

China Question of US-American Imagism

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Abstract: This paper investigates first the influences of ancient Chinese culture on Ezra Pound, and then Pound's influence on the New Culture Movement of modern China (1917). It is a kind of circular journey of literary texts and theories from ancient China to the West and then back to China. This journey, or "circle model," involves textual appropriation, variation, transformation and misunderstanding in every stage.

Qingben LI

China Question of American Imagism

The dominant critical paradigm in Chinese comparative literature or cultural studies has been the double dualisms of "China vs. West" and "tradition vs. modernity." "China and the West" was first a spatial concept, but then loaded with value judgment as it was connected with the "tradition and modernity" model. Under such a scheme, China is tantamount to ancient tradition, and the West equals modernity. Therefore, space and time are superimposed on the same linear plane. The debates about "the Western impact and China's response," "wholesale westernization," "Chinese essence and western utility," and the latest outcry to renounce "learning everything from the West" and promote "exporting Chinese culture to the world," have lasted for over one hundred years. Clearly, underlying these perennial debates and controversies are the double dualisms that rigidly separate China and the West (or the world).

In the field of comparative literature studies, the so-called French school of influence studies and U.S. school of parallel studies are considered the two primary paradigms. But neither influence studies nor parallel studies can overcome the rigid binary oppositions of "China vs. West" and "tradition vs. modernity." Recent cross-cultural studies in China try to break through the limitations of parallel studies and influence studies, attempting to open a new space for comparative literature and cultural studies. But if we are still confined in the absolute binary model of "China vs. West," we cannot achieve much even when the new method of cultural studies is deployed. How can we get out of the fetters of binarism? In this paper, I try to provide a circle model of cross-cultural studies to overcome these problems.

1. The Circle Model around China and the West

The idea of the "circle model" draws on Edward Said's *Orientalism*, in which Said describes "a large circle around all the dimensions of the subject, both in terms of historical time and experiences and in terms of philosophical and political themes" (25). For Said, Orientalism does not refer to the real Orient in the geographical sense. It is a Western representation of the Orient, but this representation does not come from the Orient itself. As he points out, "The orient was almost a European invention" (1). In short, Orientalism is a Western discourse, which has less to do with the Orient than it does with the Western world.

However, Said's concern with the West's Orient ultimately returns to the Orient as a historical reality. He points out, "It would be wrong to conclude that the orient was essentially an idea, or a creation with no corresponding reality" (5). He differentiates between the western representation of the orient and the real Orient where lives, histories, and customs have a brute reality beyond Western description. Said emphasizes that the Orient is not an inert fact of nature, "therefore as much as the West itself, the Orient is an idea that has a history and a tradition of thought, imagery, and vocabulary that have given it reality and presence in and for the West" (5).

In this way, "a large circle" has been formed. The objects of the Orientalists' inquiries must come from the orient in the first place, and then are translated, scrutinized, modified, and transformed. In the end, Orientalism as a Western discourse, a Western representation of the Orient, real or imaged, is constructed. It enters the next phase of the circle. The constructed Western representation of the Orient, i.e. Orientalism, now returns to the Orient, and as such, bestows a reality and presence to the Orient itself by its system of naming (giving the new name of the Orient to the vast, and diverse space and histories) and representation, with a modern regime of knowledge that categorizes, classifies, and ranks the order of things, ideas, polity and society according to this Western conceptualization of the modern world. By the same token, Hayot argues that "The West's Orient develops its reality and presence by virtue of the changes it effects on the minds of Westerners who then behave a certain way in the real Orient, dealing with its effects on the people and government that live there. The myth of Orientalism thus returns to its source and becomes real, like some absurd self-fulfilling prophecy" (6-7). In the second phase of the circle from the Enlightenment to the World War II, the return of Orientalism to the East, or Orient, had assumed the guise of progress, modernization, and universalism, under the rubrics of imperialism and colonialism.

Clearly, the notion of "circle model" in this paper draws largely on Said's conceptualization of Orientalism's "large circle". I hope to extend and modify Said's concepts and critiques to the Chinese case, rather than staying with Said's loci of the Middle East, particularly the Arab world. I hope to tease out the literary and cultural transaction between Ezra Pound and China in terms of the circular

journey that began with ancient Chinese poetics to modern America, metamorphosed into US-American Imagism of the twentieth century, and eventually sojourned back to twentieth century China as Western modernist poetics.

Moreover, my inquiry into the Poundian "Circle Model" is meant as a meta-criticism of modern cultural exchanges and encounters. Liu Kang discusses the hermeneutic circle with reference to paradoxical ideas about "textual unity" espoused by and inherited from US-American Criticism. Liu points out that the "textual unity" New Criticism locates in a given work may lead it to be self-consistent or self-enclosed. Unsatisfied with the self-enclosed hermeneutic circle of New Criticism, Liu proposes an alternative meta-commentary perspective. By Liu's account, Meta-commentary refers to reflecting on the China question of critical theory focusing on the historical process of Western theories' acceptance, variation and transformation in China from the perspective of intellectual history and genealogy, and its main task is to explore and reconstruct social and political situations or contexts in the historical process through symptomatic reading (Liu 97-108).

Therefore, it's insufficient to just emphasize the influence of the East on the West, and vice versa. The social backgrounds making the influence possible also need to be carefully examined. The circle model of cross-cultural studies will explore the social contexts under the different national cultures. This is to say, it will expand the temporal dimension of the hermeneutic circle to the spatial dimension and take the differences between national cultures into account.

2. The Influences of Chinese Art and Poetry on Ezra Pound

Since the publication of *Orientalism*, many researchers have used the concept of Orientalism to analyze the subject of Pound and China. Qian Zhaoming attempts to affirm China's substantial influences on American Modernism. He uses the term Orientalism differently from Said (Qian, *Orientalism and Modernism* 1). His main purpose is to show that in the Western modernist movement, especially in the early twentieth century's Anglo-American poetry reform movement, China played a positive role that cannot be overlooked. He juxtaposes Orientalism and Modernism in the book title to explain the influence of the East on the West. In addition, he tries to tell readers that the East is not the object of Western representation, manipulation and domination, but a positive force that inspired, promoted and influenced the West in modern times.

Qian's arguments are obviously different from Orientalism in a Saidian sense, but reasonable and historically valid for understanding the relationship between Pound and China. Although Said labels Pound as an Orientalist in *Orientalism* (252), Pound seems totally different from most other Orientalists described by Said. Pound's view on the Orient or China is akin to that of Ernest Fenollosa (1853-1908), a renowned US-American Orientalist Scholar. Unsatisfied with many Westerners who "have stupidly assumed that Chinese history affords no glimpse of Change, no social evolution, no salient epoch of moral and spiritual crisis," Fenollosa insists that "the Chinese have been idealists and experimenters in making of great principles; their history opens on a world of lofty aim and achievement parallel to that of the Ancient Mediterranean peoples" (76).

It cannot be denied that China was an important influence on Pound. In 1908, Pound sailed from New York to London, via Venice. Not long after arriving in London, he met the English Poet Ailejim Mathur (1860-1931), who took Pound to the Poet's Club, where some of the progressive poets had been gathering monthly. Through the gatherings, Pound quickly met a group of English literati, including Laurence Binyon (1869-1943), a poet and connoisseur of Eastern art who was working at the British Museum. From then on, Pound frequented the British museum, where he began to learn about Eastern, especially Chinese, art. In 1909, the British museum welcomed a collection of murals from Dunhuang in Northwestern China, including a standing image of Avalokiteshvara, a Buddhist goddess, which caught Pound's attention. His verse line "Kwannon / Footing a boat that's but one lotus petal" (Pound "Three Cantos" 119), fits perfectly with the British museum's 1909-1912 exhibition of Avalokiteshvara, who is described by Binyon as "standing on a lotus flower with a crown on top of which are two lotus flowers" (Binyon 10).

In discussing Pound's best-know imagist poem, "In a Station of the Metro," critics tend to attribute its beauty exclusively to the influence of Japanese haiku. But according to Qian, the poem's unique form and motif may be drawn at once from both haiku and Chinese paintings (*Modernist Response* 13). Perhaps the most significant event for Pound's connection with China is that in 1913, he received notes and papers about Chinese poetry and characters collected and written by Fenollosa through his widow. Subsequently Pound continued to work on Fenollosa's unfinished research, and published *Cathay* in April, 1915. The publication of *Cathay* immediately created a sensation and greatly boosted the interest of modernist American writers in Chinese literature and arts.

As William Yip puts it, Fenollosa, who had been exposed to Chinese painting and poems, was excited to find a new aesthetic basis in the structure of Chinese characters, and this idea greatly influenced the direction of the poet Pound's aesthetics. He rejected the abstract logic of Western languages, which in Pound's view violates the natural order (32). Afterwards, ideographic Chinese characters and ancient Chinese poetry affected Pound deeply in his writing and translation. For example, Pound translated Li Po's poem "Taking Leave of a Friend" in *Cathay* 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 (28-29).

In Pound's translation, the first two lines of the poem describe in bright tones the "blue mountains" and "white waters," contrasting with the dark tones of "a thousand miles of dead grass" in the fourth line. In order to highlight images, Pound intentionally avoided the use of verbs and conjunctions in his translation, instead employing gerunds such as "winding" or "floating" to achieve the effect of juxtaposition of images. Pound uses "floating clouds" and "sunset" to echoes the "green hills" and "white water" of the first part of the poem, depicting the sunset and its afterglow. This complements the realm formed by "blue mountains" and "white river," showing the wanderer's mood and the old friend's feeling. On the whole, Pound's translations are concise, neat, well-conceived, and blended with vivid images, which express the content of Li Po's original poem faithfully.

It is worth noting that Pound not only omitted the verbs and the conjunctions, but also omitted the speaker's pronouns in order to highlight the images. In his translation, readers do not know whose mind is like a cloud, who waves hands, or who sees the sunset. In this way, Pound's translation seemed to diverge from Western logical thinking and was incompatible with English grammar. In Yip's view, the omission of pronouns in Pound's translation can avoid locking the reader in a fixed, partial position, which is subjectively controlled, guided and oriented by the author, and can allow the reader to occupy two positions at the same time in order to get a flexible experience or feeling. This actually reflects the state of "viewing things by things" and "forgetting both things and myself" in Taoist aesthetics (40). All these aesthetic choices testify to the important influence of Chinese culture on Pound.

3. Pound's Appropriations of Ancient Chinese Poetry

However, to say that ancient Chinese art and poetry had a great influence on Pound does not mean that Pound would accept ancient Chinese art and poetry without any modifications. A work of art and literature, when traveling from one national culture to another, is bound to undergo changes in meanings and understandings, subject to the receiving culture's tradition, customs and mores. The meaning of a given text cannot be determined by the author's intention and the text itself; it is always subjected to interpretation and reception by readers who belong to different cultures and time periods.

Pound's translation in *Cathay* was directly inspired by Fenollosa who viewed Chinese notation, based upon a vivid, short-hand picture that corresponds to the order of the natural world, as something much more meaningful than the arbitrary symbols of western alphabets. Fenollosa claims that Chinese poetry has the unique advantage of combining the vividness of paintings and the mobility of sounds: "in reading Chinese, we do not seem to be juggling with mental counters, but to be watching things work out their own fate" (80).

The fact is, although the logographic Chinese characters are different from the letters of the western phonetic alphabet, they are still phonetic symbols. Like in alphabetic writing, Chinese character ultimately depends on conventions to determine the relationship among image, sound and meaning. Hence the relation between signifier and signified is arbitrary. For example, the Chinese character "dan" (旦) depicts the sun rising over the horizon, while the Chinese character "dong" (东) depicts the sun rising behind a tree (Fenollosa 84). But why is it that the sun rises over sight in the morning, and rises behind a tree in the east? Obviously, the connection between the Chinese characters "dan" meaning "morning" or between "dong" and "east" is not natural, but conventional.

Fenollosa's misunderstanding of ideographic characters also influenced Pound and became the theoretical basis for the juxtaposition of images in his translation of Chinese poems.

In *Cathay*, for example, Pound translated one famous verse line of Li Po's poem as "Desolate castle, the sky, the wide desert (荒城空大漠)" (16). This sentence was selected from "Lament of the Frontier Guard" in *Cathay*, and its Chinese title is "*Hu Guan Rao Feng Sha*" (胡关饶风沙). In the original Chinese poem, Li intended to show the scene of the frontier where sand is blown by the wind. The big desert looks boundless, and the ruined castle is empty. The Chinese word "*kong*" (空) in Li's original verse means to make someplace empty, forming a causative sentence. However, Pound changed the word "*kong*" into a noun, "sky", forming the juxtaposition of three images: the desolate castle, the sky, and the wide desert.

Pound's translation is obviously intended to adopt the method of direct translation word by word, discarding the subject and other elements of English syntax, ignoring the syntactic structure, and forming the sentence pattern characteristic of the juxtaposed structure. Indeed, in classical Chinese poetry, a considerable number of sentences feature image juxtaposition, where the syntactic relationship between image-words or phrases is not clear, and there is no need to add pronouns, prepositions, or other elements, to form a complete sentence pattern. Pound is only sensitively aware of this, but does not understand the composition of Chinese verse. According to the translation principle, if the original sentence is concatenated, the translation should be concatenated. If the original text is juxtaposed, so should be the translation. Pound does not use juxtaposition when it should be used, but he does when it should not be used. The sentence "*jing sha luan hai ri*" (惊沙乱海日) is not juxtaposed, but Pound translated it into a juxtaposed sentence, "Surprised. Desert turmoil. Sea sun" in *Cathay* (31). On the other hand, the sentence "*feng qu tai kong jiang zi liu*" (风去台空江自流) from Li Po's poem is juxtaposed, but Pound does not translate it using juxtaposition (Zhao 224). Instead, in *Cathay* he translates this sentence as "the phoenix are gone, the river flows on alone" (30).

However, the misunderstanding in Pound's translation should not be taken as serious and unforgivable. On the whole, Pound's translations are good representation of the original Chinese poems. He used Fenollosa's work as a starting point for what he called the ideogrammic method, which proceeded on Fenollosa's entirely mistaken but fruitful idea that each character represented an image or pictograph, based on sight rather than sound. Hayot insists that history has judged that Pound, despite knowing no Chinese, translated the Chinese poems better than anyone else ever has, set the stage for a series of important question about how Westerners come to "know" China, and how much of that knowledge is simply the ghostly reflection of their own desires (Hayot ix-x).

In the process of the emergence and development of the imagist poetry movement, the role of Chinese influence should neither be denied nor be exaggerated. To be more precise, it is because of the internal requirements of the Anglo-American poetry movement and the social environment at that time that China played a role. As Kern points out, the impulses that drove Fenollosa and then Pound to Chinese clearly have deeper roots, not only in American literary history (particularly the work of Emerson) but in intellectual and linguistic traditions that go back at least as far as the Renaissance (Kern ix).

Imagism was an early twentieth century Anglo-American poetry movement that favored precision of imagery and clear, sharp language. The Imagists rejected the sentiment and discursiveness typical of most Romantic and Victorian poetry, which followed proscribed rules of rhythm and rhyme schemes. Romantic poetry, which had dominated British literature before the early twentieth century, had become moralistic and hyperbolic. Many poets with new thoughts, such as Thomas Ernest Hulme, believed that they needed new literary potential to express the thoughts of a rapidly modernized society, and were looking for a precise rhetoric method. In his 1908 "Lecture on Modern Poetry," Hulme commenced with an apparent attack on the attitudes of some members of the Poets' Club, including its president Henry Simpson, and declared that traditional poetry was in the latter stages of decay. He pointed out, "the direct language is poetry, it is direct because it deals in images," and "this new verse resembles sculpture rather than music; it appeals to the eye rather than to the ear" (259-270). In his letter to the editor of *The New Age* on February 18, 1909, Hulme claimed that romanticism's demise was a belated one and criticized his friend Frank Stuart Flint who "is obsessed by the illusion that poets must be addicted to Circean excess and dis-coloured linen" (350). Imagism called for a combination of classical values and new verse forms. It returned to what were seen as more Classical values, such as directness of presentation and a willingness to experiment with non-

traditional verse forms. In fact, as Zhao points out, "without the influence of Chinese poetry, modern American poetry would still have taken up the banner of anti-romanticism. Chinese poetry only helped American poetry achieve this goal" (178).

4. Hu Shi's Reception and Variation of the Imagist Theory

American Imagism, spearheaded by Ezra Pound under the influence of traditional Chinese art and poetics, emphasized the pure combination of images in contrast to the rigidity of English poetry during the Victorian Era. The theoretical propositions are embodied in Pound's article "A Few Don'ts by an Imagiste" that in turn inspired Hu Shi's literary revolution of the early twentieth century in China. Hu Shi (or Hu Shih 胡适, 1891-1962), brought up in the age-old Chinese literati tradition and educated at Cornell and Columbia, was one of the most important intellectual and cultural leaders of modern China. Hu Shi is generally credited for inaugurating Chinese literary and language reform in the early twentieth century. A seminal work of Hu's campaign for literary reform is his 1917 essay "The Discussion of Literary Reform." There are many similarities between his text's advocacy of "Eight Don'ts" (八不主义) and the eight principles in "A Few Don'ts by an Imagiste" written by Pound in 1913.

For example, the first point of Hu Shi's proposition, "what you say must have substance" (27), and the fourth point, "don't groan without being sick" (27), are very close to Pound's first point, "use no superfluous word, no adjective, which does not reveal something" (201). The fifth point that Hu states, "not to use clichés and hackneyed expressions" (27), is essentially consistent with the second point that Pound outlines, "not to use such an expression as 'dim lands of peace'" (201), and his third point, "not to retell in mediocre verse what has already been done in good prose" (201). The sixth point that Hu Shi makes, "not to use classical allusions" (27), is also similar with the eighth point that Pound writes, "use either no ornament or good ornament" (202). Hu Shi did not completely deny the usage of classical allusions, but advocated to use either no classical allusions or good ones, clarified by Hu Shi himself in the essay "The Discussion of Literary Reform." In addition, the seventh point that Hu Shi proposes, "not to write in couplets or parallelisms" (27), and the eighth point that Hu Shi proposes, "not to avoid colloquial words and phrasings" (27), are consistent with Amy Lowell's proposals to "use the language of common speech" and to "express in free verse other than in conventional forms" (Lowell vii) in the Imagist "six principles."

In his 1919's article "Talking about the New Poetry," Hu Shi proposed that every good poem can make one or more images in our minds, which is the concreteness of poetry (334). This view is obviously consistent with Imagist theory.

In Hu's diary, in an entry written on December 26, 1916 when he was staying in New York, there was a clipping from *The New York Times* on Lowell's Imagist Credo. Hu Shi noted that most of the points advocated by the Imagists resembled his own (1143). In fact, as many Chinese scholars pointed out, many of Hu's views were inspired by Pound and Lowell, instead of the reverse.

For example, Mei Guangdi argued that the so-called Chinese vernacular poetry was nothing but a residue of free verse and American Imagism(3). Wen Yiduo believed that Hu's "Eight Don'ts" are not entirely his own creation, but may be a copy of the doctrine of the new Imagist poets with the great poetess Amy Lowell as the flag-bearer (3). All of these prove Hu's eight points were obviously inspired by Pound's "A Few Don'ts by an Imagiste" and Lowell's imagist credo, although Hu Shi never admitted this. Huang points out that "without Hu's appropriation of Pound and Lowell, Chinese modernism would not have been what it was" (130).

However, it must also be noted that Hu Shi's poetics is not exactly the same as Imagism. Indeed, both Pound and Hu Shi pay attention to the image, but they do not agree on everything. Pound adopts many imagist methods such as juxtaposition, superposition, and disembodiment of images. These ungrammatical writing methods are exactly what Hu Shi opposed.

Contrary to Pound, Hu Shi strongly proposed paying attention to grammar in literary creation. In the essay "The Discussion of Literary Reform," "no emphasis on grammar" is one of the eight negatives that Hu Shi opposes. Hu Shi points out, "Today, writers and poets do not stress the structure of grammar. There are many examples, and it is inconvenient to mention, especially those who compose parallel prose and regular-verse. No emphasis on grammar means that they make no sense. The reason is so clear that there is no need to elaborate" (27).

While Pound implores poets to "be influenced by as many great artists as you can" (202), Hu Shi insists "not to imitate the ancients" (27), which shows their different attitudes towards traditional Chinese poetry. Pound opposes Romanticism but not Classicism, while Hu Shi is the opposite.

The differences between Hu Shi and Pound remind us that Hu Shi accepted American imagist theory because of the domestic social situation in China. The abolition of the imperial examination

system in 1905 changed the way scholars lived and the function of Chinese poetry. As a result, the previously "exam-oriented" Chinese poetry turns toward the function of "enlightenment." At that time, society was chaotic, and intellectuals hoped to enlighten the public by establishing newspapers and periodicals and popularizing education among the common people. However, the classical Chinese they mastered through their studies was so different from the vernacular Chinese the ordinary people used, they had to change their writing habits and write free verse in vernacular that the general public could understand. This is the main reason why Hu Shi advocated vernacular poetry and refused to acknowledge the foreign influence. This also means that Hu's anti-tradition is not completely separated from Chinese tradition. In fact, almost all of the eight propositions of Hu Shi's literary revolution can be found in traditional Chinese literary theory. Hu Shi's repeated emphasis on "what you say must have substance" clearly shows his background in traditional Chinese literary thought represented by Confucianism, which is known for the saying, "In language it is simply required that it convey meaning" (Confucius 305).

Lin Yusheng distinguishes two different concepts in the relationship between the May Fourth Movement and Chinese tradition. In his view, the movement is anti-traditional at the level of "thought content," but not at the level of "thought mode," where it still follows Chinese tradition (158). Inherited from representative characters of the May Fourth Movement, the thought mode owes much to the teachings of Confucius, as illustrated in his saying "while you don't know life, how can you know about death?" (Confucius 241).

Generally speaking, the role of Western influences on the transition from Chinese tradition to modern times can neither be ignored nor exaggerated. It is wrong to view the Chinese modern transition as a rupture of Chinese ancient culture. Modern Chinese literature was first conceived in the matrix of ancient Chinese culture. Modernization was not a sudden historical event, but a gradual process. At the same time, it should be also noted that the realization of this transformation is inseparable from the impact and influence of the West. The former is the first or internal reason, and the latter is the second or external reason. It is the combination of internal and external factors that caused the historical transformation from tradition to modernity.

This also proves that the debate on whether or not Hu Shi received the influence of Imagism can only be reasonably resolved in the context of a cross-cultural circle model. The same is true of the debate on whether or not Pound received influence from China.

5. Conclusion

As clarified above, the China question of American Imagism is not only related to ancient China but also to modern China. It consists of a circular journey. So far, most researchers have either focused on the impact of ancient Chinese culture on Pound or the impact of Pound on Hu. But now it is time to integrate these separate processes into a whole.

At the same time, we must ask: how could Pound's imagist theories, influenced by Chinese traditional literature, be used by Hu Shi as the theoretical weapon against Chinese Classicism in the new literature movement?

We have noted that neither the French school of influence studies nor the U.S. school of parallel studies can answer this question because of their rigid binary models arising from the overlying of "China and the West" and "tradition and modernity." Influence studies view the original as the thing itself, and replace ontology with etiology. This approach naively assumes that if someone finds solid evidence to explain the source of influences, everything will be settled, ignoring all variations that can occur during the process. It is still a linear form of comparative study.

The "Eight Don'ts" by Hu Shi have greatly influenced the formation of Chinese modern literary theory. Many researchers have perhaps noticed its relationship with Western theories, but the Chinese background in Pound's theories often goes ignored. Thus, they conclude that Chinese modern theory broke from Chinese traditions because of the interruption of Western theory. However, the circular journey of Pound's theory has indicated that the reception of Western theories by China must have its own horizon of expectation, which serve as catalyst in the transmission, transaction, and transformation of cultural texts from one to another and vice versa. Those western texts that bear resemblance or similarities to Chinese tradition in some manner often trigger a good deal of interest amongst Chinese readers, more than those with little, if not anything, to do with Chinese culture. Pound's Imagist poetry and poetics, inspired by classical Chinese poetry and aesthetics in the first place, aroused great interest amongst Chinese writers of the twentieth century, who were fascinated by how Pound's avant-garde, modernist experiments with images and poetic languages created entirely novel aesthetic experience and poetic expressions. Anything new and modern, or modernist, was chic, fashionable, and embraced with tremendous zeal and passion by Chinese intellectuals of the

modern era. The sense of familiarity and affinity with Pound, a modern American poet, was increased exponentially simply by virtue of Pound's genuine affection and respect for Chinese culture.

In this circular traveling, appropriation, adaptation, variation, transformation, and even misunderstanding in every stage are normal phenomena. Pound reformed Chinese theories and Hu Shi also reformed Pound's theories. Just as Pound received and adapted Li Po's poetry with Romanticist characteristics as his weapon of anti-Romanticism, Hu Shi received and adapted Pound's Imagism influenced by Chinese classic literature and art as his weapon against Chinese Classicism. It is impossible for anything to keep unchanged in the midst of circular traveling, and there is no gap that is unbridgeable between Chinese and Western theories. In sum, it is not the linear model of Sino-western dualism, but the circle model of cross-cultural studies that can answer the China question of American Imagism.

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