

Towards the Description of the Cultural Images Translation of Li Qingzhao's: A Study of the Medio – Translatology

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Abstract

This ground-breaking study rebuts the common belief that a quantitative method cannot be successfully applied to medieval Chinese poetry. Because of this widespread skepticism, recent inquiries on Chinese poetry have been mostly confined to translation procedures and solely hermeneutical readings of pre-existing comments. This study has strong insights into the translation of images using Medio-translatology approach. The data has been collected through cultural image words in Li Qingzhao's Ci. These words have strong base and provided the clear insights to the user (Cavallo, 2016). After that the analysis has been conducted by taking different word phrases and translation has been done.

Keywords: image translation, Li Qingzhao's Ci, Medio-Translatology, Chinese culture

1. Introduction

Translators face the Scylla of faithfully duplicating an argumentative process that may be unintelligible to the intended reader, and the Charybdis of reconstituting it into a process where the reader is more accustomed and comfort. As a culturally significant medium, ci conveys significant historical and cultural meaning in China. Its conception represents the unique perspective and aesthetic sense of traditional Chinese culture. Following a lengthy period of cultural accumulation, countless cultural representations with distinct ethnic traits emerge and are preserved in classical poetry. Poems and rhymes are given more depth and breadth of imagination via the use of cultural imagery (Chambon, 2017). They are the soul of Ci. As a special kind of literary form, Ci is an integral part of Chinese culture and embodies rich cultural information, so it is the translators' obligation to faithfully convey the essence of this brilliant writing style of China to the whole world.

Poetic image is the fundamental building block and aesthetic unit of Ci, hence it is essential that it be taken into account in any adaptation of Ci. Ancient Chinese poets often used this technique to convey their innermost thoughts and feelings via verse. Therefore, while considering the challenges of rendering Ci, it is most crucial to render the poetic picture in Ci. There is a strong connection between how people present themselves and their cultural norms. As a cultural artefact, image is heavily impacted and formed by its context. Cultural context is always present in each photograph. One must be well-versed in the culture in question in order to comprehend the meaning of a given picture (Fletcher-Watson, 2020). Poetic images embody rich cultural information. The translation of poetic images should not only realize the linguistic equivalence between the source text (ST) and the target text (TT), but also convey faithfully the cultural information of the ST.

Xie Tianzhen took an important step in the study of the translation of Ci, made great theoretical contribution to the research on Ci. Up to now it is about more than twenty years since cultural image was brought forward in 1999, on which many a scholars has made great efforts. (Holler, 2019) paper On the Untranslatability of Cultural Image in Ancient Chinese Poems is an attempt to explore the intranslatability of cultural image caused by the differences of Chinese and Western cultures and the communicative difficulties of the cultural connotations in cultural image in ancient Chinese poems. Cultural translation, in this sense, "does not generally signify a specific form of translation approach but rather a viewpoint on translates that emphasizes on their development and influence as parts in the intellectual traffic across language groups."

2. Problem Statement

Owing to literary merit, Li Qingzhao's Ci has piqued the interest of several researchers, who are investigating its international reception and English translation. There is a significant lack of diversity in the sample size of the current investigation. Using "poetry by Li Qingzhao" as a topic phrase, a Google search returned almost 21,000 results, whereas a search of the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI, China's biggest electronic resource database) yielded just 77 results. But only 7 studies on English translation of cultural images in Li Qingzhao's Ci. (retrieved on May 21, 2022). The quantity and quality of studies on English translation of cultural images in Li Qingzhao's Ci are far inferior to other aspects in the translation of Li Qingzhao's Ci. The research of the English translation of cultural images in Li Qingzhao's Ci urgently needs the attention and supplementary exploration of the academic circles. Therefore, this study makes the translation of cultural images in Li Qingzhao's Ci as the study object.

As an indispensable part of Chinese classical poetry, the translation of cultural images acts a significant role in the transmission of poetry. The quality of poetry translation is determined by the success or failure in the translation of cultural images to some extent.

On the basis of the multiple definitions and classifications of cultural images, (Trujillo, 2018) extracted ninety cultural images in five categories from Li Qingzhao's works and Kenneth Rexroth's relevant translations as the study object. Within the theoretical framework of Venuti's domestication and foreignization, Wu Lin analyzed the translation strategies of cultural images and made contrastive study of Rexroth and Xu Yuanchong's translations, attempting to summarize the translation strategies and principles of cultural images as well as providing references for the Chinese translators and work in concert with the promotion of the "Chinese Cultural Going out" strategy.

3. Research Objectives

- To categorise cultural representations in Zhu Manhua's English translation of Li Qingzhao's Ci
- To Examine Zhu Manhua's adaptation of Li Qingzhao's Ci in terms of the cultural imagery he stole and twisted for his own use.
- To elaborate the Zhu Manhua's Ci (translated from Li Qingzhao) is a good case study for analyzing the challenges inherent in cultural image transfer from the original to the translated text.

4. Research Questions

- What does the Zhu Manhua's English version of Li Qingzhao's Ci explain about the cultural images and their classification?
- How did Zhu Manhua, the English translator of Li Qingzhao's Ci, get away with the blatant theft of cultural symbols in his translation?
- What are the challenges being faced while transmitting the cultural images translation from source-language to target language in Zhu Manhua's version of Li Qingzhao's Ci;

5. Literature Review

Translation of creative works like novels, poetry, plays, etc. is referred to as literary translation. According to Classe, "literary translations is seen as generally separated from technical translation." In France, any translation "designed to be regarded as literature" is automatically considered a literary translation. When it comes to literary translation, poetry is by far the most difficult to translate. It's been spoken about more than any other kind of literary translation, including play and prose.

"Poetry is the most particular and focused of the four kinds, no repetition, no phatic vocabulary, where, as both a unit, the syllable has more value than just about any other style of literature," writes Peter Newmark. According to Mathews, "to construct another poem" is the same thing as translating a poem, hence he considers poetry translation to be the same as creativity.

According to (Cook, 2015), "an ideal literature translations should really have four characteristics: a) this must be a poetry itself; b) this must keep the original feeling; c) it should maintain the original substance; d) it should maintain the original style." Also, while translating poetry, it's important to be true to the tone, subject matter, and structure of the original. The second is dependent on the translator's ability to perceive and communicate, the third on his ability to comprehend and express, and the fourth on his abilities. It is argued that while translating poetry, it is important to be true to the spirit of the original work by maintaining its rhythm and meter as much as feasible. Poetry translations should do justice to the original work in terms of both meaning and form (Nomura, 2017).

In a recent study, researchers (de Vries-Erich, 2016) were the first academics to propose and use the term "cultural translation." According to their definition, "A cultural transcription, as opposite to a textual translated version, is a transformation in which the material of the data is changed to fit the acknowledged society in some way, and/or an interpretation in which knowledge not enclosed in the native context is introduced."

Experts from China have elaborated on Nida and Taber's description of cultural translated version. To adapt to the importance of language or to add some cultural message to a target vocabulary in order to obtain the right background information, "cultural translation" entails transforming the cultural aspects (minor culture) enclosed in each standard of the original language into the contextual differences of the target language (Baur LA, 2019).

The term "cultural translation" has been used both as a translation approach and a field of study, and Kate Sturge has previously drawn attention to the relationship between the two. She worried that the topic of how to handle cultural differences in texts whether the translation skewed more toward naturalization or exoticization would be raised by the term "culture translation" as opposed to "linguistic translation" or "grammatical translation." (Helmich, 2017) idea of cultural translation revitalized the field of English poetry translation in the 1980s and 1990s. She argues that translation is now a cultural practice with historical roots in the language itself. When two languages are translated into each other, their cultural functions become equivalent. This is known as translation equivalence. Helmich argues that grasping the poet's intended meaning is essential to translating poetry. The translator of poetry must have an in-depth familiarity with both the culture and history of the original language and the target language.

Chinese classical poetry, which makes extensive use of figurative language and other visual elements, illustrates how important visual imagery is to the creative process. The ultimate purpose of composing and appreciating a poem is for the poet to produce the aesthetic figures and atmosphere via the careful selection and effective arrangement of pictures. It may be thought of as representations of real-world things that are imbued with abstract ideas and feelings. Instead of expressing his sentiments openly, a skilled poet would infuse them into the things he describes. Once a poet has chosen to utilize an item in a poem, it is no longer just a picture of an object; it has significance to the poem. By drawing on a wide range of metaphors, the poet successfully merges his subjective inner experiences with the objective outside world. The subjective and the poetic occur when inner and outside worlds collide. The term "moon," for instance, denotes a real thing: a planet that orbits the Earth. It has a form and undergoes transformations that may be visualized in our minds. When a poet uses the moon as a symbol, he changes its meaning to reflect his own knowledge and appreciation of poetry rather than its literal meaning. (Lifting my head, I see the sky so brilliant; closing my eyes, my melancholy comes around)" is a line from one of several poems that uses the word "moon." Because "moon" appears so often as a motif in Chinese poetry, it has become inextricably linked to ideas of home and family.

Natural pictures, social images, and economic images are the three broad categories into which Medio-Translatology divides cultural images. Images of natural scenery, wildlife, flora, and fauna, and environmental conditions are included in this category. Complex social pictures come from people's habits over time in interactions, such as speech, etiquette, conventions, and literature, and so represent the social phenomena of people's society. Cultural pictures of language reveal the distinctive ways in which various peoples express themselves through speech. Social-cultural representations include not just norms of conduct but also patriarchal clan notions, religious and philosophical tenets, culinary and political practices, and more. Symbols of devotion, Buddhism, God, and ghosts are among the religious topics shown in the artwork. Furthermore, Confucianism, Taoism, and Mohism are all included in the many schools of thought. The literary and creative works that result from people's imagination and cross-cultural interactions include a wide variety of literary and cultural imagery. Cultural representations of humanity's material world include things like tools for making things and finished goods. All of these things might be considered pictures since they convey not just cultural information but also the meanings associated with that information in other countries.

In the West in the 21st century, there are three main approaches to the study of culturally image translation. To investigate how well cultural images are transmitted in translation, some researchers have used notions from the poetry-creation theory of "imagism" to studies of particular literary works. The relevance of cultural aspects in translation and the inevitable loss of distinct cultural connotations were shown, for example, by (Jarrell, 2016) via her research of the translation of cultural imagery in the works of the French writer Philippe Delerm. Also, James proposed, based on Eugene Nida's cultural categorisation and dynamic equivalence, that the translator take into account the cultural connotation of both the ST (source text) and the TT (target text) when translating. This would improve the translation's accuracy in conveying the cultural information in both texts.

During the Song Dynasty, Li Qingzhao (1085–1151) was also called as Li Yi'an, and she is today widely regarded as

one of the greatest female poets in Chinese history. There are two main schools of song poetry, the "bold faction" and the "graceful faction." Li Qingzhao's inclusion in the latter group is a widely accepted fact. Li Qingzhao, during the late Tang Dynasty, invented her own style, the Yi'an style, which was influential to her group and subsequent poets. Since this is the case, it is crucial that more study of Li Qingzhao's Ci be conducted.

6. Research Methodology

This investigation is a qualitative one. The cultural image words from Li Qingzhao's Ci serve as the study data for this investigation. These cultural identifiers are derived from the English version of Zhu Manhua (2018). Manfield Zhu has translated all of Li Qingzhao's poems into English. Beijing, China: Commercial Press International Co., Ltd. Based on the "influential elements of translation strategy selection" (Jarrell, 2017) put forward by the comparatist André Lefevere, the researcher of this study adopts the comparative, descriptive, and explanatory method to analyze transmission of translation from Chinese to English of the cultural images in the Zhu Manhua's Complete collection of Li Qingzhao's poetry translation as well as their internal connection with the personalized translation strategies, mistranslation and omission employed consciously or unconsciously by Zhu Manhua, to demonstrate the usage of Zhu Manhua's conscious and unconscious creative treason on cultural images translation.

7. Data Analysis

The analysis data includes Zhu Manhua's Complete collection of Li Qingzhao's poetry translation, cultural images words in Zhu Manhua's English edition, and the researcher takes the relatively translations of the source cultural images as examples to summarize the compensation translation strategies for the transmission of translation from Chinese to English of the cultural images to a certain extent, which makes the TT closer to the receiving environment of the target audience while retaining the content and artistic conception of the source text (ST) to the greatest extent, so as to realize the effective transmission of cultural images in ancient Chinese classics.

The study extracted cultural images words from versions of the complete collection of Li Qingzhao's poetry translation by (Lajoie, 2018). It classified them into three categories (natural images, social images, and material images) according to (Miyabe, 2016) classification of cultural image. The following chart is the corpus (Show only 15 cultural images words) and the correspondent translations.

natural Images:		
Source Text	Provenance Sentence	Tr. By Zhu Manhua
1.海棠(如梦令 昨夜)	却道海棠依旧	The crabapple trees bloom as usual. (p.10)
2.黄花(声声慢)	满地黄花堆积	The ground full of flowers in yellow. (p.53)
3.寒梅(渔家傲 雪里)	寒梅点缀琼枝腻	The cold plum blossom decorates twigs to be beautiful. (p.8)
4.皎月(怨王孙 帝里)	皎月初斜	The slanting moon still kept clear and bright. (p.66)
5.五更风(浪淘沙)	帘外五更风	It's the daybreak wind outside the curtain. (p.70)
social images:		
1.长门(小重山)	春到长门春草青	Spring came in the palace gate, the grass green. (p.25)
2.东篱(醉花阴 薄雾)	东篱把酒黄昏后	Looking at homely fence to drink after dusk. (p.29)
3.三山(渔家傲 记梦)	蓬舟吹取三山去	To sail the myth-boat to the Penglai Island of the Three-Mountain. (p.39)
4.贵妃醉脸(多丽)	也不似、贵妃醉脸	Such white flowers were unlike Yang Guifei's look. (p.11)
5.孙寿愁眉(多丽)	也不似、孙寿愁眉	Unlike Sunshou's sad brows painted in black. (p.11)
material images:		
1.金猊(凤凰台上忆吹箫)	香冷金猊	Gold censer with burning incenses were getting colder. (p.19)
2.宝奁(凤凰台上忆吹箫)	任宝奁尘满	No matter how much dust covered on makeup desk. (p.19)
3.金尊(渔家傲 雪里)	共赏金尊沈绿蚁	Now share gold cups of wine. (p.8)
4.沉水(菩萨蛮 风柔)	沉水卧时烧	While the smell disappearing. (p.13)
5.瑞脑(浣溪沙 莫许)	瑞脑香消魂梦断	The borneol fragrance lost, my lovesick dream broken. (p.15)

To investigate the spread effect of the translation from Chinese to English of the cultural images in Zhu Manhua's version of Li Qingzhao's Ci, Xie's (2018) creative treason will be utilized to analyze the translation strategies, whereas the conscious and unconscious creative treason including personalized translation, conscious mistranslation, omission, brief translation, compilation and adaptation will be applied to analyze. Among them, personalized translation is the most important, so this study will give detailed discussion of it. As theoretical framework referred that two main features of personalized translation are domestication and foreignization. This study will analyze domestication from the perspective of substitution and free translation strategies, as well as foreignization will be discussed from the transplantation, literal translation and transliteration strategies.

8. Discussion

Ronald Egan sees the benefits of the long ci (changdiao) in a stringently enhanced way, and he links Zhou Bangyan's configuration with depicting "the intimate information of romance sexual liaisons" in ci ("implementing lines from
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Tang and extremely early shi poetry in and out of his combinations," which made his ci individuals to realize, and trying to describe nature as the welcome addition and equivalents to the feeling of lyrical character. In the first place, it's because she's so well-versed in the particular nuances of the ci poetry form. Li Qingzhao was severely critical of her predecessors and contemporaries in the first philosophical treatise on ci, "Essay on ci," because their ci were intertwined with shi. For her, that level of intimacy was completely off-limits. The most significant ones are the limitations on expressing feelings openly and the absence of emotions allowed in shi 5. Focusing on the issues of both limitation and moral justification, as Li Qingzhao did, entailed a progressive change to the very representation of distinct emotions and, later, an evolution from implicitly to overtly articulated emotions.

At first glance, this idea seems absurd, as it is reasonable to assume that short ci (xiaoling) would be rich in explicitly described emotions, just like how it is reasonable to assume that a shorter message would have more essential words. The formal relationship between shi and ci is also clear; the length of a typical xiaoling is between 14 and 58 characters, making it roughly equivalent to the two most common shi forms, jueju (which consists of 20 or 28 characters) and lishi (which consists of 40 or 56 characters). Specifically, early ci are comparable to these five shi types not only in comment count, but also in implicitly communicated feelings and other classic poetic tactics 6, while they are distinct by content (Naismith, 2018). This pressure came from the old poetic canon. On the other hand, Li Qingzhao may have felt more liberated to stray from the bounds of conventional poetry by using lengthier ci (zhongdiao and changdiao) in order to place more emphasis on his feelings.

9. Conclusion

This post helped me make various connections between Li Qingzhao's ci and her Yi'anti poetry style. First, in Li Qingzhao's works, the length of a ci is correlated with how high it ranks among commentators and poetry. A longer ci has a better possibility of being considered an "excellent" one. Secondly, Li Qingzhao's lengthy ci (zhongdiao and changdiao) are seen as the "exceptional" ones, whereas her short ci (xiaoling) are seen as nothing especially remarkable. Longer ci (zhongdiao and changdiao) may have given Li Qingzhao more leeway to deviate from the standard poetry conventions, allowing him to place more emphasis on his feelings. Moreover, Li Qingzhao's tales are dominated by negatively marked feelings, however the poetess seldom explains the source of her sadness or the person she associates with it. I argue that Li Qingzhao's use of the character was not an expression of grief for her late spouse but rather an expression of existential anguish at being unable to fulfill her own potential within the constraints of medieval patriarchal system. At long last, we find a link between ci structure, ci hierarchy, and moral image categories. Some of the ways in which "excellent" ci vary from "mediocre" ones include the greater prominence given to the use of a nomination plant and the inclusion of both actual and mythological plants. Quantitative methods have been shown to have significant potential in the study of Chinese medieval poetry, as this study demonstrates. While its findings are promising, they also suggest further efforts to better integrate quantitative and qualitative methods of inquiry and to operationalize novel ideas and test a wide variety of hypotheses. The duration of ci, its quality and perceived value, and the interconnection of conventional poetic canon and talent level can all be better understood. This includes the relationship between images (not just 'oral ones), the multiple pieces of equipment of overexpression thoughts and feelings (including those conveyed by universal prompts and cultural triggers), and the duration of ci.

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