

Translation Criticism on Qinyuan Chun·Changsha Based on Xu Yuanchong's Art of Beautifulization

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Abstract

Mao Zedong, the great leader of China, is also one of the greatest poets in China. His poetry is regarded as the treasure of Chinese literary, in which Qinyuan Chun·Changsha plays an leading position. With the background of “Chinese literary going out”, the translation of the poem seems really meaningful. So in this paper, the author compare seven English versions with the three theories proposed by Professor Xu Yuanchong, the distinguished translator who bend himself to Chinese and English Translation in the field of Chinese poetry so as to provide a reference for promoting the English translation activity of Chinese ancient poetry.

Keywords: Xu Yuanchong, Mao Zedong, Qinyuan Chun·Changsha, Art of Beautifulization

1. Introduction

With the implementation of Chinese reform and opening up, it is imperative to globally disseminate Chinese culture. Translation is recognized as a significant and effective method for showcasing traditional Chinese culture. Given the esteemed status of Chinese Classical Poetry in Chinese culture, numerous translators have dedicated themselves to the translation of Classical Chinese Poetry. Among them, Xu Yuanchong has made substantial contributions to both theoretical research and the translation of Classical Chinese Poetry. He has encapsulated his literary translation practice, especially in poetry, into ten Chinese characters: “Art of beautifulization and creation of the best as in rivalry” (美化之艺术, 创优似竞赛). Furthermore, he has devoted himself to the poetry of Mao Zedong, a great leader of China, who has penned numerous exceptional poems and played a predominant role in the history of Chinese poetry. There exist varied translation publications of selected poems of Mao Zedong, each with distinct characteristics, by many translators both domestically and internationally. In this thesis, the author endeavors to critique Qinyuan Chun·Changsha, written by Mao Zedong in 1925, through different versions based on Xu Yuanchong's translation theory of “Art of Beautifulization” (美化之艺术).

2. Literature Review

The study on Mao Zedong's poetry has never stopped since the founding of New China especially for the English translation and theory of translation. Many scholars try to study the English translation of Mao Zedong's poetry from different perspectives like Three-Beauty theory, linguistic features, aesthetic and rhetorical features, culture and image-schema theory, etc. There are some papers which study the poetry of Ma Zedong with Three-Beauty theory, such as—*A Comparative Study on the English Translations of Mao Zedong's Poetry*, which dwells on a comparative study on eight English translated versions of Mao Zedong's poetry. *The Reproduction of —Three Beauties Theory in Classical Poetry C-E Translation—On Xu Yuanchong's Selected Poems of Mao Zedong: Chinese-English*, a paper of Guangxi University in 2006, makes a study of Xu's translated version of Selected Poems of Mao Zedong in the three-beauty aspects, aiming to shed some light on the English translation of classical Chinese poetry and gear the literary translation towards a healthier course. There Is No Ultimate Authoritative Explanation for Poetry: Translators Just Do What They Think They Can published by Journal of SWPUL in 2005. This paper is a contrasting study of different English versions from beauty in sense, sound and form, etc.—*On Five Translations of Mao Zedong's Poems—A Deconstruction Approach*, a paper published by Yunnan Normal University in 2006 which is discussed from three aspects, sound-beauty (rhyme and reduplication), form-beauty (tune name, parallelism and line length) and meaning-beauty (verb choice, noun choice and adjective choice).

As a masterpiece of Mao Zedong's poem,—Changsha, Tune: Spring in a Pleasure Garden^{ll} has achieved a great many results on the study of its text analysis and translation since its appearance, but most of them have been done within a theoretical outline of three beauties in sound, form and sense initiated by Xu Yuanchong, or other related aspects such as the aesthetic study, culture, image and language style, the linguistic features or the rhetorical features as well as the humanistic study, but few attempts analyze and study its text as well as translations with seven English versions. One paper is about the comparative study about the poem. In *A Comparative Study of Three English Versions of "Qinyuan Chun·Changsha" from the Perspective of Chesterman's Models of Translation Ethics*, Wei Liang attempts to apply Chesterman's five models of ethics to explore how the translators comply with certain or some models of ethics according to different purposes and needs in the process of translation. It is found that it is difficult for translators to satisfy all the models in the meantime to gain an ideal translation.^[1]

Zhang Mengxue, Liu Mingdong discuss the two English versions in the paper of *Appreciating Two English Translations of "Qinyuan Chun: Changsha" from the Perspective of "Three Beauties"* in 2016. In the paper, the authors attempt to analyze the two versions from the three perspectives of beautiful meaning, beauty in sound and beauty in form, in order to reveal the important guiding significance of this theory to the translation practice of Mao Zedong's poems.^[2]

3. Methods

This thesis endeavors to apply The Art of Beautifulization in the comparative study and analysis of the poem Qinyuan Chun·Changsha within seven English versions, thus enabling the realization of Translation Criticism on Qinyuan Chun·Changsha.

3.1 The Art of Beautifulization

The Art of Beautifulization is proposed by Xu Yuanchong, a prominent translator with distinguished achievements in literary translation, especially occupying a special position in the history of the translation of ancient Chinese classics. He has not only produced prolific translation works but also raised valuable translation theories. He summarizes Chinese literary translation theory into ten Chinese characters: “美化之艺术, 创世优竞赛” which includes “三美、三化、三之、艺术论、优化论、三势论、创译论、三似论、竞赛论.” It inherits and carries forward the theories of Confucius in ancient times as well as Yan Fu, Lu Xun, Gu Shi, Guo Moruo, Lin Yutang, Mao Dun, Zhu Guangqian, Fu Lei, Qian Zhongshu, and Ye Junjian in modern times. He integrates “beauty (美)” mentioned by Lu Xun, Lin Yutang, and Mao Dun, “transformation (化)” proposed by Qian Zhongshu, “stage (之)” from “admiration (乐之)” endorsed by Hu Shi, “Art” in “the theory of Art” of Zhu Guangqian into “Art of Beautifulization (美化之艺术), taking it as the brief summary of literary translation of Chinese school of thoughts. Then he adds “creation (创)” from Guo Moruo's “the theory of Creation,” “similarity (似)” of Fu Lei, “competition (竞争)” of Ye Junjian which was sublimated for “竞赛”, as well as “Optimization (优)” proposed by himself into “Creation of the Best as in Rivalry (创优似竞赛)” as a supplement to the theory. These ten Chinese characters are inseparably interconnected. Among these theories, “Optimization (优)” and “Beauty (美)” are the Ontology of literary translation, “Creation (创)” and “-ization (之)” are the Methodology of literary translation, and “Admiration (乐之)” and “similar in mien (神似)” are the teleology of translation. The Theory of Art and the Theory of Competition are the epistemology of literary translation. Xu Yuanchong makes a great contribution to the Chinese poetry translation based on the translation theories, especially the Art of Beautifulization, which is mainly about Beauty in sense, in sound, and in form (Three Beauties 三美), Generalization, equalization, particularization (Three Transformations 三化), Comprehension, Appreciation, Admiration (Three States 三之).

3.2 Three Beauties

“Three Beauties” is the concept of poetry translation that is also applicable to translating prose and fiction. According to Xu in “The Art of Translation,” the priority in Three Beauties is the beauty in sense, followed by beauty in sound, and then beauty in form. Therefore, in translation, we should strive to convey the beauty in sound, while ensuring that we maintain the beauty in sense from the original text. Additionally, once the beauty in sense and beauty in sound have been reproduced, we should aim to achieve beauty in form as much as possible. It may be challenging to reproduce all three beauties, but it is commendable to accomplish this. Translators can utilize the “Three Transformations” to convey “Beauty in sense.”

The methodology of poetry translation known as “Three Transformations” comprises Equalization, Generalization, and Particularization. Equalization involves producing a translation that is similar to the original form, often employing techniques such as converting the part of speech, changing the sentence voice, and negation. Generalization entails simplifying the original form by omitting superfluous words or allusions to

create a more abstract translation. Translation approaches for generalization include combining two words or expressions from the original text into one, or omitting words or expressions from the original text. Particularization involves adding necessary words to express subtle information in the source text, resulting in a translation that is more vivid and specific than the original. Translation methods specializing in or dividing the original text are employed for particularization. Through Equalization, Generalization, and Particularization, the translation works can be comprehended, appreciated, and admired, which is the teleology of poetry translation. “Three States” refers to Comprehension, Appreciation, and Admiration, which originate from Confucius. Xu proposes that a good translation work should be readable, enjoyable, and delightful. Readability is the minimum criterion, ensuring that readers can understand the contents of the original text. Enjoyability is the intermediate criterion, requiring the translated version to appeal to the target readers. Delightful translation is the highest criterion, providing readers with great pleasure.

Xu Yuanchong believes that literary translation is the art of transforming the original text into the translated text based on the methods of Equalization, Generalization, and Particularization, creating a translated text that is beautiful in sound, in sense, and in form, in order to achieve the results of Comprehension, Appreciation, and Admiration. Literary translation consists primarily of Three Beauties, Three Transformations, and Three States, which is simplified as “The Art of Beautifulization.” This concept is a practical summarization of translating Mao Zedong’s poems over the past forty years by Xu Yuanchong.

4. Discussion

4.1 Translation Versions of the Poem

Mao Zedong, the founding figure of the People’s Republic of China, was not only a Chinese proletarian revolutionary and political strategist, but also a renowned poet and composer of Ci poetry. His literary works covered a wide range of themes, from nature and society to life philosophy, military revolution, and nation-building. With a total of 129 poems and Ci, his literary creations are characterized by a strong sense of atmosphere, heroism, vigor, and revolutionary spirit, showcasing remarkable literary and artistic qualities. Owing to his significant influence domestically and internationally, his poetry has been translated into numerous foreign languages by a multitude of translators within and outside of China. Given the widespread usage of English and Chinese, the English translations have been the focus of research since the earliest version was published in 1958. However, various translators have presented different interpretations of his poetry. In this study, the author aims to evaluate five English translations of “QinYuan Chun·Chan Sha,” one of Mao Zedong’s most famous poems from 1925, based on the theories of Xu Yuanchong’s “Art of Beautifulization.”

The poem “QinYuan Chun·Chan Sha,” written by Mao Zedong in Changsha in late autumn of 1925, has garnered considerable attention. The poet reminisced about the revolutionary circumstances during a challenging period when he revisited Orange Island and was inspired by the magnificent scenery along the Xiangjiang River. Notably, there are at least 14 English versions of this poem translated by distinguished domestic translators and prominent Western scholars. In this study, the author has selected five representative versions for a comparative analysis based on the theory of “Art of Beautifulization.”

The official version of the poem, released in 1976 through collaboration between the Chinese government and esteemed experts, adheres to restrained official norms due to Mao Zedong’s special identity and status. The task of translation goes beyond a mere literary translation; to a certain extent, it serves as a means to represent the image of the entire country within the framework of limited political and social constraints.

Mao Zedong’s poetry has also captured the attention of a large number of Western scholars. The Engle couple translated and published Mao Zedong’s poetry in 1972, presenting a version of “QinYuan Chun·Chan Sha” that appears to be more liberal in style, possibly influenced by distinct cultural and political environments. With the development of the country, Chinese translators and literary enthusiasts have successively translated Mao’s poems in different periods in order to help spread Chinese traditional culture and the ancient Chinese classics. Among these translators, Xu Yuanchong, Gu zhengkun and Li Zhenkun also translated and published Mao Zedong’s poetry in different styles under the looser environment of literary creation. For the sake of convenience of appreciation and comparative analysis, the original text with 5 English Versions are all copied as follows:

《沁园春·长沙》(1925)

独立寒秋，湘江北去，橘子洲头。

看万山红遍，层林尽染；漫江碧透，百舸争流。

鹰击长空，鱼翔浅底，万类霜天竞自由。

怅寥廓，问苍茫大地，谁主沉浮？
 携来百侣曾游，忆往昔峥嵘岁月稠。
 恰同学少年，风华正茂；书生意气，挥斥方遒。
 指点江山，激扬文字，粪土当年万户侯。
 曾记否，到中流击水，浪遏飞舟？^[3]

Version 1: The official translation:

CHANGSHA

—to the tune of Chin Yuan Chun (1925)

Alone I stand in autumn clod/On the tip of Orange
 Island/The Hsiang flowing northward/I see a thousand hills
 crimsoned through/By their serried woods deep-dyed/And a
 hundred barges vying/Over crystal blue waters/ Eagles cleave
 the air/Fish glide in the limpid deep/Under freezing skies a
 million creatures contend in freedom/ Brooding over this
 immensity/I ask, on this boundless land/Who rules over man's
 destiny.

I was here with a throng of companions/Vivid yet those
 crowded months and years/Young we were, schoolmates/At
 life's full flowering/Filled with students' enthusiasm/Boldly
 we cast all restraints aside./Pointing to our mountains and
 rivers/Setting people afire with our words/We counted the
 mighty no more than muck/ Remember still/How, venturing
 midstream, we struck the waters/And waves stayed the
 speeding boats?^[4]

Version 2: The Engle Couple's Translation:

CHANGSHA (1925)

Standing alone in cold autumn/Where the Hsiang River
 flows north/On the tip of Orange Island/Looking at thousands
 of hills/Red all over/Row after row of woods, all red/The river
 is green to the bottom/A hundred boats struggling/Eagles
 striking the sky/Fish gliding under the clear water/All creatures
 fight for freedom/Under the frosty sky/Bewildered at empty
 space/I ask the great, grey earth/Who controls the rise and fall?
 Hundreds of friends used to come here/Remember the old
 times—the years of fullness/When we were students and
 young/Blooming and brilliant/With the young
 intellectuals'/Emotional argument/Fist up, fist down/ Fingers
 pointing/At river and mountain/Writing full of
 excitement/Lords of a thousand houses merely
 dung/Remember still/How, in the middle of the stream/We
 struck the water/Making waves which stopped/The running
 boats?^[5]

Version 3: XuYuanchong's Translation:

CHANGSHA

Tune: Spring in a Pleasure Garden (1925)

In autumn cold alone stand I/Of Orange Islet at the
head/Where River Xiang northward goes by/I see hill on hill
all in red/And wood on wood in a deep dye/The river green
down to the bed/In speed a hundred barges vie/Far and wide
eagles cleave the blue/Up and down fish in shallows glide/All
creatures strive for freedom under frosty skies/Lost in
immensity; I wonder who/Upon this boundless earth,
decide/All beings' fall and rise.

With many friends I oft came here/How thick with salient
days the bygone times appear/When, students in the flower of
our age/Our spirit bright was at its height/Full of the scholar's
noble rage/We criticized with all our might/Pointing to stream
and hill/Writing in blame or praise/We treat'd like dirt all
mighty lords of olden days/Do you remember still/Swimming
mid-stream, we struck waves to impede/That boats which
passed at flying speed?^[3]

Version 4: Gu Zhengkun's Translation:

CHANGSHA—to the tune of Spring Beaming
in Garden

At the end of the Orange Island/Alone I stand in
the autumn chill/Watching the Xiang flow north still/Lo!
Ten thousand mountains are clothed in red/With serried
maples all dyed through/And the river so purely blue/
While ships try racing ahead/Eagles soar undauntedly
on high/Fish hover in the limpid deep/For freedom
all creatures with each other vie/Under the frosty and
vaulted sky/With feelings and thoughts evoked to my
tongue/I cannot help asking the land so immensely wide
and long/How can hold you up or sink you down'?

Here with many of my friends often came/And
memories of arduous years now remain the same/We
were young as schoolmates/All in our prime without
taints/Imbued with young scholar's daring/We defied
all restraints/We criticized the state affaire then/With
vigorous strokes of the pen/To us nothing but dung were
those big men/Ah, remember, do you/While swimming
in the midstream, we sent up waves/That stayed even
the flying canoe' ?^[6]

Version 5: Li Zhengshuan' translation:

Qin Yuan Chun (Changsha 1925)

In cold autumn stand I/River Xiang northward
flowing/The Islet of Orange being passed by/All the hills
are in red/Woods look dyed/All green is the river/Woods
vie to overtake one another/Eagles fly in high sky/Fish
glide in shadow water/All creatures vie for freedom in
frosty sky'/Sighing over the vastness/I ask the earth
and sky/Who will lord over the world'?

Oft with many friends I came traveling/How many
good days of the past/So young were we then/In our best
years of life/With spirits like a scholar/Talking with all
our power/Pointing to river and hill/Writing with good
skill/Treating past lords as dunghill/Still remember/We
struck waves in mid-stream/To stop speeding boats!^[7]

4.2 *The Appliance of Art of Beautifulization in the Poem*

Art of Beautifulization is a theory which summarized and proposed by distinguished scholar and translator Xu Yuanchong who has 40 years practical experience of translating Mao Zedong' poems. He points out that Beautiful in Sense, in Sound and in Form is the Ontology of translating poems. Generalization, Equalization and Particularization are the Methodology for better translation and Comprehension, Appreciation and Admiration are the Teleology. The 5 English translation versions of QinYuanchun·Changsha manifests to some extent the Art of Beautifulization with utilizing different expressions.

4.3 *Beautiful in Sense, in Sound and in Form*

Xu Yuanchong Said: "Chairman Mao's poems are the peak of art with beautiful in sense, in sound and in form. Translating Chairman Mao's poems need to transmit three beauties of the original poems as far as possible".^[6] (This quotation is translated by the author of this thesis). According to Xu's theory, the basis of Three Beauties are Three Similarities. Prerequisite of the translation is Similarity which is the minimum requirement. No similarity, no translation. While Beauty is the sufficient condition of translation which is the supreme requirement. Generally speaking, the translation which can transmit the Three Beauties of the original poem as much as possible is better.

In the 5 versions of Changsha's translation, the translators in some degrees convey the Three Beauties. For example, Version 3 and 5 reverse the subject and the predicate of the first line in the original poem to embody the rhythm of the poem which is beautiful in form and sound. Version 2 keeps accordance with the the original poem which is similar in form and sense but it is not beautiful in sense. Version 1 and 4 add the subject while the original poem doesn't have, besides, reverse the words order of the original poem according to their own understand which seems to be beautiful in sense and in sound. In the second line of the original poem, "万山" doesn't mean specific quantity. So the translation of Version 1 and Version 4 can only be similar in form while other versions be similar in sense and beautiful in sense. Xu thinks that If "染" is translated into dye, it is similar in sense while if it is translated into crimson, it is beautiful in sense, and using "blue" to express "碧" in "漫江碧透" is better than "green" to convey "Beautiful in Sense". For the third line of the original poem, Xu' translation gives expression to "Beautiful in form" by using "far and wide, up and down" and "Beautiful in sense" by using "cleave" for "击". Other 4 translations reflect "similar in form and in sense". The translation of Version 1 and Version 5 for the fourth line to some extent embody "similar in sense" and the Version 4 "similar in mien". But the rhythm of the translation like "Eagles soar undauntedly on high[ai]/ For freedom all creatures with each other vie[ai]/ Under the frosty and vaulted sky[ai] exhibit the rhythm of the original adequately. Version 2 and Version 3 express "Beautiful in sense" more. Version 3 is also beautiful in sound because of using "glide", "decide", "skies", and "fall and rise" to embody rhythm of the original poem.

The second part of the original poem is different form the first part of the poem in emotion and expression. In accordance with Xu's view, "峥嵘" is the most difficult part for translating. So all versions translate the first line of the original poem in the way of "Similar in sense". "挥斥方遒" can be a difficult part to translate, so 5 versions only reach "similar in mien". "粪土当年万户侯 is the strongest long sentence in the second part of the

original poem, so the translation for it are diverse but no one can achieve “Three beauties”, the translators try their best to convey the beauty of form and similarity of meaning. The last sentence of the original poem seems to be easier to translate, in which “reach” for “到”, “swim” for “击水”, “boat” for “飞舟” can achieve “similar in sense” in 5 versions

All in all, the official version express “Beautiful in form” and “Similar in sense” more while Version 2 embody “Similar in form” and “similar in sense” mostly. Version 3 does better in presenting Three Beauties by using rhythm and reduplication as well as carefully selected words to convey “beautiful in sense” of the original poem. Version 4 seems to be similar in mien and lack of form but exhibit the “Beautiful in sound” accurately. Version 5 is beautiful in form and sound but short of sense although it is readable.

4.4 Generalization, Equalization and Particularization

Xu points out we can use the method of “Three Transformations” which are Generalization, Equalization and Particularization to present “Three Beauties” of the original poem. What is called Generalization, it refers to generalize the original form by abandoning some superfluous words or allusions to produce a translation that is more abstract than the original poem, which includes vague generation, abstraction, subtracting words, combination, transforming difficulties into easiness and translating form with sound, etc. Equalization is just to produce a translation that is similar to the original form, and such translation techniques as conversion of the part of speech, change of sentence voice, negation, etc are usually adopted. It comprises the method of equivalence of resemblance, dynamic equivalence in meaning, speech conversion, sentence pattern transformation, expressing in opposite way, swapping subject and object, exchanging active voice with passive voice, translating the same word in different ways, translating different word in the same way, transplanting allusions, etc. As for Particularization, it means to add some necessary words to express the convert information in the source text and produce a vivid and specific translation, which can be realized by adding words, separating one sentence into two or more, translating new context with the old context, substantiating and making the original text special and so on.

“Three Transformations” are also used in these 5 versions. First of all, 5 translators put to use different techniques for translating the title “沁园春·长沙”. Version 1, Version 3 and Version 4 adopt the tune to convey “沁园春” while Version 2 and Version 5 omit it for generalization. The first line of the original poem is translated mainly through “Equalization” in five versions. Version 1 switches the order of the second part and the third part, so do Version 3 and Version 5. But Version 3 and Version 5 revers the words order of English poem for beautiful in sound. Version 2 reaches equal resemblance and Version 4 completes the translation by dynamic equivalence in meaning. “万山”, “层林” in the second sentence are translated in different ways, among which Version 2, 3 and 5 adopt the method of Particularization while Version 1 and Version 4 apply the method of Equivalence. But for “百舸” they all put to use “a hundred” for Equivalence. The third line of the original poem, all translators adopt Equivalence except Xu who conveys the meaning with Particularization by adding “far and wide” “up and down”. Engle and Gu Zhengkun translate “万类霜天竞自由” into two separated parts for Particularization. The fourth line of the original poem has three clauses with deep content which need to translate more vividly and colorfully. Version 1 and Version 5 use Generalization to convey the meaning. Version 2 and Version 3 chooses Equivalence in form. Version 4 uses much more words to convey the meaning which can be said “Particularization”.

The second half describes the memory of the poet, so all translators apply the past tense. “峥嵘岁月稠” is not easy to translate. Version 1 translate it into vivid yet those crowded months and years without “稠”, that is Generalization. Version 2 is also generalized, on the contrary, Version 3 uses Particularization for making it concrete. Version 4 and Version 5 adopts dynamic equivalence in meaning, that is called Equalization. The translation of second sentence with four short clauses can be regarded as Equalization and Generalization for “挥斥方遒”. The translation of the third sentence in the 5 Versions convey the original meaning with Equalization by using dynamic equivalence of the meaning. For the last sentence, Gu’s translation can be thought as Generalization because of translating “舟” into “canoe” which is weak to express the beauty of the original poem. Other versions can be regarded as Equalization or Particularization.

In the process of translating the poem, all translator have their own understanding for the meaning. Version 1 and 5 apply “Equalization” more, Version 4 adopts Particularization mostly so as to express the meaning clearly. Version 2 expresses the meaning of the poem in “Generalization” way. Therefore, every version conveys the beauty of the original poem though Equalization, Generalization and Particularization in certain degrees.

4.5 Comprehension, Appreciation and Admiration

Xu said in *the Art of Translation*, “Translation is not easy, translating poetry is more difficult, translating Ge Lv

poetry is extremely difficult. Translation is funny, translating poetry is funnier, translating Ge Lv poetry into Ge Lv Poetry is extremely funny with endless enjoyment which can make people Comprehension, Appreciation and Admiration.”(翻译不易, 译诗更难, 译格律诗更是难上加难。 翻译有趣, 译诗更有趣, 把格律诗译成格律诗简直是其乐无穷, 可以使人知之(理解)、好之(喜欢)、乐之(愉快)。)[1:119]

Trying to convey the Three Beauties of the original poem by using the method of Equalization, Generalization and Particularization can make the translation text readable, enjoyable and delightful (or delectable) that is so called “Three States” including Comprehension, Appreciation and Admiration. According to Xu Yuanhong’s point, Comprehension is knowing what it said in the original text. Appreciation is liking the translation while Admiration is feeling pleasure. These are the purposes of the translation need to realize.

In 5 versions, the translators do their best to convey the beauty, rhythm and emotion of the original poem accurately. And to varying degrees, give readers a sense of beauty. Version 1, the official translation expresses the meaning of the original poem on the basis of keeping the original text beautiful in form and sound, which makes the poem readable and enjoyable. That is to say the translation reaches the goal of Comprehension and Appreciation. However, because some expressions like “crimsoned”, “a thousand hills”, “Who rules over man’s destiny” “muck” “struck” can not convey the real meaning and beauty of the original poem, it doesn’t reach the goal of Admiration. The translation of Version 2 tries to present the form of the original poem, meanwhile, it reflects the meaning of the original text in an accurate way. But due to the different culture background and diverse writing style of the poem, the translation style is weak in presenting the rhythm and vigor of the original poem, so it realizes the Comprehension. Version 3 is Xu’s the crystallization of his experience for translating Mao Zedong’s poems, with the advantage of the culture background and better understanding of the Chinese poetry, the translation of Version 3 embodies the beauty of the poem to the great extent both in form and sound and the meaning. So it is suitable to say that his translation of some sentences accomplishes the purpose of Comprehension, Appreciation and Admiration to some extent. But not all sentences are the best translation in light of the extension and profundity of ancient Chinese poetry which the English words can not express correctly. Gu’s translation continues the rhythm of the original poem with the beauty of sound, what’s more, he uses more words to present the real meaning of the poem. It can be called Comprehension and some sentences reach the goal of Appreciation or Admiration. Version 5 is completed by Li Zhengshuan which is embody the beauty of the form and sound with concise words to convey the meaning and the original poem. The translation is readable and enjoyable but it is not beautiful in sense. Therefore, it can be say to make readers “Comprehension and Appreciation”

In author’s opinion, Comprehension and Appreciation is easy for translators to accomplish while Admiration is harder due to the differences between English poems and Chinese poems. It also lies in the reaction of target readers who may hold diverse opinions and feelings under the influence of discrepant culture background, individual capacity of understanding and the aesthetic ability and imagination of literature. Basically speaking, the Versions mentioned above can be readable and enjoyable, which represent “Comprehension or Appreciation”, while whether they are detectable or not, it seems to rest with the readers’ standard.

5. Conclusion

“Three Beauties, Three Transformations, and Three States are organized entirely with their own significance, but they are closely interrelated, leading to the realization of the Art of Beautification through translation. Xu Yuanhong, in the Art of Translation, stated that “Translation is an art of translating one language into another which mainly solves the conflict between the original content and the translation” (1:95). He translates poems according to the norm of “Refined, generally neat and rhyming,” as Chairman Mao once mentioned about new poems. Xu believes that this norm can be applied not only to writing poems but also to translating them. Drawing from his extensive experience in translation, he synthesizes and incorporates his theories on the foundation of those of his predecessors. Each translator, with their unique personal background, interprets and conveys the features of the original poem based on their own rationale. The essence of his theories for translating ancient Chinese poetry, particularly Mao Zedong’s poetry, is encapsulated in the Art of Beautification. Hence, his version of “Chansha” is crafted in accordance with this theory, aligning with “Three Beauties, Three Transformations, and Three States.” Other versions, as per the theory, convey “Three Beauties” through the method of “Three Transformations” to achieve the goal of “Three States” throughout. However, realizing “Three Beauties” or “Three States” concurrently is not a simple task. Based on “Beautiful in form and in sound,” the translation that can convey “Beautiful in sense” would be superior, and the translation that enables readers to comprehend the original poem, while also enjoying the translation and feeling delighted, would be the best translation. Translation lacks a unified standard, yet we, as Chinese, bear the responsibility of disseminating Chinese traditional culture and classics so that the entire world can appreciate the beauty of ancient Chinese

poetry in diverse ways.”

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Informed consent

Obtained.

Ethics approval

The Publication Ethics Committee of the Canadian Center of Science and Education.

The journal's policies adhere to the Core Practices established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

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Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

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