



A Comparative Analysis of English Versions of Li Po’s “Moon” Poems Within Lefevere’s Poetry Translation

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Abstract

Li Po (701 AD-762 AD) is a Chinese great poet acclaimed from his own time of Tang dynasty to the present as a romantic genius who took traditional poetic forms to new heights. This paper made a comparative analysis of English versions of Li Po’s “Moon” poems by David Hinton and Xu Yuanchong. Based on key concepts of ideology and poetics put forward within André Lefevere’s poetry translation, similarities and differences in terms of cultural connotation, associative meaning and imagery construction of “the moon” were illustrated with classic translation cases, and causes of the similarities and differences were also explored in aspects of translator’s identity and style. It’s hoped that this study can give some inspiration and illumination in Chinese poetry translation and its cultural dissemination and communication into the world.

Key words: Lefevere’s poetry translation; Versions of Li Po’s Moon poems; Comparative analysis

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1. INTRODUCTION

Tang Dynasty (618 AD-907AD) witnessed one of the most

glorious ages of ancient China with a kaleidoscope of creative poets. As the pinnacle of Chinese literature, this period gestated the most remarkable literary achievement - Tang poetry, which is not only glamorous in China’s great traditional culture, but also a splendid treasure of the world’s literature. Li Po (701 AD-762 AD), who is revered as the “Poet Immortal”, contributed greatly to the development of poetry in this period and had a profound impact on future generations. As a gifted poet, he has been admired and his poetry has been favored by translators at home and abroad in the field of English translations of Chinese classical literature.

The “moon” is one of the most prominent images in Li Po’s poetry, and the image itself presents different states (dynamic or static) and shapes (degrees of roundness) depending on different time and space. Putting the image into different context of his poetry, Li Po’s “moon” poems can be divided into three types: scenery description, lyricism, and philosophical thinking, with lyricism in particular. Through the moon image, Li Po creates a different connotation and conception to express his ambition, his friendship, his family nostalgia, his sorrow, his love or even to express the conflict between reality and ideal. The moon is an artistic image in Li Po’s poetry, which is found throughout the poet’s poems of all periods. Among Li Po’s numerous poems, there are more than 300 poems about the moon, which have developed greatly in terms of the choice of the subject, the theme and the artistic conception. The moon, an uncommon image in traditional China, takes on a new luster in Li Po’s writing, thus elevating the moon theme in ancient Chinese literature to a new realm through translations of great scholars at home and abroad.

1.1 David Hinton’s Version of Li Po’s “Moon” Poems

David Hinton is a well-known American poet and translator who has produced a body of work exploring the weave of consciousness and landscape. This exploration

is well informed throughout the insights of ancient Chinese culture, which he has primarily taken the form of translation to make it become contemporary poetry that operates outside the limitations of self-identity and the western intellectual tradition. As he expresses in translator's statement in 2001 American National Endowment for Arts of his translation selection *The Mountain Poems of Meng Hao-jan* (Hinton, 2004), "My intent is to translate the major poets of ancient China, and thereby create a new tradition of contemporary American poetry, a tradition with a coherent "voice" within which the distinct voices of individual poets are clear and consistent." Born in 1954, David Hinton has done enormous Chinese translation including classical Chinese poetry: *The Selected Poems of Tu Fu* (1989), *The Selected Poems of T'ao Ch'ien* (1993), *The Selected Poems of Li Po* (1996), *The Mountain Poems of Meng Hao-jan* (2004). He is also the first scholar in the 20th century to have accomplished the four great Chinese philosophical works: *Chuang Tzu: Inner Chapters* (1997), *The Analects of Confucius* (1998), *Mencius* (1999), *Tao Te Chin* (2000). Hinton is a poet fascinated by the cultural and artistic characteristics of Li Po's moon poetry. In the Preface of *The Selected Poems of Li Po* (Hinton, 1996), Hinton devotes a great deal to the idea of "inaction" and the imagery of the "moon" in Li Po's poetry, with 123 notes in the Appendix to explain the poems in details. In the Introduction section, David Hinton presents his own understanding and perception of the imagery of the "moon". He appreciates Li Po's strong feelings of homesickness in a large number of "moon" poems, capturing the main associative meaning and cultural connotation of the "moon". Despite cultural differences, he refines his Chinese culture to connote that the "moon" stands for "Yin" through Chinese Tao concepts of Yin (female) and Yang (male), and thinks that "This is the conceptual context within which Li Po's poems operate, with the culture's account of the moon's mystery." (Hinton, 1996).

1.2 Xu Yuanchong's Version of Li Po's "Moon" Poems

Xu Yuanchong (1921-2021) is a Chinese distinguished scholar, best known for translating Chinese ancient poems into English and French. He is a professor at Peking University since 1983. Since the 1980s, Mr. Xu has been engaged in poetry translation for more than 30 years, surpassing many Chinese translators, and has the reputation of being the "first person to translate poetry into English and French". During his decades of literary translation, Mr. Xu has translated a wide range of classical Chinese poems into English and French, contributing a lot to spreading Chinese culture and literature into the world. His translation is characterized by favouring domesticating translation. Besides great success in translation practice among Chinese, English and French, Mr. Xu has been

devoted to the study of translation theory and put forward Three Beauties Principle of poetry translation in meaning, sound and form. He has translated 100 of Li Po's representative poems into English in his translation collection *Selected Poems of Li Bai* (Xu, 2007), with a masterful technique, allowing readers to experience the unique charm of traditional Chinese literature in a foreign social context. In the Introduction in his *Selected Poems of Li Bai* (Xu, 2007), Mr. Xu cites *Thoughts on a Silent Night (Jing Ye Si)* as an example to illustrate the cultural connotation of Li Bai's "moon" poem and its associative meaning and construction of imagery. In addition, to facilitate cultural dissemination and communication, Mr. Xu also explains the domestication of the "moon" and the abstract emotion it represents in the translation process; so as to better bridge the cultural gap between English and Chinese.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Li Po's poetry has spread to Korea, Japan, and other countries since Tang Dynasty. The history of English translations of Li Po's poetry began and developed with the increasing exchanges between countries around the world. In the mid-18th century, the English poet Soame Jenyns first translated Li Po's poetry into English, pioneering the introduction Li Po's poetry into the western world. English translation of Li Po's poetry in China began later, with the study of Qiu Ke'an's *Seeing Off a Friend (Song Bie)* in 1991. Moreover, there exist some differences. On one hand, due to different focus and purpose, researches are also diverse: foreign scholars tend to do translation practice of a larger number of Li Po's poems, while domestic scholars mostly focus on translation and study of a particular poem. On the other hand, foreign scholars tend to publish their versions in the form of books, while domestic scholars tend to publish their studies in the form of papers. It can also be seen that there are relatively more translation practices abroad but more research studies at home. However, the similarity lies in the fact that studies of English translations of Li Po's poetry at home and abroad have seldom focused on poems with a particular image, such as wine, flowers or the moon as their theme, but have mostly stayed at the linguistic level without considering the cultural level.

2.1 English Translation of Li Po's "Moon" Poems Abroad

Li Po's poetry spread abroad early, which has been greatly appreciated and valued. The study of Li Po in Japan and Korea is more profound and thorough than that in western countries due to political, cultural, and geographical factors, while the translation of Li Po's poetry in western countries is much more productive.

English translation of Li Po's poetry became popular abroad from the 20th century, and not only did the number

of translations increase, but translation approaches developed: free verse and metrical verse. *Cathay* (Ezra, 1915) published by the Charles Elkin Mathews in London in 1915 was translated by Ezra Pound, one of the founders of American imagism. It contained English translations of 12 poems by Li Po, including the "moon" poem *The Jewel Stairs' Grievance* (*Yu Jie Yuan*), which had a particularly profound impact on American imagism. Since then, Li Po's poetry has been translated and disseminated more and more frequently in the western world. The first English version of *The Works of Li Po: the Chinese Poet* (Shigeyoshi, 1922) was translated by the Japanese sinologist Shigeyoshi Obata and published by Paragon Book Reprint in New York in 1922. *The Poetry and Career of Li Po* (Arthur, 1950) was translated by the British sinologist Arthur Waley and published by George Allen & Unwin in London in 1950. Arthur Cooper's Translation of *Li Po and Tu Fu* (Arthur, 1973) was published by Penguin Classics in England in 1973. David Hinton's *The Selected Poems of Li Po* (Hinton, 1996) was published by New Directions Publishing Corporation in 1996. According to statistics of China academic journals done by Liao Zhiqin and Wen Jun (Liao & Wen, 2013), English translations of Li Po's poems have involved more than 20 translators from the United States, Britain, and Japan, including international scholars such as American imagist poet Amy Lowell, American poet Witter Bynner, sinologist Stephen Owen, and British diplomat Fletcher.

2.2 English Translation of Li Po's "Moon" Poems at Home

In China, when it comes to English translation of Li Po's poetry, the representative translators are Wang Shouyi, Xu Zhongjie and Xu Yuanchong, and the translated works include Xu Zhongjie's *200 Chinese Tang Poems in English Verse* (1990), Xu Yuanchong's *300 Tang Poems* (2000), and *Selected Poems of Li Bai* (2007).

Although English translations of Li Po's poetry in China are not as prosperous as those abroad, studies on English translations of Li Po's poetry are relatively abundant. The main studies can be categorized as follows: Comparative study of two English versions of a particular poem by Li Po; Studies on the history or current situation or outlook of English translation of Li Po's poetry; Cultural analysis of the domestic or international impact of English translation of Li Po's poetry; Linguistic analysis of English translation based on a certain translation theory, such as cognitive linguistics, perspective of intratextuality and extratextuality and the figure-ground theory. For example, Wang Mingshu (2011) took the study of three poems of Li Po in English translation with cognitive linguistics as a theoretical framework to analyze the constraints of specificity on poetry translation; Li Zhengya (2014) analyzed the "moon" image in the original work and the English translation of 《静夜思》(Jing Ye Si) from the perspective of intratextuality and extratextuality;

Li Pengjuan and Zhang Hong (2016) applied the figure-ground theory to compare the poetry translation of 《静夜思》(Jing Ye Si) by Chinese and international translators.

From the above, we can see that researches on English translation of Li Po's poetry at home and abroad are flourishing, but systematic study of Li Po's "moon" poetry in a comparative way is almost blank, which makes this paper very significant and valuable.

2.3 Significance of the Study

Microscopically, English translation of Li Po's poetry has a history of more than 100 years, which has accumulated rich and diverse research materials for favorable guiding research in theory and practice. This paper makes a comparative analysis of English translations of Li Po's "Moon" poems by David Hinton, a famous contemporary American translator of Chinese classical poetry, and Xu Yuanchong, the first great scholar to do English and French translation of ancient Chinese poetry with his "Three Beauties Principle" in the world, which will definitely expand the translation theory and enlighten the translation practice, thus promoting dissemination and communication of Chinese poetry into the English world and enhancing cultural confidence.

Macroscopically, classical Chinese poetry has not only an important literary carriage of Confucianism with a long Chinese thought and wisdom, but also incorporated the influence of romantic poetry in the world, which has reached its pinnacle in Tang Dynasty. Furthermore, in the context of globalization, cultural exchanges between China and the West have been intensifying, and translation plays an indispensable role in the process of "going global" of Chinese culture. English translation of Li Po's "moon" poems is hoped to foster western readers to understand and appreciate the beauty and value of Tang poetry, to promote the splendid Chinese culture, and to bridge the communication gaps between the nations. The great cultural thoughts of nostalgia, aspiration, love and the harmony between human beings and nature reflected in Li Po's "moon" poetry must have enduring vitality and value for the people all over the world.

3. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION OF LEFEVERE'S PEOTRY TRANSLATION

3.1 Development of Lefevere's Poetry Translation

André Lefevere (1945-1996) is an American cultural translation theorist. In his *Translating Poetry: Seven Strategies and a Blueprint* (1975), he focuses on the translation process and the impact of context on the original and translation. He not only discusses linguistic techniques, but also takes an early descriptive approach, taking into account external influences on translations of "time, place and tradition" to the extent necessary. Lefevere's seven strategies for poetry translation are

comprehensive enough because they cover formal and contextual poetic features. The strategies of metrical translation, rhyme translation, blank verse and poetry into prose are mainly concerned with the form of the poems, whereas the other strategies of phonemic translation, literal translation and interpretation are mostly concerned with transferring the contextual meaning of a poem into the target language. Then in the 1990s, Lefevere and Bassnett proposed the concept of the “cultural turn” in translation studies, which pioneered the movement that translation is no more confined to a linguistic level but to the operation of “cultural power”.

3.2 Key Concepts of Ideology and Poetics

In cultural turn of translation studies, André Lefevere plays a leading role in putting forward the concept of “rewriting” in his writing *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (Lefevere, 1992), and he thinks “Translation is, of course, a rewriting of an original text. All rewritings, whatever their intentions, reflect a certain ideology and poetics, and as such to manipulate literature to function in a given society in a given way. 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” (Lefevere, 1992). The notion “rewriting” proposed by Lefevere became an important concept in translation theory. However, rewriting is closely connected with the political and literary power structures which operate within a given culture, as the process of adaptation and manipulation which rewriters perform generally lead to the production of texts which reflect the dominant ideology and poetics. For this and other reasons, rewriting is never “innocent”. Therefore, translation is a process which manipulates source text by adjusting it to fit in with two important constraints: the first is ideology, and the second is poetics.

3.2.1 Ideology

Having influenced by Russian Formalists, Lefevere regards literature as a system, seeing the production and reception of literary texts as a system, in which translation holds a unique position. In the process of translating, ideology and poetics serve as constraints within the literary system that manipulate the activities of translating, while patronage mostly operates outside the system. In Lefevere’s writing *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (Lefevere, 1992), he borrows the definition of ideology from Jameson, the leading American critic: “Ideology is taken here in a sense not limited to the political sphere, rather Ideology would seem to be that grillwork of form, convention and beliefs, which orders our actions” (Lefevere, 1992).

Based on this definition, Ideological constraint plays a crucial role in translation process because it determines a translator’s basic strategy in one form or another, and “some translating are inspired by ideological motivation, or produced under ideological constraints” (Lefevere,

1992). Therefore, when analyzing a translated work, it’s important to take the ideological factor into consideration. If translations are not in conflict with culture’s ideology and standards for acceptable behavior in the target culture, they are easier to be published and accepted in the target society. Therefore ideology always determines the choice and reception of the subject matters of original texts in translation.

3.2.2 Poetics

Poetics, as Lefevere states in his *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (Lefevere, 1992), he thinks “Poetics consists of two parts: one is an inventory of literary devices, genres, motifs, prototypical characters and situations, and symbols; the other a concept of what the role of literature is, or should be, in the social system as a whole” (Lefevere, 1992). So, the latter is influential in the selection of themes that must be relevant to the social system if the work of literature is to be noticed at all. In its formative phase poetics reflects both the devices and the ‘functional view’ of the literary production dominant in a literary system when its poetics is first codified. Once poetics is codified, it exerts a tremendous system-conforming influence in the further development of a literary system.

Therefore, poetics, with duality, is composed of two views: one is literary view, and the other is functional view. The former refers to basic literary devices and the latter determines what kind of literature can be accepted and may prevail in a specific culture and society. Poetics is not limited in literary research but extends to a broader field covering culture and customs, arts and aesthetics. With society and culture as hidden manipulators of poetics, there is actually a recognizable interplay between poetics and ideology: The functional view of poetics is tightly related to ideology outside the literary system, and the basic literary devices are dominated by the functional view inside the literary system. Translators have to rewrite the original texts to keep their translated works in line with both the ideology and the dominant poetics in target culture, ensuring the smooth access of their translation to the target culture and society. It is noteworthy that the purpose of translating from the perspective of ideology is to uphold the dominant thought of the social mainstream in target culture, while from the perspective of poetics it is to increase the readability of translated works for more receptors.

4. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TWO VERSIONS OF LI PO’S “MOON” POEMS WITHIN LEFEVERE’S POETRY TRANSLATION

4.1 Similarities and Differences With Regard to Ideology

In Lefevere’s *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (1992), he does not give a

clear definition of Ideology. However, it is clear from his delineation of the concept of ideology that it does not refer to political and economic aspects alone, but tends to be philosophical in the sense of ideology, including a society's patterns, conventions, and beliefs. Since the translator is exposed to a particular society, he cannot detach himself from his cultural and historical background and relate to the ideological currents of the time in which the translation appears. In this regard, the main similarity lies in the fact that the ideology at the political and economic levels has fostered the need to translate Li Po's "moon" poems and provided the objective conditions for the publication of the two translators' versions, which can be regarded as the cause. However, the ideology at the cultural level has influenced the translation practice of the two translators, such as the translation strategies used in the translation process. Thus, this section will analyze the similarities and differences in their versions first at political and economic levels, and then from the influence of culture.

4.1.1 Chinese Ideology and Its Influence on Xu's Version

China has undergone radical changes from the end of the 20th century. With the establishment of market economy, China has entered a period of comprehensive reform and opening up, and its economic strength has gradually increased. Within the globalization of the world, it urgently needs to connect with the world. As a result, the increasingly frequent exchanges and cooperation with other countries have pushed the demand for translation to increase dramatically, and the translation theory and practice in this period have also developed greatly. In order to foster better understanding and communication between China and the world, translation has held the historical responsibility for China to build up the international image, and "translating Chinese into foreign languages" has become a strategic task. At the same time, the economic development has given rise to the formation of translation market, and translation activities gradually penetrate into foreign-related economic activities and serve the economic construction and production of enterprises. Translation has become an emerging cultural industry and knowledge industry. Meanwhile, translation research and practice have made remarkable achievements: translation research journals and works have been emerging, and the academic and scientific nature of translation has been enhanced. The team of translation talents has gradually grown, and significant achievements have been made in the construction of disciplines and theories. However, due to the relative backwardness of translation theory and the lack of publications of Chinese literary works, the situation of imbalance between "import" and "export" has been created.

In order to speak out our own voice in the general trend of globalization, Xu's version attempts to spread Chinese traditional culture in a comprehensive and systematic way,

and to foster communications between different cultures through translation. Under the influence of such ideology, Xu's selection of Li Po's "moon" poems focuses on those that are more well-known, more culturally significant or rich in association. For the cultural export, Mr. Xu flexibly utilizes translation strategies of foreignization and domestication, so that foreign readers can better understand and appreciate classical Chinese poetry. As is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1
Comparison of ST and TT of *Jing Ye Si* by Xu Yuanchong

ST	TT
静夜思 (Jing Ye Si)	Thoughts on a Silent Night
李白 床前明月光， 疑是地上霜。 举头望明月， 低头思故乡。	Li Bai Before my bed a pool of light- O can it be frost on the ground? Eyes raised, I see the moon so bright; Head bent, in homesickness I'm drowned. (Xu, 2007)

From Table 1, we can see that since the moon is much brighter during the full moon, there is a harmonic sound between "round" (yuan) and "reunion" (tuan yuan) in Chinese, so the Chinese people usually give the cultural connotation, associative meaning and national emotion of "family reunion" to the full moon. But this does not often agree to the western culture. Due to this cultural difference, the same image of the bright moon does not definitely have the same cultural connotation with the same emotion. Therefore, in Xu's translation, he translates "明月光" (ming yue guang) into "a pool of light" with "in homesickness, I'm drowned" in the last line, thus linking moonlight and nostalgia with a pool of water to reflect the poet's love for nature, which fits well with the western readers' conception and emotion. Moreover, with the invertive sentence of the last line of "in homesickness, I'm drowned" to echo "frost on the ground" in the second line and the good diction choice of "light" and "bright" in the first and the third lines, the whole poem achieves its rhyme translation of "abab" in form. Therefore, Xu's version has realized its fullest vitality both in meaning and form in terms of cultural connotation, associative meaning and reader's emotion through the transferring of imagery construction of "the moon" from the ideology of being abstract into concrete.

4.1.2 American Ideology and Its Influence on David's Version

On political and economic aspects, the world has changed dramatically in the 1990s, and the world's landscape has tended toward "only super power and multi-great power". With the end of the Cold War, the European countries have opened up to the outside world to a much greater extent, promoting political, economic and cultural exchanges between them. The increasing exchanges

have also meant an increase in the circulation of people between different countries, which led to a surge in the demand for translation and provided a very favorable environment for both translation theory and practice. In addition, during this period, the rapid development of the third technological revolution has greatly promoted interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research, making the boundaries between various disciplines increasingly blurred, which is conducive to the effective integration of translation research with the research of other disciplines. Out of the political and economic aspects mentioned above, the twentieth century has been called the “century of translation”, a period of unprecedented global prosperity and communication, characterized by a wide range, a large scale and fruitfulness in a variety of schools and scholars. Since the 1980s, the United States has gradually become a center for the study of Chinese Tang poetry in the western world, hosting research conferences and symposiums on it. During this period, still influenced by the climax of translations of ancient Chinese poetry, the translation of Li Po’s poetry was an important aspect of translation and dissemination in the United States, and the study of Li Po’s poetry emerged. David Hinton’s version *The Selected Poems of Li Po* published in 1996, was inevitably influenced by the above cultural context. Moreover, it is clear from David’s version that he has been heavily influenced by the “Imagism” school of The New Movement in American poetry. Based on these ideological influences, he believes that classical Chinese poetry has become a more important part of modern American poetry, and thus created a new tradition for contemporary American poetry by translating the major poets of ancient China.

David’s version favors precision of image with clear and sharp language, and influenced by the imagism school, his translation is mostly of a pile of images. This is evident in the translation of Li Po’s “moon” poem, 《苏台览古》 (*Su Tai Lan Gu*). As is shown in the Table 2.

Table 2
Comparison of ST and TT of *Su Tai Lan Gu* by David Hinton

ST	TT
苏台览古 (<i>Su Tai Lan Gu</i>)	Thoughts in Night Quiet
李白	Li Po
旧院荒台杨柳新， 菱歌清唱不胜春。 只今惟有西江月， 曾照吴王宫里人。	Fresh willows among old gardens and overgrown terraces, clear song of chestnuts in wind: spring’s unbearable. There’s nothing left now- only this West River moon that once lit those who peopled the imperial Wu palace.
	(Hinton, 1996)

From Table 2, we can see that at syntactic level, although subordinate clauses with prepositions and

conjunctions are used, there is still a large collection of noun images such as “fresh willows”, “old gardens”, “overgrown terraces” and “West River moon”. In the “Introduction” section of *The Selected Poems of Li Po*, David expresses his understanding of ancient Chinese philosophies such as tzu-jan (literally “self-so”) and wu-wei (literally “doing nothing more”), and interprets the “moon” image in Li Po’s poetry from a philosophical perspective. As he thinks, “Hence, the moon was of the heavenly incarnation, it was indeed the embryonic essence of that mysterious energy we call the spirit (Yin spirit, with the sun being the source of Yang spirit). This is the conceptual context within which Li Po’s poems operate and the culture’s account of the moon’s mystery” (Hinton, 1996). Therefore, when translating Li Po’s “moon” poems, David often renders “moon” as a special image used to build a context and artistic conception to convey philosophical thoughts, but lack in expressing the association meanings or cultural connotations of “moon” with Chinese characteristics, such as “西江月” (Xi Jiang Yue) into the West River Moon, with the ideology from being abstract into concrete.

4.2 Similarities and Differences With Regard to Poetics

As Lefevere has stated in his *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (1996), poetics mainly consists of two components: the inventory component and the functional component. The former is mainly of a micro-level concept which refers to specific and clear literary elements, while the latter is of a macro-level concept which is more vague and general. As for translation of Li Po’s “moon” poems from Chinese into English, the translation can be seen as a process in which the Chinese literary system tries to enter into the English literary system. As a result, both Chinese and English translators will be influenced by different poetics in their respective social systems, specifically: The inventory component will determine the genre, while the functional component will dictate the choice of theme. This section will mainly analyze similarities and differences with regard to poetics, as is shown in these aspects.

4.2.1 Title

In translating the titles of Li Po’s “moon” poems, here list 12 poems in total, among which three have the “moon” directly in their titles. In general, both translators have tried to reflect cultural connotation, associative meaning and imagery construction of “the moon” in the source text and the target text, thus realizing the faithfulness, expressiveness and beautifulness of the translation on the basis of understanding the background of the poem’s components, but they are different in translation strategies. As is shown in Table 3.

Table 3
Comparison of title translation of Li Po's "Moon" poems by David Hinton and Xu Yuanchong

Chinese Poem Title	Xu Yuanchong's Version	David Hinton's Version
峨眉山月歌 (E'Mei Shan Yue Ge)	The Moon over the Eyebrow Mountains	O-MEI MOUNTAIN MOON
关山月 (Guan Shan Yue)	The Moon over the Mountain Pass	FRONTIER-MOUNTAIN MOON
月下独酌 (Yue Xia Du Zhuo)	Drinking Alone under the Moon	DRINKING ALONE BENEATH THE MOON
静夜思 (Jing Ye Si)	Thoughts on a Silent Night	THOUGHTS IN NIGHT QUIET
长相思 (Chang Xiang Si)	Lovesickness	THOUGHTS OF YOU UNENDING
三五七言 (San Wu Qi Yan)	Yearning	LINES THREE, FIVE, SEVEN WORDS LONG
玉阶怨 (Yu Jie Yuan)	Waiting in Vain on Marble Steps	JADE-STAIRCASE GRIEVANCE
苏台览古 (Su Tai Lan Gu)	The Ruin of the Gusu Palace	GAZING INTO ANTIQUITY AT SU TERRACE
拟古十二首 (Ni Gu Shi Er Shou)	Life and Death	AFTER AN ANCIENT POEM
宣州谢朓楼饯别校书叔云 (Xuan Zhou Xie Tiao Lou Jian Bie Xiao Shu Shu Yun)	Farewell to Uncle Yun, the Imperial Librarian, at Xie Tiao's Pavilion in Xuanzhou	ON HSIEH T'IAO'S TOWER IN HSÜAN-CHOU: A FAREWELL DINNER FOR SHU YÜN
哭晁卿衡 (Ku Chao Qing Heng)	Elegy on Abe Nakamaro	MOURNING CHAO
宿五松山下荀媪家 (Su Wu Song Shan Xia Xun Ao Jia)	Passing One Night in an Old Woman's Hut at the Foot of Mount Five Pines	SPENDING THE NIGHT BELOW WU-SUNG MOUNTAIN, IN OLD MRS. HSÜN'S HOUSE

As we can see from Table 3, in the source text, the moon in the titles is mostly to connote the theme of nostalgia, sorrow, loneliness, grievance, elegy and love through the imagery construction of deffernt moon in different physical context. Then, what translation stratgies are employed to realize its three functions in cuturel connotation, associative meaning and imagery construction is most challenging for both translators. David translates the titles in modern English in an attempt to make the translation more understandable, while Mr. Xu translates them more literally at the level of elegance. When it comes to their approach of translation, David tends to use literal translation, while the liberal translation is adopted by Mr. Xu. On the other hand, David's translation of the names of places and people in the title tends to be phonetic. Mr. Xu, on the contrary, makes flexible strategy of domestication and foreignization to better convey the meaning and style of the source text.

Mr. Xu has a big grasp of the main theme of the original poem and a more profound understanding of the connotation, who has not only made an effort in the translation of the title at the level of elegance to show the theme of the poem to a greater extent, but also has a better grasp of the actual subject and focus of the title with flexible choice of verbs and nouns. Considering all the elements in the title as a whole, Xu's translation of the title is more coherent and vivid. For example, Xu's 《三五七言》 (*San Wu Qi Yan*) is rendered into *Yearning*,

which conveys the theme of the original title and reflects the overall emotional tone of the poem compared to David's *LINES THREE, FIVE, SEVEN WORDS LONG*. The same is valid for 《拟古十二首》 (*Ni Gu Shi Er Shou*), which is translated into *Life and Death* by Xu but as *AFTER AN ANCIENT POEM* by David. With the adoption of foreignization, the treatment of names of people and places is also more flexible, such as “五松山” (Mount Five Pines) and “晁卿衡” (Abe Nakamaro).

In comparison, by dividing the original title into different units without considering the cohesive device, David's translation of the title embraces a sense of paratatical, which makes the parts of the title appear to be separate but actually complete in meaning. And most of the translated titles are headed by verbs to summarize the meaning of the act expressed by the original titles. For example, David translates 《玉阶怨》 (*Yu Jie Yuan*) by splitting it into two parts, “玉阶” (jade-staircase) and “怨” (grievance), without explicit connection between the two nouns. When translating 《苏台览古》 (*Su Tai Lan Gu*), he emphasizes the action of “览”(Lan) and translates the whole title as *GAZING INTO ANTIQUITY AT SU TERRACE*. And it is worth mentioning that his misunderstanding of “苏台”(Su Tai) as a specific terrace instead of the Suzhou Palace as an allude to show his respect to the ancient caused it to be translated as “SU TERRACE), which is relatively inaccurate and lacking in its cultural connotation. This is also evident in his

translation of Li Po's poem 《对酒》 (*Facing Wine*). In a nutshell, such a translation does a good job of retaining the elements of place, character, event and time in the original title, which enables readers to get key information of the poem in a straightforward manner. However, it is detached from the theme and imagery instruction to some degree, which may lead to doubts and misunderstandings when the title and the content of the poem are viewed and appreciated as a whole.

4.2.2 Rhyme Scheme

Poetry, in any language, has two basic aesthetic features: rhyme and meter. In English poetry, these two are expressed as regular rhyme and metre, while in classical Chinese poetry, they are usually rhymed into the Ping (平) and the Ze (仄) (the level tone and oblique tone). And on top of that, rhyme in English poetry can be divided into

different categories depending on the part of the word where the internal phonemes are repeated. The most common ones are alliteration, assonance, and rhyme. Several forms of rhyme may be present in a single line of poetry. On the issue of that in Chinese poetry, since the number of characters and syllables in Chinese is the same, for example, a single character corresponds with a sole syllable, a variety of stable forms are formed. Moreover, the foot must follow the principle of "Binary Branching". In ancient Chinese poetry, the main poem types are the "pentasyllabic Lüshi" and the "heptasyllabic Lüshi", and in Tang Dynasty, the "pentasyllabic Jueju" and the "heptasyllabic Jueju" are more prosperous. According to the different characteristics of poetry stanzas, the corresponding principle requirements were created. As is shown in following examples below.

Example 1: Translation of Li Po's 《静夜思》 (*Jing Ye Si*)

ST	TT 1	TT 2
静夜思 李白 床前明月光， 疑是地上霜。 举头望明月， 低头思故乡。	<i>Thoughts on a Silent Night</i> Li Bai Before my bed a pool of light- O can it be frost on the ground? Eyes raised, I see the moon so bright; Head bent, in homesickness I'm drowned. (Xu, 2007)	<i>Thoughts in Night Quiet</i> Li Po Seeing moonlight here at my bed, and thinking it's frost on the ground, I look up, gaze at the mountain moon, then back, dreaming of my old home. (Hinton, 1996)

From Example 1, we can see that the original poem is a "pentasyllabic Jueju", of which the rhyme form is "aaba". David translates it into four lines with six parts, and there is an end rhyme in the first and second line with "aabc", while Mr. Xu keeps the original form with alternating

rhyme scheme "abab": "light" in the first line rhymes with "bright" in the third line, and "ground" in the second line rhymes with "drowned" in the fourth line, which is more elegant in form.

Example 2: Translation of Li Po's 《宣州谢朓楼饯别校书叔云》
(Xuan Zhou Xie Tiao Lou Jian Bie Xiao Shu Shu Yun)

ST	TT 1	TT 2
宣州谢朓楼饯别校 书叔云 李白 蓬莱文章建安骨， 中间小谢又清发。 俱怀逸兴壮思飞， 欲上青天览明月。	Farewell to Uncle Yun, the Imperial Librarian, at Xie Tiao's Pavilion in Xuanzhou Li Bai Your writing's forcible like ancient poets while Mine is in Junior Xie's clear and spirited style. Both of us have an ideal high: We would reach the moon in the sky. (Xu, 2007)	On Hsieh T'iao's Tower in Hsüan-Chou: A Farewell Dinner for Shu Yün Li Po Chant poems of Immortality Land, ancient word-bones. The clarity of Hsieh T'iao reappears here among us: all embracing, thoughts breaking free into flight, we ascend azure heaven, gaze into a bright moon. (Hinton, 1996)

From Example 2, we can see that the original poem is a "heptasyllabic ancient poem" with no regular rules in terms of the "Ping" and the "Ze", and rhyme, but it's of seven Chinese characters each line with alliteration of "fa" and "fei" to show off the high ambition. David keeps the

number of words every two lines uniform, but there is no rhyme whatsoever, while Mr. Xu keeps the original form with a running rhyme "aabb": "while" and "style" rhyme with each other in the first two lines, and the last two lines "high" and "sky" are as the same.

Example 3: Translation of Li Po's 《关山月》 (*Guan Shan Yue*)

ST	TT 1	TT 2
关山月 李白 明月出天山， 苍茫云海间。 长风几万里， 吹度玉门关。	The Moon over the Mountain Pass Li Bai From Heaven's Peak the moon rises bright, Over a boundless sea of cloud. Winds blow for miles with main and might Past the Jade Gate which stands so proud. (Xu, 2007)	FRONTIER-MOUNTAIN MOON Li Po Over Heaven Mountain, the bright moon rises through a boundless sea of cloud. A hundred thousand miles long, steady wind scouring Jasper-Gate Pass howls. (Hinton, 1996)

From Example 3, we can see that the original poem is a "pentasyllabic ancient poem" with no rules in terms of the "Ping" and the "Ze", and rhyme, but each line is of five Chinese characters with the rhyme "aaba", and the arrangements of the "Ping" and the "Ze" in each stanza are almost the same. David breaks each line into two sentences with no rhyme but keeps the number of words in each sentence as consistent as possible, while Mr. Xu keeps the original form while alternating rhyme scheme into "abab": "Bright" in the first line rhymes with "might" in the third line, while "cloud" in the second line rhymes with "proud" in the fourth line.

4.2.3 Form and sense

As we can see from the above, in form, both Xu's and David's versions essentially restore the form of the original poems, with the same number of lines as the original poems, and the treatment of stanza breaks also matches that of the original, and the number of words per line is basically the same. But in comparison, Xu's version is more concise and accurate. Moreover, in form, Xu's version is of uni-code of English spellings except the translation of the author "李白" into Chinese Pinyin "Li Bai", while David's version is of multi-code mixture of English Pinyin and English spellings.

In sense, the three examples chosen above represent three aspects: cultural connotation, associative meaning and imagery construction. First of all, in the source text, the metaphor in 《静夜思》(*Jing Ye Si*) is employed to compare the "moon" to the "frost" as a natural image to convey the poet's homesickness, with echoing of "月光" (Ming Yue Guang) to "明月" (Ming Yue) in the source text. In Xu's version, the literary beauty of the ancient Chinese poem is shown in its subtlety. He directly translates only the second "moon", while the focus of the first "月光" (Ming Yue Guang) is on "light", and the emotion of the original poem is expressed in the form of a question, which highlights the metaphorical technique of the original poem. Meanwhile, Xu's translation adds some quantitative modifications, such as "a pool of" for "light" and "so bright" for "moon", making the moon image concrete. In David's version, the two are directly translated into "moonlight" and "mountain moon", which emphasizes the natural image, but the lack of modifiers makes it more partial and weakens the overall transmission of the cultural connotation. In addition, Xu's translation takes into account the poet's action and psychological activities, especially the first two lines, which show the poet's psychological activities very skillfully. However, David's translation shows the action and psychological activities through the predicate verbs and lacks an artistic sense of picture. In terms of conveying the cultural connotation, Xu's translation is stronger: "in homesickness, I'm drowned", which well conveys the moon image and the homesickness represented by it. Although David also tends to express

the nostalgia, the connection between the emotion and the image is not so natural or convincing.

In 《宣州谢朓楼饯别校书叔云》(*Xuan Zhou Xie Tiao Lou Jian Bie Xiao Shu Shu Yun*), the "moon" has an associative meaning of regretting to be departing (Jian Bie) but determined for high ideal and ambition. In Xu's version, "an ideal high" naturally paves the way for the association of "the moon in the sky", especially the word of "ideal" creates a context for "moon" to be associated with. As a result, even readers unfamiliar with Chinese culture can at least associate the natural image with aspirations. The context constructed in David's translation is relatively narrower, remaining only at the level of "thoughts". Additionally, the choice of verb before "moon" in both versions also determines the extent to which the associative meaning of the image is conveyed. Mr. Xu chooses "揽" (reach) to lift the whole line on the "moon", which is more ambitious and enterprising. David uses "览" (gaze into) and treats "青天" (Qing Tian) and "明月" (Ming Yue) as two separate images, making it difficult to engender deeper associations of the great ideal and determination.

The "moon" in 《关山月》(*Guan Shan Yue*) is mainly of imagery construction, which is actually a complete depiction of the ideorealm through image. The three main images of "关" (frontier), "山" (mountain) and "月" (the moon) outline the majestic and mournful ideorealm of the frontier. In this case, the "moon" is more of a natural scene, so there is not much difference in its translation. The difference between the two versions lies only in some details, such as the choice of prepositions and word order.

5. CAUSES OF SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

As Lefevere states in his writing *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*, of three factors of ideology, poetics and patronage, it is the ideological and poetological considerations that work together to decide the translator's translation strategy and his solution to specific problems. On every level of the translation process, it can be shown that, if linguistic considerations enter into conflict with considerations of ideological and/or poetological nature, the latter tend to win out (Lefevere, 1992). However, translator's ideology and motivation depend largely on his grillwork of form, convention and beliefs, which orders his actions. The context, in which he lives, will influence the selection of a particular text for translation. And how translator interprets the original text and express the ideas and connotations it contains in a subjective and creative way is based on his own knowledge, experience, and perceptions. This is related to the cultural context, knowledge system and literary culture of the translator. At the same time, the translator's literary skills and aesthetic preferences within his personal

ideology may also play a role in the process of translating. This section will examine the reasons for the similarities and differences explored in the previous chapters since translator's identity and style will bring about the differences in the choices of translation strategies and techniques used in the two versions.

5.1 Translator's Identity

Mr. Xu, a renowned Chinese scholar and translator in Peking University, has published more than forty translation works of foreign and Chinese literature since 1956, nearly thirty of which are English or French translations of Chinese poetry. In addition to his own familiarity with Chinese classical literature as a Chinese scholar, Mr. Xu has studied literary translation with a high level of attainment in poetry translation practice. Therefore, Xu's version is systematic and sophisticated with his confidence. The patron-translator relationship in his English translation of Li Bai's "moon" poems has been listed in *Library of Chinese Classics*, the first major national publication project in China to systematically and comprehensively introduce Chinese cultural classics to the world. Thus, Mr. Xu also has held the national responsibility of spreading the great traditional Chinese culture to the outside world besides his own preference. On the whole, Xu's version is more advantageous in preserving the rhetorical techniques of Li Bai's "moon" poems and conveying the cultural connotation and imagery construction of the original poems.

David is American prominent poet and translator. His interest in ancient Chinese poetry grew out of his youthful fascination with ecology, eastern religions, and the poets of the American West Coast landscape. He received his MFA (Master of Fine Arts) in poetry from Cornell University in 1981. Later, influenced by different forms of English translations of Du Fu's poetry, he returned to Cornell University to study Chinese in order to fully express the intent of the original poem, and then went to Taiwan to continue his language studies. His translation of Li Po's "moon" poems is of a personal activity, reflecting from a poet's perspective as he is a poet himself. The essence of his translation is to try to express the worldview, a cultural insight that makes Chinese poetry so profoundly meaningful. So with goal of implanting the worldview of the poet of the original poem, he adds his own poetic style of composition to the translated poem, keeping most of its original content, while changing the writing style considerably. Thus, his version of Li Po's "moon" poems is done in a philosophical context from the perspective of a poet, which explains why he sees most images as separate units and sometimes has his own treatment of the poems' stanza breaks in the translation process.

5.2 Translator's Style

Xu's translation shows his romantic style and his pursuit of beauty with his confidence. To achieve the "Three

Beauties Principle" he has proposed, that is beauties in "meaning", "sound" and "form", his version of Li Bai's "moon" poems not only tries to convey cultural connotation and associative meaning in the original poems but also strives for the construction of imagery. In terms of the rhythm of the translation, Xu's version utilizes the meter of English poetry, while keeping rhymes similar to that of the original poems. In addition, Xu's version also reflects his pursuit of the length of verses and the beauty of symmetry. When choosing materials for his translations, Mr. Xu has focused on the poems that have a particular and opaque style, closely related to his translation concepts and translation goals. Furthermore, Mr. Xu has held a transcultural and interpretive view of translation which has searched for artistic aesthetics in literature and the dissemination of Chinese culture together.

David's translation shows some of the imagist style with naturalness, simplicity and clarity, combining three characteristics of traditional, modern and free poetry. His version of Li Po's "moon" poems is more about incorporating his own understanding of the original poems into the translations, and rewriting them in the rule of poetry in accordance with English expression and thought pattern. At the same time, the emotions expressed by the poet in the original poems are skillfully implanted in the translation, so that the translation itself has a similar ideorealm to the original poems, without the need for further explanation. In addition, his translation also reflects some "Chinese poetic grammar", such as the absence of conjunctions between successive translation parts and presence of English Pinyin, which is also in line with the "partial imagist style" mentioned earlier. Meanwhile, David also follows the English grammatical norms by adding the subject "I" to the translated poems, which also adds a subjective individuality to some "moon" poems with purely natural descriptions, making the translations more philosophical and interpretative.

6. CONCLUSION

Based on key concepts of ideology and poetics within Lefevre's poetry translation, this paper has made a comparative analysis of English versions of Li Po's "moon" poems by David Hinton and Xu Yuanhong at both macro and micro levels. As for ideology, it's found that ideology is the most crucial in the process of translation because most translations are inspired by ideological motivation, or produced under ideological constraints, which has a decisive role in making differences between the two versions. With regard to poetics, classic translation cases are selected to conduct a comparative analysis from three aspects of cultural connotation, associative meaning, and imagery

construction in terms of title, rhyme scheme, form and sense. As a whole, both versions are advantageous in their understanding and expressing but distinctive in the choice of translation perspectives and strategies. Therefore the causes for the similarities and differences are also explored with respect to the translator's identity and style respectively.

In all, as we see from the above research, a text carries more than words and culture, which makes the act of translating socially complex, and thus the factors behind it should be studied more when doing translation practice and research. Moreover, as times change, translating has also been influenced by different ideology and poetics in different age. Then, in the process of translating Li Po's "moon" poems, one should grasp the dominant ideology and poetics of the time, so as to employ more effective and interpretive translation strategies to foster the dissemination and communication of Chinese classic poetry and its entry into the world literature with its distinctive charm and value.

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