

The Artistic Conception Translation of the Chinese Poetry

Kai Li

Tiangong University, Tianjin, 300387, China

Abstract: The artistic conception is an important issue to be studied in Chinese aesthetics. The artistic conception is also the core and foundation of the aesthetics of Chinese classical poetry. In poetry, the artistic conception is mainly expressed through the choice of imagery, the arrangement of the rhythm and the use of the rhetoric. In order to translate the Chinese classical poetry well, translators must have a deep understanding of the aesthetic features of the Chinese poetry and grasp the aesthetic characteristics of Chinese-English poetry translation.

Keywords: Poetry; The artistic conception; Translation

1. Introduction

Poetry culture has a long history in the hot soil of China. Short words with endless meanings is the important quality of a good poem. The artistic conception is the most common and favorite used expression for the concept of the Chinese aesthetic spirits, and it can represent the national aesthetic spirit and aesthetic pursuit. Poetry with profound meanings and artistic information must have the fascinating power of seeing a big field of view from a small point, so as to truly touch people's hearts and resonate. As an important carrier to understand the history of Chinese history and the spread of the Chinese poetry culture, it is particularly important to know the artistic conception and rich connotation of the Chinese poetry. A good translation of the Chinese poetry should also convey the artistic conception that the original poetry may contain with corresponding words.

2. The Aesthetic Connotation of the Artistic Conception

The category of "the artistic conception" originates from poetics, infiltrates into the theory of literature and art later, and in modern times it is developed into an aesthetic category in China. The artistic conception is generally regarded as the unique aesthetic category of the Chinese nation. And it is the aesthetic category that can represent the national aesthetic spirit and aesthetic pursuit.

2.1. The origin and theory of the artistic conception

The artistic conception is the embodiment of the philosophy "tian ren he yi" (the theory that man is an integral part of the nature) in Chinese philosophy. It is an imagery system composed of several images. The artistic conception refers to the artistic realm depicted in the literary and artistic works—the artistic realm formed by the integra-

tion of the objective category- "jing" (perceived setting/experienced world) and the subjective category- "yi" (the expressed thoughts and feelings).

The lyrical works can reify the imagery system of "qing jing jiao rong" (the feeling and setting happily blended) and "xu shi xiang sheng" (the mutualism of blankness and fullness; "xu" -blankness, false complement; "shi"-fullness, true complement) and they can induce and open up the space of the aesthetic imagination. It shows the artistic conception of the advanced forms for literary image. The artistic conception must reflect the whole and its basic structure is "xu shi xiang sheng". Just because there is "Shi", "Xu" can be manifested and it has its support. Just because there is "Xu", "Shi" has the space for breathing. If there is no "Xu", there will be no formation of "Shi", and if the full is "Shi", then the existence of "Xu" cannot be displayed. The artistic conception is a seamless artistic realm created by the poet's subjective sentiment and objective scenery.

2.2. The development of the artistic conception

To a certain extent, the theoretical interpretation about Chinese classical aesthetics of the modern Chinese aestheticians is mainly achieved through the interpretation or explanation of the "artistic conception". From a logical point of view and a historical perspective, the artistic conception plays an important role in the classical Chinese aesthetics system, and the development of the artistic conception constitutes an important clue to the history of Chinese aesthetics.

In ancient times, the artistic conception is originally a poetic category and then expands into a literary category. The Pre-Qin period is the philosophical foundation period of the artistic conception. In ancient China, the "Tao" in Laozi's theory provides a philosophical starting point for the artistic conception. The Tang Dynasty Pe-

riod is the birth of the artistic conception, and the main connotation of the artistic conception is basically established in the Tang Dynasty. The Song Dynasty Period is the consolidation period of the artistic conception. In the Song Dynasty, the theory of the artistic conception entered the other literary as well as the artistic categories from poetic theory. The Ming and Qing Dynasties is the completion period of the artistic conception. In the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the concept of the artistic conception enters more art categories such as gardens and novels.

In modern times, the artistic conception is an aesthetic category in China. Among the researchers, Wang Guo-wei influences the study of the artistic conception in modern times. In the construction of modern aesthetics and the introduction of Western aesthetics, Zhu Guangqian's contribution is still unmatched, and he confirms that Wang Guo-wei uses the "artistic conception" as the cornerstone of the research point, and their theories have the same starting point. Zong Baihua has been studying the artistic conception throughout the whole process of his aesthetic research and he believes that the study and exploration of the structure of the artistic conception can make us see the magnificence and exquisiteness of the Chinese mind. Ye Lang's research has made the artistic conception theory clear and systematic.

The artistic conception of art has its depth, height and breadth. After Wang Guo-wei's interpretation and research on the artistic conception, more than a century has passed, and several generations of poetic theory critics have made continuous efforts to the artistic conception topic in China. During this period, the context of ideology and culture has indeed turned a corner, and the theoretical connotation of the artistic conception has thus been marked with different time brands.

3. The Aesthetic Qualities of the Artistic Conception

The artistic conception is not only the connection of imagery, but the implication of the same theme and the infinite space it radiated, which is formed of many images through the orderly combination.

3.1. The mutualism and the dialectical relationship

As an important principle of the Chinese classical aesthetics, "xu shi xiang sheng" (the mutualism of blankness and fullness/ false or true complement) summarizes the important aesthetic characteristics of the Chinese classical art. The relationship between "xu" and "shi" in literary and aesthetic studies is actually the relationship between "the artistic stages" and "the objective reality". In the artistic conception, "xu" is the purpose and the pursuit of artistic creation, "shi" is the means of the expression and the focus of the artistic expression. The aesthetic space of "xu shi xiang sheng" is the essence of the artistic conception, "shi" is a concrete aesthetic space, and "xu" is an

imaginary space induced by "shi". In poetry, the artistic conception conveyed by the imagery is "xu". In a poem, if the poet points out all the meaning he wants to convey, leaving no space for imagination, then the poem will be tasteless like chewing a candle, which is so straightforward and has no lingering charm.

Liu Yuxi, the poet of the Tang Dynasty, put forward the idea that "jing sheng xiang wai" ("jing" coming from the exterior of "xiang"). In the usage here, "jing" can be understood as the artistic conception, "xiang" can be understood as the imagery, and "jing sheng xiang wai" reveals the dialectical relationship between the artistic conception and the imagery. The artistic conception and imagery cannot be equated, but the association caused by the imagery is the origin of the artistic conception. In other words, the basis of the artistic conception depends on the imagery. This is the truth that "without 'xiang' (the imagery), there is no way to appear 'jing' (the artistic conception)", and the artistic conception is the sublimation of the imagery.

3.2. The unity and the unification

The aesthetic characteristics of the artistic conception should also include the unity of "zhu" and "ke" (the subject and object). In the empathy activities, the boundary between the subject and the object is no longer distinct. Emotions, thoughts, feelings, wills, and other contents from the subject can be moved into the object. Some features of the object can also be transferred to the subject. Only by emptying the distracting thoughts in the heart, the creator's heart has enough space to accommodate the world of "jing"; only by calming down and observing carefully, the creators can understand that the world of "jing" is in the mirror, bright and clean, and each has its own place, presenting their respective fulfilling, inner and free life, and they are comfortable in the quiet observation. Then, the creators can achieve the unity of the subject and the object.

"Yin xiao jian da" (recognizing the whole through observation of the part) is another aesthetic feature of the artistic conception. This means that the literary works with far-reaching artistic meaning must have a certain generalization of the essence and regularity of things. When the artist is engaged in the creation of the artistic conception, he or she is subject to the "role consciousness" while carrying out the "self-experience". "Self-experience" is a kind of individual psychological activity, with the distinct personality; "role consciousness" is a social psychological activity, with the significant common features. The "commonness" of the literary works broadens the reader's vision, which makes the work become a kind of power, a power that can trigger the affection. And this power is caused by the "commonness" of the literary works that allows everyone to feel their own experience. Therefore, the artistic conception must have the unity of

“uniqueness” and “commonness”, and it has the power to trigger the touch or affection of “recognizing the whole through observation of the part”.

3.3. The correspondence and the blending

The artistic works with the artistic conception should also be natural and true (external appearance corresponds to inside). Requiring the natural reality of the literary works has always been the goal pursued by literati. Liking nature itself, being authentic, and not be felt by artificial knives, these can be understood as the natural features of the artistic conception.

The artistic works with the natural and true artistic conception should have a natural and smooth expression, a plain and light language with no inflexible decoration. There should be no obvious difference between “emotion” and “scenery” in the far-reaching works with the artistic conception, and the two are to be merged without any trace. “Emotion” gives “scenery” life as well as rich and vivid connotation, so “emotion” makes “scenery” a symbol of life experience. On the other hand, if “emotion” leaves “scenery”, “emotion” will lose its support, and “emotion” will not have a strong vitality, and it can only be a dry psychological feeling. “Emotion” can not vividly display the poet’s inner world, and then the poem lacks the power that can cause others to have the same thoughts as well as feelings, and the poem loses its aesthetic values. In the artistic conception, the “scenery” is the direct carrier of “emotion”, and the “emotion” becomes the soul of the “scenery” and is expressed through the “scenery”, which determines that the artistic feature of the artistic conception is “feeling and setting happily blended”.

4. The Artistic Conception Reappearance in the Chinese Poetry Translation

Poetry shapes the images with language materials, expresses lyricism and language with the images of language, and conveys all the artistic information. A good translation work should also convey the artistic conception that the original work may contain with corresponding words.

4.1. The imagery

The imagery is the materialization of the objective objects after the unique aesthetic creation of the subjects. The imagery in the poetry is the voice of the poet. The artistic conception is mainly expressed through the choice of imagery and its arrangement. In poetry, its conciseness and objectivity are increased by the use of imagery, which also replaces the radical catharsis of poetry’s subjective emotions, making the poet’s subjective feelings implicitly expressed through imagery. When translating the Chinese poetry into English, the translator should pay special attention to conveying the imagery

beauty of the original poetry. Poetry is a special literary genre. Translation must be combined with the cultural background of the poetry to change the language. The purpose is to ensure the accuracy of the translation and maintain the original artistic conception. The translation of imagery may result in the loss or improper expression due to the different methods adopted by different translators. Translators should have a deep understanding of the original and target cultures, and increase their sensitivity and consciousness to cultural differences. Translators can use the image retaining method and the image replacing method to convey the cultural information in specific situations, so that translation can be the bridge to promote the national ideological and cultural exchanges.

4.2. The rhythm

Poetry is a literary genre that combines the form and the content perfectly. The rhythm beauty is crucial to poetry. The so-called “auditory form” in the forms of poetry includes many aspects such as the end rhyme, alliteration, reiterative locution, cadence and so on. The beauty of the auditory form is often expressed as the rhythm beauty we often say. The rhythm of poetry is to express the artistic conception of poetry. Only when the tones are well-regulated and the rhyme is appropriate, the rhythm of the poetry will be harmonious. It may be considered to use ending rhyme, internal rhyme or alliteration to translate, so that the original poetry rich in rhyme can retain its artistic conception in the translated poems. The translation must not only be faithful to the original text in form and meaning, but also allow readers to enjoy the beauty and achieve the unity of the artistic conception.

4.3. The rhetoric

For the artistic conception of poetry, the exquisite use of the rhetoric is also an important part of its beauty. And the rhetoric is one of the most poetic forms of language. It is an organic combination of the information function and aesthetic function of the language. Poetry often uses a large number of rhetoric to increase the expression of language. Excellent poems are often used in a variety of rhetorical methods. Different rhetorical methods complement each other, so that the theme of poetry is particularly distinctive, and the emotions are extraordinarily moving. It can be said that the poetry is one of the most widely used areas of the rhetoric. The use of rhetoric can arouse readers’ rich associations and guide readers to develop a deeper understanding of the poem. Rhetoric makes the language of poetry vivid and beautiful. The rhetoric is the sublimation of language art. It is necessary to fully understand the rich and distinctive rhetoric and style of the original poem under the guidance of the artistic conception, and to find the corresponding rhetoric in the translated poem for reappearing the rhetoric beauty of the original poem as well as reflecting the artistic concep-

tion of the original poem. When there are differences between English and Chinese languages and cultures, the original rhetoric can be appropriately converted, such as the conversion of metaphor and simile in Chinese and English verses, the translators can adapt the rhythm to finish the transformation.

5. Conclusion

The artistic conception is the most common and favorite used expression for the concept of the Chinese aesthetic spirits. Comparing and studying the translation of Chinese poetry from the perspective of the artistic conception has profound theoretical and practical significance. Imagery is the materialization of objective objects after the unique aesthetic creation of the subjects, the rhythm beauty is crucial to poetry, and the poetry often uses a large number of rhetoric to increase the expression of language. In order to translate the Chinese classical poetry well, translators must have a deep understanding of the aesthetic features of the Chinese poetry, improve the comparative consciousness and grasp the aesthetic characteristics of the Chinese-English poetry translation. Each translator is particular in his ingenuity and the translation is also unique. The common goal of all translations is to accomplish the task of translating Chinese-English poetry in the

cross-cultural communication, spread the good culture, and express the artistic conception of poetry.

References

- [1] Barnstone, Tony and Chou Ping. *The Anchor Book of Chinese Poetry*. New York: Anchor Books, 2005.
- [2] Chan Sinwai. *Standards and Methods in Poetry Translation*. *Journal of Translation Studies*. 2000(4).
- [3] Geoffrey N. Leech. *A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 2001.
- [4] Pedro Atã, Joao Queiroz. Multilevel poetry translation as a problem-solving task. *Cognitive Semiotics*. 2016,9(2),139-147.
- [5] Pan Xiaping, Chen Xinying, and Liu Haitao. Harmony in diversity: The language codes in English-Chinese poetry translation. *Literary & linguistic computing: Journal of the Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations*. 2018,33(1),128-142.
- [6] Pym, Anthony. *Method in Translation History*. Manchester: St Jerome Publishing, 1998.
- [7] Reiss, Katharina. *Translation Criticism: The Potentials and Limitations*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 2004.
- [8] Stevie Knight. Poetry, philosophy and practicality. *The Motor ship*. 2016,97(1134), 35-36.
- [9] Zong Baihua, Jan De Meyer. The Birth of Artistic Conception in China. *Art in Translation*. 2017,9(3), 367-396.