唐詩復得：
以許淵冲與胡品清之英譯本互補參照進行對外唐詩教學

吳敏華*

摘　要

　　義大利格言「翻譯，即背叛」(“*Traduttore, traditore*”) 深獲法蘭西共鳴——「翻譯，背叛之謂也」(“*Traduire, c’est trahir*”)。美國詩人佛洛斯特以為：「所謂詩者，一經翻譯便失其味。」佛氏此說，與台灣詩人余光中之翻譯觀，可謂異曲同工。余氏以為：「翻譯，猶如政治與婚姻，乃一門妥協的藝術；此說對譯詩而言，尤為貼切。」若翻譯難免於文化、語言、美學等層面必有所喪，則文學翻譯不啻譯者逃所難逃之原罪。如此，唐詩教師如何對外籍學生傳達華夏傳統引以為傲之文苑勝境？本文作者嘗試以許淵冲與胡品清之英文譯本，互補參照進行對外唐詩教學，以期呈現原詩多彩之風貌。許淵冲先生與胡品清女士兩者皆畢業於中國著名大學之英文系，兩者皆負笈法蘭西，遠赴巴黎大學攻讀西洋語文學，兩者皆學成歸國，分別成為海峽兩岸國寶級精通中、英、法三國語言與文學之學術重鎮，雙雙成為中華文化於地球村之親善大使、中華文學於世界文壇孜孜不倦之擺渡人。然而，許、胡二氏之唐詩譯論可謂大異其趣：許氏認為唐詩英譯必須講究押韻，以求再現原詩「形、音、義」三美；胡氏則以為押韻之圭臬，徒增譯者無形之枷鎖。蓋兩氏譯詩，雖各擅勝場，卻恐皆難免有其失真之處、摸象之窘，故試以兩家之英文譯作，與原詩對照、分析、比較，進行對外漢語教學，以收互濟之效與相輔之功。

關鍵詞：唐詩英譯、胡品清、許淵冲、對外漢語教學、詩歌翻譯研究

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* 國立澎湖科技大學應用外語學系

The Tang Poetry Regained: Teaching Tang Poems with Hu Pin-ching's and Xu Yuanzhong's English Translations as a Contrast and Complement[*]

Wu, Min-Hua [**]

Abstract

The Italian proverb "*Traduttore, traditore*" finds its echo in French: "*Traduire, c'est trahir*." Robert Frost, an American poet, holds that "Poetry is that which gets lost in translation," which is, again, echoed in the perspective on translation embraced by Kwang-Chung Yu, a poet of Taiwan, who firmly believes that "translation, like politics and marriage, is an art of compromise, which applies to literature, especially to poetry." If the inevitable loss — be it cultural, linguistic or aesthetic — in translation proves an "original sin" for the translators of such a literary genre, how should a teacher of the Chinese Tang poetry do to fully convey the original richness of such a literary heritage boasted by the Chinese people? The author of this paper proposes a solution for such a dilemma, that is, simultaneously provide foreign students with two English versions by Xu Yuanzhong (許淵沖) and Hu Pin-ching (胡品清) along with the original Tang poems to serve as a contrast and complement. As English majors, both Xu Yuanzhong and Hu Pin-ching graduated from renowned universities in China, both studied abroad in France to further their western languages proficiency and broaden their horizon of

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[**] Department of Applied Foreign Languages, National Penghu University of Science and Technology

literatures at the University of Paris, both came back to their native land with admirable learning, both became national academic rarities conversant with Chinese, English as well as French languages and literatures on the two sides across the Taiwan Strait, and both serve not only as good will ambassador of the Chinese culture in the global village but also as most devoted scholars who ferry with pride and pleasure the Chinese literature beyond the endless oceans. However, a fundamental theoretical disparity lies between the two translators in regard to the way they render the poetic charms of the Tang dynasty: the former insists on the indispensability of rhyming in translating the Tang poetry so as to make intelligible its "musical, semantic, and formal beauties," whereas the latter, regarding rhyming in rendering the Tang poetry as something unbeneficial, chooses instead to transplant the Tang poetry in blank verse style. Since each translator, in spite of respective favorable performance in certain aesthetic dimensions, seems doomed to "lose" some elements in his/her translation, it is therefore advantageous to foreign students to read the two translations in parallel of a Tang poem, which altogether contributes to forming a contrast and complement that helps them further probe into the original ambiance and profundity of the Tang poetry, for they are thus endowed with a chance to benefit from the merits as well as virtues of both translators.

Keywords: English translation of the Tang poetry, Hu Pin-ching, Xu Yuanzhong, teaching foreigners Chinese literature, poetic translation study

Introduction

1. On Chinese-English Literary Translation and its Standards

Translation can be by and large divided into two categories: literary translation and non-literary translation. Although it is claimed in regard to both categories that "a perfect translation does not exist" (Rodriguez 31), the touchstone of the art of translation lies mainly in "literary translation," for it stands for "the most demanding type of translation" (Landers 7). Based on her lifetime experience in literary rendition, Maria T. Sanchez so elucidates the challenge of such an enterprise in *The Problems of Literary Translation*:

> There can be no doubt: if any kind of translation implies a challenge, in the case of literary translation the challenge is even greater because the translator has to contend not only with semantic problems but also with the stylistic connotations inseparable from the content which will demand a constant and painful process of decision-making. (Sanchez 133)

It is through a long-term literary translation from Spanish into English that Sanchez comes to the conclusion that literary rendition is the most demanding challenge amongst all sorts of translation, a conclusion perfectly echoed by Clifford E. Landers's *Literary Translation: A Practical Guide*:

> In technical translation, for example, style is not a consideration so long as the informational content makes its way unaltered from SL to TL.

The freight-train analogy is a useful one: in technical translation the order of the cars is inconsequential if all the cargo arrives intact. In literary translation, however, the order of the cars — which is to say the style — can make the difference between a lively, highly readable translation and a stilted, rigid, and artificial rendering that strips the original of its artistic and aesthetic essence, even its very soul. (Landers 7)

Even if the difficulty that characterizes literary translation has been pointed out by Western translators, it remains a difficulty of translating an occidental language into another occidental language. The Herculean task that features the art of translation, however, lies not merely in the field of literary translation but in the literary translation that ferries beyond an estranging ocean, that is to say, between the Oriental and the Occidental literatures and languages. John Francis Davis, a renowned British diplomat and sinologist, analyzes in *On the Poetry of the Chinese* the uniqueness of the Chinese characters that cannot be sufficiently and satisfactorily rendered in any western language:

. . . as far as Chinese literary creation is concerned, the entire imagery, the over all textual ambiance and the denotation and connotation derived from the combination of the Chinese characters in a poetic work possess a certain literary as well as aesthetic effect that goes far beyond any apparent literal text, which is a unique advantage of the Chinese language that can never be matched by any European language systems. (Davis 6)

Here, if we take the statement of Theodore Savory's *The Art of Translation* — "the almost insuperable difficulty of translating poetry" (Savory 138) — into consideration, we find that as far as the level of difficulty in rendition is concerned, the logic goes as follows: literary translation is more difficult than non-literary translation; Chinese-Western literary translation is more demanding than Western-Western literary translation; and Chinese-Western poetry translation is more challenging than Chinese-Western literary translation of other genres. It therefore goes without saying that the English translation of the Tang poetry lies right at the center of the art of translation, serving as a touchstone for all translators who strive to challenge the impossible mission of boundary traversing.

For such an extremely demanding, if not impossible, art, how should its translation result be evaluated? In other words, what are the assessment criteria in poetic translation? Lord Woodhouselee believes that "the best translators have been those writers who have composed original works of the same species" (quoted in Savory 138); Theodore Savory echoes such a perspective, contending that "none but a poet should undertake the translation of poetry" (Savory 140). Unfortunately, few translators manage to pass muster with native readers as poets, and the assessment criteria in regard to literary translation are therefore open to discussion. Myriads of translators as well as scholars have proposed their own perspectives on the art of translation along with their respective theories regarding literary rendition.

For instance, Yen Fu, a most influential English-Chinese translator and translation theorist of the late Ching Dynasty, proposed a translation theory that can be summarized in three words, "fidelity, intelligibility and elegance," a succinct theory that remains a profound and lasting influence upon later

study and practice of literary translation in Chinese-speaking countries across the Taiwan Strait (劉靖之 1993 1). Since Yen Fu raised his insightful conclusion on translation, scholars and translators have tried to rethink, revise or renovate his theory. It is based on Yen's standards that Lin Yutang, a celebrated Chinese writer writing in English, proposed three similar criteria: "fidelity, fluency and beauty" (林語堂 1981). Qian Zhongshu, an acknowledged towering figure in Chinese and Western literatures, maintained that the highest standard of literary translation lies in a single Chinese character "化," which signifies "perfect transformation" in the target language (錢鍾書 83). In other words, a successful literary translation should not merely traverse both linguistic difference and cultural boundary, but it should fully retain the original textual flavor, richness as well as effect — with an exact ease and mastery as shown in the source language (沈蘇儒 185). Xu Yuanzhong, a former student of Qian Zhongshu and a nonpareil translator who translates ancient Chinese poetry into both rhymed English and French, draws on his lifelong experience of literary translation, summarizing his comprehensive perspectives on translation as three levels of "beauty," three levels of "equation," three levels of "delight," as well as three levels of "vantages" (許淵冲 1998 88). In contrast, Hu Pin-ching, a renowned translator who also renders Chinese literature into both English and French, proposes that poetry translation should be faithful to the literary spirit embodied in the original text and that a translator of poems should not be confined by poetic forms (胡品清 2005 13).

"In fact, poetic translation is like fishing: one fish angled passes muster as one fish caught; it would be impossible if we designate the fisher to catch a certain fish in the vast ocean. I doubt who can ever manage to translate

Milton's 'blank verse' or Swinburne's 'alliteration' into perfectly equivalent yet equally intelligible Chinese" (余光中 1992 1).[1] Here, as a celebrated poet and translation scholar, Yu with his witty "fishing" simile manages to draw a distinctive line between poetic translation and rendition of other literary genres or texts. Likewise, German linguist and translation theorist Katharina Reiss has proposed a text-type theory, in which writing is categorized into three major types: namely, informative type (like journalism), expressive type (like lyrical poetry), and persuasive type (like advertisement), in addition to some mixed types (Reiss 2000). Reiss's models may serve as a good guiding principle for us to evince the inevitability of specific issues or conundrums that a literary translator is bound to encounter in the process of poetic translating.

Also, Yu's "fishing" simile on the uniqueness of poetic translation reminds us of Eugene Nida's criteria on translation, especially the one he sets for his "dynamic equivalence." According to the reputed Bible translation scholar, "dynamic equivalence" and "formal equivalence" are two dissimilar translation techniques used to achieve differing levels of literal as well as literary identification between the original and target languages of a given text. Both of these techniques are used in biblical translation. The two terms have often been understood fundamentally as sense-for-sense translation (translating the meanings of phrases or whole sentences) and word-for-word translation (translating the meanings of words and phrases in a more literal method). Yu's theory on the unique difficulty of poetic translation lies in its endless pursuit of the highest degree of approximation in the sense that how an aesthetic realm

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[1] The quote from Kwang-Chung Yu was originally written in Chinese and the English here is translated by the author of the paper. Hereafter if the author quotes a Chinese bibliographical entry in the text, he will do the Chinese-English translation in the context of discussion for the convenience of reading.

can be recreated in a translated poem, which sounds like a silvery echo to Nida's endeavor to approach and achieve "dynamic equivalence" in the biblical translation.

As a result, it seems that no single translation evaluation criterion might serve to satisfy all needs and all facets concerning such a highly flexible and complicated art known as literary translation. The uniqueness and particularity of a given text or work may in the final analysis defy the applicability of a certain assessment standard proposed by critics and supported by scholars. A liberal spirit and a humble attitude are therefore something indispensable in light of rendition assessment, as elucidated by the author of *Literary Translation Quality Assessment*:

Bearing in mind this viewpoint, it is reasonable to assume the impossibility of standard assessment criteria to be applied to all literary texts . . . . I claim that it seems possible to conclude the existence of a flexible framework of assessment criteria whose relevance and implementation must be determined in each specific evaluative analysis of literary translation as the research develops, taking the characteristics of each text into consideration. (Rodriguez 35)

1.1. Xu Yuanzhong's Perspectives on Translation

The comprehensive perspectives on literary translation proposed by Xu Yuanzhong can be categorized into four major dimensions. First of all, the primary and premier touchstone of a great literary translation lies in its beauty, a beauty that further falls into three respects: musical beauty, semantic beauty, and formal beauty. That is to say, a satisfactory translation in the target

language should attend to the phonological harmony, signifying profundity, and traditional rules regarding literary forms that manifest themselves in the text written in the source language. According to Xu's viewpoint of transformation, semantic beauty is the most important in the theory of three levels of beauty, and then musical beauty is more important than formal beauty. In other words, a translator has to do his/her best to convey the semantic beauty of a poem, before he/she manages to render the musical beauty of the original poem. The best translation is the one that conveys semantic beauty, musical beauty, and formal beauty of a poem and pays equal attention to Xu's theory regarding the three different dimensions of beauty.

Second, as far as "transformation" in rendition is concerned, a literary translation in the target language may display three different levels of "transformation": deepening, equalizing, and simplifying. "Deepening" refers to a translation in the target language that appeals to a literary expression and cultural heritage that appears deeper or more profound than that shown in the original text. "Equalizing" refers to a translation in the target language that adopts a literary expression almost equal to that presented in the source language in the light of lingual and literary hierarchy. "Simplifying," of course, refers to a translation in the target language whose literary expression appears not as deep or profound as that favored by the original author. Evidently, Xu has largely drawn from Qian Zhongshu's theory of "perfect transformation" to further develop his own discourse known as three levels of transformation. Such a perspective that features in a constant search of a translation that embodies a perfect transformation in the target language is echoed by Western theorists of such an art. For instance, Hilaire Belloc, renowned Anglo-French writer and translator, believes that "the translator should render *idiom by idiom*

'and idioms of their nature demand translation into another form from that of the original" (quoted from Bassnett 116). In other words, "the translator is advised to 'transmute boldly'" and "the essence of translating is 'the resurrection of an alien thing in a native body'" (quoted from Bassnett 116-17).

Drawing upon Confucius' famous saying about three different levels in regard to the pleasure of learning: "Those who know the true way rank behind those who love it; and those who love it rank behind those who enjoy it," Xu goes so far as to take readers' possible responses to a good translation into account, pointing out that there exist three different levels of psychological reception amongst the readers of a translated work: the knowledge of it, the fondness of it, and the delight in it. Accordingly, a great translation should not only inform its readers but should delight its readers while instilling knowledge in them. A delightful enlightenment, so to speak, is what a perfect literary translation may amount to for the reader of the target language.

Last but not least, based on Qian Zhongshu's insightful analytical comment on Lin Shu's (林紓) masterly Chinese translations of Western literary works, Xu goes further to bring the original work in the source language and the translated work in the target language into confrontation, a confrontation that serves to lay bare the three various levels of "vantage" looming in such a literary competition: advantage, equilibrium, and disadvantage. The word "advantage" in Xu's theorization refers to a condition in which the translated work with all its literary and artistic performance in the target language prevails over the literary and artistic totality embodied in the original work written in the source language. By the same token, the word "equilibrium" refers to a condition in which the translated work with all its

literary and artistic performance in the target language equals to all the artistic merits displayed in original work written in the source language. Needless to say, the word "disadvantage" belongs to the condition in which the translated work with all its literary and artistic performance in the target language appears to be inferior to the literary and artistic totality inscribed in the original work written in the source language. It goes without saying that an ideal literary translator should make every effort to bring the advantage or superiority of the target language into full play in his/her translation (許淵冲 1984, 1990, 1992, 1998).

What lies at the center of the four dimensions that govern Xu's perspectives on literary translation is the great importance that he attaches to traditional poetic rules, rules that are decisive in the making of a poem, for "rhyme and meter are the essential forms of poetry" (高東山 2). On the other hand, what lies at the core of Xu's lifetime pursuit in literary translation may be epitomized as "a lifelong love affair with words," as put by Clifford E. Landers in *Literary Translation: A Practical Guide*:

> In reality, being in love with one or both languages, if not an absolute necessity, is a trait frequently found among the best and most successful literary translators. A lifelong love affair with words is one of the qualities that sets logophiles apart from others — e.g., journalists, publicists, copywriters — who may make their living dealing with the written or spoken word but whose attachment is often more utilitarian than the translator's." (Landers 7)

1.2. Hu Pin-ching's Perspectives on Translation

Apart from being an outstanding prose writer in the Chinese language, Hu Pin-ching has published a great number of books during her lifetime. In addition to Chinese writings, she also translates Chinese literature into both French and English and equally translates French and English literature into Chinese. She is particularly prolific in French-Chinese and Chinese-French literary translation.

Taking her personal experience of translating *Zhan Guo Ce* (《戰國策》), an ancient Chinese literary work, into English as an example, Hu tries to shed light on the distinction between creative writing and literary translation. For her, creative writing is nothing less than spiritual galloping; one is free to write about lyrical feeling, personal life, and any individual thoughts. It is casual and boundless, as if the writer were rambling alone on a trail or in a park, namely up to any possible subject or potential style of the writer's own pen. Literary translation, on the contrary, needs much more time and efforts for the translator to figure out deliberate words and adequate expressions in the target language across the unfathomable lingual chasm from the source language. It is at the same time a brain-cracking and hairsplitting task, a far cry from a pure individual literal try (胡品清 1980, 1990). On the other hand, in the case of translating a French work into Chinese, a responsible translator needs not only to grasp the profundity of the work but also to be familiar with the panoramic historical background against which the work was written. In other words, the translator needs to invest plenty of time and efforts to learn about the history, laws, institutions, etc. that are critical in the creation and interpretation of the whole work. That is to say, he or she must possess a Chinese literacy and literary attainment sufficient to cope with a foreign text in the Chinese

language with such well-known standards as fidelity, intelligibility and elegance. As for rendering Chinese ancient poetry and modern poetry into a foreign language, a translator has to be always conscious of the fundamental beauty, appropriate diction as well as rhythmic effect displayed in the target language" (胡品清　2005 20).

According to Hu, there are mainly three schools of poetry translation. The first is called word-by-word translation; the second is known as free translation with rhyme; and the third refers to a school of translation which insists that a translation of verse should be faithful to the spirit of the original text. The first school stems from the fact that Chinese classical poetry abounds in lines lacking subject, object or even verb. A word-by-word translation, therefore, appears as some sort of syntactic imitation of the original Tang poetry, which, however, is liable to make the original text inaccessible for the reader of the foreign target language. The second school of rendition holds that now that a poem features in rhyme, a translation of such a literary genre must also be rendered with rhyme, in spite of the fact that such a rhyming pattern is more often than not inevitably incomplete or unnatural in nature. Hu's own perspective on ideal translation is that a poem must be translated by a poet. Grammatical correctness aside, one has to be thoroughly adequate in understanding the original poetic text, imagining that he or she integrates and identifies with the original poet while translating the poem, as if it were he or she doing the writing by his/her own self in the target language (胡品清　2006 序).

Among the numerous definitions of the term "poetry," Hu favors the following two: First, poetry stands for the first encounter of two words; second, poetry means elevated thoughts expressed in elevated forms" (胡品清　2006

序). When one is engaged in translating poetry, according to her, the incomplete rhythm and rhyming pattern invented by the translator is not important in nature. The essential thing that a translator should strive for is that the translated work needs to remain faithful to both the elevated thoughts and the elevated forms as displayed in the source language. Rhyme alone does not suffice to maintain the original elevated thoughts and forms; it therefore should not be regarded as an imperative standard as far as literary translation is concerned (胡品清 2006 序).

Among the three schools regarding literary translation, Hu prefers the third school: being faithful to the spirit as embodied in the original poem. She adopts neither an absolutely word-by-word translation, nor a free translation with rhyme. On the contrary, she seeks to immerse her readers of the target language in a literary ambiance similar, if not identical, to that of the original text, by means of a translation whose objective is faithful to the spirit, content, meaning and aura of the original text as attempted by the original poet at the moment of composing the original poem (胡品清 2006 序).

From Hu's perspectives on literary translation, one can see that "an ethics of translating implies above all an ethics of language. And an ethics of language implies a theory of language as a whole" (Meschonnic 35). What's more, "la traduction est, d'une part, une phénomène d'histoire culturelle et, d'autre part, un fait de stylistique ; l'appréciation que nous en donnons, se modifie considérablement, suivant que nous l'abordons du côté de l'histoire culturelle ou du côté de la stylistique" (Dobossy 213). Without doubt, an ideal literary translator should not only tackle with the dimension of cultural history but also cope with the stylistic aspects that feature in a literary text.

1.3. Xu's and Hu's English Translations as a Contrast and Complement

The Italian proverb "*Traduttore, traditore*" finds its echo in French: "*Traduire, c'est trahir*." Robert Frost, an American poet, holds that "Poetry is that which gets lost in translation," which is, again, echoed in the perspective on translation embraced by Kwang-Chung Yu, a poet of Taiwan, who firmly believes that "translation, like politics and marriage, is an art of compromise, which applies to literature, especially to poetry."[2] If the inevitable loss — be it cultural, linguistic or aesthetic — in translation proves an "original sin" for the translators of such a literary genre, how should a teacher of the Chinese Tang poetry do to fully convey the original richness of such a literary heritage boasted by the Chinese people? The author of this paper proposes a solution for such a dilemma, that is, simultaneously provide foreign students with two English versions by Xu Yuanzhong and Hu Pin-ching along with the original Tang poems to serve as a contrast and complement.

Xu and Hu both graduated from renowned universities in China, both studied at the University of Paris in France, both became academic rarities conversant with Chinese, English and French languages and literatures, and both serve not only as a goodwill ambassador of the Chinese culture in the global village but also as a most devoted scholar who ferries with pride and pleasure the Chinese literature beyond the estranging oceans. However, a fundamental theoretical disparity lies between them with regard to the way they render the poetic charms of the Tang dynasty: the former insists on the

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[2] Kwang-Chung Yu（余光中）. "Digesting Nectar to Produce Honey: Analytical Comments on English Translations of Chinese Poetry." http://www.ancientchinesepoetry.com/NTU_Award.php 2016 年 2 月 25 日檢索

indispensability of rhyming in translating the Tang poetry so as to make intelligible its "musical, semantic, and formal beauties" in the foreign language, whereas the latter, regarding rhyming in rendering the Tang poetry as something unbeneficial, if not ruinous, to the clarity of meaning and arguing that rhyming itself can not make up for the loss of original tonal, rhythmic effects, chooses instead to transplant the Tang poetry in blank verse style.

An English proverb goes that "to err is human, to forgive divine." This is particularly true for literary translation, as pointed out by Hana Jechova in her article entitled "La perspective de la représentation littéraire et le problème de la traduction" : "des malentendus ou des changements esthétiques accidentels qui pénètrent même dans les meilleures traductions" (Jechova 56). Such an insuperable difficulty in literary translation accounts, at least partially, for why people tend not to read a literary work in translation: "Literary translation, at least in the English-speaking world, faces a difficulty that texts originally written in English do not: resistance by the public to reading literature in translation" (Landers 7).

This explains why we come up with the new teaching method for foreign students of the Tang poetry, providing them with two English translations as a contrast and complement to make up for what is missing in the target language through the process of translating. Since each translator seems doomed to "lose" some elements in his/her translation, it is therefore advantageous to foreign students to read the two translations in parallel of a Tang poem followed by textual analysis and comparative critique, which altogether contributes to forming a contrast and complement that helps them further probe into the original ambiance and profundity of the Tang poetry, for they are thus endowed with a chance to benefit from the merits as well as

virtues of both translators.

2. Xu's and Hu's English Translations of Nine Tang Poems as a Contrast and Complement for Foreign Learners of the Tang Poetry

2.1. 秋夜曲　王維

桂魄初生秋露微，
輕羅已薄未更衣。
銀箏夜久殷勤弄，
心怯空房不忍歸。

An Autumn Night	(Wang Wei) Tr. Xu

Chilled by light autumn dew beneath the crescent moon,

She will not change her dress though her silk robe is thin.

Playing all night on silver lute an endless tune,

Afraid of empty rooms, she can't bear to go in.

Autumn Night Song	(Wang Wei) Tr. Hu

The moon is newborn, light is the dew.

My silk robe is too thin, but I don't change it.

Late at night, I still play the silvery lute,

Fearing to enter the empty chamber.

To begin with, Xu adopts the third personal pronoun "she" to translate the poem so readers might draw themselves from "participation" to "observation" (余光中 2008 162). On the contrary, Hu refers to the subject of the poem as the first personal pronoun "I," which leads readers of the poem to relate themselves to its overall ambience, making them move a step forward from sympathy and observation to participation and identification (余光中 2008 162).

For the Chinese characters 桂魄初生 (*kueipo chusheng*), Xu's translation "the crescent moon" faithfully presents the dynamic image of a "growing" moon with a lexicon whose register goes in accordance with the original Chinese vocabulary whereas Hu's translation "the moon is new born" appears too literal and rigid (邱燮友 395, 張淑瓊 155). Furthermore, "autumn" as the thematic image and key word of the poem is missing in Hu's entire English rendition, which accounts for an indefensible negligence on the part of the translator. On the other hand, Xu's "empty rooms" for 空房 (*kungfang*) tends to construe the emptiness of the whole house whereas Hu's "the empty chamber," referring precisely to the private chamber of marriage, seems more suggestive for a poetic rendition.

As for the translation of poetic form, "Xu adopts 'abab' English rhyming pattern in his translation: the first line and the third line use 'moon' and 'tune' as rhyme words; the second line and the fourth line use 'thin' and 'in' as rhyme words. Besides, there are twelve syllables in each line, which is by and large in accord with traditional iambic hexameter. Hu translates each line without any fixed number of syllables, nor any identical rhyming patterns across the lines" (Hung *et al* 18).

The following contrastive analyses are meant to present a succinct and

crystal clear comparison between the two translator's works: syllabic vowels of each line are underlined, ending syllables of each line that serve to rhyme are typed in boldface, the rhyming pattern is indicated with English alphabets such as "abab" or "abcd" (which means no rhyming pattern at all), and the total syllable numbers of each line are marked on the right column. Such a device will be applied throughout the contrastive analyses of the remaining 8 poems.

An Autumn Night (Wang Wei) Tr. Xu

Ch<u>i</u>lled b<u>y</u> l<u>i</u>ght <u>au</u>t<u>u</u>mn d<u>e</u>w ben<u>ea</u>th the cr<u>e</u>sc<u>e</u>nt m**oon**,	a	(12)
She w<u>i</u>ll n<u>o</u>t ch<u>a</u>nge her dr<u>e</u>ss th<u>ou</u>gh her s<u>i</u>lk r<u>o</u>be <u>i</u>s th**in**.	b	(12)
Pl<u>a</u>y<u>i</u>ng <u>a</u>ll n<u>i</u>ght <u>o</u>n s<u>i</u>lver l<u>u</u>te <u>a</u>n <u>e</u>ndless t**une**,	a	(12)
<u>A</u>fr<u>ai</u>d <u>o</u>f <u>e</u>mpty r<u>oo</u>ms, sh<u>e</u> c<u>a</u>n't b<u>ea</u>r t<u>o</u> go **in**.	b	(12)

Autumn Night Song (Wang Wie) Tr. Hu

Th<u>e</u> m<u>oo</u>n <u>i</u>s n<u>ew</u> b<u>o</u>rn, l<u>i</u>ght <u>i</u>s the d<u>e</u>w.	a	(9)
M<u>y</u> s<u>i</u>lk r<u>o</u>be <u>i</u>s t<u>oo</u> th<u>i</u>n, b<u>u</u>t <u>I</u> d<u>o</u>n't ch<u>a</u>nge <u>i</u>t.	b	(11)
L<u>a</u>te <u>a</u>t n<u>i</u>ght, <u>I</u> st<u>i</u>ll pl<u>a</u>y the s<u>i</u>lv<u>e</u>ry l<u>u</u>te,	c	(11)
F<u>ea</u>r<u>i</u>ng t<u>o</u> <u>e</u>nter th<u>e</u> <u>e</u>mpty ch<u>a</u>mb<u>e</u>r.	d	(10)

2.2. 涼州詞　王翰

葡萄美酒夜光杯，
欲飲琵琶馬上催。
醉臥沙場君莫笑，
古來征戰幾人回？

Starting for the Front	(Wang Han) Tr. Xu

With wine of grapes the cups of jade would glow at night,

Drinking to pipa songs, we are summoned to fight.

Don't laugh if we lay drunken on the battleground!

How many ancient warriors came back safe and sound?

Song of Liangzhou	(Wang Han) Tr. Hu

Delicious grape wine, luminous cups,

I wish to drink but the cither on horseback urges me to leave.

Laugh not if I'm drunk on the battlefield.

Ever since ancient times, how many soldiers came back from the war?

First of all, the translators differ from each other in rendering the title of the poem. Xu's "Starting for the Front" suggests a poetic "content" that is related to the life experience of a soldier who is sent away from his family to guard the frontier whereas Hu's "Song of Liangzhou" directly points out the literary "form" — "tz'u" （詞） and the geographical background — "Liangzhou" — of the poem. On the other hand, Xu translates the Chinese musical instrument 琵琶 into "pipa" whereas Hu renders it as "cither." The former attaches great importance to the Chinese cultural particularity embodied in such an specific term while the latter renders it with a corresponding instrument which brings forth certain ease in reading for foreign readers. What's more, Xu renders the pictorial, self-deriding scene depicted by

the characters 醉臥 (*tsuiwo*), which is lost in Hu's translation; conversely, the picturesque image 馬上 (*mashang*) suggestive of war or battleground is rendered as "on horseback" by Hu, which is missing in Xu's "summoned to fight."

　　As for the usage of personal pronoun, Xu adopts the first person plural "we" while Hu uses the first person single "I." "The difference in the adoption of personal pronoun not only decides the distance between the readers and the poem but it also affects the reader's psychological attitude towards the poem (余光中 2008 188). As a result, Xu's "we" tends to refer to a multitude of soldiers, suggesting a common fate shared by men living in the Tang Dynasty; Hu's "I," by contrast, tends to depict the personal lyrical emotion and private experience of the poet. "Moreover, the verb tense in translation also affects such a distance; for example, the distance is shorter if the translator adopts the present tense instead of the past tense" (余光中 2008 188). Both Xu and Hu adopt the present tense which brings about the urging exigencies of the parting scene to the reader.

As for the translation of poetic form, Xu adopts "aabb" English rhyming pattern in his translation: "night" of the first line rhymes with "fight" of the second line; "battleground" of the third line rhymes with "sound" of the fourth line. Besides, there are always twelve syllables in each line, which abounds in iambic meters. Hu, on the contrary, translates each line without fixed syllabic number, nor patterned rhymes (Hung *et al* 23).

Starting for the Front (Wang Han) Tr. Xu

W<u>i</u>th w<u>i</u>ne <u>of</u> gr<u>a</u>pes the c<u>u</u>ps <u>of</u> j<u>a</u>de w<u>ou</u>ld gl<u>o</u>w <u>a</u>t n**ight**,	a	(12)
Dr<u>i</u>nk<u>i</u>ng t<u>o</u> p<u>i</u>pa s<u>o</u>ngs, w<u>e a</u>re s<u>u</u>mm<u>o</u>ned t<u>o</u> f**ight**.	a	(12)
D<u>o</u>n't l<u>au</u>gh <u>i</u>f w<u>e</u> l<u>a</u>y dr<u>u</u>nk<u>e</u>n <u>o</u>n the b<u>a</u>ttlegr**ound**!	b	(12)
H<u>o</u>w m<u>a</u>ny <u>a</u>nc<u>ie</u>nt w<u>a</u>rr<u>io</u>rs c<u>a</u>me b<u>a</u>ck s<u>a</u>fe <u>a</u>nd s**ound**?	b	(12)

Song of Liangzhou (Wang Han) Tr. Hu

D<u>e</u>l<u>i</u>c<u>iou</u>s gr<u>a</u>pe w<u>i</u>ne, l<u>u</u>m<u>i</u>n<u>ou</u>s c<u>u</u>ps,	a	(9)
<u>I</u> w<u>i</u>sh t<u>o</u> dr<u>i</u>nk b<u>u</u>t the c<u>i</u>th<u>er</u> <u>o</u>n h<u>o</u>rseb<u>a</u>ck <u>u</u>rges m<u>e</u> t<u>o</u> l<u>ea</u>ve.	b	(16)
L<u>au</u>gh n<u>o</u>t <u>i</u>f <u>I</u>'m dr<u>u</u>nk <u>o</u>n the b<u>a</u>ttlefield.	c	(10)
<u>E</u>ver s<u>i</u>nce <u>a</u>nc<u>ie</u>nt t<u>i</u>mes, h<u>o</u>w m<u>a</u>ny s<u>o</u>ld<u>ie</u>rs c<u>a</u>me b<u>a</u>ck fr<u>o</u>m the w<u>a</u>r?	d	(16)

2.3. 閨怨　王昌齡

閨中少婦不知愁，
春日凝妝上翠樓。
忽見陌頭楊柳色，
悔教夫婿覓封侯。

Sorrow of a Young Bride in Her Boudoir	(Wang Changling) Tr. Xu

Nothing in her boudoir brings sorrow to the bride,

She mounts the tower, gaily dressed, on a spring day.

Suddenly seeing green willows by the roadside,

She sighs for her husband seeking fame far away.

Complaint in the Boudoir	(Wang Changling) Tr. Hu

The young lady in her boudoir ignores sadness,

In spring, with make-up, she climbs up her emerald pavilion.

Suddenly perceiving the color of the willows on the field path,

She regrets having encouraged her spouse to seek glory.

The English title of Xu's rendition seems to reveal too much to the reader, for it construes almost the content of the first line; Hu's title translation appears just as succinct and suggestive as the original Chinese title. With respect to poetic forms, such as meter, rhyme, and formal unity, Xu's translation resembles an English poem in formal accordance; Hu's translation, on the contrary, differs largely from the formal unity featuring in the original poem, for her syllabic numbers of each line range from 12 to 17, which amounts to a far cry from the original Chinese poetic formal rules that strictly govern the literary creation of the Tang poetry. On the other hand, the theme of the poem lies in the sorrow — regret or remorse to be precise — of the young bride, and such a regretful self-blame stems from her own aspiration, if not ambition. Therefore, the two Chinese characters 悔教 (*huichiao*), revealed at the ending line as a miniature poetic denouement, are highly critical in the interpretation of the poem. Xu's "She sighs for her husband seeking fame far away" does not actually render the true reason of her self-reproach; Hu's "She regrets having encouraged her spouse to seek glory," by contrast, points out why it is the bride herself and no one else that is to blame.

As for the construing of poetic form, Xu adopts "abab" English rhyming pattern in his translation: "bride" of the first line rhymes with "roadside" of the

third line; "day" of the second line rhymes with "away" of the fourth line. Hu, in converse, does not adopt any fixed syllabic number for each line, nor any rhyming pattern throughout the rendition of the whole poem.

Sorrow of a Young Bride in Her Boudoir (Wang Changling) Tr. Xu

N<u>o</u>th<u>i</u>ng <u>i</u>n h<u>e</u>r b<u>ou</u>d<u>oi</u>r br<u>i</u>ngs s<u>o</u>rr<u>ow</u> t<u>o</u> the br**ide**,	a	(12)
Sh<u>e</u> m<u>ou</u>nts th<u>e</u> t<u>ow</u>er, g<u>ai</u>ly dr<u>e</u>ssed, <u>o</u>n <u>a</u> spr<u>i</u>ng d**ay**.	b	(12)
S<u>u</u>dd<u>e</u>nly s<u>ee</u>ing gr<u>ee</u>n w<u>i</u>ll<u>ows</u> b<u>y</u> the r<u>o</u>ads**ide**,	a	(12)
Sh<u>e</u> s<u>i</u>ghs f<u>o</u>r h<u>e</u>r h<u>u</u>sb<u>a</u>nd s<u>ee</u>king f<u>a</u>me f<u>a</u>r aw**ay**.	b	(12)

Complaint in the Boudoir (Wang Changling) Tr. Hu

The y<u>ou</u>ng l<u>a</u>dy <u>i</u>n h<u>e</u>r b<u>ou</u>d<u>oi</u>r <u>i</u>gn<u>o</u>res s<u>a</u>dn<u>e</u>ss,	a	(12)
<u>I</u>n spr<u>i</u>ng, w<u>i</u>th m<u>a</u>ke-up, sh<u>e</u> cl<u>i</u>mbs <u>u</u>p h<u>e</u>r <u>e</u>merald p<u>a</u>v<u>i</u>l<u>io</u>n.	b	(15)
S<u>u</u>dd<u>e</u>nly p<u>e</u>rc<u>ei</u>ving th<u>e</u> c<u>o</u>l<u>o</u>r <u>o</u>f th<u>e</u> w<u>i</u>ll<u>ows</u> <u>o</u>n th<u>e</u> f<u>ie</u>ld p<u>a</u>th,	c	(17)
Sh<u>e</u> r<u>e</u>gr<u>e</u>ts h<u>a</u>v<u>i</u>ng <u>e</u>nc<u>ou</u>raged h<u>e</u>r sp<u>ou</u>se t<u>o</u> s<u>ee</u>k gl<u>o</u>ry.	d	(14)

2.4. 金谷園　杜牧

繁華事散逐香塵，
流水無情草自春；
日暮東風怨啼鳥，
落花猶似墜樓人。

The Golden Valley Garden in Ruins	(Du Mu) Tr. Xu

Past splendors are dispersed and blend with fragrant dust,

Unfeelingly the river runs and grass grows in spring.

At dusk in the east wind the flowers will fall just

Like "Green Pearl" tumbling down and mournful birds will sing.

The Gold Valley Park	(Du Mu) Tr. Hu

The gorgeous events dissipated with the perfumed dust,

Merciless is the flowing water, the grass heralds the spring for itself.

At dusk, birds sing plaintively in the east wind,

The fallen flowers are like the belle who threw herself from her high pavilion.

To begin with, Hu's translation for the English title of the poem seems to suffer anachronism, for the word "park," according *Merriam-Webster's 11th Collegiate Electronic Dictionary*, appeared in the 13th century, whereas the poet Du Mu lived from 803 to 852, that is, almost four century earlier than the appearance and coinage of the word "park." No wonder the image of a park surrounded by high-rise buildings in a modern or postmodern age sometimes emerges to upset our appreciation of the ancient Tang poem. By the same token, the employment of the word "gold" as an adjective seems too narrow as far as its possible connotations are concerned, for it signifies, according *Merriam-Webster's 11th Collegiate Electronic Dictionary*, "consisting of, relating to, or containing gold," which is tightly limited to the material signification of the word. On the contrary, Xu's adjective "golden" abounds in

such literary connotations as "lustrous, shining, superb, prosperous, flourishing, etc." based on the same reference. With the prepositional phrase "in ruins," Xu's English title "The Golden Valley Garden in Ruins" appears more suggestive of the poem's theme and historical ambience.

As far as the rendition of literary allusion is concerned, Xu's "Green Pearl" for 墜樓人 (*chuiloujen*) obviously needs a scholastic annotation, or foreign readers might feel at sea between the lines, for although the capitalization and quotation marks may pass muster with readers for nominalization, the historical allusion remains too complicated to be fully understood by Western readers. On the contrary, Hu's translation "the belle" for 墜樓人, though still in need of an annotation to elucidate the historical anecdote, appears more intelligible for foreign readers. On the other hand, Hu adopts the present tense to depict the flowers and birds of the Golden Valley Garden, which is highly acceptable; Xu, by contrast, adopts the future tense to construe the scene: "the flowers will fall" and "mournful birds will sing," which seems to aim at a prediction for something to take place in the future, instead of a depiction for a revealing historical scene lying right in front of the poet. In terms of diction, if we try to adhere to the textual fidelity regarding the English translation of the Chinese character 樓 (*lou*), we find that it is to a certain extent missing or simply slightly implied in Xu's English rendition; Hu, in stark contrast to Xu's implication, renders the character that signifies a certain kind of Chinese architecture into "pavilion," a word richly suggestive of the prosperity and promise of the Golden Valley Garden, which proves difficult to be kept for good along the ups and downs of a family past its prime.

Last but not least, Xu adopts the "abab" English poetic rhyming pattern in his translation: "dust" rhymes with "just"; "spring" rhymes with "sing."

However, there is no rhyming pattern at all in Hu's English translation. In a like manner, Xu manages to render each poetic line with exact twelve syllables in the English version whereas Hu construes the Chinese poem into English lines that range from eleven to nineteen syllables, which inevitably results in a prose-like style unfaithful to the original work of the Tang Dynasty.

The Golden Valley Garden in Ruins (Du Mu) Tr. Xu

Past splendors are dispersed and blend with fragrant d**ust**,	a	(12)
Unfeelingly the river runs and grass grows in spr**ing**.	b	(12)
At dusk in the east wind the flowers will fall j**ust**	a	(12)
Like "Green Pearl" tumbling down and mournful birds will s**ing**.	b	(12)

The Gold Valley Park (Du Mu) Tr. Hu

The gorgeous events dissipated with the perfumed dust,	a	(14)
Merciless is the flowing water, the grass heralds the spring for itself.	b	(18)
At dusk, birds sing plaintively in the east wind,	c	(11)
The fallen flowers are like the belle who threw herself from her high pavilion.	d	(19)

2.5. 登樂遊原　李商隱

向晚意不適，
驅車登古原。
夕陽無限好，
只是近黃昏。

On the Merry-Making Plain	(Li Shangyin) Tr. Xu

At dust my heart is filled with gloom,

I drive my cab to ancient Tomb.

The setting sun appears sublime,

But oh! 'tis near its dying time.

Ascending the Leyou Plain	(Li Shangyin) Tr. Hu

Towards dusk, feeling depressed,

In a chariot, I ascend the antique plain.

Infinitely beautiful is the sunset,

But evening is near.

Xu's English title "On the Merry-Making Plain" features in alliteration and in a revelation of the semantic significance of the locale. Hu's "Ascending the Leyou Plain" appears less "reader-friendly" as far as semantic apprehension for foreign readers is concerned; however, it retains the cultural subjectivity via the sound translation, namely transliteration, of the

geographical proper noun, a translation that in the long run functions to convey specific Chinese cultural elements across the ocean to the Western soil. As for the rendition of the two ending lines so famous across the Sinophone world that they are used as a Chinese idiom nowadays in our daily life, Xu's rendition possesses a poetic disposition that is revealed by a climactic exclamation in accord with English traditional poetic expression. Hu's diction, by contrast, seems too literal to fully foreground the overwhelming spontaneous feeling of the poet at a critical moment, if not a spot of time, in his life.

On the other hand, Hu's translation of the second line, "In a chariot, I ascend the antique plain," appears to be fair and square in the rendition of the semantic implication of the poem. Yet, Xu's translation of the second line, "I drive my cab to ancient Tomb," commits a significant mistake as far as the cultural and historical background of the Tang Dynasty is concerned. As a matter of fact, the "Leyou Plain" could be understood by the rulers of the Tang Dynasty as Taoist temples or an enclosed preserve, by the general people of the Tang Dynasty as a wonderful garden or a merry-making gathering place, by Princess Taiping（太平公主）as a personal pavilion or a private property, but it should not be understood as an "ancient Tomb," as rendered by Xu (簡錦松 2004). In other words, the translator takes such great effort to be faithful to observe the original rhyming pattern of the poem that he neglects the cultural and historical background regarding the landscape gardening and factual tourism that the Tang Dynasty witnessed.

As far as the poetic form is concerned, Xu adopts "aabb" English rhyming pattern in his translation: "gloom" of the first line rhymes with "tomb" of the second line to form a couplet; "sublime" of the third line rhymes

with "time" of the fourth, forming another couplet. Besides, there are constantly eight syllables in each line, which observes traditional English poetic rules and presents the whole poem in perfect iambic tetrameter. Hu, on the contrary, translates each line without fixed syllabic number or rhyming pattern (Hung *et al* 38).

On the Merry-Making Plain (Li Shangyin) Tr. Xu

At dust my heart is filled with gl**oom**,	a	(8)
I drive my cab to ancient T**omb**.	a	(8)
The setting sun appears subl**ime**,	b	(8)
But oh! 'tis near its dying t**ime**.	b	(8)

Ascending the Leyou Plain (Li Shangyin) Tr. Hu

Towards dusk, feeling depressed,	a	(7)
In a chariot, I ascend the antique plain.	b	(11)
Infinitely beautiful is the sunset,	c	(11)
But evening is near.	d	(6)

2.6. 遊子吟　孟郊

　　慈母手中線，
　　遊子身上衣。
　　臨行密密縫，
　　意恐遲遲歸。
　　誰言寸草心，
　　報得三春暉。

Song of a Roamer	(Meng Jiao) Tr. Xu

The threads in a kind mother's hand,

A gown for her son bound for far-off land,

Sewn stitch by stitch before he leaves

For fear his return be delayed.

Such kindness as young grass receives

From the warm sun can't be repaid.

The Traveler's Song	(Meng Jiao) Tr. Hu

The threads in a gentle mother's hand,

The garment on my body.

At the hour of parting, she puts numerous stitches in the sewing,

Fearing that the son would return with delay.

Who says that a leaf of grass

Can repay the spring sun?

The whole Chinese poem features a corresponding parallel syntactic structure from the first to the last line. As one can easily see, both Xu and Hu try to retain the parallel antithesis of the first two lines in their English translations. However, such an antithetic form as an artistic force belongs particularly to the Chinese language, a language that features in unique monosyllabism and consequently teems with monosyllabic character-to-character corresponding sentence patterns in a style of *belles-lettres* (張仁青 292). As a result, the attempt to keeping such a poetic syntax is abandoned by

both translators in the following four lines.

In our present time, the word "traveler" in Hu's title seems susceptible to misleading readers, due to its contemporary usage which is highly suggestive of commercial activities and tourist behaviors, whereas Xu's "roamer" sounds much more in keeping with the original Tang flavor. On the other hand, Xu's full stop at the end of the poem sounds like a firm statement while Hu's interrogative question mark rings vividly in readers' ears, constantly waiting for an answer from the readers.

As for the poetic conventions that govern the formal aspects of an ancient Chinese poem, we have to admit that Xu's English translation presents a well-trimmed form that attains a very high degree of identification with its original poetic aura. "As far as rhythm is concerned, the most striking difference between Chinese classical poetry and Western poetry lies in the fact that the former constantly sings whereas the latter tends to sing and talk, mingling narration with chanting" (余光中 2008 188). Yu's observation on the difference between Chinese and Western poetic traditions hold water, but Hu's English lines range from six to seventeen syllables, which inevitably results in an unfaithful prose-like style. "At the hour of parting, she puts numerous stitches in the sewing" seems to run too rampant on a page of ancient Chinese poetry; conversely, the short ending line "Can repay the spring sun?" appears straight-laced.

Xu adopts the "aabcbc" English rhyming pattern in his translation: "hand" of the first line rhymes with "land" of the second line; "leaves" of the third line rhymes with "receives" of the fifth; "delayed" of the fourth line rhymes with "repaid" of the sixth. Except the second line that carries ten syllables, there are throughout the poem eight syllables in the rendition of each

line. On the contrary, Hu does not translate the poem with any fixed syllabic number, nor any set formal rhyming pattern.

a Roamer (Meng Jiao) Tr. Xu

The threads in a kind mother's hand	a	(8)
A gown for her son bound for far-off land,	a	(10)
Sewn stitch by stitch before he leaves	b	(8)
For fear his return be delayed.	c	(8)
Such kindness as young grass receives	b	(8)
From the warm sun can't be repaid.	c	(8)

The traveler's song (Meng Jiao) Tr. Hu

The threads in a gentle mother's hand,	a	(9)
The garment on my body.	b	(7)
At the hour of parting, she puts numerous stitches in the sewing,	c	(17)
Fearing that the son would return with delay.	d	(11)
Who says that a leaf of grass	e	(7)
Can repay the spring sun?	f	(6)

2.7. 春怨　金昌緒

> 打起黃鶯兒，
> 莫教枝上啼。
> 啼時驚妾夢，
> 不得到遼西。

A Complaint in Spring	(Jin Changxu) Tr. Xu

Drive orioles off the tree,

For their songs awake me

From dreaming of my dear

Far off on the frontier!

Spring Regret	(Jin Changxu) Tr. Hu

I strike the orioles

To prevent them from singing on the branches.

Their songs wake me up from my dreams

And I can no longer join my spouse in Liaoxi.

In Xu's English translation, the first person single pronoun "I" is transformed into an imperative voice "drive" and its objective case "me." As a result, the semantic expression becomes highly succinct and flexible, that is, under total control of the translator's pen. This accounts for the poetic disposition depicted by just one single sentence that runs throughout the whole poem, which contributes to making the translator invisible — a quality that Robert Weschsler highly commends in *Performing without a Stage: the Art of Literary Translation*:

And while the translator is shouldering this responsibility and forcing literary works into forms they were never intended to take, he also lacks a stage to do it on. No one can see his difficult performance, except where he slips up. In fact, unlike all other performers, he is

praised primarily for not being seen, for having successfully created a palimpsest, two works, one on top of the other, an original and a performance, difficult to tell apart. (Weschler 5)

Notwithstanding the laudable translator's invisibility, such poetic disposition may suffer some dwindling in its complete comprehensibility of the poem for foreign readers, for the implied significance might not be easy for them to take hold of. Hu's English translation, though a bit prose-like, appears much easier and more crystal clear for foreign learners of Chinese literature to understand and follow. Thus, the two English versions laid out side by side are beneficial to foreign learners, for they work together to bring out the best in "formal beauty" and "semantic clarity" of the Tang poetry.

As far as poetic form is concerned, "Xu adopts the 'aabb' English rhyming pattern in his translation: the first and the second lines use 'tree' and 'me' as rhyme; the third and fourth lines use 'dear' and 'frontier' as rhyme" (Hung *et al* 46-47). Besides, there are neatly six syllables in each line throughout the poem. On the other hand, Hu translates each line without any fixed syllabic number or rhyming patterns.

A Complaint in Spring (Jin Changxu) Tr. Xu

Drive orioles off the tr**ee,**	a	(6)
For their songs awake m**e**	a	(6)
From dreaming of my d**ear**	b	(6)
Far off on the front**ier!**	b	(6)

Spring Regret (Jin Changxu) Tr. Hu

I strike the orioles	a	(5)
To prevent them from singing on the branches	b	(11)
Their songs wake me up from my dreams	c	(8)
And I can no longer join my spouse in Liaoxi.	d	(12)

2.8. 隴西行　陳陶

誓掃匈奴不顧身，
五千貂錦喪胡塵。
可憐無定河邊骨，
猶是春閨夢裡人。

The Riverside Battleground	(Chen Tao) Tr. Xu

They would lay down their lives to wipe away the Huns,

They've bit the dust, five thousand sable-clad dear ones,

Alas, their bones lie on riverside battleground,

But in dreams of their wives they still seem safe and sound.

Song of Longxi	(Chen Tao) Tr. Hu

Swearing to sweep the Huns at the risk of their lives,

The five thousand warriors, clad in brocade and sable,

Perished in the barbarian dust.

Alas, their bones on the bank of Wuding River,

Remain the men in the spring dreams of their spouses.

Again, Hu prefers to render original Chinese proper nouns with sound translation strategy that contributes to retaining Chinese cultural elements in the foreign language, in spite of poetic reader-friendliness for the alien learners. Examples: "Longxi" for 隴西 and "Wuding River" for 無定河. Xu, on the contrary, does not render the geographical proper noun 隴西 nor that of 無定河 in his English rendition. In consequence, the whole thematic picture as well as auratic ambience of the poem emerges immediately to the eyes of foreign learners under Xu's pen of rendition, in spite, of course, of some original Chinese geographical elements that might be trivial in appearance but not actually inessential in poetic nature.

As for poetic form in the English translation, "Xu adopts the 'aabb' English rhyming pattern in his translation: the first and the second lines use 'Huns' and 'ones' as rhyme; the third and fourth lines use 'battleground' and 'sound' as rhyme (Hung *et al* 51). In Hu's translation, there is no attempt of rhyme at all.

The Riverside Battleground (Chen Tao) Xu

They would lay down their lives to wipe away the H**uns**,	a	(12)
They've bit the dust, five thousand sable-clad dear **ones**,	a	(12)
Alas, their bones lie on riverside battlegr**ound**,	b	(12)
But in dreams of their wives they still seem safe and s**ound**	b	(12)

Song of Longxi (Chen Tao) Tr. Hu

Swearing to sweep the Huns at the risk of their lives,	a	(12)
The five thousand warriors, clad in brocade and sable, perished in the barbarian dust.	b	(21)
Alas, their bones on the bank of Wuding River,	c	(12)
Remain the men in the spring dreams of their spouses.	d	(12)

2.9. 回鄉偶書　賀知章

少小離家老大回，
鄉音無改鬢毛衰，
兒童相見不相識，
笑問客從何處來。

Coming Home	**(He Zhizhang) Tr. Xu**

I left home young and not till old do I come back,

My accent is unchanged, my hair no longer black.

The children don't know me, whom I meet on the way,

"Where'd you come from, revered sir?" they smile and say.

Return of the Native	**(He Zhizhang) Tr. Hu**

I left my home young, I came back old,

My native accent remains unchanged, but my hair turned gray.

The children recognize me not

And ask smiling: "Where from is the traveler?"

The original poem, composed of a total of 28 syllables, is rendered with 47 syllables in Xu's English translation and with 42 syllables in Hu's rendition. The natural poem written with great casual ease, just like those written by Tao Yuanming (陶淵明) and Paul Verlaine, proves to be the most tricky and delicate in terms of literary rendering. As usual, Hu does not place any importance to cater for the poetic rules and forms in her English translation. On the other hand, Xu's dealing with this poem, for the very first time, seems to lose his characteristic remarkable poetic translating style that features terseness and laconicism.

Therefore, influenced by Xu's persistent search for a style of succinctness and preciseness, the author of this research suggests that an English rendition with a total of some 30 syllables should tend to be much more in keeping with his theory on poetic translation.

As for the analysis of poetic form of their two translations, "Xu adopts the 'aabb' English poetic rhyming pattern in his translation: 'back' rhymes with 'black;' 'way' rhymes with 'say.' It is an iambic hexameter poem and there are twelve syllables in the first, second, and the third line. There are eleven syllables in the fourth line. In Hu's translation, there is no rhyming pattern at all" (Hung *et al* 54).

Coming Home (He Zhizhang) Tr. Xu

I left home young and not till old do I come b**ack**,	a	(12)
My accent is unchanged, my hair no longer bl**ack**.	a	(12)
The children don't know me, whom I meet on the w**ay**,	b	(12)
"Where'd you come from, revered sir?" they smile and s**ay**.	b	(11)

Return of the Native (He Zhizhang) Tr. Hu

I left my home young, I came back old,	a	(9)
My native accent remains unchanged, but my hair turned gray.	b	(14)
The children recognize me not	c	(8)
And ask smiling: "Where from is the traveler?"	d	(11)

3. Conclusion

Needless to say, no body wants to waste time admiring "a tapestry" "from the wrong side" (Landers 8). Nonetheless, the fact is that the tricky difficulty and complexity featuring the art of literary translation remains more often than not neglected, if not ignored, by the multitude of its readers. Hence, when it comes to translation, praxis and appreciation alike, one has to bear in mind the difficulty, which may be named as "inevitable inadequacy" that has been haunting translated literary texts since ancient times. Such an "inevitable inadequacy" is so vividly elucidated, if not lamented, by Douglas Robinson in his *Becoming a Translator*:

And no matter what else we do, we continue to immerse ourselves in cultures. Local cultures, regional cultures, national cultures, international cultures. Foreign cultures. Border cultures. School cultures, work cultures, leisure cultures; family cultures, neighborhood cultures. We read voraciously. We learn new foreign languages and spend weeks, months, years in the countries where those languages are natively spoken.

We nose out difference: wherever things are done a little differently, a word or phrase is pronounced differently or given a slightly unexpected twist, people walk differently, dress differently, gesture differently, we pay attention. Perhaps here is a cultural boundary that needs to be crossed. Why do we want to cross it? Because it's there. Because that is what we do, cross boundaries.

And maybe in some ultimate sense it's an illusion. Maybe cultural boundaries cannot be crossed. Maybe we are all locked into our groups, our enclaves, even our own skins. Maybe you have to be a man to understand men, and a woman to understand women; maybe you have to have light skin to understand people with light skin, and dark skin to understand people with dark skin. Maybe no one from the first world can ever understand someone from the third, and vice versa. Maybe all first-world "understanding" of the third world, male "understanding" of women, majority "understanding" of minorities is the mere projection of hegemonic power, a late form of colonialism. Maybe no one ever understands anyone else; maybe understanding is an illusion projected and policed by superior force.

Still, we go on trying to understand, to bridge the communicative gaps between individuals and groups. It's what we do. (Robinson 192-93)

This being said, the challenge of literary translation is yet left to be dealt with. "One of the most difficult concepts about literary translation to convey to those who have never seriously attempted it — including practitioners in areas such as technical and commercial translation — is that *how* one says

something can be as important, sometimes more important, than what one says" (Landers 7). In other words, the demanding and defying character of literary translation derives largely from "an embarrassment of cultural and literary riches," if we borrow the French philosophical term, *l'embarras des richesses*, coined by Voltaire as the title of his play, which brings forth an always already existent disadvantage that a literary translator is born to surmount:

> Consider some of the capabilities that the literary translator must command: tone, style, flexibility, inventiveness, knowledge of the SL culture, the ability to glean meaning from ambiguity, an ear for sonority, and humility. Why humility? Because even our best efforts will never succeed in capturing in all its grandeur the richness of the original. (Landers 8)

Despite such a disadvantage that besieges a literary translator, the joy of this art is to be tasted to the full. "Si l'on traduit tant, c'est aussi parce que la traduction ne cesse d'être une des activités intellectuelles les plus attrayantes" (Dobossy 214), not to mention the fact that translation contributes to "la meilleure compréhension et à l'estime mutuelle entre les peuples" (Dobossy 215). If the significance of translation has been fully confessed, we perhaps still need to trace back to John Dryden for the importance of translators: "the true reason why we have so few versions which are tolerable [is that] there are so few who have all the talents which are requisite for translation, and that there is so little praise and so small encouragement for so considerable a part of learning" (quoted from Weschler 6).

However, in regard to instructing foreign students the Tang poetry, we seem not short of reliable versions. Both Xu's and Hu's English translations for the same Tang poems are drawn on to lay bare all facets involved in the appreciation and learning of such an immortal literary heritage. By means of such a teaching strategy and method, foreign students learn not merely the art of the Tang poetry but also the art of literary translation. As far as title translation is concerned, Xu tends to render its semantic significance, which results in an easiness for foreign readers to grasp the theme of the whole poem. Hu, on the contrary, inclines to retain the proper nouns of Chinese geography or history in her English titles, which may bring about a certain obscurity regarding the thematic meaning of the poem for foreign readers at first sight, yet such a translation strategy might in the long run serve to construe and convey Chinese cultural elements, and resultantly Chinese subjectivity itself, in an alien text to a foreign land.

As for the rendition of poetic form in the English language, Xu makes every effort to adhere to English traditional poetic rules and skills that govern meter, rhythm, and particularly rhyming pattern. His accomplishment in such a pursuit is by and large highly satisfactory and respectful, except for some occasions where and when the translator happens to be carried a bit away by his persistent endeavour from certain textual aspects or poetic facets, which sometimes results in a hindrance setting back his constant enterprise of fidelity. "Translation is identifying one language with another language, literary translation is identifying one culture with another culture, and poetic translation is the identification of two languages in three different degrees of beauty" (許淵沖 1998 396). In fact, Xu's translation practice as shown in the present research reveals that he focuses *a priori* on the identification of the

semantic beauty in circumstances when and where it is almost impossible for him to attend to both musical as well as formal identification. After all, "English is a language composed of alphabetic words, and the musical beauty in an English translation may sometimes fare even beyond that embodied in an original Chinese poem; Chinese, on the contrary, is a hieroglyphic language, whose English translation consequently embraces a rare chance to fully and fairly retain the formal beauty made of Chinese characters engraved in the original poem" (許淵冲 1998 397).

For most occasions of this kind, Hu's translations come in to provide foreign readers with complementary textual elements that function to fill up the textual lacunas one comes across in reading the English translation. In short, literary translation, known as "the art of performing without a stage," is more often than not doomed to be "an art of approximation," that is, always in constant search of perfection, especially when compared with the original *chef-d'oeuvre*; two different versions in the English language for the same Tang poems therefore form a brisk and brilliant contrast and complement, which helps teachers bring out the best in instructing foreign students Chinese literature, for they — the two translators as well as the two translations — are brought to work hand in hand so as to shed full and fair light that quenches learners' tantalizing thirst while facing the beauty and charm of the Tang poetry.

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