



The Variation of Qu Yuan's Image in Hawkes' Translation of *Li Sao*

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Abstract

Chu Ci, as the first anthology of poems in the south of China, possesses unshakeable status in Chinese literature. In *Chu Ci*, the most popular poetry is *Li Sao*, written by Qu Yuan in the late period of the Warring States of ancient China. The translated versions have been repeatedly reprinted by different publishers. Hawkes' English version of *Li Sao* is widely regarded as a classic in the history of the translation of Chinese literature. This article analyzes the variation of Qu Yuan's image by collecting 88 Chinese expressions of Qu Yuan's image in the source text and relevant translation in Hawkes' English version. The results present that Qu Yuan is less loyal, more confident and less romantic in Hawkes' English version of *Li Sao*. We explore the various factors for the image variation in the translation, concerning the influence of the translator, the historic context of translation and the source text, the purpose of translation; in the meanwhile, Hawkes' translation will be evaluated.

Key words: Qu Yuan; *Li Sao*; Self-image; Hetero-image; Translation

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INTRODUCTION

Chu Ci, as the first anthology of poems in the south of China, possesses unshakeable status in Chinese literature. In *Chu Ci*, the most popular poetry is *Li Sao*, written by Qu Yuan in the late period of the Warring States of ancient China. It is considered an allegory of Qu Yuan's life. The first western translation of *Li Sao* was published by Fitzman in 1852, under the title *Li Sao and Jiu Ge*, which was brought out in the report of the Royal Academy of Science in Vienna. Since then, the translated versions have been repeatedly reprinted by different publishers. Hawkes' English version of *Li Sao* is widely regarded as a classic in the history of the translation of Chinese literature. Owing to an amount of translated versions, *Li Sao* has been regarded as a significant cultural landscape where more and more scholars are attracted by Chinese literature, humanity and history. Nevertheless, few scholars bring attention to the image of Qu Yuan in the process of translating *Li Sao*.

It is a very widespread tendency to attribute specific characteristics or even characters to different societies, races or nations (Leerssen, 2007). France is the birthplace of imagology. In 1947, *The French Writer and The German illusion* was published by Carre, which is perceived as the cornerstone of imagology. To begin with, imagology, working as it does primarily on literary representations, furnishes continuous proof in the field of poetical literature that national stereotypes are first and most effectively formulated, perpetuated and disseminated (Marius-Francois Guyard, 1978).

On the one hand, imagology explores the creation process and law of foreign mythology, on the other hand, it analyzes the social psychological background and deep cultural implication (Jean-Marc Moura, 1995). Imagology also attaches importance to the relationship between hetero-image and self-image, as well as the realistic function and influence of alien imagination (Jean-Marc Moura, 1995).

Johan Soenen and Nedret Kuran-Burcoglu (1995) produce a close analysis of the works of imagology in the framework of translatology, in which imagology continues to be involved in translation, led by their desire to seek new theoretical means of imagology.

Doorslaer and Flynn (2015) speak of the interconnecting of translation studies and imagology, extending images to translation in order to set in motion a re-articulation or differentiation, related to the translation of cultural images. In *the interconnecting of translation studies and imagology*, it shows the relationship of translation and hetero images. In this book, Emer O'Sullivan's Englishness in German translations of *Alice in Wonderland* opens the construction of hetero-images. She explores German constructions of Englishness, while tracing the history of the novel.

Xu Jun (2007) produces a significant analysis of the translation and reception of Anatole France--one of the most important French writers in the 20th century, as well as the construction of his image in China, in which the social and cultural contexts occupy a significant place in the shaping and dissemination of the image. This way of image-construction is usually determined by the cultural needs of the target country, and can be seen as a strategy of manipulation. Through translation and reconstruction in China, Anatole France, as hetero image, has formed his image and identity that is accepted by the Chinese readers. Tu Guoyuan and Li Jing (2012) use imagology as a theoretical point, exploiting the construction of Byron's image at the end of Qing Dynasty. They argue that Byron's hetero-image in China is linked to on the social ideal, the revolution and the political thought in the process of the national salvation. In addition, the female image in the translation of *Chuang-tzu* also attracts the attention of many scholars, who start to comment on the female image of ancient China in imagology, in order to imply the correct cognition of the history and culture in China (Jin Xiaohong, 2015).

Drawing on theorizations of imagology, this article aims to examine the variation of Qu Yuan's image in English version of Hawkes. In the meanwhile, we can explore the various factors for the image variation in the translation; in the meanwhile, Hawkes' translation will be evaluated.

1. THE SELF-IMAGES OF QU YUAN IN *LI SAO*

Qu Yuan is a respectable poet who loves motherland and native people in Chinese history. He is also an insightful politician who comes from the aristocracy of Chu.

From 1895 to the present, many Chinese and foreign scholars have made different comments on the image of *Li Sao*. Most of them believe that *Li Sao* is a long

lyric poetry with autobiographical nature, in which the character is the author, Qu Yuan. James Legge publishes the article under the title *Li Sao Poem and its Author*, in which he pays more attention to the exhaustive introduction to Qu Yuan. Legge (1895) argues that Qu Yuan is not enough intellectual to have any famous works.

One Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems, written by Arthur Waley, was originally published in 1929. Arthur Waley argues that no one can surpass Qu Yuan, because Qu Yuan expresses his true feelings.

Robert Payne develops an objective analysis to *Chu Ci* in his book with the title *The White Pony: an Anthology of Chinese poetry from the earliest times to the present day*. In chapter of Qu Yuan, it is more impersonal about Qu Yuan's achievements without exaggerated compliment and disparagement.

Gopal Sukhu(2012) produces a new translation: *The Shaman and the Heresiarch*, in which he argues that Qu Yuan bravely fights against the slanderers who are the members of the cabal.

A number of literary scholars devote their attention to the emotion of Qu Yuan. They produce a historical analysis of the change of Qu Yuan's emotion in *Li Sao*, in which the emotion is primarily linked to his frustrations in life, at the same time, they explore the patriotic feelings of Qu Yuan and note that the poem made a breakthrough to the romanticism of Chinese literature based on its imagination and fiction (Zeng Yalan, 1987; Chen Chongyu, 1989).

Qu Yuan is regarded as a lyric image with deep emotion and artistic background. Therefore, the image of Qu Yuan should encompass a much wider range, such as a versatile statesman with lofty ideals, a tenacious fighting warrior, a scholar with moral character and a poet with the love of motherland, from which, the artistic image of Qu Yuan appears (Ma Yan, 1999). There were some significant exceptions in the analysis of Qu Yuan. An example is the study of the core cause of Qu Yuan's tragedy, which is a particularly fruitful field of research on the aesthetic sense of Qu Yuan (Zhu Yan, 2007).

In recent years, the influence of the image of the character and the thoughts in *Li Sao* have been analyzed, including the poets' Confucianism and Legalists behind these images, as well as social law, historical law and political law (Wang Yue, 2009). The study also has been increasingly drawing attention to the things in *Li Sao*: the features of mountains, trees, birds and animals (Shi Zhongzhen, 2012).

The spirit of Qu Yuan occupies a central space in *Li Sao*: the depressive mentality is showed by Qu Yuan and cannot be eliminated under the background of his deep and persistent patriotism. One of the reasons for Qu Yuan's sorrow and anxiety seems to be the difficult political position and the conflict between himself and

his family, which has always been considered (Xiao Xiaoyang, 2015).

From above all, it presents that Qu Yuan is loyal and emotional in *Li Sao*. These self-images will lead to subsequent studies about *Li Sao* in Chinese literature. Nevertheless, few scholars bring attention to the hetero image of Qu Yuan in the process of translating *Li Sao*.

2. THE HETERO-IMAGES OF QU YUAN IN HAWKES' ENGLISH VERSION

2.1 The Less Loyal Qu Yuan

Qu Yuan has always been considered as a loyal poet and statesman in Chinese history. He loves his motherland and people. He has a born feeling of kindness and love to his native culture. The collection of loyal images in *Li Sao* and their translation are demonstrated as follow:

Table 1
Loyal Expressions and Translation

Chinese expressions	English translation
名余曰正则兮	The name he gave me was True Exemplar
字余曰灵均	The title he gave me was Divine Balance
纷吾既有此内美兮	Having from birth this inward beauty
来吾道夫先路	Come, let me go before and show you the way
纯粹	pure and perfect
耿介	glorious and great
恐皇舆之败绩	But only lest the chariot of my lord should be dashed
忽奔走以先后兮	I hurried about your chariot in attendance
及前王之踵武	Leading you in the tracks of the kings of old
中情	my true feelings
蹇蹇	loyalty
忍而不能舍也	Yet I will endure: I cannot give it up.
恐修名之不立	And I fear I shall not leave behind an enduring name
苟余情其信姱以练要兮	If only my mind can be truly beautiful
蹇吾法夫前修兮	I take my fashion from the good men of old
愿依彭咸之遗则	I will follow the pattern that Peng Xian has left
伏清白以死直兮	But keeping pure and spotless and dying in righteousness
固前圣之所厚	Such conduct was greatly prized by the wise men of old
苟余情其信芳	As long as I can keep the sweet fragrance of my mind
虽体解吾犹未变兮	I could not change this, even if my body were dismembered
鯀婞直以亡身兮	Kung in his stubbornness took no thought for his life
终然天乎羽之野	And perished, as result, upon the moor of his life
终不察夫民心	Because he will never look to see what is in men's hearts
汝何博謇而好修兮	Why be so lofty, with your passion for purity
依前圣以节中兮	I look to the sages of old for inward guidance
就重华而嗽词	Till I came to where Ch'ung Hua was and made my plaint to him
固乱流其鲜终兮	But foolish dissipation has seldom a good end
览民德焉错辅	He looks for the virtuous and makes them his ministers
夫孰非义而可用兮	Where is the unrighteous man who could be trusted
孰非善而可服	Where is the wicked man whose service could be used
世溷浊而不分兮	The muddy, impure world, so indiscriminating
好蔽美而嫉妒	Seeks always to hide beauty out of jealousy
余犹恶其佻巧	I hate him for an idle, knavish fellow
世溷浊而嫉贤兮	For the world is impure and envious of the able
好蔽美而称恶	And eager to hide men's good and make much of their ill.
怀朕情而不发兮	And the thoughts in my breast must all go unuttered
余焉能忍而与此终古	How can I bear to endure this for ever
汤、禹俨而求合兮	T'ang and Yü sought sincerely for the right helpers
摯、咎繇而能调	So I Yin and Kao Yao worked well with their princes
苟中情其好修兮	As long as your soul within is beautiful
又何必用夫行媒	what need have you of a match maker
兰芷变而不芳兮	Orchid and iris have lost all their fragrance
今直为此萧艾也	Now all transformed themselves into worthless mugwort
羌无实而容长	But he proved a sham bent only on pleasing his masters
苟得列乎众芳	He no more deserves to rank with fragrant flowers
委厥美而历兹	They have cast of their beauty and come to this

From table 1, some Chinese expressions are different from its English translation. For instance, in the source context “荃不查余之中情兮，反信讒而齎怒”，the pinyin of “中” sounds like Chinese character “忠”，and the meaning of “中” is loyalty. It is a common way of explaining an ancient character in Chinese literature. In the translation, “中情” means “my true feelings”. We can see clearly that Qu Yuan’s loyalty is deleted. Another example is the word “民心”，which illustrates

a loyal image of Qu Yuan with anxiety for the loss of good reputation. He would not like to pursue something meaningless in order to cater to the slanderers. In Hawkes’ translation, “民心” means hearts of common people, not just the loyalty of Qu Yuan.

2.2 The More Confident Qu Yuan

The expressions of confident images in *Li Sao* and Hawkes’ translation are demonstrated as follow:

Table 2
Confident Expressions and Translation

Chinese expressions	English translation
正则	True Exemplar
灵均	Divine Balance
内美	inward beauty
修能	outward adornment
不抚壮而弃秽兮	Gather the flower of youth and cast out the impure
何不改乎此度?	Why will you not change the error of your ways?
来吾道夫先路.	Come, let me go before and show you the way!
忽奔走以先后兮	I hurried about your chariot in attendance
謇吾法夫前修兮	I take my fashion from the good men of old
惟夫党人之偷乐兮	The fools enjoy their careless pleasure
岂余身之殒殃兮	I have no fear for the peril of my own person
及前王之踵武	Leading you in the tracks of the kings of old
不吾知其亦已兮	I will no longer care that no one understands me
苟余情其信芳	As long as I can keep the sweet fragrance of my mind
阽余身而危死兮	Though I stand at the pit’s mouth and death yawns before me
览余初其犹未悔	I still feel no regret at the course I have chosen
来违弃而改求	Come! I’ll have none of her; let us search elsewhere!
孰云察余之善恶	How can you show men the virtue inside you
吾令謇修以为理	And ordered Lame Beauty to be the go-between
诏西皇使涉予	I summoned the God of the West to take me over

Table 2 presents that English version has more confident translation than Chinese expressions. The confident image is produced by different structures of translation, implying sentence pattern (imperative sentence), phrase (adverbial clause of condition) and punctuation mark (exclamation mark).

In Hawkes’ translation, the image is different from in the original text. Through these imperative sentences: “Come, let me go”; “Gather the flower of youth and cast out the impure”; “Come! I’ll have none of her; let us search elsewhere!”; “And ordered Lame Beauty to be the go-between” and so on; it is presented that Qu Yuan is written as a western young man, who is decisive, confident and brave. In feudal society of China, the king is considered as the descendant of the honorable dragon, with sovereign power, as a result, common people are inferior to the emperor. It is impossible to have equal right among people. In Hawkes, Qu Yuan confidently tells the governor his opinions. Qu Yuan is imagined as a person

who is equal as the king. This is the new image of Qu Yuan in the English version.

Qu Yuan is described as a brave and confident person with criticism to the emperor and politicians of Chu. An example is the word “fools”. He laughs at his enemies for their foolishness and predicts that their future will be destroyed by themselves. English expressions strengthen Qu Yuan’s confidence. Another example is the usage of the rhetorical questions, like “Why will you not change the error of your ways” and “How can you show men the virtue inside you”. Last example is some phrases: “no fear”; “no longer”; “As long as”; “Though”; “no regret”, which express his confidence for his virtue. Despite the fact that these slanders sets Qu Yuan at odds with a society fallen into evil ways, he expresses his confidence to keep the country prosperous.

2.3 The Less Romantic Qu Yuan

The part analyzes romantic expressions and translation in *Li Sao* in the following table.

Table 3
Romantic Expressions and Translation

Chinese expressions	English translation
骐驎	brave coursers
玉虬	jade dragons
瑶台	jade tower
蛟龙	water dragons
崦嵫	Yen-tzū mountain
雷师	Thunder God
春宫	House of Spring
琼枝	jasper branch
琼靡	jasper meal
荣华	jasper flowers
佩纆	my belt
四极	four quarters
鸾皇	the bird of heaven
凤鸟	phoenixes
凤皇	phoenix
西皇	the God of the West
升皇	the heavens
鸞	phoenix-figured car
百神	the spirits
翳	came
旂	pennants
九天	ninefold heaven

As Table 3 shows, the poet's romantic imagination involves a wide variety of Chinese expressions, but in translation, there are only several formalistic words, like jade, dragon, jasper and phoenix, which construct an English image of the author, Qu Yuan. Hawkes pays more attention to literal translation, which is the reason the romantic image is omitted.

An example is the translation of “龙” and “凤”. In *Li Sao*, there are a wide variety of names of “龙” and “凤”, such as “玉虬”, “蛟龙”, “凤鸟”, “凤皇”, “鸾皇”. In Hawkes' translation, these words are translated into “jade dragons”, “water dragons”, “phoenixes”, “phoenix”, “the bird of heaven”. Another example is the name with traditional features, like “四极”, “春宫”, “琼枝”, “西皇”, “琼靡”. In the English version, they mean “four quarters”, “House of Spring”, “jasper branch”, “the God of the West”, “jasper meal”.

3. ANALYSIS OF FACTORS IN THE VARIATION OF QU YUAN'S IMAGE

There are too many factors to build Qu Yuan's image in translations. The study of image variation in literature needs encompass a much wider range of certain exotic reality, historical contextualization, acceptance of audience, as well as different purposes of reproduction of the image. All of those factors may influence authors and their attitude, which will provide various images in English versions.

3.1 The Influence of the Translator

The variation of Qu Yuan's image in English versions is linked to translators, concerning their understanding of the foreign nation and their attitudes towards the literature. The influence of the translators will be perceived as the important factor to analyze. Translators' source of information certainly exerts a considerable influence upon the reconstruction of images. Some scholars have started to comment on it, and they want especially to consider whether the writer has ever lived in the country with the original literature or make the use of second-hand materials (Wang Yajie, 2015). The latter will be limited by inadequate source in the research.

Therefore, translators are an essential element for the reproduction of Qu Yuan's image. Hawkes has been drawing attention to the source text research. In this 1951 doctoral thesis in Oxford University, Hawkes explores the problem of date and authorship of *Chu Ci*. His translations were published in 1959, including 63 poems from the 16 items of *Chu Ci*, on the basis of Wang Yi's annotation of *Chu Ci*. It is widely known as an English version with the most poems of *Chu Ci*.

We have long been aware that translators, as watchers of “the other” and re-creators of images, take up the core status in textual analysis. In the process of translating, a translator should bring attention to the image production of the translation. In order to restore the image in the highest degree, he/she will use certain source of information and the most reliable reference books.

The translator is asked to mediate the relations between translations and exotic cultures, which creates a particular difficulty for translators who never recognize its presence, meaning, and relative importance in the text of the target language before deciding how to proceed with the translation. For instance, a translator who is socially and culturally nurtured in the native nation will be inevitably intervened by the society's culture of the original image. Therefore, the cultural discrepancy may prove to be a remarkably vital factor for building a native imaginaries society of an exotic image.

3.2 The Historic Context of Qu Yuan and Hawkes

The historic context of the representing text or discourse is the factor that has an effect on Qu Yuan's image. In 280 B.C., the army of Qin attacked the State of Chu in where, people in Chu fought against Qin's force to get rid of the threat. For the reason, Qin even more frantically retaliated. Later, the state of Chu was defeated and its capital would fall. When the country is in danger, Qu Yuan tries to persuade the king in Chu to learn lessons from the mistakes through giving his own advice. But he is framed by people with different political views again. They try to stop Qu Yuan's reform and make up slander to isolate him. It creates a particular difficulty for the emperor who must recognize the current danger of Chu. Therefore, the only way to express his anger and melancholy is to write a wide variety of poems, like *Li Sao* for Qu Yuan.

For Hawkes, as the only foreign graduate student of national Peking University in 1948, he has paid attention to Qu Yuan's writings, which also laid the foundation for his later translation of *Chu Ci* (Waley, 1960). Although Hawkes has been involved in the research of *Chu Ci*, he grew up in The United Kingdom. Therefore, it is difficult for him to describe an image of Qu Yuan with anger and sadness close to the original text.

3.3 The Purpose of Translation

The purpose of translation is perceived as a factor that influences the construction of Qu Yuan. He has been drawing attention to the source text research, and analyzes a great deal of references of ancient scholars and modern *Chu Ci*. He aims to make foreign readers better understand the poem. The translation is suitable for the western readers and academic researchers.

Hawkes' translation is considered more accurate than the predecessors from a micro view, but it cannot attract readers from a macro view. One of reasons seems to be that it is difficult to understand Chinese traditional culture for western readers. The original text is regarded as a way to express Qu Yuan's morality, which will broaden readers' knowledge about Qu Yuan, at the same time, readers can better understand Qu Yuan's image, which is romantic, loyal and solitary. The strong spirit of Qu Yuan readers learn from can make them achieve success and build their own morality. What's more, most of readers are people who can understand Chinese very well, because *Li Sao* is written with ancient Chinese that is difficult to read. They have known long and rich history of China, which have a good effect upon their understanding of Qu Yuan. However, for foreign readers, the translation is the only way to understand Qu Yuan. They will bring attention to the dynamics between those images which characterize the other (hetero-images) and those which characterize one's own, domestic identity (self-images or auto-images).

4. EVALUATION OF HAWKES' TRANSLATION OF *LI SAO*

Canadian sinologist W. A. C. H. Dobson (1959) praises Hawkes as a new sinology professor at Oxford University, who has continued Oxford's remarkable tradition with an important translation, which is a good start. He comments that Hawkes subtly conveys some of the characteristics of the original work, which can be used for reading by common readers and for the study of professional scholars. Professor Harold Shadick (1959) comments on English version of Hawkes that sinology and literature students can benefit a lot from this excellent translation. Arthur Waley (1960) argues that Hawkes wisely takes into account the necessary reconciliation between ordinary readers and professional scholars.

K. P. K. Whitaker (1960) argues that Hawkes offers readers a credible and beautiful version of an ancient Chinese poetry. He considers Hawkes' translation as a milestone in the study of sinology. Yang Liansheng (1960-1961) describes Hawkes as the rarest of the translators. Hawkes is proficient in Chinese, traditional literature in China, as well as literary language of English. He argues that Hawkes' translation has the same value as *Shijing* of Waley. Chun-JoLiu (1963), a Chinese scholar at Columbia University, argues that Hawkes succeeds in capturing the beauty and sadness of another world for readers who are trapped in English. Joseph Needham (1996), an expert on Chinese science and technology history, notes that the translation of Hawkes is "beautifully translated". Hawkes' translation is also highly praised by the sinologist Michael Loewe, who is an expert studying Chinese Han Dynasty. He evaluates that Hawks' English version opens the eyes of foreigners, and readers can learn about Chinese culture that was unknown to anyone except Arthur Waley.

Li Yiyin (1992) argues that Hawkes pays attention to the meaning with rhythm and coherence in *Li Sao*. Guo Jianxun and Feng Jun (2015) argue that the translation of Hawkes gives western readers a systematic and unique perspective on the metaphor of love in *Li Sao*, which shows the features of the source text. Zhou Zhengdong and Zhang Zheng (2019) believe that Hawkes brings attention to western readers and interprets traditional Chinese culture images with common vocabulary. Guo Xiaochun and Cao Shunqing (2014) argue that Hawkes' translation of *Chu Ci* is significant in the western world, where the English version represents a peak. His translation and research are comprehensive, and he has his own special views on some issues.

CONCLUSION

With analyzing the researches of Qu Yuan's image and 88 corresponding translations in the source text and Hawkes' English version, the result shows that the loyal image of Qu Yuan is deleted, the confident image of Qu Yuan is added and the romantic image of Qu Yuan is omitted. In this thesis, factors of the variation of Qu Yuan's images are explored, including the influence of the translator, the historic context of Qu Yuan and Hawkes, the purpose of translation. In the meanwhile, Hawkes' translation is evaluated.

Imagology is perceived as an interdisciplinary field, which is primarily linked to a number of issues in literary works, concerning aesthetics of reception, semiology and ethno psychology. It is my contention that translators' contribution to images variation may prove to be a significant research for historical analysis of translation practices.

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