

## Poetry Translation: An Intertextuality Approach

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**Supported by** the Fundamental Research Funds for the Central Universities (SWU1209238); Social Science Funding Project of Hunan Province (2010w1h01).

Received 15 April 2014; accepted 26 June 2014  
Publish online 27 August 2014

### Abstract

The theory of intertextuality holds that symbols in any works are all related with other symbols not appearing in the present works. In light of intertextuality, translation process can be regarded as a cross-language intertextual activity. Poetry is a valuable legacy of a certain culture, in which intertextual signals are pervasive. It is imperative that intertextuality be introduced into poetry translation. In the present paper, the manifestation of intertextuality in poetry is concentrated on from two aspects of rhetorical intertextuality and non-rhetorical intertextuality. Finally, the translation techniques are explored in details.

**Key words:** Intertextuality; Poetry translation; Rhetorical intertextuality; Non-rhetorical intertextuality; Translation techniques

Wu, J. H., & He, Q. S. (2014). Poetry Translation: An Intertextuality Approach. *Studies in Literature and Language*, 9(1), 43-50. Available from: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/sll/article/view/5125>  
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/5125>

### INTRODUCTION

The end of 1960's witnessed the western society stepping into the postindustrial stage. The entire western cultures

evolved from the classical stage into the modern stage, and then the so-called "post-modern" stage. In such a background, the western literary theory began to gradually transit from Structuralism to Post-Structuralism. 1970's saw the transition extensively entering the whole areas of the humanities. As a trend of theoretical thought or a way of thinking, Post-structuralism has so far profoundly exerted great influence on the western academy and thought, among which the theory of intertextuality boasts itself as a prominent one.

### 1. THE THEORY OF INTERTEXTUALITY

The origin of intertextuality can be traced to the theory of Saussure, Bakhtin and T. S. Eliot, Julia Kristeva, the French semiotician, first puts forward the term intertextuality. She defined the term as the following:

Horizontal axis (subject-addressee) and vertical axis (text-context) coincide, bringing to light an important fact: each word (text) is an intersection of word (texts) where at least one other word (text) can be read. In Bakhtin's work, these two axes, which he calls *dialogue* and *ambivalence*, are not clearly distinguished. Yet, what appears as a lack of rigour is in fact an insight first introduced into literary theory by Bakhtin: any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another. The notion of *intertextuality* replaces that of intersubjectivity, and poetic language is read as at least *double*. (Allen, 2000, 39)

She defines the dynamic literary word in terms of a horizontal dimension and a vertical dimension. In the former "the word in the text belongs to both writing subject and addressee"; in the latter "the word in the text is oriented toward an anterior or synchronic literary corpus" (Allen, 2000, p.39).

Kristeva stresses that intertextuality consists in not only the syntagmatic relations between texts in space but also the paradigmatic relations between the present text and the previous text in time. It manifests the unification not only between space and time but also between diachronic relationship and synchronic one.

The theory holds that symbols in any works are all related with other symbols not appearing in the present works, that any text interweaves with other texts and that every text is the refraction of other texts. It is the absorption and transformation of other texts. They consult each other, involve each other, forming an opening network with limitless potentiality, which forms both an enormous radiating system of the text in the past, at present and in the future and an evolving process of literary symbols.

Literary works are constructed by codes, forms and systems deposited by previous works. The codes, forms and systems of culture as well as of other art forms function as guidance to the meaning of a literary work. Texts, whether they are literary or non-literary, are viewed by modern theorists as lacking in any kind of independent meaning. They are practically what theorists called intertextual. The act of reading, theorists claim, leads the readers to explore an enormous network of textual relations. To interpret a text, to quest its meaning is to trace those relationships. So reading becomes a process of traveling between texts. Meaning turns out to be something that exists between a text and all the other texts to which it refers and relates. Text thus falls into intertext.

Since it came into being, many western literature critics have been concentrating on it and explaining it from different angles, which has enlarged its connotation greatly. It has touched many areas of modern western literature theory, such as, Structuralism, Semiotics, Post-Structuralism and Western Marxism.

When it is involved in two kinds of different languages and cultures, this kind of intertextual relation is seldom understood by people in other culture systems due to lack of mutual understanding of cultural circles and becomes the obstacle in cross-language communication. The intertextual reference is just like the director who not only hides deeply behind the curtain of culture but also manipulates the linguistic signs acting onstage. Only recognizing the actors and neglecting the director will lead to mistranslation.

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## **2. LITERARY TRANSLATION PROCESS: A CROSS-LANGUAGE INTERTEXTUAL ACTIVITY**

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Literary translation, in the perspective of intertextuality, is a cross-language intertextual activity. In the translation process, the translator changes her role from the reader of the source text to the creator of the target text. As the source text reader, first of all, the translator must accomplish the process of “the completion of the given text”. Firstly, the translator should apprehend the source text and detect the intertextual signals within it with the help of her historical and cultural knowledge about the source language. Of all the intertextual signals, some are overt and easy to be determined such as citations

and imitation (pastiche); while some are covert (such as allusions, idioms and literary allusions) and the determination of them requires the reader be equipped with the profound cultural background knowledge of the source language. Having determined the intertextual signals of the source text, the translator should further trace back the pre-text of the source language from which the intertextual signals originate. The pre-text of the source language demonstrates the history and culture of its own. The pre-text of the source language can be divided into two categories: The first one is composed by the actual elements of language system such as word, phrase, clause and clause-sequence. The second is formed by units of semiotic system such as genre, discourse and text type.

In tracing an intertextual signal to its pre-text, the semiotic area being traversed is called the intertextual space (Hatim & Mason, 2001, p.134). In the intertextual space, the translator determines the connotation of the intertextual signals and reveals the connotative meaning and the deeper information of the source language which is concealed underneath the intertextual signals. Taking the intertextual signals as clues, tracing and detecting the relevant source text, the translator reaches the intertextual pattern on the two levels of actual elements of language system and units of semiotic system.

During such a process, the translator needs to resort to her own knowledge about the culture of the source language, through the curtain of source language culture, to chase down the “director” behind—The intertextual reference, rather than to confine her vision to the linguistic signs acting onstage.

Till now, being the source text reader, the translator has accomplished the process of “the completion of the text”. In the whole translation process, the translator shoulders the double missions of “the completion of the text” and “the interpretation of it”. In the latter, the translator needs to deal with the following four kinds of tasks: (a) To speak out what the author is intended to say, (b) to turn the complicated into the simple, (c) to turn the implied into the evident, (d) to abstract the universal meaning and rule from the concrete details (Yin, 1994, p.44). At the stage of “the interpretation of the text”, aiming at conveying the intention of the source language host text, in light of her own cultural background knowledge of the target language, the translator hunts for the intertextual signals in the pre-text of the target language, which could meet the translation purpose on these two levels: The actual elements of language system and units of semiotic system. Finally in the target language host text, the translator adopts the intertextual signals which could reflect the pre-text of the target language.

Now the two processes of “the completion of the text” and “the interpretation of the text” have been fulfilled by the translator and the intertextual signals of the source language are completely manifested in the target language, which will facilitate a successful translation.

### 3. MANIFESTATIONS OF INTERTEXTUALITY IN POETRY

Poetry rated as the intelligent crystallization of a certain nation is a valuable legacy of the culture. Tempered by thousands of years, the poetic language is concise, the meters are precise and the antithesis is neatly formed. In all nations, poetry could be regarded as the most superior aesthetic form, which almost covers the aesthetic nature of all art modes. Every text of the poem is interweaved by different systems (such as phonemes, words, images, meters and allusions), which constantly intermingle and clash with each other and break away from the others. By this means, they compose the ambiguity of intertextuality and proceed in endless cycles. Each time the intertextual reference makes the meaning of the text more wealthy and multivocal and the connotation more far-reaching.

Newly dressed, the poetry which is deep-rooted in its original culture goes over to a foreign nation. What they meet is the totally different culture and the new readers nurtured by it. Now for the readers, the intertextual knowledge of the classical poetry in the macro background unknowingly vanishes away which is deposited unconsciously in the native language environment. While for the translator, it becomes more important how to deal with the intertextual signal of the original text and how to make the reader comprehend the appearance and connotation of the original. So it becomes imperative that the theory of intertextuality be introduced into poetry translation.

In the present paper, manifestations of intertextuality in poetry could be explored from two aspects of rhetorical intertextuality and non-rhetorical intertextuality.

#### 3.1 Rhetorical Intertextuality

This kind of intertextuality is used to attain certain kind of rhetorical effect. It can further be classified into the following categories:

##### 3.1.1 Homophonic Pun

In the light of the characteristic of sound, it uses the same or similar pronunciation to obtain both the literal and implied meaning. The former is rather obvious while the latter implies the writer's intended meaning. Recognizing this kind of implied meaning calls on the reader to apply her intertextual knowledge. For example, Liu Yuxi's "Zhu Zhi Ci" (《竹枝词》) reads as:

杨柳青青江水平， 闻郎江上唱歌声。  
东边日出西边雨， 道是无晴还有晴。

Between the willows green the river flows along,  
My beloved in a boat is heard singing a song.  
The west is veiled in rain, the east basks in sunshine,  
My beloved is as deep in love as the day is fine.  
(Is he singing with love? Ask if the day is fine.)

(Xu, 1984)

Homophonic pun is applied in the last line. The word "晴" (which means the weather is fine) implies "情" (which means love). On the surface the author describes the weather (which is fine), in fact he alludes to the heroine's inside feelings. By this way, the author portrays most vividly the subtle and shy feelings of the heroine falling in love.

##### 3.1.2 Semantic Pun

This kind of pun is formed by polysemant. The different meanings the polysemant contains form the semantic pun.

For example, one line of the poem "On and On" (《行行重行行》) in *Nineteen Ancient Poems* (《古诗十九首》) reads as "相去日已远，衣带日已缓". The word "远" contains two meanings. It can refer to both the long distance and the time long ago. Mr. Wang Rongpei's version is:

Day by day, the farther you will go,  
Day by day, the thinner I will grow.

(Wang, 1997)

In this version, only the former meaning is manifested and the latter one is neglected, which is really a pity.

##### 3.1.3 Metonymy

It means the case of using the name of one thing for that of something else with which it is associated. Metonymy appears in Ouyang Xiu's "Die Lian Hua" 《蝶恋花》, which reads as:

庭院深深深几许， 杨柳堆烟， 帘幕无重数。玉勒雕鞍游冶处， 楼高不见章台路。  
雨横风狂三月暮， 门掩黄昏， 无计留春住。泪眼问花花不语， 乱红飞过秋千去。

The former half of Mr. Xu Yuanchong's version is:

Deep, deep the courtyard where she is, so deep  
It's veiled by smoke like willows heap and heap,  
By curtain on curtain and screen on screen.  
Leaving his saddle and bridle, there he has been  
Merrymaking. From my tower his trace can't be seen.  
(Xu, 1992)

In this poem, two cases of metonymy can be recognized. They are "玉勒雕鞍" and "章台路" respectively. The former refers to gorgeously decorated horses, which furthermore implies the heroine's husband who rides the horse. The latter refers to Zhang Tai Street of Chang'an City in the Han Dynasty, which later implies brothel. Here it refers to the husband's whereabouts. Without intertextual knowledge, it will be hard for the reader to understand the text.

##### 3.1.4 Idioms and Allusions

Since the poetry comes into being, the history of application of allusion is of long-standing. Especially in

the Chinese culture, the classical works have the greatest esteem. So the application of allusions is universal in Chinese classical poetry. Allusions are the cream of national culture. Concise and comprehensive as they are, idioms and allusions bear enormous historical and cultural information. This leads to the full application of them in poetry, a type of literature which has rigid requirements on the form. For example, Li Shangyin's "Jin Se" (《锦瑟》) reads as:

锦瑟

锦瑟无端五十弦，一弦一柱思华年。  
庄生晓梦迷蝴蝶，望帝春心托杜鹃。  
沧海月明珠有泪，蓝田日暖玉生烟。  
此情可待成追忆？只是当时已惘然。

Mr. Xu Yuanhong's version reads as:

The Sad Zither  
Why should the zither sad have fifty strings?  
Each string, each strain evokes but vanished springs:  
Dim morning dream to be a butterfly;  
Amorous heart poured out in cuckoo's cry.  
In moonlit pearls see tears in mermaid's eyes;  
From sunburnt emerald let vapor rise!  
Such feeling cannot be recalled again;  
It seemed long-lost e'en when it was felt then.  
(Xu, 2010)

In such a short poem of fifty-six Chinese characters, several allusions can be found. They are: (a) Emperor Qin once ordered the maiden to play the zither with fifty strings. The maiden cried and Emperor Qin couldn't stop her. So the Emperor split the zither and only twenty-five strings remained (from 《汉书·郊志》); (b) I, by the name of Zhuang Zhou, once dreamed that I was a butterfly, a butterfly fluttering happily here and there (from 《庄子》); (c) Emperor Wang, the emperor of ancient Shu Kingdom (Si Chuan Province of nowadays) was named Du Yu. After dying, his soul turned into a bird named cuckoo; (d) once a shark-man lived in the South Sea like a fish. His tears could turn into pearls (from 《博物志》); (e) Lan Tian Mountain lies thirty Li southeast to Chang An Country. It produces jade. So Lan Tian Mountain is named Jade Mountain. (from 《长安志》) The allusions act as the keys to understanding the connotation of the poem.

### 3.1.5 Parody

It is the transformation of the original text either to reflect the original text in a distorted way or to cite the original text in order to gain the effect of jocosity.

For example, Huang Tingjian's "王侯须若缘坡竹，哦诗清风起空谷" (from 《次韵王炳之惠玉版纸》) parodies Wang Bao's "离离若缘坡之竹" (from 《僮约》). Huang compares Wang Bingzhi's beard to the

breeze in the valley to gain the humorous effect. Another poem of Huang reads as "公诗如美色，未嫁已倾城" (from 《次韵刘景文登邺王台见思》), which breaks the tradition formed by Li Yannian, who applies "倾国、倾城" to refer to beauty in his poem "Jia Ren Ge" (《佳人歌》). Thus a humorous effect is also obtained.

## 3.2 Non-Rhetorical Intertextuality

In this kind of intertextuality, no figures of speech can be applied to gain the rhetorical effect.

### 3.2.1 Platitude

When certain allusion or idiom is firstly cited, it will give readers a fresh feeling. As an intertextual signal, it could be easily recognized. Once widely applied, it turns to be a relatively fixed usage which does not produce the striking effect any more. As time marches on, its status as an intertextual signal will be forgotten gradually. For example, one of Huang Tingjian's poems reads as:

竹枝词二首

撑崖拄谷蝮蛇愁，入箬攀天猿掉头。  
鬼门关外莫言远，五十三驿是皇州。

Two lines of another Huang's poem read as:  
送张沙河游齐鲁诸邦，

.....  
囊无孔方兄，面有在陈色。  
.....

"鬼门关，孔方兄" are the alternative names of death and money used by ancient Chinese people. After repeated application, they no longer have the fresh meaning and become platitudes.

### 3.2.2 Citation

It refers to the case that the past text appears in the present text. According to the degree of overtness, it could be further classified into overt citation and covert citation.

#### 3.2.2.1 Overt Citation

It is the situation in which the past text is directly cited in the present text. And the cited text could be easily recognized. For example, some lines of Cao Cao's "Duan Ge Xing" (《短歌行》) read as:

青青子衿，悠悠我心。  
.....  
呦呦鹿鸣，食野之苹。  
我有嘉宾，鼓瑟吹笙。

The first two lines of "青青子衿，悠悠我心" are straightly cited from *the Book of Poetry* (《郑风·子衿》). And the last four lines of "呦呦鹿鸣，食野之苹。我有嘉宾，鼓瑟吹笙。" are also directly quoted from *the Book of Poetry* (《小雅·鹿鸣》).

#### 3.2.2.2 Covert Citation

It refers to the case in which the past text is quoted but the quoted text undergoes the distortion and the trace

of citation is not evident. The recognition of it requires profound intertextual knowledge of the reader.

For example, one of Cao Cao's poems reads as, "既无三徙教, 不闻过庭语。(《善哉行》其二)". The first line quotes the story of Mencius's mother, who moves her house three times in order to find a suitable studying location for Mencius. The second line cites the allusion of Confucius. Another poem of Cao Cao reads as, "慊慊下白屋, 吐握不可失。(《善哉行》其三)". These two lines cite the story of Zhou Gong, who ceases to bath and disgorges chewing food three times during one meal to catch the time in order to welcome the grass-roots heroes who come to his place for a shelter.

### 3.2.3 Pastiche

In the imitating process of poetry, some poems imitate the previous text or even the structure of previous text. For example, one line of Huang Tingjian's "Yun Tao Shi" (《云涛石》) reads as "诸山落木萧萧夜", which is considered to imitate the line "无边落木萧萧下" by Du Fu. In the same way, the line of "野火烧不尽, 春风吹又生" by Bai Juyi is assumed to imitate the structure of "海风吹不断, 江月照还空" by Li Bai. And one of Li Bai's poems reads as:

#### 登金陵凤凰台

凤凰台上凤凰游, 风去台空江自流。  
吴宫花草埋幽径, 晋代衣冠成古丘。  
三山半落青天外, 二水中分白鹭洲。  
总为浮云能蔽日, 长安不见使人愁。

On Climbing in Nan-King to the Terrace of Phoenixes  
Phoenixes that played here once, so that the place was named for them,

Have abandoned it now to this desolate river;  
The paths of Wu Palace are crooked with weeds;  
The garments of Chin are ancient dust.  
... Like this green horizon halving the Three Peaks,  
Like this Island of White Egrets dividing the river,  
A cloud has arisen between the Light of Heaven and me.

To hide his city from my melancholy heart.

(Anonymous Author, 1984)

The above poem could be thought to wholly imitate the structure of the following one by Cui Hao.

#### 登黄鹤楼

昔人已乘黄鹤去, 此地空余黄鹤楼。  
黄鹤一去不复返, 白云千载空悠悠。  
晴川历历汉阳树, 芳草萋萋鹦鹉洲。  
日暮乡关何处是? 烟波江上使人愁。

Home Longings

Here a mortal once sailed up to heaven on a crane,  
And the Yellow-Crane Kiosk will for ever remain;  
But the bird flew away and will come back no more,  
Though the white clouds are there as the white clouds of yore.

Away to the east lie fair forests of trees,  
From the flowers on the west comes a scent-laden breeze,  
Yet my eyes daily turn to their far-away home,  
Beyond the broad River, its waves, and its foam.

H. A. Giles. (Shis, 1982)

The two poems could be regarded as equally matched. The first two couplets of the first version, which have a more profound meaning than that of the second version, express the author's feeling by describing the scene. The last couplet of the first version, which has a far-reaching connotation, indicates the author's care about his nation as well as his own future. As for the verve, Li Bai's version is inferior to Cui Hao's.

### 3.2.4 Untraceable Code

The appropriate application of allusion will add connotation to the poem. Once these intertextual signals are referred to, the covert information hidden behind them will naturally be reminded of. But the trend of applying rarely used and strange allusion will turn out to be side effect. As the intertextual knowledge on this kind of allusion is not universally known, the understanding of it turns out to be a problem. T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* can serve as an example.

In the 220-221<sup>th</sup> lines of the third chapter of "the fire sermon" of *The Waste Land*, Eliot applies the picturesque "past" to set off the "present" and writes the following two lines:

At the violet hour, the evening hour that strives  
Homeward, and brings the sailor home from sea.

Eliot hopes that the very sight of these two lines will remind readers of the lines of Sappho, a poet of ancient Greece, which are applied to sing praises of Venus. But Sappho's original poem goes so far from Eliot's version that the ordinary readers could scarcely see the connection between them. Even Eliot himself confesses in the note, "This may not appear as exact as Sappho's lines, but I had in mind the 'longshore' or 'dory' fisherman, who returns at nightfall" (North, 2001). For the ordinary readers if the notes are not attached (It is just the truth. When Eliot first wrote the poem, he didn't give any notes. Only before the publication of it, he was compelled to attach 52 notes.), it is impossible for them to recognize this kind of intertextual signals. So this sort of intertextual signals could approximately be regarded as untraceable code.

## 4. TRANSLATION TECHNIQUES: AN INTERTEXTUALITY APPROACH

The intertextual references usually bear rich cultural color. Recognizing and dealing with them require rich bilingual cultural knowledge. In the translation process, the following techniques are recommended.

#### 4.1 Literal Translation and Transliteration

This technique is applied when there is no corresponding expression in the target language. It can not only introduce foreign culture and new expressions into the target language but also smooth the communication between nations. The intertextual reference usually reflects the cultural psychology and tradition of a nation. It is always cultural-specific. When there is no equivalent expression in the target language, this strategy will be recommended. For example, Jin Changxu's "Chun Yuan" (《春怨》) reads as:

打起黄莺儿，莫教枝上啼。  
啼时惊妾梦，不得到辽西。

Witter Bynner's version is as the following:

Drive the orioles away,  
All their music from the trees...  
When she dreamed that she went to Liao-hsi  
To join him there, they wakened her.

(Lü, 2002)

In the original Chinese version, "辽西" serves as an intertextual signal. The English culture lacks such an expression. So Witter Bynner translates the source language intertextual signal by means of transliteration. But the cultural information of the source language will inevitably be lost to some extent. For foreign readers not familiar with the source language culture, transliterating the source language intertextual signal will make them puzzled. On the other hand, this strategy brings new cultural information to the target language. When the target language reader get used to this kind of expression, they obtain more knowledge of the source culture. So it is suggested that this strategy should be accompanied by the strategy of elaboration and explication when a source language intertextual signal is firstly introduced to the target language. Therefore, at the bottom of the poem, a note should be added. "Note: Liao-hsi refers to the frontier of ancient China."

#### 4.2 Cultural Substitution

This technique means substituting the intertextual signals of the source language with a culture-specific expression of the target language. Maybe the expression in the target language doesn't share the same referential meaning with the intertextual signals in the source language, whereas what the former means to the target language readers is just as what the latter to the source language readers. For example, several lines of Shakespeare's Hamlet (from Act 3, Scene 2) read as:

Full thirty times hath Phoebus' cart gone round  
Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orb'd ground,  
And thirty dozen moons with borrow'd sheen  
About the world have times twelve thirties been,  
Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands  
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

Mr. Bian Zhilin's version is as the following:

金乌流转，一转眼三十周年，  
临照过几番沧海几度桑田，  
三十打“玉兔”借来了一片清辉，  
环绕过地球三日又六十回，  
还记得当时真个是两情缱绻，  
承“月老”作合，结下了金玉良缘。

(Bian, 2000)

In the Chinese version, the gods of the ancient Greek and Roman myth (Phoebus, Neptune, Tellus, Hymen) are translated into Chinese-specific names respectively (金乌, 沧海, 桑田, 月老). The Chinese version seems quite natural and appropriate. No trace of translation could be easily found. The translated version is likely to make the same impact on the Chinese readers as the original to the English readers.

This technique can be classified into domestication in the traditional translation theory. It gives the reader a concept which she can identify, something familiar and approaching. Its main disadvantage is that it offers false information to the target language readers and obliterates the difference between the two cultures. As a result, it hinders the culture communication between nations. Having read the translated version, the Chinese readers will take for granted that "Phoebus" of the West equals to "金乌" of the east and "Hymen" equals to "月老" and so on. They needn't take the trouble of looking up the dictionary to find out what "Hymen" means and what differences lie between "Hymen" and "月老". Culture differences between nations are completely ignored.

#### 4.3 Elaboration and Explication

This technique is usually adopted, when in the target language there doesn't exist the equivalent expression of the source language. Having been repeatedly employed, the intertextual reference obtains a rather fixed culture connotation, which is quite strange for readers in a different culture environment. So the translated version calls upon elaboration and explication. This technique mostly appears in the translation process of words containing culture connotation, untraceable codes and puns etc..

The following case can serve as an example. The last two lines of Wang Zhihuan's "Liang Zhou Ci" (《凉州词》) read as: "羌笛何须怨杨柳，春风不度玉门关。" There are many English versions (Jiang, 2003, p.171):

(a) Why need my Mongol flute bewail the elm and the willow missed?

Beyond the Yumen pass the breath of spring has never crossed. (Tr. Fletcher)

(b) Why should a Tartar pipe mourn for willow trees?

Spring wind seldom crosses Yumen Pass. (Tr. Herdram)

(c) Why should the Mongol flute complain no willows grow?

Beyond the Pass of Jade no vernal wind will blow.

(Tr. Xu Yuanchong)

(d) From a flute the Willow Songs wafts forth, but why?

Beyond Jade Gate Pass, spring winds will never climb.

(Tr. Zhang Tingchen & Wilson)

The term “杨柳” calls upon different interpretations. What on earth does the term mean in the original? Its intertexts may give some indications:

(a) 昔我往矣，杨柳依依。今我来思，雨雪霏霏。  
(《诗经·小雅·采薇》)

(b) 上马不捉鞭，反折杨柳枝。

蹀座吹长笛，愁杀行客儿。(《乐府·折杨柳歌辞》)

(c) 谁家玉笛暗飞声？散入春风满洛城。

此夜曲中闻折柳，何人不起故园情。(李白《春夜洛城闻笛》)

(d) 闺中少妇不知愁，春日凝妆上翠楼。

忽见陌头杨柳色，悔教夫婿觅封侯。(王昌龄《闺怨》)

(e) 渭城朝雨浥轻尘，客舍青青柳色新。

劝君更尽一杯酒，西出阳关无故人。(王维《渭城曲》)

In classical Chinese literature, willow twigs (杨柳) are regarded as reminders for nostalgia or missing one's friends. The possible reason may be that the Chinese pronunciation of “柳” is homophonous with “留” (which means staying or remaining with somebody). In ancient China, it was ancient custom that willow twigs were bestowed to those who were going afar. So willow twigs were tinged with a color of sadness or sentiments. The images of willow twigs were repeatedly applied and carried on. This images created by the predecessors became “collective unconsciousness” firmly settling on the descendants' minds. In other words, “willow twigs (杨柳)” have become a term connoting sentimental longing for home or friendship. Later on, this culture-loaded image was composed into a piece of classical touching music called “Willow Songs”.

Among these versions, the last one does well in preserving the original meaning. Moreover, considering from the angle of cross-cultural communication, the translators add two footnotes.

\* Willow Song: A sad tune traditionally played at parting. As tokens of enduring thought, willow branches were often presented to those who were departing.

\* Jade Gate Pass: In Dunhuang, Gansu Province. On the Edge of the great desert, this was the gateway to the Central Asia: an unlikely place for farewells, or willow branches.

In the first three versions, no footnotes or annotations are added elsewhere by the translators. So for the English readers not familiar with Chinese culture, the sense of homesickness can't be perceived.

#### 4.4 Omission

Generally speaking, an intertextual signal bears both literal meaning and deep cultural information. During the translation process, the latter has to be omitted and only the former is preserved in some cases. Liu Chenweng's (刘辰翁) “Mo Yu Er” (《摸鱼儿》) reads as,

少年袅袅天涯恨，长结西湖烟柳。休回首，但细雨断桥，憔悴人归后。东风似旧。问前度桃花，刘郎能记，花复认郎否？

“刘郎” here is an intertextual signal. On the surface it refers to the author himself while in the deep structure it means Liu Chen (刘晨) of the Eastern Han Dynasty, who once unexpectedly met the fairy maiden. The author uses the allusion of “刘郎” to indicate his personal dissolute life in youth which is unbearable to recall. The last four lines of Mr. Xu Yuanchong's version are as the following:

As before blows the eastern breeze.

I ask the old peach tree

I recognize, if it still recognizes me.

(Xu, 1992)

Here “刘郎” is translated into “I”. The deep cultural information of the intertextual signal is lost in the translated version and only the surface meaning is preserved. This technique can be regarded as an expedient in the intertextual signal translation process. It is therefore advisable to use this technique as a last resort.

#### 4.5 Deep Connotation

The intertextual signal is no longer preserved in the translated version and only the deep connotation of the intertextual signal is taken into consideration. This technique is usually applied in the translation of metonymy. For example, Meng Jiao's “Gu Bie Li” (《古别离》) reads as:

欲去牵郎衣，郎今到何处？

不恨归来迟，莫向临邛去。

“临邛” here is an intertextual signal. It is Qiong Lai County (邛崃县) of Si Chuan Province of nowadays. It was here that Sima Xiangru, the famous literati of the Han Dynasty, met, knew and married Zuo Wenjun. Here “临邛” indicates the place where the heroine's husband may fall in love with others. Fletcher's version is as the following,

You wish to go, and yet your robe I hold.

Where are you going- tell me, dear- to-day?

Your late returning does not anger me,

But that another steal your heart away.

(Lü, 1980)

As the source language intertextual signal is no longer exhibited in the target language and only the deep connotation is manifested, this technique favors the target language readers who are not so familiar with the source

language culture. At the other aspect, the conciseness and covertness of the source language are not manifested in the target language. Furthermore, this technique does little to introduce the source language culture to the target language.

By the above-mentioned techniques, the target language readers who are not familiar with the source language culture could get the deep connotation of the source language intertextual signals as much as possible.

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## CONCLUSION

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In conclusion, in order to fully understand the deep connotation of the poetry of the source language, target language readers should be equipped with abundant intertextual knowledge of the source language both in the actual elements of language system and in units of semiotic system. The target language readers should strengthen their socio-cultural and cross-cultural linguistic competence and get more sociological knowledge concerning the social and cultural background, social norms and cultural difference. By these ways, they can improve their own intertextual knowledge of the source language and get rid of the culture barrier.

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