

“Cooing and Wooing”: The Re-expression of the Phonetic Elements in the English Translation of Book of Poetry from the Perspective of Translation Aesthetics

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Abstract: This paper analyzes the aesthetic characteristics of the *Book of Poetry* and Xu Yuanchong's translation of it, and how Zhu Guangqian's theory of translation aesthetics applies to Xu's translation. The paper focuses on the beauty of phonetic elements in conveying aesthetic information, specifically the use of rhyme and rhythmic musicality. It examines various forms of rhyme used in the *Book of Poetry*, including rhyme in single and double lines, cross-rhyme, and rhyme in the first and second lines followed by the third and fourth lines. Xu's translation is praised for its preservation of the musicality of the original text, especially the rhythmic musicality, and his use of onomatopoeia. The paper argues that Xu's translation philosophy is complementary to Zhu's theory of translation aesthetics, emphasizing the pursuit of beauty and artistry of the translation based on faithfulness to the original text. The analysis sheds light on the unique charm and profound ideas of the *Book of Poetry* and how they are conveyed through the beauty of language structure.

Keywords: translation aesthetics, *Book of Poetry*, Xu Yuanchong

1. Introduction

Book of Poetry is one of the earliest collections of poetry in China and the beginning of ancient Chinese poetry. It includes more than 300 poems from the upper antiquity to the Western Zhou period. The aesthetic characteristics of the original text are reflected in its form and content. Formally, *Book of Poetry* employs a wealth of rhetorical approaches, such as couplets, superimpositions, and prose, making the poems both phonetically and visually aesthetically appealing. In terms of content, the poems in *Book of Poetry* reflect various aspects of society at the time, including customs, manners, politics, and warfare, conveying profound philosophies in the form of poetry, showing the attitudes and values of life during that time[1].

Xu Yuanchong is a famous Chinese translator and educator, who has contributed a lot to the target text. The aesthetic characteristics of Xu Yuanchong's translation are mainly reflected in the fidelity and re-creation of the original text. He strives to be faithful to the original text in his translation, while at the same time not adhering to the literal meaning and focusing on the formal beauty of the poem and the conveyance of its meaning[2]. Xu's aesthetic insights are mainly reflected in his unique views on the aesthetics of poetry. He believed that the aesthetics of poetry is

consist of three main aspects: the beauty of mood, the beauty of form, and the beauty of sound and rhyme. In the process of translation, Xu focused on conveying the spiritual connotation of the original text while maintaining the formal and phonetic beauty of the poetry[3]. His translation philosophy emphasizes respect for the original text and pursues the re-creation of the translation, aiming to convey the beauty and philosophy of the poetry to a wider audience. The harmony and balance between the beauty of meaning, sound, and form in his translation practice is the best expression of traditional Chinese aesthetic thought. Xu's translation language is beautiful and concise, and he strives to maintain the rhythm and phonetic beauty of the original text in the translation.

2. Background

Xu Yuanchong is a famous Chinese translator whose translations cover a wide range of literature, philosophy, history, and art, and he is especially renowned in the field of poetry translation. The Book of Poetry is an important part of ancient Chinese literature and is the source and cornerstone of Chinese poetry. Xu Yuanchong's translation of the Book of Poetry, which focuses on preserving the translation and beauty of the original text and uses a variety of translation techniques and tactics to convey the mood and emotions of the original poems, has been widely acclaimed both at home and abroad, providing readers with a better understanding and appreciation of the artistic beauty of the Book of Poetry.

This section presents background information on the research topic and the current state of relevant research, providing readers with a comprehensive basis for understanding the research topic. Background information on Xu's version and the aesthetics of translation is an important part of this dissertation. The introduction of Xu Yuanchong's translation of the Book of Poetry and translation aesthetics will provide a better understanding of his translation philosophy and practice, and provide a foundation and background for the subsequent content of this dissertation.

2.1. The Source Text and the Target Text

Academically speaking, translation aesthetics is defined by modern literary researchers as a semiotic feature that redefines universal justice for the possible structures of translation and seeks political attention for them[4]. The aesthetics of translation is a relatively new concept and is not distinguished by any school of thought. Some Chinese scholars have transformed and subdivided the concept of translation aesthetics in Chinese academia. Some scholars are more concerned with its function, others with its form and still others with the culture involved[5][6]. They each focus on different aesthetic issues in the translation process, such as the formal beauty, contextual beauty, and cultural connotation of the translated text[7]. Their common goal is to explore ways to achieve the transmission and promotion of the aesthetic value of the original text in the translation process[8]. This paper will be based on the definition of translation aesthetics by some Chinese scholars rather than the definition of translation aesthetics in the literary world.

Zhu Guangqian is a famous Chinese aesthetician and translator, and his theory of translation aesthetics is of high academic value. Zhu advocates that translation shall focus on the aesthetic value of the translation, emphasizing the pursuit of beauty and artistry of the translation based on faithfulness to the original text. His aesthetics focuses on the translation standards of Xin (faithfulness), Da (expressiveness), and Ya (elegance). His explanation for this is that the translation should be faithful to the content and spirit of the original text, and the expression should be clear and easy to understand while having a beautiful literary style. Zhu's theory of translation aesthetics applies to Xu's version. First, based on faithfulness to the original text, Xu's translation pays attention to the beauty and artistry of the translation. He does not stick to the literal meaning but

strives to convey the meaning, formal beauty, and phonetic beauty of the original text to the readers. This is in line with Zhu's concept of translation aesthetics. Second, Xu's translation follows the translation standards proposed by Zhu. In translating Book of Poetry, Xu strives to maintain the content and spirit of the original text, while at the same time focusing on the clarity and comprehensibility of the articulation. His translations are elegant, concise, and of high literary value, which meet Zhu's requirements. Finally, Xu's translation philosophy is complementary to Zhu's theory of translation aesthetics. Xu emphasizes respect for the original text and pursues the re-creation of the translation, which is consistent with Zhu's concept of focusing on the aesthetic value and artistry of the translation. Both are concerned with how to pass on and promote the aesthetic value of the original text in the translation process[9].

3. The Re-expression of the Beauty in Rhymes

Xu Yuanchong has an in-depth study of translation aesthetics. He regarded translation as a kind of creative activity, and through deep understanding and aesthetic experience of the original text, he brought into play his own creativity and artistic perception to make the translated works more beautiful and artistic. In his translations, Xu Yuanchong focuses on preserving the meaning and beauty of the original text, while also incorporating his own thinking and understanding, and employing a variety of techniques and skills to convey the emotions and ideas of the original text. This aesthetic thought and practice of translation provides new ideas and methods for the development of the field of translation. In this section, the author will analyze the characteristics and advantages of Xu Yuanchong's translations based on his translations of the Book of Poetry.

3.1. Rhyming at the End of a Sentence

In the Book of Poetry, the use of rhyme in each verse is a common form of expression. For example, 《硕鼠》, "Large Rat" from "Sones Collected in Wei, Modern Shanxi":

Original:

硕鼠硕鼠，无食我黍！

三岁贯女，莫我肯顾。

逝将去女，适彼乐土。

乐土乐土，爰得我所。

Xu's translation:

Large rat, large rat,

Eat no more millet we grow!

Three years you have grown fat;

No care for us you show.

We'll leave you now, I swear,

For a happier land,

A happier land where

We may have a free hand[10].

Xu uses rhyme in every line. The words "rat" and "fat", "grow" and "show", "land" and "hand" are all corresponding. This is the same as its Chinese original, both rhymes. The advantage of using rhyme in every sentence is that it can enhance the rhythm of the poem and make it more beautiful. In addition, rhyming can help the poem express emotions and convey the author's thoughts and feelings.

Xu's version follows the translation and beauty of the original Chinese text by rhyming, a feature that has many benefits. First, a translation that follows the original Chinese text can better convey

Chinese culture. The Book of Poetry is an important part of ancient Chinese culture and is a treasure of Chinese culture. If the poems were translated directly into English, it is likely that the cultural connotation and beauty of them would be lost. In contrast, Xu Yuanchong's translation method, especially his use of words and sentences, conveys the meaning of the original text while preserving the beauty and rhythm of the Chinese, which makes the translation more easily understood and accepted by English readers. Second, a translation that follows the original Chinese text can better preserve the rhythm and rhyme of the original poem. Poetry is a form of art based on language, and rhythm and rhyme are one of the core elements of poetry. If the translation of the poems only translates the meaning of the original text into English, but ignores the rhythm and rhyme of the Chinese poems, readers will not be able to truly appreciate the beauty of the original poems. Xu Yuanchong's translation method, especially his keen perception of the structure and rhythm of the Chinese verses, enables his translation to retain the rhythm and rhyme of the original poem well, so that readers can feel the beauty of the original poem when they read it. Third, a translation that follows the original Chinese text can better show the diversity and complexity of the poems. The Book of Poetry contains many different themes and styles of poetry, including love poems, political poems, and poems describing natural landscapes. If the translators only follow one template to translate these poems, they will not be able to truly show the diversity and complexity of the Book of Poetry. Xu Yuanchong's approach to translation, especially his understanding and mastery of different poetic styles and themes, enables his translations to show the diversity and complexity of the poetic scriptures well, allowing readers to better understand and appreciate the beauty of these poems. Finally, a translation that follows the original Chinese text can better preserve the translator's personality and style. Translation is a highly artistic task, and each translator has his or her own personality and style. If the translation only follows a certain template mechanically, the translator's personality and style will be lost, and thus the translation will lose its unique charm. Xu Yuanchong's translation method, especially his unique style and wording, makes his translations easily recognizable and distinct from those of other translators, which not only increases the readability of the translations, but also allows readers to better understand and appreciate the translator's personality and style.

From the perspective of phonetics, the use of rhyme and the rhyming of sentences need to follow the corresponding rhyme rules. From the literary point of view, the use of rhyme and rhyme in each line can help poems express emotions and thoughts. The rhyming character of the Book of Poetry reflects its unique charm and rhyme in each line is an important form of expression. In the target text, Mr. Xu Yuanchong focused on the semantic accuracy of the translated text while preserving the rhyme and meter of the original poem, making the translated text closer in form to the original poem. By studying the rhythmic features of the Book of Poetry and Mr. Xu Yuanchong's translation, we can better understand and appreciate the Book of Poetry and feel the profound ideas and cultural connotations it contains.

3.2. Rhyming in Separate Lines

In this section, the author will introduce double stanzas and single sentences respectively, with a view to analyzing the strengths of Xu Yuanchong's translations from different perspectives.

3.2.1. Double Stanzas

In the Book of Poetry, the use of rhyme in double lines is a common form of expression. For example, in "The Newly-wed":

Original:

桃之夭夭，灼灼其华。

之子于归，宜其室家。
桃之夭夭，有蕢其实。
之子于归，宜其家室。

Xu's translation:

The peach tree beams so red,
How brilliant are its flowers!
The maiden's getting wed,
Good for the nuptial bowers.
The peach tree beams so red;
How plentiful its fruit!
The maiden's getting wed;
She's the family's root[10].

Here, "华" and "家", "实" and "室" all correspond to each other. Xu's translation "flower" with "bowers" and "fruit" with "root" had perfectly captured this. The advantage of using rhyme in double lines is that it can make the poem more beautiful and beautiful, and it can also help the poem express emotions and thoughts. For example, the poem "The Peach Blossom" uses double rhymes to express the author's beautiful praise for the peach blossom and his wish for family happiness.

Xu Yuanchong follows the rhyme and rhythm of the original in the separated lines in multiple stanzas, which has the advantage of conveying the meaning of the original poem more accurately while preserving the beauty and artistic characteristics of the original poem. The rhyming of interlinear lines gives the whole poem a better rhythm and sense of perspective, so Xu Yuanchong's preservation and good grasp of this point is invaluable. Such adherence to the rhythm and rhyme of the original can more accurately convey the meaning of the original poem, making the translation better able to convey the emotion and thought of the original poem, allowing the reader to better understand the meaning of the original poem, and also allowing the reader to feel the beauty of the music in the original poem. At the same time, following the rhythm and rhyme of the Chinese poem can better preserve the beauty and artistic characteristics of the original poem. The rhythm and rhyme of the original poem are important components of its beauty and artistic characteristics. If the rhythm and rhyme of the original poem are neglected in the translation process, the beauty and artistic characteristics of the original poem will be lost. In Xu Yuanchong's translation, he retains the rhythm and rhyme of the original in several stanzas, making the translation more likely to preserve the beauty and artistic characteristics of the original poem. In addition, this section shows the translator's own thinking and understanding. Such a unique style and personality make Xu Yuanchong's translations more easily recognizable and distinct from those of other translators, thus increasing the readability and appeal of the translations. It is significant that Xu Yuanchong's translation of the poems follows the rhyme and rhythm of the original text in multiple stanzas in separate lines. This translation method can more accurately convey the meaning of the original poem, and at the same time better preserve the beauty and artistic characteristics of the original poem, showing the translator's unique style and personality. Such a translation not only allows readers to better understand and appreciate the poems, but also allows the beauty of the poems to spread around the world.

In the target text, Mr. Xu Yuanchong fully embodies the rhythmic characteristics of poetry, especially the use of rhyme in the intervening lines. He preserved the rhyme and rhythm of the original poem, making the translated text more closely resemble the original poem. Rhyming in intervals is a common form of expression in the Book of Poetry, which can make the poems more rhythmic and help them express emotions and thoughts. In his translation of the Book of Poetry, Mr. Xu Yuanchong focused on preserving the rhythm and rhyme of the original poem, making the

translated text more closely resemble the original poem and also have more literary value. By studying the use of rhyme in the intervals of the Book of Poetry and Mr. Xu Yuanchong's translation, we can better understand and appreciate the Book of Poetry and feel the profound thoughts and cultural connotations it contains.

3.2.2. Single Sentences

Rhyme in a single sentence is a form of rhyme in a single sentence, which uses rhyme in the last sentence, and it is different from the rhyme of the previous sentence, or it continues the rhyme of the previous sentence into the last single sentence. For example, in the first chapter of Zheng Feng (Zheng Feng): "Zi Hui Si me, lowering the garment to wade through the river. If the son does not think of me, is there no one else?" The last clause of the poem is "The madness of the child is also madness!" The rhyme scheme of aabbba is used, where the last line overlaps the previous rhyme scheme to enhance the rhythm of the poem.

In the first chapter of Zhaonan Xiao Xing (The Little Star), "The little star is in the east, the three kings are in the east; the night is in the east, the night is in the east, the solids are different." The last single line of the poem, "Solidly ordered to be different", uses the rhyme scheme of "ababb". This rhyme scheme makes the poem more rhythmic and expressive.

3.3. Rhyme in Complex Patterns

In the Book of Poetry, it is a common form to use rhyme in the first and second lines, and then rhyme again in the fourth line after the third. It uses rhymes such as abab, aabb, abcc, etc., which can enhance the rhythm of the poem and make the whole verse more harmonious[11].

For example, the first chapter of "Zhou Nan Guan Ju": "Guan Guan Ju, the osprey, is on the island of the river. My fair lady, the gentleman good martyr." The first and second lines of the poem, "The osprey is on the island of the river." The third and fourth lines, "My fair lady, the gentleman is good at martyrdom." use the rhyme scheme aabb, while the third and fourth lines, "My fair lady, the gentleman is good at martyrdom." The last rhyme is the same as the rhyme in the first and second stanzas, which better integrates the mood and emotion of the whole poem.

Another example is the first chapter of Zheng Feng (The Wind and Rain): "The wind and rain are mournful, the rooster cries harmoniously. I have seen the gentleman, and the clouds are not ravenous." (Lipid part), followed by the second chapter: "The wind and rain are dashing, the rooster crows harmoniously. Since I have seen the gentleman, why does he not heal?" (Part of the Book of the Dead). (Part of You), and in the third chapter: "The wind and rain are as dreary as the rain, and the rooster crows incessantly. Since I have seen the gentleman, why don't I rejoice?" (Zhi Zhi). The rhymes in these three chapters are aabb, ccdd, and eeff.

The last example is from the first chapter of "Name of a Lady": "The lady of quiet is waiting for me in the corner of the city. I love her but cannot see her, so I scratch my head and hesitate." (Hou part). The rhyme scheme of this chapter is aabb.

In these examples, we can see a common form of rhyme in ancient Chinese poetry, namely, rhyme in a single line, cross-rhyme, rhyme in the first and second lines, and rhyme in the third line and again in the fourth line. These rhyme forms made ancient poetry more harmonious in sound and rhyme, and provided certain norms for recitation and singing of ancient poetry.

4. Rhythm

Xu Yuanchong focused on preserving the musicality of the original text, especially the rhythmic musicality, in the target text. In the Book of Poetry, each verse consists of two-syllable steps, each of which is a two-syllable tonal pause. This double-syllable tonal pause formed the main form of

syllable composition in Chinese poetry and was also the basis of the later rhythmic poetic meter.

Therefore, in order to preserve the musicality of the original poem, Xu Yuanchong paid special attention to the musicality of rhythm in the translation process, especially the rhythmic point of the two-syllable tone pause. In his translation, Xu Yuanchong used a series of translation techniques to preserve the musicality of the original poem, the most important of which is the use of such continuous rhymes as “参差，窈窕，辗转，崔嵬，虺隤，玄黄，踟蹰” to “here and there, aiden fair, tosses, tired, dizzied, perplexed”, as well as the use of double-voiced continuous rhymes and double-voiced continuous rhymes.

The use of these continuous words allows the translation to maintain the rhythm and rhyme of the Chinese poem so that the reader can better feel the musicality of the original poem. This translation method not only preserves the rhythm and rhyme of the native language poem but also allows readers to feel the beauty of the music in the original poem. In addition, Xu Yuanchong also uses some other techniques in his translation to enhance the musicality of the translation, such as making appropriate adjustments to the rhythm of the poem to make the translation more in line with modern tastes. This preserves the rhythm and rhyme of the Chinese poem, and at the same time allows the reader to better understand and appreciate the poem.

To sum up, Xu Yuanchong's translation of the poems focuses on preserving the musicality of the original text, especially the musicality of rhythm. Through a series of translation skills and techniques, Xu Yuanchong preserves the rhythm and rhyme of the original poem in his translation, allowing the reader to better feel the musical beauty of the original poem

5. Onomatopoeia

Xu Yuanchong is a famous Chinese translator whose translations of the Book of Poetry are full of creativity and artistry, the most striking of which is his use of onomatopoeia. Onomatopoeia is an expressive word that can depict the form, movement, and feeling of things through the simulation of sound. In Xu Yuanchong's translation of the poetic scriptures, he uses onomatopoeia through various means, with different techniques creating their own effects, and this variety of techniques and effects contributes to the beauty of the translation.

In Xu Yuanchong's translation of the poems, onomatopoeia is used in abundance, either as verbs, nouns, or adjectives, often to describe the sounds, movements, and sensations of nature. For example, the translator uses the onomatopoeic words “clack” and “click” to describe the sound of oxen plowing in the fields. The translation not only preserves the meaning of the original poem but also enhances the expressive power of the translation, allowing readers to better feel the mood and emotion of the poem.

In addition to using onomatopoeia to describe the sounds and actions of nature, Xu Yuanchong also uses onomatopoeia to describe the emotions and feelings of the characters in his translation, a technique that can better express the emotions and thoughts of the original poem. For example, the translator uses the onomatopoeic words “sighs” and “sobs” to describe the woman's sadness. This translation not only preserves the emotion of the original poem but also increases the expressiveness of the translation so that readers can better feel the mood and emotion of the original poem.

In addition, in Xu Yuanchong's translation of the poems, there are also some techniques that use onomatopoeia to express the beauty of the original poem. For example, the translator uses the onomatopoeic words “rippling” and “rustling” to describe the sound of the wind blowing the leaves, which not only preserves the mood and emotion of the original poem but also enhances the artistry of the translation, so that readers can better feel the beauty and music of the original poem. This translation not only preserves the mood and emotion of the original poem but also enhances the artistry of the translation, allowing readers to better feel the beauty and musicality of the original poem.

To sum up, Xu Yuanchong's translation of the Book of Poetry makes full use of onomatopoeia, which creates diversity and beauty in the translation through different techniques and effects. The use of onomatopoeia in the translations not only depicts the form, movement, and feeling of things more accurately but also enhances the expressiveness, artistry, and musical beauty of the translations, allowing readers to better understand and appreciate the original poems. In addition, the use of onomatopoeia can also make the translation more vivid, natural, and easy to understand, which is especially important for foreign readers to better engage with and understand Chinese culture and the art of poetry. Xu Yuanchong's translations of the Book of Poetry make ample use of onomatopoeia, creating a variety of aesthetic diversity through different techniques and effects. The use of onomatopoeia can more accurately express the mood, emotion, and beauty of the original poem, enhance the expressive, artistic, and musical beauty of the translation, and allow readers to better understand and appreciate the original poem. In addition, the use of onomatopoeia can make the translation more vivid, natural, and easy to understand, providing foreign readers with a convenient way to understand and access Chinese culture and poetic art. Thus, onomatopoeia plays an important role in Xu Yuanchong's translation of the poems and is one of the important factors for many readers to enjoy the poems.

6. Conclusion

The *Book of Poetry* is a valuable collection of ancient Chinese poetry that reflects the aesthetic characteristics of its form and content. The use of various forms of rhyme in the *Book of Poetry* enhances the beauty and artistic characteristics of the poetry, making it more harmonious in sound and rhyme. Xu Yuanchong's translation of the *Book of Poetry* is faithful to the original text while also emphasizing the beauty and artistry of the translation. He preserves the musicality of the original text, especially the rhythmic musicality, and uses onomatopoeia to enhance the expressive power and beauty of the translation.

Zhu Guangqian's theory of translation aesthetics applies to Xu's translation of the Book of Poetry, as both emphasize the pursuit of beauty and artistry of the translation based on faithfulness to the original text. The harmony and balance between the beauty of meaning, sound, and form in Xu's translation practice is the best expression of traditional Chinese aesthetic thought.

The analysis in this paper sheds light on the importance of language structure in conveying aesthetic information, and how the use of rhyme and rhythmic musicality in ancient Chinese poetry can enhance its beauty and artistic characteristics. The study of Xu Yuanchong's translation of the Book of Poetry and its application of Zhu Guangqian's theory of translation aesthetics provides insight into the beauty and cultural significance of ancient Chinese poetry, and how it can be conveyed to a wider audience through translation.

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