

# An Investigation into Translation of Poetry from the Perspective the Beauty of Form

Yaru Zhou

School of Foreign Languages and Cultures, Panzhihua University

Email: [1656723524@qq.com](mailto:1656723524@qq.com)

**Abstract**— Poetry is regarded as the highest form of thought expression in any country's language and contains copious cultural images. Therefore, poetry translation plays a very important role in cultural communication. Translating a poem is much more difficult than translating any other type of literary work because it is difficult for the target language to maintain both the form and the content of the original text during translation. Mr. Xu Yuanchong, a famous translator in China, put forward the translation theory of "Three Beauties" - the beauty of form, sound and image. Mu Dan was a great poet in the history of modern Chinese poetry and he had also made great achievements in poetry translation. This paper starts with the beauty in form of Mu Dan's Chinese-English poetry and analyzes how Mu Dan used Chinese poetry to show the beauty of form in English poetry in his translated works. It also analyzes how to maintain the precise meaning of English poetry without losing the beauty of form in English poetry when translate it into Chinese.

**Keywords**— Mu Dan, poetry translation, Three-Beauty Theory, Xu Yuanchong.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In this section, the research background of the thesis, and the significance of the study will be represented.

### A. Research Background

In the thousands of years of Chinese translation history, Chinese have not only produced many works of poetry, but also introduced and exported many works of poetry. In this process, translation has played an important role. English poetry is delicate in wording, properly neat in form and abundant in content, not long in length but the conception is profound. In order to make the original work and the translated work as consistent as possible in terms of style, artistic conceptions and other aspects, many translators use various translation skills when translating the original work into Chinese, so as to show the unique culture and charm of the original poem. After the "infancy" of the late Qing Dynasty and the 1920s and 1930s to the "adulthood" of the 1980s, poetry translation and its theoretical research have made considerable achievements and results both in the practice of translating poetry and in theoretical research. In the field of poetry translation, Mr. Xu Yuanchong was one of the pundits. His theory of "Three beauties" is instructive and enlightening in the field of poetry translation.

Mu Dan was a representative poet of modern poetry in the 1940s, and also a famous poet translator in China. There was a long period of no poem written by Mu Dan from the 1950s, but the translations from him kept coming. Poets have their own principles in translating poems, and Mr. Mu Dan's principle is "translating poems into poems", which makes Mu Dan's translation

radiate a unique glamour only belonging to Mu Dan himself.

### B. Literature Review

At present, most of the domestic and foreign research is about the translation characteristics of Mu Dan's poetry translation, the influence of poetry translation on him and the deep meaning in his translation achievements and translated works. But there are few specific studies on the beauty of form of Mu Dan's poetry translation. Combining with Xu Yuanchong's "Three beauties" theory, this paper is based on the existing research results of predecessors on Mu Dan and his poetry translation. The thesis analyzes the embodiment of the formal beauty of translation in Mu Dan's poetry translation works. In addition, such study is beneficial to the understanding of the characteristics of Mu Dan's poetry translation. Moreover, it can enrich the study of the beauty of image, sound and form of Mu Dan's poetry translation at the present stage.

### C. Research Significance

This paper starts with the beauty of form, one of the "Three Beauties" theory proposed by Mr. Xu Yuanchong, and analyzes several points emphatically from Mu Dan's translations of *Ode to a Nightingale*, *The Waste Land*, and other poems. The first part introduces the role and the significance of the beauty of form in poetry translation. Secondly, how Mr. Mu Dan reconstructed the images and the emotion of the original poem through the beauty of form of Chinese poetry when translating poems is analyzed word by word. The third part focuses on the difficulties in maintaining the beauty of form of the origin text during the process of

poetry translation, and ways how he solved such difficulties. The last part is how Mu Dan used the beauty of form of Chinese poetry to reappear the beauty of form of English poetry in the process of poetry translation, and how he combined the beauty of form with the other two beauties when he translated poems.

## II. BACKGROUND

Mr. Xu Yuanchong had been engaged in literary translation for more than sixty years, and his “Three Beauties Theory” is highly instructive and inspiring in the field of poetry translation. In his literary path, Mu Dan had always been modest and diligent, and he had offered translations of poets such as Byron, Shelley, Keats, Eliot, and Auden. In a literary environment where Chinese and Western poetry integrate, he had left us many monumental creations, and had made his own contribution to the development of new Chinese poetry.

### A. Xu Yuanchong and the Theory of “Three Beauties”

Translation, like many other things around people, cannot be separated from aesthetics and beauty. In his *Approaches to Translation*, translation theorist Peter Newmark emphasized “the importance of aesthetic values in semantic translation, taking poetry translation as an example <sup>[1]</sup>.” Susan Bassnett and Andre Lefevere said “the decisive role of culture on aesthetic value and argues that translation studies should be more diversified <sup>[2]</sup>.”

In the field of Chinese ancient poems translation, Mr. Xu Yuanchong, known as “the only one who translated Chinese ancient poems into English and French”, had made great contributions to poetry translation, and his translation theories and translation works have accumulated valuable wealth for the promotion of Chinese culture and the development of translation literature.

On the basis of absorbing the theories of various generations of translators, he established a relatively perfect theoretical system of literary translation, among which the principle of “Three Beauties” was the most widely used. He believed that in the process of translation, the beauty of meaning, sound and form of the original poem should be reappeared. In the way of poetry translation, based on years of practical translation experience, Mr. Xu Yuanchong puts forward the theory of “Three Beauties”, that is, poetry translation should achieve the “Three Beauties” standards as far as possible, namely, “the beauty of image, the beauty of sound and the beauty of form”. The meaning is “the translation of a poem should be as touching as the

original poem, which is the beauty of image; it has the same melody as the original poem, which is the beauty of sound; and we should try our best to keep the original form of the poem, this is the beauty of form <sup>[3]</sup>.” The beauty of form is the last criterion of the theory of “Three Beauties”. That is the style and meter of poetry. The translation should have the same beauty of form as the original text and neat antithesis, and makes the reader feel the beauty in visual. Mr. Xu Yuanchong pointed out that translators should pay attention to the length of lines, the number of stanza lines and antithesis. During translation, the poet conveys the meaning of poetry through the form of poetry. Poetry has strict rhythm, therefore, the translator should try to retain the style of the original text, and try to ensure that the number and the length of the lines of the translation is uniform, neat structure, and achieve formal equivalence with the original poem.

### B. Mu Dan and His Poetry Translation

Mu Dan was a famous Chinese translator and poet of the last century. From the 1950s onward, there was a long period of time when no poetry was published, but translations from him continued to emerge. Poets all have their own principles for translating poetry, and the principle of Mu Dan is to translate poem to poem, which makes his translations radiate a unique feature that belongs only to Mu Dan himself. Mr. Mu Dan pinned all his creative enthusiasm on translation. His profound literary and linguistic skills, his talent and his grasp of poetry as a poet were all impressive.

Mu Dan’s poetry translations are roughly divided into three categories, the first is a lot of Pushkin’s poems, among which the famous ones are *Bronze Knights*. The second is a large number of English romantic poems, such as *Don Juan*. The third is some poems such as Eliot’s *The Waste Land* and some poems by Yeats and Auden. Mu Dan advocated translating poems in the language of poetry. He believed that the important thing in poetry translation was to express the rhythm and style of the original poem. The content of poetry is indeed important, but he emphasized the importance of translating the form of poetry while focusing on the content of poetry. He believed that poetry is a literature based on form, and that translation of poetry is also poetry, all formal elements of which cannot be discarded.

## III. THE COMBINATION OF “THREE BEAUTIES”

Translation of poetry is the re-creation of poetry. It has always been the consensus of the translator that translation of literature is difficult, and translation of

poetry is particularly the highest level of literary translation that reflects the level of the translator. Dante, the greatest Italian poet, once said: “The light of poetry is necessarily lost in translation [4].” The English poet John Dryden believed that translating poetry is “like dancing on a rope in shackles [5]”. The German philosopher Schopenhauer was even more pessimistic, directly arguing that “poetry is untranslatable [6]”. However, it is the untranslatability of poetry that highlights the importance of poetic form in poetry. By solving the problem of form in the process of poetry translation, the formal beauty of the original poem can be reproduced in the translated poem through the translator’s ingenuity, which will make both the form and the meaning of the translated poetry available.

### A. The Beauty of Form and Sound

The translator can translate the original poem authentically and present the original poem to the readers through another language, because they can

truly bridge the gap from the author to the readers. Translating poetry is not a one-sided way of transmitting literature in different cultures and languages. It is just by combining the beauty of the poem’s form, meaning and sound that the translator can translate the original poem in an authentic manner.

*Don Juan* was written by Byron, and *The Isles of Greece* also came from it. The author wrote this poem at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and the poem was translated to China at the beginning of the twentieth century. In *Don Juan*, all the poems were written in ottava rima, except *The Isles of Greece*, which consists a stanza of only six lines. Poetry depends heavily on its rhyme and form. Without form and structure, a poem cannot be a poem. As a poet, Mu Dan was very sensitive to the form of poetry. However, due to the difference between English and Chinese, the style of his translations may not be the same as the original poem, but he used his own method to reflect the form and rhythm of the original poem in Chinese.

Table 1: Take a verse in *Don Juan* as an example:

<b>You-Gentlemen! By dint of long seclusion</b>	诸位君子呵，由于你们长期以来
<b>From better company, have kept your own</b>	不曾见过世面，一意固步自封，
<b>At Keswick, and, through still continued fusion</b>	你们死守在凯泽克那一隅落，
<b>Of one another’s minds, at last have grown</b>	仍旧继续在彼此间心灵交融，
<b>To deem as a most logical conclusion,</b>	于是有了自认为最合理的结论，
<b>That Poesy has wreaths for you alone:</b>	即诗的花冠只该落在你们手中；
<b>There is a narrowness in such a notion,</b>	唉，这种见识未免是所见太窄，
<b>Which makes me wish you’d change your lakes for ocean.</b>	我倒希望你们从湖边迁往大海

From the above comparison between Byron’s original poem and Mu Dan’s translation, we find that the rhyme of the poem is abababcc. And “seclusion” and “fusion” rhymes with “conclusion”, “own” and “grown” rhymes with “alone”, and “notion” rhymes with “ocean”. In his translation of the poem, the second, fourth and sixth

lines (“封”，“融”和“中”) are rhyme, and the seventh and eighth lines (“窄”和“海”) rhyme in the same way, so that Mr. Mu Dan maintains the beauty of sound of the original poem with the rhyming of Chinese characters.

Table 2: Taking another example from Mu Dan’s translation of *The Isles of Greece*:

<b>The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece!</b>	希腊群岛呵,美丽的希腊群岛!
<b>Where burning Sappho loved and sung,</b>	火热的萨弗在这里唱过恋歌;
<b>Where grew the arts of war and peace,</b>	在这里,战争与和平的艺术并兴,
<b>Where Delos rose and Pheobus sprung!</b>	狄洛斯崛起,阿波罗跃出海面!
<b>Eternal summer gilds them yet,</b>	永恒的夏天还把海岛镀成金,
<b>But all, except their sun, is set.</b>	可是除了太阳,一切已经消沉。

As can be seen, *The Isles of Greece* mostly uses the rhyme scheme ababcc, which is almost absent in Chinese poetry. Therefore, Mu Dan changed the rhyme scheme of the original poem to that of abcddd, which is

commonly used in the modern Chinese new poetry style. In this way, he conveys the musicality and rhythmic beauty of the original poems to Chinese readers through the new Chinese poetic style. Most of the translated

poems are 11-13 words long, while most of the original lines are 6-8 words long. Although this differs somewhat from the number of words in the lines of the original poem, it is also due to the differences between Chinese and English. Venuti said in *Norman Shapiro*: “I believe that a translation should strive to be so transparent that it does not look like a translation; a good translation is like a piece of glass. There are only small imperfections in the glass - scuffs and bubbles. Ideally, of course, there should be nothing at all, and the translation should never cause the reader to feel that they are reading a translation

[7].” Mu Dan’s principle of translating poetry from poetry to poetry makes his translated poems fully reveal the form and rhythm of the original poems.

**B. The Beauty of Form and Image**

Meaning is the “soul” of poetry, and form is especially important when we need to express it through form. Form is the skeleton of poetry, and without form, the poem itself is lost in this retelling when one tries to paraphrase poetry.

*Table 3: Eliot’s poem The Waste Land contains lines like these:*

<b>April is the cruellest month, breeding</b>	四月最残忍，从死了的
<b>Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing</b>	土地滋生丁香，混杂着
<b>Memory and desire, stirring</b>	回忆的欲望，让春雨
<b>Dull roots with the spring rain.</b>	跳动着呆钝的根。

The four lines of the original poem are unique in that the first three lines use three commas and a present participle to introduce the next line, and the three present participles “breeding”, “mixing”, and “stirring” are different, and it reversed the traditional imagery of April as the arrival of spring. Eliot depicted Western society as a lifeless wasteland. In the few lines, the poet expressed his deep pain and endless disappointment. In spring, when everything should be revived, but London, the symbol of modern civilization, was a withered wasteland.

In translating these four lines, Mu Dan put the prepositional phrases “out of the dead land” and “with the spring rain” in front of the verbs, and translated them into “从死去的土地滋生丁香”和“让春雨跳动着呆钝的根”. Although this translation is not formally faithful to the original poem, it conforms to the linguistic conventions of the Chinese language. The rhyming words that ends a line of verse of the original poem are “breeding”, “mixing”, “stirring” and “rain”, and in Mu Dan’s translation, they were reflected as “的”, “着” and “根”, and this also caters to the preferences of Chinese readers.

In Lefevere’s view, “translation is the most obvious kind of rewriting [8].” Faithfulness to the original text is not the only criterion for translation, and a faithful translation is only one of the forms in which the translator rewrites the original text. It can also be seen in this stanza that Mu Dan was combining the form of the poem to translate the content of the poem. For example, the word “滋生” is not in the original poem, but it is added here to make the verse vivid. Another example is the word “month” in the first line, which Mu Dan

omitted from the translation, but this method makes the verse concise and condensed. Mu Dan, who was both a poet and a translator, believed that both literary translation and composition require the ability to use language, and he insisted on using the language of poetry to translate poems.

**IV. ANALYSIS OF FORM IN MU DAN’S POETRY TRANSLATION**

Robert Frost, an American poet, once lamented: “poetry is what gets lost in translation [9].” This exclamation shows that he thinks there is no way to translate poetry, and the translated poetry is no longer the original poetry. However, in poetry translation, using the method which is called “translating the poem by the poem”, Mr. Mu Dan can convey the beauty of meaning of the original poetry and show the beauty of the form of the original poetry at the same time.

**A. The Beauty of Form**

As we all know, style refers to the independent text genre (or style, system). It is the specification and mode of text composition and a unique cultural phenomenon, and moreover, the product of some historical content accumulated for a long time. It reflects the overall characteristics of the text from content to form. In order to achieve the established effects, the author must adopt the appropriate form and structure of language during his creation. Therefore, the formation of any style is not accidental, but the results of artists’ creation as well as the inevitable results of artistic development.

As for the definition of poetry, British poet Coleridge has a famous saying: “The best words in the best order”. It can be seen that the form or the beauty of form of poetry is an indispensable part of poetry. In order to

show the visual art of poetry must rely on the form to show the beauty of form of poetry. Chinese and foreign translators have plentiful insights and discussions on formal equivalence. Eugene Nida explained it when he put forward the theory of functional equivalence: "Not only the equivalence of information content, but also the equivalence of form as far as possible <sup>[10]</sup>." Huang Guowen believes that "Formal equivalence can be considered as a standard for poetry translation <sup>[11]</sup>." Therefore, form in translation has always been an important aspect that translators care about and attach importance to. There are huge linguistic differences between two languages. In the process of translation, we should try our best to find out the connection and common ground between languages and pursue the maximum formal equivalence, and strive to convey the beauty of form of the source language to the target language.

Chinese and English are two important languages in the global cultural exchange, and they have their own linguistic characteristics. Chinese and English are the mediums of expression for Chinese poetry and English poetry, and the differences between the two languages lead to the differences in the expression of Chinese poetry and English poetry. When it comes to the comparison of the forms of Chinese and English poetry, we must first trace the roots of the differences in the forms of poetry between the two languages due to their respective characteristics.

#### **a. Hypotaxis and Parataxis**

In linguistics and translation, hypotaxis and parataxis are generally accepted as the most important characteristics which distinct English and Chinese. Parataxis dominates in Chinese and hypotaxis is in a subordinate position. The meaning is restricting the form in Chinese while English is the opposite. Hypotaxis refers to the connection of words or sentences by means of linguistic forms (including lexical and morphological means); parataxis refers to the connection of words or sentences without the help of linguistic forms but by the logical relationship of their meanings. The former focuses on the cohesion in the form of language, while the latter focuses on the coherence in the meaning of the words and lines.

In fact, the both languages use parataxis and hypotaxis. But the using of the two languages is also different, because of the different linguistic nature of the two languages. The relationship between the components of Chinese sentences mostly depends on the coherence of meaning, that is, Chinese mostly focus on parataxis. While English sentences require linguistic structural

integrity, that is, English focus on hypotaxis. For example, in Chinese there are a large number of four-character idioms, like the word "洪水猛兽", this is a noun combined by two completely unrelated words. In Chinese, there is no conjunction between them, but in English it needs to be expressed as: fierce floods and savage beasts. In this sentence, we can clearly see that the conjunction "and" has been added between the words, and the form of singular and plural of the words are also standardized.

In addition, Chinese words are very rich in meaning and flexible in usage. Therefore, the versatility and flexibility of Chinese words play a very important role in poetic expression. The poet can use the simplest words to convey the emotion what he wants to express and thus giving the poem a concise but meaningful effect because of the richness of words.

English is reversely a language in parataxis and therefore, the richness of the meaning of words is reflected by the variation of word forms. The grammatical function of English is quite strict. Yet for poetry, the clear distinction between English words increases the cumbersome complexity of poetic expression, but makes the expression precise and accurate.

#### **b. Forms of English Poetry**

Sonnet is a European lyric and its rhythm is precise. Petrarchan's poems were divided into two parts: the first part consisted of two quatrains, and the second part consisted of two three-line stanzas. According to the strict Italian sonnet style, the poetic meaning expressed at the eighth lines should come to an end, and the next six lines should express a new poetic meaning. The Shakespearean sonnet consists of three quatrains with alternating rhymes, and at the ending are two rhyming lines. The entire poem consists of fourteen lines, each line with ten syllables, usually also in iambic pentameter. The rhyme scheme for the entire poem is "abab cdcd efef gg". Shakespeare's sonnets are a step forward from Petrarchan.

Elegy is a lyric poem written to mourn a public activist, a friend, or a loved one; by extension, any lyric poem of an introspective nature that laments the vagaries of the world and has a broader range of subjects. In classical literature, an elegy is a poem written in the lament meter (lines alternating between iambic and iambic hexameter and pentameter), and the subject matter is not limited. In some modern literature, such as German literature, the dirge meter was adapted to the language, so that the term dirge became used to refer only to this meter and not to the content of the poem.

A ballad, flourished in the 15th century, is a story told in song, usually in 4-line stanzas, with the second and fourth lines rhymed. The meter is usually short and long quatrains or short and long quintuplets, but there are also many interlocking lines. The light, melodic language of the ballad was loved by the romantic poets.

Free verse is a form of poetry that does not require a specific meter, number of lines, or line length, but relies on natural speaking rhythms. Free verse is a form of poetry that was developed in the 20th century by poets such as Cummings, Wilhelm, and Sember.

Blank verse consists of lines of iambic pentameter which are unrhymed—hence the term “blank”, of all English metrical forms it is closest to the natural rhythms of English speech, and at the same time flexible and adaptive to diverse levels of discourse; as a result it has been more frequently and variously used than any other type of versification.

### **c. Forms of Modern Chinese Poetry**

Modern Chinese poetry is the poetry since the May Fourth Movement, mainly referring to the new style of poetry. Modern Chinese poetry is not concerned with rhythm, and there are no fixed requirements for the stanzas, line building, or the number of words per line of a poem. It is adapted to the requirements of the times, reflecting real life in vernacular language which close to the masses and expressing the new contents of the times of science and democracy. It has broken the shackles of the old poetic meter and is flexible and free in form. Chinese modern poetry is suitable for expressing passionate, complex and varied thoughts and feelings. But the form of modern poetry must be subordinated to the needs of emotional expression. The intonation of language and the shaping of images can reproduce the natural rhythm of poetry. It is suitable to express the anxious and agitated emotions of the poet.

Modern Chinese poetry has been profoundly influenced by Western poetry in the transition from classical to modern, and the role of translation in this transition cannot be underestimated. The introduction of Western poetic through translation not only directly influenced the innovation of the Chinese language, and lead to the birth of a new style of vernacular poetry—“a new style of poetry that was forced to be translated <sup>[12]</sup>”, but also had a comprehensive impact on the Chinese language. In addition, it also had a deep impact on the reform of Chinese thought and culture as well as literature.

### **B. Literariness**

Mu Dan’s translation is full of creative ideas in literature and art. His translation principle is the famous “translating the poem by the poem.” As early as the 17th century, John Dryden, the founder of English literary classicism, proposed that to be an excellent poetry translator, you must first be an excellent poet, and the translator should have some similarities with the original author. So the premise of “translating the poem by the poem” is that, first of all, the translator is a poet. In addition to his status as a poet translator, Mu Dan is also an outstanding poet in the history of modern Chinese poetry. After returning to China in 1953, during this period, until 1957, his creative desire decreased greatly. Since 1957, he began to turn to poetry translation. For Mu Dan, poetry translation is not only a simple translation, but also a way for him to transfer and release his love for literature and writing. Bian Zhilin called Don Juan translated by Mu Dan which is one of the signs of the maturity of the art of poetry translation of China. The translation achievement of Don Juan is a milestone in the poetry translation of China. Wang Zuoliang praised Mu Dan and the famous poet Dai Wangshu as the two most successful translators in China, while the scholar Ma Wentong called Mu Dan an outstanding poetry translator of China, who has made the greatest achievements in the history of poetry translation of China so far. Poetry translation had filled the blank of Mu Dan’s creation in recent 20 years, and the long-term translation of the classic works of Western Romantic poets had also created a far-reaching impact on Mu Dan’s poetry creation in his last period. Mu Dan’s poetry translation not only enriched his literary achievements and comforted his soul, but also made the history of modern Chinese literature shine. His translation makes the cultural civilization more brilliant in the integrating and collision of Chinese and Western culture.

### **C. Reconstruction of the Image**

The form of a poem serves its content, and the exquisite form can cause a special artistic effect, which helps the reader feel the poetry of the poem and makes the reader’s impression of the poem deeper. Alexander Fraser Tytler, a British translator, he point out that: a translation should give a complete transcript of the ideas of the original work, the style and manner of writing should be of the same character as that of the original, and the translation should be as fluent as the original <sup>[13]</sup>. The translation of poetry needs to be translated with the language of poetry, and the problem of image in poetry translation is the content and form. If the translator preserves the content, but the form will be destroyed; if the translator takes care of the form, but the content will

be damaged. In poetry translation, the translation of image is a difficult place. “To investigate a translated poem, we should first see whether it clearly conveys the image or essence of the original work; secondly, we should see what form it arranged in.” “That is, how to translate the content of poetry in combination with its form... the content of poetry must be conveyed through its specific form [14].” It can be seen that Mu Dan’s

poetry translation emphasizes the translation of poetry in the form of poetry. *Ode to the West Wind* is one of the representative works of romantic lyric poetry, which was written by British Romantic poet Shelley. Here we select a section of Mr. Mu Dan’s translation to discuss how Mr. Mu Dan uses form to reconstruct the image of the original poem.

Table 4: Mr. Mu Dan’s translation

没入你的急流,当高空一片混乱,	Thou on whose stream, mid the steep sky’s commotion,
流云象大地的枯叶一样被撕扯	Loose clouds like earth’s decaying leaves are shed,
脱离天空和海洋的纠缠的枝干。	Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean,
成为雨和电的使者:它们飘落	Angels of rain and lightning: there are spread
在你的磅礴之气的蔚蓝的波面,	On the blue surface of thine aery surge,
有如狂女的飘扬的头发在闪烁	Like the bright hair uplifted from the head
从天穹的最遥远而模糊的边沿	Of some fierce Maenad, even from the dim verge

From the excerpts of Mr. Mu Dan’s translated poems, it can be seen that there are 13 words almost in each line. Because there are some differences in the semantic capacity between English and Chinese words, the construction of rhythm needs to adjust the semantic capacity of lines. The most common means of this adjustment is to compress or expand the semantic unit to control the number of syllables, such as the sixth line of the extract:

The original poem: Like the bright hair uplifted from the head

The translated poem: 有如狂女的飘扬的头发在闪烁

It can be seen that in order to ensure the integrity of the semantic structure of this line, the translator translated “Maenad” in the next line into the previous line. However, this will inevitably lead to crowd the semantic thing in the structural space of this line, which requires semantic compression in translation. Here, the translator skillfully deleted “from the head” and did not translate its semantics. Because the meaning of the deleted part has been included in the “飘扬的头发” in the previous sentence. In this way, the translator ensured the rhythm of five pauses in a line. The original poem consists of five sections, each of which is a sonnet. In terms of form, the five sections are complete and can be divided into separate chapters. The form of Mr. Mu Dan’s translation is also basically consistent with the original poem even very close to the original text. In the process of Mu Dan’s poetry translation, modern poetic language was basically used, and four character idioms rarely appear. He often used many simple and popular phrases to enhance the rhythm of the poem. Moreover, this practice

also makes his translated poems closer to Chinese readers and enhanced the readability of his translated poems. In this verse, Mu Dan translated “angels” into “使者”. Such method not only conforms to the image of the original text, but also conforms to Chinese culture. The essence of poetry translation lies in the reconstruction of the image and artistic conception of the original poetry. Since Mu Dan had experience in image transmission as early as when he wrote poetry, he can better understand the original poetry image and restore the poetry image.

#### D. Reappearing the Emotion

As a literary form, poetry is a way for poets to express their emotions. The language is concise but full of poets’ emotions. Keats was a talented poet. He had just been engaged to his lover, but soon he was seriously ill. His fate tortured his body and mind at a young age. In *Ode to a Nightingale*, the nightingale was not the focus, but the serious opposition between the poet’s beautiful imagination and the cruel reality in which the poet was living.

Mr. Mu Dan’s choice to translate Keats’s poems is not random. He only selected “the best works of very famous writers for translation [15]”. He accurately realized Keats’s rich and multi-level emotions. “He (Keats) seems to say that the real world is tragic and ugly, which is its unworthy side; but there is still beauty and the sense of beauty. Let’s pursue this kind of happiness, because it is a higher level of reality [16].”

Keats’s *Ode to a Nightingale* has eight stanzas. Each stanza is composed of ten lines and was written in iambic pentameter. The ending rhyme of *Ode to a*

Nightingale translated by Mr. Mu Dan was cleverly designed, and the rhymes of the third stanza and the sixth stanza are completely consistent with the original

work. The arrangement of the ending rhyme of other stanzas may be roughly similar to that of the original poem.

Table 5: The comparison

<b>The first verse of the original poem: abab cdec de</b>	Translated poetry: abab cdef fe
<b>The second verse of the original poem: abab bacb ac</b>	Translated poetry: abab ccdc cd
<b>The fourth verse of the original poem: abab cdec de</b>	Translated poetry: abca defd ef
<b>The fifth verse of the original poem: abab cdec de</b>	Translated poetry: aaaa bcdb cd
<b>The seventh verse of the original poem: abab cdec de</b>	Translated poetry: abac defd ef
<b>The eighth verse of the original poem: abab cdec de</b>	Translated poetry: abab cdea fg

From the above comparison, it can be seen that on the whole, the ending rhyme of the translation is very neat except that the last few sentences of sections are somewhat different from the previous sentences. The reason why the rhythm of the last three sentences of the whole poem is not strong that is really a last resort, so Mr. Mu Dan abandoned the form and retained the content of the original poem. The poem translated by Mr. Mu Dan has an appropriate length, which not only has a sense of rhythm, but also maintains the beauty of form of the original poem.

The beauty of English language largely depends on “the form” to express “the meaning”. Verbs are often used in Chinese, while nouns are often used in English. In this poem, Mr. Mu Dan used many vivid verbs to vividly express the emotion what Keats wants to express. For example:

*The original poem: My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains,*

*The translation: 我的心在痛,困顿和麻木*

*The original poem: My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,*

*The translation: 刺进了感官有如饮过毒鸩*

A vivid word “刺” was used in Mr. Mu Dan’s translation to express the pain caused by the cruel reality came to Keats’s heart, which makes the readers feel this pain by themselves. Or another example “Of beechen green, and shadows numberless”, Mr. Mu Dan’s translation is “你躲进山毛榉的葱绿和荫影”. this “躲” vividly expresses the lightness and flexibility of nightingale, and it reminds people of the playfulness of nightingales just like elves. Thus it can be seen, Mr. Mu Dan’s

translation uses accurate words and reappeared the emotion that the poet wants to express in the poetry. “In the literary works, content and form are an inseparable organic whole, because form itself serves to transmit the information in the content of the text, and its importance is no less than content<sup>[17]</sup>.” Mu Dan’s poetry translation pursued to embody the meaning of poetry, but also payed attention to the form of poetry. He believes that the meaning can be fully expressed only through a specific form. When translating western poetry, he would flexibly use a variety of translation skills to make the translation more smooth and natural. While retaining the image of the original poetry, he would use his way to reflect the cultural connotation of the original poetry and achieve “translating poetry by poetry”.

### E. Problems and Solutions

The famous lyric prose poem *When We Two Parted* was written by British poet Byron when he was young. There are more than ten translations in China. For example, Chen Xilin, Bian Zhilin and Huang Gaoxin have translated them, and their translation reflects their own translation techniques. It is very difficult to maintain the beauty of form in the process of translating poetry, however, because Mu Dan was a poet, he had keen observation and understanding of the original poetry when translating poetry, so the poetic flavor of his translation is also very thick. Relying on his translation principle of “translating poetry by poetry”, Mr. Mu Dan had solved many difficulties in maintaining the beauty of the form of the translation in the process of translating English poetry. Such as the sentences selected from Byron’s poem:

The original poem: The dew of the morning



*Sunk chill on my brow-*

*The translated poem: 清早凝结着寒露，  
冷彻了我的额角，*

The original poem is a complete sentence with a subject, a predicate and an object, while in Mu Dan's translation, he separated it into two sentences, and there are only subjects and predicates, no object. Once this is done, the original poem was became into two lines, and Mu Dan's translated poem is also two lines. Therefore, it could better show the characteristics of rhyme, and can be especially accepted by Chinese readers.

There is no this Word “凝结” in the original text, but this verb which added in this sentence fully expressed the emotion of the original poem after the translator fully understood the original text. The word “凝结” highlights the cold and the beauty of dynamic of the morning. The cold of the morning condensed the dew of the morning, and the separation of the poet from his lover made the poet frown. In this way, “寒露” can form a pun connection with the word “额角”, which is “凝结” connecting “晨露” and “额角”. In addition, the word “彻” perfectly expresses the pain of separation from his lover and the degree of cold dew in the morning felt by the poet. One word in the translation expresses the dual meaning of the original text. Thus, it can be seen that Mr. Mu Dan's literary skills and ingenious thinking in translation. Other:

The original poem: Half broken-hearted

*To sever for years,*

*The translated poem: 预感到多年的隔离  
我们忍不住心碎；*

In this sentence, Mu Dan adjusted the order of the poem. That is because these two sentences have a strong logical relationship. Heartbroken was caused by separation. And separation is the cause of heartbroken, also heartbroken is the result of separation. When expressing causality, in English expression habits, they lead to the result and then the reason; On the contrary, Chinese people are used to saying the reason first and then the result. Based on Chinese grammar and expression habits, Mu Dan made some adjustment of the words' order, which made the translation more in line with Chinese language expression habits, also make the translation more fluent, coherent and logical. As Harris said, “the main function of the translator is not imitation, but the induction [18]”. Mu Dan's translation is not a simple imitation. It was precisely because of Mu Dan was a poet, that his translated poem naturally was a poem. His translated poem possessed his own

consideration. His translated poem took care of both Chinese readers and the emotional expression by the English poet who written it.

## V. CONCLUSION

### A. Summary

Mu Dan was a dazzling pearl in the history of Chinese poetry. He was an excellent Chinese modernist poet and a brilliant translator. At that particular time, Mr. Mu Dan's choice to continue to shine and create by translation was undoubtedly the best. His translations show us his poetic and translating talents.

Combining Mr. Xu Yuanchong's theory of “Three-Beauty”, this paper analyzes how Mr. Mu Dan's translations reproduce the form beauty of English poetry through Chinese poetry. Moreover, it goes through the specific use of the principle “translating poetry by poetry” in his translated poems and finds out how Mu Dan's translations reappear the emotion of the original English poem. It also embodies that Mu Dan's translation of the poem not only conveyed the meaning of the original English poem but also kept the form of the original poem.

Poetry, as a special form of literature, has many limitations in the process if it is to be translated. For many years, translators have had considerable insights into the untranslatability and translatability of poetry. However, combining his own experiences, Mr. Mu Dan gave full play to his poet's strengths in translating poetry and left us many excellent and valuable translations.

After the analysis, this paper states that during the translation process of English to Chinese, firstly, the translator must have profound Chinese literary foundation, and secondly, he has to own the keen sense to perceive and appreciate the emotions that the author of the original poem wanted to express. Third, the translator must grasp the style and form of the original poem, and have his own translation principles and his own translation style. So that he can ensure the reproduction and reappearing of the original poem's form and image.

### B. Research Limitations

Due to the limitation of space, this article analyzes only a few translated works of Mr. Mu Dan, and the material is relatively thin and lacks horizontal comparison. The article's arguments are not strong enough, coupled with the lack of experience in academic research and the limited time available. If this paper could comprehensively compare and analyze the linguistic

styles of different translators' translations, it would be more scientific with a more valuable reference.

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