

A Comparative Study of the Translation of Shakespeare's Sonnets from the Perspective of "Three Beauties"

-- A Case Study of the Chinese Versions of Dai Liuling and Tu An

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Abstract: The sonnet is a relatively old form of poetry that originated in Italy and was later introduced to England. Shakespeare's sonnets are a type of sonnet composed of rhyme, pentameter and iambic pentameter, which occupy an important place in the world's poetry and literature and have been translated in various ways in China. Chinese translators have gone through various explorations on the way to translate Shakespeare's sonnets and have tried many different translation methods. However, when we look back at previous translation studies, most of them analysed the translations from the perspectives of meter, style, and rhetoric, but few of them analysed the translations in perspective of contemporary Chinese poetry translation theory, for reveal the extent to which different translators reproduced the aesthetic characteristics of the sonnets. Xu Yuanchong's translation theory system has inherited the essence of traditional Chinese translation thought, among which the principle of "three beauties" takes "beauty" as the principle of pursuit, which breaks the traditional "faithfulness-centered" translation idea and concentrates on the aesthetic requirements of contemporary poetry translation. The two Chinese translations of Shakespeare's sonnets, namely Tu An and Dai Liuling's translation, have different identities and reproduce the beauty of the original poem to different degrees. Under the guidance of the translation principle of "three beauties", this thesis compares and analyses the two translations, and studies the aesthetic reproduction of "sense, sound and form" by the two translators, aiming to enlighten the translators in the process of poetry translation and to inspire the cause of Chinese poetry translation.

Keywords: Shakespeare's Sonnets; The Principle of "Three Beauties"; Aesthetic Reproduction; Comparative Study.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

English poetry and Chinese poetry share and differ in their characteristics, which leads to the translatability and difficulty of E-C and C-E poetry translation. Xu Yuanchong, a famous contemporary translator, put forward for the first time the principle of "three beauties" for poetry translation in late 1980s, namely, "beauty in form, beauty in sense and beauty in sound". It provides solution for difficulties in poetry translation. Liu Miqing (2012, p. 40) proposed that translation needs to be flexible as well as dependent in An Introduction to Translation Aesthetics. Flexibility makes translation possible and diversifies the art of translation, which has the same view as the principle of "three beauties" for translation methods.

Shakespeare's sonnets occupy an important place in British and even world poetry and literature. They have been translated in various ways in different time and fields into over 10 complete versions. In these versions, the sonnets were translated into the form of Chinese ancient poetry, metrical form and free form. For general literary translations, it is not easy to accurately convey the content and rhythm of the original work, but for poetry translations, it is also necessary to consider the rhythm and form of the original work. Different translators have different translation styles, but no version has entirely represented the aesthetic features. The well-known translator and poet Bian Zhilin proposed: the spirit of a poem cannot be conveyed without form which is a distinctive feature of the poem. Translators should imitate the

original form to reproduce the original spirit (Wang, 2010, p. 125). Therefore, this thesis will study on two Chinese versions that reproduced the original form of the sonnets to various extents.

Reviewing the researches on Chinese versions, many scholars have researched the translation of Shakespeare's sonnets from different perspectives, such as relevant theory, contrastive theory, and equivalent theory. Few people have researched the translation of sonnets from the perspective of the principle of "three beauties" and explored how the principle of "three beauties" is applied in the translation practice of Shakespeare's sonnets.

1.2. Significance of the Study

Translation, as a bilingual activity, requires the translator to be well versed in the language and culture of both the source language and the target language, which makes the translation of poetry difficult. Xu Yuanchong's translation theory system inherits the essence of traditional Chinese translation thought and is widely applied in translation practice, especially in literary translation, in which the principle of "three beauties" takes "beauty" as the pursuit. Shakespeare's sonnets hold extremely high aesthetic standards for sense, sound and form. Under the guidance of the translation principle of "three beauties", this thesis compares and analyzes the specific translation methods of the two translations, and examines the aesthetic gains and losses of the two translators in terms of "meaning, sound and form", with the aim of enlightening translators in the process of poetry translation and injecting inspiration into the cause of Chinese poetry translation.

1.3. Research Methodology

This thesis is based on following research methods:

Firstly, the thesis selects two Chinese versions, namely Tu An's and Dai Liuling's in accordance with basic poetry translation requirements on form. Secondly, the principle of "three beauties" is adopted to do a comparative study on the two Chinese versions according to the aesthetic characteristics of Shakespeare's sonnets. Through comparisons, this thesis aims to discover the different ways in which they represent the aesthetic features and the way of dealing with the difficulties in translation of the sonnets. Thirdly, after analyses and comparisons, the thesis will conclude the aesthetic representation in the two Chinese versions.

2. Literature Review

In this section, the author introduces Shakespeare's sonnets briefly then retrospectes the origin and contents of the translation principle of "three beauties" proposed by Yu Yuanchong. It is the theory basis of the thesis. After that the previous studies on translation of Shakespeare's sonnets will be discussed, which proves the creative thoughts of the whole thesis.

2.1. Overview of Shakespeare's Sonnets

The sonnet is an old form of poetry that originated in Italy, and many commentators credit the Sicilian poet Giacomoda Lentino with creating the first sonnets (Lu, 1990, pp. 45-50). Later, under his influence, Dante, Petrarch, and other literary giants worked together to establish the basic form of the early sonnet. The first twelve lines are divided into three quatrain stanzas, each of which rhymes with the other, while the last two lines are separate and take the form of a couplet. Although English poets at different times experimented with the form and rhythm of the sonnet, the above-mentioned approach gave the English sonnet its own distinctive character and made it one of the most influential.

Shakespeare was a staunch practitioner of this form, and almost all his sonnets are written in it. Feng Ke (2009) introduced that Shakespeare not only brought the unique form and rhythm of the English sonnet to its fullest extent, but also covered a wide range of topics, was sincere and passionate in his feelings, and was full of criticism of social reality and deep philosophical thinking. All of this made Shakespeare the master of the English sonnet, a form he practiced and developed successfully, which later bore his name.

In *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*, Pau Harvey (1978) wrote that sonnet is defined as "a poem consisting fourteen lines, with rhymes arranged according to one or other of certain definite schemes, of which the Petrarchan and Elizabethan are the principles (p. 768).

Shakespeare's sonnets, first published in 1609, consisted of 154 poems, each numbered. The actual publication of this collection and the different editions that followed have been much debated. In terms of content, one widely accepted theory is that the first to 126 are addressed to a beautiful young nobleman, the 127th to 152 are addressed to a "black girl", and the last two seem unrelated to the story. This explanation has been passed down today. The largest group within this readership is made up of young lovers, for whom these sonnets compose a compact and attractive vade mecum (Evans & Hecht, 1997, p. 1).

Although the debate over these claims has never really

disappeared, the aesthetic and philosophical value of Shakespeare's sonnets should be beyond question. The perfection of Shakespeare's art, the depth of his philosophy, the intensity of his feelings, the richness and variety of his imagery, and the beauty of the music he appeals to the sense of hearing are best expressed in his sonnets. (Tu, 1998, p. 70).

2.2. Xu Yuanchong's Principle of "Three Beauties"

In this part, the origin and development of the principle of "three beauties" are mainly introduced. The principle of "three beauties" is the combination and expansion of Chinese literary translation theories. Literary translation must reflect the author's imagination, intelligence and intuitive writing. Indeed, literature is characterized by its aesthetics. Xu Yuanchong's principle of "three beauties" condenses the aesthetic requirements of poetry translation, which can be found in traditional Chinese translation theories.

2.2.1. Origin of Xu Yuanchong's the Principle of "Three Beauties"

Yan Fu (2010) put forward "Xin (faithfulness), Da(expressiveness) and Ya(elegance)--the difficulties for translation" in the preface of the Chinese version *Evolution and Ethics*. These three words are the earliest translation standards in the history of Chinese translation theory and are still widely used in translation practice today. When time and linguistic form change, the debate about "Ya" arises and becomes increasingly intense. Later, many translators made modifications to "Xin", "Da" and "Ya". In 1933, Lin Yutang proposed three translation criteria: faithfulness (忠实), smoothness (通顺), and beauty (美) in his book *On Translation*. Xu Yuanchong changed "Xin, Da and Ya" into "Xin, Da and You", with "You" being the core. He emphasized the last word "You", which means maximizing the use of target language to beautify target texts. "You" defines the degree of "three beauties".

Fu Lei (2006, p. 3) contended that from the perspective of effect, translation should be like imitating a painting, which pursues spiritual similarity rather than in form. He applied the aesthetic requirements of painting to translation. This translation theory was adopted and modified by Xu Yuanchong's translation theory system, which includes three similarities (sense, form and sound) as the basic requirements for poetry translation. The "three similarities" is the foundation of the "three beauties".

Qian Zhongshu's "sublimity" translation theory holds a milestone significance in the history of Chinese literary translation. When rendering a work from one language to another, rigid symbols should not be exposed due to differences in language habits, and the style of the original work has also been perfectly preserved (Qian, 1964). Considering Qian Zhongshu's translation theory, Xu Yuanchong proposed the principle of "three transformations", which is the methodology in his translation theory system. The "Three Transformations" is the methodology for achieving the "three beauties".

The development course of Chinese literary translation theories indicates that translation theory is becoming increasingly perfect.

2.2.2. Content of Xu Yuanchong's "Three Beauties"

Beauty in Sense

The Sense refers not only to the meaning but also to the artistic conception. The artistic conception is the harmonious

unity of the image and the author's feelings. It is the soul and marrow of a poem. A poem should convey a deep meaning to the reader. By successfully reproducing the beauty in sense, the translation version can express the author's feelings to readers of target languages. Beauty in sense is based on similarity in sense, which requires no absence of any mistranslation, omission, or addition of meaning. However, similarity in sense is not the same as beauty in sense, because different backgrounds of language and culture will produce different artistic conceptions. To resolve the contradiction between beauty and similarity, translators can modify the degree of similarity in sense to achieve the best degree of beauty in the target language.

Beauty in sound

In poetry, sound refers to rhyme and rhythm, which is a distinctive feature of English and Chinese poetry. The rhyme includes alliteration and middle rhyme and end-rhyme, which are present in both English and Chinese and can be reproduced in the translation of English and Chinese poetry. However, they are different in nature in terms of rhythm. English rhythm is manifested as the stressed and unstressed syllables, while “平仄 (level and oblique tones)” in the Chinese language are nearly untranslatable. The beauty of sound is based on the similarity of sound, which can also be achieved through a certain extent of change.

Beauty in form

In literary genres, poetry places the greatest emphasis on the requirement of form, which is also an important and unique feature of poetry. The beauty in form is mainly reflected in different lengths, patterns of rhyme parallels, all of which create the beautiful appearance of a poem. English poetry and Chinese poetry have many similarities in form. The beauty in form, just like the beauty in sense and sound, is based on the similarity in form and can also be changed to a certain extent to achieve the beauty in form.

In *The Art of Translation*, Xu elaborated on the essence of his translation theory and proposed the three beauties principle as the standard of poetry translation. Translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style (Nida & Taber, 2004, p. 12). The “sense, form and sound” constitute a poem and, therefore, the successful reproduction of the beauty in sense form and sound marks the success of translation. Xu (2006) explains that translators should make full use of target language to express the aesthetic beauty of the original poems. In order to present the beauty of the original poem in sense, form and sound, the degree of similarity can be changed (p. 109). The breakthrough of “three beauties” lie in creativity -- breaking the restriction of “faithfulness”.

2.2.3. Previous Applications of the Principle of “Three Beauties” in E-C Poetry Translation

Since Xu Yuanhong's principle of “three beauties” is applicable to translations involving both Chinese and English, it is suitable for two-way translation, and Xu Yuanhong adopts his principle of “three beauties” principle in his comment of E-C poetry translation. There is an example from his *Art of Translation*: Cao Yu translated a poem in *Romeo and Juliet*. In 2015, Zhang Yuhui analyzed three Chinese versions of Keats' poem “When You Are Old” under the “three beauties” principle. Yang Mingli compared the Chinese

versions of the poem “I Am Afraid” in 2015. Wang Xiaoyan studied the formal equivalence of E-C poetry translation under the principle of “three beauties” perspective, and a postgraduate student Ye Mei from University of South China published a paper in 2012, “A Comparative Study on Chinese Versions of Masterpiece of Robert Burns' Poems-from the Perspective of Three Beauties Principle”, in which he studied how the principle guided the successful translation of English poetry.

2.3. Reviews on the Translation of Shakespeare's Sonnets in China

Since the early 20th century, Chinese intellectuals have been translating Shakespeare's sonnets, which was a completely new type of poetry for the Chinese people at that time. So far, interest in translating sonnets is still burning. Among all foreign poems, Shakespeare's sonnets are the most well-known and appreciated, even among the Chinese people. Many famous Chinese poets, such as Wen Yiduo, Zhu Xiang, and Feng Zhi, not only translated sonnets but also wrote their own sonnets in Chinese.

The first Chinese to translate Shakespeare's sonnets was Zhu Xiang. In his work “*Psidium Guajava*”, Shakespeare's four sonnets are included. In the translation of sonnets, Zhu Xiang pursues the neatness of ten words to represent the ten syllables of each line in the original poem. In fact, he attempted to use the Chinese syllable as a prosodic unit to replace the English syllable (Zhu, 1936).

He had a profound influence on later sonnet translators in terms of translation methods. In 1943, Mr. Liang Daizong published an article on *National Literature* titled “Shakespeare's Sonnets” There are 30 sonnets at the end of the article. Later, many scholars engaged in the translation of Shakespeare's sonnets, including famous literary figures such as Sun Dayu and Bian Zhilin.

In the late 1970s, Mr. Sun Dayu rendered approximately 30 Shakespeare's sonnets, which were included in his *English Selected Poems*. In his translation, he proposed the theory of Meter in the 1920s.

The first complete Chinese version was created by Tu An in 1950. So far, there are more than 10 Chinese versions. The translators who published their versions have crossed different eras, such as Tu An in the 1950s, Yu Erchang and Liang Shiqiu in the 1960s, Shi Yingzhou in the 1970s, Yang Xiling, Tu An (new version), Liang Zongdai in the 1980s, Qian Zhaoming, Cao Minglun, and Gu Zhengkun in the 1990s, Ruan Shen, Wang Yong, Ai Mei, Jin Fashen, Li Hongming, and Li Jie in the early 21st century. Shakespeare's sonnets, no matter how long they have been created, will never fade from the world forever.

3. Comparative Analysis of Two Chinese Versions

This section makes a comparative analysis of the two Chinese translation versions of Shakespeare's sonnets, to dig out the reproduction of “three beauties” explicitly in the two versions. It includes the analysis of beauty in form, beauty in sense and beauty in sound.

3.1. Comparisons on the Aesthetic Focus of Different Chinese Versions

Table 1. The classification of different translation methods

Free Form	Correspondence of Meters	Equivalence of Syllables and Correspondence of Meters	Correspondence of Syllables and Meters	Classic Chinese
Liang Shiqiu (2002)	Liang Zongdai (1983,1985,2011)	Dai Liuling (unknown)	Cao Minglun (1996,2008)	Gu Zhengkun (1998,2005,2008)
Yang Xilling (1980)	Tu An (1956,1981,1988,1995,2008)	Shi Yingzhou (2011)	Wei Haiying (1994)	Gao Liping (2011)
Tian Weihua (2011)		Ruan Kun (2011)		

The editions above are available in libraries or on the internet. These published editions show: first, Chinese translators of different periods tried many different approaches to translate Shakespeare's sonnets; second, Tu An, Liang Zongdai, Gu Zhengkun and Cao Minglun's versions were published more frequently than other editions, which indicates that they are more widely accepted, and the latest publication date is 2011, which implies that the translation of Shakespeare's sonnets is never ending.

An overview of English poetry translations over the past hundred years reveals that different translators have used different methods of translation. This thesis is based on an analysis of two versions of Shakespeare's sonnets, namely the Chinese translations of the sonnets by Tu An and Dai Liuling. The reasons for the author to choose these two Chinese versions are as follows:

Form is the distinguishing feature that separates Shakespeare's sonnets from those of other poets. If the form of Shakespeare's sonnets were translated into free form or classic Chinese form, they would not be Shakespeare's sonnets. Therefore, the two translators whose Chinese versions are used in this thesis have both tried to outline the form of Shakespeare's sonnets. Their versions employ different approaches to presenting the form. Second, their translations are contemporary in their diction and translation standards, facilitating a better horizontal comparison of the translation characteristics of the two translations.

Tu An, a Chinese poet and translator, born in 1923, completed the first version of the sonnets in 1950. Then in 1955, after revisions he published a second edition. In 1963, Tu An made extensive changes to the 1953 edition and published it again in 1981. The 1981 edition was widely circulated among readers. He was the first person to translate all of Shakespeare's sonnets. He was also the first to translate Shakespeare's sonnets by using the Chinese word "Dun" (顿) instead of foot.

Dai Liuling, born in 1913, is a professor at the School of Foreign Languages of Sun Yat-sen University. Only four surviving translations of Shakespeare's sonnets can be seen today. Unlike the more common "staccato" translations of Shakespeare, Dai did not deliberately seek to express the iambic pentameter of the original poems. According to Feng Ke (2009), when Dai Liuling studied in England, his professor was a leading authority on Shakespeare, and he himself had long been engaged in poetry composition and translation, and the quality of his translations could be said to be quite high.

The above reasons have drawn the author's attention and interest in analyzing these two versions with a view to finding the reproduction of the "three beauties" in each version, exploring more appropriate versions according to the

principles of the "three beauties", and contributing to a better way of translating and writing modern Chinese poetry. The translation of Shakespeare's sonnets will not end forever, which gives an important value to the study of Shakespeare's sonnets in translation.

3.2. Beauty in Form

Tu An (1982) contended in the article "The Reason and Method of Translating Shakespeare's sonnets":

The first question is whether to interpret the sonnet in terms of free verse or in terms of traditional Chinese metrical poetry. I chose the latter because it would allow Chinese readers to understand the characteristics of Shakespeare's sonnets...Therefore, the version uses five Duns instead of five feet, and one stressed tone with each iambus foot(pp.174-177).

Table 2. Two Chinese versions of Sonnet 18

屠译	戴译
我能否/把你/比作/夏日的/一天?	我怎样/能把你/比作/夏天,
你是/更加/可爱, 更加/温婉;	你比它/更可爱/也更/温和;
狂风会/吹落/五月的/娇花/嫩瓣,	五月的/娇蕾/有暴风/震颤,
夏季/出租的/日期/又未免/太短;	夏季的/寿命/很短就/度过。
有时候/苍天的/巨眼/照的/太炽热,	有时候/当空/照耀着/烈日,
他/金光闪耀/的圣颜/也会被/遮暗;	又往往/它的/光彩/转阴澹;
每一样/美呀, 总会/失去美而/凋落,	每件美艳/终把/美艳/消失,
被时机/或者/自然的/代谢/所摧残;	遭受/运数和/时序的/摧残。
但你/永久的/夏天/决不会/凋枯,	你永恒的/夏季/却不/凋零,
你永远/不会/丧失你/美的/形象;	而且/长把/你的美艳/保存;
死神/夸不着你/在他的/影子里/蹒跚,	死神/难夸你/踏它的/幽影,
你将在/不朽的/诗中/与时间/同长。	那时/永恒的/诗/和你/同春。
只要/人类在/呼吸, 眼睛/看得见,	天地间/能有人/鉴赏/文采,
我这诗/就活着, 使你的/生命/绵延。	这诗/就流传/就教你/永在。

Sonnet 18 is the well-known typical Shakespearean sonnet. The original sonnet is as follows:

Shall I/ compare/ thee to/ a sum/mer's day?
 Thou art/ more love/ly and/ more tem/perate:
 Rough winds/ do shake/ the dar/ling buds/ of May,
 And sum/mer's lease has too/ short a/ date:
 Sometime/ too hot/ the eye/ of hea/ven shines,
 And of/ten is/ his gold/ comple/xion dimm'd;
 And e/very fair/ from fair/ sometime/ declines,
 By chance/ or nature's chan/ging course/ untrimm'd;

But thy/ eter/nal sum/mer shall/ not fade,
 Nor lose/ posse/ssion of/ that fair/ thou owest;
 Nor shall/ death brag/ thou wan/der'st in/ his shade,
 When in/ eter/nal lines/ to time/ thou growest:
 So long/ as men/ can breathe/ or eyes/ can see,
 So long/ lives this/ and this/ gives life to thee.
 William Shakespeare (2016)

The reproduction of beauty in form is a rather important thing to accomplish when translating Shakespeare's sonnets. The beauty of the form of Shakespeare's sonnets lies in the iambic pentameter and the refinement of stanzas. This arrangement precisely echoes the plot of the content. More importantly, the similar length of the sonnets, seven to ten words each line, is pleasing to the eye. The author will analyze the two translation versions in three aspects: the number of syllables in each line, the number of feet, and the pattern of end rhyme.

3.2.1. Content of Xu Yuanchong's "Three Beauties"

The compactness of a poem is strongly related to the number of syllables and words, which determine the length of each line in terms of sound and vision. English and Chinese differ greatly in terms of syllables. An English word must consist of at least one syllable, while a Chinese character has only one syllable. This difference makes it somewhat impossible to achieve parity in the number of syllables and words in translation.

Tu An did not pay attention to syllable equivalence. The length of each line of the translation varies from 10 to 14 words. Thus, a visual disorder is created. In contrast, the number of words in each line of Dai Liuling is strictly limited to ten, to correspond to the ten syllables of the original poem, thus reflecting the formal neatness of the English sonnet.

3.2.2. Content of Xu Yuanchong's "Three Beauties"

The internal rhyme of English poetry has no corresponding term in Chinese at the beginning was then named by "音步". Because of their different roots, Chinese poetry differs somewhat from English poetry in terms of rhyme. For example, in ancient Chinese poetry, pauses are referred to as "units of meaning". The number of pauses in each line is the same as in other lines, and the number of each word is specified. However, since 1919, influenced by foreign poetry, Chinese poetry has broken the shackles of the old forms. Since then, Chinese poetry has undergone several changes and gradually developed a style of its own form, which is called "New Poetry". The foot in English poetry finally found their counterparts in the new Chinese poetry, such as Zhu Guangqian's "Dun", which was widely accepted as a term in the new Chinese poetry. The introduction of the word "Dun" was a change in the similarity of the foot and an approach to the beauty of form.

Both of the two Chinese versions adopt the translation method of substituting "Dun" for "foot". In the original poem, there are two syllables per foot. As for sonnet 18, Tu's version contains five Duns per line of poetry, which matches the original poem's foot; while Dai did not seek to express the iambic pentameter of the original poem. His version is set at ten words per line, with four Duns per line. Therefore, he could not pursue five Duns, otherwise the translation would become fragmented.

3.2.3. Content of Xu Yuanchong's "Three Beauties"

The end-rhyme refers to the rhyme at the end of the line. Shakespeare's sonnets, except for 126 sonnet's heroic couplets, are written in four stanzas--three quatrains and a

couplet. A distinctive marker is the end-rhyme of each line. The three quatrains end in a cross rhyme. The end-rhyme of Sonnet 18 is shown below.

Table 3. Comparison on the patterns of end-rhyme for the sonnet 18

屠译	aaaa baca defg ee
戴译	abab cdcd efef gg

3.3. Beauty in Sense

Xu (2006) wrote that the most important characteristic of the "three beauties" is the beauty in the sense. When it is not possible to achieve all the three beauties at the same time, beauty in sense should be the first characteristic to be kept (pp. 73-75).

One of the characteristics of English poetry is that it can evoke inner emotions through its description of objective reality. Shakespeare makes full use of figures of speech in his sonnets, outlining many picturesque frames of reality. The beauty in sense refers to the reproduction of the impressions and ideas of the original poem, rather than the simple equivalence of meaning. A comparison of the two translators' versions reveals their different degrees of expression of sensual beauty.

Table 4. The two versions express perceptual beauty to different degrees (a)

Original sonnet	Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?	Thou art more lovely and more temperate
屠译	我能否把你比作夏日的一天?	你是更加可爱, 更加温婉;
戴译	我怎样能把您比作夏天,	你比它更可爱也更温和;

These two lines express the poet's praise for his friend, saying that his beauty is "more lovely and more temperate", depicting his extraordinary beauty. While Spring has formed a beautiful image in Chinese culture, such as "the duck is a prophet of the warmth of the spring river" and "the spring breeze is green again on the shore of the south of the river", both of which depict a thriving and vibrant picture. Therefore, many scholars have discussed whether to translate "summer's day" into Chinese as "spring". However, unlike China, the climate in England is maritime, bringing warm and humid sea breezes to the British mainland every year. Therefore, summer is the most pleasant season of the year. Although the word "summer" in Shakespeare's works is close to the Chinese word for spring, it should be translated as "夏天", because from the beginning of England until Shakespeare's birth, the seasons were only divided into summer and winter, and the months from March to September were all in the scope of summer. By Shakespeare's time, although there were already spring and autumn, the scope of summer was narrowed down to three months, namely May, June and July, which were also the most beautiful seasons in England, so translating summer as "夏天" would help readers understand the history and geography of England and its customs. If a word "夏" is not enough to convey the meaning or association of summer, we can add some modifiers to convey the basic and associated meanings of the original text as fully and accurately as possible.

Table 5. The two versions express perceptual beauty to different degrees (b)

Original sonnet	Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines
屠译	有时候苍天的巨眼照的太炽热
戴译	有时候当空照耀着烈日

In the fifth line of the poem, the expression “eye of heaven” appears, meaning the sun, which is a very graphic reference. Tu translates it as “苍天的巨眼”, which retains the image of the original and brings out the rhythm of the translation. Dai’s translation as “烈日” which adopts the original form instead of the metaphor, can convey the meaning of Shakespeare’s original work, but loses the original artistic conception.

Table 6. The two versions express perceptual beauty to different degrees (c)

Original sonnet	So long as men can breathe or eyes can see.	So long lives this and this gives life to thee.
屠译	只要人类在呼吸，眼睛看得见，	我这诗就活着，使你的生命绵延。
戴译	天地间能有人鉴赏文采，	这诗就流传就教你永在。

Shakespeare’s last two lines indicate that a dear friend will live with the poem. Tu translates as “只要人类在呼吸，眼睛看得见，我这诗就活着，使你的生命绵延”，where “眼睛看得见” is the same as “人类在呼吸”，and the semantic meaning is repeated. Dai’s version “天地间能有人鉴赏文采，这诗就流传就教你永在”，which has adopted the method of free translation here, is quite innovative.

3.4. Beauty in Sound

The lilting sound, together with the precise form of the poem, is an adjunct to its meaning, just as a beautiful woman is more attractive when she is dressed in a wonderful costume. If there were no sound and form, poetry would be indistinguishable from prose. Likewise, a poem with sound alone cannot be a poem because of sound and gibberish, like the Chinese “doggerel”. These three elements: sense, form, and sound complement each other and are necessary in a poem. Shakespeare is an expert at handling these elements, and his verse is concise. His sonnets are pleasing to the heart, the mind and the ears. The sound of poetry is made up of rhythm and rhyme.

3.4.1. Content of Xu Yuanchong’s “Three Beauties”

The following table is the comparison on the length of each foot of the sonnet 18.

Rhythm is featured by the movement of time; therefore, it is a feature of the art that presented by time-dance, music and poetry, not space (Leech, 1969, p. 105)

The numbers divided by “/” represent syllables. In Shakespeare’s sonnets, there are five feet per line and two syllables per foot. Looking at these two versions, we can tell that neither of them presents the same beauty of rhyme. But they both have their own ways of forming different types of rhythm.

Table 7. length of each foot of the sonnet 18

Tu	Dai
3/2/2/3/2	3/3/2/2
2/2/2/2/2	3/3/2/2
3/2/3/2/2	3/2/3/2
2/3/2/3/2	3/2/3/2
3/3/2/2/3	3/2/3/2
1/4/3/3/2	3/2/2/3
3/2/2/3/3	3/2/2/2
3/2/3/2/3	2/3/3/2
2/3/2/3/2	4/2/2/2
3/2/3/2/2	2/2/4/2
2/4/3/3/2	2/3/3/2
3/3/2/3/2	2/4/2/2
2/3/2/2/3	3/3/2/2
3/3/3/2/2	2/3/3/2

Both in Tu and Dai’s version, the length or time interval of each foot is not consistent with the others, ranging from one to four syllables, but most of the feet are arranged in the rhythmic “two-three” type. On the other hand, the beauty of this art lies in the coordination of repetition and variation. The coordination of repetition and variation is best demonstrated by Chinese poetry. For example, a four-word Chinese poem with a mere “two-two” rhythm sounds like playing a drum, while a poem of five or seven words has a “two-three” rhythm and the five- or seven-syllable poems with “two-two-three”. Rhythms are vivid in the readers’ minds. Thus, their creative rhythmic approach also has advantages.

3.4.2. Content of Xu Yuanchong’s “Three Beauties”

Table 8. Comparison on detailed end-rhymes of sonnet 18

Shakespeare	/ei/ /eit/ /ei/ /eit/ /ain/ /imd/ /ain/ /imd/ /eid/ /eist/ /eid/ /eist/ /i:/ /i:/
Tu	/an/ /an/ /an/ /an/ /e/ /an/ /uo/ /an/ /u/ /ang/ /u/ /ang/ /an/ /u/
Dai	/an/ /e/ /an/ /uo/ /i/ /an/ /i/ /an/ /ing/ /un/ /ing/ /un/ /ai/ /ai/

According to Xu Yuanchong’s idea of creative translation, the two translators have adopted different end-rhyme respectively. As the table above shows, the end-rhyme of Tu’s version and Shakespeare’s sonnets are completely different, but the Dai’s version basically follows the rhyme scheme of the original poem. Through different end-rhyme patterns, both translators present similar aesthetics and achieve a similar beauty in sound. The musical character of Shakespeare’s sonnets is also reflected in the rhyme.

4. Conclusion

This section first presents the major findings from the comparative analyses of the two translation versions of Shakespeare’s sonnets, Tu An’s version and Dai Liuling’s version. Then the author gives a summary and offers some suggestions for future related research.

4.1. Main Findings

Poetry represents one of the most abundant expressions in one language. Compared with other literary genres, it has the most stringent requirements for sense, form and sound. Due to the different nature of language and culture, it is impossible to completely replicate the aesthetic characteristics of the original poem.

A comparative analysis of the two Chinese translations reveals that the different Chinese versions of the poem mean that the translator cannot express every feature of the original poem in the translated version. For the translation of poems, the translator should pay more attention to the overall beauty rather than the specific meaning, rhyme and rhythm. The “three beauties” principle in translation is guided by its pursuit of beauty and tolerance of infidelity, to some extent a certain degree of unfaithfulness to Shakespeare’s sonnets, which makes it possible to reproduce the beauty of the sonnets to a greater extent. As Gunilla Anderman and Margaret Rogers (2003) wrote, translation is always an approximation (p. 14).

The following is a brief summary of the analysis of the two translated versions.

4.1.1. Tu An’s Version

Tu An’s status as a poet preceded that of a translator, and is better known. Tu An’s version, according to the time of publication, is the most popular among Chinese readers. From the previous comparisons and analyses, we can conclude that in his Chinese version, the number of syllables per line varies from 11 to 14 and the end-rhyme pattern is different from the original sonnet.

To express the rhythm, he uses “Dun” in his translation. The most striking feature is the beauty in sense. Tu An’s language goes far beyond the requirements of accuracy and fluency, seeking to resonate with Shakespeare. His version comes the furthest from the beauty of the original form, but the closest to the beauty of the original meaning. The popularity of his version is due to his skillful linguistic technique. He not only preserved the figures in the original poems, but was also adept at using Chinese verse. He was able to convey the same wonderful feeling in Chinese readers as Shakespeare’s sonnets for English.

4.1.2. Dai Liuling’s Version

Dai Liuling’s translation is unique in that it is neatly translated, with about 10 words per line, and reads well. In addition, Dai is flexible in dealing with couplet. Although he does not try to match the original text precisely, the lines are still short and concise, giving the impression of being completed in a single breath and with great momentum. As to the rhyme, Dai’s version basically follows the rhyme scheme of the original poem, and present similar aesthetics and achieve a similar beauty in sound. The musical character of Shakespeare’s sonnets is also reflected in the rhyme.

4.2. Limitations

First, previous studies of Shakespeare’s sonnets in translation have been quite inadequate. Particularly, it is viewed from the perspective of the “three beauties”, therefore, the objectivity of the material is limited. In addition, due to the author’s limited ability to study the great works, the analysis of two Chinese versions is not deep enough, nor is it comprehensive and objective. Secondly, for the comparative analysis of translations from the perspective of the principle of “three beauties”, the selected translations are limited to

sonnet18, which may lead to the analysis results not being objective and representative enough. Finally, the Chinese version chosen in the thesis is a translation of the last century, because no new and famous version has appeared in the twenty-first century. Therefore, there is no reference basis for discussing current trends in the translation of poetry.

4.3. Suggestions for Future Researches

Based on the principle of “three beauties”, the study has made systematic analysis of translation forms, sense and sounds. The results have been demonstrated in the previous sections. During the study, some inspirations were obtained and some suggestions for future research were made.

The Chinese versions that are widely disseminated in modern times are still the versions translated in the last century. Translators in the twenty-first century still need to continue their research and exploration for better translations. The translation of Shakespeare’s sonnets should not end, for every age needs new translations of great works. Therefore, the study of translation of sonnets should continue and translators should keep translating better and better translations. One can try to translate Shakespeare’s sonnets from different translation methods. New methods of translation are very important to enrich the methods of translation and writing in line with the twenty-first century.

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