

TRANSLATION OF HUMOR IN CH'IEN CHUNGSU'S "WEICHENG"
IN JEANNE KELLY AND NATHAN K. MAO'S VERSION: FROM THE
PERSPECTIVE OF RECEPTION AESTHETICS

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ABSTRACT

TRANSLATION OF HUMOR IN CH' IEN CHONGSHU'S "FORTRESS BESIEGED" IN
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Under the Supervision of Dr. Wally Iselin

Statement of the problem

The problem to be addressed is to study the translation of humors in Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao's version of "Fortress Besieged" written by Ch'ien Chungshu, to identify the translation strategies Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao adopted, the efficiency of their translation and whether their translation is in accordance with reception aesthetics.

Methods and Procedures

A brief review of literature on characteristics and the classifications of humor, key notions and concepts of reception aesthetics and its application in literary translation will be conducted. The significance of Ch'ien Chungshu's "Fortress Besieged" as a Chinese literary classic and its English version translated by Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao will be briefly introduced. Humor in both Ch'ien Chungshu and Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao's version will be collected as data for further analysis. By analyzing the data, translation strategy adopted by Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao will be concluded. The concluded translation strategy will be viewed from the perspective of reception aesthetics to draw a further conclusion that whether Jeanne Kelly's translation strategy is in accordance with it or not. The paper serves as a translation critique aimed at providing translators with a new angle of

viewing translation and hopefully it will help translators solve practical problems in their translation processes.

Summary of Results

Through a review of literature, Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao's version of "Weicheng"---"Fortress Besieged" has not received many positive comments from scholars and translators. Some scholars even consider humor untranslatable.

Viewing from the perspective of Reception Aesthetics, Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K Mao orientate their works to the readers in the United States, leave enough indeterminacy of text to the readers and help their readers adjust their horizon of expectation in their translating process by adopting foreignization as the prior translation strategy in humor translation.

Through the results of the study, it seems that the most important thing for translation criticism is to adopt an objective and scientific angle. Foreignization is obviously a wise choice in the humor translation in "Weicheng" because the translators' purpose is to introduce Chinese culture to readers in the United States.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Humor is shared by people from every nation. However, different nations have different kinds of sense of humor, closely related to religion, ideology, society, politics and culture. Therefore, although humor has been studied for a very long time, most are from the perspective of literature, art, sociology, psychology pragmatics or linguistics. Some scholars doubt that humor can be fully translated into another language because humor is language-specific and culture-specific. Only a few scholars study the translation of humor. Most of them conducted their research under the guidance of functional equivalence, stylistics, and so on.

This review of literature makes a tentative study on translation of humor from the perspective of reception aesthetic, and the data will be gathered to form a corpus from Ch'ien Chungshu's "Fortress Besieged" and Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao's version. Humor in two books will be compared and analyzed to conclude the translation methods adopted by Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao. Finally, the methods adopted by Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao will be viewed from the perspective of reception aesthetic to see whether they are in line with it or not, and in what way they are/are not in line with it. Hopefully, this research will shed light on humor translation to the literary translators and a new perspective to appreciate humor from another language to readers.

Statement of the Problem

As is stated above, humor is shared by people from all countries. Few people know what humor is and why humor creates humorous effects. A few scholars know how to

translate humor appropriately into another language. The subject of this paper is to provide answers to the following questions: What are the humorous expressions that Ch'ien Chungshu's "Fortress Besieged" is famous for? How can they be classified? What are the characteristics of them? What translation strategy works well for translation of humor in "Fortress Besieged"? What is reception aesthetics? And taking the case study of humors in Ch'ien Chungshu's "Fortress Besieged" in Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao's version into consideration, what translation strategy did Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao adopt in humor translation? How efficient is the translation and why? How can the translation of humor in "Fortress Besieged" be guided by reception aesthetics?

Definition of Terms

Humor. Humor is the tendency of particular cognitive experiences to provoke laughter and provide amusement. Many theories exist about what humor is and what social function it serves. People of most ages and cultures respond to humor. The majority of people are able to be amused, to laugh or smile at something funny, and thus they are considered to have a "sense of humor."

The term derives from the humoral medicine of the ancient Greeks, which stated that a mix of fluids known as humors (Greek: χυμός, *chymos*, literally juice or sap; metaphorically, flavour) controlled human health and emotion. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Humor>)

Reception aesthetics. Reception aesthetics, also termed as reception theory (Holub, 1984), is in essence a "systematic theory of the reader in the creation of literary meaning (Fluch, 2002:253)". It emerged in Germany in the late 1960s when a period of turmoil took place in the West marked in academia by a prevailing concern about reality and politics. A crisis in literary scholarship arose where the formalist agenda of studying literature "for its own sake"

was strongly attacked and a new aesthetic theory was badly called for. Reception aesthetics emerged just in response to such crisis with an optimal cutting-edge (the receptor) into the paradox of literary history: the co-existence of aesthetic independence and historical dependence (Zhu , 1989:8). Theorists of reception aesthetics , among whom Hans Robert Jauss and Wblfgang Iser stood out for their distinguished yet different contributions, drew their inspirations from Russian Formalism , praguestructuralism , the phenomenology of Roman Ingarden , Hans-Georg Gadamer’s hermeneutics and the “sociology of literature”. They laid the emphasis on the role of the reader and the act of reading in hope of finding a satisfactory answer to literature’s effects (Fluek , 2002:254). As a literary criticism theory , reception aesthetics is regarded as a paradigm shift in the study of literature. It breaks away from the former author-centered and text-centered paradigms but introduces a reader-centered paradigm. From a reception aesthetic point of view, the meaning of the original text is actually indeterminate and cannot be fully determined for the reader. That is why “there are a thousand Hamlets in thousand readers’ eyes”. Starting from this premise, reception aesthetics no longer sees both the translator and the reader as passive receptors but rather indispensable parts to literary works who make the lifeless works revived through their active participation and actualization. Thus the emphasis on the active role of readers in processing the text makes a central point of reception aesthetics.

The original insights of reception aesthetics Provide valuable suggestions for translation studies, especially for literary translation studies. The reception aesthetic approach to the present research is advantageous in the following aspects:

- 1) Instead of seeking to input the designed program “how to translate”, reception

Aesthetics leaves the choice of translation strategies to the translator-the principal part of the translation activity- by telling him what is expected from the version by the reader.

2) Reception aesthetics does not see the whole translation process and all participants as invariable factors but from a diachronic and dialectic point of view. Seen from this new angle , translation is not something static but a dynamic activity varying from individual to individual and from era to era(Qiong Z, 2005).

Translation. Translation is the interpreting of the meaning of a text and the subsequent production of an equivalent text, likewise called a "translation," that communicates the same message in another language. The text to be translated is called the "source text," and the language that it is to be translated into is called the "target language"; the final product is sometimes called the "target text." (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Translation>)

Delimitations of the Research

The research will be conducted in and through the Karrmann Library at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville, during the spring 2010 semester. Primary searches will be conducted via the Internet through EBSCO host with Academic Search Elite and CNKI online library as the primary sources. Key search topics included “humor”, “translation”, and “reception aesthetics”.

Method

A brief review of literature on characteristics and the classifications of humor, key notions and concepts of reception aesthetics and its application in literary translation will be conducted. The significance of Ch'ien Chungshu's “Fortress Besieged” as a Chinese literary

classic and its English version translated by Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao will be briefly introduced. Humor in both Ch'ien Chungshu and Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao's version will be collected as data for further analysis. By analyzing the data, translation strategy adopted by Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao will be concluded. The concluded translation strategy will be viewed from the perspective of reception aesthetics to draw a further conclusion that whether Jeanne Kelly's translation strategy is in accordance with it or not. The paper serves as a translation critique aimed at providing translators with a new angle of viewing translation and hopefully it will help translators solve practical problems in their translation processes.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Brief introduction to humor

Origin of humor

The word “humor” can be traced back to Latin originally means “moisture” (as cited in Jia, L.L., 2008, p 7). It refers to not only the sap of plants but the body fluid of human beings as well. And in the 15th and 16th century, humor began to be used to describe a person’s character and was considered to be one of the four fluids of the body: blood (coming from the heart, representing heat), phlegm (originating in the brain, representing cold), choler (yellow bile, secreted by the liver, representing dryness), and melancholy (black bile, emanating from the spleen and stomach, representing moisture) (Xu, 2003, p 15).

Like many other words, the meaning of humor evolves a lot as time moves on. As mentioned by Han (2007) in his “On Strategies & Principles of Linguistic Humor E-C Translation”.

When the time came to the 16th century, the meaning of "humor" was extended, referring to the unbalanced mental state or eccentric words and deeds. Therefore, an individual who was in such a state or had such a behavior would become a "humorist" and hence the object of laughter. Then "humorist" signifying an individual subject to one of humor

got a new meaning: someone who was amusing and facetious, an individual skilled in the literary or artistic expression of humor. Gradually "humor" lost its original meaning, turning into a concept in aesthetics, which means the capacity to cause or feel amusement [6]. (Han, 2007, p 3)

In the 18th century, humor gradually lost its original meanings and gained its modern meanings. It was used to refer to people's behaviors, words or some features of literary works that are interesting and can make people laugh (Jia, 2008, p 7).

Most Chinese people take it for granted that "humor" which is always translated into "幽默" in China has the same meaning with "humor" in English. The Chinese people have no idea that the original meaning of the Chinese word "幽默" is quite different from what it means now.

Han (2007) traced the original meaning of the word "幽默" to its first appearance in some Chinese classics like Chuci (《楚辞》) and found that it was not used the same way as it is in modern Chinese.

It originally meant silence and quietness like in the sentence ".....孔静幽默.....". It was in 1924 when Lin Yutang (林雨堂) translated the word "humor" into "幽默" by choosing this word from Chuci that "humor and "幽默" began to mean the same. Before that time the Chinese counterparts of "humor" are "huaji 滑稽", "huixie 诙谐", "xiequ 谐趣" "fenqu 风趣" or "tiaokan 调侃"[6]. (Han, 2007, p 3)

Definition of humor

Defining humor is a daunting task, and to many, it is a mission impossible. Many linguists, including McGhee & Goldstein (1983, I:v), stated that "There is still no agreement on how humor should be defined. Nor is there agreement on how appreciation or comprehension should be determined." Nevertheless, the definitions listed in dictionaries can shed some light on the general nature of humor (Feng, 2007).

Quoting part of Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English with Chinese Translation. Humor is:

1. (capacity to cause or feel) amusement;
2. person's state of mind (esp. at a particular time); temper;
3. (old use) one of four liquids(blood, phlegm, choler, melancholy)in the body; said to determine a person's mental and physical qualities;
4. v. give way to, gratify

Collins (COBUILD) Learner's Dictionary defines humor as:

1. You can refer to the amusing things that people say as their humor.
2. Humor is a quality in something that makes you laugh } for example in a situation, in someone's words or actions, or in a book or film.

In Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, the definition is:

1. the ability to understand and enjoy what is funny, and make people laugh;
2. the quality of causing amusement.

Besides the definitions from dictionaries, there are more definitions from different scholars in different periods of time.

McGhee (1979) argues that humor is something in our mind and not in the real world. He emphasizes that humor is not a characteristic of certain events (such as cartoons, jokes, and clowning behavior), or behavior (such as laughing and smiling) (McGhee, 1992, p 6).

Physiologically, Koestler (1993) defines humor “as a form of communication in which a complex mental stimulus illuminates, amuses, or elicits a stereotyped predictable response: the laughter reflex” (as cited in Liu, 2006, p 10). The definition provided by Koestler has been the least controversial yet the most scientific one.

In Xu Lixin (2003)’s book “A Study on Humorous Discourse”, he states that

Humor is an attribute indispensable to man’s welfare. Indeed, it is a temperament, a spirit, an attitude to life, and even a way of life (Li & Hu, 1990:1, 4). It is a tone, a mind style and aesthetic form (Xu, 1991). It is a tone, a mind style and a category of discourse; it is a style of writing, which can exhibit itself under any topic as long as the humorist is in tune with the mood (Lin, 1990:85). It is also a writing, speaking or behaving technique for eliciting laughter (Xu, 1991).

According to Xu (2003), there are four categories in the definition of humor: a quality or capacity of the interlocutor, a feature of the discourse or situation, the objective manifestation (in the form of literary works or other discourses or the event or situation

itself) and technique of expression (Xu, 2003, p 16).

Xu (2003) also mentioned, “ Although a universal definition has never existed or may never come into existence, and there appear to be as many ideas (of humor) as there are people, a survey of some of the attempts at defining humor yields a helpful insight into the concept.” (Xu, 2003, p 19).

Lin Yutang thinks that humor is a characteristic of behavior, which can cause joyance, bring delight, or make people get spiritual large charge in an amusing way (幽默是指一种行为的特征 ,能够引发喜悦 ,带来快乐 ,或以愉快的方式是别人获得精神上的快感) (Jia, 2008, p 8).

Though there are various definitions, they all share the key feature---"in all its many splendoured varieties, humor can be simply defined as a type of stimulation that tends to elicit the laughter reflex." (Han, 2007, p 4).

Classification of humor

As different scholars defined humor in different ways, humor also is classified similarly in a number of ways for a number of different purposes and reasons. Some of the classifications overlap. Those classifications will definitely influence the translatability of humor, therefore the following paper would put forward some of those classifications.

On the translatability and untranslatability of humor, Bergson singles out two kinds of “funniness”, the first expressed by languages, which is translatable and the second created by language, which is untranslatable, contending that “funniness” that uses language as the medium appears to be in the majority (Xu, 2003, p 38).

Koestler (1993) may see eye to eye with Bergson because he also divides humor into

verbal and situational humor, whereby verbal humor plays on sounds, words and ideas and covers jokes and anecdotes, comic verse, the bogus proverb, nonsense verse, and satire by means of allegory. Situational humor by contrast involves such comic devices as imitation, impersonation (the most aggressive form being parody) and disguise, where the source of humor comes from the “bisociation” of man and machine, man-animal hybrid (like playful behavior in young animals and children), deformity, and the changed roles between the part and the whole. (Koestler, 1993,p 684-685).

Palmer (1994) distinguishes between comic texts (or comedy), formalized either in recorded textuality or in performance (or both) on the one hand, and unscripted humor of everyday life on the other (Palmer, 1994, p 7).

While Cicero in *De Oratore* (II, hiii-lxii) classified humor in terms of the forms of rhetoric metaphor and illogic (Feng, 2007, p 4).

Freud further(1976) specifies verbal and conceptual jokes, with verbal jokes utilizing the language devices like wordplay, irony, etc. and conceptual jokes using the techniques of displacement, faulty reasoning, absurdity, and indirect representation, together with representation by the opposite (Freud, 1976, p 130).

Yang (1991) classified humor in a totally different way. He holds that humor can be classified into red, gray and black humor.

Red humor embodies justice and encourages the potential qualities of the targets as it is both philosophical and instructive.

Gray humor begs cheap laughter, being low, vulgar, boorish,

and shallow, as is the case when the pot-bellied gentlemen and ladies with heavy make-up and jewelry appreciate the sight of poor working people, beggars and the disabled with amazement, laughter, mimicry and disdain.

Black humor also brings about laughter, after which, however, one cannot help feeling anguished, distressed and miserable. It makes use of taboos (such as death), the awful and the grotesque to create laughable subjects out of the otherwise unfunny; indeed, black humor causes one to recall one's worst fears in a humorous light (Yang, 1991, Forward).

Zeng Zheng (2006) argues that as for verbal humor, the taxonomy also varies. It may be classified according to diverse purposes and in many ways. But these classifications generally are not absolute. As a matter of fact, there is no objective or absolute scientific method to classify humor. Each method is determined for a purpose (Zeng, 2006, p 6-7).

Humor can be classified in various ways for a number of different purposes and reasons. This paper focuses on the study of verbal humor in various rhetoric forms: hyperbole, oxymoron, paradox, periphrasis, puns, sarcasm, synecdoche, witticism and shed light on the translation strategy of humor.

Translation of humor

Wang Lina (2007) indicates that "Humor is a worldwide treasure and should be enjoyed by all the people in the world. There should be no discrimination for different nations, classes and sexes to share this worldwide treasure. But because of the obstacle of different

languages and cultures, the proper translation of humor becomes especially important for the wide spread of this world treasure.” (Wang, 2007, p11-12).

Humor has long been a topic discussed by scholars as well as by translators in both the West and the East. Studies and explorations of humor and its translation have always been going on in academic field in spite of the pace being rather slow because of the complexity and the sheer difficulty attached to the very topic-humor and translation. Because of the features of humor, humor translation has always been a big headache for both translators and scholars in the field of translation. Although some of them attempted to explain and analyze the translation of humor, they mainly put their emphasis on the surface level --- achieving a balance between the restrictions of the source text (ST) and the demands of the target text (TT). Not much thorough and comprehensive theoretical outcome on this aspect can be found in the translation of humor.

In a clear and systematic way, Ouyang Lifeng (2002) discusses the translation of humor from the following aspects: translation purpose, faithful principle, functional translation, domestication strategy and its translatability. According to his research, the purpose of the translation of humor is the effects humor may produce, not the information content in the language. A translator should be faithful not only to the ST itself, but to the ST's intention, especially to the author's intention (as cited in Jia, 2008, p 12).

Cicero distinguished between verbal humor (*facetiae dicto*) (i.e. "involving the phonemic/graphemic representation of the humorous element") that is untranslatable, and referential humor (*facetiae re*) that is translatable, a division corresponding to that used by several modern scholars (Attardo, 1994, p 27).

Untranslatability of Humor

Just as Cicero states, due to their linguistic features in English and Chinese respectively, the translation of much humor is unlikely to succeed. Here the term "untranslatability" mainly refers to the impossibility of retaining the function and semantic meaning of source text (ST) simultaneously in the target text (TT). Once translated into TT literally, it will not be humor anymore, and the fun created by it also vanishes.

Feng Yun(2007) further classifies untranslatable humor, or in her words, near-untranslatable humor into three types: ① rhyme, alliteration, rhythm ② riddle and ③ allusion (Feng, 2007, p 40). Because Chinese and English belong to different language families, there exist great differences between them. Therefore, if a translator has to consider both the contextual effects and the processing effort involved for the audience, she or he has to provide pages of explanation to show the TT readers what this humor is about and how it works out. After reading pages of explanation the TT readers may lose interest, let alone enjoy the funniness the humor was meant to provide.

With the study of cultural influence incorporated into translation studies, some scholars hold that translators may encounter a variety of culture-bound problems in the process of translating. According to the research on factors impeding humor transference by Liu Miqing (1998:33), Xiao Sa (1989:231), and Mao Ronggui (1992:56) , rhetoric devices adopted in humor and cultural factors are main obstacles on the way to producing satisfactory rendering (Wang, 2007, p 12).

Liu Miqing(1998) stated in his *Style and Translation*:

Language is a complicated thinning and communication tool.

Its complicatedness is demonstrated above all by the history, culture, and psychology unique to a nation. Some of these backgrounds are the barriers in the way of transference....Humorous and punning language can hardly be translated because humor comes from the witty use of words, and the wit easily vanishes in translating process....Rhyming always produces humor, such as the alliteration....Rhyming is generally untranslatable, prosaism becomes a necessity in translating....Puns always refuse to be translated....(Liu, 1998, p 33).

Moreover, in Ye (2006)'s view, the "impossibility seems to also exist in translating much cultural humor. Cultural humor plays on the realities of a culture. Its comprehension and appreciation needs to be preceded by some relevant knowledge of the source culture. Much of these realities are still barrier for TT readers despite some overlapping cultural factors between cultural groups with expanding cross-cultural communication" (Ye, 2006, p 36). TT readers' comprehension and enjoyment of the humor is based on the necessary knowledge about the source culture.

Delia (1992) reconsiders the issue of impossibility of translation. He believes that "if we aim at the exact mirroring of discrete items, then translation is indeed out of the question; on the other hand, if we are willing to find a solution such as substitution in functional terms acceptable, then, although not ideal, translation, or rather retelling, is quite feasible." (Delia 1992, p 95-96).

In the following pages the transformation from the untranslatable to the translatable of humor from angles of the translatability of culture and the relativity of untranslatability will be discussed.

Translatability of Humor

Despite all the difficulties in the process of translating humor and debates about it, the translation practice continues. Translators have to work out solutions to translate untranslatable humor.

Professor Gu Zhengkun holds that "it is the unilateralism of our thoughts that makes us accustomed to judging things by A or B. People are used to believing that every thing has a unique answer, affected by which many translators have spared no efforts looking for an absolutely right translation criterion." (as cited in Han, 2007, p 33).

Ye Bei (2006) developed Gu Zhengkun's idea, she thinks "the term "translatability" mainly refers to the possibility of retaining the function and semantic meaning of source text (ST) simultaneously in the target text (TT). When the TT is faithful to the ST semantically, naturally it can cause analogous effects on readers"(Ye, 2006, p 33).

Ye (2006)'s analysis of the classifications of language humor provides us with a better understanding of the specific translatable categories.

First, most language-expressed humor is translatable for it often plays on common logics to achieve laughable results or describes some universal funny situations or facts. Second, some language-created humor is also translatable with a view

Comment [U1]: Be used to doing= people have the habit of doing

to the correspondence between the two languages in terms of the linguistic techniques exploited to amuse readers. For example, such figure of speech as exaggeration that brings amusement to ST readers can be retained in translation without losing their meaning and charm. Third, some cultural humor is translatable if the cultural realities it plays on are shared by TT readers. It is self-evident that a translator, in translating these translatable categories, only needs to bring the semantic meaning of the ST to the TT readers in order to successfully amuse them (Ye, 2006, p 33).

Qin Li (2007) concludes the relationship between untranslatability and translatability in a scientific way.

On the whole, translatability and untranslatability are a kind of natural dichotomy. Translatability and untranslatability are like the two sides of a coin. They are a dialectical unit of contradictory opposites. Translatability or untranslatability is not a static product, but a dynamic process. With the development of society, the enlarging and deepening of cultural exchanges and the efforts of translators and researchers, what appear untranslatable may be changed into translatable. Untranslatability is relative while translatability is absolute. Translatability allows for different versions of

interpretation. And accordingly, transformation from the untranslatable to the translatable is justified and can be realized. Untranslatability is relative and temporal. Thus, like many other translations, humor translation is a possible and feasible task(Qin, 2007, p 37).

This paper bases all the research and analysis of humor on the possibility of humor translation.

As was previously pointed out, humor translation cannot be discussed separately from culture. On one hand, humor is a carrier of culture; on the other hand, humor itself is an important component of culture.

The most knotty problem in humor translation is the translation of culture-bound humor. In order to translate it, translators need to solve the problems on deeper levels, such as, ideology, mode of thinking, values and aesthetic standard, and so on.

By applying reception aesthetics theory, this paper intends to provide a new perspective for humor translation focusing on the following thoughts and ideas.

Key notions and concepts of reception aesthetics

Reception Aesthetics, also called the reception theory, is a kind of artistic aesthetic school which appeared in 1960s with Hans R. Jauss and Wolfgang Iser at the University of Constance in Germany as two of its representatives.

Unlike the literary theories back in the 1850's in which period the main focus of the literary studies focused on the relations of the characters and the authors, the setting of the literary works and that in reality or the literary theories in 1910's in which era, under the

challenge by formalism of Russian scholars, the focus of literary studies shifted to the literary features of the texts, Reception Aesthetics focused on the relationship between the reader and the text.

With Hermeneutics and Phenomenology as its basic theory foundation, Wu (2005) concludes the features of Reception Aesthetics as: on the one hand, it considers the literary texts are realized in reader's reading; on the other hand, it regards the literature reception in perspective of the literature history, especially discussing the constant changes of the literature in its different historical stages (Wu, 2005, p 3).

Hans Robert and Wolfgang Iser hold that “artistic works as a product, is not a realization of a fulfilled aesthetic activity, but only an intentional structure, the real aesthetic realization depended inevitably on the active and creative participation of the readers” (Zhao, 2006, p 15).

Reader's role and status

The author and the text are usually understood as the focus of literary study and reader's role tended to be overlooked before the appearance of reception theory. With the shift of the attention from the author and the text to the reception of the text, Reception Aesthetics can be considered as a reader-response theory. “It examines how readers realize the potential of a text, and reception history examines how readings change over the course of time” (Zhang, 2005, p 19).

They believe that the real creator of the art and beauty is not the author but the readers in a historical period. Reception Aesthetics hold that the meaning of a work can only be achieved in an ongoing process of interpretation by the receiver; and it is the receiver's

interpretation that turns the text into a work of art. Therefore, readers should be considered as active participants in the actualization or realization of the literary works. Due to the variety of readers, the interpretation of the literary works also varies from one to another from time to time.

Jauss asserts that "in the triangle of author, work and the public (the reader), the last is no passive part, no chain of mere actions, but rather itself an energy formative of history. The historical life of a literary work is unthinkable without the active participation of its addressees (as cited in Zhao, 2006, p 16).

Indeterminacy of the text

According to Reception theory, there are many "gaps" and "indeterminacy" in the literary texts waiting to be filled and concretized by the readers. The concept--"indeterminacy" of the text and the vacancy of the meaning, is put forward by Wolfgang Iser. Jauss defines indeterminacy as "the absence of an exact correlation between phenomena described in literary texts and objects in the world of real life" (as cited in Zhang, 2005, p 21).

Indeterminacy, a peculiar openness, helps the reader shape his/her own situations in his/her individual reading and gives rein to his/her imagination. Huang Weiqun and Wu Junwu (2005) quotes Iser by saying that "the text is in such a way that we want to see the thing which does exist in it. The written part in the text gives us knowledge; while the unwritten part gives us the chance to see things. In fact, without the gaps and indeterminacies, we can't exert our imagination" (Huang & Wu, 2005, p 48).

Horizon of expectations

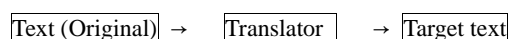
Horizon of expectations is one of the important concepts in Reception theory. It refers to "an inter-subjective system or structure of expectations, a system of references or a mind-set that a hypothetical individual might bring to any text (Jauss, 1983, p 59). Jauss uses the term "horizon of expectations" to describe the criteria readers use to judge literary texts in any given period (Seldon, Widdowson, & Brooker, 2004, p 53). In his view, literary work cannot be absolutely new as it might appear to be to a reader. A reader has to take his own experience, knowledge and comprehension in the process of reading. And in that process, his horizon of expectations constantly establishes, changes, modifies and re-establishes. Jauss even describes horizon of expectation as "It awakens memories of that which was already read, brings the readers to a specific emotional attitude and with its beginning, arouses the expectation for the "middle and end", which can then be maintained intact or altered, reoriented, or even fulfilled ironically in the course of the reading according to specific rules of the genre or type of text" (Jauss, 1983, p 23). Therefore, readers in different times, with different reading experience and ideology may hold different horizon of expectations which supports the saying, "Where there are a thousand readers there are a thousand Hamlets".

Reception Aesthetic and translation

Reception Aesthetics, though first applied mainly in literary research, also has its significance in literary translation. Since reader's understanding and aesthetic activity play such an important role in the aesthetic representation of the literary text, we need to take this into consideration in translation, and try to apply translation techniques to preserving the aesthetic effects in the source text (Fang M.Z., 2004, P 298).

Dual role of the translator

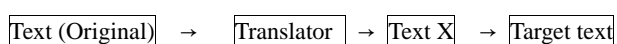
In most people's point of view, translation is simply translating the original text just like Figure 1 (Wu, 2005, p 5) shows:



(Figure 1)

Judging from Figure 1, target text is considered the reproduced product from original text. In that case, the initiative and creativity of translator are obviously ignored.

However, the target text is not directly reproduced from the original text but an intermediate text interpreted by the translator in the process of translation, as is showed in Figure 2 (Wu, 2005, p 6):



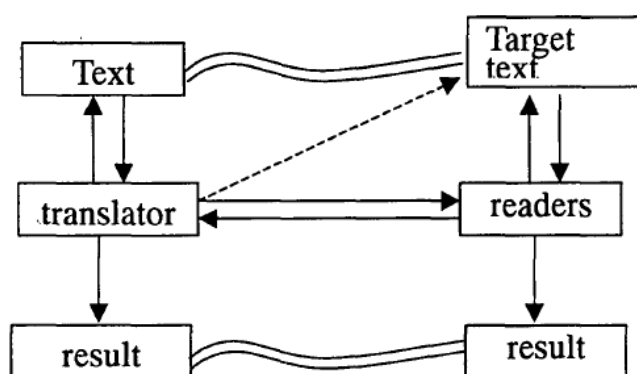
←

(Figure 2)

TextX in Figure 2 is the “original text”, and translators usually base their translation on it during the translating process. That is to say, the translator plays two roles--- the reader of the original text and the re-creative writer of the target text. Yu Fengping provides a clear definition of the translator's dual role in the process of translating: "When translating, the translator uses the materials abstracted from his understanding which comes from the original text. That is the presentation and crystallization of the author's thought and emotion. So he must keep balance between the position of the author and that of his own" (as cited in Wu, 2005, p 7).

Invisible participation of the reader

As is mentioned above, Reception Aesthetic is a reader-oriented theory, when it comes to exerting influence on the studies of translation; the participation of the target text reader is also emphasized. Figure 2 shows that the translator's reception of the original text, or TextX, will influence the formation of the Target Text. As a matter of fact, the reception of target text reader may also influence the formation of the Target Text. Therefore, Wu (2005) explains that in translating, the translator will be influenced by two processes of reception which can be described as Figure 3 shown below (Wu, 2005, p 8):



(Figure 3)

In Figure 3, the translator is influenced by both the original Text and the readers of the target text. In the process of translating, the translator has to not only faithfully express what the author of the original text wants, but take into consideration the target readers' demand and the receptive competence as well. In this case, readers participate "invisibly" in the process of translating. Without the prior knowledge of the translator--- the consideration of the target text readers, the result produced by the translator may not be in accordance with

the expectation of the target text readers.

An empirical analysis on the translation of humor in Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K

Mao's version

Both comically exuberant and morally sophisticated, "Fortress Besieged" is, in the words of the eminent critic C.T. Hsia, "the most delightful and carefully wrought novel in modern Chinese Literature" (as cited in Ch'ien, 2003, front flap). It has been translated into English, French and Russian. In the following part, a brief introduction of Ch'ien Chung-shu and "Weicheng" will be given so as to provide context for the analysis of humor translation in the next chapter.

Review of the study on Ch'ien Chungshu

Ch'ien Chung-shu (1910-1998) was born into a literary family in Wuhsi, Kiangsu province in 1910. He was a precocious child, noted for his photographic memory and brilliance in writing Chinese verse and prose. He graduated from Tsinghua University in 1933, and he spent two years at Oxford, where he majored in English and also became conversant with Latin and modern European literatures. He returned to China in 1937 and taught for a short period at the Southeast Associated University in Kunming and then returned to Shanghai. From 1946 to 1948, he also worked as an editor of the English Periodical Philobiblion (Shu-lin chi-kan). After the founding of People's Republic of China in 1949, he returned to Peking to teach at Tsing-hua University. Since 1952 he was also a senior fellow of the Institute of Literature in the Academy of Social Sciences, then he

transferred to the Chinese Literature Institute of the same academy. In 1974 it was rumored that Ch'ien had died, but he was alive and well, with his reputation "resurrected" after the Gang of Four. Ch'ien passed away on December 19, 1998 in Beijing due to sickness (Ch'ien, 2003, back flap).

Some of his most significant work is as listed below:

In 1941, published a collection of essays entitled, *The Marginalia of Life*.

In 1946, published a volume of short-stories entitled, *Men Beasts Ghost*.

In 1947, published a novel, *Fortress Besieged*.

In 1948, published *On the Art of Poetry* which is composed in an elegant or classical style.

In 1958, published, *Annotated Selection of Sung Poetry*,

In 1979, published a collection of short essays on comparative poetics, semiology, literary history, literary theory entitled *Kuan-chui pien*. This publication is considered Ch'ien's most important publication, a mammoth work of over one million words (Ch'ien, 2006, Introduction, ix).

Review of the study on "Weicheng"

"Fortress Besieged" is considered to be one of the best Chinese novels of the twentieth century. "Fortress Besieged" first serialized in *Literary Renaissance* and published in book form in 1947 has achieved immense popular and critical acclaim in China. It was even adapted into a television series in China in 1990. After receiving extensive notoriety for his works in C. T. Hsia's *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction* in 1961, Ch'ien was largely neglected until recently (Xie, 2006, p 6).

“Fortress Besieged”, arranged in nine chapters, is a comedy of manners with much picaresque humor, as well as a scholar's novel, a satire, a commentary on courtship and marriage, and a study of one contemporary man (Li, 2006, p 27). Li (2006) further divides the nine chapters into four sections. In each section, Ch'ien Chung-shu depicts the Fang Hung-chien 's experiences from hope through frustration to defeat. “Despite of the seriousness and success of the courtship and marriage theme, the crowning achievement of Fortress Besieged is the creation of the hero, Fang Hung-chien, it is in Fang that Ch'ien is able to fully suggest the idea of besiegement, and thus make his comment on the isolation of modern man”(Li, 2006, p 27-28).

Literary Features of “Fortress Besieged”

Numerous profound studies have been conducted on the features of “Fortress Besieged”. It is considered to be a “unique, classic, graceful, and prominent” literary work. As far as literary features of “Fortress Besieged” are concerned, to the author’s mind, they are mainly the following: humorous, satirical and encyclopedic or scholarly (Zhao, 2007, p 27). Two prominent literary features of “Fortress Besieged” are stated below:

1. comic manners

Zhao (2007) concludes that “‘Fortress Besieged’ is a comedy of manners in its presentation of representative segments of the author's time: the lowly porters, shopkeepers, innkeepers, bus drivers, country folk, soldiers, prostitutes, the middle-class returned students, the rising middle-class bankers, and even Japanese collaborators” (Zhao, 2007, p 27).

Although the keynote of “Fortress Besieged” is tragic, the whole novel is written in a comic manner. It can be referred to as one of the classic humorous and sarcastic literary

works. Ch'ien's work is written under a unified comic atmosphere by the employing of witty language.

2. scholarly

Besides the comic manner Ch'ien adopts in "Fortress Besieged", he also displays his wide scope of knowledge ranging from "Chinese and Western literature, philosophy, logic, customs, laws, educational system, to other areas such as foreign languages and feminism" (Liu, 2007, p 6) to supply the reader with an witty, rhetorical and comic story. Because of the achievement of "Weicheng", Ch'ien is also named as China's foremost "scholar novelist" (Liu, 2007, p 6).

Humor in "Weicheng"

Being named as China's foremost "scholar novelist", Chien Chung-shu shows his sensitive insight in "Weicheng". Besides that, Chien Chung-shu is also a great master of humor. Unlike other writers, his humor is "implicative but profound" (Song, 2005, p 36). Zhao (2007) argues that as "the greatest attraction" of Ch'ien's "Weicheng", humor is used as the "most powerful weapon to reveal the genuine nature of human beings" (Zhao, 2007, p 42).

Liu Lihong (2007) classifies humor in Ch'ien's "Weicheng" into three categories: humor caricaturing of people, humor commenting on social reality and humor generated by various rhetorical devices (Liu, 2007, p 26-53).

This paper intends to discuss humor in Ch'ien's "Weicheng" on the basis of case study in a general term which covers all the aspects Liu (2007) mentions.

Review of the study on “Fortress Besieged” translated by Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K Mao

“Fortress Besieged”, the English translation of Wei Cheng, is the cooperative effort of Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao. Jeanne Kelly did the first draft of the translation and Nathan K. Mao revised it. It was published in 1979 by Indiana University Press (Deng, 2007, p 3). So far, it is the first English version and has evoked an enthusiastic response.

Wu Ting (2007) cited the translators' preface as saying:

“The translation is the cooperative effort of Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao. Whereas Jeanne Kelly did the first draft of the translation, Nathan K. Mao revised it. In addition, Mao wrote the introduction, refined the footnotes and prepared the manuscript for publication. Despite our divided tasks, the book is our joint responsibility.” (Wu, 2007, p 44)

Jeanne Kelly is an American scholar and translator. She received her M. A. from the School of Chinese at the University of Wisconsin and has translated many Chinese short stories and scholarly articles.

Nathan K. Mao, a Chinese-American, is a professor of English in Shippensburg State College. He received his Master's degree of English literature in Yale University (1962) and his doctorate at the University of Wisconsin (1966). He is the translator of “Twelve Towers” and “Cold Nights”, and author of “Li Yu” and “Pa Chin” (Ch'ien, 2003, back flap).

Hu Dingbang gives his comments on the first three chapters of the version. He concludes that as a whole the quality of this version is just so-so because it has lost the literary strength because it doesn't preserve Qian Zhongshu artistic mastery of language. He

Comment [U2]: ©

thinks Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K Mao failed to introduce Ch'ien and his novel to the western readers: "The English version always makes one hesitate to determine what the writer's true intentions are, but the readers of the Chinese original can appreciate leisurely rich and colorful skills of the novelist" (as cited in Ye, 2006, p 7). "Only Ch'ien himself can be the translator of his own works." best shows Hu's dissatisfaction to the English version of "Weicheng".

In accordance with Hu Dingbang's comment, Sun Yifeng (1995) issues his comments in "four aspects which include misunderstanding, incorrect and rough translation, grammar and style, and Chinese-like tendency" (Ye, 2006, p 7). He thinks that in the version with so much misunderstanding, incorrect and rough translation and grammar errors the style of the original version cannot be fully expressed.

In response to Hu Dingbang's bitter criticism of the English version of Ch'ien's "Weicheng", Xi Yongji (2001) holds that translation criticism should be valuably unbiased. Xi acknowledges the contribution of the English version (as cited in Ye, 2006, p 7).

Analysis of translation strategies adopted by Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao

Translation is by nature a communicative activity across culture. Humor prevailing throughout "Weicheng" is an important part of language, and language is a part of the culture. To some extent, language also reflects the culture and opens a door to another culture. Therefore, one cannot discuss the translation of humor without dealing with culture as a concern. How to keep the function and flavor of humor in the target language is an ever-lasting topic for translators. In order to keep the effect humor created in the source language to the full extent, a translator's work needs to be guided by certain translation

strategies. As the two leading translation strategies, “domesticating translation” and “foreignizing translation” are to be studied in this part.

Target language oriented translation strategy or “domestication”

“Domestication” is used by Venuti to describe “the translation strategy in which a transparent, fluent style is adopted in order to minimize the strangeness of the foreign text for target language readers” (Mark, & Moira, 2004, 43-44).

According to Venuti, the term “domestication” has negative connotations as it is identified with a policy common in dominant cultures which are “aggressively monolingual, unreceptive to the foreign”, and which he describes as being “accustomed to fluent translations that invisibly inscribe foreign texts with [target language] values and provided readers with the narcissistic experience of recognizing their own culture in a cultural other” (Mark, & Moira, 2004, 44).

Comment [U3]: It is a direct quotation and it is an original sentence.

Source language oriented translation strategy or “foreignization”

“Foreignization” or “Minoritizing Translation”, a term used by Venuti (1995) “to designate the type of translation in which Target Text is produced which deliberately breaks target conventions by retaining something of the foreignness of the original” (Mark, & Moira, 2004, 59). The concept of Foreignization originated from Schleiermacher, who discusses the type of translation in which “the translator leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, and moves the reader towards him” (as cited in Mark, & Moira, 2004, 59)

Venuti sees the role of Foreignization as being to “register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad” (Mark, & Moira, 2004, 59).

Comparing with domestication, Venuti concedes that foreignization is “equally partial in

its interpretation of the foreign text”, yet points out that it “tend to flaunt it partiality instead of concealing it” (Mark, & Moira, 2004, 59).

CHAPTER 3

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Despite the richness of humors in Ch’ien Chungshu’s “Weicheng”, twenty-nine humors were picked out from the whole book to be studied in this chapter (see appendix). Among them, sixteen of them were translated by using strategy of foreignization, while thirteen of them were translated by using strategy of domestication. They will be studied in this chapter respectively.

Total number of humors in “Weicheng”	29
Humors translated by using strategy of “foreignization”	17
Humors translated by using strategy of “domestication”	12

(Figure 4)

Translation of humors in Ch’ien Chungshu’s “Weicheng” via “foreignization” strategy

As was introduced in chapter two, “foreignization” is the type of translation in which “the translator leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, and moves the reader towards him” (as cited in Mark, & Moira, 2004, 59). Obviously, humors translated via adopting translation strategy of foreignization outnumbered those translated via adopting the strategy of domestication. The following examples from the book can best explain how foreignization is utilized in the translation process.

Example 1: 船走得这样慢 ,大家一片乡心 ,正愁无处寄托 ,不知哪里忽来了两副麻将牌。麻将当然是国技 ,又听说在美国风行 ;打牌不但有故乡风味 ,并且适合世界潮流。妙得很人数可凑成两桌而有余 ,所以除掉吃饭睡觉以外 ,他们成天赌钱消遣 (Ch'ien, 2003, p 8)。

The ship moved ever so slowly, while homesickness welled up in everyone's heart and yearned for release. Then suddenly from heaven know where appeared two sets of mahjong, the Chinese national pastime, said to be popular in America as well. Thus, playing mahjong not only had a down-home flavor to it but was also in tune with world trends. As luck would have it, there were more than enough people to set up two tables of mahjong. So, except for eating and sleeping, they spent their entire time gambling (Ch'ien, 2003, p 9).

“麻将牌” was directly translated into “mahjong” without adding explanation what it is later on, and there is no footnote telling the American readers what it is, either. Actually, “mahjong” is a game for four players originated in China. It is not only an ordinary pastime but a popular way of gambling mostly among the uneducated people. This humor ironically hinted that those so-called scholars who studied overseas are no different from the grass-roots by showing that they had no better or more elegant taste than those uneducated. If Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao domesticated it into another popular game in the United States which might not dimmed the irony in the humor, but the oriental flavor will be lost

for sure.

Example 16: 他记得《三国演义》里的名言：“妻子如衣服，”当然衣服也就等于妻子；他现在新添了皮外套，损失个把老婆才不放心上呢 (Ch'ien, 2003, p 94)。

He remembered the famous saying from the Romance of Three Kingdoms, “A wife is like a suit of clothes,” and of course clothes also meant the same as wife. He now had himself a new fur coat. The loss of a wife or two wasn't about to worry him (Ch'ien, 2003, p 95).

In the translation of this humor, Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao, in order to leave enough indeterminacy of the text, translated the saying in 《三国演义》 directly into English and add no further explanation of what kind of story 《三国演义》 told and how important it is in China's literary history. That clearly shows that they took it for granted that reader of their translation must be someone who knew much about China or at least they are those who want to dig into China's literary history. Thus, by doing so, Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao held high expectations of their readers. The eagerness to introduce Chinese culture to the United States can also be felt in the following example, in which “锦上添花” was literally translated into “adding flowers to embroidery”. If it was translated into “make good things better”, the Chinese flavor in the idiom will certainly be lost.

Example 17: 方鸿渐说：“女人原是天生的政治动物。虚虚实实，以退为进，这些政治手腕，女人生下来全有。女人学政治，那真是以后天发展先天，锦上添花了

(Ch'ien, 2003, p 104)。

Fang Hung-Chien said, “Women are natural political animals. Political tactics, such as saying yes and meaning no, retreating in order to advance, are what they know from birth. For a woman to study political science is really developing the innate through the acquired; it is as superfluous as adding flowers to embroidery. ” (Ch'ien, 2003, p 105)

Tanslation of humors in Ch'ien Chungshu's “Weicheng” via “domestication” strategy

In order to “minimize the strangeness of the foreign text for target language readers” and make the translated works fluent, Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao adopted the strategy of domestication in the translation of humors in “Weicheng” as well (Mark, & Moira, 2004, 43-44). Some of them successfully helped readers to overcome the cultural ridges, while they weakened the funniness of the original humors at the same time. Examples below can exemplify that well enough.

Example 2: 苏小姐，我告诉你句笑话，方先生跟你在中国是老同学，他是不是一向说话随便的？昨天孙先生跟他讲赌钱手运不好，他还笑呢。他说孙先生在法国这许多年，全不知道法国人的迷信：太太不忠实，偷人，丈夫做了乌龟，买彩票准中头奖，赌钱准赢，所以，他说，男人赌钱输了，该引以自慰(Ch'ien, 2003, p 12)。

Yesterday Mr. Sun was telling Mr. Fang about his poor luck

in gambling, and Mr. Fang just laughed at him for having been in France all these years and not knowing anything about the French superstition; Mr. Fang said that if the wife is unfaithful and has an affair, the husband is sure to take first prize if he buys a lottery ticket, and he is sure to win if he gambles (Ch'ien, 2003, p 13).

“丈夫做了乌龟” was translated into “the wife is unfaithful and has an affair” in the humor above. If it is plainly translated, the correspondent English version would be “the husband was turned into a turtle” and that would be beyond the understanding of target readers with American cultural background. “乌龟” has rich connotation in Chinese culture, besides endurance, strength and longevity which it symbolizes, it also refers to the role the husband plays if wife unfaithful and has an affair in Chinese slangs. Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao flexibly translated it figuratively via the strategy of domestication and that effectively removes the puzzles of their readers. However, the vulgarness and crudeness of the Chinese slangs were also gone with the missing of “乌龟”, which is definitely a loss in translation. The regrets of cultural loss can also be found in the following two examples.

Example 20: 辛楣笑道：“这是董斜川想出来的，他说，同跟一个先生念书的叫“同师兄弟”，同在一个学校的叫“同学”，同有一个情人的该叫“同情”(Ch'ien, 2003, p 248)。

Hsin-mei said with a grin, “That’s something Tung

Hsieh-ch'uan thought up. He says people who study under the same teacher are called classmates, and people who go to the same school are called schoolmates, so people who are in love with the same girl should be called "lovemates." (Ch'ien, 2003, p 249)

Example 28: 最近一次，上来的鸡汤淡得像白开水，我跟汪先生说：‘这不是煮过鸡的汤，只像鸡在里面洗过一次澡。’他听错了，以为我说‘鸡在这水里洗过脚’，还跟我开玩笑说什么‘饶你奸似鬼，喝了洗脚水’——” (Ch'ien, 2003, p 480)

In the most recent case she served some chicken broth, which was as thin as plain drinking water. I said to Mr. Wang, "This isn't broth from boiling a chicken. It's more like a chicken has had a dip in it." He heard it wrong and thought I'd said, "a chicken has had its feet in it," so he said as a joke, "You think you're so quick and clever, yet you drank the foot wash water." (Ch'ien, 2003, p 481).

“同情” in example 20 holds two meanings in Chinese: one is the relationship of two men in love with the same woman; the other is the sympathy they hold toward each other. But it was translated figuratively into “lovemates” by Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao. Though there seemed to be no better alternative in translating “同情”, the second layer of the meaning cannot be reflected by “lovemates” and therefore the humor lying in the

contrast of the hatred and sympathy between two men can be found nowhere.

The same is with the humor in example 28. Originally, the funniness exists in the similar pronunciation of “洗澡” (pinyin: xizao) and “洗脚” (pinyin: xijiao). Readers of the translated version may feel puzzled why one can mistaken “It’s more like a chicken has had a dip in it.” with “a chicken has had its feet in it,” though no one can deny the effort made by Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao to choose two English words “dip” and “feet” to reconstruct the humor in Chinese.

Seemingly, Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao’s version of “Weicheng”---“Fortress Besieged” has not received many positive comments from scholars and translators. Though there might be some unsatisfactory cases in it, the version plays an important role in introducing Chinese culture to the western world.

Many scholars (Liu, L.H., 2007; Zhao, Y.L., 2006; Chen, S.L., 2004) surveyed and summarized the leading translation strategy adopted in the English version of “Weicheng” is foreignizing translation. Chen (2004) concluded the translation strategy adopted by Jeanne Kelly after his survey as “In the macro sense, the translation strategy of Weicheng is foreignization above domestication” (Chen, 2004, p 42).

However, it is imprudent to draw the conclusion that “Weicheng”’s English ran contrary to reception aesthetics just because the translators adopted foreignization as their guiding translation strategy.

As is mentioned in chapter two, Jeanne Kelly received her M.A. from School of Chinese of Wisconsin. Therefore, she herself is an expert on Chinese language and culture. Her cooperator, Nathan K. Mao, a Chinese-American who, “like many other

Chinese-background scholars, has a strong wish to publicize the Chinese culture” (Wu, 2007, p 45). The two well-educated translators take introducing Chinese culture as their priority in translating Ch’ien’s “Fortress Besieged”. So the purpose of the translation of “Fortress Besieged” determines the translation strategy they adopted. In order to keep the original flavor of humor in Chinese culture, foreignization is adopted because it “register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad” (Mark, & Moira, 2004, 59).

Wu Ting (2007) points out the important role the patron plays on the translation of the book. She concluded that most patrons are mainly the American scholars (some with Chinese origin) who are interested in Chinese literature, devoting themselves to the faithful transmission of Chinese culture. She based her conclusion on the names listed in translators’ preface: (Wu, 2007, p 46)

We wish to thank Professor Joseph S. M. Lau of the University of Wisconsin and Professor Leo OU fan Lee of Indiana University for their expert editing assistance, patience, and encouragement; Chang Hsu-peng for help in the first draft of the translation; James C. T. Shu of the University of Wisconsin and Professor Mark A. Givler of Shippensburg State College for reading the entire manuscript and offering their advice; Mr. George Kao of the Chinese University of Hong Kong for permission to reprint chapter one, published in Renditions(No. 2, Spring

1974); and lastly Professor C. T. Hsia of Columbia

University for supplying us biological information on

Ch'ien Chung-shu.

Judging from the names listed above, it is not hard to understand the translator's inclination in the choice of translation strategy.

As Chen (2004) suggested the criteria on which the translated criticism based on should not be one-sided and narrow-minded. It has to take the context, translator's purpose and their translation strategy into consideration to avoid subjectiveness and arbitrariness. Jeanne Kelly's version of "Fortress Besieged" is to be viewed from three aspects from the perspective of Reception Aesthetics.

1. Reader's role/ status

As the translators' purpose is to introduce Chinese culture to the readers in the United States, they orientate their works on those readers who might be interested in Chinese culture and who are well-educated. Keeping that range of readers in mind in their process of translating, they adopt foreignization translation strategy to keep the original flavor of language and culture to the full extent to arouse the interest of the readers.

2. Indeterminacy of the text

Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao seldom use annotation and footnote to explain the translated humor. On one hand, it is decided by the characteristics of humor. One can imagine how bored the readers will be after reading the lengthy explanation, not mentioning enjoying the funniness the humor brings about. On the other hand, translators need to leave

some imaginative space for the readers to interpret. That imaginative space is what is defined as the indeterminacy of the text.

3. Horizon of expectation

Orientating their works on some readers who might be interested in Chinese culture and who are well-educated and already equipped with some knowledge about Chinese culture, the translator wants the readers to be exposed to new cultural information in the English version of “Weicheng”. According to Reception Aesthetics, readers may change their horizon of expectation constantly when they are reading the text. In that case, readers may assimilate the new cultural information with the knowledge they already have and turn that new information into the innate knowledge for new information to be based on next time. With the enriched knowledge about Chinese culture, those readers will be ready for similar cultural information. Therefore, the English version of “Weicheng” functions as a key to unlock the treasure of rich and profound, striking and overwhelming Chinese literature.

In conclusion, humor translation in Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao’s version of “Weicheng” is comparatively successful viewing from the perspective of Reception Aesthetics. The English version of “Weicheng” plays an important role in introducing Chinese culture to Americans. With the development of China, more Chinese literary works will be introduced to the United States. There is still a long way to go before Chinese culture being accepted in the United States but the introduction of “Weicheng” by Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao is undoubtedly a great starting line for that journey.

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APPENDIX

Example 1: 船走得这样慢，大家一片乡心，正愁无处寄托，不知哪里忽来了两副麻将牌。麻将当然是国技，又听说在美国风行；打牌不但有故乡风味，并且适合世界潮流。妙得很人数可凑成两桌而有余，所以除掉吃饭睡觉以外，他们成天赌钱消遣 (Ch'ien, 2003, p 8)。

The ship moved ever so slowly, while homesickness welled up in everyone's heart and yearned for release. Then suddenly from heaven know where appeared two sets of mahjong, the Chinese national pastime, said to be popular in America as well. Thus, playing mahjong not only had a down-home flavor to it but was also in tune with world trends. As luck would have it, there were more than enough people to set up two tables of mahjong. So, except for eating and sleeping, they spent their entire time gambling (Ch'ien, 2003, p 9).

Example 2: 苏小姐，我告诉你句笑话，方先生跟你在中国是老同学，他是不是一向说话随便的？昨天孙先生跟他讲赌钱手运不好，他还笑呢。他说孙先生在法国这许多年，全不知道法国人的迷信：太太不忠实，偷人，丈夫做了乌龟，买彩票准中头奖，赌钱准赢，所以，他说，男人赌钱输了，该引以自慰(Ch'ien, 2003, p 12)。

Yesterday Mr. Sun was telling Mr. Fang about his poor luck in gambling, and Mr. Fang just laughed at him for having been in France all these years and not knowing anything about the French superstition; Mr. Fang said that if the wife is unfaithful and has an affair, the husband is sure to take first prize if he buys a lottery ticket, and he is sure to win if he gambles (Ch'ien, 2003, p 13).

Example 3: 有人叫她“熟食铺子”(charcuterie), 因为只有熟食店会把那许多颜色暖热的肉公开陈列; 又有人叫她“真理”, 因为据说“真理”是赤裸裸的”。鲍小姐并未一丝不挂, 所以他们修正为“局部的真理”(Ch'ien, 2003, p 14)。

Some called her a charcuterie--- a shop selling cooked meats---because only such a shop would have so much warm-colored flesh on public display. Others called her “Truth,” since it is said that “the truth is naked.” But Miss Pao wasn't exactly without a stitch on, so they revised her name to “Partial Truth.” (Ch'ien, 2003, p 15).

Example 4: 爱尔兰人气得咒骂个不停, 喝醉酒, 红着眼要找中国人打架, 这事也许是中国自有外交或订商约以来唯一的胜利(Ch'ien, 2003, p 28)。

The Irishman was so enraged that he cursed without stop, got drunk and red-eyed, and sought to pick a fight with any Chinese he could find. The incident may well mark China's sole victory over the foreigners since she began to have foreign relations or signed her first treaty of commerce (Ch'ien, 2003, p 29).

Example 5: 侍者上了鸡, 碟子里一块像礼拜堂定风针上铁公鸡施舍下来的肉, 鲍小姐用力割不动, 放下刀叉道:“我没牙齿咬这东西!这馆子糟透了。”(Ch'ien, 2003, p 40)。

There on the plate was a piece of meat that seemed to have been donated by the iron weathercock on a church steeple. Try as she might, Miss Pao could not make a dent in it(Ch'ien, 2003, p 41).

Example 6: 据说“女朋友”就是“情人”的学名, 说起来庄严些, 正像玫瑰在生物学上叫“蔷薇科木本复叶植物”, 或者休妻的法律术语是“协议离婚”(Ch'ien, 2003, p 52)。

IT IS SAID that “girl friend” is the scientific term for sweetheart, making it sound more dignified, just as the biological name for rose is “rosaceae dicotyledonous”, or the legal term

for divorcing one's wife is "negotiated separation by consent." (Ch'ien, 2003, p 53)

Example 7: 那张是七月初的《沪报》，教育消息栏里印着两张小照，铜版模糊，很像乱坛上拍的鬼魂照相 (Ch'ien, 2003, p 60)。

It was an early July Shanghai newspaper, with two small photographs in the educational news column. The plates were as blurry as the picture of a ghost taken at a divining altar (Ch'ien, 2003, p 61).

Example 8: 鸿渐暗想，为什么可爱的女孩子全有父亲呢？她孤独的一个人可以藏匿在心里温存，拖泥带水地牵上了交亲、叔父、兄弟之类，这女孩子就不伶俐洒脱，心里不便窝藏她了，她的可爱里也就搀和渣滓了(Ch'ien, 2003, p 68)。

Hung Chien thought to himself, *why do charming girls all have fathers? She can be hidden away all by herself in one's heart to cuddle, but when her father, uncle and brother are dragged along with her, the girl stops being so cute and carefree and it's not so easy to conceal her away in your hear anymore. Her charm has been mixed in with the dregs* (Ch'ien, 2003, p 69).

Example 9: 鸿渐一下午看得津津有味，识见大长，明白中国人品性方正所以说地是方的，洋人品性圆滑，所以主张地是圆的；中国人的心位置正中，西洋人的心位置偏左；西洋进口的鸦片有毒，非禁不可，中国地土性和平，出产的鸦片，吸食也不会上瘾；梅毒即是天花，来自西洋等等。只可惜这些事实虽然有趣，演讲时用不着它们，该另抱佛脚。所以当天从大伯父家吃晚饭回来，他醉眼迷离，翻了三五本历史教科书，凑满一千多字的讲稿，插穿了两个笑话。这种预备并不费心血，身血倒赔了些，因为蚊子多 (Ch'ien, 2003, p72)。

Hung-Chien read all afternoon with deep interest, greatly broadening his knowledge. He

learned that the Chinese were square and honest by nature, so he said the sky was square. Foreigners were roundabout and cunning and therefore maintained that the earth was round; the heart of the Chinese was located in the center, while a Westerner's heart tilted slightly to the left. The opium imported from the West was poisonous and should be banned. The nature of the soil in China was mild, therefore opium produced there would not be addictive. Syphilis, that is, smallpox, came from the West, and so on. Such a pity that while there items of information were all very interesting, they could not be used in the lecture. He would have to read something else. That day after returning home from dinner at his uncle's house with his eyes blurred from drink, he flipped through four or five history textbooks and worked up a draft of over one thousand words with a couple of jokes inserted. This kind of preparation did not tax his brains any, though he did lose some blood to the mosquitoes (Ch'ien, 2003, p 73).

Example 10: 听众大多数笑，少数笑，少数都张了嘴惊骇；有几个教师皱着眉头，那记录的女生涨红脸停笔不写，仿佛听了鸿渐最后的一句，处女的耳朵已经当众丧失贞操 (Ch'ien, 2003, p 76) ;

The recording-secretary's face flushed crimson, and her pen stopped, as if by hearing Fang Hung-Chien 's last remark her virgin ears had lost their chastity in front of the audience (Ch'ien, 2003, p 77).

Example 11: 以后飞机接连光顾，大有绝世佳人一顾倾城、再顾倾国的风度 (Ch'ien, 2003, p 80)。

Later, the planes kept coming in much the same manner as the peerless beauty whose "one glance could conquer a city and whose second glance could vanquish an empire." (Ch'ien,

2003, p 81)

Example 12: 方老先生因为拒绝了本县汉奸的引诱，有家难归，而政府并没给他什么名义，觉得他爱国而国不爱他，大有青年守节的孀妇不见宠于翁姑的怨抑(Ch'ien, 2003, p 82)。

Since Mr. Fang had rejected the offers of Japanese collaborators in his home district, he could no longer return home; yet the government had given him no recognition, making him feel that, while he loved his country, his country did not love him. He felt the same resentment as a young widow who, despite maintaining a chaste widowhood, finds no favor with her parents-in-law (Ch'ien, 2003, p 83).

Example 13: 这女儿刚十八岁，中学尚未毕业，可是张先生夫妇保有他们家乡的传统思想，以为女孩子到二十岁就老了，过二十没嫁掉，只能进古物陈列所供人凭吊了(Ch'ien, 2003, p 82)。

She was just eighteen and had not yet graduated from high school, but Mr. and Mrs. Chang, who held to the traditional view of their hometown, thought that a girl was old by the time she was twenty, and if she passed this age still unwed, she could only be put in a museum of old relics to be viewed with nostalgia (Ch'ien, 2003, p 83).

Example 14: 所以他说话里嵌的英文字，还比不得嘴里嵌的金牙，因为金牙不仅妆点，尚可使用，只好比牙缝里嵌的肉屑，表示饭菜吃得好，此外全无用处。他仿美国人读音，维妙维肖，也许鼻音学得太过火了，不像美国人，而像伤风塞鼻子的中国人。他说“verywell”二字，声音活像小洋狗在咕噜 - - “vurrywul” (Ch'ien, 2003, p 86)。

The English words inlaid in his speech could not thus be compared with the gold teeth inlaid in one's mouth, since gold teeth are not only decorative but functional as well. A better

comparison would be with the bits of meat stuck between the teeth---they show that one has had a good meal but are otherwise useless. He imitated the American accent down to the slightest inflection, though maybe the nasal sound was a little overdone, sounding more like a Chinese with a cold and stuffy nose, rather than an American speaking. The way he said “Very well” sounded just like a dog growling---“vurry wul.” (Ch’ien, 2003, p 87).

Example 15: 张太太是位四十多岁的胖女人 ,外国名字是小巧玲珑的 Tessie 张小姐是十八岁的高大女孩子 ,着色鲜明 ,穿衣紧俏 ,身材将来准会跟她老太爷那洋行的资本一样雄厚(Ch’ien, 2003, p 88)。

Mrs. Chang was a portly woman of forty or more with the dainty little foreign name of “Tessie.” Miss Chang was a tall girl of eighteen with a fresh complexion, trim-fitting clothes and a figure, which promised to be just as ample as the capital in her father’s foreign company(Ch’ien, 2003, p 89).

Example 16: 他记得《三国演义》里的名言：“妻子如衣服，”当然衣服也就等于妻子；他现在新添了皮外套，损失个把老婆才不放心上呢 (Ch’ien, 2003, p 94)。

He remembered the famous saying from the Romance of Three Kingdoms, “A wife is like a suit of clothes,” and of course clothes also meant the same as wife. He now had himself a new fur coat. The loss of a wife or two wasn’t about to worry him (Ch’ien, 2003, p 95).

Example 17: 方鸿渐说：“女人原是天生的政治动物。虚虚实实，以退为进，这些政治手腕，女人生下来全有。女人学政治，那真是以后天发展先天，锦上添花了(Ch’ien, 2003, p 104)。

Fang Hung-Chien said, “Women are natural political animals. Political tactics, such as saying yes and meaning no, retreating in order to advance, are what they know from birth.

For a woman to study political science is really developing the innate through the acquired; it is as superfluous as adding flowers to embroidery.” (Ch’ien, 2003, p 105)

Example 18: 沈太太生得怪样，打扮得妖气。她眼睛下两个黑袋，像圆壳行军热水瓶，想是储蓄着多情的热泪，嘴唇涂的浓胭脂给唾沫进了嘴，把黯黄崎岖的牙齿染道红痕，血淋淋的像侦探小说里谋杀案的线索……(Ch’ien, 2003, p 120)

Mrs. Shen was rather odd-looking and very heavily made up; the two black bags under her eyes were like round canteen bottles, filled probably with hot, passionate tears; the thick lipstick had been washed into her mouth and colored the yellowish, rough ridges of her teeth red, making her teeth look like hemorrhoids dripping with blood or the clues to a bloody murder in a detective yarn...(Ch’ien, 2003, p 121)

Example 19: 豚翁题名字上了瘾，早想就十几个排行的名字，只等媳妇们连一不二养下孩子来顶领，譬如男叫“非熊”，用姜太公的故事，女叫“非烟”，用唐人传奇(Ch’ien, 2003, p 230)。

He’d already thought up a whole series of a dozen or more names and merely waited for his daughters-in-law to give birth to a succession of children to come take them. A boy, for example, would be called “Fei-hsiung” (No Bear) after the story of Chiang T’ai-kung, and a girl would be called “Fei-yen” after a T’ang ch’uan-ch’i tale (Ch’ien, 2003, p 231).

Example 20: 辛楣笑道：“这是董斜川想出来的，他说，同跟一个先生念书的叫“同师兄弟”，同在一个学校的叫“同学”，同有一个情人的该叫“同情”(Ch’ien, 2003, p 248)。

Hsin-mei said with a grin, “That’s something Tung Hsieh-ch’uan thought up. He says people who study under the same teacher are called classmates, and people who go to the same school are called schoolmates, so people who are in love with the same girl should be called

“lovmates.”” (Ch’ien, 2003, p 249)

Example 21: 每逢它不肯走，汽车夫就破口臭骂，此刻骂得更利害了。骂来骂去，只有一个意思：汽车夫愿意跟汽车的母亲和祖母发生肉体恋爱(Ch’ien, 2003, p 304)。

Each time it refused to go, the driver let out a steam of foul abuse, and at this point he cursed it even more soundly. However he cursed, the meaning was always the same: The driver wished to enter into carnal relations with the bus’s mother or grandmother (Ch’ien, 2003, p 305).

Example 22: 旅馆名叫“欧亚大旅社”。虽然直到现在欧洲人没来住过，但这名称不失为一种预言，还不能断定它是夸大之词(Ch’ien, 2003, p 308)。

The name of the hotel was “The Grand Eurasian Hotel.” Though no Europeans had ever stopped there, the name served well as a kind of prophecy and not as an empty boast (Ch’ien, 2003, p 309).

Example 23: 掌柜写账的桌子边坐个胖女人坦白地摊开白而不坦的胸膛，喂孩子吃奶；奶是孩子吃的饭，所以也该在饭堂吃，证明这旅馆是科学管理的 (Ch’ien, 2003, p 308)。

At the cashier’s counter sat a fat woman plainly and publicly displaying her fair but not so flat bosom as she nursed a child. The milk was the child’s dinner, so it too must be eaten in the dining room--- proof that this hotel was scientifically operated (Ch’ien, 2003, p 309).

Example 24: 门口桌子上，一叠饭碗，大碟子里几块半生不熟的肥肉，原是红烧，现在像红人倒运，又冷又黑。旁边一碟馒头，远看也像玷污了清白的大闺女，全是黑斑点，走近了，这些黑点飞升而消散于周遭的阴暗之中，原来是苍蝇。这东西跟蚊子臭虫算得小饭店里的岁寒三友，现在刚是深秋天气，还显不出它们的后凋劲节 (Ch’ien, 2003, p 318)。

Rice bowls were piled on a table at the entrance along with a few pieces of half-cooked fat meat on a large plate, meat which turned out to be red-cooked pork. Now cold and black, the pork was like a once prosperous man who was down on his luck and had lost his formerly ruddy complexion. Next to this was a plate of steamed bread which, from a distance, looked like a once pure-white virgin who has been soiled. It was covered with black specks and streaks. When one came closer, the clack specks flew off and disappeared in the surrounding shadows. In fact, they were flies. These, along with mosquitoes and bedbugs, are considered the “three companions of winter” at small inns. As it was now just late autumn, their steadfastness in winter was not yet apparent (Ch’ien, 2003, p 319).

Example 25: 三闾大学校长高松年是位老科学家。这“老”字的位置非常为难，可以形容科学，也可以形容科学家。不幸的是，科学家跟科学不大相同；科学家像酒，愈老愈可贵，而科学像女人，老了便不值钱。将来国语法发展完备，终有一天可以明白地分开“老的科学家”和“老科学的家”，或者说“科学老家”和“老科学家”(Ch’ien, 2003, p 376)。

KAO SUNG-NIEN, the president of San Lu University, was an “old science scholar.” The word “old” here is quite bothersome. It could describe science or it could just as well be describing a scientist. Unfortunately, there is a world of difference between a scientist and science. A scientist is like wine. The older he gets, the more valuable he is, while science is like a woman. When she gets old, she’s worthless. Once Mandarin grammar reaches its full development, the time will come when “old science scholar” can be clearly distinguished from “scholar of old science” or “old science scholar.” But as it’s still too early for that yet, a general term of reference will have to do in the meantime(Ch’ien, 2003, p 377).

Example 26: 现代人有两个流行的信仰。第一：女子无貌便是德，所以漂亮的女人准比不上丑女人那样有思想，有品节；第二：男子无口才，就是表示有道德，所以哑巴是天下最诚朴的人(Ch'ien, 2003, p 406)。

Modern man has two popular myths: first, that homeliness in a girl is a virtue, so that pretty girls do not have half as much intelligence or honor as ugly girls; and second, that if a man lacks eloquence, he must be virtuous, making deaf-mutes the most sincere and honest people(Ch'ien, 2003, p407).

Example 27: 他在本省督军署当秘书，那位大帅留的菱角胡子，就像仁丹广告上移植过来的，好不威武 (Ch'ien, 2003, p 452)。

When he was a secretary at the office of the provincial military governor, the marshal's caltrop mustache was so impressive that it looked like it had been transplanted from a Jen-tan medicine advertisement (Ch'ien, 2003, p 453).

Example 28: 最近一次，上来的鸡汤淡得像白开水，我跟汪先生说：‘这不是煮过鸡的汤，只像鸡在里面洗过一次澡。’他听错了，以为我说‘鸡在这水里洗过脚’，还跟我开玩笑说什么‘饶你奸似鬼，喝了洗脚水’——”(Ch'ien, 2003, p 480)

In the most recent case she served some chicken broth, which was as thin as plain drinking water. I said to Mr. Wang, “This isn't broth from boiling a chicken. It's more like a chicken has had a dip in it.” He heard it wrong and thought I'd said, “ a chicken has had its feet in it,” so he said as a joke, “ You think you're so quick and clever, yet you drank the foot wash water.” (Ch'ien, 2003, p 481).

Example 29: 一切机关的首长上办公室，本来像隆冬的太阳或者一生里的好运气，来得很迟，去得很早 (Ch'ien, 2003, p552)。

In the office hours they keep, heads of organizations are like the midwinter sun or that once-in-a-lifetime stroke or luck: they come late and leave early (Ch'ien, 2003, p 553).