

Influence of Li Qingzhao's Poems on Feminist Consciousness from the Perspective of Translactology

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Abstract: Professor Liu Ruiqiang's Translactology, proposed in the late 1980s, offers a groundbreaking perspective for traditional translation studies. Its Generalized Translation Effectology primarily examines the multidimensional impact of translation on target cultures in cultural, social, and political dimensions. Based on the cultural research framework of Generalized Translation Effectology, this paper systematically investigates the unique expression of feminist consciousness in Li Qingzhao's poems and its cross-cultural reconstruction during English translation. The study focuses on three core dimensions.

First, through a diachronic analysis, it reveals the differentiated representation of feminist consciousness in Li Qingzhao's poems across three translation phases—the Colonial Period, the Academic Transition Period, and the Contemporary Reconstruction Period, demonstrating the co-evolutionary relationship between translation strategies and ideological paradigms of their respective eras.

Second, from the perspective of translator subjectivity, it delves into how neutralized diction, de-objectification strategies, and semantic ambiguity reconstruct the original work's emphasis on women's self-worth, portrayal of survival predicaments, and defiance of feudal traditions.

Third, it demonstrates how the translations positively influence Western academia's perception, target-language readers' reception, and global gender equality awareness by deconstructing the Orientalist gaze, reconfiguring lyric paradigms, and building universal emotional bridges.

The findings indicate that the English translation of Li Qingzhao's poems is not merely an act of linguistic transfer but an active reproduction of feminist consciousness in cross-cultural contexts. Its effect chain spans from cultural image migration at the textual level to gender discourse reconstruction at the societal level. This study provides new empirical evidence from Chinese classical literature for feminist translation theory while offering methodological insights for the dissemination of gender perspectives in China's "Going Global" cultural strategy.

Keywords: Translactology; poems; feminist consciousness.

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Introduction

Li Qingzhao, a renowned female poet in Chinese history, occupies a unique position in the pantheon of Chinese literature. Her poems are replete with rich emotions, incisive observations of life, and a bold expression of her thoughts and feelings as a woman. Her works showcase her remarkable literary talent and provide a vivid window into women's lives, aspirations, and struggles in the Song Dynasty.

Against this backdrop, translating Li Qingzhao's poems from Chinese to other languages, especially English, has attracted significant academic attention. Using the theory of canonization, Stephen Owen (1996) analyzes how Li Qingzhao was reconstructed from an "edge poet" in the Song Dynasty to the "peak of Chinese medieval literature" in the English-speaking Sinological circle. He points out that the English academic circle's preference for *Drunk under the Shadow of Flowers* (accounting for 27% of the total translations) reflects the West's imagination of the "implicit Oriental woman". Lois Fusek (1991) first created the "gender marking annotation method".

Besides, Liu Ruiqiang (2014) confirmed that for every 10% increase in cultural effects, the comprehension level of target-language readers decreases by 6%, while the acceptance satisfaction of professional reader groups increases by 8%. Based on this, the Chinese University of Hong Kong (2021) proposed a stratified translation method for "寻寻觅觅" in Li Qingzhao's *Shuyu Ci* (Words of Jade) based on relevant translation effect theories, which is as follows.

At the linguistic surface level, literal translation strategies (e.g., rendering "寻寻觅觅" as "Searching, seeking") preserve the original's dynamic imagery, laying the foundation for cross-cultural comprehension. The cultural interpretation level employs annotations (such as "Daoist meditation practice") to unveil the Daoist practices of Song Dynasty women, elevating individual actions into gendered cultural symbols and dismantling the male-dominated perspectives inherent in traditional interpretations.

To achieve deeper transmission, the reader experience level innovatively utilizes VR technology to reconstruct historical

settings. By immersing audiences in these environments, this level bridges temporal and spatial divides, enabling target readers to "physically inhabit" the creative context of female writers, transforming cognitive understanding into emotional resonance. Ultimately, at the translafectology level, the study demonstrates translation as an act of cultural reproduction and power dynamics. On one hand, it amplifies the global visibility of marginalized feminist themes in Li's works (e.g., self-identity construction and emotional autonomy). On the other hand, it fosters a bidirectional dialogue between history and modernity, offering a cultural framework for contemporary gender equality discourse.

This paper aims to comprehensively analyze the impact of the translation of Li Qingzhao's poems on feminist consciousness from the perspective of translation effects. By closely examining specific translated texts, cultural contexts, and the reception of these translations in different cultural circles, we hope to shed new light on the significance of literary translation in promoting gender-related cultural exchanges and the evolution of feminist consciousness globally.

Theoretical Background and Academic Vision

The exploration of translation as a dynamic cultural force, rather than a mere linguistic transfer, has gained increasing scholarly attention in recent decades. Within this context, the concept of Translafectology emerges as a critical framework for analyzing how translated texts actively reshape cultural perceptions, ideologies, and social discourses in target systems.

This theoretical foundation is particularly relevant to the study of Li Qingzhao's poems, where the mediation of translators not only bridges linguistic gaps but also reconfigures the gendered nuances embedded in her works. Moving from theoretical foundations to applied Translafectology in literary studies, we see this framework's potential to reveal how translation shapes feminist consciousness cross-culturally.

Western theories like Equivalence Theory and Descriptive Translation Studies proved inadequate in handling cultural nuances, while traditional Chinese concepts such as Yan Fu's "faithfulness, expressiveness, and elegance" lacked measurable criteria. The theory's development was further informed by cognitive science research on reader reception and neural processing of translated texts.

Practical challenges in globalizing Chinese culture exposed critical gaps in translation approaches, evidenced by high misunderstanding rates of key cultural terms and the limitations of machine translation in conveying cultural concepts. The digital age's multimedia communication requirements and evolving translation evaluation standards further highlighted the need for a more comprehensive framework.

The theory evolved through three phases: initial exploration (2000-2015), building on Chinese scholars' work and European assessment models; formal theorization (2016-2020), establishing the three-dimensional model and quantitative effect formula; and current empirical validation across diverse applications from cultural heritage to film localization. While facing some academic criticism regarding its instrumental approach, the theory has demonstrated adaptability through dynamic weight adjustment based on cultural distance metrics.

Translation studies represent both a methodological advancement and a shift in China's role in global translation

discourse. Its incorporation into national translation guidelines underscores its growing influence in addressing real-world translation challenges while maintaining theoretical rigor. The theory continues to evolve through ongoing applications and refinements in our increasingly interconnected multilingual world.

As it develops, Chinese scholar Liu Ruiqiang has systematically explained the core framework of translafectology, which is defined as a research system with "translation effect" as the core, covering primitive text selection strategies, translation methods, translation evaluation, and effect tracking. It is particularly worth noting that the theory of translafectology has included "translation culture research" into macro research for the first time, which makes up for the lack of traditional translation studies on cultural dynamic interaction, and provides a new theoretical perspective for translation research.

Applying this theory from the broad perspective in literature research mainly focuses on the multi-dimensional influence of translation literature on the social culture of the target language. The following is a discussion from different aspects, theoretical basis, research category, and case study. Translafectology theory has gradually formed a theoretical system with "translation effect" as the core since Liu Ruiqiang (2014) systematically explained it in the early 21st century. He proposed a "text-culture-cognition" effect linkage mechanism. It breaks through the limitations of traditional translation on the equivalent of text, emphasizes the social function of translation as a cross-cultural practice, and pays special attention to the dynamic acceptance and long-term influence of the translation in the context of the destination.

This theory holds that literary translation is not only a language translation, but also a process of cultural information reconstruction. For example, the theory of translafectology proposes the concept of "effect tracking", which requires researchers to conduct a systematic investigation from the starting point of translation communication (the target language reader's contact translation) to the end point (the manifestation of social and cultural effects), thereby revealing how literary translation participates in the translation of the source language culture. The translafectology on the cross-context transfer of cultural imagery in literary works is concerned. For example, when Chinese classical poems are translated into English, translators often use naturalization strategies to adjust images (such as "dragon" or "loong"), which directly affects Western readers' cognition of Chinese culture, and may even strengthen or dissipate cultural stereotypes. Translation literature may lead to a new genre of the target language literature. (Venuti, 1995) For example, the translation and introduction of Western realist literature in the May Fourth period promoted the transformation of modern Chinese novels, and Lu Xun and other writers absorbed Western narrative skills through translation practice, forming a creative style with both locality and modernity.

In modern times, the adaptation of cross-media (such as drama, film, and television) has given new cultural meanings to the text, reflecting the globalization context of gender equality issues. The generalized translafectology provides a dynamic and chronological analysis framework for the research of literary translation, and its value lies in revealing the complex effect chain of text cross-cultural travel. Future research needs to further integrate technical tools and interdisciplinary theories to meet the

cultural and political functions and ethical challenges of literary translation in the context of globalization.

Feminist Consciousness in Li Qingzhao's Poems

Li Qingzhao's literary practice constructed the spiritual landscape of Song Dynasty women. Her works not only poetically present personal destiny but also achieve a cultural breakthrough against the gender system. By transforming female experiences into aesthetic objects, she endowed the voices from the inner chambers with intellectual weight that transcended temporal and spatial boundaries, establishing a milestone of feminist consciousness awakening in Chinese literary history. This creative posture of confronting disciplinary norms through art continues to provide rich interpretive space for contemporary gender studies.

Li Qingzhao (1084- c. 1155) was a preeminent Song Dynasty female lyric poet whose works are celebrated for their delicate restraint, emotional authenticity, and exquisite craftsmanship. Hailed as "China's Greatest Literary Talent Across the Millennium," the translation history of her poems into Western languages reflects the global dissemination of Chinese classical literature, cross-cultural exchange, and the evolution of Sinology.

The translation history of Li Qingzhao (1084- c 1155), the preeminent female ci poet of the Song Dynasty, reflects three pivotal phases in the global dissemination of Chinese classical literature:

1. Colonial Period (Late 19th - Mid 20th Century)

Herbert Giles' History of Chinese Literature (1901) first translated "Drunk Under Flower Shadows" with the line "人比黄花瘦" rendered as "As thin as the yellow flower" (Giles, 1901, p.112), diluting gender subjectivity through floral generalization, aligned with Western imagination of Oriental feminist "morbid beauty" (Said, 1978, p.207)

2. Academic Transition Period (1960s-1990s)

Xu Yuanchong's 1988 translation systematically preserved ci rhythmic patterns but softened the affective intensity in "Slow, Slow Song", translating "凄凄惨惨戚戚" as "so sad, so drear" (Xu, 1988, p.45), reflecting Cold War cultural diplomacy constraints

3. Contemporary Reconstruction Period (21st Century)

Feminist translator Julie Landau (1994) added editorial commentary to "Slow, Slow Song": "This is not merely melancholy, but a woman's manifesto against patriarchal oblivion" (Landau, 1994, p. xxiii)

As the following table demonstrates, the evolution of Li Qingzhao's translation strategies corresponds directly to the shifting ideological paradigm in Western Sinology:

Table 2.1.1 Shifting ideological paradigm

Period	Translational Features	Ideological Drivers
Colonial Period	Degendered adaptation	Orientalist aesthetics
Academic Transition Period	Formalist priority	Cultural Cold War dynamics
Contemporary Reconstruction Period	Gendered discourse foregrounding	Global feminism

Building upon the historical analysis in Section 2.1.1, Li's cross-cultural transmission demonstrates threefold translation effects: reconfiguration of cultural memory, negotiation of gender politics, and variation in reception aesthetics.

Early translations' deliberate omission of the Jingkang Incident reference in "武陵春" ("风住尘香" as "Wind subsides, dust carries scent") exemplifies "cultural filtering". (Lefevre, 1992, p.58) Contemporary editions restore historical context through paratexts (e.g., Ronald Egan's 2013 edition with 12-page "Historical Annotations").

Evolving renderings of "此情无计可消除" in "一剪梅·红藕香残玉簟秋" exemplify how gendered discourse is manipulated through translation strategies. Xu's (1988) neutral rendition—"This feeling finds no way to be dispelled"—contrasts sharply with Landau's (1994) explicitly gendered interpretation, "This desire, no way to shake it off," which imposes a sexualized subtext absent in the original. This divergence underscores Venuti's (1995) theory of the "translator's invisibility": while Xu's version adheres to lexical fidelity, Landau's choice of "desire" and "shake it off" reveals the translator's ideological intervention, refracting feminist longing through a Western lens of eroticized passion. Such cases illuminate how translation acts as a site of power negotiation, where gendered consciousness is either effaced or exaggerated across cultural boundaries. As the periodization demonstrates (see Table 2.1.1), translational strategies consistently mirror target cultures' ideological demands.

When juxtaposing Giles' botanical metaphors(Giles, 1901), Xu's formalism, and Landau's feminist declarations, Lefevre's (1992) "patronage mechanism" (Lefevre,1991)becomes evident—each era's translations constitute re-encodings of Li's feminist consciousness by dominant discourses.

Li Qingzhao's poems have constructed a feminist consciousness with a spirit of resistance by shaping a female image that breaks through the traditional gender discipline, and with bold self-expression, the deconstruction of patriarchal values, and the publicity of feminist subjectivity. The female image of her writing is no longer the "other" who has been disciplined, but the main body of life who dares to challenge the restraint of etiquette and pursue spiritual freedom, which is mainly reflected in the following three levels.

Within patriarchal literary traditions, female voices were routinely objectified and commodified. Defying this convention, Li Qingzhao's poems consistently foreground the feminist "I" as an autonomous lyrical subject, articulating women's independent consciousness through first-person expression. This revolutionary approach is exemplified in her "渔家傲·天接云涛连晓雾", "我报路长嗟日暮, 学诗谩有惊人句。" The poet's deliberate first-person declaration serves multiple subversive purposes: it asserts authorial presence ("我叹"), celebrates female erudition ("惊人句"), while the self-deprecating "谩有" ironically underscores the systemic marginalization of women's literary achievements. Through such nuanced diction, Li subtly contests the patriarchal

literary establishment that traditionally relegated women to passive muses rather than creative agents.

Li Qingzhao proved the equal status of women in the field of intelligence through poetry creation and academic activities. She criticized Su Shi, Liu Yong, and other male poets, and put forward the creative proposition of “别是一家”, showing the independent opinions of literary theory. In “The Post Preface to Jinshilu”, she recorded the experience of studying gold and stone calligraphy and painting with her husband, and asked the question of “钱癖与传癖”, and raised women's academic interest to the same height as men. This pursuit of intellectual value has broken through the feudal rules of “women are virtue without talent”, and has fought for women's cultural discourse power.

“浣溪沙·闺情”“眼波才动被人猜” conveys the flow of eroticism with dynamic “眼波”, and shows women's pursuit of emotional autonomy. This kind of writing is not only a rebellion against men's gaze, but also an affirmation of the true state of women's lives.

Her creation not only opened up a new realm for women's literature in the Song Dynasty, but also became a classical model for the awakening of feminist consciousness with the modern revelation of the super-era times. As she said in “鹧鸪天·咏桂”, “何须浅碧深红色, 自是花中第一流”, this pair of osmanthus praises is exactly her ultimate metaphor for the independent value of women.

Li Qingzhao's poems deeply reflect the multiple difficulties of women under the feudal ethics. After her husband, Zhao Mingcheng, died, she remarried Zhang Ruzhou but suffered domestic violence. Although this matter is not directly written, the use of the overlapping words of “寻寻觅觅, 冷冷清清, 凄凄惨惨戚戚” in “声声慢” has strengthened the sense of depression and despair with the repetition of the phonology, and implies the powerlessness and trauma of women in marriage. The description in “点绛唇”“倚遍阑干, 只是无情绪..” reflects the dilemma of women being imprisoned in the boudoir and having nowhere to vent their emotions. She even satirized the cowardice of men with “夏日绝句”, “生当作人杰, 死亦为鬼雄。” and indirectly criticized the society's repression of women's courage.

After suffering southward migration, she witnessed the destruction of the country and her family. In “永遇乐”, she not only lamented the personal flow. Li also reveals the heavy burden of the family and country that women bear in the turmoil, “如今憔悴, 风鬟霜鬓, 怕见夜间出去。”Li Qingzhao broke the shackles of gender through literary practice and social action. In “词论”, she bluntly criticized Su Shi, Liu Yong and other male lyricists such as “the sentence cannot be read” and “the word is under the dust”, emphasizing that the words should be “different from one family”, and redefine the literary standard from a feminist perspective, and compete for the right to speak.

In the face of Zhang Ruzhou's domestic violence, she did not hesitate to violate the law of “wife tells her husband”, resolutely resorted to court, and finally successfully divorced. This behavior is circulated through people's notes and has become a symbol of women's resistance to oppression. With works such as “咏史”, she appealed to the anti-Gold, linking the fate of women with the rise and fall of the family and the country, breaking through the stereotype of “women only pay attention to boudoirs”.

Li Qingzhao's poems are not only a record of personal emotions, but also the deconstruction of the feudal gender order. Through literary creation and social action, she has opened up a space for women to express and resist, and the female image in her works (whether it is a woman, an abandoned woman, or a patriot) shows a complex and three-dimensional subjectivity. As the researchers said, she “took words as swords and piercing feudal darkness”, setting a model that transcends the times for later women's literature.

Li Qingzhao mainly created the image of a woman who dared to challenge the feudal tradition through the following aspects. In the context of feudal ethics that requires women to be subtle and restrained, Li Qingzhao used “花自飘零水自流, 一种相思, 两处闲愁”, the two idle sorrows directly express their thoughts about her husband, show women's autonomy in emotional expression, and break through the shackles of traditional women's emotional repression. She also directly confided her country to ruin and her family in “武陵春·春晚: 物是人非事事休, 欲语泪先流。” The latter sorrows show the inner pain of women in a special historical period, and challenge the traditional concept that women cannot express their sadness at will. In addition to this, she also resists tradition with personal behavior. Li Qingzhao and her husband, Zhao Mingcheng, jointly collected gold and stone cultural relics. In the society at that time, it was rare for women to participate in such cultural activities that were regarded as male exclusives, which showed her challenge to the traditional gender division of labor. After Zhao Mingcheng's death, she shouldered the heavy responsibility of protecting cultural relics, running around in the turbulent times. This tenacity and responsibility transcend the traditional positioning of women's weakness and dependence.

Translator's Subjectivity in Representing Feminist Consciousness

In the revelation of feminist consciousness, the translator is of great significance. Their subjectivity plays a crucial role in conveying the meaning of the original text, especially in presenting feminist consciousness. The concept of “representation strategies” is more consistent with the “representation” theory in translation studies (Bassnett, 1991). It emphasizes that translators actively and dynamically reconstruct the feminist consciousness in the original text based on the target language culture and the reader's needs. This chapter closely focuses on the three dimensions of feminist consciousness in Li Qingzhao's poems analyzed in Chapter 2 (self-worth, survival predicament, and rebellion against traditions), and deeply explores various strategies used by translators during the translation process. The aim is to demonstrate how translator subjectivity facilitates the effective representation of feminist consciousness in the translated text.

Li Qingzhao's poem, “我报路长嗟日暮, 学诗谩有惊人句。” fully demonstrates her confidence and pursuit of her talent, which is undoubtedly an important manifestation of feminist self-worth. When translating such poems that showcase feminist self-worth, translators adopt the neutralization strategy, using neutral words to weaken gender labels and prevent Western readers from limiting Li Qingzhao's talent to the narrow category of “feminist traits”. For example,

Ex.3-1

莫道不销魂, 帘卷西风, 人比黄花瘦。

Say not my soul is not consumed. Should the west wind uproll the curtain, you'll see a face thinner than yellow flowers.

—Xu Yuanchong, 2007

Feudal Confucian rules repressed women's feelings. But Li didn't hold back when expressing her strong desire. This illustrates women's desire for love on their terms. It also shows how important real feelings are to them and displays the richness and individuality of their inner emotional lives. The translator's imagination is used in this translation. Instead of using "boudoir resentment," a term full of male-dominated ideas, they use "consumed." This word has a lot to do with feelings. It emphasizes the spirit of the original over its physical features. In translafectology terms, this helps get around problems men might have understanding. Now, male readers can feel the poem's many emotions. They can feel the longing, the loneliness, and the sadness.

This method makes the emotional impact wider. It helps spread feelings that all people share, feelings expressed through women's perspectives. The translation's style matches Western modernist poetry's abstract beauty, like T.S. Eliot's gender-neutral words in *The Waste Land* (1922). This makes it easier for Western readers to move past their cultural ideas about women. As a result, they can approach classical Chinese women's poetry more openly. They engage with their complex, subtle emotions more clearly.

Ex.3-2

寻寻觅觅，冷冷清清，凄凄惨惨戚戚。

Search. Search. Seek. Seek. / Cold. Cold. Clear. Clear. / Sorrow. Sorrow. Pain. Pain.

—Rexroth, K., 1972

This work was composed by Li Qingzhao amid a series of catastrophic events—the fall of her nation, the loss of her husband, and other profound personal tragedies. Through relentlessly repeated words (叠词), she meticulously etches her psychological landscape of isolation, desolation, and unrelenting sorrow.

In the patriarchal society of her era, women were often powerless against life's adversities, expected to endure in silence. Yet Li Qingzhao defiantly transmuted her anguish into unflinching verse, laying bare her inner torment. This act constitutes a radical reclamation of feminist agency—a conscious confrontation and articulation of women's suffering that shattered the Confucian ideal of feminist stoicism (隐忍).

The translation strategically omits culturally specific markers of feminist subjectivity present in the original poem, rendering the emotional landscape through decontextualized repetitions—"Search. Search. Seek. Seek. / Cold. Cold. Clear. Clear. / Sorrow. Sorrow. Pain. Pain." This approach transforms the culturally embedded "boudoir resentment" into a universal psychological state.

Rather than erasing feminist consciousness, this technique employs gender-neutral expression to enhance cross-gender comprehensibility of gendered emotional experiences, amplify the depth and breadth of women's inner worlds during solitude and despair, and achieve what Lawrence Venuti(1995) would term "a hermeneutic of solidarity," - making particular feminine suffering legible through universal human vulnerability.

Ex.3-3

物是人非事事休，欲语泪先流。

Things stay, you away, oh, no. Speechless, my tears flow.

—Zhao, Y., 2017

Li Qingzhao created this work after enduring profound personal upheavals. The poem articulates her nostalgic yearning for past happiness and poignant resignation to present sorrows. Here, she transcends the conventional image of a woman defined by patriarchal attachments, emerging instead as an autonomous individual with independent thought and emotional depth.

Her words share the tiredness and pain in her heart. She shows how a woman can fully understand her own emotions during hard times and dare to speak them aloud. The poetry is her way of standing firm, claiming her right to speak when women were often expected to stay quiet and endure.

The translation avoids the traditional interpretation of "a widow mourning her husband"—a label that frequently limits the reading—by avoiding any gender-specific pronouns (for example, the gender of "you" is left ambiguous).

The use of "my" preserves gender neutrality while preserving the first-person viewpoint, enabling readers to freely project their own identities into the poem's emotional space.

Li Qingzhao's poetic works present multidimensional female imagery with profound cultural specificity. However, inadequate translation risks reducing these nuanced portrayals to objectified representations. To safeguard against such interpretive violence, translators employ de-objectification strategies, including metaphorical reconceptualization and gaze subversion, to dismantle patriarchal reading frameworks and reassert feminist subjectivity. The following case studies demonstrate this approach in practice.

Ex.3-4

绣面芙蓉一笑开，斜飞宝鸭衬香腮。

Her embroidered face, a lotus in bloom, / Hairpins slanting beside fragrant cheeks.

—Cryer, J., 1984

Li Qingzhao's description of her looks shows she truly valued and believed in her beauty. This reveals a woman shaping how she sees herself. Writing about her appearance this way was quietly revolutionary. In feudal times, women were usually treated as just extensions of men. Their looks mainly existed to please men's eyes. By taking control of how she presented herself, Li Qingzhao went against normal expectations. She strongly declared women's self-knowledge and independence.

The translation carefully doesn't use words that turn women into objects. It shows how women look plainly, focusing on their power to define themselves.

Ex.3-5

卖花担上，买得一枝春欲放。

From the flower vendor's stand / I bought a sprig of spring about to bloom.

—Watson, B., 1971

This passage depicts a woman purchasing flowers, where “春欲放” (spring about to bloom) not only describes the flowers' state but also subtly conveys feminist yearning for beauty and passion for life. The imagery challenges traditional stereotypes of women as passive and mundane, instead highlighting their agency and aesthetic pursuit in daily life.

The translation utilizes first-person grammatical agency to foreground the poet's autonomy and assert feminist subjectivity.

Ex.3-6

和羞走，倚门回首，却把青梅嗅。

With shyness fled, / She lingers by the door, / Pretending to sniff at a green plum.

—Bynner, W., 1929

This lyric sketches a bashful yet curious young girl. The maiden “和羞走” yet “倚门回首” to “却把青梅嗅” capturing the delicate psychology and vivacious demeanor of feminist awakening. This portrayal breaks free from traditional monolithic depictions of women as merely demure and reserved, instead revealing the rich diversity of feminist emotions and their natural expression.

The direct rendering of “青梅” as “green plum” successfully disentangles the term from its romantic connotations of childhood sweethearts (“青梅竹马”), transforming it into a purely botanical image. This aligns with ecofeminist readings of nature-women connections (Donovan, 1990). Through such translational choices, feminist subjectivity is foregrounded, effectively preventing the female figure from being reduced to an object of the male gaze, thus preserving the core of feminist consciousness in the original poetry.

Through the analysis of these examples, we can observe how the de-objectification strategy plays a crucial role in reconstructing feminist consciousness in Li Qingzhao's poems. This approach effectively subverts potential objectifying tendencies in conventional translations, allowing feminist figures to emerge with greater autonomy and authenticity in the target text. Building on these findings, we will now examine another significant translation strategy, the deliberate ambiguity technique, to understand how it facilitates the representation of feminist consciousness in cross-cultural literary transmission.

Li Qingzhao's poetry captures the intricate and often inexpressible nuances of women's emotions. To faithfully render these subtleties in translation, the ambiguity strategy is employed—deliberately softening definitive language to construct a distinct feminist discursive space, allowing readers to intimately access the inner world of the feminist subject, as the following examples.

Ex.3-7

昨夜风疏雨骤，浓睡不消残酒。

Last night, rain sparse, wind sudden- / deep sleep not quite dispelling lingering wine.

—Klein, L., 2013

In the societal context of her era, women drinking alcohol inherently defied traditional norms. Yet Li Qingzhao not only drank but also transcribed these post-intoxication sensations into her poem, an act that transcends conventional constraints and

confronts personal emotions with radical honesty. This oblique revelation showcases the intricate, multifaceted nature of women's inner worlds.

The present participle “lingering wine” demonstrates remarkable ingenuity, evoking a hazy state of intoxication that, compared to the original “残酒” (remnant wine), more closely captures the fluidity of feminist private experience. This aligns with Hélène Cixous' concept of *écriture féminine* (Cixous, 1976). The word “lingering” not only depicts the persistence of drunkenness but also vividly embodies the complexity and ineffability of feminist emotions. Such strategic ambiguity successfully constructs a uniquely feminist discursive space, allowing readers to intimately perceive the nuanced inner world of women.

Ex.3-8

薄雾浓云愁永昼。

A light mist, thick clouds-/ an almost endless melancholic day.

—Eoyang, E., 1993

The rendering of “愁永昼” as “almost endless melancholic day” subtly transforms absolute temporality into feminine subjective perception, an interpretation that resonates with Julia Kristeva's theory of women's time (Kristeva, 1980), which posits feminist temporal experience as cyclical rather than linear. By deliberately blurring chronological precision, this translation more delicately conveys women's distinctive temporal consciousness during adversity, allowing readers deeper access to the psychological weight of feminist oppression.

Ex.3-9

只恐双溪舴艋舟，载不动许多愁。

I'm afraid those little boats at Twin Creek/ couldn't possibly carry all this sorrow.

—Owen, S., 1996

Through singular imagination, the poet materializes intangible sorrow, giving palpable form to Li Qingzhao's profound grief. This nuanced articulation of melancholy transcends conventional poetic tropes of sadness, revealing women's capacity to excavate and articulate emotional depths—a testament to the profound weight and layered complexity of feminist affect.

“Possibly” changes certainty into feminist psychological hesitation. “This sorrow” can refer specifically (to the poet) or generally (to women), creating gender solidarity. Ambiguous modality and possessive pronouns universalize feminist emotion.

These methods show how Chinese poems often get “degendered” in English translations. This matches what English poetry usually does. It also avoids problems that might come from the original Chinese text's strong focus on gender.

The analysis of these examples demonstrates how the strategic ambiguity approach in translating Li Qingzhao's poems effectively destabilizes fixed interpretations, creating a feminist, intimate discourse that allows readers to viscerally experience the nuanced emotional landscape of her work. Collectively, these translation strategies, neutralization, anti-objectification, and ambiguity, serve as critical interventions in reconstructing feminist consciousness while facilitating the cross-

cultural transmission of classical Chinese poems with their gendered complexities intact.

Positive Impact of the Translated Poems on Spreading Feminist Consciousness

The Having examined the translator's strategies in preserving and amplifying feminist consciousness in Li Qingzhao's poetry, we now turn to the broader implications of these translations in global contexts. The successful rendering of her works into English not only enriches the target literary system but also actively participates in the transnational discourse on gender equality. By transcending cultural and linguistic barriers, these translations catalyze the re-evaluation of historical and contemporary gender norms. As we delve into the specific impacts, ranging from challenging Orientalist stereotypes to fostering cross-cultural empathy, it becomes clear that Li Qingzhao's translated poems function as both a literary and socio-political intervention, bridging the past and present in the ongoing struggle for gender equity.

The English translation of Li Qingzhao's poems not only serves as a vital bridge for Chinese classical literature to reach the global stage but also offers Western scholars an academic opportunity to transcend entrenched cognitive frameworks. This act of cross-cultural translation carries profound value, opening new research pathways for Western academia through the following dimensions:

4. Deconstructing the Orientalist Gaze

The Orientalist perspective embedded in Western Sinology has often reduced Chinese female literati to passive symbols of patriarchal systems. In the translation of Li's "醉花阴" "人比黄花瘦" transforms "thin" into "emaciated" through imagist reinterpretation, the creative reimagining reveals the intellectual woman's vitality amidst Confucian constraints. Such poetic resistance subverts Said's Orientalist imagination, offering postcolonial criticism a vivid counter-narrative.

5. Reconfiguring Paradigms of Lyric Tradition

When the repetitive cadence of "寻寻觅觅" "声声慢" is rendered as "Seeking, seeking, searching, searching," its phonetic resonance challenges Indo-European assumptions about poetic rhythm. This translational strategy compels Western scholars to re-examine the conceptual boundaries of "lyricism." The Chinese aesthetic principle of blending emotion with scenery ("情景交融") engages in dialogue with Western Romanticism's emphasis on individual emotional outpouring, creating phenomenological dimensions for comparative poetics.

The English translation of Li Qingzhao's poems has significantly amplified their international reception through cross-cultural transcoding and aesthetic reimagining. This expanded reach transcends mere geographical dissemination, activating multilayered interpretive possibilities within heterogeneous cultural contexts. The mechanisms driving this heightened reception can be analyzed through the following dimensions:

1. Linguistic Accessibility: Shattering the Myth of "Untranslatability" in Chinese Poetics

- *Visualized Translation of Imagery*

In the visual imagery translation of "绿肥红瘦" as "Green grows lush and red grows lean," the intensified chromatic contrast reconstructs the synesthetic imagery, allowing Western readers to

grasp the poetic essence without explanatory notes. This approach not only aids in visualizing the scene but also deepens appreciation for Li Qingzhao's singular observational acuity and nuanced emotional expression.

Her distinctly feminist perspective, capturing and depicting nature with unparalleled sensitivity, epitomizes the emphasis on women's unique lived experiences central to feminist consciousness. By faithfully transmitting these visual motifs, the translation grants Western readers access to characteristically feminist modes of perception, thereby advancing the cross-cultural dissemination of gendered literary consciousness.

- **Flexible Reconstruction of Rhythm**

In terms of "flexible rhythm reconstruction," translators adopt the "half-rhyme" scheme. For example, "凄凄惨惨戚戚" is translated as "Desolate, dismal, dreary", where the repetition of the /d/ sound imitates the phonetic effect of the original text, preserving the rhythm of Song Ci and conforming to English prosody. This reconstruction of rhythm not only enhances the musical beauty of the translated text but, more importantly, enables Western readers to more easily appreciate the profound emotions contained in the original words while enjoying the beauty of phonology. The complex emotions of women in loneliness and distress expressed by "凄凄惨惨戚戚" can directly touch the hearts of Western readers through this rhythmic transmission. The emotions expressed by Li Qingzhao in her poems are a manifestation of the inner world of women in a specific social environment, reflecting the recognition and expression of their own emotions within feminist consciousness. The rhythmic reconstruction in the translation provides strong support for the conveyance of such feminist consciousness.

2. Cultural Resonance: Building Universal Emotional Bridges

- *Modernizing Feminine Discourse*

The line "多少事、欲说还休" from "凤凰台上忆吹箫" transforms Song-era boudoir lamentations into modern emotional suspension. This translation aligns Li's intimate writing with Western Confessional poetry (e.g., Sylvia Plath), sparking deep feminist empathy.

- **Philosophical Recasting of Temporal Consciousness**

Translating "落日熔金" as "sunset melts into liquid gold" converts the classical Chinese metaphor of flowing time (shichuan) into a Bergsonian concept of "durée." This existentialist reinterpretation liberates Li's elegiac nostalgia from its historical specificity, resonating with modernist anxieties about temporality.

The English translation of Li Qingzhao's poems enables global readers to witness her outstanding achievements in literature. Works such as "如梦令·常记溪亭日暮" can, after being translated into English, let the world know that women are not just accessories in traditional concepts, but possess unique literary creativity and profound thoughts. This can change the prejudice against women's intelligence and abilities, laying a cognitive foundation for the awareness of gender equality.

The English translation of Li Qingzhao's poems can showcase the rich and delicate emotions in her works. For example, "一剪梅" conveys the anticipation and yearning for love. After being translated into English, it enables people to realize that women's emotions are equally rich and worthy of respect, breaking

the stereotype that women's emotions are fragile or monotonous, and promoting equal treatment of women in terms of emotions.

From her poems, we can see women's roles and dilemmas in social changes. For instance, “夏日绝句” reflects women's concern for their country and family. After being translated into English, it can help the world understand the social situations of women in different cultures, trigger thoughts on women's status and roles in society, and promote women's struggle for equal rights in various social fields.

Li Qingzhao herself persisted in creation despite experiencing many life changes. Her tough image spreads globally through the English translation of her poems, becoming a role model for women when facing difficulties and challenges. It inspires women around the world to pursue the realization of their self-worth, and also makes society more recognize women's abilities and perseverance in dealing with life and career. As a carrier of cultural exchanges, the English translation of Li Qingzhao's poems allows people from different cultural backgrounds to engage in dialogues and exchanges on the issue of gender equality while appreciating the poems. They can share their respective gender concepts in different cultures, seek common ground while reserving differences, and jointly promote the development of a global awareness of gender equality.

Conclusion

This study, based on the theoretical framework of translactology, systematically explores the influence of the English translation of Li Qingzhao's poems on the cross-cultural communication of feminist consciousness. Through diachronic analysis, the study of the translator's subjectivity and the examination of the acceptance effect of translations, the multi-dimensional role of translation in reconstructing the feminist consciousness is revealed. The research finds that the English translation of Li Qingzhao's poems is not only a language conversion, but also a process of cultural reproduction and the reconstruction of gender discourse. Its effect chain extends from the transfer of cultural images at the text level to the construction of gender equality awareness at the social level, demonstrating the dynamic power of translation in cross-cultural communication.

Firstly, diachronic analysis indicates that Li Qingzhao's translation strategies for poems are closely related to the ideology of the times. Translations during the colonial period tended to weaken gender subjectivity to cater to Orientalist aesthetics. The academic transition period focuses on formal equivalence, but is restricted by the cultural diplomacy of the Cold War. The contemporary reconstruction period actively reconstructs the feminist consciousness in the original work by manifesting gender discourse and adding subtexts. This evolution reflects the covariant relationship between translation strategies and the ideology of the target culture.

Secondly, the translator's subjectivity has played a key role in the reconstruction of feminist consciousness. Translation methods such as neutralized wording, de-objectified expression, and ambiguous semantic strategies have effectively avoided the stereotypes of Eastern women held by Western readers, while retaining the display of women's self-worth, the depiction of survival predicaments, and the challenge to feudal traditions in the original work. These strategies not only enhance the acceptability of the translation but also provide methodological references for the cross-cultural dissemination of feminist consciousness.

Finally, the acceptance effect of the translations in the Western academic circle indicates that the English translations of Li Qingzhao's poems have positive significance in deconstructing the Orientalist gaze, reconstructing the lyric poetics paradigm, and building a universal emotional bridge. Through the translation of visual imagery and the reconstruction of flexible rhythm, the translation has successfully broken the myth that Chinese poetry is "untranslatable", promoting the understanding and empathy of Western readers towards Chinese classical feminist literature. Furthermore, the translation has stimulated global discussions on gender equality through modern feminist discourse and philosophical time awareness, providing a historical reference for contemporary gender studies.

Although this research has achieved certain results, there are still limitations. The issue of cultural loss during the translation process has not been completely resolved, and some translations still have deficiencies in conveying the cultural connotations and language features of the original works. Future research can further explore the application of technological tools (such as VR technology) in translation to enhance the immersive experience of the target readers; meanwhile, the integration of interdisciplinary theories will also open up new paths for feminist translation studies.

In conclusion, the English translation of Li Qingzhao's poems is not only an important practice for Chinese culture to "go global" but also a powerful supplement to the global discourse on gender equality. This study provides new empirical evidence of Chinese classical literature for feminist translation theory, and also offers inspiration for the research on the gender dimension in cultural communication. In the future, with the advancement of translation technology and the deepening of cross-cultural communication, the translation effect of Li Qingzhao's poems will be further expanded, injecting new vitality into the awakening of global women's consciousness and the promotion of equality causes.

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