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A Study on the Impact of Emotions on Lin Shu's Translation Strategies in *Zei Shi*

Xiao Xiaoyu[1,*]

[1]*School of European Languages, Culture and Society, University College London, London WC1E 6BT, UK*
[*]*Corresponding author. Email: xiaoyuxiao1012@163.com*

ABSTRACT
This paper examines the role of emotions in Lin Shu's strategies in translating Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist* to *Zei Shi*. There are four prominent changes of emotions discovered in his translation, including weakened compliments on female characters' appearances, blunted affection between lovers, sharpened anger and grief out of gratitude, and uglified images of negative Characters. The author argues that these changes derive from the different emotional styles between the Victorian society and the late Qing society due to different historical realities, traditions and values. Lin intensifies or abates emotions in the original to navigate his audience's emotional attitudes in a way to help achieve his educational purpose.
Keywords: *Emotions, emotional style, translation strategies, Zei Shi, traditional Chinese ethics*

1. INTRODUCTION

Lin Shu was the first Chinese translator who proposed that translators should infuse their own emotions into their translation. Bearing this notion in mind, he translated 156 foreign works into Chinese, introducing Washington Irving, Alexandre Dumas, and Charles Dickens and their major literary works to the Chinese public. In so doing, he influences a large number of Chinese novel translators and writers, leading the trend of translating world literature [1]. In the earlier stage of his translation career, he was so passionate about his works that he would weep over a character's misfortune and rejoice at the happy turn of his fate [2]. Unsurprisingly, his emotions are translated into many of his works. For example, his grave concern for late Qing dynasty's national crisis informs his sympathetic description of black slaves' miserable conditions in *Hei Nu Yu Tian Lu* (1901) from Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1851) [3]. Filled with disdain for dishonesty, he uglifies the images of thieves in *Zei Shi* (1908), his translation of *Oliver Twist* (1838). At a more private level, in narrating the heartbreaking fate of Marguerite, the heroine in *Ba Li Cha Hua Nü Yi Shi* (1848) (*The Lady of the Camellias* (1895)), Lin infuses into his translation deep sorrow of losing his beloved wife in his 40s [4]. All these emotions pose a considerable effect on Lin Shu's translation. However, to date, the impact of emotions on Lin's translation has largely remained unexplored. To fill this gap, this paper seeks to make a tentative examination of the role of emotions in Lin's translation strategies in *Zei Shi* (History of Thieves), one of his highly-rated translations, as well as the underlying causes.

In *Translation and Emotion* (2018), Séverine Hubscher-Davidson categorizes three particular areas in emotions that affect translators: 1) emotional contents in SL, which entail emotion perception; 2) their own emotions, which concern emotion regulation; and 3) the source and target readers' emotions, which involve emotion expression [5]. Drawing upon this theory, the author identifies four prominent changes of emotions in Lin's translation *Zei Shi* from Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*: weakening compliments on females' appearances; diluting affection between lovers; sharpening a character's anger at his mother's being insulted and his grief over his benefactor's death; and smearing images of negative characters. I borrow William M. Reddy (2008)'s theory of 'emotional styles' to discuss the reasons why Lin conducts these alterations. Reddy states that the style of emotions implies their consistency with the time and location it is in. Emotional styles flourish or perish based on whether they work for communities; an effective emotional style should be consistent with the cultural configuration of its time and place [6]. In light of this idea, I contend that the Victorian society and the late Qing society feature different emotions styles due to their different historical realities, traditions and values, because of which, in his translation *Zei Shi*, Lin reinforces or mitigates emotions in the original.

To unpack this argument, the rest of the paper is organized as follows. I will first analyze the causes behind Lin's abating praise for female characters' appearances, followed up by an examination of why affection between lovers is weakened. After this, I call attention to reasons for intensifying rage and sorrow out of gratefulness. Finally, I elaborate upon the reasons why Lin uglifies negative characters' images.

2. THE IMPACT OF EMOTIONS

2.1. Weakened Compliments on Females' Appearances

Traditional Chinese standards for perfect females shape Lin Shu's emotional response to females images in the original texts, altering his depiction of females in *Zei Shi*. *Book of Rites*, a Confucian classic, documents that an ideal woman are expected to possess 'Si De' (four virtues) [7]. Of these four virtues, morality comes first, indicating loyalty and obedience to her husband; also, an exemplary woman should speak gently with appropriate language; the third virtue is neat appearance and dignified bearing while seductive charm is forbidden; the last one is women's capability of doing daily household chores [8]. Another Chinese classic *The Spring and Autumn Annals* mentions that good-looking women are not virtuous, believing that a depraved and unrighteous stunner corrupts people and incurs disaster [9]. These insights show that in traditional Chinese social context, a female is valued for her grace, moderate temper, decent demeanor, and sufficient manual labour skills. In contrast, her beauty or attractiveness is not considered as merit, if not trouble.

A typical scholar-official with a firm belief in Confucianism, Lin Shu must have been aversive to women's good looks as depicted by Dickens, as a result of which, he deliberately blunts pleasant appreciation of females' beauty. In the original text, Oliver utters deep admiration for a lady in a portrait: 'what a beautiful, mild face that lady's is!' And the old lady standing by explains to him that 'painters always make ladies out prettier than they are' [10]. Lin, however, deliberately alters the hero's pleasant appreciation of female beauty into that of tenderness: 'how gentle and mild that lady in the small picture is!' [11]. Accordingly, he dismisses the praise of the painters' skills in allowing female beauty to stand out with some exaggeration, praising their techniques in painting artistic portraits.[1] Rather than translating literally the compliment on female prettiness, Lin either praises her gentleness or omits the praise and switches the focus to the painting, given that the mainstream emotional style in feudal China considers female beauty as provocative of trouble.

Lin's lack of appreciation of female beauty could be best illustrated when placed alongside his praise of a pretty drawing. In the SL text, Oliver regards the picture with a look of awe, commenting that 'it's so pretty' [10]. Here Lin faithfully conveys the character's fondness for the painting: 'I don't mean anything else. I just feel it is beautiful.' [11]. It is natural for Lin to appreciate a picture's beauty, which contrasts with his obvious reluctance to articulate appreciation of a beautiful lady.

2.2. Diluted Affection between Lovers

Due to the implicit way lovers express their love in traditional Chinese society, Lin weakens their expressions of affection. Confusion ethics, the backbone of traditional Chinese moral values, consider love, with its mere function in reproducing offspring, as secondary to marriages, which means love is only legitimate if it ends with marriages [12]. *Guan Ju*, the first poem in the first ancient Chinese poetry collection *The Book of Songs*, extols the kind of love that values restrained attachment, cautious behavior, and marital harmony as its goal [13]. Normally, young people, especially girls, have no right to choose their future spouse other than abiding by their parents' arrangements. However sincere and deep it is, love not ending up getting married is morally unacceptable. As Monique Scheer (2012) reminds us, individuals tend to behave in line with the patterns required by their community [14]. Under the strict supervision of feudal ethical code, bold declarations of love are forbidden. Therefore, Chinese males and females communicate their affection with moderation and prudence, often through secretly exchanging personal items like a sachet or a piece of jade. Because of such practice, displays of overwhelming affection were unacceptable to the majority of Chinese people following feudal doctrines.

Taking his contemporary audience's emotions into account, Lin mitigates infatuation between the two sexes. For instance, in the original, a young man Harry, obsessed with Rose, begs her to show him even the slightest feelings: 'If your answer be what I almost dare to hope it is, it will shed a gleam of happiness upon my lonely way, and light the path before me. ...for one who loves you beyond all else. Oh, Rose: in the name of my ardent and enduring attachment; in the name of all I have suffered for you, and all you doom me to undergo; answer me this one question!' [10]. Metaphor, parallelism, and repetition are employed to reveal this torrent of strong emotions. Harry compares love from Rose to the source of light, illuminating the sad, lonely, and dark road before him. And he repeats the phrase 'in the name of' to emphasize his intense love for Rose which tortures him day after day. Besides, the parallel structure, as well as the exclamation mark at the end, suggests Harry's effort to press Rose for an answer. However, Lin weakens Harry's painful entreaty and deep adoration for the lady, rendering this violent confession of love as a simple and polite request: 'I know you would say this, but I still want to hear more. Please, for the sake of my love for you, give me a reply.' [11].[2] All the rhetoric devices Dickens applies to reinforcing the begging and pressing tone are omitted.

Lin sticks to the principle that courtesy should accompany the expression of love, and thus he diminishes affection between lovers through exerting good manners on them. It is written in *Book of Songs*, as mentioned earlier, that proper boundaries and etiquette are essential in a

relationship of romance. Given Lin's role as a scholar-official defending feudal ethics his whole life, it is unsurprising to see him impose due courtesy on a character who lacks such consciousness [15]. In *Oliver Twist*, when Mr.Bumble and Mrs.Corney are passionately in love, Mr.Bumble 'exchanged a long and affectionate embrace with his future partner' [10] before they part. But Lin adjusts this lingering and loving cuddle to a short and well-mannered hug [11][3]. Disfavouring too much physical closeness between this couple, Lin exerts politeness and self-control on them, diluting their affection.

2.3. Sharpened Emotions out of Gratitude: Anger and Grief

The central role of filial piety in traditional Chinese moral code has a strong influence on Lin Shu's affective reaction to insults imposed on one's mother and that to the death of a kind benefactor. Filial piety, seen as the foundation of all virtues in traditional Chinese society, requires a person to do his utmost to respect and look after his parents, upon which are premised loyalty and contributions to the throne [16]. With ingrained faith in conventional morals, Lin advocates filial piety to such an unreasonable extent that he highly appreciates the act of using one's own human flesh to treat his parents' illness [15]. Besides, Lin himself is a filial son. As shown in his prose *Shu Xian* [17], his mother being critically ill, he sets off every early morning, prostrating himself and praying for her early recovery all the way to the Temple of Heaven for nine consecutive days in all weather.

Attentive to the cultural influence of his translations on his contemporary readers [18], Lin portrays the protagonist as a filial image, in the hope that readers would fulfil their filial duties. In the SL text, when Noah viciously affronts Oliver's deceased mother, Mrs. Sowerberry takes sides with Noah, swearing at Oliver that his mother deserves it. Toward such offensive behaviors Oliver only retorts coolly and briefly: 'She didn't' [10]. In stark contrast, Lin must have felt the insult as intolerable, for he intensifies the hero's rage and defense: 'Everyone has a mother. Why only my mom is abused by him!' [11]. This is because in the feudal Chinese context, it is one's duty to defend his humiliated mother. In another example, hearing that Rose, his benefactor falls gravely ill with little hope to recover, Oliver 'sit down on one of the green mounds, wept and prayed for her, in silence' [10]. But Lin intensifies such quiet sorrow into uncontainable grief: 'Oliver, with his face covered with tears, ran wildly to a cluttered graveyard, sitting on the ground, wailing loudly' [11]. *Xiao Jing*, a Confucian classic on Confucian ethics which centers on filial piety, states that the filial duty related to parental loss includes losing one's usual dignified manner due to deep mourning pain, which often entails crying loud and hard [16]. Although Rose is not the poor orphan's mother, Oliver takes her, who saves him from starvation and bullying and brings him happiness, as family. Hence, Lin adjusts Oliver's silent sorrow to what is counted filial in traditional Chinese society: a hysterical run and violent wail.

2.4. Smeared Images of Negative Characters

The pursuit of perfect morality in traditional Chinese context poses a profound impact on Lin's translation strategy in dealing with negative characters' favourable dimensions and positive characters' good impression of them. In *Tao Te Ching*, a classic of Chinese philosophical literature, a person with high morals are compared to a flawless newborn child who possesses great power and is immune to any harm or temptation [19]. Educated to be a man of lofty virtue since childhood, Lin is obsessed with the fantasy of moral perfection. As a result, he abominates 'evil' characters whose vocation violates the rigid moral codes, and is thus unable to empathize with them despite their occasional display of kindness and benevolence. Furthermore, Lin tends to cast righteous characters as morally impeccable images sharply demarcated from evils. Thus, genuine trust between positive and negative roles is unbearable to him.

A strong example can be seen in Lin's representation of Nancy. In the original, the thief Nancy, compelled to steal by the gang leader Fagin since she was little, has no way to change her trade or run away. Filled with hatred for Fagin who ruins her life, Nancy feels deep compassion for Oliver, sincerely hoping the little orphan will not suffer the same fate. Thus, when overhearing the conspiracy to corrupt Oliver, she 'wrung her hands and burst into tears' [10], grieving over his misfortune and her inability to save him. Nevertheless, Lin dismisses Nancy's immense sorrow [11], which shows his distrust in an artful thief's capability of genuine kindness. In another instance, the realization of Oliver's possible death panics the villain Monks. He exclaims: " 'It's no fault of mine if he is!' interposed the other man, with a look of terror, and clasping the Jew's arm with trembling hands. 'Mind that. Fagin! I had no hand in it. Anything but his death...' " [10]. The exclamation marks as well as the description of Monks' nervousness, alarm and fear demonstrate that Oliver's imagined death haunts his conscience. However, Lin removes the details as to the villain's terrified look: 'If he is dead, it's none of my business. I didn't intend to kill him.' [11]. In this way, he portrays Monks as a more coldblooded swindler hardly disturbed by his conscience.

Likewise, Lin Shu's absolute obedience to the rigid moral codes in his times prompts him to weaken virtuous roles' favourable impression of thieves in this novel. As related in the original text, Oliver's benefactors, Rose and Mr. Brownlow are grateful for Nancy, who has secretly informed them of Monks' villainy at great risk. Mr. Brownlow lays complete trust in Nancy: 'I confess to you that I had doubts, at first, whether you were to be implicitly relied upon, but now I firmly believe you are. I repeat that I firmly believe it. To prove to you that I am

disposed to trust you, I tell you without reserve... [10]'. What is striking here is that Mr. Brownlow repeats this expression of trust several times, an unconscious behaviour which discloses the intensity of his emotional gratitude towards Nancy. However, with a far less sophisticated idea of good and evil, Lin weakens Mr. Brownlow's sincere trust by reframing it as a mere confirmation of fact: 'Initially, I had doubts, but now I think it's true indeed. [11]'. The alteration dismisses Nancy's kindness, her desire for atonement, and her significant role in rescuing Oliver.[4]

Moreover, Lin also adopts several other methods for rendering negative characters more ignoble so as to educate the masses and improve the social ethos. In the preface of *Zei Shi*, Lin mentions that Dickens used his novels to reveal the social ills to the British government of the time, who then initiated a reform contributing to Britain's prosperity by bettering the social ethos. Lin believes that if late Qing China follows this example, the country would also flourish [11]. Therefore, to inculcate a strong sense of morality, Lin vilifies immoral roles. His expectation is that his contemporary readers will hold them in abhorrence and the late Qing government will take effective measures to cure social ills. To this effect, Lin criticizes venal office-holders outright with a direct speech in the text. In *Oliver Twist*, a newspaper article repeatedly satirizes the magistrate Mr. Fang's unlawful behaviours, bringing them to the Secretary of State's notice [10]. But Lin not only exposes this layer of irony. Instead, he expresses his personal judgments, stating that such bureaucrats deserve harsh penalties like abolishing their posts [11].[5] This highly affective comment reveals his deep contempt at corrupt officials abusing their power, which also points to his sympathy for people who suffer from bureaucratic oppression. In addition, Lin uglifies hypocritical officials. In the original, a board member, ironically referred to as 'the gentleman in the white waistcoat', maltreats workhouse inmates cruelly but with an air of justice. When Oliver's 'vicious' act reached him, he 'patted Noah's head, which was about three inches higher than his own.' [10]. Here we can note Dickens' objective description of this man's small stature. However, Lin conjures up an image of 'a stupid and fat dwarf [11]' to highlight this man's sordid soul.[6] His purpose lies in arousing his readers' disdain and disgust at sanctimonious bureaucrats.

Echoing his dilution of negative roles' positive feelings, Lin intensifies their negative emotions by depicting them as more villainous. For instance, in the scene in which Oliver was to be taught a lesson by a beadle [10], Lin adds an evil curse from an unfeeling board member at the poor: 'Tell Mr. Sowerberry that the child cannot receive no wounds. If he doesn't suffer wounds, his clamour won't quiet down. [11]'.[7] Indiscriminate violence is the man's solution to disobedient children. Lin sharpens his mercilessness, an exaggeration which is evocative of anger at those officials riding roughshod over the people among his audience. This is an effective way to educate them.

3. FURTHER DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Lin's protection of traditional Chinese ethics gives rise to his strategies of weakening or sharpening emotions in *Oliver Twist*. At the turn of the twentieth century, China was repeatedly invaded by foreign powers. As a fervent patriot and traditional literati, Lin advocated educating the populace and ameliorating the social ethos so as to fight for national independence. Meanwhile, he insisted that Confucianism, which contains the essence of Chinese culture, should be preserved to confront western invasion [20]. To inform his audience of the value of females' traditional virtues, lovers' restrained attachment, filial piety, and high morality, in *Zei Shi* Lin weakens compliments on females' appearances, dilutes affection between lovers, sharpens anger and grief out of gratitude, and smears negative characters' images. Therefore, exploring the role of emotions in Lin's translations is significant for getting a deeper understanding of his translation strategies and the historical realities, values, and culture behind.

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