Translator's Subjectivity from the Perspective of Reception Theory: A Case Study of Goldblatt's Translation of *The Moon Opera*

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Abstract

Translator's subjectivity is a hot topic discussed nowadays. It has undergone a process of being neglected to being recognized. With the development of translation studies, translator's role has been accepted gradually. As a matter of fact, the process of translation can be divided into two stages: comprehension of the original and translation of the target text. Translator's subjective factors have effect both in comprehension and in translation. From the perspective of reception theory, the thesis analyzes translator's subjectivity in Goldblatt's translation of *The Moon Opera*.

Reception theory originates in the 1960s. Hans Robert Jauss and Wolfgang Iser are the most important representatives of the theory. It emphasizes reader's participation and its main concepts such as blanks and reconstruction of horizon of expectation which leave more room for readers' comprehension. It also provides a different perspective for translation studies. *The Moon Opera* is one of the representative works of Bi Feiyu. It was translated by Goldblatt and his wife in 2008. The translation version has received a broad welcome among western readers. Until now, there are some scholars who have done research on the translation of *The Moon Opera*, while papers on translator's subjectivity in this work are less in amount.

Based on reception theory, the thesis analyzes Goldblatt's subjectivity in the translation of *The Moon Opera*. The thesis holds the view that translator has two roles in the process of translation: as a reader of the original and as a translator of target text. For his dual identity, translator's subjectivity can not be ignored both in the procedure of selection, comprehension and translation. The thesis analyses Goldblatt's subjectivity as a reader in the first part. His subjectivity reflects in two aspects: the first one is the choice of the source text; the second one is comprehension of the original. As for the first aspect, the paper holds that it is Goldblatt's preference for Chinese literature and Bi Feiyu that encourages him to choose *The Moon Opera*. And the feature of Peking Opera in the original is another factor that attracts Goldblatt to choose the work. In terms of the second aspect, the thesis discusses the

influence of Goldblatt's cultural context on understanding of the source text and the reflection of Goldblatt's fusion of horizon with the source text. In the second part, the thesis mainly focuses on Goldblatt's subjectivity as a translator in his process of expressing. Through filling the blanks and fusing horizon of expectation, the thesis points out that Goldblatt translates a readable and acceptable text for target readers.

In the end, the thesis finds out the appropriate exposition of translator's subjectivity guarantees the successful of a translation. It also admits translator's subjectivity is not the betrayal of original without limitation. As a matter of fact, it refers to translator's creativity on the basis of respect for the original. Finally, the thesis concludes that reception theory provides theoretical basis for translator's subjectivity. And the successful case of *The Moon Opera* provides a good example for further literature translation practice.

Key words: translator's subjectivity, reception theory, translation of *The Moon Opera*

摘 要

近年来，译者主体性是翻译研究的热门话题之一，译者主体性经历了从被忽视到逐渐被认知的过程。随着翻译研究的不断发展，译者在翻译过程中的地位逐渐得到广泛认可。事实上，译者的翻译过程大致可分为两个阶段即原文的理解阶段和译文的翻译阶段。不论在理解原文还是在翻译过程中，译者的主观因素都起到一定的作用。本文以接受理论为视角，分析葛浩文的《青衣》英译本中译者主体性的体现。

接受理论起源于于二十世纪六十年代，主要代表人物有汉斯罗伯特·姚斯和沃尔夫冈·伊瑟尔。接受理论强调读者参与的重要性，并提出"文本空白"、"视野重构"等观点，为读者解读文本提供了更广泛的空间，也为翻译研究提供了不同的视角。《青衣》是国内著名作家毕飞宇的代表作之一，2008 年被葛浩文夫妇译成英文，译文受到国外读者的一致好评。截止目前，国内已经有不少学者对《青衣》的英译本进行研究，但少有学者分析该译本中译者主体性体现。

本论文以接受理论为依据，分析葛浩文的主体性在《青衣》英译本中的体现。文章认为译者在翻译过程中主要承担两个角色，原文读者和目标语译者。作为双重身份的译者，其主体性在文本选择、文本理解以及文本翻译过程中都是不可忽视的。论文第一部分主要分析葛浩文作为读者时，在选择翻译文本和理解文本时所体现的读者主体性。在翻译文本选择方面，文章认为葛浩文对中国文学和毕飞宇的偏爱是他选择《青衣》的一个重要因素；其次，《青衣》中包含的京剧元素是吸引葛浩文的另一个重要原因。在文本理解过程中，论文主要探析了葛浩文的文化语境对他理解原文的影响，以及他与原文视野融合的体现。论文第二部分分析了葛浩文作为译者时，在翻译阶段所体现的主体性。论文指出，葛浩文通过填补文本空白和视野重构两个方面，译出了更容易被目标语读者接受和可读性强的文本。

最后，论文指出作为双重身份的参与者，译者主体性的适度发挥是译文成功的一个重要保证。但译者主体性并不是毫无限度的背叛原文而是在尊重原文的基础上发挥译者的创造性。同时论文还得出接受理论为译者主体性的发挥提

供了理论依据，而《青衣》英译本的成功案例，也为文学翻译实践提供了借鉴。

关键词： 译者主体性；接受理论；《青衣》英译本

Contents

Chapter 1 Introduction

For a long time, translation has been perceived as a secondary activity, as a "mechanical" rather than a "creative" process. Hence translation is doomed to exist in a position of inferiority. Studies on translation indicate the low position of translator. And translator's subjectivity has been neglected as well. Latter, with the appearance of "cultural turn", a large number of scholars notice that translation is a creative activity, taking cultural factors into consideration. It is the task of the translator to liberate the words from the source language and rebirth them into the target language. Consequently, translator's subjectivity arouses a large amount of research in the field of translation.

The great change happened in translation studies promotes the change of translator's social status. Translation scholars such as Venuti, Douglas Robinson and translators such as Tim Parks, Peter Bush and Barbara Godard have all stressed in different ways on the importance of the translator's role (Bassnett, 2005). It is more acceptable for translators to display their subjectivity in the process of translation. Most scholars explore translator's subjectivity in the process of their translating. But little research focuses on translator's comprehension of original as a reader. In fact, reader is not a passive receptor but an active participant in the process of comprehension, whose importance cannot be ignored either. Compared with the previous literary theories, reception theory takes a different perspective. It emphasizes the important role of reader's participation in the process of literary realization. It provides a different angel for translators to expose their subjectivity in translation studies. Because it holds that translator is the reader first, and then is the interpreter. It takes the reader into consideration, opening a different perspective for literary research and translation study. Based on the main points of reception theory, the thesis explores Goldblatt's subjectivity in the translation of *The Moon Opera* in two aspects: Goldblatt's subjectivity as a reader and Goldblatt's subjectivity as a translator.

1.1 Background of the Research

Traditional literal theories attach great importance to the original authors and the meaning of their works. Little attention has been paid to the research of the relation between the text and the reader. The reader has not even been incorporated into the research scope. Reception theory or reception aesthetics is developed by some scholars of University of Constance in Germany. Hans Robert Jauss and Wolfgang Iser are the most important representatives of the theory. Challenging traditional literary theory, reception theory believes that works without readers' participation are lifeless. It connects the reader with text, emphasizing the readers' role and the process of reader's acceptation. It is a type of literary theory which puts readers in the central position, as Iser illustrates that a literary text has two poles "artistic and aesthetic" (Iser, 1972, p. 279). The former refers to the text created by the author, and the latter is the realization of the text achieved by the reader. The reader's understanding, horizon of expectation and aesthetic ability directly affect their acceptance of the text (Zhou Ning & Jin Yuanpu, 1978, p. 21, Trans). The text has many indeterminacies and blanks, which call for readers' cooperation. Therefore, reception theory emphasizes readers' understanding and creative ability. Reception theory jumps out of the traditional pattern of dilemma and focuses on reader's participation.

In terms of the process of translation, translator has two roles: the reader and the interpreter. Translator must read and comprehend a work before he starts to translate. While previous research regards translation as a mechanical process, neglecting translator's creativity. Due to translator's low status in the academic world, scholars need to clarify the essence of translation. As Douglas Robinson says it seems undeniable that translation is largely an intuitive process. Good translators choose words and phrases by no reference to some abstract system (Robinson, 2006). Translation, like most other human behavior, is traditionally an immaterial business. It will be influenced by cognitive, rational and logical factors of human translator. For the dynamic nature of language and culture, and for the dissimilar character of any two languages, it is clear the task of the translator to find a solution to even the most daunting problems. Under the guidance of reception theory

which puts the reader in the central position, it provides a different perspective for translation studies to view translator's subjectivity from two aspects: as a reader of original and as a translator of target language text.

1.1.1 Introduction to Bi Feiyu and *The Moon Opera*

Bi Feiyu, the author of *The Moon Opera*, is a well-known Chinese modern novelist. He vividly presents the real life of common people in old times of China. His unique writing style attracts much attention in literary world. Besides, he is also a productive author with high-quality works. Born in 1964, Bi lived in a small city of Jiangsu province. For personal reasons, he did not have a wonderful childhood. The work: *Youth in North Part of Suzhou -- "Quixote"* is his autobiography to some extent, in which his childhood life is described vividly. In 1987, he graduated from School of Literature in Yangzhou University. Presently, he serves as the professor in Nanjing University and vice president of the *Writer's Association* of Jiangsu province. He began his writing career in the 1980s. After publishing his first work *The Lonely Island*, Bi starts to step into the literary world. Bi enjoys high reputation in literature for gaining a lot of prizes. Many of his works have been translated into other languages and have been published in foreign countries. His representative works are *Massage*, *The Nursing Woman*, *Three Sisters* and *The Moon Opera*. Among them, *The Moon Opera* wins the prize of the *Chinese Fiction Institution* for the first time and the prize of *Off Print* for two consecutive years. Like Gong expresses, Bi is good at narration. In his short stories, he presents a fragment of life before readers. He never tells what the ending will be and he never cares about it. Anything could happen in his novels (Gong Peishan, 2008). His memory about the *Cultural Revolution* has deeply influenced his view on life and also has influenced the choice of his themes and the way he narrates, which form his unique style of narration.

The Moon Opera tells a tragedy of a woman who is a genius in drama, as the writer describes that "she is born to be an actress" (Bi Feiyu, 2000, p. 26). The name of the heroine is Xiao Yanqiu, who is famous for acting the role of Chang'e in *The Moon Opera*. She indulges herself so deeply in the role that she can not distinguish the play from the

reality and finally loses herself. She thinks she is Chang'e and wants to play the role all the time. Once upon a time, Li Xuefen, another actor in the opera troupe, who is the only person, authorized to replace Xiao Yanqiu, requires playing the role of Chang'e for the reason that the audience knows her better than Xiao. The officials in the troupe agree this application. Consequently, Li appears on the stage with absolutely different performing style from Xiao Yanqiu. However, Xiao does not agree with Li's performance. After a fierce quarrel, Xiao pours a glass of boiling water to Li's face, which ends Xiao's theatrical career. After this event, Xiao changes her job as a teacher. Several years later, her life begins to change because of a boss of cigarette factory. He promises to sponsor the performance for the condition that Xiao will appear on the stage as Chang'e. With the development of the plot, Xiao loses the role again because of her jealous to her own student Chun Lai, who is obviously more suitable than Xiao Yanqiu to play the role of Chang'e both in figure and in age. In order to win the battle, the teacher puts all irons in the fire. She even has the sexual relationship with the factory boss. In the end, the story has a dramatic ending, because Xiao Yanqiu finally misses the show for personal reasons. And what she can do is just waving her robe in the snow.

With its unique style of narration, the novel features in the exquisite emotional description of the characters and the exquisite words in the lines. It explores the deep part of human beings. Since the story happens in the opera troupe, a lot of cultural loaded words and sentences describing the opera will be in the text, which convey special charm of Peking Opera, and increase the difficulty of translating in return.

1.1.2 Introduction to Howard Goldblatt and His Translation of *The Moon Opera*

Howard Goldblatt is a famous American sinologist and a translator in the contemporary world. He knows much about China and Chinese culture. He translates a lot of Chinese works, such as Xiao Hong's *The Tales of Hulan River* (1979), Li Ang's *The Butcher's Wife* (1986), Mo Yan's *Big Breasts and Wide Hips* (2004), Jia Pingwa's *Turbulence*. The translation of *Turbulence* won the *Pegasus Prize* for Literature in 1989. In 2012, Mo won the *Nobel Prize* in Literature owning to Goldblatt's beautiful translation to a

large degree. Mo even says in his speech, "his translation (Goldblatt's) lights up for my works... he is a talented translator as well as a rigorous interpreter" (Mo Yan, 2000, p. 170). His translation is highly praised by scholars and readers in western country. The works he translates are vividly represented in the target language country. Fu attributes Goldblatt ranks the highest position as a translator in the English world (Fu Xinxin, 2011). According to He Lin, Xia Zhiqing praises Goldblatt as the chief translator of modern and contemporary Chinese literature (He Lin, 2011). To some extent Goldblatte makes a great contribution in helping Chinese literature go outside.

The Moon Opera is translated by Goldblatte and his wife Sylvia Li-Chun Lin. It was selected into the review list of Foreign Novel Award by The Independent in 2008. As mentioned above, the novel tells about the story happened in the opera troupe, so there are a lot of professional words and sentences describing the life there. For example, the sentence vividly describes the detailed performance of the actress: "everything about her, her eyes, her interpretation, her enunciation, and the way she tosses the water sleeves of her costume, is imbued with an inbred aura of tragedy" (Goldbaltt, 2012, p. 7). If the translator does not know the art of opera performance, he can not understand what the original sentence means, let alone to illustrate these words so clearly. It not only reproduces the features of the original work, but also expresses the familiar ways of expression that easily help foreign readers understand. Moreover, it does not lose any charm and beauty of the original. Some western scholars highly praise the translation for it introduces a fascinating story to them. Similarly, the translation also helps the Chinese writer Bi Feiyu, gain some popularity in the Western world.

1.2 Aim and Significance of the Research

In recent years, a lot of translation studies have emphasized on the comparison between the source text and target text. Translator is located in a marginalized position. The real underlying reason for the low status of translator is the everlasting criterion of translation versions. Faithfulness to the original becomes a typical criterion to evaluate a translation. Translator is treated as a language trans-coder or a tool which is attached to the

original text in the process of translating. Traditional theories regard translators as servants or as invisible factors, or even imprison them to subordinate status. Therefore, the translator has not received the proper attention they deserve. Although some scholars notice translators' subjective influence later, they still pay much emphasis on the process of translating, ignoring the process of understanding. As a kind of thinking activity in the human brain, like translation, it will be influenced by translator's personal cognitive, rational, logical or analytical factors. Even the same text may be understood or interpreted differently. So translator's subjectivity is inevitable. In fact, whether in the process of choosing the translation text or selecting the translation strategies, the translator's subjectivity appears at any time.

The study of translator's subjectivity from the perspective of reception theory provides a reasonable explanation for translators. Firstly, translator is the reader of the original. The special role as the reader, he must be influenced by his own life or reading experience in the process of selecting and understanding of the original text. So does the process of interpreting. He adopts his appropriate strategies to reproduce an acceptable version for target language readers. Reception theory justifies the subjectivity of translators. Most importantly, it provides a reasonable theoretical basis for translator to display their creativity in the process of comprehension. In translation studies, the two-role translator has the responsibility to balance the two relations and properly exert his subjectivity well.

This research takes the English version *The Moon Opera* as a case study, exploring Goldblatt's subjectivity in the process of understanding and translating under the guidance of reception theory. The analysis is mainly divided into two aspects: as for the first aspect, the thesis analyzes the Goldblatt's subjectivity in selecting the source text and his understanding of it because the translator is the reader of the original first. With regard to the second aspect the thesis discusses the Goldblatt's subjectivity in choosing the translation strategies and the process of reproducing the translation version. The aim of this research is to find out how translator's subjectivity works in the two processes and how the reception theory applies in this process.

The thesis is made up of five chapters. Chapter one is the introduction part, which

introduces the background information of the thesis, such as the author and the original work, *The Moon Opera*; the translator, Goldblatt and his translation of *The Moon Opera* and the significance of the research.

Chapter two is literature review. This part presents previous research on translators' subjectivity, reception theory and some studies on the English version of *The Moon Opera*.

Chapter three explores translator's subjectivity and reception theory respectively. Then it discusses the limitation of translator's subjectivity under the guidance of reception theory.

Combining the reception theory, through analyzing Goldblatt's *The Moon Opera*, the fourth chapter discusses the Goldblatt's subjectivity in each process from selection of the source text to the manipulation of the translation and emphasizes the translator's subjectivity in *The Moon Opera*. Then the significance of translator's subjectivity in *The Moon Opera* will be elaborated.

The last chapter is conclusion, which summarizes the content of the whole thesis and points out the limitation existing in this paper. It puts forward some suggestions for further study in translator's subjectivity as well.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

This chapter will give a brief review on the previous studies of translator's subjectivity, reception theory and their application in the translation studies. Later this paper will explore the previous studies on the translation of *The Moon Opera*.

2.1 Studies on Translator's Subjectivity and Reception Theory

Translator's subjectivity has been ignored for a long time. Traditional translation studies focus much emphasis on the comparison between the source text and target text. Little attention has been paid to the subject of translation practice. Translator is always in a position of inferiority. However, some scholars have begun to realize the important role of a translator since the "cultural turn". Until now, a lot of scholars review translator's position in translation studies as an active participant not the invisible man. Increasing number of essays and articles testify translator's subjectivity from theoretical perspective.

Venuti (2004) uses the term of "invisibility" to describe the translator's situation in Anglo-American culture (Venuti Lawrence, 2004). The translator even has been treated as a servant, who must follow the orders from the author of original text and the target language readers. Yang Jiang thinks the difficulty of translation task caused by the "servant" position of translators (as quoted by Xu Jun, 2011). Later, with the development of translation studies, scholars begin to change their opinion on translator's social status. Translator's subordinate position receives broader concerns and increasing scholars begin to realize translator's subjectivity in the translation process. Jeri Levy (1966) stresses the importance of translator's creation in literary translation in *Translation is a Decision- making Process*. Until now, many Chinese translation scholars begin to focus on the translator's social situation. Scholars like Zha Mingjian and Tianyu (2003) discusses the phenomenon of marginalization of

translators' role through analyzing the possible reasons that caused this phenomenon. They point out there are two main factors that lead to translator's marginal position in old China. One is the self-centeredness in traditional Chinese ideology. This kind of over self-centered consciousness has greatly covered the cognition of translator's subjectivity. The other is the conventional conception which views translation just as a simple interlingua transformation and thinks the value of translation is worth less than creation. Their paper justifies the manifestation of translator's subjectivity from several aspects presenting a systematic research on the marginal position of translator, which provides a rich reference for latter researches on this topic. Wei Jin and Wei Shuyan (2004) points out translator's subjectivity exposes in the process of translation under the premise of being respected by others. Zhang Yaoping (2005) claims a translation is never a copy of the original. It is a kind of rewriting activity in another language, which is the supplement of the original (Zhang, 2005, p.76). This point of view is highly coincident with the opinion of Andre Lefevere, who emphasizes the creative ability of translator by viewing translation as a rewriting process. Similarly, Lv Xiaofang and Zhu Xiaomei (2014) think translator's subjectivity is the personality and creative awareness presented in translation.

Xia Guiqing elaborates the connotation and manifestation of translator's subjectivity in detail. He holds the view that the subject of translation is the translator for the reason that the original author is the dependence that the translator's creation should abide by, while the target language reader is the object of translation practice. Thus the translator is the medium who coordinates the two poles in the translation process (2004). His paper works out the daunting question lingering on many scholars for a long time: who is the subject of translation? Zhong Weihe and Zhou Jing (2006) focus on the restrictions that limit translators' subjectivity. They suppose that it is those restrictions that help to develop the potential ability of translator to produce better translations. Zhou Weiying and Liu Xuehua (2013) make a comparative study of two English versions of Shakespeare's sonnet from vocabulary, rhythm and style from translator's subjectivity. They indicate that translator should take the given cultural environment into consideration and fuse the translation's horizon with readers.

Sun Ling (2009) explores translator's subjectivity and point that it works in two stages: the first stage is selecting a word from several synonyms for a word of original text; and the second stage is expressing the logical relationship which does not exist in original work to fill the indeterminacies. It is unavoidable that translator's individual views and aesthetic tendency would be merged in translation. She also indicates that the cultural factors are the most difficult part in literary translation. It is these difficulties that require translators to choose the appropriate strategies to avoid the distortion of original meaning. Wang Yan (2013) objects to over interpreting or rewriting the original text. She states that "translator's subjectivity should be confined in a limited range" (Wang, 2013, p.26). The author is aware of the black area which is ignored by many scholars. But unfortunately, she does not discuss what are the limiting factors in-depth.

As "a challenge to literary studies", reception theory jumps out of traditional literary theory and regards the reader as the vital factor that will make difference in literary realization (Thompson, 1994, p. 53). The theory is mostly influenced by Russian formalism, Hermeneutics and Phenomenology. The term like "horizon of expectation" mainly comes from Gadamer's Hermeneutics, while "indeterminacy" is borrowed from Roman Ingarden by Iser. In *Reception Theory and the Interpretation of Historical Meaning*, Thompson illustrates that the paper applies the very different insights of theorists into the interpretation of the historical meaning of literary reception. In the following parts of the book, he discusses some key points of Jauss and Iser (Thompson, 1994).

In China, Yang Wuneng (1987) is the first scholar who introduces reception theory into translation studies. Yang figures out that the traditional translation theory neglects translators' subjectivity and the target reader's participation in reception process. He expresses that there are three stages the translator should go through: reception, interpretation, and recreation. Mu Lei (1990) applies the reception theory to idiom translation and emphasizes the importance of reader's reception. Later, he further discusses idiom translation from the perspective of reception theory in-depth, and points out the limitation of the theory. Then he explores the methods of idiom translation taking cultural factors into consideration. He holds the view that translation involves far more than replacement of lexical and grammatical items

between languages. The process may include the basic items of cultural factors. Another scholar Hou Xiangqun(1994) declares it is the reception theory that liberates the meaning from Formalism and Structuralism. He advocates the translation criteria should be developed from singular standard to diversified one. Fang Xin thinks that the appearance of reception theory requires us to adjust our thinking patterns. And she also pointes out that readers are "dancing with chains" because they do not have the absolute freedom in the process of appreciation (2000, p.72). Fang's research admits reader's active creation while in limited range. Recently, many scholars have mainly focused on putting the reception theory into application. Some of them apply the theory to guide certain translation text, like poetry translation, novel translation, drama translation, and idiom translation, etc.

Some others explore translator's role or translator's subjectivity from the perspective of reception theory. In *The Pluralism of Literary Translation Standards in the Context of Reception Theory*, Zhou Tinghua (2005) expresses that translator's subjective creativity is more obvious in the transformation phrase. He puts much emphasis on the subjectivity of the translator rather than reception theory, ignoring the importance of readers' participation. Lv Xiaoyi and Han Jianghong (2010) finds out that only the similar background information between reader and translator could the consistency be achieved in the language level in the process of reading. This is also a process of fusing the horizon of expectation. Li Yanran (2012) states that when translating, the translator should take the target reader into full consideration and fuse their horizons with the text to make his translation more acceptable. This kind of point of view reflects the main ideas of reception theory. Another scholar Chen Yanyan agrees that the translator should fuse his horizon with the original text, and then take the readers' expectation into consideration (Chen, 2013). Li Shuang mentiones "a good translation is the results of keeping the target reader in mind" (2013, p. 115). "Studying the English version of Sun Zi Bing Fa", Li Xiaofang and Li Yan (2013) think the center of translation no longer lies in the author or the original text, but in readers' acceptation. Scholar like Jiang Xuan analyzes the changes of translators' status and reflection of translators' subjectivity from reception theory (2013). Yang Mengshan (2013) discusses the manifestation of translator's subjectivity combing with reception theory, taking *Huaxia Ji* as an example.

To sum up, according to the survey from CNKI, the paper finds that most of the

articles about translator's subjectivity are from two aspects: some discuss the marginal status of translator, manifesting translator's subjectivity in a certain literary text. While some others explore translator's subjectivity under the guidance of the theories, such as hermeneutics, translation ecology, cognitive linguistics, manipulation theory, and relevance theory, etc. Through the study of journal articles and papers, it can be found that there are some scholars who have talked about translator's subjectivity with reception theory. But their research is not so systematic and mainly concentrates on translator's process of translation, neglecting the process of comprehension.

2.2 Studies on the Translation of *The Moon Opera*

The Moon Opera is translated by the famous Sinologist Howard Goldblatt and his wife, Sylvia Li-chun Lin. There is a lot of research studying the original text. According to Wang Chunlin, the critics, Hong Zhigang, once said: Bi's fiction was always filled with charm, whether on narration or on analyzing the human nature, which reflects Bi's unique artistic character (2009). Even Howard Goldblatt praises Bi Feiyu as a creative writer, who pays much attention to language. *The Moon Opera* with its distinctive linguistic features and cultural images, has won a broad readership in China. As Chinese culture receives increasing attention of the world, Chinese literature begins to step outside and be welcomed by foreign readers. The great success of *The Moon Opera* in outside world mainly contributes to its beautiful translation to a large extent.

First published by *Telegram Books* in the UK, the translation has been widely praised in the western literary world and shortlisted as "the review list of *Foreign Fiction Prize* of UK's *The Independent* in 2008" (Sun Huijun & Zheng Qingzhu, 2011, p. 86). Although the translation of *The Moon Opera* has gained a rich harvest internationally, the research seems to lag behind in Chinese translation field. According to a survey from CNKI, only limited papers have studied the English version of *The Moon Opera*, which is less in amount. Sun Huijun and Zheng Qingzhu (2011) analyze the book cover and linguistic features of *The Moon Opera*. They point out that the English version is natural and fluent in lexical level. By adding notes, the translation narrows the distance between foreign readers, presenting profound reference of Chinese culture. The paper lists out various translation examples and then

figures out some parts different from the original text. The authors give out the reasonable reasons for the transformation by taking target readers into consideration. After detailed illustration, their paper tries to seek out a solution for Chinese literature going outside. Zhang Linlin (2013) explores domestication and foreignization strategies from the perspective of opera terms. Zhang pointes out whether in title translation or in cultural image translation, professor Goldblatt takes reader's reception as the top priority. Zhang Chi (2013) analyzes the ways of narration in *The Moon Opera*. Through comparing the translation version with the original text, Zhang concludes that the translation version do not add notes for every allusion to make the reading process fluently. By weakening the original image in transforming the sentence structure, the translator successfully conveys the original charm and the style of the original text. Wu Yun (2013) provides a detailed analysis on the translation process. He points out the cooperation between the author and the translator will influence the pattern and quality of translation. Wu even holds the view that the beautiful translation of *The Moon Opera* mainly attributes to the good communication between Goldblatt and Bi Feiyu. Li Long (2013) illustrates the rendition of Chinese culture-loaded words form Relevance theory based on his own translation of *The Moon Opera*. Li concludes that the whole translation process is a difficult task. It requires unswerving perseverance and comprehensive competence of bilingual language ability to achieve a qualified translation. Through Li's description, it can draw the conclusion that the translation of *The Moon Opera* is a tough work. Though Li's thesis never mentions Goldblatt's translation version all the time, it is by no means self-evident that Goldblatt has done a very great job for the English version accepted well in the western word. Another thesis is "Adoption and Selection: Study on the Translation of *Qingyi*" by Xie Wenjing in Shanghai International Studies University. Xie (2014) gives a study on Howard Goldblatt's translation of *The Moon Opera* in light of methods like adaption and selection. Xie believes that cultural characteristics of Chinese literary works should not be eliminated completely during translating. Instead, it is necessary to strike a balance between readability and culture otherness. Xue Rui (2011) explores the cultural filtration in literary translation, taking *The Moon Opera* as a case study. Xue focuses on the strategies used by Goldblatt to realize cultural filtration. He also pointes out some mistranslation in *The Moon Opera* and provides the appropriate translation versions, which sets a good example for latter studies.

The success of *The Moon Opera* indicates that, in addition to the attractive language features of the original text, the capability of the translator can not be ignored. So with the successful case, domestic translators should draw lessons from the translation experience of this novel. However, domestic research on the English translation of *The Moon Opera* is less in amount. It is necessary to raise upsurge interests of the successful translations of Chinese literature and then do enough research of it.

Chapter 3 Translator's Subjectivity and Reception Theory

Translation is an old activity with the emergence of language. Steiner indicates that human communication equals with translation (Steiner, 1975). As the main participant of translation practice, translator does not receive the proper attention they deserve. It is common to find that most previous translation studies pay much attention to the comparison between the source text and target text. However, the appearance of reception theory changes this situation. As a literary theory, reception theory provides a different perspective in viewing translator's subjectivity.

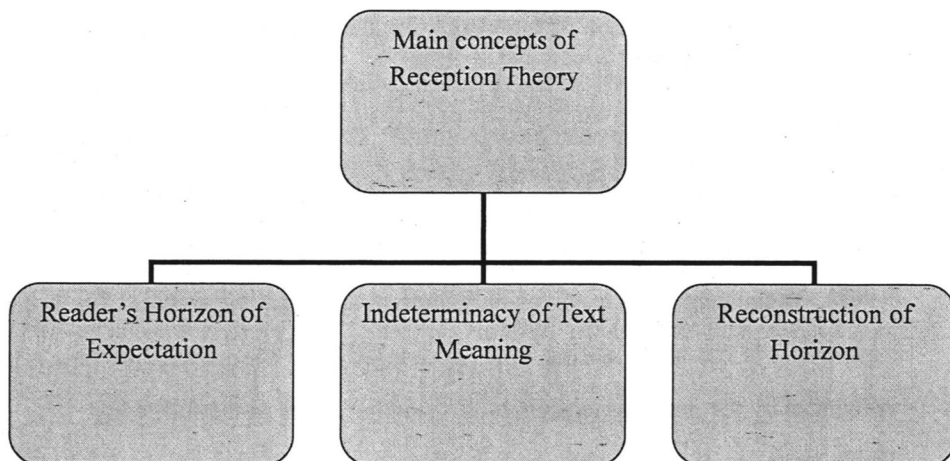## 3.1 Formation and Development of Reception Theory

Originated in Germany, reception theory or reception aesthetic is a literary theory rising in the 1960s, which emphasizes the important role of reader's participation in the process of appreciation. So it is also called "reader-centered theory. The important representatives of the theory are Hans Robert Jauss andWolfgang Iser. Jauss conceives the theory as "a challenge to literary studies" (Thompson, 1994, p. 53). The theory is mostly influenced by Russian formalism, Hermeneutics and Phenomenology. The term like "horizon of expectation" mainly comes from Gadamer's Hermeneutics, while "indeterminacy" is borrowed from Roman • Ingarden by Iser. The beginnings of aesthetics of reception canbe traced back at least as far as Aristotle's remarks on the role of public expectations in attributing aesthetic value to tragedies (Thompson, 1994). Reception theory mainly emphasizes the intercommunication between the reader and text. Reader's participation becomes a vital factor in literary realization.

The development of reception theory has undergone various stages and it has been influenced by a lot of theoretical framework like Russian's formalism, structuralism, hermeneutics, etc. Jauss even claims "it is necessary to avoid the reductionism that is characteristic of cultural history and Marxist literary history, as

well as the narrow aesthetic of the Russian formalists and the Czech structuralisms"
(Thompson, 1994, p. 250). The first book which refers to the reader in literary study is
The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition. Later, many
scholars start to study on the connection between readers and the works. Hans-George
Gadamer thinks that "the meaning of the text is achieved by the reader after fusion of
reader's horizon with the text, and the meaning of the text is not closed or static but
open and dynamic" (Thompson, 1994, p.13). Gadamer's theory makes a great
contribution to the development reception theory. In 1967, Jauss's lecture, *Literary
History as a Challenge to Literary Scholarship,* greatly emphasized the active role of
reader's participation, which is regarded as the birth of reception theory. Afterwards,
Iser points out that the prominent feature of literature works lie in the indeterminacy
of the text meaning. The meaning of text and their critical assessment varies with time,
with place and with the specific characteristics of readers. No reader reads a text
without some experience and some expectations (Iser, 1974). Iser's ideas are mainly
derived from Roman Ingarden. Iser thinks that the literary works have two poles,
which we may call the artistic and the aesthetic. The artistic refers to the text created
by the author, and the aesthetic refers to the realization accomplished by the reader
(Iser, 1974). Actually, before the appearance of reception theory, there are some other
scholars realizing the importance of readers' response. For example, Eugen Nida's
dynamic equivalence aims to allow the reader to understand as much as the source
text context as possible, just as his words goes "the target audience for which a
translation is made almost always constitutes a major factor in determining the
translation procedures and the level of language to be employed" (Nida, 2011, P. 102).
He thinks the reader is an important factor that will influence the construction of a
translation in translation process. He notices the reader's response is an important
factor which should be taken into consideration by translators.

The prominent features of the reception theory are: firstly, it emphasizes the role
of reader. Secondly, it reconstructs the changing horizon of expectation, in which text
is constructed and received. Lastly, it recognizes that the reception of reader is both a
reproductive and a creative activity. Most importantly, it gradually shifts the focus of

literary studies from the author-oriented paradigm and the text-oriented paradigm to the reader-oriented paradigm. Summarized from Jauss' and Iser's ideas, reception theory includes three main parts. The following chart refers to the main concepts of reception theory.

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          ┌─────────────────────┐
          │  Main concepts of   │
          │  Reception Theory   │
          └──────────┬──────────┘
      ┌──────────────┼──────────────┐
┌───────────┐  ┌───────────┐  ┌───────────┐
│ Reader's  │  │Indeterminacy│ │Reconstruction│
│ Horizon of│  │ of Text   │  │   of       │
│Expectation│  │ Meaning   │  │ Horizon    │
└───────────┘  └───────────┘  └───────────┘
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3.1.1 Reader's Horizon of Expectation

The term "horizon of expectation", originates from Heidegger's "pre-understanding" or Gadamer's "prejudice" (Heidegger, 1962). It is used to describe the established psychological schema that the reader's possesses before they read. It is put forward by Jauss in his essay. According to Gadamer, the historicity of a man constructs the foundation of his understanding. Humans never come to a text with a complete pure mind, but with beliefs and expectations which we are familiar with (Gadamer, 1975). It does not solely refer to the accumulated literary experience of readers, but also refers to their language experience memories, intentions, emotions, and sub-consciousness as well. Jauss points out that the interpretation of every piece of literature is affected by certain historical environment (Jauss, 1982). A literary work is not an object that stands by itself and it also do not offer the same view to each reader in each period (Zhang Zhongzai& Wang Fengzhen & Zhao Guoxin, 2002). It makes sense for Jauss to propose three components in the literary horizon of expectation in any given time: firstly, the known norms and immanent poetic of the genre concerned; secondly, the implicit relationship of the work to other works in the

literary-historical context of the time; thirdly, the presupposed opposition between fiction and reality, between the practical and poetical function of language (Zhou Ning & Jin Yuanpu, 1987, p. 263.Trans). Reader's imagination, life experience and aesthetic sentiment, etc. all of these factors have effect on the process of understanding and reception of the works. As Zhang puts it "whether it is possible to comprehend and reproduce the history of literature in its unique historicity depends on the horizon of expectations can be objectified" (Zhang Zhongzai & Wang Fengzhen & Zhao Guoxin, 2002, p.235). Heidegger holds that any understanding and interpretation of the literary works depends on the pre-understanding of the reader (1962). Understanding is a universal, historical and creative process. The horizon of expectation is not static all the time. It changes with the passage of time and it is influenced by the previous expectations. Gadamer states as the following:

The horizon is something that we move into and also moves along with us. Horizon changes as a person moves. There exist no more isolated horizons for the present than the historical horizons. Understanding is, in fact, the fusion the all these diverse horizons that we can think of by themselves (Gadamer, 1975, p. 261).

When reading a literary work, reader's process of comprehension with his horizon of expectation is also the process he revises and broadens his current expectations. Only the fusion of the reader's expectation with the text can the work be understood and it makes the work easier to be accepted. Reader's expectation influences his acception of or rejection to the content and form of the work he reads. It also decides the basic attitude and evaluation towards the works.

Translation is a special type of cross-cultural communication. People from different counties may have different kinds of values and background, which forms various horizons of expectation and pre-knowledge. Similarly, readers from different times may also have different horizon of expectations. Even Howard Goldblatt admits, those extremely excellent literary works should be re-translated every 20 years to satisfy current reader's expectation (Goldblatt, 1980). Hence, it will be concerned with reader's expectation in analyzing the textual structures and strategies in the process of translating. And the translator's expectation can influence the process of

his translating either. Douglas Robinson puts it: "since I am choosing the target-language words when I translate, everything that I write has to be filtered through my experience, my interpretations" (Robinson, 2001, p. 2). It indicates the influence of translator's horizon of expectation in the process of translating. It explains the reason for the existence of different kinds of translation versions of the same text. It may be that the horizons of translators' are different from others' or the reader's demand for newly translation version.

3.1.2 Indeterminacy of Text Meaning

Indeterminacy is a term stressed by Roman Ingarden. It means the "gap" or "blanks" of the text meaning. It is clear that indeterminacy is the overt feature of literature. Iser even proposes that "it is the most important feature in distinguishing literary text from non-literary one" (Iser, 1974, p, 45). It refers to the absence of an exact correlation between phenomena described in literary texts and objects in the real world life (Jauss, 1982). Filling these indeterminacies or gaps is also an act of interaction between the text and the reader. This is the most important task that requires reader's participation. The gaps and indeterminacies in the text challenge the familiar norms and rules in reader's mind during the process of reading. As for the relationship between the text and the reader, Iser says, "The work is more than the text, for the text only takes on life when it is realized, and furthermore the realization is by no means independent of the individual disposition of the reader-though this in turn is acted upon by the different patterns of the text" (Iser, 1974, p. 125). It is clear that Iser notices the dynamic understanding process of readers. And the process is an indispensable part in literary realization.

Roman Ingarden calls this action as "concretization". In the process of reading, the reader plays an active role to accomplish the effect of communication with the text. In a narrow sense, the concretization refers to any forms of complement, which means reader's involvement to fill the gaps or indeterminacies. In a broad sense, it means the result of potential factors and the concretization of certain indeterminacies in the text.

The process of concretization is the process of the receptor to display his subjectivity and the process of recreation.

According to phenomenology, every object has unlimited indeterminacy. The activity of comprehension cannot fill all these indeterminacy. In reception theory, only the reader's participation can make the literary works complete through concretizing the indeterminacies in the text. It makes sense for readers to find the potential charm of literary works in-depth.

3.1.3 Reconstruction of Horizon

Reconstruction of horizon or fusion of horizon is another feature which can highlight reader's subjectivity in literary studies. How to successfully understand the text needs the reader to adjust his horizon of expectation to adapt that of the original text. The process of adjustment is regarded as reconstruction or fusion of horizon. The fusing of horizon of expectation forces reader to change and revise his "pre-understanding" and to form a new one. In this way, new horizons come into being. Reader's cognition plays an active role during understanding. To have a better understanding, reader will undertake activities like filling the blanks or adjusting text structure. However, this adjustment is not a random choice. As for the translator, any interpretation of a text will involve in the translators' own understanding. There are two stages of reconstruction when the translator first encounters a literary work as a reader. The first stage is that the translator fuses his own horizon with the work he read, and then he considers the horizon of expectation of the target language readers. The process the translator fuses or reconstructs his horizon with the original work lays a good foundation for his latter translating. There are some principles for translator to abide by. Firstly, he should respect the original work and does not change the original meaning arbitrarily. Then he should consider the target language reader's horizon of expectations and makes relevant adjustment for readers. Reader's reception ability is another important factor that will influence the strategies the translator adopts according to reception theory. For example, in the early 1950s, Chinese readers were

not so familiar with the foreign culture. Many names in western novels at that time were translated into local Chinese name, by adding a surname before it, such as "Scarlett" in *Gone with The Wind* was translated into "郝思嘉" , for the reason that our Chinese often have a surname before our names like Zhao, Qian, Sun, Li, etc. This kind of translation will not cause distance between the text and readers. Translator should also pay attention to the aesthetic preference of the target language readers. In most Chinese literary works, there are a lot of Chinese four-character idioms. The expression has a long history in China with abundant cultural loaded meanings. When confronting these words, the translator explains simply or in detail is based on the degree of aesthetic preference the readers propose at that time, because readers' horizon of expectation is changing with the passage of time. Lastly, translators should grasp the trend of the mainstream of ideology. The mainstream of ideology can help a translator open to new things and make them adjust their horizons more easily.

The three characters of reception theory distinguish it from the previous traditional literary theories. It challenges the traditional internal textual research and the author-oriented method to establish a new reader-oriented paradigm. The theory greatly promotes the status of readers. Simultaneously, it often leaves room for translators to display their subjectivity for their dual identity, both as a reader and as a translator. Therefore, it gives translator's subjectivity a reasonable theoretic basis in translation studies.

3.2 Translator's Subjectivity

Translator's subjectivity is not a new forthcoming term in translation field. Many scholars have made research on it in the past years. It has become a heated topic for some time. In the previous translation studies, many scholars have focused more on the equivalence between target text and source text rather than on the creation process involved in translation. No concessions are made to translator, who conducts the behavior of translation. Lately, many scholars notice the marginal position of

translator, whose subjectivity gradually steps into translation studies as well. The position of translator has greatly been improved since the *cultural turn*. As a result, the role of translator has radically altered from then on.

"Subjectivity" is a term, which means "ideas, feelings or experience existing in somebody's mind rather than the real world." (*New Oxford Dictionary*, p. 1760). The subject of translation has been a controversial dispute. Some scholars believe the translator is the subject of translation, while others argue the subject is the author or reader. According to Douglas Robinson,

> In this broad sense, clearly, translators are invariably, by definition, channels or channellers. Translators channel the words and ideas of their source authors...one of the things that the rational translator-subject is supposed to control, in fact is the interference of his own control in the process of channeling the source author directly and immediately to the target reader (Robinson, 2001, p. 10-11)

From Robinson's words, it is the translator that keeps the whole procedure of translation going smoothly, whose subjectivity will inevitably be involved in the whole process of translation practice.

3.2.1 Development of Translator's Subjectivity

Appearing the phenomenon of translator's marginal role, the development of translator's subjectivity undergoes several stages. In the beginning, being faithful and equivalent to the original text is seen as the supreme principle of translating. According to Tan, from early Buddhist translation to translation practice in the modern era, being faithful has been regarded as the primary responsibility of translator (Tan Zaixi, 2000). Very little topic has focused on translator's subjectivity. If any, it must emphasize the subordinate position of translators. Venuti even thinks that translator is "invisible" in Anglo-American culture (Venuti Lawrence, 2004). Indeed, the invisible position leads to translator's subordinate role. Translator even has been treated as a servant, who must follow the orders from the original author and

the target language reader. Yang Jiang emphasizes the difficulty of translation task caused by the "servant" position of translators (as quoted by Xu Jun, 2011). Being a servant, translator can not be self-assertive. It requires translator to abandon his standpoint and keep neutrality. Another point of view regards translator as a transparent person. Ouyang Zhen (1993) elaborates "transparent" like this: "A good translation should be transparent, which means the original work can be perceived through the translation, most importantly, with no trace of translated sign" (quoted by Xu Jun, 2011, p. 113) The situation of translator's marginal situation has lasted for a long time until the appearance of *Cultural Turn* in translation studies in the 1970s. Since then, increasing attention has been paid to the subject of translation.

Translation is a complex and complicated task. I. A. Richards (1953) has claimed that translation is probably the most complex type of event in the history of the cosmos (as quoted by Nida, 2011). In western world, the development of translator's subjectivity can be divided into several periods. According to Xie, it can be divided into three periods as the following: translator's subjectivity in Bible translation period, in literary translation period and in non-literary or practical translation period (Xie Tianzhen, 2009). In Bible translation period, the translator was regarded as the divine person who could convey the spirits of God. Thus translators at that time could only use the method of word-by-word translation. So their subjectivity was confined by the Holy Spirit of God. However, the scholar, Martin Luther, still tried to challenge the common ideology and by 'adding' a word to his 1522 German New Testament" (Robinson, 2001, p. 5). In his time, "adding to" or "subtracting from" in the Bible was regarded as distorting the Vulgate, and distorting the Vulgate was distorting the God's meaning. It was guilty and could not be accepted at that time. As a result, there is no room for translator's subjectivity in the Bible translation period.

With the appearance of literary translation, translator's role has been greatly improved. Because the literary works need translator to completely understand them in order to convey the original meaning to target language readers. As Anne Cluysenaar points out in her book on literary stylistics "the translator should not work

with general precepts when determining what to preserve or parallel from the source language text, but should work with an eye on each individual structure, whether it be prose or verse" (as quoted by Bassnett, 2005, p. 82). So many scholars gradually notice the translator's importance in the process of translation. According to Lefevere, Jacques Amyot, the French Renaissance writer and translator, translates *Life of Noble Grecians and Romans*. He creates a large number of vocabularies and enriches the French words in a large extent (Lefevere, 2010). His creative literary translation method has provided profound material resources for the writers in the flowing times. A well-known person John Dryden, the greatest translator in the 17th century, changes the style of his translation with the original text. He thinks that translation can be divided into three categories: metaphase, paraphrase and imitation. He proposes to adopt the middle of the road approach in translation that means interpretation should be neither too random nor too rigid. It leaves more room for translators to decide the degree of their subjectivity. Another great translator Alexander Pope is a person who maximizes to utilize his subjectivity in translation. To some extent, his translation is also his products of creation. We do not advocate changing the meaning or style of original works in the process of translating. But it can not be denied that translator's subjectivity is unavoidable and it plays an important role in the process of literary translation. Latter, some scholars began to research translator's subjectivity on theoretical perspective. Among them Even-Zohar developed polysystem theory in the 1970s, which has shifted the focus of translation from one sided text-oriented to many aspects including a study of translator's role in translation studies. It provides theoretical evidence for translators to display their subjectivity.

In non-literary translation period, the priority principle the translator uses is to be faithful to the original work, because majority of translation at that time are out of practical usage, like scientific translation and terminology translation. Therefore very little room is left for translator's subjectivity. However, the comprehension of the original text still relies on the familiarity of the translator with a set of referential systems of translator. Translator's subjectivity still exists in this period though in a limiting range.

The development of translator's subjectivity in China has undergone the same course with the western procedure. It also can be divided into three periods: the phrase of Sutra translation, the phrase of literary translation and the phrase of practical translation. Sutra translation in China has lasted for more than one thousand years. Zhi Qian, a translator of Buddhist Sutra in the Three Kingdoms period, puts forward "translator should follow the meaning of original text without any decoration" (Xu Jun, 2011, p.112). His point of view emphasizes the priority of the original text without considering translator's subjectivity. Later, Kumarajiva adopts literal translation to cater to Chinese readers. His translation not only reserves the original meaning of Sanskrit text but also is accordance with Chinese common expressions. His successfully utilization of translator's subjectivity makes his translation fluent and acceptable. His contribution to Chinese Buddhist is out of evaluation. Some scholars even admit that Chinese Buddhist presents an entirely new appearance by Kumarajiva, whose translation is the doctrine of Buddhist scripture and a leading authority in Sutra translation (Xie Tianzhen, 2011).

Literary translation period starts from the 1970s in China. The introduction of western culture has promoted the climax of Chinese literary translation. A lot of scholars begin to explore the principle of translation, which can reflect the development of translator's subjectivity. Among them, Yan Fu is the most influential translator in the 19th century. He puts forward the three principles in translation, namely, "faithfulness", "expressiveness" and "elegance". His translation of Thomas Henry Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics* greatly satisfied the current circumstance at that time. He abandons the word by word translation method; instead he adopts flexible ways of translation strategies like rewriting, deletion, supplement and adding notes. Most importantly, he changes the name of the book into *"Tian Yan Lun"*. His subjective decision in the process of translating makes his translation a great success in that period. And his three principles still play a significant part in translation practice. There are a lot of scholars like Yan Fu, who promote the development of translator's subjectivity and set a great example for us to present translator's subjectivity when translating.

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In the period of practical translation, with the appearance of machine translation, the existence of translator's subjectivity arose to be questioned. The translator is relegated to the position of technician. So it is an irresistible trend for translators to become more professional. Thus it still requires translator to be a master of both languages and to understand the characteristics and spirits of the original author. All of factors can not be reached by the machine, especially taking the cultural factors into consideration. Like Robinsons says, "translation is an immaterial business" (Robinson, 2006, p. xxii), which indicates the indispensable status of translation no matter how the social develops.

3.2.2 Inevitability of Translator's Subjectivity

The development of a society needs the activity of translation. "Translation is not merely advantageous to all the arts and sciences but absolutely vital to them, both for a whole life and for specific moments of it" (Lefevere, 2010, p. 50).Translation is like a bridge which connects the different world together. In order to meet the need of social development, it is necessary for translator to grasp the mainstream of social ideology, to know the reader's expectations and to develop his own professional skills. All the requirement indicates that translator's subjectivity is inevitable in translation process.

Translation is a negotiation process between two cultures, and translator is the mediator between them. As an independent individual, the translator's own features and personality can not be avoided in the process of translation. There are many factors such as, cultural context, purpose of translation and the target language readers, etc. all of them can influence the processes of translation, which require translator to take them into consideration. It requires the translator to have the ability in transforming the charm of original by adopting correct strategies.

The social ideology will influence translator's judgment, in reverse, translator's judgment and his subjectivity will determine the quality of a translation. Different social development phrase demands different types of translation even in the same

text. It does not mean the previous translation is not good any more. The re-translation is just catering to the current reader's expectation and social development. Under this circumstance it needs the translator to choose his strategies to satisfy readers' horizon of expectation. For instance, the world famous classics: *Gone with the Wind* appeared in the 1940s China was in a state of warfare at that time. People believed the works with fighting spirit could be called classics. Knowing the mainstream of social ideology in that period, the translator, Fu Donghua chooses his strategies and uses them into his translation, making his translation a great success. The translator has influence on the feature of a translation. The process of interpretation includes translator's subjective understanding in reviewing and interpreting the original text.

Among the social factors, cultural context is the most influential factor that affects the process of translation. Cultural context refers to social customs, faith, mode of thinking and cultural standpoint of a person, etc. the practice of translation becomes more flexible when taking cultural factors into consideration. There is a big difference between East and West in various aspects. For instance, in West, people will think "individualism" is a good feature, while it means selfish in China. Most of western people believe in Christian, so they often say "God bless you!" However, some Chinese think it is the " Lord Buddha" or "heaven" (*Tian*) that protect us, so they always say " 佛主保佑" or "老天保佑". When confronting this circumstance, translators should transform the suitable expression for target language readers by using their subjectivity appropriately.

To sum up, from the above discussion, translator's subjectivity is inevitable due to the following reasons:

Firstly, no two languages are exact the same with the other, which increases the difficulty of translation. Richards even claimes that translation is probably the most complex type of event in the history of cosmos (Nida, 2011, p.3). Therefore, it is clear that the task of the translator is to find a solution to the most difficult problems. In his process of solution, his subjectivity is unavoidable. Secondly, as mentioned above, the indeterminacies are the highlight feature of literary works, which requires reader's creative participation in the process of understanding. Hence it encourages the

translator, as the reader first, to utilize his own existing information to fill these indeterminacies. There are many discrepancies between meanings and structures in the works. Thus it needs translator to use their referential systems to work out the blank parts in meanings or structures. Thirdly, translation is not just the transformation of text from one language into another but it is seen as a process of negotiation between text and between cultures. Since culture is a dynamic system, only taking the cultural factors into consideration, the translator's importance to the continuity and diffusion of culture is immeasurable. For this reason, the translator plays an important part in channeling the items between different cultures. In a word, for the dynamic feature of language and culture and for the character of literature works, it is necessary for translator to expose their subjectivity.

3.3.3 Restrictions of Translator's Subjectivity

As mentioned above, translator's subjectivity is obviously unavoidable in the process of translation. Yet, translator can not display his subjectivity without limitation. There are still some restrictions to confine translator's subjectivity in some range. As for reception theory, it does not infinitely exaggerate the role of readers. Otherwise, it just highlights their active participation, not a passive standby. Under the guidance of reception theory, it emphasizes the importance of translator's subjectivity for translator's dual identity. Firstly, as reader's understanding should be coincident with the work he reads, the translator should abide by the work he translates. In other words, the translator must be faithful to the original work. It can be concluded that the translator's first duty is to be faithful. But it can not be the complete copy of the original. Jacques Delille says in preface of his translation *Georgics*, "the extreme faithfulness in translation results in extreme unfaithfulness" (as quoted by Lefevere, 2010, p.38). Even Lefevere regards translation as rewriting, which advocates translator's creativity to some extent. However, it can not be too much creation. Secondly, he should consider the target language reader's horizon of expectations and their reception ability and make relevant adjustment for readers. It is a controversial

topic of translator to exert too much subjectivity on the original works by changing the original meaning the work.

In a word, the exertion of translator's subjectivity is restricted by target language readers and the original work. On the one hand, as the first reader of the source text, it will make a difference in understanding of the source text because of translator's different horizon of expectations. On the other hand, the target language reader is not a passive participant any more. It is their horizon of expectation that influences the way the translator interprets. The translator should take the target language reader's social background, their reception ability and aesthetic sentiment, etc. into consideration. Only by considering the reader's expectation and fusing it with the original work can the translation be successfully accepted in the foreign culture and rebirth to new life.

Chapter 4 Goldblatt's Subjectivity in *The Moon Opera* from Reception Theory

According to reception theory, in the course of comprehension and translation, translator's subjectivity will appear in two stages: being an active participant as a reader and being a decision maker as a translator. The translator's understanding of the source text is mostly based on his previous experience and on his existing information system, which can not be avoided. As the translator of the target text, translator displays his subjectivity in choosing the translation strategies and the way of expressing. In this chapter, a detailed case study of Goldblatt's translation of *The Moon Opera* will be carried out to present his subjectivity from two aspects: Goldblatt's subjectivity as a reader in comprehension and as a translator in expression.

4.1. Goldblatt's Subjectivity as a Reader

Since the reader's understanding of source text is an internalized process, it is difficult to discuss the abstract activity in this paper. But it cannot be denied that the selection of the text will be influenced by reader's subjective decisions to a large extent. According to reception theory, the understanding of a literature work is involving in the readers' self-consciousness all the time. The knowledge and information of a reader can influence their understanding to some extent. Reader will unconsciously fuse their horizon with the work during the process of comprehension. When confronting difficulty in reading, most of the readers will try to solve them by different ways. All of the activities mentioned above reflect reader's subjectivity in the process of reading and comprehension. As a reader of *The Moon Opera*, Goldblatt also shows his subjective decision in selection and comprehension of the original text.

4.1.1 The Choice of the Source Text

It is accepted that reader's personal interests have great effect on selecting of source text. When he tries to read a work, the first thing he needs to do is selection. This part will discuss Goldblatt's subjectivity on his selection and understanding of the original text in *The Moon Opera*. Then it will explore the factors that influence Howard Goldblatt's selection of the original work, *The Moon Opera*. As for Goldblatt's choice of *The Moon Opera*, there are two factors that attract him to choose the work to translate, namely, Goldblatt's preference for Chinese literature and the feature of Peking Opera in *The Moon Opera*.

In terms of the first aspect, Goldblatt shows a strong affection to Chinese literature. According to the above analysis, the reader plays an active role in selecting and understanding of the source text. It is clear that translator shows his subjectivity in the first stage: as a reader. Howard Glodblatt is a reader at first. He shows his strong interest in Chinese literature. He says in an interview: "I always choose those works I love, and I think they must be translated... The only thing I know is I love Chinese culture and Chinese literature" (Ji Jin, 2009, p. 46). It is Goldblatt's special affection to Chinese literature that promotes him to choose the work he likes to translate. In fact, it is true for ordinary reader that most of them begin to read a literary book out of interest. Interest can raise the resonance at its maximum, leading to fusion of horizon between the reader and the author. When reading literary works, readers will inevitably use their subjective interpretation. In the process, the translator as a reader will unconsciously use his or her previous aesthetic experience, belief, value, cultural background and social ideology to understand the original text. Goldblatt once described his translation career as "I translate to stay alive" (Shi Guoqiang, 2014, p.45) He expresses in an article that he loves to read Chinese and loves to write in English, "I love the challenge, the ambiguity, and the uncertainty of the enterprise, the tension between creativity and fidelity, and even the inevitable compromises" (Zhang Yaoping, 2005, p. 76). His strong preference on translation and Chinese literature promotes him to introduce Chinese writers such as Xiao Hong, Jia

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Pingwa and Mo Yan to western readers. As quoted by Liu Zaifu Liu, Goldblatt is the person who knows the soul of China (Liu, 1999, p. 22). Based on this point of view, it is by no means self-evident that interest is the main factor that leads the reader to choose the work to translate. As for selection, Goldblatt holds the same opinion that "selection is critical" (Ji Jin, 2009, p. 49). Goldblatt always chooses to work based on his own interest. As for his translation of *The Moon Opera*, he also shows the same feeling that he likes Bi Feiyu very much and he admits "Bi is a capable writer with characteristic personality" (ibid, p. 46). He states in an interview that "I just translate the works of my favorite writer" (ibid, p, 48).

From the above statement, it can draw the conclusion that it is Goldblatt's preference for Chinese literature and his appreciation of Bi Feiyu that makes him choose the work of *The Moon Opera* to translate.

Apart from his preference for Chinese literature and Bi Fiyu, another prominent character that attracts Goldblatt is the artistic charm of the Peking Opera in the original work. *The Moon Opera* includes a lot of professional words and descriptions with cultural-loaded meaning, such as "搭台(da tai)", "菩萨(pu sa)", "二郎神（erlang shen), etc. According to some well-known performing artists of Peking Opera, increasing number of foreigners begin to show their interests in the Peking Opera nowadays. According to Li Siqing, Liu Wenfeng researches Mei Lanfang's activity which introduces the Peking Opera to American audience and successfully wins reader's favor when Mei visits America (Li Siqing, 2014). Huang Yao (2013) illustrates in the article about the transmission of the Peking Opera that, with the reform and opening-up policy and the trend of globalization, the performing art of Peking Opera gradually goes abroad and wins increasing attention nowadays. Its unique style of performing and special artistic charm not only attracts the favor of Chinese people, but also wins the attention and respect from abroad, which raise their keen interest and their desire to learn it (Huang Yao, 2013). Li Siqing (2014) points out in *Dissemination and Influence of Peking Opera in the World*, that for nearly thirty years, Peking Opera has considerable influence in countries like Asian, North American and European (Li Siqing, 2014). Goldblatt is also an American reader, who

knows well the thirst of public. As mentioned above, westerners show their increasing interest on Chinese Peking Opera. Thus the feature of Peking Opera in the original work, *The Moon Opera* satisfies the target reader's expectation to some extent. Howard Goldblatt takes the English readers' desire into consideration, which is part of the reason that the work accepted well in western counties. Besides his preference to the author and Chinese literature, it is the unique performing art that attracts Goldblatt to translate *The Moon Opera*. There are some interesting descriptions about Peking Opera. For example:

Example 1,

青衣和花旦其实是两个完全不同的行当，只不过现在看戏的人少了，许多人都习惯于把戏台上的年轻女性统统称之为"花旦"……梅老板（梅兰芳）博大精深，他在长期的舞台实践中把青衣与花旦的唱腔与表演程式杂糅在了一起，创建了一种有别于青衣同时又有别于花旦的新行当，也就是"花衫"。（Bi Feiyu, 2000, p. 31）

Example 2,

一部戏总是从唱腔戏开始。说唱腔戏俗称说戏，你得先把预设中的一部戏打烂了，变成无数的局部、细节，把一部戏中戏剧人物的一恨、一怒、一喜、一伤、一哀、一枯、一荣，变成一字、一音、一腔、一调、一擎、一笑、一个回眸、一个亮相、一个水袖、一句话变成一个又一个说、唱、念、打，然后，再把它组装起来，磨合起来，还原成一段念白，一段唱腔。（Bi Feiyu, 2000, 34）

From the above examples, it can be seen that Bi describes vividly the performing art of Peking Opera which provides a profound reference for readers who want to know the unique style of the art form. According to Zhang Chi, an American scholar Sam Sacks remarks on *Open Letters Monthly* that "we know little about Chinese literature; more translations of Bi Feiyu's fiction may help us have a better understanding of the unfamiliar literary world away from us till now" (Zhang Chi, 2011, p. 87). Goldblatt grasps the target readers' horizon of expectation and chooses *The Moon Opera.*

4.1.2 The Process of Comprehension

Different from previous theories, reception theory stresses reader's participation in literary realization. The author is not the only authority to explain the text. Reader plays an important role in this process. The meaning of a literary work is no longer static. It is also defined by the readers. The process of reader's reception of a work is the process of his comprehension. In the process of understanding, reader will connect their subjectivity with the source text unconsciously which is a kind of cognitive activity. "Cognitive", according to *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, means the process of knowing, understanding and learning something (2007, p. 345). According to reception theory, understanding is a historical process. Nobody can read a work by ignoring his previous reading experience. Every work he reads will be influenced by his previous reading experience, educational background and motivation. When a reader is in the process of understanding, he begins to interact the text with his own horizon of expectations, life experience, language competence, intuition and so on, which refers to reader's subjective interference in the process. The product of understanding is meaning. Unlike the writer writing a novel or the translator translating a piece of work, the process of cognition is abstract, which is an intermediate link between understanding and expressing. It involves in not only some linguistic knowledge but also involves all sorts of information resources stored in the brain of the reader. Understanding the original text is the first requirement of a good translation. So in this process, translator's subjectivity is inevitable during his understanding. Translator's comprehension includes the fusion of his expectation with the source text.

In understanding the original text, readers will infuse their own insights and personal experience to some extent. Although Goldblatt does not illustrate clearly his opinion on his understanding of the original text, we can get the clues from his interviews, articles and translation works. When being interviewed, Howard Goldblatt once says that the beautiful swan lake described in "*Wolf Totem*" always reminded him of his childhood. So the process of understanding is unconsciously tinged with

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reader's personal experience. When talked about the *Cultural Revolution Period* in *Hard as Water*, Goldblatt expressees explicitly that "we are the generation who were born in the nineteen sixties and grew up in the nineteen seventies. We can feel the language atmosphere at that time, while the readers in the nineteen eighties or nineteen nineties could not understand the meaning of words" (Fu Xinxin, 2011, p. 4). From this description, it can be concluded that there is resonance between Goldblatt and the writers at his time. Fortunately, Bi Feiyu is one of them. The similar background helps him to fuse his horizon with the original author's expectation in *The Moon Opera*, which helps a lot in his latter translation.

According to Shi Guoqiang, before reading, Howard Goldblatt will do a lot of preparing work in order to have a better understanding of the original text (2014). To fuse the horizon of expectation, Goldblatt will ask the author Bi Feiyu when he has some problems in understanding. When reading the original text of *The Moon Opera*, Goldblatt expresses that the length of the whole novel is smaller than the length of emails between Howard Goldblatt and Bi Feiyu (ibid, 2014). He expresses in an interview that the purpose to read the original is to experience the feeling and charm of the work. Only the reader's horizon of expectation fuses with the literary work can we believe the procedure of reception and understanding are accomplished.

With regard to cultural context, it can not be denying that reader's cultural context has influence on their understanding of the Source Text. "Culture" has a very broad meaning nowadays. It can refer to any cultural patterns that influence people's choice, such as beliefs, values, social norms and social practice. The word "context" as it used by Hall needs to be understood if one is to appreciate the link between context and communication. According to Hall, cultural context can be divided into two groups, one is high context culture, and the other is low context culture. A high context (HC) communication or message is one in which most of the information is already in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicitly transmitted part of the message. High-context cultures tend to be more aware of their surroundings and their environment and do not rely on verbal communication as their main information channel. In low context culture, people change opinions in a clear way. While

translation is not a simple activity of language transfer, it is a cross cultural communication so it always happens in low culture context. Under this circumstance, it requires translator to choose the appropriate expression to achieve the best effect. If fails, it can cause the misunderstanding in translation.

From above analysis, it is clear to be seen that there are some difficulty in understanding of the source text because of different cultural background. For the different cultural identity, Howard Goldblatt has his own opinion on Chinese literature. When talked about the reason that Chinese fiction is terribly received in western world, he expresses clearly that it perhaps owning to a perceived lack of character development. He even criticizes "general Chinese novel is not so interesting" (Shi Jianfeng, 2014, p. 1). Readers either at home or abroad, have their own preference on literary works. It may be attractive to Chinese readers if the beginning of a novel takes large space in describing a place. While for western readers, it may be a gap. They will lose their interests to move on (Shi Jianfeng, 2014). Goldblatt believes that the most prominent feature of Chinese literature is the platitudes of idioms. It often uses several words to express the same meaning, just as some interesting expressiones in *The Moon Opera*, with abundant cultural loaded words. How Goldblatt solves these problems and the strategies he adopted will be discussed in the following parts.

4.2 Goldblatt's Subjectivity as a Translator

Reading is a decoding process of the source language, while translation is an encoding process in target language. Translator is a dynamic and an active participant in the translation process. In the following parts, the thesis will discuss the manifestation of translator's subjectivity in expressing from the perspective of reception theory in *The Moon Opera*.

4.2.1 The Choice of Translation Methods

In this part, the thesis will discuss the strategies Goldblatt uses in *The Moon Opera*. Howard Goldblatt believes translation is a kind of creative rewriting. He

expresses that translator has the freedom to choose the methods he thinks that are the most appropriate to convey massage and the transmission of images. He does not need to follow every word the author writes (Shi Guoqiang, 2014). Translation is not the copy of the original for no absolute correspondence existing in both languages. In most of Goldblatt's translation works, it appears three features, accuracy, readability and acceptability. Firstly, accuracy does not mean following the original order of the sentences by using word for word translation. Instead, it needs creation on the basis of the original text. So in this process, translator's subjectivity works. Secondly, as for readability, Goldblatt is a native American, who knows well about the reading habit of the western readers. So his expression in translation text seems natural and fluent for the target language readers. Goldblatt holds a very strong consciousness of reader's acceptation. Lastly, translation is not just a process that happens in the translator's head. Readers decide to accept or reject translations. He even said in an interview, "I think the most important thing a translator should do is to live up to his reader not the author" (as quoted by Ji Jin, 2009, p. 46). To bring a good text, it requires translator to use appropriate strategies to produce readable and acceptable translation for target language readers.

Translation strategy, according to Venuti Lawrence, involves the basic task of choosing the foreign text to be translated and developing a method to translate it (quoted from Baker, 2004, p.240). Based on this opinion, the thesis will discuss the translation strategies Goldblatt adopts in *The Moon Opera*.

a. Rewriting

Susan expresses that in her *Translation Studies*, it needs to redefine the terminology of faithfulness and equivalence, the importance of highlighting the visibility of the translator and a shift of emphasis that views translation as an act of creative rewriting (Bassnett, 2005, p. 6). Andre Lefevere developes the idea that translation is a form of rewriting, which is produced and read with a set of ideological and political constraints in the target language cultural system. It means any text produced on the basis of another has the intention of adapting to other text with certain ideology or with certain poetics, and usually with both (Wikipedia). Similarly,

Goldblatt holds the view that translation is a special kind of writing (as quoted by Zhang Yaoping, 2005, p. 76). According to reception theory, the meaning in a text is no longer static. It needs translator to fill these indeterminacies, which not means the translator's simple description of the source text. A responsible translator will take the target reader's horizon of expectation into consideration to naturalize the different culture, making it suitable to ways the target readers familiar with. A lot of examples in *The Moon Opera* can testify Goldblatt's rewriting strategy to ease the difficulty of reader's understanding. Here are some examples:

Example 3,

Original text:

炳章激动了，人一激动就顾不上自己的低三下四。炳章连声说："今天撞上菩萨了，撞上菩萨了"。(Bi Feiyu, 2000, 25)

Target text:

On the occasions when he was excited, as he was now, he tended to **blur the line between honesty and flattery**. "Today, I am in the company of a bodhisattva," he said, "a true bodhisattva". (Goldbaltt, 2012, p. 7)

In this translation, Goldblatt translates "低三下四" into "bur the line between honesty and flattery", which is another interpretation for these Chinese four-character phrase. In China, "低三下四" means humbler position of social status or a person with humble manner. Apparently, the social position of Bingzhang can not be lower than anyone. In this novel, the troupe leader, Bingzhang displays a state of arrogant at first. But after the cigarette factory boss promises to offer to pay for their performance, his attitude completely changes. The translator changes the way of expression to make a comparison of Bing Zhang' attitude to his previous one. This adjustment can avoid reader's confusion.

Example 4,

Original text:

十九岁的筱燕秋天生就是个古典怨妇，她的运眼、行腔、吐字、归音和甩动的水袖弥漫着一股先天的悲剧性，对着上下五千年怨天尤人，除了青山隐隐就是此恨悠悠。(Bi Feiyu, 2000, 25)

Target text:

People pegged her as an emerging star, even at nineteen a natural for the role of a heartbroken woman. Everything about her--her eyes, her interpretation, her enunciation, and the way she tossed the water sleeves of her costume--was imbued with an inbred aura of tragedy: **sad, melancholy and fanciful.** (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 7)

From the above example, it is clear that the translator changes a long sentence into three words. Actually, the original sentence originates from a poem written by Jia Baoyu, the protagonist of *Dream of Red Mansions*. It expresses that the feeling of melancholy can not be restrained just as the green hills can not be covered and the rolling water can not be cut off. With the abundant cultural connotation, the target readers may feel confused and interrupted their reading procedure if the translator adopts literal translation method or adds some notes between the text. Goldblatt objects to translate the sentence into a poetry form. Instead he chooses three words, which directly express the meaning of the long sentence and lower the burden of reader's understanding.

Example 5,

Original text:

这段二黄慢板转原板转流水转高腔有极为复杂的表现难度，音域又那么宽，一个离开戏台二十年的演员能把它一口气完成下来，答案只有一个，她一直没有丢。(Bi Feiyu, 2000, 27).

Target text:

The Erhuang piece she'd just sung had gone from slow and meandering to a lyrical rhythm, and then to a strong beat, leading to a crescendo, a complex and demanding melody that required a broad vocal range. She had been away from stage for twenty years, yet sang it beautifully, without missing a note; clearly, **she had never stopped practicing.** (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 18)

This sentence describes the professional performance of Peking Opera. People will feel puzzled when first seeing it. In the translation version, the translator expresses clearly the reason that she acts so well, because she has "**never stopped practicing**". This rewriting makes the special description accessible to common readers. Continuous practice gives readers a reasonable explanation for Xiao Yanqiu's outstanding performance. Taking the target readers into consideration, Goldblatt

adopts the rewriting strategy to help the target readers have a better understanding of the text. The cultural loaded words or phrases can be a great barrier to them if the translator do not change the way of expression. Therefore, the strategies Goldblatt adopts can be an important factor that makes the translation accepted well in western world.

b. Omission

Similar with rewriting, omission is another strategy Goldblatt adopts to narrow the distance between original and target readers. He omits some information which he thinks will impair the fluency of the story in order to cater to the taste of the potential target language readers. Similar to the rewriting strategy, Goldblatt deletes some sentences that can be difficult for the target readers to understand. Here are some examples.

Example 6,

Original text:

老板向乔炳章送出他的大下巴，莫名其妙的颁布了他的命令，说：“让她唱”。（Bi Feiyu, 2000, 24）

Target text:

Thrusting his prominent chine in Bingzhang's direction, he said, "Let her sing." （Goldblatt, 2012, p. 6）

For western readers, only the authority and the high ranks can give an order. If the translator translates the sentence out, it seems as if Bingzhang has a lower social position than the boss. In order to avoid the confusion, the deletion appears.

Example 7

Original text:

老板没有起立，炳章却弓着腰站起来了。他用酒杯的沿口往老板酒杯的腰口部撞了一下，仰起了脖子。酒到杯干。（Bi Feiyu, 2000, p. 25）

Target text:

The man remained seated, while Qiao Bingzhang stood, bent slight at the waist. They clinked glasses, then Bingzhang tipped his head back and emptied the contents of his glass. (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 6）

In traditional Chinese culture, the one will lower his cup than the other he toasts to if he wants to show his respect to him or her. We call it "敬酒" in Chinese, which indicates the respect to that person. It is tedious to explain the cultural difference in the translation text for fear that it will interrupt reader's procedure of reading. To avoid the interruption, the translator chooses the deletion method. This omission makes the translation more readable and coherent for western readers.

Example 8,

Original text:

他用苍松翠柏般的遒劲魏体改换了叶剑英元帅的伟大诗篇……（Bi Feiyu, 2000, 25）

Target version:

In the style of a great poem by Marshal Ye Jianying, he wrote... (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 9)

Foreigners are not familiar with the style of calligraphy of Chinese characters, so the deletion of the phrase will not cause any lose in meaning. Instead, the deletion of it can make the sentence smoothly and coherently.

c. Annotation

Annotation is another important method in Goldblatt's translation process. For languages are essentially different, it needs to explain when confronting the cultural loaded words or expressions when necessary. Gadamer believes translation is by all means a process of explanation. Peter Newmark even thinks explanation is the translation (Nida, 2001). Judging from the lexical level, explanation means explanatory statement made by the translator in his translating process. As for *The Moon Opera*, a prominent feature of it is the abundant cultural images. Based on his understanding of Chinese culture, the translator makes subjective decision to add some explanation in the translation, for example:

Example 9,

Original text:

说起来十五岁那年筱燕秋还在《红灯记》中客串过李铁梅的，她高举着红灯站在李奶奶身边，没有一点铮铮铁骨，没有一点"打不尽财狼绝不下战场"的霹雳杀气，反倒秋风秋雨愁煞人了。（Bi Feiyu, 2000, 25）

Target text:

At the age of fifteen she had appeared on the stage as Li Tiemei in the **revolutionary model opera** *The Red Lantern.* Holding her lantern high as she stood beside Granny Li, she had evoked no sense of incorruptibility...Instead, like autumn winds and rain; she'd left her audience with feeling of intense of melancholy. (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 7)

For Chinese readers, the opera of *The Red Lantern* is not strange to us. We know it tells a story of brave heroine model in revolution times. But for western readers, they know little about Chinese culture, even a certain portion of Peking Opera. So the translator adds the words before the name of the opera not only to give them more information about the opera but also to lead them compare the role Xiao Yanqiu plays and the nature of herself displays, which is a total contradiction..

Example 10,

Original text:

将军书法家把筱燕秋叫到了家中，他在抚今追昔之后亲自将一条横幅送到了筱燕秋手上。（Bi Feiyu, 2000, 25）

Target text:

He then invited her to his home and, after reminiscing about the good old days, presented her with the framed poem in his own calligraphy, **which she could hang on the wall.** (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 9)

Example 11,

Original text:

谁能想到《奔月》会遇上菩萨呢。(Bi Feiyu, 2000, 27).

Target text:

Who would have predicted that The Moon Opera would find **a patron**, its own Bodhisattva. (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 15)

In example 10, the word "横幅" is explanted by the attributive clause "**which she could hang on the wall**". Through this explanation, the target language readers may have a better understanding what the "横幅" is. "菩萨" an image in Buddhism, which means the good fortune a person confronts, appears several times in the original text. Here the author indicates the boss who is willing to sponsor the troupe's performance. By adding to the meaning of "patron", readers in the target language would not feel

confused.

Example 12,

Original text:

革命不是请客吃饭，对的。炳章不是革命，就想办事，办事还真的是请客吃饭。（Bi Feiyu, 2000, 30)

English Text:

Didn't Chairman Mao say that revolution is not a dinner party? True enough... (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 30)

Example 13

Original text:

春来最初学的并不是青衣，而是花旦……(Bi Feiyu, 2000, 32)

Target text:

When she started out, Chunlai had studied for the *Huadan* role -- bold, seductive women-- not *Qingyi* -- chaste women and faithful wives. (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 38)

In example 12, Goldblatt adds the origins of the sentence, which makes it more convincing. In example 13, *Qingyi* and *Huadan* are two of main characters in the opera with distinctively features. In order to make the target language readers distinguish the two roles clearly, Goldblatt adds the detail explanation after each item. This kind of explanation can provide clear information and avoid culture misunderstanding.

Example 14,

Original text:

春来的变声期也是格外地顺利，居然没怎么在意说过去就过去了，许多演员过不了变声期这么一个鬼门关，昨晚洗澡的时候还好好的，一觉醒来，好嗓子已经被鬼偷走了。(Bi Feiyu, 2000, 33).

Target text:

For Chunlai, the adolescent change of voice occurred so smoothly that on one even noticed. For some performers, this change is the **gate of hell, a career ending barrier.** They are in perfect singing form at their evening bath, only to discover upon awakening the next morning that demons have stolen their voices. (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 44)

"鬼门关" in Chinese culture means the gate under the hell, which indicates a very dangerous border if you get through. The target readers may feel confused about the relation between the "gate of hell" and the voice. By adding the meaning of "a career ending barrier" it makes the meaning of sentence connected under the context. Because the change of voice is very important to each performer, so the author of the original compares the process of voice change to the "gate of hell". If you get through it, a bright future will be waiting for you. If you fail, your career will be finished.

d. Literal Translation

The above translation methods are, in Schleiermacher's words, "leaving the reader in peace and moving the author towards him" (Lefervere, 2010, p. 5). Besides the above translation methods, Goldblatt uses another way to represent the unique linguistic feature of the original: that is literal translation. As Peter Newmark states literary translation is correct and must not be avoided, if it secures referential and pragmatic equivalence to the original (Newmark, 2001, p. 69). It has been discussed in the previous parts that Bi Feiyu's style of narration is extraordinary. If the order of the original sentence changes, the aesthetic feeling of the original text may alter as well. In *The Moon Opera*, Goldblatt follows the original sentence order representing the narrative style and humorous atmosphere vividly. Here are some examples:

Example 15,

Original text:

他们聊起了国际态势、WTO......改革与开放.....就好像这些问题一直缠绕在他们心坎上，是他们的衣食住行，油盐酱醋；就好像他们为这些问题曾经伤神再三，就是百思不得其解。现在好了，水落石出、大路通天了。答案终于有了，豁然开朗，找到出路了。(Bi Feiyu, 2000, 31).

Target text:

...as if these were things that had been on their minds all long, an important part of their daily life, like cooking oil, salt, soy sauce, and vinegar, and as if they had been racking their brains over these very things, but find no solutions. And now, at last, the water had receded and the riverbed stones were exposed, all highways led to heaven, answers had been found and solutions formed. (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 34)

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Example 16,

Original text:

花旦唱起来利索、爽朗，接近于捏着嗓子的流行歌曲，还歪着脑袋一蹦三跳，又活泼，又可爱，像一只叽叽喳喳的小麻雀。青衣则不同，就那么一个字，她也要咿咿呀呀的，一步三晃的，一手捂着小肚子，一手比划着，在那儿晃悠着，跷着个小指头，慢慢地哼，等你上完了厕所，把该尿的尿了，该拉的拉了，前前后后都擦完了，一回头，那个字还没唱完呢。(Bi Feiyu, 2000, 32)

Target text:

A Huadan sings in a nimble, bright, clear manner, sounding a bit like a pop singer, with a pinched falsetto. Lovely and fetching, she cocks her head as she leaps around like a chirpy sparrow. A Qingyi, on the other hand, takes forever to sing a single word, squeaking and creaking, swaying three times with each step, with one hand over her midsection and the other gesturing with a curved pinkie as she hums and croons; you could get up, go to the bathroom, finish your business, wipe yourself front and back, and return to your seat, only to find that she is still on the same word. (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 39-40)

Example 17,

Original version:

身上的肉少了，然而皮肤却意外的多了出来，多余的皮肤挂在筱燕秋身上，宛如捡来的钱包，浑身上下找不到存放的地方。多出来的皮肤使筱燕秋对自己产生了这样一种错觉：整个人都是形式大于内容的。(Bi Feiyu, 2000, 34)

Target text:

She lost the fat, but gained skin, which, like a found purse, **hung** from her body limply. This extra skin gave the illusion that she was **more form than content**. (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 48)

In example 15, the original version is filled with irony. The tone in the translation version of Goldblatt is highly coincident with its original version without changing original language rules which realizes the original contextual effects. Similarly, in example 16 and example 17 the humorous description on *Qingyi* is vividly reproduced both in lexical and in syntax level in translation.

4.2.2 The Process of Expressing

Apart from the reader of the source text, the translator is also the interpreter of the target text. During the process of his translation, his subjectivity will affect his way of expression. Besides reader's influence, another factor that will influence translator's decision is the text itself. The prominent feature of literary works is the indeterminacies or blanks the content contains, which stimulates the translator to display their subjectivity to concretize the text. Based on the translator's language competence, aesthetic experience, the expression will be greatly influenced by translator's subjective perception as well as the target reader's horizon of expectation. The process of expressing consists of two stages: the first stage is translator's filling the indeterminacies in the source text; the second stage is translator's reconstruction of horizon of expectation in the target text.

In terms of the first stage, according to reception theory, literary works are filled with much indeterminacy, which requires the readers to concretize. As the translator of the target text, during the stage of expressing, the translator will inevitably interpret the original with his own horizon of expectation. Besides his own factors, translator should take the target language reader into consideration, such as their way of expression, acceptance capability, and aesthetic tendency, etc. The translator should adjust his horizon of expectation to adapt the horizon of the original text. The process of adjudgment requires translator to fill these blanks and reconstructs the horizon to satisfy target reader's horizons. Howard Goldblatt concretizes some blurry meaning in *The Moon Opera*, which simplifies the understanding of the target text. Several examples are listed below to present how the translator fills these blanks in the process of expressing.

Example 18,

Original text:

幸福宁静的夜晚都是宁静似水的，但又是轰轰烈烈的。(Bi Feiyu, 2000, 29).

Target text:

In this way a happy night is as quite as water yet **lights up like fireworks**. (Goldblatt, 2012,

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p. 24)

In the original text, the author uses "轰轰烈烈的" to describe the uncommon night for the thing happening in the following part, which satisfies Miangua's expectation that he has hopped for a long time. As if it needs to light up some fireworks to celebrate it. **"Lights up like fireworks"** not only translates the connotation meaning the sentence contains, but also refers to the sound that the fireworks make out. By adding the meaning, the connotation of the sentence becomes clear.

Example 19,

Original text:

筱燕秋望着炳章，把两只胳膊放到桌面上来，抱成了一个半圆，却又看不出任何风吹草动。(Bi Feiyu, 2000, 27)

Target text:

Yanqiu gazed at him and rested her arms on the table to form a half-circle, **giving no hint of what was going through her mind at that moment.** (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 18)

The translator understands "风吹草动" as the activity that happens in the inner heart of Xiao Yanqiu, which concretizes the meaning of the original.

Example 20,

Original text:

筱燕秋承受不了这样的压抑，泪汪汪地四处找人......检查书的内容最终肯定了检查书的态度。(Bi Feiyu, 2000, 28)

Target text:

Unable to bear the stifling atmosphere, Yanqiu looked around with tear-filled eyes **for someone to come to her aid**...the contents of the self-criticism confirmed the offender's **positive attitude.** (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 21)

In this example, the original text does not state clearly why she finds people. While in the translation version, Goldblatt adds the meaning of help, which makes the contextual meaning represent clearly. In the latter part of this sentence, there is a word "态度", which is specified as "positive attitude" by the translator. In Chinese culture, only the upright attitude and positive attitude deserve other's respect and forgiving.

Goldblatt knows it well, so he adds the "positive" before the original meaning proving other people's point of view towards this event.

The examples listed above greatly prove translator's subjective decision by explaining the original description clearly based on his own understanding. It is clear that the original text will not state everything clearly, instead it is the translator that sweeps out the unclear parts for target language readers.

With regard to the second stage, translator's reconstruction of horizon in the target text, reconstruction of horizon is a process in which the translator displays his subjectivity. In order to cater to target language reader's horizons, some of the expressions in the original text are transformed to the familiar expressions the western readers used to in *The Moon Opera*. Here are some examples.

Example 21,

Original text:

《奔月》当即下马……炳章就等着《奔月》上马，越快越好。(Bi Feiyu, 2000, 25/ 30)

Target text:

The Moon Opera **closed before it had opened**...Bingzhang couldn't wait for The Moon Opera **to be staged**, the sooner the better. (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 7/32)

Example 22,

Original text:

炳章闭上眼睛，把右手插进裤子口袋，翘起了四只手指头，慢慢地敲起来，一个板，三个眼，再一个板，再三个眼。(Bi Feiyu, 2000, 27)

Target text:

With his eyes shut, the thrust his right hand into his pants pocket and curled his fingers to drum the beat: **hard soft-soft-soft, hard soft-soft-soft.** (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 18)

Example 23,

Original text:

他一杯又一杯，来着不拒，酒到杯干，差不多已经是一斤五粮液下了肚子。(Bi Feiyu, 2000, 31).

Target text:

Not once since the banquet began had he stopped drinking; he accepted every toast, and by

then had probably downed **a quart of hard liquor.** (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 35)

Example 24,

Original text:

三十岁生日那天筱燕秋头一回喝了酒，不到二两。筱燕秋醉的不成样子。(Bi Feiyu, 2000, 33)

Target text:

On her thirtieth birthday, she had her first taste of liquor. **It was only a small cup,** but enough for her to get truly drunk. (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 41)

Example 25,

Original text:

筱燕秋在戏校待了二十年了，教了那么多学生，细细排下来，却没有一个能唱出来的。大红大紫就不说了，显一下山露一下水都没有。(Bi Feiyu, 2000, 32).

Target version:

In her twenty years at the academy Xiao Yanqiu had taught legions of students, but there hadn't been **a true singer** among them, not one who might **carry on the tradition,** let alone **become famous.** (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 41)

In example 21 and example 22, the words in original text are the professional vocabulary in opera. Through combining the reader's horizon, Goldblatt reconstructs the horizon of the original text and translates the professional terms into general expressions of a show, which reduces the difficulty in understanding. In example 23 and example 24, the vocabulary in original text relates to wine. The former refers to ordinary hard liquor named *Wu Liangye*. While in translation version, Goldblatt neglects the name of it. In translation of quantifiers, he chooses western way of expression to avoid the difficulty in understanding. Finally in example 25, "大红大紫"means an extremely famous state of stars in Chinese. In translation version, the translator directly translates it into famous and "显一下山露一下水" into "carry on the tradition", which simplifies the contextual meaning. In a word, by his reconstruction of the original expectation, Goldblatt successfully conveys the information and the meaning of the original.

From above discussing, it is apparent that the translation keeps the original

meaning and feature through Goldblatt's reconstruction. During the process of translation, the translator always bears the target reader in mind. When confronting the cultural barriers, the translator adjusts the expression in his translation to help the readers experience the glamour and beauty of the original.

4.3 Significance of Translator's Subjectivity in *The Moon Opera*

Translators play a vital role in transmitting of a culture. They connect the two distant cultures together like a bridge. In the process of cultural transmission, it can be called that the information the target readers receive is the information processed by the translator. Translator's professional accomplishment decides the quality of a translation to a large extent. In return, the translator's subjectivity will be influenced by the target readers. According to reception theory, reader is the final judge that makes the text meaning complete. It is the reader's horizon of expectation that proves the necessary of a translator's subjectivity.

4.3.1 Reception of *The Moon Opera*

Since the publication of *The Moon Opera*, it has received high approval among western media. A comment on *Magill's Book Review* shows that *The Moon Opera* will make the readers excited for its moving plots (Patricia, 2009). *Publishers Weekly* states that the simple narration and ethics in this novel endow it a charm of allegory. Peking Opera is unfamiliar and strange to western readers, while a large amount of remarks affirm the positive meaning of opera factors in this novel. Kate makes a comment on *Times* that this pocket-size story focuses on traditional Chinese drama, which is far away from them and makes them indulge in it (Kate Saunders, 2007). *Booklist* admits that the theme of this novel is limited, but there is "a ring lingering on reader's minds" (Brad Hooper, 2008). According to Sun and Zheng, Sam Sacks remarks on *Open Letters Monthly* that it is a book with no complicated plots. It combines the ancient, mysterious art of Peking Opera with the dirty and cruel reality of sponsorship. She expresses that they know little about Chinese literature, which

will be presented transparently before their westerners one day. The translations of Bi Feiyu's fiction may help them have a better understanding of the unfamiliar literary world (Sun Huijun & Zheng Qingzhu, 2011). On the back cover of the English version, scholars praise that *The Moon Opera* is a valuable literary work. They hope that more works of Bi Feiyu could be translated later (as quoted by Sun & Zheng, 2011). Another scholar makes comments on *Booklist* that "it uses the fascinating way to present Chinese drama and the ethics of Chinese drama to us. With the curtain coming down, it deserves the thunderous applause from all the audience" (ibid, p.84). From the above remarks, it can be seen that even the professional opera description may cause difficulty in understanding. Human's desire described in this novel surpasses cultural barriers and arouses emotional resonance among readers.

The success of *The Moon Opera* in western world attributes a lot to the good translation to some extent. It is the translator that puts the target language readers in his mind and produces readable and coherent version. The reader plays an important role in Goldblatt's translation. He expresses it is the reader not the author he translates to (Shi Guoqiang, 2014). In the whole process of his translating, he largely considerate the reception ability, reception aesthetics and reading habit of target readers. If there are some descriptions with abundant cultural loaded meaning, Goldblatt will adopt appropriate strategies to adjust it for reader's granted. Reader's reception of a text is largely influenced by translator's interpretation. To keep the original charm of *The Moon Opera* for English readers, Goldblatt decides to translate them by transliteration such as *huandan, qingyi, erlang shen,*etc.

A successful translator should not only convey the original meaning but should make reasonable consideration for avoiding obscure translation and losing readability. Therefore, combing with the reception theory, the thesis finds that the reader decides to accept or reject the literary text. Thus it is an everlasting factor that the translator should consider in the translation practice. The success of Goldblatt's *The Moon Opera* presents us a good example for this perspective.

4.3.2 Inspiration for Translation Practice

As mentioned above, the translation of *The Moon Opera* achieves a great success in western world, which transmits our special art of Peking Opera. It is a typical example that helps Chinese culture go abroad. As the important medium between two cultures, it requires translator to be a master of both languages and to understand the characteristics and spirits of two cultures. As a profound sinologist, Golbalatt has his distinct translation methods in translating. His translation practice is deeply affected by his ideology, his previous reading experience and his motivation. As an excellent translator, Goldblatt attaches great importance to the target language readers. He thinks it is the responsibility of translator to introduce readable and meaningful text to target language readers (Lian Yajie, 2013). He also holds the point of view that a translator should be both a faithful translator and a creative writer (Zhang Yaoping, 2005). From the translation of *The Moon Opera*, some rules of Goldblatt should be paid attention to for further translation practice.

Firstly, Goldblatt lays much emphasis on the readability and coherence of a translation. Goldblatt always puts the readers in his mind. He thinks that a translator should be responsible for his reader rather than the author (Ji Jin, 2006). At the time he translates *Cellophane*, in order to satisfy reader's tastes, he revises the chronological order under the agreement of the original author (Xu Diye, 2013). In translation process of *The Moon Opera*, Goldblatt always puts the target readers in his mind. He often considers their acceptance ability, their reading habits and aesthetic tendency, etc. Therefore, in his translation process, he adopts some translation strategies like omission, rewriting and explanation to cater to reader's reading habits. Hence he adopts the concise expressions in translation, which is familiar to the target language readers. Thus his translation has a strong readability and a fluent language expression, which wins a broad praise among western readers.

Example 26,

Original text:

吃错药是嫦娥的命运，女人的命运，人的命运。人只能如此，命中八尺，你难求一丈。

（Bi Feiyu, 2000, p. 43）

Target text:

Ingesting the wrong elixir is Chang'e 's fate, it is a woman's fate, and it is humanity's fate. Humans are what they are. **If they are fated to have only this much, they must not quest for more.** (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 80)

The example presents translator's reconstruction of horizon. In our Chinese culture, "八尺" and "一丈" refer to units of measurement. All of them have accurate amount. While in translation, Goldblatt adopts vague methods to explain these quantifiers, which decreases the difficulty of understanding and increases its readability for readers.

Example 27,

Orginal text:

她不知道新郎是谁，尚未拉开的大幕是她头上的红盖头……红盖头是一个双重的迷，别人既是你的迷，你同样有构成了别人的迷。（Bi Feiyu, 2000, p. 43）

Target text:

Who the groom was she did not know, but the red curtain that had yet to be raised would be her head cover, her veil… **The audience on the other side of that veil** would be a mystery to her and she would be a mystery to them. (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 82)

In example 27, the original versions are filled with cultural images. "红盖头" in Chinese culture refers to the veil put on the bride's head during the wedding ceremony. In the original version, it is the implication of the curtain on the stage. The original version may like a "mystery" for target language readers if translated word by word. Connecting with the context, Goldblatt defines "somebody" as "the audience" which simplifies the sentence and expresses the meaning clearly. In short, for reader's reception ability and reception aesthetics, Goldblatt chooses the proper translation methods thus making the translation version different from other ones.

Secondly, Goldblatt emphasizes cultural transmission in dealing with cultural images. Goldblatt thinks translation is not a simple language transfer. It is a cross-cultural communication (Lian Yajian, 2013). In fact, it is a dialogue between two cultures. As mentioned in literature review part, increasing number of foreigners

become interested in Peking Opera with the development of society. *The Moon Opera* tells a story happens in opera troupe. Therefore, a lot of professional expressions about opera will be displayed in this book. Goldblatt's translation keeps most of the Opera items, which vividly provides western readers the special form of arts. In return it also helps our precious Chinese culture flourish abroad. In terms of cultural transmission, this version plays a positive function in introducing the form of opera to other countries. Here are some examples displaying the features of Peking Opera:

Example 28,

Mei(Mei Lanfang) had a vast and profound knowledge of Peking Opera, and over the course of his lengthy career blended the singing styles and acting formulae of two female roles to create a new role, called *Huashan*. (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 38-39)

Example 29,

Qingyi was still *Qingyi*; *Huashan* remained *Huashan*. The differences in singing style, oral narration, costume, stage movements, and performance formulae were legion, like flowers on separate branches, each with its distinct bloom, but which never come together. (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 39)

In the translation of *The Moon Opera*, Goldblatt translates a lot of professional terms of Peking Opera by transliteration or adding notes, which keeps the exotic flavor of the mysterious art form.

Apart from the above rules, fidelity is another important rule that Goldblatt abides by. Fidelity or faithfulness means the translated text is highly coincident with the source text in a large extent. It is a fundamental and widely used criterion to measure a translation. This kind of faithfulness does not mean the absolute copy of original. As for Goldblatt, it is coordination between fidelity and creativity (Lian Yajian, 2013). Similarly, creativity does not refer to abandon the original work and misrepresent the meaning of original. Instead, it is a kind of creative method to reproduce the charm and beauty of original. He once expressed in an interview, fidelity means reproducing the original meaning, not the original word in a simple level (Ji Jin, 2009). Meaning is an importance part that Goldblatt concerns. The language feature in the original is also represented in the translation. As many

translation versions of Goldblatt, *The Moon Opera* is faithful to the original in a large extent. To keep the original charm, Goldblatt even adopts the same figures of speech of original, such as irony, simile and parallel structure. And some adjustment can be traced in the translation version. Compared with the original, it is easy to find out that Bi Feiyu's unique style of narration is represented in English. The glamour and beauty of the original are also reproduced in English version. Here are some examples:

Example 30,

Original text:

青衣是女人中的女人，是女人的极致境界。青衣还是女人的试金石，是女人，即使你站在戏台上，在唱，在运眼，在运手，所谓的"表演"、"做戏"也不过是日常生活的基本动态。（Bi Feiyu, 2000, p.33）

Target text:

Qingyi is a woman among woman, the ultimate, and a touchstone for all others. She appears on the stage, where she sing, signals with her eyes, and gestures with her hands—all components of so-called "performing" or "acting", yet never more than simple movements from daily life. (Goldblatt, 2012, p.43)

Example 31,

Original text:

但春来从来都不是女孩子，她天生就是一个女人，一个风姿绰约的女人，一个风情万种的女人，一个风月无边的女人，一个你看她一眼就百结愁肠的女人。（Bi Feiyu, 2000, p.35）.

Target text:

But she had never been a girl. In a way she had been born a woman, an enchanting woman, a bewitch woman, a woman who could plunge you into bottomless sorrow with a single look. (Goldblatt, 2012, p.44)

Example 32,

Original text:

减肥真的像一场病。病去如抽丝，病来如山倒。（Bi Feiyu, 2000, p.39）

Target text:

Dieting is a lot like illness. Getting well can be like extracting thread from a silkworm cocoon, whereas falling ill is like the topping of a mountain. (Goldblatt, 2012, p. 64)

In example 30 and example 31, it is clear that the translation follows the original sentence order without losing any meaning. In example 32, the author Bi Feiyu uses simile to describe dieting. Similarly, Goladblatt adopts the same figure of speech and reproduces the scene vividly.

From the above analysis, it is the Goldblatt's subjective concern for readers that helps the translation accepted well in foreign countries. By considering target language reader's reception ability, their horizon of expectation, Goldblatt brings out the beautiful translation version, presenting a more readable and coherent text for target language readers. By coordinating between the two cultures, Goldblatt tries his best to find a solution to represent the distinct feature of the original. For future translation practice, it provides a typical reference in introducing Chinese culture to go abroad, especially in guidance of translation with cultural loaded features.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

Previous studies mainly focus on the role of writer or the product of translators. Little attention has been paid to the interaction between reader and the text. Different from them, reception theory emphasizes the active role of reader's participation in the process of reading. As a literary theory, it also provides a different perspective for translation studies and broadens the direction of translation research, because the translator must read the work first before he starts to translate. Therefore, it provides a reasonable theoretical basis for translators to utilize their subjectivity in reading and translating. Being neglected by scholars for so long, translator deserves a situation to justify his subjectivity, which is unavoidable and necessary.

Through a tentative case study on the English version of *The Moon Opera* by Howard Goldblatt, this thesis explores the translator's subjectivity under the guidance of reception theory from two aspects: the translator as the reader of the original and the translator as the interpreter of the target text.

After the analysis of Goldblatt's translation of *The Moon Opera*, the thesis concludes some major findings. Firstly, as the reader of the original, translator's personal factors work all the time from selection to understanding. Selection is influenced by translator's preference and interest in a large extent. Goldblatt shows great interest in Chinese literature and Bi Feiyu. It is this preference that encourages Goldbaltt to choose *The Moon Opera* and accomplish this translation. In the process of reading, the translator will fuse the horizon of expectation with the text to completely understand it. His previous knowledge about Chinese literature helps him a lot in the process of understanding. The process of translator's understanding is an important cognitive recognition on the source text. Because it not only reflect translator's individual knowledge, but it must be attached on the original writers' thoughts when he reads the work, which lays a good foundation for his latter

translation.

Secondly, as a translator, Goldblatt adopts a several methods to adjust and satisfy reader's horizon of expectation. From the perspective of reception theory, the translator will adopt the appropriate translation strategies to fully transmit the beauty and charm of the original for target readers. In *The Moon Opera*, Goldblatt adopts several methods to convey the beauty of original, such as rewriting, omission, explanation and literal translation. He also changes the way of expression to obtain a natural way for foreign readers to narrow the distance between the text and target readers. If necessary, he concretizes the indeterminacies in the original text to make the translation clear and readable.

Through above analysis, it is obvious that translator's subjectivity appears all the process of translation. The translator always tries to seek a proper way to transfer the essence of the original work. It is by all means the responsibility of a translator to produce readable and meaningful text to target readers. And the successful translation of *The Moon Opera* has an instructive meaning in guiding the further translation practice.

The thesis focuses on the process of translator's understanding of source text and the process of interpreting of target text influenced by reception theory. For the lack of enough information, many foreign resources are unreached and the research on this translation version is limited. For further studies, the thesis advocates more researches should be made on the cognitive process of translator. Also it hopes the study will provide some useful points to future studies on *The Moon Opera*.

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