

Translation of Cultural Elements in *Big Breasts and Wide Hips*: A Postcolonial Perspective

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Abstract: Translation is a crucial vehicle for Chinese literature to go global, and Goldblatt's translation of *Big Breasts and Wide Hips* is a successful example of Chinese literature translation. Based on the post-colonial translation theory, this study focuses on the English translation of *Big Breasts and Wide Hips* by Goldblatt to explore whether it achieves cultural equality and accurate exchange in translating Chinese cultural elements. The research reveals that while the translator endeavors to preserve the original's cultural essence and present an objective China, the influence of dominant cultures cannot be fully eschewed. To facilitate acceptance and readability, some uniquely Chinese elements are occasionally omitted or rewritten, slightly diminishing the text's cultural depth. This study will not only enrich the application of postcolonial translation theory in the translation of specific literary works but also provide a useful reference for the translation practice of Chinese literature under the strategy of going global.

Keywords: Post-colonial Translation, Cultural Equality, Chinese Literature Translation, *Big Breasts and Wide Hips*, Howard Goldblatt.

1. Introduction

1.1. Statement of the Paper's Background, Purpose, and Significance

As a vital means for cultural dissemination, literature plays a pivotal role in shaping China's image and influence on the international stage. However, within globalization, literary translation entails more than mere linguistic conversion; it involves an exchange of cultures. Promoting cultural soft power necessitates not only the widespread spread of Chinese literary works but also the effective conveyance of a diversified, authentic, and comprehensive image of China through translation. A well-executed translation enables foreign readers to access an accurate and vivid portrayal of China, thereby dispelling stereotypes and fostering a positive international perception. Nevertheless, Western culture continues to dominate globally, resulting in unequal cultural negotiations during translation processes. Weaker cultures are compelled to conceal their distinctive characteristics and conform to the demands imposed by stronger cultures to gain acceptance. Such exchanges neither effectively promote mutual understanding among diverse cultures nor enhance the status quo for weaker ones; instead, they perpetuate strong cultural hegemony over time. Despite significant advancements in China's international standing, Chinese culture remains comparatively weaker when compared with Western culture. Although Chinese literary works have gradually gained recognition on the global stage in recent years, we must not overlook the challenges encountered during their translation process. Therefore, attention should be paid to how Chinese culture is translated.

This study aims to conduct an in-depth analysis of Goldblatt's English translation of *Big Breasts and Wide Hips* from the perspective of post-colonial translation theory, to determine whether it achieves cultural equality and accurate communication in the translation of Chinese cultural elements. Based on postcolonial translation theories, the effectiveness

and fairness of these translation choices in preserving the cultural identity of the original text are evaluated. By identifying and analyzing strategies in translation, this study will help translators deal with cultural elements more consciously, improve the quality of translation, and make it a true cultural transmission rather than a simple language conversion. The findings of this study will provide new empirical case studies for postcolonial translation theory, enrich the theory itself, and explore its applicability in new cultural and linguistic contexts. The results of the study will provide an important reference for translation practitioners, especially when dealing with texts with strong cultural overtones, to help them find a balance between fidelity to the original text and adaptation to the target culture.

1.2. Introduction to Post-colonial Translation Theory

Post-colonialism originated after the end of colonialism, and as a theoretical critical discourse, it first included the cultural colonization of the East by the West in its research scope. It mainly studies the power relationship of cultural discourse between the host country and the colony, the difference in cultural status, and power struggles between the colonial powers and colonies after the end of the colonial era. The three main representatives of post-colonialism are Edward W. Said, Gayatri C. Spivak, and Homi K. Bhabha. Said's *Orientalism* sharply criticized the "discourse" of "Orientalism" under the operation of Western power, which is widely recognized as a sign of the maturity of postcolonial theory.

Post-colonial translation theory is developed under the theoretical framework of post-colonial criticism, which deeply reveals the cultural power struggle and inequality behind translation. This theory emerged in the late 1980s and its core lies in examining translation behavior through the lens of post-colonialism, particularly focusing on power relations in translation practice in different historical, cultural, and linguistic contexts.

Traditional translation studies tend to assume that there is a theoretical equivalence between different language systems and that translation is a means of free exchange of information between two equal cultures. As Steiner said, “The translator-interpreter creates a condition of significant exchange. The arrows of meaning, of cultural, psychological benefaction, move both ways. There is, ideally, exchange without loss”[1]. However, post-colonial translation theory breaks this idealized assumption, and Niranjana believes that there is an unequal relationship between nationalities and languages, and translation is exactly involved in the construction of this relationship [2]. Postcolonial translation studies point out that in reality, due to political and economic inequality, there is a significant power gap between dominant cultures (such as the culture of the suzerain state) and disadvantaged cultures (such as colonial cultures). This difference not only affects the fairness of the translation process, but also makes translation a field of cultural power struggle, in which dominant cultures often strengthen, or spread their cultural hegemony through translation. Postcolonial translation studies emphasize that translation is not only the transformation of linguistic symbols, but also the reproduction and reconstruction of cultural identity, power relations, and ideology. It reveals the implicit power relations and historical context in translated texts, as well as how these factors affect translation choices, strategies, and outcomes. From this theoretical perspective, translation is seen as a cultural and political practice that participates in the construction and deconstruction of imperialist cultural hegemony and has a profound impact on the dissemination, acceptance, and resistance of culture.

1.3. Introduction to *Big Breasts and Wide Hips* and Goldblatt

Big Breasts and Wide Hips is one of the representative works of Mo Yan -- the Nobel Prize winner in Literature. The novel is set in Mo Yan's hometown, Gaomi in Shandong Province, and tells the story of several generations of the Shanguan family, spanning more than 100 years. Through the rise and fall of the Shanguan family, the novel reflects the great changes in Chinese society in the 20th century, including the impact of war, revolution, famine, and other major historical events on the lives of ordinary people. With its rich imagination, delicate emotional description and mature narrative skills, *Big Breasts and Wide Hips* shows Mo Yan's profound insight into human nature, history, and society. This work eulogizes the great selflessness of the mother and shows the tenacious vitality of the Chinese people. It can be a great bridge for foreign readers to understand Chinese people and society.

Goldblatt is a famous American translator, famous for his translation of Chinese literary works, especially his translation of Mo Yan's works, which made an indelible contribution to Mo Yan's winning the Nobel Prize in Literature. Professor Goldblatt is not only proficient in Chinese but also has a deep understanding and love of Chinese culture. His translations of Chinese literature not only let Western readers understand the charm of Chinese literature but also promoted the international spread of Chinese culture. Goldblatt's translation has made a great contribution to Chinese literature going global, but whether Goldblatt, as a foreigner, can get rid of the influence of cultural hegemony and translate under the premise of the equality of Chinese and Western cultures remains to be investigated.

2. The Translation of Religious Culture

Religion significantly influences people's lives across both the East and the West, making religious culture a vital and integral aspect of literature in these regions. But there is a huge gap between China and the West in terms of religion, with Buddhism and Christianity being their dominant religion respectively. How to deal with this difference is a difficult problem in translation.

Example 1:

ST: “菩萨...祖宗保佑...所有的神、所有的鬼，你们都保佑我吧、饶恕我吧，让我生个全毛全翅的男孩吧...我的亲亲的儿子，你出来吧...天公、地母、黄狐精，帮助我吧...”[3]

TT: “Lord in Heaven, protect me ... Worthy Ancestors, protect me ... gods and demons everywhere, protect me, spare me, let me deliver a healthy baby boy ... my very own son, come to Mother ... Father of Heaven, Mother of Earth, yellow spirits and fox fairies, help me, please ...” [4]

In Buddhist culture, Bodhisattvas are regarded as the embodiment of compassion and wisdom, and they not only guide believers spiritually but also often appear in various forms to meet the faith needs of different believers. However, in Western countries, most people believe in Christianity, for them lord is the creator of everything. To enhance the readability and cross-cultural adaptability of the work, Goldblatt translated the concept of “Bodhisattva” as “lord in heaven”. This approach, while helpful to some extent to Western readers, can also be misleading. Simply replacing Chinese religious culture with Western religious terms may prevent foreign readers from truly appreciating the richness and uniqueness of Chinese religious culture. More importantly, this practice may create the misconception among Western readers that Christianity is already widely accepted in China and that most Chinese people share the same beliefs as Westerners. This misunderstanding not only ignores the diversity of religious beliefs in China but also ignores the complexity and diversity of religious beliefs in Chinese society.

Example 2:

ST: “鲁立人说:种瓜者得瓜，种豆者得豆，种下了藜就不要怕扎手。老岳母，不要操这些闲心啦。”[5]

TT: “Please, Mother-in-law, don't trouble yourself over things like this.” [6]

“种瓜得瓜，种豆得豆” is a Chinese idiom. This idiom originally comes from the Buddhist language, used as a metaphor for the relationship of karma, and later came to refer to the causal relationship of things. It is a metaphor that suggests that if a person plants or initiates something good or bad, it will ultimately bear corresponding fruits or consequences. In short, it emphasizes that individuals are responsible for the results of their actions and decisions, just as sowing a specific type of seed will inevitably lead to the growth and harvest of the same type of plant. Such a Buddhist idea was directly deleted in the translated text because it is inconsistent with Western Christian culture. This is a compromise of Chinese culture. This not only weakens the integrity and depth of the original text but also fails to promote mutual understanding and respect between Chinese and Western cultures.

Example 3:

ST: “多嘴多舌的三姐上官领弟问身边的人: “大叔，这里要施粥吗?” 那人不置可否地摇摇头。身后一个人道: 姑

娘，腊八节才施粥呢。”[7]

TT: “My big-mouthed third sister, Ling di, asked the person next to her, “Are they going to hand out some porridge, uncle?” The man merely shook his head, but someone behind her said, “They don’t do that till the eighth day of the twelfth month young lady.” [8]

“Laba Festival” is an important traditional festival in China and has a close relation with Buddhism. “Laba Festival” is a Buddhist festival, which is set up by Buddhists to commemorate Sakyamuni’s enlightenment under the Bodhi tree on the eighth day of the twelfth lunar month. After the evolution of generations, it gradually became a well-known folk festival. Confronting the festival with religious culture, Goldblatt did not introduce its cultural connotation and even did not translate this festival but only the specific date of the festival. The rich connotation of the Laba Festival is only simplified into a date, but it fails to dig deeply and convey the religious significance, historical origin and folk customs behind it. In this case, Chinese culture seems to have been effaced in the translation to some extent, and its colorful and profound connotations are not fully displayed in the eyes of Western readers. Laba Festival is not just a day in the lunar calendar, it carries the celebration of the harvest, the worship of Buddha, the value of family reunion, and the hope for a better life in the future. The absence of this festival is not only the neglect of a specific cultural symbol but also the dilution of a cultural spirit and values.

Example 4:

ST: “他模仿着寡妇尖细的嗓音，呜呜地哭着，诉着：二狗二狗好狠心呀！两手一撒归了西呀！” [8]

TT: “In the high-pitched voice of a widow, he began to sob and voice her grief Dog Two, Dog Two, how could you do that with your arms outstretched, you return to your maker.” [9]

“归西” is a Buddhist word. It describes the soul of a person who dies and returns to the Western paradise, which is a kind of good wish for the afterlife. Here, this word was translated into “return to your maker”, however, “maker” is a Christian concept, referring to the god who makes everything in the universe, including humanity. The influence of a strong culture may override or replace the uniqueness of a weak culture. This phenomenon of replacement is not uncommon in the process of translation. In many cases, the cultural elements in the translation will be replaced due to the influence of the translator’s cultural background. In this case, although the translation can convey certain information, it has lost the cultural connotation and characteristics of the original.

Schleiermacher argued that “there are only two. Either the translator leaves the author in peace as much as possible and moves the reader towards him; or he leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the author towards him”[10]. Venuti refers to the first method as “domestication”, that is “an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to receiving cultural values, bringing the author back home”, and the second as “foreignization”, that is “an ethnodeviant pressure on those values to register the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad”.[11]When translating different religious cultures, Goldblatt adopted a domestication strategy, the words containing unique Chinese cultural characteristics were deleted or re-written into Western culture. Domesticating the original text, not only erases the cultural characteristics and uniqueness of the original text but also invisibly promotes

Western cultural values and ways of thinking, making non-Western cultures marginalized and ignored. This practice of translation is seen as a form of cultural inequality in which the dominant (usually Western) culture dissolves and assimilates the weaker one. In Goldblatt’s translation practice, although the domestication strategy may help to improve the fluency and acceptability of the translation, it should also be vigilant against the risk of cultural homogenization that it may bring.

3. The Translation of Political Culture

The background of Big Breasts and Wide Hips is set from the anti-Japanese war to the reform and opening-up, so political description inevitably appears in this novel. However, there is a sharp contrast between China and the West in terms of politics. As for this Goldblatt directly omitted or re-wrote the part of the original with Chinese political culture.

Example 5:

ST: “汪银枝，你这个反革命，人民的敌人，吸血鬼，害人虫，四不清分子，极右派，走资本主义道路的当权派，资产阶级反动学术权威，腐化变质分子，阶级异己分子，四肢不勤、五谷不分的寄生虫，被绑在历史耻辱柱上的跳梁小丑，土匪，汉奸，流氓，无赖，暗藏的阶级敌人，保皇派，孔老二的孝子贤孙，封建主义的卫道士，奴隶主义制度的复辟狂，没落的地主阶级的代言人……”[12]

TT: “Wang Yinzhi, you counterrevolutionary, you enemy of the people, you blood sucking insect, you damned rightist, degenerate, class outsider, parasite, petty scoundrel tied to the post of historical disgrace, bandit, turncoat, hooligan, rogue, concealed class enemy of the people, royalist, filial daughter and virtuous granddaughter of old man Confucius, feudalism apologist, advocate for the restoration of the slave system, spokeswoman for the declining landlord class.” [13]

The selected text is the words of Shangguan Jintong cursing Wang Yinzhi. Shangguan Jintong was persecuted during the Cultural Revolution. This period left a deep impression on him. As a result, he used politically charged terms from the Cultural Revolution in his denunciation of Mr. Wang. “走资本主义道路的当权派” and “资产阶级反动学术权威” were specific products of the Cultural Revolution, reflecting the wrong concept of class struggle at that time. The West is generally a capitalist country. Such sensitive political words will arouse some unnecessary dispute among Western readers. Therefore, Goldblatt omitted these words. There is no corresponding translation of these words in the translated text. By omitting these words that may cause misunderstanding or controversy, the translator can avoid unnecessary cultural conflict and make the translation more acceptable to the target language readers. However, this kind of omission may also lead to the loss of information, affecting readers’ understanding and perception of the cultural background of the original text.

Example 6:

ST: “父老乡亲们，日本鬼子就要来了！”[14]

TT: “All you elders, fellow townsmen, the Japs are coming!”
“日本鬼子” is a unique term used by the Chinese people to refer to the Japanese invaders during the Anti-Japanese War, which contains rich history, culture, and national emotions. Its origin can be traced back to the late Qing Dynasty, especially after the First Sino-Japanese War. At that time, Japan rose rapidly through the Meiji Restoration and began to expand its power in Asia, including piracy and military aggression off the coast of China. These actions aroused the

strong disgust and anger of the Chinese people, so the term gradually spread. During the anti-Japanese War, the term “日本鬼子” was even more popular. The Japanese troops burned, killed, looted, and committed atrocities on the land of China, resulting in the destruction and death of tens of millions of innocent people. These atrocities further deepened the hatred and anger of the Chinese people towards the Japanese aggressors. This term contains the Chinese people's strong indignation and resistance to Japanese aggression. This term is also closely related to the idea of ghosts and gods in ancient China. When the Chinese call the Japanese “日本鬼子”, they are comparing the Japanese to evil ghosts, implying that they are as vicious and horrible as evil ghosts. This word was translated into “Jap”, the abbreviation of “Japanese”. It is offensive slang and is often used as a demeaning or discriminatory term for Japanese people or Japanese culture. Before World War II, the term “Jap” had no obvious pejorative meaning. It may only be used as a convenient form of address to refer to Japanese people or Japanese culture. However, during and after World War II, the term “Jap” gradually became a derogatory or discriminatory term for Japanese people or Japanese culture. This was mainly due to the conflict and hostility between Japan and many countries during the war. Translating “日本鬼子” into “Japs” can perfectly express Chinese people's indignation towards Japanese invaders, but the Chinese idea of ghosts and gods was neglected.

Example 7:

ST: “本人三代矿工，根红苗正”

TT: “I come from three generations of miners, as red and upright as they come”

The origin of the term “根红苗正” can be traced back to the period of China's Cultural Revolution. In that particular historical context, the term was used to describe those who were considered to be of good birth and pure thinking, especially children of workers, poor and lower-middle peasants, military martyrs, and so on. The sons of these families were considered immune to old ideas and reliable successors to the revolutionary cause. However, with the changes of The Times and the development of society, the meaning of the word has gradually changed. Nowadays, it is more often used to describe a person who has a good background, but no longer has the strong political overtones and evaluation criteria of the past.

However, the selected text of this story happened in the period of the Cultural Revolution. This word still has strong political overtones here. This word was literally translated into “as red and upright as they come”. As a product of the specific context of the Cultural Revolution, the profound historical and political meaning of the word “根红苗正” is far beyond the scope of its simple literal translation - “as red and upright as they come”. In the context of that turbulent era, it was not only a highly politicized evaluation of the composition of personal background but also an embodiment of social ideology, profoundly reflecting the extreme pursuit of “revolutionary purity” in society at that time.

Moreover, placing the term in the context of today's globalization, especially for Western readers with limited knowledge of that period of history, it is obvious that the direct literal translation cannot accurately convey the complex meaning behind it. Therefore, in cross-cultural communication, more detailed and comprehensive interpretation strategies should be adopted for such historical

and culturally specific words. For example, employing additional notes or background introduction can briefly explain the era background, social environment, and specific role of this word in modern Chinese history, helping readers to understand that the word is not only a simple description of personal origin but also a microcosm of the society and politics of that era.

According to the above examples, it is clear that Goldblatt deliberately avoided Chinese political culture which is in contrast to that of the West. Some political words were directly deleted or its connotation was not translated. This approach can improve the translated text's readability and acceptance among Western readers.

In translated Western literary works, the profound depiction of Western political culture is common. However, when Chinese literary works are translated into English, a striking phenomenon is that Chinese political and cultural elements are often omitted or even rewritten, rather than presented in their original form. This treatment reflects a tendency for Chinese culture to be accepted by Western society only if it is adapted to fit Western cultural perspectives, or if it simply cuts out parts that conflict with Western culture. This essentially reflects the suppression of the strong culture over the weak culture, which will undoubtedly erode the diversity and richness of the world culture in the long run. Therefore, in the face of the conflict between Chinese and Western cultures, it is unfair and detrimental to the balance of cultural ecology to seek reconciliation simply by erasing or rewriting Chinese culture.

4. The Translation of Social Culture

Literature is a mirror for society. Through literary works, we can understand people's living conditions, values, and in different times and social backgrounds. Big Breasts and Wide Hips will make Western readers accessible to Chinese society at that time. The translation of social culture included in this novel is crucial to spreading Chinese culture.

Example 8:

ST: “马洛亚牧师静静地躺在炕上，看到一道红光照耀在圣母玛利亚粉红色的乳房和她怀抱着的圣子肉嘟嘟的脸上。”

TT: “From where he lay quietly on the brick-and tamped-earth sleeping platform, his kang, Pastor Malory saw a bright red beam of light shining down on the Virgin Mary's pink breast and on the pudgy face of the bare-bot-tomed Blessed infant in her arms.”

“炕” is a common facility for heating and sleeping in rural families in northern China. It is usually made of adobe or brick. The design and use of “kang” have a long history in China, it is not only a way of heating, but also an important part of family life. On the “Kang”, family members can sit together and talk, eat, or do other family activities. The existence of “Kang” reflects the living habits and cultural characteristics of rural areas in northern China. However, in the West, “bed” usually is the only facility for them to sleep. They are not familiar with this “unique Chinese bed”. When translating this unique Chinese culture, Goldblatt adopted the foreignization method. He transliterated this word and explained its make-up. In such a way, not only Western readers can understand different Chinese cultures, but the translated text be more integrated and exotic.

In Venuti's view, domestication ignores linguistic differences. While foreignizing translation is a very desirable

option, which emphasizes the value of heterogeneous culture and challenges the target language norms with resistant reading. "The aim is rather to develop a theory and practice of translation that resists dominant values in the receiving culture to signify the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text." By breaking the mainstream cultural norms of the target language, translators can provide readers with a different reading experience, which can curb the violence of ethnocentrism in translation. In the current era of growing aphasia in the third world, foreignization can be regarded as a powerful tool to oppose Western cultural hegemony and build equal cultural exchanges among countries in the world.

Example 9:

ST: "我家璇儿,非嫁个状元不可的!大姑父说"

TT: "Our Xuan 'er will marry a zhuangyuan, top scholar at the Imperial Examination."

"状元" is the title for the first place in the imperial examination system in Chinese history. The imperial examination was an ancient Chinese system for selecting officials, which began in the Sui and Tang Dynasties and lasted until the end of the Qing Dynasty. The imperial examination system has had a profound impact on Chinese society and culture throughout history, providing upward mobility opportunities for people of different social classes and promoting social stability and development by selecting talents through examinations. As the translation of "炕", Goldblatt also employed a foreignization method, and "状元" was transliterated and explained. Chinese culture was equally translated into the Western world. It not only helps to preserve the cultural connotation of the original text but also allows Western readers to feel the uniqueness of Chinese culture. Through transliteration, Western readers can intuitively feel the pronunciation of the word, which is the first step in cross-cultural understanding. Based on transliteration, further explanation of the meaning and cultural background of these words can help Western readers better understand these concepts.

Example 10:

ST: "福生堂当然要跑,我们跑什么?上官家打铁种地为生,一不欠皇粮,二不欠国税,谁当官,咱都为民。日本人不是人吗?日本人占了东北乡,还不是要依靠咱老百姓给他们种地交租子?"

TT: "Of course, the people at Felicity Manor have run off. But why should we join them? We are blacksmiths and farmers. We owe no tariff to the emperor or taxes to the nation. We are loyal citizens, whoever is in charge. The Japanese are human, too, aren't they? They've occupied the Northeast, but where would they be without common folk to till the fields and pay the rent?"

The term "皇粮" in Chinese history refers to the grain tax paid by farmers to the state, that is, the agricultural tax. It is a customary name for this kind of tax among Chinese people, which has a long history and has played an important role in China's agricultural society for thousands of years. This word was translated by Goldblatt into "tariff to the emperor". In ancient China, the original meaning of "皇粮" was "grain offered to the emperor", which reflected the emperor's supremacy and control over the peasants in feudal society. Over time, especially in the 1930s and 1940s, Chinese society underwent tremendous changes, including the abolition of feudalism and the weakening of centralization. Therefore, the meaning of "皇粮" also expanded, no longer limited to the use of the emperor, but generally referred to the farmers

paying grain taxes to the state. This part of Big Breasts and Wide Hips took place in the 1930s and 1940s when the imperial system of China was overthrown and there were no emperors in China. For English readers, the direct translation of "皇粮" might mislead them into thinking that China was still in a centralized imperial state. This kind of translation does not take into account the change in historical background and cultural context.

Example 11:

ST: "母亲咬着牙齿说: '姓沙的,你癞蛤蟆想吃天鹅肉,做梦去吧!'"

TT: "Mother clenched her teeth. 'You there, Sha,' she said, 'like the toad who wants to feast on a swan, you can just dream on!'"

"癞蛤蟆想吃天鹅肉" is a common Chinese idiom used to describe a person who overreaches himself and has excessive and unrealistic expectations or pursuits. The "toad" in this idiom is usually regarded as a despicable creature, while the "swan" is a symbol of elegance and nobility. Therefore, when saying "癞蛤蟆想吃天鹅肉", it is often ironic that someone or something has a high goal or desire that is grossly disproportionate to its condition. This idiom was translated into "like the toad who wants to feast on a swan". Both Chinese and Western people have alike feelings towards these two animals. The swan is often regarded as a symbol of purity and nobility in Western culture, especially their habit of having only one partner for life, which makes the swan a representative of loyal love. In Western culture, images of toads are often associated with negative traits such as ugliness and venomousness. Therefore, although there is no similar idiom in the West, Western readers can comprehend this idiom based on their feelings towards "toad" and "swan". Goldblatt directly introduced two Chinese images into the West. The direct translation of Chinese images not only retains the cultural characteristics and uniqueness of the original text but also promotes cross-cultural communication so that readers with different cultural backgrounds can experience the original flavor of Chinese culture. This method not only enhances the exoticism and artistic charm of the text and attracts the attention of the reader, but also has important educational significance and helps the reader to learn the language, history, and culture of China. Direct translation also helps to avoid misunderstandings and distortions of cultural elements in the translation process, ensuring that readers can accurately understand the intention and meaning of the original text. In addition, it enriches the expressiveness of the target language, introduces new vocabulary and expressions, and increases the diversity of the language.

Example 12:

ST: "鹦鹉韩嘟啾着: 不要推完磨就杀驴吃嘛!"

TT: "I'd advise you not to kill and eat the donkey after the milling's finished, Parrot muttered."

"卸磨杀驴" is an idiom, meaning that after the donkey is finished grinding, the owner will kill the donkey. This idiom is used to mean discarding or getting rid of someone or something after using it. It is an act of ingratitude. There is a counterpart in English -- kick down the ladder, which also means abandoning or damaging the people or things that have helped them after achieving their goal or success. Here, the translator does not adopt the domestication translation strategy to cater to the reading habits of the target language readers and translate it as "kick down the ladder". Instead, the translator maintained its original meaning and image, so that

the readers could appreciate the “original flavor” of the exotic culture. The literal translation of an idiom may arouse readers’ curiosity and prompt them to further explore the cultural background and deep meaning behind the idiom. Literal idioms can serve as a bridge of cross-cultural communication, allowing people with different cultural backgrounds to come into contact with and understand the ways of expression and thinking in other cultures.

The above examples show that when translating the social culture, Goldblatt tries his best to maintain the heterogeneity of Chinese culture. Chinese culture has not been rewritten or deleted because it is different from Western culture. Many unique Chinese images were preserved and the translation’s readability was not deteriorated. This approach emphasizes the bidirectional and equal nature of cultural exchanges and avoids the problems of cultural hegemony and cultural homogenization. On the one hand, through this kind of equal cultural exchange, Western readers have more opportunities to know the real China, Chinese society, and people, and their stereotypes about China will be reduced. It is helpful for them to see the world with a more objective and comprehensive perspective. On the other hand, an objective and comprehensive translation of Chinese culture will help build a positive image of China and enhance China’s reputation and influence in the world. China was objectively presented in front of the world. And it will enhance the confidence and pride of the Chinese people in their own culture and nation.

5. Conclusion

To sum up, through the in-depth study of Howard Goldblatt’s translation of *Big Breasts and Wide Hips* from the perspective of post-colonial translation theory, we can see that although the translator is trying to retain the cultural essence of the original work and present an objective image of China, the influence of the dominant culture is still difficult to avoid completely. To improve the acceptability and readability of the translation, some unique Chinese cultural elements related to political and religious culture are omitted or rewritten in the translation process, which weakens the cultural depth of the text to a certain extent. In the translation of social culture, Goldblatt retains the characteristics of Chinese culture and the original text. However, this does not mean that Goldblatt’s translation was a failure. On the contrary, his translations have played an important role in promoting Chinese literary works to the world and promoting cross-cultural exchanges.

This study not only enriches the application of postcolonial translation theory in the translation of specific literary works but also provides a valuable reference for the translation practice of Chinese literature under the strategy of globalization. By analyzing and exploring the cultural strategies in the process of translation, this study helps translators to deal with cultural elements more consciously, improve the quality of translation, and make translation a real transmission of culture rather than a simple language conversion. In the future, with the continuous improvement

of the status of Chinese culture in the international arena, how to better balance the maintenance of cultural identity and cross-cultural adaptation in translation will become an important issue for translation researchers and practitioners. It is hoped that this study can provide new ideas and directions for this purpose, and promote the wider and deeper dissemination and acceptance of Chinese literature in the world.

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