

# A Study on the English Translation of Early Qing Dynasty Mongolian Han Poetry in the Context of Cultural Interaction, Exchange, and Integration in the Northern Frontier

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## Abstract

The study is particularly relevant to the context of the “Northern Frontier Culture”, which encompasses a rich tapestry of cultural elements and spirit. This cultural milieu is reflected in the poetry of the early Qing Dynasty, where Mongolian poets, influenced by both their native cultural heritage and the dominant Han culture, created works that blend these diverse influences. The translation of such poetry not only requires linguistic proficiency but also a deep understanding of the cultural and historical contexts in which these works were created. This research examines Chapter Three of Part Three from the book *A Study of Chinese Classical Poetry Written by Mongolian Poets*. The study draws on the reception aesthetics and relevance theory, analyzing the translation from the perspectives of domestication and foreignization, which employed strategies such as imitation, variation, transcreation, transliteration, literal translation, and zero translation.

## Keywords

Mongolian Han Poetry Translation, Classical Poetry Translation, Culture Interaction, the Northern Frontier Culture

## 1. Introduction

Stretching across Northeast, North, and Northwest China, Inner Mongolia is situated along the northern frontier of the country. Since ancient times, it has been a vibrant hub for exchanges, interactions, and integration among various ethnic

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groups, as well as a stage for the convergence of diverse cultures. From the Xiongnu, Wuhuan, and Xianbei to the Turks, Uyghurs, Khitan, Jurchens, Mongols, and Han Chinese, these peoples have thrived on this vast land. Through continuous communication and collaboration, they jointly built prosperous homelands and cultivated a rich tapestry of cultural forms, including red culture, grassland culture, farming culture, Yellow River culture, Great Wall culture, West Liao River culture, and Hetao culture—all integral components of the broader Chinese civilization.

In his directives on Inner Mongolia, General Secretary Xi Jinping has repeatedly emphasized the concept of the “Northern Frontier”, such as “Inner Mongolia lies in the northern frontier of the motherland,” “building the northern frontier into an even more splendid landscape,” “establishing a secure and stable barrier in the northern frontier,” and “constructing a green Great Wall across the northern border”. At the Cultural Heritage Development Symposium in June 2023, the General Secretary underscored that promoting cultural prosperity, advancing a modern Chinese civilization, and fulfilling new cultural missions in the new era require unwavering confidence, responsibility, and innovation. In October 2023, he further stressed the importance of inheriting and revitalizing China’s cultural heritage through creative transformation and innovative development.

## 2. Introduction to the Source Text and Its Author

The source text is selected from *the Study of Chinese Classical Poetry Written by Mongolian Poets* written by Mi Yanqing. The book discusses the creation of Han poetry by the Mongols during this period from multiple dimensions, including history, literature, and the history of ideas. It studies the origins, development, and evolution of Han poetry by the Mongols during the Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties systematically. Also, it reveals the significant role of the integration of Mongolian and Han literatures in the formation of the spirit of Chinese literature and the traditional Chinese cultural heritage.

Mi Yanqing, a distinguished Professor and Doctoral Supervisor, is a leading talent in philosophy and social sciences under the national “Ten Thousand People Plan” (2021). Her main academic focus is on the study of Tang and Qing Dynasty poetry, as well as the ethnic literature of the Yuan, Ming, and Qing Dynasties. She has made significant contributions to academia, publishing four scholarly monographs, editing four volumes, and authoring more than 60 academic papers in prestigious journals like *Literary Review*. She has successively overseen and concluded multiple research initiatives, including those sponsored by the National Social Science Fund.

## 3. Theoretical Basis

Reception aesthetics, also known as the reception theory, emerged in the mid-1960s. The pioneer of this theory is Hans Robert Jauss from the Federal Republic of Germany. The main principle of this theory is that the educational and entertainment functions of a work are realized in the act of reading (Jauss & Benzinger,

1970). Through this process, the work can gain its vitality. Also, the reader is active in this process and serves as the driving force behind literary creation; the reception of literature is not only determined by the nature of the work but also by the reader. Reception aesthetics divides the literary reception activity into two forms: social reception and individual reception (Iser, 1987).

The source text includes many poems, which are rich in imagery and figures of speech. Also, readers are those who have some knowledge of the Chinese culture and are interested in ancient poetry and history. That makes the translation more essential to convey original meaning and aesthetic values. The guiding principle of Reception Aesthetic can help to narrow the distance between target readers and source texts. For example, in this poem “愿折珊瑚枝，持谢知音难。”(《古诗四章喜王勤德过》梦麟) of the text, the rhythm can be marked with numbers as: two-one, two-one. The rhythm of a five-character line is generally divided into a “two-one” rhythm, where the first two characters form one rhythmic unit, and the next three characters form another rhythmic unit. This division is based on the characteristics of Chinese syllables constituting one beat, creating a classic prosodic rhythm. Therefore, in correspondence with the rhythm of Chinese poetry, the translator translated it into “Willing to break the coral branch, Expressing finding a confidant’s hard”. The translation can be structured into iambic tetrameter, with the metrical feet divided as follows: Willing/to break/the coral branch, Expressing/finding/a confidant’s hard. Also, it conforms to the rules of English poem creation. From the perspective of Reception Aesthetics, the translation connects the author with the readers, recreating the poet’s intentions and emotions. Therefore, on the one hand, the translation takes characteristics of Chinese poem into account, but it also gives consideration into English poem features, like iambic foot, trochaic tetrameter, and dactylic foot. That is how the translation shortens the distance between the author and the reader under the guidance of acceptance aesthetics.

Compared with translation aesthetics, relevance theory provides a more effective framework for examining metaphor translation in Mongolian-Chinese poetry through the lens of relevance and its degree. First formally proposed by Sperber and Wilson in 1986, relevance theory maintains the following key tenets:

- 1) The purpose of communication lies not in replicating the speaker’s thoughts, but in modifying the listener’s cognitive environment. The communication process essentially optimizes the mutual cognitive environment between interlocutors, with its success contingent upon the quality of this shared cognitive space.
- 2) Communication constitutes a cognitive-inferential process of mutual manifestness.
- 3) Relevance encompasses two dimensions: relevance itself and its degree. An assumption becomes relevant in a given context only when it generates contextual effects. The degree of relevance depends on the balance between contextual effects and processing effort: greater contextual effects enhance relevance under equal conditions, while reduced processing effort increases relevance correspondingly.
- 4) Optimal relevance emerges when contextual effects and processing effort

reach equilibrium. Human communication inherently pursues this optimal relevance rather than maximal relevance (Sun & Zhang, 2009: p. 91).

Given poetry's unique literary nature, English-speaking readers of translated classical Chinese poetry typically possess a certain level of education, linguistic competence, and established interest in Chinese culture. From the perspective of optimal relevance, such readers can reasonably be expected to exert appropriate processing effort to comprehend translated poetry. This makes it feasible for them to reconstruct the original context and metaphorical meanings through reasonable inference to achieve sufficient contextual effects. As cultural ambassadors, translators (including both Chinese translators and Western sinologists) must fulfill dual responsibilities for successful cross-cultural communication: they need to not only identify cultural defaults in source texts but also accurately assess target readers' knowledge frameworks to properly define shared knowledge and pragmatic premises (Sun & Zhang, 2009: p. 98). Guided by relevance theory, this paper argues that translators should preserve original metaphors while flexibly employing domestication and foreignization strategies according to poetic imagery. This balanced approach will better facilitate cultural exchange and dissemination of the Northern Frontier culture.

#### **4. The Selected Poetry Translation of the Chinese Classical Poetry Written by Mongolian Poets**

The author used domestication for rhythm, meter, and phonology and foreignization for imagery. First, domestication involves adapting the text to the cultural and linguistic norms of the target language, making it accessible and relatable to the target readers. In 1995, Lawrence (2004: p. 25) proposed domestication and foreignization for the first time in *The Translator's Invisibility A History of Translation*, and he believes that domestication "requires the translator to align with the readers of the target language, speaking as a native author would. For the original author to engage in direct dialogue with the readers, the translation must be transformed into authentic language of the target country". Domestication in translation aids in enhancing the readers' comprehension, improving the readability, and increasing the appreciation of the translated work. Also, the primary value of Reception Aesthetic is reader-oriented, requiring translators to overcome linguistic and cultural setbacks to give target readers a better understanding, and to achieve cultural exchanges.

Second, the essence of translation lies in bridging the gaps between different cultures, enhancing communication, and fostering understanding among people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) once defined foreignization as "the translator's effort not to disturb the original author, but to bring the reader closer to him". This approach, known as foreignization in translation, deliberately challenges the conventions of the target language, aiming to retain the exotic qualities and unique characteristics of the source text. Moreover, translators are not merely tasked with catering to the tastes of target readers;

they must also strive to preserve the core values and distinctive features of the original work. This preservation is crucial for achieving meaningful cultural exchange, as it allows readers to engage with and appreciate the richness of foreign cultures and ideas.

**Example 1:**

ST

《观回俗贺节》

怪道花门节，封羊血溅腥。

翔鸡充幾里，姿故震羌庭。

酋拜摩尼寺，僧喧穆护经。

火袄如啖蜜，石墩信通灵。

TT:

*Observing the Hui Festival's Rites*

On the Flower Gate's peculiar path,  
the ram's blood splatters, its tangy stench.  
Roaming chickens span the miles around,  
as ancient Lou's might shake the Qiang ground.  
Chiefs in Mani's temple bow with grace,  
monks' chant protects the holy texts' embrace.  
Fire-robed figures feast like honey's sweetness,  
Stone altars glow with spirits' light, a completeness.

The translated poem retains the original's line count and largely achieves a correspondence with the original's metrical feet and cadence, skillfully recreating the smooth narrative and balanced tone of the original. It conveys the poem's inherent emotions while preserving the original rhyme scheme, employing both internal and end rhymes such as "path" with "stench", "around" with "ground", "grace" with "embrace", and "sweetness" with "completeness". These rhymes enhance the musicality and rhythm of the poem (Tawfiq, 2020: p. 16). Additionally, the translation employs a literal strategy, faithfully preserving the original imagery, vividly recreating the festive scene. The dynamic imagery (Liu & He, 2019: p. 130) of the original is fully conveyed in the translation, with words like "splatters", "span", "shakes", and "bow" accurately translating "溅" (splash), "充" (span), "震" (shake), and "拜" (bow), using specific actions to depict the grandeur and liveliness of the festival, making the scene more vivid and lifelike. The final line captures the symbolic significance of "火袄" (fire jacket) and "石墩" (stone pedestal), also conveying the poet's deep understanding of the cultural connotations in the ethnic minority regions. This poem adopts a literal translation strategy under the guidance of relevance theory to preserve the metaphorical explicatures. While requiring greater processing effort from English readers, such translation satisfies their inherent expectations for cultural authenticity by retaining the original's exotic appeal. The preserved cultural otherness and freshness of literal metaphor translation not only grant the rendition distinctive aesthetic value but also justify

the increased cognitive investment through amplified contextual effects. Though demanding more interpretative engagement, readers ultimately gain richer poetic resonance through this approach. The foreignization strategy thus delivers superior results in this context, as the unique cultural novelty embedded in literal translation outweighs the challenges of processing effort, achieving optimal relevance through culturally resonant contextual rewards.

**Example 2:**

ST:

西斋诗辑遗  
博明  
香浓雪迈枪人琴，给事频年感旧心。  
留得梅菴诗话在，淮南烟月讯知音。

TT:

*The Poetic Legacy of Xi Zhai*  
Boming  
Fragrant and lush, the snow strides forth, a lute's lament;  
Years in office, the heart's old memories, a nostalgic chant.  
The hermit's plum, in poetry, forever stays,  
In Huainan's misty moon, it calls to kindest hearts and minds.

The original poem, through crafted syllable combinations and rhythmic patterns, showcases the characteristics of classical poetry. The syllable arrangements and rhythmic cadences not only enhance the musicality of the poem but also deepen its emotional expressiveness. Moreover, the poem employs end rhymes such as “琴”, “心”, “在”, and “音”, which belong to the soft “Renchen rhyme” (in). (Zhang, 2011: p. 91) The translator adopted the translation strategy of imitation, utilizing the iambic meter, (Ma, 1996: p. 31) a rhythmic unit common in English poetry, as the dominant foot. Additionally, the translation is employed rhyming techniques, pairing “lament” with “chant” and “stays” with “minds”, to create a harmonious and balanced auditory effect, corresponding to the end rhymes in the original poem. Furthermore, phrases like “A lute's lament” and “a nostalgic chant” evoke a vivid sensory experience. In conveying the original poem's term “讯知音”, the translator used “call” to express the poet's longing for a confidant, while “hearts and minds” are employed to describe the search for a kindred spirit in matters of the heart, aligning with the preferences of the target language readers. Therefore, to accurately convey the information in the source language, the translator employs relevant imagery in the target language that can carry the metaphorical meaning of the source text. This approach not only facilitates cross-cultural communication but also enhances the contextual effect and relevance (Chen, 2022: p. 37). Moreover, the translated poem employed metaphorical and personification rhetorical devices; “the snow strides forth” anthropomorphizes the falling snow, attributing it with dynamic life characteristics, and “A lute's lament” compares the fragrance to the mournful sound of a zither, vividly depicting the

intensity and emotion of the scent. In this case, a domestication strategy would be more appropriate for the translation of the poem.

**Example 3:**

ST:

《海天琴思续录》

林昌彝

七言激楚复悲凉，五字萧寥又老苍。  
朔气关云奇句在，敲残铁板唱斜阳。

TT:

*Sequel to the Reflections of the Sea and Sky*

Lin Changyi

With seven words, a passion's born, yet steeped in sorrow's chill,  
In lines of five, a desolation echoes, aged and still.  
The northern airs and clouds at pass yield phrases strange and bold,  
As the setting sun's lament is sung on the anvil's cold.

The poem expresses a deep reflection on personal destiny and offers a profound critique of the social realities of that era, filled with intense patriotic emotions and sympathy for the suffering of the people. Its end rhymes, like “凉”, “苍”, “阳”, are “Jiangyang Rhyme” (ang).

The translation used variation strategy, in which the translation “The northern airs and clouds at pass yield phrases strange and bold” captures the essence of the original poem's imagery involving the “朔气关云”. The translator chose to transpose this into a more familiar English context by using “northern airs” and “clouds at pass,” which maintains the sense of a rugged, northern landscape. The phrase “strange and bold” likely corresponds to the original's depiction of “奇句在”, suggesting that the poetry is filled with unusual and daring expressions. Also, the rhyming words like “chill” and “still”, and “bold” and “cold” capture the original's emotional depth but also add a musicality that is appreciated in English poetry. In translating this poem, using a foreignizing strategy that strictly follows the original structure and diction might make the translation feel stiff and unnatural in English, failing to convey the original's rhythmic beauty and emotional depth. Therefore, a domestication strategy is more suitable here. It can better assist English readers in understanding the poem, appreciating its rhythm, and engaging with its emotional dimensions. The translation conveys a sense of melancholy and defiance, creating an equivalent aesthetic experience.

**Example 4:**

ST: 霜寒嘶病马，沙碛伏明驼。

《八月十五日夜进哨》

TT: Amid the frost and cold, sick horses neigh; On sandy deserts, camels lie in wait.

*On the 15th Night of August, the Sentinel*

This poem showcases the unique dietary customs of Tibet and serves as histor-

ical evidence of the Qing Dynasty's governance over the region. It is considered a vivid depiction of Tibetan life and scenery. In the translation, the translator employed transcreation (Yang, 2016: p. 83), such as the translation of “伏明驼”. The phrase “lie in wait” conveys the sense of “lurking” or “crouching in anticipation”, which effectively captures the image of camels lying down. The word “camels” is used to represent the animals, evoking the scene of camels resting in the sandy desert. Although the term “明驼” in ancient times often referred to white camels or those known for their speed, the English translation may not perfectly align with the cultural connotations of “明驼”. However, from the perspective of overall meaning and scene creation, the translation strives to recreate the imagery of camels quietly resting in the vast wilderness of the desert as presented in the original poem. By adopting a domestication approach in translation, the poem can more effectively showcase the unique lifestyle and scenery of China's Tibet region to English-speaking readers, fostering cross-cultural communication and understanding. The translation enables English readers to appreciate the natural landscapes and cultural charm of China's border regions, deepening their recognition and enjoyment of diverse cultures and advancing the dissemination and exchange of culture.

**Example 5:**

ST: 锦样六朝随水去，夕阳愁煞庾兰成。

《雪桥诗话续集》

TT: The splendor of the Six Dynasties, like brocade, flows away with the river,  
Under the sunset's sorrow, Yu Xin's lament pierces the heart with its sever.

*Sequel to the Snowbridge Poetry Talks*

This translation aims to capture the fleeting nature of the prosperous eras, symbolized by the metaphor of flowing water, and the deep emotional response to the setting sun, which is associated with Yu Xin's poignant reflections on his homeland and the realities of his time. It used literal translation strategy. The term “Yu Lancheng” employed allusion, referring to the literary figure Yu Xin from the Six Dynasties period, whose poetry often expressed deep sorrow for his homeland and a sense of helplessness regarding reality. Also, “the sunset” is an image of light and shadow. It not only signifies the end of a day but also symbolizes the decline of an era and the twilight years of an individual. These imagery words retain the characteristics and historical context of the original language. Furthermore, the use of “splendor” and “like brocade” conveys the richness and beauty of the past, while “flows away with the river” signifies the irreversible passage of time. By using a foreignizing strategy of literal translation, this poem can effectively convey to English-speaking readers the splendid history of China's Six Dynasties period and the poets' feelings about historical changes. This approach allows readers to gain a deeper understanding of this significant era in Chinese history, as well as the thoughts, emotions, and cultural context of the people at that time, thereby enhancing their recognition and appreciation of Chinese historical culture.

**Example 6:**

ST: 短衣茸帽晓迎风，塞雁行行映碧空。

《木兰围中和申光禄笏山韵》

TT: Dressed in a short coat, with a furry hat, I greet the morning breeze,  
Border geese in rows fly across the clear blue sky.

*In the Woodland, Harmonizing with Shen Guanglu's Hushan Rhyme*

It depicts the natural scenery of the frontier, and reflects the poet's profound experiences and emotions regarding frontier life, Mongolian culture, and the cultural exchange between the Mongolian and Han Chinese peoples. The translation employed a literal translation strategy. Firstly, “塞雁” symbolized homesickness and wandering. Due to their migratory nature, wild geese are often used to represent the drifting of wanderers and their longing for home. In frontier fortress poetry, the image of wild geese flying south is particularly prominent, as they travel between their homeland and foreign lands, symbolizing the desire for home and the missing of loved ones. Therefore, to preserve the original poetic imagery, it was translated as “Border geese.” Secondly, “Border geese in rows” maintains the visual imagery of the original, depicting the orderly flight of geese, which is a striking image that resonates with readers familiar with the sight of migrating birds.

**Example 7:**

ST: 诗之为道，原本性情，亦根柢学问，非涉猎剽窃，仅事浮华而已。

TT: Poetry as a way, originally stems from human nature and emotions, and is also rooted in learning. It is not about casual skimming and plagiarizing, or just dealing with superficiality.

The translator of this poem employed the strategy of zero translation, which is particularly evident in the sentence “非涉猎剽窃，仅事浮华而已”. In the translation, “It is not about casual skimming and plagiarizing, or just dealing with superficiality”, the translator omitted certain modal particles from the original sentence that carry emphasis or conclusive tone. For instance, the word “而已” in the original, which conveys a sense of emphasis and conclusion, is difficult to translate directly into English with a word that precisely captures its tonal function. Therefore, the translator opted for a zero translation strategy by omitting it. Instead, the translator used the overall structure of the English sentence and the negative expression “It is not about...” to convey the critical and emphatic tone of the original. By removing unnecessary elements, the translation is made more accessible to English readers (Qiu, 2001: p. 25).

**Example 8:**

ST: 虽鸿才硕彦，务得片言赏识，便足增价。于单寒之士，尤加意怜恤。

TT: Even for those with great talent and profound learning, just a few words of appreciation are enough to enhance their reputation. As for those scholars from humble backgrounds, special care should be given to them.

The translation of this poem still employs the strategy of zero translation (Liu,

2002: p. 30). The original phrase “务得” is omitted in the translation; the structure “just...are enough” sufficiently conveys the emphasis on the value enhancement brought by obtaining a word of praise. Including a translation of “务得” would make the sentence redundant and awkward, which does not align with the English preference for concise and smooth expression. Additionally, “尤加意怜恤” is translated as “special care should be given to them”, omitting the adverb “尤” (especially or particularly). The passive voice structure “should be given” inherently carries an emphatic tone, effectively highlighting the importance of showing care. Including the word “尤” would complicate the sentence structure, which is not in line with the English habit of concise expression. Hence, it is omitted to emphasize the core meaning of providing care.

## 5. The Evolution of Domestic Scholarship on Domestication and Foreignization Strategies

During the 1930s and 1940s, Chinese literary translation predominantly adopted domesticating approaches, emphasizing the conveyance of the original work’s “spiritual essence” while prioritizing readability and fluency over formal fidelity to source texts. The latter half of the 20th century witnessed a surge in literary translation activities in China, during which translators began exploring foreignizing strategies, with Dong Qiusi and Bian Zhilin emerging as the most prominent advocates. (Sun, 2002: p. 39)

In 1959, Bian Zhilin articulated his translation philosophy in the article “A Decade of Foreign Literary Translation and Research,” advocating for “comprehensive faithfulness encompassing both content and form.” He asserted: “Content manifests through form. Failure to preserve the original form in literary translation inherently compromises fidelity to content, as it distorts the authentic expression of the source material.” This foreignizing approach earned Bian widespread acclaim from academic circles.

Fu Lei articulated his domestication-oriented perspective in the 1951 preface to his retranslation of *Le Père Goriot*: “In terms of effect, translation should resemble portrait painting, what matters lies not in formal resemblance but spiritual resonance.” He reaffirmed this stance in 1960s correspondence with Luo Xinzhang: “My translation principle remains simple: prioritize spiritual verisimilitude over formal equivalence. The ideal translation should read like the author’s original Chinese composition.”

In 1987, Liu Yingkai challenged conventional practices through his essay “Domestication: A Misguided Path in Translation” published in *Modern Foreign Languages*. He advocated for “maximal literal translation” to preserve foreign cultural flavors and faithfully reproduce original figurative language.

This evolution demonstrates that while domestication dominated early 20th-century translation practices, the increasing cultural exchanges in later decades prompted Chinese translators to adopt foreignization as the predominant strategy, aiming to introduce authentic Chinese cultural elements to global audiences.

In recent years, China has placed heightened emphasis on international cultural communication (Qiu, 2021: p. 165). The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China explicitly designated “enhancing national cultural soft power and global influence of Chinese culture” as a crucial strategic objective. The new era demands effective communication of China’s narratives, dissemination of China’s voice, and projection of a credible, amiable, and admirable national image to promote Chinese culture’s global reach. The Third Plenary Session of the 20th CPC Central Committee further emphasized strengthening cultural confidence, inheriting China’s outstanding traditional culture, and stimulating nationwide cultural innovation to contribute to building a global community of shared future.

As a distinctive regional culture, the Northern Frontier Culture represents the collective creation of diverse ethnic groups throughout history and constitutes an integral component of Chinese civilization. Serving as cultural mediators, translators must strategically employ both domestication and foreignization strategies. This entails preserving source texts’ cultural particularities, linguistic idiosyncrasies, and authors’ unique stylistic devices to authentically introduce Chinese culture to global audiences and amplify its international impact.

While advocating foreignization as a primary approach, translators must emphasize the necessity of measured implementation. Foreignization should progress steadily in accordance with contemporary needs, avoiding two extremes: excessive “translationese” that alienates readers, or arbitrary interpretations that obscure original meanings. Translators must maintain balance and moderation when applying foreignization strategies, judiciously resorting to domestication when necessary. These complementary approaches, when harmoniously coordinated, can achieve optimal cross-cultural communication outcomes.

## 6. Challenges and Gains in Translation

The translation of poetry presents many challenges, particularly regarding culturally specific references from ethnic minority traditions. Take the “花门节” (Huamen Festival) mentioned in *Observing the Hui Festival’s Rites* as an example: this ancient custom, documented in historical records through fragmentary evidence, resists definitive interpretation. Du Fu’s poetic usage of “花门” as a metonym for the Uighur people in works like *Lament for Royal Descendants* (《哀王孙》), “花门斃面请雪耻, 慎勿出口他人狙” and *Joy at Hearing Imperial Forces Reaching the Enemy’s Territory* (《喜闻官军已临贼境二十韵》), “花门腾绝漠, 拓羯渡临洮” justifies preserving this ethnonym through literal translation to maintain cultural distinctiveness.

The second challenge lies in balancing poetic imagery preservation. To what extent should original aesthetic conceptions be retained? How effectively can target-language readers comprehend culturally saturated representations? Contextual discernment proves essential. For instance, rigid adherence to formal structures in translating *Sequel to the Reflections of the Sea and Sky* risks producing

stilted renditions that fail to convey original rhythmic beauty or emotional depth, necessitating strategic domestication.

Thirdly, metaphorical translations of Mongolian Han poetry demand particular ingenuity. Conventional symbols like “frontier wild geese” (embodying homesickness and displacement) or “setting sun” (signifying dynastic decline or personal twilight) lose their associative power through literal rendering. Guided by Relevance Theory, this study adopts a cognitive-pragmatic approach to ensure optimal contextual effects, developing metaphor translation strategies that achieve maximal interpretive correspondence between source and target cultures. Through this framework, the author explores methods to bridge cultural-conceptual gaps while preserving poetic essence.

Moreover, to address the cultural representation risks inherent in classical poetry translation, a dual-strategy framework balancing accessibility and authenticity can be implemented through Layered Annotation and Cultural Resonance Mapping. The former employs tiered explanatory mechanisms: intratextual glossing seamlessly integrates brief cultural clarifications within poetic lines (e.g., annotating “frontier wild geese” as migratory symbols of displacement in nomadic traditions), while paratextual supplementation through footnotes preserves textual fluidity yet provides extended historical context (Xie, 2023: p. 156). Concurrently, Cultural Resonance Mapping systematically identifies cross-cultural equivalences, distinguishing primary resonance where direct symbolic parallels exist (e.g., translating Chinese “setting sun” as Western “autumn leaves” for mortality symbolism), secondary resonance requiring minimal mediation for partial overlaps when confronting culture-specific concepts (Shu, 2024: p. 70). This integrated approach enables strategic cultural adaptation without compromising semantic depth, allowing translators to navigate the delicate equilibrium between preserving original cultural essence and ensuring target-audience comprehension.

## 7. Conclusion

In this translation research, the author delves into the translation process of Chapter Three in Part Three of *The Study of Chinese Classical Poetry Written by Mongolian Poets*. Guided by reception aesthetics and relevance theory, the author meticulously summarizes the translation methods and diverse strategies employed. Moreover, the author broadens the exploration of the evolution of domestic scholarship on domestication and foreignization strategies. A key conclusion is drawn: translators must maintain a balance and exercise moderation when applying foreignization strategies, prudently resorting to domestication when necessary. These complementary approaches, when harmoniously coordinated, can achieve optimal cross-cultural communication outcomes. By employing these methods, the translator can approach the readers’ horizon of expectations, enabling the target readers to deeply understand the connotations and implications of the original text.

Through this translation research, the author aspires to facilitate the interac-

tion, exchange, and integration of cultures among different ethnic groups and to offer some reference for cross-cultural translation activities.

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## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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