Representations of Late Ming Culture in English Translations of *Jinpingmei*

Shuang-jin Xiao

The Ming novel *Jinpingmei* 金瓶梅 contains numerous references to late Ming culture and society, which can be extremely challenging when the novel undergoes interlingual translation. The present paper presents a descriptive study of the treatment of cultural references in two English translations of *Jinpingmei*, with a particular focus on the translators' choices and employed strategies for rendering the aforementioned references. Based on Toury's paradigm of descriptive translation studies, the present study employs a mixed-methods design, combining qualitative and quantitative data analysis. The study mainly addresses three topics: How cultural references are treated in the two English translations of *Jinpingmei*; translator tendencies in rendering cultural references; and the possible reasons underlying these tendencies. The findings indicate that the two translators employed numerous strategies ranging from omission to complete retention of cultural references. Egerton demonstrated a tendency to use more domesticating strategies, whereas Roy demonstrated a tendency to employ more foreignizing strategies. The tendencies of the two translators related to rendering cultural references were largely influenced by differing translation philosophies, expectations regarding targeted readerships, and sociohistorical contexts in which the translations emerged. Egerton's tendency toward domestication diluted the late-Ming cultural atmosphere of the original work, improved the fluency and readability of the translation, and improved the accessibility of the translation for target-language readers. Roy's tendency toward foreignization led the translation to have an exotic feel and caused the cultural heterogeneity to be observable, which can enable target readers to learn more about the cultural knowledge and history of the Ming dynasty.

Keywords: cultural references, *Jinpingmei*, translator choices and strategies, domestication and foreignization, cultural reception

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《金瓶梅》中的晚明文化表徵及其英譯策略之探析

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　　明代小說《金瓶梅》蘊含豐富的晚明文化元素，這些歷史文化資訊給語際翻譯帶來了極大挑戰。本論文旨在對《金瓶梅》中的文化資訊之英譯進行描述性研究，特別關注兩位譯者在翻譯文化內容時所採取的翻譯策略。依據圖裡（Gideon Toury）所提出的描述性翻譯研究範式，本篇論文採用定性和定量分析的研究方法以解決三個問題：《金瓶梅》中不同類型的文化元素是如何翻譯的，譯者主要採取了哪些翻譯方法和策略；兩位譯者所採用的翻譯策略呈現出什麼樣的傾向，是趨向於異化還是歸化；如若有這樣的不同傾向，那麼產生這些傾向的可能原因是什麼，會給譯作和譯文讀者帶來怎樣的影響。研究表明，艾格頓（Clement Egerton）表現出使用更多歸化策略的趨勢，而羅伊（David Tod Roy）表現出使用更多異化策略的趨勢。兩位譯者選擇翻譯策略的不同傾向在很大程度上受到他們所秉持的不同的翻譯理念和各自不同的翻譯目的影響，其次，還受不同譯文讀者的期待規範以及他們翻譯《金瓶梅》時所處的不同社會歷史語境的影響。艾格頓的歸化傾向淡化了原作濃厚的晚明文化氣息，提升了譯文的流暢度和可讀性，使得譯作更容易被目的語讀者所接受。羅伊的異化傾向讓譯文充滿了異域風情，使得文化異質性變得非常明顯，這有利於他的目標讀者了解到更多的明代文化知識以及歷史。

關鍵詞：文化元素、《金瓶梅》、翻譯策略與趨向、歸化與異化、文化接受

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Introduction

Jinpingmei 金瓶梅 is one of the four great novels written in the 16th century during the Ming dynasty (1368-1644). Considered as one of the few classical Chinese novels that could rank with the outstanding novels of the Western tradition, *Jinpingmei* stands out for its grand scope, exquisite characterization, and ingenious plot design (Hightower, 1953, p. 120). Containing rich philosophical, humanistic, and cultural values, the novel has been a source of polemical reactions and the subject of rigorous scholarship. Set in imperial China, this complex and multi-layered book is generally recognized as an encyclopedia of late Ming society mainly for its subtle and realistic delineation of social and cultural detail (Shang, 2005, p. 63). Thematically, *Jinpingmei* revolves around a meticulous depiction of the male protagonist's everyday life. The quotidian minutiae delineated in the story are culturally verisimilitudinous and historically contingent. This and other aspects justify the prodigious appeal the novel has retained till today. *Jinpingmei*'s English translations make an illuminating case for exploring how "Western cultures translated non-Western cultures into Western categories" (Lefevere, 1999, p. 77). One fruitful avenue is to investigate the ways in which the encyclopedic cultural references in *Jinpingmei* are treated in English translations.

Cultural references are grounded in a specific cultural and historical milieu where a text emerges, embodying the value and essence of a civilization. In *Jinpingmei*, cultural references cover a broad spectrum of areas including proper names, rituals, customs, food, religions, domestic objects, allusions, among other things. They are axiomatic and self-explanatory for the source readership but may be disconcertingly unfamiliar and undecipherable to a reader from a different cultural background. The way in which cultural references are handled in translation could affect target recipients' identification with the story and characters. Therefore, it

would be productive to investigate what happens to the culture-specificity when the novel is shifted to another cultural territory through translation.

Several translations of *Jinpingmei* have been published since the 20th century. Of these versions, *The Golden Lotus* (henceforth *Lotus*), rendered by Clement Egerton, and *The Plum in the Golden Vase* (hereafter *Plum*), retranslated by David T. Roy, have become the only two full-length translations currently available in the Anglophone world. *Lotus* came out in 1939 by George Routledge and Sons Ltd. while *Plum* was published by Princeton University Press between 1993 and 2013. Clearly, the two translations appeared in different time periods spanning roughly 60 years, which affords insight into the analysis of translational shifts from a cultural perspective. While several studies investigate the English translations of *Jinpingmei*, both in Chinese and English (Luo, 2014; Qi, 2016, 2018), no scholarly work has been found to carry out a systematic discussion on the treatment of the wide variety of cultural references in this late Ming novel. The relative paucity of scholarly attention in this respect motivates the need to tap into the problematic domain with a view to contributing to this trend.

The translation of cultural reference has been a recurring research topic in the sphere of translation studies. To contribute to the literature, this paper attempts a descriptive study of the treatment of cultural references in the two translations of *Jinpingmei*, focusing in particular on the translators' choices and strategies for dealing with these references. To this end, the paper mainly addresses the following three questions: (1) How cultural references in *Jinpingmei* are dealt with in the two English translations? (2) What are the general tendencies for translators to deal with the transfer of cultural references in *Jinpingmei*? (3) What are the possible causes for the tendencies? To answer these questions, the paper will draw upon theoretical insights and analytical tools derived from descriptive translation studies and cultural studies. It is hoped that the present study can offer a full picture of the

complex operations involved in translating cultural references in the Chinese classic text into English.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

For the purpose of the present study, theoretical issues such as cultural references, taxonomy of cultural references, and cultural translation strategies need to be clarified here.

Defining and Categorizing Cultural References

In general terms, cultural references reflect values and dynamics of a specific culture (Schwartz, 2007). They manifest the difference between languages and cultures, which requires cross-cultural mediation and negotiation in the translation process. Translating from one culture to another can bring new ideas, concepts, and facts to the recepients whose cultural horizons can thus be expanded (Komissarov, 1991, p. 46). In the sphere of translation studies, cultural references receive different nominations and can be referred to as culturemes, culture-specific items, culture-specific references, and extralinguistic cultural references (Aixelà, 1996; Nord, 1997; Pedersen, 2007; Ranzato, 2015). This paper, however, adopts the term cultural references as an umbrella term to avoid terminological confusion.

There are several definitions regarding cultural references, which are nevertheless not significantly different in general. Aixelà (1996) posits that cultural references pose a translation problem because of the nonexistence or of the different value of these references in the receiving culture (p. 57). He defines cultural references as "those textually actualized items whose function and connotations in a source text involve a translation problem in their transference to a target text" (Aixelà, 1996, p. 58). Due to its distance from the target culture,

Mailhac (1996) understands a cultural reference as a cultural entity which is characterized by a high degree of opacity for the target reader to constitute a problem (p. 134). According to Olk (2013), cultural references are identified as names of objects or concepts in the source text that do not exist or do not have lexical equivalents (i.e., denotations and connotations) available in the translating culture (p. 346). In literature, as Rura (2015) contends, cultural references are referred to as textual units of any length alluding to historical and cultural phenomena and facts with few or no equivalents in other languages (p. 258).

The above understandings of cultural references are similar in highlighting the fact that cultural references register strong national and regional identity inscribed in the source texts. In this study, however, cultural references are defined in a different fashion for their diversity and complexity inherent in the source text under study. To be specific, cultural references refer to words or word-formations that indicate objects, facts, and subjects peculiar to the life, culture, or social development of the Chinese nation, and that manifest a strong national, historical, or even stylistic coloring which remains unfamiliar or totally unknown to most Westerners and requires huge cognitive effort for comprehension. Due to the difference between languages and cultures, the translation of cultural references means a challenge to translators as the form and function of these references differ in the cultures compared (Katan, 1999). It is thus not surprising that the handling of cultural references in translation has been deemed as one of the most challenging "cultural bumps" (Leppihalme, 1997).

As a rule, cultural references can fall into different categories. Several scholars have developed taxonomies to divide different types of cultural references. For instance, Nida (1964) proposes five categories of cultural references which may lead to translational dilemmas: ecological culture, material culture, social culture, religious culture, and linguistic culture (p. 91). Newmark (1988) similarly

produces five types of cultural references, including ecological culture, material culture, social culture, institutional culture, and gestures and habits (p. 96). Chen (1999) divides cultural references into just three main groups: material culture, institutional culture, and mental culture. Certain overlapping or interweaving areas can be observed in these typologies. More recently, another interesting framework is offered by Ditze (2006), who groups cultural images in literary works into non-personal, transpersonal, and personal dimensions (p. 52). An obvious disadvantage for Ditze's framework is that the three dimensions cannot be defined very clearly. Therefore, Nida's taxonomic framework is considered most relevant to this study, which will be specified in a later section.

Cultural Translation Strategies: Domestication and Foreignization

The notion of translation strategy plays an essential role in translation studies research. It has significant implications for both translation scholarship and translation practice. Lörscher (1991) identifies translation strategy as "a potentially conscious procedure for the solution of a problem which an individual is faced with when translating a text segment from one language into another" (p. 76). Chesterman (1997) posits that translation strategies are goal-oriented procedures which are identifiable from the translated text compared with its source text (p. 89). These procedures are governed by the choices the translators make from among several alternatives (Chesterman, 1997, p. 90). Apropos of the choice of translation strategy, Friedrich Schleiermacher considered there to be two paths or choices open for a translator: "Either the translator leaves the writer alone as much as possible and moves the reader toward the writer, or he leaves the reader alone as much as possible and moves the writer toward the reader" (Schleiermacher, 1813/1992, p. 41). Schleiermacher's preferred strategy is moving the reader to the writer as this can give the reader the same impression that the translator would receive while reading the text

in the source language. To this end, the translator can adopt an "alienating" rather than a "naturalizing" method of translation to valorize the foreign and to convey that to the target text (Schleiermacher, 1813/1992, p. 43). Lawrence Venuti, however, takes this a step further and puts forward the two concepts of domestication and foreignization, which are instrumental in exploring and solving cultural translation problems.

According to Venuti, domestication is a global strategy of translation. It involves translating in a transparent, fluent, and invisible style in order to minimize the foreignness of the original text and to adapt to target literary canons or discourse types (Venuti, 1995, p. 19). Hence, the domesticating strategy would entail "an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values, bringing the author back home" (Venuti, 1995, p. 20). While domestication serves broader domestic agendas, it can nevertheless facilitate the understanding of the target text on the part of the general reading public.

Unlike domestication, foreignization is a type of translation which can resist fluency and "register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad" (Venuti, 1995, p. 20). The choice of foreignizing strategy can make visible the translator, manifest the foreign identity or cultural specificity of the source work, and contend with the dominance of fluent, transparent translation strategies (Venuti, 1995, p. 311). Like Schleiermacher, Venuti (1995) argues for a foreignizing translation as it is more desirable and instrumental in breaking target conventions and in signifying the otherness when a foreign text is transposed to a hegemonic culture (p. 311). While foreignization can enact an alien reading experience, it may demand the target reader to expend more cognitive effort for perceiving and interpreting a foreignized text.

In effect, domestication and foreignization strategies have political, ideological, and ethical implications. They have taken a central position in discussions of translation strategies in Anglophone contexts (Snell-Hornby, 2006,

p. 147). They take into consideration the impact of translation products on the receiving audiences as well as the target cultures. It should be noted, however, that the two approaches, domestication and foreignization, are not binary opposites. In view of this, Venuti (1998) contends that:

> Both sets of terms demarcate a spectrum of textual and cultural effects that depend for their description and evaluation on the relation between a translation project and the hierarchical arrangement of values in the receiving situation at a particular historical moment. (p. 19)

Therefore, it seems that there should be a continuum existing between domestication and foreignization regarding a given translation (Van Poucke, 2012, p. 139). In practice, no source text can be totally foreignized or thoroughly domesticated in the translation process. In other words, domestication and foreignization should be coexistent in any translation but normally there is a predominant strategy that can be identified as the general tendency for the translator to render a given source text or certain aspects of it. In the present study, for instance, one of the research aims is to determine the general tendency for each translator (i.e., Egerton & Roy) in dealing with the transfer of cultural references.

Research Methods

Methodologically, the present study is positioned within the paradigm of descriptive translation studies (DTS) (Toury, 1995). This paradigm aims to compare source and target texts, identify translational shifts and describe translational phenomena. It relies on empirical evidence and favors the case study method combining quantitative and qualitative data analysis. Based on the DTS paradigm, this study resorts to a mixed-method design which combines quantitative and qualitative approaches.

To address the questions proposed in the introductory section, the study is divided into two phases. In the first phase, a qualitative textual analysis is presented. Due to space limitations, it is unfeasible to take account of all cultural references in *Jinpingmei* as the novel is a magnum opus with one-hundred chapters. As such, several illustrative examples are singled out from the source text and compared against the English renderings with special attention to translational shifts and their effects. In the second phase, the study moves on to a quantitative data analysis, which can complement or to corroborate the findings obtained from qualitative analysis. The quantitative data consists of textual samples collected at random from the source and target texts to establish a bilingual corpus for statistic analysis. The statistical analysis is concerned with the frequencies of the translators' deployment of concrete strategies for rendering cultural references.

To facilitate qualitative analysis, all selected cultural references are categorized according to Nida's proposed taxonomy of cultural references, who posits five major categories of cultural references, as listed in Table 1 below. Nida's (1964) model is relevant as it can distinguish cultural renferences according to their nature. More significantly, this taxonomy can incorporate all key cultural references in the corpus under study.

Table 1

Categorization of Cultural References

linguistic culture:	terms of address, idiomatic expressions, etc.
material culture:	food, drinks, clothes, goods, instruments, etc.
social culture:	customs, festivals, organizations, etc.
religious culture:	religious beliefs, values, names of deities, etc.
ecological culture:	landscape, flora and fauna, geography, etc.

Note. Adapted from Nida's typology, by E. A. Nida, 1964, p. 91. Copyright 1964 by Brill Archive.

Once cultural references are selected and categorized, it is necessary to classify the concrete procedures and strategies as they will be used to describe translational shifts. However, the procedures and strategies, as proposed in previous studies (Aixelà, 1996, pp. 52-78; Cintas & Remael, 2007, p. 202), are adapted to the specificity of the present study. The adapted typology is illustrated in Table 2 below. Notably, the procedures are positioned along a continuum based on the paradigm of foreignization and domestication. This paradigm serves as the most important theoretical underpinning for this study.

Table 2

Typology of Procedures and Strategies for Rendering Cultural References
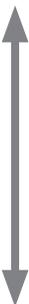
Domestication (TT oriented)	Omission	CRs are ignored or deleted in the target text
	Substitution	CRs are replaced with target cultural items easier to be understood
	Paraphrase	using familiar terms to explain the original CRs
	Generalization	simplifying those complex CRs
	Literal translation	translating CRs verbatim or in a word-for-word way
	Explicitation	over-literal transfer; representing the full meaning of CRs
	Calque	inventing new lexical terms based on the source writing system
Foreignization (ST oriented)	Transliteration	using the source pinyin system to represent CRs in the target text

The above typology represents a more relevant classification of translation procedures and strategies that translators have deployed to deal with cultural references in the corpus under study. The various procedures and strategies will be exemplified in the ensuing qualitative and quantitative analysis.

Qualitative Textual Analysis

Following the methodology established in the previous section, this section presents a qualitative textual analysis. To facilitate discussion, cultural references appear in bold; the source text is abbreviated as ST while the target text as TT. Additionally, TT1 indicates Egerton's translation while TT2 refers to Roy's version. 11 sets of examples are analyzed and discussed. All the examples are numbered sequentially. The discussion begins with the category of linguistic culture.

Translating Cultural References at the Linguistic Level

In this subsection, special attention is paid to terms of address and several idiomatic expressions.

Terms of Address

It is true that most Chinese kinship terms take multiple shapes and are rather difficult to find English counterparts for due to the big difference between cultures.

Table 3

Honorifics and Self-Abasing Terms

ST	TT1	TT2
官人貴庚？沒了娘子多少時了？西門慶道：「小人虛度二十八歲，不幸先妻沒了一年有餘」。(Xiao, 2012, p. 61)	"How old is this **gentleman** and how long is it since his **lady** died?" "**I** have misspent twenty-eight years," Ximen Qing said, "and **my wife** unfortunately died more than a year ago." (Egerton, 2011a, p. 109)	"How old are you, **sir**," the woman asked, "and how long has **your wife** been dead?" "**I**'m twenty-seven," said Hsi-men Ch'ing, "and I was born on the twenty-eighth day of the seventh month, at midnight. Unfortunately **my former wife** has been dead now for more than a year." (Roy, 1993, p. 134)

In Table 3, expressions such as *guanren* 官人 , *niangzi* 娘子 , *xiaoren* 小人 , and *xianqi* 先妻 in the ST are honorifics and self-abasing terms used in premodern Chinese society. Faced by this reality, Kwong claims that an appropriate strategy would be "to abide by the original's basic semantic meaning, keeping reductive or distorting interpretation of the text to a minimum, and letting the translated language generate its artistic chemistry" (Kwong, 2011, p. 200). In TT1, *guanren* is substituted with "gentleman"; *niangzi* and *xianqi* are generalized as "lady" and "my wife." In TT2, *guanren* is substituted with "sir"; *niangzi* is substituted with "your wife"; *xianqi* which means "deceased wife" in the ST is translated word-for-word as "my former wife." The term *xiaoren* is substituted with "I" in both translations. Due to cultural difference between Chinese and English, these elegant terms of address cannot find equivalents in the target language. The English renderings have conveyed the original's semantic meanings but nevertheless suppressed the cultural and historical significance of these forms of address.

Slang Terms, Jargon, and Colloquialisms

Jinpingmei is rich in colloquial language. For instance, slang and pithy sayings used by the narrator and characters create ambience and humorous effect. This makes the story authentic, lively, and interesting. The following examples show how different colloquialisms in the ST fare in translation.

Table 4

Slang Terms, Jargon, and Colloquialisms (1)

ST	TT1	TT2
他胸中才學，果然班馬之上，就是人品，也孔孟之流。(Xiao, 2012, p. 507)	He is a learned man and will **stand comparison with Ban and Sima**. He is **a follower of Confucius**. (Egerton, 2011b, p. 37)	The talent and learning he has acquired actually make him **superior to Pan Ku or Ssu-ma Ch'ien**, while, as for his personal integrity, he is **in a class with Confucius and Mencius**. (Roy, 2006, p. 387)

In Table 4, colloquial expressions such as *banmazhishang* 班馬之上 and *kongmengzhiliu* 孔孟之流 in the ST contain allusions to historical figure in ancient China. Precisely, *banma* 班馬 alludes to the historians *Ban Gu* 班固 and *Sima Qian* 司馬遷 of China's Han dynasty (BC 202-220); *kongmeng* 孔孟 alludes to the ancient philosophers *Confucius* 孔子 and *Mencius* 孟子 of China's Spring-Autumn and Warring States Period (BC 770-BC 221). Obviously, the Egerton translation here is characterized by simplification and generalization in rendering the original allusions. Yet the translation remains fluent and natural in general, for the benefit of the target reader. In contrast, TT2 is a literal translation, which has retained intact both the original content and syntactic style. In TT2, all allusions in the ST are preserved, which builds a bridge for target readers to access Chinese historical figures. In Berman's (1992) parlance, "a good translation retains this strangeness even as it makes the work accessible to us" (p. 24).

Table 5

Slang Terms, Jargon, and Colloquialisms (2)

ST	TT1	TT2
又有幾個服侍的小廝也一個個都是**標緻龍陽**的。(Xiao, 2012, p. 509)	There were a host of beautiful maids there and several **good-looking boys**. (Egerton, 2011b, p. 39)	Moreover, there were also a number of page boys, each and every one of which was a **good-looking catamite**. (Roy, 2006, p. 392)

As with *biaozhilongyang* 標緻龍陽 in Table 5, it is an allusion to *Longyang jun* 龍陽君 , a famous gay man with political wisdom in ancient China, and later the name loosely refers to male homosexuals in Chinese society. Obviously, TT1 downplays the ST's cultural image in its pursuit of generalization by offering a more neutral equivalent. In TT2, the term "catamite" is a substitution of the Chinese original, which can invoke a similar association in the target reader. In

Collins English Dictionary (online edition), the word "catamite" is defined as a boy or youth who is used for sexual purposes by a man in ancient Greece and Rome. By recontextualizing the Chinese allusion, TT2 is helpful for conjuring a sexual image on the part of the receiving audience, despite that it fails to reveal the cultural and historical significance of the SL term.

Table 6

Slang Terms, Jargon, and Colloquialisms (3)

ST	TT1	TT2
「你家第五的秋胡戲，你娶他來家多少時了？是**女招**的，是後婚兒來？」西門慶道：「也是**回頭人兒**。」(Xiao, 2012, p. 204)	"Was your **Fifth Lady** married before she came here?" she heard Huilian say. "Yes," Ximen replied, "she is **one of the changeable kind**." (Egerton, 2011a, p. 289)	"How long is it since you married that fifth '**object of Ch'iu Hu's roving eye**' of yours? Was she a **virgin** when you married her, or had she been married before?" "She'd been **married before**," said His-men Ch'ing. (Roy, 2001, p. 53)

In Table 6, we can observe that the dialogue is colloquial and humorous. In Chinese, *qiuhuxi* 秋胡戲 is another literary allusion. It is associated with a man named *Qiu Hu* 秋胡 from the Lu State (BC 1032-BC 249) in ancient China, who left home for three years, leaving his wife alone; on his way back home one day, he met a beautiful woman and flirted with her; the woman was Qiu Hu's wife, but he didn't recognize her; after knowing the truth, Qiu Hu's wife committed suicide (He, 1990, p. 479). The allusion appearing in works of literature generally refers to someone's wife and at times suggests a mistress. *Huitouren* 回頭人 is a euphemistic epithet used to satirize remarried women, and *nuzhao* 女招 indicates an unmarried virgin. All the references entail sarcasm and pejorativeness, reflecting the speaker's attitude. Pesaro (2021) remarks that "[t]ranslation carried out as a form of literary mediation should enhance the cognitive and emotional impact the literary text produces on the

readers" (p. 82). TT2 achieves this effect while TT1 is virtually neutralized to a great extent.

Specifically, in TT2, *qiuhuxi* is adequately converted to the "object of Ch'iu Hu's roving eye." The satirical overtones are reproduced through explicitation and transliteration. *Nuzhao* is paraphrased as "virgin" which approximates to the original. *Huitouren* is paraphrased as "married before," which is fully equivalent to the original meaning. In principle, TT2 captures the original spirit and reproduces the vividness and jocosity of the dialogue. It can be concluded that TT2 shows a foreignizing touch in this example.

By comparison, TT1 gives a very fluent version in which the two terms *qiuhuxi* and *nuzhao* are omitted all together. The term *huitouren* is paraphrased, causing a change in the meaning of the text intended by the novelist. Clearly, TT1 downplays the colloquial effect of the source text. It fails to draw the reader's attention to the affective associations attached to the culture-bound lexis. Despite fluency and accessibility, the choice made in TT1 removes the tantalizing and humorous tone of the original which should have been realized for the target reader.

Translating Cultural References at the Material Level

Jinpingmei is a novel of manners and many plots take place in the domestic setting, namely the male protagonist's household. The novel's focuses on the delineation of the protagonists' daily life and activities in various perspectives. The protagonist, Ximen Qing, is a wealthy merchant and official who lead extravagant life with his wife and mistresses. In the novel, a variety of material concepts are presented, which renders the story exceedingly authentic and realistic. The material elements reflect culture and values and assert national identity of the source-language text. More significantly, material culture in its differing forms and types functions as crucial thematic constructs and a central motif in *Jinpingmei*. What

will be discussed in the following includes food and drinks for which target audiences do not share the same value as the source readership due to the lack of probable cultural equivalents. Terms referring to material culture are therefore worthy to be translated adequately so that their cultural imagery could be fully transposed to the target culture.

Table 7

Food and Wine (1)

ST	TT1	TT2
唱畢，吃了**元宵**，韓道國先往家去了。(Xiao, 2012, p. 376)	When the song was ended, they ate the **pastries**. Han Daoguo was the first to go home. (Egerton, 2011a, p. 509)	When the singing was over, they ate the **Lantern Festival dumplings**, and then Han Tao-kuo was the first to go home. (Roy, 2006, p. 35)

In Table 7, *yuanxiao* 元宵 refers to a special type of food enjoyed by people at the Lantern Festival. It certainly possesses significant social value because it triggers associations with traditional Chinese festivals. A cursory glance at the two English texts shows that the term *yuanxiao* is substituted with "pastries" in TT1. The cultural and symbolic value of the term is lost in translation. TT2 is a literal translation as *yuanxiao* is directly rendered as the "Lantern Festival dumplings." The meaning and linguistic designation are conveyed to the target reader, including the emotive value of this special food. The exotic flavor of the source culture figure prominently in TT2. Table 8 below showcases a concentration of food-related cultural references in the ST.

Table 8

Food and Wine (2)

ST	TT1	TT2
先緽邊兒放了四疊果子、四疊小菜、又是四疊案酒：一疊頭魚、一疊糟鴨、一疊烏皮雞、一疊舞鱸公。(Xiao, 2012, p. 439)	There were three or four plates of **fruits**, four smaller and four larger dishes to accompany the wine. There was one dish of **fish head**, one of **preserved duck**, one of **chicken** and one of **sea porch**. (Egerton, 2011a, p. 585)	To begin with, there were four saucers of **nuts**, and four saucers of **appetizers**. Then there were another four dishes to complement the wine, namely, one saucer of **bullhead**, one saucer of **duck preserved in a fermented wine mash**, one saucer of **black-bone chicken**, and one saucer of **still wriggling male sculpin**. (Roy, 2006, p. 198)

　　While the importance of food to Chinese culture is well known, Chinese cuisine remains largely unknown in the Western world. Few specifically Chinese foods have been introduced to Western society due to profound cultural difference. Therefore, it is hard to find equivalents in the receptor culture when Chinese dishes get translated into English. The presentation of food and wine in *Jinpingmei* is important for plot advancement and characterization, so it is a necessary object of translation. Yet, it is by no means easy to convey the aesthetic characteristics of food names in a different culture.

　　Evidently, TT1 is condensed by omission of the signals of luxury and copiousness included in the ST. The terms *touyu* 頭魚 , *zaoya* 糟鴨 , *wupiji* 烏皮雞 , and *wulugung* 舞鱸公 are generalized in TT1 but are explicitated in TT2. The preparation methods, ingredients, and utensils for the dishes are well represented to target readers through explicitation in TT2. Thus, it appears that TT2 manifests the value and significance of the food discourses in the original for prospective readers. We should bear in mind that the extravagance and luxury apparent in the food-choices are an index of the social and economic status of the protagonist's family as portrayed in *Jinpingmei*.

As Garzone (2017) argues, "food choices are…social or religious belonging, as often within a given culture certain kinds of foods are prescribed or proscribed to different categories of persons" (p. 218). As the food names and variety have been created intentionally by the novelist, it is crucial to make target readers aware of the level of detail in translation to help them immerse themselves in the fictive world and better perceive the minutiae of the story. Additionally, the sensory experience and exotic flavor stand out markedly in TT2, which conjures up a vivid and varied image of the Chinese culinary culture depicted in the novel. The treatment of foodstuffs in TT2 illustrates the advantage of foreignization as described by Venuti (1995) because it reaffirms the alien façade of the ST and preserves cultural diversity (p. 305).

Translating Cultural References at the Social Level

Social culture concerns a variety of cultural references which include customs, folk activities, organizations, habits and the like. In *Jinpingmei*, there are references to traditional festivals and folk customs unfamiliar to English-speaking audiences. The translation of these specific concepts is often problematic. The following examples illustrate how social culture is treated by the translators.

Traditional Festivals

Several traditional festivals are mentioned in the novel, which increases cultural barriers for interlingual translation.

Table 9

Traditional Festivals

ST	TT1	TT2
一日，將近**端陽佳節**。 (Xiao, 2012, p. 54)	It was the **Dragon Boat Festival**. (Egerton, 2011a, p. 101)	One day the **Dragon Boat Festival**, **on the fifth day of the fifth month**, rolled around. (Roy, 1993, p. 117) Light and darkness alternate swiftly. Before long the
光陰迅速，又早九月**重陽**。(Xiao, 2012, p. 111)	The days passed quickly. It was **the Feast of the Ancestral Tombs**. (Egerton, 2011a, p. 175)	**Double Yang festival, on the ninth day of the ninth month** rolled around. (Roy, 1993, p. 259)

In Table 9, the two English translations appear similar in dealing with the cultural reference *duanyangjiajie* 端陽佳節 . Both versions are literally rendered as "Dragon Boat Festival" which is a calque/loanword in the English language. The festival is held in memory of *Qu Yuan* 屈原 , a great poet and scholar, on the fifth day of the fifth lunar month. In TT2, the date of this traditional Chinese festival is presented to make readers from a remote culture more familiar with it. Both the Gregorian calendar and the lunar calendar are in use in Chinese society, but traditional Chinese festivals are based on the latter. It turns out that TT2 works fine through mentioning the month and date of the festival. It is a clear example of explicitation.

Noticeably, *chongyang* 重陽 is a quintessentially Chinese festival. It falls on the ninth day of the ninth lunar month. The number "nine" in Chinese culture represents a *yang* 陽 number according to *Yijing* 易經 (*The Book of Changes*). As this day contains two nine's, it is also called the Double Yang Festival. Comparing the two English versions, TT2 unpacks the original connotations and fleshes out the cultural difference by coining a new term, pointing to the underlying cultural alterity. By comparison, TT1 is a paraphrase for the original term, which preserves the cultural information in the ST.

As Venuti puts it, translations are hoped to show respect for the source culture

through producing "a correspondence that enlarges, amplifies and enriches the translating language" (Venuti, 1998, p. 81). TT2 shows this respect for the ST in manifesting cultural difference.

Customs, Practices, and Games

Jinpingmei contains exhaustive descriptions of the characters' daily activities, such as gaming, singing, praying, and the like. These items constitute traditional customs and rituals. Some of these traditions may have a long history in China but may not have survived in contemporary society. Hence, they have become parts of cultural heritage. In the following, some typical examples will be discussed.

Table 10

Customs, Practices, and Games (1)

ST	TT1	TT2
西門慶又脫下他一隻繡花鞋兒，擎在手內，放一小杯酒在內，吃鞋杯耍子。(Xiao, 2012, p. 57)	Ximen took off one of her embroidered shoes, poured a cup of wine into it, and drank. (Egerton, 2011a, p. 104)	His-men Ch'ing took off one of her embroidered shoes, held it in his hand while he put a little cup of wine in it, and then **drank a "shoe cup"** for the fun of it. (Roy, 1993, p. 123)
他在家跟著人走百病去了。(Xiao, 2012, p. 212)	She had been out on the walk to **cure the hundred illnesses**. (Egerton, 2011a, p. 298)	She had joined some neighbors in **"walking off the hundred ailments."** (Roy, 2001, p. 72)

In Table 10, *xiebei* 鞋杯 is a kind of kitsch game played by scholar-officials in imperial China. In *Jinpingmei*, it is played by Ximen Qing and Pan Jinlian, the male and female protagonists, in the sixth chapter. It is no longer existent in China today. To put it differently, the game has become a historical phenomenon in the source culture and is relevant for advancing the plot. Thus, it is necessary to preserve this cultural marker in translation. In TT1, the term *xiebei* is omitted, so the cultural mark is absent from the translation. However, in TT2, it is valued and

kept relatively intact by calquing a new term, "shoe cup," which transmits the denotative meaning well and preserves the source cultural image.

Additionally, *zoubaibing* 走百病 was a superstitious activity performed during the Lantern Festival when women in ancient China went out onto the city streets to eliminate misfortunes and pray for blessings for themselves and their family. It does not mean curing illness but implies praying not to fall ill. In TT1, the referential meaning of the cultural term is distorted, presenting the reader with a potential misconception. In contrast, TT2 is more source-oriented, and the cultural connotation of the term is also illuminated through literal transfer.

Table 11

Customs, Practices, and Games (2)

ST	TT1	TT2
旋邀了應伯、謝希大來打雙陸。良久，都出來院子內投壺耍子。(Xiao, 2012, p. 166)	He invited Ying Bojue and Xie Xida to **play backgammon** with him. After a while they all went to the courtyard to **play Arrows through the Jar**. (Egerton, 2011a, p. 246)	Later on, he sent someone to invite Ying Po-chueh and Hsieh His-ta to join him for **a game of backgammon**. After a while, they went into the courtyard together and amused themselves by **playing at "pitch-pot**." (Roy, 1993, p. 393)

In Table 11, two kinds of folk activities are delineated in the source text, namely *dashuanglu* 打雙陸 and *touhushuazi* 投壺耍子 . The two games have great importance for plot and characterization but are probably unfamiliar to an English addressee because there are no such activities in the receptor culture. Comparing the two translations illustrates that *dashuanglu* is rendered verbatim as "backgammon" in both versions. Yet, *touhushuazi* is treated differently. In TT1, it is rendered as "play Arrows through the Jar" which is easily comprehensible for a target audience but detracts from the original too much. In TT2, the cultural item is treated with a defamiliarizing effect. The calqued term "pitch-pot" is more accurate because it

captures the nuances of the game and adds a certain amount of local flavor on the reader. The intended reader is made aware that it is a sort of folk tradition from a different culture, thus reaffirming the foreign cultural imagery. Yet, a shortcoming is that it may not be easily comprehensible to the general reader unless an illustration of the game can be offered as a guide.

Translating Cultural References at the Religious Level

In Chinese society, three important religions, namely Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, have powerful impacts on language and culture, although Confucianism is considered by many as a philosophical school rather than a religion. As essential parts of Chinese culture, the three religions influence Chinese people's social life, ideology, and values. Religious elements are commonplace in traditional Chinese fiction, carrying important hallmarks of Chinese history and culture. As far as *Jinpingmei* is concerned, the book incorporates numerous references to Buddhism and Taoism which are relevant to plot structure and characterization. In Anglophone culture, Christianity is the predominant religion and exerts a powerful influence on various aspects of the English-speaking audience's lives and ways of thinking. Religious differences between China and the Western world can play a crucial role in cross-cultural encounters. This is mainly due to mismatches in interpreting and valuing religious phenomena. Some translation problems can be found in the religious concepts contained in *Jinpingmei*. The following are prime examples which may illustrate whether and how religious culture is conveyed in the two translations.

Table 12

Religious Culture

ST	TT1	TT2
阿彌陀佛！這是西門老爹門首慶？(Xiao, 2012, p. 512)	Outside the gate, he called loudly upon **Buddha** and asked: "Is this the noble Ximen's house? (Egerton, 2011b, p. 43)	**Amitabha Buddha**! Is this the gate to the residence of His Honor His-men Ch'ing? (Roy, 2006, p. 402)
咱聞那佛祖西天，也只不過要黃金鋪地，陰司十殿，也要些楮鏹營求。(Xiao, 2012, p. 515)	Besides, they tell me that gold is not despised, even in **Paradise**, and, in the **ten regions of Hell**, money is at a premium. (Egerton, 2011b, p. 47)	I've heard it said of the **Jetavana Park**, **in the western realm of the Buddhist patriarch** himself, that it was only acquired after the grounds were paved with gold and that even in the **Ten Courts of the Underworld**, something in the way of paper money is required if one is to survive. (Roy, 2006, p. 411)
怪不的那賊淫婦死了，墮阿鼻地獄！(Xiao, 2012, p. 252)	When that thievish whore died, she went to **the lowest depths of Hell**. (Egerton, 2011a, p. 346)	No wonder that lousy whore went straight to **the Avici Hell** when she died. (Roy, 2001, p. 164)

In Table 12, religious references are concerned with Buddhism. To illustrate, *amituofo* 阿彌陀佛 is one of the many Buddhas. It is generalized as "Buddha" in TT1 but is rendered adequately as "Amitabha Buddha" in TT2. The referential meaning is made explicit in TT2 through literal rendition. The references *fozuxitian* 佛祖西天 and *yinsishidian* 陰司十殿 are specific to Buddhism. In TT1, both religious expressions are domesticated through substitution with terms more familiar to the target audience. In contrast, in TT2, the two elements are literally transferred by foreignizing the Buddhist concepts. The religious content is conveyed to the reader and a better understanding of the text can be attained in TT2. In the same vein, *abidiyu* 阿鼻地獄 is reduced to a familiar term easily comprehensible for an intended audience in TT1. In TT2, it is rendered verbatim as "Avici Hell" with the source religious color left intact. It seems that TT2 is characterized by the frequent use of more academic or professional vocabulary to interpret religious references in the ST.

Translating Cultural References at the Ecological Level

The final dimension concerns cultural references featuring nature and geography. In *Jinpingmei*, natural scenes, weather, historical locations, flora and fauna are vividly portrayed. They may have less relevance to plot or characterization but can determine a specific cultural setting and add a certain amount of local color. They may also contribute to certain images of Chinese culture as there is the tradition of "exhausting meaning through images" in Chinese literature (Cao, 2010, p. 31). In translation, they constitute a major locus of cultural representation and manipulation. In addition, the ecological references have multiple levels of metaphorical associations in different cultures. In Chinese literary texts, depictions of nature, plants, animals, and place names are highly charged with rhetorical qualities and symbolic value. Cross-cultural problems may emerge as to what translatorial choices should be made. The following examples may illustrate this point.

Table 13

Ecological References

ST	TT1	TT2
又有耐寒**君子竹**、欺雪**大夫松**。(Xiao, 2012, p. 160)	They looked at the **bamboos that bore the cold like supermen**, and the proud **pine trees boldly contemptuous of the snow**. (Egerton, 2011a, p. 239)	That "**cold-enduring gentleman**," **the bamboo**, and that "**snow-despising grandee**," **the pine**. (Roy, 1993, p. 379)

In Table 13, bamboo and pine trees are two kinds of plants that symbolize tenacity and stamina in the Chinese cultural tradition. Here in the source text, bamboo is likened to a gentleman while pine trees are compared to scholar-officials. TT1 is a paraphrastic translation which reveals the intended metaphorical meaning. TT1 conveys to the reader a scene which is similarly evocative in visual terms as the

source text. Likewise, TT2 invokes the original imagery and conveys the cultural context of the original expression. The beauty and emotive value of the original metaphorical expression are preserved in this literal, or word-for-word translation. Newmark (1988) posits that if the artistic work with a strong local flavor and if the culture is as important as the message, a literal transfer is preferred (p. 11). TT2 creatively adds an exotic flavor through literal rendition.

Quantitative Statistical Analysis

The qualitative textual analysis offered in the preceding section gives the impression that Egerton's translation is basically target-oriented while Roy's stays closer to the source culture. Egerton mainly adopts procedures such as paraphrase, generalization, and omission, whereas Roy deploys literal translation, calquing, transliteration, and explicitation. This section seeks to complement the qualitative textual analysis with quantitative approaches to present a fuller picture of the difference in handling cultural references between the two translators. Quantitative analysis can help validate qualitative study by widening the analytical scope. Thus, a statistical analysis will be carried out to determine the frequencies of the translation procedures and strategies employed by Egerton and Roy.

The number of cultural references in *Jinpingmei* is large. It would be unfeasible to take into account all of them in this small paper. Based on Nida's typology of cultural references, a total of 312 samples are randomly selected to form the corpus for statistical analysis. The corpus can allow us to discern the tendency followed by each translator in rendering cultural references. Of course, the corpus may not allow the researcher to obtain any generalizable results which certainly demand a larger-scale corpus. This will be a future work. The procedures and strategies are subsumed under the principles of foreignization and

domestication as indicated in Section three. The frequency of each procedure is calculated to show the general tendencies of the two translators.

As outlined in Section three, foreignization normally involves calquing, literal translation, transliteration, and explicitation while domestication involves omission, substitution, generalization, and paraphrase. Figure 1 below shows the frequency of procedures and tactics used by Egerton and Roy.

Figure 1

Distribution of Procedures and Strategies Used by Egerton and Roy
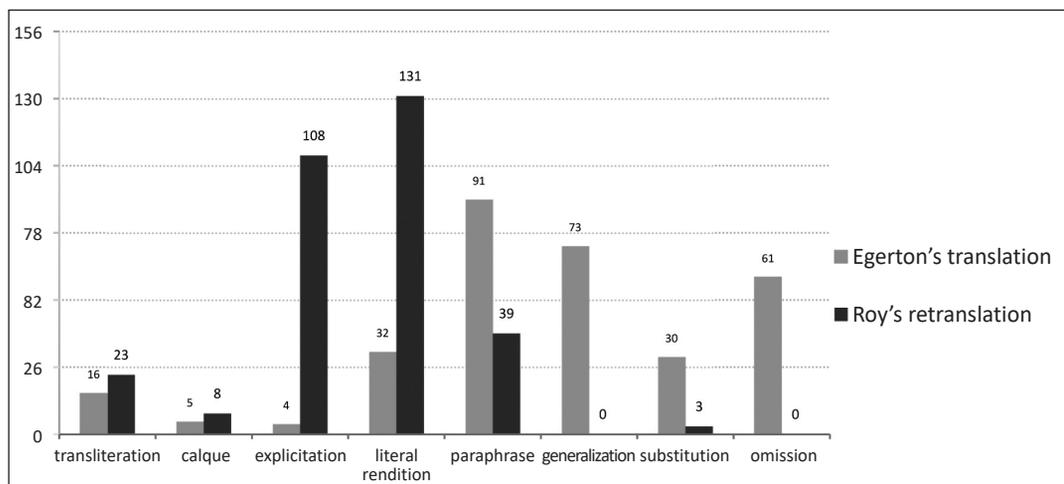
Egerton's translation has a great number of instances of generalization, paraphrase, and omission, amounting to around 225 instances. This contrasts with Roy's translation, which features over 200 instances of literal rendition and explicitation, about half the total number in the corpus. Paraphrase is less common in Roy's translation, adding up to less than 40 instances, but omission is used very sparingly. This quantitative result almost concurs with the qualitative textual analysis carried out in the preceding section. In the textual analysis, Egerton's solution-types are more flexible or more diversified than Roy's in rendering the

wide variety of cultural references in *Jinpingmei*. This shows that Egerton's renderings appear fluent, readable, and easily comprehensible on the part of the target English-language readers. Roy's renderings have a strong foreignizing, or exotic effect, but this does not suggest that Roy totally gives up domestication tactics. In fact, both translators adopt foreignizing and domesticating methods in the process of translating cultural references, as can be seen in the percentages presented in the following.

As for the percentages of procedures and strategies employed by Egerton and Roy, Table 14 and Table 15 below demonstrate that Roy uses the foreignizing strategy around 270 times (with a percentage as high as 86.53) and makes few concessions to the domesticating strategy (with a percentage as low as 13.46).

Table 14

Percentages of Procedures and Strategies Adopted by Egerton and by Roy

	transli-teration	calque	explici-tation	literal rendition	para-phrase	generali-zation	substi-tution	omi-ssion
Egerton's translation	5.12	1.60	1.28	10.25	29.16	23.39	9.61	19.55
Roy's retranslation	7.37	2.56	34.61	41.98	12.5	0	0.96	0

Table 15

Tendencies Towards Domestication and Foreignization in the Two Translations

	foreignization		domestication	
	total	percentage	total	percentage
Egerton's translation	57	18.26	255	81.73
Roy's retranslation	270	86.53	42	13.46

By comparison, paraphrase (29.16%) is the most frequently used procedure in Egerton's translation, and generalization (23.39%) and omission (19.55%) are also common. Thus, the statistics show two different tendencies largely established in the process of rendering cultural references in *Jinpingmei*. Egerton's translation leans to domestication while Roy's translation has a marked foreignizing tendency. The tendencies have implications for understanding the translators' cultural attitudes towards the source text and their positioning in presenting translations to the intended audience. They also encourage us to look at the factors and the extra-textual influences during the translation process, which will be discussed in the next section.

The statistical data also indicate that neither of the translators has recourse to exclusively domesticating or exclusively foreignizing strategies in rendering cultural references. Rather, their translational strategies fall along the continuum of domestication and foreignization with different frequencies. This concurs with Venuti's observation that foreignization and domestication are not binary opposites but should be perceived as a question of degree in rendering a given source text (Venuti, 1998, p. 13). The next section will explain the significance of the findings and discuss the relevant factors contributing to the different tendencies for the two translators.

Discussion and Conclusion

In light of the descriptive analysis in the previous two sections, and based on the main findings, it can be concluded that Egerton demonstrates a domesticating tendency to render cultural references in *Jinpingmei* whereas Roy shows a foreignizing tendency to deal with these elements. The different tendencies shown by the two translators in dealing with the transfer of cultural references can be attributable to several factors. Overall, two significant concerns may have influenced the two translators' choice of strategies. The following discussion will elaborate on these.

The first consideration is the different social and historical context in which the two translations emerged. As translations are artefacts of the host culture, any translators perform their work in a specific cultural context (Toury, 1995, p. 24). Dimitriu (2015) posits context as a key parameter for "complex analyses of the translator's activities and decisions" (p. 5) in translation studies. Egerton's *Lotus* was produced in early twentieth century England. At that time, Chinese literature and culture was unfamiliar or unknown to most Western readers. It is not easy for English-language readers to understand the rich tapestry of cultural references present in a novel translated from Chinese. According to Liu et al. (2012), "[i]n past English history China has been so marginal to its perception of the world order, that when it appears in a translation into English, it has to leap quite a credibility gap in the English reader" (p. 18). Interest in things Chinese in Britain faded since the late nineteenth century. After the Opium War (1839-1842), British perceptions of the Chinese changed dramatically and the esteem felt for China and the Chinese declined in the British context (Barringer & Flynn, 1998, p. 28). When China's Boxer Rising broke out in 1900, Sinophobia and Yellow Peril were in full swing in the West and the Chinese continued to be stereotyped as a curious people. It was after the First World War that the Sinophobia sentiment diminishes significantly due to the rise of business interest in China and the growing antifascism sentiment in Britain (Yeh, 2008, p. 301). The British antifascism prompted sympathy for the Chinese when Japan invaded Manchuria in the early 1930s and British views of the Chinese also changed for the better (Ma & Guan, 2017, p. 568). During the 1920s, "China fever" already gripped Britain because of new economic, cultural, and political interests in China (Yeh, 2008, p. 301). For instance, Chinese commodities, fashion, and art were well received in Britain at the time. More significantly, many writers, scholars, and poets showed intense interest in Chinese literature and culture and translated a variety of Chinese poems and fictional works during the first half of the twentieth century.

The imagist poet Ezra Pound, for instance, translated numerous Chinese classical poems for his contemporary readers. His *Cathay* (published in 1915) created a sensation at the time and stimulated many others to read and translate Chinese poetry. The famous poet T. S. Eliot stated that Pound was "the inventor of Chinese poetry for our time" (Eliot, 1928, p. vvii). Aside from Pound, Arthur Waley also translated hundreds of Chinese classic poems into English, which attracted widespread attention in the 1910s. Waley's *Chinese Poems* printed in 1916 was well received among his contemporaries such as W. B. Yeats, Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, and Bertrand Russell (Chan & Pollard, 1995, p. 423). Waley's *A Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems* published in 1918 was even regarded as "one of the most memorable books of recent years" (Johns, 1982, p. 18). Some of the poems translated from Chinese have been anthologized more than once and enjoyed as English literature in their own right.

However, most of these translations were by no means faithful to the Chinese original as they were largely abridgements, adaptations, and "refractions", in Lefevere's (1982) words (p. 5). In both Pound's *Cathay* and Waley's *Chinese Poems*, for instance, there were signs of adaptation, alteration, and invention or skillful improvement. The translators took great liberties to manipulate or adapt the source texts to meet target readers' horizon of expectations. The same is true of translations of Chinese prose fiction and plays during the time. Pearl S. Buck's *All Men are Brothers*, a translation of the Ming novel *Shuihuzhuan* 水滸傳 published in London in 1933, was adapted and abridged to suit the tastes of contemporary Western readers. Buck's writing not only fostered favorable attitudes among Westerners towards the Chinese but also aroused an interest in Chinese culture. As with Chinese plays translated into English, Shih-I Hsiung's 熊式一 *Lady Precious Stream* (published in 1934) must be mentioned here since it reflected British chinoiserie tradition of appropriating Chinese culture during the 1930s. Hsiung was a Chinese diaspora writer in London and his *Lady Precious Stream*, a translation of *Wang Baochuan* 王寶釧 , made a

commercial success through localizing Peking Opera and adapting it to conform to the chinoiserie tradition in Britain. According to Yeh (2014), there was in fact "an emerging fashion for an exotic China in the UK" (p. 35) during the 1920s and 1930s and traditional Chinese things were what a British audience wanted to perceive and appreciate. The play *Lady Precious Stream* was a prime example.

As Yeh explains, despite the "emerging fashion for an exotic China" in Britain in the 1930s, China was still imagined as remote and less appealing than India and Japan in culture and the arts (Yeh, 2014, p. 50). The dominant ideology in the target culture in the early twentieth century viewed China and its culture as quite alien, unfamiliar, and lacking appeal (Liu et al., 2012, p. 18). This also partly explains why Waley and other translators of Chinese literature favored adaptation and rewriting techniques in the translation process. As Lefevere (1992) puts it, "ideology and poetics particularly shape the translator's strategy in solving problems raised by elements in the Universe of Discourse of the original and the linguistic expressions of that original" (p. 48). Egerton undertook his translation during this period, and he could not be exempt from the influence of the dominant ideology in the society. In view of the then receptive environment for Chinese literature and culture in Britain, it should come as no surprise that Egerton tended to use domesticating strategies for translating cultural references in *Jinpingmei*. This could avoid confronting his targeted readers with much of the unfamiliar and unfathomable cultural heterogeneity of the source work. The translation strategies Egerton used were similar, if not the same, to those used by his contemporaries, which could bring readers pleasure, enhance their reading experience, and facilitate comprehension. In short, Egerton's domesticating tendency is closely related to the social and historical context of the receiving culture when he undertook his project.

On the other hand, Roy undertook his project in the 1980s. His first tome came out in 1993 and the last volume was completed in 2013. Roy's translation was

credited with the rapid development of Chinese Studies in North America in the late twentieth century. The establishment of Sino-U.S. diplomatic relations in 1979 and the implementation of mainland China's reform and opening-up policy in the 1980s have made China preoccupy the Western consciousness. Chinese Studies have grown popular in North American institutions, providing a number of ways of understanding China and constructing "Chineseness." Since the 1990s, China's rapid economic achievements and full integration into the global economy have enhanced soft power on several levels. Soft power, as Nye (2004) posits, is the ability of a country to persuade others to do what it wants through rojecting and maintaining a positive national image (p. 11). Nye (2004) reminds us that primary sites of soft power entail "culture, values and foreign policies" (p. 11) and culture remains the most important. Western interest in China's rise as an economic powerhouse in this globalized world has also prompted growing interest in Chinese culture and literature. Given the growing recognition and importance of Chinese literature in the "world republic of letters" (Casanova, 2004), a growing number of translations of Chinese literary texts have been published in the Anglophone world since the 1990s. Most of the translations have been done by professional and scholarly translators, each appealing to different kinds of English-speaking audiences. As postulated by Kowallis (1996), "the importance of expert translation in the whole enterprise of getting the West to take Chinese literature seriously seems, finally, on the verge of being recognized" (p. 153). The Western public has become more receptive to Chinese literature and culture, which no longer seem quite so remote. This may explain why Roy tended to adopt foreignizing strategies for translaing cultural references in *Jinpingmei*. As demonstrated by the qualitative analysis, Roy's translation often keeps close to the source text in form and content. In effect, Roy's translation, following Venuti's (1995) tenets, is meant to "register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text" (p. 20), and to bring target readers into a cross-cultural dialogue with Chinese literature.

Thus, it becomes immediately clear that the different sociohistorical contexts serve as a key factor leading to the two translators' different tendencies in terms of rendering the abundant cultural references in the source text.

Another concern is the translators' different translation philosophies. Egerton was a writer and freelance translator. His translation of *Jinpingmei* was motivated by his interest in learning Chinese language and culture. His translation was chiefly intended to share with contemporary readers the artistic charisma of the Chinese novel as well as the reading pleasure it gives (Egerton, 1939, p. ii). Egerton's *Lotus* was published by George Routledge and Sons Ltd., a commercial press in London in the early twentieth century. So, meeting readers' expectations was exceedingly important for a commercial publisher. To accommodate a wider reading public and to cater to their tastes and reading habits, Egerton resorted to more domesticating strategies for handling cultural references, placing emphasis on fluency, readability, and intelligibility of his renderings.

By contrast, as a scholarly translator, Roy decided to retranslate *Jinpingmei* chiefly because of his ardent love for this masterpiece and of his many years of research on it. He started the retranslation project by contracting with Princeton University Press in the 1990s. The publication by an academic press also indicates the scholarly nature of Roy's translation. Both Roy and his patron paid close attention to the literariness of the original. As shown in the metatexts attached to the published volumes of the translation, Roy and the publisher's shared purpose was to offer both specialist and general readers a genuinely complete version of *Jinpingmei*, aiming at revealing the true value of the novel and its significance not merely to Chinese literature but to world literature, or "Weltliteratur," to use J. W. Goethe's term (Damrosch, 2018). Given that Roy's translation philosophy was to "translate everything" in *Jinpingmei* for his intended readers (Roy, 1993, p. xlvii), it is not difficult to understand why he decided to use foreignizing strategies to deal

with cultural references. He made a great effort to transmit the novel's rich cultural information to the target text, enabling the linguistic and cultural alterity to reach his targeted audiences.

In conclusion, this paper has provided a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the translation of cultural references in *Jinpingmei*. Firstly, it reveals that foreignness or cultural heterogeneity in the Chinese original have been increasingly preserved, as discerned in Roy's retranslation in comparison with Egerton's earlier version. This finding aligns with Bensimon's and Berman's assertions that first translations are naturally closer to the receiving culture while subsequent retranslations tend to return to the original work for restoring its linguistic energy and cultural particularities, thereby achieving an improvement (Bensimon, 1990, p. iv; Berman, 1990, p. 1). Secondly, the paper demonstrates that the translators' choices were both socially and historically determined while rendering cultural references in *Jinpingmei*. Finally, the study shows that both domesticating and foreignizing strategies are deployed by the two translators for rendering cultural references; however, the dominant strategies for Egerton and Roy are domestication and foreignization respectively. It should be noted, however, that the study relies on a relatively small corpus and cannot obtain generalizable results. Further research is still needed by considering a larger corpus to produce more generalizable results or by exploring other aspects of the source text to arrive at more interesting conclusions in terms of the study of English translations of *Jinpingmei*.

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