

## A Study on Feng Tang's Translation of *Stray Birds* from Manipulation Theory

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### Abstract

Tagore is a distinguished Indian writer and poet, and his works have never lost popularity around the world. Published in 1916, *Stray Birds* is one of the earliest translated poetry collections in China, of which the version translated by Zheng Zhenduo is highly regarded. However, Chinese poet Feng Tang translated *Stray Birds* in 2015 and his version soon became the subject of heated discussions among translation field and academic world due to his unique style and bold diction. Based on Lefevere's manipulation theory, this essay offers an analysis of Feng Tang's translation of *Stray Birds*, analyzing the influence of the manipulative factors, namely ideology, poetics and patronage on Feng's translation methods and strategies. At present, most criticisms of Feng Tang's translation focus mainly on translation theories and linguistic factors. From the perspective of manipulation theory, the study on Feng's translation will not only provide new methods and ideas for the appreciation and translation of poetry, but also add more radiance on *Stray Birds*.

**Keywords:** Stray birds; Feng tang; Manipulation theory.



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### 1. Introduction

*Stray Birds* is a collection of poetry written by the Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore. With a keen insight into nature and human society, Tagore's collections of poetry were deemed as mercurial and spiritual. Written in the form of loose ballad, *Stray Birds* contains rich thoughts and profound meanings. The philosophy-intensive collection of poetry takes on a fresh, bright and elegant style. Moreover, along with strong oriental flavor, it has always been popular among Chinese readers. At the same time, *Stray Birds* had a great impact on the development of Chinese New Literature. Therefore, it has always been the object for Chinese scholars to study. As early as 1922, Zheng Zhenduo, a Chinese writer and translator, chose to translate a fraction of this collection of poetry and received great popularity.

2015 marks the 155<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Tagore's birth, and right in that year, Chinese writer Feng Tang translated his poem *Stray Birds*. Due to Feng's bold and bizarre diction as well as unique style, his version has stirred a heated discussion among translation and literature fields. Feng's translation was banned from publishing shortly afterwards, but his version is still making rounds on the Internet. Feng's translation has undoubtedly undergone fierce criticism but also received praises.

For instance, some netizens thought that Feng's translation is too erotic, or even said he is a terrorist against translation. According to some media, Feng's translation of *Stray Birds* is accused of blasphemy towards Tagore and Indian poem. There are, however, some commentaries in favor of Feng's translation. Feng's supporters said his work demonstrates true poetic quality and they highly appreciated his unique observations of human beings and the world. What is worth noticing is that Li Yinhe, a famous Chinese sociologist, spoke highly of Feng Tang's new translation work, and she said that it is the best Chinese translation of *Stray Birds* so far. Despite Feng's strong individual translating style, Li thought that Feng's translated version is nearly perfect and it has the most poetic value.

Readers can easily sense the extreme personal characteristics within Feng's translation. Feng once said: "When I am translating, I play the role of a writer instead of a translator. I don't need to understand the context of the original text, I just want to be creative and unrestrained." And this point of view coincides with Lefevere's manipulation theory. In the 1980s, Lefevere proposed the manipulation theory, which states that "translation is rewriting" and that literary translation activities are limited and manipulated by a series of external factors, including poetics, patrons, ideology, just to name a few. The manipulation theory set a new stage for translation researches and studies, which is of great significance for re-understanding and analyzing Feng Tang's translation of *Stray Birds*. For those aforementioned reasons, this essay analyzes the translation of Feng's *Stray Birds* from the manipulation theory.

In fact, in Feng Tang's translation, there are only a few "bold" chapters, and they are the reasons why Feng's translation has been criticized for so long. Moreover, so far, most of the discussions of Feng Tang's translation are limited to the linguistic instead of the academic point of view. Scholars criticized his translation being mainly based on some translation strategies or theories such as literal translation, free translation, domestication and foreignization. Furthermore, since cultural turn occurred in the 1980s, it has always been seen as a turning point of China's modern translation studies. From then on, translation studies were no longer restricted to the sphere of linguistics but have been set in a broader context, including culture, society and history. However, few people have realized and explored those causes in Feng's translation.

From the perspective of manipulation theory, this essay discusses the translation methods applied in Feng Tang's translation of *Stray Birds*. It is conducive to a more objective treatment and analysis of Feng Tang's

translation. In doing so, this essay provides new methods and ideas for poetry appreciation and translation. Ultimately, the great *Stray Birds* will be added more radiance and it will last hundreds of millions of years.

This essay is composed of six parts. The first part is an introduction of the essay. The second part is the introduction of the theory, namely Lefevere's manipulation theory. The next two parts offer brief introductions of Tagore and Feng Tang. The fifth part elaborates how manipulative factors affect Feng's translation activity, including the translation strategies and methods Feng applied. The final part is the conclusion.

## 2. An Introduction to Manipulation Theory

This Chapter is a brief introduction of manipulation theory, including the origin of the manipulation school, and its main representative Andre Lefevere.

### 2.1. The Manipulation School

Before the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Western translation theory mainly belonged to the category of literature and art. It deems translation as art, emphasizing the translator's creative reproduction of the source text. Until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, translation theorists integrated modern linguistics into translation studies, thus linguistic approach emerged. The linguistic approach sees translation as science, focusing on the equivalence between the original text and the target text.

There is no doubt that the linguistic approach has deepened translation studies and achieved fruitful results. But it limits translation studies to the language level, and thus placing itself at a dead end in recent years. Since the 1980s, influenced by postmodernism and cross-cultural studies, cultural approach in translation studies has gained its popularity. The cultural approach pays attention to many social factors that affect translation in cultural context, thus broadening the scope of translation studies and injecting new ideas for translation studies. The manipulation school is the most influential one among them.

#### 2.1.1. The Origin and Representatives of Manipulation School

Manipulation school originated in Benelux and grew in European countries and it was later introduced to the United States. It belongs to the scope of comparative literature and focuses on literary translation.

It was Hermans, a contemporary British translation theorist, who applied the concept of manipulation in the studies of translation theories at the first place. He pointed out: "From the point of the target literature, all translation implies a degree of manipulation of the source text for a certain purpose (Theo and Hermans, 1985)." This is considered to be the embryonic form of the manipulation school. Afterwards, Andre Lefevere integrated rewriting and refraction into his translation studies. In Lefevere's book *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*, he combined translation studies with power, ideology, patrons, and poetics and he pointed out that translation is subject to the ideology and poetics of the translator or the authority, and he believed that translation is rewriting.

Rewriting is manipulation. In other words, translation means the translators manipulating the source/target text. Lefevere systematically discussed the concept of manipulation theory in the translation field, and he has exerted an important influence on translation studies in the cultural context, marking the formal establishment of the manipulation school. Originating in Low Countries (Holland, The Kingdom of Belgium, and The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg) and maturing in the United States, manipulation theory has been highly praised by scholars such as Lefevere, Lambert, and Hermans. Later, its influence extended to the translation theorists in the United Kingdom and Israel such as Susan Bassnett and Toury.

The manipulation school is the product of the cultural turn and is an important part of cultural approach. Lefevere, Bassnett, and Tymczko are the main representatives of the manipulative school. They enjoy high status and prestige in the international academic community and play significant roles in the formation, development, improvement, and dissemination of the manipulation school.

### 2.2. Lefevere and His Manipulation Theory

Andre Lefevere was the main representative of the manipulation school. The next part offers a brief introduction of him and his manipulation theory.

#### 2.2.1. A Brief Introduction to Lefevere

Andre Lefevere was a comparative literary scholar and translation theorist who enjoyed world reputation. He was born in Belgium and later immigrated to the United States.

He had studied at the University of Ghent and then obtained his PhD at the University of Essex in 1972. And he was a professor of Germanic Studies at the University of Texas at Austin.

Lefevere has been studying translation theories from the perspective of comparative literature and he was one of the most influential scholars of the manipulation school. He made tremendous contributions to the development of translation studies and manipulation theory. Hermans adopted the word "manipulation" proposed by Lefevere and named his own collection of thesis *The Manipulation of Literature*.

#### 2.2.2. Lefevere's Manipulation Theory

In the translation field, "manipulation" is neither a commendatory term nor a derogatory term, but is a terminology with neutral concept. From the perspective of comparative literature, Lefevere put forward that

translation never happens in vacuum. He believed that any objective factors other than literature can affect or even manipulate the entire complex translation process. In order to better analyze the influence of other objective factors, Lefevere introduced a new set of terms, including power, ideology, poetics, patrons, and institutions.

He believed that translation is rewriting and rewriting is manipulation. "If some rewritings are inspired by ideological constraints, depending upon whether rewriters find themselves in agreement with the dominant ideology of their time or not, other rewritings are inspired by poetological motivation or produced under poetological constraints (Tang Ting, 2014)." With regard to the relationship between ideology, poetics, and translation, Lefevere said: "on every level of the translation process, if linguistic considerations enter into the conflict with considerations of an ideological or poetological nature, the latter tend to win out."

Lefevere put forward that ideology is the most important factor, including both the ideology of the translator and the ideology imposed by the sponsoring institution on the translator. As an intercultural communication behavior, translation is inevitably branded with ideology. Ideology determines, to some degree, the translator's basic tactics in translation, thus influencing the translator's handling of the specific issues related to the original ideas and language. The poetics refers to the mainstream poetics of culture to which the target language belongs. These two factors determine the translation strategies and the solutions to practical problems.

### 3. An Overview of Tagore and *Stray Birds*

This part contains introductions of Tagore and his works, with a focus on one of his masterpieces *Stray Birds*. The following paragraphs also elaborate the Chinese translation of *Stray Birds*.

#### 3.1. A Brief Introduction of Tagore

Rabindranath Tagore was a well-respected Indian poet and writer. He was also a social activist, a philosopher, and an Indian nationalist. At 13 years old, Tagore was able to create long poems and odes. In 1913, he became the first Asian writer to win the Nobel Prize for Literature with *Gitanjali*.

Over the century, his works and ideas have been continually chanted, translated, read and studied in various countries around the world. Most of Tagore's works were written in his native language of Bengali, so before his visit to Europe in 1912, his influence was limited to the Bangladeshi literary field in India. He then started translating some of his favorite works into English in 1912. As a result, his works has produced a wide range of impact in Europe and America. During his stay in the UK, Tagore met Rosenstein and Yeats, and that marks the beginning of his contacting with European intellectuals. With the efforts of Rosenstein, the Macmillan Company published the English version of *Gitanjali*. Since then, Robindranath's name made the headline on the British newspaper and soon became a household name in the western world. Shortly afterwards, Macmillan Company published *The Gardener*, *The Crescent Moon*, and a short story collection *Life in Bangladesh*. Tagore then moved to and lived in the United States, so his literary works were also introduced to the United States with the help from Ezra Pound.

In 1913, Tagore won the Nobel Prize and a great reputation in the world. His works quickly set off an upsurge of translation in Europe and America. Many publications printed Tagore's literary works one after another, hoping to build a bridge between oriental literature and world literature.

Tagore was a well-rounded human beings with unique qualities and talents. He was like a stray bird in that he traveled all around the world as if the world is a giant forest. More importantly, Tagore valued the deeper experience and ideas of life so that he paid great attention to the value and destiny of humans. And that is the reason why Tagore's works can be spread around the world and endure for thousands of years.

#### 3.2. *Stray Birds* and Its Chinese Translations

*Stray Birds* never lost its popularity in China and remains one of the most favorite foreign poems among Chinese readers. The following paragraphs serve as a brief introduction of this collection of poem and studies on its Chinese translations.

##### 3.2.1. A Brief Introduction of *Stray Birds*

Tagore's poetry has a profound influence on a group of young authors in China who later became torchbearers of China's New literature Movement. At that time, works of poetry kept emerging, and most of its authors were directly or indirectly influenced by Tagore's works including *Stray Birds*.

Just as other masterpieces of Tagore like *Gitanjali*, *The Crescent Moon* and *The Gardener*, *Stray Birds* was his famous ballad written when he was living in seclusion. Containing 325 songs, *Stray Birds* is slightly different from other poetry in terms of the form. Most chapters in this collection of poem have only one or two lines, or occasionally, four lines. Some scholars speculated that Tagore wrote poem like this because "he was influenced by Japanese haiku after returning from Japan (Peng Ruizhi, 1982)."

Tagore compared this collection of poem to the footprints of those stray birds flying and traveling all over the world. In other words, the poet regarded himself as the "eternal traveler" who sought an infinite ideal world, creating these poems to memorize his journey. Therefore, *Stray Birds* captures natural scenes and narrates truism, like the lightning in the sky, the radiance of the sea waves, the afterglow, and the shadow of the dawn, all those offering a striking impression to readers.

At the same time, readers would never ignore the deep philosophical meaning inherited in *Stray Birds*. For instance, this one-line-poem shows the poet's open-minded and indifferent attitude to life. Living in the world, we

always encounter all kinds of troubles, and it is not easy to cope with them well. Tagore's *Stray Birds* may offer us clues to resolve problems, help us to treat them correctly, and tell us ways to pursuit happiness.

In conclusion, *Stray Birds* reveals profound philosophy of life and leads people to explore the source of wisdom and truth.

## 4. An Introduction of Feng Tang and His Translation

The discussion about Feng Tang's translation of *Stray Birds* which published in 2015 never ceased. It is clear that his version is full of his personal characteristics. He translated Tagore's poetry with his unique understandings regardless of the original context. It is necessary to learn about Feng Tang before analyzing his translation.

### 4.1. A Brief Introduction of Feng Tang

Born in Beijing, Feng Tang is a rising post-70s writer. In recent years, his novels have gradually been adapted into films and hit the screen. As a result, more and more people are attracting to and interested in his works.

Feng Tang has multiple occupations. He used to be a gynecological oncologist and a businessman. Now he is a writer and a poet. These unique life experiences make Feng Tang famous and special when compared with other writers. His rich experience of life, sentimental personality and keen observation of life made him extremely interested in themes about life and death, and that could be reflected in many of his works.

*Huan Xi* is Feng's maiden work. After that, he continued his creation of literary works. He never restricts himself to just novels. His works ranges from prose, poetry to history story. They are characterized by multiple narrative angles, precise depiction of figures, unrestrained content and classic language style. All these factors have rendered his novels an unique charm.

As researchers and readers continue to pay close attention to his works, his works have become increasingly controversial, and the evaluations to him and his works are a mixture of both praise and criticism. Some critics think that he is a vulgar writer, a hooligan. However, Li Yinhe believes that Feng Tang ranks second among the contemporary writers, and Feng seconds only to Wang Xiaobo. She highly appreciated his works no matter what the Association of Writers said or who won the Nobel Prize. The author believes that although Feng's novels sometimes do contain vulgar languages, they also imply a certain spiritual meaning and culture.

### 4.2. Studies on Feng's Translation

Feng Tang has created multiple literary works but he only translated Tagore's *Stray Birds*. The previous parts offer an introduction of Feng Tang, the following paragraphs will focus on his translated version of *Stray Birds*, and elaborate the most striking characteristics of his translation.

#### 4.2.1. Poetics

In the preface of Zheng Zhenduo's translation of *Stray Birds*, he mentioned that Tagore love using beautiful words and phrases in poetry creation. These verses are poetic, beautiful and vivid. These words and sentences are so elegance, they even melt in people's minds. They are always implicit and suggestive (Zheng Zhenduo, 1982:3). As the founder of the poem-minimalism in China, Feng Tang's translation of *Stray Birds* embodies his own style, which is very different from the original.

Example 1: The water in a vessel is sparking; the water in the sea is dark. The small truth has words are clear; the great truth has great silence.

(Rabindranath and Tagore, 2018)

Version 1: 杯中的水是光辉的；海中的水确是黑色的。小理可以用文字来说清楚；大理却只有沉默。

(Zheng Zhenduo, 2004)

Version 2: 罐子里的水灿烂；大海里的水暗淡。小常识能说清楚楚；大正见沉默望天。

(Feng Tang, 2015)

As the above example shows, from the perspective of poetics, Zheng Zhenduo preserved the style of the original works through the optimization of translated vocabulary. Although the original style is perfectly preserved, Zheng's translation doesn't really show much poetics. The style of Feng's translation firmly conforms to his writing style. His diction is extremely simple, sensitive and with strong emotions. These two lines are not only perfectly neat and tidy, but also catchy. The words “罐子” “大海” “小常识” “大正见” Feng used may seem casual at first sight, but they tell the truth of life; the rhetoric in “大正见沉默望天”, namely personification, along with its profound artistic conception, leaves readers room for imagination and makes them feel like they were right at the scene.

#### 4.2.2. Rhyme

The poetry in *Stray Birds* has a distinct style of prose, which means they rarely have rhymes. But if we take a look at Feng Tang's translation, we can find that his translation harbors not only a strong personal style, but also perfect rhymes. Feng Tang believes that “poetry must be rhyming, rhyme is the poet's most powerful weapon (Feng Tang, 2015)”, so even if the English version of *Stray Birds* basically contains no rhyme, he still racked his brain to find the best rhyme for the translation.

Example 2: The music of the far-away summer flutters around Autumn seeking its former nest.

(Rabindranath and Tagore, 2018)

Version 1: 远去的夏天的音乐，徘徊所在秋夜，思念过去的巢穴。



(Feng Tang, 2015)

Example 3: Dear friend, I feel the silence of your great thoughts of many a deepening eventide on this beach when I listen to these waves.

(Rabindranath and Tagore, 2018)

Version 1: 听潮， 黄香渐消， 我想我听懂了你伟大思想的寂寥。

(Feng Tang, 2015)

However, due to Feng Tang's excessive insistence on rhyme, some even backfires. In some chapters of Feng's translated version, Feng forsook "normal" translation strategies or methods to reach rhymes. And that makes his translation funny and even ridiculous.

Example 4: The night kisses the fading day whispering to his year, "I am death, your mother, I am to give you fresh birth."

(Rabindranath and Tagore, 2018)

Version 1: 白日将尽， 夜晚呢喃， “我是死啊， 我是你妈， 我会给你新生哒。”

(Feng Tang, 2015)

In order to reach rhymes, Feng Tang even used the onomatopoeia like “啊” and “哒”. To a certain extent, it negatively affects the aesthetic effects of this poetry. In fact, the quality of a poem does not depend on whether it is rhymed or not.

In short, Feng Tang's translation is sometimes aesthetically pleasing, and it does have some splendid parts. But Feng changed and even distorted the rhymes and the poem's images, so it is reasonable that Feng's translation of *Stray Birds* was banned from publishing and needs rectification. Feng's translation of *Stray Birds* is definitely different from other translated versions in many ways. However, the above two characteristics, namely poetics and rhyme, are the most prominent ones that made his translation so unique.

## 5. Manipulative Factors in Feng's Translation Activity

The following part serves as an analysis of the manipulative factors in Feng's translation of *Stray Birds* and how they affected his translation activity. The following paragraphs also expound the translation methods Feng applied, including amplification, omission and rewriting.

### 5.1. Manipulation of Ideology

Since the concept of ideology emerged at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, scholars have been interpreting their rich connotations from different perspectives. The so-called ideology means “What the world should be like (Xu YanTing, 2007).” So it is a collection of ideas and thoughts. In Lefevere's point of view, the ideology in translation refers not only to the translator's personal value orientation, but also to the ideology imposed on the translator by those in power or sponsors. Therefore, ideology which manipulates the translator may come from society, the superstructure, or the translator himself, while the latter is often unconsciously influenced by the former.

Feng Tang's writing style is unique and maverick, which can be reflected in his translation works. Feng Tang's rich life experience and complex identities (due to his multiple former professions) have kept him far away from the general interests and general thinking patterns of our time in terms of literary creation. But he never cares about what other people think about him or how they criticize him, Feng keeps his unique style. It can be said that when Feng Tang translated *Stray Birds*, he was mainly manipulated by his own ideology. Some people commented that all of Feng Tang's works are full of a strong sense of hormone, in other words, a little bit pornographic, which is also shown in his translation of *Stray Birds*.

Example 5: The world puts off its mask of vastness to his lover. It becomes small as one song, as one kiss of the eternal.

(Rabindranath and Tagore, 2018)

Version 1: 大千世界在情人面前解开裤裆， 绵长如舌吻， 纤细如诗行 (Feng Tang, 2015)

Example 6: The great earth makes herself hospitable with the help of the grass.

(Rabindranath and Tagore, 2018)

Version 1: 有了绿草， 大地变得挺骚。

(Feng Tang, 2015)

However, it is worth mentioning that the time in which he was born, grown up, and became famous were indeed quite unusual. People born in the 1970s did not really experience the nightmare “Cultural Revolution”, there was no such thing as great changes in society at that time. “They want to rebel but have no object of rebellion (Yu Yinghao, 2015).” Born in 1971, Feng Tang is a writer who gained popularity in this period. His appearance in the new century posed a heterogeneous style. Therefore, we can also say that the formation of Feng Tang's writing style is closely related to the ideology of the superstructure.

### 5.2. Manipulation of Poetics

In terms of the manipulation of poetics, Lefevere had this definition: a poetics can be said to consist of two components. One is the inventory of literary devices, genres, motifs, prototypical characters and situations, and symbols; the other a concept of what the role of literature is, or should be in the social system as a whole.

A translator's view of poetics has great influence on his translation activity, including his choosing of translation methods and the way he presents his translated version. This is the same case when it came to a translator or a writer. Different translators may have different thoughts about poetics and they may manage their translations with their

own views of poetics. The translator's view of poetics can be clearly reflected by the translation methods he adopted in his translation. In Feng's translation of *Stray Birds*, he mainly applied three translation methods: amplification, omission and rewriting.

### 5.2.1. Amplification

Feng believes that translation could increase the meaning of the original text. As a result, if we judge Feng's translation with Yan Fu's criteria, we can say that Feng pays great attention to "expressiveness" or "elegance", instead of "faithfulness". According to Feng's point of view, it is nearly impossible for translators to reach a precise equivalence, since translation itself can be distorting or twisting. Therefore, Feng tended to put more emphasis on "expressiveness" and "elegance" by sacrificing the fidelity of the source text.

Example 7: The touch of nameless days clings to my heart like mosses round the old tree.

(Rabindranath and Tagore, 2018)

Version 1: 无名的日子的感触，攀援在我的心上，正像那绿色的苔藓，攀援在老树的周身。

(Zheng Zhengduo, 2004)

Version 2: 心里挥之不去的无名的日子，苔藓挽住老树的脖子。

(Feng Tang, 2015)

Feng translated the "old tree" into "老树的脖子", which means the "neck of the old tree" in English. The whole sentence renders readers a feeling of being stifled, the feeling is too strong and too real that one can barely breathe. It also makes readers think of the old days and brings them precious memories. Feng says that his life experiences helped him to understand Tagore's love or hurt, as well as Tagore's oriental wisdom. He doesn't agree that *Stray Birds* is written for children because children can by no means comprehend all the pain in Tagore's poetry.

Example 8: God comes to me in the dusk of my evening with the flowers from my past kept in his basket.

(Rabindranath and Tagore, 2018)

Version 1: 神，来到我的黄昏，提篮里鲜嫩着我旧日的花魂。

(Feng Tang, 2015)

Feng translated "the flowers" into "the spirits of flowers". The spirits of flowers is an implication of poem, means that "the flowers from the past" could not keep fresh now in real life, and it is the soul of flowers that keeps in the poet's mind. Like Lake Poets William Wordsworth, Tagore is also labeled as a naturalist poet and a visionary thinker. Tagore's poems are full of creativities, and those were speculated to be inspired by natural sceneries. Readers can find various natural images like flying birds, floating clouds, trees, grass, rivers, sunset and sunrise in Tagore's collections of poetry.

### 5.2.2. Omission

As the founder of poem-minimalism, Feng translated Tagore's *Stray Birds* in a very simple style, and that could be reflected in the diction he used. He translated 326 poems to about 8000 Chinese characters by using translation methods like omission.

Example 9: The earth hums to me to-day in the sun, like a woman at her spinning, some ballad of the ancient time in a forgotten tongue.

(Rabindranath and Tagore, 2018)

Version 1: 今天大地在阳光下对我嚶嚶作响，织布的姑娘，死了的语言，远古的吟唱。

(Feng Tang, 2015)

In this chapter, similes "like" is omitted by Feng. In fact, in some other chapters of Feng's translated version, similes are also translated without using "like", such as "like a giant child" "like an idle breeze" and "like flocks of ducks". In other words, Feng chose to describe and translate words in a very direct way. It feels like that Feng put several unrelated things in a blank paper so that readers can connect the things by themselves. In doing so, Feng activated reader's imagination. When we read the word "sun", "woman at her spinning", "dead language" and "ancient songs", for instance, our mind becomes active and tries to put them together, thus we are able to enter the ideorealm and we can understand the hidden implication of the poem.

### 5.2.3. Rewriting

In terms of views of translation, Feng advocates that translators should have self-consciousness. To him, the translation of the soul of the poetry is what really matters. Feng once said "A writer should create without self-consciousness, yet a translator should translate with self-consciousness." Therefore he is not 100 percent faithful to the original text, which displeased many of Tagore's fans. Feng rewrote some chapters of *Stray Birds* based on his own life experience and reflections upon life. Feng regards translation as an action "to build an exact, unobstructed and scenic bridge by language between two different information sea (Feng Tang, 2015)."

Example 10: That which oppresses me, is it my soul trying to come out in the open, or the soul of the world knocking at my heart for its entrance?

(Rabindranath and Tagore, 2018)

Version 1: 是谁让我肿胀，是我的魂要离我而飞翔，还是世界的魂要进入我心房。

(Feng Tang, 2015)

We should pay close attention that Feng translated the word "肿胀", which means "swell" in English. But it doesn't appear in the original text at all. Feng mentions for many times that he has to write for a kind of "swelling" inside his body. The word "swelling" has an implicit and somehow erotic meaning in Chinese therefore some

scholars who study on Feng's fiction said that Feng regards sexuality as a part of our life, and it is as normal as food and other activities in life.

Feng explained in an interview that he doesn't mean to write about pornography. Instead, he was writing about humanity. The word "oppress" makes people only able to think about sad or terrible things, which reminds Feng of his own emotions and feelings towards the world, thereupon he translated "oppress" into "肿胀".

The above paragraphs discussed the three main translation methods adopted by Feng Tang in his translation of *Stray Birds*, namely amplification, omission and rewriting. As mentioned before, a translator's choosing of translation methods are mainly manipulated by his views of translation and poetical factors. Since Feng put great emphasis on making his translated poems more poetical, it's easy to find out the reasons he used those methods.

### 5.3. Manipulation of Patrons

Patronage refers to the powers (persons and /or institutions) that can further or hinder the reading, writing, and rewriting of literature. These powers manipulate the translation activities and the translators through ideology, economy and social status. Like Lefevere further illustrates the component elements of patronage: "Patronage basically consists of three elements: ideological component, economic component, and status component."

In Feng Tang's translation of *Stray Birds*, the patron is Zhejiang Literature and Art Publishing House. In the preface of Feng Tang's translated work, the publisher used the following words: "We invited the poet Feng Tang to re-translate *Stray Birds*. With his sophisticated writing skills, he can find us the ideal emotions and rhythm of *Stray Birds* and make it more suitable for the Chinese people to read." It is clear to see that Zhejiang Literature and Art Publishing House highly respected Feng and had a lot of faith in him.

It is safe to say that in Feng's translation activity, the patron, which is the publishing house, had little interference with Feng. Feng translated this collection of poetry with great freedom and made it full of his personal characteristics. Venuti advocates that translators should be invisible, but Feng has been trying hard to improve the subjectivity of translators and emphasizes that the translators' own understanding is what really matters. In his translation activity, Feng Tang did what most translators couldn't do.

From the aforementioned reasons, we can conclude that the patron exerted certain influence on Feng since Zhejiang Literature and Art Publishing House wanted Feng to "make it more suitable for the Chinese people to read". So that explains why Feng's translated version is so different from the original text. The factors which highly manipulated Feng's translation are poetics and ideology. From the perspective of poetics, we can also see that Feng took great efforts to make his translation poetical by using translation methods such as amplification, omission and rewriting.

## 6. Conclusion

As a noted poet in modern times, Tagore was the first Asian person who won the Nobel Prize for literature, and his works were widely favored by readers around the world. Among his masterpieces, *Stray Birds* has the most far-reaching impact on China. In the past century, the Chinese versions of *Stray Birds* have kept springing up. Feng Tang's translated version was published in 2015 and it caused great controversy. Although Feng Tang's translation does not exactly meet Yan Fu's translation criteria, which is faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance, it is not difficult to find that his translation does have some merits.

The essay, under the guidance of Andre Lefevere's Manipulation theory, analyzes some translation methods applied in Feng's translation, namely amplification, omission and rewriting, and finds the merits in his translated version. According to the reasons above, it is firmly convinced that Feng's translation is not entirely awful. We can find new ways and approaches to translate and appreciate poetry by analyzing Feng Tang's translation.

According to Lefevere's manipulation theory, translators are manipulated by some factors, including poetics, patronage and ideology. He also put forward that translation equals rewriting. With this in mind, it is not rational to criticize Feng's translation only for some linguistic reasons. This essay holds an approval attitude on Feng's translation of *Stray Birds*. Taking a look in China's studies on Feng Tang and his translation, we can see that only few essays or passages explored the advantages of his version. We should be more inclusive since there is no golden criteria of translation especially when it comes to poetry translation.

The analysis of Feng's translated version of *Stray Birds* may serve as a bridge for further exchanges between Chinese literature and Indian Literature. It might be helpful to draw people's attentions on our great oriental culture, and it might encourage everyone to work together and add radiance to it. However, this essay also has its limitations. Due to the lack of knowledge and ability, the author only analyzes Feng's translation from one perspective and the essay doesn't make a thorough analysis of the impacts of manipulative factors. Therefore, more comprehensive studies of Feng's translation of *Stray Birds* are needed and worth carrying out.

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