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翻譯季刊

Translation Quarterly

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The Hong Kong Translation Society

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Chief Editor's Note

Translation history is the subject of the two articles collected in the present volume: Tao Ching Sin analyzes the collaborative translation of *Aesop's Fables* by Robert Thom and a “Chinese helper” in the nineteenth century, while Wang Baorong charts the changing course of English translations of Lu Xun's short stories in the last century. Tao asserts the cultural dynamics behind the creation of the *Yishi yuyan*, which to her epitomizes “the meeting point between two distinct cultures in their early encounter”. Wang, on the other hand, evaluates his corpus—seven translations by scholars, journalists and professional translators—with respect to descriptive criteria like adequacy and acceptability, à la Gideon Toury. In addition, there is depth in one article, scope in the other: one makes an effort to delineate through one translation the atmosphere of an entire era, and the other seeks to paint a broad mural of competing versions of Lu Xun over a period of 64 years. Nevertheless, while pursuing different paths (the so-called cultural and descriptive approaches), the two authors are united by a concern with reception, in particular as it is revealed textually, across a temporal matrix. Thus the two articles should be of interest to those who have been following the fervent debates on the history of translation reception carried on by researchers of our generation.

One needs to note that Tao's “*Yishi yuyan: Aesop's Fables* in

Late Qing China” is the winning essay of the 2008 Hong Kong Translation Society Lion and Globe Educational Trust Research Scholarship. The author won by a wide margin, since two of the adjudicators ranked the article first among all the submissions, and the third adjudicator ranked it second. Along with Sunny Tien Yuk’s “The Translation of Shakespeare’s Suggestive Language” (issue 41) and Zhang Xu’s “A New Interpretation of the Architectural Experiments in Zhu Xiang’s Translated Poetry” (issue 48), it showcases the excellent work done by a younger breed of scholars. Unfortunately, due to the lack of funding, the Research Scholarship has been discontinued since 2008. It is the hope of the Executive Committee of the Translation Society that the generosity of donors will make it possible for the scheme to be reinstated in the not too distant future.

Leo Chan

May 2010

Yishi Yuyan: Aesop's Fables in Late Qing China

Tao Ching-sin

Abstract

This paper studies a Chinese translation of Aesop's Fables in nineteenth-century China. Published amid the Opium War in 1840, Yishi Yuyan was meant to be a primer for English learners of Chinese, but it acquired at the same time a wide local readership despite being censored by the Chinese authority soon after publication. Shunning the antithesis between "linguistic" and "cultural" translation, the present paper will explore more comprehensively the translation as a meeting point between two distinct cultures in their early encounter. This is done by comparative textual analyses and by a probe into the cultural intricacies behind the practice of translation. It will establish that the amateurish collaboration between the "foreign devil" and his "Chinese helper", as it happened so often then, was the best means available toward some salubrious degree of intercultural understanding, with their respective "horizons" inevitably predetermining the composition of the work. The purpose of the discussion is to delineate the complexity involved in the perception (and reception) of the Self and the Other by dissimilar cultures—as refracted in the translation.

Introduction

Aesop's Fables^[1] inspires, prompting reflections on the individual and collective self; and it lingers, with its infinite capacity for metamorphosis. By the end of the second century A.D. *Aesop's Fables* was well established in classical culture, and has “developed down the centuries in different cultural contexts by different applications and uses, to become a vehicle of literary expression with special resources” (Blackham 1985: xi). Considered “the alphabet of humanity” (Chesterton 1969: ix-x) handed down from the distant past, the Aesopian tales are said to have become embedded in the western psyche, without which Kafka would not have written *Metamorphosis* nor Orwell *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (Boxall 2006: 1).

Yishi Yuyan 意拾喻言 (*Aesop's Fables: written in Chinese by the Learned Mun Mooy Seen-Shang, and compiled in their present form [with a free and a literal translation] by his pupil Sloth*) was published at the imminence of the first Opium War in 1840. The publication itself and its many reprises garnered almost overwhelmingly positive reviews in the nineteenth century^[2] and it was a relatively extensive Chinese rendition as compared to the fragmentary Jesuit translations earlier in the Ming Dynasty. “Sloth” was the pseudonym of Robert Thom (Luo Bodan 羅伯聃, 1807-1846), then a British employee working for Jardine and Matheson Company at the Thirteen Factories in Canton (Green 1942: 28-29) who would later become the first British Consul of Ningbo.^[3] This rendition, positioned as a Chinese language primer, is a selection of eighty-two tales. It aligns the Chinese version with a “free” rendition and a literal back translation in English by Thom and the phonetic transcriptions of the Chinese in Cantonese and Mandarin. This unique avatar of *Aesop's Fables* is, as we shall see, a far cry from its English original, *Fables, of Aesop and other eminent mythologists: with morals and reflections* (1714), by Sir

Roger L'Estrange (1616-1704),^[4] both in themes and narration.

This paper foregrounds *Aesop's Fables* in its vernacular veneer and explores the extent to which its reception and rewriting echoes the socio-historical circumstances, literary traditions and translation trends of late Qing China, particularly the decade preceding the Opium Wars. Comparisons will be drawn between the English original extracted from L'Estrange's collection and the Chinese adaptation in regard to their distinct themes and narratives. It will be evident that the Chinese rendition was in fact a figural response, both consciously and unconsciously organized in the Chinese language, to the ethos of the times. Such a study, it is hoped, will shed light on the nature of translation and the central importance of the Chinese *Aesop* to the understanding of Qing China at the brink of modernity.

The Collaborative Translators

Robert Thom's primary identity as a prominent member of the translators plying their trade in Canton, an undermanned team^[5] without doubt in the early nineteenth century, earned plaudits from foreign residents and prominent Sinologists in Europe alike. Thom was regarded by many of his contemporaries as top-notch. James Matheson, for instance, remarked that should Thom ever leave the company, he would miss him more as an interpreter than in the piece-goods line (Cheong 1979: 166). John Davis, a cold man, had warmed to Thom, and paid handsome tribute to his memory twenty years after his death (Coates 1988: 25). Frederick Edwyn Forbes (1848: 223), a British lieutenant, called him "the best linguist of all the Europeans in China". Readers of *The Canton Press* listed him among others as one of the "best Chinese scholars" to be consulted for translation^[6] and M. C. Morrison, at

sixteen, studied Chinese under him in Ningbo (Coates 1988: 21). Fairbank (1953: 121-122) nevertheless refers to him as the “less able” translator of the treaties in comparison to John Robert Morrison and “certainly no Sinologue”, judging from Thom’s performance in the translation of the Supplementary Treaty, which was originally full of blemishes. Thom, indeed, might not have been so well-versed in Chinese as his contemporaries would like to have thought he was, while various sources show that a Chinese assistant played a crucial role in bowdlerizing the original *Aesop*. According to Davis (1865: 73-74), “Thom’s Chinese version of *Aesop’s Fables* had been chiefly effected by the aid of an educated native”; Thom himself acknowledged in the preface of *The Lasting Resentment of Wang Jiaoluan* (1839) his Chinese teacher’s contribution to the making of the text, and on the cover page of *Yishi Yuyan* he credited his Chinese teacher by noting that the work was “*Aesop’s Fables written in Chinese by Mun mooy seen shang*”.

Thom remarked in his preface to *Wang Jiaoluan* that there were *seen shang* or “teachers who frequent[ed] [the foreigners] Hong[s] to teach [them] the elements of [the Chinese] language” (1839: vii-viii). Among them was Mun mooy seen-shang, the penman of *Yishi Yuyan*, a native Cantonese with whom Thom first got acquainted around 1835.^[7] Historical records, however, show that foreigners’ right to learn Chinese openly was secured only after the first Sino-American Treaty of Wangxia in 1844,^[8] and before that language teaching and translation activities were necessarily clandestine in nature. Although never strictly implemented, the penal code stated that teaching expatriates Chinese could mean capital punishment (Morse 1926-29: 343) and the participants might be stigmatized if they “appeared overly enthusiastic, interested or fluent in foreign languages, customs, habits or mannerisms” (Van Dyke 2005: 78).

Time and again, in fact, memorials reporting on illegal teaching

of the Chinese language were presented to the emperor.^[9] Resident foreigners' frequent petitions to study Chinese under native scholars were successively turned down by the Mandarins, for the law prohibited language acquisition by foreigners under normal civilians. The only exception ever made was by the Viceroy of Guangdong and Guangxi, who once pointed to the officially approved linguists and compradors as "good enough" in teaching the language (for commercial purposes).^[10] Mun mooy's true identity remains to this day unknown^[11] but it should be a plausible conjecture that he found his niche in the Canton trade as a member of a tiny squad of interpreters 通事, or a linguist as some would term it, whose essential role in the trading scene rendered him free access to the Foreign Hongs 夷館 where foreign merchants resided, while common people paying visits to these residences would be seen as traitors.^[12] Aside from linguists, only Hong merchants, compradors or coolies had entrée,^[13] though it is unlikely that the merchants would spare time to teach the foreigners, while the servants were not adequately qualified for the task.

These linguists could be differentiated into several kinds: servants who served merely as messengers, official interpreters with little knowledge of a foreign tongue who worked for the Hoppo, and those appointed to assist in the Hongs. Usually the status of linguists was highest among all the employees. In such a hierarchy, lowly servants were hired in the foreign Hongs by compradors, whose employment was vouched for by the "linguists", who were in turn insured by foreign merchants. Generally speaking, linguists served as mediators between foreign merchants or officials, Hong merchants and the Hoppo. Their duties included filing petitions for foreign traders, handling all customs duties, catering to Mandarin officials who were on visits, and overseeing the quality of goods (Si 2002: 46). For three times a month, linguists accompanied foreign residents in expeditions to certain spots assigned

to them (Chen 1995: 264).

Managing virtually all procedural matters in the foreign trade, the linguists sometimes engaged in the commerce themselves—taking up the compradors’ duties in their absence, or even rising to be a Hong merchant. Xu Ao 許鰲, for instance, gave up his position as Chief Linguist and became a Hong merchant in 1810, known subsequently as Goqua 浩官 (Xu 1931: 185-186). It is very likely that linguists, long involved in business, shared with the mercantile class similar values, beliefs, attitudes and mentalities. Their mercenary inclination was well recorded: Yung Wing 容闳, the first Chinese who received education in the United States, when serving as a translator in the Shanghai Customs Office in the 1850s, discovered that his fellow “interpreters” and the merchants embezzled money in collusion (Yung [1909]: 58-78; Li 2002: 140-147). According to Feng Guifen [1861]: 83), many linguists, who had only a slight knowledge of the barbarian tongue, knew nothing but monetary interests. ^[14]

It is true that although presented as “linguists”, these practitioners were not necessarily competent bilinguals. The nature of their job was more of a “referee”: their predominating task was to “mediate”, and “being able to effectively negotiate, persuade and pacify were skills more important to their careers than being able to interpret foreigners’ actions correctly or translate their intentions accurately” (Van Dyke 2005: 78). Yet all foreign traders had to settle for such common literates from the lower echelon, who had “a modicum of education, but ... [were] not elites by virtue of scholarly achievement” (Berling 1985: 194). Overall, their actual language ability was dubious—some of them were employed after the collapse of the Canton system by the Canton Customs Offices to assist in treaty negotiations but official records of the antagonists noted a lack of capable translators on the Chinese side. Chinese officials recorded the failure in recruiting respected personnel who could

communicate and negotiate with the foreigners. ^[15] Thom's teacher, Mun mooy, who had not even attained "the lowest step in their literary ladder" (that is, "*Semtsae*"), ^[16] belonged, as it appears, to this particular group of literates, whose education broadly consisted of "less costly reading matter, such as cheap editions of the classics with simple commentaries, almanacs, shorter (and therefore less expensive) *pao-chüan* and *shan-shu*, ballad broadsheets and pamphlets such as the 'wooden-fish books' of Kwangtung ..., and so on" (Johnson 1985: 65).

As in most cases of translation in the late Qing, the Chinese assistant was "no mere scribe [but] more of a collaborator" (Hanan 2000: 415), indispensable to his foreign students, who possessed only a rudimentary knowledge of Chinese. Thom in his preface to *Yishi Yuyan* explains the process of the dual translation:

The following Fables ... were delivered orally at different times, in Mandarin Chinese, by the Compiler to his native Teacher; who being a good penman, found little difficulty in writing them off, in the simple easy style in which they are composed ... Composing in Chinese after this manner, has both it's advantages and it's drawbacks. The advantage consists in—that, the document thus produced will be purely *idiomatic Chinese*—free from those blemishes of style, redundancies, and other mistakes—into which even our best Sinologues sometimes fall. (Thom 1840)

The "*idiomatic Chinese*" here refers not to grammaticality alone, but what Giles would later call "a faultless frame" (Giles [1901]: 429)—narratives and themes largely assimilated into the Chinese context. It should be more a brainchild of the Chinese penman. The sections that follow will look into how the Chinese collaborator remodels his unique percept of the original *Aesop* after Chinese literary prototypes; this, as I shall argue,

reflects the mentality of those engaged in the Canton trade.

Narration

Yishi Yuyan is notable for its extreme Sinification. The Chinese fables bear an aura of legitimacy, as if they were indigenous works. The impression is partly underpinned by the repressing of cultural specifics that would have required copious explanation: “Commoners of Rome” and “senate” in “The Belly and Members” (F50); “Greek” and “Latin” in “A Horse and an Ass” (F38), for example, are omitted in the Chinese; Greek gods and goddesses are supplanted by Daoist and Buddhist deities (Chan 1998: 61); even a “diamond” in “The Cock and a Diamond” (F1) is replaced by “pearls” 明珠. “The world”, still a vague concept to many nineteenth-century Chinese, is replaced by “Country” 國 in “A Father and his Sons”.^[17] By “narration” here, however, I refer more specifically to the fables’ settings and scenes. The legible maneuvers in the Chinese version, including the format with which a story begins and ends and the dramatization of the scenic elements, are mimetic of conventional narrative patterns in non-elite reading materials to which the Chinese writer constantly reverted, and they largely account for the publication’s resonance among the Chinese community.

Thom speaks of *Yishi Yuyan* as a “humble work” rendered by his native teacher in a style that “comes under the class of 雜錄 *tsā-lǔh*, being the 文字之末 *mān-tsṣé-che-mō*,^[18] or lowest and easiest style of Chinese composition”—“the dregs” covering “all silly novels and trash of stories”.^[19] Upon mastering this style, students of Chinese “would find little difficulty understanding the various 小說 *seāou-shwō* or popular novels of the day, and it may serve as a stepping-stone to much higher

literary attainments".^[20] Thom himself, in the course of his stay in China, translated two pieces of Chinese fiction: *The lasting resentment of Miss Keaou Lwan Wang, a Chinese tale* 王嬌鸞百年長恨 (Canton, 1839), and the first six chapters of *Hongloumeng* 紅樓夢, appended to *The Chinese Speaker, Part I* 正音撮要 • 上卷 (Ningbo, 1846). Many amateur Sinologists in the nineteenth century like Thom seemed to have set their eyes on this "department of *belles-lettres* [that] forms the most important class of works in respect to Chinese social life" (Wylie [1897]: 232). These novels and short stories, according to Samuel Wells Williams ([1857]: 692), were "the chief type of books found along the street". Alexander Wylie ([1867]: xxii-xxiii) provides in his *Notes on Chinese Literature* a list of publications circulated then among the bookstores, which includes, among others, various editions of *Hongloumeng* and *Jingu Qi Guan* 今古奇觀 (from which Thom selected the story of *Keaou Lwan Wang*). There was "a censorate" for these publications, which could be unchaste in content, although "its action [was] of the mildest character". The same titles in fact appeared in the *Index Expurgatorius* of the Qing government in the Daoguang era^[21] and their unhindered circulation despite official censure perhaps attests to their popularity.^[22] Apart from novels, chapbooks^[23] including Christian tracts, morality books and mercantile handbooks were prevalent in the late Qing, targeting people who could read and even write, and yet were not members of any elite. The section below discusses how the composition of the Chinese *Aesop* is circumscribed by the narrative frames of the existing written materials that were accessible to people like Mun mooy.

A. Settings

The "Sinicism" in the translated tales is rendered, structurally, by the tales' openings, which assume scrambled yet assimilated space and time frames. A number of tales are set nostalgically in some distant past

in a Chinese chronology. The first fable, “The Wolf and the Lamb” 豺烹羊 (F1), for instance, begins with “When Pwan koo first began, all the birds and beasts could speak” 盤古初鳥獸皆能言.^[24] Similar initiatives include: “In the time of the Emperor Ta Yu” 大禹時 (F6); “In the time of the Divine Husbandman” 神農間 (F7); “When the Great Emperor of Yu drained off the waters of the Deluge in nine streams” 禹疏九河之時 (F16); “During the reign of Yu and Shun” 虞舜間 (F24); and “A long time ago, when the Great Emperor Yu was draining off the waters and the rivers” 昔大禹治水 (F30). Tales not placed in definite time sets are also determinedly embedded in an indistinct past, beginning with phrases such as “A long time ago” 昔有, “Formerly” 曾有, “From days of old” 自古, “In days of old” 古有, etc., whereas in the originals specifically dated settings are normally absent, or are introduced by the general phrase “One day”. And as for stylistic variation, the Chinese fables deprived of time references are unabashedly posited in mythical places or vague locations with ancient names. In “The Little Dog and the Wolf” 狼受犬騙 (F12), the puppy who has made a narrow escape from the wolf’s clutches resides “at the bottom of Lo fow mountain ... in a retired temple’s secluded spot” 羅浮山下蘭若幽棲小犬. Two cocks are made in the Chinese version to engage in combat “[o]n the outskirts of a certain hamlet which shall be nameless” 無稽村外 (F17). Other similar “suppositories”, as Thom (1840: 104) calls them in an endnote, include “the summit of the ridge of the Mosing mountains” 摩星嶺 (F22); “Lingtae (Spiritual Terrace)” 靈臺 (F23); “Go me Mountain” 峨眉山 (F25); “Sze & Hwae” 泗淮 (F30); “Ta hwang shan” 大荒山 (F32), and “Lingyew” 靈囿 (F33). Such modifications are akin to the Chinese fabular conventions under which mythical times and places of the writers’ own invention are used.^[25] The fable “The Unnatural Son” 縱子自害 (F67), which commences with the prologue “The rod brings forth a filial son;—

tenderness and prodigality a disobedient Child!” 棒頭出孝子，嬌奢忤逆兒；憐兒多與棒，憎兒多與食，此古語也 suggests on the other hand a shared narrative mode between the Chinese *Aesop* and Ming-Qing fictions, wherein using a prologue as an introductory remark to foretell the plot and the narrator's stance is a well-known and distinct feature.

The endings of the fables also adopt a Chinese narrative framework. Just like their English originals, the Chinese fables conclude with ending comments, the “morals”. Their difference, however, lies in their presentation: while the original morals are usually plain statements, the Chinese morals are encased in a proverbial format or direct pronouncements supposedly by ancient worthies. These epimyth, initiated by formulaic phrases like “the proverb saith” 諺云, 俗云, “this is just what people say” 正所謂, “the (old) book say” 書云, etc., are common conventions of Chinese narrative writing.^[26] The most frequently applied initiator, “as the common saying goes” 俗云, is often seen in the more vulgar publications,^[27] and it seems that to the Chinese writer, their appeal to folk wisdom is itself enough to vouch for the moral truth of his stories.^[28]

The presence of a self-assertive narrator and his control over the angle from which the tale is read^[29] are made explicit in an array of rhetorical questions exploited to engage the reader and probably to reinforce the penman's own convictions: “Are such men few in number?” 豈鮮哉; “Is it not indeed to be lamented?” 豈不惜哉; “What occasion is there to say more?” 何可說哉; “Have you never heard of the saying?” 豈不聞乎; “What occasion is there for surprise?” 何足怪哉; “What is there in this to cause surprise?” 又何怪乎; “And is not this exactly the case?” 不其然乎; and “Who pray can tell their number?” 可勝道哉. Exclamations too are ubiquitous: “It is indeed so!” 誠哉; “This is very true!” 甚矣; “My repentance is alas! unavailing!” 悔無及矣; “How

perfectly true this is!” 其信然矣; “Such men need to be look upon with utter contempt!” 甚可鄙也; “What shall I do!” 奈何奈何; and “I have indeed seen but too many!” 吾多見矣. All these narrative devices have only scant presence in the English originals, but in Chinese they conform to the narrative practice of non-elitist literature.^[30] The narrator’s omnipresence is also highlighted by his direct address to the reader, initiated by phrases like “We continually see, that the men of this world ...” 吾見世人, “By this we intend to admonish the men of this world” 勸世人 and “Be on your guard!” 慎之. Such a self-assumed position of “admonition” is the usual narrative point of view in morality books and Christian tracts modeled on them (You 1999: 204-224), where similar exhortative phrases are common.^[31]

This liberal approach to translation was in fact the norm among the protestant missionary circle, who in their more secular publications often excluded the exogenous elements and employed a Chinese fictional framework that targeted non-elite readers, their potential converts (Fairbank 1985: 6). Charles Gützlaff, who had a close rapport with Thom, for example, is said to have been the most sensitive to such fictional conventions among all the Sinologists.^[32] In the early nineteenth century a Sinicized narrative pattern was the collective manner of translation within the confined habitat of foreigners, with both the Western and Chinese practitioners adopting, consciously or subconsciously, the readily available printed materials as handy prototypes.

B. Dramatization of Scenes

Dramatization is a known feature of Ming and Qing fiction (Gao 2004: 182-208). This includes a reliance on dialogue to advance the plot and a meticulous description of the characters’ movements (Bishop 1956: 241). *Yishi Yuyan* in this sense bears close resemblances to such

narratives. The dramatic embellishments through dialogues and descriptions of movements and mien are closely linked to respective shifts in motifs and themes, which, after the remodeling, mainly focus on survival and mercantile interests. Conflicts are aggravated when the contrast between the strong and the weak, the villain and the innocent, is magnified. In the Chinese *Aesop*, the strong are more than usually empowered, the weak more distressed and the villains far more heinous in their own distinctive way. Such characterizations are manifested in dialogues and actions unique to this Chinese rendition.

Characters in Chinese animal fables, which are not very common, are usually mute. In Liu Zongyuan's 柳宗元 famous animal tales, there is only one brief moment when the tiger "contemplates" in the first person, and this in fact conforms to the tradition of Chinese fables (Chen 1983: 119). The plots in *Yishi Yuyan*, however, proceed with colloquies among characters, which are in the original either suppressed in the narrative or simply absent. The fable below is exemplary:

1. Sir Roger L'Estrange's original version:

A Big-Belly'd Bitch borrow'd *Another Bitch's* Kennel to lay her Burden in. The Proprietress, after some time, Demanded Possession again, but the Other begg'd her Excuse and Patience, only till her Whelps might be able to shift for Themselves. This was Agreed upon for so many Days longer: But the Time being Expir'd, the *Bitch* that was Out, grew More and More Pressing for her *Own* again. Why then, **says** the Other, if you can force Me and My Puppies Out of the Kennel, You shall have Free Liberty to come In.

"A Bitch ready to Puppy" (*orig.* F323)

2. Mun mooy seen-shang's Chinese version:

黑狗將誕我子，苦無地方，乃求其白狗曰：汝有空房借我誕育，則感德於無既矣！白狗許之。於是育得諸兒，漸次長成，嗷嘈聒耳。白不耐煩，即對其黑曰：汝已養大諸兒，可以去矣！黑者曰：汝能驅逐諸兒，汝當自便，猶恐反為諸兒所逐也！

3. Robert Thom's English rendition of the Chinese version:

A Black Bitch was about to litter her whelps, but alas! she had no place to put them; **so she begged of (her friend) a White Bitch, saying,** “you have got an empty room, please lend it me to bring forth and bring up (my whelps,) and I will feel grateful your goodness to all eternity.” ... **The White Bitch then lost all patience and said to her Black friend,** “your whelps now are all reared to maturity! will you be good enough to go away! **The Black Bitch replied,** why, if you can drive out all my whelps, you may just do what will most suit your own convenience; but I fear that you yourself on the other hand will be driven out by my children!

“The Two Bitches” 黑白狗鬩 (F18)

The power dynamics between the strong and weak are reflected in the terms of address particular to a Chinese milieu. In the dialogues between the adversaries, the weak are made all the more unctuous when begging for pardon or pleading for favours. Their predators, or foes, are revered by them as “your majesty” 大王, “young masters” 小官, “my master” 先生, “valiant sir” 壯士, etc., and enjoy elevated statuses in the translated tales, for example:

Villain (says [the wolf]) how dare you lie muddling the Water that I'm drinking? Indeed, says the poor Lamb, I did not think that my drinking there below, could have foul'd your Water so far above ... If you'll

believe me, Sir (quoth the innocent Lamb ...)

“A Wolf and a Lamb” (*orig.* F3)

[豺]自念無以措辭，乃強責之曰：汝混濁此水，使老夫不能飲，該殺！羊對曰：大王在上流，羊在下流，雖濁，無礙。

The sheep to him said, “**your majesty** is at the upper part of the stream, I the sheep am at the lower part of the stream, although muddy it is no obstacle!”

“The Wolf and the Lamb” 豺烹羊 (F1)

The deliberate use of polite forms also accentuates the guileful traits of the villains. The contradiction between what is said and what is meant is highlighted; see for example the fox which robs the depleted beasts in “The Lion and the Bear Contending for the Spoil” 獅熊爭食 (F3) ^[33] and bids them farewell thus: “I am deeply indebted to the exertions of both gentlemen’ and with an air of much consequence marched away” [狐]曰：多費二公之力。揚揚而去。The repartee of the fox in “The Wolf and the Stork” 豺求白雀 (F7) ^[34] also begins with the fox’s addressing the stork as “先生” (“master”), and later with a simple pronoun “汝” (“you”) when he turns out to be an ingrate:

有豺食物，骨鯁在喉不能出，無可以救，自思必須有雀嘴方可，乃懇其雀曰：先生其嘴甚長，弟受骨鯁之患，求先生貴嘴向喉一拔，自當重報。雀則如其所請，即拔救之，曰：謝我之物安在？豺曰：汝得脫身，已屬萬幸，猶欲謝乎？

[He] earnestly begged the stork saying, “**my master!** your beak is exceedingly long! ... I beg master that with your noble bill you will give just one pull in the direction of my throat, when I will most

certainly give you a handsome reward!” The stork ... having instantly plucked it out and delivered him, said, “where is the fine thing which you are going to give me in recompense?” The wolf said, “that **you** have made your escape at all, is already a remarkably fortunate circumstance for you, and do you still wish for recompense?”

Visual details, mainly of physical actions and mien, are also added to the Chinese fables, many of them designed for the intensification of the conflict between the facades and the facts, and between animals. Emotional strengths are enhanced, actions enlivened and thus the contrasts amplified. These modifications and additions constitute, according to Hanan (2001: 55-80), “a switch of mode from summary to scene” which thus conforms to the general tendency in Chinese fictions to dramatize. The viciousness of the rascals is magnified by careful descriptions of their actions. See, for example, the fox in the Chinese version of “The Fox and the Goat” 狐與山羊 (F31): in the original tale he falls together with the goat into a well, ^[35] but in the Chinese version he tricks the goat into the well when finding himself trapped by exaggerating the taste of the water. Another fox in “The Lion and the Bear Contending for the Spoil” 獅熊爭食 (F3; *orig.* F5) has a good gloat over others’ catch, and leaves the lion and the bear prostrate with its overweening air: “[The fox] then said ‘I am deeply indebted to the exertions of both gentlemen’ and with an air of much consequence marched away. The two wild beasts rolled their eyes about furiously, but the case was without remedy”. The fox in the original is far less true-to-life: he simply “scamper’d away” upon seizing the Fawn. There is a more fiendish war horse in the Chinese version who “scoffs” and “kicks with its hind leg” the ass whom he disdains. The dog in “The Little Dog and the Wolf” 狼受犬騙 (F12) ^[36] begs its predator for pardon by “falling on his knees”. All these enlivening details, though ubiquitous

in the Chinese *Aesop*, are absent in the English original.

The Uses of *Aesop*

“Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.”

—*Matthew* 10.16

Aesop's Fables are no nursery tales. John Locke thought it almost the only book fit for children, one which would join childhood to manhood by attending to all sides of human life (Blackham 1985: 9). The Aesopian menagerie can indeed be very unpleasantly brutish, wherein habitants of radically different stripes are set to vie with one another, yet powers are never balanced and the plots are fraught with craft and machination, constituting altogether a giant scheming court. The fables, in translation, in practically all major European languages, found their way into school textbooks steeped in the humanist tradition nevertheless, and were employed in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for teaching English, French or Latin (Lewis 1996: 20); until the nineteenth century, the fable was considered “a worthwhile vehicle for conveying morality to children and the working classes, particularly in England and Germany” (Stewart 1991: 16). To compilations bred under the turbulent decades of the English Civil Wars was added the underlying objective of suiting fabular discourses to specific political causes (Lewis 1996: 20). Sir Roger L'Estrange's popular *Fables, of Aesop and other eminent mythologists: with morals and reflections*,^[37] first published in 1692, with its lengthy reflections, would be recognized for its intricate political allegories, but he also indicated in the prefatory statement his intentions to use his collection in English classrooms, “where it might instill a proper sense

of the English language”, and maintained that “fables affect their readers as sense experience does, impressing reading minds as writing might a page” (Lewis 1996: 25): “To Speak All in a few Words, Children are but *Blank Paper*, ready Indifferently for any Impression, Good or Bad (for they take All upon Credit) and it is much in the Power of the first Comer, to Write Saint, or Devil upon’t, which of the Two He pleases” (L’Estrange 1714: A3). L’Estrange proposed the transmission of Aesop’s morals to the younger generations “upon the Point of a Timely Discipline and Institution, toward the Forming of an Honourable, and a Virtuous Life”, and made clear the principles he stood by, namely “Christian Charity, Civil Society, Decency and Good Manners” (*ibid.* B2, A3).

“Fable” is generally translated in Chinese as *yuyan* 寓言, a term derived from the twenty-seventh chapter of *Zhuangzi*, which begins with “*Yuyan shijiu*” 寓言十九. *Yuyan* literally means “lodged words”, and used to correspond with allegory (Hartman 1986: 946-8), or any tropes that involved embedded meanings. It designates nowadays more narrowly, however, “the didactic fables, a literary form that teaches lessons, often exhortative and pedagogical ones, through personification and other forms of fictional narratives”.^[38] *Yuyan* flourished in the Warring States Period and were revived during the Tang and Song, which witnessed a transition in subject matter, from the political-philosophical to the social-satirical. The term has an array of synonyms throughout literary history (Chen 1983: 6-7): *yu* 喻, “a figure or metaphor”,^[39] as in *Yishi yuyan* 意拾喻言,^[40] is one of them. The use of the character in the fabular sense is also linked to the translation of Buddhist sutras in the Southern and Northern Dynasties (420-589 A.D.), and examples include *Bai Ju Biyu Jing* 百句譬喻經, *Za Biyu Jing* 雜譬喻經, etc. (Chen 1983: 6).

The translated fable has been employed in Chinese history for moral admonishment and exhortation. Buddhist sutras abound with them,

while generations of Jesuit missionaries saw *Aesop's Fables* as convenient manuals for preaching Christian values to the pagans,^[41] each bringing along a copy to the distant Orient during the late Ming Dynasty.^[42] Matteo Ricci (Li Madou 利瑪竇, 1552-1610) was the first to introduce the Aesopian tales in his teachings. His *Ten essays on Eccentrics* 畸人十篇, first published in 1608 and later included in Li Zhizao's 李之藻 *Tian Xue Chu Han* 天學初函, records the dialogues between Ricci and the elites on religion, philosophy and ethics. He brought in Aesop's name, presenting him as "a famed ancient sage and a slave, Esuoboshi 厄瑣伯氏" (Ricci [1608]: 218-219). Ricci employed in his writings six tales from *Aesop* to exemplify the Christian doctrines, namely "The Wit of the Wild Fox" 野狐之智, "A Fable of the Peacock" 孔雀鳥之喻, "A Fable of the Well-bred Dog" 良種犬之喻, "The Clever Fox" 智狐, "The Seasons of the Trees" 樹木之隆冬春夏 and "The Horse and the Stag" 馬與鹿, all lecturing on self-abnegation, the vanity of materialism and meanings of the afterlife. Ricci's work was very much extolled for its capacity to instill virtues:

西泰子近所著書十篇，與《天主實義》相輔行世者。顧自命曰畸人，其言關切人道。大約澹泊以明志，行法以俟命，謹言苦志以裨身，絕欲廣愛以通乎天。載雖強乎先聖賢所已言，而譬喻博証令人讀之而迷者豁，貪者醒，傲者愧，妒者平，悍者涕。(Ricci [1608]: 190-191)

The recent ten articles by the reverend Matteo Ricci from the West were published along with *Tianzhu Shi Yi*. Albeit calling himself an eccentric, Ricci's work concerns everything about humanity—it teaches on a simple way of life in order to discover one's true goal; on abiding and awaiting heaven's will; on being discreet in speeches and ascetic in behavior in order to cultivate the self; on abstinence and philanthropy

so that one may reach heaven. Those are exactly what the sages have taught. The fables he employs, sharp and varied, will guide the lost, awaken the avaricious, mortify the defiant, placate the jealous and affect the savage.

In a revised edition, *Re-inscribed Ten essays on Eccentrics* 重刻畸人十篇, Zhou Bingmo 周炳謨 again credited the work with didactic efficacy: ^[43] “[T]hey enlighten every earthling ... I chanced to read a few of them, and found everything so fresh and new. The truth dawned upon me. The benefits brought by these prints cannot be underestimated”. In 1614, Didacus de Pantoja (Pang Diwo 龐迪我, 1571-1618) included nine Aesopian tales (Uchida 2001: 5-7) in *Qi Ke* 七克, and remarked in the preface a shared quest between the East and West for moral advancement:

中華語言文字迥不相通，苦心學習，復似蒙童，近稍曉其大略，得接講論；竊見有志賢儒，勿務修德克己之功，同方合志，萬里非懸。^[44]

The Chinese language, used to be so vastly unfamiliar, has become more fathomable for me after some painstaking labour like that of an ignorant student. I now manage to apply it in my discourse, and am pleased to see ambitious scholars quicken their pace in moral improvement, a common goal indeed shared by people far and near.

A more extended batch of *Aesop Fables*, totaling thirty-eight tales, were rendered into Chinese by Nicolaus Trigault (Jin Nige 金尼閣, 1577-1628) and his Chinese collaborator Zhang Geng 張賡 in their work *Selectae Esopi Fabulae* 況義 (Uchida 2001: 14-19). Once again, it was a book on morality that served to enlighten the earthlings:

凡立言者，其言粹然，其言凜然，莫不歸之於中，至於多方誘勸……或罕譬而喻，使讀者之遷善遠罪，而不自知……張先生憫世人之懵懂也，取西海金公口授之旨，而諷切之。(Ge 1986: 290)

Sayings that are pristine and imposing are all assembled here ... and the exceptional parables will influence readers imperceptibly, leading them to repent and reform ... Mr. Zhang has much empathy for the ignorance of the people, and tried to remonstrate that with the teachings of Mr. Trigault from the Western ocean.

The late Qing *Yishi Yuyan* was adapted mainly as a language primer, yet there too were hints alluding to *Aesop's* role for “enlightenment”. The epithet “Mun mooy seen-shang” of the Chinese assistant, literally meaning “Mr. Unenlightened”, may have epitomized the common Chinese who in the eyes of the Westerners were in dire need of Christian values. Also, in the Chinese introduction to *Yishi yuyan*, Mun mooy remarked on the Aesop tradition for the “instruction of Pupils”: “[Aesop’s] works (or sayings) having been transmitted to us after-ages—as, in the case of England, Russia, France, Spain, and all the Nations of the Western Ocean—there is not one which has not had these FABLES translated into the vulgar language of the country, and which does not use them for the instruction of Pupils:—they being easily understood, and still more easily remembered”.^[45] Moreover, *Yishi Yuyan* actually first appeared as serialized tales from 1837 to 1838 in Gützlaff’s *Eastern Western Monthly Magazine* 東西洋考每月統記傳 and a forerunner named *Yishimi Zhuan* 意拾秘傳 (1838?) published by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, an institution purported to promote useful Western values to the Chinese. In fact, Robert Thom spoke rather complacently of the impact generated by the early editions in his preface to *Yishi Yuyan*:

When first published in Canton 1837-38 their reception by the Chinese was extremely flattering. They had their run of the Public Courts and Offices—until the Mandarins—taking offence at seeing some of their evil customs so freely canvassed—ordered the work to be suppressed ... [W]e may nevertheless justly lay claim to a share in the ushering of this Græco-Sinico compound into the world. The good-natured Reader may thus even feel disposed to admit—that, it is quite possible for so paltry a publication to be useful in it's way. ^[46]

Yishi Yuyan did not escape the fate of proscription either. Taken again as a political weapon by the Chinese officials, it was said to be listed in the Chinese *Index Expurgatorius* (Uchida 2001: 67-70).

The Morals

“Basically a metaphor” (Blackham 1985: xi), the fable genre to a certain extent enables the editor to make liberal annotations: “[Although] it has become habitual to say what the fable is about in a title or a moral, this is only an editor’s privilege; it is exemplary, not restrictive. A history of editions of fables would show that. There is no definitive ‘moral’. The metaphor is open; the comparison invites exploratory reflection” (*ibid.*: xiii). Set in a grisly, inimical “war of all against all” (*bellum omnium contra omnes*), where actions are determined not by virtues but by self-interests, *Aesop’s Fables* can be bleak tales of ploys and deceptions. There was indeed a recurrent tendency for the fables to be used by the lower classes (Rothwell 1995: 235), whose members could easily identify themselves with the fragile little creatures who are obliged to tussle with those that can far outgun them by reason of their physical size or hierarchical superiority. For the disadvantaged, this depressing Hobbesian

state of nature justifies a pragmatic world view that holds supreme the preservation of one's life and interests at all costs, and they tend to suppose that it simply cannot be otherwise. But just as Orwell did not write *Animal Farm* to congratulate the triumph of injustice and inhumanity (Kerr 2003: 88), *Aesop's Fables* can also be read as a moralistic discourse of opposition to the many vices it contains. For, as Lewis (1996) discusses, Ogilby in his epigraph to *Aesop's Fables* (1650) "maintains that fables' primary task is to 'make Men lesser Beasts', to offer precepts 'Men' can agree upon and that can forestall reversion to what we may fairly call a 'state of nature'", and, albeit ironic, the commission of the "belligerent elements of that state" allows the fabulists "to forestall such reversions" (Lewis 1996: 20-21).

Yishi Yuyan, on the other hand, is inclined to lecture on the grimmer side of worldly affairs, which is a far cry from the Jesuit righteous sermons, and differs from Sir Roger's original both in form and gist. In substance it is a rulebook on survival and self-preservation tailored for the downtrodden, a collation of expedients to help them think through decisions and predicaments. The Chinese *Aesop's Fables* appears to have been functionally construed as a stratagem in the vein of *vade mecum*; like Sunzi's *Art of War*, each of the tales is presented as an instance of some worldly wisdom, invariably appended with a rich assortment of gnomic advices—some innocuous, some less so—descended from past "sages". *Yishi Yuyan* does not inspire, but reinforces, from the poignant viewpoint of the aggrieved, a static world order and the immutability of human nature. The small and weak are made to learn through bitter lessons on how to drag on an ignoble existence by accepting one's role in life, by acquiescing in injustice, and by shrewdly profiting from circumstances. These clearly are no high-end morals taught in the classics, but resonate with values and visions that prevail in the more popular, low-brow publications like morality books 善書,^[47] mercantile handbooks

商業書 (Yu 1987: 122-36), and of course popular fiction—what “people actually read” according to Gützlauff, who went so far as to claim that “[in the] whole libraries in Chinese houses ... no book is ever touched except novels”.^[48] The propensity of the general reader for such lighter literature was marked, although much of it is in fact “foul, scandalous, and dishonest, full of insipid tittle-tattle, frothy jests, and jingling witticisms unfit for any useful or even harmless purpose”,^[49] contradicting the moral purposes and pedagogical function which they claim to serve, to circumvent criticism by Confucian officialdom (Bishop 1956: 245). I shall below align the fables in the English and Chinese versions, and highlight how the latter depart from the originals in their moralizing under these topics: “fatalism”, “social injustice” and “utilitarianism”, which are the most recognizable themes of the translated tales. I shall also discuss why this particular edition of *Aesop*, in which Thom takes pride for its slightly reformist effect, has evolved into its present form, and how it upholds, more than anything, mundane values and even shows the sordidness of worldly affairs.

A. “Fatalism”

Yishi Yuyan’s morals are essentially fatalistic.^[50] The stories speak consistently to the underdogs, suggesting a vital self-consciousness towards one’s own identity which is chiefly decided by social status, and often interpret mishaps as the upshots of attempts to transcend one’s lot in life. This “natural order of social inequality” is sustained by the fatalistic point of view in Chinese folk ideology, the core idea of which is that “there is really little to be done about one’s miserable condition, or the obverse, that one’s exalted condition as a member of the elite is not only right and proper, but inevitable” (Harrell 1987: 92). “Fatalism”, according to Lin Yutang, “is not only a Chinese mental habit, it is part of the conscious Confucian tradition, [which] is a great source of personal

strength and contentment, and accounts for the placidity of Chinese souls" (*ibid.*). Such a fatalistic point of view is a common theme found in morality books. Chan Zhixi 陳智錫 in his *Quanjie Quanshu* 勸戒全書 or *Complete Book of Exhortations and Admonitions* (1641), for instance, "warned his readers against any attempts to change their livelihood or their residences" (Brokaw 1991: 176). Such recreant sentiment is embodied in the fable "The Eagle and the Tortoise" 鷹龜 (F15; *orig.* F220), wherein the tortoise aspires to soar, like the eagle, into the clouds. Advice unheeded, the tortoise is lifted up by the bird, released in midair, and killed. Sir Roger's concluding moral is "Nothing can be either Safe, or Easy, that's Unnatural"—a fair comment over the folly of a lack of common sense and exorbitant passions. Fatalism is only faintly present, if at all, in the idea of what is natural or otherwise. The Chinese moral alludes explicitly, on the other hand, to the class hierarchy in society—how, by misjudging its own status, the tortoise ends up being dashed into pieces: "[A]s all articles have their different qualities, so among men each has his station in life:—if the business (you undertake) is not in proportion to your strength, how can you escape being a sufferer? The proverb saith: 'if you do not fly high, when you fall you won't be hurt'—it is so indeed!" 物各有其品格，人各有其身分；如事不量力，豈不受害乎？俗云飛不高跌不傷是也。 The Chinese moral here correlates physical naturalness with seemingly preordained social statuses, and opposes social mobility.

Another fable, "The Ass and Lap-Dog" 驢犬妒寵 (F46; *orig.* F15), similarly exemplifies this notion. The ass, who mimics the whelp (a pet) and curries favour for itself, asks for his own misfortune of flogging for forgetting its own standing. It is made ruthlessly explicit that there *is* indeed a double standard that operates by status or class:

[T]he simple cause of all this was, that the Ass had formed very

erroneous ideas concerning himself. Thus it is in this world! if a man can really depend upon his high rank in society, altho' he may commit certain *faux pas*, yet they are overlooked as mere matter for jest:—but if it be a poor wretch, who is so unlucky as to sin in the same way, then his crime can on no account be pardoned! This therefore is intended as a hint to the men of this world, that they may form a correct idea of themselves!

是驢之不自量，故也。如世人果倚世位可恃者，雖有小過，亦可作為玩意；若下賤之輩犯之，罪無可辭耳。為人自量可也。

The original, on the other hand, condemns the act of licentious imitation, which is itself “Putid and Servile”, and speaks against those “Brutal Minds wrapt up in Human Shapes”. In the original fables, the reasonableness of actions is determined by set criteria such as common sense and integrity; in the Chinese tales, however, iniquities towards the powerless are seen as inevitabilities, for fate determines status and in turn eligibility, with the morals tacitly agreeing to the privileges enjoyed by those in power.

B. “Social Injustice”

Self-preservation is, in *Yishi Yuyan*, the rule of thumb for survival, and that accounts for the oblivion to injustice that infests the menagerie. Readers are persuaded into accepting that nothing is intolerable so long as personal interests remain unthreatened. This acquiescence is also based on the conviction that the world simply cannot be changed, not, at least, with one's own power. Towards abuse and humiliation, the morals in these Chinese tales remain equivocal: for “The Wolf and the Lamb” 豺烹羊 (F1; *orig.* F3), where the sophistic wolf devours the innocent lamb on various pretexts, the moral is “if you wish to impute

crime to a man, why feel anxiety about not having an excuse?" 欲加之罪，何患無辭。The original moral, however, is a warning against the unscrupulous manipulation of logics ("Reasons") of "Tyrannical Power".^[51] In "The Wolf, the Fox, the Eagle, the Kite, and the Sheep" 狼斷羊案 (F64; *orig.* F29), where the sheep is falsely incriminated for owing the wolf "measures of corn" in a complot of the perjurers, the Chinese moral goes:

Thus it is in this world! if a man chance to possess wealth, it is continually drawing down evils and calamities upon his head! and should he meet a greedy magistrate like the Wolf, a plaintiff like our fierce Dog, and witnesses like the Eagle and Kite of our story, then indeed he may not hope for any affair (he may get involved in), being decided with the smallest attention to justice! The proverb saith, "the Elephant has got Ivory tusks, and for that reason is his body burned!" and is it not indeed so?

如世人若有貲財，每招橫禍；又遇貪狼之官、原告如犬、干證如鷹鵠，則不必望其秉公斷事矣！諺云：象有齒，焚其身。豈不然乎？

The iniquity is aggravated here in the concluding moral, which extinguishes hope and seems to take to task the victim as though its intrinsic qualities beget misfortune. Such "morals" find cross-references in mercantile handbooks, which teach against hard-edged attitudes and exposure of one's fortune or talents. They contain entries like "wear no attire in silk and conceal your banknotes in others' presence" 逢人不令露帛，處外亦宜藏鈔。^[52] "Embrace your shortcomings instead of strengths. Those who are short of capabilities and skills would naturally become unambitious and even despicable, and are guaranteed therefore a harmless life and tolerance from others, while those who are

outstanding, ambitious and assertive may not always enjoy the advantages they deserve, but instead beckon envy or jealousy, physical harm or even murders, and lurking prickles (troubles) that are beyond control” 抱短寧勿抱長。短於才技者，所以短鄙猥縮，不欲向先，害亦鮮及，雖有過失，人且不較。彼優於才能者，多自矜持好動，百凡首出，然所為未必皆善。或妒或忌，或毀或戕，芒刺暗生，豈能周御。^[53] The English moral, while still confirming the essentiality of the judicature—“There’s no Living however without Law”—condemns the witnesses who are “so Profligate as to bring a Scandal upon Truth itself, where it is to be Asserted”.

A pessimistic outlook rings through the whole work, with unrighteousness taken as commonplace. In “The Eagle, Cat and Sow” 鷹貓豬同居 (F22; *orig.* F403), a tale-telling cat ruins the families of its neighbours by planting seeds of distrust between them and afterwards consumes their children. Here the tone of the Chinese moral remains resigned and, rather than denouncing the falsities of the wrongdoer, only points out that this is the way of the world: “Truth is not spoken behind one’s back, and that which is spoken behind a man, can be for no good!; when the kite and the oyster struggle together, the fisherman gains profit thereby!” 好話不背人，背人無好話；鸛蚌相持，漁人得利, whereas the English moral lays a definite charge against what is wrong: “The Sin of Traducing is Diabolical”—“There can be no Peace in any State or Family, where whisperers and Tale-bearers are Encouraged”, for intermeddlers are “People that set their Neighbours Houses on Fire to Toast their own Eggs”. The “proneness to adjust to injustice” (King 1967) is, according to Chinese morals, a skill that the bulldozed party, as well as the onlookers, should master. While the English text makes lucid the collective moral values to be upheld, like innocence and serenity, the Chinese text focuses on how to be shrewd and sophisticated in a tottering subsistence: “we must be on our guard

against flattery”, as in “The Fox and Raven” 鴉狐, which tells of how a fox blandishes a raven so that the latter loses her morsel the moment she tries to sing. In the English, both the “crafty knave” and the “vain easy fool” are reproached (F27).

Yishi Yuyan also presents a grim view of humanity, with its flinging accusations of the disinterested doers of good, whose kindness is repaid with enmity, while the English version decries the malicious, firmly upholding ethical principles, and suggesting a delicate equipoise in the face of moral dilemmas. For “The Country Man and the Snake” 農夫救蛇 (F9)—in which a farmer is so kind as to thaw a frozen snake who, when fully awake, snaps at his redeemer—the Chinese moral is “he who brings up a tiger does it to his own hurt” 養虎為患, which derides the benefactors for their fatuity. In another fable, “The Hen, the Snake’s eggs and the Swallow” 雞抱蛇蛋 (F44), in which a hen hatches a snake’s spawn and a swallow persuades it to abandon the whole project, the moral goes: “where again in this world will you find those, who recall foolish people to their senses like the Swallow; and where will you find those, who hearken into good counsel like the Hen? of such alas! I have never yet seen any!” 世上安得有如燕子喚醒痴人？而從勸有如母雞者，亦未之見也。^[54] It is the voice of a cynic inveighing against the general foibles of humanity. The English version, instead of speaking lopsidedly against charities, teaches that “Friendships, Charities, and Kindnesses, should be well Weigh’d and Examin’d, as to the Circumstances of Time, Place, Manner, Person, and Proportion” (F9; *orig.* F195). Similarly, in “The Two Bitches” 黑白狗鬻 (F18), where the black dog, with her puppies, brazenly occupies the white dog’s home, the moral is “when Lew-pe borrowed the King-chow territory, it was a *borrowing* without return” 劉備借荊州，有借無還. All the cruelties and tyrannies, as the Chinese version shows, will go unpunished since divinities, and divine justice, are usually absent. There are the frogs stoned to death

for the children's amusement in "The Boys and the Frogs" 孩子打蛤 (F20), and the moral speaks thus of the victims' distress: "when all things are destroyed, it only excites his smile!" 萬物傷殘，祇供一笑. By contrast, the English moral is a reprimand of man's delight in blood: "Hard-heartedness and Cruelty is not only an Inhuman vice, but worse than Brutal: For such Men take Delight in Blood which Beasts spill only in Self-Defence, or in case of Necessity to satisfy Hunger".

C. "Utilitarianism"

The Chinese *Aesop* overflows with a spirit of utilitarianism, ^[55] which is defined here as a guiding view of life that is basically egoistic and proposes the maximizing of utility or happiness for oneself, as measured mainly in economic terms. The social changes concomitant with the expansion of trade in the Lower Yangzi (Jiangnan) and southeast coastal areas since the sixteenth century were significant. Merchants, consigned in Confucian social theory to the bottom of the social scale, had their status elevated and began to enjoy more power, upsetting the conventional creeds that depreciate inordinate profit seeking (Huang 2001: 37-38; Brokaw 1991: 5). Trade in Guangdong continued to prosper nevertheless, to such an extent that Emperor Yongzheng once remarked that the natives of the area were all "profiteers". ^[56] In the 1830s, Howqua, leader of the Canton Cohong, acquired a fortune that placed him among the fifty richest men in the millennium of 1000-2000 A.D. (Huang 2001: 276). The utilitarian spirit soon permeated literature. The fictional stories of *San Yan* 三言, *Er Pai* 二拍, for instance, reflected the ascending status of merchants and money determining value (Gao 2004: 16). The value system of merchants was also recorded in the handbooks that were targeted at an ever expanding mercantile audience in the Ming and Qing Dynasties. The "morals" taught in these publications, which basically give advice on monetary discretion, are strikingly similar to

some of those drawn from the *Aesop's Fables* by Mun mooy seen-shang, himself possibly playing a part in the Hong's mercantile dealings: "Those who spend in moderation always find themselves sufficed; those who spend on credits live in despondence" 度入而制出則常足，未來而預費則失望；"Gluttony makes one forget his origins, the greed for tiny profits may lead to insolvency" 貪口福而忘本，因小利以傾財；"Avarice makes one lose more" 貪負失大, etc.^[57] Similarly in the Chinese *Aesop*, morals on how to avoid loss are pervasive: "[W]hen the kite and the oysters are struggling together, the fisherman has the fortune (to take them both)" 鷸蚌相纏，漁人得利 (F3); "[B]ecause the covetous ... not obtain what he covets, he loses both capital and profit!" 貪心不得，本利俱失 (F4); "[Because] the avaricious heart is unsatisfied, he loses his capital as well as his profit!" 貪心不一，連本俱失 (F70); "Ten sales on trust are not as good as one for ready money" 十賒不如一現 (F12); "Before entering any place, think first how you may get out of it again; before you buy a thing, consider previously if you will be able to sell it again" 未算入，先算出；未算買，先算賣 (F31); "Just as the men of this world! of those who fly to hug their bane and shun that which is advantageous to them,—there are indeed too many!" 如世人每速於所害，而捨其所利者多耳 (F43). It even appears that profiteering, at whatever costs, is nothing wrong at all. In "The Man and His Image" 愚夫求財 (F34) where a man dashes a statue into pieces to avenge his unanswered prayers for wealth but accidentally finds a fortune among the shattered pieces, the moral goes:

[O]ne need not be surprised at the proverb, money that is begged with meekness, we give it reluctantly, but when extorted from us by oppression we part with it gladly (i.e., to save our bacon): if this applies even to the gods themselves, how much more must it apply to man? We are continually seeing the men of this world (in the same

predicaments;) you may meekly solicit them again and again, yet not obtain (what you want;) but when the argument of cruelty and oppression comes to be applied to them, then it is got (without difficulty)!

怪不得俗語有云善財難化，冤枉甘心；靈神尚且如此，而況世人乎？每見世人再三善求，終不可得，及至逞兇勒掙，即得之矣！

The English original, on the other hand, condemns the “vain desires”, “immoderate love of riches”, and those who “govern their lives by Fancy and Appetite; without consulting the Honour and Justice of the case” and “accommodate their religion to their Profit”.

Pervasive in *Yishi Yuyan* is a kind of mercantile utilitarianism that prioritizes material interest over virtues. In “The Cock and the Precious Stone” 雞公珍珠 (F2), for example, the Chinese version pities a dejected cock, who fails to benefit from a windfall: “wherein does true value consist? If useful, then it is valuable”. 何以為寶，合用則貴, while the English version is in praise of the industrious cock and his wisdom to prefer things of good use: “He that’s industrious in an Honest Calling, shall never fail of a Blessing. ’Tis the part of a wise Man to prefer Things Necessary before Matters of Curiosity, Ornament, or Pleasure”. Choices, it is suggested, are to be made solely upon the measure of gains and losses. In “The Country mouse and the Town mouse” 二鼠 (F8), the rustic reflects that she “[would] rather eat husks in peace and quietness, than the most delicate viands amid fear and alarm”, “for the proverb says, ‘one would rather eat gruel that gives pleasure, than cooked victuals which cause sorrow!’” 與其徬惶而甘旨，孰若安靜而糟糠；寧食開眉粥，莫食愁眉飯. The English version, on the other hand, glorifies the delights, innocence and simplicity of country life, and denounces the anxiety, lewdness and hazards of the city.

Yishi Yuyan also promotes charity, albeit not a kind that arises out of magnanimity, but out of the apprehension that fortune may ironically turn former foes into benefactors. Charity is sometimes performed, as the Chinese version puts it, as an exchange of interests. The moral of “The Lion and the Mouse” 報恩鼠 (F47) presents this intricate reasoning to the King of the Jungle that pardons a little mouse:

[O]f a dozen of beams (of wood) we know not which is the strongest!; when you have an opportunity of letting people go, you should let them go; when it is in your power to spare men, spare them! do not on any account treat a single individual with contempt! It may possibly happen, that the man who appears to poor and mean today, may nevertheless be your benefactor on some future occasion; and no one can be certain that it may not be so!

十二條樑唔知邊條得力。得放手時須放手，得饒人處且饒人。切勿輕視人小，誠恐今日之小人，是將來之恩人，亦未可定也。

To the egotistic horse which ignores the ass's call for rescue in “The Horse and the Ass” 驢馬同途 (F60), a similar logic applies: “Just so the men of this world! these are continually, niggardly of their exertions, when they are required to give assistance to others; and when the consequences (of their disobliging conduct) extend to themselves, they repent when it is too late!” 如世人每每吝力，不肯為人幫助，及至己身，悔之晚矣！ By the same retributive rule, deception should not be committed, as in “The Fox and the Stork” 狐鶴相交 (F56), where the fox and the stork exchange inhospitality and the moral is: “we now admonish the men of this world, that they do not cherish in their hearts any intention to insult others! Moreover it is to be feared, that he who does so, will on the contrary get others to insult him! what occasion is

there to say more!!” 勸世人不可自存欺人之心，猶恐反被人欺，何可說哉？The “fear” of the inscrutable machinery of retribution is, in the Chinese world, the motivation for action or inaction. By contrast, the English version has it that “[i]t is a Christian, a Natural, a Reasonable, and a Political Duty, for all Members of the same Body to Assist One Another” for “[w]ithout good Nature and Gratitude, Men had as good live in a Wilderness as in a society”.

Yishi Yuyan strays further away from its antecedents by generally failing to condemn actions that are determined by the meticulous calculation of interests without any moral scruples. In “The Ass and the Lion’s skin” 驢穿獅皮 (F13), where the ass exposes its true identity under his masquerade of a lion and gets snapped into pieces, the calamity is interpreted thus:

[T]he reason of all this was, that the ass did not behave with proper care! Suppose that the ass could have understood matters, in his whole life-time he would never have brayed, and then the ass’ person with the Lion’s noble appearance: would not this have been a happy conception! This is very true! but then a false assumption of dignity can never last long! The proverb speaks of “the fox assuming the air of the Tiger”, but in this case, the Ass “allowed the cloven-foot to appear”, and “trying to play the part of a clever fellow, turned out a fool!”

是驢之不慎，故也，使驢若能知機，終身不叫，則驢身獅勢，豈不快哉！甚矣！狐假虎威，其露出馬腳來，而弄巧反拙矣！

The Chinese narrator provides no moral censure of the counterfeit. Instead, he would be ready to consecrate a scoundrel if he had gotten off scot-free and the negligence of the ass is seen as “regrettable”. The

original moral, on the other hand, deplores the misdeed: “The world abounds in Terrible Fanfarons, in the Masque of Men of Honour: But these Braggadocio’s are easy to be Detected for no Counterfeit of any good Quality or virtue whatsoever, will abide the test”. In “The Daw and the Borrowed Feathers” 鴉插假毛 (F14), the Chinese version, rather than denouncing the forgery, explains what spoils the plot: “Thus are the men of this world! some of these are continually engaged in matters where they avail themselves of others’ lights and too frequently in the midst of their conversation, let something slip which ruins the whole!” 如世人每有借光之事，多從言語中敗露者， while the moral in the English version speaks against the stolen identity: “We steal from one another all manner of Ways, and to all Manner of Purposes; Wit, as well as Feathers; but where Pride and Beggery meet, People are sure to be made Ridiculous in the conclusion”.

Conclusion

Although commissioned as a language primer, *Yishi Yuyan*’s largely domesticated narratives cannot be fully explained by a functionalist approach (Chan 1998: 57-78). They should, instead, be understood in terms of the dynamics of cultures as perceived by the translators, and in this case the Chinese writer in particular, whose role as “a creative participant” (Baker 2001; Nord 1991: 10) is too significant to be overlooked. His discourse, like most of the nineteenth-century ones prior to the Opium Wars, is constrained by a very static and conservative cultural outlook in a specific socio-historical context.

The contortions in the Chinese *Aesop*, both in narrative forms and themes, indicate as well that the rendition is dominated by the Chinese writer’s “horizons” arisen from his identities as a lower literatus, a

participant in the prospering Canton trade and an ambassador in the early cross-cultural scene in late Qing China. He therefore conforms to the poetics ^[58] of the popular lowbrow literature of the time and is in favour of mercantile values and concerns particular to his habitat.

This rendition also shows that translation studies as a discipline can in its own distinctive, perhaps sinuous, way reveal some elements in translation history—in this case there are strong references to the mentalities of those involved in the Canton trading scene. In a sense, the bestial tragedies in the Chinese *Aesop* reflect the pathos of the average people in the late Qing whose lives were full of misgivings, for they seemed to exist in a tangled world with all its absurdities undefeatable in the absence of dependable faiths, social pacts and justice, so that they could only abide by the afflicting platitude of common adages that had been espoused by generations of people battered by a sense of powerlessness.

Notes

[1] “*Aesop’s Fables*” in this research paper refers in general to all the fables that are at one time or another sheltered under the shadow of the name. See Jacobs (1979: ix).

[2] See, for example, the comment of James Legge in 1887 recorded in Alfred J. May’s edition of *Yishi Yuyan* in 1891: “A compilation of Aesop’s and other fables, admirably translated into Chinese, was published at Macao in 1840 by Mr. Thom, who was afterwards appointed Consul at Ningpo by Sir Henry Pottinger. Mr. Alfred J. May has shewn to me the manuscripts of much the larger portion of Mr. Thom’s work, arranged and adapted by him for use as a school book in the Government Central School in Hongkong, and in other Chinese-English Schools. I think that the work, published according to Mr. May’s plan, would be very useful,

and that his undertaking deserves to be encouraged and assisted". Quoted from Uchida (2001: 63).

[3] For a biography of Thom, see *Chinese Repository* (May 1847, 16: 236-245).

[4] See *Chinese Repository* (Oct 1838, 7: 335). According to the editor, "[t]he fables ... now for the first time in a Chinese costume, have been selected from sir Roger L'Estrange's collection".

[5] "[W]hether in war, during trade negotiations, or in the course of exploration, the scarcity of capable interpreters was too often reflected in personal misunderstandings and the obscurity of official statements." See Graham (1978: 10).

[6] "Ask of Messrs. Morrison, Gonsalvez, Gützlaff, Bridgman, Hunter, or Thom, our best Chinese scholars, now in China and see what all will tell you." See "CORRESPONDENCE—Chinese Translation", *The Canton Press* (10 June 1837, 2-40: 92).

[7] "*Mun Mooy* the writer of these Fables—out of a very numerous range of acquaintances—is the only native we have met, who can write fluently in the vulgar canton idiom; and yet when we first became acquainted (some four years ago) he was as backward as his neighbours at this sort of exercise." See Thom (1840: x).

[8] See Wang ed. (1957-62: 54), Article 18 of the Wangxia Treaty: "Officials and citizens of the United States are allowed to learn different dialects of Chinese under the natives".

[9] In 1831, Imperial Censor Shao Zhenghu 邵正笏 in his memorial to the throne reported that "there were traitors teaching Chinese to the children of the barbarians". See Wu (2003: 177).

[10] English merchant Brown made a request to the Viceroy of Guangdong and Guangxi for the permission to learn Chinese after the natives so that foreigners could understand the Chinese law. The latter replied, "Existing linguists and compradors are natives too and you can learn after them instead of hiring extra teachers—which is in breach of the law". See

Liang (1999: 157).

- [11] Uchida (2001: 64-7) raises the possibility that Mun mooy seen-shang might be “Tsin-shen” (He Jinshan 何進善, 1817-71). It seems however not very likely to be the case, for He was a pious Chinese Protestant minister, while what *Yishi Yuyan* preaches is a very practical, utterly non-Christian worldview and *Yishi Yuyan*’s narratives do not really conform to He’s more highly educated background. See also Cai (2004: 132-162).
- [12] “If foreigners are to enter the city, their respective Hong merchants, linguists have to submit the names of the foreigners and their retinue to the local Magistracy ... No native people are allowed to enter a foreign Hong nor to acquaint with the residents there.” See *Liang Guang zongdu Li Shibao Zouchen Yue dong difang fangfan yangren tiaozhe ji* (The 24th Year of Qianlong Reign) 兩廣總督李侍堯奏陳粵東地方防範洋人條則集 in *Ming-Qing shiqi Aomen wenti dangan wenxian huibian* 明清時期澳門問題檔案文獻匯編 Vol. 1 (1999: 338).
- [13] “The hiring of native people should be restricted to the posts of compradors and linguists alone, as the usual practice.” See *Dao-Xian-Tong-Guang xi chao zongyi* 道咸同光四朝奏議 (1835), quoted by Si (2002: 45).
- [14] “Those who deal with the western barbarians nowadays are called *tongshi*. They are in fact rabbles loitering in town and despised by their fellow countrymen. Only those who cannot find employment elsewhere would enter such business. They are by nature dull, uninformed and crooked, and care nothing but monetary interests” 今之習於西夷者曰通事，其人卒皆市井佻達游閑，不齒鄉里，無所得衣食者始為之。其質魯，其識淺，其心術又鄙，聲色貨利之外不舍其他。
- [15] “The rules and constitutions concerning the five ports are just beginning to settle, there are however hardly any staff who can communicate with the barbarians” 五口通商章程初定頭緒紛如，求情意相通威信能服各夷者竟不可得。See *Chouban yiru shimo* 籌辦夷務始末 Daoguang era (1929-

1930, 76: 31).

- [16] “As for the *Señ sang* or teachers who frequent our Hongts to teach us the elements of their language, I am not aware of a single one who is a *Señtsae*, or who has attained even the lowest step in their literary ladder. Many of them would not be kept in a Chinese gentleman's house, to teach Chinese boys out of leading strings.” See Thom (1839: vii-viii).
- [17] “The Breach of Unity puts the world, and All that's in't, into a State of War, and turns every Man's Hand against his Brother”, while in the Chinese version the moral becomes: “如以一國而論各據一方者，鮮有不敗”。
- [18] As antonyms of “古文”，“時文” or “世文” *shé-wăn* (it is written both ways) or *modern literature*, could according to Thom's teacher branch off into the six sub-divisions, viz. “文章”，“詩賦”，“諭契”，“書札”，“傳志” and “雜錄”. See Thom (1840), “Introduction”.
- [19] Thom (1840), “Preface”，“Introduction”.
- [20] Thom (1840), “Preface”.
- [21] In the seventh year of Tongzhi, Ding Richang 丁日昌, Provincial Governor of Jiangsu proposed to clamp down on the unchaste novels, and in the following year titles like *Hongloumeng* 紅樓夢, *Qing shi* 情史, *Paian jingqi* 拍案驚奇 and *Jin-gu qi guan* 今古奇觀 were included in the *Index Expurgatorius* (*Yin jin shumu* 應禁書目), which in fact originated in an earlier list (*Quan hui yin shu zheng xin lu* 勸毀淫書徵信錄) of the Daoguang era. See A Ying (2000: 71-5).
- [22] “Throughout the Qing Dynasty, popular fictions were banned and their circulations were always under close surveillance. These banned publications, however, survived by assuming newer forms. Their proscription, actually, made them more enticing to the readers in a way.” See Song (2004: 151-152).
- [23] “[Religious] pamphlets must have been widely distributed, for nineteenth-century missionaries found them everywhere.” See Rawski (1985: 24).

See also You (1999: 15): “Morality books, along with the Sacred edicts, family injunctions, proverbial handbooks, Buddhist sutras, and other daily manuals, add up to a holistic collection of textual materials for educating the commons or for the promotion of folkloristic religions, and further a bibliography of admonishment and exhortation”. See also Yuan (1995: 3).

[24] The English translations of the Chinese fables, unless otherwise specified, are by Thom.

[25] See Liu (1994). The fable “*Diao chuan*” 雕傳 (533-38), originally in Tao Zongyi’s 陶宗儀 (1360-8) *Nan cun chuogeng lu* 南村輟耕錄, for example, is set off by “昔黃帝、少皞之世” (Long Ago During the Reign of *Huangdi* and *Shaohao*); “*Wang wei*” 王鮪 (594-5) and “*Niu wei li*” 牛尾狸 (598-9), originally in Song Lian’s 宋濂 (1310-81) *Song Wenxian Gong quanji* 宋文憲公全集, start with “東海有” (In the Eastern Ocean) and “越山之中” (Inside Mountain Yue); Liu Ji (1311-13)’s “*Gan yu zhi que*” 紺羽之鵲 (604-5) in *Chengyibo wenji* 誠意伯文集 opens with “熹華之山” (In the Mountain of Xihua).

[26] “Vernacular fictions still in circulation today ... like *San Yan* [have] traces of simulation of [the formulaic phrases commonly used in the Sui and Tang Dynasties]. Right before the verses, there are always initiators like ‘How so? As the poem says ...’; ‘The poem says’ etc.” See Tan (2005: 6).

[27] See “Preface”, in Zhao Nanxing’s 趙南星 *Xiao zan* 笑贊, in *Qing du san ke er zhong* 清都散客二種 (1936: 1). The author positions his collection as “folkloristic” 村謠里諺, as “publications disregarded by the highbrows but dispensed in the streets and alleys” 不重於士大夫而轉流播於里巷歟; see also p. 2b: “俗云文章中試官非虛言也”. The initiator is commonly applied in popular publications of the day. See *Yu jiao li* 玉嬌梨: “俗云解鈴還是繫鈴人” and *Xu zibuyu* 續子不語: “俗云虎毒不食兒”. Both are listed by Wylie ([1867]: xxii-xxiii, xxxiv) as in circulation. The former was translated from Chinese into French in 1826.

- [28] See *Zhongguo yuyan daguan* 中國寓言大觀 (Liu 1994): “Taishi Gong yue” 太史公曰; “Junji yue” 君子曰.
- [29] “[Ling Meng-ch’u] ... gives [the narrator] power over the story’s interpretation such as he had never had before, and grants him a distinct personality. In part, this follows naturally from the *kind* of story Ling was writing. It is avowedly a story of ‘moral admonition’, and appeals to a clearcut moral judgment on the part of the reader.” See Hanan (1977: 89). See also Bishop (1956: 241): “The narrator felt free to intrude in his own person into the story, lecturing his auditors on some moral problem raised by the plot, answering questions which he assumed to be in their minds, even exhibiting to them some tour de force of narrative logic which they might have missed”.
- [30] See Shi Chengjin’s 石成金 “Fang she” 方蛇, in *Shao Debao* 笑得好 (A Good Laugh), quoted in *Shijie yuyan shi* 世界寓言史 (Wu 1994: 164). See also Pu Songling’s 蒲松齡 “Zhong li” 種梨 in *Liaozhai Zhiyi* 聊齋誌異 (Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio), quoted in *Zhongguo yuyan daguan* (Liu 1994: 824-825).
- [31] In William Milne’s (1785-1822) *Xiang xun shisan ze* 鄉訓十三則 (1855), there are initiators like “我看世人” (I think the men of this world), “故此我看世人” (So I think the men of this world). The use of “世人” is also common in another of his publications, *Chang yuan liang you xiang lun* 長遠兩友相論 (1854), for example “我看世人論說此事多有不同” (I think the men of this world hold different views on this issue). See Yuan (1995); see also morality books like *Chong ding shenshi zhunsheng* 重訂身世準繩 (1975) and *Quan shi liang yan* 勸世良言 ([1832]).
- [32] See Hanan (2000: 423-4): “[Gützlaß] published eight works that can be classified as novels, six of them from 1834 through 1838, the other two undated. His interest in fictional settings and fictional techniques is also found in other works ... Throughout his writing Gützlaß is careful to give all dates in terms of Chinese chronology. His history of Britain, *Da*

Yingguo tongzhi 大英國統志 (1834), and his history of the world, *Gujin wangguo gangjian* 古今萬國綱鑑 (1838), are hybrid forms, combining fiction with history. The *History of Britain*, in particular, is written in the vernacular and makes some use of the features of traditional fiction ... The author-narrator imposed his own comments in the form of prologues at the head of each chapter. In works such as these Gützlaff sprinkled quotations from the Chinese philosophers, especially the Mencius and the Guan Zi, as well as from poets like Su Shi. Similar references are found in his *Eastern Western Monthly Magazine* 東西洋考每月統記傳, begun in the middle of 1833, in which he includes numerous short vernacular items written in simple anecdotal form". See also Lutz (1985: 61-87).

[33] The fox in the original story does not make such a statement when he "scamper'd away". See *orig.* F5.

[34] In the original (F8): "A *Wolf* had got a Bone in's Throat, and could think of no better Instrument to ease him of it, than the Bill of a *Crane*; so he went and Treated with a *Crane* to help him out with it, upon Condition of a very considerable Reward for his Pains. The Crane did him the good Office, and then claim'd his Promise. Why how now Impudence! (says t'other) Do you put your Head into the Mouth of a *Wolf*, and then, when y've brought it out again safe and sound, do you talk of a Reward?"

[35] The original (F83) opens like this: "A Fox and a Goat went down by consent into a Well to Drink".

[36] There is no such personification in terms of action in the original (F119): "A *Wolf* took a Dog napping at his Master's Door, and when he was just about to Worry him, the Poor Creature begg'd heard only for a Reprieve. Alas (says he) I'm as Lean at present as Carrion; but we have a Wedding at our House within these Two or Three Days, that will Plump me up you shall see with good Chear. Pray have but Patience till then, and when I'm in a little Better Case, I'll throw my self in the very Mouth of

ye. The Wolf took his Word, and so let him go”.

- [37] Lewis (1996: 2, 26): “The two most popular of the many fable collections to materialize between 1651 and 1740 were Roger L’Estrange’s Stuart-sympathizing *Fables, of Aesop and other eminent mythologists* (1692 and 1699) and Samuel Croxall’s virulently Hanoverian *Fables of Aesop and Others* (1722) ... Eminent Mythologists remained the most popular collection in the nation for the next thirty years. Other Aesop came and went without attracting half the notice that it did. None was more often abridged, revised and discussed”.
- [38] See the respective entry in *Hanyu da cidian* 漢語大詞典 (CD-Rom version) (2002).
- [39] “Liu Xie, in his *Book of Literary Design*, commends the style of plea of Zhouyang, a prose essayist in Western Han Dynasty, for his figurative narrative 喻考而理至, and some scholars interpret the word *yu* 喻 here as ‘to illustrate with fables’.” See Zhou ed. (1965: 349). See also Li (2000: 239).
- [40] See Thom (1840: ii-iii): “Under such circumstances he drew up these FABLES intending to govern his People by their application” 故設此譬喻以治其國.
- [41] “The Jesuits saw fables as an elixir for the salvation of the pagan Chinese and found them very flexible as teaching aid.” See Li (2000: 240).
- [42] Every Jesuit is said to have brought to the Orient a copy of *Aesop's Fables*, and applied the tales often for admonishment and exhortation purposes. See Bernard (1995: 209). See also Ge (1984: 230).
- [43] Ricci ([1608]: 192-3). See also Wang Ruchun’s postscript 新都汪汝淳萬曆辛亥年仲春跋 (1611): “*Ten essays on Eccentrics* records the conversations between Ricci and the gentry. Now that I chance to read it, I find it composed of terse but highly significant statements which are enlightening and beneficial to the refining of the mind and spirit, with all of its distinctive metaphors” 蓋述及其與縉紳人士答問之語，淳得而讀之，

- 則皆身心修正之微言，其間釋疑辨惑，罕譬而喻。 Quoted from Ge (1984: 227).
- [44] Pantoja, “Preface to *Qi Ke*” 七克自序 (1614). Quoted from Ge (1985: 295).
- [45] Mun mooy seen-shang, “意拾喻言小引” (Introduction to *Aesop’s Fables*), in Thom (1840: ii-iii).
- [46] Thom, “Preface” to *Yishi Yuyan*.
- [47] “Morality books can be defined simply as texts that teach people to do good and avoid evil.” See Brokaw (1991: 3). For a general introduction to morality books, see Tadao ([1960]: 1-3); Hiroshi (1978: 19-31).
- [48] *Chinese Repository* (1841, 10: 554).
- [49] “ART VIII. Literary Notices: Aesop’s fables in Chinese; Boletim Official do governo de Macao.” *Chinese Repository* (1838, 7: 334-335).
- [50] “[F]atalism’ is the belief ... that deliberation and actions are pointless because the future will be the same no matter what we do.” See Weatherford (2005).
- [51] The original moral is: “’Tis an easy Matter to find a staff to beat a Dog. Innocence is no Protection against the Arbitrary Cruelty of a Tyrannical Power: But Reasons and Conscience are yet so Sacred, that the greatest Villainies are still Countenanc’d under that Cloak and Colour”.
- [52] Li Jinde (Ming Dynasty, 17th century), *Ke shang yi lan xing mi* 客商一覽醒迷, in Sun Dedun, ed., *Huangjia cangshu* 皇家藏書 (2000, 25: 349, 392).
- [53] *Ibid.*, 392.
- [54] There is also a creed for the mercantile: “True confidants and grateful people are rare” 以心度心者少，以德報德者稀。 See Li Jinde (2000 [n.d.]: 348).
- [55] “Utilitarianism” here does not, as in some of its senses, designate the maximization of happiness and utility for the *greatest number* of people. See Blackburn (1996).
- [56] “Native Cantonese care only about monetary interests” 廣東本土之人，

惟知貪射重利。See Li Guangting et al (2003 [1879]).

[57] See Li Jinde, 329-423.

[58] Poetics is informally defined by Lefevere as a combination of “literary devices, genres, motifs, prototypical characters and situations, and symbols” and the culture’s notion of what the role of literature in the social system should be. See Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997: 147-148).

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魯迅小說英譯歷程綜述

汪寶榮

Abstract

Lu Xun's Short Stories in English: A Descriptive Study (by Wang Baorong)

This paper, adopting a descriptive approach, aims to provide a historical overview of Lu Xun's fiction in English by focusing on seven major translations. The translation norms and strategies employed by the translators are described and the underlying conditioning factors analyzed. The following observations are made in this study: (1) the adequacy of the translations shows a general tendency to increase steadily, indicating that the position of the English texts of Lu Xun's stories in the target literary polysystem rose gradually between mid-1920's and the 1990's, and later translations were more adequacy-oriented than earlier ones; (2) the acceptability of the translations also increased steadily, which helped win a wider audience for Lu Xun's stories and enhance their international standing; and (3) patronage, ideology and poetics might have dictated the translation strategy and the solutions to specific problems; these manipulative forces of translation, however, should not be overemphasized while disregarding the important role that the translator can play in the decision-making process.

一、引 言

魯迅是現代中國最聲名遠播的作家。他的數量有限的小說作品，特別是收入《吶喊》和《彷徨》的 25 篇，被有關論者譽為中國的“活的遺產”的一部分，“用任何一種標準衡量，放在任何一種語言裏，也是絕對的傑作”（Kao 1942: 280）。魯迅能夠享有這份“殊榮”，不能只歸功於中共對他的大肆吹捧和神化，因為“在中共把他捧為英雄之前，魯迅已經是一位甚受推崇的作家”（Hsia 1999: 29）。魯迅在國內被尊奉為經典作家，有很多理由和原因，無須細說，但是，魯迅及其小說之所以享有國際聲譽，翻譯無疑功不可沒。

在西方，“魯迅一直是被翻譯和研究最多的現代中國作家”（Chan 1975: 268）。這一論斷可從魯迅小說英譯盛況中找到依據。據筆者掌握的材料，自 1926 年梁社乾在上海出版他翻譯的〈阿 Q 正傳〉算起，到 1995 年美籍華裔學者方志華（譯音）又出新譯，^[1] 短短 70 年間，已有十餘種魯迅小說英譯本面世。隨着這些譯本陸續出版，譯評文章及論文的數量十分可觀，其中當然不乏真知灼見。然而，這些論述大多或零碎或片面，不能幫助人們瞭解魯迅小說英譯事業的全貌。

本文擇取其中的七種主要譯本，運用描述翻譯研究的理論及方法，特別是埃文-佐哈爾（I. Even-Zohar）的“多元系統論”，圖里（G. Toury）的“翻譯規範論”，勒菲弗爾（A. Lefevere）的“重寫理論”，對 60 餘年間的魯迅小說英譯活動及譯本作比較全面的歷時描述。^[2]

二、七種譯本簡介

筆者所見十餘種英譯本中，以譯出《吶喊》、《彷徨》所收若干篇居多，全譯本迄今只有兩種。本文重點討論的七種譯本（詳見表 1），或為開山之作（敬隱漁、梁社乾），或出自美國著名記者之手（斯諾、伊羅生），或公認較有影響（王際真、楊氏、萊爾）。現以出版時間先後為序列明如下：

梁社乾（George Kin Leung, 1889-?）翻譯的 “The True Story of Ah Q”（阿 Q 正傳，1926）；^[1] 米爾斯（E. H. F. Mills）轉譯自敬隱漁（J. B. Yn-Yu Kyn, 1901-1930）法譯本的《阿 Q 的悲劇及其他現代中國短篇小說》（1930），內收 “The Tragedy of Ah Qui”（阿 Q 正傳）、“Con y Ki”（孔乙己）、“The Native Country”（故鄉）；伊羅生（Harold R. Isaacs, 1910-1986）主編的《草鞋腳》（1934），^[4] 收有甘迺迪（George A. Kennedy, 1901-1960）翻譯的 “Diary of a Madman”（狂人日記）、“Medicine”（藥）、“K’ung I-chi”（孔乙己）、“Gust of Wind”（風波）、“Remorse”（傷逝）；斯諾（Edgar Snow, 1905-1972）編譯的《活的中國》（1936），收有他和姚克合譯的 “Medicine”（藥）、“A Little Incident”（一件小事）、“K’ung I-chi”（孔乙己）、“Benediction”（祝福）和 “Divorce”（離婚）五篇小說；王際真（Chi-chen Wang, 1899-2001）翻譯的《魯迅選集》（1941），內收 “My Native Heath”（故鄉）、“The Cake of Soap”（肥皂）、“The Divorce”（離婚）、“Reunion in a Restaurant”（在酒樓上）、“The Story of Hair”（頭髮的故事）、“Cloud over Luchen”（風波）、“Our Story of Ah Q”

（阿 Q 正傳）、“A Hermit at Large”（孤獨者）、“Remorse”（傷逝）、“The Widow”（祝福）、“The Diary of a Madman”（狂人日記）凡 11 篇；楊憲益、戴乃迭（1919-1999）合譯的《魯迅小說全集》（1981），收有全部 25 篇小說；萊爾（William A. Lyell, 1930-2005）的全譯本《〈狂人日記〉及其他小說》（1990），譯有包括文言小說〈懷舊〉在內的 26 篇小說。^[5]

	梁譯	敬/米譯本	甘譯	斯/姚譯本	王譯	楊譯	萊譯
出版年	1926	1930	1934	1936	1941	1981	1990
譯者	梁社乾	敬隱漁 米爾斯	伊羅生 甘迺迪	斯諾 姚克	王際真	楊憲益 戴乃迭	萊爾
譯者身份	美國華僑	中國文學 青年 英國譯者	美國新聞 記者 美國譯者 兼漢學家	美國新聞 記者 中國劇作 家、翻譯 家	美籍華裔 翻譯家、 哥大中文 講師	中國翻譯 家 英籍翻譯 家	美國魯研 專家、斯 坦福大學 中文副教 授
譯作標題	“The True Story of Ah Q”	<i>The Tragedy of Ah Qui and Other Modern Chinese Stories</i>	<i>Straw Sandals: Chinese Short Stories 1918-1933</i>	<i>Living China: Modern Chinese Short Stories</i>	<i>Ah Q and Others: Selected Stories of Lu Xun</i>	<i>The Complete Stories of Lu Xun Call to Arms Wandering</i>	<i>Diary of a Madman and Other Stories</i>
所收篇目	阿 Q 正傳	阿 Q 正傳、孔乙己、故鄉	狂人日記 孔乙己 藥 風波 傷逝	藥、一件小事、孔乙己、祝福、離婚	阿 Q 正傳、狂人日記、故鄉、祝福、傷逝等（凡 11 篇）	全部小說	全部小說及〈懷舊〉
出版商	Shanghai: The Commercial Press	London: G. Routledge & Sons	Cambridge: MIT Press	London: G. G. Harrap	New York: Columbia University Press	Bloomington: Indiana University Press	Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press
附加部分	譯序及作者小傳	作者小傳	作者寫的小引、作者小傳、長篇編者序	編者序、作者小傳、〈藥〉譯文導讀	長篇導言		前言及長篇譯序

表 1：魯迅小說七種英譯本一覽表

三、英譯歷程描述

以上七種譯本是在特定的歷史及社會文化背景下產生的，它們面貌各異，品質參差不齊。本節根據譯本問世時間及譯文品質與特點，嘗試把魯迅小說英譯歷程劃分為五個階段。具體描述方法是：一方面，通過對比分析原文及譯文，同時參考有關譯評及譯者序、前言、導言等譯本衍生文字（paratext），試圖確立譯者所遵循的翻譯規範；另一方面，將譯者及譯本放回到特定的歷史、社會、文化語境中，分析影響翻譯行為的各種因素，以便解釋翻譯現象，特別是增刪、誤譯、改譯、編譯等異常做法。

（一）發端期（1926-1930）

本階段有兩種譯文，一種是梁社乾所譯〈阿 Q 正傳〉，另一種是敬隱漁法譯、米爾斯從法文轉譯的三篇魯迅小說。前者是在中國問世的最早的英譯本，後者則最先在英語國家出版，標誌着魯迅小說英譯歷程的開始。

1926 年，梁譯〈阿 Q 正傳〉由上海商務印書館出版。從魯迅日記及譯者序中獲知，他於 1925 年 5 月起與魯迅通信，直到次年年底，內容涉及請求作者同意其翻譯〈阿 Q 正傳〉、釋疑解難、校閱譯稿等。^[6]可見譯者尊重魯迅，“態度認真”（林萬菁，1985: 3）。梁氏在譯序中說，〈阿 Q 正傳〉的主人公是勞苦大眾的典型，作者的用意是反映他們的疾苦，發出他們的聲音；“原文風格獨特，如潺潺流水般舒緩、幽默，然而在文字的背後，讀者彷彿可以聽到受壓迫的窮苦農民的吶喊，以及作者對一切欺詐、卑劣做法的抗議”（Lu 1926: vi）。顯然，梁氏準確

把握了作品的主旨，且對原作頗為欣賞。

從整體看，梁譯是逐句直譯，力求密合原文，譯筆無精彩可言，甚至頗有些佶屈聱牙，可讀性及可接受性都較低。以下是一個典型的例子：^[7]

他很想即刻揪住他，拗斷他的竹筷，放下他的辮子，並且批他幾個嘴巴，聊且懲罰他忘了生辰八字，也敢來做革命黨的罪。（〈阿 Q 正傳〉，頁 100）

He very much desired to seize him at once, break up the bamboo chopstick, let down his queue, and give him a few slaps on the mouth in the bargain, merely to punish him for forgetting his humble birth and destiny and for having the audacity to be guilty of the offense of becoming a Revolutionist. (Lu 1926: 71)

把譯文與原文一比對就可看出，梁譯幾乎逐字對譯，接近絲絲入扣的程度。當時有一位署名“軼”的評論人指出，梁譯乃“依照原文全部逐譯者。惟譯文累贅，致將原文之緊湊空靈筆墨完全喪失”（軼，1993: 445）。另一位署名“甘人”的譯評人也認為：

唯其因為太懇切，反見得譯文有些僵硬與不自然了。這原是直譯的通病，只能怪譯者不該為便利對讀起見，就墨守了直譯法，拘住了自己的筆頭，使文章有了遜色，因為對讀並不是翻譯的目的。（轉引自戈寶權，1981: 25-26）

梁譯顯得“累贅”，“有些僵硬與不自然”，可能和譯者的文字功力不足有關，但是，由於目前對梁氏缺乏瞭解，此處不宜對其質素妄下雌黃。可以推測的是，梁譯偏於直譯，注重譯文充分性，有以下三個原因：首先，從五四時期起，“直譯”及傾向譯文充分性開始成為中國的主流翻譯規範，^[8] 梁氏雖身為美籍華人，且從事的是漢譯英的工作，但由於是在中國做翻譯，不能不受當時國內偏重充分性的翻譯規範的影響。其次，上文已指出，梁氏尊重魯迅，喜愛原作，翻譯時自然會謹小慎微、一絲不苟。再次，梁氏是在上海也就是魯迅的鼻子底下翻譯的，譯作又由上海商務印書館印行，具有“家門口內銷”性質，譯者因而受到諸多掣肘，不敢給自己太多自由，否則容易遭人非難。梁氏在譯序中稱，“我知道很多人會拿譯文與原文對讀，因此除了因兩種語言文字差異太大而不能直譯之處，本人儘量照原文直譯”（Lu 1926: v）。此話道出了譯者內心的顧慮，足見當時梁氏面臨的直譯壓力。

其實，梁氏並非真的“依照原文全部逐譯”，“墨守了直譯法”，譯文中也有任意增刪之處。這一翻譯行為不一致現象，尚未引起國內譯評界的關注和重視。其實，早在 1935 年，斯諾（1979: 543）就已指出，“兩種譯文（指梁譯和敬／米譯本——筆者注）都被譯者刪改過，譯文也顯得生硬”。令人不解的是，身為〈阿 Q 正傳〉第三代英譯者的王際真，在他於 1939 年發表的〈魯迅年譜〉中，仍說梁譯本是“完整的、未經刪節的”（Wang 1939:115）。

梁譯中刪節最嚴重的，是原文第三章“續優勝略記”中阿 Q 和王胡“捉蝨子”比賽一節。據筆者粗略統計，梁譯至少刪去該

節 20 個句子（頁 77）。另外，在處理原文的猥褻之詞或惡言穢語方面，如“媽媽的”、“和尚動得，我動不得？”、“鳥男女”等，梁譯常作淡化處理。^[9] 較典型的例子是，在第四章“戀愛的悲劇”中，阿 Q 跪下向吳媽求愛，口中連聲懇求“我和你困覺，我和你困覺！”（頁 83），梁氏譯作 *Will you ... will you ...?*（Lu 2002: 43），把阿 Q 粗俗直白的哀求變成了文雅體面的求愛語。

另一方面，梁譯也有增譯現象。如譯完第五章結束句“待三個蘿蔔吃完時，他已經打定了進城的主意了”（頁 89），譯者憑空添加 *where he remained for some time, passing through some unusual experiences*（Lu 2002: 53）。另一處出現在第八章結尾處，阿 Q 怨恨假洋鬼子不准他革命，想去告狀，叫他“滿門抄斬，——噉！噉！”（頁 104），譯者加上 *With such resentment filling his heart, Ah Q gradually snored off*（Lu 2002: 78）。

陳平原（1989: 37-38）認為，“‘直譯’在晚清沒有市場，小說翻譯界基本上是‘意譯’一邊倒”；當時的“譯意”風尚，大致表現為四個方面，其中包括對原文的任意增刪。陳氏所討論的，無疑是指當時譯介域外小說時採用的主流譯法，但由此仍可推論：梁譯偏於直譯，表明在二十年代的中國，主流翻譯規範已發生轉變；同時，晚清“意譯為主的時代風尚”殘留的痕跡，即便在梁譯這個漢譯外譯本中也清晰可辨。

梁譯有刪有增，可能受到贊助人、譯者審美情趣及目標讀者等因素的影響。梁譯在當時租界林立的上海刊行，主要是為學漢語的外國人提供讀物。關於這一點，可以上引譯序為證。寇志明（Kowallis 1994: 283）也認為，“梁譯主要面向上海這個對外商

埠的讀者”。由此看來，梁氏在章末添飾若干文字，無非想讓譯本讀者讀起來感到輕鬆和有趣一些。至於嚴重刪節是否譯者的個人行為，目前還沒有可靠證據；但是，梁譯總須有一個贊助人，而且這個贊助人很可能就是出版商。後者出於意識形態方面的考慮，可能會責令譯者刪去“外揚家醜”的段落，因為“捉蟲子”一幕會給人“中國人是骯髒的豬”的負面聯想。許欽文（1956: 62）指出，“當時一般人都是以為‘家醜不可外揚’的，魯迅先生卻大膽地暴露了當時國民性的缺點”。梁譯於〈阿 Q 正傳〉發表五年後即問世，出版商自然也難免有遮醜護短的想法。最後，梁社乾身份特殊，既是美籍華僑，又是尊崇魯迅及其作品的人。譯者不同於一般中國人的審美情趣，可能會令他對原文的粗言穢語反感。刪除或淡化不雅之辭，既可以維護國人的形象，也可以避免魯迅的令名受損。

就在梁譯出版的同年，當時在法國里昂留學的中國文學青年敬隱漁把〈阿 Q 正傳〉譯成法文，譯文經法國大作家羅曼·羅蘭（Romain Rolland）推薦，分兩期發表在《歐羅巴》（*Europe*）雜誌 1926 年五月號和六月號上。敬氏隨後又譯成〈故鄉〉和〈孔乙己〉，與〈阿 Q 正傳〉一起收入他於 1929 年編譯出版的中國短篇作品選。1930 年，英國人米爾斯把敬譯轉譯成英文，於同年和次年在英國、美國先後出版。關於敬／米譯本的基本面貌，正如上述斯諾所指出，“被譯者刪改過，譯文也顯得生硬”。戈寶權（1981: 36-37）自稱校閱過《歐羅巴》所載〈阿 Q 正傳〉的法譯文，發現除刪去“比較難譯”、外國讀者不易理解的第一章“序”之外，“其他各章都略有刪節”。作為在英語國家出版的第一個魯迅小說英譯本，敬／米譯本無疑具有特殊歷史意義，但

這是一個轉譯本，因此本文不作詳細討論。

梁譯和敬／米譯本代表了魯迅小說英譯歷程的蹣跚起步，譯文品質雖不盡如人意，且對原文任意增刪取捨，但是，魯迅之名很早就傳遍歐美各國，1927 年甚至有過要把諾貝爾文學獎頒給魯迅的傳聞（參見許壽裳，1977: 53；Kowallis 1994: 283），應該說歸功於這三位今人所知不多的譯者。

（二）活躍期（1934-1936）

本階段有斯諾編譯的《活的中國》和伊羅生編輯的《草鞋腳》問世。二人有許多驚人的相似之處：駐中國的美國新聞記者、進步作家，與魯迅有過交往，編選集子時得到魯迅的指導和幫助，有得力助手協助翻譯。身為記者的斯諾和伊羅生涉足譯壇，使魯迅小說英譯事業呈現出一派生機勃勃的景象。

1930 年，斯諾決定編譯中國小說選集，找到後來成為著名劇作家的姚莘農（筆名姚克，1905-1991）做助手，兩人合作譯出魯迅的七篇作品（包括散文〈風箏〉和雜文〈論“他媽的！”〉）。據曾協助斯諾編譯的蕭乾（1983: 5-8）回憶，斯諾的做法是：先叫青年學生把原文粗譯出來，然後自己動手修訂譯稿。斯諾自稱在編譯魯迅小說時“幾乎不懂中文”（Snow 1936: 14），因此可以推測，他和姚克也是用大致相同的方式合作翻譯的。

斯／姚譯本的譯文雖不夠精美雅致，但大體上尚可讀，不過大幅度刪汰之處着實不少。比較突出的有：〈藥〉的第四節寫到夏瑜母親看到兒子墳頭上的花圈，很吃驚，自言自語地說，“這沒有根，不像自己開的。——這地方有誰來呢？孩子不會來玩；

——親戚本家早不來了。——這是怎麼一回事呢？”（頁 28）。譯者只把最後一句譯作 *What could be the explanation?* (Lu et al. 1936: 39)，而將其餘句子刪去。〈孔乙己〉中，把“因為他姓孔，別人便從描紅紙上的‘上大人孔乙己’這半懂不懂的話裏，替他取下一個綽號，叫作孔乙己”（頁 15）刪掉，同時刪汰的還有暗示孔乙己的命運將進一步惡化的過渡段：“孔乙己是這樣的使人快活，可是沒有他，別人也便這麼過”（頁 17）。〈祝福〉中祥林嫂複述阿毛被狼吃掉的悲慘故事的一大段，“‘我真傻，真的，’她說。‘我單知道雪天是野獸在深山裏沒有食吃，會到村裏來；我不知道春天也會有。……可憐他手裏還緊緊的捏着那隻小籃呢。……’”（頁 168），譯者只譯出起首兩句，刪除餘下的大段文字，接着添加了 *retelling her story in the same words* 一句，用來說明此處譯文有刪略（Lu et al. 1936: 68-69）。

另一方面，該譯本中也有一些誤譯和亂譯。茲舉較嚴重的二例：〈藥〉的第四節夏瑜母親哭訴，“我知道了。——瑜兒，可憐他們坑了你”（頁 28），是指兒子被人坑害，卻被誤譯為 *Yu, Yu, my son! It was a trap; you were “buried alive”* (Lu et al. 1936: 40)。如果夏瑜是被“活埋”的，就不會有人血饅頭即“藥”，整個故事框架就不能成立了。〈祝福〉中有這樣一句：“不更事的勇敢的少年，往往敢於給人解決疑問，選定醫生”（頁 159）。“選定醫生”此處喻指幫人出謀劃策，拿定主意，譯者把它胡亂譯作 *but responsible people, like officials and doctors, have to choose their words carefully*，還附注說，“作者曾在日本學醫，當過醫生”（Lu et al. 1936: 55）。

須要指出的是，斯／姚譯本也有一些增譯之處。例如，把

“清明”譯作 *The Clear and Bright Day, when graves are visited* (Lu et al. 1936: 38)。又如，譯完“女人們卻不獨寬恕了她似的，臉上立刻改換了鄙薄的神氣”（〈祝福〉，頁 168）之後，還用文內注釋法補充文化背景知識，解釋祥林嫂為何需要他人的“寬恕”：

The women not only forgot all their contempt for her, but at the moment forgave her entirely for her black sins—**remarrying and causing the death not only of a second husband but also of his child**—(Lu et al. 1936: 69)

譯者採用增譯、文內注釋等補救手段，自然是為了方便讀者。斯諾強調，他的譯本“以對中國一無所知的讀者為對象”（參自蕭乾，1983: 7）。

斯／姚譯本不注重譯文充分性，可能涉及以下兩個原因。其一，斯諾從西方中心主義及西方主流文學觀出發，輕視當時尚嫌幼稚的中國新文學。誠然，斯諾對魯迅作品評價甚高，譽之為“幾乎是現代中國最偉大的藝術”（斯諾，1979: 543-545），但是，到了動手編譯之時，他卻認為魯迅的大多數小說“結構似乎相當鬆散”，“從西方觀點看，情節極為粗略，許多小說只是人物素描而已”（Snow 1936: 26）。此外，他對現代中國小說還有一套獨特的看法：

在中國，付給作家的稿酬低得可憐，……因此，除了最出色的作家，作者們都傾向於把作品拉長。他們往往夾入一些辭藻漂亮卻無

助於故事情節推進的毫無意義的對話和敘述，其結果是，為了能多買幾斤米，犧牲了作品的興味、連貫性、風格的統一及形式的緊湊。令人吃驚的是，一些寫得極好的小說也有這種缺陷，而英譯後則更為明顯。（Snow et al. 1936: 16）

斯諾對原文及作者抱着這樣的態度，加之他認定“西方讀者讀短篇小說時，若遇到散漫的文字，肯定會不耐煩”，因此他就可以“大膽地刪汰某些段落和情節”（Snow et al. 1936: 16-17）。

其二，譯作產生的時代背景及譯者的翻譯目的也決定了斯／姚譯本任意刪改的面貌。二十世紀三十年代，美國陷入經濟危機，國內左派勢力抬頭，左派文學破天荒地成為美國文學的主潮。魯迅作為東方受壓迫民族的鬥士，自然受到美國知識界青睞。不過，當時向美國人熱情介紹魯迅的美國左翼作家，注重的多是魯迅作品中政治思想方面的內容，斯諾自然也不例外（參自鄭心伶、梁惠玲，1994: 76-77）。斯諾指出，他決定編譯《活的中國》，是想弄清楚並且幫助西方讀者瞭解“現代中國作家究竟在想些什麼”。他還認定，“現代中國即便沒有產生傑作，譯介這些作品仍然具有科學及社會學方面的意義”（Snow 1936: 11-13）。由此可見，斯諾不注重魯迅小說的文學性，因而對原作任意刪改，既是時代背景使然，也是其翻譯目的及其記者的職業習性所決定的。順便指出，斯諾對現代中國文學簡慢的態度，身為譯文校定者的他又幾乎不懂中文，可能是造成誤譯的主要原因。

伊羅生編輯《草鞋腳》時得到魯迅和茅盾的指導和幫助。根據二人最初開列的選目，魯迅小說只有〈風波〉、〈傷逝〉入選，1974年，《草鞋腳》得以出版時，卻增收了〈狂人日記〉、

〈藥〉和〈孔乙己〉三篇。伊羅生 (Isaacs 1974: lii) 在集子的“作者簡介”中說，〈藥〉和〈孔乙己〉由甘迺迪譯出，原載於他在上海主編的《中國論壇》1932 年第 1 卷 (1932 年 3 月 25 日、5 月 21 日)。在長篇編者序中，伊羅生 (Isaacs 1974: xlvii) 又提到，〈風波〉的譯文初次發表於 1935 年，載紐約的《小說雜誌》9 月號。另據吉伯斯等人 (Gibbs and Li 1975: 105-111)，伊羅生關於〈藥〉和〈孔乙己〉的譯者及原載刊物的說明屬實，但〈藥〉的譯文收入《草鞋腳》時稍有修改；此外，〈風波〉、〈狂人日記〉、〈傷逝〉的譯文也都出自甘迺迪之手，分別於 1932、1934、1932-1934 年間譯成。吉伯斯曾參與《草鞋腳》出版前“半數以上譯稿的校訂工作” (Isaacs 1974: xlvi)，他提供的資料應該是確切可靠的。

伊羅生對甘迺迪的譯文品質很有信心。他在 1934 年寫的原編者序中說，“水門汀 (指甘迺迪——筆者注) 翻譯的小說都是成品，無需校訂”。在 1974 年的長序中，他再次強調，“我們花了很大力氣校改譯文中的錯誤，使譯文更加忠實，特別是那些原先不是甘迺迪翻譯的作品” (Isaacs 1974: xliii, xlvi)。萊爾 (Lyll 1976b: 392) 也評價說，“《草鞋腳》所收五篇魯迅小說雖說已有前譯，但甘迺迪高品質的譯文使該書有足夠的理由出版”。

與斯／姚譯本相較，甘譯比較忠於原文，刪削、誤譯較少。萊爾稱讚甘譯品質好，可能是針對譯文的這些特點而言的。

據筆者粗略統計，甘譯中僅有以下十多處輕微刪略：〈風波〉中，刪去“人人的脊樑上又都吐出汗粒” (頁 50)，“七爺說到這裏，聲色忽然嚴厲起來” (頁 52)，“九斤老太正在不平，趁這機會，便對趙七爺說” (頁 52) 等五處；〈傷逝〉中，

刪去“不但如此。在一年之前，這寂靜和空虛並不是這樣的”（頁 264），“我就叫它阿隨，但我不喜歡這名字”（頁 269），“況且你已經可以無須顧慮，勇往直前了”（頁 277），“我仍然只有唱歌一般的哭聲，給子君送葬”（頁 284）等六、七處。

筆者在甘譯中只發現以下四處明顯誤譯：〈藥〉中描寫康大叔長相兇惡的“滿臉橫肉”（頁 23-24），被誤譯為 *sallow-faced, sallow-skinned, yellow skin* (Lu et al. 1974: 18-19)；康大叔說“這小東西不要命”（頁 25），是指革命者夏瑜膽敢造清廷的反，簡直“不要命”了，表明說話人對革命的無知以及對革命者的不理解，該句被誤譯為 *That little wretch didn't deserve to live* (Lu et al. 1974: 19)。在〈孔乙己〉中，旁人談論說孔乙己“終於沒有進學”（頁 15），“進學”在科舉制度下指童生考中秀才，卻被誤作 *he hadn't ever been to a proper school* (Lu et al. 1974: 27)；作為小說敘述人的酒店夥計說自己“沒有什麼失職”（頁 14），是指勉強勝任溫酒之職，此處“失職”並非“丟掉工作”之意，卻被誤作 *I was kept employed* (Lu et al. 1974: 26)。

甘譯大體上忠信可讀，一定程度上實現了譯文充分性和可接受性的折衷。這種折衷譯法典型表現在對“之乎者也”的處理上：

他對人說話，總是滿口之乎者也（〈孔乙己〉，頁 15）

His speech was heavily interlarded with *classical particles* (Lu et al. 1974: 26)

接連便是難懂的話，什麼“君子固窮”，什麼“者乎”之類（頁

15)

He would continue in a string of unintelligible phrases, something about
“Sit philosophus indigens,” a succession of “*wherefores*” and “*whereases*,”
(27)

這回可是全是之乎者也之類，一些不懂了（頁 16）

but this time it was so *entirely literary* that no one understood a
word (28)

“不多不多！多乎哉？不多也。”（頁 17）

“Not many! Not many! *Lo*, are there indeed many? *Nay, forsooth*,
there be not many!” (29)

第一例和第三例採用意譯法，第二例用兩個比較莊重的英文詞替換“者乎”，第四例則特意選用古雅的 *lo*, *forsooth*, *nay* 及呆板僵硬的英語句式對譯。如果說前三例只是解釋或替換手法，充分性有所欠缺，那麼第四例既再現了原文的文言風格，又容易為譯文讀者理解並接受，是充分性與可接受性兼備的譯文。

斯諾不甚注重譯文的充分性，為何同期翻譯魯迅小說的甘迺迪卻比較中規中矩？可以推斷，這與譯者的背景及翻譯目的密切相關。據著名語言學家趙元任回憶，甘迺迪出生於中國，可能是傳教士之子，他的母語不是英語，而是吳語區的一種方言。^[10] 魯迅的故鄉是紹興，紹興方言屬於吳語區；“故鄉是魯迅靈感的主要源泉”，“他的小說大多以紹興為背景”（Hsia 1999: 31）。譯者和作者在語言上的親近及生活環境方面的相似，可能有助於

譯者準確理解原文。另一方面，據伊羅生介紹，三十年代頻頻發表譯作時，年輕的甘迺迪在上海公共租界的一所學校教中文，對“當時上海的政治活動毫無興趣”（Isaacs 1974: xliii）。這一點或許說明，與斯諾注重作品的政治意義及文獻價值甚於文學性不同，甘迺迪看重的恰恰是後者。甘迺迪後來成為耶魯大學知名的漢學家，出版過幾本中國小說讀本，發表了十多篇討論中國古典文學的論文，很大程度上得益於他早年豐富的翻譯經歷。可以說，在某種意義上，三十年代的甘迺迪所從事的已是一般傾向於譯文充分性的學術性翻譯。

（三）穩定發展期（1941-1944）

以上討論的四種魯迅小說譯本，或只譯單篇，或譯若干篇，大多收入多名作家合集中，且譯文品質普遍不高，因而影響較小。1935 年，王際真英譯的〈阿 Q 正傳〉（“Our Story of Ah Q”）在紐約《今日中國》月刊（*China Today*）第 2 卷第 2、3、4 期上連載。1938 年至 1940 年間，王氏在美國《遠東雜誌》（*The Far Eastern Magazine*），上海《天下月刊》（*T'ien Hsia Monthly*）和《中國雜誌》（*China Journal*）上，接連發表魯迅小說譯文多篇。1941 年，他將陸續發表的 11 篇譯作結集為《魯迅選集》，由美國哥倫比亞大學出版社出版。此外，王氏編譯的《現代中國小說選》（哥倫比亞大學出版社，1944 年版），內收“*What's the Difference*”（端午節）和“*Peking Street Scene*”（示眾）。加上 1940 年在雜誌上刊載而未收入集子的“*The Dawn*”（明天）、“*Professor Kao*”（高老夫子）、“*A Happy Family*”（幸福的家庭），王際真譯成魯迅小說凡 16 篇，成為二十世紀

前期西方世界翻譯魯迅作品最多的學者。

《魯迅選集》是在西方世界出版的第一本魯迅小說譯文選集，“僅此一端，王際真的貢獻也是功不可沒的”（張傑，2001: 285）。王際真所譯魯迅小說不僅數量遠超前譯，而且品質也勝出甚多。雖然王譯《魯迅選集》比斯諾的《活的中國》只晚了五年出版，〈阿 Q 正傳〉譯文的發表甚至還早於斯／姚譯本，但是王氏譯筆上乘，為五、六十年代品質超卓的楊譯及稍後的全譯本出世奠定了堅實基礎，可視為穩定發展期的代表性譯家。

評論家對王譯大多讚譽有加。高克毅（Kao 1942: 281）認為，“魯迅洗練、生動的散文風格，在王譯中也能找到；顯然，只有像王氏這樣一位和作者靈犀相通的譯者才能做到這一點”。另一位美國學者在評論王氏編譯的《戰時中國小說》（哥倫比亞大學出版社，1947 年版）時說，“王際真再次展示了他作為翻譯家的才能。這些小說不僅英文極佳，而且原著的中國風味很大程度上得以保留”（Clyde 1947: 467-468）。漢學家兼翻譯家亞瑟・韋利（Arthur Waley），以及著名作家賽珍珠（Pearl S. Buck），都盛讚王氏譯筆高明（參自王海龍，2000: 63-69）。夏志清在其經典之作《中國現代小說史》中，多次引用王氏譯文，足見夏氏對王譯品質的肯定和激賞。

總體而言，王譯雖對原文略有刪削，間或也有自創及引申發揮之處，但譯文基本忠於原文，且儘量保留中國風俗習慣。另一方面，譯者“深明西方讀者之心理”，因而譯文讀起來“毫無土俗奇特之病”（餘生，1976: 70-71），可讀性及可接受性俱佳。以王譯〈阿 Q 正傳〉為例，原文內容基本上全部譯出，對一般的英文讀者瞭解的或能夠理解的源語文化資訊，如“老爺”、

“少爺”、“少奶奶”、“太太”等稱謂詞，又如“賽翁失馬，安知非福”之類的典故、成語，盡力加以保留。

據筆者粗略統計，王譯〈阿 Q 正傳〉中輕度刪削凡 28 處，其中九成左右為短小的單句。刪汰較嚴重的有以下四處：“但上文說過，阿 Q 是有見識的，他立刻知道和‘犯忌’有點抵觸，便不再往底下說”（頁 74），“女人，女人！……他想。‘……和尚動得……女人，女人！……女人！’他又想”（頁 81），“但大約他從此總覺得指頭有些滑膩，所以他從此總有些飄飄然；‘女……’他想”（頁 81），“他生怕被人笑話，立志要畫得圓”（頁 106）。

與刪削形成鮮明對照的是，譯者有時會對原文作引申發揮。例如，翻譯“母親和我都歎息他的景況：多子，饑荒，苛稅，兵，匪，官，紳，都苦得他像一個木偶人了”（〈故鄉〉，頁 65）這一句時，譯者難以抑制自己的創作欲望，對原文作了添飾，把“都苦得他像一個木偶人了”譯作 *all these contributed to make the burden heavy for the poor peasant, crushing him and draining the life out of him until he was scarcely more than a wooden image*（Lu 1941: 12）。此處譯筆固然“輕清流暢”，原文的表現力也增強了，但譯文的充分性卻降低了。

王氏還慣於使用文內注釋或腳注，為讀者提供必要的中國文化背景知識。例如，“趙府上請道士祓除縊鬼，費用由阿 Q 負擔”（頁 85），王譯譯作 *Ah Q was to foot the expenses incurred in exorcizing the evil spirits that might be trying to induce Wu-ma to commit suicide*（Lu 1941: 97）。此外，為便利閱讀理解起見，譯者還不時地在譯文中插入補充性或銜接性語句。如讀到“但閨中究竟是閨

中，所以也算得一件神異”（頁 92），譯文讀者可能會對“什麼事算得一件神異”感到納悶。譯者切實為讀者着想，把原句增譯為 *But women do have a world of their own and it was strange that Ab Q's fame should have penetrated therein* (Lu 1941: 106)。

王氏之所以採用引申及補充譯法，是因為他——一個浸淫於中國傳統文化、居住在譯入語國家的學者——深明目標讀者心理及其對中國文化的瞭解程度。如此做法自然提高了譯文的可讀性及可接受性。

王譯比較偏重充分性，可能受到時代背景、譯本用途及譯者個人偏好等因素的影響。1931 年，美國戴爾書局再版了“有刪節”的敬／米譯本，“極為難讀”的梁譯則早幾年就已在美國印行。^[11] 美國讀者接觸了這篇魯迅名作之後，對信實完整、流暢可讀的新譯本自然有所期待，王譯可謂應運而生。再者，王氏當時身為哥倫比亞大學中文教員，需要確切可靠的中國現代文學作品的譯本做教材，而無論敬／米譯本、斯諾的《活的中國》，還是梁譯，顯然都無法滿足要求。此外，王氏對魯迅滿懷欽敬，他在譯本扉頁的題記中說：“我們（指譯者及其幼弟——筆者注）對魯迅的欽敬勝過對所有其他中國作家，無論古代的還是現代的”。可以推測，譯者對作者的偏愛也是譯文偏向充分性的一個重要原因。

王譯對原文略有刪削，間或自創、引申發揮，應該與當時中國現代文學在英語國家文學多元系統中地位不高有關。1929 年，王氏節譯的《紅樓夢》甫一面世，餘生（1976: 70-71）即撰文評價說：

總觀全書，譯者刪節頗得其要，譯筆明顯簡潔，足以達意傳情，而自英文讀者觀之，毫無土俗奇特之病（西人譯述東方事，文筆往往故意如此，殊可厭），實為可稱。……故吾人於王際真君所譯，不嫌其刪節，而甚贊其譯筆之輕清流暢，並喜其富於常識，深明西方讀者之心理。

這位署名“餘生”的評論家是吳宓（1894-1978）。身為比較文學家、西洋文學家的吳宓，發表“不嫌其刪節”中國古典名著《紅樓夢》的譯評意見，一定程度上或許表明當時中國的知識精英承認中國文學在英語國家文學多元系統中位處邊緣，同時也說明當時中國文學英譯規範有迎合西方讀者文學品味的傾向。

其次，王氏所刪似乎大多屬於他以為的無關緊要的閑文，或拖遝鬆散的文字，如保留會令讀者感到不耐煩的字句。因此，刪汰原文、自創及引申發揮等做法，應該和譯者遵循的詩學及其文學趣味有關。

最後，王譯譯筆“輕清流暢”，無疑得益於他在美國學習生活多年，英文達致爐火純青之境。1929年，王氏初試譯筆，其《紅樓夢》節譯本大獲好評，由此創出一條成功的翻譯路子，等到三十年代譯魯迅小說時，譯筆自然更上一層樓了。

（四）成熟期（1953-1981）

1981年，楊憲益、戴乃迭合譯的魯迅小說全譯本問世。在此之前，楊譯經過不斷修訂及擴充，歷時近30年，可分為三個階段：（1）1953年出《阿Q正傳》，次年出《魯迅短篇小說選》（收13篇），均為單行本；（2）1956年出《魯迅選集·第一

卷》（內收 18 篇小說），1960 年（1972 年再版）出《魯迅小說選》（收 18 篇小說，篇目同 1956 年版）；（3）1981 年譯成《吶喊》、《彷徨》中全部作品，並分集出版；同年，美國印第安那大學出版社將兩者合併，出版《魯迅小說全集》。楊氏每出新版，均對前譯作不同程度的修訂。本文視 1981 年全譯本為其決定版，討論時以該譯本為準。

楊氏夫婦被譽為珠聯璧合的譯壇大家，他們對魯迅作品翻譯所作的巨大貢獻是毋庸置疑的。他們翻譯的四卷本《魯迅選集》（1956-1960），被譽為“用英語系統介紹魯迅作品的首次嘗試”（Lyell 1990: xlii），以“精練的選題和準確的譯筆成為歐美各大學中文學生至今沿用不衰的教科書”（雷音，2007: 186）。戈寶權（1981: 29）則指出，許多國家翻譯魯迅作品時，多以楊譯為藍本轉譯，在這方面，楊氏作出了特殊貢獻。英國學者、翻譯家詹納爾（Jenner 1990: 188）認為：

他們的譯作是出色的文學性和可讀性方面的典範，（外文）局裏的譯者很少有人能望其項背。……如果要評選在英譯現代中國文學方面成就最大的譯者，楊氏之名必然名列榜首。……人們用英語撰文討論魯迅作品時，引用最多的是楊譯，這難道只是巧合嗎？^[12]

據此，我們可以把楊譯的面世視為魯迅小說英譯事業成熟期來臨的標誌。

楊譯具有以下鮮明特點：一方面，忠於原文，大致偏向於直譯，極少有增刪或錯漏，其信實準確居現有各種魯迅小說英譯本之首；另一方面，譯文大體通順流暢，但由於偏於直譯，有時略

顯呆板生硬。美國學者鄧騰克（Denton 1993: 174）指出，楊譯雖以準確、流暢著稱，但“他們的譯筆給人一種呆板拘謹感，長期以來讀者對此頗感遺憾”。寇志明（Kowallis 1994: 283）也指出，一些讀者抱怨楊譯讀起來不悅耳，有點矯揉造作（stilted）的味道。戴乃迭本人則直言不諱地說：

我覺得我們的自由度太小了。有一位我們非常欽佩的翻譯家，名叫大衛·霍克斯，他的翻譯比我們有創造性得多。我們的翻譯比較呆板迂腐，讀者不愛看我們的譯作；這是因為和霍克斯相比，我們比較偏於直譯。（Henderson 1980: 34）

對於自己遵循的“偏於直譯”的翻譯規範，楊憲益曾解釋說：

我認為不能在譯文裏作過多的解釋；譯者應儘量忠實於原文的形象，既不要誇張，也不要夾帶任何別的東西。……過分強調譯者的創造性是不對的，……總之，譯者必須非常忠實於原文。（Henderson 1980: 34）

總的原則，我認為是對原作的內容，不許增加或減少。把“一朵花”譯成“一朵玫瑰花”不對；把“一朵紅花”譯成“一朵花”也不合適。（楊憲益，1998: 83-84）^[13]

如果說這是譯者恪守的翻譯原則，楊譯中違背該原則的做法着實不少。以下是三種比較典型的情形：

其一，經常用歸化法（有時也用意譯法）處理中國文化專有

詞，例如“地保”（bailiff）、“趙太爺”（Mr. Zhao）、“拔貢”（senior licentiate）等稱謂詞，“土穀祠”（the Tutelary God's Temple）、“賽神節”（the Festival of the Gods）等反映民間信仰的辭彙，“塞翁失馬，安知非福”（misfortune may prove a blessing in disguise）、“一日不見，如隔三秋”（it was greatly changed）等典故習語。無疑，以上經歸化處理的譯文，為英語讀者所熟知，容易理解和接受，因而可讀性及可接受性較高，但是歸化法往往造成文化聯想義的改變甚至歪曲，因此嚴格說來楊譯並沒有“忠實於原文的形象”。

其二，魯迅文白夾雜的風格未予傳達或保留。西方學者非常重視魯迅作品中文言和白話並置的特點，認為魯迅“把新白話嫁接到文言中，運用這種雜合文體創作了傑構”（Chan 1975: 270-271）。因此，不少西方學者強調譯文應該儘量反映這個特徵。例如，針對楊譯〈狂人日記〉，鄧騰克（Denton 1993: 175）批評說，楊譯的讀者無從知道原文是以文言為序。寇志明（Kowallis 1996: 161-162）也指出，楊氏沒有努力使讀者感受到“序”與小說其他部分在風格、語言上的差異。

其三，不時出現的增調（tone up）或降調（tone down）處理現象。例如，〈藥〉的第三節描寫茶館閒人談論夏瑜，用“小傢伙”、“小東西”、“這種東西”、“不成東西”、“賤骨頭”指稱革命者（頁 25-26）。從字面上看，這些詞語除“賤骨頭”（不知好歹的人）具有較濃的貶義色彩外，其餘都只有中性義，至多表達說話人的輕蔑語氣。楊氏卻對它們作了增調處理，分別譯成 young rascal、the rogue、real scoundrel、the rotter、wretch（Lu 1981: 24-25）等表示“流氓”、“無賴”、“惡棍”的感情色彩

強烈的英文詞。相反，對原文中一些粗俗、不堪入耳的冒辭，楊譯則往往降調處理。例如，〈離婚〉的女主人公愛姑怒斥自己的無良丈夫，“那個‘娘濫十萬人生’的叫你‘逃生子’？……他那裏有好聲好氣呵，開口‘賤胎’，閉口‘娘殺’”（頁306），句中三個與性有關的紹興方言冒辭“娘濫十萬人生的”、“賤胎”、“娘殺”，被楊氏分別淡化處理為 the devil、slut 和 bitch（參見汪寶榮、潘漢光，2007: 68-73）。

楊譯偏重直譯法有其深刻的原因：首先，如上所述，從五四時期起，國內主流翻譯規範（一般指外譯中）逐漸傾向充分性，新中國成立後這一傾向更趨強化，楊氏從事的雖是漢譯外的工作，但由於是在中國做翻譯，難免受主流翻譯規範的影響。戴乃迭就曾坦言，“我覺得，長期以來，我們（中國）的整個翻譯傳統就是偏重直譯，過於僵硬的直譯”（Henderson 1980: 36）。楊氏注重充分性，正如二十年代的梁社乾墨守直譯法，兩者無疑都受到中國主流翻譯規範的制約。無怪乎林萬菁（1985: 14）在多角度比較了梁譯和楊譯後指出，“楊氏的英譯確是脫胎於梁氏的英譯”。其次，魯迅逝世後即被中共捧為英雄，新中國成立後，其著作更被人為地經典化，在國人心目中享有崇高乃至神聖的地位。楊氏除了嚴格忠於原作，應該別無選擇。再次，作為職業翻譯家，楊氏夫婦一直供職於外文局，很大程度上受到官方規範的制約，譯者的自由度和創造性空間不大。為此，戴乃迭曾抱怨說，“長期以來，我們一直受過去工作環境的限制，因此我們的譯作比較拘泥於原文，缺少趣味；即便今天，我們還是深受過去生活經歷的束縛”（Henderson 1980: 34）。同時，出版楊譯的北京外文社是純官方的，這就決定了其出版物具有權威性和嚴肅

性。為求譯本穩妥、安全，譯者通常只能對原文亦步亦趨，難有發揮餘地（參見張南峰，2004: 223-225）。

楊譯稍顯呆板生硬，無疑是譯者堅持直譯主義的直接結果，但似乎還牽涉到另外兩個原因。其一，目標讀者不明確。戴乃迭承認，“我們不僅在為美國人或澳大利亞人做翻譯，也在為亞非國家中懂英語的讀者而工作，所以我們不知道我們的讀者究竟是誰”（Henderson 1980: 36）。沒有明確的目標讀者，譯者就無從瞭解讀者的審美期望及文學品味，為穩妥起見，楊氏就奉“忠於原文”為上策。其二，譯者英文落伍。楊、戴組合中，一般先由楊憲益譯出初稿，譯文潤色則由戴乃迭負責（參見鄒霆，2001: 284）。可是，戴乃迭 1940 年來到中國後，一直生活在非英語環境中，這對其英語的更新及提高頗為不利。譯者的英文陳舊過時，往往會使新一代讀者覺得其譯文語言刻板生硬。^[14] 戴乃迭自己也意識到這一缺陷，在《芙蓉鎮》譯序中坦承，“由於本人英文能力所限，特別是因為在中國生活四十多年，我的英文早已落伍，譯文恐不能傳達原作者生動樸實的語言”（Yang 1983: 11）。

楊譯經常歸化處理中國文化專有詞，可能是因為這些詞頗為棘手，甚至幾乎不可譯，所以只能忍痛割愛，捨棄或改變原文形式。楊憲益（1998: 83）曾不無遺憾地指出，文化差異在翻譯中很難完全傳達，因此“翻譯要完全做到‘信’和‘達’又是很困難，甚至可以說不可能的事，尤其是在文學翻譯方面”。至於楊譯未能保留魯迅文白夾雜的風格，相信並非由於譯者能力欠缺，而是因為他們對風格再現問題不夠重視。楊譯的這個缺陷，將由萊爾來彌補（詳見下文討論）。

楊譯對原文所作的增調及降調處理，應該與譯者的意識形態及審美情趣有關。例如，對原文中一些罵人的髒話，譯者可能感覺不舒服，因而加以淡化。然而，根據勒菲弗爾的理論，譯者的意識形態和詩學受制於贊助人，贊助人往往嚴格控制文學作品的意識形態，特別是作品的內容和思想，以確保文學作品為當時的主流意識形態服務。楊氏夫婦任職於外文局，具有官方性質的外文局和外文出版社是他們的贊助人。楊氏於五十年代初、中期譯成魯迅的大部分小說，那時正是其贊助人對作品的意識形態控制極嚴的特殊時期。當時國內極左思潮逐步升級，外文局領導和編輯的頭腦裏裝滿了“教條主義和庸俗社會學的種種謬論”，他們往往要求作者（包括譯者）通過作品為“光焰無際”的毛澤東思想做注腳（鄒霆，2001: 283-289）。上文增調例中，楊氏將原本中性的字眼升級強化，很可能是想通過醜化茶館閒人，達到美化及頌揚革命者的目的。魯迅被毛澤東譽為“偉大的文學家”、“思想家”、“革命家”，其筆下的革命者自然應該得到熱情頌歌。

另一方面，魯迅的作品中出現較多的粗言髒語，贊助人會擔心影響魯迅的“光輝形象”，因此可能會責令譯者淡化甚至刪除這些“髒”的成分。楊憲益在回憶這段時間自己的遭際時說，“不幸的是，我倆實際上只是受雇的翻譯匠而已，該翻譯什麼不由我們做主，……即使是古典詩歌的選擇，也要視其‘意識形態’和政治內容而定”（Yang 2002: 202-203）。這番話明確道出了譯者受贊助人擺佈的無奈。此外，中國傳統道德規範在涉及性的話題方面傾向於保守，翻譯時刪除或淡化原文中與性有關的內容，是國內翻譯界一貫的做法，楊氏可能也受到這種道德規範的

無形約束。

（五）後成熟期（1973-1990）

1973 年秋，萊爾所譯的“Brothers”（弟兄）載香港中文大學翻譯研究中心主辦的《譯叢》（*Renditions*）創刊號。這是這篇小說的第一個英譯。1976 年，萊爾研究魯迅小說的重要專著《魯迅的現實觀》出版，該書附錄中收有他翻譯的〈懷舊〉及〈兔和貓〉。萊爾隨後譯出《吶喊》、《彷徨》所收全部作品，加上早先的〈懷舊〉譯文，一起結集為《〈狂人日記〉及其他小說》，1990 年由美國夏威夷大學出版社出版。

寇志明（Kowallis 1994: 283）把魯迅小說主要英譯者劃分為四代：梁氏和敬、米二人為第一代譯者，斯、姚和王際真為第二代，楊氏為第三代譯家，並特別指出：

評價魯迅小說翻譯的得失，不應以字面忠實為準繩，而應看譯文是否再現了魯迅辛辣、睿智的風格，對語言的匠心獨運以及作者塑造的入木三分的人物形象。時至今日，還沒有譯者像萊爾一樣注意這些問題。

據此，他認為萊譯的問世標誌着“成功英譯魯迅小說的至少第四代譯者所作的努力”。鄧騰克（Denton 1993: 176）也認為，直譯主義的弊病長期困擾着現代中國小說英譯界，而萊譯“朝着遠離直譯主義邁出了一大步”。本文據此把萊譯視為“後成熟期”的代表性譯作。

萊譯的突出特點是：努力再現原作者的獨特風格，經常採用

靈活、自由的補充譯法，借助大量注釋為讀者提供中國歷史及文化背景知識。萊爾把自己的譯法稱作“詮釋譯法”。他在〈懷舊〉譯後記中說，“總體上，翻譯這篇作品我用的是詮釋譯法（interpretive translation），對於那些原文讀者會自行補足的內容及知識，我盡量也為英文讀者補足”（Lyll 1976a: 327-328）。〈懷舊〉譯成於 1976 年，可見當時的萊爾已表現出偏愛詮釋譯法的傾向。這種標新立異的譯法，不僅此前沒有一個魯迅小說譯者認真、執着地嘗試過，而且與傳統翻譯觀有所背離。^[17]

萊爾特別重視再現魯迅的個人風格，這是他注重譯文充分性的一個獨特表現。萊爾（Lyll 1990: xl）認為，魯迅小說的一個鮮明特點是文言和白話混雜而形成的強烈對比，作者時常用譏諷的口吻引用文言句子，以貶損文言所代表的古老傳統，這種風格特別適合魯迅小說的主旨。為表現這種文體特徵，萊譯有時採用一種誇張的古雅文體，或用大寫字體或斜體凸現某些單詞和片語，或給不押韻的原文句子押韻。例如，魯迅用“之乎者也”表現孔乙己的窮酸迂腐，萊爾選擇古雅的英文詞 *lo, forsooth, verily, nay* 對譯，並且標以斜體。又如，他選用莊重的維多利亞時代英語翻譯〈狂人日記〉中文言寫成的序，而用俚俗的美式英語口語處理日記部分。再如，〈社戲〉的敘述人“我”說農村是他的“樂土”，因為在這裏他“又可以免念‘秩秩斯幹幽幽南山’了”（頁 147）。萊爾把該句譯作 *I wasn't forced to read all that Percolate, percolate doth the rill / Distant, distant lieth the hill stuff*（Lu 1990: 206）。譯文不僅意義上切近原文，而且形式優美，古雅味十足。相比之下，以譯筆忠實、準確著稱的楊氏卻把該句乾巴巴地譯作 *but here I could skip reading the Book of Songs*（Lu 1981:

141)。的確，正如鄧騰克（Denton 1993: 175）所評價，“萊譯讓人覺得更貼近原文”。

萊譯儘管也有細心讀者才能發現的輕微刪削，但是，增刪相較，前者絕對遠遠多於後者。萊爾常常在譯文中插入解釋性詞句，以改善原文的轉接啟承，或解釋含混晦澀之處。例如：

莫非她翻了車麼？莫非她被電車撞傷了麼？……我便要取了帽子去看她，然而她的胞叔就曾經當面罵過我。驀然，她的鞋聲近來了，……（〈傷逝〉，頁 265）

Had her rickshaw overturned? Had she been hit by a trolley? **Beset by such worries**, I grabbed my hat and decided to go to her place. **But just as I was on the point of leaving, I remembered how her uncle had once warned me to keep away** and had called me ugly names. Suddenly the sound of her footsteps began to close in ... (Lu 1990: 339)

原句描寫涓生焦急等待子君時的思想活動：“我”久候子君不着，想去找她，可是突然想到“她的胞叔就曾經當面罵過我”。那麼“我”接下去會怎麼辦呢？是立即行動，還是逡巡不前？對此讀者必然有所期待。讓人感到突兀的是，下文卻緊接着說子君出現了。譯者顯然察覺到此處句子間銜接轉承有問題，因而作了增譯處理，譯文斜黑體部分（為筆者所加）巧妙地彌補了原文句法之不足，利於讀者理解。又如下例：

同寓的白問山雖然是中醫，或者於病名倒還能斷定的，但是他曾經對他說過好幾回攻擊中醫的話：況且追請普大夫的電話，*他*也許已經聽到了……。 (〈弟兄〉，頁 289)

上句中斜體標出的“他”是指中醫白問山，本來這是清晰無誤的。可是，作者接連用了三個“他”，造成人稱指代混亂。其實，只要聯繫後續句子“然而他終於去請白問山”，就能作出正確推理：沛君打電話去請西醫為兄弟看病，西醫卻遲遲不到。情急之下，沛君想到讓同寓的中醫來看看，可又猛然想起自己得罪過對方，同時擔心電話已被中醫聽到。最後，他還是硬着頭皮去請白問山。為了幫助讀者理清頭緒，萊爾採用還原人名的處理方法：

What was more, *Dr. Bai* might well have heard that *Peijun* was trying to telephone the German doctor ... (Lu 1990: 366) ^[16]

萊爾的增譯法應該說是成功的，至少普通讀者讀起來會非常方便。但是，“魯迅作品用字造句都經過千錘百煉，故具有簡潔短峭的優點”（蘇雪林，1993: 96）。萊爾喜歡為原作者代言，效果可能適得其反，偏離他的“再現魯迅風格”的翻譯目的或許就更遠了。此外，這種詮釋譯法有時會給譯文帶來“無妄之災”。例如，〈社戲〉中有這樣一句：“我們年紀都相仿，但論起行輩來，卻至少是叔子，有幾個還是太公，因為他們合村都同姓，是本家”（頁 147）。原文交代“我”住在魯鎮，有時跟母親去外祖母家住幾天，“那地方叫平橋村”。作者雖然說“他們

合村都同姓，是 본가”，卻沒有明說該村人姓什麼。萊爾把該句譯作 ... for everyone in the village had my mother's maiden name *Lu*, and thus we were all related (Lu 1990: 206)。萊爾很可能是這樣推測的：魯鎮人姓魯→“母親”的娘家姓應該也姓魯→她來自平橋村→這個村合村都同姓→該村的人都姓魯。這無疑是一個過於大膽而且危險的臆斷。作為對魯迅生平、思想及作品的學術探討，這樣做未嘗不可，但翻譯畢竟不是學術研究。做翻譯時的萊爾似乎常常迷失自我，扮演着譯者兼學者的雙重角色。

萊譯是迄今所見注釋最多、最詳盡的魯迅小說英譯本。提供大量腳注是萊譯注重充分性的另一個表現，但是這種做法容易招致責難。鄧騰克 (Denton 1993: 175) 就認為，注釋使讀者不能專心看正文，從而打斷閱讀流；一部文學作品如果注釋過多，就成了“社會歷史類文獻”。應該肯定的是，萊爾提供的腳注大多內容確切、詳盡，有的甚至可說是妙趣橫生。捧讀萊譯的讀者，不僅可以借助注釋輕鬆理解原文，增長中國文化背景知識，而且可以提升閱讀趣味。萊爾在“譯序”中說，譯本中提供大量注釋，或許是譯者之過，因為對某些讀者來說，有些注釋純屬畫蛇添足，但是，“為了讓讀者對原文的理解或誤解的程度可以做到和他自己大致相當，譯者應該提供足夠的背景知識”；譯者還須儘量擴大譯本的讀者群，光是那些熟諳中國歷史及文化的人看不夠的 (Lycell 1990: xlii)。

最後值得一提的是，萊譯中用了不少美語口語詞，人物對話譯文部分甚至雜有美語俚語，這是萊爾重視譯文可接受性的一個標誌。熟識美式英語的讀者會覺得萊譯親切可讀，而習慣於英式英語的人可能會有所排斥。要達到“擴大譯本讀者群”的目標，

看來並不容易。

萊爾 1990 年問世於魯迅研究重鎮之一的美國，這一歷史背景及譯作出版地對譯本面貌有着潛在影響。在王際真翻譯魯迅小說的三、四十年代，魯迅在美國的認知度很低，魯迅小說自然也少人關注。到了八、九十年代，魯迅作品已經廣為人知，並且獲得較高評價，也就是說，魯迅小說譯作在美國文學多元系統中有了一定地位，根據埃文－佐哈爾的理論，萊爾注重譯文的充分性是正常的。此外，萊爾身為學者型譯者，從事的又是嚴肅的學術性翻譯，譯文自然會傾向充分性。鄧騰克（Denton 1993: 176）正確指出，“依據翻譯標準，萊爾採用的可說是自由譯法，可實際上他很少偏離原文太遠”。再者，萊爾在“譯序”中稱，魯迅小說很難翻譯，因為魯迅是一位“風格大師”；“我選擇了努力在譯文中再現魯迅風格的某些方面”（Lycell 1990: xxxix-xl）。顯然，譯者遵循的翻譯詩學也決定了譯文會傾向充分性。

另一方面，譯者的翻譯目的決定了他不會忽略譯文的可接受性。萊爾有着明確的翻譯目的及強烈的目標讀者意識，他自稱是“把魯迅的全部小說譯成美語的第一人”，並且想要為譯本“贏得盡可能多的讀者”（Lycell 1990: xlii），因此他不可能忽略譯文的可讀性及可接受性。

最後，萊爾之前的譯者，包括王際真和楊氏夫婦，可用的魯迅研究成果比較有限，萊爾卻佔盡天時地利，不僅有多種前譯作為參考藍本，可以利用自己的研究心得，而且可以借用中國及國際上的大量魯研成果。^[17] 藉此，萊爾才能信心十足地使用詮釋譯法，提供多得驚人的注釋。

基於上述歷時描述，試以下表勾勒魯迅小說英譯歷程的發展

脈絡。

階段 語境 變量	發端期	活躍期	穩定發展期	成熟期	後成熟期
翻譯目的	梁譯：為外籍人士提供語言學習材料	斯/姚譯本：側重介紹原作的反傳統思想及革命性 甘譯：側重介紹原作的文學性	介紹魯迅小說到美國的比較嚴肅的目的	對外全面準確介紹魯迅小說	為美國讀者提供忠信可讀的美語全譯本，學術性目的突出
翻譯方法	梁譯：僵硬的直譯 敬譯：任意刪削	斯/姚譯本：增刪並用的自由譯法 甘譯：可讀性較好的直譯	兼顧充分性基礎上的靈活、自由譯法	通順流暢程度一般的直譯	注重充分性基礎上的詮釋譯法
譯本性質	梁譯：單行本 敬/米譯本：多人合集	多人合集	個人選集	全譯	全譯
魯研成果運用程度	無	無	譯者對魯迅及其小說有所研究	對國內魯研成果有所吸收	充分吸收、利用中國及國際上研究成果
參考前譯數量	無	一至二種	至少三種	三種以上	至少四種以上
充分性	梁譯：很高 敬譯：較低	斯/姚譯本：一般 甘譯：較高	較高	很高	較高
可接受性	梁譯：很低 敬譯：較低	斯/姚譯本：一般 甘譯：較高	較高	較高	很高（尤其對美國讀者）
魯迅小說譯作在譯入語文學多元系統中的地位	梁譯：較高（譯入語國家實為中國） 敬/米譯本：無地位	邊緣地位	邊緣地位，但對魯迅小說的文學價值稍有瞭解和認同	中心地位（譯入語國家實為中國）	有顯著提高
贊助人	梁譯：不明 敬譯：羅曼·羅蘭或雜誌社	自發或美國國內的出版商	自發或美國的大學出版社	外文局	自發或美國的大學出版社

表 2：魯迅小說英譯歷程發展脈絡

四、結束語

綜合全文所述及上表勾勒的魯迅小說英譯歷程發展脈絡，可以歸納以下幾點：

第一，每個譯本各具特色，瑕瑜互見，但總體上譯文品質逐漸提高；譯本發表形式從單篇單行本、多人合集到個人選集直至全譯，顯示出魯迅小說英譯事業從發端、活躍、穩定發展到成熟及後成熟的清晰軌跡。

第二，七種譯本中，梁譯、甘譯、王譯、楊譯、萊譯都偏向充分性，只有敬／米譯本和斯／姚譯本的充分性較低，且大致上充分性程度逐漸提高，表明魯迅小說譯作在譯入語文學多元系統中地位日漸上升。反之，隨着魯迅小說譯作在譯入語文化系統中地位的上升，譯文可能越偏向充分性。此外，利用魯迅研究成果及參考前譯有助於譯者準確理解原文，使譯文品質提高，同時也會使譯文偏向充分性。

第三，早期的梁譯、敬／米譯本及斯／姚譯本的可接受性較低，較晚出的甘譯、王譯、楊譯、萊譯的可接受性較高，且可接受性程度呈現出穩定上升的趨勢，表明後期譯者較之前期譯者，其翻譯目的更為嚴肅，語言文字功力日見深厚，目標讀者意識也逐漸增強。譯文可接受性的提高，有助於吸引更多的讀者，推動魯迅小說的對外傳播，擴大其國際影響。

第四，決定或影響譯文面貌的，既有時代背景、魯迅小說譯作在譯入語文學及文化多元系統中的地位、主流翻譯規範、贊助人、意識形態、譯作出版地、目標讀者等社會文化因素，也有譯者的翻譯目的、詩學觀及文學趣味等個體因素。有的譯本受到所

有這些因素的影響（如楊譯），但更多譯本只是受部分因素的制約；同時不同譯本受制約程度各異。

第五，翻譯目的往往決定翻譯方法，而譯者的翻譯目的可能被贊助人所左右，同時也取決於譯者遵循的翻譯規範、詩學及個人偏好。贊助人對譯者的意識形態及翻譯策略選擇有着不容低估的影響，這種影響對楊憲益、戴乃迭尤其明顯。翻譯規範、詩學及個人偏好對梁譯、斯／姚譯本、王譯及萊譯的影響特別突出。

第六，譯者並非任人擺佈的傀儡，其主觀能動性不容低估，而翻譯的外部操縱力則不應過分強調。在中國現代文學作品英譯規範傾向於任意增刪原文的背景下，甘迺迪卻能循規蹈矩地翻譯，就是一個明證。

德國著名魯研專家顧彬（2001：43）指出，“任何翻譯都是一種闡釋，因此它與譯者的理解及其所處的時代密不可分”。確實，每一種譯本都是特定歷史及社會文化背景下的一個產物，有其時代的局限性及“使用壽命”。以今天的眼光考量，梁譯、敬／米譯本、斯／姚譯本及甘譯因相對來說品質較低，已經很少有人讀了，只剩下歷史意義及文獻價值。對於一般讀者，王譯因基本忠於原文和較高的可讀性，仍是非常值得推薦的一種譯本。對於歐美各國大學的中文學生及有志於學習中國文學的外國青年讀者，楊譯依然是目前最可靠、最合適的教科書。以學術性詮釋譯法見長的萊譯，則是國外的中國文學研究生及研究者的理想讀本，尤其是那些熟諳美式英語的讀者。

注 釋

- [1] Fang Zhihua 的 *Chinese Short Stories of the Twentieth Century: An Anthology in English* (New York: Garland, 1995) 收有〈狂人日記〉、〈祝福〉、〈孔乙己〉三篇。本文不把方譯納入討論之列，理由是：其一，方譯出版至今已十餘年，未見有分量的評論，可說影響甚微；其二，譯文乏善可陳，疑是幾種前譯的拼湊組合，除字面上密合原文外，並無其他值得稱許或評價的特色。
- [2] 鑒於《故事新編》的翻譯相對沉寂，且對所收 8 篇歷史小說是否算得上純粹的創作小說，國內外學界還存在爭議，本文僅涉及《吶喊》和《彷徨》所收 25 篇小說的英譯歷程。
- [3] 本文依據的梁譯本為 2002 年的版本。
- [4] 由於出版困難，《草鞋腳》直至 1974 年才問世，但是，吉伯斯等 (Gibbs and Li 1975: 105-111) 證實，《草鞋腳》所收魯迅作品譯文均於 1934 年前刊載或譯成。因此，本文將該譯本問世時間定於 1934 年。
- [5] 這七種譯本的出版資料，詳見參考文獻部分。本文依據實際譯者，把它們簡稱為梁譯、敬／米譯本、甘譯、斯／姚譯本、王譯、楊譯、萊譯。
- [6] 可參 1925 年 5 月—1926 年 12 月間的魯迅日記，見《魯迅全集·第十四卷》（北京：人民文學出版社，1981 年），頁 545，550，552-555，584，627。
- [7] 凡引魯迅小說原文，頁碼均依照《魯迅小說全編》（魯迅，2006），簡體字換作繁體字。
- [8] 例如，茅盾（1934）指出：“‘直譯’這名詞，在‘五四’以後方成為權威”。
- [9] 西班牙翻譯學者艾克西拉（Aixela 1996）認為，出於意識形態方面的考慮，譯者常採用淡化手法，即刪去原文中“過於強烈”的或某方面不可接受的詞，代之以“較溫和”的、比較符合目標語寫作傳統或理論上切合讀者期望的詞。
- [10] 見 Levenson 一文。

- [11] 這是 1935 年刊載王際真〈阿 Q 正傳〉譯文的美國 *China Today* 雜誌編輯的評語，轉引自戈寶權（1981: 28）。
- [12] 詹氏還指出，楊譯在英語國家影響不大的主因是出版商（外文局）銷售能力差及選材不當（不切合目標讀者的需求期待）。不過，鑒於詹氏曾與楊氏夫婦在外文出版社共事兩年（1963-1965 年），且和楊氏交厚，以上評價，未免有感情成分摻雜其間。
- [13] 由此不難看出，楊戴二人的翻譯觀不同：楊憲益強調忠於原文，為此目的可以不避直譯，戴乃迭則認為譯者應有一定的自由度和創造性。不過，從楊譯偏於直譯看，這個翻譯二人組中拿主意的還是楊憲益。
- [14] 對此，李歐梵（Lee 1985: 565）就曾指出，在美國讀者看來，楊譯的“欠缺”可能表現在他們“選用英式英語中的慣用語，以及偶爾使用略顯陳舊的表達法或句子”。
- [15] 如前文所述，斯、姚二人及王際真也運用了補充譯法，但遠遠不及萊爾用得多。就萊爾的譯法，寇志明（Kowallis 1996:153-154）指出，“萊爾充分發揮一個作家的創造性，這種做法有時會引起爭議；又用一個細心學者特有的方式提供內容豐富、有時令人愉悅的腳注”。
- [16] 試比較有明顯誤譯的楊譯：... besides, he'd already asked several times for the Western doctor, who might have had a telephone call by this time (Lu 1981: 277)。
- [17] 萊爾在譯本“前言”中說，他依據的原文版本是 1981 年北京人民文學出版社的《魯迅全集》，該優秀版本提供的大量注釋對他助益甚多。此外，萊爾參考了不少重要的著述，包括：Chow（1967）；許壽裳（1952）；周作人（1970）。其中，《魯迅小說裏的人物》（周遐壽，1954）是萊爾參考及引用最多的。

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BOOK REVIEW



The “Stylistic” Turn?

Li Bo

Boase-Beier, Jean. 2006. *Stylistic Approaches to Translation (Translation Theories Explored)*. Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, pp. viii+176, £19.50. ISBN 1-900650-98-3.

The ideas of style and translation have long been in circulation, and discussions on each of them and on the relationship between the two have lasted for ages. Boase-Beier is not the first one to touch upon this topic. However, she quotes Wales (2001) to state that stylistics has become a recognized and established discipline only since the 1960s, and therefore, “views of translation before this might have been influenced by concept of style, or have focused on style, but they could not justifiably be called ‘stylistic approaches’” (Boase-Beier 2006: 7). Meanwhile, Translation Studies has been recognized as an independent discipline since the publication of James Holmes’ seminal paper “The Name and Nature of Translation Studies” in 1972. A decade and a half later, Shen completed her Ph.D. thesis entitled “*Literary Stylistics and Translation: With Particular Reference to English Translations of Chinese Prose Fiction*” in Scotland in 1987, and, “unfortunately”, her monograph was not published in Mainland China until 1995.^[1] It is easy to understand why Boase-Beier misses this reference in her 2006 book, though Shen’s exposition on stylistics and translation can be viewed as a pioneer attempt

to bring the two disciplines together.

Nonetheless, Boase-Beier's encompassing book keeps a close look at the development of both disciplines, with special focus on the latest cognitive stylistics and on the place of style in translation theory. In the second half of her book (Chapters 4 to 5), Boase-Beier brings in the very latest developments of cognitive stylistics to look at those ideas translation studies could use. But, this should not dwarf her cogent exposition on the relationship between style and translation in the early period of both stylistics and translation studies, which she covers in the first half of the book (Chapters 1 to 3).

Boase-Beier is particularly interested in a number of questions about style and translation, which she summarizes in her introduction as follows: (i) What exactly do we mean by style and how has this view changed over time? (ii) What is its place in translation theory? (iii) What is its place in the process of translation? (p. 2) She clearly lays out the content of her book in the introduction. The entire book is divided into two parts with Chapters 1 to 3 discussing the first and second issues and Chapters 4 to 5 on the second and third. Both parts overlap on the second aspect, which reveals the author's intention to explore the stylistic approaches to translation studies. The final chapter 6 concludes the whole book briefly and convincingly. For the content of each chapter in detail, you are invited to read Erkazanci's book review which has given a comprehensive description of the whole book (Erkazanci 2008). Here I will only cover a few points in the following paragraphs.

To avoid the tedious question of what style is, Boase-Beier directly quotes Wales' definition of style as "the perceived distinctive manner of expression" (Wales 2001: 371). Here, the word "perceived" is very important, and it immediately ushers in the following question: perceived by whom? For a source/target text, it is not difficult to understand that the subject of perception is the reader. However, when it comes to the

process of translation, the special reader plays a vital role, which is often ignored. Therefore, when considering style in translation, Boase-Beier proposes four potential viewpoints: (i) the style of the source text as an expression of its author’s choices; (ii) the effects of the style of the source text on the reader (and on the translator as the reader); (iii) the style of the target text as an expression of the choice made by its author (who is the translator); (iv) the effects of the style of the target text on the reader (p. 5).

Boase-Beier puts her emphasis of discussion on the second and the third points because the key to stylistic approaches to translation is “the style of the source text as perceived by the translator and how it is conveyed or changed, and to what extent it is or can be preserved in translation” (p. 5). Throughout the book, the author highlights, by making references to reader-response theories, the role played by the translating subject, i.e. the translator. She makes a distinction between the determinate meaning (primary meaning), which is embedded in the linguistics of the text, and the “weakly implied” or “second-order” meaning, which is to be found mainly in the style. Then, a further distinction between implication and implicature is highlighted by the latter being attributed to a speaker. She thus proposes “the inferred author” (p. 50) to avoid the intentional fallacy and to set the translator free from the heavy dependence on the original author and the source text.

While the translator’s subjectivity and capacity to recreate a text is recognized, Boase-Beier is cautious to outline the sources of constraints and influences that the translator is subject to. She also looks at some of the ways translators’ stylistic choices and the constraints on them have been theorized, and at some of the ways the target texts have demonstrated of the sort of stylistic choices made by the translator in order to recreate the style of the source texts. Therefore, translation, in cognitive terms, “is attempting to bring about a meeting of minds” (p.

82), and this intersubjectivity in translation is later attested in her quotation of Verdonk that interpretation is both subjective and “intersubjective” (p. 110). The role of the translator, both as the reader of the source text and the (co)-author of the target text, is closely related to the translator’s sensitivity to and awareness of literary stylistic features. This is echoed in her exposition of the relationship between theory and practice. I will come back to this point later.

The repeated mentioning of the latest development of stylistics is invalid without touching upon the cognitive turn in this discipline. Boase-Beier points out that “[c]ognitive views are often concerned with the relation between what is universal and what is culture-specific in language and for that reason alone they are of great interest to translation theory” (p. 3). However, this turn does not come suddenly in the second half of her book. For one thing, she has in her introduction already stated clearly that she will look at these latest development in Chapter 4 and “relate[s] them to the issues discussed in the first three chapters” (p. 3). Moreover, her exposition of the place of style in translation theory in relation to her focus on the translating subject, i.e. the translator, has paved the way for the cognitive turn which highlights the cognitive state of subjects.

Therefore, we can have a better understanding of Wales’ definition of style as “perceived distinctive manner of expression”. Here, the word “distinctive” should not be viewed separately from the perceiving subject. Boase-Beier does not deny the diverse possibilities of reading and interpretation of literary works, but it is not a problem for her. Quite on the contrary, she even contends that the translator as the reader of the source text should “pretend”, based on his or her perception of the inferred (not implied) author’s mind style, to have grasped that mind in reading. Boase-Beier also contends that “a cognitive stylistic view of translation suggests that we see style as a reflection of the

mind, and attempt to grasp that mind in reading and to recreate it in translation” (p. 109). Thus, the translation process is presented as a dynamic process of minds-meeting. First, the translator tries to reveal, based on the distinctive manner of expression in the source text, the inferred author’s mind style. Second, the translator, as the author of the target text, endeavours to recreate in translation a new mind style, which will overlap partially with the inferred author’s mind style but also inevitably present the translator’s own mind style. The new mind style is open to target readership for further inference and interpretation. The translating subject, the stylistically-aware translator, plays a vital role in the search of the inferred author’s mind style and the recreation of mind style in the target text. ^[2]

Apart from her theoretical contribution of integrating the latest development of stylistics into translation studies, Boase-Beier has also provided us with insights into the dilemmatic relationship between theory and practice. While some propose that the great translators are born rather than trained (with theory of course), some even venture to put theory and practice in dichotomy isolation. It is often assumed either that translation theory should offer guidelines for, if not dictate, practice, or that translator should follow their nose in theoretical vacuum. Boase-Beier deconstructs such a dichotomy by juxtaposing the two in a dynamic interaction. For her, theories are just knowledge *par excellence*, and knowledge of stylistic and translation theory will contribute to, instead of constraining, translation practice.

They (knowledge of stylistic and translation theory) thus broaden the translator’s mind, increase awareness, and so can set free the translator from too timid a dependence on the source text. Knowledge of style is a tool which aids in both interpreting the style of the source text and assessing the way styles works in the target text. And knowledge of

translation theory opens up possibilities (such as issues about the target-text relation to the source text or the target-text relation to other target texts) which might not otherwise have been considered. (pp. 64-5)

Her view of the relationship of theory and practice is reiterated throughout the book (p. 2; p. 5; p. 6; p. 63; p. 111; p. 141; p. 147; etc.). Her effort in explicating the relationship of theory and practice results from an intention to deal with the common ongoing misunderstanding of this relationship and her own experience in translation practice and theorizing translation. Theories are not designed to dictate practice, and description does not necessarily mean to merely exhaust the diverse phenomenon and data. Boase-Beier concludes that “[i]n fact theoretical studies can have very different effects on practice, not all of which are prescriptive. The descriptive-prescriptive distinction is at best an oversimplification of the relationship between theory and practice” (p. 2).

Gavins is right in claiming Boase-Beier’s book to be “the most encompassing text” of the year 2006 (2008: 397), and Seago admits that she has to take a reductive approach when reviewing the book insofar as it is “a rich and rewarding book of such breadth and scope” (Karen 2009: 145). Yes, Boase-Beier’s book is widely encompassing in its examples and comprehensive in its theoretical coverage. It provides a lucid and cogent account of stylistic approaches to translation. She explores the existing theories and approaches in the first half of the book and, in the second half, tries to synthesize earlier views and her own, integrating them into an overall approach. Her theoretical contribution is equally attested and supported by her application of these approaches on translation practices.

When a book of less than 200 pages seeks to be encompassing on

the subject, it leaves more for further research and inquiry. Take her discussion of foregrounding for example. Boase-Beier mentions that “one way in which foregrounding takes place in novels is through the use of heteroglossia” (p. 133), and she expounds this point by making reference to her own translation of the German dialect into English. Her exposition is rather convincing. However, the heteroglossic feature in novels goes beyond that, and more and more scholarly research has covered this subject matter (Bandia 2008; Meylaerts 2006; Määttä 2004; Sumillera 2008; etc.). Of course, this is not a criticism, and my point here is that Boase-Beier’s book is enlightening for it leads to more and more in-depth research on the issues mentioned by her.

Notes

- [1] Shen’s Ph.D. thesis was not published until 1995 in Mainland China with the new title of *Literary Stylistics and Fictional Translation*.
- [2] It is important to note that the subtitles for 4.2 and 5.2 are “Translating the Mind in the Text” and “Using Style to Translate Mind” respectively. Actually, 4.2 aims at raising translators’ stylistic awareness, contributing to translators’ understanding of the inferred author’s mind style, whereas 5.3 is, to a large extent, a discussion of the mind style in translation with reference to the two English translations of Morgenstern’s “The Two Donkeys”. The main argument in this part has appeared in one of her earlier articles entitled “Mind Style Translated” (Boase-Beier 2003). This 2003 article integrates the two levels of connotation into an overall exposition: the search of mind style in the source text and the recreated mind style in the translated work.

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稿約凡例

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