

Translation Quarterly No. 38

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Special Issue IV

Selected papers presented at the Second
Tsinghua-Lingnan Translation Symposium

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第三十八期
第二屆清華—
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Translation Quarterly No. 38, December 2005

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Chief Editor's Note

Three more articles from the Second Tsinghua-Lingnan Translation Symposium are presented in this issue—one that marks the eleventh year of this journal's publication.

Robert Neather engages with the translation of museum texts, and unearths a number of problems that can have serious implications for the theorizing that we have been doing on the basis of translated texts. For, as he puts it, in the museum, the interpretation of meaning is "combinatorial and relational ... involving a complex interaction of text, object, exhibition space, and visitor responses". The translator, in this case, has to take into account not just the text, the reader, the patron, the ideology, and so on (which have long gone into the theorizing), but, additionally, the object(s) against which the translated text is juxtaposed.

The translation of Lin Zexu's *Letter of Advice to Queen Victoria* is the subject of Mu Fengliang's article. In a penetrating analysis, Mu delineates the tragic consequences of a failure to take into account possible misunderstandings in cross-cultural communication. The loss was on both sides. In penning his letter Lin Zexu obviously expected peace, but the translators who translated it failed to meet not only Lin's expectation for peace but also Britain's expectation for diplomatic courtesy. The letter became "a message for war", as Mu puts it.

Feng Zongxin's focus is the hedging devices ("words whose meaning implicitly involves fuzziness") used in fictional texts and how they can be handled in translation. Citing copious examples from George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Feng points out ways in which the author casts himself in a variety of narratorial as well as authorial stances, and strives to make the reality he is presenting more "real". Feng's article is a brilliant exegesis of the demands placed on the translator to be well attuned to textual innuendoes in fiction.

In the non-Symposium article for this issue, "The Ideogrammatic Method and Ezra Pound's *The Great Digest*", Wang Hui revisits the highly enigmatic practices used by Ezra Pound when he translated one of the best-known texts in the Confucian canon, one that is least amenable to a unified interpretation.

This issue concludes with Part 1 of a report on the discussion held at a Translation Panel during the ICLA (International Comparative Literature Association) conference in August 2004. The participants are seen to be engaging in a lively debate on the importance and relevance of contemporary Western translation theories for the Chinese researcher, especially those of the "manipulation" school and of postcolonialist critics. How translation history ought to be written also figures as one of the key issues discussed. Part 2 of the report is slated for publication in *Issue no. 39*.

On 3 September the *Translation Quarterly* celebrated its tenth

anniversary at the Hong Kong Translation Society's Gala Dinner held at Grand Hyatt Hotel, Hong Kong. It has certainly come a long way since it began, unpretentiously enough, as a slim 80-page publication. While still in the euphoric mood carried over from the party, the Editors are confident that the journal will flourish in the years ahead, considering how it has gone from strength to strength in the past decade.

Leo Chan

November 2005

Translation Quality in the Museum: Towards a Greater Awareness of End-User Needs *

Robert Neather

Abstract

This paper explores issues of translation quality in the context of museums and heritage sites, arguing that translated texts in the museum are frequently constructed with little awareness of end-user (visitor) needs. The paper begins with an account of how meaning is produced in the museum, noting that written texts form but one part of a greater meaning system which includes the objects that the texts describe as well as the spatial layout of the museum. It then proceeds to examine examples from the Confucian Temple site in Beijing, showing how a failure to understand the nature of museum texts leads to faulty translation and in turn to an "inter-semiotic" breakdown – an inability on the part of TT users to adequately decode the artefacts presented to them. In the final portions of the paper, various reasons and motivations for the production of such translations are rehearsed.

In the public presentation of culture, the role of museums and heritage sites is crucial. Such institutions provide one of the main channels through which a given society narrates its cultural heritage, both to its own citizens and to those of differing cultures. As such, a museum represents not merely an articulation of the past, but also a commentary or reflection on the present state of that society. The presentation of cultural information in this context involves a variety of different aspects, including the choice of the artefacts themselves, their spatial arrangement, as well as various forms of explanatory material, of which the written text is perhaps the most important. Clearly, translation of such textual material is vital if a museum is to fulfill its cross-cultural role. Yet translation quality is often highly variable.

This paper addresses the issue of translation quality in the Chinese museum context. (The term “museum” will be used here to refer both to museums and heritage sites.) It argues that many poor quality museum text translations demonstrate a failure to understand the needs of the end-user, the museum visitor. Whilst a growing body of scholarship exists in regard to textual practice in the museum and to problems of textual quality (see below), such research has focused almost exclusively on a monolingual context. Issues of quality in translated texts, if discussed at all, are usually confined to a few practical and perfunctory remarks (e.g. Devenish 1990: 68; Ambrose and Paine 1993: 90; Serrell 1996: 101). Such lack of attention is perhaps symptomatic of a greater failure in respect of broader foreign language provision in museums that is only now beginning to be recognised. In the UK context, for instance, Koliou’s (1997) survey of visitors to seven London museums suggests significant under-provision of foreign language material, whilst in China, the prospect of a sharp increase in foreign visitor numbers following China’s entry to the WTO and the 2008 Olympics has led to calls for a far greater awareness of language and translation needs within the museum community (Duan

2003: 115; Zuo 2003: 88).

The paper will begin with a consideration of how meaning is constructed in the museum context, and the ways in which texts are read by museum visitors. It then proceeds to a case study of translated texts in the Confucian Temple in Beijing, focusing on examples of outdoor explanatory text-panels and information brochures used by visitors to the temple. In assessing issues that influence translation quality, the paper draws less on a translation studies framework than on the discourse of museology or “museum studies”. In this way, it seeks to offer a new perspective from which to explore further our understanding of texts and translation in this environment.

Meaning and Texts in the Museum: Ways of Reading

Any consideration of meaning in the museum must start with a discussion of objects, for it is the objects or artefacts themselves that are the *raison-d’être* for a museum’s existence. The nature of museum display is, almost by definition, selective. Objects arranged in a given exhibition are clearly selected for their particular cultural significance. As such, they may be read as standing *pars pro toto* for the particular culture or society from which they are taken, leaving museum visitors to reconstruct an interpretively meaningful whole for themselves. This quality has been explored from various theoretical angles: some scholars (e.g. Hooper-Greenhill 2000: 116-117) have stressed that our reading of objects involves a hermeneutic dialogue between part and whole; others (e.g. Pearce 1995: 16) have applied the classic linguistic distinction of *langue* and *parole* to suggest that collections of objects are the “parole” which emerge from and represent the broader “langue” of the social conditions

and practices which produced them. The present paper draws on a third such formulation, which introduces the language of literary criticism: in Mieke Bal's analysis, objects may be said to function "synecdochically", for as Bal reminds us, "synecdoche is the figure of rhetoric where an element, a small part, stands for the whole" (1996a: 206). Specific objects in a given museum display, then, may be read as synecdoches that stand for a broader cultural unity. For Bal, this synecdochic mode of reading is what characterises ethnographically-oriented museums. In the ethnographic context, "the artefact is only readable *as culture*, no matter what aesthetic qualities it may have" (Bal 1996a: 206). By contrast, she argues, paintings in an art gallery are read in an essentially "metaphorical" way, not as synecdoches of a given culture:

Instead, artworks are viewed as standing for an aesthetic, and as such, they are considered metaphors, transferring their specific aesthetic to the one current sufficient to make the work readable, but readable *as art*, regardless of what it could tell us, also, about the culture it comes from. (Bal 1996a: 206)

However as Bal later makes clear, these two categories are not necessarily discrete, and as we shall see below in relation to translated museum text-panels, the way in which artefacts are presented may encourage or impede one reading strategy in favour of the other.

If visitors to a given museum exhibition will tend to read its contents synecdochically as parts of a cultural whole, then how is that synecdochic reading constructed? How, in short, do objects "mean"? Recent museological research, informed by semiotic and critical theory, has stressed the polysemic nature of objects in the museum context, arguing that given objects possess "multilayered identities" (Maroević 1995: 25) allowing of a variety of interpretations. The way in which such identities

are highlighted or made available will depend on the way that objects are presented in combination with other elements. Meaning in the museum is therefore said to be "combinatorial and relational" (Hooper-Greenhill 2000: 3). To begin with, objects will yield certain meanings when placed in relation to other objects, and therefore the choice and combination of objects becomes crucial. A second relationship involves the relation of objects to the various texts that describe them, a relationship that we shall explore in more detail below in regard to translation. Texts and objects are, in turn, linked by a third element, namely their spatial positioning. Though seemingly intangible, such an element has been shown (e.g. Silverstone 1994: 171-172; Bal 1996b) to exert a powerful influence on interpretation. Thus in a given museum, we have a range of differing systems of signification (textual/linguistic, visual, spatial) which, to borrow a distinction from Toury (1986/1994: 1114), interact both "inter-semiotically" (e.g. textual and visual) and "intra-semiotically" (e.g. textual and textual).

Such relationships, and the meanings they suggest, are however constrained by the exercise of curatorial control. If a given exhibition is ultimately the product of a particular curator, then it is necessarily conditioned by what Coxall (1991: 91) has referred to as the "unconscious articulation of underlying ideologies". Such ideological positions may be reflected in any aspect of the museum, though they are particularly evident in texts. Behind a given text-caption, for instance, there is always the sense of an "expository agent" guiding the viewer into a particular interpretive line of approach (Bal 1996b: 111). In more extreme cases, text labels may even present curators—and the institutions for which they work—with "a semantic opportunity ripe for misuse" (Ferguson 1996: 180), a situation which, until relatively recently, has occurred in both Mainland China and Taiwan. In the Taiwan context, for example, Wang (1999: 37) has argued that Taiwan museums before the late 1980s

were nothing less than government “propaganda machines”. Whilst the situation has changed dramatically in recent years, the repeated stress on the need for “authenticity” of meaning by prominent figures in the museum community (Huang [2003], for example, devotes an entire chapter to the issue) perhaps suggests a continued anxiety about excessive curatorial intervention and control in the construction of meaning in the Chinese context.

The awareness that objects should be allowed to reveal meanings in a more objective and yet still coherent way has driven an increasing move towards greater understanding of end-user (visitor) needs. Museology has also become increasingly aware that, like the reader of a literary text, the “reader” of the museum—the visitor—is a key agent in the making of meaning. And just as literary theory sought to develop a position which allowed for the fact that the reader’s reconstruction of textual meaning is at once individualised and part of a shared interpretive outlook, so museology has attempted to allow for the simultaneously personal and communal reading of a museum that the museum visitor enacts (see, for instance, Hooper-Greenhill [2000: 119-123], who applies Stanley Fish’s concept of the “interpretive community” to the museum context).

If reading of the museum is at least in part a communal act, then a central problem arises regarding the nature of the particular community it seeks to address. Individual exhibitions may seek to address specific “target groups” or audiences, a term found extensively in the literature of museology in both Western and Chinese contexts (see e.g. Dean 1994: 20; Su 2000: 76). To this end, one sees attempts to actively involve the relevant local communities in the selection and organisation process. Smith (1991), for instance, discusses the experience of involving the local Gujarati community in Leicester, UK, in an exhibition of Indian jewelry. However, if a given exhibition can to some degree successfully address

one community’s needs, it is far more difficult to provide for a specific group in a larger museum. As Coxall (1991: 87) points out, the problem of whom the museum is addressing is evident even at the most basic level, namely the level of language adopted in museum labels. When both domestic and foreign audiences are involved, the question becomes more complicated: even within a mono-lingual setting (e.g. English), American and English visitors will react to and use written information differently (Cunnell and Prentice 2000), whilst in a bilingual context, as will be discussed later in this paper, the question of addressing two culturally remote audiences simultaneously within the same exhibit space may be still more difficult to negotiate.

Reading the Confucian Temple: Translated Captions, Limited Perspectives

Having examined such issues of meaning in the museum, let us now turn to consider the ways in which translated texts operate in such an environment, and the extent to which translation quality issues impinge upon the end-user’s reading of museum artefacts. In the following analysis, we will draw on examples of certain key genre types used within the museum. Genre analysis, as a research discipline, has not yet addressed the question of museum texts, and thus little theoretically informed analysis of such genres exists. Various scholars in the museological field, however, have at least attempted to provide more practically-oriented typologies of differing museum text genres and subgenres (e.g. Dean 1994: 110ff; Devenish 1990; Serrell 1996: Ch. 3), which provide a useful basic framework for categorisation. Whilst the precise distinctions drawn vary from one typology to another, all tend to place museum texts in a clear hierarchical framework. Dean, for instance, suggests six divisions,

namely: title signs, sub-titles, introductory text, group texts, object labels, and distributional materials. To this we might add further possible distinctions: for example, distributional materials—texts that, in contrast to other museum genres, are portable rather than fixed—might include everything from exhibition leaflets to educational worksheets, and indeed book-length museum and exhibition catalogues. Each of the various categories in this typology is defined by a somewhat different communicative purpose, and exhibits distinctive generic or subgeneric features, in particular in regard to the density of information presented. As we shall discuss further, proper awareness of such genre features and the correct contexts in which they operate—a quality which Bhatia (e.g. 1997b: 317) terms “generic competence”—is a crucial factor influencing translation quality.

Our specific case for discussion is a prime heritage site, the Confucian Temple in Beijing. The Confucian Temple is a major visitor attraction, whose very name suggests values central to Chinese culture. As such, it functions as a vital conduit for communicating and making accessible a cultural tradition. In common with most such sites, various texts play a prominent role in facilitating visitor understanding. Each area of the temple compound contains text panels explaining the architecture or artefacts on display. There is also a booklet available, which offers a rather different presentation of information; and shorter, individual object labels are used in the temple's exhibition rooms. In considering the effectiveness of one particular text, it is worth remembering the “intra-semiotic” nature of museum texts which we mentioned above: a given text must be seen as operating in tandem with other, differing texts, to provide a composite interpretive framework.

The following is one example of a text panel at the temple. (For a photograph of the original text panel in situ, see Appendix 1.) The text explains a group of stele or stone tablets, upon which are engraved the

names of successful graduates of the “Advanced Scholar” (*jinshi*) examination through the ages.

進士題名碑簡介

先師門和大成門東西兩側是元、明、清三代進士題名牌，共一百九十八塊，刻有五萬一千六百二十四名進士的姓名、籍貫和名次，是研究我國科舉制度的珍貴資料。

歷史上元碑共有九塊，現有三塊，其餘六塊被明代人磨去字跡刻上當朝進士姓名。明朝初年的進士題名牌在南京，自永樂十四年（1416年）起至崇禎十六年（1643年）止共七十七塊在本廟內。清代自順治三年（1646年）至光緒三十年（1904年）止，共存一百一十八塊。

科舉制度形成於隋唐，比察舉征辟及九品中正制是一大進步，是選拔人才的途徑，封建社會後期則流為僵化的模式，成為束縛知識份子的枷鎖。明清科舉考試分三級進行，即院試、鄉試、會試和殿試，取中的稱為生員、舉人、貢士、進士。進士分三甲，一甲三人稱狀元、榜眼、探花，賜進士及第；二甲若干人，賜進士出身；三甲同進士出身。科舉程序如右圖所示，各朝代特點及位置示意在四組進士碑前分別介紹。

STELES BEARING NAMES OF JINSHI

ON THE TWO SIDES OF THE GATE OF ANCIENT TEACHER AND THE GATE OF GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS ARE FOUND 198 STELES BEARING THE NAMES, NATIVE DISTRICTS AND POSITIONS ON THE LIST OF SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES OF 51,624 SCHOLARS WHO OBTAINED THE RANK OF JINSHI AT THE IMPERIAL EXAMINATIONS DURING THE YUAN, MING AND QING DYNASTIES. THEY FURNISH VALUABLE DATA ON THE

IMPERIAL EXAMINATION SYSTEM OF CHINA.

[Note: original capitalization maintained]

The English target text here strikes us as unsatisfactory. What is immediately obvious from the translation is its relegation to a secondary role in the presentation of information. This is evident even from the layout and typography of the text panel itself (see Appendix 1). The Chinese text is placed first, given a larger title, and a diagram in Chinese is added. Moreover, even to a visitor with no knowledge of Chinese whatsoever, it is clear that significantly more space has been afforded to the Chinese text than to the English. It may also be clear to such a visitor that information has been omitted: for instance, the Chinese text contains a series of roman numerals that could only be a chronological sequence of dates, which are missing from the translation. Such omissions become fully apparent when the TT and ST are compared more closely. The TT, quite simply, translates only the first of the three Chinese paragraphs. Moreover, the diagram, which illustrates the titles of the various Imperial examinations and their relationship to one another, is not available in English. The whole presentation, then, suggests a strong sense of cultural privileging, in which the Chinese visitor is provided with full information whilst the English reader is clearly excluded from key portions of the explanation.

In addition to such omission of information, the TT reader's understanding is further obfuscated by the translator's obvious lack of "generic competence"—the awareness as to how the translated text should operate in genre terms and the ability to construct a TT in which target "generic identity" is maintained (Bhatia 1997a: 206). Viewed generically, the text panel might at first be categorised as an "object label"; however, closer inspection suggests that it be better read as what Dean (1994: 113-114) refers to as a "group text": the final line of the Chinese text informs

the visitor that "the characteristics for each dynasty and details of the positioning are introduced separately in front of the four groups of stele". This text, then, operates at a "higher level of information transfer" in the museum textual hierarchy, serving to "unify a particular group of objects or data conceptually" (Dean 1994: 113). Such texts occupy a pivotal position in the interpretive process. Consequently, Dean cautions, they should be constructed in a succinct and easily read style; ideal text length may also be defined as between 75 and 150 words. Even in terms of a pure word-count, then, the TT in the temple panel example can be seen to be generically unsatisfactory: it is excessively short in length. However, more problematic is the presentation of information itself, which is the direct result of an overly source-oriented translation approach. The TT seems almost designed to frustrate, raising questions in the mind of the reader which are left unanswered. For instance, what is "the rank of jinshi", what precisely were the "imperial examinations" and why are only the "Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties" mentioned? Or again, in what way can such steles be said to "furnish valuable information"? Whilst such questions may pose few problems either for readers of the Chinese text or for those with some prior grounding in Chinese history, for the less informed visitor with access only to the TT, they pose a major problem to understanding the cultural world described.

Before analyzing some of the issues at work here more fully, we should first consider this text in the light of other available texts. For text panels, as we have stressed above, are of course only one form of access to information. In the Confucian Temple, as in most museums and heritage sites, a "distribution leaflet" is also provided. The leaflet consists principally of pictures of the temple with explanatory captions. Among the pictures is one featuring a group of the same stele, with a text which reads as follows:

進士題名碑

孔廟共有三進院落。矗立於前院的分屬於元、明、清三代的 198 座進士題名碑，是中國科舉制度最寶貴的實物見證。碑上題刻有 51624 名在科舉考試中中了進士人的姓名、名次、籍貫。每科一、二、三名分別稱為“狀元、榜眼、探花”。

Imperial Examination Winner Superscription Stele

There are 3 lines of compounds in the Confucius Temple. In the front compound, there erecting [*sic.*] up 198 Imperial Examination Winner Superscription Steles belonging to the Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties respectively, which are most valuable material evidence for China's Imperial Examination System. Inscribed on the stele are names, places and birthplaces of a total of 51624 students who became Imperial Examination Winners. The top 3 places of each subject were called "Zhuang Yuan (No. 1), Bang Yan (No. 2) and Tan Hua (No. 3)".

Text in distribution leaflets such as this may be used for different purposes. Dean (1994: 116) proposes that leaflets are essentially "information intensive", involving longer and potentially "unlimited" portions of text. Nevertheless it is also true that some distributional materials function differently, providing a briefer, overview account of artefacts that can then be approached individually in more detail through group texts and labels. Certainly, this would seem to be the purpose of the Chinese source text in this example. The text is clearly much shorter, and, with the exception of the final sentence naming the titles of the top three graduates, is largely confined to the information found in the first paragraph of the larger "group text" panel. In short, the leaflet text complements the panel text: there is, to use our earlier term, an effective

"intra-semiotic" interaction at work which in turn allows the reader—the visitor—to more easily decode the cultural relevance of the artefacts in question. (A more in-depth examination of the way in which information is textualised differently across these genres, and the issue of how such a booklet text attempts to "easify" [Bhatia 1997b: 210ff] the more complex panel-text, will be addressed in a separate paper.)

In the target text, however, the complementarity found between the two ST text genres is weakened dramatically. The TT leaflet text, though it contains other imperfections which we shall not discuss here, is at least more appropriate generically: TT "generic identity" is more effectively maintained. Yet because of the faulty panel-text translation, discussed above, the two texts merely replicate each other: the panel-text tells us almost nothing more than the leaflet. The situation might be explained using the distinction proposed by Toury (1986/1994), mentioned above, for whom "intra-semiotic translation" (translation within one semiotic system, here referring to the linguistic system) may be divided into "intra-linguistic" and "inter-linguistic" translation. When considering the failure of our two English TTs to work in a genuinely complementary relationship, we may say that an initial failure at the inter-linguistic level (the faulty text-panel translation) has led to a commensurate intra-lingual failure, in which information is not effectively "translated" from one appropriate genre format to another, but is merely replicated in an almost identical format. The result, in turn, of such a repetition is a further breakdown at the *inter-semiotic* level: our ability to decode the cultural and visual significance of the artefacts before us is obstructed.

How then should we understand the experience of the TT reader in such a situation? Earlier we noted Bal's idea that objects and artefacts in museums and related sites may be read "synecdochically", as parts that stand selectively for a broader cultural "whole". Bal's notion of the *synecdochic* has important implications for the visitor experience of

translated texts, as one of her examples powerfully illustrates. Bal relates the experience of visiting a Czech museum (1996a: 207; further developed in 1996b: 81-82), in which the exhibits were introduced only by Czech labels: no translation was provided, whether in English or any other language. For Bal, this absence of translation closed off the possibility of reading these objects “synechdochically”; for whilst one might sense that such individual objects were clearly part of some greater whole, it was quite impossible to interpret or understand their place or importance within this broader cultural tradition. Bal was thus forced to interpret the choice and arrangement of the objects along “metaphorical” lines, reading them as symbolic of the particular curator’s own artistic aesthetic.

In the Confucian Temple text-panel, we have a situation which is one stage on from this. Some translated information is available, permitting of a partial synecdochic reading. Yet the possibility for such a reading is limited, frustrated by the withholding of information (and by an accompanying booklet text that adds nothing new), such that whilst it is possible to understand something of the steles’ importance in their cultural tradition, the reading of them is an imperfect one. A full understanding of the steles as parts of that tradition is precluded.

In the Confucian Temple text-panels, then, Chinese readers are privileged whilst English readers are denied the possibility of a fully synecdochic—and hence culturally meaningful—reading of the objects in question. Though no doubt unintentional, the resultant effect on TT readers and visitors is one of exclusion, of obfuscation. In this most culturally central of Chinese heritage sites, the Chinese reader is welcomed into a fuller appreciation of his/her own heritage that celebrates the glorious traditions of that culture. The TT reader, by contrast, is subjected—through the exclusivity of the information presented—to a sense of display of cultural superiority that is at best frustrating and at worst unsettling.

The Confucian Temple Translations: Issues and Motivations in their Production

Having assessed some of the problems inherent in the Confucian Temple translations, and their effect on end-users, we may now turn to consider some of the broader issues and motivations underlying the production of such translations. One obvious factor motivating the choice of a highly truncated TT in the panel-text is the very practical consideration of space. The overall panel is already quite large, and it might be rightly objected that full translation of the ST would lead to a TT of excessive length. This problem becomes particularly acute in the Chinese-English context, for the obvious reason that whereas cognate language pairs such as English and French occupy similar space on a given page, Chinese is far more spatially compact. Such a problem, however, demands a greater consideration of how source and target texts may be effectively presented together within a bilingual context: both texts must share the same, limited space, without compromising the differing end-user groups’ access to knowledge: both must be constructed so as to work effectively both on an inter-lingual level as well as on an intra-lingual level (i.e. with other, complementary text materials). In the present example, there is a case for rewriting not only the TT, but for also adjusting and editing down the ST, so that a greater sense of balance is achieved. This, in turn, must be done in consideration of how relationships with other text genres in the museum may be affected as a result. In short, a spatially suitable and effective translation can only be produced if it is considered as part of the entire textual system of the museum.

A second issue seen in these examples concerns the whole question of precision in museum texts. Earlier, we commented in passing on the excessively source-oriented nature of the Confucian Temple text panels.

The problems of serious undertranslation seen above are exacerbated by the fact that what *is* translated seeks to replicate closely the language of the ST. The desire for precision is a key influence on such an approach. Precision, especially in regard to terminology, is obviously crucial in the museological field. Objects must be classified and catalogued as precisely and scientifically as possible, an understanding that underlies, for example, the various museum terminology projects taking place under the auspices of the UNESCO-affiliated body, the International Council on Museums (ICOM: <http://icom.museum/>). Yet the desire for rigorous precision can all too easily lead to excessive ST orientation, a fact which, though not explicitly stated, would seem to underlie much of Zuo's (2003) powerfully argued attack on current museum translation practice in China. For Zuo, excessive literalism combined with unthinking acceptance of standard equivalents, legitimised as "correct" through their inclusion in standard dictionaries, has led not to greater precision but to misinformation of target users across a range of museum-related genres. For instance, the entrance to the *taoci* 陶瓷 collection at the Palace Museum in Beijing has a headline reading: "Porcelain of the Three Kingdoms and the Western and Eastern Jin Dynasties", an apparently direct translation of the Chinese phrase "*Sanguo Liangjin de Taociqi*" 三國兩晉的陶瓷器. Yet, Zuo argues, whilst "porcelain" may constitute accepted "correct" usage for the Chinese term *taoci*, it is wholly misleading: it is, put simply, too specific, too hyponymic. Instead, "ceramics" is a more truly correct equivalent (2003: 85). In another example from Zuo, a title in a museum-related archaeology journal translates "*Jiandu zhidu xintan*" 簡牘制度新探 as "New Research on the System of Wooden and Bamboo Documents", yet a consideration of the contents of the text in question might suggest the more functionally appropriate—though less "literal"—translation as "Research on the Sizes of the Ancient Wooden and Bamboo Slips for Writing". Such a suggestion provides a more genuinely end-

user accessible translation, which, whilst maintaining precision, is more target-oriented, an approach that as Zuo remarks, is seldom seen in museum translation (2003: 87).

Zuo's example brings us to a third issue evident in the Confucian Temple text panel, namely an inadequate understanding of the importance of the translated text to foreign visitors. Visitor Studies, the branch of museology which seeks to analyse visitor behaviour in the museum, has attempted to provide a typology of visitor types, which are categorised in various ways (see e.g. Serrell [1996: 41] for an overview of types as well as the dangers of categorisation). Dean's typology (1994: 25-26) divides visitors according to interest, ranging from the casual visitor, through more interested but "object-focused" visitors, to the more serious visitor who demands more textual elaboration. Such notions of visitor stratification sometimes underlie the choice of textual content and the organization of texts in a given exhibition (Serrell 1996: Ch. 6). In the temple's text panels, we have the strong sense that such stratification is working inter-lingually, and that it informs the terseness of information provided in the TT. There is the sense that English readers are perceived as somehow not needing the same amount of information as Chinese visitors. This may be because they are seen as just an inherently less interested visitor group who are less concerned with the fine detail of Chinese culture. It may also be due to a curatorial supposition that they lack the requisite "museum schema" (a term which Parker [1996] borrows from linguistics to discuss the role of background knowledge in visitors' understanding) for understanding the museum in question, a schema which is simply felt too complex for the Chinese museum to provide adequately for them.

A final possible motivation for the production of such text is that of curatorial (and hence, ideological) influence, which we outlined in the introductory portion of this paper. For it is at least clear that some sort

of curatorial judgment has been exercised as to the extent of translated text to be provided for non-Chinese visitors. Whilst Ferguson's idea of the curatorial "misuse" of museum labels, cited earlier, would seem too extreme a characterization in the present case, the sense of cultural privileging that we see here may be in part be due to the "unconscious articulation" of an ideological position, to recall Coxall's phrase. Such articulation in the ST is then reproduced in the TT, resulting in the same imposition of a curatorial viewpoint, but through the medium of translation. In such a translation, we see no attempt to mediate the ideological position of the ST for a TT audience. Instead, ideological biases are reproduced in a way that, once again, bespeaks excessive source-orientation. Such unconscious articulation of cultural dominance is sometimes prevalent in the TT even when it was not originally present in the ST. In a particularly striking example from the Preface to a Museum Catalogue published by the Shaanxi Museum of History, Xi'an, in 1996, visitors to the museum are categorised as "the descendants of Yan and Huang [i.e. the Chinese], and the foreigners". In the ST phrase (*yanhuang zisun, zhongwai binpeng* 炎黃子孫、中外賓朋) the juxtaposition of "Chinese" and "foreign" is more neutral; in the TT, by contrast, it borders on the offensive.

Conclusion

This paper has aimed to examine some of the issues surrounding translation quality in museum texts. Drawing on the discourse of museology, it has analysed examples of texts in a major Chinese heritage site to show how faulty translation can dramatically influence the end-user/visitor's reading of the cultural artefacts which the site presents. It has drawn on Bal's notion of "synecdochic" reading to suggest that

such translations preclude full cultural understanding, and that in so doing, they perpetuate a sense of cultural privileging in favour of source text readers.

In assessing problems in the production of translations, we have argued firstly that texts in the museum must be understood as working in a series of inter- and intra-semiotic relationships, the particular configuration of which will shape the way in which particular readings and meanings of objects are made available to the visitor. We have argued further that such an understanding is an absolute prerequisite for the production of effective target texts in the museum, and that many texts of problematic quality demonstrate a lack of such understanding. We have also raised the question of what Bhatia calls "generic competence", suggesting that a lack of such competence underlies the failure of many translations to maintain the "generic integrity" of the target text genre. Such problems, it should be reiterated, pertain both to the textual and the extra-textual aspects of genre. In all, we noted that such texts suffer from an excessive source orientation, in those portions where the ST has been translated rather than omitted altogether.

In addition to pointing out these failures of understanding, we also examined some of the possible motivating factors behind the translations. An initial factor may have been the desire to save space. A second factor, which may motivate the desire for source-text affinity, is the issue of precision, which as Zuo shows, can easily be conflated with "faithfulness" to the source. We also noted that Chinese perceptions of Western visitor needs and motivations when visiting the temple may differ significantly from the perceptions of visitors themselves. Future research in visitor studies must address the question of foreign audience needs and the ways in which these can be reconciled with source-culture users. Finally, we raised the issue of curatorial and ideological influence, noting that such influence in the source text is often directly reproduced in the

target text, and that in some cases, it may even be introduced into the target text where it was not present in the source.

Such issues are prevalent across many museums in China. A trip over the road from the Confucian Temple to the Yonghe Gong (the Lama Temple) reveals a similar set of problems. This paper has aimed to raise key issues of vital importance to the credibility and effectiveness of the museums and cultural heritage sector in China. It is hoped that they will provide the basis for a field that is keenly deserving of further research.

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Appendix 1

(i) Text-panel at Confucian Temple, introducing "Steles Bearing Names of Jinshi".



(ii) A corresponding text from the Confucian Temple visitor booklet.

进 士 题 名 碑

孔庙共有三进院落。矗立于前院的分属于元、明、清三代的198座进士题名碑，是中国科举制度最宝贵的实物见证。碑上题刻有51624名在科举考试中中了进士人的姓名、名次、籍贯。每科一、二、三名分别称为“状元、榜眼、探花”。

Imperial Examination Winner Superscription Stele

There are 3 lines of compounds in the Confucius Temple. In the front compound, there erecting up 198 Imperial Examination Winner Superscription Steles belonging to the Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties respectively, which are most valuable material evidence for China's Imperial Examination System. Inscribed on the stele are names, places and birthplaces of a total of 51624 students who became Imperial Examination Winners. The top 3 places of each subject were called "Zhuang Yuan (No.1), Bang Yan (No.2) and Tan Hua (No.3)".

About the Author

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Cultural Policy and Translated Assimilation: A Case Study on Lin Zexu's *Letter of Advice to Queen Victoria*

Mu Fengliang

Abstract

This paper explores the cultural differences between Qing Dynasty China and Great Britain in the period of the industrial revolution, taking as a basis a case study of Lin Zexu's Letter of Advice to Queen Victoria. The paper seeks not to judge the historical right or wrong, but to analyse past experience as a means to raise awareness of the often considerable pitfalls involved in cross-cultural communication. It demonstrates how an understanding of sometimes finely nuanced cultural differences is essential to a communicationally effective target text.

1. Introduction

On January 1, 1839, Lin Zexu 林則徐 was sent to Canton (Guangzhou) as Imperial Commissioner to suppress the trade in opium. The two-month journey started from Beijing, with Lin arriving in Canton on March 10. His task was a difficult one: the opponent this time was

not the barbarians that Chinese had encountered in the past, but the leader of the first industrial revolution, a technologically formidable power. Feudal custom in China dictated that only the strongest could assume the role of ruler, while those who were defeated would be treated as slaves. Yet the Qing Dynasty desire for such dominance was undermined by the fact that it was militarily weak in the face of the foreign powers, a situation directly attributable to its backward nature and technological ignorance. Moreover, it had no route for retreat, for any diplomatic failure might be the initiation of the Qing Dynasty's termination. The task given by Emperor Daoguang to his Celestial Commissioner was in fact very intangible: on the one hand Lin Zexu must maintain the image of the country, whilst on the other hand he must not arouse a frontier dispute (Gu 1987: 23).

However, due to broader political, economic and cultural differences, Lin Zexu could not avoid such a dispute. As one of the diplomatic efforts to ease the relationship and seek cooperation, Lin wrote a *Letter of Advice to Queen Victoria* in the process of his confiscating and destroying the opium. The letter proved to be a failure. According to Kishlansky, it was a "frank document" written in "the usual highly stylized language of Chinese diplomacy" (Kishlansky 1995: 266-269). This article will focus on the analysis of Lin Zexu's *Letter of Advice to Queen Victoria*, with a view to suggesting an alternative approach to translation.

2. Lin Zexu's Preparation for the Opium Embargo

Before modern times, very few Chinese had acquired a western language, and thus Chinese did not normally read foreign books. Even if someone could speak a western language, he was greatly alienated

from the mainstream culture of China, either because of his economic disadvantage, marginalized poverty, or low taste in culture. More often than not, he was not interested in the western politics or historical development of institutional changes. His only interest was his personal survival. In his time, China had no need of interpreters, and thus he probably had to make a living by serving the foreigners or carrying on a practical business. In addition, the rulers in China adopted a closed-door policy to separate the Chinese from so-called barbarians, and consequently the Chinese were not allowed to study foreign affairs (Wang 1997: 363). Great Britain had studied China for three hundred years, yet China still knew nothing of Britain, except the name of England on the world map drawn by Matteo Ricci.

In need of new markets, European countries started their preparation to open up China. They had interpreters and missionaries who studied Chinese language, politics, history, customs, geography, economic structure, and culture, and who translated Chinese material into books for Europeans to read (Wang 1997: 363). After generations of effort, Western missionaries also promoted a certain understanding of the western culture in China. Foreign monks, such as Parthamasiris (An Shigao 安世高) from Afghanistan, and Lokaksi (Zhiloujiachen 支婁迦讖) from Pakistan, translated Buddhist Scripture successfully in ancient China. In the process of colonization, missionaries such as Matteo Ricci (Li Madou 利瑪竇 1552-1610), Jean Adam Schall von Bell (Tang Ruowang 湯若望 1591-1666), Ferdinand Verbiest (Nan Huairan 南懷仁 1623-1688), Jacobus Rho (Luo Yage 羅雅各 1593-1638) and W. A. P. Martin (Ding Weiliang 丁韪良 1827-1916) made prolific translations, which were well-accepted in China.

Generally speaking, the Chinese were several steps behind in international studies. Japan provides us with an interesting parameter of comparison. Later in the 20th century, Lu Xun had to study the West

with the help of translated resources from Japanese, while Lin Zexu had to start from zero. Realizing such an information gap, therefore, Lin Zexu included four Chinese interpreters, known as Yuan Dehui 袁德輝, Liang Jinde 梁進德, Ya Meng 亞孟 and Ya Lin 亞林 (Ma 1999: 512) in his team. In fact, Lin Zexu was once the coordinator of the Imperial House of Translation (*fan shufang xingzou* 翻書房行走), and thus was relatively experienced in intercultural communication.

2.1 Study of Foreign Affairs

According to the institutional framework of the Qing Dynasty, government officials were “celestial representatives”, whilst businessmen were not equal to government officials. As a diplomatic rule, foreign businessmen were not allowed to communicate with Chinese government officials directly. However, due to the need of the opium-suppression campaign, Lin Zexu made some institutional breakthrough when he contacted foreigners such as American missionaries E. C. Bridgman (Bi Zhiwen 裨治文), Peter Parker (Bo Jia 伯駕), and British Merchant Ship Doctor Hill (Xi Er 喜爾) directly or via Chinese Co-hong merchants.

Lin Zexu also changed the scholastic bias of Confucians who acknowledged Chinese books only. To deal with foreign affairs, Lin shifted his concern to translating foreign newspapers and books. As a result, his staff translated *the Macao Monthly* from 1839 to 1840. In the same effort, the *Encyclopaedia of Geography* by Murray was partially translated into *Sizhouzhi* 四洲志.

2.2 Legal Preparation

Lin Zexu also made legal preparations by translating a part of Valtel's *Le droit des gens* or *The Law of Nations*. According to Lydia Liu, it was Yuan Dehui “who, in view of the impending trouble with the British, first called Lin's attention to the authoritative work of Valtel” (Liu

1999: 141). Under the request of Lin Zexu “during the month of July”, the American medical missionary Peter Parker (1804-1888) paraphrased three paragraphs of Valtel's book into Chinese, the paragraphs relating to “war, and its accompanying hostile measures, as blockades, embargoes, etc.” (Liu 1999: 140). It reads:

Every state has, consequently, a right to prohibit the entrance of foreign merchandises, and the nations that are affected by such prohibitions have no right to complain of it, as if they had been refused an office of humanity. Their complaints would be ridiculous, since they would only be caused by a want of that gain, refused by a nation that would not suffer it to be made at its own expense. (Liu 1999: 141)

Lin Zexu believed that such matters could be understood and shared with his counterpart delegated by the British government. However, this unsystematic study was far from being persuasive. In addition, “a language is just a dialect with an army” (Morris 2000: 210): when an international legal term was expressed in a dialect, such as in Chinese, it might encounter a strong resistance or challenge. It was not realized until years later, by Tan Sitong 譚嗣同, that without upgrading its institutional framework over time, China would be paralyzed and powerless. In contrast, a European state of about one hundred square miles, Switzerland, had maintained an effectively valid state power, with common protection won to its favor. Consequently Switzerland enjoyed peace for six hundred years with no army allowed to enter its border (Wang 1997: 370). China's case was quite different. Beside political and economic conflicts, there were also cultural confrontations. No matter how much innovation Lin Zexu made in his administration, he could not break through the limit of what we shall refer to as “tributary diplomatism”, the tribute system of diplomacy set up by the Chinese emperors.

3. Textual Study of Lin Zexu's *Letter of Advice to Queen Victoria*

Lin Zexu's *Letter of Advice to Queen Victoria* is frequently mentioned by both Eastern and Western scholars in connection with the Opium Wars. Ma Zuyi notes that this letter, or "communication", was sent to Britain via a British ship-owner. The British Ministry of Foreign Affairs refused to accept the letter (Ma 1999: 517). Even if it had been otherwise, it could hardly realize its assumed function. As Gregory has recently observed: "The fate of the communication is obscure. If it was ever received by anyone in power in Britain, they would certainly have been bemused by some of the assumptions behind it" (Gregory 2003: 78).

3.1 The Purpose of the Letter, and Misunderstandings

The purpose of Lin Zexu's *Letter of Advice to Queen Victoria* was originally to keep the peace. It asked Queen Victoria for help in the Chinese campaign against the sale of opium in China. Unfortunately this purpose was not clearly presented because the arrogant tone of "the Celestial Court" was very much misleading. Firstly the letter tried to show how powerful China was, and how awesomely its legal code was observed. Secondly, the terms used, though neutral to China, were certainly insulting to Britain. For instance, the British merchants were referred to as "barbarians", a term intended in Chinese simply to indicate "foreigners", but which to British readers would seem grossly derogatory. Such terms caused misunderstandings. Furthermore, another misunderstanding took place in communication when Lin Zexu ignored Captain Elliott, the Chief Superintendent of Trade in Guangzhou. Captain Elliott was the official representative of the British government. Instead of contacting him and handing in the letter, Lin Zexu sent the letter to Queen Victoria via a British merchant ship. Being ignorant of the function of the Queen, he

believed he should address her directly, while he avoided direct communication with the British government, thus losing a direct chance for peace negotiations. The threatening gesture of force and punishment in cutting off the market was conveyed by habitual expressions based on maintaining face and image, but sounded warlike. It turned the peaceful communication of the opium issue into an ultimatum for war.

3.2 The Thinking within the Frame of Chinese Tradition

The traditional Chinese approach to diplomacy, as noted above, was one of "tributary diplomatism". One of its features was expressed in the ancient *Zuo Zhuan* 左傳, or *Zuo Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals*, where we find the phrase: "pacify the Chinese by virtue, and threaten the barbarians by punishment" (see *Zuo Zhuan*, "Duke Xi, Year 25" 僖公二十五年). This feature was well presented in the *Letter of Advice to Queen Victoria*, which was in the format of a communication, but the copy sent to Emperor Daoguang for proof-reading was titled as an official declaration of a war campaign (檄 檄). Written in accordance with the discourse of tributary diplomatism, the letter stated:

- (1) We have read your successive tributary memorials ... The kings of your honorable country by a tradition handed down from generation to generation have always been noted for their politeness and submissiveness.

觀歷次進貢表文……貴國王累世相傳，皆稱恭順。

(For the English version of Lin's *Letter* see Kishlansky 1995: 266-269; for the Chinese version see Zheng 1987: 2-3. All subsequent quotes from the letter here are sourced from these works.)

Whenever there was a communication from outside, it was deemed

as a tribute to China. Whenever polite terms were applied, it was considered as “submissiveness”. This way of thinking harmed the quality of communication and degree of understanding.

The letter went on:

- (2) we presume that the ruler of your honorable country, who takes delight in our culture and whose disposition is inclined towards us, must be able to instruct the various barbarians to observe the law with care.

諒貴國王向化傾心，定能諭令眾夷，兢兢奉法。

The suggestions here that Britain “takes delight in our culture” and is “inclined towards us” show the self-assumed ethnocentrism or sinocentric worldview, which was not only Lin Zexu’s practice, but also the common assumption held by China even until quite recently. Maybe the Chinese had reasons to keep their culture, but it was problematic to ask other people to practice it or sing one’s own praises.

Here is an example of threat:

- (3) Our Celestial Dynasty rules over and supervises the myriad states, and surely possesses unfathomable spiritual dignity.

我天朝君臨萬國，盡有不測神威。

This threat was not effective because long before, Ambassadors Macartney (who visited Emperor Qianlong) and Amherst (who visited Emperor Jiaqing) had seen China respectively, and knew that China was not as strong as it claimed.

Here is another threat:

- (4) They must by no means try to test the effectiveness of the law with

their lives. May you, O King, check your wicked and sift your wicked people before they come to China, in order to guarantee the peace of your nation, to show further the sincerity of your politeness and subversiveness, and to let the two countries enjoy together the blessings of peace.

王其詰奸除惡，以保乂爾有邦，益昭恭順之忱，共用太平之福。

These examples show the pattern of tributary diplomatism that China enforced upon others. The letter lost half of its chance to gain its request by being unfair in some of its political and cultural positions.

3.3 Problematic Terms of Address

Lin Zexu’s *Letter of Advice to Queen Victoria* addressed foreigners, no matter good or bad people, as “barbarians”. He used terms like “the wicked barbarians” (*jian yi* 奸夷), “the good barbarians” (*liang yi* 良夷), and “the barbarian ships” (*yi chuan* 夷船) in his letter. More examples include the following:

- (5) there appear among the crowd of barbarians both good persons and bad

眾夷良莠不齊...

- (6) the crime of those barbarians who through the years have been selling opium

夷人歷年販賣之罪...

- (7) We take into to consideration, however, the fact that the various barbarians have still known how to repent their crimes and return to their allegiance to us by taking the 20,183 chests of opium from their

storeships and petitioning us, through their consular officer [Superintendent of Trade], Elliot, to receive it.

惟念眾夷尚知悔罪乞誠，將整船鴉片二萬二百八十三箱由領事官義律，稟請繳收。

Examples (5) to (7) from Lin's *Letter* show that the term of address for "foreigner" was translated habitually from Chinese into English as "barbarian". It was from Lord Napier that the term was taken as a "respectable rhetoric for war" (Liu 1999: 133). As early as 1833, when Britain abolished the monopoly over British trade with China, the Foreign Secretary Lord Palmerston appointed Lord Napier as the Chief Superintendent of Trade in Guangzhou. This official title was translated by Chinese as *Yimu* 夷目 ("foreign principal"), but once back-translated, it turned out to be "the barbarian eye", and Guangzhou's Viceroy refused Napier's interview request. Consequently, the translation of *Yimu* as "the barbarian eye" caused the confrontation of two governments. At the death of Lord Napier, the successor Captain Elliott adhered to Lord Napier's hostile policy against China.

The word "foreigner" or "non-Chinese" up to the Qing Dynasty was commonly translated into Chinese as "barbarian". Originally this was because China used to think of itself as the Central Kingdom from the period of the Shang and Western Zhou Dynasty onwards, as recorded in the *Book of Odes*. Bordering around the Central Kingdom were four categories of barbarous people. In the east were the Yi 夷, whose character in Chinese calligraphy was originally derived from "a picture of a man carrying a bow" (Bai 1982: 53). In the west lived people named Rong 戎, characterized as being military. The Di 狄 tribes lived in the north and were good at hunting. Finally, there were the Chinese southern Man 蠻. Long after these peoples were assimilated into the Central Kingdom, Yi, Rong, Di and Man were still used as terms to indicate a

lower type of civilization.

According to Sima Qian, in his *Records of the Historian*, the term "four barbarians" (*si yi* 四夷) could be traced back to Di Ku 帝嚳, the Great grandson of Huang Di, who once suffered the disturbance of Quan Rong. He offered a reward of 20,000 liang of gold, and a post to govern a land with 10,000 tenants. He also offered a princess as a bride, to anyone who could kill General Wu of the Quan Rong Army. After the order was issued, it was Di Ku's dog, with a fur of five colors, and named Panhu 槃瓠, who came back to the palace with a human head held in its mouth. The ministers around Di Ku looked and found it was the head of General Wu. Di Ku was very pleased, but he could not let the princess marry a dog, nor could he promote the dog as an administrator. He was puzzled as how to reward the dog. The princess heard the story, and insisted that the promise be kept. Di Ku reluctantly married the princess to the dog Panhu. Panhu, the dog, carried the princess to the cave in the South Mountain, located on a bare steep slope, with no human intrusion. In three years' time, they gave birth to six boys and six girls. After the death of Panhu, those boys and girls became wives and husbands to themselves. Thus they were named Man Yi 蠻夷.^[1]

In the Northern Song Dynasty, Shi Jie (石介 1005-1045) extended the term Yi further by saying that the Heaven was above, and the Earth was below, in between was China, whilst the Four Yi were at the four corners; they were outsiders, and China was in the middle. Therefore, the Heaven and the Earth had boundaries delineating inside and outside. In China, the monarch and his ministers were independent of outside forces or ceremony. Music was self-composed, clothes and hats were home-made, marriage and ancestor worship were self-administered, funeral and its customs were self-regulated, fruits and vegetables were self-managed, and five corns were self-owned. Each lived his own way, and each practiced his own custom. Each practiced his own teaching, each worshiped his

own worship, each clothed his own clothes, each lived in his own house. Thus, the Four Yi were settled at four corners, and China settled in the Central Kingdom. There would be no disturbance to each other.^[2]

With such etymological background, no matter how neutralized the term *yī* 夷 became, in the English version it would habitually be rendered as “barbarian”. Such being the case, Lin Zexu’s *Letter of Advice to Queen Victoria* was, to Britain, not a letter for peace, but a translated message of war. As a result of power politics, “the British ... lifted the ban on the opium trade” and instead banned “the word *yī*” by the British Treaty of Tianjin (1858), stipulating that: “It is agreed that, henceforward, the character ‘*yī*’ [barbarian] shall not be applied to the Government or subjects of Her Britannic Majesty in any Chinese official document issued by the Chinese Authorities either in the Capital or in the Provinces” (Liu 1999: 133-134). The Chinese suffered injustice over the Opium War. Even the *Times* of London stated in an editorial that moral compensation was owed to China “for pillaging her town and slaughtering her citizens in a quarrel which could never have arisen if we had not been guilty of an inter-national crime” (Jordan 1999: 62). Nevertheless, China did not win general sympathy from the standers-by because its cultural and diplomatic policy involved tributary diplomatism. “Where is your conscience?” Lin Zexu asked. His counterparts, who were involved in an organized crime of trafficking illegal drugs, might have retorted, “you are at fault yourselves”.

3.4 Ridiculous Assumptions Based on Ignorance of the West

A short letter by Lin Zexu reflects certain ridiculous assumptions of the Qing Government. Firstly, Emperor Daoguang saw Britain as a small foreign land (*fan bang xiao guo* 番邦小國), a nation of insignificant island barbarians (*ququ daoyi* 區區島夷), and thus neglected his study of the world situation. Consequently his self-conceited and rootless

assumptions influenced his ministers. Here are examples from Lin’s letter:

- (8) Take tea and rhubarb, for example; the foreign countries cannot get along for a single day without them.
況如茶葉大黃，外國所不可一日無也。

When Lin Zexu showed the letter to the British Doctor Hill for proof-reading, Dr. Hill laughed at the exaggeration of the function of rhubarb and tea, for these were not addictive drugs, so people could still get along without them.

- (9) Moreover the woolens, camlets, and longells [i.e., textiles] of foreign countries cannot be woven unless they obtain Chinese silk.
又外國之呢羽嗶嘰，非得中國絲斤不能成織。

This is another exaggeration, for silk was much less important than wool and cotton.

- (10) As for other foodstuffs, beginning with candy, ginger, cinnamon, and so forth, and articles for use, beginning with silk, satin, chinaware, and so on, all the things that must be had by foreign countries are innumerable.
其餘食物，自糖料姜桂而外，用物自綢緞瓷器而外，外國所必需者，曷可勝數？

These products were tradable, so they were beneficial not only to buyers, but also to sellers. Lin’s view was thus not mature commercially.

- (11) On the other hand, articles coming from the outside to China can only be used as toys. We can take them or get along without them.

而外來之物，皆不過以供好玩，可有可無。

- (12) Since they are not needed by China, what difficulty would there be if we closed our frontier and stopped the trade?
非中國要需，何難閉關絕市。

Examples (11) to (12) also depart from the truth. South China was densely populated with less arable land, so for many years there were people who specialized in business and commerce. It was impossible to stop all the trade.

Lin Zexu's letter turned out to be a diplomatic failure. (His other failure was said to be his ignorance of the approaching war, when he assured Emperor Daoguang that the British dare not declare war against China. However, this will not be discussed here.) To sum up the misunderstandings between Britain and China, they arose from the gaps created by differing institutional frameworks. China was a self-centered feudal dynasty that was not only backward in technology, but also ignorant of the sense of democracy and equal rights practice. Such political background would produce problematic source texts, and their translations would be as problematic as the source, as documented in Lin Zexu's *Letter of Advice to Queen Victoria*.

4. Conclusion: A New Approach in Translation

The Opium Wars knocked open the closed door of China, and initiated both the Western colonization in China and the Chinese policy reform for reconstruction. One of the institutional efforts was the translation of Wheaton's *Elements of International Law*, which came twenty

years later after the first Opium War. This, along with a series of other legal translation studies, was responsible for terminating the old sense of tributary diplomatism. On hearing of such a translation, British Minister Frederick Bruce said "The work would do good, by showing the Chinese that the nations of the West have *taoli* [principles] by which they are guided", and that "force is not their only law". That occurred after force had gained the desired interests in China. It was now time for the Chinese imperial court to protect foreign interests "according to the requirement of international law" (Liu 1999: 142). Ironical as it was at this initial stage, China was successful in kicking off its isolated state and unilateralism, to join the family of nations. This happened with pain, humiliation, curiosity, and at last the status of an equal membership. To study such a process initiates new dimensions in translation research.

Based on the data discussed above, I conclude that translation, as a means of cross-cultural contact, can convey a war of words or words of war, if it is done in a spirit of self-assumed ethnocentrism or sinocentrism. However, managed in generally accepted conventions and norms, a translated piece will have more chances of meeting the target audience's expectations. Such being the case, there are two kinds of expectations: one is from the source text providers, and the other is from the target text readers. Lin Zexu expected peace when he provided the *Letter of Advice to Queen Victoria* as the source text, but the translators who translated the letter failed both Lin Zexu's expectation for peace and Britain's expectation for equal partnership and diplomatic courtesy by turning the letter into a message for war.

Such a situation reminds us that it is important for the translator to be faithful to the source text. This helps the source text to be accepted positively by the target text readers. At the same time, it is the translator's duty to promote the sense of cultural integration and assimilation.

Notes

- [1] See *Shi ji* 史記, "Wu di ben ji" 五帝本紀; *Fengsu tongyi* 風俗通義, "Yi wen" 佚文, "Si yi" 四夷; and *Hou Han shu* 後漢書, "Man xi nan yi lie zhuan" 蠻西南夷列傳.
- [2] See *Culai shi xiansheng wenji* 徂徠石先生文集, "Juan shi: zhong guo lun" 卷十: 中國論.

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Hedged Fictional Propositions and Faithful Literary Translation

Feng Zongxin

Abstract

Based on Lakoff's study of hedges, Fraser's discussion of hedged performatives, and Brown and Levinson's ideas of implicit and hedged performatives, this paper explores hedges and hedging devices that implicitize performatives and modify the speaker's commitment to truth-valued propositions. It holds that a literary text is a general authorial implicit performative, by which the author performs a series of speech acts and commits him/herself differently to authorial/narratorial propositions by means of hedging devices. Analyses of some examples have found that such subtle linguistic devices work in quite unexpected ways on the discursive level: actualizing fictional as well as realistic performatives and constructing more "real" fictional reality from authorial/narratorial stances. The paper holds that these aspects can have important implications for faithful literary translators and translation critics.

1. Introduction

In his classical essay "Hedges: A Study of Meaning Criteria",

originally delivered at the Eighth Regional Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society in 1972, George Lakoff was concerned with the logical properties of "words whose meaning implicitly involves fuzziness—words whose job is to make things fuzzier or less fuzzy", which he referred to as "hedges" (Lakoff 1973: 471). His point of departure was to criticize truth-conditional semantics for dividing sentences into true, false and lacking a truth value, and argued for studying fuzzy boundaries (Channell 1994: 10). When later studies, especially pragmatics, focused on the communicative value of hedges, the concept no longer covers linguistic items merely for (im)precision of category memberships. Along with "hedging", the concept now covers a wide range of devices modifying the speaker's involvement in what he/she says, typically showing "a lack of full commitment to the propositional content of an utterance" (Kopple 1985, quoted from Markkanen and Schröder 1997: 4-5), or toning-down of utterances and statements "in order to reduce the riskiness of what one says" (Wales 1989: 215).

In terms of the speaker's commitment to the propositional content, the same is true of speech acts in written communication, of which literary communication is one type. As is widely recognized, in a literary discourse, there is an embedding of complex addresser-addressee relationships by which the author, while addressing his/her readers, performs authorial performative acts and makes a series of fictional propositions. To accomplish their performatives and make their propositions believable, authors resort to various hedges and hedging devices to implicitize their performatives and commit themselves accordingly to the truth-value of fictional propositions. However, such features have not deserved due attention because of the general nature of studies on hedges in the Lakoffian sense. This paper deals with hedged literary performatives and fictional propositions and shows that, instead of semantically "de-specifying" and "de-intensifying", hedges and hedging

devices are pragmatically and stylistically *specifying* and *intensifying* in that hedged fictional propositions in certain parts of a narrative in fact show prominent traces of efforts to present more precise, more truthful, more assertive and believable fictional realities, coupled with detailed descriptions and metalinguistic comments from the "implied narrator". By discussing how literary authors perform fictional speech acts and how they hedge their fictional propositions for particular purposes, this paper aims to explore what light this observation can shed on literary translation in terms of authorial/narratorial stances.

2. Hedges and Hedging Devices

From the onset, Lakoff (1973: 471ff) did not seem to show much interest in the communicative value of the use of hedges, but only interest in how words can make things "fuzzier or less fuzzy". For example, "A sparrow is a bird" is true, but "A penguin is a bird" is not exactly true, since a sparrow is a typical and prototypical representative of the category of birds; a penguin, however, in our common knowledge of birds, is not and does not trigger a prototypical image of a bird in our mind. Thus, only hedged statements like:

- (1) *A penguin is sort of a bird.*
- (2) *A penguin is, technically speaking, a bird.*
- (3) *A penguin is, in the strictest sense, a bird.*

can be true, or close to being true.

Obviously, statements like "A sparrow is a bird" and "A penguin is sort of a bird" are acceptable, but a statement like "A penguin is a bird" is not acceptable and one like "A sparrow is sort of a bird" sounds ridiculous. In order for a statement like "A penguin is a bird" to be true or close to true, hedges such as *sort of*, *technically speaking*, and *in the strictest*

sense, etc. are useful in emphasizing the (im)precision of logical or categorical properties. In other words, whenever we come across a concept other than typical or prototypical representative of a category or class of things, we have to resort to certain hedges to mark the statement in order to be true in the sense we expect.

Prince, Frader and Bosk (1982: 85), following Lakoff, distinguished two kinds of fuzziness, one within the propositional content and the other in the relationship between the propositional content and the speaker's commitment to the truth of the proposition conveyed. Accordingly, there are two types of hedges: those that affect the truth-conditions of propositions, called "approximators" (e.g. His feet were *sort of* blue), and those that do not affect the truth-conditions but reflect the degree of the speaker's commitment to the truth-value of the whole proposition, called "shields" (e.g. *I think* his feet were blue).

Brown and Levinson (1987: 145) include in their concept of hedges both "detensifiers" and "intensifiers" (e.g. *I rather* think it's hopeless; Bill is a *true* friend; You are *quite* right), for they see "hedge" as "a particle, word or phrase that modifies the degree or membership of a predicate or a noun phrase in a set; it says of that membership that it is **partial** or true only in certain respects, or that it is **more** true and complete than might be expected". Generally, people take the term only to refer to expressions showing discrepancies between what they mean and the resources available to mean, or at least "the match between a piece of knowledge and a category is less than perfect" (Chafe 1986: 270).

When practitioners in pragmatics and discourse analysis take this linguistic phenomenon into their consideration, the term "hedge" no longer refers to the expressions that modify the category membership of a predicate or noun phrase. Although Lakoff (1973: 492) pointed out the link between the semantic study of hedges and pragmatics, the concept of "hedge" has tended to evade linguistic-communicative definitions,

due to its essentially philosophical and logical nature. For example, Bussmann (1996), one of the very few dictionaries of linguistics giving an entry for the term, defines "hedge" by solely drawing from Lakoff. A pleasant exception is Wales (1989), who defines "hedge" and "hedging" in the same entry from the perspectives of discourse analysis and speech act theory, mentioning the Lakoffian sense into the bargain, i.e. "the qualification and toning-down of utterances and statements ... by clauses, adverbials, etc. in order to reduce the riskiness of what one says". And the motivations for their use are given as "mitigation of what one may otherwise seem too forceful" and "politeness or respect to strangers and superiors (*That may be true, but ...; Would you mind awfully if ...*)" (Wales 1989: 215).

It may be assumed that in all communication the speaker or writer tries to avoid the potential possibility of being confronted, questioned, or negated. According to Hübler (1983), the function of hedges is to "reduce the risk of negation". According to Kopple (1985), hedges like *perhaps, seem, might, to a certain extent* are seen as modifying the truth-value of the whole proposition, not just as making individual elements inside it more precise (cf. Markkanen and Schröder 1997: 5). Tannen observes that "by qualifying or modifying a word or statement, hedges measure the word or idea against what is expected" (1993: 17-18). Since every instance of language use involves certain communicative purposes, with hedges and hedging devices, politicians can ask to be believed for what they say and be relieved of the responsibility for what they say, thus to avoid criticism (Schäffner 1998: 185); scholars in academic discourse can try to "strengthen the argument by weakening the claim" (Meyer 1997: 21). That is, by avoiding possibilities of overgeneralization or overstatements, scholars can avoid possible risks of disputes and make their propositions more waterproof.

3. Hedges, Performatives, and Propositions

Lakoff (1973: 490) noticed that hedges raise some interesting questions. Firstly, they interact with performatives. For example, "*Technically, I said that Harry is a bastard*" would generally be taken to mean that the speaker "I" did not mean the statement "Harry is a bastard", since the hedge, together with the clause "I said", seems to be canceling the implicature so that the speaker's saying so does not necessarily mean it. Thus, Lakoff concluded that hedges may possibly "interact with felicity conditions for utterances and with rules of conversation" (1973: 490). Secondly, certain verbs and syntactic constructions convey hedged performatives. For example, *I suppose/guess/think that Harry is coming* is a "hedged assertion" and *Won't you open the door?* is a "softened request" (Lakoff 1973: 490-491). Although Lakoff did not discuss these two questions in detail, he made a note that investigation of the questions will be "revealing".

Fraser's (1975) idea of "hedged performatives" is a classic that wedges the study of hedges into pragmatics, discourse analysis, stylistics, and narratology (cf. Wales 1989: 214). He discovered sentences that have the general form of a "performative sentence" may "count as the performance of the illocutionary act", denoted by the performative verbs like *promise, advise, admit, suggest*, etc. as in "I can *promise* you that we will be there on time", "I must *advise* you to remain quiet", "I have to *admit* that you have a point", and "I might *suggest* that you ask again" (Fraser 1975: 187). He noted that these example sentences differ from their corresponding performative sentences (i.e. *We will be there on time; You must remain quiet; You have a point; You should ask again*, etc.) in that each of them contains a modal or semi-modal, which makes their sentence meaning different. For instance, *I must advise you to leave* is literally a statement that the speaker has an obligation to say so rather than literally

performing the act of advising the hearer to leave at the moment of speaking. The very significant thing about Fraser's observation is that certain linguistic devices can get the speaker less involved in the speech performance, or strategically relieve the speaker from some of the responsibility for saying what he/she is saying.

Although Fraser did not label modals or semi-modals as hedges, he focused on the fact that it is the modal or the semi-modal that makes the difference (Fraser 1975: 187). Markkanen and Schröder (1997: 4) followed this view in their observation and concluded that the modal *must* "gets the speaker off the hook". In my view, in Fraser's hedged performatives, it is not the "modal/semi-modal" alone that makes the difference, but rather, it is the whole "clause structure" that does the job. A hedged performative contains a modal/semi-modal which embeds the un-hedged performative structure as a down-toned one. For example, a bald on-record request, "Remain quiet", can be turned into a softened request, "Won't you remain quiet?", which could be glossed as "*I hedgedly request that you remain quiet*" (cf. Brown and Levinson 1987: 145). Thus, a "softened request" is actually an implicit and hedged performative, which, as Wales (1989: 215) notices, "metalinguistically" refers to the illocutionary force of the utterance.

Since Austin and Searle, it has been widely recognized that when human beings use language, they do not merely talk or write but they also perform actions. According to Austin (1962), ritual phrases like "I promise" and "I know", in the appropriate circumstances, are not *describing* the action, but *doing* it. If someone promises that S is P, it means that he/she is specifically committed to the proposition that S is P. This means that when people perform speech acts, they commit themselves to the truth value of their propositions. According to Searle (1969: 65), when someone makes a statement, he is doing three things at the same time: (1) he *implies* that the preparatory conditions of the act are satisfied, i.e.

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he can "back it up"; (2) he *expresses* the state specified in the sincerity conditions; and (3) he *says* whatever is specified by the essential condition. The reason is that "there is a close connection between saying and the constative class of illocutionary acts" (Searle 1969: 66).

Since it is not always easy, as Austin said, to distinguish performative utterances from constatives, there is little doubt that every instance of language use involves performatives and the user's commitment to both the performance and the propositional content. Thus, for certain communicative purposes, people may vary their commitment with hedges and hedging devices. In fact, hedging devices can function in all types of discourse (with varying degrees, though) where the addresser deliberately hopes to be less assertive and imposing than would otherwise sound, and commit him/herself less to the speech acts involved, for the purpose of being more polite and more hearer/reader-friendly.

4. Hedged Fictional Propositions

In literary works, characters are performing the kind of speech acts that are appropriate to the specific situations with all the fictional felicity conditions as well. On a higher level, the author, in his/her writing, knows from experience very well his/her readers' possible reaction to his/her verbal strategies which can be taken as the same as those employed when addressing his/her audience. Although one of the pragmatic conventions of literature is that the speaking "I" is understood not to be the author but only an immediate narrator or addresser created by the author, what the narrators (whether "reliable" or "unreliable") or characters say in the fictional world is held to be just what the author himself/herself wants to say in the real world. Hence in fictional discourse *authors* are, in a sense, performing a series of performatives and

constatives, committing themselves to corresponding series of truth-valued propositions at the same time. Thus, every sentence on the page can be a performative in the guise of a constative with a propositional value. A literary work as a whole can be a general implicit performative because the author implicitly "asks" the readers to do the reading on the assumption that they will recognize the felicity conditions and accept the fictional propositions. As Brown and Levinson (1987: 146) point out, "to ask someone to do something is to presuppose that they can and are willing to do it, and have not already done it ... to hedge these assumptions—that is, to avoid commitment to them—is a primary and fundamental method of disarming routine interactional threats".

When hedges and hedging devices are used to soften the strong background assumptions or to tone down speech utterances, their chief concern is "politeness" (Wales 1989: 215). The basis of Brown and Levinson's (1978/1987) politeness model, closely based on Grice's original model of conversation assuming that human communication is purposeful and goal-directed, is a highly abstract notion of "face", which everybody has a strong interest in preserving. Since most speech acts are face-threatening, in order to "save face", or not to lose face, the speaker chooses the most polite strategy to commit intrinsically "face-threatening acts" (FTAs) in an "off record" way, with its threatening-ness veiled in one way or another, so that the listener is not openly forced to recognise and accept it.

While accepting much of Brown and Levinson's account of politeness, Sell (1991: 215) sees all interaction, and all language use, as operating within politeness parameters, and that politeness is "mankind's patient, sleepless super-ego", and that the writing and reading of literary texts are interactive communication processes. Since the study of politeness can be that *in* and *of* literary texts (Sell 1991: 217), Feng and Shen (2001) discussed authorial politeness towards the reader. One of

their findings was the literary author's use of classical hedges (e.g. *perhaps*, *of course*, *might*, etc.) and other hedging devices to soften or weaken the impact of literary speech acts, or to tone down authorial imposition on the readers in order to win them over.

Although the fictional world is not exactly the same as the real world, every fictional proposition the author makes presupposes similar truth-value. In different parts of a fictional discourse, the author commits himself differently to the truth-value of such propositions as he/she constructs the fiction from different perspectives.

On the macro-level, a fictional creation, made up of series of speech utterances, can be a general implicit performative, by which the author requests the reader to do things ("Read my work and believe what I write"). As such an implicit performative is also an FTA, the author/narrator naturally resorts to a further hedged performative ("I hedgedly request that you read and believe what I hedgedly write"). However implicit the authorial performative and however strongly hedged the narratorial performative may be, they are after all FTAs. For the implicit performative, the reader may leave the authorial request unfulfilled by possibly discarding the whole book in the first place. For the hedged performative, suppose the reader's perlocutionary act in response to the first-step of the authorial request is successful, the reader may still refuse to accomplish the second step of the authorial request—he/she may not accept the propositional truth due to a strong disbelief of, and therefore dislike for, the author's fiction-making. Thus, in order for the second-step hedged performative to be successful, the author has to redress the FTA in reducing the "riskness" of his/her narratorial assertions.

On the micro-level, for the same purpose, the author lets his/her fictional characters make appropriately hedged performatives and modest assertions, so as to sound more like what people verbally do in various

real social settings. Hedges and hedging devices on these two levels combined, the author can commit less to the propositional content of the general authorial implicit performative, appearing less imposing and more inviting, making narratorial assertions less vulnerable and more acceptable, and inviting more "willing suspension of disbelief".

Typical hedged fictional propositions on the macro-level can be found in quite a lot of modern fiction. In George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, for example, the author uses various hedging devices to tone down the narrator's assertiveness or to commit himself as little as possible to the statements he is making in the text:

- (1) ... Down in the street little eddies of wind were whirling dust and torn paper into spirals, and though the sun was shining and the sky a harsh blue, there seemed to be no colour in anything except the posters that were plastered everywhere. (Orwell 1954: 6)
- (2) ... a heavy, murmurous sound, somehow curiously savage, in the background of which one seemed to hear the stamp of naked feet and the throbbing of tom-toms. (Orwell 1954: 16-17)
- (3) For perhaps as much as thirty seconds they kept it up. It was a refrain that was often heard in moments of overwhelming emotion. Partly it was a sort of hymn to the wisdom and majesty of Big Brother, but still more it was an act of self-hypnosis, a deliberate drowning of consciousness by means of rhythmic noise. Winston's entrails seemed to grow cold. In the Two Minutes Hate he could not help sharing in the general delirium, but this sub-human chanting of "B-B! ... B-B!" always filled him with horror. Of course he chanted with the rest: it was impossible to do otherwise. (Orwell 1954: 17)

- (4) It was a lean Jewish face, with a great fuzzy aureole of white hair and a small goatee beard—a clever face, and yet somehow inherently despicable, with a kind of senile silliness in the long thin nose, near the end of which a pair of spectacles was perched. (Orwell 1954: 13)
- (5) ... Winston had seen O'Brien perhaps a dozen of times in almost as many years. ... Much more it was because of a secretly held belief—or perhaps not even a belief, merely a hope—that O'Brien's political orthodoxy was not perfect. Something in his face suggested it irresistibly. And again, perhaps it was not even unorthodoxy that was written in his face, but simply intelligence. ... (Orwell 1954: 12)
- (6) Winston did not know why Withers had been disgraced. Perhaps it was for corruption or incompetence. Perhaps Big Brother was merely getting rid of a too-popular subordinate. Perhaps Withers or someone else close to him had been suspected of heretical tendencies. Or perhaps—what was likeliest of all—the thing had simply happened because purges and vaporizations were a necessary part of the mechanics of government. ... (Orwell 1954: 39)
- (7) Perhaps the rumours of vast underground conspiracies were true after all—perhaps the Brotherhood really existed! It was impossible, in spite of the endless arrests and confessions and executions, to be sure that the Brotherhood was not simply a myth. Some days he believed in it, some days not. There was no evidence, only fleeting glimpses that might mean anything or nothing: scratches of overhead conversation, faint scribbles on lavatory walls—once, even, when two strangers met, a small movement of the hand which had looked as though it might be a signal of recognition. ... (Orwell 1954: 17)

In all the excerpts quoted above, the underlined parts are the author's hedging devices. The classical hedges like *sort of*, *kind of*, and *somehow* are used, not merely for (im)precision of categories or memberships, but rather, to make the authorial/narratorial presentations more precise and realistic. Although such devices may seem lexico-grammatically banal, they form a prominent textual and stylistic patterning showing how the author tries to modify his commitment to the fictional propositions. For instance, "there *seemed to be* no colour" (1) and "one *seemed to hear*" (2) are much softer and less assertive than versions of "there was no color" and "no one heard". Instead of choosing an either/or polarity (i.e. "existence" or "non-existence"; "perceiving" or "non-perceiving"), the author puts his observational statements on fuzzier scales between the polarities, strategically blurring the distinction to deliberately and artistically show a narratorial uncertainty. While "it was a *sort of* hymn" (3) and "a *kind of* senile silliness" (4) may make the concepts or categories of "hymn" and "silliness" fuzzier in the Lakoffian sense, the hedges also literarily show that the author, instead of *referring to* the chant or the lack of wisdom in question, chooses to *describe* them in a way as if there were no precise words available. In (3) the author does not seem to be sure whether Winston's entrails really grew cold, for "*seemed to grow cold*" indicates that it is an impression, which can be as good as the author's, or anybody's, guess rather than an assertion. But at the end of this excerpt, the hedge *of course* shows that the author is describing a natural instinctive behaviour with more assurance ("he [Winston] chanted with the rest"), based on the grounds that "it was impossible to do otherwise". In contrast to the intensifier *of course* at the end, the detensifier *seemed to* can strategically get the author "off the hook" and impress the reader with greater authorial detachment and objectivity. Here, the author/narrator is appealing to the reader's commonsense realism on very reasonable grounds.

More significant uses of hedges and hedging devices are in examples

(5), (6), and (7), where the classic hedge *perhaps* is repeated in a prominent pattern in presenting series of guesses from an implied authorial perspective. In listing some reasons for Winston's having seen O'Brien for many times in the past year in (5), the author leaves the truth-value of his fictional propositions to the reader's imagination and judgment. In presenting Winston's ignorance of the causes why the Withers had been disgraced in (6), all the four reasons are hedged for deliberate uncertainty. Parallel in structure, they proceed in an order of incremental climax. In spite of the seeming negation in presenting the last guess overriding the previous three with *Or perhaps* and the intensifier *what was likeliest of all*, the author does not really mean an overriding of his preceding statements, simply because this last proposition is at best a guess after all, however likely it may be. The last hedge in (7), *looked as though it might be*, is a combination of hedging devices, in sharp contrast to an otherwise un-hedged predication *was* or *had been*, which could be more assertive.

Orwell's uses of hedging for his fictional propositions with negation-like conflicts are more dramatic. Examples are:

(8) ... People referred to it, if at all, simply as *the book*. (Orwell 1954: 14; Italicization original)

(9) And it was exactly at this moment that the significant thing happened —if, indeed, it did happen. (Orwell, 1954: 17)

Example (8) presupposes that (i) people do something of referring, and (ii) there is something and that the thing is called a book; (9) presupposes that (i) there is an action of event, and (ii) the significant thing did happen. However, the hedging devices *if at all* (8) and *if, indeed, it did happen* (9) immediately tone down, if not immediately contradict,

what Searle calls the sincerity conditions that the fictional statements presuppose. They seem to show that the addresser is not absolutely sure about the fictional happenings, and therefore put the author/narrator in a situation detached from the responsibility for what is being said. Superficially, these hedging devices tone down the author/narrator's propositional truth-value and show a certain lack of authorial/narratorial commitment to the fictional propositions. In fact, however, they paradoxically enhance the truth value and make the fiction impersonal and more objective.

According to Wales (1989: 215-216), in narratives hedging is likely to be "the sign of an obtrusive narrator or implied author; or the subjective point of view of a character". Reliable or unreliable as the narrator may be, my interest is in how the author employs hedging devices in modifying the statements and how he/she commits himself/herself to the truth-value of the fictional propositions. Naturally, we assume that the author/narrator is omniscient and knows all the ins and outs of what is happening and why things happen as they happen in the fictional world. If the addresser him/herself is not sure, no one else can be sure. Hence, the significance lies in how Orwell constructs his fictional realities and makes fictional presentation more truthful and realistic in a special way, as many realistic writers try their best to achieve maximum reality in their fiction.

5. Implications on Literary Translation Studies

In cross-linguistic contexts, adequate recognition of hedges and hedging devices in redressing literary performatives and fictional propositions on the discursive level can be very important in literary translation, where the translator accomplishes a series of discursive acts

in response to authorial performatives and react to narratorial fictional propositions.

As reader and the first-level addressee in relation to the original author, the translator has to do two things. Firstly, on the author-reader level, the translator responds to the authorial general implicit and/or hedged performative in the source language text as its interlocutor. Secondly, on the addresser/narrator-addressee/narratee level, the translator willingly accepts the narratorial propositional truth in the utterances in the source language text, just as the author assumes and expects. The most important point on these two levels is the translator's adequate recognition of (i) how the original author performs the verbal act and what illocutionary effects the original author intends to achieve by what he/she says; and (ii) how the author lets the narrator speak and what illocutionary effects the source-language-text narrators can possibly achieve by what they say on the other.

As writer and the second-level addresser in relation to the target language text reader (cf. Feng 2003), the translator has to do two things, too. Firstly, on the author-reader level, the translator (as re-writer) has to produce a functionally equivalent authorial general implicit and/or hedged performative in the target language text in accordance with that in the source language text. Secondly, on the addresser/narrator-addressee/narratee level, while the translator (as narrator) "relays" the narrator's message, he/she is not doing a word-for-word rendering, but has to represent the narratorial message in appropriate narratorial perspectives, faithfully representing the hedged propositions that best fit the original author's narratorial commitment to them. If the literary translator is unaware of the linguistic-pragmatic hedging devices that serve as metalinguistic authorial and narratorial comments which are closely related to their commitments to the fictional propositional content, the translator is more likely to fail as the re-writer or re-addresser, therefore most

possibly misappropriating the original authorial and narratorial messages in the target language text.

Particularly in realistic fiction, the author may artfully put himself/herself in different authorial/narratorial stances such as an "implied author", "reliable narrator" and "unreliable narrator" in presenting fictional truth and creating fictional reality. Thus, the literary translator has to pay attention to the author's linguistic-literary messages in terms of literary performatives, different authorial/narratorial commitments to propositions, and occasional shifts of narratorial stances so that he/she can find adequate linguistic resources to represent them in the target language text. As Shen (1995: 100ff) points out, the stylistic values of the same linguistic form or pattern can be functional in fictional discourse while tending to be dormant in non-fictional discourse. Thus, it seems to me that there is a big difference whether a literary reader (the literary translator being one, first of all) is aware of the nature of literary discourse.

Further, literary aesthetic effects are more often than not generated through deviations, i.e. violation of conventional rules or expectations, as shown by the examples of Orwell's unreliable, redundant, and illogical presentation. But readers may have a general inclination for reliable, straightforward, and logical presentations in the name of textual coherence and cohesion. Hence, such deviant elements, linguistically subtle but literary-stylistically significant, can pass unnoticed in the process of incompetent reading and translating.

As the addressee of multi-level messages in the source language text and re-addresser in the target language text, the translator has to be in the author's shoes and bear in mind that the message in the target language text must coincide with the original message not only in terms of lexico-grammatical features but also pragmatic and stylistic features (with the appropriate illocutionary force on the discursive level). Therefore, a competent *literary* translator is first of all a competent *literary*

reader, who is a faithful interlocutor and illocutionary actor with respect to the original text, responding appropriately to the authorial performative, decoding the right authorial/narratorial fictional propositions, corresponding to the author's different stances and perspectives in the original literary text. Only when a translator puts himself/herself in the right authorial/narratorial stances can he/she be, or on the way of becoming, a faithful re-writer, representing the original author's linguistic and pragmatic-stylistic features in an appropriate manner for functionally equivalent re-presentations.

In a similar fashion, the literary translation critic should pay more attention to how a translator actualizes in his target language text the different authorial and narratorial stances in a given original work than to how smooth and readable a target language text is on the lexical-grammatical level. Among the many linguistic, pragmatic, and stylistic devices that can make a piece of fiction successful and fictional truth believable, implicit and hedged propositions constitute one important linguistic-literary feature. Focusing on the subtle but tangible ways they are used, a translation critic can be in a better position of evaluating how faithfully a translator re-presents and re-creates fictional reality on the discursive level.

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析字法與龐德的《大學》譯本

王 輝

Abstract

The Ideogrammatic Method and Ezra Pound's *The Great Digest*
(by Wang Hui)

Ezra Pound has produced two English versions of the Daxue or The Great Digest, the second of which embodies major departures from orthodox readings of the original. This article traces the historical context of its production, the translator's agenda and his unique way of interpretation. Through a detailed analysis of various Chinese characters as "deciphered" by Pound, it reveals that the Ideogrammatic Method, though open to the charge of unsound scholarship in Chinese philology, is ingeniously employed by Pound as a powerful tool for putting into practice his modernist poetics and renovating/revitalizing Confucianism. The article also argues that Pound's view of language and translation, which appears rather postmodern, also finds its best expression in this "heretical" way of reading and translating Chinese.

一

龐德對於《大學》可謂情有獨鍾。不僅自己拳拳服膺，而且

大力推介，先後出了兩個英文譯本和一個意大利文譯本。^[1] 1937年，龐德發表〈急需孔子〉一文，指出西方文明染疾已深，“需要孔子，特別是《大學》，尤其是《大學》的第一章”加以療治（Pound 1975: 77），並聲稱 1928 年的《大學》譯本是其“三十年來最重要的作品”（Pound 1975: 75）。

這個譯本將鮑狄埃^[2] 法文譯本轉譯成“美語”（the American Language），因為譯者“從中發現了一系列有助於開化美國的觀念”（Cheadle 1997: 24-25）。譯文相當貼近法譯本，是龐德翻譯實踐中少有的“直譯”文本。龐德雖然早在 1913 年就已經通過費諾羅薩^[3] 的遺稿發現了漢字的“奧秘”，但對漢語的了解極為有限，“析字法”並沒有派上用場。^[4] 1936 年，龐德借助馬禮遜字典^[5] 學習漢字。1937 年八、九月間，又通過理雅各的漢英對照詳注本系統研讀《四書》原文（Pound 1975: 81）。由此，龐德對此前的譯本萌生不滿，並因而展望：

一個適當的雙語譯本，對每一個表意文字（漢字）作充份的解說，如此，則美國讀者得到的，便不僅僅是某個譯者所認定具體語段中最重要的那一層意義，而是全面的意義，它照顧到意義的各個層面，且不失主次之分。（Pound 1975: 80）

然而直到 1939 年，儘管出版者曾預告會有修正和新的注釋，由 New Directions 出版的《大學》仍然只是 1928 年譯本的重印。龐德很可能覺得小修小補無濟於事。畢竟，析字法對儒經的闡釋與翻譯將是革命性的。

龐德的新譯本 1942 年出版，意大利文，書名（*Confucio, Ta*

S'eu, Dai Gaku, Studio Integrale) 用意大利語、日語和法語翻譯，顯然是要為法西斯軸心國改造世界提供藍圖。1944年7月重印時改名為《孔子之遺書》(*Testamento di Confucio*)，約略可見法西斯勢力日暮途窮，也顯示出龐德對《大學》作者問題的討論顛預無知，了無興趣。^[6]

1945年5月2日，龐德因宣傳法西斯主義、發表反美廣播講話被捕入獄，關押在比薩懲戒所(Disciplinary Training Center, Pisa)，隨身攜帶有理譯《四書》和一本字典。^[7]法西斯運動的破產並沒有徹底動搖他對儒學的信念，相反，他認為希特勒與墨索里尼的失敗，原因正在於他們最終背離了孔子(Cheadle 1997: 84)。像周遊列國遊說諸侯的孔子、孟子一樣，龐德將《大學》由意大利文譯成英文，取名為《偉大的摘要》(*The Great Digest*)，轉而向英語世界傳播儒家的王道盛世理想。譯者在前言(Note)和譯文結尾處諄諄告誡讀者，要反覆閱讀、認真揣摩：何以中國歷代王朝的興衰安危，均取決於統治者能否貫徹《大學》裏定下的原則？在他看來，唯孔子之道能夠經受歷史的檢驗。今之為政者，欲求世界大治，而不身體力行，則危乎殆哉。

龐德的《大學》和著名的《比薩詩章》寫在同一個筆記本上(Kenner 1971: 474)，但命運卻迥然不同，極少為研究者所注意。對漢學家來說，它顯得太另類，“錯誤”之多，不值一駁；在龐德的崇拜者看來，它又太拘謹，遠沒有《華夏集》和《詩經》翻譯的天馬行空，揮灑自如。

然而，無論是就龐德研究還是翻譯研究而言，他的《大學》譯本都不容忽視。儒家經典對龐德來說，從來不是古董文物，而是源頭活水，是“日日新，又日新”的。龐德對儒學的發展更

新，透漏出的是譯者的獨特關懷。龐德又是當代翻譯史上極重要的人物，^[8]追蹤他的散文翻譯，正可與其詩歌翻譯相對照，揭示出其翻譯理論與實踐的複雜性。

二

Hugh Kenner (1971: 474) 形象地將翻譯《大學》、《中庸》比作龐德與理雅各的對話。理雅各的翻譯，從訓詁、考證和歷代注疏入手，努力發掘文本的本義和作者的原意，是文字學翻譯的典範，被譽為英語世界的漢學經典。龐德對這位漢學宗師的態度是矛盾的，一方面得仰仗其譯注本理解原文，一方面卻又大膽懷疑，急於立異。究其原因，一則龐德對文字學翻譯殊無好感，^[9]對學者素乏信任；二則龐德自詡是發現了漢字的奧秘，找到了解經的法門：

當我對（理雅各的）譯注本持有異議或感到困惑的時候，我只需要琢磨一下那些漢字的形體與部首。我認為，學者們知道的太多，看見的卻太少。他們知道費諾羅薩，但卻一無所獲。……不瞭解表意文字的性質，則難以發現現有翻譯的問題。(Pound 1975: 82)

對龐德來說，費諾羅薩的遺稿《作為詩歌手段的中國文字》催生出的“表意文字法”，^[10]既是作詩的方法，又是解經的正途。費氏認為，漢字來源於“記錄自然運動的一種生動的速記圖

畫”，“大部份原始的漢字，甚至所謂的部首，是動作或過程的速記圖畫”。在由兩個部首構成的複合字中，部首代表的“兩個事物相加並不產生第三物，而是暗示兩者之間一種根本性的關係”（Fenollosa 1991: 8-9；趙毅衡，1998: 234-235）。英語日漸遠離詞源而貧血，最終變成乾癟的木乃伊保存在詞典中。可是漢字的字源卻經常清晰可見，對自然的模擬與隱喻歷數千年而仍能顯示出來：

一個詞，不像在英語中那樣越來越貧乏，而是一代一代更加豐富，幾乎是自覺的發光（consciously luminous）。它一再使用於民族的哲學和歷史中，在傳記和詩中，從而在他的周圍投出了一層意義的光環。這些意義集中在圖像符號周圍，記憶能夠抓住他們，使用他們。（Fenollosa 1991: 25；趙毅衡，1998: 249）

基於這種認識，則漢字的意義，不論如何演變、發展，均去圖畫式的源頭不遠。只要瞭解部首的基本意義，按圖索驥，再結合具體的語境稍加揣測，^[11] 雖不中，不遠矣。如此看來，則訓詁、考證的工作，實在是捨本逐末，庸人自擾。

三

析字法賦予譯者極大的自由，尤其是當他連字源都可以置之不理的時候。龐德並不是逢字必查。即使是馬禮遜字典也不能完全滿足他對漢字的期待，畢竟表意文字並非漢字的主體。析字法

離開了字典／字源的制約，就變成了“盯着那個漢字看三遍，然後從其偏旁部首中推敲出其意義來”（郭為，1998: 110）。

漢字拆解成部首以後，每一部份代表甚麼事物，幾種事物之間又是甚麼關係，其實有多種可能性。這就給了譯者想像創造的空間，取便發揮的餘地。

龐德對析字法的熱情，^[12] 首先是因為它與自己的詩學相契合。

龐德的詩學要求語言直接、精確地表現事物，相信物象的並置會產生一種奇妙的反應，給人以強有力的刺激與啟發。根據費諾羅薩的發現，具有形象性、動作感與隱喻性的漢字是詩歌的最佳媒介。試想，既然每一個部首都代表一種具體的事物，一個合體漢字不就是一首生動的意象詩嗎？

《大學》徵引最多的是《詩經》，幾乎每一處引文都因為龐德的取便發揮而顯得詩意盎然，增色不少。試看兩例：

緡蠻黃鳥，止於丘隅。

The twittering yellow bird,

The bright silky warbler

Talkative as a cricket

Comes to rest in the hollow corner of the hill. (Pound 1969: 39)

中間兩句生動的描寫，其實來源於對“緡蠻”二字的拆解（bright—日；silky—糸；talkative—言；cricket—蟲）。鳥聲啁啾，羽絨似綢，秋蟲呢嚶，何等“中國”的意象！

於戲，前王不忘。

In our **ceremonial plays**,

In the **ritual dances with tiger masks and spears**

The archetype kings are not forgotten. (Pound 1969: 45)

這一句是讚嘆先王德澤廣佈，後人不能忘懷。“於戲”是嘆詞，即“嗚呼”。龐德解作“在（祭祀之）戲中”，又將“戲”拆為“虍”（tiger）、“豆”^[13]（ritual）和“戈”（spear），由此將一部鏗鏘熱鬧的中國戲呈現在讀者眼前。先王在祭禮的喧天鑼鼓中被緬懷追思，這種創造性誤讀，不僅去原意不遠，還頗有中國特色。

析字法用在其他地方，雖然不構成意象詩，也一樣的形象、醒目：

人之有技，媚疾以惡之。

When others have ability, he **acts like a female sick with envy**, and hates them. (Pound 1969: 79)

媚，忌也。疾，同嫉。媚疾即嫉妒。嚴格從文字上推敲，龐德將“疾”理解為“疾病”（sick），是不了解漢字的通假現象。但他敏銳地發現表達嫉妒這種負面情緒的漢字（媚）與女性有關，毅然將這種隱喻起死回生。撇開對女權主義者的冒犯不說，龐德的翻譯可圈可點。

心有所忿懣，則不得其正。

If there be a **knife of resentment in the heart** or enduring rancor, the mind will not attain precision. (Pound 1969: 51)

忿、懣均指憤怒。將“忿”譯作“a knife of resentment in the heart”，既突出了形象，又兼顧了意義（resentment）。^[14]

在以上四例中，龐德既譯出了漢字的直接意義（direct meaning），又通過析字法釋放出“隱藏”^[15]在漢字形體中的能量，帶給讀者以強烈的視覺衝擊力。譯文鮮活的生命，不能不歸功於譯者的點石成金之術。

四

名不正則言不順，言不順則事不成，事不成則禮樂不興，禮樂不興則刑罰不中，刑罰不中則民無所措手足。故君子名之必可言也，言之必可行也。君子於其言，無所苟而已矣。（《論語·子路》）

有論者認為，龐譯儒經的獨特魅力，在於他能洞察原作的精華所在，從中擇取可資時鑒者（what matters now），形之於富有穿透力的優美語言，令人過目難忘，悵然有所思（Pound 1969: back cover）。

龐譯的語言具體直觀，形象生動，加上隨析字法而來的新奇的比喻與意象，不時會令人眼睛一亮，精神亦為之一振。讀經書翻譯而能有此感覺，實屬難得。不過，以龐譯“錯誤”之多，說

他能明辨儒學的精義，恐怕難以服眾。但考之於龐譯《大學》、《中庸》、《論語》，不難發現，龐德的高明之處，在於他能抓住幾個核心概念，通過抽絲剝繭的分析和反覆的強調，將其凸顯出來。

《大學》譯本開卷即用析字法界定術語(terminology)，解釋了十四個漢字、部首和一個短語，其中有誠、德、信、仁、道等儒學關鍵字。對他來說，“精確定義”(precise verbal definition)是探討中國哲學和一切問題的前提(Pound 1975: 79, 84)。

由上一節的分析可知，析字法並不導向唯一的、客觀的意義，而是向多種可能性開放。翻譯就是決策，譯者不大可能將這些豐富的可能性全部轉移到譯文中去。而要作出取捨，除非隨意為之，必然會有所依託。

龐德運用析字法闡釋儒學關鍵詞，主要受制於兩個因素，一是他的前理解，尤其是他對儒學的前理解；二是他闡釋、翻譯儒經的目的。龐德雖然不是嚴謹的學者，但對《大學》的理解亦非膚淺。翻譯鮑狄埃譯本，研讀理雅各譯本，幫助他對儒學，尤其是《大學》形成了整體的理解。這種理解是他重新翻譯、闡釋《大學》的出發點，並且作為“闡釋循環”中的整體，必然會對作為局部的漢字之解析起到限制和導向作用，使析字的結論不至於偏離儒學太遠。

至於第二個因素，如前所述，龐德翻譯《大學》是為了讓它在當前發揮作用。要讓歷史文本指導當代，則必須突出它與當代的關聯，淡化或者隱去過時失效的成份。譯者甚至可以借闡釋之名代聖人立言，為經典補充新鮮血液。

下面對這兩種因素主導下的析字結果分別加以考察。

(一)從對儒學的整體把握出發，龐德利用析字法將不少核心概念變得具體、生動、富有操作性。例如“德”，通常譯作“virtue”，他認為太過籠統抽象，“就像把犀牛、狐狸、長頸鹿毫無區別地譯作‘四足動物’或‘動物’一樣”。他的定義是：

What results, i.e., the action resultant from this straight gaze into the heart. The “know thyself” carried into action. (德者得也。直視內心然後採取行動。“認識你自己”並付諸行動。)(Pound 1969: 21)

這樣解釋的依據是，“德”字左邊的部首“彳”表示行動，^[16]右邊中間的“目”（眼睛）直視右下方的“心”。^[17]“德”的本義指“行的正，心真誠，表裏如一”（穀衍奎，2003: 679），龐德的分析既重內省，又強調行動，指出道德踐履的方法就是反求諸己，與儒學的精神並無二致。

又如“仁”，龐德根據左偏旁（“亻”）定義為“Humanitas, humanity, in the full sense of the word, ‘manhood’. The man and his full contents”（人，人性，人道，人的全部內涵）（Pound 1969: 22），顯示出對儒學追求完美人格的人文主義取向有深刻理解。^[18]在譯文中，龐德對此更是不吝筆墨，反覆加以強調：

為人君，止於仁。

As prince he came to rest in **humanity**, in the **full human qualities**, in his **manhood**. (Pound 1969: 41)

這種翻譯較之用“benevolence”或“love”譯“仁”，實在更能體現儒學的人文精神。析字法的功勞不可謂不大。

(二)從傳統學術的標準來看，龐譯《大學》裏有不少觀念是明顯的誤讀或無中生有，但細加揣摩，會發現這些“錯誤”之間往往具有某種關聯，透漏出譯者的某些關懷。

知止而後有定，定而後能靜，靜而後能安……

Know the point of rest and then have an orderly mode of procedure; having this orderly procedure one can **“grasp the azure”**, that is, **take hold of a clear concept**; **holding a clear concept** one can be at peace [internally] ... (Pound 1969: 29)

“Grasp the azure”（抓住藍天／色），是對“靜”字的拆解。^[19]但“azure”（藍天／色）怎麼會同“a clear concept”（一個清晰的概念）畫上等號？藍天／色不妨說是清澈／晰的，但“concept”（概念）從何而來？“靜”字裏面沒有，它只能來自龐德的大腦。

《大甲》曰：顧諟天之明命。

It is said in the Great Announcement: He contemplated the luminous decree of heaven, and **found precise word wherewith to define it**. (Pound 1969: 35)

“顧”，顧念注視之意。“諟”的解法很多，朱熹解作“此”。若依此說，“He contemplated the luminous decree of

heaven”已是完整的翻譯，後面“and found precise word wherewith to define it”（而且找到精確的詞語加以界定）從何而來？原來龐德從“諟”字看到了“言”旁，而語言在他的詩學和政治理念中都居於核心地位。有了這個橋樑，兩岸的交通自不可免，龐德之道便堂而皇之的在儒經中升堂入室了。

這種做法在核心概念“誠”的翻譯上體現得更為明顯。且看龐德對《大學》八條目之一“誠意”的翻譯：

欲正其心者，先誠其意。欲誠其意者，先致其知。

... wanting to rectify their hearts, they **sought precise verbal definitions of their inarticulate thoughts** [the tones given off by the heart]; wishing **to attain precise verbal definitions**, they set to extend their knowledge to the utmost. (Pound 1969: 31)

知至而後意誠，意誠而後心正。

... given the extreme knowable points, **the inarticulate thoughts were defined with precision** [the sun's lance coming to rest on the **precise spot verbally**]. Having attained this **precise verbal definition**, [this sincerity], they then stabilized their hearts. (Pound 1969: 31, 33)

所謂誠其意者，毋自欺也。

Finding the precise word for the inarticulate heart's tone means not lying to oneself. (Pound 1969: 47)

“意”是“心之所發”，龐德所謂“the tone of the heart”。

意念志向容易夾雜私情物欲，故恒常真妄混處，純駁錯雜。誠意就是要使意念真實無妄，從而讓心靈清明澄澈。“誠”就是不作偽、不自欺，通常譯作“sincere”。在龐譯中，誠意變成了：將未經表述的思想形諸精確的語言，換言之，用語言精確地界定（表達）思想。“誠”是如何同語言精確掛上鉤的？龐德的分析如下：

誠, "Sincerity". The precise definition of the word, pictorially the sun's lance coming to rest on the precise spot verbally. The righthand half of this compound means: to perfect, bring to focus. (Pound 1969: 20)

曾傳第六章釋誠意，龐德在結尾處解釋“誠”字為“the sun's lance falling true on the word”（Pound 1969: 51）。

“誠”是個形聲字，從“言”，“成”聲。龐德究竟如何從這個不表意的聲符（“成”）中看出“太陽的長矛”，而且還要“準確無誤地落在那個詞語上”，實在是匪夷所思。在馬禮遜《字典》裏，“成”屬於“戈”部（Morrison 1815-1823, Vol. I, Part II: 189），“戈”是長矛、標槍。^[20]根據 Cheadle（1997: 65）的考證，龐德從“太陽之長矛”想到的是日晷，借日晷投影計時之準確比喻用詞定義之精當。但不僅“日”字的出處無法落實，而且“日”、“戈”、“言”三者的關係也委實太過曲折。如果不是譯者預訂了目的地（“正名”），再輔之以循循善誘，很難想像“誠”能夠回到語言的家園。

從“靜”、“謔”、“誠”這三個字殊途而同歸的變化，不難看出龐德對“正名”的執着。^[21]在他看來，語言的混亂模糊，

不僅是詩學問題，更是社會危機的癥結所在。要解決這些問題，必須從語言上正本清源，對名份制度作出清楚嚴密的定義，維護語言的威權，使萬事萬物各如其類，^[22]依名行義。這種語言本位主義，和孔子的“君君臣臣父父子子”在精神上何其相似！

龐德強調語言精確，對《大學》來說可能是無中生有，但對儒學整體而言卻不過是對“正名”問題的凸顯與發展而已，算不上離經叛道。類似的，龐譯《大學》還突出強調了“義”的價值。原因是龐德將止於至善的“善”，威儀的“儀”都譯作“equity”或“fair-dealing”，甚至有些地方無中生有的塞進“justice”。^[23]這些“誤讀”雖然沒有析字法的支持，但同樣是為了彰顯儒家經典中具有時代意義的成份。杜維明強調以儒家的“公義”補充西方的“自由”，和龐德的想法頗為契合。

五

從表意文字中得到的好的想法，其實不能算作我的。要是我的思想碰巧比鄒人之子（筆者按：孔子）的還要高明，那我的牌位就應當從祀孔廟，我的觀點就可以取代先聖之言了。但這不大可能發生（Pound 1975: 83）。

龐德大概不會承認他的翻譯是操縱或者改寫。對他來說，作品的意義存在於它與一定的歷史情境的關係之中，因而是開放的、發展的。作品的載體——語言有自己的生命，隨着歷史的演進，在不同的關係網絡中不斷調整、變異，積蓄能量，豐富、擴

展自己的內容。語言的能量體現在音 (melopoeia)、形 (phanopoeia)、意 (logopoeia)^[24] 三個層面。形可翻，音難譯，意則不可翻譯 (logopoeia does not translate)，只能更新 (make it new)。譯者可以通過追溯歷史探求作者的意圖和文本的原意，但他必須回到當前重構文本的現實意義，讓歷史文本通過翻譯煥發出時代生命。^[25]

這種翻譯觀在《大學》譯本中得到了最好的體現。析字法關注的不是漢字的直接意義 (direct meaning)，而是其形態。為充份展現漢字的形態及其蘊含的豐富的可能性，龐德堅持譯文與原作對照編排，而且譯文中各章節的附注中都標示出關鍵漢字。但析字法不僅譯形，^[26] 更賦予譯者一種詮釋的空間，使他得以從容周旋於文本與現實之間，尋找結合點，牽線搭橋，讓現實進入文本，讓文本活在當前。譯者的主體性，稱之為改寫也好，操縱也好，創造也好，發現也好，也便融入歷史文本嶄新的生命之中了。

注釋

- [1] 龐德的第一個《大學》譯本 (*Ta Hio, The Great Learning of Confucius*) 1928年由美國西雅圖 University of Washington Book Store 出版。1936年作為“表意文字系列” (Ideogrammic Series) 的第二冊在倫敦印行；1939年由紐約 New Directions 重印。1942年龐德與 Alberto Luchini 合作完成意大利文譯本 (*Confucio, Ta S'eu, Dai Gaku, Studio Integrale*)，收有漢語原文。1944年出版單行本 (*Testamento di Confucio*)，1945年與《中庸》意大利文譯本合訂出版 (*Confucio, Studio Integrale & L'asse Che Non Vacilla*)。1945年完成《大學》英文新譯本，1947年與《中庸》英譯本由 New Directions 合訂出版 (*Confucius: The*

Unwobbling Pivot & The Great Digest)，1949年在印度印行；1951年 New Directions 在譯本中加入《大學》、《中庸》的唐代石經拓本，對照出版 (*Confucius: The Great Digest & Unwobbling Pivot*)，1952年在倫敦重印。這個對照本 1969年又加入《論語》譯文 (無原文) 由 New Directions 出版 (*Confucius: The Great Digest, The Unwobbling Pivot, The Analects*)，至今已重印十多次。龐德的《大學》英文新譯本還經 A. E. Marand 轉譯為芬蘭語 (Gallup 1983: 42, 71, 74-75, 166, 170-171, 174, 372)。

- [2] 鮑狄埃 (M. G. Pauthier, 1801-1873)，又譯作卜鐵、鮑梯氏、波蒂埃、頗節。法國印度學家、漢學家。譯有《大學》(1837)、《東方聖書》(1840)、《四書》(1841)等。
- [3] Ernest Fenollosa (1853-1908)，美國美學家，東方學家，畢生致力於推介東方藝術，尤其是日本美術，著有《東亞美術史綱》。跟隨日本漢學家森槐南 (Mori Kainan) 學習漢詩，死後留下大量讀書筆記，由其遺孀於 1913 年託付龐德整理出版。龐德根據這些筆記創造性地譯出《華夏集》(1915)，整理出一部日本能劇集 (1917) 和一篇〈作為詩歌媒介的中國文字〉(1919)。參見 Fang (1957)。
- [4] 龐德 (1928/1939: 10) 只在一處注腳中對“新”字的左半邊做過分析，甚至沒去注意右半邊的斧頭 (“斤”)。1935 年，龐德從這個字中看到了“法西斯的斧頭砍去樹的壞死部份” (Cheadle 1997: 36)。本文引文中表示強調的黑體均為筆者所加。
- [5] 馬禮遜 (Robert Morrison, 1782-1834) 的《漢語字典》 (*A Dictionary of the Chinese Language, 1815-1823*) 分為三部六卷，第一部 (《字典》) 和第二部 (《五車韻府》) 為漢英字典，分別按部首和音序排列。第三部為英漢詞典。馬禮遜字典因提供字源和字形演變而深受龐德倚重。
- [6] 《大學》有古本 (《禮記》第四十二篇) 與改本的分別。改本以朱熹的《大學章句》最為流行，明清兩代奉為正統。朱熹 (2001: 4) 認為《大學》分為“經一章，蓋孔子之言，而曾子述之。其傳十章，則曾子之意而門人記之”。這種說法後世大多以為不可信。理雅各

(1960: 26, 360, 367) 在緒論和腳注中根據文本的證據對此作過批駁。龐德使用的理本《四書》是上海的盜印本，刪去了緒論和索引，但保留了詳盡的注釋。

- [7] 根據 Cheadle (1997: 38-39) 的考證，龐德攜帶的小型字典是翟理思《漢英字典》的縮略本，不解釋字源。龐德將《大學》譯成意大利文時有馬禮遜字典可供參考，譯成英文時卻無，這對他的析字法有何影響，須將意、英兩個譯本對照才可看出。可惜筆者不通意大利語，無能於此。
- [8] 翻譯史家斯坦納 (Steiner 1975)、根茨勒 (Gentzler 1993) 和韋努蒂 (Venuti 1995) 均曾對龐德的翻譯理論或實踐進行過梳理。龐德研究者對其具體翻譯實踐的考察不勝枚舉，但只有 Mary Paterson Cheadle (1997) 對其儒經翻譯有系統、深入地研究。
- [9] 龐德反對文字學翻譯，因為它呆板、僵化，缺乏生命活力。但他是否反對文字學的工作，則很難斷言。根茨勒 (Gentzler 1993: 24-27) 指出，龐德主張翻譯應當忠實於原作的意義 (meaning) 與氣氛 (atmosphere)。為此，譯者首先要進入文本的歷史語境，包括語言、時代、經濟、思潮、作者的生平著述等，體會作者的意圖與文本的精神 (mood)，然後將其植入當前的文化土壤。由此看來，龐德也認為文字學或文獻學的工作是翻譯的基礎。他翻譯《大學》、《中庸》、《論語》依靠理雅各，翻譯《詩經》依靠高本漢，實在是討了很大的巧。但他在翻譯中對文字學的成果又常常棄之如敝屣，譯本中的創造成份大多是反文字學的。甚至有人認為，“龐德總是極其反學術的” (趙毅衡，1998: 297)。
- [10] Ideogrammic method 對龐德來說首先是一種詩學，即作詩要學習漢字的構造方法，並置具體、自然的物象，用詞精煉，避免抽象。Cheadle (1997: 15) 指出，龐德的《詩章》自 1917 年創作伊始便已受此影響。作為翻譯方法，ideogrammic method 指的是對漢字的形態或偏旁部首加以分析，以便找出其“真正的意義” (what is real)。詳見後文分析。Ideogrammic method 直譯為“表意文字法”或“意象字法” (臺灣楊錦銓將象形、會意、指事三種漢字稱為意象

字)，也有譯作“漢字詩學”的。本文關注的是它的後一種意義，為直觀計，譯作“析字法”。

- [11] 之所以要考慮具體的語境，是因為龐德認為詞語的意義存在於彼此的關聯之中。同一文本中的詞語在不同的語境中會產生新的關聯，即新的意義。參見 Gentzler 1993: 23。
- [12] 短短一篇《大學》，經龐德析解的漢字就有 51 個，分別為：篇、是、則、焉、學、在、德、親、靜、慮、道、誠、意、明、謔、峻、釋、銘、君 (子)、所、極、新、縉、蠻、穆、閒、誼、盛、戲、沒 (mo)、前、慎、益、忿、視、碩、機、宜、忒、巖、瞻、配、眾、奪、寶、媚、菑、忠、信、得、恆。
- [13] 豆，象形字。本義為古代高足食器。引申為禮器。按，“戲”是會意兼形聲字，左邊的聲符中的“𠂔”表示虎形面具，“豆”表示一面鼓。整個字表示手執兵器 (“戈”)，在鼓聲中比武角力之意 (穀衍奎，2003: 235)。龐德取“豆”的常見意義，是為了引出祭祀之戲，與紀念先王掛鉤。
- [14] 如果沒有“resentment”作意義的限定，“心上一把刀”還可以解作痛苦、忍受。如“忍”字即是。
- [15] 從文字學的角度看，龐德對這幾個字的解讀都是誤讀。縉、蠻、媚、忿都是形聲字。“戲”的分析也有操縱因素，見注 [13]。
- [16] 龐德認為“彳”表示“The man in two successive positions. Serve as prefix to indicate motion or action” (Pound 1969: 21)。
- [17] 有趣的是，龐德編輯的費文〈作為詩歌手段的中國文字〉附表 5 中，對“德”的解釋是“Virtue or virtue, to pace (two men or man in two places; or seen near and at little distance) + heart under sacrificial dish under ten” (穀衍奎，2003: 679)。對“憲” (德) 的解釋是：“會意字。甲骨文從彳 (街道)，從直 (目視標杆)，會視正行直之意。金文另加義符心或以心代彳，突出心地正直之意”。馬禮遜 (Morrison 1815-1823: 128) 提供三種字形但未作拆解。
- [18] 從詞源上看，“仁”由“人”、“二”構成，其中“二”是重文，表示與左邊的部首 (“亻”) 相同。許多學者據此認為“仁”強調的是

人際關係。但楊錦銓(1996: 2453)認為“二”是聲符，不表意。當然，從女性主義的角度看，龐德的 **manhood** 也有更新的必要。

[19] “靜”是形聲字，從青，爭聲。“爭”是會意字，表示兩手各自用力將物拉向自己一方，即爭奪(穀衍奎，2003: 213, 778)。

[20] “成”是會意字。“甲骨文像以斧劈物形，表示斬物以為定盟之意。說文誤作形聲字：從戊，丁聲”(穀衍奎，2003: 172)。馬禮遜字典並未解釋字源。

[21] 孔子講正名，是要求君臣父子都能克盡份內職責(君要像君，臣要像臣，父要像父，子要像子)，居其名，行其義，使名義相稱，達到天下大治。不然，名不正則言不順，言不順則事不成。這一點龐德深以為然。不過孔子的正名關注的是政治倫理上的名份，龐德的“precise verbal definition”同時也是詩學主張和語言學上的名實問題，範圍更廣，應當說有所發展。按，龐德將《論語》中的“正名”譯作“determine a precise terminology”(Pound 1969: 249)。Peter Makin (2003)對龐德的正名(定義)情結有詳細的分析，他指出，處處宣揚語言精確的龐德，在翻譯中運用表意文字法對詞語做出的界定每多扭曲，並不精確。其實，龐德所謂的精確，正如他堅持“析字法”指向漢字的“真正意義”一樣，很多時候都是借求真之名，行創新之實。

[22] 龐德講“格物”譯作“sorting things into organic categories”(使事物各從其類)，表達的也是嚴正名份、不使混亂的意思。

[23] Pound 1969: 29, 43, 47, 65, 75。

[24] 黃運特(1998: 226-227)將 *melopoeia*、*phanopoeia*、*logopoeia* 分別譯作聲詩、形詩、理詩，即詩歌的三種形式。不過，龐德借這三類詩談論的是語言如何通過不同的方式被充電或積蓄能量，故本文理解為語言的三個層面。

[25] 本段關於龐德翻譯觀的論述參照的是 Gentzler 1993: 23-25。

[26] 龐德對漢字形態的關注，顯示出對語言符號之嬉戲(the play of signifiers)的強烈興趣，與解構主義的翻譯觀有契合之處，擬另文探討。

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中國語境中的西方翻譯理論 ——第17屆國際比較文學大會 翻譯主題的圓桌會議（I）

丁 欣

Abstract

China's Re-encounter with the West: The Cross-Fertilization of Research Models for Translation (by Ding Xin)

The advances made in the past two decades in translation studies in the West are sure to create an impact on a new generation of translation scholars emerging in China, where new centers for translation, as well as new programs of postgraduate study, have sprung up like "bamboo shoots in spring rain". The invigoration of translation research by a plethora of approaches that has borrowed the insights of literary studies, linguistics, psychology, critical theory, anthropology, information science and cultural studies has given new life to translation studies in the West; it is also something that Chinese researchers on translation will have to contend with.

The Roundtable organized for ICLA 2004, as reported here by Ding Xin of Shanghai International Studies University, gathered together scholars from China and engaged them in dialogue with each other on the directions, goals, and methodologies for pursuing translation research in the Chinese context. A variety of translation

phenomena as exhibited inside and outside of texts, literary and non-literary, was the focus of discussion. Among the more specific questions addressed were: How can Chinese translation theorists benefit from cross-disciplinary thinking of the kind that has affected Western translation studies recently? In what way can the Chinese translation situation be re-read from contemporary Western perspectives? Can Chinese scholars benefit from the historical-descriptive approach as advocated in the West in rewriting their own histories of translation?

2004年8月8日—15日，第17屆國際比較文學大會在香港理工大學召開。翻譯無疑是本次國際比較文學大會的熱點之一。除了以“翻譯研究”為主題的討論組每天進行主題討論之外，8月9日和10日下午14:00—15:30，還分別舉行了兩次以“中國再次遭遇西方：翻譯研究模式的中西學術交流”為主題的圓桌會議。

圓桌會議在陳德鴻教授（香港嶺南大學）和謝天振教授（上海外國語大學）的主持下進行。本次圓桌會議召集了中國大陸的一批年輕學者，對中國語境中的翻譯研究的方向、目標以及方法論等方面的問題進行對話，討論涉及了大量的翻譯現象——不僅在文本之內，也在文本之外，不僅有文學文本，也有非文學的文本。討論的焦點有如下幾個：（一）中國翻譯理論研究者怎樣從近年來影響了西方翻譯研究的跨學科思維方式中獲益？（二）以當代西方視角，如何重新看待在中世紀的佛學翻譯家、17世紀科學讀物的翻譯家、及20世紀文學、科學的翻譯家的著作中包含的中國翻譯現象？（三）中國的翻譯理論對歷史—描述學、文本—

語言學、文化研究等學派是如何接受及應用？這些西方理論自引進中國之日至今，得到那些應用？如今是否還具有生命力？

與會的發言者分別以科幻小說（范若恩，復旦大學）、中國大陸十七年的翻譯文學（盧玉玲，復旦大學）、網路翻譯（許濟濤，上海外國語大學）、佛經翻譯（張旭，香港浸會大學）、魯迅的“硬譯”（崔峰，上海外國語大學）、中國大陸的外國文學史教材（丁欣，復旦大學）、馮友蘭的《莊子》英譯（徐來，復旦大學）及中國20世紀翻譯文學史中的操縱現象（查明建，上海外國語大學）等具體問題為例，對上述的問題做出了自己的回答。加拿大蒙頓大學的Denise Merkle教授、美國聖地牙哥加州大學的張英進教授和香港浸會大學的Dorothy Wong博士、王輝先生也參與了討論。從與會者的發言和討論中我們可以看到，中國的新一代學者既能應用當代最新的西方翻譯理論及其他學科的理論所提供的新的視角，又能相當自覺地固守中國的文化語境，關注中國的翻譯實際，開闢新的研究領域，並用自己的研究推動源於西方的翻譯理論的發展。

會議實錄（8月9日）

中國再次遭遇西方： 翻譯研究模式的中西學術交流

陳德鴻：西方的翻譯研究在過去20年取得了很大發展，這些發展無疑對中國的新一代翻譯研究的學者產生了影響。新的翻譯

研究中心與新的研究生研究課題，如雨後春筍般不斷湧現。文學研究、語言學、心理學、批評理論、人類學、資訊科學及文化研究等學科的新思路，不但給西方的翻譯研究注入了新的活力，也給中國的翻譯研究者提供了新的研究視角。這次的圓桌會議召集了中國的一批年輕學者，對中國語境中的翻譯研究的方向、目標以及方法論等方面的問題進行對話，討論涉及了大量的翻譯現象——不僅有在文本之內的，也有在文本之外的，不僅有文學文本，也有非文學的文本，從中我們可以看到中國的新一代研究者對西方翻譯理論的應用。他們用西方的理念和思路重新看待中國的翻譯現象，重新審視、重新認識中國的文化傳統。

一、范若恩（復旦大學英語學院）：失敗的幽靈

以薛紹徽首譯凡爾納的《八十天環遊地球》為標誌，西方科學幻想小說在中國的譯介最早可以追溯到 1900 年。一個仍然有待回答的問題是：在中國是否真的有嚴格意義上的科幻小說？通過歷史回顧與分析，我首先探求清末啟蒙知識份子們是如何簡單理解抑或誤讀了科幻小說的內涵及功能，而這種扭曲和誤解又是如何直接或間接的影響了當時科幻小說譯者對譯文的取舍。換句話說，作為一種文化改寫，對外國科幻小說的譯介是如何受到某種政治和文化意圖的操縱，從而進一步對本土的科幻小說創作產生了巨大的影響。

以 1818 年西方瑪麗·雪萊（雪萊的第二位夫人）的《弗蘭克史坦》為開端，西方科幻小說自誕生起就引發了對其定義的爭議。儘管觀點有所不同，但大都同意這種文學潮流可以大致進一步分為兩類。即第一類科幻小說深深植根於西方人文精神的傳統

中，以悲觀批判態度質疑虛幻的科學技術萬能論與工具主義，探討在科技日益發達的社會裏日益渺小的人，是如何進行絕望的掙扎與反抗，以試圖恢復他原有的地位與尊嚴，以憂患意識重新審視人與理性這一恆古的命題。而作為其對立面，另一類科幻小說，是以法國著名作家凡爾納為鼻祖的純科學派，以非常單純的道德觀，樂觀的預測科學發現與科技發明所創造的美麗新世界。

第一類科幻小說，儘管在西方公認為此類創作的主流，卻長期或多或少的受到中國學者的忽略。而一旦將此文學錯位產生的歷史和文化背景，尤其是當時中國主導的意識形態和文學理論納入考察視野，科幻小說譯者微妙的心態及其翻譯目的也就昭然若揭。一旦將目光貫穿整個生死存亡，危機四伏的清朝末年和整個中國現代歷史，先進的中國知識份子奔走呼告，試圖以各種各樣的道路抵抗外國侵略和統治，傳播新知，喚起精神麻木癱瘓的國人，在此之中，文學亦被賦予特殊的意義。因此，堅信科技進步和科學萬能的凡爾納型科幻小說，儘管在西方未能歸於主流，卻機緣巧合，在另一文化語境裏倍受青睞。對此，最具代表性的詮注也許來自中國的最早期科幻小說譯者之一魯迅，早在 1903 年的由日文轉譯的《大炮俱樂部》和《地底旅行》譯本前言中對科幻小說的闡述：“蓋臚陳科學，常人厭之，閱不終篇，輒欲睡去，強人所難，勢必然矣。惟假小說之能力，被優孟之衣冠，則雖析理譚玄，亦能侵淫腦筋，不生厭倦”。

二、盧玉玲（復旦大學英語學院）：翻譯與權力——1949—1966 中國翻譯文學研究

當代西方翻譯理論，特別是以女性主義和後殖民主義為代表

的後現代翻譯理論，一反傳統翻譯理論的種種常態，在操作上以“改寫”為基本策略，以政治、權力、意識形態等超文本元素構建了全新的理論框架。面對這些反傳統理論的衝擊，困惑與質疑都是可以理解的。但是更為積極的態度恐怕應該是研究和挖掘這些理論對於中國翻譯理論的價值和意義。中國對外交流的歷史源遠流長，蘊藏了豐富的翻譯資源。以“信、達、雅”為代表的感悟式的傳統翻譯經驗論，以及局囿於譯本分析，以翻譯教學為目的而建構起來的翻譯論往往無法解釋一些特殊的翻譯現象，也難以從理論的高度全面地對這些資源作一個整體的把握。我的發言借用當代西方譯論中的後殖民視角，通過考察 1949—1966 年間翻譯文學的狀況，揭示不平等的權力關係是如何影響這一時期翻譯文學的生產、流通和消費。

關於“十七年”翻譯文學，目前國內的研究往往將這一時期的翻譯現象與意識形態的操縱聯繫在一起。1949 年之後，新中國的翻譯現象與意識形態的操縱聯繫在一起。1949 年之後，新中國開始建立了社會主義政治意識形態，在政治與外交上都倒向當時的蘇聯。意識形態的因素在很大程度上決定了當時的文化策略。作為文化的重要組成部份的翻譯文學不可避免地受到這種意識形態的影響。這一點從 1949 年 10 月之後蘇聯文學被大量譯入中國的事實來看就再清楚不過了。但是，我們應該看到隱藏在這意識形態背後的是更為複雜的國際政治因素。

雖然殖民體系在戰後土崩瓦解，民族國家紛紛宣佈獨立，但是殖民主義並沒有因此灰飛煙滅，而是以文化帝國主義的形式隱蔽在世界的各個角落。當前蘇聯瓦解，歷史學家洋洋得意的宣告社會主義陣營的瓦解時，並不意味着整個資本主義陣營的勝利。相反，世界朝“單極化”的方向發展，成了美國的掌上玩物。薩

義德在《文化帝國主義》中在談到美國在當下全球範圍中的霸權地位時這樣說到：“冷戰結束後，美國政府關於世界新秩序的修辭，它那孤芳自賞的氣味、難以掩飾的勝利情緒和它對責任的莊嚴承諾，都是康拉德在霍爾洛德身上描寫過的：我們是老大，我們註定要領導別人，我們代表着自由和秩序”。美國的新型帝國主義以經濟與文化“全球化”的形式主宰着這個世界。這樣的霸權主義昭然若揭，已遭到後殖民學者的抨擊。

二戰之後的“冷戰”開始了以美國為首的資本主義陣營和以前蘇聯為首的社會主義陣營的兩極對峙。這種兩極對峙掩蓋了美國與蘇聯在各自陣營中的霸權主義。美國與蘇聯以各自雄厚的經濟軍事實力充當着各自陣營中的“老大”，領導和操縱着各自陣營中的“弱勢”國家。因此，與其說這是兩大陣營間的較量，不如說是兩大超級大國之間圍繞着各自的利益展開的對整個世界勢力的瓜分。在社會主義陣營中，前蘇聯以其強大的勢力充當着這個陣營的“老大”，以軍事庇護的藉口駐軍東歐各國，並在其勢力範圍之內實行嚴格的文化政策。

中國在這一時期的世界格局中的位置無疑是極不穩定的。對社會主義陣營的選擇使她遭受了以美國為首的另一陣營的敵視，而建國初期國內各方面的困難使她不得不選擇依賴前蘇聯。前蘇聯的庇護和援助在某種程度上給了這個新生國家一定的安全感。但這種安全感是以套上政治、文化的枷鎖為代價的。而掙脫這個枷鎖必然要付出更大的代價，這一點從 1958 年中蘇關係破裂後，中國所遭受的報復性的待遇來看是再清楚不過的。

從世界文化的發展歷史的角度來看，翻譯扮演了舉足輕重的積極的角色。但是，我們還應該看到翻譯，作為溝通不同文化的

一種手段，從來不是在真空中進行的。因此從純粹的語言角度來解釋翻譯現象，必然無法解釋翻譯的本質。根據福柯的權力話語理論，權力製造了知識，而知識在維繫着權力的同時也在製造權力。特嘉思維妮·尼蘭賈娜在《為翻譯定位》一書中指出：“作為一種實踐，翻譯建構了，同時受制於殖民狀態下不對稱的權力關係”。後殖民翻譯理論學者從世界殖民歷史的角度考察翻譯的性質，認為翻譯一直是殖民主義的幫兇，是殖民者的征服他者的文化工具。

從建國初期中國文化政策對前蘇聯的傾斜來看，翻譯既建構了這種不平等的權力關係，也受制於這種權力關係。前蘇聯的文化殖民主義，或者說中蘇間的權力不平等決定了中國的文化策略。這種策略無疑是傾向蘇聯的。周揚這樣說道：“擺在中國人民，特別是文藝工作者面前的任務，就是積極地使蘇聯文學，藝術，電影更廣泛地普及到中國人民中去……”換句話說就是全民普及蘇聯的文化模式。蘇聯的文化作為一種高高在上的文化參照物受到了頂禮膜拜。這樣的一種策略無疑是非理性而盲目的。

“十七年”翻譯文學的蘇聯模式是前蘇聯在整個社會主義陣營中推行的文化帝國主義的一部份。它見證了中蘇曲折的發展關係，建構了中蘇在這一時期不平等的權力關係。

三、許濟濤（上海外國語大學社會科學院）：網路虛擬空間背景之下的文學翻譯研究

電腦網路的虛擬空間已經極大地改變了人們與文學作品之間的關係：原本意義上通常被當作知識精英的行為的文學創作，由於網路的普及，已經變成一種大眾的行為。這有兩方面的含義。

一方面，任何人都可以自由地創作他想要創作的東西並將它發表和傳播；另一方面，從這些文本的接受者來說，不同年齡，不同文化背景，屬於不同社會群體的讀者可以自由地從網上選取他感興趣的文本來閱讀。從這兩個方面來說，文學文本的傳播較之傳統意義上有了很大的變化。BBS、電子郵件、Blog 等等這些都可以成為傳統的文學文本流傳的媒介的替代物。由此延伸到文學翻譯的研究，在電腦網路的虛擬空間迅速發展的影響之下，翻譯的過程及產物也較之傳統意義上的產生了一定的變化，而這些變化，足以影響文學翻譯的研究。

對文學翻譯的產物而言，尤其是對於那些文學經典而言，網路虛擬空間所帶來的影響是非常深遠的。人們連接到互聯網非常方便，並且，由於網路空間所具有的開放性，人們完全可以在網路上重新翻譯並傳播那些文學經典。相應的，原先這些文學經典的翻譯並且傳播通常是被當作只有“專業”的翻譯家才能來完成的事情，但現在，網路幫助任何想要翻譯並傳播這些經典的人去實現這個過程。而在這個網上完成的文學經典的翻譯過程中，傳統意義上的譯者和讀者之間的關係被打破。更多時候，讀者與譯者之間是一種互動的關係，譯者可以很快地以一種比較直接的方式獲取讀者的反饋，甚至有時候讀者幫助譯者一起完成翻譯。

（比如，美國作家 E·B·懷特的作品《夏洛的網》，早在 1979 年就已經有了人民文學出版社出版的譯本，但是在 2000 年，網上化名為肖毛的一個譯者，重新翻譯了《夏洛的網》並隨時地將他的翻譯發表在網上，許多網上的讀者更是直接參與到翻譯中去，對譯者在翻譯中的措辭等提出建議。而這一事件的結果，就是重新引起了讀者對這部經典的興趣，並且在 2004 年上海譯文出版社出

版了由著名兒童文學作家任溶溶的譯本。)

在網路的開放空間中，人們可以任意地選取極為豐富的文學文本來閱讀，同時，人們是否想翻譯這些文本，如何選擇想要翻譯的文本，讀者如何選擇這些譯本等等，也發生了相應的變化。因此，翻譯研究的文化學派中的代表人物勒菲弗爾所提出的文學翻譯所受到的三種操縱因素——詩學，意識形態和贊助人——在網路上的這些翻譯行為中，所起的作用減弱或者消失了。或者，從一定意義上來說，網路上的這些翻譯行為，已經脫離了之前普遍流行的翻譯研究方法的所及範圍。另一方面，就文學翻譯這一行為來說，隨着審查制度，出版制度等等對於網路空間的約束能力的減弱甚至消失，原來對於文學翻譯這一行為中起一定引導作用的因素也減弱或者消失。

由於翻譯作品隨着廣闊的網路虛擬空間而得到廣泛傳播，對讀者而言，原作與譯作之間的關係變得相對複雜：由於他們很容易並且很快捷地從網上得到一個文學文本，有時候，他們對於譯作和原作之間的關係會變得難以判斷。

新興技術的發展已經極大地改變了人們的生活方式，當然，在此之中也包括對文學的影響。可以清楚地看到，隨着文學翻譯中這些新的問題的出現，相應的，文學翻譯的研究離開了原來的理論所及的範圍之內，從這點上來看，從一個新的角度——比如從網路虛擬空間對文學翻譯的影響的這個角度——來找到一種或是幾種可以適當地解釋這些新出現的現象的理論也變得具有一定意義。以 Theo Hermans 的觀點來說：“最重要的，它顯示了當前思考和討論翻譯的途徑並不是僅有的一種可能的途徑，它需要更新，並且去除人們心中的疑慮”。從一個更廣的角度來看，作

為一個學科中的理論和方法，它不應當僅關注歷史，也應關注當下，而由於當下甚至未來的具體情形是處在不停的變動之中，相應的，理論和方法也應是不斷進化的理論和方法。

四、張旭（香港浸會大學翻譯系）：譯經文學傳統與近代英詩歌漢譯——從譯入語看近代詩歌翻譯方法上的嬗變

早期的佛經翻譯中就孕育着中國翻譯文學的萌芽。除了對譯經中的直譯、意譯等方法有所繼承外，近代譯家們在譯入語的擇取上更多地是本着“以史為鑒”的態度，也就是更多地從歷史上的譯經傳統中汲取養份，其次是那種樸實平易的白話文體，也為譯經大師們首先採用。

中國歷史上佛典翻譯中經常採用“連類”或“格義”的辦法。“格義”就是兩個語義不對等，找一個詞來對等。這種方法其實是一種意譯，但中國長期把它視為直譯。這是因為中國人長期把自己視為世界的中心，如果有甚麼引進，也不可以動搖中國主體文學文化的根基，他們必然在引進西方文化時考慮如何把它變化。在對佛經一些術語的概念的翻譯時都是採用這種方法。比如用 nothing 與佛教的“空”對等，或用 non-activity 對應“無為”等。與其相關的另一種方法就是“連類”，《高僧傳》裏有一段記錄，佛學大師慧遠向聽眾宣講佛學的“實相”義，費了很多的口舌，聽眾越聽越糊塗。慧遠於是用了莊子的道理作解釋，引“莊子義為連類”，聽眾就明白了。當時在慧遠等眾僧的眼中，佛教的義理與中國原有的思想是可以相互闡釋的，玄學和佛學基本上是一致的，所以它們的概念也是可以互相通釋的，它們的語言也是可以互相翻譯的。連類方法主要用於配合格義解釋經文的

過程中。從語言學詩學角度看，翻譯佛經對中國的整個的詩歌體系，尤其是魏晉南北朝以後，對於詩韻學影響很大。判斷一首詩歌的好壞，我們可以用描述翻譯學的“歸化”的方法。古代人們是有一個規範，怎麼做佛經翻譯，就是把佛經分為兩個部份，前面的翻譯梵文部份都用韻文，後面的一部份解釋經文，都用散體。這對中國語言產生很大影響。事實上，中國古代的詩歌創作也一直從譯經中得到滋潤。表徵之一是中國古典詩歌中的平仄，最初也是受了翻譯佛經的影響，並根據漢語的四聲而制定出來的；後經六朝文人的深入研究和不斷運用，才成為中國古代格律詩的重要規則。

我從朱自清先生的一句話受到啟示，就是：“中國的現當代文學無一不是受到外國文學的影響”。梁啟超先生也談到這一點。我就注意從語言的角度，其內在的機制找到二者內在的聯繫。我從翻譯的策略入手，因為翻譯的策略必然導致語言的變化。我發現在中國早期詩歌翻譯史上，類似於沃努蒂所謂的那種“歸化”手段運用得最多。其實這種“歸化”的方法又與中國歷史上佛典翻譯中所用的早期的翻譯策略“連類”和“格義”一直在使用。早期翻譯家，如梁啟超、蘇曼殊、馬君武、胡適等大多古文功底深厚，且能寫出很不錯的古體詩。於是他們翻譯時大多注重形式上的“格義”，其譯作多選用所熟悉的古文為譯入語，並嘗試使用包括五言、七言、騷體乃至長短句在內的幾乎各種中國傳統的韻文體形式。於是我們可以發現，在同一時期，就是針對拜倫的《哀希臘》這首慷慨高歌之作，就先後出現了四種各具特色的譯文。可以說，正是這種譯詩格局的多元化，從此拉開了中國近代翻譯詩體革新與探索的序幕。

以譯入語為突破口的革新運動是由語言學家兼詩人劉半農率先發起的，他力圖將譯詩作為一種倡導“增多詩體”的一種手段，早期劉半農的譯詩儘管尚處於摸索期，但前後幾首譯詩卻可清晰地看出他是如何向那所神往的“無韻體”詩過渡的。1918年，劉半農又發表了一首譯詩《我行雪中》，詩前有短短的“譯者導言”，透露了他對譯詩用語的思索：“兩年前，得此詩於美國《Vanity Fair》月刊，嘗以詩賦歌詞各體試譯，均苦為格調所限，不能竟事，今略師前人譯經筆法寫成之，取其曲折微妙處，易於直達，然亦未能盡愜於懷。意中頗欲自造一完全直譯之文體，以其事甚難，容緩緩嘗試之”。而正當劉半農欲“緩緩嘗試”的時候，胡適已開始了他那劃時代意義的新“嘗試”，大膽選擇白話體來譯詩，1918年4月，《新青年》4卷4期發表了胡適譯安妮·林德塞（Anne Lindsay）的《老洛伯》（Auld Robin Gray），1919年3月15日，《新青年》第6卷第3號刊載了胡適譯美國新派意象詩人莎拉·蒂絲代爾（Sara Teasdale, 1884-1933）的〈關不住了〉。後一首詩是用地道的口語白話，即劉半農理想中的“完全直譯之文體”在翻譯。在這首譯詩中可以清楚地看到，新詩中的那種自然節奏與音韻是如何得到出色的展現。事實上胡適的白話譯詩的嘗試更多地可與他事佛典翻譯研究這一經歷相聯繫。有證據表明，胡適早年曾對佛經翻譯文學作過很深的鑽研，他充份肯定過譯經文學的作用，認為它對中國文學的一大貢獻就在於提高了白話文的地位。這種以白話體為譯入語的詩歌翻譯也不僅僅是一個簡單的文學技術上的改變，它更象徵着一種新世界觀、新生命情調、新生活意識在尋找它的新的表現方式。每一種翻譯詩歌的語體形式都有其特定的歷史使命，故而每

到一定時期，就需要對它進行更新和替換，但這並不意味着外國詩歌本身是不可移譯的。事實上“五四”時期的一代文壇哲人，就在新文學的旗號下，大膽地摸索和實驗，證明了這一形體是必須而且是可以改變的，並以此燭照着未來翻譯詩歌旺盛的生命力。它是一代學人和譯家們本着“窮則變，變則通”的生命原則，經過自己的艱苦的探索，從而開闢了一方新的文藝園地，以表達那新世界新生活的內容、含義、情調、感觸和思想。初期的這些白話譯詩，在中國翻譯詩歌史上實際上起到了承前啟後的作用，它們為中國的翻譯詩歌開拓了發展的新道路，同時也為中國詩歌開闢了新時代，其影響和作用是不可磨滅的。

討 論

陳德鴻：在你們的研究中發現西方翻譯理論對你們有甚麼幫助？你們的研究課題與西方理論家的理論有甚麼關係？

盧玉玲：我原來是英語文學專業，在讀書時也有翻譯課，那時接觸的都是傳統的理念，而新的西方翻譯理論給我一個新的視角去看待中國的翻譯現象。中國漫長文明中的豐富的翻譯資源，有些現象從傳統理念的角度很難解釋。而西方的翻譯理論從不同的角度談翻譯的功能、策略都可以讓我重新看待中國的翻譯史。

范若恩：我跟盧玉玲的學術背景是一樣的。我們的翻譯課的訓練多是兩種語言的技能轉換。我開始對翻譯的理解也停留在這個層面。我出於對文學的愛好在業餘也從事翻譯，實踐中發現一篇好的原文會有幾篇甚至是數十篇優秀的譯文。在我上研究生期

間，有幸修習謝老師的一系列課程，我發現對翻譯的理解不能僅僅停留在語言的層面，對翻譯理論的理解也不能僅僅停留在翻譯內部的語言轉換。要從外部，就是具體的歷史、文化、當時一定時期的意識形態和政治氣候來看翻譯。這樣我們就擴大了翻譯的內涵，而不僅僅把它看成是語言的操作，雖然可能對實踐沒有太大的幫助，但使我們更加清醒地認識到翻譯作為文化現象怎樣使人類歷史產生了巨大的變化。

陳德鴻：那麼會不會覺得外國的月亮特別圓？

許濟濤：我的看法是這樣：西方的翻譯理論說得比較多，而我國的傳統翻譯理論說的比較少。對我來說，西方的理論就是提供了一套比較成熟的現成的話語可以借用。但我們需要做的不是用西方的理論說我們的翻譯史，而是重新定義。今天我們的圓桌會議的題目是對翻譯研究模式的討論，那麼對於模式的建立就要考慮模式的適用性問題，就是對各種各樣的翻譯現象後面的東西有所揭示或指導，不是直接服務於翻譯實踐。但模式的基礎是甚麼？我更喜歡用歷史的眼光看待這種模式。因為一方面我們面對的模式的選擇是建立在中國的文學傳統之上，就是我們要用這個模式解釋我們自己的翻譯文學史。另一個是模式的實效性問題，就是這個模式能不能解釋當下的問題，而不是僅僅能用於解釋過去的現象。

張 旭：我贊成錢鍾書的看法，就是學問無所謂中西古今，只要打通就好，在普遍的層面上道理是相通的。另外站在別人的領域反觀本學科往往能看得更清楚。

Merkle：我感興趣的問題是你們是否認為翻譯研究對翻譯有用？在加拿大，由於我們是雙語國家，翻譯是很活躍的。但翻譯

家通常對翻譯理論和翻譯研究並不感興趣，我們也承認翻譯理論會對翻譯有推動作用，但似乎對翻譯的能力不見得有直接的提高，我們通常把翻譯研究看成是學術領域的事，而認為從事翻譯的人通常都是有創作才能的人才能從事的，尤其是翻譯。你們談到翻譯理論對翻譯的應用，我對那些翻譯理論並不熟悉，但我知道，你們自己從事翻譯嗎？在你們進行翻譯時，應用那些翻譯理論嗎？

范若恩：就我個人而言，我在翻譯時是完全不考慮翻譯理論的。不過運用翻譯理論如何看待翻譯的很多現象也是我的興趣之一。

Merkle：我還有一個問題有關網路翻譯的。在中國有沒有網路的版權法規定？你提到許多譯者重譯一些文學作品，你們有沒有版權方面的限制呢？

許濟濤：就我所知，目前中國大陸還沒有網路的翻譯版權規定或限制。

陳德鴻：那麼作者有甚麼反應呢？是不是有點利用這些外國作者不懂中文或無法知道在網路上有他的作品被翻譯？

許濟濤：實際上如果某人，主要是業餘譯者，把重譯的一部作品，比如艾略特的詩，放到網上，那是沒有任何限制的，甚至還被大家認為有利於他們的作品的傳播。

范若恩：張先生，你剛才提到一些早期翻譯家對拜倫的《哀希臘》的翻譯，那麼你怎麼看待卞之琳翻譯的拜倫的《哀希臘》？你又怎麼看待他的翻譯觀？

張旭：我的這個論文是有年代限制的，考察到1919年。你提到的卞之琳的翻譯屬於另外一個年代，他屬於“新格律派”，

有不同的規範和作業系統。

范若恩：那麼他們是否受到中國傳統的影響，是不是創造了新的模式？

張旭：我現在也正在研究“新格律派”，比如重要人物之一朱湘，大家說他沒有受到中國傳統的影響，而我從他小時候讀的書入手，用實證主義的方法推尋，發現有很強的證據表明他走的道路的必然性。

陳德鴻：我覺得詩歌翻譯最難討論的方面就是感情、感覺，詩歌的意義是否翻譯過來很容易察覺，但感覺似乎很難用文字表達，我覺得翻譯理論談得最少的地方就是感覺、感情這部份。在你研究時會不會覺得這部份是最難解釋的？

張旭：中國傳統詩學大致可以分為言、象、意，就是言語、意象和意韻三個層面。研究翻譯時也就是首先我們要確定甚麼是詩，翻譯的詩是甚麼樣的詩，是中國的詩還是外國的詩，然後是參照哪個規範，忠實於原文又忠實於哪一條，任何取捨都只能是一方面。我承認詩歌在翻譯時要失掉一些東西，但詩歌在某些方面是可以譯的，形式方面的東西是最容易轉化的。比如對朱湘，我把他翻譯的所有詩歌進行詳細研究，對他用的字數、音節數等都詳細考察，如果音節有變化，就必然有原因。這些形式方面的東西是好研究的。但意韻是一個綜合的整體，我確實覺得很難研究。

謝天振：我對科幻小說提一個問題。科幻小說的翻譯是一個非常有趣的翻譯現象。你談到最初翻譯科幻小說是為了救國，我覺得我國20世紀的科幻小說的翻譯其實在五四以後還經歷了三個時代：30年代以後、60年代和新時期（就是文革之後），你覺得

這三個時期翻譯科幻小說的動機和觀念有沒有本質的變化？

范若恩：我目前的研究還只限於中國大陸。在中國開始跟科幻小說發生文學因緣時，像梁啟超、魯迅對科幻小說的譯介，是為了開啟民智，救國救民，是非常實用的觀念。但在中國的科幻小說確實有另類的聲音。比如對 H·G·威爾士的譯介。對威爾士的譯介與凡爾納的譯介相比就是威爾士的小說並沒有全部翻譯出來，而凡爾納的作品卻在 20 年內就譯完了。1915 年開始在報紙上刊登威爾士的《時光機器》（當時的譯名是《80 萬年以後的世界》）和《星際戰爭》（當時的譯名是《火星與地球戰爭》），是有兩個副標題的，分別是“離象小說”和“怪異小說”，我不知道是不是可以算成科幻小說的別稱，如果是的話，那麼當時是不是對科幻小說有完整的理解？30 年代對科幻小說的譯介大部份還是停留在凡爾納這類的小說的譯介，雖然也有個別的聲音，比如老舍的《貓城記》，但他自己本人也覺得這部作品無足輕重，很快轉向了更有革命傾向或現實主義傾向的文學。這一派作為文學流派始終是若隱若現，儘管已有星星之火，但始終未成燎原之勢。到 50 年代，我們受蘇聯的影響，把科幻小說歸為科普少兒一類。當時整個科幻小說的創作和譯介也還是停留在科學技術萬能的層面上。直到 80 年代我們才開始有多元流派的科幻小說觀的出現。

謝天振：還有一個非常有趣的現象，就是美國也是受外來影響才開始注意科幻小說的，美國從歐洲大陸翻譯科幻小說以後，引起了他們的“科幻熱”，至今還很有影響。中國雖然也有為數不少的科幻小說被翻譯過來，但一直也沒有所謂的“科幻熱”。

范若恩：是，80 年代雖然有科幻小說的復興，但始終也沒有

得到很好的發展，甚至曾受到壓制與打擊。1986 年，沒有一部科幻小說出版，因為當時科幻小說被冠以“偽科學”或“唯心主義”予以打擊的。

謝天振：我覺得從 90 年代開始，科幻小說的翻譯有了轉向。一個例子就是對《1984》的翻譯。我個人就已經看到了 4 個譯本。這在我看來，一個是代表我們對科幻小說的認識有所擴大，另外就是科幻小說興趣熱點的轉移，就是從以前對自然科學的科幻小說的興趣轉到了對社會科學的科幻小說的興趣。《1984》的譯本一個又一個地出現，是一個值得思考的問題。

陳德鴻：你提到《1984》，我就想到《美麗新世界》。事實上，《美麗新世界》還是公認的科幻小說，《1984》倒有人覺得是政治小說。怎麼定義科幻小說倒也是一個問題。加拿大是怎麼定義《1984》的？是政治小說還是科幻小說？

Merkle：是把它分類為科幻小說，但認為它有很強的政治性。

查明建：剛才范若恩提到科幻小說有兩次興起，都是與當時的對西方科學世界的想像有關的。你提到的那類比較另類的科幻小說，也是代表了當時對科學未來的一種想像。

Wong：我對盧小姐的發言提一個問題。你怎麼樣用“後殖民主義”的概念去討論中國大陸 1949—1966 年？你認為那段時間是後殖民時期嗎？

陳德鴻：是不是用“半殖民主義”更合適？

Wong：那麼那些蘇聯原文的文本與中文的譯本，它們被翻譯過來只是出於實用的目的或者說政治目的嗎？

盧玉玲：我認為大多數是出於意識形態的目的。在那段歷史

時期，中國是處於一種很特殊很複雜的國際環境之中，它從蘇聯學習了社會主義模式，不得不在一定程度上依賴蘇聯。又通過使用蘇聯的文本，也就是翻譯大量的蘇聯的文本，來建立一種政治上的身份認同感。說實話，我並不懂俄文。但這段時期有一些很有意思的現象引起我的注意。在這段時期裏，美國文學也有被譯介進來，但主要是作為批判資本主義社會的工具。

Wong：“後殖民主義”的一個重要人物霍米巴巴，他有一個著名的概念就是“第三空間”，你能說說這段時間中國的翻譯如何在某種程度上開闢了這種“第三空間”嗎？

陳德鴻：這恐怕是有點難的。因為那段時間的翻譯主要還是受制於政府的意識形態。

盧玉玲：我認為當時對美國文學的翻譯是對資本主義的對抗，而非對社會主義的對抗。

查明建：當時對傑克·倫敦、馬克·吐溫的作品都有譯介。甚至《愛情的故事》這樣的通俗小說也被翻譯過來。但都是為了“揭露資本主義社會的黑暗”的目的。就是翻譯過來就是為了批判。

Wong：那麼對那些蘇聯文學的翻譯有助於中國建立的社會主義意識形態嗎？就是說，通過這些翻譯可以有助於中國擺脫蘇聯的文化帝國主義嗎？

盧玉玲：是的。

范若恩：那麼又怎麼用後殖民的理論去解釋建國以後對那些弱小國家的文學的翻譯呢？

陳德鴻：我們說是後殖民理論，但這個理論不一定只針對曾做過殖民地的第三世界國家的情形才有用。你可以在很多情況下

發現可以應用後殖民理論，它一開始確實是針對後殖民國家的情況，但後來已經可以普遍應用了，它的很多理念，比如關於權力關係、意識形態、操縱等，可以用於很多不同的政治情況上。

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BOOK REVIEW



Lessons from the Great Modernist "Translators"

Leo Tak-hung Chan

Yao, Steven G. *Translation and the Languages of Modernism: Gender, Politics, Language*. New York: Palgrave, 2002, xii + 291 pp. ISBN 0-312-29519-7.

According to Steven Yao in *Translation and the Languages of Modernism*, translation is a mode of literary production, its creativity shown in the ingenious use of the source text by the translator. In some cases this manifests an attempt to surpass the achievement of the original author. The search for strict correspondence between the source text and the target text that is the conventional focus of translation researchers is skewed in this argument, and what emerges is a "generative" model by means of which the literary tradition can be rejuvenated and enriched. This model entails, in effect, a more broadly defined, and less orthodox, understanding of "translation" that includes imitation and various forms of rewriting, as illustrated most trenchantly in the last chapter of the book. There Yao discusses two poet-translators from outside of the Modernist era, Robert Lowell and Louis Zukofsky, who deliberately break the model of translating "sense-for-sense". Ultimately, for Yao, translation need not be viewed as a purely linguistic operation; it is a literary mode of writing in which the greatest of the Modernists participated.

After an introduction in which he outlines the abundance of

Lessons from the Great Modernist "Translators"

translations undertaken by the Modernists (3-6) and discusses the seminal part played by translation in Modernist aesthetics, Yao devotes separate chapters to six authors and their works, subsumed under the three rubrics of "translation and gender", "translation and politics" and "translation and language". Of the Modernist masters, Ezra Pound figures most prominently. His translations of Chinese poems in *Cathay*, of Sextus Propertius's Latin Odes, and of key texts in the Confucian canon in *The Cantos*, form the subject of discussion in three chapters (Chapters 1, 2 and 5, respectively). Through skillfully reworking three classical Chinese poems, and manipulating the notes of his "collaborator" Ernest Fenollosa, Pound, it is argued, presents women's experiences of separation from their lovers during the First World War. With regard to *Homage to Sextus Propertius*, too, Yao examines the "deliberate" inaccuracies in Pound's rendering of the original Latin text through close textual study of the constituent elegies. He notes the significance of *Homage* in this way:

[It] constitutes arguably the first of many Modernist works in which the practice of translation functions as a fundamental method of textual construction. In this respect, it also resembles a "parody" ... a "singing along" of something else, the creation of different meanings to the same tune or words. (61)

And in Chapter 5, Yao gives a comprehensive yet incisive study of *The Cantos*, covering in chronological order "Canto XIII", Pound's first translation of *The Great Learning* in 1928 (as *Ta Hio*), the "Chinese History" and "Adams" Cantos, the re-translation of *The Great Learning* in 1947 (as *The Great Digest*), and finally, the late Cantos that Pound wrote after his Pisa incarceration. Yao charts, with amazing clarity, the development in Pound's thinking about the importance of Chinese ideograms and the

usefulness of an “ideogrammatic” method of translation over several decades. He does this at the same time as he teases out the deftness with which Pound makes use of his translation (in particular that of the Confucian classics) to serve his own political agenda.

In connection with the theme of gender, Yao considers in Chapter 3 Hilda Doolittle’s translations against the backdrop of her troubled personal life, her relationship with the (male) literary giants of her day, and her engagement with classical Greek literature. Close textual analysis is applied to two of H. D.’s early poems, “Hermes of the Ways” and “Priapus”; to passages in her two novels *Palimpsest* and *Bid Me to Live*, where her conception of translation is revealed; to her translations of the opening lines from Homer’s *The Odyssey*; and to her incorporation of lines translated from Plato and Meleager in three of her later poems, “Lais”, “Heliodora” and “Nossis”. All these, to Yao, exemplify a persistent urge on H. D.’s part to break out of the confines of “masculinist constructions of literary production” (112) and discover her voice as a feminine Modernist writer.

W. B. Yeats’s rendering of Greek drama is the subject of Chapter 4, in which the intricate relationship between translation and politics as it impinges on the development of a national drama form for Ireland is discussed. Yao considers at length Yeats’s free adaptation of Sophocles’s masterpiece in his *King Oedipus*, even while referring to R. C. Jebb’s more semantically accurate translation from the original Greek. The abundance of alterations—especially the deletions in the choral odes—testifies to Yeats’s effort to “highlight the applicability of the play to a specifically Irish cultural and political context” (138). Such a project is further explicated by Yao through a close look at two translations, “From ‘Oedipus at Colonus’” and “From ‘The Antigone’”, which represent, again, examples of “adaptation” (149) of Sophocles.

The last Modernist writer addressed in this book (in Chapter 6) is

James Joyce, one perhaps less often regarded as a “translator” than the others so far mentioned. To Yao, who has drawn significantly from the pioneering work by Fritz Senn on Joyce’s “transluding” (translating as play) activities, Joyce explores the expressive potentials of the English language at the same time as he explodes its boundaries by bringing it into contact with a host of other languages. Yao conducts for his readers a tour of all of Joyce’s major works, from *Dubliners*, through *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Ulysses*, to the pinnacle of his life’s work, *Finnegans Wake*, emphasizing how, in his least understood novel, he transforms (or “translates”) English into a completely different language.

To demonstrate the relevance of Yao’s brilliant study of literary Modernism to Translation Studies, it is necessary to enumerate the central features of Yao’s position. First, most modernist “translators” did not have sufficient knowledge of the source language that they were working with, yet this is to be viewed as an advantage rather than a deficiency. Ezra Pound was hardly proficient in Chinese when he translated *The Book of Odes (Shijing)*, *The Great Learning* and *The Analects*; Joyce had little knowledge of German when he translated Gerhart Hauptmann; Lowell did not have a mastery of Russian, nor did Louis Zukofsky of Latin.

Second, partly as a consequence of the lack of understanding of the source language on the part of these Modernist “translators”, the test of “fidelity” or “accuracy” will simply not be applicable in the assessment of their translations. Lowell, for instance, was interested more in recapturing the style and “voice” of his originals than in being faithful to their meaning.

Third, an essential aspect of the significance of translation during the period under review is its impact on creative writing. This is an easily observable cultural phenomenon, reiterated time and again in Yao’s study, which is seen in the way writers explored the expressive capabilities of their language (English in this case) while confronting new cultural realities

in the world in which they lived.

Fourth, there is the need to consider an expanded conception of translation, freeing it from some of the restraints placed upon it by, for instance, those who refuse to accept imitation as translation. The model for most translation theories, in fact, has been provided by semantically based translations. The cases of Ezra Pound and Louis Zukofsky, however, are examples of "unorthodox" translations which refuse to be admitted to a category outside of translation proper.

Fifth, many of the translations studied in this book reveal the Modernist preference for the mode of "creative" translation, over and above the "scholarly" mode as adumbrated by Matthew Arnold, among others (126). This preference needs to be related to two other facets of the translators' work: (1) their choice to work with existing translations (for example, Pound's use of de Mailla and Legge, and Yeats's use of Jebb); and (2) their desire to impose their own interpretations on the source texts. Both encourage as well as enhance the possibility of working "creatively" with the sources. Quite unwittingly, therefore, the leading Modernist "translators" furnish the clearest examples of what, in Translation Studies circles since the 1990s, has been termed "manipulation".

Finally, the attempt to introduce the "multiple Others of foreign languages and traditions" is yet another remarkable feature in the work of the Modernists. This is especially the case with James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*, in which some 60 languages are employed. Indeed, his novel prompts the interesting question of how Translation Studies scholars should view works that are not translations as such but refer to themselves as translations.

For us, Yao's approach suggests possibilities for writing a history of modern Chinese literature in which translation activities are incorporated as an essential component.^[1] More specifically, one notices

the similarities between the Modernists and May Fourth writers who experimented with new forms of creative writing after their contact with foreign literature. The conditions of the Chinese world of letters in the early twentieth-century may, after all, be comparable to those of Anglo-America during the same period. If translation as a literary activity, formally undertaken or otherwise, can be said to have risen to an unprecedented level of prominence during the Modernist period (not matched by any other historical period in the West except the Renaissance), then the May Fourth period, well-known for the enormous amount of translation work carried out and for the extent of writers' involvement in translation, must be seen as an era of translation not matched by any except the age of the great Buddhist translators.

Yao's familiarity with the work of Translation Studies scholars is evidenced by his Introductory Chapter, "Modernism and the Practice of Literary Translation". There he notes the way in which Translation Studies scholars have traced the history of translation as well as theorized about the various facets of translation as a cultural activity. But it is precisely in the same terms that he faults the discipline. Referring specifically to Lawrence Venuti's widely acclaimed history of translation in the West, *The Translator's Invisibility*, he laments how critics adopting the Translation Studies perspective have addressed only a small number of the innumerable "translations" found in the many literary and linguistic traditions during the period of Anglo-American Modernism (17). This is perhaps a suggestion which we Chinese scholars should heed as we turn our attention to modern Chinese literary and translation history and contemplate the potentialities of rewriting it for the new century.

Translation and the Languages of Modernism is filled with insights about "the revolution in translation in the West" begun in 1901. It provides some inspiration for literary historians writing about the similar revolution that took place in China in the early twentieth century. More generally, it

stimulates us to rethink the boundaries that translation theorists have set, and reveals the possible limitations of such delineation of "borders". Near the end of his book, when assessing Zukofsky's achievement, Yao explicates a notion of translation predicated upon metonymy rather than, as is usually the case, upon metaphor. The prevailing (and negative) influence of the metaphorical approach, I should like to note, can all too readily be seen in the interest focused on translations "as replacements for, rather than supplements or additions to, original works, based on the fetishization of semantic content as the most essential aspect of a text" (232). In this day and age, what we need to turn our attention to is "a metonymic sense of translation as a mode of literary production in which the source-text stands at once as the originary cause and contiguous fulfillment of the translation itself" (233). Which sounds very much like a clarion call for the reconceptualization of our disciplinary parameters.

Notes

- [1] See an attempt at "combining" the two histories—those of creative writing and translation—with reference to one fictional subgenre in my "First Imitate, Then Translate: Histories of the Introduction of Stream-of-Consciousness Fiction to China", *METÁ* 49.3 (2004): 681-691.

About the Author

Leo Tak-hung Chan is currently Professor and Head of the Department of Translation, Lingnan University. His articles have appeared in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, *TTR*, *Babel*, *Across Languages and Cultures*, *The Translator*, *Journal of Oriental Studies* and *Asian Folklore Studies*. His recent books include *The Discourse on Foxes and Ghosts* (University of Hawaii Press, 1998), *Masterpieces in Western Translation*

Theory (co-edited, City University of HK Press, 2000), *One into Many: Translation and the Dissemination of Classical Chinese Literature* (Rodopi, 2003) and *Twentieth-Century Chinese Translation Theory: Modes, Issues and Debates* (John Benjamins, 2004).

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