An Anthology of Chinese Discourse on Translation

Volume 2: From the Late Twelfth Century to 1800

Compiled with Annotations and Commentary by Martha P.Y. Cheung

Edited by Robert Neather

With the assistance of Theo Hermans and Yau Wai-Ping

ROUTLEDGE

AN ANTHOLOGY OF CHINESE DISCOURSE ON TRANSLATION

Translation has a long history in China. Down the centuries translators, interpreters, Buddhist monks, Jesuit priests, Protestant missionaries, writers, historians, linguists, and even ministers and emperors have all written about translation, and from an amazing array of perspectives.

This second volume of the seminal two-volume anthology spans the thirteenth century CE to the very beginning of the nineteenth century with an entry dated circa 1800. It deals mainly with the transmission of Western learning to China – a translation venture that changed the epistemological horizon and even the mindset of Chinese people. Also included are texts that address translation between Chinese and the languages of China's Central Asian neighbours, such as Manchu, which was to become of crucial importance in the Qing Dynasty.

Comprising 28 passages, most of which are translated into English for the first time here, the anthology is the first major source book of its kind to appear in English. It features valuable primary material, and is essential reading for postgraduate students and researchers working in the areas of Translation, Translation Studies and Asian Studies.

The late **Martha P.Y. Cheung** was Chair, Head of the Translation Programme and Director of the Centre for Translation at Hong Kong Baptist University. She was Editor-in-Chief (Chinese translation) of the *Oxford Children's Encyclopedia* (1998), and Editor-in-Chief (English translation) of *An Illustrated Chinese Materia Medica in Hong Kong* (2004). She also co-edited and co-translated several anthologies, with Jane C.C. Lai and others.

Robert Neather is Associate Professor, Head of the Translation Programme and Director of the Centre for Translation at Hong Kong Baptist University.

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ABOUT THE COMPILER

MARTHA P.Y. CHEUNG received her BA and MPhil from the University of Hong Kong and her PhD in English and American Literature from the University of Kent at Canterbury. She taught English Literature and Translation at the University of Hong Kong and Translation at the Chinese University of Hong Kong before joining Hong Kong Baptist University. She was Chair Professor in Translation, Head of the Translation Programme, and Director of the Centre for Translation at Hong Kong Baptist University.

She served on the editorial boards of a number of prestigious international journals and was Visiting Professor and PhD Supervisor at Sun Yat-sen University in Guangzhou, PRC, Visiting Professor at Sichuan International Studies University and the School of Interpreting and Translation Studies of Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, and Distinguished Visiting Professor and Honorary Director of the Centre for the Study of Translation and Globalization, Faculty of Foreign Languages for Economics and Trade, Southwestern University of Finance and Economics.

She translated many works of Chinese Literature into English, including the work of Han Shaogong and Liu Sola, as well as Hong Kong poets such as Leung Ping Kwan. She co-edited (with Jane C.C. Lai) *An Oxford Anthology of Contemporary Chinese Drama* (1997) and co-translated (with Jane C.C. Lai) *100 Excerpts from Zen Buddhist Texts* (1997). She was Editor-in-Chief (Chinese translation) of the *Oxford Children's Encyclopedia* (9 volumes, 2,082 entries, 1998) and Editor-in-Chief (English translation) of *An Illustrated Chinese Materia Medica in Hong Kong* (506 entries, 2004). She also edited and translated (with Jane C.C. Lai and others) *Hong Kong Collage: Contemporary Stories and Writing* (1998).

Martha Cheung's main research interests included discourse and metadiscourse of translation, the relation between translation theory and the practice of translation, and the changing meanings of the concept of "translation" in different translation traditions. She published numerous works on translation theory, literary translation and translation history, among them *An Anthology of Chinese Discourse on Translation, Volume 1: From Earliest Times to the Buddhist Project* (St Jerome Publishing, 2006) and a Special Issue of *The Translator* titled *Chinese Discourses on Translation: Positions and Perspectives* (2009). She was preparing Volume 2 of the Anthology when she passed away in September 2013.

ABOUT THE EDITOR

ROBERT NEATHER is Associate Professor, Head of the Translation Programme and Director of the Centre for Translation at Hong Kong Baptist University. He received his BA in Chinese from the University of Cambridge, and went on to gain a PhD from there in classical Chinese literature. He also holds a postgraduate diploma in translation from the University of Bath. Before joining Hong Kong Baptist University, he taught translation at the University of Bath and City University of Hong Kong. His research interests include translation in the museum, intersemiotic translation and collaborative translation. He has published on various aspects of these areas in a variety of journals. He is also Co-Chief Editor, with Leo Chan, of the Hong Kong-based journal *Translation Quarterly*.

ABOUT THE TRANSLATORS

The translations in this volume were principally done by the following three translators.

MARTHA P.Y. CHEUNG (see About the Compiler).

JANE C.C. LAI studied at the University of Hong Kong and the University of Bristol. She taught English Literature and Translation at the University of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Baptist University for many years, and is now Honorary Professor of Translation and Honorary Fellow of the Centre for Translation at the Hong Kong Baptist University. She has a long association with the Hong Kong theatre scene, mainly in the area of translation of playscripts for performance. The year 2005 saw the publication of her Chinese translation of nine plays: *After Magritte*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Deadly Ecstasy*, *The House of Bernarda Alba*, *King Lear*, *Long Day's Journey into Night*, *Looking for the Rainbow*, *Oedipus Rex*, *Rockaby*. Another nine, *The Collection*, *Rashomon*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *A View from the Bridge*, *Happy End*, *The Zoo Story*, *Whose Life Is It Anyway?*, *The Maids*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, will be published in 2006. She collaborated with Martha P.Y. Cheung on a number of Chinese–English translations, including *An Oxford Anthology of Contemporary Chinese Drama* (1997), *100 Excerpts from Zen Buddhist Texts* (1997) and *Hong Kong Collage: Contemporary Stories and Writing* (1998), and also translated (with Li Guoqing) *Selected Works of Ba Jin (III): The Cross of Love and other Stories* (2005). She edited *Translation Criticism and Appreciation* (in Chinese, 1996). In 2009, she was awarded the 'Outstanding Translator Award' at the Eighteenth Hong Kong Stage Drama Awards by the Hong Kong Federation of Drama Societies.

CATHY POON, a veteran freelance translator, studied translation at the University of Hong Kong and received her MA from the Chinese University of Hong Kong. She has translated into English *Chinese Ceramic Pillows* (1993), *Chinese Archaic Jades from the Kwan Collection* (1994), *A Child's First Library of Values* (1997), and other books.

During the course of preparing the volume for posthumous publication, additional translation work has also been done by:

CYNTHIA S.K. TSUI, Lecturer in the Translation Programme, Hong Kong Baptist University.

YAU WAI-PING, Associate Professor in the Translation Programme, Hong Kong Baptist University.

PREFACE

When Martha Cheung passed away in September 2013, she left behind two major unfinished projects. The first, her development of the "Pushing Hands" approach to translation and its theorization, was still in its infancy; the second, the completion of her *Anthology of Chinese Discourse on Translation, Volume Two*, was at an advanced stage. Both were innovative and idiosyncratic – in short, they were very "Martha", indelibly imprinted with her personal research vision – and both thus presented a formidable challenge to whoever was to carry them forward. The ways in which this was done differed in each case: while the "Pushing Hands" project found new life in the form of a series of scholarly papers that engaged with – pushed hands with – Martha's idea (*The Pushing-Hands of Translation and its Theory*, ed. Douglas Robinson, Routledge 2016), the Chinese Discourse project required the editing and preparation of a large existing manuscript. The result of that process is the present volume.

Volume Two of the Anthology was originally intended as a much longer work than the present volume, one that would incorporate texts stretching to the final days of the Qing Dynasty and its replacement by the Republican government in 1911. The twenty-eight entries included here represent only a third of the total material Martha left behind, and stop at the very beginning of the nineteenth century with an entry dated circa 1800. These twenty-eight entries were those judged to be in good enough shape to be manageable to bring the volume out within a relatively short time-frame; the remainder, another fifty-six entries – essentially those presenting texts from the nineteenth century – were judged to require considerably more work: more extensive editing and checking, the addition of commentaries and other paratextual material throughout, and would need to be left to a later date. That the twenty-eight more "ready" entries have taken over two years to bring to press – even allowing for the fact that the staff involved often had little free time to work on them – demonstrates the difficulty of taking up and engaging with an unfinished work of this scholarly importance.

The final realization of this volume is a testimony to the power of collaborative effort in overcoming such difficulty. Most of the project coordination duties were taken up by Yau Wai-Ping, who shouldered the considerable burden of organizing members of the Translation Programme staff and overseeing the tasks that they had variously volunteered to handle: these included such items as unfinished portions of translation, missing headnotes and commentaries, addition of footnotes, and checking of existing translations. Wai-Ping generously suggested that I come in during the more advanced stages of the preparation work (a welcome relief, since I had just taken over as Head after Martha's passing and was inundated with the sudden new admin load). When all the particular portions in question had been submitted by members of the team, Wai-Ping and I together began to address the initial editing issues; we were joined by Theo Hermans, who gave crucial assistance and advice and

helped maintain the momentum of the project. In the final months, the baton has passed to me, as originally planned, with Theo assisting till the end.

The process we have been through gives one pause as to the nature of the task in hand. Any act of reading, or translation, in some sense involves a dialogue with an original author – or in this case, scholarly anthologizer – who is no longer physically present. Yet when the work is unfinished, when it contains fragments of thoughts still being formed, or footnotes that peter out, or, in the worst case, handwritten scribbles on a manuscript copy, then that dialogue takes on new dimensions. One is struck, in particular, by the sense of absence, writ large in the comment bubbles that litter the margins of the "Track Changes" version. Sometimes, the sense of a dialogue truncated mid flow is painfully represented, as Martha communicated through the margin comments with her Research Assistants (RAs). One note, for example, ends a query about an incomprehensible phrase in the Source Text with the injunction, "Please check and talk to me about this." The result of that talk is unrecorded. Moreover, though it is addressed to an RA, it becomes a direct address to the editor who reads the note, and who must also check the point in question – but who must solve the problem alone, with no way to report back or find out whether his or her reading of the text in question concurs with the personal view of the original anthologizer. The editor, then, must approach the text with a respect for the original anthologizer's intentions, while not being crippled by a "what if?" mentality.

A single and necessarily in-depth example may suffice to give a sense, at the micro level, of these processes and their textual complexity. Entry 21 presents a text titled "*Taixi renshen shuogai xu*" 泰西人身說概序 ("Preface to *An Abbreviated Treatise from the West on the Human Body*"), by Bi Gongchen, a scholar who died at the very beginning of the Qing Dynasty (1644), in which he discusses the events leading to the publication of the *Taixi Renshen Shuogai*. What was the source text – the original *Abbreviated Treatise* – for this Chinese translation? The question is important since it affects how one interprets a passage of Bi's narrative. Bi recounts how he had previously seen Johann Adam Schall von Bell (1591–1666), a leading Jesuit of the time, and had obtained from him a draft Chinese translation, by Johann Schreck (also known as Terrentius, 1576–1630), of a Western text on anatomy. At the time, Schall had explained that "many books were written on the subject", but that, "as he occupied himself with translating books related to their religion, he had not translated those books. They would have to be dealt with at a later date." Later in the passage, Bi describes writing to Schall on a subsequent occasion and asking him if the "complete translation of the book on the human body" was ready yet. Was Bi referring here to the rest of the book from which Schreck's draft seems to be extracted? Or was he talking about a different work? Classical Chinese is highly compact and was traditionally unpunctuated, with no marking of personal or other names, titles of works and so forth, in addition to various potentially complicating grammatical features such as the lack of plural marking and articles. Thus when the Preface here mentions *ren – shen – quan – shu* 人身全書 (literally: human – body – whole/comprehensive – book), ambiguities arise. Martha had clearly felt this in her own reading. An RA had suggested the phrase be translated as a title. Martha's reply was as follows:

> [You say] that Schall was translating a book entitled *Renshen Quanshu* 《人身全書》. I am inclined to think that the *renshen quanshu* 人身全書 was not a title. *Renshen* 人身 was a short form for *Renshen Shuo* 人身說 [*Treatise on the Human Body*], and *quanshu* 全書 meant the entire book and not just the "two-part

> manuscript" referred to above by Bi. Perhaps you could check info on Schall von Bell to see whether he had been engaged in the translation of that book? Check *Chongzhen Lishu*.

The RA continued the exchange, replying that *renshen quanshu* 人身全書 was, in his view, a book title: it was the book that Schall had expressed a hope of completing during his earlier meeting with Bi. It did not, then, mean simply the remainder of *the same* book (the *Treatise on the Human Body*). Rather, "Schall was showing two different books to Bi. One was left to be translated later, known as *Renshen Quanshu* 《人身全書》 now; and the other was roughly translated in Li Zhizhao's home, which was the one that became *Taixi Renshen Shuogai* 《泰西人身說概》."

What is one to do with this conversation? Attempt to act as independent arbiter, or somehow introduce a third pair of hands into this silent, two-way motion? First, it seemed important to establish whether one source text was in play here, or two – if two, then the "two books" hypothesis would seem likely. The source for *Taixi Renshen Shuogai* (*An Abbreviated Treatise from the West on the Human Body*) has generally been assumed to be Caspar Bauhin's (1560–1624) huge and comprehensive *Theatrum Anatomicum*. Yet what if it was not? It has recently been argued, by Hong Xinglie (Hong 2013), that *Theatrum Anatomicum* cannot be the source (though he is unable to say what could have been). If this assertion is correct, then it may be that the source was another of Bauhin's anatomical works, and one shorter in length – such as *Anatomica Corporis Virilis et Muliebris Historia*, which preceded *Theatrum Anatomicum* by seven years – while *Theatrum Anatomicum* is the book Schall (and Schreck before him) did not have time to translate. Perhaps, then, Schall showed Bi Gongchen a copy of *Theatrum Anatomicum*, but then later showed Bi a different, translated book rendered by Schreck (the *Taixi Renshen Shuogai*, or *Treatise* to which entry 21 gives the Preface).

All this, of course, is just so much scholarly conjecture by an editor come late to the conversation, unable to develop the ideas further through ongoing discussion, but simply pushing hands, as best he can, with someone who can't push back. The lack of a firm conclusion prompts a compromise: "the complete translation of the book on the human body" is left unchanged, in the same "deliberately vague" rendering that Martha mentions earlier on in her margin comment. But the paratexts – the notes and the commentary – are introduced to suggest the possible problems with the phrase, and allow for the other interpretation.

In all this, it is important to remember the composite nature of this kind of text. Martha's original manuscript was already in some sense heteroglossic, involving the presence of multiple players in dialogue together and with Martha in her capacity as compiler, as the above example has shown. Several different RAs, translators and text-preparers worked on the project at different times; all of their interpretations and research have fed into the mix. In the version of the text prepared since Martha's passing, the layering of voices and subjectivities is of course more complex, involving the additional appearance – sometimes brief, sometimes more sustained – of the various Translation Programme staff here at HKBU, most of whom had not previously been involved in the project. The involvement of two Westerners (myself and Theo Hermans) introduces a further element not envisaged by Martha, who had originally intended to keep the project a Chinese-only affair in the hope of gaining a truly Chinese perspective of translation discourse.

The nature of the text before you, then, is inevitably different from what it would have been had Martha lived to complete it herself. And the truncation of a large part of the material

she had intended to include necessarily means that the volume is a slimmer, merely partial expression of her more holistic vision for the project. Perhaps, as Maria Tymoczko has observed of translation, such editing is likewise necessarily a "metonymic" act. We hope that Martha would have approved of this part-for-whole tribute to her scholarship, and that she would have welcomed the continued yet different heteroglossic conversation that this work now represents. We feel sure, at least, that she would have appreciated deeply the devotion to her project that all those involved in bringing it to publication have shown.

Robert Neather

GENERAL INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

There are broad similarities but also significant differences between Volume One of the present *Anthology of Chinese Discourse on Translation* and this second volume. The two volumes differ in size, Volume One containing eighty-two documents, some of them quite short, the present volume featuring just twenty-eight documents, though most are fairly substantial. Although both volumes report on oral interpreting, in Volume One interpreting was seen as facilitating relations between the Chinese state (or states) and neighbouring communities, while here in the second volume interpreting has multilingual empires as its backdrop. In both volumes written translation serves as a means to transmit and negotiate knowledge reaching China from the West, but whereas Volume One charted the arrival of Buddhism from India and lands bordering China to the west and south-west, many of the documents in this second volume concern science and technology coming from much farther west, all the way from Europe, at a time when on land the horse and at sea the sailing ship were still the fastest means of transportation. In both volumes the transmission of ideas is handled by a relatively small number of intermediaries. As was the case in Volume One, this involves the creation or adaptation of a native Chinese vocabulary to accommodate the new concepts, which then have to find their place alongside existing systems of ideas, giving rise in turn to alignments and rivalries both conceptual and social. While Volume One showed Buddhist texts being translated and retranslated over a period of around a thousand years, the frequent retranslations demonstrating the success of the new religion in China, the European texts in the present volume were rendered into Chinese over a mere one hundred and fifty years or so, and few found retranslations. Also, whereas the Buddhist texts were translated from a variety of languages and in many cases the actual source language behind particular versions proved hard to determine, in this second volume, despite Europe's multilingual make-up and cultural diversity, most European books translated into Chinese were originally written in a single language, Latin. Further, in both volumes translation is shown to be a collaborative endeavour involving both oral and written renditions, but instead of the sutra translation assemblies comprising dozens or on occasion even hundreds in Volume One, in the present volume the teams tend to be much smaller. Finally, whereas the discourse on translation in the first volume focused on canons of accuracy, here it typically deals with the practical usefulness of the foreign knowledge being imported.

It is essential at this point to signal a difference of another order between the two volumes. There was no need to repeat the long general introduction to Volume One, since the principles informing the organization and presentation of the entries have remained the same. The difference lies in the perspective from which the overviews preceding the three sections of the present volume are written. The perspective is European, not Chinese. The sources on

which the overviews are based are also non-Chinese. This is primarily a matter of the limited competence of the present writer, but perhaps a degree of justification may also be found in the fact that the bulk of the volume, especially Parts Two and Three, concerns translations resulting from the Jesuit missionary project and its European background. The nature, logistics and evolution of that project will receive attention, as one way of contextualizing the discourse on translation presented in the individual entries.

Theo Hermans