Twentieth-Century Chinese Translation Theory

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Twentieth-Century Chinese Translation Theory: Modes, issues and debates
by Leo Tak-hung Chan

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Modes, issues and debates

Leo Tak-hung Chan

Lingnan University,
Hong Kong

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List of contributors

Evangeline Almberg has a B. A. (Hons) from the University of Hong Kong and a Ph.D. from the University of Stockholm. She is currently a full professor at the University of Macao.

Kelly Kar-yue Chan is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Edinburgh and currently teaches at the Polytechnic University of Hong Kong.

Leo Tak-hung Chan is Head of the Department of Translation, Lingnan University, Hong Kong. His articles have appeared in *TTR, Babel, Across Languages and Cultures* and *The Translator*. His most recent publication is *One into Many: Translation and the Dissemination of Classical Chinese Literature* (Rodopi, 2003).

Chapman Chen currently teaches translation as Assistant Professor at the Department of Chinese and Bilingual Studies at Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

Julie Chiu is Assistant Professor of Translation at Lingnan University. She has published two books of translation and articles on the translation of fantasy novels and modern Chinese free verse. She is presently engaged in research on contemporary "short-short" stories and time in translation.

Gilbert C. F. Fong is Reader/Professor at the Department of Translation, Chinese University of Hong Kong. He translated many plays by Gao Xingjian, published in *The Other Shore* and *Snow in August*. He also edited *Studies on Hong Kong Drama* and *Plays from Hong Kong*, and is Editor of two journals.

Han Yang has a B. A. (Hons.) and a Ph.D. in Linguistics from the University of York, UK. She is currently an Assistant Professor in Language and Translation at the Open University of Hong Kong.

Orlando Nang-kwok Ho has a B. A. (Hons.) from the Chinese University of Hong Kong and a Master's degree from the University of New South Wales. Currently, he is doing part-time teaching at the Open University of Hong Kong.

Sara Ho has a B. A. (Hons) from the City University of Hong Kong and a Master's degree from the Hong Kong Baptist University. Currently, she is doing HRD work in the Hong Kong Housing Authority.

Brian Holton, currently teaching translation at Hong Kong Polytechnic University, has translated many texts into both English and Scots. He is currently translating another book by the contemporary poet Yang Lian, and has recently finished a Scots translation of "The Nine Songs" ("Chu Ci").

George Kao has published a number of Chinese translations under the penname of Qiao Zhigao; most notable among these is that of Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*.

John Tsz-pang Lai has a B. A. (First Class Hons.) and an M.Phil. degree from the University of Hong Kong. Currently, he is a D.Phil. candidate at the University of Oxford.

Matthew W. K. Leung obtained his B. A. (Hons.) (English and Comparative Literature), M. Phil. (Comparative Literature) and M. A. (Language Studies) from the University of Hong Kong. Currently, he is Associate Professor in the Department of Chinese, Translation and Linguistics, City University of Hong Kong.

Rachel Lung Wai-chu obtained a Ph.D. in English Language and Linguistics at the University of Essex, and is now Assistant Professor in the Department of Translation at Lingnan University.

Tan Zaixi has a B. A. degree from Hunan Normal University (People's Republic of China), and a Master's and a Doctorate degree from the University of Exeter (United Kingdom). He teaches translation as a Scholar-in-Residence in the English Department of the Hong Kong Baptist University.

Laurence Wong is Professor and former Head of the Department of Translation at Lingnan University, Hong Kong. His latest publication is a Chinese verse translation of Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

May Wong has a B. A. (Hons.) from the Chinese University of Hong Kong and a Master's degree from the City University of Hong Kong. Currently, she is a Public Relations Officer at a commercial firm and teaching part-time at the Open University of Hong Kong.

Yau Wai Ping obtained his B. A. and M.Phil. from the University of Hong Kong, and his Ph.D. from the Hong Kong Baptist University. He taught translation at Lingnan University and is currently Co-ordinator of the translation program at the School of Professional and Continuing Education, University of Hong Kong.

Priscilla Yip, a court interpreter with the Hong Kong Government, is currently studying for her M. A. at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Wai-lim Yip, intercultural poet, translator, critic, theorist, and East/West comparatist, has published more than 40 books in English and Chinese. He has been Professor of Chinese/ Comparative Literature at the University of California at San Diego since 1967.

Preface

Initially, this book grew out of an interest in systematically analyzing the history of translation theory in modern China. The study of metatextual material (like theory and criticism) helps us understand the norms upheld by a certain society at given points in time, and in recent years it has attracted the attention of translation scholars and teachers. The importance of knowing more about the history of translation theory is that it allows us to see through the surface features of translated texts, providing information that will support, or compel us to revise, our hypotheses. There are different concerns in different periods, as witnessed, for instance, by the perennial debate on the proper way to translate poetry, especially with regard to formal matters like rhymes and metrical patterns. In different periods different answers have been posed, and actual translations must be seen as responding to the multiplicity of positions advanced by the theorists. This fact is borne out nowhere else more clearly than in the various methods used by Chinese translator-poets to render meter through the course of the twentieth century.

Theoretical debates, of course, also reveal broader political concerns and are not necessarily concerned only with the practicalities of translation. For one obvious example: the fierce disputes between Lu Xu and Liang Shiqiu need to be viewed against the backdrop of rivalries between the Left-league Writers and the Crescent Moon Society in the 1930s. It could be said, in fact, that what happened *behind* the theories is more fascinating than the theories themselves. Indeed, the controversy over whether translation is as much an act of creation as original writing reflects the struggle on the part of translators to gain respectability, first in the 1930s and then again in the 1990s. Judging by the fact that the arguments, vehemently presented by both sides, are still heard even today, evidently the battle has not yet been won.

One thing highlighted by the present anthology of translated essays is that translation theories seldom exist independently. Most have to confront oppositions of one kind or another, so that a fruitful way of studying the history of translation theory to see how ideas are dialectically juxtaposed, as well as how this affects practicing translators who constantly have to choose between

alternatives. Anthony Pym has put this succinctly in *Method of Translation History*: "In principle, since no one theorizes just to state the obvious, each individual theory or act of theorization should find at least one counterpart somewhere" (p.129). For translation scholars, one might add, the translation theories propounded through the centuries revolve around possible choices more than likely solutions.

Naturally, in contrast to elements of contention and disagreement, we should also notice some attempts at reconciliation or resolution. For instance, Lin Yutang sought to bypass the distinction between literal and sense-translation with his theory of sentence-for-sentence translation. However, in the poststructuralist and postmodernist times that we happen to inhabit, a universally agreed theory of translation may not be possible, or even desirable. Consequently, the chances are that we will continue to live — but thrive — between the polar opposites of translation and creation; literalism and liberalism; foreignization and domestication; translation as art and as science; formal and spiritual resonance; and so on and so forth.

Two caveats. Some readers going through Part II of this book might think that certain articles ought to be included in a different debate than the one they are presently allotted to. For instance, in the final part of Sun Zhili's article on "Some Thoughts on Building Our Nation's Translation Theory" (included in "Translation Theory for China"), the author expounds at some length on the "Science vs. Art" debate. Several articles, too, are at least partially concerned with the controversy over literal and sense-translation, though they do not belong to Section E. In allotting the 38 articles to the eight different sections, however, the primary concern has been to show how each debate has evolved through a number of articles that were historically connected, in the sense that some were actually written in response to others that preceded them. Other readers might think that certain articles have been inadvertently left out. The truth of the matter, however, is that while a more comprehensive selection could have been made, one wonders if that is at all advisable at this stage of the game.

The four essays that constitute Part I of this book are revised from the following articles I previously published: "What's 'Modern' in Chinese Translation Theory? Lu Xun and the Debates on Literalism and Foreignization in the May Fourth Period," *TTR: Traduction, Terminologie, Redaction* 14.2 (2001), pp.195–223; "Translation Studies in Hong Kong-China and the Impact of 'New Translation Theories,'" in *Translation in Hong Kong: Past, Present and Future*, edited by Chan Sin-wai (Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong

Kong Press, 2001), pp.157–74; "'Colonization,' Resistance, and the Uses of Postcolonial Theories for Translation in Twentieth-Century China," in *Changing the Terms: Translating in the Postcolonial Era*, edited by Paul St. Pierre and Sherry Simon (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2000), pp. 53–70; and "The Impressionistic Approach to Translation Theorizing; or, Twentieth-Century Chinese Ideas of Translation through the Western Looking-Glass," in *Translation as Intercultural Communication*, edited by Mary Snell-Hornby, Zuzana Jettmarová and Klaus Kaindl (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co., 1995), pp.57–66. Two translations originally appeared elsewhere: Yen Fu's "General Remarks on Translation," *Renditions* 1 (autumn 1973): 4–6 (tr. C. Y. Hsu); and Ch'ien Chung-shu's "Lin Ch'in-nan Revisited," *Renditions* 3 (autumn 1975): 8–21 (tr. George Kao). I wish to thank the publishers concerned for permission to use or reprint them.

Offering indispensable help in the preparatory stage of the book is a longtime friend and colleague, Paul Levine, without whom this project might not have taken off at all. I hope the final product has not fallen far too short of his expectations. I am especially indebted to the twenty translators, all of whom exercised the utmost patience during the three years in which the book was looking for a publisher. Among those to whom I am grateful for timely help and expert advice are: Chu Chi-yu, Eugene Eoyang, Luo Xuanmin, Sherry Simon, Mary Snell-Hornby and Xu Jun. I am glad this book has finally found a niche where it can feel truly comfortable. For this I have to thank Professor Gideon Toury, Editor of the Benjamins Translation Library; the two anonymous reviewers, who spotted many an omission or repetition; and Isja Conen, who ensured smooth sailing for the manuscript after it was accepted for publication.

Part I

Chapter 1

The traditional approach: Impressionistic theories

Much of the current evaluation of Chinese translation theory has tended toward one of two extremes: either it has been valorized as belonging to a distinctive, separate tradition, so that any attempt to seek Western equivalents can only be futile, or it has been denigrated as lacking in analytical depth and philosophical insight as compared with Western translation theory. There is some truth in both of these views, though difference does not need to be equated with inferiority or, for that matter, superiority. Speaking of the distinctiveness of Chinese views of translation, it is a well-known fact that in China, translation has for centuries been regarded as a marginal, if not trivial, activity. St. Jerome's (346?–420) belief that translations can be used to expropriate ideas from another culture to enrich one's own would have found little favor with the Chinese. Chinese thinking on translation remained for some time strongly influenced by an attitude which saw the target culture as infinitely superior, and hence not quite the "recipient" — until the tables were turned at the beginning of the twentieth century.

As for the criticism that Chinese translation is deficient in analytical rigor, it must be admitted that many Chinese translation theorists are prone to vague, impressionistic assertions concerning translations. That is the case with the early Buddhist translator-theorists working in the second to the tenth centuries, with the seventeenth and eighteenth-century Christian converts who translated religious and scientific writings from the West, and even with the early twentieth-century theorist Yan Fu (1854–1921), whose "three principles of translation" practically set the perimeters for present-day discussions on translation in China. This impressionistic bent is evidenced in the direct borrowing of terminology from the discourse of traditional literary criticism, presumably in the absence of existing terms for the description of translated works. It is not until the extensive importation of Western linguistic parlance since the 1960s that a more systematic, and less subjective, analysis of the translational process is made possible.

What this scenario reveals in effect is that, up until recently, intuitive judgements concerning translations often formed the basis for theory. This showed itself in a proclivity to theorize with reference to "good" translations as opposed to "bad" ones. Before the linguistic approaches of theorists like J. C. Catford and Eugene Nida came to China, there was in Chinese translation theory less emphasis on the translation process — on what happens in interlingual transfer — than on the quality of the product itself, and on what constituted a good translation. For James Holmes, translation theory is distinct from criticism in that theory is concerned with evolving principles and models, not "in describing existing translations, observed translation functions" (Holmes 1988: 73), whereas criticism always focuses on translated texts and inevitably entails an element of subjectivity.[1] If that is the case, was much of the discussion that passed for translation theory in China actually translation criticism? Or was this a theory that focused more on description and evaluation of the product than on analysis of processes? I propose to address these issues below, through a study of the key ideas propounded by noted translation theorists of the first half of the twentieth century, among them Yan Fu, Fu Lei (1908–1966), and Qian Zhongshu (1910–).

Yan Fu's "three principles"

Yan Fu's three principles — fidelity (*xin*), fluency (*da*) and elegance (*ya*)[2] — were widely accepted as essential criteria for understanding translations ever since their appearance almost a century ago in Yan's preface to his own translation of T. H. Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics* (1898). They have also become the fundamental tenets of twentieth-century Chinese translation theory. Though there have been attempts to remove "elegance" from the list or replace it with other principles, the importance of fidelity and fluency has gone pretty much unchallenged. Perhaps these three principles are best defined by Yan himself, rather than by the multitude of translation theorists in his wake who sought to extract other meanings from them:

> Translation involves three requirements difficult to fulfill: fidelity (*xin*), fluency (*da*) and elegance (*ya*). Fidelity is difficult enough to attain but a translation that is faithful but not fluent is no translation at all. Fluency is therefore of prime importance. Since China's opening to foreign trade by sea, there has been no lack of interpreters and translators. But if you assign them any book to translate and tell them to meet these two requirements, few can do so.[3]

It is easy to see the degree to which fidelity, elegance, and especially fluency are terms of an evaluative nature, and indeed Yan Fu proceeded in his treatise to critique his own translation of Huxley. He noted how much he had tampered with the original text in the interest of fluency: he freely added to or deleted from it, since to him the translation should not be unnecessarily constrained by the linguistic structures of the source text. For a brief while it appears that he was privileging fluency over and above the other two terms of reference, though a little later on he observed that, while there should be room for the translator to re-create, this was nevertheless "not the right way of doing a translation." Hence, to cut short the ongoing debate on whether Yan Fu regarded fidelity or fluency as the more central criterion, we need to note that, in principle (as against even his own actual practice), he stood on the side of fidelity to the original. In so doing, Yan Fu falls squarely within the tradition of the majority of Bible translator-theorists in the West, for whom faithfulness, or respect for the source text, was to be defended as a virtue.

For some years there have been rather harsh criticisms of Yan Fu's theory of translation, most of them directed against his principle of elegance, and some against that of fidelity. Several scholars underlined the uselessness of "elegance" as an analytical term, and asserted that Yan Fu had included it in his tripartite model simply because he wanted to suggest that the ornate classical prose style of the Tongcheng school, in which *Evolution and Ethics* was translated, was the best language for translations.[4] Now that such period tastes have become outmoded (and plainer styles preferred), so should the criterion of elegance. Others, eager to elevate the criterion of fluency, argued that the pursuit of embellishment in translations can be subsumed under "fluency," since whatever style is chosen, the main goal is still to attract readers to the translation. A fluent style could serve the purpose even better than an elegant one. In fact, one problem with both terms, elegance as much as fidelity — or even fluency — is their lack of specificity, which weakens considerably their use as analytical tools; there are as many interpretations of them as there are theorists who choose to talk about them. As will be made apparent below, such vagueness of reference can be seen in several other recurrent terms in Chinese translation theory.

While Yan Fu's ideas have by and large provided the framework for Chinese thinking about translation in the twentieth century, a little observed fact is that there was an alternative approach to translation theory at the end of the nineteenth century, expounded by the leading philologist of the time and Yan's contemporary, Ma Jianzhong (1845–1900). While spending the greater part of

his time writing a voluminous grammar of the Chinese language based on borrowed Western grammatical categories,[5] Ma presented "A Proposal for the Establishment of a Translation Bureau" in 1894. In this treatise he adumbrates an approach to translation drawing on the insights of what must be termed (in hindsight) contrastive linguistics. For Ma, in order to succeed at his task, the translator needs to analyze with the minutest care the source and target languages. By placing together for comparison individual words and sentences from the two languages, he seeks to identify the causes for similarities and differences in expression. He stresses that only after thoroughly understanding the original should one proceed to translate.

Ma Jianzhong differs markedly from Yan Fu in his emphasis on close textual analysis and his valorization of the literal method in translation. Set in contrast to Ma, Yan Fu appears more of a proponent of latitude in translation — although he does, as we noted above, concede that fidelity is something not to be disregarded. Of course, Ma's attention to the language of the original (and that of the translation) did at times go to exaggerated lengths. With philological enthusiasm he encouraged the translator to pay special heed to the etymologies of words, as well as semantic changes over time. Nevertheless, one will not have been amiss in viewing Ma Jianzhong as the first of a line of Chinese linguists who actively enlisted the aid of Western linguistics to explicate Chinese grammar and syntax. He is virtually the pioneer of Chinese translation theorists who adopt a language-oriented approach to translation, focusing on equivalence in translation. Unfortunately, however, the rise to prominence of Yan Fu's three principles was paralleled by the neglect paid to Ma's ideas through the twentieth century. The linguistic turn was one that Chinese translation theory was slow to take; it did not occur until after mid-century, when theorists like Liu Miqing and Jin Di appeared on the scene.[6]

Fu Lei's "spiritual resonance"

Meanwhile, the stock of impressionistic terminology with an evaluative coloring continued to expand. Another widely used term in twentieth-century Chinese translation theory is Fu Lei's "spiritual resonance" (*shensi*). To many, Fu Lei had released the discussion of translation from the constraints imposed by Yan Fu's three principles with his introduction of this principle in 1951, in his preface to his second rendition of Honorè de Balzac's *Le Père Goriot*. Fu left no doubt that his was a term appropriated from traditional Chinese aesthetics,

a term associated in particular with painting criticism. According to him, "In terms of effect, translation, like imitation in painting, should be in search of resemblance in spirit rather than in form."[7] "Formal resonance" (*xingsi*) is, for translation scholars brought up on Western linguistics, much the same as "formal equivalence." But it is clear that Fu Lei's use of the term was more vague, and he merely intended it to refer to whatever is not "spiritual resonance," the paired but opposed term. The two terms only set up a continuum of sorts with an evaluative prejudice, since the rendering of the spirit is adjudged to be infinitely superior to that of, if we may, the "body."

Other than the evaluative bent, Fu Lei's terms suffer also from a looseness of reference. In fact, "spiritual resonance" has remained perennially enigmatic. Like Yan's three terms, it has kept theorists busy hunting for exact connotations for decades, without coming any closer even today (as fifty years ago) to a grasp of its precise implications. Innovative as it may seem at first sight, when understood in context, this concept has an ancestry traceable back to discussions of "spiritual assonance" (*shenyun* or *fengyun*) in the 1920s and 30s. At the time these terms were most often bandied about by poetry translators like Guo Moruo (1892–1978), translator of Shelley and Goethe, and Zhu Shenghao (1912–1944), translator of Shakespeare. Guo Moruo's discussion of "the achievement of spiritual assonance in translation" in an article he published in 1922 is especially pertinent to the present discussion. For him:

> The translator of poetry does not exercise his skill through checking up the dictionary for others, nor does he act as if he is deciphering telegrams at the telegraph office. The life of poetry resides in an inherent musical spirit. . . . If we simply translate poems literally, then we turn out translations not of an artist, but of a linguist (Chen 1992: 268).[8]

Two telling points are conveyed by this passage. First, in spite of the fact that Guo Moruo shows a keen concern for translating the essential spirit of a work of art, he still offers little help in clarifying the meaning of the term "spirit" — which for him seems largely a matter of rhyme and metre. Second, Guo appears again to be mounting an assault on the linguistic approach, this time through a disparagement of the linguist's concern for capturing the literal meaning, or "semantic equivalence" in contemporary translation terminology.

The painter/translator comparison, as well as the dichotomy stipulated between the outward "form" and the inward "soul" of a literary work, reminds us how closely this school of Chinese translation thinking resembles that of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Western translation theorists like John

Dryden (1630–1700) and Alexander Frazer Tytler (1747–1814). For example, Tytler — whose theories were introduced to the Chinese through Zheng Zhenduo (1898–1958) in an article, "How to Translate Literary Texts" (1921) — has said that, even without using the same colors, the translator has to give his picture the same force and effect of the source text, to re-capture the "soul" of the author. Yet this is not to suggest any direct Western influence on Chinese translation theory; quite on the contrary, a term like "conveying the spirit" has occurred in as ancient a Chinese text as the *Book of Changes*, and terms like "spiritual assonance" have for centuries figured prominently in the poetry-talk (or poetry criticism) tradition.[9] Hence one would be missing the mark if one attempted to re-cast Fu Lei's ideas in modern Western linguistic discourse. To re-interpret "spiritual resonance" as equivalent to Eugene Nida's theory of "dynamic equivalence," for instance, serves little more than delimit the field of reference of Fu's term. As is typical of critical terminology used in twentieth-century Chinese translation theory, their vagueness is also partly the cause of their continued relevance.[10]

Qian Zhongshu's "realm of transformation"

In common with Yan Fu's three principles and Fu Lei's all important aesthetic criterion, Qian Zhongshu's "realm of transformation" (*huajing*) describes what an ideal translation is like, differentiates the good translation from the bad, and contains hidden echoes of similar terminology from traditional Chinese poetics and art criticism. Qian's critical term is marked by even greater imprecision in that it simply posits a state that the successful translation is supposed to have reached, and which is out of bounds to poorer translations. Unlike his predecessors, however, Qian does not define the "realm of transformation" through a critical discussion of his own work. In his seminal article on Lin Shu (1852–1924), renowned translator of Charles Dickens, Walter Scott and Rider Haggard, Qian began by talking briefly about the etymological and semantic associations of the Chinese character *yi* ("to translate"), to which I shall return in a moment.[11] Then he explained what he meant by "transformation":

> The highest standard in literary translation is *hua*, transforming a work from the language of one country into that of another. If this could be done without betraying any evidence of artifice by virtue of divergences in language and speech habits, while at the same time preserving intact the flavor of the original, then we say that such a performance has attained *huajing,* "the ultimate of transmutation." (Luo 1984: 696)

Lest the sources of Qian Zhongshu's theory be thought of as completely Chinese, especially given the Buddhist and Daoist overtones carried by the term "transformation," one needs to be reminded that Qian's immediate sources were in fact Western. In a footnote, he said that a similar criterion was posited in the seventeenth century by the French scholar George Savile, First Marquess of Halifax, and then in the twentieth century by the German scholar Wilamowitz-Mollendorff, as well as the French poet Paul Valéry. In this way Qian's ideas become clothed in a cross-cultural guise. The metaphor that Qian proposed for this kind of perfect translation is the transmigration of souls (again a phrase with Buddhist associations), wherein the body undergoes a transformation, but the "soul" is retained. This may sound oddly similar to Fu Lei's "spiritual resonance," yet Qian's theory of transformation is hardly a variant version of Fu's. As Qian's detailed analysis of Lin Shu's translations later on in the essay shows, this transformation can take sundry forms, producing translations that are immensely successful while differing on the surface from the original.

Hence, to say that Qian Zhongshu's "realm of transformation" remains very much an impressionistic jargon and not of much analytic utility is not to belittle Qian's contribution as a translation theorist. At the very least the idea of transformation implies that the translator can have great laxity as well as latitude as he carries out his task. Qian, too, defines the function of a "good" translation differently from theorists before him, in a way that renders his theory of transformation relevant and usable. For him, "a good translation annihilates itself" (qtd. in Luo 1984: 698); by enhancing readers' interest in the original, it encourages them to seek out the source text, leaving the translation behind. By contrast, a bad translation "annihilates the original"; the reader will not want to read either. In his role as mediator between the original and the translation, the translator uses all the energies and skills at his disposal to effect a successful transformation. By thus re-orienting the perspective of the translator, Qian opens the door to the possibility that the translated text can be an improvement on the original, and the translator can exercise judgements as to how his source text can best be translated.

With Qian Zhongshu's notion of total transformation, of the original text being "reborn" as a translation, we also come very close to a contemporary Western conception of the autonomy of the translated text which lives a life of its own, and which may even bring the original work to completion. Jacques Derrida, the West's leading deconstructionist, has incidentally remarked that "transformation" is a term that he believes should replace "translation":

> In the limits to which it is possible or at least *appears* possible, translation practices the difference between signified and signifier. But if this difference is never pure, no more so is translation, and for the notion of translation we would have to substitute a notion of *transformation*: a regulated transformation of one language by another, of one text by another. (Derrida 1981: 240)

For his part, Qian Zhongshu sought to rationalize the connection between "translating" and "transforming" by recourse to some verbal antics. German readers are already familiar with the semantic links between *Übersetzung* on the one hand, and transfer/ transport on the other, while Italians can ponder with bemusement the maxim, *Traduttore, traditore*. For Qian, the Chinese character for "translation" (*yi*) has etymological and associative connections with the characters for "seduction" (*you*), "error" (*e*), "mediator" (*mei*), and "transformation" (*hua*). These express precisely for him the manifold aspects of translation: the translator seeks to seduce the reader, to lure him to the original; the translator is always liable to errors in crossing from one language to another, from one culture to another; and of course the translator "transforms." And so, like his Western counterparts, Qian forges linkages between terms, which he then uses to build his theory.[12] (One thinks in this context of how Eugenio Donato has taken advantage of the fact that *Übersetzung* has as one of its senses "leaping over an abyss" to make his point on "specular translation" [see McDonald 1985: 127]).

The purpose of the foregoing discussion, however, has not been to argue for convergences between Chinese and Western thinking about translation as a process of cultural and linguistic transfer, but to define the impressionistic elements in twentieth-century Chinese translation theory with greater precision. This I have done by looking at five central concepts, and on the whole it appears that, while comparisons at every point can be made with Western theories, Chinese theorists have very much gone their own way in that they have manipulated terms derived from traditional Chinese poetics in general and painting criticism in particular, to describe a realm of activity that suffered initially through its marginal status. The choice of terminology, however, reflects a special Chinese emphasis on evaluating (rather than describing or analyzing) the translated product impressionistically; discussions of translation almost invariably begin by proposing ways of "telling the good translations from the bad ones." The preference for evaluation, together with the overall de-emphasis of the linguistic approach, and the blurring of the lines of demarcation between theory and criticism, are perhaps the distinguishing hallmarks of a body of translation theory propounded in China in the twentieth century.

Postscript

As the century turns, a new phase in the discussion of the impressionistic jargon in Chinese translation theory seems to be emerging, almost as a reaction against decades of Western-dominated translation thinking — or perhaps as a rebound from the decades-long disparagement of traditional theories. On the one hand, there is a deep feeling that the concepts of "faithfulness," "fluency," "elegance," etc., have been misrepresented, and that a return to origins — particularly what was involved in the translation of Buddhist sutras — may help eliminate the obfuscation. Indeed, readers not acquainted with the Chinese situation may view the whole debate about terminology as muddled and unnecessary. It is in this context that the work of Zhu Zhiyu (see Zhu 2001: 3–8), especially his re-examination of the core meanings of terms like "spiritual resemblance" and "realm of transformation," assumes significance. Debates at conferences and symposia between traditionalists and Western-trained theoreticians are still fierce and appear to admit of no easy resolution, reflecting a growing recognition that a more accurate presentation of impressionistic theories is in order.

On the other hand, a younger generation of scholars are making brave attempts to reinvigorate the hackneyed scholarly discussion of translation by resorting to the full range of impressionistic terms available, and by exploring the possibility of utilizing them in the exegesis of translated texts. Of special note is the work of Liu Huawen, who, by bringing in an array of aesthetic terms centering around *shen* (spirit), *qi* (ether) and *xing* (form), exemplifies the power of "impressionistic" terms in explicating the relationship between the translator and his Other (Liu 2002: 95–112). She does this through a detailed analysis of several translations of a famous poem from the Tang dynasty. What she says at the conclusion of her article is tantamount to a defense of traditional Chinese translation theories and their applicability to a twenty-first-century environment:

> In reflecting on the issue of aesthetic response in translation, I came to realize that, although traditional Chinese translation theory can be subsumed under *anben* (basing on the original), *qiuxin* (searching for fidelity), *shenhua* (aiming to be imbued with the spirit) and *huajing* (attaining the realm of transformation), it is not adequately covered by these broad terms. We see only the tip of an iceberg, since traditional Chinese translation theory is grounded on traditional theorizing about literary writing developed through the centuries. Even though Chinese translation theory puts a premium on intuitive experience rather than abstract

> reasoning, empathetic response rather than logical thinking, it nonetheless is based on a rich crop of critical literary theory, and should therefore not be slighted. (Liu 2002: 110)

Notes

1. These can be considered hallmarks of Descriptive Translation Studies, an approach that has garnered increasing interest among translation scholars since the 1970s. The demarcation of criticism as belonging to the "applied" branch of research, as an enterprise separate from theory, is a central concern for this School. For a comprehensive discussion, see Toury (1995, esp. Part 2). In such terms, much of twentieth-century Chinese translation theory can be designated as "traditional."

2. Yan's three principles have been variously translated; readers are referred to Part II of this anthology. The three translations adopted here are chosen because they can be readily understood by those familiar with the current Western discourse on translation theory. "Fluency" is used in the sense that Lawrence Venuti intends it to mean in Venuti (1995). For him it is the dominant strategy in translation in the West since the seventeenth century.

3. See the first paragraph of Yan's "Preface to *Tianyanlun*" as translated in Part II of this book.

4. Among those who suggested doing without "elegance" is Qu Qiubai, for whom this criterion is counter-productive and undermines the effectiveness of the other two criteria. For Frederick Tsai, another prominent twentieth-century translation theorist, it can be replaced with "adequacy" (*tie*) (see Tsai 1972: 18–19).

5. For an extended discussion of Ma's Grammar, see Shen (1992: 180–218).

6. There is a significant Western influence on both Liu and Jin. Liu's *Present-Day Translation Studies* (Liu 1993) is one of the more influential books on translation theory written for a Chinese readership. In 11 chapters it deals with "translation as a discipline," "a model for Chinese translation theory," "translatability and untranslatability," "the aesthetics of translation," "the translation of style," and so forth. The contrastive linguistics background that informs Liu's discussion throughout is made evident in his detailed references to the ideas of Western linguists like Saussure, Humboldt and Martinet, among others. Ji Di collaborates with Eugene Nida in writing *On Translation* (Jin and Nida 1984), a popular text used in university courses on translation theory.

7. For Fu Lei's ideas on translation, see Fu (1981). For a recent study of the various aspects of his life and work, see Serena Jin, ed. *Fu Lei yu tade shijie* (Hong Kong: Joint Publishing Co., 1994).

8. For a discussion of Guo Moruo's views, see Chen (1992: 262–72).

9. Wong Wai-leung has traced the use of impressionistic critical terms in discussions of traditional Chinese poetry. For him, many of the terms are used descriptively and evaluatively, and analytical terms are scarce (see Wang 1976, esp. Chap.3). For a more extensive consideration of similar aesthetic terms as well as their recommended English

translations — like *fenggu* (forceful style), *xianqing* (leisurely sentiments), *wenrou* (gentleness), *qu* (oblique style) and *yijing* (poetic state) — see Deeney (1994, esp. 87–98, 107–14). On the merging of "formal resonance" with "spiritual resonance," see Deeney (1994: 59).

10. Among those who have registered their dissatisfaction with "spiritual resonance" is Huang Yushi (Huang 1995: 285).

11. See Qian's "The Translations of Lin Shu" in Part II of this anthology.

12. There are other semantic links mentioned by Qian that may be of some interest: *yi* has been defined by traditional Chinese philologists as referring to the "transmission of the language of the barbarians, of birds and beasts"; *fan* refers to "the turning-around of a piece of embroidered silk," so that everything faces the opposite direction. One may add that one of the homophones for *yi* also means "to change."