Introduction

Translating China for Western Readers
in the Context of Globalization

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In the worldwide context of globalization, translation has played an increasingly important role in the cultural exchanges between different cultures, nations, and regions. As globalization has brought China into the global village via the World Trade Organization, the demand for translated Chinese texts has been on the rise for both commercial and cultural reasons. However, due to the radical differences between Chinese and Western languages, and the difficulties involved in mastering the Chinese language, Chinese-Western translation has been dominated by an overwhelmingly one-way flow, especially in the domains of literature, art, and cultural studies. In China, most Western texts that are fundamental to Western traditions from pre-Socratic times to the present have been rendered into Chinese; even popular fictional works like the Harry Potter series and *The Da Vinci Code* were translated into Chinese soon after their publication in the West. By contrast, in the West, only a small number of Chinese texts have been rendered into Western languages, including English. Many works of the most important Chinese thinkers and writers in history, especially those on premodern subjects or works on topics related to classical Chinese materials, remain untranslated into any Western languages.

Here I offer one example to illustrate this situation. Li Zehou is arguably the most celebrated philosopher and aesthetician in twentieth-century China, one who has enjoyed among Chinese intellectuals a national reputation comparable to that of Raymond Williams in England and of Jean-Paul Sartre in France. He is not unknown to the West, as he was

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elected a fellow of the International Institute of Philosophers in Paris in 1988 and taught Chinese philosophy and aesthetics in various institutions of higher learning in the United States. And comparatively speaking, he is perhaps the most translated Chinese thinker in the West. But of his twenty-odd books that have captivated Chinese intellectuals and common people alike and exerted an enduring influence upon Chinese academia and society since the late 1950s, only his three books on aesthetics have been translated into English,[1] while his masterpiece, *A Critique of Critical Philosophy: A Study of Kant* (1979), remains untouched by any Western language. This case reveals the degree of difficulty in translating Chinese texts into Western languages and offers special insight into the unsatisfactory situation of such translation: While those who are equipped with knowledge of Chinese tradition and culture lack mastery of Western languages, those who are fluent in both Chinese and Western languages do not have the necessary theoretical and technical preparation to tackle a philosopher's text. The same dilemma applies to translations of Chinese texts in literature, art, history, and religion, especially those of premodern periods.

In the field of translation from Chinese into Western languages, there is an interesting reversal of popularity in choosing materials for translation between modern and premodern texts. Half a century ago, not many scholars would have taken an interest in translating modern and contemporary Chinese materials, with the result that most of the Chinese translations that had appeared in the West, especially in the domains of literature, were of premodern texts. As the preface to the first anthology dedicated to Chinese translation studies, *Translating Chinese Literature* (1995), notes, "In the case of Chinese literature, it almost appeared as if those who translated it had no interest in the present-day Chinese."[2] But the situation has totally changed. Since the late 1980s, modern Chinese literary works have been translated into Western languages in quick succession, especially in the genre of fiction. Now available in Western languages are the fictional works by internationally renowned writers like Gao Xingjian, Mo Yan, Su Tong, Yu Hua, and Jiang Rong, as well as lesser-known authors. Mo Yan's major works were translated into English and other Western languages before the conferment of his recent Nobel Prize for literature. In fact, the translations of his works made a decisive contribution to his winning the ultimate honor in the field of literary creation. The rapid appearance of modern Chinese translations seems to confirm a tendency for translators (especially young ones) to turn away from classical Chinese texts to modern texts. Taking a brief look at the

available Chinese texts in Western languages in the past twenty years or so, we easily notice that the number of modern texts, especially Chinese fictional works, greatly outnumbers that of premodern texts. The reversal of the trend in translation is, of course, largely due to the rising interest of Westerners in the tremendous changes that have taken place in China since the late 1970s, but there is also another scholarly factor. Once at a conference on translation, I raised a simple question to an internationally renowned translator of Chinese literature: Why do more and more translators of Chinese culture nowadays shy away from translating classical Chinese texts? He enumerated several reasons. One of them is that translating premodern Chinese texts is much more demanding than translating modern texts, as the former requires much greater preparation in the classical Chinese language, historical background knowledge, and techniques for rendering classical Chinese terms, concepts, ancient customs, and traditional institutions, among other aspects. Indeed, while someone with a good command of the modern Chinese language and a Western language is potentially capable of turning modern Chinese texts into a translation in that Western language, a successful translation of premodern texts requires one to be a good scholar of premodern Chinese culture familiar with the complicated scholarly apparatuses of traditional texts in addition to having mastery of the Chinese language and a target Western language. The recent successful translation of Li Zehou's *The Chinese Aesthetic Tradition* (华夏美学) (University of Hawaii Press, 2010) testifies to the soundness of this observation.[3] As Li Zehou's book is a magisterial synthesis of the Chinese aesthetic tradition in relation to modern Western aesthetic theories, only a translator equipped with adequate knowledge of both the Chinese and Western aesthetic traditions is capable of successfully rendering the book into a Western language.

The Genesis of This Volume

To meet the challenges of China's growing desire to develop a literary and intellectual presence in keeping with its emergence as an economic powerhouse in the world and to address the theoretical and practical difficulties in translating Chinese texts into Western languages, the Center for Translation Studies and the Confucius Institute at the University of Texas at Dallas jointly held on April 6–8, 2009, in Dallas, Texas, an international symposium on the translation of Chinese culture and art with the title "Translating China into the West." Although its major goal was to focus

on a broad range of topics, among them the translation into Western languages of premodern and modern Chinese poetry, fiction, intellectual thought, and the theory and craft of translation as these appear in various aspects of culture and art, the organizers deliberately made it a priority to tackle the difficulties of translating premodern Chinese texts for Western readers. For this purpose, we made a special effort to invite scholars who are specialists in premodern Chinese literature, thought, and culture. The title of the symposium seems somewhat enigmatic but duly reflects the major concerns of the symposium. First, in the title, both "China" and "the West" are not used in their literal sense but in a rhetorical sense. They are synecdochic representations of Chinese and Western texts. Second, the title reflects the contemporary concern with translation as a means of bridging the gap between cultures. It calls for fusing the horizons of East and West by means of translation. Third, it reflects a theoretical and practical concern with the dichotomy between invention and translation, the reception and reciprocity of translation, and the naturalization of source texts in the cultural milieu of the target language. In a word, it seeks to capture in a figurative way the theme of the symposium, duly reflected in the title of the present volume: *Translating China for Western Readers.*

The symposium gathered together a dozen internationally renowned scholars and creative writers from countries and regions around the world, including China, Germany, England, Canada, Sweden, Hong Kong, and various universities in the United States. It lasted for two days with eight sessions. Session 1 was entitled "Reflections on Chinese Translation." Wolfgang Kubin (Bonn University) presented "Translators in Brackets or Random Thoughts about Translation Work," and Tony Barnstone (Whittier College) presented "The Three Paradoxes of Literary Translation: On Translating Chinese Poetry for Form." Session 2 was on "Translation and History." Michael Nylan (University of California, Berkeley) presented "Translating Texts in Chinese History and Philosophy," and Wang Ning (Tsinghua University) presented "Translating Chinese Literature: Decanonization and Recanonization." Session 3 was on "Principles of Translation." Chung-ying Cheng (University of Hawaii) presented "Hermeneutic Principles of Understanding as the Logical Foundation of Translation," and Bonnie McDougall (University of Edinburgh and the Chinese University of Hong Kong) presented "Reciprocity in Translation Relationships." Session 4 was on "Techniques of Translation." Martin Svensson Ekström (Stockholm University) presented "*Trans-latio*, or Does the Metaphor Translate?" and Fusheng Wu (University of Utah) presented "Reflections on Translating Medieval Chinese Panegyric Poetry." Session 5 was on

"Poetry Reading and Translation by a Poet." Fiction writer and poet Shi Yu (Fujian Normal University) presented "Personal Poems, Personal Translations," and Xuanchuan Liu (China Three Gorges University) and Joan Mortensen (University of Texas at Dallas) jointly presented "Poetry Translation: Some Random Thoughts." Session 6 was on "Translation: A Cross-Cultural Perspective." Frederick Turner, professor and poet (University of Texas at Dallas), presented "Translating the Tang Poets: A Personal View," and Ming Dong Gu (University of Texas at Dallas) presented "Translation as Discovery: The Role of Chinese Translations in American Modernist Poetry." Session 8 was on "Translation and Media." Richard John Lynn, University of Toronto, presented "Internet and Electronic Resources for Translation of Premodern Chinese Texts and How to Use Them," and Fred Curchack (University of Texas at Dallas) gave a presentation with performance, "From Text to Performance: The Process of Writing, Directing, and Performing the Play *MONKEY––The Quest to the West.*"

After the symposium, all the presenters were requested to revise their presentations for publication in terms of a unifying theme: "How to Effectively Translate China for Western Readers." When the revised versions were returned, Ming Dong Gu, with the assistance of Rainer Schulte, edited the papers and reorganized them into a new format consisting of three parts: I. Reflections on Conceptual Issues of Translation; II. The Art and Craft of Translation; and III. Critical Assessment of Translation Practice. The collection has also adopted the present title, *Translating China for Western Readers: Reflective, Critical, and Practical Essays*. Due to technical difficulties, some presentations could not be reproduced in this volume. We commissioned two new essays, "Real-m-ization and Eventualization: A Phenomenological Approach to Poetic Translation," by Liu Huawen (Shanghai Jiao Tong University), and "Aesthetic Fidelity versus Linguistic Fidelity: A Reassessment of the Chinese Translations of Ezra Pound and Amy Lowell," by Yuehong Chen (China Three Gorges University).

The Conceptual Framework

Translation studies is a young field; the field of Chinese translation studies is even younger. Now it is generally accepted that James S. Holmes's 1972 paper, "The Name and Nature of Translation Studies," presented at the Third International Congress of Applied Linguistics, marked the official birth of "translation studies" as a discipline.[4] Although Chinese tradition has had a long history of translation studies in both theory and practice,

it is widely believed but also hotly debated that translation studies as a discipline was officially launched in China with the publication of Huang Long's book *Translatology* in 1988.[5] Chinese translation studies in the West is still younger. It is claimed that the maturation of translation from the Chinese did not appear until after the convocation of the first International Conference on the Translation of Chinese Literature in 1990.[6]

Young as the fields are, neither translation studies in general nor Chinese translation studies as a particular area of study lacks ideas, theories, paradigms, and conceptual formulations. Holmes's initial conception and mapping of translation studies were further extended and even visualized as a "map" by Gideon Toury in his *Descriptive Translation Studies—and Beyond* (1995).[7] In disciplinary conceptions by later scholars, Holmes's conception of "translation studies" splits into two parallel areas: theoretical translation studies (also called "translation theory") and descriptive translation studies.

In the 1980s, there appeared a series of books in translation studies that broke away from the time-honored paradigm of seeking linguistic equivalence in translation and started a new turn in translation studies.[8] They paid more attention to the purpose of translation than the process of translation, and initiated what is known as the cultural turn in translation studies, which was described by André Lefevere in *Translation/History/Culture* (1992).[9] It ushered in a new era in which translation studies became comprehensively enmeshed with other areas of studies like historiography, sociology, philosophy, comparative literature, feminism, gender studies, postcolonialism, and cultural studies, and such concepts originally alien to translation studies as cannibalism, globalization, and the performativity of speech acts. The cultural turn in translation studies has potential drawbacks, for it has not only run the risk of fragmenting translation studies as a discipline in its own right, but moreover it has overlooked the *raison d'être* of translation studies. Take the now highly fashionable paradigm of cultural translation for example. As a new area of translation studies—derived mainly from various approaches to disciplines like historiography, anthropology, psychology, sociology, philosophy, literature, and culture, etc.—its foremost interest is not directed to the process of translation practice per se but to the process of cultural transformation in a society. Linguistic translation, the very core of translation practice, is only used as a tool or metaphor for studying the nature and characteristic features of cultural transformation and interchange.

"Cultural translation" is now quite a "hot" term in many different areas, not least in translation studies. It has two basic but different mean-

ings. One is derived mainly from Homi Bhabha's postcolonial study in his widely acclaimed book, *The Location of Culture*, especially the chapter with the putative name in the subtitle: "Postmodern Space, Postcolonial Times and the Trials of Cultural Translation."[10] The other covers the insights of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's conceptual considerations of translation (2007), which may be succinctly summed up by the title of her essay, "Translation as Culture."

Although the chapter in Bhabha's book may have been the source of the term "cultural translation," it does not talk about the central issues of interlingual translation but focuses on issues of differences between cultures, as is clear in his definition of cultural translation as a performative act of staging the difference. In his theorizing, "translation" is not so much a linguistic transfer of meaning between languages as a tool or metaphor for studying cultural transformation. His line of thought can easily lead one to treat cultural translation as studies that treat translation as a handmaiden to cultural studies and even as a remedy to the consequences of globalization. Suffice it to note the work of the German literary scholar Doris Bachmann-Medick, who envisions the possibility of a worldwide "translational turn" that may possess the critical potential for dealing with the negative effects of globalization.[11] As cultural translation deals with the processes of how extralinguistic meaning accompanies linguistic transfer, including meaning-shift and meaning-extension, and various kinds of practices that move from one culture to another, the term may be chiasmatically presented as "translating culture" or reduced to "culture as translation" in contrast to Spivak's idea of "translation as culture." Spivak is not only a scholar and theorist but also a practicing translator who wrestles with the question of translatability. Her two widely read essays, "Translation as Culture" and "The Politics of Translation," not only talk about her own experience as a translator but also address some fundamental issues of translation studies.[12]

The growing variety of theories and paradigms promoted the establishment of translation studies as a discipline but produced adverse effects as well, for it is recognized as a cause of conflict and debate in translation studies. The conceptual divides among scholars arise from another source of conflict, which is the breach between theory and practice. As more and more attention is focused on formulation of theories and paradigms, translation studies becomes further alienated from its original purpose and theories have less and less applicability to translation practice. I myself have even heard renowned scholars of translation studies say that even though their field of specialization is translation studies, they and their

students are engaged in scholarly work almost totally dissociated from translation practice. As a consequence, we have observed a strange phenomenon: Many graduate students with advanced degrees in translation studies are incapable of rendering a text from English into Chinese or vice versa.

All scholars of translation studies would agree that translation studies is an empirical activity, and the accumulated findings of descriptive studies from translation practice should be able to "formulate a series of coherent *laws* which would state the inherent relations between all the variables found to be relevant to translation."[13] André Lefevere, for example, argues that the goal of translation studies is "to produce a comprehensive theory which can also be used as a guideline for the production of translations," and "[p]ractioners of the discipline should try . . . to assist . . . in the production of translations."[14] Indeed, if research in translation studies has no applicability to translation practice, it is useless and should be abandoned.

It is precisely because of our observation of the unhealthy tendency in translation studies that we conceived the general theme of the conference: how to make translation theory work for translation practice. We intensified it in editing and revising this volume. In our view, for translation studies to dissociate research from studies of how to produce translated texts is like watching Shakespeare's *Hamlet* without the Prince of Demark. We therefore profess to react against this tendency and revert to the original source of translation studies: translation practice. A return to the time-honored practice of translation does not mean that we have no interest in translation theory. On the contrary, this volume is interested in conceptual issues of translation. But our theoretical orientation is characterized by a move toward the time-honored basis of translation—linguistics and hermeneutics—and by a consideration of translation practice from the viewpoint of reading and reading theories. Specifically, we want to formulate a conceptual framework informed by insights drawn from considerations of translation and reading in the works of both translation studies scholars and critical thinkers.

If I may use one phrase to summarize the major theme of the present volume, I can find no better one than "reader-friendly translation." Indeed, the conceptual framework is predicated on an emphasis on reader-friendliness. In its most basic sense, translation is the rendering into a target language a text of the source language, produced in an entirely different cultural environment. There are many views on the nature and function of translation and many ways to measure the success

of a translation. As a consequence, there have been numerous debates and arguments on assessment criteria and translation criticism. To reexamine these issues, I suggest, we should reorient translation studies in terms of reading theory because reading and translation are more or less similar hermeneutic endeavors. The present volume is characterized by a distinct hermeneutic orientation. In line with the theme of "translating China for Western readers," this volume amplifies the hermeneutic orientation of the symposium and proposes a conceptual framework that emphasizes reader-friendly translation as the unifying theme of all the essays. This means that while resituating the presented essays within the geocultural context of globalization, the editors asked the authors to revise their essays from the perspective of Western readers. The major reason why this approach is adopted is that reading is the basis of translation and no translation can be done without reading. Conceptually, both reading and translation are hermeneutic acts that aim at understanding texts. While reading is an effort at understanding a text without necessarily consigning what is understood into another language, translation is a specific form of reading that turns the understanding of a text of one language into another language. Simply put, translation starts as reading, continues with understanding, and ends as writing.

In my opinion, we can divide different ways of reading into four categories: (1) author-centered reading, (2) text-centered reading, (3) reader-centered reading, and (4) author-text-reader-negotiated reading. Corresponding to the four kinds of reading, translation practices may be classified into four major categories: (1) author-centered translation, (2) text-centered translation, (3) reader-centered translation, and (4) author-text-reader-negotiated translation. The author-centered translation is based on the assumption that a translation should approximate the author's original intention as much as possible, and the validity of translation should be measured by its degree of faithfulness to the author's intention. But the finished translation is a form of writing, and "writing is the destruction of every voice, of every point of origin."[15] The author's intention, be it pretextual or posttextual, is unreliable and in most cases unverifiable with the literal or figurative death of the author. Thus, a translation that aims to duplicate the author's intention is impossible. The text-centered translation seeks to duplicate the conditions of the source text in the target language, but a translated text is still a text, which, in the poststructural conception, "is not a line of words releasing a single 'theological' meaning (the 'message' of the Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash."[16] It is,

therefore, doubly impossible to duplicate the text of a source language in a translated text of the target language. The author-text-reader-negotiated translation attempts to render the text of the source language into the target language by taking the author's intention, the text's condition, and the reader's needs into consideration, and may be viewed as the ideal model of translation. But as this model is based on a negotiation among the author, the reader, and the text, it is a give-and-take model that involves gains and losses in one way or another. A gain in one direction may imply a loss in another direction. This model is therefore ideal but not practical. Translation is, in the final analysis, a textual product intended for the reader. "The reader," says Roland Barthes, "is the space on which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination."[17] Although Barthes talks about reading, his insight is equally valid for translation. The value of a translation does not lie in its origin, whether it is found in the author or the source text; its value lies in the targeted reader. This is even more so in the domain of translating China for the Western reader who has little or no prior knowledge of China.

But the reader-centered model has its own problems, as it tends to downplay the role of the author, the source text, and the cultural conditions in which the source text was produced. In his highly influential treatise "The Task of the Translator," Walter Benjamin raises this question: "Is a translation meant for readers who do not understand the original?" His answer is a paradoxical one. It is common sense that a translation is meant for the reader who does not understand the original, but if a translation is done with this sole aim in mind, it is a bad translation, because the essential task of translation is not a restatement or transmission of information, which is after all inessential, hence "the hallmark of bad translations." In his opinion, a translation should impart the essence of a literary work: "the essential substance of a literary work" is "what it contains in addition to information . . . the unfathomable, the mysterious, the 'poetic,' something that a translator can reproduce only if he is also a poet."[18] Nevertheless, he also admits that this is also the symptom of another kind of "inferior translation, which consequently we may define as the inaccurate transmission of an inessential content. This will be true whenever a translation undertakes to serve the reader."[19] The paradoxical situation identified by Walter Benjamin has haunted translators throughout history, East and West. It has certainly troubled translators of Chinese poetry and classical Chinese texts.

In his treatise, Benjamin gives a series of hints at strategies for resolving the paradox. One of them is to consider the relationship

between translation and its original in terms of the original's translatability. Although he regards translation as having no significance for the original, he believes them to be closely connected, as a life and its afterlife:

> Just as the manifestations of life are intimately connected with the phenomenon of life without being of importance to it, a translation issues from the original—not so much for its life as from its afterlife. For a translation comes later than the original, and since the important works of world literature never find their chosen translators at the time of their origin, their translation marks their stage of continued life.[20]

Thus, a translation should attain the status of the afterlife of an original.

A translation as the continued life of an original is not determined by the author or even by the translator. In large measure, it is determined by the reader. To readers of the target language, neither the original text of the source language nor the author of the original text is a concern; only the translated final product matters. This is amply reflected in the translations of Chinese poetry undertaken by some Anglo-American modernist poets. T. S. Eliot once convincingly illustrated this point in his comments on Ezra Pound's translation of Chinese poetry: ". . . it must be pointed out that Pound is the inventor of Chinese poetry for our time."[21] Eliot's statement has been understood to mean that Pound's *Cathay* poems are not so much a translation of original Chinese poems as poems recreated out of the Chinese materials. This understanding, however, is not entirely adequate to Eliot's view. While recognizing Eliot's characterization of Pound as an "inventor of Chinese poetry," scholars tend to overlook his qualifying words, "for our time," and fail to grapple with Eliot's concern with the relationship between poetic creation and translation. In his comments, Eliot observes:

> I suspect that every age has had, and will have, the same illusion concerning translations, an illusion which is not altogether an illusion either. When a foreign poet is successfully done into the idiom of our own language and our own time, we believe that he has been "translated"; we believe that through this translation we really at last get the original.[22]

Then he goes on to enumerate some famous cases of translations from other languages into English: Chapman's translation of Homer and

North's translation of Plutarch in the Elizabethan age. But because Eliot and his contemporaries are not Elizabethans, they do not have the illusion of successful translation; rather, they consider Chapman's and North's translation as creative writings. In the same way, if a modern Chapman or North appeared, English-speaking readers would believe that he was the real translator and they should give him the credit of doing a good job of translating a foreign text and achieving what Eliot called the "translucence" of translation. Eliot regarded the Tudor translations as "magnificent specimens of Tudor prose." In his opinion, the same can be said of Pound:

> His translations seem to be—and that is the test of excellence—translucencies: we *think* we are closer to the Chinese than when we read, for instance, Legge. I doubt this: I predict that in three hundred years Pound's *Cathay* will be a "Windsor Translation" as Chapman and North are now "Tudor Translations": it will be called (and justly) a "magnificent specimen of XXth Century poetry" rather than a "translation." Each generation must translate for itself.[23]

Then in unequivocal terms, Eliot explains why he considers Pound an inventor of Chinese poetry: "This is as much as to say that Chinese poetry, as we know it today, is something invented by Ezra Pound."[24]

Translation is a dynamic process of reciprocity that results in a paradoxical situation in which the text to be translated and the translator are mutually influenced by each other. Eliot's comment on Pound's translations from the Chinese and other languages touches upon this paradoxical situation: A translator is definitely influenced by what he translates, but he or she also exerts influence on the translated materials:

> It is probable that the Chinese, as well as Provençals and the Italians and the Saxons, influenced Pound, for no one can work intelligently with a foreign matter without being affected by it; on the other hand, it is certain that Pound has influenced the Chinese and the Provençals and the Italians and the Saxons— not the matter *an sich*, which is unknowable, but the matter as we know it.[25]

Eliot's statement can be understood to mean that a translator will put his own stamp on his translations, thereby transforming a foreign text into a hybrid text that integrates the cultural and linguistic baggage of the

original text and all that pertains to the translator, his mother tongue, his native culture, his inborn talent, and his distinct personality.

There is a problem that often embarrasses Chinese translations: A Chinese text is faithfully translated into a Western language, but it does not fly, and certainly does not appeal to the Western reader.[26] As a consequence, we often notice, many "faithful" translations of Chinese texts are simply ignored, while less faithful translations like Pound's translation of a Chinese poem have greater appeal to the English reader. Eliot's observation of the paradox and illusion of translation behooves us to give adequate consideration to the reader's perspective in translation. From this perspective, a translator's duty is not just simply to render into the target language a foreign text; he or she is obliged to take into account the question: "Does my translation read like a text of the target language?" This question is what Eliot had in mind and lies at the core of our decision to adopt the title *Translating China for Western Readers*. It highlights the concerted efforts of all the essays in this volume to turn a Chinese text into a text readily accessible to and recognized by the Western reader through the medium of translation. Only when a Chinese text is naturalized and achieves a translucence in a Western language can one say that successful translation has been done. Such translations are more than mere transmissions of the content of the originals, whose life, as Benjamin puts it, "attains in them to their ever-renewed latest and most abundant flowering."[27]

I have briefly covered the preferred theory of translation for this volume. Because of our concern with rendering Chinese texts for Western readers, our volume is based on a conceptual model of translation that emphasizes producing reader-friendly translations. Reader-friendliness will not only serve as the unifying theme but also provide an overall conceptual guideline for all the chapters. With this theme and guideline, this volume does not attempt to address general issues in the theory and practice of Chinese-Western translations but will have as its priority tackling the problems and difficulties in translating premodern and modern Chinese texts specifically for the Western reader.

Scope and Content

The whole collection consists of twelve chapters neatly divided into three parts. There are four chapters in part 1. Despite their diverse interests and topics, they are concerned with such general issues as the nature,

function, rationale, criteria, and historical and conceptual values of translation. The first chapter is Chung-ying Cheng's "Hermeneutic Principles of Understanding as the Logical Foundation of Translation." In this chapter, Cheng adopts a conceptual approach to translation and explores the logical foundation of translation in terms of hermeneutical principles of human understanding. Based on the conceptual inquiry and analysis of some concrete examples, he proposes seven principles of translation to serve as the logical foundation of the possibility of translation and as practical criteria for appraising the adequacy of translations. Then, he puts the principles to test by analyzing some chosen examples of existing translations of classical Chinese texts like the *Zhouyi* (Book of Changes), *Lunyu* (Confucian Analects), and *Daode Jing* (The Way and Its Power) and offers further insights.

The second chapter is an essay by Martin Svensson Ekström. It explores the relationship between metaphor and translation in the translation of ancient Chinese texts into English. Ekström raises a simple question, "Does the Metaphor Translate?" and goes on to relate the concept of metaphor with that of translation in the specific context of Chinese poetry and the larger context of Western intellectual thought. Critically analyzing the metaphor of "flaw in the jade" and that of the "flaw in words" in a *Shijing* poem, he argues that translation from Chinese to Western languages carries over one whole set of cultural and linguistic notions from one realm to another and heads toward two interrelated directions: While one is phenomenological and conceptual, the other is idiomatic, hermeneutic, and intercultural. Recalling the idea that *translatio* is the Latin "translation" of the Greek concept of *metaphora*, he suggests that translation and metaphor share a common ground in locating sensibility for the similar in the dissimilar and vice versa. On metaphorical ground, he believes, rest the premises for translating Chinese literature into Western languages.

Wang Ning's "Translating Chinese Literature: Decanonization and Recanonization" addresses the issues of canon formation and reformation through translation in the historical development of literature. He suggests that because canons are manipulated by certain power relations, translation has played an important role in reconstructing different literary canons in different languages and cultural backgrounds. Employing Walter Benjamin's view that translation endows a literary work with a "continued" life or an "afterlife," he makes an observation of how modern Chinese literature is translated into English and forms a unique modern Chinese literary canon, which differs significantly from that constructed

by domestic literary historians. He draws the conclusion that translation can both "decanonize" an established literary canon and "recanonize" a new literary canon in a cross-cultural context. His essay offers an interesting study that shows how Western readers' reading plays a role in Chinese canon formation.

Using Anglo-American modernist poets' fascination with and translation of Chinese poetry as analytic data, Ming Dong Gu's essay attempts to rethink the nature, function, and criteria for assessment of translation in terms of two newly formulated concepts: "readerly translation" and "writerly translation." It argues that translation is not simply an act of rendering a source text into a target language; it is a complex hermeneutic act with the aim to produce a performative continuum in which the translator assumes multiple roles of reader, scholar, critic, thinker, and writer. The outcome of such a hermeneutic act is a multiple textual spectrum with readerly translation at one pole and writerly translation at the other. Drawing insights from the views and practice of some Anglo-American modernist poets' translation of Chinese poetry, the essay suggests that an ideal translator is not merely a competent reader who has a mastery of both source and target languages, or a sensitive reader who is able to discover hidden connections in a source text, but one who should be a well-trained scholar who has intimate knowledge of source-text culture and target-text culture, a discerning critic who possesses a high literary sensitivity and can tell the strengths and weaknesses of a translated text, a practical thinker who can apply insights derived from reading, scholarship, and translation criticism, and a creative writer who is worthy of being ranked among first-rate authors.

Part 2 has four chapters that focus on the art and craft of translation and offer practical methods and tips. A common theme of this part is how to produce reader-friendly texts in translating classical Chinese thought and poetry into Western languages. As most chapters in this part address the formal, stylistic, and technical aspects of translation, they show a distinct regard for the translation of poetry and thought as an art. Unlike most chapters in this section, which discuss translations of literary works, Michael Nylan's chapter, "Translating Texts in Chinese History and Philosophy," focuses on frequently met problems in translating historical and philosophical works from early and middle-period China. As a senior scholar of early China, Nylan is also an experienced translator of early Chinese texts. In addition, she has served as an editor for a translation series on Classics of Early Chinese Thought and read numerous manuscripts of translations. With the aim to improve the sophistication

of translations, she has pondered whether it would be possible to supply a list of comments and cautions relating to the craft of translation, which may serve as a practical guide for scholars and translators who work on translating classical Chinese texts into Western languages. Through a critical analysis of chosen examples, she identifies a series of pitfalls in translating classical texts, which includes failures to convey a sense of the irony and sarcasm in the original, to have the translation reflect the usage of the time it was written, to alert the reader to the precise original context for the composition, to outline the history of the later reception of important writings, and to maintain the same level of ambiguity as in the original text. On the basis of analysis, she proposes practical ways to translate concepts, ideas, notions, and practices peculiar to early China, and offers precious advice to specialists, translators, and common readers of early Chinese texts. Her chapter also discusses the contradictory desires nursed by translators of historical and philosophical works: They want to make the translation understandable to as wide an audience as possible and at the same time cherish the contrary desires to retain the air of strangeness of rhetorical features in the foreign texts that date back to a remote past.

Fusheng Wu's chapter discusses the textual and extra-textual prerequisites for translating medieval Chinese panegyric poetry. He points out that in translating panegyric poetry, one encounters the common challenges in translating any classical Chinese poetry into English, but the challenges become serious issues because of the overtly political and sometimes grave contexts in which the panegyric poems were composed. English translations of this genre tend to overtly represent originally vague, indirect references or information, thereby causing the translated versions to lose their original subtlety and nuance. While one may choose to sacrifice English translation by keeping the original Chinese syntax, thereby foregrounding its foreignness, Wu advocates a middle path.

Liu Huawen's essay examines the Chinese-English translation of poetry in terms of a Chinese aesthetic principle, *jingjie* (境界), a category originating in Buddhism but assimilated into Chinese classical literary criticism. Initiated by the Chinese erudite Qian Zhongshu, it develops into a new concept, *huajing* (化境, transformation of realms), in the discourse on translation. This concept in translation posits two aesthetic realms that respectively exist in the target text and the source text. The transformation of one into the other realm in the English translation of Chinese poetry rests on the attainment of *jingjie* where the perceiving agent experiences an aesthetic immediacy of the images and the world. In actual practice

of translation, one must address the problems arising from eventualization, a tendency in the translation from noun-dominated Chinese into verb-dominated English. Illustrating with examples, Liu discusses how to maintain the tension between the tendency to employ image in the Chinese poem and the event in the English version when translating Chinese classical poetry.

Richard John Lynn is an accomplished translator as well as a scholar of classical Chinese literature and thought. Over the many years of his scholarly career, he has accumulated rich experience in translation, which he wishes to share with others. His chapter, "Internet and Electronic Resources for Translation of Premodern Chinese Texts and How to Use Them," is unique in this collection. It shows how internet resources have transformed procedures for translating premodern Chinese texts and offers practical ways of making full use of existing internet and electronic resources to facilitate the translation process. It extensively covers electronic and online dictionaries and encyclopedias; enormous databases of digital texts such as *Siku quanshu*, *Sibu congkan*, and *Gujin tushu jicheng*, as well as other database sites in Mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Japan; online bibliographical, historical, philosophical, religious; and literary resource reference and resource sites. In addition, Lynn summarizes practical tips on how to use these resources for translation. The summarized tips come in two categories: one for native speakers of English and one for native speakers of Chinese. They will help both Chinese and Western translators who engage in rendering premodern Chinese texts into Western languages.

Part 3 addresses critical assessments of translation policy, formal issues, and aesthetic issues in translation, and examines the interplay between the author and translator, the translator and the reader, the translator and his creative works, and translations and the market. Wolfgang Kubin is an accomplished writer of poetry, novels, and essays, as well as an experienced translator who has translated a large amount of Chinese literature into German. His essay, "Translators in Brackets, or, Rambling Thoughts on Translation Work," is a deep reflection on some general issues involved in translating texts in modern and contemporary Chinese literature into Western languages, including: Why does one want to be a translator? What are the prerequisites for a translator? How should one select texts for translation? Why is a translated work well or ill received? Why does the reception of a translation differ from one country to another? What relationship should be maintained between a translator and a writer? What decides the interaction between the translator and the

publisher and between translation and the market? His sharp observations afford a rare insight into how Chinese writings, especially fiction and poetry, are translated and received by readers in some Western nations.

The next two chapters discuss translating classical Chinese poetry for Western readers with attention to form. Frederick Turner is an internationally renowned poet-scholar and translator. Although he does not know Chinese, he carried on the American tradition of collaborative translation initiated by Ernest Fenollosa and perfected by Ezra Pound, Amy Lowell, and others, and brought out a volume of Tang poetry that integrates faithful rendition and poetic creation. Precisely because he does not know the Chinese language, he turned a disadvantage into an advantage by considering translating Chinese poetry from the perspective of the English reader. His chapter addresses several prerequisites for a successful collaborative venture: the art of collaborative translation; the need to understand the social, political, spiritual, and philosophical context of the Tang poets; and the problem of translating the formal peculiarities and beauties of a body of very ancient, tonal, highly formal, and ideographic verse. In his own translation practice, he turns problems that would seem individually insuperable into solutions. He makes metrical fidelity serve as a guide to preserving the tone and voice of the original Chinese poems. Employing ample examples of his own translations, he argues that a broader cultural understanding of the tradition and the period can suggest analogies with Western periods, styles and forms, and thus ways of rendering the translation familiarly unfamiliar or unfamiliarly familiar. A sample of his translated poems with annotations will offer translators, scholars, and readers a poet's profound insights into the art of Chinese poetry and the art of translation.

Tony Barnstone is also poet-scholar. His chapter discusses how to address formal issues in translating Chinese poetry. Placing translation in the larger context of "world literature," he addresses some problems or what he terms "paradoxes" arising from translating literary texts from Chinese into English in particular and from one language to another language in general. He examines the dichotomy between original and copy in translation; the relationship between translation and creation, and the search for the hidden poem behind the given poem through formal strategies in the original so as to create a new original after translation. In a way, Turner's and Barnstone's chapters most fully reflect the spirit of the symposium because they deal with the problem of how to turn a Chinese text into a Western text through translation.

Yuehong Chen's essay critically reviews the craft of translation by two well-known American poets, Ezra Pound and Amy Lowell, and pro-

poses a new translation assessment criterion. Chen argues that traditionally, faithfulness in translation is basically restricted to the linguistic level. As a translation principle, it cannot do justice to the aesthetic beauty of the original and, as a standard of assessment, cannot conduct a fair evaluation of a translation. In her efforts to deconstruct the binary opposition between "beauty" and "fidelity" in translation, Chen turns a famous Chinese aesthetic principle, *yijing* (literally, ideorealm, or aesthetic conception) into a new criterion for measuring the quality of translations. She suggests that as a classical Chinese poem largely rests on the construction of an ideorealm, its successful translation depends on the extent to which the translator succeeds in reproducing the aesthetic conception of the original poem. The more closely a translation reproduces the original aesthetic conception, the greater success it achieves. Employing this proposed idea as the yardstick for her reassessment of Pound's and Lowell's translations, she concludes that while Lowell's renditions are more faithful to the originals at the linguistic level, Pound's translations are more faithful to the originals at the aesthetic level. She concludes that since Pound has done a more successful job in reproducing the beauty of the original ideorealm, his seemingly unfaithful translations are paradoxically more desirable as a form of translation art.

The volume is wrapped up with an afterword by Dennis M. Kratz, who attended the symposium from beginning to end and participated in the discussions. His afterword offers reflections on reading the collected essays and insights into issues of translation of Chinese texts in particular and of translation studies in general from the perspective of a Western reader. The volume ends with a reference list of further readings, prepared by Daisy Guo. It provides the current available studies of Chinese translation in print as well as major texts of general translation studies.

This volume distinguishes itself from available books on Chinese-English translation via several special features. First and foremost, most of the authors are nationally and internationally renowned scholars from prestigious universities in several countries. Unlike authors of other similar books, they are both specialists in their own fields and practicing translators who have done a good deal of translation. Second, the book mostly deals with translation from classical Chinese texts into Western languages, an area that has not been given sufficient attention due to the difficulty of rendering classical Chinese into modern Western languages. Third, it is both theory driven and practice oriented, aiming to provide scholars and translators with conceptual principles and practical techniques of translation. A distinctive feature of the book is its direct wrestling with the difficulties in translating premodern Chinese texts, as

well as its provision of reference sources, useful tips, and practical techniques. Thus, it may serve as a guide and reference book for those who want to dedicate themselves to translating premodern Chinese materials. In general, we hope it will make a contribution to the advancement of translation from Chinese into Western languages and vice versa.

Acknowledgments

Notes

1. Li Zehou, *The Path of Beauty* (美的历程) (first ed., 1988; second ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); *Four Essays on Aesthetics* (美学四讲) (New York: Lexington Books, 2006); *The Chinese Aesthetic Tradition* (华夏美学) (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010).