Between Texts, Beyond Words
Intertextuality and Translation

edited by
Nicoletta Pesaro

Between Texts, Beyond Words

Translating Wor(l)ds

A series edited
by Nicoletta Pesaro

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**Edizioni
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Between Texts, Beyond Words
Intertextuality and Translation

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Introduction

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The second volume of the series takes its inspiration from the International Workshop on Translation: *Between Texts, Beyond Words: Intertextuality and Translation*, which took place in Venice on 26-27 November 2014. The workshop's keynote speaker, professor Lawrence Venuti, who is also a member of the Scientific Board of this series, gave an opening lecture entitled "Translation, Intertextuality, Interpretation".

During the workshop, papers on translation processes and translation discourse were presented, touching upon relevant subjects across different linguistic and cultural contexts. A particular focus was devoted to the issue of intertextuality and its relevance in both translation practice and theory.

This book is built upon a reflection on the various intertextual and interdiscursive relationships between certain Asian traditions (such as those of China, Japan and Persia) and the West. However, it also deals with other significant aspects of translation as a dynamic intersection between cultures and texts, tackling important translational issues, such as the translation of the Chinese self *vis à vis* Western modernity; the translation of the Bible and of Christian terms into Japanese and Chinese; the translation of metaphors from Persian poetry; and the relation between Chinese and Western translation studies.

Intertextuality is a pivotal concept derived from Bachtin's theories on plurilingualism and from the idea of "polyphony" developed by Julia Kristeva – who gave it the following definition: "each word (text) is an intersection of other words (texts) where at least one other word (text) can be read (1980, 66)". The notion was taken up again, among the others, by Cesare Segre, who underlined its pervasiveness not only in the literary texts but also in every day forms of communication. He suggested the term "interdiscorsività" (interdiscursivity) to describe, "i rapporti che ogni testo, orale o scritto, intrattiene con tutti gli enunciati o discorsi registrati nella corrispondente cultura e ordinati ideologicamente" [the relations that every written or oral text entertains with all the ideologically ordered utterances or discourses reported in the corresponding culture] (1982, 23). This multiplicity of voices and thoughts within the same text is also realised

by means of textual parody and rewriting (Genette 1997), allowing for a re-proposition of the text/discourse of the Other in new and often critical forms. Perceiving and recognising the existence of the ideas of the Other, or "ideologemes" (Bachtin 1981), interspersed in the text is a key element for detecting a range of interlinguistic and intercultural interferences during the process of translation. For this reason, a translation cannot ignore the existence of such ideologemes, as the hermeneutic process is often one of disambiguation.

Intertextuality may take different forms, as explored in some of the essays in this volume, which addresses a variety of translation issues, including: religious translation and the adaptation of cultural values and terms in Aldo Tollini and Raissa De Gruttola's articles; the translation of some rhetorical figures (hyperbole, metaphor and comparison) from Persian into Italian (Daniela Meneghini); Chinese writer Zhang Ailing's practice of self-intertextuality and the need for translators to reconstruct the plurality of voices and texts embedded in her autobiographical fiction (Nicoletta Pesaro); and last but not least, the presence of interdiscursivity at a theoretical level through an overview of the fundamental attitudes towards translation in late Imperial and Republican China, such as the role played by translation as an enrichment of Chinese culture, language and literature and as a form of self-expression (Monika Gaenssbauer).

In the field of translation, the encounter between Asian traditions and Western culture was of course quite a fertile one; modern readers/scholars are usually more acquainted with the effects of this encounter on Asian cultural productions than on Western ones. The importance of religious translations in the cross-cultural relations between Asia and Europe is hardly a neglected topic, yet it is definitely worth investigating more in depth, by taking into account the bidirectional flow of words and "ideologemes", also in order to enrich our comprehension of historical and practical factors of great significance for translation studies and theory. In their contributions to this volume, both Aldo Tollini and Raissa De Gruttola analyse the processes and outcomes of this encounter, by focusing on the introduction and dissemination of Western culture/religion in Japan and China. Tollini notes "the huge task of translating technical terms of Christianity into Japanese language", underlying that "[t]wo very different cultures came for the first time in contact and serious problems of understanding were to be solved" (104). According to De Gruttola, "the approach of the missionaries in China to the Bible conformed to the directions given by the Church hierarchies all over the world" (28); this entails that the ideological factor, i.e. the will to keep a tight control on the contents of the Bible, heavily impacted the translation practices and strategies applied by the missionaries/translators. Thus, the intersection of cultures and voices here was deeply affected by ideological factors, which were often dealt with by means of technical (linguistic) solutions or a complementary paratex-

tual strategy. On the one hand, in the pre-modern Japanese translation of Christian terms, the former strategy was based on the use of paraphrases, phonetic transcription and "[t]ranslation by the most similar indigenous term" (103); but the strongly "mediating" role played by the first missionaries/translators is also remarkable, in that they chose to employ common words rather than terms which were more specific/precise but liable to misunderstanding. On the other hand, one example of the latter solution is the use of chronological tables and geographical maps inserted in "the first complete text in Chinese for Catholics" (26), whose aim was to fill the many epistemological gaps of the target readers in respect of the history and culture of the Bible.

Religious translation presents a variety of practical tools and theoretical issues for both Asian and Western translation studies. The transfer of religious texts and concepts from one culture to another usually involves a critical comparison of cultural and social values as well. We should bear in mind that the first important peak in translation activity and theory in China was reached with the endeavour to translate Buddhist texts in the period from the mid-2nd to the 11th century. Later, new translation theories sprouted up at the turn of the 20th century – the most important phase in the making of modern Chinese translation theory – when two thirds of the literary production was based on translations of foreign literature. The impact of foreign thought and literary works in Chinese culture led to a stream of translational theories, which intermingled with the long-standing local tradition of Buddhist translation. The existence of radically different translation practices – we might even call these a different "culture of translation" – is a topic that deserves further exploration, as Gaenssbauer demonstrates in this volume. Her contribution sheds light on the complex relationship between diverse traditions within translation studies, where – despite the increasing number of remarkable new perspectives, such as the ones opened up by Susan Bassnett and Maria Tymoczko – a Eurocentric attitude still prevails. Two levels of investigations are at work here: on the one hand, the transfer of ideas and values that are introduced into Chinese society and negotiated by the translators – often by means of the so-called practice of "redaction" (37); and on the other hand, the shaping of a peculiar practice and theory of translation stemming from the need to cope with the novelty represented by Western literature and philosophy, once this has been assimilated into, or adapted to, the receiving culture. The concepts of "redaction" and "collective translation" (another staple in Chinese translation studies, which has been discussed before by Marta Cheung and Eva Hung), as well as the importance assigned to images in Chinese translation theory, no doubt represent a valuable supplement and integration to Western theories. These elements are the outcome of a centuries-old practice that, nonetheless, is also present in Western translation practice to some degree.

Some of the articles address more specific details of the translator's activity, exploring the range of skills and strategies which must be applied in order to "accommodate the unfamiliar" represented by the prototext – when it comes to introducing this into a radically different context, remote in terms of space and time – or, in other words, to develop, as Sell puts it, an "empathetic imagination" (40). The reader can therefore delve into the hard and sometimes controversial choices made by the translator with respect to the mystery embodied by a literary text reflecting a remote tradition – as in the case of the Persian poet analysed in Daniela Meneghini's article – or a restless and continuously revised self (such as that of the Chinese writer Zhang Ailing, the subject of my own contribution).

Meneghini stresses the responsibility of a translator, faced with the challenge of translating the work of an author who lived in 12th-century Persia and built his poetry on a sophisticated rhetorical web made of "figurative language, comparisons, metaphors and hyperboles" (55). I agree with her when she claims that one must be equipped with "philological attention, patient interpretation, honest negotiation with the original" (55), in order to allow the words and the voice of the author to be adequately "heard" and recognised by the contemporary Italian reader. In my analysis of my own translation of Zhang Ailing's posthumous novel, *Little Reunions*, I discuss the risk of flattening the multi-layered structure of the prototext, which is made up of self-translation, self-rewriting, self-intertextuality and other cross-references. I also reflect on the impact that the normalisation and homogenisation often required by the publisher's standard editorial practices might impose on the text, if these rich embedded references are ignored or deliberately effaced.

A final remark should be made concerning the sophisticated level reached by studies on translation (carried out both by theoreticians and by practitioners) in rethinking the encounter of European languages and values with specific Asian cultures. Indeed, reflections such as those offered in this volume can contribute to, and enrich the new dialogue between Western and Asian traditions in the field of translation, a dialogue that is increasingly being invoked and felt to be necessary. Tymozcko (2010, 49) has recently stressed the importance of

> a postpositivist epistemology [which] is not merely recognition of the importance of perspective for the construction of knowledge about translation, but ultimately an activist assertion of the value of alternate perspectives on translation in relation to those of dominant cultures.

Although devoted to different aspects, languages and epochs, all the essays in this volume provide insightful reflections on the various ways in which cultures intersect "between texts and beyond words". In line with the general approach of the series, the volume encompasses a range of

diverse perspectives on translation – from the analysis of theoretical issues to the craft and choices of the translator, from historical developments to the cultural and theoretical implications of translation.

This volume has been published thanks to the kind financial support of my friend and colleague, Prof. Fiorenzo Lafirenza, whose views and strategies as a translator have always been most valuable to my own work.

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Translating the Bible into Chinese
Characteristics and Features of the *Sigao Shengjing*

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Abstract   The translation project of the *Sigao Shengjing* 思高聖經 was developed by Gabriele Allegra, given the absence of a complete Catholic Bible in the Chinese language. Allegra started to translate in 1935, and in 1945 assembled a team of Chinese Friars to revise the Old Testament and translate the New one. Subsequently, a biblical research centre was founded, and from 1946 to 1961 it published the first Catholic Bible in Chinese in eleven volumes. The single-volume version was issued in 1968. This paper will present the translation process and the features of the *Sigao Shengjing*. A brief presentation of the translations of the Chinese Bible will precede a description of the general characteristics of the biblical text. Moreover, the phases of the translation and the publication of the *Sigao Shengjing* will be examined through the analysis of archival material and the main characteristics and features of the first Chinese Catholic Bible will be outlined.

Summary   1 Introduction. – 2 Features and Translations of the Bible. – 2.1 Bible Translation in Chinese. – 2.2 Languages and Translation of the Biblical Text. – 3 The *Sigao Shengjing*. – 3.1 The Phases of the Translation. – 3.2 Characteristics and Features. – 4 Conclusion.

Keywords   Bible translation. Chinese Bible. Missionary linguistics. Franciscans in China.

1   Introduction

In 1928, the Franciscan Friar Gabriele Maria Allegra, while studying missiology and theology in Rome, became acquainted with the missionary activity of his confrere of the 13th century John of Montecorvino. He learned that Montecorvino, first bishop in China, had translated the New Testament and the Psalms into Mongolian language, and that, unfortunately, no copies of those manuscripts had been preserved. Furthermore, Allegra came to know that the Chinese Catholics did not have a complete version of the Bible in their language and decided to ask his superiors to go to China as a missionary and translate the Scriptures in Chinese.

Allegra was appointed as rector of the Minor Seminary in Hengyang (Hunan) and arrived there in 1931. He immediately committed himself to the study of the Chinese language and gradually developed the project of

the translation of the Catholic Bible in Chinese. He started on the translation of the Book of Genesis in 1935. Ten years later the missionary formed a team of Chinese Friars to revise the translation of the Old Testament and to work together on the version of the New Testament. The group set up a biblical and research centre, the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum Sinense or *Sigao Shengjing Xuehui* 思高聖經學會. The teamwork led to the publication of the whole Bible in eleven volumes between 1946 and 1961 and to the revision and the issue of the single volume version in 1968. The first venue of the Studium was in Beijing, but in 1948 it was moved to Hong Kong, where it still operates today.

In this paper, the translation process and the features of the 1968 volume known as the *Sigao Shengjing* 思高聖經 or *Sigao Bible* will be presented and analysed. Before introducing these phases and characteristics, the features of the biblical text and the translation matters related to it will be outlined to provide the general context in which the issue of Chinese biblical translation and the translating process of the Sigao Bible must be set. The analysis of the translation process and of the features of the Sigao Bible is provided according to the results of various research sessions conducted in the Archivio Vice-Postulazione where all the documents concerning Allegra and his translation activity are preserved.

After Allegra's death, some of his brethren and relatives believed that there were sufficient reasons to start a Cause of Beatification and thus began to draw up documents and testimonials from four dioceses: Hong Kong, Taipei, Rome, and Catania. When in 1986 the process was concluded, the remains of the Friar, some personal belongings, and all his documents were moved to Acireale, a town in the South of Italy where Allegra had spent his first years as a Friar. There, a small archive was set up in a room of the Franciscan convent, under the name of Archivio Vice-Postulazione – Convento San Biagio dei Frati Minori – Acireale (CT). The main purpose of the collection of these papers was that of preparing the needed information material for the Beatification process, nevertheless, the Archive still constitutes today a precious source of documents because, though the aim of the collection of the documents was to verify the Friar's Christian virtues and the organisation of the material in the Archive focuses around his spirituality and the aspects that could testify his sanctity, there are many documents concerning Allegra's activity as a translator. In September 2017 the whole Archive in Acireale was transferred to Palermo, to the Historical Archive of the Sicilian Province of the Friar Minor.[1] The work done in Acireale up to that moment was preserved, and all the writings are still available for consultation.

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[1] The material stored in Palermo is the same as that stored in Acireale. All the documents therein included will be further referred to as 'Archive'.

The documents in the Archive cover Allegra's entire life, the earliest date ing back to 1926 and the latest to 1976. The writing languages are Italian, English, Chinese, Latin, French, and German, with some notebooks with pages in Greek and Hebrew. A rich epistolary, many autograph handwritten or typewritten papers, all the published material by Allegra himself and articles by other authors on his life and activity are included in this collection. The documents are written both on simple notebooks or on official letterhead paper of the Studium Biblicum or of other associations. The letters are mostly addressed to Allegra's relatives, his superiors or other people relevant for the translation and for his mission. A large part of the unofficial documents consists of notebooks or diaries with drafts of letters or notes on several aspects of his daily life. Many documents examined in the Archive include references to the history and process of this Bible translation not found elsewhere to date.

2 Features and Translations of the Bible

2.1 Bible Translation in Chinese

The New Testament[2] commonly used by Chinese Catholics at the beginning of the twentieth century had been published only in 1922 and was the translation from the Latin Vulgate by the Jesuit Xiao Jingshan 蕭靜山.[3] It was the first publishable Catholic translation in Mandarin Chinese, a clear indication that things were changing. Despite their arrival in China at the end of the thirteenth century, Catholic missionaries had never actually committed themselves to the translation of the Bible into Chinese. When they had attempted to do so, prevailing circumstances hindered all efforts to complete, publish or distribute any piece of translation. The absence of a complete translation of the Bible in Chinese until the twentieth century may be due to two key factors. Firstly, European missionaries did not translate the Bible in Chinese because of its position and the role of the Bible itself in the life of the clergy and of the laymen according to the historical context. Furthermore, there was scarce use and distribution of the Bible among Catholics worldwide as well as specific restrictions on translating the Bible into languages other than Latin. The Bible itself as a missionary instrument is worthy of discussion as Buzzetti argues:

2 The following three paragraphs are adapted from Chapters 1.2 and 3.2 of: De Gruttola, Raissa (2017). *"And the Word Became Chinese"*. *Gabriele Allegra and the Chinese Catholic Bible: History, Process, and Translation Analysis* [PhD dissertation]. Venice: Ca' Foscari University of Venice.

3 Xiao 1922. See also Choi, Mak 2014, 110.

> The nature of the Bible is not such as it can be directly used as an efficacious missionary or apologetic instrument […] it is not regarded as means of communication for those who are unbelievers, but rather as a collection of texts recording, remembering, and expressing the historical moments of faith […] a common use of the Bible may be otherwise indicated – such as, for example, in preaching – only prior to thorough knowledge of the focal elements of faith itself. (1973, 264; Author's translation)

Buzzetti, therefore, illustrates the reasons behind the reluctance or vacillation to translate the Bible in the early missionary periods, but his text does not unfold the rationale of such a prolonged delay. The second reason for the absence of the Chinese version of the Catholic Bible is the position assumed by the representatives of the Catholic Church hierarchy. The few attempts at translation were, indeed, prevented from being completed, published or distributed by the superiors of those who undertook the task or by the directives of Propaganda Fide.

There are three relevant translation experiences into colloquial Chinese occurring before the twentieth century that are worth mentioning. Jean Basset (1662-1707) of the Paris Foreign Mission Society arrived in Canton by the end of 1689. He translated almost the whole of the New Testament from Latin Vulgate into colloquial Chinese. When he died in 1707, only the end of the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Book of Revelation had not been translated. The 1655 decree of Propaganda Fide forbidding the printing of any book without the permission from Rome, however, prevented the publication and distribution of this version. Nevertheless, some copies of the manuscript were made and one of them was later conserved in the British Museum. In the first half of the eighteenth century two Franciscan missionaries, Francesco Jovino (1677-1737) and Carlo Orazi of Castorano (1673-1755), exchanged some letters on the translation in vernacular Chinese of the first books of the Old Testament. This version had been started by the Franciscan Friar Antonio Laghi (1668-1727) and was continued by Jovino himself. However, Castorano firmly prohibited his addressee from distributing the text, regarding the translation of the Scriptures into the local language premature for the Chinese converts. By the end of the same century, the French Jesuit Louis Antoine de Poirot (1735-1813) was translating both the Old and the New Testament from Latin into colloquial Chinese, compiling more than 34 volumes. In 1803, he completed the *Guxin shengjing* 古新聖經 (Old and New Testament) where only the Song of Songs and some of the books of the Prophets were not translated. Despite the appreciation of the work, Propaganda Fide prohibited its printing and circulation, and the version of Poirot was stored in the Jesuit library in Beijing. Furthermore, it is worthy to underline that the Catholic missionaries had written or translated a large amount of books in Chinese

such as catechisms, collection of biblical episodes, illustrated books, or explanations of the life of Jesus (see Standaert 1999).

The first Catholic translation of a part of the Bible was published in Shanghai by the Tushanwan Press in 1887. It was the *Zongtu dashi lu* 宗徒 大事錄, the book of the Acts of the Apostles, translated into literary Chinese by the Jesuit Li Wenyu 李問漁. Choi and Mak report that:

> All Chinese versions of the Catholic Bible published between the second half of the nineteenth century and the 1920s were partial translation of the New Testament, particularly the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. Most of them were in literary Chinese, the standard Chinese for publications at the time, which was commonly adopted for Chinese Catholic literature. (2014, 106)

Nevertheless, the missionaries arriving in Beijing after 1860 gradually recognised the role of Mandarin as a *lingua franca* and used it to preach the Gospel. Furthermore, the status of the written vernacular changed at the turn of the century in connection with the growth of Chinese nationalism, the creation of the modern school system (1902), and the abolition of the examination system (1905) (Kaske 2004, 272-84). At the beginning of the twentieth century, the *baihua* 白話 became the language used in newspapers and journals to circulate new ideas promoting the modernisation of China, to open these ideas to less educated people, and to spread the vernacular language and the formation of a national identity for the Republic of China founded in 1911. In this complex historical context "the missionaries were passively driven by Chinese linguistic realities" (Kaske 2008, 65). The attitude of the missionaries toward the Chinese language changed according to their background, their denomination, their education, and the group of Chinese people they related to. Some missionaries only preached orally through local dialects; the ones in the North enthusiastically learned and used Mandarin; others created systems to Romanise the Chinese characters, while those intending to convert the higher classes continued to write and translate texts into literary Chinese. The issue of translating the Bible using these different approaches was thus considered. Nevertheless, the tendency towards literary or vernacular Chinese is evident in the changes arising from the boards responsible for the translation of the Protestant Bible known as the *Union Version*. The term 'union' was to indicate the joint efforts in the translation of numerous representatives of many different churches among the Protestant denominations present in China. In the first conference in 1890, the attendants decided to prepare three translations differing in style, assuming that a version in the classical language was required, as well as a version in a lower form of literary Chinese. As far as the Mandarin version was concerned, however, few missionaries were willing to work on it, despite acknowledgment of

the need for translation in that language. Many missionaries rejected the assignment because it was considered an undertaking that would not grant them merit or power. Nevertheless, it took so long to complete the three versions that, during the years, too many circumstances had changed, and the literary translation was no longer imperative. It was in 1919 that the complete Union Version was published in two editions, the classical and the Mandarin one, but the historical context had changed by then, bringing with it new events and features. The two editions of the Union Version were published in April (*baihua* version) and June (*wenli* 文理 version) 1919, when the new tendency towards using Mandarin, unpredictable thirty years before, had already set in. For these reasons, the Mandarin version was well accepted by all, not only among Christians (see Zetzsche 1999). Furthermore, it must be underlined that this debate concerning the issue of translating the Bible in literary or colloquial Chinese was already concluded when Allegra arrived in China and started his translation in 1935.

2.2 Languages and Translations of the Biblical Text

The term 'Bible' indicates the collection of books considered as sacred by all the Christian denominations, which is divided into two main sections, the Old and the New Testament. The three branches of Christianity, the Catholic, the Eastern Orthodox, and the Protestant all include the same books in the New Testament, but follow different criteria when defining the canonical books of the Old one. Furthermore, the books in the Old Testament are considered sacred by the Jews too, whose religious authorities had been conferring upon the issue of the translation of these texts since the first set of canonical writings.

The three authoritative sets of scripts for the Jews were the Torah (the five books of the Pentateuch), the Prophets, and the Writings. The first two sections were characterised by a fixed composition, while the books included in the Writings varied according to the doctrine of different groups of believers. The need to translate the sacred texts into a different language arose under the reign of Alexander the Great (r. 336-323 BC), when Palestine and many other areas of the Eastern Mediterranean coast were undergoing Hellenization and Greek became the *lingua franca* for many Jewish communities. It was probably in the city of Alexandria, between the third and the first century BC, that the Torah, and subsequently the other sacred texts, were translated into the Greek language, constituting what today is known as the *Septuagint*. The Greek edition of the Old Testament would be the first text to convey the biblical contents from a Semitic context to a Hellenistic one. The importance of the Septuagint is also connected to the fact that it became the source text for several other versions of the Old Testament such as the Old Latin, the Syriac, and the

Slavonic, and today continues to be the version used in the liturgy of the Greek Orthodox Church. Furthermore, the majority of the quotations from the Old Testament in the Greek New Testament are taken from the Septuagint. During the long process of translation of the Hebrew texts, some books in the Greek language were added to the corpus of the Septuagint before the Canon had been established. These would be later defined as 'deuterocanonical' and included seven books and some additions to already accepted texts.[4] The acceptance of these texts was variable up to the fifth century, when both the Hebrew canon and the Christian one were eventually set. In 393 and 397, the provincial Councils of Hippo and Carthage III issued documents in which the deuterocanonical books were included in the Christian canon, defining in this way a tradition that has continued ever since.

The New Testament is a collection of twenty seven books accepted by all three major Christian groups today. It consists of four books, known as the Gospels, presenting the life and teachings of Christ, one book on the creation of the Church and the activity of the first apostles (Acts of the Apostles), some letters written by Paul of Tarsus and other apostles, and the book of Revelation. All these texts were written in the first two centuries of the Christian era and their canonicity was established by the end of the fourth century. The main criteria used to define the canon of the New Testament in the first centuries were three: the apostolic origin, the consistency of the message, and the liturgical use. According to these features, other contemporary texts on the life of Jesus and his disciples were thus defined apocryphal.

The books of the New Testament are written in a language defined as 'New Testament Greek.' This peculiar language, together with the Greek used to write the Septuagint, constitutes what is known as 'biblical Greek' and is a variant of the *koine* ('common standard') Greek. Greek was the dominant liturgical language in the Roman Empire, but Latin was also widely used. From the second century, some Christian communities in Northern Africa, Southern Gaul and Italy began to translate passages of the Bible into Latin for private use. By the fourth century, the number of these translations had significantly increased and the collection of all these Latin versions of the Bible are now known as *Vetus Latina* (Old Latin Bible). As Latin gradually replaced Greek in the life of Christians, these translations spread among the believers, often causing confusion. For this reason, in

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4 The seven books are: Tobit, Judith, 1 and 2 Maccabees, Wisdom, Sirach, and Baruch. The additional passages are extracts found in the books of Esther and Daniel. Studies following the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls (1946-1956) show that the composition language of Tobit, Judith, 1 Maccabees, and Baruch was Hebrew or Aramaic. The book of Sirach was written in Hebrew, while the additional passages to Esther and Daniel, together with the books of Wisdom and 2 Maccabees were written in Greek (Fabris 1994, 299).

382 the Pope Damasus I asked the scholar Jerome (347-420) to prepare an official Latin version of the Bible. The complete work of Jerome circulated under the name of *Vulgata* that means 'popular, common' (from the Latin *vulgus* 'the common people'), and, despite an initial phase of strong critics against it, this text slowly replaced all the other Latin versions of the Bible. In the subsequent centuries, the Vulgate would become the only Bible acknowledged by the Church, even though its central and exclusive position was to be established only during the Council of Trent (1545-1563).

Latin was the language of the Roman Empire and also of Christendom, but it was gradually replaced by the various vernaculars according to the geographical areas after the fall of the Western Roman Empire (476). During the Middle Ages, throughout Europe, Latin remained the only *lingua franca* used among sovereigns, in universities, and during ecclesiastical events, becoming a formal and official language, nonconforming to the language spoken in the regions of the previous empire, which were experiencing an independent evolution of the Romance languages. This linguistic development was perceived by the Christians who, in the twelfth and thirteenth century, began to partially translate the Bible into German, French, and Italian. These translations used the Vulgate as the source text and were distributed in the form of manuscripts among small groups of believers. Nevertheless, the translation of the Bible into modern languages and its subsequent accessibility and significance in the lives of Christians was one of the controversial issues raised by Martin Luther (1483-1546) in the events that prompted the Protestant Reformation at the beginning of the sixteenth century. In 1522, Luther printed and distributed his German version of the New Testament. The Catholic Church considered the issue of the vernacular translations of the Bible during the Council of Trent. First and foremost, the congregation of bishops defined the canon of the biblical books and declared that the Vulgate would be the one and only Latin text and in 1590, the *Vulgata Sixtina* (from the Pope Sixtus V, 1567-1590) was published. It was revised by a body of biblical scholars and republished in 1592, 1593, and 1598. This last version is known as *Vulgata Clementina* (after Pope Clement VIII, 1592-1605) or Sixto-Clementina, and would be the official Latin Bible of the Catholic Church until 1979 (see Fragnito 1997, 2005).

From the seventeenth century onwards, the different Protestant groups continued to translate the Scriptures in different languages, also in the missionary stations they had founded in Asia, while the Catholics showed little interest in this activity. In China, the Catholic missionaries Basset MEP and Poirot SJ (eighteenth century) had been banned from publishing their translations whereas Robert Morrison, the first Protestant missionary in China, set out to undertake the task of translating the Bible even before leaving for China. The translation by Morrison was published in 1823 and, in the following century, fifteen Bibles and other volumes of the Old and

New Testament were prepared, printed and distributed. For the Catholics, only at the end of the nineteenth century did a new document addressing matters concerning the Bible come to light. In 1893, Pope Leo XIII issued the encyclical letter *Providentissimus Deus* (The God of all Providence) on the study of Holy Scripture. Nevertheless, in the same document, the centrality of the Vulgate in the life of the Church was reasserted. The next decree on the translation of the Bible was issued only in 1943 in the encyclical letter on promoting Biblical Studies, *Divino Afflante Spiritu* (Inspired by the Divine Spirit), issued by Pius XII on September 30, 1943. In the document there were some references to the translation issue, and it asserted that the Sacred Scriptures could be translated:

> Whenever the liturgical laws permit […] with the approval of the Ecclesiastical authority, into modern languages. (*Divino Afflante Spiritu* 1943, 9, 51)

These two encyclicals vaguely hinted at the translation question while discussing matters concerning liturgy and Scriptures in general. The official documents on the Bible and its translation would be issued only as reports of the meetings of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), namely, the constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (This Sacred Council) and the dogmatic constitution on divine revelation *Dei Verbum* (The Word of God). The latter defined the importance of translating the Bible from the original texts, the utility of explanatory notes, and the relevance of collaborating with the Protestant Churches:

> Since the word of God should be accessible at all times, the Church by her authority and with maternal concern sees to it that suitable and correct translations are made into different languages, especially from the original texts of the sacred books. And should the opportunity arise and the Church authorities approve, if these translations are produced in cooperation with the separated brethren as well, all Christians will be able to use them. […] Editions of the Sacred Scriptures, provided with suitable footnotes, should be prepared also for the use of non Christians and adapted to their situation. (*Dei Verbum* 1965, VI.21, 25)

These documents were issued by the Holy See in 1963 and 1965. In 1961, Allegra and his team had published the eleventh volume of the complete Catholic Bible in Chinese, translated from 1935 onwards, according to modern principles, despite they were not yet official.

3   The *Sigao Shengjing*

3.1   The Phases of the Translation

In a report written for the Apostolic Delegate in Beijing, on May 6, 1941, Allegra responded to four points of issue (1914, 10-1). The first point concerned the necessity of the translation, and he wrote that the necessity stemmed from the need of the priests and the faithful to know the contents of the 'revealed truth,' with the consensus of other missionaries and bishops besides. This point explains the high degree of details and exegetical features of the translation notes written by Allegra and his team, and also the strict adherence of the Chinese text to the original. In fact, the main aim of the translators was to encourage the Chinese clergy to deepen their knowledge of the doctrine and transmit it subsequently, so it does not come as a surprise if common Christians found the translation too difficult to understand. The second point of issue regarded the source text, mentioning the Vulgate as a possible option. Allegra's response was that this would have been possible only if the Hebrew or Greek texts were wanting. He stressed once more the importance of an adequate mastery of biblical languages, considering Greek and Hebrew, as well as other Semitic languages, such as Syriac. After more than fifteen years, Allegra still wanted to continue and accomplish the aims set out in the final documents of the Plenary Council of Shanghai (1924), which was the essence of the third point of issue. He wrote that the commission requested by the Council could be formed in those years, choosing six or seven members, Chinese and foreigners.[5] The final question was on the possibility of overcoming the different kinds of obstacles, such as linguistic problems, hermeneutical knowledge, lack of time and appropriate space, need of money. Allegra's reply to this ultimate point was that every problem had to be faced with trust in Providence, hard work and faith in the Virgin Mary. This is the earliest document on the Studium found in the Archive, and despite it being written four years before the foundation of the institute, it confirms that Allegra already had a clear idea of his translation plan. In particular, some years later, the Friar explained the reason why he had chosen to establish a research institute rather than a translating commission:

> A Commission could accomplish its task in a decade, and cease to exist when the work is finished. A Studium, on the other hand, should be open to revision, the publishing of updated commentaries, biblical monographies and other auxiliary works, even after the completion of the translation. (Allegra 1953, 7)

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5 On the First Plenary Council of Shanghai in 1924 see Lam 2008, and *Primum Concilium Sinense, anno 1924 etc.* 1930.

After its foundation, the first purpose of the Studium was to revise and publish the Book of Pslams – task accomplished on September 15, 1946 in Beijing, with the publication of the first volume of the Old Testament books, the *Shengyong ji* 聖詠集.

Concerning the translation method, many accounts written by Allegra himself are available in the Archive, and some of them were also published. However, it must be underlined that the first document found on the topic was written in 1944. The indications to follow were: 1) translation of original text; 2) 'word-for-word' translation (*verbum ad verbum*); 3) exegetical notes to be placed at the end of translation. Concerning the language to use, Allegra mentioned the *guoyu* 國語 used by Lu Xun 魯迅, Zhou Zuoren 周作人, Hu Shi 胡適, Ba Jin 巴金, Lao She 老捨, and Bing Xin 冰心. In this document Allegra exposed the different styles used in the translation of different sets of books. He chose clarity for the historical books, elegance for the poetics, earnestness for the wisdom books, while legal texts were strong and straightforward. To sum up:

> The style will be one and different according to the variety required by the different literary genres. (Allegra 1945, 5)

The lengthy paragraph that follows in the report deals with the *terminologia sacra* ('sacred terminology') and indicates the principles of its translation. The translator discouraged the use of new words, inviting to keep the Chinese Church's customary terminology. Where words needed to be changed or corrected, other Chinese Catholic books should be consulted, such as liturgical texts, the missal, various editions of the catechism, some lives of saints, and Chinese translations of books in European languages containing the words needed. Allegra suggested to create the indices of the transliterated names, dividing them into three groups, namely: proper names; technical names, such as plants, animals, weight and measurement units; and 'strictly sacred terms' (*terminorum sacrorum sensu stricto*). In the latter group, it is argued that the various transliterations, by Nestorians, Manicheans, Muslims, and Protestants, should be reported to choose the most appropriate. These indices can be found in the 1957 edition of the Gospels and, with more details and some modifications, in the appendices of the single volume edition of 1968. In this document Allegra also confirmed his approval of the plain transliteration of Semitisms, bringing to mind that their seemingly 'barbarous' sound would gradually become familiar, as occurred in the languages of Europe. On the dubious passages of the original texts, the translator stated that the contemporary exegetes were to be consulted and followed. Only if the ambiguity were to persist, could the Vulgate be consulted and used as source text. This position confirms the will of Allegra of being faithful to the tradition of the Church and his reluctance to discard the authority of the Vulgate, highlighting, at the

same time, the intention of following the new exegetical and hermeneutical methods.

While the translation method employed remained almost constant during the whole translation process, the position of the members of the Studium regarding the commentaries on the biblical books changed during the years. Allegra noted that no Catholic Chinese commentaries of the Old Testament existed, and only some explanations of the New Testament were available. He described the situation in these words:

> However useful and pious such explanations were, they must be considered more as devotional than as literal and doctrinal explanations of the Sacred Text. To translate the Bible into a modern language and to write a kind of commentary designed to nourish the devotion of the faithful by indulging in accommodations and pious considerations would not, it seemed, meet the real needs of the Church. What was needed was a modern scientific version and a sound scientific commentary. (Allegra 1965, 351)

In a document written by Allegra on September 30, 1960 some important standpoints to prepare the commentaries are listed (Allegra 1960). The requirement of remembering the explanations of all the other books, while commenting a single one, in order to create unity and consistency, is noteworthy. Other points regard the importance of following the instructions of the Church on translation and of bearing in mind the historical context and details of the first edition of the original texts, so as to appropriately understand and translate the more difficult passages. As often argued by Allegra and his collaborators, the adherence to a scientific translation and exegetical method was fundamental. However, another key element was loyalty to the Catholic doctrine, with the commentaries necessarily delineating "the voice of the Church" and the "clear and theologically solid exposition of the Sacred Text" (Allegra 1960, 1). In a later document Allegra defined the commentaries as a "translation of the existing Catholic exegesis" (Allegra 1959-60, 9; Author's translation).

The translation and publication process can be divided in two phases, one concerning the Old Testament, and the other concerning the New Testament. When the Studium was founded in 1945, the translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew had been completed by Allegra himself, therefore, only the revision of the Chinese text and the editing of the paratext needed to be prepared. The publication of the volume of the Psalms in 1946 started the issue of the Old Testament Books and was followed by the print and circulation of the *Zhihui shu* 智慧書, the Books of Wisdom, on October 4, 1947. On the same day, one year later, the Chinese Pentateuch, *Meise wushu* 梅瑟五書 was published, this being the last work of the Studium printed in Beijing. The first book prepared and published in Hong

Kong was the first volume of the Historical Books, *Shi shu shang ce* 史書上冊, when the team of translators was still in the Franciscan residence of Waterloo Road (October 4, 1949). In Kennedy Road, the second volume of the Historical Books was published (*Shi shu xia ce* 史書下冊, November 8, 1950) followed, one year later, by the first volume of the Prophetic Books, *Xianzhi shu shang ce* 先知書上冊 (November 8, 1951). This first volume included only the Book of Isaiah, while the second volume of the Prophetic Books was composed of the Books of Jeremiah, Lamentations, Baruch, and Ezekiel and was published on December 8, 1952: *Xianzhi shu zhongce* 先知書中冊. The third volume of the Prophetical Books, *Xianzhi shu xia ce* 先知書下冊 was published on May 31, 1954, and included the Book of Daniel and the Twelve Minor Prophets. This was the eighth volume published by the Studium Biblicum and completed the first edition of the Catholic Old Testament in Chinese.

In the month of October 1955, the translation of the New Testament began. The first books to be published would be the four Gospels (*Fuyin* 福音, 1957): after the translation of the texts of the Gospels, the Friars had to prepare other sections of the volume, namely the chronological table of the life of Jesus Christ, a table on the use of the Gospels during liturgy, maps of the places mentioned in the texts, and the index of the proper names. The next volume included the Acts of the Apostles and the letters by Saint Paul, and was published on December 2, 1959 (*Zongtu jing shu shang ce* 宗徒經書上冊, Writing of the Apostles, vol. 1); the last volume of the New Testament was published on August 2, 1961 (*Zongtu jing shu xia ce* 宗徒經書下冊, Writing of the Apostles, vol. 2), with the Catholic Epistles (James, Peter, John, and Jude) and the Book of Revelation. The issue of this book concluded the edition of the eleven big volumes containing the first complete translation of the Catholic Bible in Chinese.

In the year 1962, the complete New Testament was printed and distributed in one volume. This included the translation of all the twenty seven books, together with introductions presenting each book, and explicative notes at the side of each left page, next to the translated text. The appendices include a table with the main events of the New Testament, a table of the weights, measures, and currency systems used at the time, a list of the passages of the Gospels used during the liturgy of Sundays and main holy days, and a thematic index. The maps reproduce those included in the volume of the Gospels, namely those of the Roman Empire, the Palestine and Jerusalem during the events described in the New Testament, the Passover of Jesus, and add the missionary travels of Saint Paul, replacing the picture of the room of the Last Supper reported in the volume of the Gospels.

Soon after the completion of the edition of the eleven volumes of the whole Bible, Allegra and his team started the revision phase with the aim of publishing the single volume Bible. The criteria of the revision were established and followed up for five years from 1963. One new criterion

used in the revision of the two testaments was that of rendering the text accessible to anyone willing to approach the volume, so that many comments, particularly those concerning the textual critic, meant only for a literate reader belonging to the clergy, were deleted. Each book was to be revised by one member of the Studium and later discussed by all the other translators of the team. This kind of team-work and draft review included the method of identifying the incorrect or difficult passages and discussing them among the translators; the translation would be fixed only after the approval of each component of the team. The aim of this process was that of achieving consistency through the whole Chinese text translated, still respecting the differences in style of the several books composing the Bible. From the Latin preface to the 1968 version, we know that the New Testament was modified according to the recent critical text edition of 1966, assenting to the ecumenical view proposed in those years. Furthermore, some passages of the Old Testament were corrected following the recently discovered Dead Sea Scrolls (1946-1956). The first Catholic Bible in Chinese language in a unique volume was distributed on December 25, 1968 and is therefore known also as *Bethlehem Bible* or *Christmas Bible*. In 1969 the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments approved that the version published by the Studium Biblicum could be used as the official text in liturgical celebrations in Chinese language. Furthermore, after some revisions and editing, the Sigao Bible is the official text for Catholic liturgy in Chinese language still today.

3.2   Characteristics and Features

The issue of the single volume Bible, the first complete text in Chinese for the Catholics, was warmly welcomed and soon became a landmark for the Catholic Chinese speaking communities. Besides the good quality of the translation, what enriched the volume were some useful appendices carefully prepared by the members of the Studium. Among these, worthy of mention are the chronological tables, including one that brings together the significant events all over the world and those in the Bible, one listing the events described in the Old Testament, and one listing those of the New Testament. Another table presents the events in the world in relation to the events of the life of Jesus, while the next table reports Jesus' three years of public ministry. There is also a table comparing the weights, measures, and currency systems cited in the Bible with those currently used. Two charts report the Judean, Greek and Roman calendars, and the holy days for the Jews during one year. In the autobiographical memoirs, Allegra mentioned that the most appreciated appendices for the Chinese readership were those containing historical features. Furthermore, despite acknowledging that it needed amendments, as well as being the most

demanding appendix to prepare, Allegra was content with the *Shengjing jiaoyi suoyin* 聖經教義索引 (Index of Biblical Doctrine), an index presenting the explanation of twelve topics, covering all the main biblical themes and abridging the whole salvation history. The twelve small chapters were condensed in thirty pages and included themes as the revelation of God, the nature of God, the role of God as Creator, Savior and Redeemer. Three chapters concerned the Church, the sacraments and the prayers. The maps reproduce Palestine, the Roman Empire, the Assyrian Empire, and the Persian one, together with its process of Hellenization. Several illustrations are distributed in the text, in the places where they are pertinent. There are, for example, the pictures of the original scrolls of the Bible, or figures of the twelve tribes of Israel, and the reigns of David and Salomon in the sections where they are mentioned in the Old Testament, while pictures such as the official residence of Pilate or the structure of the cross as an instrument of punishment at the time of Jesus are found in the chapters of the Gospels narrating the Passion episodes.

Concerning the main body of the text, it can be underlined that Allegra and the translators of the Studium chose the terminology already accepted and used by the Catholics, following the long Church tradition. Relevant words such as 'God', 'Holy Spirit', 'baptism', or 'Word (*logos*)', whose translation had been extensively debated in the preceding centuries, were translated, respectively, as *Tianzhu* 天主, *Shengshen* 聖神, *xi* 洗, and *Shengyan* 聖言.[6] Furthermore, the team adopted the same strategy to translate other words belonging to a 'sacred terminology' or well-known proper names and toponyms, maintaining the acknowledged translations for the most familiar nouns, and, when necessary, trying to reproduce the sound of the original Hebrew or Greek name, avoiding strong similarities with some transliterations used by the Protestants and based on English pronunciation. An important detail is that, in every occurrence of seemingly strange or obscure translations, the team provided clear explanatory notes or cross references to check the meaning of important words or topics. Furthermore, it is noteworthy to mention the publication by the Studium of a Chinese Biblical Dictionary (*Shengjing cidian* 聖經辭典, 1975), meant to provide a better understanding of the translation and the terminology used therein. Biblical Weeks and Biblical Expositions, the issue of a biblical periodical and other types of publications edited by the Studium after 1968 were also fundamental sources to biblical knowledge.

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6 On the 'Term Question' see Eber 1999.

4   Conclusion

The topic of the translation of the Bible in Chinese must be set in a wider context of research where both the general issue of biblical translation and the history of missions are included. In this way, the reason for the absence of a complete Catholic translation of the Bible in Chinese at the beginning of the twentieth century becomes clear. In fact, the analysis of the previous attempts at biblical translations by Catholic missionaries, or the reference to the extensive production of other types of texts has demonstrated that the Bible itself was not considered as a primary missionary tool. Moreover, taking into account the educational background of the missionaries and the general attitude towards the use and circulation of the biblical text both in Latin or in other languages, it is evident that the approach of the missionaries in China to the Bible conformed to the directions given by the Church hierarchies all over the world. Considering that the translation of the Bible in German by Martin Luther was believed to be one of the elements leading to the Protestant Reformation, it follows that Catholic missionaries were reluctant to translate the Bible in Chinese. Other types of texts were employed to spread their doctrine, and the few attempts at translating biblical texts were prevented from being circulated.

When the Franciscan missionary Gabriele Allegra arrived in China in 1931 with the purpose of dealing with such translation commitment, the attitude of the Catholic Church towards biblical translations in modern languages was gradually changing, and the Friar had received the support of his superiors at the very beginning of the project. Furthermore, between the publication of the last of the eleven volumes of the first complete edition of the Chinese Bible (1961) and the issue of the single volume (1968), the Second Vatican Council had officially approved and sustained the spread of the Bible in every language of the world, so that the work of the Studium Biblicum was highly appreciated even by the Pope himself and the Church hierarchies.

The analysis of the translation method and the publication process has shown that, since its initial project, the version of the Catholic Bible in Chinese was intended to diffuse the contents of Christian doctrine among Chinese speaking Catholics, rather than to convert people. In fact, when the first eleven volumes of the complete translation were published year by year, the first addressees were the clergy and the catechists who were to explain biblical episodes and messages to the believers. Subsequently, the volume published in 1968 was meant also for personal use, and the Studium could provide believers a better understanding of the Bible also through other means.

To conclude, this specific translation project of the Bible in Chinese can be considered as a complex text intending to translate into the Chinese language not only some Christian words but also a composite and

manifold Christian world. Furthermore, the original texts, preceding and contemporary versions in other languages, a wide set of commentaries, and other types of texts were a continuous and rich source of intertextuality, together with the changing historical contexts over the centuries and the different positions the Church and its representatives assumed concerning the topic of biblical translation. These elements constitute the basis on which this study can be included in the present volume *Between Texts, Beyond Words. Intertextuality and Translation*, second of the series "Translating Wor(l)ds".

The issue of this biblical text translating worlds and representing a complex case of intertextuality in translation can be analysed both from a historical and linguistic perspective. Concerning the historical perspective, there are two arguments to take into account, namely the changing historical and social contexts from the first writing of the texts to the specific Chinese translation case, and the developing role of the Bible in the life of the Church, of the clergy and of the lay people along the centuries. Firstly, it must be underlined that the 73 books which constitute the canon of the Catholic Bible were written in times and contexts different from those in which the events there reported took place. The causes of writing and the intended audiences (before than readers) were very different as well. Moreover, as reported above, the translation matters related to the shaping of other cultures and the affirmation of other languages soon arose, long before the first missionaries could reach China. According to historical, social, cultural, and religious needs, the canon was defined, the Old Testament was translated into Greek, and later the whole text was translated in the Latin language. Subsequently, the Latin Vulgate became the only officially accepted version for centuries reaching, without a permit of translation, every missionary destination all over the world. Documents allowing and supporting Bible translation in modern languages were officially issued only in the second half of the twentieth century. Secondly, the weak role of the Bible as a missionary tool should be considered. As already mentioned, in the first centuries of Christian missions to China, the Bible was more a source of preaching contents than a book to be translated and circulated. As a consequence, many other types of Christian texts such as catechisms, collections of stories from the Old Testament and the Gospels, books of prayers, saints' biographies were translated or directly written in Chinese. Furthermore, the absence of a Catholic Bible in Chinese along the centuries was the result of the close connection among Catholic communities in the whole world, all depending on the directions and rules established by the Pope and the hierarchies in Rome. The attitude of the higher representatives of the Church towards the translation of the Bible in Chinese – and in modern languages in general, was a consequence of the issues dealt with after the Protestant Reformation, thus resulting in the ban on the translation and circulation of the Sacred

Scriptures in languages different from Latin, and including some versions even in the Index of Prohibited Books. The reluctance shown by these hierarchies would seem to indicate a scarce awareness of the possibility of translating the sacred text in Chinese in order to transmit the Christian doctrine, nevertheless, the efforts made by the missionaries to produce and circulate Christian books in the Chinese language demonstrates that, however, the primary purpose of their mission was that of fostering the knowledge of their world. If on the one side these circumstances impeded the direct translation in Chinese words of the biblical world in its literal sense, on the other side they consented the circulation of various types of texts in the Chinese language that well transmitted the Christian world to Chinese people. Thus, for many centuries, the biblical world could be transmitted to Chinese people even if not through direct translation of the biblical text. As shown in the preceding paragraphs, the undertaking of Allegra could be accomplished also because he received approval and support from his superiors. Moreover, the Chinese speaking Catholics were finally considered prepared to receive the Word of God in their language, and not believed to be 'premature' as in the previous centuries.

Concerning the linguistic perspective, the specific case of the Sigao Bible can be examined. According to the documents written by Allegra and analysed in this study, the main aim of the translator was that of providing the Chinese with a complete version of the biblical text in their language. This meant that, through this specific book, they would have easy and, for the first time, direct access to the Word of God. In particular, some translating choices of the missionary can be underlined. In the first place, as the case of the 1919 Mandarin Union Version had clearly demonstrated, the context in which the final version would be published and distributed had to be taken into account. The long project of a unitary translation was undertaken by the different Protestant denominations in 1890 and could allow the missionaries to work on two versions of the text, one in literary and one in Mandarin Chinese. Nevertheless, the Protestants would soon witness the deep changes both in Chinese history and in the use of the Chinese language, and be able to acknowledge that the Mandarin version would be the most successful. When Allegra arrived in China and started to translate, the *guoyu* was already the standard national language and the works by Hu Shi, Lu Xun, Ba Jin, and other authors would be his reference texts. Choosing to translate in this language, Allegra intended to prepare a text which could be received and understood by his contemporary Chinese speaking world. In addition to this, in the documents analysed there is often explicit reference to the will of keeping the Chinese Christian terminology already acquired by tradition and familiar to the Chinese Catholics. In the second place, a particular concern for the correct understanding of the translated text can be observed in the analysed version. The numerous, long and detailed introductions, comments, and explanatory notes to the

translated text demonstrate the will of the translators to provide readers with all the needed support to better understand the main body of the text, offering detailed notes on words, names or events specifically belonging to the Judeo-Christian terminology. Furthermore, meeting the same needs, a rich paratext improved the final volume, with chronological and measure tables, pictures, and maps. These are all translating choices that aimed at creating a more familiar translated world. Particular reference with regard to this topic can be made to the chronological tables comparing relevant events of Chinese and Christian history, the correspondences between weights, measures, and currency systems, the pictures, the maps with the mentioned itineraries, the notes explaining Hebrew festivities or practices. It is interesting to note that, after the publication of the single volume Bible and its following revisions, the Friars of the Studium Biblicum in Hong Kong continued to work on complementary tools aimed at improving the knowledge Chinese people could have of the Christian and biblical world. Among these, the most important are the Biblical dictionary published in 1975 and the Biblical Expositions and the Biblical Weeks organised in Taiwan (1963), Hong Kong (1965), and Macau (1969). Finally, the difference between the edition of the eleven volumes published from 1946 to 1961 and the 1968 single volume translation is worthy of mention. The first edition of the translated text with bulky commentaries and explanations was intended to instruct the clergy; on the contrary, the single volume Bible published and circulated in 1968 was meant to reach every Chinese, even the non-Christians. Therefore, the series of eleven volumes included detailed exegetical and hermeneutical notes, references to the original lexicon in Hebrew and Greek and internal references intended to provide the clergy with a solid biblical knowledge. Differently, the 1968 Bible in a unique volume could be bought, read, and understood by a very wide range of Chinese speaking people, including non-believers or non-educated people.

Adopting a clear and efficient work plan and methodology, sharing translation problems, preparing explanatory notes, and providing a detailed paratext to support the main body of translation, Allegra and the other Friars of the Studium Biblicum created a unified and clear text. These efforts offered Chinese speaking Catholics an accessible, comprehensible, and complete Bible, a book that represents a well-developed endeavour of translating the Christian world into Chinese words.

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Interdependencies Between Literature, Language and Translation in Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth-Century China

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Abstract   This paper focuses on specific concepts and modes of translation practised during late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century China. Its Author does not argue for the uniqueness of a 'Chinese Translation Studies system' but asks critically why European scholars of Translation Studies sometimes show a lack of 'empathetic imagination' in accepting the contributions of Chinese protagonists to the field of Translations Studies. The paper suggests that one reason for this kind of negative attitude might be the belated arrival of the 'iconic turn' in the West. The last part of the paper examines the relations between translators and the socio-political developments in China as well as their identity as world-citizens.

Summary   1 Concrete Modes of Translation in China During the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries. – 2 Some Observations on Chinese Translation Concepts' Contribution to the Field of Translation Studies and their Reception by European Scholars of Translation Studies. – 3 Relations Between Socio-Political Developments in China, Translation and World Citizenship. – 4 Conclusion.

Keywords   Modes of translation in China. Lu Xun. Qian Zhongshu. Modernity. Empathetic imagination. Iconic turn.

This paper is the result of a presentation delivered at a university in Germany several years ago. The audience consisted mainly of European experts in translation studies who were unfamiliar with the Chinese context.

The aim of the presentation had mainly been to identify concrete features of translation as practiced in China during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In this period, Chinese writers and translators were confronted with western influences, but Chinese indigenous developments were still quite visible. The presentation offered the view that the translation concepts developed, and the translation modes practiced, in China during that period, such as the collective mode of translation, are valuable contributions to the international field of translation studies.

Observers have described the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as the period of a 'Third Wave' of intensive translation activity in China. This followed the 'First Wave' during which translators undertook

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the enormous collective project of translating Buddhist scripture from Sanskrit and other ancient Indian languages into Chinese. This helped to establish Buddhism as a religion in China shortly after the beginning of the Christian era in the West. It also followed the 'Second Wave', which saw many translations resulting from the encounters between Chinese scholars and European Jesuits in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Fan 1999, 27). In the first section of this paper, the discussion will focus on the 'Third Wave' of intensive translation activity in China.

In the second section, this paper will provide my reflections on the critical reactions to my presentation by German experts in translation studies. The mocking and arrogant reactions of these European academics might be partly explained by a lack of interest in translation beyond the Western tradition. This is something which has been observed by Eva Hung, Judy Wakabayashi and Douglas Robinson. They characterised the contemporary field of Translation Studies at the beginning of the 21st century as being still highly Eurocentric (Hung, Wakabayashi 2005; Robinson 2017). However, in my opinion, the failure of these European scholars of translation to accept Chinese traditions might be explained also by another factor: the belated arrival of an 'iconic turn' in western academic research.

I want to clarify, however, that I am not siding with those Chinese scholars of translation studies who are nowadays trying to "develop Translation Studies in China with its own theoretical system and methodology so as to claim to create the so-called Chinese characteristics". Sun Yifeng from Lingnan University in Hong Kong has spoken of a "new-found cultural confidence [in China], which calls for a sweeping revitalization of traditional Chinese translation theory" (Sun 2012, 35-6).

The third section of my paper examines the relations between translation and the socio-political context in China. Here my argument is that translation has been – and in fact still is – connected with issues of orthodoxy and dogmatism. In 1963 the writer and translator Qian Zhongshu, with his thoughts dwelling on translation, protested against the prescribed orthodoxy and dogmatism of his time. Today leading scholars of translation studies in the People's Republic of China (PRC) are still demanding that translators show a 'correct' attitude with regard to translation culture.

1 Concrete Modes of Translation in China During the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries

In my opinion, two very interesting features of translation as practiced in China are the collective mode of translation and the habit of redacting texts. Eva Hung (2006, 152) has shown how this collaborative mode was established over many centuries. The tradition of 'translating in a team' was still alive and well in nineteenth-century China. The translator Lin

Shu 林紓 (1852-1924), for example, who introduced over 150 novels from Europe and America to China, actually knew no language but Chinese. He accomplished his translations with the help of assistants who were familiar with the languages from which he was translating. They conveyed to him the content of the text in question and Lin Shu then reformulated this content in classical Chinese. Lin's elegant style made him a much-loved translator whose works were highly in demand among literate Chinese at the end of the nineteenth century and start of the twentieth century. Lin's works had evidently found their 'target group'. As the twentieth century advanced, this respect for translation as teamwork gradually declined in China. It was sidelined by western influences and another notion arose to replace it, namely that translation should be accomplished by one person alone (Hung 2006, 157).

We also encounter the practice of translation as a collective process in other contexts across the world. Maria Tymoczko (2007, 60) has described such a process of collective translation taking place in African society. She reports on the retelling of *Hamlet* by a circle of African tribal elders who collectively carried out its 'translation' in accordance with the locally applicable cultural rules. The elders, for example, interpreted the death of Ophelia as the inevitable consequence of a wicked magic spell. Tymoczko considers the oral sharing of tales and narratives, and the appropriation and integration of foreign stories into one's own cultural context, to be characterised by a performative aesthetic.

Returning to Lin Shu, we might ask: did his manner of proceeding not necessarily imply the taking of great liberties vis-à-vis the original texts? Many commentators on Lin's works have expressed this opinion. Lin himself, however, seemed aware of the need to limit such liberties. He wrote:

> Translating is unlike writing. The writer can write about what he has seen or heard, either in vague expressions or in detailed descriptions, that is to say, he can write about whatever subject and in whatever manner he likes. However, when it comes to translation, the translator is confined to relating what has already been written about... When religious inculcations are found in the original text, he must translate them; how can he purge his translation of that discourse just for taboo's sake? (Fan 1999, 3)

Lin's self-perception, in other words, was characterised by a "loyalty to the author", to adopt a phrase that Christiane Nord has introduced into debates in this field (Nord 2011). Even so, Martha Cheung has pointed to the presence of certain traits in Lin Shu's translations which amount to a subtle censorship or 'redaction' of his source texts. Lin's translation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* appears to preserve the Christian message that is central to the source text. However, his translation of the book does not offer

narration of a religious conversion inspired by any specifically Christian behaviour. Instead, Lin chose to place the emphasis on a moral transformation of the protagonists which corresponded more closely to Chinese models of religion and morality (Cheung 1998, 138). In Cheung's view, this amounted to a shift of emphasis through which Lin intended, consciously or unconsciously, to lead his text's readers to the conclusion that "[t]here is nothing which Christianity can offer that traditional Chinese morality cannot" (139).

Dan Dexing has also conducted research on Lin Shu's mode of translation. As Dan shows, political motives were among the considerations driving Lin Shu's translation. Lin Shu took seriously what Liang Qichao and Yan Fu had said about the power of fiction to influence whether China undergoes 'renaissance' or 'ruin'. Chapter 7 of 'A Voyage to Brobdingnag' in Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* contains the following sentence: "They have the Art of Printing, as well as the Chinese, Time out of mind" (1959, 136). Lin Shu translated and extended the phrase "time out of mind" as follows: "古今無分遂泥古不化墨守舊法至於老死" (*gu jin wu fen sui ni gu bu hua mo shou jiu fa zhi yu lao si)*. In doing so, he made the phrase imply that people in China tended to be inflexible and to stick to the old ways even if this implicated their death. Dan (2009, 105-6) argues that Lin Shu argues that Lin Shu extended the phrase in this way because he was seeking to shake his compatriots into activity and make them engage in "saving their country from ruin" (救国 *jiuguo*).

However, we should be careful not to characterise this 'interpreting', 'redacting' and 'editing' approach to translation as being 'typically Chinese' (Zheng 2009, 75). James St. André's research has identified a case of spurious translation from this period. In 1900, Ernest Bramah Smith published a book entitled *The Wallet of Kai Lung*, which purported to be a 'genuinely Chinese' collection of tales by a Chinese storyteller. In fact, Smith could not read Chinese. His English work represented an attempt to recreate 'Chineseness' and it was essentially a pastiche. "Spurning the type of Pidgin-English commonly ascribed to Chinese in the popular press, Smith depends mainly on vocabulary choice for [t]his effect" (St. André 2006, 244).

To cite an example from more recent times, Karin Schindler has shown how a French translation made in the 1950s of the classic Swedish children's book *Pippi Longstocking* contains significant 'redactions'. One classic scene describes Pippi's experience at school. In the 1950s French translation, Pippi remains unable to make sense of the idea that eight and four make twelve, as she is in the original. However, the French translator's 'loyalty to the author' clearly has its limits. The paragraph in which Pippi impudently proposes that the teacher, instead of Pippi herself, should go and stand in the corner has been dropped from the French translation (Schindler 2004).

2 Some Observations on Chinese Translation Concepts' Contribution to the Field of Translation Studies and their Reception by European Scholars of Translation Studies

This second section of the paper will describe the specific conceptual deliberations made by prominent Chinese translators in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Presenting these deliberations, it will show the broad range of discussions that took place in China related to translation issues and the different lines of argumentation that emerged. The concepts developed by these Chinese translators do show some similarities with western concepts. However, in their discussions we can also discern quite unique conceptual developments, such as ideas about the importance of images in the Chinese language and translation context.

One important protagonist of translation and translation research in early twentieth-century China was Fu Lei 傅雷 (1908-1966). Fu Lei worked as a writer, art critic and translator. He was of the opinion that it was not important for a translation to resemble the source text in formal respects. For him it was essential that a translation conveyed the spirit (*shen* 神) of the source text (Luo, Xinzhang 2012, 8, and Liu, Miqing 1995, 89).

The term shen 神 is deeply embedded in Chinese aesthetics. In the Daoist classic *Zhuangzi* 庄子 (The Texts of Taoism 1962, 198), *shen* 神 stands for the outer effect of an inner truth (真在内者神動於外 *zhen zai nei zhe shen dong yu wai*). Wolfgang Kubin, in his translation of the *Zhuangzi*, has pointed out that at the time of its writing the term shen also carried the sense of "incredible", "extraordinary" (Kubin 2013, 168). The passage might, then, be rendered thus: 'the inner truth of a source text becomes visible through an inspired and remarkable translation'.

The well-known Chinese philologist Zhang Taiyan 章太炎 (1869-1936) called into question the very possibility of translation. All words, he argued, are merely substitutes (*yi ming wei dai* 以名为代) and resemble the ephemeral footprints left by passing birds (*niaoji* 鸟迹). He maintained that names cannot possibly succeed in re-evoking the scene originally evoked by a 'source text' and therefore meanings are often lost in conventional translations (Zhang 1986, 77). Admittedly, these highly sceptical views did not prevent Zhang from making many translations himself and starting a Translation Society (Murthy 2014, 71). He nevertheless preferred to describe his works as 'interpretative transpositions' of the originals.

A contemporary of Zhang Taiyan, the author, translator and scholar Zheng Zhenduo 郑振铎 (1898-1958) held a differing view on translation. He wrote:

> I [...] hold to the opinion that literature is translatable. I think that if a book is well translated, it can have the same value as the original [...] If we compare thoughts to water, then expression is the container; no

matter how the container's form changes, the essence and amount of water remain the same […] We have no reason to doubt that thoughts can be represented in more than one language. (Zheng 2014, 63)

In my opinion, reflections on translation such as those discussed above offer an enrichment of international research into translation. However, when I presented Zhang and Zheng's concepts to the audience of experts in the field of Translation Studies at a German university, several members of this audience responded with mocking smiles and asked whether such ideas could really be said to constitute valid contributions to international translation studies. This reaction made me reflect on why there is a reluctance to accept Chinese contributions to the field of translation studies as relevant.

Roger Sell (2000, 4), who defines literature as a form of communication, claims that during intercultural encounters "the human imagination must be sufficiently autonomous to empathize with modes of being and doing that are different from the ones valorized within its most immediate milieu". He argues that when we are confronted with a cultural landscape of difference it is necessary to have 'empathetic imagination'. Sell (15) calls for a careful "negotiation of differences". One reason for the attitude shown by the European scholars of Translation Studies in the above mentioned case might therefore be a lack of the kind of 'empathetic imagination' that Sell describes.

Another reason for these European scholars' over-critical stance might be that in Europe there is a tradition of viewing sense and meaning as things only brought to explicit expression through language itself. For Gadamer, "[b]eing that is comprehended is language". But in the view of many European scholars, the "edges" of language tend to bring forth certain irrationalities (Boehm 2007, 14). Because of this, some scholars ascribe to the Chinese language a non-logical character (Yuasa 2009, 71).

However, a powerful sense of images has traditionally characterised Chinese culture and thought, and continues to do so. The Japanese philosopher Yuasa Yasuo (1925-2005) argues that the foundation of linguistic expression in a 'written language' such as Chinese is the image, which appeals to visual perception (2009,76). In the Chinese cultural context, "the world is grasped as a momentary image of which the eternal movement of the cosmos allows us to have a glimpse in the midst of time" (2009, 80). In works as early as the *Yijing* 易经, or *Book of Changes* – one of the most important among the canon of ancient texts revered by Chinese scholars – we read that the sages of ancient times attempted to picture the essential phenomena of the cosmos by means of 'primal images'. Examples of such 'primal images' were the trigrams and hexagrams of the Yijing. Images can also be a means of understanding the cosmos and the events occurring within it. The Chinese point of view did not regard these images

as 'unscientific'. The notion that images were 'unscientific' emerged only when western scholars, in the course and context of imperialist expansion, entered China with their entirely different forms of knowledge and set their own standards for the culture they found there. In recent years, with what has become known as the 'iconic turn', western academics have been rediscovering the significance of visual images. The art historian Gottfried Boehm (2007, 9) speaks of the "notable reality of the visual image". Still, as Boehm points out, "*homo pictor*" has only very recently and rudimentarily gained the attention of Western academic research and thought, and the spectrum of visual representations in the Western world has been surprisingly restricted.

This restricted spectrum of visual representations might explain why the above-mentioned experts of Translation Studies were hesitant to recognize Chinese conceptual contributions, such as those made by Zhang Taiyan and Zheng Zhenduo, to the international field of translation studies.

3 Relations Between Socio-Political Developments in China, Translation and World Citizenship

In the third section of this paper my aim is firstly to relate Chinese reflections on translation with the societal and political background from which they evolved. The literary scholars Pascale Casanova (2004) and Wolfgang Klein (1999) have also advocated placing increased focus on the historical and societal context of literature. In addition to this, the third section of the paper also asks whether Chinese translators and writers have seen themselves as part of a larger community and as world citizens.

In the late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century China, many Chinese intellectuals, including Yan Fu 严复, Liang Qichao 梁啟超, Kang Youwei 康有为 and Lu Xun 鲁迅, translated works by foreign authors into Chinese, particularly writings of political and sociological import. Liang Qichao described literature in translation as the "sharp sword" of culture, which could shake people out of their slumbers (Luo Xuanmin 2009, 125).

The writer Lu Xun (1881-1936) and his brother Zhou Zuoren 周作人 (1885-1967) were among those who shaped the debates on translation at the beginning of the twentieth century. Lu Xun chose to abandon his profession as a doctor in favour of being an author and a translator, moved by his conviction that it was in these latter areas of activity that the appropriate resources for the reconstruction of Chinese civilisation were to be found. He was of the opinion that the translation of works from foreign languages and the introduction of new linguistic patterns would enrich Chinese literature and culture and would lead to a change in Chinese thought and societal patterns. In a similar way, proponents of German Romanticism hoped for an enrichment of their own culture, language and

literature through translation. During the Romantic period, many classical works were translated from Greek and Latin into the German language in order to accumulate literary capital, as Pierre Bourdieu would have put it, and to strengthen the position of the German-speaking world as a literary space equalling France in importance (Casanova 2009).

For some time Lu Xun and Zhou Zuoren translated as a team. In fact, it was Zhou Zuoren, whose accomplishments in the academic field have been somewhat neglected in the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the West, who inspired Lu Xun to enter the field of translation (Zhao 2012). Yu Xiaozhi (2014, 10) has recently pointed out that Zhou Zuoren translated no fewer than 326 literary works. For Zhou, translation became a particular mode of self-expression. He professed to have been influenced by Lin Shu's mode of translation at the outset of his work (Zheng 2013, 89). Yu asserts that Zhou lost his interest in 'isms' of all kinds after 1924 (2014, 58). For Zhou, one of the most important roles of literature was the liberation of the individual (个人的解放 *geren de jiefang*).

In his approach to making translations, Lu Xun (Gao 1983) advocated the principle of taking whatever is useful (拿来主义*nalaizhuyi*). He believed that people in China lacked knowledge of the literatures and languages of the world, and he was in favour of integrating new terms and grammar into Chinese culture and literature. Shih Shu-mei (2001) describes Lu Xun as having the self-confidence of an individual writer who perceived himself as a citizen of the world. Lu Xun (Guo 2005b, 8) questioned the possibility of completely contextualising a foreign text in one's own language (完全归化 *wanquan guihua*). Therefore, he adopted a strategy of literal translation, bound by strict accuracy, which often resulted in texts that were hard to understand. This method of translation was called *yingyi* 硬译 (Zhang Sijie 2012, 121). Lu Xun required considerable patience from his readership, arguing that after a while they would become accustomed to reading these somewhat grammatically strange translations that appeared difficult to read (Yu 2014, 44).

In order to exemplify Lu Xun's style, I would like to mention his translation of the work *Little Johannes* by the Dutch writer Frederik van Eeden. Lu Xun translate this work into Chinese, taking, as it seems, a detour via German. He describes how in the process of translation he encountered a bird's name: *Rohrdrossel* in German, 'Great Reed Warbler' in English, *Acrocephalus turdoides* in Latin. Since he could not find an equivalent in Chinese, he decided to create a neologism: *weique* 苇雀, literally meaning 'Reed Sparrow' (Wang Hongzhi 2007b, 240). Today's equivalent of the bird's name in Chinese is 苇莺 *weiying*.

In the long run, Lu Xun's translations were not well received by his readers, who tended to regard them as inaccessible and hard to understand. Interestingly, the Italian-American translator Lawrence Venuti, born in 1953, appears to prefer a strategy similar to Lu Xun's. Instead of produc-

ing a domesticating translation and "preempting the illusion of transparency" under the "regime of fluency", Venuti (2002) favours a foreignising translation that highlights the differences of the foreign text and can be seen as "a dissident cultural practice" (125).

The writer and translator Liang Shiqiu 梁實秋 (1903-1987), who had rendered the complete works of Shakespeare into Chinese, took a different view. He criticised his contemporary Lu Xun's translations as 'dead translations (*siyi* 死译)' (Wang Hongzi 2007a, 258). He found fault with the strange grammatical constructions in Lu Xun's translations and wrote: "Dead translations are characterized by the fact that after having read them it is as if you have never read these translated works" (264; Author's translation). In Liang's rejoinder to an article on the 'class character' of literature written by Lu Xun, Liang wholeheartedly rejected the notion that literature possessed any class character. In his view, literature was an expression of human nature (267).

Let us take a look at the dispute that formed the backdrop to these differences of opinion. Lu Xun had translated into Chinese a resolution on cultural policy issued by the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party. He labelled the Communist cultural policy 'scientific' and gave expression to his conviction that literature's purpose was to benefit society.[1] Opposed as he was to an overly close relationship between Chinese authors and Russian cultural policy, Liang accused Lu Xun of using translation for propaganda purposes (Wang Hongzhi 2007a, 276-77). In Liang's view, the cultural policy of the Russian Communist Party aimed at depriving authors of their freedom of expression.

The language reformer and writer Hu Shi 胡适 (1891-1962) belonged, like Lu Xun, to the group of Chinese writers who advocated the use of the vernacular *baihua* 白话 in writing modern literature. The authors who wrote in *baihua* were somewhat alone in their endeavours in the early years, as Martha Cheung (2014, 150) has stressed. Few authors dared to approach this new hybrid form. Hu Shi differed from Lu Xun in his preference for a non-literal mode of translation. He was also in the habit of simplifying and shortening passages of text (Zhao 2012). In his view, translation was a more difficult task then writing, and a translator was called upon to thoroughly understand or incorporate (吃透 *chitou*) the source text and carry out extensive research on its context (Guo 2005a, 49).

What is striking about the statements being made by early twentieth-century Chinese writers is the fact that they are often informed by a range of different cultural contexts and reveal a knowledge of several foreign languages. In the first half of the twentieth century, authors were often

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1   The author Mao Dun 茅盾 was of the opinion that besides perfecting their skills in matters of language and literature, translators should also undergo training in political theory. See Guo 2005c, 167.

also translators. Lu Xun, for example, translated more than 200 works by about 100 authors from 14 different countries in the course of his literary activity. Chen Duxiu 陈独秀 (1879-1942), another protagonist of this time, translated authors such as Zola, Flaubert and Maupassant. Chen, one of the co-founders of the Communist Party of China, also rendered poems by the Indian author Tagore into Chinese in his early years, a little-known facet of his work. However, in a way that was similar to the way in which Lin Shu gave *Uncle Tom's Cabin* a Confucian colouring, Chen Duxiu added new elements to these translations. For example, he added evolutionary ideas to a religious poem by Tagore in his translation for issue 2 of the magazine *Xin Qingnian* 新青年 in 1915. He rendered the line "Thou hast made me endless, such is thy pleasure" into Chinese as follows: '我生无终极造化乐其功 *wo sheng wu zhong ji zaohua le qi gong* (My life is endless. Nature takes delight in my succeeding life)'.[2]

It was certainly the case that the Chinese authors of that time were curious about the outside world. Chen Duxiu (2000, 281) called in 1915 for young people to "[b]e cosmopolitan, not isolationist". However, due to a lack of knowledge of foreign languages and to political self-isolation, this tradition of a dual identity of authors and translators came to an end in the second half of the twentieth century. Today, few authors in China are also translators, and the number of Chinese contemporary authors who have mastered foreign languages is small (Kubin 2006).

4　Conclusion

I would like to conclude by taking a brief look into the second half of the twentieth century and the situation today. In an essay on translation from the year 1963 (Qian 2012), the writer and renowned scholar Qian Zhongshu 钱钟书 (1910-1998) cites the authority of the scholar Xu Shen 許慎 (ca. 58-ca.147), who compiled the dictionary *Shuowen jiezi*. Qian draws the reader's attention to an entry in the *Shuowen jiezi* – the character 囮 *é* – that elucidates the concept 譯 *yì* (translation) and is rich in interpretive significance (Cheung 2011). The character 囮 *é* is pronounced as 訛 *é* (errors, misrepresentations), as *é* is a common variant of 譌 *é*. This being the case, the characters 譌 *é*, 訛 *é*, 囮 *é* and 化 *hua* are all interconnected. Hùa 化 (transformation) is phonophoric (the sound-bearing component). Qian sees a metaphorical connection between the term 譯 *yì* (translation) and that for 鳥媒 *nǐaoměi* (decoy). When the bird-catcher uses a live bird as a decoy, it is called 囮 *é*. The bird-decoy entices (誘 *yòu*) birds. Qian writes: "譯 *yì* can be explicated as transmitting the words of the tribes in the four

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2　See: http://www.reedscom.cn/forum.php?mod=viewthread&tid=750 (2018-12-13).

quarters and those of the birds and beasts" (translation by Martha Cheung, 2011, 5) The transmission of words functions in much the same way that the bird-decoy functions to entice birds.

Martha Cheung summarises the argument in this way: to Qian, *hùa* 化 (transformation) is the highest state to be attained by literary translation,[3] and is correspondingly difficult to achieve. In Qian's view, 訛 é (misrepresentation) is inevitable. A translation serves as 媒 the *měi* (medium) of transmission, enticing (誘 *yòu*) the reader to become attached to a foreign work (Cheung 2011, 4).

In my view, this text by Qian Zhongshu contains important insights into matters of literature, language and translation. At first sight, the text may seem apolitical. However, at the time of its publication, its political component was unmistakable. In 1957, Qian's father was branded as a rightist. Qian himself came in for severe criticism one year later,[4] only escaping his father's fate with the help of influential friends. In 1993, Chen Sihe recorded the fact that just like other authors, such as Shen Congwen 沈從文 and Zhou Zuoren, Qian Zhongshu had "disappeared from the face of literary history in the PRC without leaving the faintest trace" (Wong 2013, 11).

Let us take a closer look at the time in which Qian Zhongshu composed his reflections on translation. The 1950s were marked by a highly specific discourse on translation. This was a discourse controlled by the Chinese Communist Party and one which emphasised the necessity of a 'correct' stance on translation, the accuracy of translation, and the primacy of translations from Russian. From 1949 to 1966, over 3,500 translations of Soviet Russian literature were published in total, constituting approximately 65 percent of all publications of translated foreign literature (Qi 2012, 124). Lin Shu's method of editorial translation was subject to harsh criticism during this period.

Qian Zhongshu did not fit into this framework. He spoke of the inevitable fallibility of translations and of translators' role as mediators whose task was to transmit "the words of the tribes in the four quarters" (Cheung 2011, 3) and not to limit themselves to one dominant source language. This was the implicit message of the text discussed above. This meant that Qian's thoughts on translation constituted a potentially dangerous political act of protest against the prescribed orthodoxy and dogmatism of the time. In my opinion, Qian's text retains its relevance today. This is a relevance we may recognise when looking at Chinese teaching materials on translation studies from 2009 (Xu Jun, Mu Lei 2009, 16). The authors of these

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3 On the concept of transformation (*hùa* 化), see also Liu Miqing 1995, 96-7.

4 The translator Fu Lei was also heavily criticised during the Anti-Rightist campaign and committed suicide together with his wife in September 1966 after having been abused by Red Guards.

materials emphasise that translation connects people as they progress towards a better future, yet still conclude by stressing the importance of maintaining a 'correct' attitude towards translation.

Today, China is undoubtedly in a state of modernity. At this juncture, I find the concept of multiple modernities coined by Shmuel Eisenstadt (2002) helpful. In my view, the modernity that Qian Zhongshu and others evoked in the first half of the twentieth century has yet to arrive. Zygmunt Bauman (2007, 9) has characterised modern consciousness as one that "criticises, warns and alerts. It makes the action unstoppable by ever anew unmasking its ineffectiveness". I agree with Shih Shu-mei (2001, 385) who has remarked that the project of modernity in China is incomplete. She considers this "not due to an unfulfilled promise, as Juergen Habermas lamented in the Western context, but instead due to it being a particularly arduous, violent, repetitive, and long process, longer than any modernist writer could have anticipated".

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Metaphors and Translation
Some Notes on the Description of Pain in a Twelth Century Persian Poem

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Abstract   The question of the translation of the figures of speech is a debated and complex field of studies. In the present work, after a brief introduction, I propose to ponder on the translation of some figures of speech (metaphor, comparison and hyperbole) from Persian into Italian, taking as a source and representative text a passage from the poem *Khosrow o Širin* by Neẓāmi Ganjavi (12th century). This is a text of extraordinary imaginative and creative power, which represents a hard challenge for a translator, especially at a rhetoric level. Through the analysis of some verses that describe the pain of Princess Širin, I will try to verify methods, possibilities, strategies and defeats for their translation into Italian.

Summary   1 Introduction. – 2 Manifesting Pain. – 3 Conclusions.

Keywords   Classical Persian poetry. Figurative language. Metaphors. Translation. Sadness.

1   Introduction

Questions concerning translation appear to me as questions that, first of all, touch on the motivation and meaning given to the work, especially when translating texts composed centuries ago. This is an a priori inquiry, and without it a translator is like a mariner without a compass. Once the translator has clarified his motivation and the meaning he attributes to a translation project, he places himself in an intellectual position that has a decisive influence on the choices he makes. This position, I believe, has much greater impact than theoretical choices or ideal (or ideological) approaches which claim to offer a priori technical solutions and/or methodological guidance. Clear evidence of this distance between ideal and action lies in numerous studies on translation (and especially on the translation of metaphors, comparison and hyperbole which mainly interests us here), where the outcome of published works is analysed, and choices taken by translators are evaluated and classified on the basis of various theories, only rarely raising hypotheses which are alternative to

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what is being described.[1] Critical work is of course always a posteriori, and tends to describe and classify choices made by translators, placing them in a theoretical framework that is the one adopted by the scholar who is writing. On the other hand, there exist countless scientific contributions concerning the theory and practice of translating figures of speech, which profoundly explore the linguistic and cognitive structures underlying the construction of figurative language;[2] these works intend to provide the translator with the foundations for theoretical considerations that he/she can then apply to the act of translating.[3] As a whole, therefore, one may say that both the critical approach – a posteriori and tied to the result of the translation – and the theoretical approach – a priori and tied to the process – certainly provide tools for reflection and stimulate the translator's awareness, but they do not represent a concrete possibility of guiding the translator's work or defining the outcome in suitable terms (that is, not only concerning 'how' but also 'why' certain choices may be proposed).[4] This is not only because, obviously, the linguistic and cultural context represented by a literary work is always new and different, and would therefore call for *ad hoc* considerations rather than generalisations, but also because the motivation and meaning of the act of translating that guide the translator remain, in most cases, a territory which no theoretical approach is able to explore.[5] Concerning the theoretical approach, one

1 Staying strictly within the limits of Persian literature, one can mention as an example: Khosroshahi, Sadighi 2017; Ordudari 2008; Sedighi 2014, 205-14; Behnamnia 2016, 199-206; Panahbar 2016, 49-63; Mohaghegh, Dabaghi 2013, 275-82.

2 To mention only one recent collection of essays where the issue has been dealt with in an ample and significant manner, from both a theoretical and practical point of view, see Miller, Monti 2014.

3 A vast array of reference material on this topic exists. For example, see articles by Kovecses, Steen, Arduini and Shuttleworth in the volume Miller, Monti 2014, all dedicated to the translation of metaphors; and see also Mandelblit 1995, 482-95; Maalej 2008, 60-81; Safarnejad 2014, 107-18; Jaber 2008, 195-210; Piccioni 2013, 354-62; Burmakova, Marugina 2014, 527-33; Al-Hasnawi 2007.

4 This observation fits in with the fundamentals of translation studies, as Nergaard (1995, 13) says in her "Introduction" to *Teorie contemporanee della traduzione*, remembering that Holmes (1988, 66-80), in his article "The Name and Nature of Translation", had been the first to propose 'Translation Studies' as the most appropriate definition for a discipline with two goals: the first, that of describing the phenomenon of translation according to personal experience (descriptive translation studies); the second, that of laying down general principles able to explain such phenomena (theoretical translation studies). Bassnett (1980) too, after having reviewed the history of the evolution of translation theory, from the Romans to the present day, offers an analysis of specific problems associated with literary translation (of poetry, prose and theatre), showing how translation theory and comparative analysis can also be useful for practical purposes.

5 As an example, see the interesting observations, based on actual examples, in Marchesini 2017, 45-69.

must also take into account a diachronic aspect: ideas about translation are going through constant change, and are powerfully influenced by social and cultural change, so that nineteenth century axioms, though they can provide us with valid material for discussion,[6] are still remote from a vision arising in the globalised society of the 21st century. Finally (and this is another slippery *coté* of the discussion which does not always receive the attention it deserves), it seems inappropriate and even misleading to try to level out on a hypothetical standard the way the translated text is received by the reader; this too in fact is an important variable to be taken into account, and an unknown factor that in any case limits the planning of any general solution decided on beforehand.[7]

Taking all these questions together, those who dedicate themselves to translating poetry start at an even greater disadvantage, as they find themselves facing an endless panorama of theoretical dissertations on the function, value and limits (even in terms of legitimacy) of such a task.[8] Even more complex and critical is the position of the translator, when the text is not only poetry, but belongs to a world which is totally other, not only in time and space, but also because of the culture and civilisation it expresses. I refer actually to classical Persian literature, which is my field of competence and the terrain where I shall try to develop the considerations that follow. Despite the serious and controversial points of difficulty which an ancient poetic text presents, there is no lack of examples of people still able to give translation of classical texts the value of a fundamental contribution to knowledge of the literary heritage of another culture.[9] To accept the challenge posed by translation, in view of the solidity and richness of analyses and criticisms by linguists and specialists in Translation

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[6] One need only think, for example, of the many references, also in contemporary studies, to the fundamental work by Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Ueber die verschiedenen Methoden des Uebersezens*, Berlin 1813, which is still today acknowledged as a milestone and source of inspiration for reflection on the main general issues involved in translation (Seruya, Justo 2016).

[7] Reception of a text is in fact closely connected to the cultural background and to the competence on poetry of the reader and it is of course impossible to work on a translation imagining a standard reader, even though in practice, throughout the process, whether consciously or not, one never ceases doing so.

[8] For Persian poetry, the main text of reference that is extremely sceptical of any possibility of translating poetry is certainly Šafiʻi Kadkani (2001), the axioms of which have been taken up and further developed by Fani (2014) and more extensively discussed by Hillmann (2018, 39-90).

[9] A case worthy of note in this sense is the recent anthology (Zipoli 2016) which – alongside a rich introduction and many explanatory notes – collects the translation of a large and significant body of obscene Persian poetry, from the 10th to the 20th centuries. This is the result of careful philological work on texts (many difficult to find and complicated to interpret) which for the first time makes available to the Italian reader, in an elegant and effective manner, a collection of poems of obscene inspiration from the classical Persian tradition, true masterpieces of narrative and stylistic perfection.

Studies, which at times seem to lead to an insurmountable impasse, means to continue a profitable dialogue on the theme.

Translation of a classical poetic text as a whole takes the shape of an investigation, philological and interpretative, which starts from the certainty that in other literature there is something to listen to, understand and transmit, through a constant quest for balance between the original text and final rewriting.[10] The basis of such a balance seems to me to have been described perfectly by J. Berger in these words:

> Because true translation is not a binary affair between two languages but a triangular affair. The third point of the triangul being what lay behind the words of the original text before it was written. True translation demands a return to the pre-verbal. We read and reread the words of the original text in order to penetrate through them, to reach the vision or experience which prompted them. We then gather up what we have found there and take this quivering almost wordless 'thing' and place it behind the language into which it needs to be translated. And now the principal task is to persuade the host language to take in and welcome the 'thing' which is waiting to be articulated. (2016, 7-8)[11]

We shall therefore keep as our point of reference this 'triangle', in order to describe below some strategies adopted when translating the figures present in a series of illustrative verses.

2 Manifesting Pain

In recent years, I dealt with the translation of a famous twelfth-century poem, *Khosrow o Širin* by Neẓāmi Ganjavi (1141-1209),[12] a text that began and became the founding model of the genre of the Persian romantic poem, a work that became the object of countless imitations in following centu-

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10 Concerning the concept of translation as rewriting, see the fundamental article by Lefevere (1985, 215-43), which first introduced the concept and term of rewriting, referring to those processes, including translation, by which an original text is reinterpreted, altered or manipulated. According to this theory, the criteria of rewriting are dictated by the ideology of the translator (of which the translator himself may well be unaware) and by the dominant poetics of the time.

11 These words by John Berger bring to mind, in a more modern fashion, Walter Benjamin's idea that the true purpose of translation is to free the "pure language" enclosed in the text, that is what is hidden behind the words, what has not been made explicit by the original author, in other words, the secret essence, the ineffable, to reawaken the echo of the original (Benjamin 1962, 39-52).

12 Neẓāmi 2017.

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ries and has met with unparalleled fortune in the context of Persian culture right until our times.[13] It is a very complex text, also weighed upon by a philological tradition that has never been completely solved. It was composed by an illustrious twelfth-century poet, a Ḥakim (scholar) who poured into the poem much of the science and wisdom he possessed, besides his extraordinary human sensitivity and his vision of Life and Man. The text covers a wide range of contents, going well beyond the plot of the story, being a 'Classic' of Persian literature,[14] with all the responsibility such a definition implies in view of a translation. Going back to the initial question of this contribution, and defining the motivation and sense I gave my work on *Khosrow o Širin*, in my turn I would use a 'figure', taking another look at the image of the mirror proposed by D.-H. Pageaux: translation is a mirror and the more polished it is, the better it will reflect the image of the original text (cf. Pageaux 2001, 50). What keeps the mirror polished is philological attention, patient interpretation, honest negotiation with the original, the attempt to recreate the intention of the text, what the text says or suggests in relation to the language in which it was expressed and the cultural context it was born in (Eco 2004).

An aspect of the work of translation that – through over six thousand verses – never ceased to manifest itself problematically, was how to render the rhetorical devices of the poem, especially the issue of translating figurative language, comparisons, metaphors and hyperboles.[15] The founding premise, not only theoretical but also empirical, is of course that the rhetorical system of a text is no mere ornament on top of the discourse, but

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13   For the historical and literary context of this work, see Orsatti 2006; see also the introduction to the Italian translation in Neẓāmi 2017, XI-XXXIII.

14   There is no need to spend time speaking of the classic nature of Neẓāmi's work, one need only remember how even Italo Calvino, in his essay *Perché leggere i classici*, includes *Le Sette Principesse* (The Seven Princesses) translated by Alessandro Bausani (the only complete Italian translation of a text by Neẓāmi available at the time) among the works he lists and describes, commenting: "Accostarci ai capolavori della letteratura orientale per noi profani resta il più delle volte un'esperienza approssimativa, perché è tanto se attraverso le traduzioni e gli adattamenti ce ne arriva un lontano profumo, e sempre arduo risulta situare un'opera in un contesto che non conosciamo (Calvino 1991, 65). Cf. McLaughlin's translation: "Tackling masterpieces of Oriental literature is usually an unsatisfactory experience for those of us who are uninitiated, because it is so difficult to obtain even a distant glimmer of the original through the translations and adaptations; and it is always an arduous task situating a work in a context which we are not familiar with" (Calvino 1999, 56).

15   It is again Italo Calvino who, speaking of *The Seven Princesses*, wonderfully sums up the complexity of Neẓāmi's style: "il vertiginoso linguaggio figurato di Neẓāmi assorbe [varie tradizioni] nel suo crogiolo, e stende su ogni pagina una lamina dorata tempestata di metafore che s'incastonano le une nelle altre come pietre preziose d'uno sfarzoso monile" (Calvino 1991, 68). Cf. McLaughlin's translation: "Nezami's heady figurative language blends them [various traditions] all together in his creative melting pot, and he spreads over every page a gilded patina studded with metaphors which are embedded inside each other like precious gems in a dazzling necklace" (Calvino 1999, 58).

is its very consistence. If our thinking (and therefore also that of Neẓāmi) is structured not only according to a logical-empirical model, but also according to a model we might call rhetorical and which places figures at the forefront, these of course become one of the means by which a 'culture' is built, and even more so, a literary culture. Figurative language, in fact, allows one to give shape to knowledge of the world and make it readable and interpretable, blending the practical level with the abstract dimension and vice versa. Therefore, the figure is not only the 'cladding' of speech, it is also an indispensable tool of knowledge and as such cannot be thought of as an 'after' compared to *intellectio* and *inventio*, but as a 'during' (Eco 2004, 35-75). Using or creating a figure means building a way of representing the world that in another linguistic, cultural and conceptual system, can only be 'interpreted'. In view of such evidence, when translating the figures present in a text, we must take into account all the implications involved in such an operation.

The above holds true of course for any linguistic/literary system, but let us now consider some specific features of the cultural context in which the text on which we are basing our exemplification was produced.

Technically, when the poem *Khosrow o Širin* was composed, theoretical reflection on the use of figurative language in poetry was flourishing in the context of Arabic-Persian civilisation. Although we have no way of knowing whether, or to what extent, Neẓāmi was aware of contemporary or previous works on *balāghat* (that is on the science of eloquence in the widest sense) or on *bayān* (the science of figurative language), it is impossible to ignore the fact that the poet belonged to an extremely lively intellectual milieu that must certainly have heard an echo of the treatises on rhetoric by Muḥammad Raduyāni (1088-1113), by Rašidoddin Vaṭvāṭ (d. 1182-3) and the enlightening linguistic analysis on metaphor by Abd al-Qahir Jurjāni (d. 1078).[16] Formalisation of the rhetorical system and considerations on the use and function of figures, in Neẓāmi's time, were already a mature stage in the Muslim world, and in the strictly Persian speaking world, this formalisation was based exclusively on poetry. In a very summary fashion, one can say that in compliance with the idea of *adab*, that is with a literary production, in the wider sense of the term, which had the purpose of teaching and education, the aesthetics of Persian poetry considered use of figures an indispensable device for effective communication of discourse, and only secondarily, for its embellishment. Especially, the science of *bayān* (figurative language), within the wide context of rhetoric, codified the use of comparison and metaphor (the outstanding figures of this science) as means of 'affirmation, exposition, explanation', in other words as an indispensable support for clarity and

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16 Rāduyāni 1949; Rašid-al-Din Waṭwāṭ 1929; Abd al-Qahir Jorjāni 1954.

comprehension of the message.[17] Figurative language, ultimately, had the purpose of making a text (and especially a poetic text) more perspicuous, clearer, more eloquent and comprehensible. We are dealing with a vision of the poetic text where figure is no longer an ornament, a surplus added to the degree zero of communication, not a deviation from the norm, but a tool to make communication more effective. With reference to medieval Persian texts, such as the poem *Khosrow o Širin*, we find ourselves dealing therefore with practice of poetry which charges figures of speech, and their aesthetic value, with a didactic and pragmatic purpose. In this sense, the position of the translator is subject to strong constraints: this perspective must be taken into account when making basic choices (and later, more specific ones), that is giving due importance to the reason why a certain figure is to be found in a certain part of the text.

Neẓāmi's power of imagination in building figures (especially metaphors, similitudes and hyperboles) draws of course on his conceptual map and on his cultural background, but is also a pure act of creation, and at the same time an iteration between these three levels.[18] The description of pain arising from separation from the beloved is one of the themes where Neẓāmi's art finds its highest expression.[19] Rendering his text is in very many cases problematic: the semantic areas involved by the construction of images are partly unfamiliar to the Italian reader, for whom the repertoire of classical metaphors, which are the starting point for new expressive developments, is in itself something new, and requires an imaginative effort by itself; beyond this, what appears most difficult to render is the intensity evoked by his metaphors, an intensity which expresses itself through hyperboles. This intensity is at some points expressed using images that are so powerful as to verge on the grotesque, for an Italian reader. This aspect of the great poet of Ganja poses an especially arduous challenge to a translator: it is question of producing a target text that decentralises the reader's glance

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17 See article "Bayān" in *Encyclopaedia of Islam* 3rd ed. (Meneghini 2017) and in *Encyclopedia Iranica* (De Bruijn 1988).

18 It was always Italo Calvino who noticed that: "Le finiture di questo arazzo verbale sono così lussureggianti che i nostri paralleli con le letterature occidentali, al di là delle analogie, delle tematiche medievali, e attraversando la pienezza fantastica del Rinascimento di Ariosto e Shakespeare, vanno naturalmente al barocco più carico; […] proliferazione di metafore che ricopre fittamente il racconto di Neẓāmi sviluppando un germoglio di racconto in ogni immagine" (Calvino 1991, 69). Cf. McLaughlin's translation: "The decoration of this verbal tapestry are so luxuriant that any parallels we might find in Western literature (beyond the analogies of medieval thematics and the wealth of fantasy in Renaissance works by Shakespeare and Ariosto) would naturally be with works of heaviest baroque;… the proliferation of metaphors which encrust Nezami's tale and germinate a hint of narrative in every single image" (Calvino 1999, 58-9).

19 This theme is present in many parts of the text, but especially in two other chapters of extraordinary density, chapters 44 and 50.

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from his usual context of signified/signifier, 'introducing' him/her into the conceptual domains proposed by Neẓāmi, by means of choices that highlight in an acceptable[20] manner the authenticity, art and communicative efficacy of the figures proposed.

To exemplify and practically try the above observations out, let us take into examination the first 14 verses of chapter 44 of the poem.[21] Without going into details of the narration, to help the reader find his way, we must first say that in this text, the poet describes the suffering of Širin – the heroine of the poem – on having been separated from her beloved Khosrow, the last Sasanian emperor who, at this point in the story, has ascended the throne and lives in his capital city, having apparently forgotten his beloved. Over half of chapter 44 is dedicated to describing Širin's pain, a description that makes use of a repertoire of images built mainly through metaphors, comparisons and hyperboles, which represent an excellent terrain for reflecting on the question of translation of figurative language in classical Persian poetry.[22]

Following are the original text, my translation and some considerations on the choices I made. In the analysis proposed in this work, what is central is not so much the aesthetic outcome (another whole page of analysis could be opened on this) as the motivations that led to rendering the figures, how the relationship between vocabulary and image was handled, which is what we should pay most attention to when translating metaphors, similitudes and hyperboles. The purpose of the following analysis, therefore, is to propose a practicwal perspective on certain manners of operating, on the decision-making processes that have led to a specific solution, with the intention of opening a fertile discussion on so crucial yet complex a point in the work of translating a classical text.

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20   Umberto Eco wrote: "it should be said that a satisfactory translation must render (that is preserve somewhat unchanged, and perhaps amplify without contradicting) the sense of the original text, to translate means to interpret, and to interpret also means to place a bet that the sense that we recognise in a text is in some way, and without evident co-textual contradictions, the sense of that text. The sense the translator must find, and translate, is not deposited in any pure language. It is only the result of a pure interpretative conjecture [...] the decision is taken contextually, but understanding a context is a hermeneutic act [...]. [...] when passing judgement on a translation, one need to maintain the meta-rule according to which a translation must be faithful; criteria of faithfulness may change, but (i) they must be taken within a certain culture and (ii) must remain consistent within the context of the translated text" (Neegard 1995, 38-9).

21   The limit of 14 verses is exclusively due to the available for this contribution; the verses actually analysed are 13, because the first verse introduces the narrative, and presents no figure of interest for our research.

22   The verses we are examining also contain numerous other figures of speech, for example *tajnis* (a sort of paronomasia), *tekrār* (repetition), *mora'āt-e naẓir* (observance of analogues), which are, of course, deeply incorporated into the textual fabric with figurative language that remains however the focus of our attention.

1	[چنین در دفتر آورد آن سخن‌سنج
	که برد از اوستادی در سخن رنج]
2	که چون شیرین ز خسرو باز پس ماند
	دلش دربند و جانش در هوس ماند
3	ز بادام تر آب گل برانگیخت
	گلابی بر گل بادام می‌ریخت
4	بسان گوسپند کشته بر جای
	فرو افتاد و می‌زد دست بر پای
5	تن از بی‌طاقتی پرداخته زور
	دل از تنگی شده چون دیده مور
6	هوا بر باد داده خرمنش را
	به آب دیده شسته دامنش را
7	گهی از پای میافتاد چون مست
	گهی دستارچه بر دیده می بست
8	گشاده رشته گوهر ز دیده
	مژه چون رشته در گوهر کشیده
9	ز خواب ایمن هوسهای دماغش
	ز بیخوابی شده چشمش چراغش
10	سهی سروش چو برگ بید لرزان
	شده زو نافه کاسد نیفه ارزان
11	زمانی بر زمین غلطید غمناک
	ز مشگین جعد مشگ افشاند بر خاک
12	چو نسرین بر گشاده ناخنی چند
	به نسرین برگ گل از لاله می‌کند
13	گهی بر شکر از بادام زد آب
	گهی خایید فندق را به عناب
14	گهی چون کوی هر سو می‌دویدی
	گهی بر جای چون چوگان خمیدی

(Neẓāmi Ganje'i 1987-88, 311-12)

1 - [Ecco cosa scrisse nel suo libro quel poeta che misurava le parole e che divenne maestro d'eloquenza.]**²³**

2 - Appena Širin si separò da Khosrow, il suo cuore finì in catene e la sua anima prigioniera del desiderio: 3 - dai suoi occhi, mandorle umide, scorreva acqua di rose che versava profumo sul volto, fiore di mandorlo. 4 - Come accade al montone quando viene ucciso, ella cadde a terra piegata, con le mani che colpivano i piedi: 5 - il suo corpo aveva perso ogni forza per sopportare il distacco, il suo cuore si era subito stretto come l'occhio di una formica. 6 - La passione per Khosrow aveva gettato al vento il raccolto della sua vita e aveva lavato con le lacrime la sua tunica: 7 - a volte cadeva a terra come ebbra, a volte si legava una benda sugli occhi infiammati dal pianto, mentre 8 - una fila di perle scorreva dalle sue ciglia che infilavano quelle perle, una ad una. 9 - I suoi pensieri appassionati non si assopivano mai, così per la mancanza di sonno i suoi occhi erano lampade accese; 10 - la sua statura slanciata di cipresso tremava come foglia di salice. Con la sua disperazione Širin mandava in rovina il prezzo del muschio e abbassava quello del cuoio: 11 - in preda al dolore si contorceva a terra e i suoi capelli spargevano tutt'intorno profumo di muschio; 12 - come rosa canina sbocciata, con le unghie affilate si strappava dalle bianche guance di rosa petali rossi di tulipano. 13 - Le lacrime erano latte di mandorle sullo zucchero delle sue labbra e a loro volta le labbra, come giuggiole, mordevano le nocciole dei suoi polpastrelli. 14 - A volte come palla correva impazzita in ogni direzione, a volte se ne stava ferma, piegata come mazza da polo […]

1 - [Here is what that poet, who measured his words and became a master of eloquence, wrote in his book.]

2 - As soon as Širin was separated from Khosrow, her heart ended in chains and her soul, a prisoner of desire: 3 - from her eyes, wet almonds, rose water flowed pouring scent on her face, almond flower. 4 - As happens with the ram when he is slaughtered, she fell to the earth bent over, her hands hitting her feet: 5 - her body had lost every power to withstand detachment, her heart had immediately shrunk like the eye of an ant. 6 - Passion for Khosrow had cast to the winds the harvest of her life and had washed with tears her tunic: 7 - at times she would fall to the ground as if drunk, at times she would tie a blindfold over her tear-swollen eyes, while 8 - a row of pearls would flow from her lashes which threaded those pearls, one by one. 9 - Her passionate thoughts never rested, so due to lack of sleep her eyes were lit lanterns; 10 - her slender cypress stature trembled like a willow leaf. With her desperation, Širin made the price of musk collapse, and lowered that of leather: 11 - overcome by pain, she

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23 In the translation, we also give the numbering of the verses to make it easier to find them.

would twist on the ground, and her hair all around would spread the scent of musk; 12 - like blooming dog rose, with her sharp nails she would rip red tulip petals off white rose cheeks. 13 - Her tears were almond milk on the sugar of her lips and her lips, in their turn, like jujube, bit the hazelnuts of her fingertips. 14 - At times, like a ball, she would run madly in every direction, other times she would stay still, bent, like a polo mallet […]

Verse 2, hemistich II   The first metaphor we meet, at the opening of the chapter after the first introductory verse, describes the heart in chains and the soul (or life *jān*)²⁴ seized by passion. In this case, we are dealing with a metaphor which is familiar to the Italian reader, who can easily recognise in the figure built by Neẓāmi an expression which is present and widespread in our poetic repertoire. The literal translation adopted, therefore, seems to omit nothing of the poet's message, and efficaciously introduces the emotional state of Širin at the time she is abandoned by her lover, her heart and soul prisoners of an all-embracing passion. Pain and love, the intensity of a suffering that is directly proportional to the intensity of feeling, the impossibility of escaping from the pain of these emotional states, these will in fact be the themes of the whole chapter.

Verso 3   This verse is an admirable example of condensation of figures of speech: we find here, in hemistich I, the metaphor of the wet almond (*bādām-e tar*), which represents the crying eye of the beautiful Širin²⁵ alongside a *mora'at-e naẓir*²⁶ built using the semantic context of water (*āb*, *tar*, *golāb*, respectively 'acqua' [water], 'umido' [damp], 'essenza di rose' [rose essence]), as well as a play on words between *āb-e gol* (water of the rose, meaning tears)²⁷ and *golāb* (perfumed rose essence, again with the meaning of perfumed tear); furthermore, in hemistich II, we find the syntagm *gol-e bādām*, which is the metaphor for the white and smooth face of the princess (*bādām* 'mandorla', in the first hemistich, on the other hand, represented her eyes). In this case we are dealing with a description before which the reception by an Italian reader finds itself without tools for interpretation, because metaphors built on almond flower and fruit are less familiar to us than they are to a Persian reader, who lives in a territory

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24   We should remember that in Persian the word *jān* indicates both referents, 'soul' and 'life'.

25   It should be remembered that almond eyes were a paradigm of beauty in Medieval Persia.

26   *Mora'āt-e naẓir* (observance of analogues) is a very frequent figure in Persian poetry, defined as the accumulation in a single verse of words belonging to the same semantic field.

27   *Āb-e gol* (rose water) as metaphor for a tear also arises because of the bloodred colour which generally denotes a tear as an expression of pain. *Gol* in Persian is also a general term for flower, but in an erotic-anacreontic context, like the one we find in this part of the book, it represents the red rose.

where this tree has always been widespread.[28] The metaphor of the almond flower, indicating the white cheeks of the girl on the basis of a similarity in colour – white – and substance – smoothness and softness – creates a play on words with almond as 'eye' (metaphor based on a formal analogy) of hemistich I, with a tangle of references that seem not to be immediately intelligible even to the present day Persian reader, as Servatiyān, editor of one of the most reliable editions of the poem, felt the need to dedicate an explanatory note to this verse (Neẓāmi Ganje'i 1987-88, 869). In this case, due to the complexity of the image, it was decided to add, in translation, the tenor of the metaphors (eyes and face) without explicitly stating the reasons for the analogy and leaving the reader to make the effort of picturing in his mind the image created by Neẓāmi, decoding its references and connections. Compared to the figures of the previous verse, a partial paraphrase was provided here to make up for the lack of shared references between the poetic tradition of the source language and that of the target language.

Verse 4   This verse presents a similitude that is closely tied to Neẓāmi's Islamic religious context, that is the ritual slaughter of a ram that took (and takes place) both during the feast of sacrifice (*īd al-adhā*) and in Islamic propitiatory slaughtering in general. The metaphor of the slaughtered ram (*guspand-e košte*) is alien to the Italian reader; although in recent decades Muslim rituals have certainly become more familiar than in the past, the details of the killing, implicit in the image, are certainly unknown. Sacrifice, however, is a practice that also belongs to the cultural context of Christianity, so, even though all typically Islamic religious references may be lost, for us too the image recalls the idea of a love for which one is ready to sacrifice one's own life. On this basis, the translation was kept on a literal level, also because the linguistic elements present in the verse permitted perfect reconstruction, even in Italian, of the evoked image, that is of Širin bled dry and knocked over by pain, trembling like a dying animal, as she shakes hands and feet. Concerning this verse, what raised doubts was the effect produced by a shocking image that with its references to blood, to trembling death throes, conferred a rather powerful 'animal' touch to the verse. Despite the universal association between love and death, the image proposed by the verse is gory and in strong conflict with the figure of Širin as described hitherto – a composed woman of perfect beauty. Despite this, it seemed important to preserve the image without any filter, since in classical Persian poetry, the ram with its slit throat is a common metaphor for the lover led to death by love.

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28   It should be noted, as a general indication, that neither the almond flower nor the fruit ever appear in Petrarch's *Canzoniere*, which can be considered a good reference point in order to identify the set of similitudes or metaphors more familiar to the Italian reader.

So it was decided to let the reader clash with the metaphoric creativity of Neẓāmi, even if this meant submitting him to the very powerful effect conveyed by the image.

Verse 5   In this verse, the poet goes from describing pain expressed 'physically' by the metaphor of the slain ram, to affirming (as in hemistich I) the absolute weakness that prostrates the abandoned lover. Reinforcing the image of such weakness, hemistich II presents a similitude between the heart (*del*) of Širin and the eye of the ant (*dide-ye mur*) through the explicit *tertium comparationis* of narrowness/smallness (*tangi*). This similitude too contains a touch of intentional exaggeration: the ant being already a symbol of smallness and fragility, Neẓāmi introduces the eye of the ant, something absolutely invisible, thus going beyond the limits of classical metaphor and crossing the frontier of hyperbole.[29] Here too, literal translation does not hinder understanding of the image, indeed to the description of pain, it adds a note of total helplessness.

Verse 6   In this verse, we find a new image stemming from the natural world: the metaphor of *xarman* ('il raccolto' [harvest]) which in the Persian poetic convention brings to mind everything that, in an illusory fashion, people believe they have put together in their lives (assets, stability, wisdom, certainties…). The desire (*havā*) that Širin feels for Khosrow casts to the wind (*bād*) and throws away all the 'harvest' of her life, while the pain manifested by the tears that, like a river, flow uninterruptedly, from her eyes (hemistich II) wash her clothing, purifying her. Loss and suffering are the steps demanded by true love, the trials one must overcome. When translating this verse, we decided to split up the 'harvest' metaphor replacing it with the syntagm 'il raccolto della sua vita' [the harvest of her life], since the image is not familiar in Italian, and there was the risk the message might not be understood. If on the one hand the determination 'della vita' [of life] subtracts conciseness and density from the sentence, on the other hand it lets the reader immediately grasp the sense of the verse and grasp the analogy between the wind scattering ears and grains put together with effort and the blind force of desire that in an instant erases the false security of existence. In hemistich II, 'aveva lavato con le lacrime la tunica' [she washed with tears her tunic] was left literally, since pain, expressed by crying, as purification is a concept which belongs to our culture too. However, our culture lacks the function of water for ritual

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29   This is confirmed by a search on Ganjoor, a large database dedicated to Persian poetry, which shows how the syntagm *dide-ye mur* appears only a few times (3) in the texts of Khorasanic and Iraqi style poets, whereas it begins to appear more frequently (a few dozen times) in the XVII century poets belonging to the more sophisticated Indian style (especially Ṣā'eb-e Tabrizi and Bidel-e Dehlavi).

ablutions, present instead in the Islamic world and implicitly in the verse:[30] this reference is therefore lost in translation on a reader unfamiliar with Muslim rituals.

Verse 7   In this verse, we find a similitude which is very important in defining the nature and the effects of the pain Širin suffers due to separation from her lover, the comparison with a drunken person (*chun mast*) unable to stand on his feet. In Persian poetry, a person in love is conventionally described as 'drunk with love', but considering the Islamic context, such drunkenness is charged with a surplus of meanings related to the taboo on any alcoholic drink, according to the religious law. At the same time, the association of drunkenness with a state of ecstasy is common among Persian (and not only Persian) mystic poets. In translation, the additional meanings tied to the Muslim religious tradition could not be conveyed, however love seen as the utmost inebriation (inebriation as a metaphor of love) is a concept conventionally accepted in our literature too and can be communicated directly by literal translation. In hemistich II, Širin ties a blindfold (*dastārche*) over her eyes, but in translation a determination was added to 'eyes', that is 'infiammati dal pianto' [tear-inflamed]; we preferred to split up the allusion of Neẓāmi's expression in order to avoid loss of sense, and to ensure that reading flowed on without raising doubts concerning the reason behind that blindfold over her eyes. The need to explain this image is also confirmed by the editor's note which reveals how even a Persian reader needs clarification on this matter.[31]

Verse 8   Description of Širin's crying, of the ceaseless flow of her tears, in this verse exploits the classic metaphor of tears as pearls (*gowhar*) and of eyelashes as the threads (*rešte*) on which the pearls of tears are threaded. Tears as pearls are a conventional metaphor for the Italian reader too, whereas eyelashes that become threads supporting pearls/ tears (and hence an ornamental element of pain itself) represent an unaccustomed image. Despite this, the image proposed by Neẓāmi is simple, if one pictures the dynamics of the phenomenon, so no need was felt to add anything to the literalness of the translation. Here Neẓāmi, besides the idea of ceaseless crying, wishes to evoke the fact that this crying is a precious part of Širin's beauty. The two levels – descriptive static (tears as ornament of the eyelashes and hence of the face) and dynamic (dripping of tears like pearls coming off the thread of the eyelashes) – blend

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30   Here we note that, in the preceding verse, there was an image recalling blood (an impure substance for Muslims) contrasting with the purification operated by the water of tears in this verse. Tears may be of blood, if they are the symbol and expression of pain, or else of water and an instrument of purification, as in this case.

31   (Neẓāmi Ganje'i 1987-88, 870).

together in a simple but highly evocative image.[32]

Verse 9   In this verse, the image of amorous passion and of pain due to separation is enriched by another connotation: fantasies and yearnings of love never cease, they are not subject to the pause of sleep and hence the eyes of the beautiful Princess always stay open, like lit lanterns. Here we have a personification of feeling, *havashā-ye demāgh-aš* 'I suoi pensieri appassionati [her passionate thoughts] and a metamorphosis of the ever open eyes of the lover, to whom sleep is denied, into a lit lantern that lights up Širin's very face (*šode chašm-aš cherāgh-aš*). The reason for these associations is common to hemistich I and II, and is related to 'sleep' (*xwāb*), with a reversal from negative to positive: lack of sleep (*bixwābi*) is negative for the ordinary person, but becomes a specific state characterising the figure of the lover. An attempt was made to convey this reversal in translation, with the intention of transmitting the idea, present in the original, of a passion that knows no rest.

Verse 10   Another metaphor opens this verse, sahi sarv-aš (her slim cypress, that is her tall and slender body) which is described as 'trembling' like a willow leaf (*cho barg-e bid larzān*). The cypress represents the body of the beloved in classic Persian poetry; however, with this meaning, the image is foreign to our poetry, so in translation the metaphor was expanded by adding 'stature' ('la sua statura slanciata di cipresso' [her slender cypress stature]'). However, the comparison of Širin's body with willow leaves has been left unaltered, also supported by the fact that the willow tree in Italian is accompanied by the adjective 'weeping', which fits well with the description hitherto given of the sad lover. Hemistich II, however, with an image which then extends to the two following verses [11 and 12], proposes with an extreme conclusion two complex hyperboles, to which the Italian reader is totally unaccustomed. Not only was a paraphrase needed, it also took a footnote to explain its meaning: *šode z u nāfe kāsed nife arzān* 'con la sua disperazione Širin mandava in rovina il prezzo del muschio e abbassava quello del cuoio' [with her desperation, Širin made the price of musk collapse, and lowered that of leather], where the musk gland (*nāfe*) is in competition (rivalling but being defeated) in colour (blackness) and scent with Širin's hair, and the market for quality leather (*nife*)[33] is driven to collapse by the softness of the skin that Širin rips off her face.

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[32]   In this verse, we also have intense alliteration, with a sevenfold repetition of the ancipite palatal vowel 'e' at the end of a word; I was unable to reproduce, in the translation, the rhythm conferred to the verse by this assonance.

[33]   In this hemistich we are also dealing with a *tajnis* (a kind of paronomasia) between *nāfe* and *nife*, which in the original adds a play on words to the density and conciseness of the image.

Verse 11   In continuity with the previous verse, Neẓāmi here begins to split up the image, creating a fantastic aetiology that explains why the market for *nāfe* (musk gland) is collapsing due to Širin: 'in preda al dolore si contorceva a terra e i suoi capelli spargevano tutt'intorno profumo di muschio' [overcome by pain, she would twist on the ground, and her hair all around would spread the scent of musk]. In this verse, it was necessary to add the term 'profumo' [scent] associated with the direct translation from Persian, 'muschio' [musk], since the original *mošk*[34] evokes, by itself, a black substance of animal origin, with a very precious scent. *Mošk* in classical lyric poetry is a conventional term of comparison (or metaphor) for the black and scented hair of the beloved.[35] In Italian, however, the term 'muschio' [musk] does not immediately evoke blackness and scent; hence the need to introduce in the translation the motif of associating the image of hair to that of musk.

Verse 12   In this verse, always connected to hemistich II of verse 11, Neẓāmi builds a fantastic aetiology to explain the reason for the fall in the price of high quality leather (*nife*): he describes Širin scratching her face, and pieces of very white and delicate skin coming off and becoming red with blood (softness and colour are the elements that determine the quality of leather, and it loses value before the precious pieces of skin which Širin rips off her face). The image is played mainly on a level of colour: the dog rose (*nasrin*) is white (or pale pink) and has very delicate petals (like Širin's skin before being blemished by scratches); the tulip (*lāle*) is red and reminiscent of the colour of blood like the petals of a rose (*barg-e gol*). In translation, an attempt was made to privilege the level of colour, deviating from strict literalness and mixing up the elements of the verse slightly: 'come rosa canina sbocciata, con le unghie affilate si strappava dalle bianche guance di rosa petali rossi di tulipano' [like blooming dog rose, with her sharp nails she would rip red tulip petals off white rose cheeks]. The outcome cannot be said to be satisfying, especially for the term nasrin ('rosa canina' [dog rose]) which recurs twice in the original (in translation only once being also a compound word) but as a metaphor it is unknown to the Italian reader, perhaps evoking the white colour of the flower, but failing to convey all the other meanings of delicacy it has accumulated in the Persian lyric tradition when referring to the white/pink skin of the beloved.

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34   The black and scented essence is produced by small glands under the belly of the male gazelle (*Moschus moschiferus*) who uses them to mark his territory by rubbing against rocks.

35   In this connection of musk-hair, the tertium comparison is not only the scent, but also the intense blackness, which however is lost in translation in order not to overload the phrase.

Verse 13   In this verse, the description of pain is enriched with new images. In hemistich I we still find the theme of crying: at times [Širin] from the almonds (eyes) brings water (tears) to the sugar (lips). The translation chosen for hemistich I brings to the fore not only painful crying, but also the sweetness of Širin[36] who even in her desperation expresses her 'sugary' nature. In hemistich II we have a different manifestation of pain: Širin with the jujube (mouth) bites the hazelnuts (fingertips). In the original, the expression is extremely elliptical: since Neẓāmi draws on consolidated metaphors (almonds/eyes, water/tears, sugar/lips, jujube/mouth, hazelnut/ fingertip), a literal translation would be missing all the connections needed to understand the image. To avoid explanatory notes and allow the reader not to interrupt once more the long description, we chose to split up the metaphor adding specification supplements ('lo zucchero delle sue labbra' [sugar of her lips], 'le sue labbra come giuggiole' [her lips like jujube], 'le nocciole dei suoi polpastrelli' [the hazelnuts of her fingertips]).

Verse 14   In this, the last verse we analyse, the poet draws on metaphors from the traditional game of polo, widely practised by Persians since ancient times. Persian poetry has drawn some of its most frequent images from polo, and Neẓāmi here makes use of this semantic field to describe Širin who, overwhelmed by pain, rolls on the ground like a ball (*guy*) or bends, broken by suffering, taking on the curved shape of a polo mallet (*chougān*). The Persian text clearly shows the irreconcilable contrast between a ball racing in every direction (*har su*) and the block of a spine curved like an unmoving mallet (*bar jāy*). For an Italian reader, the image of polo playing and the shape of the mallet traditionally used in Persia are unusual, however the words used by Neẓāmi are sufficient to picture the contradictory image typical of an equally restless mood, of a pain that drives one to move in every direction seeking relief, yet at the same time deprives the lover of all energy, bending her down with the weight of suffering. The translation has therefore been literal, taking only the liberty of the adjective 'impazzita' [adverb madly] following the verb 'correva' [run], which it was thought could emphasise the feeling of inner conflict caused by the pain afflicting Širin and underlined in Persian by the presence of the same expression of time, *gāh-i* (at times) at the beginning of both hemistichs. In this case, literalness did not deprive the reader of any element required to understand the image, even though the semantic field in which it was developed is foreign to the target culture.

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36   In Persian the word *širin*, when used as an adjective, indicates anything having a sweet flavour.

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3 Conclusions

As we have seen, though within the limits of these fourteen verses, we are working with images that, when first read, have an estranging effect on the reader: they nearly always draw on a repertoire of comparisons and metaphors that are foreign to our lyric tradition and identify connections between tenor and vehicle, or between first and second term of comparison, which demand an interpretative effort. On the other hand, it seemed inevitable for us, at the end, to preserves the translation of the figures implied in the description of the state of pain as literal as possible, and this for an obvious reason. The motive is tied to the distance, not only cultural but also temporal, from Neẓāmi's text: this distance does not afford us a comprehension and perception of the figures sufficient to allow us to find suitable equivalents for the present day Italian reader.[37] Staying as faithful as possible to Neẓāmi's words, while at the same time pointing out the rhetoric and semantic connections among the elements through some translating strategies, allowed us to offer the reader the images of the original text in the most favourable way for a subjective representation.[38] Literalness when translating figures of speech, if it is based on careful and profound philological investigation, is in many cases the only possible choice for opening up to the reader a glimpse – however imperfect and limited – of how the author of the original text described the world through his verses. When we do so, we build new metaphors in Italian, forcing the verbal apparatus to take on the task of stimulating the addressee to conceive a new image that did not exist as such before the metaphor produced it.[39]

In our specific case, when one finishes reading this chapter (or even just some of its first verses), what remains, it seems to me, is the possibility of acknowledging the universality of Širin's pain: this acknowledgement comes true, for those reading the text in translation, as they enter a new poetic imagery and let themselves by guided towards a possible attune-

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[37] Translating contemporary prose is a completely different matter: here the search for semantic or rhetorical equivalents is not only in many cases possible, but actually determines the degree of communicative efficacy of the translation itself.

[38] The multi-faceted nature of poetic metaphor is well known: having recourse to unconventional, implicit or allusive uses of language, poetic metaphors demand an interpretative effort from the reader. Less determination of metaphorical expressions, in fact, provides those who interpret them with less clues to guide decodification, thus admitting the plausibility of manifold interpretation. Poetic metaphor, in fact, tends to combine – compressing them – multiple basic metaphors, giving life to expressions that are semantically denser and hence more complex to decipher. And this, we believe, is how it should remain in translation.

[39] In italics, our free paraphrase of the definition of metaphor which Umberto Eco gave in his article: "Ekfrasis, ipotiposi e metafora", in Miller (2014, 6).

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ment with Neẓāmi's description. When such an attunement is activated, Neẓāmi's expressions, instead of appearing merely unfamiliar, become a new descriptive possibility for that universal feeling that is pain for separation from the beloved. Literalness when translating, in this sense, is rewarding, because it shows – beyond the specifics of communication codes – the expression of a feeling that is shared by men of every place and time. Perhaps the third element of the triangle evoked by Berger is precisely this one: bringing out, in different linguistic expressions, the humanity that we all share.

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Another Type of 'Old Tales Retold'
Translation and Self-Translation, Intertextuality and Self-Intertextuality in Zhang Ailing's Works

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Abstract This paper deals with Zhang Ailing's (1920-1995) posthumous novel, *Xiao tuanyuan* 小团圆 (Little Reunions), written in the 1970s of the last century but completed just before her death, finally published only in 2009, which is an example of the continuous manipulation of the same narrative materials used in previous works, and re-presented here through a politics of self-translation and self-intertextuality. In translating this novel one is confronted with a complex "mosaic of quotations" as Kristeva says, and self-quotations, and is dragged into a forest of meanings derived from the juxtaposition of a variety of external 'voices' that mix up with the internal voice of the author. This Bachtinian or babelian quality of the novel, in other words its pluri- and interdiscursivity, challenges the translator, who is called not only to reconstruct the original sources of the allusions, but is also caught between the need of disambiguation and the respect of the intertextual connections implied by the text; he/she has also to cope with the deliberate narrative fragmentation adopted by Zhang.

Summary 1 Introduction. – 2 Parody. – 3 Self Intertextuality. – 4 'External' Intertextuality or Hypertextuality. – 4.1 Hollywood Movies, Hollywood Actors and Songs. – 4.2 Confucian Sayings. 5 Poetry. – 6 Conclusions.

Keywords Zhang Ailing's novels. Translation. Self-translation. Intertextuality. Pluridiscursivity.

1 Introduction

This paper focuses on the intriguing and far from negligible problem of translating a text that derives from a complicated and deliberate politics of assimilation of different texts, calling for a reconstruction of intertextual hints – I take here as a definition Genette's simple formula that defines intertextuality as "a relationship of copresence between two texts or several texts" (Genette 1997, 1) or "the actual presence of one text within another text" (2). However, in order to better analyse the literary work under scrutiny in this paper, I will also refer to other forms of "transtextuality" or "the textual transcendence of the text", as Genette (1) defines this phenomenon. In particular, in the novel I will be discussing these

intertextual hints come both from previous texts by the same author and from other texts.

My recent, and as yet-unpublished, Italian translation of the famous Chinese writer Zhang Ailing's posthumous novel *Xiao tuanyuan* 小团圆 (Little Reunions) written in the 1970s but only published in 2009 in China, provides an exemplary case of the apparent clash between literary values and commercial values. It also reveals the asymmetrical relations and the fundamental misunderstanding embodied within the whole process of introducing a foreign literary work into a receiving culture, where the very act of translating is only one part of the process.

A literary testament and résumé of the author's life more than a romantic novel (although Zhang's works have been improperly labelled as 'romantic' in Italy), *Little Reunions* is highly challenging on the narrative level, for it implies a multiplication of voices and texts under one main yet fragmented perspective. It can be defined beyond a shadow of a doubt as the 'summa' of Zhang Ailing's life and work, owing to the strong autobiographical character of the novel and its daring intertextual nature.

The issue I would like to discuss here belongs to both the translational and the deontological sphere. It regards the possibility and advisability for a translator of treating the prototext as a three-dimensional space where the text to be translated is but the final result of a multi-layered process of overlapping of texts. By analysing my translation of the book, I wish to raise the following questions:

– when translating a text, especially a literary one, shall we translate only the 'text' as the final product or shall we also take into account the whole 'process' that leads to the creation of its final version? How is it possible – and is it adequate for the translator – (to attempt) to preserve this three-dimensionality of the text, even if it might make it harder for the readers to receive and to thoroughly understand the text?

– Or is it rather unavoidable and all the more convenient to efface that space and reduce it into a two-dimensional one, for the sake of a reader-oriented translation?

Although Zhang Ailing has been largely researched over the past decades in China and Taiwan, there is a surprising paucity of studies on the Western side. Among the Chinese essays there are many studies referring to Zhang Ailing's translation and self-translation activity (Yang Xue 2010), and I would like to mention a particular article (Bai Yingying, Wang Shuo 2011), which deals with intertextuality and Zhang's English translation of her own novel *Wusi yishi* 五四遺事 (*Stale Mates*, 1956).

Hoping to provide a small contribution to this thread of research, as called for by Leo Lee (2012, 246), I would like to carry out some further reflections on the issue of self-translation and self-intertextuality, when

it comes to translation into a third language. As a matter of fact, when reading and translating *Little Reunions* a reader or translator familiar with Zhang Ailing cannot avoid being influenced by the 'intertextual knowledge' of her previous works and life-story.

The novel is indeed a complex and captivating narrative labyrinth, which draws the readers onto the winding paths of Zhang Ailing's memory. It recalls Zhang's childhood and youth, her life as a young and passionate writer in Shanghai, through the main female character, Julie, interspersing the description of this early phase of her life with scattered hints of her later experience in the US. As many scholars (Wang D. 2012; Lee 2012) have pointed out, Zhang's entire literary production is, to a certain extent, part of an incessant work of rewriting her own history and life.

As we know from the letters she exchanged with her friend and her "quasi-literary agent" (Louie 2012, 11), Stephen Soong, the process that led to the creation of this novel is an extremely troubled one: she was many times on the verge of destroying it, but, according to her last letter to her agent in Taiwan in 1993, in the end she felt she could not betray her readers and chose to finish the novel:

"小团圆"一定要尽早写完, 不会再对读者食言。(Zhang Ailing 2009, 13)

I must complete *Little Reunions* as soon as possible, I won't disappoint my readers.[1]

Carrying out the Italian translation of the novel, I was driven both by an ethic and a translational concern. On the one hand, I was aware that I was handling the fragile material of a controversial autobiography, which involved many sensitive issues and complicated states of mind, many painful relationships the author had entertained with certain people in her lifetime. On the other hand, I believe that such a composite, uneven work, deserves to be respected at the risk of making it harder for the readers to follow its sometimes awkward retelling of the past: the time of the narration is uneven and often abruptly interrupted and pushed forward or backward;[2] the plot is also highly fragmented and heavily depends on the flow of memories that unfolds throughout her narration, not to mention the point of view, which is based on the author herself and Julie (九莉), her piv-

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[1] Except when referenced, English translations are mine.

[2] "*Little Reunion* is constructed like a maze, with multiple temporal and dramatic lines weaving in and out of one another. Its language is cryptic and understated, deliberately requiring laborious decoding rather than easily ingested and consumed" (Sang 2012, 212).

otal, self-mirroring character.[3] Nevertheless, the point of view sometimes shifts to other central figures of the plot, creating a confusing web of inter-subjectivity. The translation process was deeply revelatory, thus opening up many paths for the analysis of this novelist's writing – especially as regards her language and style – which go beyond its autobiographical meaning: as observed by Wang X. (2012, 238), her "derivative poetics" is also an important literary and, for us, translational, issue.

In this paper the different levels of intertextuality of the novel will be categorised as follows:

1. The first and perhaps most striking level is self-intertextuality: in *Little Reunions* one can find a variety of subtexts, details, and even long passages, which have already been used by Zhang Ailing in her previous works (starting from the 1940s and including fiction – both in Chinese and in English – essays and published photo albums). As Kam Louie (2012, 1) puts it: "Chang herself retold her personal stories in different languages and from different perspectives, times and places throughout her life, so these recent renditions build upon a lengthy tradition of retellings". This "lengthy tradition" and this practice of retelling and rewriting extensive yet fragmented material drawing upon her own biography and her own literary production, therefore, are a unique feature of this author, which cannot be ignored by the translator.

2. A phenomenon of "architextuality" (Genette 1997, 4) is traceable in *Xiaotuan yuan* since the novel is, partially, an attempt to revive the popular tradition of the so-called social novel (*shehui xiaoshuo* 社会小说), as Zhang Ailing herself used to call the novels of manners that were popular from the 1920s to the 1940s in China – an example being Zhang Henshui's works (Zhang 1976, 295; Zhang 2009, 161);

3. We find other examples of intertextuality, both in quotation and dispersed throughout the text, in the allusions to Chinese and Western literary and visual works (such as Chinese classical poetry, quotations from the Confucian classics, musical dramas by Gilbert and Sullivan (Zhang 2009, 19), novels like *The Island of Doctor Moreau* by H. George Wells (Zhang 2009, 282), the Bible, Hollywood movies and songs, etc. Most of these references are deliberately altered, parodied or modified in order to convey Zhang Ailing's subjective mood or to highlight some crucial passages in the narration. Therefore, these examples can also be considered within the category of parody mentioned and analysed by Genette as hypertextual (Genette 1997, 5).

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3 In one of his letters to the writer, Stephen Soong expressed his fears that Zhang Ailing herself was much too "thinly veiled" under the character in the novel: "九莉就是张爱玲" (Zhang 2009, 8-9) [Julie is precisely Zhang Ailing].

4. Finally, a separate category is the one to which the title belongs, and which Genette calls "paratext": it should be remembered that, according to him, "[t]his is probably one of the privileged fields of operation of the pragmatic dimension of the work – i.e. of its impact upon the reader […] the field of what is now often called […] the generic contract or pact" (Genette 1997, 3).

The creation of such a polyphonic and self-textualised novel is plausibly the fruit of a deliberate plan Zhang drew up when recollecting her youth memories in the 1970s, rewriting and developing them unceasingly until her death: as we read in her letters to Stephen Soong and his wife, Zhang aimed to rewrite some stories from her own past that she had already told before, by adopting different forms, and especially different perspectives:

"小团圆"因为情结上的需要,无法改头换面。看过"流言"的人,一望而知里面有"私语"、"烬余录"(巷战)的内容,尽管是"罗生门"那样的角度不同。(Zhang Ailing 2009, 4)

For the sake of the plot, I couldn't rewrite *Little Reunions* from the beginning. Those who read *Written on Water*, will be able to recognise at a glance that in this novel there are contents taken from *Whispers* and *From the Ashes* (the war at Hong Kong), although the point of view is different as it is in *Rashomon*.

The process of translating such a composite novel entails the kind of problems one encounters when working on a text that is already the product of a self-translation – a case of "derivative poetics", as David Wang puts it. Zhang Ailing constantly rewrites the same episodes and scenes, from *Siyu* 私语 (Whispers, 1944)[4] and *Jinyu lu* 烬余录 (From the Ashes, 1944) to the two novels written in English, *The Fall of the Pagoda* (Chang 2010a) and *The Book of Change* (Chang 2010b). The content of the episodes and characters described are very similar, but at each rewriting one can find some slight changes, either of perspective or just in the characters' names and in the setting. In the Italian translation I tried to take into account the different rewritings, as the previous versions were mostly useful in cognitive terms, as a means of reconstructing the author's mind, and were quite helpful also in dealing with the sometimes unconventional syntax and the ambiguous narrative perspective adopted by Zhang Ailing in the later versions and particularly in *Xiao tuanyuan*. Indeed, in many cases, the scene narrated makes it difficult to understand whose gaze or point

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4 A later version of the article, "What a Life! What a Girl's Life" was published in 1938 in the *Shanghai Evening Post*.

of view is being presented, especially in very dramatic scenes where the main character interacts verbally or only psychologically with some other important figures of the novel and of Zhang's own life.

2 Parody

The first case of parody is the novel's title, which is a clear but ironical reminder of the traditional *datuanyuan* 大团圆 (big reunion), the (happy) ending of traditional Chinese popular novels and dramas: the reunion(s) between the young and promising scholar with his wife and his concubines. It is a romantic cliché, which Zhang Ailing deliberately seeks to overthrow, by shifting from a 'big happy ending' (*da* 大), a 'big reunion', to a little (*xiao* 小) one or, to quote the title I unsuccessfully suggested to the publisher for the Italian translation: *Un piccolo lieto fine* (A Little Happy Ending). The intertextuality of this expression is confirmed by the fact that the author repeats it a few times in the text, adapting it ironically to her own (Julie's) experience of unhappy love. In the eighth chapter, when travelling across China's inner provinces in order to meet her fiancé, who is hiding from the Guomindang after the war, the young woman watches a traditional opera, which ends up coinciding with the reunion of the male protagonist with his beloved wife and concubine.

Tuanyuan 团圆 (reunion) is undoubtedly a key word in the novel, which would deserve to be included and properly translated in the title as well, given its suggestiveness throughout the text. The word belongs to the category of

> conceptual words, those that are not important for their expressiveness or because they link elements which are remote from the textual structure, but because, with their meaning, they directly express concepts that are poetically important within the text.[5]

The word *tuanyuan* appears four times in the novel: in the first occurrence it is not used in a parodic way, because it belongs to the classical lexicon of the traditional opera Julie watched at the theatre: this episode is an evident hint at or epitome of her own situation (in the opera the young scholar successfully passes the imperial exam and he reunites with his beloved wife and his concubine, whereas in the novel, Shao Zhiyong, Julie's fiancé, maintains his relations with his previous wife and other women while seeing her).

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[5] "Le parole concettuali, quelle che sono importanti non per la loro espressività, non perché collegano elementi distanti dalla struttura testuale, ma perché esprimono direttamente con il loro significato concetti poeticamente importanti per il testo" (Osimo 2004, 70).

九莉无法再坐下去，只好站起来往外挤，十分惋惜没看到私订终身，考中一并迎娶，二美三美团圆。(Zhang 2009, 230)

Julie couldn't linger any longer. She stood up and jostled her way back of the theatre, deeply regretting not being able to witness the unveiling of the lovers' secret pledge to marry without parental permission, the scholar returning a licentiate and marrying both girls, the joyful reunion with the two beauties (maybe three). (Chang 2018, 262)

The other three occurrences are all in the tenth chapter and refer directly to Julie and her uncomfortable situation of being just one of the women of Shao Zhiyong, who is built upon the real figure of Zhang Ailing's former husband Hu Lancheng (1906-1981). In this case, of course, we can ignore the original meaning of the title, and, as the Italian publisher suggested, entitle the book *Il circolo delle passioni* (The Circle of Passions). However, from a literary viewpoint, in this way, the chance of recognising and offering the readers a *Leitmotiv* of the text, and a key to understanding the real, unromantic nature of Zhang's poetics, is completely wasted.

My choice to maintain Zhang's original intention to debunk the traditional Chinese concept of romantic love apparently clashes with the need to make the book more attractive for a general audience, and with the main politics of the publisher in constructing a different identity of Zhang Ailing, an identity tailored to the Italian readership.

Therefore, while the use of this term is definitely satirical in Zhang's mind, the translation requested by the Italian publisher unavoidably leads to a misinterpretation of her psychological and literary world.

Another example of parody in the novel is offered by the description of the traditional Chinese opera attended by Julie. Every movement, every line and the very description of the actors respond to a sardonic remake of classical Chinese opera, which is enhanced by the reaction of the audience, who keep making remarks about the ugly appearance of the actors and their clumsy moves:

观众里不断有人嗤笑, 都是女人。"怎么一个个都这么难看?" (Zhang 2009, 228)

"Why is every one of them so ugly?" someone jeered. The hecklers in the audience were mostly women. (Chang 2018, 259)

3 Self Intertextuality

Many examples of material drawn from her own previous books (written both in English and Chinese) are disseminated or embedded within the novel: I will just list a few that are particularly meaningful. The first case

of parody and self-intertextuality concerning the paratext is tied to the use of the word *tuanyuan*, which has already been discussed above as a conceptual word that gives the title of the novel a striking ironical power. It is worth recalling that in a previous work, *Wusi yishi* 五四逸事 – namely the Chinese edition of *Stale Mates: A Short Story Set in the Time When Love Came to China* (1956), which Zhang Ailing herself translated into Chinese in 1958 – Zhang added to the Chinese version a significant subtitle, *Luo Wenshou sanmei tuanyuan* 罗文涛三美团圆 (The Three Reunions of Luo Wenshou), apparently a mockery of the May Fourth's rhetoric of free marriage and anti-traditional love. In the story, Luo, who embodies the May Fourth enlightened young man, after divorcing from his wife in order to marry his true love, ends up in a typical situation of concubinage with three women.

Another remarkable example of self-intertextuality, or rewriting with a slight change, is a passage which Zhang rewrites from *The Fall of The Pagoda*: it reveals the troubled states of mind of both mother (Dew) and daughter (Lute), the daughter being a representative of Zhang Ailing herself. The very same scene appears in *Little Reunions*, where the mother (Rachel) and the daughter (Julie) have an awkward physical contact:

[…] they were faced with the widest and busiest street in Shanghai. 'Be careful crossing the street. Don't run, follow me.' **Dew** said.

She studied the tangle of cars and trams and trucks with rickshaws and delivery bicycles ducking in and out. When her opening came **Lute** sensed her slight hesitation and her almost inaudible cluck of annoyance before **she** reached down and grubbed Lute's hand petulantly, having decided it was too much risk to get her across without holding her by the hand. **She** gripped it tight although fearful that **she** would wriggle away. The bunched bones of her thin fingers made the grip feel steel harder. **Lute** was in a turmoil, it was the first time her mother had ever held her by the hand that **she** could remember. It was a strange feeling but it made **her** very happy. (Chang 2010a, 148; emphases added)

[…] 站在街边等着过马路。**蕊秋**正说 '跟着我走：要当心，两头都看了没车子——' 忽然来了个空隙，正要走，又踌躇了一下，彷佛觉得有牵着**她**手的必要，一咬牙，方才抓住**她**的手，抓得太紧了点，**九莉**没想到**她**手指这么瘦，像一把细竹管横七竖八夹在**自己**手上：心里也很乱。在车缝里匆匆穿过南京路，一到人行道上蕊秋立刻放了手。**九莉**感到**她**刚才那一刹那的内心的挣扎，很震动。这是**她**这次回来唯一的一次形体上的接触。显然**她**也有点恶心。(Zhang Ailing 2009, 80)

… stood on the curb about to cross the road. 'Walk with me', instructed **Rachel**, 'and be careful. Look both ways to be sure there are no cars.' Suddenly there was an opening, but just as they were about to cross the road Rachel hesitated. Perhaps she felt the need to hold Julie's hand. She

gnashed her teeth, then seized **Julie**'s hand a little too tightly. **Julie** was bewildered, as she had not expected her mother's fingers to be so bony. **She** felt as if a bunch of thin bamboo canes clenched **her** hand. They hurriedly crossed Nanking Road through a gap in the traffic, and as soon as they reached the footpath on the other side **Rachel** relinquished her grip. **Julie** was overwhelmed by the momentary struggle of her mother's emotions. This was the first time **she**'d had any physical contact with her mother since her return to Shanghai. Obviously **Rachel** also felt a slight revulsion. (Chang 2018, 80)

In a short comparison of the two passages, one can observe that both versions present an ambiguity between the two characters, although it is clear from the text that they are both somehow shocked by the unexpected physical contact. Especially in the Chinese version, where the name of the character is often replaced by the pronoun (*ta* 她 'she'), the reader cannot really be sure whose feelings are being expressed. A difference is noticeable in the last version, where this brief experience apparently produces an opposite result: a strange 'happiness' for Lute in *The Fall of the Pagoda*, whereas in *Little Reunions* the conclusive impression is of revulsion (*e xin* 恶心).[6] Confirming the psychological importance of this trivial incident, later on in the novel the narrator goes back to it in order to enforce the sense of awkward unfamiliarity.

她忘了小时候那次牵她的手过街的事, 不知道为什么那么怕碰那手上的手指, 横七竖八一把细竹管子。(Zhang 2009, 253)

She had forgotten the time her mother had held her hand on that occasion crossing the road when she was a child, and the way, for some reason, she was so afraid of touching her mother's fingers, so scrawny that they felt like a bunch of thin bamboo canes clenching her own hand. (Chang 2018, 287)

A more subtle but by no means irrelevant case of self-intertextuality is when some characters and scenes of the novel are a development of scenes and characters from the writer's previous fiction: one example is the couple composed by Mr. Pi and Miss Hsiang, marginal characters in *Little Reunion*, who are a basic draft of the main characters of *Qincheng zhi lian* (Love in a Fallen City, 1944). Miss Hsiang is described in some detail in the first chapter, as a divorced Shanghai woman who goes to Hong Kong in order to remarry and ends up flirting with Ambassador Pi, on whom

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6 I have provided a narratological analysis of this passage in terms of intersubjectivity in a previous article on the novel (see Pesaro 2014, 668-9).

Julie's mother had also set her eyes. In Zhang's latest novel the romantic couple of *Qingcheng zhi lian* is somewhat reduced to a caricature: she writes about the woman that in the past she

项八小姐做龚家四少奶奶的时候是亲戚间的名美人, […] 现在胖了些, 双下巴 […]. (Zhang 2009, 31)

was a renowned beauty among the relatives […]. Nowadays, Miss Hsiang was a little chubby and had a double chin. (Chang 2018, 23)

Besides, she has a seventeen-year-old son from her first husband. Very distant from the image of the charming and mysterious male protagonist of Zhang's early bestseller, Fan Liuyuan,

他六七十岁的人了, […],头发秃成月洞门, 更显得脑门子特别高, 戴着玳瑁边眼镜, 蟹壳脸. (Zhang 2009, 32)

Ambassador Pi was well over sixty […]. His receding hairline made his head look like a moon gate, his forehead appearing especially large. A pair of tortoiseshell-framed spectacles adorned his broad face that resembled a crab's carapace. (Chang 2018, 24)

Episodes depicting Zhang's childhood with the *amahs*, or her controversial relationship with her father and mother (a mixture of affection and hate), which form Zhang's earliest memories, are also reproduced in her late fiction with some variations: generally speaking, these episodes are treated with a sort of cultural mediation approach in the novels *The Fall of the Pagoda* and *The Book of Change*, targeting an English readership, while in *Little Reunions* these fragmented scenes from a remote past are like colourful pieces that recompose the complicated mosaic of Julie/Ailing's psyche in Freudian terms. In the latter case, the use of her mother tongue allows Zhang Ailing to daringly explore the deepest recesses of her mind by means of a broken flow of images and words, which is reflected in her broken grammatical style. As far as the translation is concerned, it is difficult yet essential to preserve the deliberate fragmentariness of Zhang's narrative in terms of syntactic and discourse structure, by resisting the temptation (or the publisher's urge) to reduce it to a more harmonious and coherent narrative style. As a matter of fact, this fragmented, inconsistent style reflects her narrative poetics, which can be resumed as a "poetics of the irrelevant" (不相干 *bu xianggan*) (Pesaro 2014, 660).

4 'External' Intertextuality or Hypertextuality

A rich variety of texts are quoted throughout the novel – sometimes overtly, sometimes by hiding them between the lines. Most of these texts come from the major works of classical Chinese thought and poetry; but some are drawn from the Bible and from modern Western novels as well as from musicals, operettas and dramas. Among the material quoted we find also Hollywood movies, popular Chinese and American songs, aphorisms and idioms from the local culture of Nanjing or Shanghai and even pictures and paintings. This polyphonic structure of the novel makes it very hard for the translator to cope with such an uneven and hybrid language, as Zhang carries out what we could define as a 'cross-medial intertextuality', including not only texts but images and sounds as well. If, on the one hand, this phenomenon testifies to the cosmopolitan quality of Zhang Ailing's culture and background, on the other hand it is also a complicated screen under which she hides her thought and emotions, fragmenting and projecting them as in a multifaceted kaleidoscope. In order to achieve a proper translation, or a "thick translation" in Appiah's[7] words, the translator needs to reconstruct the pieces of the author's memory one by one.

It is "true that every brief peremptory, and nonargumentative statement—proverb, maxim, aphorism, slogan— inevitably invites an equally peremptory and equally dogmatic refutation" (Genette 1997, 37), the use of these formulaic clichés by Zhang Ailing appears to be as a "form of parody whose function and mood may vary according to the various contexts and situations" (Genette 1997, 37).

There is not enough room in this article to cite all cases in detail. What I will do is list some examples and then analyse only one case, where Zhang Ailing makes use of ancient Chinese poems in order to highlight her disenchantment with human relations. All the hypertexts quoted or referred to in the novel contribute to the author's final intentions of re-enacting her past through a range of multicultural associations with literature, art and music.

4.1 Hollywood Movies, Hollywood Actors and Songs

Zhang Ailing's passion for cinema and theatre is revealed by her frequent use of them as a mirror of the characters' feelings and attitudes. The importance of this field of intertextuality is confirmed by the fact that the

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[7] "Translation that seeks with its annotations and its accompanying glosses to locate the text in a rich cultural and linguistic context, is eminently worth doing. I have called this 'thick translation'" (Appiah 2004, 427).

very incipit, significantly repeated in the ending of the novel, is based on a scene taken from the famous film *Spartacus* (1960):

大考的早晨, 那惨淡的心情大概只有军队作战前的黎明可以比拟, 像'斯巴达克斯'里奴隶起义的叛军在晨雾中遥望罗马大军摆阵,所有的战争片中最恐怖的一幕,因为完全是等待。(Zhang 2009, 15; 283)

Only the somber mood of troops waiting in the dawn before battle can compare with the morning of final exams, like the rebel slave army in *Spartacus* silently peering through the predawn mist the Roman troops maneuvering [*sic*] in the distance – surely the most chilling moment in any war film – everything charged with anticipation. (Chang 2018, 3; 323)

Beyond the specific reference to the final exams, the sense of long and solemn waiting conveyed by the quotation of the impressionistic pre-battle scene from Kubrick's film seems to hint to a bigger event in her life, which in Julie's case never occurred.

In the last part of *Little Reunions* we find quotations of American movies, such as *Fear Strikes Out* (1957), *Mildred Pierce* (1945) and *The Trail of the Lonesome Pine* (1936). The characters of the first two films are taken as a pretext to comment on Julie's conflictual tie with her family, while the latter provides an ironical setting for her unwanted dream.

又有一次看了电影, 在饭桌上讲'米尔菊德. 皮尔丝',里面琼克劳馥演一个饭店女侍, 为了子女奋斗, 自己开了饭馆, 结果女儿不孝,遗抢她母亲的情人。'我看了哭得不得了。嗳哟, 真是——!'感慨的说,嗓音有点沙哑。九莉自己到了三十几岁,看了棒球员吉美.皮尔索的传记片,也哭 得呼嗤呼嗤的,几乎 嚎啕起来。安东尼柏金斯演吉美, 从小他父亲培养他打棒球,压力太大,无论怎样卖力也讨不了父亲的欢心。(Zhang 2009, 254)

On another occasion after watching a movie, Rachel expounded at the table about Joan Crawford playing a waitress in *Mildred Pierce*. Struggling to support her children, she opened her own restaurant, but in the end her unfilial daughter turned on her, even stealing her mother's lover. 'I cried my heart out when I watched that film. Really it was too much,' she lamented, her voice a little hoarse.

When Julie reached her thirties she cried too, almost wailing while watching *Fear Streaks Out*, the biographical film about the baseball player Jimmy Piersall, whose father groomed him from a young age to be a football player. Anthony Perkins played Jimmy […]. He experienced enormous pressure, and no matter how hard he tried, he couldn't earn his father's esteem. (Chang 2018, 288)

While in the first example Julie's mother hints at her "unfilial daughter", in the second one Julie/Ailing feels the same frustration as a son who never lives up to his father's expectations.

Zhang Ailing builds her rewriting of painful memories and conflicting feelings on the suggestive power of movies. In the last example, at the end of the novel, her cinematic imagination helps her translate her antiromantic rejection of the rhetoric of a happy family, which is contrasted with the sense of joy that lingers inside her after the dream.

但是有一次梦见五彩片'寂寞的松林径'的背景, 身入其中, 还是她小时候看的, […], 内容早已不记得了, 只知道没什么好, […]。有好几个小孩在松林中出没, 都是她的。之雍出现了, 微笑着把她往木屋里拉。非常可笑, 她忽然羞涩起来, 两人的手臂拉成一条直线,就在这时候醒了。二 十年前的影片, 十年前的 人。她醒来快乐了很久很久。(Zhang 2009, 283)

Once she dreamt that she was in the color movie *The Trail of the Lonesome Pine*, which she had watched as a child. […] though Julie had long forgotten the story, only remembering she didn't like it. […] In her dream some children emerged from the pine forest, and they all belonged to her. Then Chi-yong appeared –elated beaming– and took her hand to lead her back into the cabin. A comical scene. She blushed as their arms stretched out horizontally in a line, at which point she woke up. A movie she saw twenty years ago; a man from ten years ago. Julie floated rapturously for a long, long time after she woke up. (Chang 2018, 323)

Throughout *Little Reunions* songs are quoted with an ironic flavour and used as a term of comparison for the characters and situations in Julie's ordinary life, so they are adapted in order to fit her individual sense of history. In this example, the English song sang softly by her mother and aunt is a sardonic metaphor of her vain love expectations:

[…] 她听着都像小时候二婶三姑常弹唱的一支英文歌： '泛舟顺流而下 金色的梦之河， 唱着个恋歌。' […] 她不过陪他多走一段路。在金色梦的河上划船,随时可以上岸。[…] 她也有点知道没有这天长地久的感觉, 她那金色的永生也不是那样. (Zhang 2009, 149-50)

[…] she thought it resembled an English song Second Aunt and Third Aunt used to sing. *Down the River of Golden Dreams | Drifting Along | humming a Song of Love* […].

She would merely accompany him a short distance –in a rowboat on the river of golden dreams. She could disembark and go ashore at any time. […] She also vaguely knew that without the aura of enduring love, her golden eternal life would never be as she envisaged. (Chang 2018, 165-6)

4.2   Confucian Sayings

While Western movies and songs give Zhang the occasion to display her troubled sentimental experience, quotations from the Chinese classics, which are never introduced by the narrator, serve as an ironical counterpart to the reminiscence of her traditional education, which shaped but sometimes also hindered her unconventional spirit. These proverbial sentences are inserted during the recalling of ordinary life's episodes, often in a tone of mockery: one example is a sentence from Confucius's *Analects* used to describe Julie's poor dialectic ability with her mother. Zhang manipulates the original passage by replacing the word *zhong* 中 (hit the target) with the opposite *shi* 失 (miss the target):

一开口就反胜为败。她向来 '夫人不言,' 言必有失。(Zhang 2009, 252)

If she were to speak, Julie would have turned victory into defeat. She always adhered to the wisdom of keeping one's own counsel. (Chang 2018, 286)

The English version ignores the Confucian saying (*Analects* 11.14), preferring a normalising translation. However, Zhang Ailing's self-irony would have been better enhanced by keeping the original text: 'She was one who rarely says anything, but when she did, it always missed its target'.

In a previous passage, the authoritative running of the house by the two *amahs* in Julie's family is jokingly compared to the joint government of the Duke of Zhou and the Duke of Shao during the Zhou dynasty.

'周召共和'就是像现在韩妈余妈管家,九莉想。(Chang 2009, 182)

The Konghe regency of 841 BC was jointly ruled by two dukes. Auntie Han and Auntie Yu managing the household' thought Julie. (Chang 2018, 205)

In another scene, the unnecessary concern of her family, who asks a famous surgeon to treat Julie's small burn, is ridiculed, again through Confucius' words: "Does one chop up a chicken with a beef cleaver?" (杀鸡焉用牛刀, *Analects*, 17.4):

杨医生是个红外科大夫, 杀鸡焉用牛刀, 但是给敷了药也不见效。(Zhang 2009, 256)

Asking him to treat a blister was like wielding a slaughterhouse poleax to kill a chicken, but the ointment he applied didn't work either. (Chang 2018, 291)

5   Poetry

A typical example of intertextuality in the novel is the interspersion of some crucial scenes with classical Chinese poetry: the quotations of verses by famous poets of the ancient dynasties makes emotions and love more literary and rarefied, drawing upon the tradition of the Chinese novel which often makes resorts to poetry, especially to signal a change in the narrative scene. However, in the following examples, Zhang Ailing seems to renew the traditional Chinese concept of *yixiang* 意象 (poetic vision),[8] the use of a figurative symbol to express the fragility of human feelings, and the subtle technique of *bixing* 比兴 (compare and evoke).

Contrary to the conventional function, the intertextual function of these quotations is not predictable. Zhang Ailing always manages to subvert classical symbols and images by framing them within a landscape of anxiety and disappointment.

The first two examples mentioned here are both quoted by Zhiyong, Julie's lover, in the fifth chapter of the novel, which represents the core of their relationship.

> [...]高悬着大半个白月亮, 裹着一团清光。"'明明如月, 何时可掇?'在这里了!"他作势一把捉住她, 两人都笑了。(Zhang 2009, 162)

> [...] And suspended in the heavens, a half-moon radiated pure light with a glowing halo. *Brightness, bright as the moon/When can I pluck it from the sky?*
>
> "Here and now," he said and striking a pose he grabbed hold of Julie. Both of them burst out laughing. (Chang 2018, 180)

The strongly traditional image of the moon, unattainable as love, here appears empty and insincere, just as at the very beginning of the novel, where Julie's mind wanders:

> 水泥阑干像倒塌了的石碑横卧在那里, 浴在晚唐的蓝色的月光中. 一千多年前的月色, 但是在她三十年已经太多了,墓碑一样沉重的压在心上。(Zhang 2009, 15)

> The concrete balusters like overturned stellae, lying in ruins, were bathed in blue moonlight. Moonlight of the late Tang dynasty of a thousand years ago. But for Julie thirty years old already felt too long, weighing heavily on her heart like a tombstone. (Chang 2018, 3)

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8 It "refers to a heightened presentation of outer and inner realities, characterized by the beyondness of one kind or another – 'the meaning beyond words' (yan wai zhi yi 言外之意), 'the images beyond images' (xiang wai zhi xiang 象外只象)" (Cai 2008, 379).

In fact, as Yang Xue (2010, 123) observes,

‘月亮’是张爱玲作品中的意象,张爱玲通过这一较为固定的意象抒发对苍凉世界的观感,这与她年少时的经历和创痛有关,蕴涵着深刻的人生体验。并且,张爱玲笔下的‘月亮’意象每次出现时都不一样。因为她每次都根据创作时的情绪和感觉,去赋予‘月亮’各种不同的色彩［…］。

The ‘moonlight’ is a recurrent poetic image in Zhang Ailing’s works: by this rather fixed image she expresses her impression of a desolate world, an impression which is connected with her childhood traumas, implying a profound human experience. Moreover, in her writing the image of the ‘moonlight’ each time occurs with a variety of different shades, according to the creative mood and emotional state.

Besides,

古诗词中传统空灵、清远、孤独的月亮情调被张爱玲放大、变形或强化,给读者强烈的感。

The traditional mood of moonlight in ancient poetry, implying lyricism, purity and loneliness, is amplified, deformed or reinforced by Zhang Ailing, producing strong emotions in the readers.

Back to the fifth chapter, one of Li Bai’s (701-762) famous poems sketching a utopian world of calm solitude and placid contemplation of nature, on the contrary, provokes in Julie and Zhiyong a sense of inexplicable dismay:

壁上一面大圆镜子像个月洞门。夕阳在镜子上照出两小条五彩的虹影。他们静静的望着它, 几乎有点恐惧。他笑道: “没有人像这样一天到晚在一起的。” 又道:‘相看两不厌, 惟有敬亭山。’” (Zhang 2009, 163)

The large round mirror on the wall resembled a moon gate. The setting sun reflected in the mirror formed two small rainbows. They gazed at the rainbows on silence, almost with a kind of horror. “No one else lives like us, together all day” he chuckled. He recited lines from “Sitting Alone by Ching-t’ing Mountain” by the Tang Dynasty poet Li Po: *Never tiring of watching each other | Mount Ch’ing Ting there is no other*. (Chang 2018, 181)

Again, traditional poetry is but a deforming mirror of the lovers’ awkward entanglement. In *Love in a Fallen City*, Zhang’s ‘cross-cultural’ re-writing reflects, according to Wang Xiaoping (2012, 565), “the predicament of marriage and love as social institutions in a semicolonial, semitraditional society”. In her later novel, by contrast, the novelist further adds to it a

profound and cynical disenchantment, which is ironically enhanced by the poetic quotations, already stripped of all romantic flavour. Zhiyong's reciting of Li Bai's poem reminds us of Fan Liuyuan reciting lines from the *Shijing* to Liusu, where the dandy-poet is nostalgic for "a spiritual homeland or city that exist[s] beyond the visible world' and has an internalized 'sense of decay and decline" of culture (Wang 2012, 567). However, in *Little Reunions* the lover's words are even more fraught with a sense of bitter self-mockery and disbelief.

A fallacious and over pedagogical way to translate these lines is to introduce them with an explanatory sentence with the name and dynasty of the poet whose verses are quoted: this explanation (completely superfluous for Zhiyong's fiancée) inserted within the text (and not in a footnote) decidedly effaces the associative effect of these intertextual references. Such a pedestrian and domesticating translation would reduce the motif of the moon (which is one of the most common *yixiang* used by Zhang in all her works) to a falsely romantic cliché.

In fact, to counterbalance the use of some ancient clichés of *wenyan* poetry (put in the mouth of the unfaithful Zhiyong), just a few passages later, at the end of the chapter, we are given Julie's own lines in vernacular. As though to suggest that the flat simplicity of *baihua* could reveal the protagonist's modernist consciousness and restore the true meaning of such a burning but ephemeral love story, Zhang writes:

他的过去里没有我,|寂寂的流年, |深深的庭院, |空房里晒着太阳, |已经是古代的太阳了. |我要一直跑进去, |大喊'我在这儿. |我在这儿呀!' 他没说, 但是显然不喜欢. 他的过去有声有色.不是那么空虚.在等着她来。(Zhang 2009, 165)

Never have I occupied any places | In his life's bygone phases | As his years of solitude streamed past | He incarcerated himself in a silent courtyard | The empty rooms filled with sunshine | A sunshine left behind from ancient times | I have a good mind to crash into the compound | And shout: "Here I am! Look, here I am!" (Chang 2018, 183-4)

Reasonably enough, building upon the atmosphere created by these poetic interpolations and the 'strategy of meaning' adopted by the author throughout her works, the translator should infer from these subtexts that the key feeling of these passages is a sentiment of solitude and inconsistency and not of romantic passion. We can deduce that while sometimes intertextuality is used to enhance the general mood of the text, more often Zhang Ailing aims to provide a baffling effect.

6   Conclusions

As a conclusion, in an attempt to give a preliminary answer to the questions I raised at the beginning of this paper, it is possible to state that:

1. a fair translation of this novel cannot be carried out without being aware of its composite, self-textualised and multidiscursive nature. The knowledge and analysis of her previous texts and of the transformation of certain themes, motives and characters, is the key to interpret this artistic and psychological process of involution, and hence constitutes an irreplaceable basis for the translation act;

2. the recognition of all the intertextual hints scattered in the text is of primary importance for the translator, if he/she is to create a balanced network of subtexts and intertexts drawn from different literary works and traditions. This composite intertextual texture of the novel is, indeed, a mirror of the double, composite identity of the author, Zhang Ailing or Eileen Chang;

3. as it has been noted elsewhere, this practice of rewriting is often not a simple self-translation; rather, Zhang Ailing seems to exploit all the potentialities of intertextuality. In the very process of rewriting or translating her own works, she often creates shifts in meaning or changes in some details, and almost always modifies the previous version, if only slightly. The aim of such a complex poetics is to debunk and defy any kind of systematic reading of her past and her works. Zhang rejects all labels, offering her readers a dynamic, personal way of experiencing her writing. Ultimately, in a letter to Soong (dated July 7, 1975), talking about *Little Reunions*, she states that

这篇没有碍语。[…]我在《小团圆》里讲到自己也很不客气，这种地方总是自己来揭发的好。当然也并不是否定自己。(Zhang 2009, 2)

In this text I have removed all taboos, in *Little Reunions* I am not self-indulgent at all, I think it is better to expose myself, of course without denying myself.

Therefore, the main approach in translating novels of this kind must be based on an 'intertextual knowledge' of the text and of the author. Every move towards effacing this multi-layered 'narrative fabric', which is indisputably built on the equally composite fabric of the author's self, would cause a significant loss of meaning.

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Translation During the Christian Century in Japan
Christian Keywords in Japanese

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Abstract   This essay presents examples of translation of keywords of the Christian doctrine translated by Jesuit missionaries during the so-called 'Christian century', when Europeans undertook the conversion of the Japanese, between the second half of the 16th century and the first part of the following. The purpose is to highlight the difficulties of translation between very distant and different cultures, and the strategies that were devised in order to overcome the problems.

Summary   1 Introduction. – 2 The Word for God. – 3 Anima. – 4 Other Keywords of Christianity. – 5 Considerations and Concluding Remarks.

Keywords   Christian lexicon. Translation. Medieval Japan. Jesuit missionaries. Kirishitanban.

1   Introduction

The cultural exchanges that took place during the first meeting between the European missionaries and the Japanese around the second half of the sixteenth century and the first part of the following, among many difficulties and mutual misunderstandings, find an interesting issue in the linguistic activity that intensively engaged some of the Jesuits missionaries in Japan.

Although the declared purpose of this activity, which led to the publication of dictionaries, vocabularies and grammars, was *ajuda para aprender esta lingoa*, that is 'to provide materials for language learning' by the confrères who were to preach the Gospel, as written in the Introduction of *Nippō jisho*; in fact, the amount and the care employed testify to us, modern people, an intention that goes well beyond the didactic intent. The Europeans, bearers of the humanistic and Renaissance culture, brought to Japan the idea that language is not only a tool for communication, but also the vehicle of cultural transmission par excellence. In fact, the study of language in the European tradition of that time had become a subject of study of great interest, as is evident in the remarkable production in this field, which saw the first studies of grammar and vocabulary of both classical and vernacular languages.

Once in Japan, the missionaries began, from the early nineties of the sixteenth century, to devote themselves to translation, press activities, and the production of texts for the study of Japanese language, thanks above all to the enthusiasm of the Visitor Alessandro Valignano, the superior of the mission.

Some important dictionaries have been handed down to us besides the grammars of João Rodrigues (1561-1633) and Diego Collado (late 16th c.-early 17th c.):

1. *Dictionarium Latinum Lusitanicum, ac Iaponicum*, Amacusa, 1595 (in Latin letters). (From now on *Rahonichi*).[1]
2. *Vocabulario da lingoa de Iapam com a declaração en portugues*, Nagasaki, 1603-04 (in Latin letters) (From now on *Nippō jisho*).[2]
3. *Dictionarium sive thesauri linguae japonicae compendium*, Roma, 1632 (in Latin letters) (From now on *Raseinichi*).[3]

They are an important source of information that offers us incredible insights for the understanding of the cultural exchange between Europeans and Japanese that took place at that time, shedding light on the difficulties of mutual understanding, and also showing us the strategies implemented to give an adequate translation of the main terms of Japanese culture in European languages and of the Christian lexicon in Japanese.

We can witness two forms of linguistic and cultural operations: the first to be found in Japanese-to-Portuguese dictionaries, in particular in *Nippō jisho*. It is an attempt to express European culture in Japanese language. This is the mirror of the capacity and level of understanding of Japanese culture achieved by Europeans in the early sixteenth century. In other words, a reading of Japanese culture with the tools of one's own.

The other, which is found in dictionaries from European languages (Latin, Spanish and Portuguese) to Japanese, specifically *Rahonichi* and *Raseinichi*, is, instead, the testimony of the attempt by the Europeans to convey their own culture to the Japanese. The purpose is that of promoting

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1 *Dictionarivm Latino Lvsitanicvm, ac Iaponicvm*, Amacvsa, anno M.D.XCV (羅葡日辞典) (1595). Fukushima Kunimichi (ed.) (1979). *Rahonichi taiyaku jisho. Dictionarivm Latino Lvsitanicvm Ac Iaponicvm*. Tōkyō: Benseisha. Quotations are from this text. Also on Internet at: https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=nnc1.cu05758114;view=1up;seq=1 (2019-01-08).

2 *Vocabulario Da Lingoa De Iapam, con adeclaração em Portugues, feito por Algvns Padres, E Irmaõs da Companhia de Iesv*, Nangasaqui, anno M.D.CIII (日葡辞書) (1603). In printed edition: Tsukimoto Masayuki (ed.) (2013). *Nippo jisho: kirishitanban: karā eiinban. Vocabvlario da lingoa de Iapam: Nagasaqui 1603-4*. Tōkyō: Bensei shuppan. Quotations are from this text.

3 *Dictionarivm sive Thesavri Lingvae Iaponicae Compendivm. Compositum, & Sacrae de Propaganda Fide Congregationi dicatum à Fratre Didaco Collado Ord. Praedicatorum*, Romae anno 1632 (Latin and Spanish). Ōtsuka Mitsunobu (ed.), *Raseinichi jisho. Dictionarium siue thesauri linguæ iaponicæ compendium*. Tōkyō: Benseisha. Quotations are from this text. Also on Internet at: http://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/2513086 (2019-01-08).

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the understanding of European culture among the Japanese.

Here, I deal with the second: the effort that the missionaries exerted to explain or bend the European cultural terminology in the Japanese language. Since, however, the main purpose of the Jesuits was the evangelization of Japan, the presentation of Christian culture was particularly important and delicate, and the greatest efforts were made in this field.

Below, I will present an analysis of some of the most relevant and meaningful terms of Christianity translated into Japanese: this will help to understand the strategies that were employed to facilitate the process of cultural exchange, and the strategies implemented in order to avoid easy and sometimes unavoidable misunderstandings.

The sources that I use for this purpose are, in addition to the two dictionaries mentioned above, that is *Rahonichi*, *Raseinichi*, also some other texts in which the selected terminology occurs. This allows me to observe different approaches and strategies of translation, conditioned by contingent factors and even by an evolution that took place over time.

It goes without saying that the limits of this essay force me to leave out many words which are also interesting and meaningful. This essay is intended as an initial approach to the subject that I have chosen to deal with.

2 The Word for God

I want to begin with the most important and perhaps one of the most difficult words to be translated in Japanese: the word 'God'.

It is a well-known story that when Xavier[4] disembarked in Kyūshū in 1549, Anjirō,[5] who accompanied him to Japan, taught Xavier the word Dainichi (大日), that is the name of one of the Buddhas, that of the Shingon sect, to which Anjirō belonged. In the beginning, Xavier taking the word Dainichi for 'God', used it in his preaching. When, in the April of 1551, he went to Yamaguchi and there he used it, he was very welcome by the Shingon monks, however this fact made him suspicious. After realising the misunderstanding, he preferred to use the Latin word Deus.[6]

Soon some of the missionaries became aware that the use of Buddhist words involved the risk of letting the Japanese think that Christianity could be assimilated to a Buddhist sect. Balthasar Gago (1520-1583), a Portu-

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[4] Saint Francis Xavier, S.J. (1506-1552), a Spanish Catholic missionary, co-founder of the Society of Jesus.

[5] Anjirō or Yajirō, a Japanese who after committing a murder in Japan fled to Portuguese Malacca where he met Francis Xavier and returned to Japan with him as an interpreter.

[6] Ikuo Higashibaba, Christianity in Early Modern Japan: Kirishitan Belief and Practice, Brill, 2001, 9-11.

guese missionary, was the first to present the problem of the translation of the Christian lexicon into Japanese.

In a letter of 23 September 1555,[7] he writes:

These Japanese have some words with which we have been preaching the truth for a long time, which they use in their sects, that they change because they want to treat the truth with words of deception and lies, giving them a misleading meaning.

In this way, to all the words that we teach them as ours to indicate new things for them – since we need new words – and that they recognize as prejudicial to them, they give a different meaning in respect to what we mean.

Thus, for example, for Cross, in their language they say Iumogi (*ju-monji* 十文字),[8] which is their letter in the form of a cross which means 'ten', and therefore to the careless people it seems that the Cross and their letter is the same thing.

Therefore, at every turn, every word must be explained, or we must change the word, and there are more than fifty of these words that can do damage, but by specifying the meaning of their words and that of ours, we see the difference that exists, and we see that their words are unsuitable for explaining the things of God, and this can lead to a better understanding. I say this so that those who are among the pagans listen well to the explanations and weigh well the words.

The problem of translating the Christian lexicon into Japanese was very important and engaged the missionaries in Japan for a long time.[9] Let us consider, for example, the problematic phonetic similarity between Deus, a word that was also used, and Japanese *daiuso* (大 嘘), which means 'big lie'. A solution was to use the term *aruji* (主),[10] or rather its honorary form *on-aruji* that literally means 'lord', to indicate the Lord, although in the *Nippō jisho* we find for *aruji* simply: "Sehnor, ou sehnora, ou dono[11] da

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[7] 'Carta do padre Baltazar Gago', Hirado, 23 settembre 1555, in *Cartas que los Padres y Hermanos de la Compañia de Iesus, que andan en los Reynos de Iapon escriuieron a los de la misma Compañia, desde el año del mil y quinientos y quarenta y nueve, hasta el de mil y quinientos y sesenta y uno*. En Alcala, En la Casa de Juan Iñiguez de Lequerica. Año 1575, foglio 116 e 117. The reform of 'dangerous translations' was approved by the Provincial, Father Melchior Nunez, when he visited Japan in the following year. The translation in English is of the Author.

[8] *Iŭmonji*: "Letra que significa dez. Item, figura de cruz" (*Nippō*, 146).

[9] On this topic see: Schurhammer 1929 and Doi Tadao 1974.

[10] It is a synonym of *nushi* (主), 'owner, lord'.

[11] Dono is the Japanese word for 'owner'.

cousa" (Gentleman or lady, or a owner of something) (*Nippō*, 13) without any reference to the Lord God.

Analysing the contemporary dictionaries of that time, we find, instead, terms composed by *ten*天, or 'sky', perhaps to highlight the difference between the Christian God imagined in Heaven, and the Japanese gods or *kami* who live instead in nature, and especially in the uncultivated mountains, or the buddhas, whose physical location is never specified.

On the other hand, 'heaven' 天 had a long philosophical and religious tradition in the Chinese language. To put it in an extremely synthetic way, Confucian thought identifies in the sky a regulating entity of human life and the model of virtue to refer to.

This conception, together with the related words, passed also to Japan where, in consequence, the reference to the 'sky' pointed to a celestial model of perfection and a sort of 'regulator of the life of the universe'. This could lead one to think of a superior, superhuman power, perhaps the generator of life, which could be not so far in meaning from the conception of the Christian God.

In the *Rahonichi* of 1595 under the entry DEUS we find the following translations: *tentŏ* (天道), *tenxu* (天主) *tenson* (天尊), *tentei* (天帝) (*Rahonichi*, 206). In *Raseinichi*, this term is not present. In "Kotoba no yawarage"[12] of *Hidesu no dōshi* (ヒイデスの導師)[13] we find:

- *Tenmei* 天命。デウスのご内証 (*Tenmei*. Secret name for God);
- *Tentei* 天帝。天の帝王 (*Tentei*. King of the heaven);
- *Tentŏ* 天道。デウスの心 (*Tentō*. The heart of god).

And in "Kotoba no yawarage" in *Sanctos no gosagveo no vchi nvqigaqi*:[14]

- *Ten.mei*. Deos. Mandado de Dios.
- *Ten.tei*. Deos.
- *Ten-tŏ*. Idem.

In *Nippō jisho*, we also find the word *tentŏ* (天道): "*tenno michi*, Camiho, ou ordem & prouidencia do ceo. Commummente chamamos ja a Deos por esse nome. Postoque os gentios não parece que atinauão mais que com o primeiro sentido" (Way, or order and providence of the heaven. For the Heathens have never referred to this term except in the first meaning (that

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12 'Kotoba no yawarage' was in general, an appendix to a text that listed the most important and difficult words and their explanation.

13 Obara Satoru (ed.) (1995). *Fides no dōxi, Kirishitan bungaku sōsho*. Kyōbunkan, 382-3. *Fides no dōxi* means 'Introduction to the faith'. Published in Amakusa in 1592.

14 Yamamoto Masako (1976). *Kirishitanban rōmajibon, Kotoba no yawarage shū*. Jōchi daigaku kokubungakukai. *Sanctos no gosagveo no vchi nvqigaqi* means 'Excerpts from the Acts of the Saints'. Published in Kazusa in 1591.

is that of 'way') (*Nippō*, 255).

The same dictionary for *tenxu* (天主) says: "*Tenno nuxi. Senhor do ceo. Palabra dos liuros da igreja*" (Lord of the heaven. Word used in the texts of the church) (*Nippō*, 256), and for *tentei* (天帝): "*Tennomicado. Rey. Item, Deos*" (King, and also God) (*Nippō*, 255). Also the word *tenson* (天尊) is present: "*Palaura que corre na igreja por Deos, ou sehnor do ceo*" (Word largely used in the church for God, or Lord of the heaven) (*Nippō*, 255).

For the entry *Ten* (天) there is: "*Ceo. Item, Nos liuros he o mesmo que tentŏ. Ordem, ou reuolução, & gouerno do ceo, ou o gouernador do ceo*" (Heaven. Also, in the books is used in the same meaning of *tentŏ*. Order, or revolution and government of the heaven, or governor of the heaven). (*Nippō*, 254). There is also the term *tenmei* (天命), a very important word in Chinese culture, which is explained as: "Mandado, ou ordem do ceo, ou de Deos. *Tenmeiuo somuqu*, Quebrar o mandamento de Deos, ou ir contra a vontade de Deos" (Order of the heaven, or of God. *Tenmeiuo somuqu*, Go against the order of God, or against the will of God.) (*Nippō*, 255)

In the *Dictionary Divided for Periods: the Muromachi Period* (from now on *Muromachi Dictionary*)[15] at the entry *tenshu* we find (190): "1. 仏教語。諸天の主。特に須彌山頂に在る帝釈天をいう。2. キリシタンで、Deus の訳語" (1. Buddhist term. Lord of all heavens. In particular, it is referred to Taishakuten[16] who abides on mount Sumeru. 2. In Christianity, it is the word for God).

In the same dictionary for *tentei* there is (197): "1. 天ヲ主宰する神。天の王者。特に、仏教では帝釈天、キリスト教では、DEUS をいう" (The god who governs the heaven. The king of the heaven. Especially in Buddhism Taishakuten. In Christianity is God). And for *tenson* (194) there is: "キリシタンで、DEUS の称" (In Christianity, it is the name for God). *Tentō* is not present.

In the various *kirishitanban*[17] we often find translations of the word God that do not coincide with those found in the Dictionaries mentioned above. For example, in *Dochiriina Kirishitan* of the year 1591, published in Amakusa,[18] *deus* (written in *hiragana* でうす) is used, or it is expressed with graphic symbols, and Lord is translated with *von aruji*, i.e. *on aruji* transcribed according to the pronunciation of the time. Although the word *deus* is widely used in the texts of popularization of Christian doctrine,

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15 *Muromachi jidai hen*. Vol. 2 of *Jidaibetsu kokugo daijiten*. Tokyo: Sanseidō, 1989.

16 Originally an Indian deity, Indra. In China and Japan it becomes a protector of Buddhism and defends both deities and humans against all that is evil.

17 Kirishitanban is a general term for the texts produced in Japan by the Christian missionaries in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

18 Ebisawa Arimichi et al. (eds) (1970). *Kirishitansho haiyasho*. Vol. 25 of *Nihon Shisō Taikei*. Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 13-81.

surprisingly it does not appear in the dictionaries of the time.

The words related to Christianity that we find in the texts for the dissemination of the Christian faith seem to be less subject to possible misunderstandings if compared with those present in the dictionaries, and therefore very often they are transliterations of original words of the European languages. In general, the translations in the dictionaries have rather a more intellectual and literary character, and are often translations, neologisms or loan words from the Sino-Japanese lexicon. In a sense, we could consider them as 'official translations' that possess less capacity to avoid misunderstandings.

3 Anima

Let us now turn the attention to another fundamental term of the Christian lexicon: soul (in Latin *anima*). In *Rahonichi* we find:

> Anima, ae. Lus. Alma. Iap. *Vjŏ* (有情), *fij*ŏ (非情) *no meicon* (命根) *to naru mono*. – Item, Espirito, vida: *inochi* (命), *xinmi*ŏ (身命). (*Rahonichi*, 47)

> That which serves as a basis for the life of 'animate beings' (*vjŏ*) and of 'inanimate beings' (*fij*ŏ). Life (*inochi*), life of the body (*xinmi*ŏ).[19]

In *Raseinichi*:

> Anima sensitiva, alma sensitiva,[20] y como espiritus vitales, *tamàxi*. (*Raseinichi*, 10)

> Sensitive soul, and like a vital spirit, *tamashii*.

Tamashii according to the *Muromachi Dictionary* is in English translation "that which is believed to reside in the body of living beings and man and that governs their life and spirit".[21]

While in *Rahonichi* the aspect linked to vital functions is preferred, and the primary definition is given through a paraphrase, in *Raseinichi* the less elaborated translation refers to the spiritual aspect.

Thus, with "Anima" they meant what sustains the life of beings, and also the 'spiritual' principle of man, according to what was current in contem-

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19 All English translations were made by the Author.

20 Aristotle distinguishes three kinds of souls: nutritive soul, sensitive soul and rational soul.

21 *Muromachi jidai hen*. Vol. 2 of *Jidaibetsu kokugo daijiten*. Tokyo: Sanseidō, 1989, 1083-4..

porary European culture. Surprisingly, the Christian conception that the soul is created by God, is immortal and is responsible for life after death is not found in the dictionaries. However, it is to be found in *Dochirina Kirishitan*[22] where we find:

Ninguen no cotouoba nanito funbet xerareqeruzo?
Ninguenua xiqixin bakari ni arazu, fatçuru coto naqi ANIMA uo motçu nari. Cono ANIMA ua xiqixin ni inochi uo ataye, tatoi xiqixin ua tçuchi faini naru to yŭtomo cono ANIMA ua vouaru cono naxi: tada jen aku ni xitagatte goxŏ no curacu ni azzucaru mono nari. (10-11)

Q   'How can a human being distinguish (good from evil)?'
A   'The human being is not only composed of the physical body. He always has a SOUL. This SOUL gives life to the physical body, and for example, although the physical body returns (after death) to be earth and ashes, this SOUL has no end. Following good and evil sets the premises for the sufferings or bliss of life after death.'

And

… varera ga ANIMA ua tada ittai nite arinagara, mitçuno xeicon ari: fitoçuniua Memoria tote voboyetaru cotouo vomoi idasu xei, futaçuniua Entendimento tote jenacuuo vaqimaye funbet suru xei, mitçuniua Vontade tote yoqito vomô cotouo nozomi, axiqito vomô cotouo qirai monouo aisuru xei. Cacuno gotocu ANIMA ua ittai narito iyedomo mitçuno xei Potentia aru gotocu. (85-7)

… although the SOUL is one, it has three spiritual forces: the first is MEMORIA (memory) the ability to remember things, the second is EN-TENDIMENTO (judgment) the ability to distinguish good from evil, the third is the VONTADE (will) which is the ability to tend to think about what is believed to be good and to despise the thought of what is bad. In this way, the SOUL though is only one, has three POTENTIA (powers).

22   Kojima Yukie (1966). *Kōhon, Dochirina kirishitan*. Fukui: Fukui-Kokugogaku-Gurūpu, 10-11, 85-7.

4 Other Keywords of Christianity

In *Rahonichi* we find the following translations:

The Gospel (Euangelum): *Qiss*ŏ, and in *Raseinichi*: *Qiss*ō, *von minori*.[23] The word *qiss*ŏ (today *kissō*) is interesting: in Japanese it is written 吉左右 and is formed by three characters meaning: 1. 'good luck' (吉), 'left' (左), 'right' (右). In other words: 'Good luck (news) left and right (everywhere)'. Presently this word means 'good news', 'happy news', and is a synonym of *kippō* 吉報. As a matter of fact, *kissō* is the literal translation of *Evangelium* that comes from Greek and means *eu-* 'good', 'felicitous', and *aggelion* for 'news': the Gospel is the 'good news' of Jesus coming on the earth and bringing the message of salvation to men. One wonders if the Japanese could understand correctly the meaning of this translation…

The Church (Ecclesia) is: "1. *Ixxecaini fanyei xitaru Christãono cotouo yŭ*" (It is said Christianity that which flourish all over the world); "2. *tera*" (Buddhist temple).

Grace (Gratia) is: "*Vôx*ŏ, 2.a.*von ataye*, *gouon*". *Vôx*ŏ is 応召 (today *ōshō*) that means 'answer to a call' (of a prayer, or of faith), while *von ataye* is: *von* (honorific prefix) plus 与え (today *atae*), that is 'something given'; *gouon*: *gou* (honorific prefix) plus *on* 恩, that is 'benefit', 'gratitude'. In any case the translation is based on the idea of 'receiving a favour, or a bless'.

Prayer (Oratio) is: "*Monogatari, cotoba, dangui, cotouari. Qinen, tanomi, negai*". *Monogatari* (物語) is 'tale, story, narration'; *cotoba* (言葉) 'words'; *dangui* (談義) 'sermon, preaching'; *cotouari* (断り) 'warning'; *Qinen* (祈念) 'prayer'; *tanomi* (頼み) 'request'; *negai* (願い)'request', 'wish'.

Conscience (Conscientia) is: "*Vaga xosano yoxi axiuo chiyeno ficari vomotte togamuru tocorono xosauo yŭ*" (it is called the behaviour that alerts us on what is good and bad in our actions, based on of the light of intelligence).

Devil (diabolus) is: "*Tengu, tenma*". *Tengu* (天狗) (long-nosed goblin) is popular in Japanese tales; *tenma* (天魔), 'evil spirit, demon'. Both terms are of Buddhist origin.

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23 *Von minori* means: 'fruit' in honorary form.

Paradise (Paradisus) is: " *Sono. – qedamonono voro, vel vuono iqesu. –Deus Adamuo voqitamaixi yorocobi iŭmanno tocoro*". *Sono* is 園, a general term for 'garden'. *Qedamonono voro, vel vuono iqesu*: corral where animals are kept, or ponds where fish are bred. *Deus Adamuo voqitamaixi yorocobi iŭmanno tocoro*: the place full of pleasure where God placed Adam.

Hell (Infernus) is: "*Gigocu*", that is *jigoku* 地獄, which is also a Buddhist term for the hell.

For **Sin** there are two entries:
1. **Peccatum**: "*Toga, ayamari*". *Toga* (咎) is 'error', 'mistake', 'fault', and *ayamari* (誤り) is a synonym.
2. **Peccatus**: "*Tano tçumauo vocasu coto uo yŭ. Togauo vocasu, vel ayamaru*". In this case, a specific kind of sin is presented in the sentence *tano tçumauo vocasu, which means*, 'have intercourse with the wife of somebody else', that is the sin of adultery. The other two definitions are the same as for no. 1.

Cross (Crux) is: "*Varerauo xeme curuximuru fodono coto*" (That which is used in order to persecute and make us suffer).

Piety (Pietas) is: "*Tenxu (Deus), coqiŏ, voyani taysuru (taisuru) vyamai. – voya cŏco (cŏcŏ), vel xinrui, coqiŏuo vomô taixet*" (Respect and devotion towards God, the fatherland and the parents. Devotion towards our parents, or love for the relatives and the fatherland).

Love (Amor) is: "*Taixet* (大切), *vomoi* (思い)". Interestingly, the word for 'love' is not translated with common words like *ai* (愛), *koi* (恋), *suki* (好き), but with *taixet* (today *taisetsu*) whose meaning is 'important', or 'urgent'. In other words, something that is pressing and well present in our mind. Probably this translation is due to the fact that the words for 'love' were not suited to express a lofty love, addressed to God, and the Jesuits preferred to use a 'special' word, with an implicit meaning for 'love'.

5 Considerations and Concluding Remarks

Below, some considerations related to the translations seen above:
1. Translations rarely correspond to modern ones.
2. More generic terms are used than those used nowadays and more often they are common terms of everyday language. Besides, many *wago* are present, while today there are many more *kango* words.

3. Common words are often used, while modern nomenclature tend to use almost exclusively a very technical terminology with words often uncommon in everyday language.
4. Limited use of Buddhist lexicon.
5. Wide use of paraphrases.
6. Use of multiple synonyms for the same Latin term, perhaps due to the desire to convey the correct meaning.
7. Often translation in *Rahonichi* and *Raseinichi* do not correspond.
8. Generally, the translations present in *Raseinichi* are less accurate. *Rahonichi* has a more extended and more descriptive lexicon.
9. Sometimes translations have a very general character.
10. Lastly, it is well evident that cultural differences are responsible for ambiguous translations.

As for the translation strategies, we can summarise them in the following four variants:
1. Phonetic transcription of Western words by means of Japanese *kana* (*Dochiriina Kirishitan*).
2. Translation by the most similar indigenous term (*Raseinichi*, *Rahonichi*).
3. Paraphrase (*Raseinichi*, *Rahonichi*).
4. Use of a semantic shift (love → *taixet*).

As regards the first type, there are very few phonetic transcriptions of Western words in the dictionaries, while we find a large quantity of them in many *kirishitanban* where the strategy of maintaining Latin terminology is very widespread. In particular, we find really many of them in *Dochiriina Kirishitan*, which is almost a sort of presentation of the fundamental Christian vocabulary. In this case, probably the translators preferred to use Latin words, rather than using terms of Buddhism, in order not to generate erroneous understandings. I think that the dictionaries literally embarked on the task of 'translating' the Christian lexicon into Japanese, while the *kirishitanban* had among their aims that of familiarising the Japanese with the original terminology of Christianity.

The second type concerns the use of similar indigenous terms, of which we find considerable quantity. They are often terms of the common language, such as *toga*, *ayamari* for sin, or *monogatari*, *cotoba*, *dangui*, *cotouari* for prayer and so on. This strategy has the advantage of being easily understandable for ordinary people, much more than abstruse technical terms. This type of vocabulary, very often uses *wago* words. However, also Buddhist terms are not rare: i.e. *tengu*, *tenma* for devil.

The third type regards paraphrases[24] of which there are quite a lot.

Generally, the paraphrase is used when there is no single word suitable in Japanese and therefore a sort of explanation is considered necessary. In some cases, to the paraphrase, a translation with a Japanese word follows to better define or delimit the concept.

The fourth type is a translation that use particular strategies, such as *taixet* (大切) for love.[25] In such cases, the difficulty of expressing the Christian concept of emotional sentiment towards God and neighbour is evident.

In conclusion, during the so-called Japanese 'Christian century', when European missionaries endeavoured to convert the Japanese to Christianity, they were confronted with the huge task of translating technical terms of Christianity into Japanese language. Two very different cultures came for the first time in contact and serious problems of understanding were to be solved. The Jesuits, who were learned people with a high level of instruction, tried to overcome the linguistic impasse by implementing sophisticated translation strategies.

Whether they were successful or not in this enterprise, to which they devoted so much effort and great competence, is a question that is debated today. In any case, their efforts remain an interesting example of a translatological approach to distant cultures: they can teach us which were and still are the problems and the unavoidable difficulties inherent in cultural exchanges.

My essay is limited to the analysis of only a few words of a specialised lexicon, but through these few examples it wants to highlight some of the concrete problems that can arise when it comes to cultural exchanges, a field of study that today is at the centre of the debate on transcultural studies.

24 With 'paraphrase' here I mean the formulation of a concept through an explanatory sentence.

25 By the way, the modern term for love *ai* 愛 translates caritas.

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This volume offers an overview on a variety of intertextual, interdiscursive and cross-cultural practices in the field of translation between Asian and European languages. From a twelth-century Persian poet to a Chinese female novelist of the last century, from the 'cultural translation' of Christian texts carried out in pre-modern Japan and modern China, up to the making of the modern Chinese theory of translation based on its encounter with Western literature, the authors of this volume provide many valuable insights, ensuring a deeper comprehension of the evolving relations between cultures and of the tools adopted by both Asian and European translators on each particular occasion.

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