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An Analysis of the Concept of "Science Fiction in the Late Qing Dynasty"[1]

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Abstract:

In the late Qing Dynasty, the respect for "science" and the emphasis on "fiction" spawned the translation and introduction of foreign science fiction works and the birth of local science fiction in China, but there was no such thing as "science fantasy" (*kexue huanxiang*) at the time. At present, there are differences regarding the appropriate terminology to refer to these works. This paper will make a brief review and analysis of the existing terminology strategies, sort out the use of labels such as "science fiction (*kexue xiaoshuo*)," "ideal fiction (*lixiang xiaoshuo*)," "philosophical fiction (*zheli xiaoshuo*)," and "political fiction (*zhengzhi xiaoshuo*)" by the intellectual elites in the late Qing Dynasty, and, lastly, analyze the channels of their mutual conversion, and the tension between "science" and "fantasy," so as to present the historical logic of the concept of "science fiction in the late Qing Dynasty."

Keywords: late Qing Dynasty, science fantasy, science fiction, historical logic

1 The Chinese version of this paper was published in the eighth issue of the *Modern Chinese Literature Studies* in 2017.

1. Differences in Terminology

In the late nineteenth century, China fell into an unprecedented national crisis. To save the nation and to survive, intellectual elites made great efforts to study Western civilizations. As Western learning spread to the East, advanced Western technology penetrated people's daily lives, reshaping our thinking and our image of the cosmos. At the same time, "fiction," which had been at the bottom of the literary hierarchy for thousands of years, began to receive attention because of its broad appeal and was regarded as a sharp weapon of enlightenment by cultural pioneers. The new fantasy activated by modern intellectuals encountered fiction, giving rise to several works featuring elements of science fiction. However, there was no Chinese word for "science fantasy" at that time, only "science fiction," "ideal fiction" and other concepts with a high degree of relevance. Later researchers have adopted different strategies to define these works.

At present, the term "late Qing science-fantasy" (*wan Qing kehuan*) is popular and common. If a reasonable definition for this term can be given, works can be selected with an open attitude, without becoming entangled in the debate regarding the name and its reality. The problem is that the concept of science fantasy itself is difficult to define. Which theorist's viewpoint should researchers adopt as the standard for defining late Qing fiction? Where does its legitimacy come from? If there was science fiction in the late Qing Dynasty, would there have also been science fiction in the Ming and Song Dynasties? When faced with specific works, critics may sometimes be hesitant to say so. Taking *The Future of New China* (*Xin Zhongguo weilaiji*, 1902) as an example, the author Liang Qichao called it "political fiction" (*zhengzhi xiaoshuo*), and though there is no exploration of science and technology in the story, it was the first to introduce the notion of the future perspective as an aspect of linear temporality into Chinese fiction. It begins with a prosperous scene 60 years later, imbued with a Utopian sensibility, so can it be classified as late Qing Dynasty science fiction? In this regard, some individual theorists also have offered divergent opinions: Wu Yan called it "future fiction" in *The Outline of Science Fiction Literature* (2011), while in his *Six Lectures on Science Fiction* (2013), he recognized it as a work of "science fiction with political science as its theme, imagining China's prospective political development and political future" (158).

The second strategy is to use the existing works of science fiction to refer to the object of research. This seems to be closer to the true face of history, and *kexue xiaoshuo* can also be regarded as a literal translation of the English term "science fiction". It could therefore potentially encompass science fantasy fiction (*kexue huanxiang xiaoshuo*). But what is science fiction? Is it based on the label attached

to the work at that time? Researchers are still faced with the problem of screening. In *Study of the Forest of Fiction Society (Xiaoshuolin she yanjiu)*, Luan Weiping notes how casually people in the late Qing Dynasty labeled fiction, arguing, "The division of science fiction is even more confusing. It has been classified into many types, such as ideal fiction, adventure fiction, craft and industrial fiction, comic fiction and so on." Her definition of science fiction must include both science and fantasy. "Popular science articles that simply propagate scientific principles or have simple dialogue are not science fiction; pure fantasy stories without any scientific elements are not science fiction either" (205-206). However, science fiction thus redefined is no longer substantially different from science fantasy fiction as understood today.

Lin Jianqun wrote a master's thesis entitled *The Study of Science Fiction* [*kehuan xiaoshuo*] *in the Late Qing Dynasty (1904-1911)*, and his doctoral dissertation was titled *Before Mr. Science Came — The Genealogy of Science Fiction* [*kexue xiaoshuo*] in *the Late Qing Dynasty*. The title adjustment between two works reflects Lin's attempt to respect the authors' original intent. However, how do we explain the existence of such "political fiction" as *The Future of New China,* which appears in the appendix of "The Chronological Catalogue of Science Fiction in the Late Qing and Early Republic of China (1851-1919)" of the latter (J. Lin 16-22)?

Obviously, complete compliance with terminologies used at that time does not reduce the theoretical difficulties. Thus, there is a third strategy, which is to create a different name. David Der-wei Wang's *Repressed Modernities of Late Qing Fiction, 1849-1911* is well known for its study of science fantasy (translated as *kehuan qitan*) in the late Qing Dynasty. The Chinese translation of this book regards the concept of science fantasy differently from science fiction, thus emphasizing the mixed characteristics of types by the interweaving of traditional gods and demons with modern technology. This, of course, highlights the self-contradiction between the narrative purpose (promoting science) and the effect (talking about mystery) of the work, but is insufficient to highlight the writers' original narrative intention (the effort to promote science). More importantly, this concept still implies a set of presuppositions regarding what science fiction is, based on the standard of science fiction that has been popular in English since the 1930s to evaluate Chinese writing practices in the 1900s. It would be a misplaced impression to conclude that science fiction is not "good enough."[2]

2 Some scholars have adopted the concept of "future fiction." The term, however, did not appear in the late Qing Dynasty either, and it was not rigorous in academic theory. See Zhao Yiheng. "Future Fiction in Twentieth-Century China." *Twenty-First Century*, December 1999. Zhao Yiheng. "Future Fiction in China." *Huacheng,* No.1, 2000.

In short, none of these strategies offer an infallible methodology. Therefore, in addition to analyzing the relationship between imagination and science in fiction during the late Qing Dynasty, it is necessary to sort out the specific use of several related fiction labels at that time to present the germination and generation logic of scientific fantasy fiction in modern China.

2. Association of Labels

In the turbulent times of the late Qing Dynasty, in an effort to educate the ignorant people to become qualified modern citizens, intellectual elites began to emphasize the value of fiction, believing that works of fiction were an important driving force for development of European, American, and Japanese civilization (Chen 54-70). In 1902, Liang Qichao founded *Xin Xiaoshuo* and launched a "revolution in the field of fiction," claiming that fiction has "magic power," and that morality, religion, politics, customs, skills, personality, and so on are all subject to its influence. Liang argued, "To renew the people of a nation, the traditional literature of that nation must first be renewed" (1902). This statement quickly aroused strong responses and was accompanied by a boom in translation and creation, as well as the birth of many fiction labels: political fiction, ideal fiction, philosophical fiction, detective fiction, historical fiction, chivalric fiction, constitutional fiction, nihilistic fiction, love fiction, and so on. Many of the titles reflect the expectation of the refinement of fiction's social function. Hence the expression that "one kind of fiction has one purpose, which can be closely connected to the political system and people's will" (Qiu 47-48). Among them, new types with local scarcity are especially recommended: "If you read Western political fiction, you can understand political principles; if you read science fiction, you can explore the laws of things; if you read the detective fiction, you can aim at the local customs of the Westerners and their treacherous changes of intentions, which is beyond our nation's ability. Therefore, while reading Chinese fiction can just be a pastime; reading western fiction will be of great help to knowledge" (Sun 710).

However, a given work will often be multi-faceted, so it is difficult to limit oneself to a single label. Therefore, while the scope of works referred to by various fiction labels overlaps, they cannot completely replace each other. Some of them, such as "science fiction," "philosophical fiction," "political fiction" and "ideal fiction" are closely related, and the meaning of "science fantasy" is born of them.

"Political fiction" is the earliest label of new fiction in the late Qing Dynasty. After the Wuxu Coup (1898), Liang Qichao, who lived in exile in Japan, founded *Qingyi Daily* in Yokohama and wrote an article in it praising political

fiction: "at the beginning of the revolutions in European countries in the past, scholars and men of noble ideals often expressed their experiences and political opinions in their fiction…whenever a book comes out, the debate of the whole nation changes." The same is true in Japan: "a man who writes a book is a great politician of the time. He assigned his political views to the characters in the book, so we cannot regard the book merely as fiction" (680-681, 47) .

It is apparent that those with foresight aimed to use political fiction to motivate the benighted masses. It took on the form of fiction but in fact contained great truth, so he valued it most. After the suspension of *Qingyi Daily*, Liang Qichao founded the *Xinmin Congbao* in 1902. Issue fourteen of this newspaper advertised several types of forthcoming fiction publications in *Xin Xiaoshuo*. One of them was "philosophical science fiction," whose purpose was "to invent philosophy and study the nature of things through fiction." This category included Plato's *Republic*, Moore's *Utopia*, Fumio Yano's *New Society*, Elieu's *The Future of the World,* and Jules Verne's *Around the Moon*, *Five Weeks in a Balloon*, and *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*.[3] Here, political utopia and science fiction are regarded as the same, foreshadowing the tangle of the labels of the subsequent fiction.

By the 17th issue of *Xinmin Congbao*, philosophical fiction and science fiction were listed independently, respectively corresponding to the French astronomer Nicolas Camille Flammarion's work of science fiction, *The End of the World* and Jules Verne's *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*.[4] As far as I can see, this is the first time that the word "science fiction" appears independently in Chinese. However, at the time, because readers would not have seen the original text of the work, it would have been difficult for them to know exactly what science fiction was. The first issue of *Xin Xiaoshuo*, published soon after, maintained this correspondence. With Jules Verne, science fiction was officially introduced to Chinese readers, appearing at the same time with *The Future of New China*, a political work of fiction created by Liang Qichao to express his political opinions. In 1903, in the twenty-seventh issue of *Xinmin Congbao*, *The New Society*, which had been classified as a work of philosophical science fiction in the fourteenth issue, was relabeled as a work of ideal fiction named *Elysium*. This is probably the earliest appearance of ideal fiction. At this point, several major labels associated with science fiction have all appeared.

It seems that in the minds of Liang Qichao as well as others, "philosophy," "science," "politics" and "ideal" did not have strict functional distinctions as labels

3 "The Only Literary Newspaper in China *Xin Xiaoshuo*." *Xinmin Series*, No.14, 1902.

4 "The Only Literary Newspaper in China *Xin Xiaoshuo* The Forecast of the No.1 Principal Point." *Xinmin Series*, No. 17, 1902.

for fiction. Instead, they were interlinked with each other and served the project of renewing the people. In other words, it is this ultimate purpose that made the quiet exchange of labels possible.

Firstly, both political fiction and ideal fiction are derived from dissatisfaction with reality. The former inevitably contains ideal color and future orientation (such as *The Future of New China*), while the latter often contains political content as well, such as the ideal fiction of *Elysium*. It can also be regarded as an expression of political opinions that "The intention to break down all systems in the old society, and to adopt the law of pantisocracy [equal government by all] with magnificent and well-organized ideas."[5] Another example is Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, which was labeled as a work of "political fiction" when it was published in *Illustrated Fiction (Xiuxiang Xiaoshuo)* while also labeled as "ideal fiction" when published by the Commercial Press.

Secondly, ideal fiction is closely related to science fiction. It should be noted that ideal fiction does not necessarily depict an ideal world. Both H.G. Wells' *The War of the Worlds* and Shunrō Oshikawa's *The World After a Thousand Years* translated by Bao Tianxiao have been described as ideal fiction," with the former describing an alien invasion, and the latter "using noble ideals to describe the degradation of a miserable society, so as to see the theme of a bright world…It contains all the profoundness of physics, psychology and ethics, as well as the concepts of the religious social world" (Chen 775,1305).[6] Neither set of circumstances would be described as ideal. Therefore, the ideal fiction of that time had roughly two meanings: writing motivated by a noble ideal or a method of writing based theories and the derivation of imagination. The second meaning hews very close to today's science fantasy, because at that time, a variety of principles and theories began to undergo the baptism of science. Meanwhile, future ideal worlds without science are not convincing. Ideal fiction was therefore often confused with science fiction. The science fiction work *Sleepwalking in the 21st Century* (Pieter Harting's, *AD 2070*) was recommended on the following basis:

> In China, what we call the golden age is in the past, while in the West, the most prosperous world is in the future. Because the past is no longer visible, so ambition is weak; the future is keenly awaited, so hope is

5 "The Ideal Fiction *Elysium*." *Xinmin Series*, No. 27.

6 In 1904, the second issue of *The Twentieth Century Stage* made an advertisement for *The World After the Millennium,* as well as the Shenzhou Daily on August 11, 1907.

stronger. This is the judgment of the strength of China and the West.[7]

However, by examining the past and looking at the present, what can we know about the future? Though there are things unknowable, there are theories knowable. To predict what we don't know, based on what we know, is not to rely on illusion and fantasy (Chen 582, 619).

When evolutionary theory became axiomatic, the expectation of the ideal world shifted from a fascination with the past to a vision of the future, and books like *The Future of New China* appeared. As for the method of speculating about the future, of course, we can only depend on "science." It can be said that had Liang Qichao completed *The Story of the Future*, the book would not eventually become science fiction. As the "Master of the Bihe House" said in *The New Era* (1908):

> The purpose of writing fiction is to write an ideal work of fiction for the sake of the future world, instead of the past and the present. Because in the future world, it is science that must be developed to the extreme. Thus, the material of this fiction is based on science. As a reader, you should know that the writer of this fiction is not a science expert, and this fiction is not a scientific handout. Although on the surface, it is a work of science fiction. In the purpose of expounding the author's ideas, you read this book and will naturally understand (Bihe 438).

Thirdly, science fiction and philosophical fiction were originally differentiated from philosophical science fiction (*zheli kehuan xiaoshuo*). Thus, naturally, they are closely related. In his work of philosophical fiction *Diary at the End of the World*, Liang Qichao found the connection between "the most accurate theory in science and the noblest thought in philosophy, that is the connection between science (evolutionary theory) and philosophy (Mahayana Buddhism) (Jia 50-53). Ding Yi also believes that "philosophical fiction and science fiction commune and relate to each other: if science is clear, philosophy will be clear; if there is much science fiction, there is more philosophical fiction" (170).

Fourthly, science fiction and political fiction are also related. Deng Yuyi believes that political fiction is a subcategory of science fiction: "In science fiction, science covers a wide range of subjects, but topics such as politics become their own category. The rest is more science to explore the truths and principles" (1903).

7 "New Translations of Various Books" advertisement in *Sleepwalking in the 21st Century. Xinmin Series*, No. 30, 1903.

Others hoped that Verne's work of science fiction *Iron World* (*Les Cinq Cents Millons de la Bégum)* could function as a direct call to political mobilization: "As the kind of person who tortures me and kills me without feeling pain, what is the purpose of imitating false foreigners who help evil? Are we Chinese not yet dead at heart? We should read more urgently and diligently to motivate ourselves to fight for the future" (Chen 620, 639).[8]

What's more, science is the way to dispel superstition and reshape national ideals, which should be part of the political agenda. According to an advertisement for *A Trip to the Moon*, "those Chinese people who refuse to develop and fantasize about new ideas have no sense of science in their minds. This book is a work of science fiction, dedicated to stimulating the innovative ideals of people" (Chen 670). In 1906, the article "On [how] the Advancement of Science Can Eliminate the Absurdity of Old Fiction" made it clearer:

> Thought is like light. Countless rays of light regulated by a condenser, will converge at one point; if it is carried by poor quality, it will be scattered and have no destination. Science is the condenser of thoughts, following common laws and clearing definitions and boundaries. With sincerity, profound knowledge can be opened. Otherwise, irregular fallacies will grow rampant, based on the curiosity of the heart, as described in the old fiction of our country, it is not enough to be a loud laugh for those truth explorers…
>
> …Therefore, if science is not developed, we are finished. And if it is developed, won't all groundless thoughts be easily removed, just like the wind sweeping away bamboo leaves or hot water poured on the snow?
>
> …Now and then, with great advances in science, freedom of thought, and the improvement of fiction writers and their customs, 400 million of our citizens will rejoice in the new China of the 20th century.[9]

In the era of natural selection, the kind of ideals people should embrace became

8 In 1903, Bao Tianxiao, at the beginning of the book *The Iron World* by Shanghai Civilization Publishing House, wrote "the wordiness after translation." Advertisement of "Civilization Book Company's Special New Book Publication" in *The Home and Abroad Daily*, October 10, 1903.

9 "On the Advancement of Science Can Eliminate the Absurdity of Old Fiction." *The New World Fiction Society*, No. 2, 1906.

a crucial political issue. Traditional Chinese fiction also had ideals, but they were often absurd, telling stories of ghosts and gods to poison people's minds. Now, they needed to be improved by science to turn harmful delusions into useful inventions, to turn Ne Zha's *Wind Fire Wheel* into a light balloon in the real world. This argument not only resonated at that time,[10] but also received constant responses in later generations. In fact, the entanglement and conflict between science and fantasy in fiction constitutes the core issue of the development of Chinese science fiction in the 20th century. It is not necessary to expand on this, but take the definition appearing in the *Encyclopedia of China* (1986) as an example: "Science fiction…What it describes is fantasy, not reality; the fantasy is scientific, not woolgathering."[11]

It is the recurrence of this core issue that enables us to identify the actual germination of Chinese science fiction in the late Qing Dynasty, when the concept of science fiction had not yet appeared: at that time, the cultural elite, whose actions were political and directed to the future of the nation, began to ask for science/philosophy (*kexue/zheli*) to rearrange ideals/fantasy/dreams (*lixiang/huanxiang/mengxiang*). This is a new phenomenon in the history of Chinese fiction. As a result, the categories of philosophical fiction, science fiction, ideal fiction and political fiction all overlap, and there are channels of communication between them. Among them, the political fiction advocated by Liang Qichao has not received much response in fact (Chen 97), while the first three can be traced back to the earliest philosophical science fiction, and to a certain extent actually share the function of political fiction. Of course, political fiction does not necessarily describe the future, ideal fiction does not necessarily involve science, and science fiction does not necessarily have fantasy elements. None of them is completely equivalent to today's science fiction, but in their intersection and interaction, the local science fiction narrative has broken ground.

3. Internal Contradictions

The innovation of literary concepts can promote the appearance of creative work, but this does not mean the immediate appearance of the actual achievement

10 "Only the fiction of our people, whenever it goes to the exhausted state of thinking, it will bring in the gods and monsters as a turning point. While Westerners are good at using the truth of science to explain…without the illusory and unconvincing words, that's why it is valuable." Sun Baoxuan. *Forgetting Shanlu Dairy* (vol. 2), Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House, 2015, 950. Print.

11 Editorial Board of Encyclopedia of China. *Chinese Literature.* Beijing: China Encyclopedia Publishing House, 1986, 353. Print.

of creation. The same is true of science fiction in the late Qing Dynasty.

On the one hand, supporters of science fiction praise it as an ideal vehicle for popularizing science. This view was particularly common at the beginning of the "revolution in fiction." Take several translations published in 1903 as examples. Bao Tianxiao, the translator of *The Iron World*, believed that "science fiction is the forerunner of the civilized world. There are people who don't like science books, but no one who doesn't like science fiction, which is the quickest way to introduce civilized thoughts" (Chen 620). The translator of *Airship in the Sky*, Hai Tian Du Xiao Zi, declared, "It's unnecessary to force people to study a scientific book. This is what fiction is good at. Today, with the trend of importing Western European knowledge, there are a great number of new books, translations, and printings. If you want to get twice the result with half the effort and popularize it all over the country, please start with science fiction" (Chen 642). Lu Xun in his youth, after translating Verne's *From the Earth to the Moon* and *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, said, "Countless fictional works of our country were talking about love and the past, satirizing the time or describing ghostly phenomena, only science fiction is very rare. Making up for the lack of wisdom and knowledge, is really a focus…Therefore, to overcome the shortcomings of today's translation and to guide the Chinese people, we must start with science fiction" (163-164). As a result, science fiction not only appeared in various kinds of books and journals but also in scientific journals such as *Science World* and *A Spot of Science (Ke Xue Yi Ban)* from time to time, bringing readers new aesthetic experiences and reading interests: "When I read *A Journey Under the Sea* and *The Iron World* with worship, I realized that they have endowed our people with dreams of science and art, from which the great power of Chinese people can be imagined" (Song 1903).

On the other hand, despite the expectation of readers and the example of foreign works, local attempts at science fiction writing were not ideal, leaving few masterpieces. Part of the reason is the literary environment. As Chen Dakang observed, the social function of modern fiction has been overstated, bearing the burden of "improving mass governance." At the same time, the form of newspaper serialization and the considerable reward made the author write in haste, leaving no time for him to think deeply, and calmly deal with the dramatic changes and colorful social life. As a result, although modern fictional works "are quite numerous, it is difficult to find one or two masterpieces among them" (145).

In addition to these general problems, the development of science fiction faced some challenges.

Firstly, due to historical limitations, many writers of fiction in the late Qing

Dynasty were born in a traditional culture and did not receive a systematic and complete modern scientific education. For example, Liang Qichao was a "recommended man" (*juren*) in the Chinese examination system. Xu Nianci and Bao Tianxiao had both attained the rank of "distinguished talent" (*xiucai*) and later learned foreign languages. So, they could both write and translate works. Xu Zhiyan was born in a family of officials and was immersed in family learning when he was young. They have many experiences in education, teaching new theories, and compiling encyclopedias, compendia, and newspapers, which proves that they can have a good understanding of Western learning through individual efforts. However, scientific knowledge was not their area of specialization. Take Wu Jianren, the author of *New Story of the Stone* (1908), as an example. He studied and worked in the Jiangnan Arsenal for fourteen years, engaging in copying, drawing, and dealing with Western knowledge day and night. "In learning and method, it could be said that there was nothing that he did not look through"; however, after reading the Western books translated by the Jiangnan Arsenal, he felt troubled by the incoherency of order, the indeterminacy of definition, and the unclear meaning, "eighty to ninety percent of people are at a loss when opening those books" (Li 12). Although he gained some scientific knowledge, he often knew it without understanding the underlying principles. The rest was left to guesswork: "I wish I could meet a knowledge explorer and keep him around" (Wu 259-260). Under such unfavorable conditions, it is indeed not easy to write works comparable to foreign science fiction.

Secondly, when science fiction is regarded as a tool for the popularization of science, its inherent contradictions will be highlighted. "Ideals" should be recast by science," but can "fiction" be competent for this task? Doubts have been expressed. A chivalrous person thinks, "the nature of literature is suitable for virtuality, not for reality, therefore, science fiction should not occupy the first place in the field of fiction."[12] Lin Chuanjia also asks, "If we study science fiction instead of science, can we benefit the wisdom of the people? Or is it just a matter of ignoring the essence" (148)? The tension between science and fantasy has indeed troubled readers. *The New World Fiction Society* reminds readers that reading new fiction requires certain new knowledge, otherwise readers will mistakenly regard Verne's *Journey to the Center of the Earth* as a story of "underground traveling magic" as seen in the legend *Investiture of the Gods (Fengshen Yanyi)* or mistakenly regard the story of *The Airship* as the magic of flying through the clouds in *Journey*

12 Chivalrous Person. "Series Talk of Fictions." *Xin Xiaoshuo*, No. 1 in its second year.

to the West. Seen through the eyes of old fiction, readers fail to understand many ideas in new fiction. Thus, it becomes a question of whether to acquire knowledge through fiction or to appreciate fiction through knowledge. In fact, when facing the science fiction story *Black Planet*, some readers were at a loss: "the whole story describes a black planet's collision with the sun, which breaks through the outer shell of the sun, with its elements scattering to the earth and burning up. Aside from this, there are no other facts. Scientists may have something to look for, but fiction readers will not understand" (Chen 992). Readers who enjoyed studying mechanical manufacturing, especially aeronautical technology, encountered other problems when faced with Verne's plot to land a man on the moon in a giant shell like a cannonball: "How can people not be suffocated inside those cannonballs? Won't they be killed by heat when shot out of the cannon? Or be killed by the shaking as they travel through space? Because those who are happy to read are really into innovative stories, but it does not promote ideals" (Hong 318).[13]

Verne has been widely praised but is still subject to criticism. Native science fiction is naturally harder to admire. *The New Era* (*Xin jiyuan*) criticizes fiction writers in the past who could only use historical books or events like a blueprint but never wrote about the future. However, the author could only think of two positive examples in translation, making no mention of the works of their own kind in our country (Bihe 1989). When collecting fiction, *Xin Xiaoshuo* Series Press requested national fiction and ideal fiction in both categories of "original works and translations, writing or translating," while its standard for science fiction (*kexue xiaoshuo*) required "exclusively translated foreign works" (Chen 1057).

Readers with insufficient scientific literacy may find it difficult to appreciate, and those with sufficient scientific literacy may find it absurd. The dilemma of science fiction" coupled with its poor performance, makes it hard to convince the public of the genre's popular science function. As a matter of fact, after the literary revolution, doubts regarding the utilitarian view of fiction soon emerged. In 1907, *The Forest of Fiction (Xiaoshuolin)*, which focused on the aesthetic orientation of fiction, commenced publication. Huang Ren, the chief editor, believed that China's national autonomy, educational reform, scientific research, and industrial development were all in a superficial stage, while the output of fiction was

13 However, in his own science fiction drama "Journey of the Electric Ball," Hong Bingwen doesn't talk about the issues either, because if this fiction discusses the method of ball manufacturing and manipulating instead of ball riding, it can be called the study of the electric ball, which is not allowed in the field of fiction. Therefore, to correspond to the purpose of fiction, it is necessary to describe it as ball riding.

expanding rapidly, which would inevitably result in shoddy work. In fact, many works in the name of "improving society" were actually "expressing the pursuit of lovers with music and dance; dressing up demons and ghosts in the masks of magnetoelectric sound and light" (Huang 1907). Later, Zhou Zuoren, who along with his brother, Lu Xun, was obsessed with science fiction, expressed a similar sentiment: the real power of fiction lies in "shifting human feelings." It is wrong to popularize historical knowledge with historical fiction and scientific knowledge with science fiction (113).

However, it is precisely this kind of strange image of the times "dressing up the of demons and ghosts in masks of magnetoelectric sound and light" (Huang 1907) that proves the prestige of science at that time while helping us to see the incipient period of Chinese science fiction.

Out of national pride, some critics in the late Qing Dynasty tried to explain that fictional works such as *Flowers in the Mirror (Jinghua yuan)* and *Quell the Bandits (Dangkou zhi)* fall under the category of science fiction or somewhere close to it.[14] Indeed, in ancient China, there are magnificent myths and legends as well as technical fantasy stories such as Yanshi's creation of human beings, Lu Ban's creation of wooden kites, and Qi Gongguo's flying car. During the Ming Dynasty, Li Yu wrote *Twelve Towers (Shi'erlou),* a story about a talented scholar and a beautiful woman with a plot driven by Western telescopes. Later, in modern times, there was a story named *Quell the Bandits* (1853), which implanted white inventors into Shuibo Liangshan of the Song Dynasty, melding military technology fanaticism with battles between gods and demons. However, while these works reveal the development of local fantasy, it was only after the *Jiawu* year (1894), when modern ideas such as the scientific spirit, empiricism, rationalism, and evolutionary theory began to shock people's minds, that the moment of disciplining and compiling the uninhibited fantasy of the pre-scientific era arrived.

This discipline is based on critiques of old fiction and aims at shaping new fiction. After the Taiping Rebellion in the late 19th century, many people blamed the old fiction for the evil monsters that made people stupid. Qiu Weixuan said that "the theory of gods and monsters is fragmented, especially in *Journey to the West* and *Investiture of the Gods* which feature vast invisible powers" (47-48). The Fiction Reform Society also believed:

14 Chivalrous Person's "Series Talk of Fictions" in *Xin Xiaoshuo*, No. 1 in its second year, Ding Yi's "Series Talk of Fictions," No. 3 in its second year, and Wu Jianren's "Miscellaneous Remarks" on *Xin Yue Xiaoshuo* both have the same arguments.

> Fiction revels in talk of gods and monsters; ascents to heaven to become Buddhas; blessings offered and evils repented; learning miraculous skills from immortals; and fights with secret treasures. With all the dazzling strange things, fiction is devoted to the depiction of magical stories. The Bandits of Bai Lian and The Eight Trigrams were so perplexed by fiction that they tried to make a riot. In the Gengzi year's Boxer Rebellion (1900), their ideas put China in trouble several times. Their talk of spirit possession or the inheritance of magical treasures, we can realize that all of them come from fiction. (He 1902)

By the logic of such a condemnation, if the fiction writer wants to write fantastical stories and show off their secret and powerful strength, he must rely on the prestige of science. *The New Era* (1908) describes a world war in 1999. Although it obviously narrates in the fighting modes depicted in traditional magic fiction, portraying both sides of the war constantly produce mysterious magic weapons such as an "abyssal lens" (*dong jiu yuan*) and "soul stealing sand," (*zhui hun sha*) the author explains each artifact one by one, describing each has having been invented by a Western scientist in a certain year. In advertisements, publisher Forest of Fiction Society (*Xiaoshuolin* s*he)* reminds readers that "imagined scientific discoveries propel a war between white and yellow. When seen by the uninitiated, the implements they use are mistaken for the magic weapons of the Sages of Ghost Valley and the Old Lady of Mt. Lishan, so the people and the time of their inventions are explained. Those endowed with good memory will know that these descriptions are not mere imagination."[15] Therefore, readers will never see the magic of the immortals in the book. It must be balloons and submarines that lead scientists into the sky and underwater instead. As for the swordsman stories like *The New Seven Warriors and Five Legacies* (*Xin Qi Xia Wu Yi*) (1909), the swordsmen are also equipped with advanced equipment such as "steamboats," "electric lightsabers," and "electric light stones." Perhaps it was not enough for the heroes in the new era to punish evil and establish a reputation, and all these "are invented based upon biology, optics, chemistry, and electricity. One day when China makes scientific progress in the future and invents various kinds of instruments, how can we know whether they will match this book or not" (Chen 1821)?

15 "Introducing New Books." *The Forest of Fiction*, No. 10, 1908. For English translation and more on *The New* Era, see Jia Liyuan, "'Soul-Stealing Sand': War and Time in Xin Jiyuan [The New Era]." Ed. Tr. Nathaniel Isaacson. *Science Fiction Studies*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (2018): 1-23. Print.

Of course, the discipline of science is often superficial. *Two Souls* (*Shuang Linghun,* 1907), for example, tells the story of an Indian's dead soul entering a Chinese brain, giving one person two souls. It is a fable. However, the author, Peng Yu, has devised a set of electrical theories. Besides electricity with positive and negative charges, there is "nourishing electricity," which can connect all things, but "two-hearted people" have "magic particles" in their hearts, turning their souls into "blocking material," for instance. At the end of the story, the author attached an argumentative essay, "Cultivating the Soul," which discussed the relationship between "electricity," "qi," "power," "soul and spirit" as well as "yin and yang" and claims that electricity proves that good people could go to heaven after death and evil people will go to Hell after death (Ya 406-407). The phenomenon of interpreting ghosts and gods with electricity was not unique to the late Qing Dynasty. In his *Handout on Monsters*, Inoue Enryō commented, "Since the advent of electrical theory, all things have been explained by the influence of electricity for a while. If we can't explain an inexplicable monster, the electrical effect may answer, just as the unknown was attributed to God in the Middle Ages" (278-279). The fact that the monsters in the world want to shelter themselves under science shows not only the tenacity of monsters, but also the rising prestige of science. As the legitimate source of fantasy elements in fiction, science has also been borrowed, imitated, and appropriated by various fiction writers. Before and after the Sino-Japanese War in 1894-1895, the important division of local scientific imagination came into being, which led to the first wave of Chinese science fiction.

Unfinished Comments

"Science fiction in the late Qing Dynasty" is a retrospective invention of genealogy, seeking the origins of Chinese science fiction after its development and maturity. In fact, it is only the consciousness of creating a genealogy for Chinese science fiction that can guide researchers to identify the counterpart of science fiction in China at the beginning of the twentieth century. Otherwise, we will refocus on historical materials, which will give rise to another academic issue. Therefore, we don't have to carefully avoid referring to the works of the late Qing Dynasty as science fiction (*kehuan*). Instead, we should set aside our opinions and let these works help us to understand the meaning of science fiction. In terms of word formation, the prepositive attribute "late Qing Dynasty" already contains the specificity of early Chinese science fiction, so there is no need to use the term "science fantasy" or other words to specify.

This kind of specificity derives from the fiction writers' new knowledge learned

from broken chapters and newspapers at the beginning of the twentieth century. They got inspiration from it and led the readers to fly into the sky or sea, dream of a great harmonious world, or express their anguish in difficult times. In this process, the encounter between "science" pursuing reality and "fiction" featuring imagination raises the question of how to categorize fantasy. This problem has driven several related labels to undergo historical tests. Through elimination, variation and combination, the concept of "science fiction" finally emerged.[16] Of course, it is difficult to study the evolutionary process of the concept of science fiction in Chinese because it involves the long-lasting "translingual practice"[17] between French, English, Japanese, Russian, Chinese, and other languages, as well as the complex meaning of important concepts such as science and literature in different periods of history. This paper engages in only a preliminary discussion. More in-depth work remains for the future.

As for "science fiction in the late Qing Dynasty," please consider Yasushi Nagayama's comments on the origin of science fiction in Japan:

> Ideas and the birth of the genre of certain works are not unrelated, but they are not necessarily at the same time…It requires us to be deeply moved to recognize the fact that works of science fiction were born before the concept of science fiction.
>
> Through future fiction, the future is presented as the definite past. This

16 Previously, researchers such as Ye Yonglie and Guo Jianzhong had argued that the Chinese term "fantasy" in "Science Fantasy Fiction" originated from the translation of Russian concepts (Ye Yonglie. *On Literature about Science*. Beijing: Science Popularization Press, 1980, pp.93-94.). Guo Jianzhong further pointed out that "Science Fiction" in Chinese does not conform to the original meaning of Science Fiction, and its substitution of the term "Science Fiction" before 1949 "has greatly hindered the development of the literary style of this scientific age in China," and further advocated that the "correct translation" of "Science Fiction" should be reused today (Guo Jianzhong. "Translation of Science Fiction." *Shanghai Journal of Translators for Science and Technology*. No. 2 (2004),p52.). However, according to the author, this is not the case. As early as December 25, 1930, Chen Jun used the term "scientific fantasy" in his article "Can We Communicate with the Planets" published in *Oriental Magazine*, Vol. 27, No. 24. 17 February 17, 1936. Tianjin Ta Kung Pao published an advertisement for a scientific fantasy film, *A New World Fifty Years Later*; On August 15, 1946, the Shen Bao reported "the death of the famous British writer Wells," which quoted "Reuters London's telegram on 13th," saying that Wells' works included "science fiction." Obviously, the formation process of "science fantasy" in Chinese is much more complicated, and the author is conducting a further investigation on this issue.

17 Regarding the concept of "interlingual practice", see Liu, He. *Translingual Practice* (Revised Version), Tr. Song Weijie et al. Beijing: Sanlian Publishing House, 2014. Print.

is the expression of the will of people to survive by steering the present with a firm belief. For the people of the era associated with classical science fiction, what they acquired was an idea and a way of living: the possibility of the future is in their own hands (3).

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Commercialized Imagination: Chinese Science Fiction Today

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Abstract:

Recently, there has been a rapid development in the science fiction literature and industry in China. Online literature and print publishing are very popular in the reading market. Some science fiction films have made a large amount of money. These provide opportunities but also cause inevitable problems. With the emergence of related cultural products and video games, the mechanism of intellectual property empowerment in science fiction has gradually taken shape. Due to the implementation of a series of national policies, science fiction tourism has generally realized the reconstruction of real spaces through the commercialized imagination and has achieved positive results. Commercialized imagination promotes the rapid development of science fiction in China. It is poised to become an important cultural commodity that affects the next generation and provides a significant market for science fiction writers. Science fiction industry plays a crucial role in the promotion of science fiction literature.

Key words: science fiction, cultural industry, cultural creativity, cultural market

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Cultural industry, including literature, is essentially a process of production, dissemination, and consumption in the modern context. When the literary industry becomes more marketable, a specific literary theme will become a kind of market-oriented commodity. As Diane Crane mentioned, the nature of the cultural industry refers to a specific type of culture (46). Therefore, it may be possible for it to be divided into communication or mass communication. It is of great significance to study the marketization of a literary genre, thus exploring the relationship between literature and cultural industries and investigating the process of its formation.

Chinese science fiction is such an example. It did not seem to have a significant

position in the world twenty years ago, but now it has become an important part of the genre. When it comes to the science fiction writing in the world, few can ignore the vitality, competitiveness, and creativity of Chinese science fiction in the last decade.

It is acknowledged that China is a country of very rich heritage in fantasy literature. For example, *Journey to the West*, written by Wu Cheng'en in the sixteenth century, is a science fiction creation with many fantasy elements. In this book, Wu Cheng'en conceived of many advanced technologies such as human flight and gene cloning, which have been realized today. In addition, *New China* (1910), written by Lu Shi'e at the turn of the twentieth century, depicted a vivid picture of life in the city, much like how Chinese people live now. In the twentieth century, more extraordinary science fiction films were produced, including *The Rhapsody of The Ming Tombs Reservoir* (1958), *Dead Coral Island* (1980), and *Wonder Boy* (1988). They were regarded as propaganda films or children's literature at that time and have never attracted the attention of academia throughout the world, unlike contemporary Chinese works written by Liu Cixin and Hao Jingfang.

Chinese science fiction owes its success to the efforts of its writers. The rapid development of the country's cultural industry is another essential driving force. It includes the production of online literature, the publication of books, the release of films, the manufacture of related cultural products and video games, and development of the tourism industry. These aspects have constructed the imagination of cultural commercialization around the science fiction IP and formed a huge cultural production system. This promotes the dramatic development of Chinese science fiction. In 2019, the total value of the science fiction industry was 65.87 billion yuan, an increase of 44.3% compared with the previous year. The same year, the market for science fiction was estimated to be worth 2.01 billion yuan, a year-over-year increase of 13% (Yang).

The Chinese science fiction industry is a brand-new topic, yet the current academic community has not paid much attention to it. Research on it so far has emphasized the strategic coordinates in the science fiction industry based on the bibliometric analysis (Chen & Li 26), the mechanism of creation, production and reception of science fiction works, such as film production (Huang 40), the production and dissemination of Liu Cixin's novels (Gaffric & Peyton 26), and the study of "intellectual property (IP) manufacturing" in the Chinese science fiction industry (Zhu 19-20). Systematic studies on Chinese science fiction and its industry are yet scant.

This article will first consider theories of the cultural industry, with respect

to methods of cyberethnography and conceptual analysis. Following that, it then examines specific objects such as online literary works, print books, movies, video games, related cultural products, and tourism. Finally, based on the current situation, the last section constructs a broader social and cultural background for science fiction to explore the existence, dissemination, reception, and possible direction of future development in China.

1. The Textual Presentation of Science Fiction: Internet Literature and Print Books

Online literary works and print books are the most popular forms of textual presentation of science fiction. This can be seen through the abundance of internet videos that flood China, all presented in the same way. Science fiction is an important component of the current reading market presented in the same way.

1.1 Internet literature

Many people, particularly teenagers, prefer online books in the digital screen-reading era. It should be noted that the total number of science fiction literary works has exceeded one hundred thousand (January 2021) in the six largest Chinese literary websites: www.hjsm.net, www.Readnovel.com, www.qidian.com, www.yuewen.com, www.jjwxc.net, chuangshi.qq.com, and www.tianya.cn —the largest online virtual community. The amount is huge and outstrips the total volume of full-length novels in the same year.

The readership for these works is statistically astonishing (fourteen billion times in total as of February 2021). It is almost about 10 readings per Chinese citizen and involves nearly three thousand authors, an unimaginable achievement. These works vary in length; some are over one million words while others barely reach one hundred.

It is apparent that these works have a great influence in China and permeate different reader groups through personal mobile terminals. Related research has proven that science fiction as online literature is quite popular in China, and the readers are mainly commuters, college students, and small shop owners (Bao 148). Many online writers are expanding the science fiction genre. The traditional fictional works based on scientific fantasies have become monotonous today. This genre has been redefined, creating a broader stage for science fiction.

Strictly speaking, such works do not fall under the category of science fiction, but the definition is not static. The question of what is science fiction is still

controversial (Chen 39-40). Science fiction is not just a genre. Rather, it is more like an element. This genre has also become rich and diverse among the active science fiction literature found on the internet in China. It includes the discussions on the future world, universal civilization, evolutionary mutation, and even Western myths and epics. It also mentions cultivating immortals and Daoism related to Chinese traditional myth, in which science fantasies and traditional metaphysics are combined. This kind of science fiction is labeled and classified as fantasy in China.

Of course, this type of fiction isn't the only one that expands the boundaries of conventional science fiction; there's also a sub-genre of science fiction that can be identified as a rising star in the world of Chinese online literature. Readers coined the term "ancient armored vehicle wars" to describe this type of fiction. The emergence of this term is entirely due to the growth of such works, rather than terms such as "star civilization" and "future world" that have existed for a long time. Through Baidu, China's widely used online search engine, we can find as many as six hundred thousand web pages related to this term, involving thousands of pieces of online literature.

"Ancient armored vehicle wars" refers to a story describing an armed war with mechanical armor that took place in ancient times. This kind of science fiction, called "travel back to history", has gained unprecedented popularity within Chinese literature. Some people argue that this theme imitates the Japanese Gundam series. However, its fantasy element indicates that it has become one of the most influential subjects in Chinese science fiction. An example is *Fake Heroes* written by the author "72bian". This epic novel is about a young man who journeys through time, serves his country, and engages in interstellar warfare. It has reached 4.21 million words, three times that of *Quiet Don* by Sholokhov.

1.2 Print Books

Online science fiction literature is not in opposition to print books. In fact, many online literary works have been published due to the special literary production mechanism, which is determined by the Chinese Writers Association (including awards and the publishing system). Online literature and paper publishing were once regarded as two literary fields, online literature accounting for the main literary field and all others occupying the secondary field (Han, "On the Split..." 18-20, 94). Online science fiction literature has changed this situation. It has not been given due attention and has been marginalized for a long time, even under the mainstream literary production mechanism. Many science fiction writers have been included in the category of children's literature writers, amateur writers, or

screenwriters. In these circumstances, the science fiction internet literature and print book publishers have formed a force of convergence to break through the existing literary production mechanism.

Therefore, science fiction in print cannot be ignored in China and its content must be acknowledged. According to our research, among the already published science fiction works, quite a number of them were online works with tremendous influence. The novel *Little Mushroom* written by Shisizhou was a best seller, which accumulated nine billion points on www.jjwxc.net (with total readings at nearly three hundred million). The book has a circulation of more than one hundred thousand copies since Beijing United Publishing published it in 2020. The sales volume exceeded seven thousand copies on dangdang.com alone. This is incredible since print books are practically negligible when compared to online copies, which are used more frequently. The author has realized that this win-win situation on both sides has an influence on the readership of traditional publications.

Of course, this is not a single case. Among the top one hundred books sold on dangdang.com (February 1, 2021), thirteen of them are science fiction works with an average of 3,520 copies per book sold online. This is far more than other recreational reading works. In contrast, only two of the one best-selling books are canonical, with an average sales volume of 923 copies. It is apparent that works of science fiction literature are as popular as the teaching materials. Therefore, science fiction has an irreplaceable market share in recreational reading.

Many works are printed on paper. Apart from being purchased by readers, where else did they go?

Quantum Seventeen: Mecha Warrior (Vol. 1), written by Agui, is currently the most popular work on dangdang.com. It was published in 2018 and had sold 3,780 copies on the site by February 2021. We learned from the Chinese Public Library's retrieval system that this book has been held by 1,140 libraries by February 2021, and the collections rank among the most popular books.

This is due to the popularity of science fiction literature. As early as 2015, it is shown that among the 100 books with the highest annual borrowing rate in 10 large public libraries across the country, fifty-two were works of science fiction, and even the same book appeared in nine public libraries (Han, "The Dilemma" 69). This situation has basically stabilized so far. Many university libraries and public libraries announced that science fiction works had a relatively stable borrowing rate, and it was of high proportion.

Science fiction literature is growing in popularity in the cultural industry through its availability both online and in print. It occupies an extremely unique

place in the literary industry. The main characteristic is that it is reproduced in different media formats. In addition to online literature and books, there are other types of cultural products, which will be an important channel for studying the existence, dissemination, and acceptance of science fiction in China.

2. The Power of Capital: The Rise and Dilemma of Science Fiction Films

Online literature and print publishing are the most basic cultural industries, so the rise of science fiction films should be regarded as an updated model of the science fiction industry, of which capital intervention is a very important sign.

Cultural products have become an industry where high commercialization of production and consumption occurs. The cultural product industry also includes capital income, which shows circulation and development in market production (Morawetz 421). Science fiction novels promote the flourishing of science fiction movies, which proves that science fiction literature and its industry have indeed developed rapidly.

2.1 The Rise of Science Fiction Film

In July 2020, the China Film Administration and the China Association for Science and Technology jointly issued "Several Opinions on Promoting the Development of Science Fiction Films," or "Science Fiction 10 Articles" in short. This is the first document issued in China with regards to the development of the science fiction industry. The China Association for Science and Technology established the "Scientific Communication and Film Office" at the China Science Fiction Convention in November 2020. From the perspective of government administration, the development of science fiction films must be urgently standardized. The capital assets cannot be ignored. In 2019, the cumulative box office earnings from science fictions movies reached 19.51 billion yuan for the Chinese market. Three of this year's top 10 movies were science fiction movies. Currently, some of the highest grossing movies, such as Marvel's *The Avengers*, *Ready Player One* and *The Wandering Earth* are stirring consumers' interest.

Chinese science fiction films are increasingly controlled by capital, and the mode of cooperation between producers and investors is gradually forming and affecting the process of distribution. One of the motivating factors is the growth of high-tech internet companies. They were mainly involved in the promotion and distribution of films but did not participate in film production in the first stage. This is due to a limited financial capacity, and a lack of interest and money in promoting

such major projects like film production. However, with the further development of internet technology in China, some companies, such as Baidu, Alibaba, and Tencent have gradually formed their own platforms and collaborated with video-streaming platforms such as iQiyi, Youku, and Bilibili, changing their roles from promotion and distribution for others to content-production for their own platforms. These companies have set up platforms for production and explored potential thematic resources for science fiction movies with the advantages of internet companies. After 2017, Chinese internet giants like Tencent and Alibaba began to dominate the science fiction movie industry, moving from production to a new stage of capital operation.

For example, in February 2018, Ali Pictures signed a strategic cooperation agreement with Wanda, a large Chinese real estate company, to acquire a 12.7% share of Wanda for 4.68 billion yuan. After that Alibaba Pictures participated in the investment and production of *The Wandering Earth*, *Star Trek Beyond*, and *Iron Man,* which occupied a prominent position in Chinese science fiction film production. The cooperation of producers and investors has become the main mode of film production.

This model is widely replicated in the production of the most outstanding science fiction films in China. For example, *The Wandering Earth* was jointly produced by China Film Co., Ltd. and Beijing Jingxi Culture & Tourism Co., Ltd. *Crazy Alien* was produced by Huanxi Media Group Limited, which was distributed by Holgos Youth Film, Shannan Film, and Wuxi Baotang Film Co., Ltd. *Shanghai Fortress* was jointly produced and distributed by HS Entertainment Group Incorporated, China Film Co., Ltd., Tianjin North Film Group, United Entertainment Partners, Tencent Pictures and other institutions. *Warriors of Future* was produced by Gravity Pictures and One Cool Pictures. It was released by Jia Ying Film Co., Ltd. *Bleeding Steel* was jointly produced and distributed by Youku and Xiaomi Pictures. *Pathfinder* was produced and distributed by Shanghai Tencent Pictures Cultural Communication Co., Ltd. and Movie Fun Co., Ltd. *Fatal Countdown: Reset* was produced and distributed by New Clues Film, Horgosz Jiaxing Media, Beijing Sparkle Roll Media Corporation.

2.2 The Dilemma of Science Fiction Film

It should be noted that the local science fiction film market is highly concentrated, and an efficient industrial system has yet to be formed. Only a few film and television companies with strong financial background can participate in production and distribution (Toubao Research Institute 23). Therefore, there is still

a long way to go for Chinese science fiction industry to become a strong world wide power with a large scale system. However, the sound development trend indicates that Chinese science fiction films have the potential to improve.

In addition, the rapid development of science fiction film has affected literature, inspiring innumerable writers to participate in the production of films. However, it is still in its inception, filled with many obstacles. Film productions require a clearer division of resources and attaching more importance to the role of science fiction writers.

It is indisputable that all science fiction films are adapted from literary works. This is a process of artistic recreation, and the success of the movie will inevitably promote the science fiction industry. A large number of science fiction writers no longer aim at publishing books or even creating best sellers. Instead, they participate in film creations, like Liu Cixin does. Research shows that among the sample size of one hundred science fiction writers, ninety-two people expressed their expectation that their works could be made into a movie, while fifty-five said it didn't matter to them whether their novels were published or not but preferred it to be a film (Jinjiang Wenxuecheng Co. Ltd. & Ali Pictures 40). For example, *Shanghai Fortress,* written by Jiang Nan, is a bestselling novel published in 2009. However, his goal was not just to write a bestseller, but also rather to put it on the screen (C. Zhong). Vision China Star (HS Entertainment Group Incorporated) and other institutions had begun to prepare for the movie since 2017, but after the film was released, the box office only made 120 million yuan, far less than the film production cost of 360 million yuan, causing huge losses to the producer and distributor (Yao).

Even though the failure of this film at the box office put Chinese science fiction movies in a dilemma, it also allowed for an accumulation of experience. It had an enormous pool of investment capital but a considerable amount of expenditure goes to superstars like Lu Han and Shu Qi. In the end, the process of editing and production was rather rough. The plot was not schematic. The dialogue was absurd. The lighting, setting and special effects were hardly satisfactory. Audiences were disappointed. Several critical articles poured in, and the marketing reputation plummeted. Director Teng Huatao and the author Jiang Nan had to write an article to apologize (Z. Xin).

Funding is indispensable for film projects. The success of science fiction film requires that a lot of money be spent on the adaptation of creative works and top-notch screenwriting. Some praiseworthy works have elaborate storylines that fascinate readers. Care should be taken when adapting a literary work into a film that is limited to 150 minutes. The literary work should be rewritten for the screen,

and dialogue should be refined to avoid clichés. In addition, money should be put into lighting, choreography, beautiful settings, and other visual aspects. As heavy industry films, science fiction films require a particular type of craftsmanship. The fictional scenes should be spectacular, but also tally with general scientific knowledge. It should be an immersive experience for the audience, allowing them to feel the impact of future technology, instead of making crude scenery and thus leaving a bad impression.

Therefore, it is believed that science fiction cinema should not be entirely focused on the star performers. Funds should be allocated to screenwriters and set designers to create a more faithful film adaption of the original literary works. Selling scripts to filmmakers is no longer the science fiction authors' goal. They also want to play a key role in film creation, writing high-quality scripts with directors, screenwriters, and other creators. Moreover, they should put forward their own suggestions on visual effects, setting, lighting, and special effects. On the other hand, producers and distributors should respect the author and clarify the division of work among the staff. After all, the author is the person who conceives the essence of the film, and therefore should be given more power in the decision-making process so as to promote a collaborative, innovative atmosphere within the creative team.

In short, we should respect science fiction itself, promote science fiction films to a higher degree and help them to get out of this predicament as soon as possible. By doing this, we will enable science fiction film to reach its full potential in a new cultural background rather than simply treating it as a category of cultural industry that is independent of science fiction literature. We should recognize the logical connection between science fiction books and films. Only when science fiction literature develops soundly can movies have a more promising future.

3. Related Cultural Products and Video Games: How to Realize IP in Science Fiction Literature

An important sign of the prosperity of the cultural industry is the diversified expansion of business formats under IP (intellectual property). Related cultural and creative products and video games are important manifestations of science fiction IP empowerment.

3.1 Related Cultural and Creative Products

The main feature of related cultural and creative products is larger IP but

lower cost, among which the most eye-catching is the cultural creative industries surrounding museum gift shops. This kind of product related to literary themes has already existed for a long time, and things like matchbox pictures, stamps, and dolls were popular in the 1980s. However, there is no suitable IP authorization mechanism for them, and they also lack a more healthy and pluralistic mode.

In recent years, with the rapid development of science fiction industries, its related cultural and creative products are also growing. They are mainly produced by publishing houses, literary websites, or cultural companies that undertake the duty of promoting science fiction. One of the most important reasons lies in the convenience of IP authorization. Publishers, as the biggest owners of IP rights, can easily engage in cultural creation. Related cultural and creative products should be an important driving force for the success of print media in the face of fierce competition.

This study has found that Chinese science fiction-related cultural and creative products are mainly as follows. One category features postcards, notebooks, and other products developed by publishing houses for science fiction masterpieces, such as the "Dreaming in the Sea" postcards and "The Wandering Earth" notebooks, developed by Cixin Publishing Group for Liu Cixin's novels. These goods are sold individually in online stores. The second option for buyers is to buy books with complimentary playing cards, notebooks, and other products. For instance, when Tangjiasanshao's *Legend of the Dragon King* was sold on dangdang.com, thematic notebooks and card stickers were also given away. The last category is the derivative commodity cooperatively developed by filmmakers and video broadcasting platforms. For instance, the "Art Illustration Collection of *Three Body*" was jointly printed by The Three-Body Cosmos, Future Affairs Administration (FAA), and Hangzhou Senyu Culture Co., Ltd. through crowdfunding. The Three-Body indoor humidifier was designed by the China Film Group Corporation. These commodities mainly create a closer relationship between the audience and works of science fiction through the process of production and dissemination.

These products reflect that the Chinese science fiction industry is in a state of rapid growth, and that the potential of IP empowerment is increasing. Compared to other cultural products, the IP potential for literary works is relatively rich, which is very suitable for the development of cultural and creative products. According to the statistics of this study, these kinds of products have included more than 50 influential science fiction books, and the number of goods has exceeded 200. This number is not huge, but it includes a wide range of products that have laid an important foundation for the development of cultural and creative products.

3.2 Video Games

Compared to related cultural and creative products, science fiction video games are more distinctive. Operating under the category of science fiction, they require the same roles and graphical framework. Currently, Chinese science fiction games have played a positive role in the world. They have become an important domain for many science fiction writers, allowing them to achieve self-fulfillment. It is recognized that science fiction games include both computer games and mobile games.

As early as 2015, the online game *Thunder Fighter,* developed by Tencent, announced that it would cooperate with Liu Cixin. He would participate in the game's development as one of the designers and also write a new story entitled "The Story of Thunder Fighter." In 2019, ZLONGAME, one of the largest Chinese game companies in Beijing, developed the *Second Galaxy* mobile game. Several writers were involved in writing the script. It has amassed a great deal of attention since the game went live, with as many as one million registered users. This game is as much a science fiction masterpiece as the *Three Body Problem*.

Light-Driven Sailing, a science fiction game developed in China, was launched in early 2021 and is one of the country's top downloads. This game is widely regarded as an excellent example of interactive science fiction. In addition to the core game play, the game also has a complete worldview setting as well as alternative storylines. Its behind-the-scenes team includes several avant-garde science fiction writers and illustrators. Strictly speaking, science fiction video games cannot be equated with science fiction literature in the traditional sense, but taking into consideration the overall developmental trends of science fiction in China, they share common traits. They include plot, narration, and interpretability. More and more science fiction writers have begun to participate in the design and development of science fiction games. This indicates that games will become a larger component of the science fiction industry.

In the internet era, the scope of gaming has been constantly expanding. The boundaries between the games and their printed counterparts have gradually begun to blur and they infiltrate each other. The direction of the plot and the ending of the story have seemingly been handed over to the game player. It is notable that the game player is invited into the text creation directly and participates in the process of writing.

Haruki Murakami contends that games may serve as the most suitable genre for literature (Wray and Murakami 13). In the view of some radical cultural researchers, video games are another form of literary texts. Because of the empowerment

of science fiction IP between electronic games and literary texts, an interplay mechanism has been formed. The core of this mechanism is the self-construction of human ideology (Lu and Li 59-60). In fact, video games are independent and can be seen as deconstructed poetics. This not only completes the self-construction, but also forms a synchronous narrative. Moreover, video games have formed a new paradigm in which we anticipate further theoretical research.

These two kinds of cultural products related to Chinese science fiction are in their infancy at present. Compared to world powers like the United States, there is still a considerable gap. The cultural industry is in a weak position, judging from industrial volume, added value, and social influence. However, there are noteworthy products empowered by science fiction IP, and they have high economic added value. In the future, products and video games should be given sufficient attention.

4. Science Fiction Tourism: Real Space Reconstruction by Commercialized Imagination

In 2018, the Ministry of Culture and the National Tourism Administration were combined to form the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People's Republic of China. The integration of culture and tourism has gradually penetrated China's cultural industry. It has become a new form of the Chinese cultural industry. In fact, tourism is the most attractive industry in the field of science faction.

Science fiction tourism is science fiction industry based on tourist projects. It is broadly categorized into three types. The first is projects built around themes of science fiction themes, such as the Parallel Universe exhibited at the China Science and Technology Museum. The second is resorts and children's playgrounds based on science fiction stories, such as the Guizhou Oriental Science Fiction Valley Theme Park and the Jianyang Science Fiction Town which is still under construction. The last is the travel routes from canonized stories specially customized by some travel companies for science fiction fans, such as the Xichang Satellite Launch Site and the Lenghu Mars Camp. These three kinds of tourism generally cover the current science fiction destinations, and they are in varying degrees of development in China.

These types of tourism are essentially a reshaping of real space according to commercialized imagination. Thus, they transform the concepts embodied in the text into a reality that can be experienced through the senses. Some argue that this deconstructs the core of science fiction, namely, imagination. For the creation of science fiction, fertile imagination is necessary to be imbued with novelty and pleasure. In China, this is mainly reflected in the following three aspects.

4.1 Construction of Real Space Based on Commercialized Imagination

At present, one characteristic of science fiction tourism is that the virtual scene is realized and real space is constructed via the commercialized imagination. The scene, as a medium to obtain information, should be considered as an extension of the human being (McLuhan 2-3). Therefore, the spectacle offered is a kind of fantasy information medium based on science fiction, but this imagination is commercialized and has cultural traits.

When commercialized imagination constructs real space, it does so with respect to current trends of consumerism. For instance, during the construction of Jianyang Science Fiction Town, the magazine *Science Fiction World* selected the most popular science fiction stories, such as *Three-Body Problem* and *Folding Beijing*, and put forward ideas for IP realization. This case will obviously pique the interest of writers and inspire them to create better content. At the same time, it will also allow more people, possibly including non-science fiction fans, to understand this genre and to kindle interest in it.

4.2 Utopian Presentation of Literary Texts

For a long time, people have argued that science fiction is a sort of imagination because it does not exist in real life. Its most abvious features is that it is fictional and is disconnected from real life. Unlike most literary works, it is not based on history or real life, but on the imagination of basic scientific principles. Science fiction tourism is a way of re-imagining the text. Neither theme parks nor distinctive towns truly realize the imagination of the science fiction stories, and they are more of a realistic fiction.

Literary text and tourism are different fictional types, but they are substantially utopian presentations. Tourism is the utopian presentation of the literary text. Utopia is a textually or non-textually imaginary world because the text is the vehicle of imagination. The growth of science fiction projects along with tourist participation has been gradually proposed recently. For example, the background of the Guizhou Oriental Science Fiction Valley Theme Park is universal civilization and adopts the striking setting created by *The Wandering Earth*, *The Three-Body Problem*, and *Star Wars*. Science fiction fans immerse themselves in an imaginary world drawing on cutting-edge technology like virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR) and artificial intelligence (AI). Their experiences provide them with the possibility of rewriting literary texts. This program is similar to video games but more realistic, providing consumers with a utopian outlook on reality.

4.3 Reaching the Scene of "Super Imagination" through Immersive Experience

Aesthetically, the acceptance of literary works occurs because people can enter a world that is completely virtual and exists in ideology. Therefore, literary appreciation is a purely ideological activity. Compared with reading, tourism is an immersive experience. The spectacle is not imaginary but super-imaginary which reconstructs the content of imagination.

At present, most of the science fiction destinations are based on the literary works, such as *The Wandering Earth* and *Three-Body Problem*, or the Lenghu Mars Camp that is closely associated with science fiction novels. These resorts provide the possibility of an immersive experience for tourists; but at the same time, they also reconstruct the imagination of science fiction stories and form the scene of super-imagination. This offers participants with a different view of the original works, which inspires consumers' passion for science fiction.

Science fiction tourism constitutes a reshaping of the real space according to the commercialized imagination and enhances the development of China's science fiction industry. Although it is in its initial stages, most projects are profitable businesses, because science fiction tourism is consistent with major national strategies such as targeted poverty alleviation, construction of distinctive towns, new infrastructure, and internal circulation. Therefore, China's science fiction tourism industry is promising. This study has found that there are thirty-eight projects still under construction in China, and there are thirty projects in which the investment capital is more than 100 million yuan. The real budget may be far more than what we know. The scale of tourism may exceed that of the movies and be a considerable component of the Chinese science fiction industry.

5. Conclusion: Chinese Science Fiction Needs Imagination and Market

When it comes to market share in China, no other literary genre has exceeded science fiction. This ancient country has embraced globalization, which is inspiring the imagination of writers. Their imagination is no longer the same as the writers who lived over a century ago and dreamed of a life free from poverty. They believed this freedom would be possible due to powerful future technologies. Current writers can now give full play to their imagination beyond the bondage of time and construct a variety of romantic and magical connections between the universe and the earth. However, we should realize that its essence is still commercial imagination, which is the premise of further study of the Chinese science fiction industry.

Firstly, commercialized imagination drives the development of science fiction industries, which will become an important cultural commodity that affects the children of the next generation. Though there is nationalism in *The Wandering Earth*, this film discusses how China can become the new Messiah. *Folding Beijing* illustrates social issues in China and criticizes the maladies of the city. Chinese science fiction, like other cultural products, tends to cultivate the values of a generation and pique their interest in history, culture, and the future of their country.

Moreover, commercialized imagination provides an important market for science fiction practitioners. The rapidly growing industry continually generates opportunities for them to become world-class science fiction writers. Chinese science fiction, therefore, needs imagination and market. A higher income can stimulate writers' imaginations, and they can participate in cultural creative activities. These activities can be done in a variety of ways, thus mutually stimulating markets and imaginations.

Chinese science fiction has played an important role in world literature. It has not received any governmental support or funding, unlike other literary subject matter, like war or history. It relies solely on the market. Many talented science fiction writers have yet to gain recognition. Even the Mao Dun Literature Award, the most authoritative award for Chinese novel, has never been awarded to a science fiction writer before. Nevertheless, there are hundreds of thousands of science fiction novels in China, something unprecedented in the history of Chinese literature since 1949.

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Translating between Literary Systems: An Interview with Professor Jonathan Stalling

Jonathan Stalling (The University of Oklahoma)

Xuezhao Li (The Ohio State University)

Abstract:

In this interview, Professor Jonathan Stalling talks about the differences between translating classical and contemporary Chinese poems and discusses how the various responsibilities for the present and past global reception of translated Chinese literature fall on translators, authors, and others. He argues that translators can help the authors that they translate better understand the target language's industry norms and to offer authors options about how to best navigate the target country's literary system. Stalling explains how founding the "Chinese Literature Translation Archive" at Bizzell Memorial Library at the University of Oklahoma, can provide the archival research materials needed to better understand the kinds of negotiations that take place (or fail to take place) between the US and Chinese literary systems. He also introduces his two major interlanguage projects: Pinying and English *jueju*. Both projects are the main topic of a new book focusing on his work: *Yinggelishi: Jonathan Stalling's Interlanguage Art*. He adds that a rationale behind the English *jueju* project is that learning to compose classical Chinese poetic forms in English helps prepare English readers to be better readers of classical Chinese poetry. Lastly, he gives some practical suggestions to Chinese literary translators.

Keywords: literary systems, Chinese Literature Translation Archive, interlanguage art, Pinying, English *juejue*

Li: Professor Stalling, thank you for accepting this interview. Let's start with some basic questions: How did you start your translation career? Why did you choose Chinese poetry?

Stalling: Well, my first Chinese teacher, Li Qingmin, emphasized memorizing

classical Chinese poetry, Tang poetry in particular. So even as an adolescent, I was interested in translating classical Chinese poetry. It was simply part of my education. And I was already a poet as an adolescent as well, so I enjoyed translating these works and trying to write some of my own *jueju* in Chinese. Then as an undergraduate, I invented the English *jueju* form for an assignment given to me by the poet June Jordan. She had asked me to find a way to translate classical Chinese poetry so that she could hear the music of the original. After that, I started to translate classical Chinese poetry into this experimental monosyllabic rhyming form. So, while the English *jueju* started as a genre of English poetry, it was also a way for me to translate canonical poems, to let the English readers hear the formal features of regulated verse better. This was all in the late 1990s.

Li: So you started to formulate such an idea of English *jueju* when you were an undergraduate student?

Stalling: Yes. I started this work in 1996 when at UC Berkeley, and I was given a chance by Professor Jordan to teach the form to my fellow students at UC Berkeley as well as inmates at Dublin Women's Prison, and at the Glide Memorial Church homeless shelter in San Francisco, and in other places. Jordan believed that the form I came up with could teach the fundamental essence of English poetry too, and that this would be valuable to those who were most in need of a voice. I continued to teach the form as a genre of English poetry ever since, but also spent a number of years early on trying to systematically translate a larger body of classical Chinese poems in various genres into my monosyllable-based system. By 2002, however, I abandoned this translation method and started to focus on expanding the composition method to make it as comprehensive as possible.

Li: You mentioned that you first used English *jueju* as a form both to compose English poems and to translate classical Chinese poetry but later chose to focus solely on the former. Do you think there is a conflict between translation and composition?

Stalling: The conflict between translating classical Chinese poetry into English and composing classical Chinese forms in English lies in the freedom of the latter to generate new poetic combinations wholly within the constraints of the rules of regulated verse. In translation, you are not free to choose one's own words because word choice and how they are sequenced must convey the meaning of the poem being translated. This semantic constraint limits one's ability to be faithful to all the rules of regulated verse which demand an end rhyme scheme, adherence to a particular semantic rhythm within lines, parallelism between lines, and patterns of horizontally and vertically balanced and counterbalanced vowels. While it is very

hard to translate into monosyllabic English regulated verse, it is not hard to use this system to generate new works. With over 8000 variations of English monosyllabic words to draw upon, we can compose *jueju*, *lushi*, *ci*, and *qu* endlessly.

Li: Allow me to direct our attention to translation practices again: What do you think is the difference between translating traditional Chinese poems and modern ones?

Stalling: For me, there are two very big differences. The first one is that for modern poems, at least for contemporary poems, oftentimes, the poets are alive. In many ways, the job of modern translators of living poets is to get their work to the widest audience. So for me, translating contemporary Chinese poetry needs to rely on contemporary English poetic norms. There is more domestication, in other words, for contemporary poetry. *Baihua* and modern English are both polysyllabic and hypotactic by nature with light parataxis for poetic effects so modern or contemporary Chinese and English poems are roughly similar in form (when compared to classical Chinese poetry). That similarity allows one to deemphasize the source formalism since the source texts' formal qualities live in the same universe as modern English poetic techniques and qualities. *Wenyan shi* (Classical Chinese poetry) on the other hand is so different from English free verse, and to my mind traditional English verse as well. So when translating classical Chinese poems, I have preferred the path of more extreme foreignization. When translating contemporary poetry on the other hand I typically have opted for domestication because translating contemporary poets is focused more on the poet's style rather than the genre, and should focus on the source poet's choices rather than drawing attention to the translator's choices. Also, when you are translating poets like Li Bai, Du Fu or Li Shangyin, you can rest assured that there are already many other pre-existing translations. So I feel that translators can make more bold choices and experiment with the language more because their translations are always adding to a corpus of earlier translations. But for contemporary poets, maybe it's the only time that a poem will be translated, so the translation practice should be quite normative, I think. Therefore, there is more invisibility of the translator with contemporary poetry because the translation has a different social function.

When it comes to classical Chinese poetry, I believe new translations are always supplemental rather than being a kind of displacement. A translation does not displace previous translations but just supplements them. When you are translating, it is not doing violence to previous translations. It is not trying to erase them but just adds to them. That is why when we are translating famous poems by Tang and Song poets, it is ok to add unusual translations to the tradition. We want to get as many

different concepts through language as possible. But when I am translating poems by a poet like Shizhi or Zheng Xiaoqiong, I had to recognize the possibility that my translation may be the only English translation available of a particular poem and deliver something that the widest audience would appreciate.

Li: I noticed an important point here. Usually, we would use "experimental" to describe contemporary Chinese poetry and "traditional" to describe classical poetry. But talking about translating them into English, you mentioned that you would use experimental methods to translate classical poetry. So this reverses my expectations.

Stalling: I guess it's because contemporary Chinese poets are the ones doing the experimenting. If you are translating Duo Duo, or someone like the Taiwanese poet Xia Yu, for instance, both of whom have quite experimental works, or Che Qianzi, who writes more experimental poems, the English translation will also appear to be experimental. But this experimental quality in the English translation is set in motion by the author rather than the translator. If a contemporary Chinese poet is pushing against her audience's expectations, then the translator will need to do the same thing in English. But the translator is letting the Chinese poet push, whereas the English translator is simply carrying that intentionality forward into English: pushing against poetry norms more generally. When translating a classical Chinese poem, on the other hand, experiments are necessary because the poem comes from a different poetic tradition. The source text is not experimental in the context of its source community's poetic norms, but to convey its formalism in English with any fidelity makes it appear "experimental." So I am talking about the experiments conducted by the translator as the result of challenging target norms to convey something that was not experimental in the source text (such as regulated verse norms).

Li: About the translation of contemporary Chinese literature into English, many people are discussing the unsatisfactory reception of translated Chinese literature in the global market. What's your opinion of this? Do translators have to take any responsibility?

Stalling: I think that the answer is complicated. Both translators and authors have to take some responsibilities, and the harder part of the answer to discuss is what falls back on the author's shoulders I think. Let's talk about both of these though. When we say "literature", we mostly mean "fiction" here. When we say "fiction", we mostly mean "literary fiction" rather than "genre fiction". So it's important to differentiate literary fiction writers like Ge Fei, Mo Yan, Su Tong, Wang Anyi, Jia Pingwa, from our earlier discussion of poetry. All of these are all great Chinese

writers with a wide critical and generally popular reception among Chinese critics and readers. So the expectation is that the same should be true of their English translations. But you see their work represents the literary norms established within the Chinese literary system which is quite distinct from the American Literary system. When we talk about literary fiction in America, we talk about individual authors, as if they are sovereign actors, but in reality, authors work with many other people in the US to bring about a published literary work. American authors typically grow into mature writers within creative writing workshops like the famous MFA model where mentors and peers shape their work from prototypes through an iterative process after which texts are further shaped by literary agents and finally by commercial publishing house editors. All the actors shape the modern English novel as fiction (and much of poetry) in English follows the larger "value-added economics" we find shaping every other commodity in late capitalism. I call the work provided by actors to improve literary works, "positive assessment labor," and the value of literary works that have gone through this process is ensured because "negative assessment labor" filters out all other works that would otherwise compete with the highly networked works for market share. In the end, therefore, we can say that American literary fiction is radically collaborative and dispersed across a wide agential network of actors just as other kinds of designed products. The result of this process taking place repeatedly over many decades is that literature has continually been improved through ideation, inception, prototyping, beta testing (workshopping), iteration (revision), to market testing (agents' and editors' consultation and shaping), etc. By the time a novel hits the bookstores, the author is only responsible for 70-90% of the book's final form. The other percentages come from peers, editors, agents, and other readers whose input helped "improve" the book along the way. Every actor who touches the book adds labor value to the product, making the product more valuable (or so the logic holds). Over the last 30 or 40 years, there has been a huge growth within the US creative writing industry because most of the money in the American literary system comes from providing positive and negative assessment labor, rather than "writing" (your own work). If you want to make a living in the US as a writer, then you learn how to convert your network position and assessment skills into helping others reach the largest audience. The money we make as writers therefore is typically earned by adding value to other people's writing rather than in the sale of our own books. I should be clear here, this is not the way we Americans talk about our literary system, but it is how the system works, and I have come to notice this not because I have taught creative writing for decades (which I have), but primarily because our

system is so different from the Chinese literary system.

In China, a writer's income comes largely from salaries provided directly by the Writers' Association and the central funding mechanism that undergird the distribution of literary fiction into libraries for instance. The "chuban fei" (subventions) that are sponsored by the Writers' Association and universities, or other state-funded agencies contribute greatly to the overall book sale numbers. Thus, even book sales are partly determined by a centralized funding mechanism rather than relying wholly on market forces. But the most conspicuous difference lies in the fact that China has not had a creative writing industry paying writers to teach undergraduates how to write. Nor are there literary agents paid to reshape works of fiction based on their superior knowledge of literary market trends, or editors empowered to intervene in the shaping of novels to offset their publishing risks, etc. In short, it is nothing at all like America. But I should mention that America is quite unique. Even France and Germany do not have literary systems like the one we find in the US. So American literary fiction is "cooked" to a high degree by an extremely high level of editorial quality control, whereas Chinese fiction can be thought of as relatively uncooked. An author like Bi Feiyu or Jia Pingwa will write a book and send it to the publisher. The publisher will check it for typos, and print it, so no one outside the author touches it. So Mo Yan can write a 500-page-long book, in a handwritten manuscript in two months, and send it off to a publisher, and they will publish the whole thing. No one dares to change the words. That's a completely different paradigm.

And herein lies a problem, and this is how I answer your question (thank you for your patience), when an editor doesn't change a word, and when the translator translates the work faithfully, it means the English version will be very different from other novels readers are encountering in English because there is only one person writing it. Chinese novels are rough in this sense, simply by virtue of the fact that they haven't been shaped by this larger value-added economic model. In short, they haven't been edited. The plus is that no one else interferes with the author's vision, so it arrives at the reader's doorstep in its pure form. The Chinese literary system therefore can be thought of as being stridently individualistic, philosophically romantic, and exceedingly idiosyncratic in the best sense, but this also means that works of Chinese fiction lack the normative refinements that can only be achieved at scale within literary systems that provide the kinds of resources we find in the US.

So let me try to narrow this down now to answer your question now. The expectation of English readers is extremely high for English novels. The characters

are expected to be fully developed because any lack of development would have been discovered and improved upon early on. The balance between exposition and dialogue is expected to be just right again because many hands are on deck to ensure that this is the case. The novel will take on topics that readers care about and likely conform to evolving ideological norms. And finally English readers expect a highly refined literary English which only specialized training and experience can help writers (including translators) gain. So what I am saying is that native English speakers cannot write publishable fiction unless they are highly trained and well networked within the literary system. The competition is insanely tight for reader attention. So when American readers encounter a work of Chinese fiction like Jia Pingwa's novel *Ruined Capital* (Fei du)*,* they find a novel well over twice as long as the English norm with many characters that are not developed throughout the length of the novel, a loose plot and gender stereotypes that many will find off-putting if not offensive. I was the series editor that published that book in English, and it was wonderfully translated by Howard Goldblatt with fidelity and class, but he did not alter or update the text, so the book could not be expected to hit a wide target market despite my huge expectations at the time, given its notoriety among Chinese readers and critics. So I personally feel that translating such works into English is an opportunity to let English readers learn about different kinds of writing, cultures, and literary systems more generally. But Chinese novels can be a difficult choice for English readers to make because they are not used to this kind of loose style, personal style.

So this is an unspoken problem for the translators of Chinese literature. The question we have to ask ourselves is: What do I do as a translator? Do I keep faithful to the original or try to tighten it a little bit to make it more appealing to English readers accustomed to English novels? So the answer to your question is: Yes, it does come down to the translator in the sense that they must choose how to talk to their authors about their expectations and desires vis-à-vis the English audience. Translators need to get better at talking to Chinese novelists about the market realities in the West, and how our system has been steeped in capitalism for so many decades that it has evolved in a very specific way quite distinct from its Chinese counterpart. Because the Chinese government still puts money into the Writers' Association, it largely protects the writers from the marketplace. The writers can write what they want without thinking "Oh! I have to sell the book." or "The publishing house will not publish my book unless I…" There is not as much of this kind of worry for Chinese authors as their American counterparts. Of course, there is censorship so this also means that authors are not free to

conform to the market pressures that would likely find sensational or politically challenging work more appealing than those that are not. English novels are free to discuss contemporary cultural issues to directly appeal to their readers, while Chinese novels are not. This can mean that Chinese novels may come off as lacking modernity from an American perspective, but I still think that the main hurdle lies in the formal distinctions between the Chinese and American literary systems.

To my mind, there is only one moment when a Chinese author and an English translator fully went through the American literary publishing system. When Mo Yan first published his two novels, the American translator Howard Goldblatt worked with a very famous literary agent to reshape the novel. The editors even requested that Mo Yan rewrite the ending of his second novel in English *The Garlic Ballads* (Tiantang suantai zhi ge). Mo Yan's willingness to take criticism and improve his work may well have been a causal factor in his lasting appeal and fame among English readers relative to his Chinese contemporaries. If the author can be more flexible, it may be possible for more Chinese writers to work with higher-level agents and editors who will help reshape their novels as shown in Mo Yan's example. That could produce more popularity as 500-page novels can be honed into 300-page English counterparts, etc. If done correctly, such revision can pull out the really deep part of the novel and present an even more potent vision of the novel than the one originally penned by the author. After all, I think that this is the way English novelists feel as they compare their first drafts to their final published versions.

In the end, the translator's responsibility and the author's responsibility are intertwined: I think that translators need to talk to their authors and ask them: "What is your goal for the English version? Do you want it to be read by a small scholarly readership or by average people?" If an author chooses the former, go with fidelity; if the author chooses the latter, then the author will need to accept the American idea of networked collaboration and the translator will need to become integrated into the highly networked system of literary publishing (likely by working with an agent). I don't think that this is a betrayal if the author has asked for his/her work to go through this process. But it would be a betrayal if the author is not consulted first. I think that's the future, to be quite honest. Some level of collaboration would be very helpful to Chinese literature more generally. At the end of the day, we will need to see agents working directly with authors and translators to help them understand the American market and create new versions of books that may be called "adaptations" rather than "translations". The idea is to legitimize both tracks, to see both as legitimate pathways. Let's see what happens.

Li: So it was not the translator that revised the draft, but Mo Yan that rewrote the book himself, right?

Stalling: Yes, that is correct. Mo Yan made the changes based on the editor's and agent's comments and suggestions, and the translator (Howard Goldblatt), translated those changes into English. So you asked me if the translator bears any responsibility, and the answer is yes. I think the translator bears the responsibility of explaining the situation to the author and providing the author with choices. That's their responsibility. Goldbatt did this with Mo Yan by sharing the editor's and agent's ideas with the author. He did not stand in the way of the American literary system by shielding the author from it. But here we can also see how commercial agents and presses also bear responsibility for they could do so much more to bring translators into their formal assessment networks, to provide them with highly networked cultural capital, etc. Both parties then can and should let Chinese authors know that if a book is too long with problems in its plot and certain characters are not developed, it will likely not find a large American audience. After reading the book, the translator can say: "I will translate it. It's a great novel. But I would like to work with agents and editors to shorten it a little bit, and here is why. And I want to do this with you (the author)." Not only should authors always have the right to "yes" or "no" to this, but we can see from Mo Yan's example, that they could embrace the process by potentially reworking elements if they agree (as Mo Yan did) that the novel would be better for the revision. The translator's responsibility is to follow the author's desire, but to make sure the author is offered clear choices. There must be trust and collaboration at the heart of the translation process.

This is my feeling that to promote Chinese literature, we probably need a little bit more honesty about the differences between the English and Chinese literatures, and it will be the author's responsibility to respond to this honesty with goodwill understanding that the English market is a hard nut to crack. But it's their choice.

Li: Yes. In China, the promotion of contemporary Chinese literature has partly become a political agenda. Some government sectors like Guojia Hanban (the Beijing-based National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language) put money into it and hire translators. The writers are also glad to be included in these programs. But the outcome oftentimes is disappointing. Your answer really explains this phenomenon that I have always been curious about. You also got involved in this project organized by Hanban and you collaborated with Professor Liu Hongtao at Beijing Normal University to promote Chinese literature in the English-speaking world, right?

Stalling: Yes, I worked closely with Liu Hongtao. For ten years we worked

together in fact on this project, but I should mention that the Hanban was only involved for the first half of this partnership. This was a big part of my education, a real hands-on learning experience. We had a sizable start-up grant from the Hanban for the first publication of the *Chinese Literature Today (CLT)* journal and book series. Since I was then a young scholar, I was all about fidelity. But I understood that there was a deep desire among Chinese authors to find an English audience for their work. I believed then and still believe today in the meaning of promoting Chinese literature as a global good, as Chinese literature conveys a real-world, textured, genuine, and complex portrait of a large percentage of humanity and it is simply another realm of wonderful literature from a purely literary perspective.

We created *Chinese Literature Today (CLT)* to be a beautiful magazine with rich colors and whose layout is also very sophisticated and well designed, and yet I found it still very difficult to get the readers to pay attention to Chinese literature. That's when I started to wonder: if this isn't working, then how do you do it? So it was the struggle to promote *CLT* that led me to establish the Chinese Literature Translation Archive (CLTA) as a way to better understand the actual history of Chinese literature in translation.

Li: Could you say something more about why you started the CLTA?

Stalling: By starting an archive and studying the history of translation, you can read the letters between Mo Yan and Howard Goldblatt. You can add the other agents I have been discussing into your study of how translation works within the larger ecosystem of various publishing industries, and you can start to put all the pieces together. Now we understand what's happening here: Chinese-English Translation Studies was always missing its material history. It never had an archive. So scholars like you and I have nothing to study. We have our minds to study. We have ideas, concepts, and theories. We have the original books and their translated versions which are not the same. So we have to come up with why they are different. So we write a dissertation about why they are different, right? We write a book or an article. We guess. We use theory. But actually, we could have an archive where you have all the draft materials and letters to and from the author, translator, editors, and agents. You can put together the history and get the answers. And the answer is that: translation is not between languages and cultures only, but also between literary and economic systems at scale. So when I was working with Liu Hongtao, that experience taught me to see the problem. But it didn't actually reveal the solution so the Translation Studies and Comparative Literature/Chinese literature community needed new ways to seek out the origin of the problems. Archive work allows us to come up with new tools for scholars to use, so hopefully

sometime in the future young scholars like you can come to Oklahoma and spend time in the archive and read through the Howard Goldblatt papers, or the Wolfgang Kubin papers. Kubin is a translator of mostly poetry into German, but his archive is full of letters from almost all the *Menglong* poets: Bei Dao, Gu Cheng, Shu Ting, Yang Lian, all of these, from the 1980s forward. You can get a lot of background stories about translation through that correspondences and learn about Chinese poetry in Europe at the end of the twentieth century. A decade on, I now definitely think that the answers we are looking for can be found in archival work and new methods drawn from complex systems' theory. Now we can think about agents, not abstract agents as in Bordieu's theory or actor-network theory, but the actual people whose letters and notes provide us with the evidence we need to describe the interactive network of translation. There is almost no scholarship that describes how the American literary market works and how it does or doesn't influence its Chinese counterpart. We need much more archival work to be able to know how the *guanxi* (relationships) works in both systems for instance. And then, when we have these resources, we can better understand the differences between literary expectations for audiences and how to transmit more between them.

Li: Your argument also sheds some new light on Translation Studies, especially the study of literary translation history. The archives enable us to dive into the details. However, these archives are usually precious and rare. It's not so easy to get access to them. Compared with the contemporary archives, for the study of the earlier periods, like late Qing, the archive work could be even harder. Let's move on to the next question:

Congratulations on the publication of your new book *Yinggelishi, Jonathan Stalling's Interlanguage Art*. From Pinying to English *jueju*, I know that you have been developing such interlanguage projects for more than a decade. How has your perception of this interlanguage art evolved over these years?

Stalling: Well, firstly, this book is edited and designed by Professor Chen Wang (Cal State), and I wish he was here to answer your question as the book reflects his reading of my work and there are two other chapters by Timothy Billings and Liu Nian who interpret the work from their respective disciplines too. But of course, the book is focused on what can be called a long learning process for me as an interlanguage worker.

I'm not sure where to begin, but since you mentioned translation in the Qing Dynasty, I suppose it would make sense to start with my work's indebtedness to that period. There is a portion in this book that talks about Li Ruzhen, a Qing fantasy writer. In many ways, my project Pinying was inspired by Li Ruzhen in the sense

that his fantasy writing imagined a kind of interlanguage phonology. We can think of this fiction as presenting a kind of speculative phonology. He was a very well-known phonologist that studied the evolution of Mandarin and wrote a book about the phonology of modern Mandarin – *Lishi Yinjian* (A Phonology Book by Li). In this work, he tried to create a modern mandarin rhyme table that would update the rhyme table tradition of the past to capture the standard pronunciation of Mandarin in the Qing Dynasty. He was an innovator and a real linguist trying to modernize the Chinese sound system. But he was also a fantasy writer, and he wrote about the split-tongue people in his novel, *Jinghua yuan* (Flowers in the Mirror). This "fanshe" (reversed-tongue) people had the most complicated language in the world, yet they figured out how to use Chinese characters to spell their language and by extension any language. He imagined that Chinese people could pronounce any language like magic through a fantasy application of *fanqie,* reverse spelling (using one character to represent only its initial consonant and another character to represent only its vowel or vowel plus final). The book even includes a fantasy rhyme table in it. The idea that you don't need letters and that you could have a modern Chinese language that doesn't Romanize but Sinicizes other languages through *fanqie* is something that inspired me to think: why can't we create a *fanqie*-based writing system for English? For me, the Qing Dynasty is really interesting because you have those cosmopolitan global figures who were not westernized. Their training was not western but their disposition was cosmopolitan. So you have this really unique moment before Hu Shi went to America and others like Lu Xun went to Japan to get educated. This was really a special moment, especially for translation. Liminal figures like Li Ruzhen had a big and in modern terms, strange imagination. They imagined the whole world and asked how China and the Chinese language could fit into that world. But then within a few decades, that space was gone as people started to ask other questions and it was always about: Do we keep the Chinese characters? Or do we throw them away? Do we take one kind of Romanization over another kind of Romanization? No one ever thought about *fanqie* again. That's why I think this is a pretty unique lineage of thinking, and I want to live in this lineage, this kind of speculative linguistics. So English *jueju* and Pinying both came out of this kind of romantic idea, going back in time and moving toward the future from the way of thinking in Qing Dynasty or before as opposed to starting in the 20th century. The last chapter of the book is written by a linguist, Liu Nian, and she writes about our conversations and reflects at some length on the Li Ruzhen's portion. I also talked about Li Ruzhen at the end of my 2015 Ted Talk. Today, we can actually build interlanguage technologies like the one Li imagined by employing

computational algorithms to re-sequence the English language using "fanqie" characters to literally blend languages at the level of the phonetic DNA. That's what Pinying is, and it's something I have really enjoyed working on over the last decade or so. Now you can download the app in the Apple app store by searching for the exact word "Pinying" (don't forget the 'g' at the end).

Pinying transforms Chinese into English by employing *fanqie*, while my other project of teaching English *jueju* moves in the opposite direction by transforming English into Chinese by limiting it to English and by organizing it according to the rules of regulated verse and the rhyme table tradition (parsing its 8000 words into *ping* and *ze* categories, semantic categories for parallelism and so on). While Pinying can solve some problems by disambiguating the sequence of English phonemes in a word, English *jueju* can be used to transfer so much information about Chinese poetics into English. In a few hours, teachers can use the hands-on experience of composing regulated verse in English to impart knowledge most Ph.D. students in Sinology likely have not had hands-on experience doing. This is why I have focused most of my efforts on teaching middle-school and high-school students and teachers as one does not need more than a middle-school education to become proficient at writing English *jueju*. So over the last few years, I have begun to think more about how classical Chinese poetry and regulated verse in particular represent an information system, and so my approach makes it closer to informatics, and I think about how we can use interlanguage to transmit not individual poems through translation, but the whole classical Chinese poetry and poetics system by making English fully compatible with it structurally. Once the English language has been reorganized into one wholly compatible with classical Chinese poetics, we can teach it to students with little effort, and once students can use the form proficiently, then they have a schema upon which to hang correlated ideas from classical Chinese philosophy, politics, aesthetics, ethics, and quite a bit of history and sociology as well. It's basically impossible to impart this information through standard translations as the formal dimensions of regulated verse are rarely marked in English translation.

Li: When discussing how to transmit classical Chinese poetics into English, you mentioned the limitation of translation. My question is: What do you think about the untranslatability of poetry?

Stalling: Untranslatability is an interesting quality to discuss in the context of poetry. The problem is that translatability does not end with the translation but also includes the interpretive horizons of readers. For instance, my tonalized monosyllabic translations of Li Bai's poetry may follow the same patterns as the

Chinese and can therefore be chanted (*yinsong*), but what that pattern "means" or the kinds of associations a reader may feel when hearing them are not likely to be the same as those experienced by a native speaker of Chinese. So we may be able transmit classical Chinese sound sequences and patterns in English but we need to prepare readers by providing them with a larger interpretive schema within which to unpack those sounds. An English speaker who knows how to compose a regulated *jueju* in English will know what the alternation of vowel lengths means when hearing *yinsong* chanting done properly. They will have a framework within which to notice the counterbalance within and between lines and will feel the skill of both the poet and the chanter while those without this preparation may enjoy the poem but will not have the same acuity or intensity of experience. So translatability must be thought of as something larger than the text, something that takes a larger experiential approach to migrating information across languages and time. But for all intents and purposes, however, I do not think that untranslatability is a very useful idea. We just have to continue to expand how we define translation.

Li: I read the translator's note in your translation of a collection of Shizhi's poems named "Winter Sun: Poems by Shizhi". In the note you mentioned "Sounds could hold meanings" and there are "culturally specific ways of hearing", which made the translation of the aural textures of Shizhi's poems impossible. Now do you still think so or do you have some new solutions?

Stalling: I translated a couple of his poems in the beginning and included the rhyme schemes, but I realized as soon as I did it that they sounded less like Chinese Cultural Revolution poems and much more like traditional English poems. Because American readers don't have the red song background, they are not likely to feel the red song patterns that undergird Shizhi's works. Therefore, I felt like I had put Robert Frost's sound into Shizhi's poems. In some way, Shizhi's poems are too easy to translate because his poems are not terribly complex and the rhymes can be pretty easy to create in English. But the effect was undesirable from my point of view because I felt they were not communicating their spirit as I had expected. This was how I felt at the beginning of the process at any rate. I have changed my attitude a bit since then though. Compulsively maintaining the formal quality of his poetry for all those years was a part of his personality in a way that I didn't understand when I was firstly translating them. I think rhyming created a safe space for him, one where the world was ordered outside during the tumult of the cultural revolution or inside the mental hospital where life was very hard. In hindsight, I could have written an essay about this background of the poet's formalism to let readers learn more about the "red songs" that informed his prosody and more about

his mental health to help readers prepare themselves to hear his poems differently. In any case, I made the choice to do free verse as I felt that this was the best way for his poetry to reach a wider English audience. I'm pretty happy with the results even if I may have done it differently today.

Li: My last question is: What suggestions would you give to novice translators, especially literary translators?

Stalling: My advice to Chinese native speaker translators (of Chinese into English) is to workshop their translations. I would suggest that they try to attend American-style creative writing workshops as they are a brilliant training ground for translation as I have already said earlier. If you can participate in a good workshop, then you will meet future collaborators who can also work on your translations with you and help you improve them. And you will likely have a teacher who can help you learn how to network your work better. Only by participating directly in the feedback loops of workshopping can you become familiar with literary English. Translators must have a literary-grade English, and to my knowledge, this is the best (though not only) way to get it. No textbook can tell you how to write well. It's based on an iterative, collaborative practice. This is not about gaining native-speaking proficiency. Literary English is a specialized skill that cleans, smooths, and tightens writing. That kind of English doesn't come out of someone's mouth, even a native speaker's. It doesn't come out of our pens either. It only emerges from someone with this kind of training after they have normalized iterating on the feedback of multiple people. There is no reason why non-native English Speakers can't become the best translators of Chinese into English as long as they put in the workshopping work to gain literary English level skills. I have other advice, but this is the bit that ties together most closely with what we have talked about.

Li: Thanks for taking the time to answer my questions.

Stalling: Thanks to Xuezhao for asking such interesting questions and for having the patience to listen to my super long answers!

Author Profiles:

Jonathan Stalling is the Harold J & Ruth Newman Chair of US-China Issues, and Professor of International and Area Studies as well as Co-Director of the Institute for US-China Issues at the University of Oklahoma, where he directs The Newman Prize for Chinese Literature, The Newman Prize for English *jueju*, and *Chinese Literature and Thought Today*. He is also the founder and Curator of the

Chinese Literature Translation Archive and an Affiliate Professor of English. Dr. Stalling specializes in Comparative US-China Culture, Literature, and Poetics as well as Chinese-English translation and interlanguage studies (and pedagogies). He is the author or editor of eight books and the translator of *Winter Sun: Poetry of Shi Zhi (1966-2005)*, which was a finalist for the National Translation Award.

Xuezhao Li is a PhD student in Chinese Studies at the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures, the Ohio State University. She specializes in the study of literary translation in late Qing and early Republican China and has published journal papers including "On the Translation of *Hong Lou Meng* by Jorge Luis Borges", "Translation and National Literary Style Reforms: An Analysis of the Relay Translation of 'The Californian's Tale'" as well as translations including "Butter Pancakes".

Chinese Studies in the UK: an Interview with Professor Henrietta Harrison

Henrietta Harrison (University of Oxford)

Jane Qian Liu (University of Warwick)

Abstract:

Professor Henrietta Harrison of Oxford talks about the structure of Chinese Studies courses in the UK, their relationship with Modern Languages departments, and the admissions requirements for undergraduate courses in Chinese Studies in the UK. She provides a brief overview of the historical developments of modern Chinese Studies in Oxford. She also discusses the challenges faced by Chinese Studies BA courses in the era of the pandemic.

Jane Qian Liu (hence forth JQL): Please allow me to introduce this project a little bit: It is part of a major grant sponsored by Professor Ji Jin of Suzhou University. The grant's name is "The Dissemination of Sinology Overseas". The sub-project that I participate in is sponsored by Professor Yao Jianbin of Beijing Normal University in Zhuhai. He is Head of the School of Chinese Language and Literature there. I'm going to interview a few Sinologists, translators and editor of Chinese Studies books. You are my first interviewee. Thank you very much for accepting my interview!

I am wondering if you could talk a little bit about the features of Sinology in the UK, because you've been in both the UK Sinological field and the US one. What , do you think, are the main features of UK Sinology?

Henrietta Harrison (henceforth HH): In the UK we have Chinese Studies departments for undergraduates, and because of the nature of the undergraduate education system where students apply to university to study a certain subject, we have more students doing majors in Chinese and studying Chinese as the core of their degree. Whereas when I taught in the US there were huge numbers of students taking Chinese courses, but rather few students doing Chinese or East Asian Languages and Civilizations as their major.

JQL: That actually links to my next question. The majors of Chinese Studies are arranged very differently across the universities in the UK. For instance, at Warwick, Chinese is just one minor or subsidiary that students can select.

HH: Yes, but there were a number of universities in the UK which do have

majors in Chinese. So there's a core group of universities that have a tradition of Chinese studies majors and significant Chinese departments: Oxford, Cambridge, SOAS, Leeds, Durham, Edinburgh, Sheffield, Westminster, and, more recently, Nottingham and several other growing departments... Those are the places that have this tradition and then of course there were other places, like Warwick, which have some Chinese on offer or Chinese as part of other things and that's a slightly different category.

JQL: So I've also noticed that in some universities Chinese studies come under Modern Languages. I didn't realize that before, until I went to Warwick…

HH: But that makes sense because Chinese is a modern language, isn't it?

JQL: Yes, but then traditionally, Modern Languages refer to modern European languages, doesn't it?

HH: Sort of. But it shouldn't really be, should it? Logically, all modern languages should be considered as modern languages.

JQL: That's true. That was Eurocentrism.

HH: Exactly, it was Eurocentrism.

JQL: So do you think it's better for Chinese studies to be under Modern Languages? Or is it better to be under, say, Area Studies?

HH: Well, there aren't usually undergraduate degrees in area studies. So once you're in area studies, you're talking about masters programs. I don't know how they were organized before, but basically traditionally, most Chinese departments in the UK have been in modern language departments. I think. In Oxford it is in Oriental Studies, but not many universities have a faculty of Oriental Studies, because that's a very odd 18th-century idea.

JQL: I see. That's really interesting. So could you talk a little bit about the course of Chinese Studies in undergraduate studies in Oxford?

HH: So our course is very much what we call "front loaded". The students do a lot of Chinese language in the first year: both modern and classical Chinese. They do this in the first year even though some of our students are coming to us with no background in Chinese at all.

JQL: Really?

HH: Did you not know that? (laugh)

JQL: I thought you only admit students with background in Chinese…So how do they get admitted?

HH: So we don't admit native speakers. The Chinese course is designed for learners of Chinese, so some of them will have done GCSE Chinese. But we don't want to only admit people from the few schools which teach Chinese. So some of

our students will have self studied a little and some will have done none at all. And they arrive (JQL: That's really interesting!) And then they learn classical Chinese from scratch in the first year.

JQL: That really surprised me because I thought when you do admissions, the Chinese level would be one of the entry requirements.

HH: No, the Chinese level, that's not one of the entry requirements. The program is designed for complete beginners.

JQL: So what would be the expectations of the qualities of the students if Chinese level is not one of those?

HH: They will be very diligent and hardworking because it takes a lot of work to learn Chinese, doesn't it? And that they will be intelligent and interested.

So we do expect them to have done reading on their own. But Chinese is taught here and I think everywhere in the UK as a subject that students start at university, because only a very small number of schools teach Chinese. There are schools that teach Chinese but they are disproportionately private schools. We don't want to limit ourselves to only taking students from this relatively small group of private schools. In fact, we definitely don't want to only take students from private schools. The vast majority of students in the UK attend state schools. And obviously Oxford should make its opportunities open to them all.

JQL: Right. That makes very good sense. So is this situation the same among Chinese and other languages that students learn from school?

HH: No. Obviously there are several languages which many British students study in school. So for example Spanish is the most popular language in British schools, and then, I think, French. Students who want to study Spanish or French will be expected to come to university with an A-level in that language. But it is the same with other languages that people don't study at school. So Russian or Arabic, or any kind of language that you wouldn't do at school, or even ancient Greek and Latin nowadays. Those are subjects that you start at university.

JQL: So why do these prospective undergraduate students choose Chinese studies? Do you think?

HH: A whole variety of reasons, I remember a nice girl who was studying Chinese at Leeds when I taught there. And she'd been told as a small child that every fourth child in the world was Chinese. She was the fourth child of her parents, so she thought herself as Chinese. Some of young people have become interested in China and Chinese: they visited museums, they've been inspired by looking at Chinese objects. They've read books about China. Sometimes they've traveled to China, maybe they had relative who worked in China.

JQL: That's really good to know. I think now I'm going to bring back the question of Sinology in Oxford, because you did your undergraduate in Oxford, didn't you?

HH: I studied classics and I did it in Cambridge.

JQL: Ah (laugh), I actually did double check, but I did not find this information…. But can you talk a little bit about your memory or your past experience of Chinese Studies in Oxford?

HH: I did my DPhil here in Chinese. (JQL: yes I guess that's what I meant.) I'm not sure it has changed very much, actually. The program is very much the same. Professor Dudbridge very sadly died, he was, you know, such a big feature of the Chinese department for so many years. And he and Mr. Kan set up the… in fact, if you really want to know about Chinese studies in the UK you should talk to Mr. Kan, Mr. Kan Shio-yun, who is our senior language lecture (JQL: He is still teaching here?) He's still teaching here. And he has spent his whole life promoting Chinese in the UK.

JQL: Right. Did he establish Chinese studies here?

HH: No, that dates back to the 19th century, but he established an effective modern language program. Because early Chinese studies at Oxford was only classical. If you think about it in the Cultural Revolution, it wasn't possible for Western students to go to China. David Helliwell, our librarian, used to tell a story of how when he was a student of Chinese at Durham, they asked for courses to study modern Chinese and how to speak it. When they asked the university "Please can we have courses in speaking modern Chinese", the response was "Well, who do you want to speak to?" Obviously there were some very left-wing British people who went to China in that period, but there were very, very few. So then it was after the Cultural Revolution that you get these courses in modern Chinese. So Chinese when it was first taught here at Oxford was all classical.

JQL: Since the Cultural Revolution, there were modern Chinese courses as well.

HH: So when Mr. Kan and Professor Dudbridge, Glenn Dudbridge, arrived, they really got the modern Chinese language program going. There must have been some modern Chinese before that. But they were the people who really established a vibrant modern Chinese language program here.

JQL: Amazing. I never met him before.

HH: You must have met Mr. Kan, you would recognize him. You would. He would be much the best person for you to interview and he'd like to be interviewed because it's his life's work.

JQL: Yes, I'll do that!

JQL: So my last question is that some people think in some UK universities where Chinese Studies used to be a very strong discipline, Chinese studies is disappearing. What do you think of it?

HH: I think that's true. I think there's been a massive drop in applicants the last two years, because it's not possible to do the year abroad. So, obviously, no one wants to do an undergraduate degree if they can't go to China… Our degrees all have a compulsory year abroad (JQL: And students really like it?) It's absolutely crucial to why students are doing the course. And moreover, no one wants to do an online year abroad. So many students during Covid had to do their year abroad sitting at home in their bedrooms online. That was just the worst thing: you're supposed to be in a foreign country, having a wonderful time learning lots about the foreign country. And you're sitting in your bedroom at home. So it was just a disaster. So applications just collapsed. And I think once the year abroad recovers… but at the moment we don't know when China will reopen for short term language students. So it's very difficult. We were lucky to be able to send our students to Taiwan, but lots of other universities haven't been able to arrange that.

JQL: I am aware that you are about to start your class very soon. I'm going to end my interview here. Thank you so much.

HH: Not at all!

Author Profiles:

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Katherine Mezur and Emily Wilcox eds. *Corporeal Politics: Dancing East Asia* (Studies in Dance History). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2020. ISBN: 978-0-472-05455-8. 372 pp.[1]

Liang Luo (University of Kentucky)

Katherine Mezur and Emily Wilcox should be congratulated for not only contributing to but also expanding the field of East Asian dance and performance studies. Their co-edited volume, *Corporeal Politics: Dancing East Asia*, should be recognized as a milestone in this growing field. Emily Wilcox's introduction articulates the importance of "a regional approach" in studying "multiple forms of dance across East Asia," and highlights "corporeal politics" as "a unifying methodology" for the sixteen case studies collected in this truly interdisciplinary, transnational volume, with contributors based across East Asia and the United States (2). In her substantial introduction, Wilcox continues to delve into how critical area studies methodologies and anti-Orientalist approaches could offer insights for East Asian dance studies, from the late 1960s to today.

The introduction further articulates the central methodological tenets of *Corporeal Politics* through invoking "East Asia" as a framing concept, that is, the volume's emphasis on deep historical and cultural contextualization, its use of original sources in East Asian languages, and its following the logic of East Asian history, rather than treating US or European models as universal (7). Based on its respect for and insistence on the linguistic, cultural, and historical specificities of the forms of East Asian dances it examines, *Corporeal Politics* foregrounds the inventiveness of East Asian dancers and choreographers and the creativity and transnational qualities of East Asian dance forms. More importantly, it locates dance within the broader structures of power and knowledge by offering sustained politicized readings of dancing bodies in East Asia in the traditions of critical area studies and critical dance studies.

1 A shorter version of the review is published in *The International Quarterly for Asian Studies*, Vol. 53, No. 1 (2022), https://hasp.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/journals/iqas/article/view/19014.

Radical contextualization is at the heart of the methodology of *Corporeal Politics*. The sixteen chapters of the book are organized into five thematic parts. Part 1, "Contested Genealogies," consists of three chapters on China. In Chapter 1, "Sexuality, Status, and the Female Dancer," Beverly Bossler argues that the association between dance and sexual allure in China and East Asia made female dancers and males who performed feminine roles inherently transgressive figures. This chapter sets the stage for the future chapters, as according to Bossler, "the legacies of imperial Chinese practices and attitudes still influence the social conditions and meanings of dance and dancers in East Asia today" (25).

Chapter 2, "Mei Lanfang and Modern Dance," analyzes Mei Lanfang's cross-gender stage performances and the writings of his close artistic collaborator Qi Rushan. Catherine Yeh argues that dance operated as a modernizing force in Chinese theater. She demonstrates how dance represented a new language of the "civilized" vitality of modernity that could be incorporated into Peking opera (48). In this sense, Peking opera modernity shares the trajectory of modern dance in the US and Europe, borrowing from both foreign cultures and one's own cultural traditions, and distinguishing itself from other forms of cultural hybrids.

In Chapter 3, "The Conflicted Monk," Nan Ma compares two choreographies based on the *Si Fan* (Longing for the Mundane) story, one staged in 1921 by female Japanese dancer Fujikage Shizue and the other in 1942 by male Chinese dancer Wu Xiaobang. Ma argues that Fujikage appropriated the modernity that came to be associated with *Si Fan*'s rebellious theme to make a gesture of "breaking away" from the formal and thematic constraints of traditional Japanese dance, while maintaining its difference from Western dances (68). She continues to examine how Wu Xiaobang's concern about the unity of the mind and the body was ultimately a utopia in the age of mass popular culture, in which the dancing body was irreversibly objectified and commodified (73). Beautifully written, Nan Ma's chapter demonstrates how the same *Si Fan* theme was seen with dynamic differences in the Japanese and Chinese new dance movements, as both new and old, refreshing and decadent, progressive and backward, and liberating and oppressive.

Part 2, "Decolonizing Migration," consists of four chapters. Chapter 4, "Murayama Tomoyoshi and Dance of Modern Times," written by Kazuko Kuniyoshi and translated from Japanese by Yuda Kenji, emphasizes Murayama Tomoyoshi's attempts to approach Western dance as an equal and from a contemporary perspective. Based on his study in Germany, Murayama proposed "conscious constructivism" as a new concept of fine arts. According to Kuniyoshi, this is Murayama's inventive way of presenting fresh and powerful visual materials,

rather than a direct influence of Russian Constructivists (90). By focusing on Murayama Tomoyoshi and his creative synthesis of Western dance, this chapter challenges the accepted view of modern Japanese dance history as a part of the history of the importation of Western culture to Japan.

Chapter 5, "Korean Dance Beyond Koreanness," written by Okju Son, explores how Park Yeong-in, through his Korean-themed *Sinmuyong* dance pieces performed in Europe, negotiated complex political and cultural positions and expressed hybridity in their movement language and characterizations. A central problematic raised by this chapter, relevant to other parts of East Asia and other chapters in this volume, is why Korean *Sinmuyong*, which literally means "New Dance," is paradoxically associated with stylized, reformed, or even "pseudo" Korean dance (102). Okju Son shows that Park utilized Korean and Japanese culture to choreograph a new kind of dance that connected him to his European audiences. In this sense, Park Yeong-in's experiments on Korean dance became a means to modernize dance. His understanding of ethnicity was framed by the discourse of modernity, which enabled him to invent a multidimensional tradition to choreograph dance pieces that spoke to wider audiences.

In Chapter 6, "Diasporic Moves," Emily Wilcox, one of the co-editors of *Corporeal Politics*, asks how the notion of Overseas Chinese identity might change our understanding of the life and work of Dai Ailian. By focusing on Dai Ailian's September 1940 performance in Hong Kong and March 1946 performance in Chongqing, Wilcox shows that Dai's choreography embodied a localized and evolving approach to representing Chinese identity, performing a Sinophone epistemology enabled by her diasporic experiences (117). She borrows from Shu-mei Shih's notion of "multiply-angulaed critique," which acknowledges multiple cultural affiliations while maintaining a critical distance from them, to fruitfully analyze Dai's choreographies as responses to her intercultural experiences.

Chapter 7, "Choreographing Neoliberal Marginalization" by Ji Hyon (Kayla) Yuh, argues that the dramatic and physical representation of non-Korean characters on the musical stage reveals how Koreans understand race and racialized others within the current neoliberal, multicultural political economy in South Korea (136). The chapter compares different representations of two non-Korean characters, Solongos from Mongolia, and Michael from the Philippines in the musical *Bballae* (*Laundry*) and argues that these articulated differences in their choreography ultimately foreshadow their different fates in the story.

Part 3, "Militarization and Empire," consists of another three chapters. In Chapter 8, "Masking Japanese Militarism as a Dream of Sino-Japanese Friendship,"

Mariko Okada delves into the popular Kyoto tradition of *Miyako Odori* and shows how it was turned into a tool for disseminating Japan's imperialist propaganda in the late 1930s. Demonstrating how *Miyako Odori* performances presented idyllic images of Sino-Japanese friendship at a time of Japanese full-scale invasion of China, Okada argues that such dance performances sought to provide audiences with alternative images that coincided with their dreams, which were inevitably shaped both by their own desires and by state propaganda (161).

Echoing Chapter 8, Chapter 9, "Imagined Choreographies" by Tara Rodman, analyzes an unrealized 1944 plan made by modern dancer Itō Michio for a national festival pageant to be held in the Japanese-occupied Philippines. Rodman shows how this plan synthesized Itō Michio's experiences studying in Germany and staging mass performances in the US. The chapter argues that it is precisely by attending to an unrealized project such as the Philippines pageant that a crucial facet of Itō Michio's career becomes visible, that is, choregraphing ways of being in community that could transcend geography, race, and regime (170). The imagined status of Itō Michio's pageant crystalizes the collaboration between an individual's own private dreams and those of the empire, connecting the personal with a broader social and regional community.

In Chapter 10, "Exorcism and Reclamation," Ya-ping Chen reads Taiwanese contemporary choreographer Lin Lee-chen's 1995 work *Jiao* (*Miroirs de Vie*/ Mirrors of Life) as an exorcism of the militarized body and a reclamation of sensuous and empathic life. Chen argues that Lin Lee-chen used elements of indigenous culture and religious rites embedded in local Taiwan history to achieve such a goal. The chapter continues to examine the choreographic embodiments in *Jiao* not only within the framework of the dance's cultural and ritualistic references, but in the context of the corporeal history of twentieth-century Taiwan (186). Ya-ping Chen demonstrates that the corporeal expressions in *Jiao* were therapeutic counteractions to the subjugated and instrumentalized bodies formed by the militarized culture in Taiwan, even when the theme and content of the performance do not address the political history of Taiwanese bodies directly.

Part 4, "Socialist Aesthetics," consists of another three chapters. In Chapter 11, "Choe Seung-hui Between Classical and Folk," Suzy Kim excavates the post-1946 career of Choe Seung-hui, one of the most renowned figures in early twentieth-century East Asian dance. Kim emphasizes the theoretical and artistic depth of Choe Seung-hui's dance writings, choreography, and pedagogy, showing her engagement with transnational socialist culture and her enduring legacy in Korean dance today. The chapter concludes by illustrating how Choe's dilemma

was ultimately resolved through a renewed commitment to folk dance as the quintessential embodiment of both national form and socialist content (205). Echoing Chapters 8 and 9, this chapter further demonstrates how ideological agenda often went hand in hand with individual ambitions, connecting the personal with the political.

Chapter 12, "The Dilemma of Chinese Classical Dance" by Dong Jiang, contends that "the argument over traditional or contemporary is like a ruler or mirror that can provide artists with corrections at the right moment" (237). In Chapter 13, "Negotiating Chinese Identity through a Double-Minority Voice and the Female Dancing Body," Ting-Ting Chang argues that ethnic minority dances such as Yang Liping's make China more visible to the world and that the peacock dance specifically serves to reinforce an imagined transnational Chinese community in an era of globalization (242). Moreover, Chang carefully attends to the economic aspect of cultural exports such as the peacock dance, highlighting how such a cultural form remains tied to Yunnanese identity, bringing financial benefit back to the Yunnan region and its ethnic minority communities.

Part 5, "Collective Technologies," consists of the final three chapters. In Chapter 14, "Cracking History's Codes in Crocodile Time," Katherine Mezur, one of the co-editors of the volume, addresses the work of Ashikawa Yoko and Furukawa Anzu, two Japanese women artists who were central to the domestic and transnational evolution of *butoh* from the 1970s to the 2000s. The chapter considers these artists' contributions to the worlds of *butoh* within the confluences of Japan's gender discrimination in the arts, the US occupation and postwar conditions, and issues of single authorship in collective art making processes (262). Mezur argues that the two women artists' diverse collective performances offer examples of a decolonized corporeal politics embedded in the located temporalities of East Asia. She recognizes the importance of bringing these two women artists forward and into the light of performance historiography, which "should provoke and inspire a reimagination of *butoh*'s genealogy beyond any singular lineage and a recognition of the complexity of their diverse collective art labor" (264). The chapter's emphasis on Ashikawa's and Furukawa's radical kinesthetic imaginary with their bodies, and their performing and choreographing fantastic extensions of (often posthuman) forms drawing on a wide range of cultural resources, will be echoed in Chapter 16, the final chapter of the volume.

In Chapter 15, "Fans, Sashes, and Jesus," Soo Ryon Yoon analyzes the use of dance in anti-LGBTQ activism by right-wing Christian Protestant groups in South Korea, while also considering how queer activists and their allies reappropriate

national dance styles and imbue them with new meanings. The chapter argues that church groups choose a combination of dance and songs not simply to proselytize, but to present their nationalist political ideology with the goal of building their power in and outside of South Korea (285). According to Yoon, the queer parallel to the Christian fan dance demonstrates how a traditional performance emblematic of "Koreanness" comes to produce new affective engagements through a "queer" choreography, while the evangelical activists' singing and dancing become a process of territorializing Christian hegemony and "proper" Koreanness at the expense of queer Koreans.

Chapter 16, "Choreographing Digital Performance in Twenty-First-Century Taiwan" written by Yatin Lin, examines *Huang Yi & KUKA* as a case study to interrogate the production of experimental dances involving collaborations between humans and digital technologies in the context of twenty-first-century Taiwan. Lin considers Huang Yi a digital performance artist representing the dot-com generation. For Lin, Huang's choreographies were based on his broad interests, drawing on his talents in fine arts, dance, photography, videography, and computer and stage technology to map out his own dance-scape. The chapter emphasizes the power of Huang Yi's work from the perspective of "sensorially immersed audiences," as Huang attracts people across disciplines who are willing to engage in his performances with a new corporeal awareness (314).

Centrally concerned with decolonization, the coda of the book, "To Dance East Asia" by Katherine Mezur, one of the co-editors of the volume, suggests that what stands out across the different approaches covered in this volume is "*movement* and its powerful potential for deployment by artists" (318). Mezur drives home the argument that dancers are cultural citizens and agents of power, who, through their dance movements can lead and create social movements. The power of dance could be seen both from its promotors and those who want to put it under control: on the one hand, dancers deploy their bodies to drive action and move the world; on the other hand, the myriad forces that carefully manipulate dancing bodies to their ends, also understand their significance in propelling political and social action.

Corporeal Politics is a richly diverse and thoroughly rewarding read, one that makes the reader stop and reflect. I very much appreciate co-editor Emily Wilcox's emphasis in the introduction on extending the critique of whiteness in US dance studies (8). At the same time, using "decentering whiteness" to frame this volume might not best serve the purpose of centering East Asian dancers and following the logic of East Asian dance histories. As to individual chapters, I find Chapter

7's focus on the South Korean musical *Bballae* less directly related to dance and choreography as it stands now. It might help to discuss the dialectics between choreography (movement) and stillness (lack of movement) early in the chapter. If these central dynamics could be raised early and with more intentionality, it might help to situate this chapter better in the volume. Similarly, to better situate Chapter 12 and its examination of the dilemma of Chinese classical dance in this volume, close reading of specific case studies could have strengthened its thematic cohesion.

The organization of the sixteen-chapter volume into five themes of contested genealogies, decolonizing migration, militarization and empire, socialist aesthetics, and collective technologies is very effective. The substantial introduction and coda powerfully emphasized anti-Orientalist and decolonizing approaches, and convincingly presented "corporeal politics" as a central thematic thread. Such an effective organizational structure could be complemented not only by better articulating the connections among the five thematic sections, but also by signaling alternatively ways of organizing the chapters in the introduction or coda, such as following the themes of dance as ritual (chapters 1, 10, 16), dance as the coming together of individual desires and collective ideologies (chapters 8, 9, 11), and dance as a dialogue between human and non-human bodies (chapters 14 and 16), among other possibilities and configurations.

With its chapter-length, theoretically informed introduction and coda, and sixteen richly referenced chapters based on original research in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and English, *Corporeal Politics* breaks new ground in East Asian Dance Studies through its dual contribution to Dance Studies and East Asian Studies. It should be read by anyone interested in dance history, the East Asian region, its rich transregional and transnational cultural histories, and the politics of dance in East Asia and throughout the world.

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Jie-Hyun Lim and Eve Rosenhaft, eds. *Mnemonic Solidarity: Global Interventions.* Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. 2021. ISBN 9783030576684. 135 pp.

Shaoyu Yang (University of Warwick)

With the influence of globalization, a global memory space in which historical and collective memories of different nations have become entangled across borders, cultures, races, and languages has emerged since the late twentieth century. Outside of Europe, memorial practices and memory contests have also developed. Memories of past trauma in Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and the spaces which connect them are being shaped not only through interactions among the subjects of their own histories but also via conversations with the memories of others around the world. More and more voices of the Global South are heard, and in this context, scholars Jie-Hyun Lim and Eve Rosenhaft launched a new book series *Entangled Memories in the Global South* to explore the past and present of global memory formation in the Global South. *Mnemonic Solidarity: Global Interventions* is the first outcome of this series published in 2021. We can quickly gain a sense of what this volume explores: how to ensure shared and harmonious grounds for memories of different nations and communities that are the opposite of competition, conflict, discrimination, hegemony, and hierarchy in memory space. This is evident from the word "solidarity" in the title, and the subtitle "global interventions" also makes us aware that memories are not merely vernacular and national but have been internationally interwoven and the solidarity between different memories is being promoted or impeded by global forces.

From the beginning of the twenty-first century, "cosmopolitan memory," "multidirectional memory," "transcultural memory," "traveling memory," "prosthetic

memory," "transnational memory," and "entangled memory" [1] are proposed to investigate and reflect on the interconnection, contest, and reconciliation among memories of European and American historical violence and trauma. On this basis, this mnemonic solidarity project is a comprehensive study of a new model of global memory formation. It provides critical discussions on previous models in memory studies and memory practice and pays critical attention to specific memory actors and material processes. It also rethinks the way in which particular memories and memory practices form and may be appropriated by cultural or national memories, and thus exploited in disputes and competitions. In the reading, we can find penetrating insights into the mnemonic solidarity as well as the specific role of the entanglement of memories in memory formation and memory practices. We might be also inspired by those intriguing findings of the changes in global memory formation. The volume suggests new strategies to cope with problems in memory practice such as hierarchies of victimhood and nationalistic and political manipulations of victimhood memory. The volume consists of five chapters in which five scholars investigate the facets, causes, changes, and implications of global memory formation in not only Europe and the US but East Asia and Africa from a variety of interdisciplinary and regional perspectives.

In the first chapter, Lim and Rosenhaft elaborate the differences in the terms "Global South" and "global memory formation" of which they write in this volume. They point out the liquidity and historical construction of the "North" and "South" in global interactions and emphasize the processes and dynamics, rather than the structures, of global memory formation (3). This type of formation co-constructs national memories in the "self- and other-identities of perpetrator and victim nations," rather than simply and casually heaping up the national memories of each person (10). Meanwhile, the formation depends on the interactions between national

1 Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, 'Memory Unbound: The Holocaust and the Formation of Cosmopolitan Memory', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 5 (2002), 87-106; Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age*, trans. by Assenka Oksilloff (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006); Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009); Astrid Erll, 'Travelling Memory', *Parallax*, 17 (2011), 4-18; Astrid Erll, *Memory in Culture*, trans. by Sara B. Young (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Alison Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory: The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004); *Transnational Memory: Circulation, Articulation, Scales*, ed. by Chiara de Cesari and Ann Rigney (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2014); Gregor Feindt, Félix Krawatzek and others, 'Entangled Memory: Toward a Third Wave in Memory Studies', *History and Theory*, 53 (2014), 24-44; *Entangled memories: Remembering the Holocaust in a Global Age*, ed. by Maruis Henderson and Julia Lange (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2017).

and local memories, official and vernacular memories (10). Lim and Rosenhaft insist on two defining features of global memory formation to assist us in understanding this new model. The first is the complex interplay between the de-territorialization and re-territorialization of memories, and the second is the ongoing decentralization of European experience in global articulations of trauma (4, 7). We could first gain simple sense of de-territorialization and re-territorialization through "a degree of randomness" and "discursive nexus" in the way different pasts are remembered, and "heightened competition among the parties to contending national memories" which Lim and Rosenhaft succinctly explain here (4). We then could have a simple understanding of the background of the European experience and the possibility of its continuing decentralization before going deep into each scholar's chapter later.

In Chapter 2, Jie-Hyun Lim amplifies the re-visioning of Holocaust memory which has been increasingly used as a model in worldwide memory practices as well as in the articulation of historical trauma. He explores the global mnemonic confluence and entanglement and the possibilities for mnemonic solidarity from a postcolonial perspective through three historic traumas: the Holocaust, colonial genocide, and the Stalinist terror. He specifically examines the interaction of the (post)colonial and the Holocaust memory of Poles, Jews, and Blacks, the connection between Auschwitz's and Hiroshima's victimhood, and the transpacific migration of the memory of Korean comfort women. Lim argues that the entanglement of victimhood claims creates a global memory formation and emphasizes the dynamic process of that entanglement (18). We can see the specific interactions between the global mnemonic pattern and vernacular mnemonic subtleties, for instance, the competition between collective guilt for antisemitism and colonial innocence to offer a narrative template for post-communist collective memory revealed in the debate over the refugee question in Poland, or the continuity of the spirit of solidarity between African Americans and Jews shown in the Yiddish version of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the work of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and thus understand how the global memory is forming or being formed. Besides the entanglement mentioned above, the memory of Korean comfort women has migrated into the global memory space, specifically interwoven with other East Asian memories in the US. This globalization of the comfort women relates to mnemonic solidarity. Nevertheless, what we should notice is the vulnerability of mnemonic solidarity, which can be dominated by the anguish of competition and be battered by nationalistic, political manipulation (37-38). Lim also found the complexity of the Auschwitz-Hiroshima connection indicated in, for example, the nearly opposite opinions of two Japanese memory

agents, Nakatani Takeshi, and Hirano Yumie, on the mnemonic connectivity and historical comparability of these two places. In addition to this, another instance is the implicit comparison between Auschwitz and Nagasaki and the reappearance of redemptive discourse which has occurred in the African diaspora's invocation of the Jewish exodus in Nagai Takashi's funeral oration for Catholic *hibakusha* in A-bomb. However, following Lim's critical analysis of the nationalist appropriation and ideological instrumentalization of Holocaust memory in Japan and Poland, we might need to rethink the concept of "cosmopolitan memory" that connects Auschwitz and Hiroshima (31). At the end of the chapter, Lim puts forward "critical relativization" and "radical juxtaposition" as remedies for the political instrumentalization of memories, mnemonic nationalism, the hegemony and centrality of universal memories, and the hierarchies of victimhood (19). These strategies would protect the outcomes of mnemonic solidarity and urge us to reflect on the relationship between other victims and our own victimhood.

Chapter 3 turns to the Global North. Eve Rosenhaft investigates how the discourses of human rights, racism, and antisemitism that appeared in Europe and the US after the end of the Second World War have been affected by memory conflicts in the twenty-first century (46). In response to the competition, animosity, stagnation of mnemonic solidarity, and many other challenges in multicultural Europe, Rosenhaft proposes "post-Holocaust" and "post-imperial" melancholia, and argues that these two forms of nostalgia are the fusion of the current memory wars (47). For example, as Rosenhaft suggests in her discussions of "white Christian Europe" and antisemitism, the Eastern European rejection of refugees might be explained as a kind of post-imperial melancholia, and post-Holocaust melancholia could inflame diasporic Jewish anxieties about antisemitism (64, 68). As the changes in mobilization of diasporas bring new interactions between memory communities, Rosenhaft goes on to suggest that "this unpicking of the materiality of cultural memory is key to understanding the prospects for mnemonic solidarity" (47-48). Rosenhaft then explores the reconfiguration of Afro-diasporic memory space and its results through three Black Holocaust fictions: John A. Williams' *Clifford's Blues*, Esi Edugyan's *Half-Blood Blues*, and Bernice McFadden's *The Book of Harlan*, as well as conversations among African-Americans, Africans, Afropeans and other non-American Blacks. She found that the Black writers and filmmakers inside and outside the United States all use some of the same "morphemes of memory" such as jazz and concentration camp in their works, but their use has different effects (50). African-American writers place African-American men in Nazi concentration camps and the African-American perspective still remains central, which weakens

the reality of Black victimhood in Nazi Germany although the relationship between the narratives of Afro-diaspora and the Holocaust has been built, and a pessimistic vision of Black community is shown in their novels. However, Black writers outside the US place Black Europeans in Holocaust history and reflect on the issues of race and identity specific to themselves, and give optimistic ends to their novels. Rosenhaft proposes that the creation of those fictions is associated with the shifting balance between optimism and pessimism in Black memory communities (50). What might give us a more straightforward sense of antisemitism and memory conflicts is Rosenhaft's own encounters with two accusations of antisemitism leveled against the exhibitions which she curated. However, the face-to-face conversation between Jewish and Roman survivors organized by Rosenhaft, and its positive effects in mutual recognition and cooperation still make us aware of the importance of a shared knowledge and mutual understanding of different pasts and offer an optimistic view of mnemonic solidarity among different memory communities which usually compete for victimhood status.

Chapter 4 shifts our attention back to the comfort women issue previously discussed in the third section of Lim's chapter. Compared to Lim's focus on the transpacific migration of the memory of comfort women, Carol Gluck moves to examine this issue from different aspects in her chapter. Gluck makes a transtemporal and transregional comparation and clearly demonstrates to readers how the ideas, norms, and practices of public memory increasingly changed in the process of the visibility and audibility of the comfort women's figures and voices on global, social platforms. She analyzes the changes in five dimensions of "global memory culture": law, testimony, rights, politics, and responsibilities (76). We can first comprehend the alteration in the legal and judicial courses coping with past injustice in national courts, international laws and legal tribunals, and civil trails via the trial of the Class A war criminals in Tokyo as well as the 1991 class-action lawsuit filed by three Korean former comfort women. Gluck then demonstrates to us the role of witness and the changes in victim's claims through the testimony of Kim Hak-sun who is the first Korean comfort woman to publicly narrate her story as well as the claims for recognition, education, and public apologies in the testimonies of other former comfort women. Regarding the alterations in geopolitical practices in treating past wrongs as well as in the responsibility of states, societies, and individuals for traumatic pasts, we might grasp these two dimensions through the statements and actions of the leaderships and nationalistic memory politics in China, South Korea, and Japan, as well as the attitudes and reactions of young people in these three countries to Japan's colonial rule and aggression

in the past. Aided by the abundant cases and instances provided by Gluck here, we can thoroughly perceive how public memory changed. Gluck concludes that what bring the comfort women issue to global vision are "the civil courage of the former comfort women" and "the norms and practices of the global memory" (103). When reading the last words of the chapter, we could not but reflect on what our own nations, societies, and individuals should do for the former comfort women to prevent similar injustice, and we could still be positive to expect a "maltreated women against a maltreating world" (104).

In the final chapter, Lauren van der Rede and Aidan Erasmus use two "mnemonically disobedient objects" in Africa as cases to discuss how the Europe-centered memory and trauma templates are affected and how to democratize a global mnemoscape (108). One is the Red Terror in Ethiopia, and another is States of Emergency during Apartheid in South Africa. In the case of the Red Terror, van der Rede and Erasmus demonstrate the difference between the definitions of "genocide" and "terror" which was not very explicit in the Genocide Convention and the Roman Stature but was clearly elaborated in the Ethiopian Penal Code of 1957 afterwards. From the case of South Africa, we might be able to grasp a temporality of state violence and the ways in which the small wars of empire which form the "total war" in South Africa are remembered (122). Considering these two examples, van der Rede and Erasmus point out that the need for mnemonic solidarity can be "a call for the democratization of the global mnemoscape" (107). If we intend to commence the process of this democratization, we must pay attention to and cope with the "punctures" which might disillusion the people who seek discourse of memory that might embrace the world via a different type of solidarity (107). Besides, van der Rede and Erasmus regard Africa as a concept and methodology rather than a cartographic and geological position, and propose aurality, "hearing and listening," as a way to memory studies to criticize the liberal universalism in memory studies (115). They explain that aurality can complicate any universal relation to the past and the listening that the legal hearing enables is a potential for admitting and accepting mnemonic legacies of violence (116-117). Responding to the call for mnemonic solidarity means that we must have be able to hear of and listen to the people who have been influenced by the global mnemoscape (107). What these two examples uncover to us is that approaching mnemonic solidarity might require us to focus on "the notion of the apparatus: juridical, imperial, mnemonic, disciplinary, technological, or otherwise" (128). We need to explore and reflect on the mnemonic subjects which are not included into the global mnemoscape, such as the Ethiopian Red Terror, which is being forgotten by the discourse of genocide (128).

This volume is well-structured and internally coherent. The authors of different chapters refer to one another to demonstrate their ideas or complement the analysis of the relevant memory practices and disputes, which reflects both the mnemonic entanglement of different nations and regions and the academic interrelation in memory studies. This assists readers to understand some historical memory issues, references, or authorial arguments that are unfamiliar to them more clearly, deeply, and critically. The readers who are concerned about, active in, or studying issues of memory in the Global South will learn more about the development and theory of memory studies as well as the details of those previously suppressed and inaudible memories and the changes in the mnemonic interactions among Asia, Africa, and the world from numerous citations and careful inclusion of various cases and instances in the book. *Mnemonic Solidarity* deserves a wider readership and will prove to be equally beneficial to other academic fields apart from memory studies such as history, politics, sociology, law, and literature.

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Maghiel van Crevel and Lucas Klein eds. *Chinese Poetry and Translation: Rights and Wrongs.* Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2019. eISBN: 978-90-485-4272-7. 350 pp.

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Translating poetry is a widely acknowledged bugbear, if not something unachievable. Translating poetry between two languages with huge linguistic and cultural distances even adds to its difficulty. The notorious complexity of the Chinese language makes translation activities into and from it one of the most challenging tasks. Nevertheless, the many contributors to the groundbreaking anthology *Chinese Poetry and Translation* have bravely taken on this challenge and revealed to us that behind the arduousness of this task lies a fruitful outcome: a fascinating diversity of perspectives for us to view not only literature-related activities, but probably all aspects of the human society at large.

As its editors Maghiel van Crevel and Lucas Klein explain, the anthology is compiled around three key concepts: poetry, translation, and Chinese, any one of which would fit for a chunky monograph (or many monographs). As pointed out by Crevel and Klein (14), in Chinese culture, the number three possesses special meaning. In Daoism, the Dao has given birth to One, the One has given birth to Two, the Two to Three, and it is the Three that gives birth to everything. In this sense, Three is magically interrelated with the Universe. This embodiment echoes with Crevel and Klein's ambitious aspiration for the full coverage of discussions relevant to the three concepts, regardless of subgenre, historical scope, language orientation, or methodological foundation.

The wide coverage of topics unsurprisingly causes trouble when it comes to grouping the articles. To cope with that, Crevel and Klein once again resort to the magic number: the anthology is divided into three parts, respectively focusing on the translator's task, theoretics, and impact. "Part One: The Translator's Task" comprises four articles, starting with Jenn Marie Nunes's rationalization of her somewhat radical renditions of the works of China's phenomenal female poet Yu

Xiuhua. She is in a disadvantaged position — from a rural area, poorly educated, and physically challenged — but she defiantly writes to challenge the patriarchal hierarchy that causes her sufferings. In this case, the translator deliberately adopts a queer-feminist approach that evokes discomfort from the audience to foreground the existence of the translator, and to give recognition to the vulnerability and marginalized identity of the author. Following Nunes's evocative confession, Eleanor Goodman introspects how her own encounters with English poets have shaped her translation of Chinese migrant worker poets Zheng Xiaoqiong, Wang Xiaoni, and Zang Di. The next two chapters divert to classical poetry: Joseph R. Allen elaborates his explanatory translation of *Shijing* by means of multivocal commentaries, with the purpose of overcoming the spatial and temporal distances and bringing as much of the subtlety of the book to the audience as possible. Wilt L. Idema puts emphasis on the formality of classical Chinese poetry, addressing issues in its translation that can be applicable to any language with the example of a poem by Tang Dynasty poet Han Shan.

"Part Two: Theoretics" consists of five chapters. In Chapter 5, Nick Admussen challenges the traditional textual-equivalence regulation of translation and points out that the interrelationship between the source and target texts could transcend words and become physical and emotional. Next, Jacob Edmond uncommonly addresses the importance of theory in translating poetry, exemplifying with the influence of Russian Formalism on Bei Dao's translation of Boris Pasternak. Zhou Min investigates the translation of Chinese *ci* poetry, a kind of classical lyric poetry, and argues that different from the usual lack of narrativity in lyrics, the translation of *ci* requires the translator to mentally immerse into the text and construct his or her own narrative, which can serve as the evidence of the translators' subjectivity. Nicholas Morrow Williams zooms in on the contradictory meanings of the very title of *Li Sao*, suggesting that the translation should preserve the polysemy of the title. Finally, Chapter 9 touches on both the modern and classical poetry of China. By revealing the intertextual authenticity in both ancient *Shijing* and contemporary migrant worker poetry, Lucas Klein explores the meaning of translation in a wider sense.

"Part Three: Impact" comprises six articles. First, Liansu Meng reveals the female translator Chen Jingrong's agency in her renditions of Baudelaire in an eco-feminist way, which is ahead of her time. Christ Song follows with an examination of the translations of Western surrealist poet Ronald Mar in Hong Kong and how the translation is intertwined with the evolving social context. Tara Coleman then directs attention to the background of Taiwan, examining its modernist

post-war poetry, which is characterized by the juxtaposition of images from the perspectives of intralingual, interlingual, and cultural translation. Following Meng and Coleman's contribution, Joanna Krenz delves into the discourse on poetry and poetics in mainland China today through the polemic among Wang Jiaxin, Bei Dao, and Yi Sha on the translation of Celan. Moreover, Rui Kunze explores the role of trauma in the translation of Liao Yiwu's poem. Maghiel van Crevel then wrap up the book with an exhaustive analysis of the Chinese-to-English translation of multiple author poetry anthologies.

The brief summary of the fifteen articles in the anthology indicates that it is indeed an amazingly comprehensive selection, covering translations both in and from the Chinese language, Chinese poetry from different historical periods and regions, contributors of varying ethnicities, and a wide range of topics. This makes the book an ideal introductory and informative volume for those seeking an introduction to Chinese poetry and/or its translation. The avant-garde studies also bestow on the book high reference value for academics. My only quibble would be the organization of these articles. It seems the tripartite scheme did not work out well. It is, however, doubtful that a perfect categorization scheme exists. Considering the complexity of each focus, the articles under each topic seem to lack a close connection with each other. Take Part One, for example. The abrupt jump from modernity (Chapters 1 and 2) to antiquity (Chapters 3 and 4) may cause bewilderment and affect the reading experience. Finally, it should be noted that, although the editors claim that the concept of "China" in this book is more of a linguistic and cultural presence than a "political entity" (14), the topic selection still does not completely dispense with the Western lens. Readers must therefore approach the text with a dialectical view.

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