

UC Santa Barbara

UC Santa Barbara Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

Self-Translation as Method: Modern Sinophone Self-Translators and their Transmediated Afterlives

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/0w17x548>

Author

Friedman, Ursula Deser

Publication Date

2024

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Santa Barbara

Self-Translation as Method:
Modern Sinophone Self-Translators
and their Transmediated Afterlives

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies

by

Ursula Deser Friedman

Committee in charge:

Professor Hangping Xu, Chair

Professor Xiaorong Li

Professor Dominique Jullien

June 2024

The dissertation of Ursula Deser Friedman is approved.

Xiaorong Li

Dominique Jullien

Hangping Xu, Committee Chair

May 2024

Self-Translation as Method: Modern Sinophone Self-Translators
and their Transmediated Afterlives

Copyright © 2024

by

Ursula Deser Friedman

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation is a labor of love to the modern and contemporary Sinophone self-translators whose work has inspired and unsettled me the most. I would like to extend my profound appreciation to Eileen Chang, Kenneth Pai (Bai Xianyong), Ha Jin (Xuefei Jin), and Regina Kanyu Wang for transcreating the bliss and suffering of the human condition, and to the latter three living writers for graciously responding to my interview questions.

This project would not have been possible without the tireless guidance of my academic advisor, UC Santa Barbara Professor Hangping Xu. Dr. Xu encourages me to temper critique with compassion, authorial agency with historical context, and affective aesthetics with systemic rationalization. I am also deeply indebted to my 2019-2020 academic advisor, the eminent poet and University of California, Santa Barbara Professor Emeritus, Dr. Kuo-ching Tu, for inducting me into the field of Taiwanese literary studies, and for responding to my many queries about his own self-translation practices. I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to Professor Xiaorong Li, whose transnational approach to gender studies, pioneering research on imperial Chinese women poets' literary production, and morale support during the Covid-19 pandemic have proved invaluable on my dissertation journey. I could not have undertaken this project without the wise guidance of Comparative Literature Professor Dominique Jullien, who encouraged me to take comparative paths less traveled, consider translation and comparative literature praxis in a global light and implement my research findings into translation pedagogy design. I am also extremely thankful to Prof. Thomas J. Mazanec for steering me towards UC Santa Barbara's Kenneth Pai collections and to Professor Katherine Saltzman-Li for finding a way for Pai's "Twinkling Stars" to illuminate the "Winter Nights". Without Alyson Alexander, none of this

would have ever been possible. Thank you for your boundless integrity and generosity!

I am deeply grateful to the University of California, Santa Barbara Library's Department of Special Collections, particularly university archivist Matt Stahl, former UCSB East Asian Studies Librarian Cathy Chiu, and reference specialist Raul Pizano, for permitting me to peruse Kenneth Pai's handwritten manuscripts for weeks on end, and to UCSB's East Asian Studies Librarian Yao Chen for providing rare Chinese Studies material. I would also like to extend special thanks to the University of Southern California's Special Collections archive specialists for enabling me to access Eileen Chang's written manuscript of "She Said Smiling". I am deeply grateful to Ms. Tang Li (李唐), Head of the East Asian Library and Chinese Studies Librarian at the University of Southern California, for setting this manuscript aside for dedicated scholarly perusal, and to Nicole Huang of the University of Hong Kong for sharing her initial impressions of the manuscript's discovery. My sincerest thanks go to Isabel Planton, the Public Services Librarian at Indiana University, Bloomington, for kindly coordinating my November 2022 visit to view the Papers of Suzanne Jill Levine (1952-2000) archives at the Lilly Library. I am also deeply appreciative of the Special Collections librarians at National Taiwan University, particularly the Special Collections Handwritten Manuscript Senior Specialist, Cai Pi-fang (蔡碧芳), who kindly allowed me to access a slew of Pai's handwritten letters and manuscripts at short notice. Thank you to Lindsay Moen, Lead Public Services Librarian of the Special Collection and Archives Department of the University of Iowa Libraries, for unearthing a microfilm version of Pai Hsien-yung's Master's Thesis, *Six Stories* (1965). I would also like to thank UCSB Professor Emerita Suzanne Jill Levine, a literary translator and creative thinker of the highest order.

I am also highly indebted to Margarita Dore and Rainier Grutman, editors of the 2022

volume *Humor and Self-Translation*, for their painstaking comments and suggestions on the Ha Jin case study, an expanded version of which appears in Chapter 4. Thank you to my colloquium members, classmates, and seminar instructors Lawrence Venuti, Galin Tihanov and David Damrosch at the Harvard Institute for World Literature (IWL, Mainz, Germany, July 2022) for encouraging me to consider the intersections between exile literature, global politics, and World Literature. I would also like to acknowledge the generous financial support provided by UCSB's Center for Taiwan Studies (CTS), without which I could never have completed the Pai research. It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the generous China Understanding and Peace Fund Research Accelerator Award, which enabled me to finish my dissertation ahead of schedule. UCSB's Confucius Institute and the Graduate Center for Literary Research (GCLR) also provided generous research funding; I am deeply indebted to professors Sabine Frühstück, Mayfair Yang, and Sven Spieker of the CTS, Confucius Institute, and GCLR, respectively, for their constant support of my research.

I would like to end by thanking my students for teaching me to venture beyond my comfort zone, and my parents, brother, extended family, and partner, TT, for always having my back. Thank you to Li-Ting Chang for helping me decipher a portion of Pai's drafts and letters. Thank you to my colleagues and classmates for sticking with me through thick and thin: Yiming Ma, Susie Wu, Xu Teng, Kaitlyn Ugoretz, Wendy Sun, Jaeyeon Jeon, Wandu Wang, Sophia Shi, Liu Yan, Soohyun Lee, Patrick Fryberger, Xinci Fu, Jin Young Lim, Carl Gabrielson, Hanne Deleu, Raymond Chung, Meagan Finlay, Xinci Fu, Sabra Harris, Natalya Rodriguez, Liang Yuan, Winni Ni, Shixing Lin, Cai Qiaoyu, Alexander Serrano, Jiyao Tang, and Kevin the Skeleton. I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my (great-)grandparents, who kindled my love of literature and taught me how to keep an open mind and an open heart.

VITA OF URSULA DESER FRIEDMAN

MARCH 2024

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts in East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies and Hispanic Studies, Oberlin College, January 2014 (summa cum laude)

Master of Arts in Translation & Interpretation, Beijing Foreign Studies University, July 2015

Doctor of Philosophy in East Asian Languages & Cultural Studies, Emphasis in Translation Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara, June 2024 (expected)

PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT

2014-2015: Oberlin Shansi Fellow to Beijing Normal University

2017-2019: Lecturer in Chinese-English Translation, Graduate School of Translation and Interpretation, Beijing Foreign Studies University

2019-2022: Teaching Assistant, Associate, and Reader, Department of East Asian Languages & Cultural Studies, Religious Studies and Comparative Literature, UC Santa Barbara

PUBLICATIONS

“At Home on the Road: A Conversation between Ha Jin and Ursula Deser Friedman.” In *The Journal of Literary Multilingualism* (2024): 1-10.

“From *Traduttore, Traditore* to *Traduttore, Creatore*: Creative Subversion in the Self-Translations of Ha Jin and Pai Hsien-yung.” In *Humor and Self-Translation* [Topics in Humor Research 11]. Margherita Dore, ed. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2022, 63-86.

Yao Bin and Ursula Deser Friedman (2022). Zhang Xiping, et al., [A Study on the Influence of Ancient Chinese Cultural Classics Abroad in the Twentieth Century](#) [20 世纪中国古代文化经典在域外的传播与影响研究], Springer Nature.

“[Creative Subversion in Hao Jingfang’s *Shengsi Yu* \(生死域\)/Limbo](#).” *Translation Review*, vol. 110, no. 1, 2021, 48-62.

Ursula D. Friedman (July 2020). Hao Jingfang 郝景芳, “[Limbo](#)”/生死域 [novelette]. MCLC Resource Center (Modern Chinese Literature and Culture).

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: East Asian Languages & Cultural Studies

Studies in Modern & Contemporary Chinese Literature & Film with Professor Hangping Xu

Studies in Gender and Sexuality in (Pre-)Modern China with Professor Xiaorong Li

Studies in Theories and Histories of Comparative Literature, World Literature and (Self-) Translation Studies with Professor Dominique Jullien

ABSTRACT

Self-Translation as Method: Modern Sinophone Self-Translators and their Transmediated Afterlives

by

Ursula Deser Friedman

How do Kenneth Pai, Eileen Chang, Ha Jin, and Regina Kanyu Wang reinvent language and culture in the process of transcreating their own source texts? In this dissertation, I investigate the cultural politics and defamiliarizing aesthetics of (self-) translation and transmediation, two literary and transmedial phenomena that underpin intercultural communication worldwide. This project interrogates the ways in which our hypermediated world is constantly re-mediated and re-circulated in orality, film, theater, television, music, and digital media. I use self-translation and (self-)transmediation as tools for re-examining hybrid identity construction in the context of Sinophone creators who navigate between multiple languages, media, and cultures. This project analyzes (self-) translated texts, their transmediated iterations, and the politics of those texts' circulation beyond their immediate discourse communities. My project is the first to examine longitudinal case studies of multicultural Sinophone writers who practice self-translation, transwriting, and transmediation as organic forms of artistic transcreation. I posit self-translation and transmediation as reparative forces that fuel self-reflection, trauma

reconciliation, and intercultural dialogue worldwide. By situating the practice of self-translation within the circumstances of diasporic subjectivity, this project lends textually situated historicization to Sinophone interventions. By examining the ways in which the émigré Sinophone authors Kenneth Pai (Pai Hsien-yung 白先勇, b. 1937), Ha Jin (哈金, pen name for Xuefei Jin 金雪飞, b. 1956), Eileen Chang (张爱玲, b. 1920), and Regina Kanyu Wang (王侃瑜, b. 1990) *defamiliarize* their own texts and memories through reader-enabled catharsis, I envision self-translation as a trauma reconciliation technology that (re-)inscribes national trauma narratives under individual affective structures, and vice-versa. These authors' creative processes of self-transmediation, spanning multiple decades, languages, genres, and mediums, reveal self-translation as a hermeneutic process of cultural transcreation that posit source and translated text as a pair of mutually refracting mirrors.

Displaced geographically, temporally, and linguistically from their source material, self-translators are uniquely positioned to ferry meanings across diverse languages, mediums, and cultural contexts. I reconceptualize Sinophone literature as encompassing Chinese (Mandarin, Taiwanese Hokkien, and so forth) and Chinglish renderings in oral, written, translated, and transmedial forms, thus positing the Sinophone as a translingual epistemology that rewrites Chineseness from the margins. I propose the Shadow Sinophone framework as encompassing hybrid, multilingual, and transmedial literature, especially countercanonical literature deliberately created in a subversive, deviant, queer, and jarring style. The works I examine *democratize* language and culture by creating a liminal “transwriting zone” bridging heterogeneous cultures and temporalities. Ultimately, Sinophone self-translators and transcreators enrich and challenge the literary canon from the periphery, forging *transwriting* zones that intervene in the monoliths of homogenized English and Mandarin globalese.

NOTE ON TRANSLATION AND ROMANIZATION

Most of the Chinese terms appearing in this dissertation have been Romanized in Mandarin pinyin. Taiwanese proper names, which are rendered in the Wade-Giles system (for example, Pai Hsien-yung, Tu Kuo-ch'ing, Pai Ch'ung-hsi, and Hsu Pei-hung), are one exception. Another exception are personal names which follow individual preferences, as in the case of Eileen Chang (rather than Zhang Ailing) and Pai Hsien-yung, who goes by Kenneth Pai in English. Chinese individuals' names are traditionally Romanized in traditional Chinese fashion, with the surname appearing first, unless the individual prefers the conventional English-language order (i.e., Billy Chang, Eileen Chang, and Regina Kanyu Wang). Some artists renowned in both mainland China and Taiwan are referred to both in Wade-Giles and pinyin, as in the case of Director Tsao Jui-yuan, who also goes by Cao Ruiyuan, and Pai Hsien-yung, also known as Bai Xianyong. To avoid ambiguity, character names are provided both in pinyin and Wade-Giles, whenever possible (i.e., A-Feng/Phoenix Boy and A-Long/Dragon Prince). Chinese characters are rendered in their traditional form. Source texts are provided for Chinese-language passages whenever possible, though many have been relegated to the footnotes to conserve space. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are my own. Though it would be remiss to categorize these translations as either "literal" or "free", "domesticated" or "foreignized" per se, I have attempted to capture both letter and spirit, with an emphasis on capturing colloquial nuance.

LIST OF FIGURES

- Figure 1:** A typewritten image excerpted from Kenneth Pai’s “Winter Nights”, edited by Patia Yasin and Kenneth Pai, with edits in red by executive editor George Kao.....64
- Figure 2:** The image on the left depicts Wu Zhongtian (the actor playing Wang Kui-long) and Billy Chang (Zhang Yijun) (playing the role of A-Feng) performing an aerial dance duet in the 2014 stage play production of *Crystal Boys*. The righthand image depicts Billy Chang soaring on stage during the February 7, 2014 inaugural performance of *Crystal Boys*.....78
- Figure 3:** In the lefthand image, Mark Padmore (left, playing von Asenbach and Leo Dixon (right, in the role of Tadzio) perform in Benjamin Britten’s operatic adaptation of *Death in Venice*, adapted from Thomas Mann’s novella. The righthand image depicts Tadzio performing during a 2019 production of *Death in Venice*.....82
- Figure 4:** A chart depicting Kenneth Pai’s textual and intersemiotic adaptations of *Crystal Boys/Niezi* from 1971 to 2020.....84
- Figure 5:** Left to right, top to bottom: 1. Pai’s handwritten manuscript (version 1) of *Mantianli liangjingjing de xingxing*; 2. 1992 cover art for *Niezi* (calligraphy by Dong Yangzi, Mandarin version, cover image reproduced for the 2017 Hong Kong version); 3. Flyer for the 2003 T.V. series; 4. 1990 *Crystal Boys* cover; 5. 1995 *Crystal Boys* cover; 6. 2014 *Niezi* stage play flyer; 7-8. Two posters designed for the 2020 stage play remake.....87-88
- Figure 6:** Top: Aerial dance rehearsal for the *Niezi* stage play: Billy Chang (Zhang Yijun) and Zhou Xiao’an play Dragon Prince and Phoenix Boy, respectively; Bottom: Billy Chang and Zhou Xiao’an fly alongside one another in the 2022 production of *Niezi* as rainbow confetti showers over them.....112-113
- Figure 7:** Lu Yilong (陸一龍) plays the role of A-Qing’s father in the 2020 stage play production, banishes his son Li Qing after receiving a report that he was caught in a sexual act with his lab supervisor: *Get the fuck out of my house and don’t come back!*118
- Figure 8:** A-Qing is inducted into the New Park community. His companions strip him of his schoolboy uniform and clad him in a close-fitting white silk shirt, before hoisting him onto their shoulder and conducting an elaborate series of pirouetting dance duets.....120-121
- Figure 9:** Left (34:45): Dragon Prince confronts Phoenix Boy by the Lotus Pond. Right (34: 52): Dragon Prince brandishes a knife, which gleams in the moonlight as thunder peals above.....127
- Figure 10:** *Left:* In Cao Ruiyuan’s television series adaptation, Tu Zonghua (庾宗华), in his role as Wang Kui-long, embraces a dying A-Feng (played by Ma Zhi-Xiang (馬志翔)). As A-Feng collapses with Wang’s knife in his chest, a smile of rapture illuminates his face; *Right:* In the 2014 stage play production, A-Feng, played by Zhang Yi-jun (張藝君), collapses in

the arms of Wang Kui-long (played by Wu Zhongtian 吳中天), who has just plunged a knife into his chest.....129

Figure 11: *Left:* Phoenix Boy collapses in a pool of blood after being stabbed by his lover Dragon Prince (image from the 2014 production); *Right:* The lighting blazes purple as a sobbing Dragon Prince embraces Phoenix Boy as the background glows with the image of interlaced lotus blossoms behind the Lotus Pool.....132-133

Figure 12: *Left:* The female opera star Tang Mei-yun (唐美雲, center) plays Yang Jinhai (楊金海) in the 2014 stage production of *Niezi*, accompanied by Wei Qunhan (魏群翰) as Shi Xiaoyu (飾小玉); *Right:* Tang Meiyun gesticulates while conversing with Little Jade....139

Figure 13: *Left:* The male actress Liao Yuanqing 廖原慶 stars as Yang Jinhai 楊金海 in the 2020 stage production of *Niezi* 孽子, accompanied by the boys of Taipei's New Park; *Right:* Liao, bearing the same fan as Tang in the 2014 production, converses with Little Jade....140

Figure 14. *Left:* A half-smile graces Eileen Chang's face. Zhang Ailing circa 1966; *Right:* Da Vinci, L. (1506). *Mona Lisa*, Musée du Louvre, Paris, France.....145

Figure 15. A partial list of Eileen Chang's translations of her own and others' works.....151

Figure 16. Patent images for Lin Yutang's Chinese typewriter; U.S. Patent #2,613,795...178

Figure 17. *Left:* Cover art from the July 2012 edition of *Luodi* (落地), published by Jiangsu Literature and Art Publishing House; *Right:* *A Good Fall* cover art, from the 2009 vintage international edition published on October 2010.....207

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
VITA OF URSULA DESER FRIEDMAN	vii
ABSTRACT	viii
NOTE ON TRANSLATION AND ROMANIZATION	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
PREFACE: Where Am I When I Self-Translate?	1
I. INTRODUCTION/CHAPTER ONE: The Self-Translator Keeps the Score: Situating Sinophone Self-Translation	3
<i>Soaring out of the Closet: Pai's Decades of Intersemiotic Adaptations</i>	3
<i>A Pair of Mutually Refractive Mirrors: Defining Self-Translation</i>	6
<i>Translation, Transmediation, and Adaptation</i>	9
<i>Research Questions</i>	13
<i>"Taking the Scalpel to Oneself": Debunking the Sanctity of Self-Translation</i>	13
<i>Reparative Sinophonicity and Convergence Culture</i>	15
<i>Rationale for Author Selection</i>	22
<i>Towards a De-romanticized Perspective on Exile and Migranhood</i>	23
<i>Critical Framework: Text and Paratext</i>	27
<i>Gender Politics and Queer Theory</i>	28
<i>Situating Dispossession in a Sinophone Context</i>	32
<i>Analysing Self-Translations: Critical Interventions</i>	33
<i>Chapter Outline</i>	34
II. CHAPTER TWO: (Self-)Translating Nostalgia: A Constellation of "Winter Nights" and "Twinkling Stars"	37
<i>Double Exile: Kenneth Pai's Cross-Strait and Cross-Pacific Displacement</i>	38
<i>Exile Consciousness in Pai's Taipei People Anthology</i>	41
<i>"Winter Nights" and the May Fourth Movement's Legacy</i>	47
<i>Pai's Collaborative Self-Translation of "Mantianli liangjingjing de xingxing"</i>	50
<i>Transmediating Melancholia: Comparing Three Translations of "Winter Nights"</i>	53
<i>Colorful Interludes Against a Black-and-White Montage</i>	58
<i>Universalizing Dialogues: Humor and Crip Studies</i>	62
<i>Recapitulation and Bridge to Case 2</i>	68
<i>Source Text as Draft: Pai's Alternative Ending to "Xingxing"</i>	69
<i>What's in a Name?: From Chu Yen to Crimson Flame</i>	72

<i>(De-)Familiarizing the Erotic Male-Male Gaze</i>	73
<i>The “Pioneer of Melancholia” Meets the “Pioneer of Desolation”</i>	76
III. CHAPTER THREE: Re-mediating Queer Desires: Kenneth Pai’s and Eileen Chang’s Wartime Transcreation	78
<i>Self-Translation and Transmediation as Organic Forms of Authorship</i>	78
<i>The Crystal Boys Soar from Page to Stage</i>	80
<i>Transmediating Kinship Structures in “Twinkling Stars” and Crystal Boys</i>	84
<i>(De-)eroticization: From Niezi (Sinful Sons) to Renzi (Sons of Humanity)</i>	87
<i>The Crystal Boys Flock to the Silver Screen</i>	96
<i>From “Sinful Sons” to “Sons of Humanity”: The Crystal Boys Soar to the Small Screen</i>	104
<i>Theatrical Canonization: (Re-)Staging Crystal Boys in the Post-Martial Law Era</i>	107
<i>Dance Choreography: Scripting Queer Sinophonicity for the Stage</i>	112
<i>Characters and Audience as Agentive Co-Performers</i>	113
<i>Exhibit 1: Banishment</i>	117
<i>Exhibit 2: Refuge in the New Park and Cozy Nest</i>	119
<i>Exhibit 3: Trudging Through Snow in Search of Plum Blossoms</i>	124
<i>Exhibit 4: Transmediating the Murder Scene</i>	126
<i>2014 Stage Play Production: Critical Reception</i>	133
<i>The Crystal Boys Strike Back: 2020 Remake during the Marriage Equality Era</i>	135
<i>Exhibit 5: Yin/Yang Duality: Chief Yang Jinhai’s Gender Transformation</i>	138
<i>Code-Switching Between Mandarin and Taiwanese Hokkien</i>	141
<i>Half-Smiles as Masquerade: Recapitulation and Bridge to Eileen Chang</i>	143
<i>Eileen Chang’s Hybridized Aesthetics and Co-Eval Self-Translations</i>	146
<i>“Forced to Speak to Someone You Don’t Like”: Chang’s Bleak Assessment of Conventional Translation</i>	150
<i>Eileen Chang’s Palimpsestuous Bilingual Writing Practice</i>	152
<i>Self-Translator as Double Agent: Chang’s Transwriting Zone</i>	155
<i>Xiangjian huan (1950/1978): Roots, Themes and Reception</i>	158
<i>Subversive Smiles: Xiangjian huan vs. “She Said Smiling”</i>	161
<i>Reading Between the Lines: Homoerotic Subtext</i>	171
<i>Recapitulation and Bridge: Building a Transwriting Zone in Self-Imposed Exile</i>	176
IV. CHAPTER FOUR: The Politics of “Bad English”: Ha Jin’s and Regina Kanyu Wang’s Subversive Stutters	180
<i>Introduction: Ha Jin’s Political and Linguistic Transgressions</i>	180
<i>“Born Translated”: Defamiliarizing English through Translationese</i>	182
<i>An Untranslatable Joke: “Poverty Stunts Ambition”</i>	184
<i>Carving out a “Third Space” in Foreignized English</i>	185

<i>Ha Jin's Linguistic Revolution in Poetry and Prose</i>	186
<i>Self-Orientalizing or Destabilizing Chineseness?</i>	188
<i>Banning as Consecration: Towards a new Conceptualization of Literary Capital</i>	191
<i>Disowning English: Li Yiyun's and Ha Jin's Linguistic Displacement</i>	193
<i>A "Wandering Fate": Ha Jin's "Good Fall" into the English Language</i>	195
<i>The Road to A Good Fall/Luo di</i>	197
<i>A Kaleidoscopic Palimpsest of Self-Translations</i>	199
<i>The Bird from Heaven That Never Lands: Avian Allusions</i>	203
<i>Exiled in Her Mother Tongue: Regina Kanyu Wang's Multilingual Speculative Fiction</i>	212
<i>Situating Regina Kanyu Wang: From Late-Qing Roots to Contemporary SF Boom</i>	213
<i>Female and Non-binary Authored Speculative Fiction in the "She Era"</i>	219
<i>Beyond the Human-Machine Binary: Towards a Reparative Posthumanist Politics</i>	221
<i>"The Language Sheath": Reflections on Language-Imposed Exile</i>	223
<i>The Materiality of Linguistic Production: The Methexics of Self-Translation</i>	240
<i>The CoFutures Movement: Sinophone Science Fiction in the She-Era</i>	241
<i>Recapitulation: Lingua Mater, Terra Incognita?: Defamiliarizing the Mother Tongue</i>	243
V. CHAPTER FIVE/CODA: Lost and Found in (Self-)Translation: Towards a Reparative Translanguaging Praxis	246
<i>Creation as Recreation; Language as Translation</i>	246
<i>Les Belles Infidèles and the Tao of Translation</i>	248
<i>Towards a Posthumanist Theory of Self-Translation</i>	250
<i>From "Winter Nights" to "The Language Sheath": Recapitulation</i>	252
<i>Double Displacement and Transmedial Transcreation</i>	254
<i>Beyond Domestication and Foreignization: (De-)Familiarization and (De-)Localization</i>	255
<i>Expanding the Sinophone Framework: From Heteroglossia to Cyclical Modernity</i>	256
<i>Reading Translations as Translations</i>	257
<i>Self-Translation Applications: Psychoanalysis, Pedagogy, and Sonology</i>	258
<i>Ethical Reading Practices: Reparative, Globalectic and Acousmatic</i>	260
<i>Avenues for Further Research</i>	263
ENDNOTES	267
REFERENCES	296
<i>Primary Sources</i>	296
<i>Secondary Sources</i>	312
APPENDICES	329

<i>Appendix 1: Behind the Scenes with the White Peony: Interviews with Kenneth Pai</i>	329
<i>Appendix 2: Crystallizing the Crystal Boys: A Conversation with Hsu Pei-hung</i>	355
<i>Appendix 3: What Makes Niezi Taiwanese?: A Conversation with Yang Fumin</i>	366
<i>Appendix 4: Niezi's Multimedia Afterlives: A Conversation with Cao Ruiyuan</i>	379
<i>Appendix 5: A Traveler in Search of Beauty: A Conversation with Tu Kuo-Ch'ing</i>	403
<i>Appendix 6: At Home on the Road A Conversation with Ha Jin</i>	415
<i>Appendix 7: Queer SinoFutures: A Conversation with Regina Kanyu Wang</i>	423

PREFACE: Where Am I When I Self-Translate?

*I self-translate; therefore, I am.*¹

I grew up in Boulder, Colorado in a blended family of English and French-speaking scientists who put me through a bilingual middle school. Ashamed of my lesbian proclivities, I embraced classical piano as an escape from my shadow self. Acquiring Spanish allowed me to don a second skin. In high school, I stumbled across a beginning Chinese language course at the university up the hill. I was immediately hooked on the musicality of the language and the artistry of the characters. A dose of fiction, philosophy, and history courses at Oberlin College left me craving adventure. I spent the next eight years in Beijing, China, living, breathing, and eating Mandarin Chinese. I began to talk to myself in Chinglish. I journaled in Chinese, and talked to anyone who would listen—in parks, on the street, on the subway. Once I began dreaming in Mandarin, I decided it was time to confront that dreaded “other”. I came out. Not just as queer, but also as someone struggling with anxiety and self-esteem. I could not have mustered up the courage to “come out” without the critical distance of foreign language, a shield and veil which enabled me to dismantle, face, and remake myself.

I now happily curse, self-criticize, throw tantrums, love, and whoop in Spanish, Chinese, Spanglish and Chinglish. My English-speaking persona is introverted and risk-averse, whereas my multilingual personae are adventurous and extroverted. Studying translation and interpretation at Beijing Foreign Studies University taught me to mediate between these various multilingual selves. But there is no saying where my English-language self ends and the Chinese self begins. Mediating between these multifaceted selves allowed me to practice empathy and self-acceptance. For me, self-translation is not simply an academic subject, but rather a way of life. When I translate myself for myself and others, I

create a new personality, a new temporality. Yet I do not feel more complete—quite the opposite. Failure and vulnerability become my constant companions.

Navigating this echo chamber of linguistic fragmentation, I play hide-and-seek with these elusive selves. The mind is built of mirrors, and in chasing authenticity, we end up right back where we started. When we make new memories woven from the fabric of dreams, music, mathematics, theater, film, and so forth, we are reborn anew. From the shattered shards emerges an imperfect mosaics of transmedial memory. I adapted my travel memories into blog entries, short stories, poems...Sometimes I would self-translate, but more often than not, I would create a watercolor of languages, infusing English with Chinese, and vice-versa.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, we saw uncertain reflections of ourselves plastered on boarded-up storefront windows, cracked phone screens, television screens, in the fear etched on our loved ones' faces. The Cold War has never ended. From Ukraine to the Gaza Strip, new technologies wipe out millions of innocent people in a heartbeat. How do we reconcile the trauma of war, atrocity, and destruction? Self-translation helps train us to stop thinking in absolutes, to empathize with both sides, and to initiate healing. Nations the world over devote themselves to erecting walls, both physical and intangible, only to discover that they have been cutting their citizens off from themselves and their world. When we open our hearts, we turn ourselves inside out. Cracks emerge in familiar narratives, and we find a way to let ourselves back in. Let others inside. Embrace spontaneity and vulnerability.

I have since made peace with the fact that I'll never find Ursula. I'll find whispers of her, only to lose her over and over again. Because there was never any self to seek in the first place, Ursula exists in a perpetual state of becoming. Each multilingual component helps mediate Ursula into being. Where am I when I self-translate? Everywhere and nowhere.

I. INTRODUCTION/CHAPTER ONE: The Self-Translator Keeps the Score: Situating Sinophone Self-Translation

“I translate, therefore I am.” (Lahiri 2022: 2)
--Jhumpa Lahiri, *Translating Myself and Others*

Soaring out of the Closet: Pai's Decades of Intersemiotic Adaptations

After relocating to Taiwan in the 1950s, Pai Hsien-yung (白先勇, Kenneth Pai, b. 1937) stumbled across a newspaper article about a Taiwanese government official's son who murdered his male lover in a fit of blind rage (Pai and Friedman 2022-2023). In 1965, Pai took up a professorship in the East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies Department at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he spent nearly a full decade weaving this crime of passion into *Niezi* 孽子 (1983, literally “sons of sin” or “unfilial sons”², *Crystal Boys* in Goldblatt's 1990 translation). From across the Pacific Ocean, Pai gave voice to Taiwan's marginalized queer community; this groundbreaking novel would later be hailed as the first modern Asian novel overtly depicting male homosexuality.

After President Chiang Ching-Kuo lifted Martial Law in 1987, *Crystal Boys* soared out of the closet and onto the stage and silver screen, as Pai co-adapted his novel into a film (1986), a television mini-series (2003), and finally a pair stage plays (2014, 2020). The 2014 and 2020 stage play productions undid Pai's Martial Law Era self-censorship by openly depicting sensual male-male intimacy on stage, thus improving visibility for the Sinophone LGBTQIA+ community and paving the way for the legalization of same-sex marriage in Taiwan in 2019. Pai's creative process of self-transmediation, spanning multiple decades, languages, genres, and mediums, reveals (self-)translation as a hermeneutic process of cultural transcreation in which the source text is not taken as fixed and irreducible, but rather

yields diverse, shifting, and even conflicting interpretations. Such transmediations are enabled by the audience's affective investment in the work's afterlives, and by the self-translator's creation of an interstitial space at the crossroads of languages, cultures, and mediums. Whether capturing Taipei citizens' nostalgia for mainland China or banished adolescents' longing for home, Pai Hsien-yung unfailingly captures the "unspoken pain of the human heart" (Pai in Liao et al. 2017) through his lyrical prose and multimedia adaptations.

In this dissertation, I investigate four cases of self-translation and transmediation across the Sinosphere in the modern and contemporary eras. Specifically, I examine the ways in which Pai Hsien-yung (白先勇, b. 1937), Ha Jin (哈金, pen name for Xuefei Jin 金雪飞, b. 1956), Eileen Chang (张爱玲, b. 1920) and Regina Kanyu Wang (王侃瑜, b. 1990) *queer* (i.e., augment, subvert and deconstruct) their own source texts through selective acts of "creative subversion" (Levine 2009)—for instance, plot and character altercations, shifting chronotypes, lyricization, eroticization, (de-)censorship, melodramatization, and so forth. I posit (self-)translation as a creative process of self-transmediation that destabilizes hierarchical models conceptualizing translators and translated texts as derivative offshoots of the source text author and translated text. By *weirding* and *queering* English through non-standard linguistic interventions, self-translators and transmediators democratize, diversify, and decolonize the English language.

I approach émigré Sinophone authors' self-translation, transwriting, and adaptation practices as avenues for eroding cultural and linguistic binaries. Self-translation occurs when the author of an original work (co-)translates their own text(s) into another language, transwriting involves creative re-writing between multiple languages, and intersemiotic

adaptation entails transforming one genre or medium into another. Dwelling in the fluid borderlands between languages and cultures, exiled self-translators re-examine Greater China's modern history through linguistic and psychological defamiliarization techniques.

Rather than approaching source texts as the exclusive result of authorial genius, I balance first-hand interviews with the self-translators with close readings of text, culture, and history, to anchor their texts in their respective sociocultural milieu and highlight readers' *participatory* roles in bringing the adaptations to fruition. I temper my focus on authorial agency through a post-structuralist approach; i.e., considering the extra-textual and intertextual paratexts and labyrinth of transcultural transmediality that inform literary (re-)creation. By *writing themselves* into the political fabric of the *World Republic of Letters* (Casanova 2004), self-translators leverage and enrich the cultural capital of *both* their native and adopted linguistic/political systems, thus mediating the authorial subject into being through a co-constructive healing process. I consider the self-translator as a power-laden subject navigating complex political, identity-based, and language politics. By navigating these diverging cultural forces alongside co-translators and co-transmediators, the self-translator negotiates their own identity into being, exposing the "self" as a confluence of historical and literary paratexts. The task of the *transmediator* is to tease out the affective remainder buried within the source text, thus rejuvenating language through defamiliarized re-mediations.

Multilingualism changes our linguistic perception by proposing a hybrid linguascape that enables writers to defy cultural homogeneity and process personal and national trauma. Self-translators rewrite the literary canon from the periphery and embrace hybrid linguascapes underlying cultural identity. I position the pluralized, self-translated Self as a

cosmopolitan subject forming its identity in dialogue with (a) foreign language(s) and culture(s). Sinophone self-translators map China onto the world and vice-versa, revealing modernity as a nonlinear, cosmopolitan palimpsest in dialogue with myriad linguistic and cultural traditions. These author-translators forge interstitial *transwriting* zones bridging languages, temporalities, and cultures, rewriting and re-mediating memories of historical trauma through their translingual and transmedial practices.

A Pair of Mutually Refractive Mirrors: Defining Self-Translation

Self-translation is a self-reflexive process which occurs when the author of an original work either simultaneously or consecutively³ translates their own writing(s) into another language⁴. Many self-translators refer to this process as one of transaction (Federman 2001) or rewriting (Brink 1999) rather than translation per se. I envision self-translation as a *translanguaging*⁵ (Lee and Wei) practice originating in the periphery that intervenes in monolithic notions of Chinese and English, revitalizing these languages by adding local idiosyncrasies. The self-translated source and target texts form a pair of mirrors⁶ that reflect and refract (Lefevere 1982) two languages and cultures; the self-translator adopts an “aesthetic of mirrors”, mirroring the environment and their inner psyche, while simultaneously forging a prismatic vision through the “aesthetic of prisms” (Borges et al., trans. Levine 2010: 3). The Italian-English self-translator Jhumpa Lahiri (b. 1967) describes the self-translation process as one of reversing the directionality of source/translated text: “Like an image viewed in the mirror, [the source text] has turned into the simulacrum, and both is and is not the starting point for what rationally and irrationally followed” (Lahiri 2022: 85). I view self-translation as a transmediation of the self that erodes assumed binaries between center and periphery, source and translated text, word and image.

Hokenson and Munson define self-translation as the activity of “any bilingual writer who authors texts in one language and then translates them into the other” (2007: 12). The self-translated text simultaneously exists in two languages and in two separate versions, often featuring overlapping content (Hokenson and Munson 2007: 4). Because the writer-translator has access to their own authorial intentions, this authorial intentionality (Fitch 1985: 112) enables the self-translator to take creative liberties a conventional outside translator might shy away from (Fitch 1985, Grutman 1998, Jung 2002). Self-translation is audience-oriented, prioritizing readers as active participants in the reading event, participants whose “ratified presence affects the translator’s choices as well” (Oittinen et al. 2018: 7).

Many solo self-translations draw upon previous collaborative versions; often, the self-translation is also the direct result of a collaboration with a native speaker in the target language. Both Pai Hsien-yung and Regina Kanyu Wang produced translations in tandem with target language native speaker collaborators (Pai working alongside co-translator Patia Yasin and editor George Kao and Wang with Emily Xueni Jin), producing what Guillermo Cabrera Infante (1929-2005) terms *closelaborations* (also cited in Appel 2013: 619-620). Though each ultimately had the final say on matters ranging from style to content, the collaborator’s input enabled the author to adapt their writing for the target culture’s aesthetic preferences without straying from their original aspirations. However, just as many conventional translators turn to unacknowledged collaborators for feedback and editing, many self-translators also pass off their translations as a solo effort or minimize their collaborators’ contributions to play into the Western mystique of author-driven originality. However, as Julio-César Santoyo reminds us, many self-translated texts constitute “second originals, rendered into a second language with all the liberty an author enjoys” (Santoyo

2013: 27).

Self-translation differs from bilingual writing and code-switching⁷ in that each text is published separately at different times and promoted as a stand-alone text. Self-translators retain access to their original pre-linguistic conceptualization and authorial intentions, deconstructing, reinventing, adapting, displacing, refracting, transforming, and ultimately *displacing* their own source texts, thus paving the way for a non-binary renegotiation of meaning between source and target texts, source and receiving cultures. Self-translators blaze an alternative path for identity formation that erodes oppressive colonial hierarchies encoded within such binaries as source/target culture, center/periphery and so forth, positing these notions as fluid constructs existing along a continuum.

Itamar Even-Zohar emphasizes translation's pivotal role in expanding the literary repertoire, highlighting the dynamic intercultural exchange that influences the reception of translated works and their ultimate position within the target literary system. According to Even-Zohar, when a particular work is translated from a so-called well-established, or "central" to a young, or "peripheral" literary repertoire, it is often foreignized, or translated literally, for fear of losing the "prestige" of the original work, whereas when the target culture is considered "central" or mainstream, the translator will often opt for domestication techniques. (Even-Zohar 1990/2012: 242-245) Self-translation intervenes in the binary polysystem of translation by leveling the playing field between source and target text, reflecting a Borgesian model of world literature in which "the reader and the writer, meet in the morphological labyrinth of ramifying stories [...] one in which the center is everywhere, the periphery nowhere." (Jullien 2019: 106)

Translation, Transmediation, and Adaptation

I envision *translation*, *transmediation*, and *adaptation* as three overlapping, yet distinct processes of cultural transcreation. Translation (derived from the Latin term *translatio*, meaning to transfer a text from one language to another) connotes the conversion of signs from one linguistic system to another, and occasionally, one literary trope to another. For instance, Kenneth Pai's collaborative self-translation of his short story *Mantian li liangjingjing de xingxing* 漫天裡亮晶晶的星星 (1971) to "A Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars" (1991) is an act of literary (self-)translation. I opt for the term *transwriting* to describe a consecutive process of self-translation in which the author writes bilingually between two languages over an extended period of time. Eileen Chang's "transwriting zone", which I derive from Emily Apter's notion of the "translation zone" (2006) forms the backbone of Chapter Five. An act of *transmediation*, hereby conceived as the transformation of a work from one medium to another, such as novel to film or script to theatrical production, may also involve translation between linguistic registers. For instance, Kenneth Pai's transformation of his novel *Niezi* into a stage play of the same name falls into the category of *transmediation*. By emphasizing *transmediation*, I aim to broaden the notion of the *transmedial* turn in translation, going beyond language to highlight the importance of medium.

Adaptations constitute the broadest of these three categories. Adaptations, or creative re-interpretations that adapt a source medium for a new time, place, and audience, often involve transmediation, without necessarily anchoring content to a specific medium. For instance, Pai's page-to-screen-to-stage transmediations may all be broadly categorized as adaptations. Sometimes, a particular adaptation is also both a translation and transmediation—for instance, Emily Wilson's *The Iliad* (Homer and Wilson 2023) translates

Homer's Greek into English, converting Dactylic Hexameter into iambic pentameter. However, because Wilson also departs from the source text to transport Homer to contemporary audiences, with a particular orientation towards women-identifying readers, this translation may also be considered as an adaptation. Insofar as Wilson's *The Iliad* transforms both medium and genre, converting unrhyming storytelling prose to balladic verse and vice-versa, or adding similes and other tropes where they do not appear in the source text, it may also be considered a *transmediation*. In this dissertation, I focus on adaptations as intertextual engagements with a source text and as interpretive acts of creative adaptation.

As Linda Hutcheon suggests in *A Theory of Adaptation* (2006)⁸, when various units (time, place, characterization, and so forth) of a narrative are *transmediated*, they often change radically. At times, the very “point of departure or conclusion” may be completely “transfigured in adaptation” (Hutcheon 2006: 12). Because every act of retelling involves re-interpretation and re-transmediation, referring implicitly to embedded medialities, no two retellings of the same story are identical. Video game, theater, television, and film renderings of a piece of literature also differ markedly in terms of audience immersion. Video games, for instance, might invite players to manipulate fantastic worlds, while television renderings rely on melodrama and suspense to deliver catharsis.

Why self-translate? Authors often translate their own work for pragmatic reasons; i.e., foregoing a translator's fees, reclaiming their own cultural capital, controlling the reception of their own work; creative ones, i.e., using self-translation as a methodology for improving the source text; and for psychological reasons; i.e., to restore wholeness to their split selves, and/or as a means of distancing themselves from memories of war and exile, effectively re-writing the exiled self into being through dialogue with its omnipresent Other.

To shed further light on the question of why self-translators translate their own work, we begin with three basic premises: First, trauma immobilizes the traumatized, unleashing a cycle of self-perpetuating trauma re-enactment. Second, history lies in the nexus of personal and collective trauma; history is the story of our implication in each other's traumas. Third, we are all foreigners to ourselves, displaced and dispossessed in the language(s) and culture(s) we are born into. Only by displacing ourselves from our own cultural-linguistic fabric can we subvert the "mother tongue" complex.

How does self-translation fit into the equation? First, we need critical distance from our own languages and traumatic memories. we develop self-awareness by viewing personal trauma from a distance. First, writing in a foreign language defamiliarizes trauma, both personal and inherited, breaking the immobilizing cycle of trauma recollection, retrieval, and re-experiencing through reader-enabled⁹, anticipatory catharsis. Second, self-translation calls for a reparative "aesthetics of defamiliarization", whereby both self-translator and readers allow their own text(s) to surprise and challenge them. Third, self-translation blurs boundaries between source and target text/culture, catalyzing linguistic innovation and evolution by juxtaposing linguistic and cultural systems. Fourth, in self-translation, both source and target text are placed along a continuum of endless drafts—*everything is translatable*¹⁰—a similar effect can be achieved in another language—yet at the same time, *nothing is translatable*, given that language is fundamentally an approximation of ideas, thoughts, and experiences. Language can never fully capture meaning, yet the more linguistic systems we have at our disposal, the better equipped we are to approximate meaning.

I maintain that *every creation is, in essence, a recreation*; moreover, every act of self-expression is one of self-translation—we are constantly sublimating our non-verbal thoughts

and feelings into oral and written linguistic structures and re-inscribing the world back into our own psyche. As the Nobel Prize-winning Mexican writer Octavio Paz puts it, “when we learn to speak, we are learning to translate” (Paz 1992: 152); in this sense, language is itself a form of translation. Building upon Jhumpa Lahiri’s dictum, “I translate; therefore, I am” (Lahiri 2022: 3), I declare: *Translatimus, ergo sumus*. We translate; therefore, we are.¹¹

Where do we draw the line between translation, transcreation, bilingual and creative writing? If the self-translator translates however they please, what is to prevent her from deviating completely from the source version? Certainly, radical alterations in terms of plot, characterization, and aesthetics might re-categorize liberal self-translation as creative bilingual re-writing, which is based only loosely upon the source text. If outside translators were to emulate such a liberal approach, readers would undoubtedly feel jilted. Indeed, the self-translator’s privileged intimacy with the source text might indeed disqualify her from performing an ethical self-translation. Perhaps, a bit of psychological distance from the source text can result in a more democratic balance between the aesthetic priorities of the source and target cultural aesthetics. Though admittedly, the author might not be the most qualified person to translate their own work, they stand to gain the most. By defamiliarizing their own narratives through the smokescreen of a different language, self-translators cultivate renewed cultural and aesthetic awareness, which often lead to artistic breakthroughs.

Rather than simplifying self-translation as a negotiation between the writer and their world, I consider the self-translator as a world unto herself. Translating oneself to the world ultimately forces one to come to terms with the fact that the “self” exists in a perpetual state of flux and spiritual exile. We are all tasked with negotiating our multiple selves into being through interaction with myriad historical, literary, and sociopolitical factors to ourselves. In

the words of Rita Wilson, self-translators “self-reflexively explore the extent to which they see themselves as constructed through language”; moreover, “the narration of their lived experience is increasingly viewed as an act of (self-)translation” (Wilson 2009: 186).

(Re)-performing one’s own score or literary work in a different language and/or medium for a different audience results in a critical detachment that delivers fresh insight into the work at hand. By *performing* their text(s) in another language(s), self-translators establish a critical distance from traumatic experiences that they could not have achieved simply by writing in their native language.

Research Questions

This study delves into the significant altercations the self-translator makes to the source text by asking: How do Kenneth Pai, Eileen Chang, Ha Jin, and Regina Kanyu Wang reinvent, adapt, refract and transform their own source texts, generating alternative narratives that deconstruct notions of self, culture, and nation? Why do these self-translators elect to alter their own texts (capaciously conceived, including film, stage play, calligraphy, geoscape and television)? To what extent can a “born-translated” text be said to be (re-)translated? How does this translingual shift problematize authorial originality? What are the cultural politics, historical contexts, and ideological logics that underpin these authors’ creative departures from their source text(s)? Why should we read self-translated texts as textual palimpsests? What is the significance of tracing the self-translator’s deviations from their source text? Finally, how does the author’s gender identity influence their textual production?

“Taking the Scalpel to Oneself”: Debunking the Sanctity of Self-Translation

The subjective nature of self-translation has churned up a clout of controversy, and a host of modern linguists and laymen alike have adamantly shunned the practice. The Spanish-

English literary translator Jessica Sequeria muses: “self-interpretation can produce reactions of estrangement or astonishment. Sometimes one even prefers the interpretations of others.” (Sequeria 2020) Many scholars are particularly off-put by the author-translator’s special authority to interpret their own work as they please and manipulate it to fit cultural context of the target audience. The French-American novelist Raymond Federman’s wariness of the excessive “freedom” granted to self-translators prompted him to remark: “Often I begin [a self-translation], but quickly abandon it, out of boredom...fatigue or disgust, or perhaps because of [...] the fear of betraying myself and my own work” (Federman 1993).

Jhumpa Lahiri explains that self-translating her novel *Dove mi tropo* from Italian into English (entitled *Whereabouts*) enabled her to simultaneously improve her Italian source text. Though Lahiri admits the anxiety involved in translating her own text by comparing the act of self-translation to performing surgery on oneself¹², she also uses the metaphor of radioactive dyes to explain how the act of self-translation enables her to locate “problem spots” in her source text (Lahiri 2022: 76). Indeed, the source and target texts become locked in a tennis volley (Lahiri 2022: 79) through which both versions evolve in tandem with one another and become “conjoined twins” (Lahiri 2022: 80).

Critics are certainly justified in countering the author’s claims to absolute authority over their own text. No work is composed in a vacuum—countless tributaries of intertextuality inform literary production; moreover, outside interpreters are often able to shed new light on a work precisely due to their critical detachment from the text and their position as an outsider.

Poet/philosopher Paul Valéry writes:

There is no such thing as ‘the real meaning’ of a text. The author has no special authority. Whatever he may have wanted to say, he has written what he has written.

Once published, a text is, so to speak, a mechanism which everyone can use in his own way and as best he can: it is not certain that its constructor uses it better than the next man. (Graham 1971: 93)

Because all texts are open to interpretation, the author's interpretation of their own is not necessarily the most compelling or authoritative¹³. Rather than defend the self-translator's practice as somehow exceptional or irreplicable and discounting outside translators' interpretations as less than such, I unpack the psychoanalytics of re-processing trauma in another language and/or medium. I propose self-translation as a reparative technology that might be incorporated into therapy practices to provide patients with tools for detaching from disturbing experiences. Moreover, self-translation enables writers to embrace a hybridized cultural identity, which often helps them innovate their linguistic style and embrace non-standard linguistic production, which ultimately catalyzes linguistic evolution.

Reparative Sinophonicity and Convergence Culture

Shu-mei Shih spearheaded the interdisciplinary field of Sinophone Studies as a critical intervention against the homogenizing Han-ization wave in the Chinese-speaking world. Shih defines the Sinophone as “the study of Sinitic-language cultures and communities on the margins of China and Chineseness”¹⁴; for Shih, the Sinophone is a mode of reading, and epistemology that is defined by Sinitic networks and language¹⁵, rather than a fixed place or time of origin. I consider (self-)translation as a self-healing technology that positions the self as a hybrid, cosmopolitan subject forming its identity in dialogue with (a) foreign language(s) and culture(s). Taking self-translation as a method for examining China's place in the world, I consider the Sinophone as a diversified *mode of reading*¹⁶ that positions the Self as a hybrid, cosmopolitan subject that forms its identity in dialogue with (a) foreign language(s) and culture(s). I concur with Shu-mei Shih's canonical definition of the Sinophone as “the study of Sinitic-language cultures on the margins of geopolitical nation-states and their hegemonic

productions” (Shih 2011: 710). I contend that Sinophone literature rejuvenates Sinitic languages and cultures in dialogue with both foreign and nonstandard Chinese languages. In other words, diasporic Sinophone authors reimagine translational Sinophonicity as the product of intercultural and interlinguistic negotiation. I expand the definition of “Sinitic languages” to encompass Chinglish, oral literature, and transmedial languages such as dance, music, and corporeal gestures. This range of media encompass both ephemeral, disembodied sounds and consistent, embodied writing. Though I embrace queer and non-Han linguistic interpolations, I also recognize the potential for reparative Sinophonicities within Han-dominated languages and cultures, both within the PRC’s borders and beyond.

My approach to Sinophonicity thus echoes David Der-wei Wang’s extension of “Sinophone literature” to Chinese literature produced both within and outside Mainland China’s borders. Wang asserts that though Sinophone literature’s “domain lies in overseas, it should also be extended to the literature of Mainland China, and we should establish a dialogue between them” (Wang 2006). I nuance Wang’s approach to Sinophone literature by extending the label to literature rendered in Hokkien, Taiwanese, Cantonese, Mandarin, Shanghainese, and even in hybrid and/or multilingual forms. Such instances of defamiliarizing linguistic hybridity catalyze linguistic and cultural innovation. I consider such “literature” in its oral, written, musical, and transmedial forms, deconstructing hierarchies between written, theatrical, and musical production by acknowledge the interplay between these media and genres. In a nod to the notion of transmedial Sinoglossia¹⁷ jointly proposed by Yu-lin Lee, Howard Chiang, and Andrea Bachner, and Edward Said’s notion of contrapuntal reading¹⁸ (Said 1993), I propose the “Shadow Sinophone” as encompassing hybrid, multilingual, and transmedial literature, especially literature deliberately written in a

“bad”, subversive, ungrammatical, jarring, and otherwise unconventional medium. The term “Shadow” echoes David Damrosch’s notion of the “shadow” canon, encompassing “minor authors who [...] fade into the background” and the “countercanon” of “subaltern and contestary voices” within a given culture¹⁹.

Acknowledging Shih’s analysis of Sinophone literature as characterized by both “multiple sounds”²⁰ and “multiple orthographies” (Shih 2011:716), I consider both the polyphonic and polyscriptic aspects of Sinophoncity. By analyzing the ways in which the “Sino” is scripted into bodily and affective performance through transmedial adaptation, I suggest that Sinophoncity is enriched through reparative dialogues between languages and cultures. Just as the Sinophone pushes back against a monolithic version of standardized Chinese, so too does the Sinophone intervene in English *globalese* by infusing it with Chinese aesthetic sensibilities. Pai, Jin, Chang, and Wang engage in self-displacing acts of “creative subversion” that coalesce to form a linguistic dissonance through the mutual reflecting and refracting of multiple cultures, selves and linguistic systems. They resist homogenized accounts of Chineseness, positing the potential of exiles and migrants to tell their own Sinophone stories simultaneously in a symphony of diversified voices. These case studies contribute to Sinophone Studies by foregrounding translanguality and transcreation over ethnicity and exploring mobile linguistic and cultural identities (Shih 2010: 32).

Through interpolations of “bad” English (nonstandard English that *writes back* against standard or naturalized English) émigré Sinophone writers “democratize”²¹ the English language by opening it up to a multiplicity of voices and perspectives. The English language is mired by its tradition of perpetuating colonial discourse, which hampers linguistic diversity. Thus, *weirding* French, Portuguese, English, and other colonial

languages through dialogue with local languages remakes language as an engine for social justice.²² These writers write against a hegemonically imposed monolith of “pure” English and debunk the notion that birthright automatically ensures a superior command over the English language. Building upon Evelyn Ch’ien’s notion of “weird English”²³, I highlight émigré Sinophone authors’ subversive potential to “weird”, “hybridize”, and “badden” English, thus rendering the English language inclusive to non-native speakers and ensuring its continued evolution. By “weirding” English, writers invite community-building and experimentation across racial, class, and linguistic divides. By “taking back” English through creative interpollations, self-translators who embrace non-standard English usage reveal the English language not as something one is born into, but rather a tool for democratic linguistic revolution.

Pai, Jin, Chang, and Wang form an affective discursive community that transcends geographical, cultural, and ethno-racial boundaries, revealing the Sinophone²⁴ (Shih 2011) as a diverse constituency of agentive subjects bridging the fluid intersections of empire, culture and language. These diasporic modernist writers all employ self-translation as a means of navigating the shared experience of cultural displacement, which destabilizes monolithic accounts of the nation, self and text. The works I examine *decenter* Chineseness by depicting immigrants who refuse nostalgia for a hegemonic center of power by re-creating Chineseness through embedding themselves within a new nation and culture. I take issue with articulations of the Sinophone as advocating a nostalgia for China as a “cultural motherland or the source of value” (Shih 2010: 33); by debunking China-centrism, I concur with Shih that the “Sinophone is often the site where the most powerful articulations against China-centrism are heard.” (Shih 2010: 33) For instance, Ha Jin’s short story anthology *A Good*

Fall/Luodi proposes an alternative to a return to a monolithic Chinese center by proposing that immigrants carve out a new “home” for themselves in their new community, thus redefining Chineseness according to immigrants’ own lived experiences.

Pai, Jin, Chang and Wang embody Henry Jenkins’ notion of “convergence culture”, or “the flow of content across multiple media platforms, the cooperation between multiple media industries, and the migratory behavior of media audiences who would go almost anywhere in search of the kinds of entertainment experiences they wanted.” (Jenkins 2006). This “cross-medial network” suggests that media creates its own content and highlights the permeability of media transfer. I expand the notion of “convergence culture” to include a participatory dialogue between author, translator, and reader. By blurring the boundaries between author, translator, and critic, the self-translator reinforces a “convergence culture” in which author becomes translator, and reader becomes creator.

By creating hybrid mediascapes bridging languages, cultures, genders, and genres, these self-translators posit heightened cultural interaction as a catalyst for cultural evolution. These self-translators’ texts are both *born translated* (Walkowitz 2015: 4) and *gain* in translation; though meaning is inevitably distorted, subtexts are also restored and enriched through intertextual dialogues with other linguistic and cultural traditions. The self-translator’s process of inscribing themselves within the World Republic of Letters mirrors the immigrant communities’ struggle to embed themselves within their new cosmopolitan niches.

Self-Translation as a Healing Technology for Countering Cultural Amnesia

In this dissertation, I explore the ways in which author-translators forge interstitial spaces bridging languages and cultures, a healing haven from which they process individual and national trauma and embed²⁵ themselves within the global community. I reaffirm the

importance of ongoing, critical, and intercultural reflections on the violence of historical trauma. Self-translators help combat historical amnesia by defamiliarizing²⁶ the violent ruptures of the past to chart a healing path for the present era. Nations are built on exclusionary systems that hinge upon a politics of amnesia—self-translators, by engaging in dual levels of reflection on personal and national trauma, help combat the “syntax of forgetting”²⁷. In Ha Jin’s words, “We should remember the past. I am writing against [...] collective amnesia” (Jin and Varga 2020). My research echoes work by Yasemin Yildiz, who proposes linguistic and cultural heterogeneity as an antidote against the violence of the monolingual paradigm and the homogenizing force of globalization (Yildiz 2014).

Adopting a *semiotic* approach, Lydia Liu conceives of translation as a violent process of confrontation between “host” (*zhufang yuyan* 主方語言) and “guest” (*kefang yuyan* 客方語言) languages (Liu 1995: 27). Drawing upon Jacques Derrida’s notion of “hauntology” (the notion that elements from the cultural past return to haunt the present), Liu identifies the colonial confrontation embedded in transliterated linguistic palimpsests that attempt to camouflage their foreignness (i.e., such “super-signs”²⁸ as *yi* 夷/barbarian and *fan gui* 番鬼/foreign devil”), positing the sovereign subject as basing its subjectivity on exorcising the invasive “ghost” of the Other (Liu 2006: 105). While I acknowledge the instability of an immutable Self that is reified through dialogues in relation to a cultural-linguistic Other, I take issue with Liu’s conceptualization of translation as violent confrontation and identity splintering. Instead, I posit self-translation as a *reparative* mechanism whereby the self is mediated into being through co-constructive dialogue with another cultural counterpart. Kenneth Pai expounds upon the healing process of self-translation, “Translat[ing...] *Taipei People* for five years [...led me to a] deeper understanding of my own writing and myself. It

was an inspiring and healing experience.” (Pai and Friedman 2023) These words echo Pai’s main motivation for writing—capturing the “unspoken pain of the human heart” (Pai in Liao et al. 2017). Just as self-translation lends Pai a critical mirror through which to see himself and his writing anew, self-translating back into Chinese provided a linguistic homecoming for Ha Jin, enabling him to carve out a “little villa in [his] mother tongue” (Jin 2012: 3-4, trans. mine). For Eileen Chang, self-translating *The Golden Cangue* (金锁记) over a quarter century provided an avenue for exorcising the demons of her own traumatic family and wartime experiences.²⁹ Regina Kanyu Wang also harnesses the English language as an avenue for linguistic innovation; though her Chinese writing veers towards “heavy narrations” and anthropocentrism, in English, she “experiment[s] with “nonhuman perspectives and more vivid and humorous tones” (Wang and Friedman 2023).

Emily Apter outlines the *reparative* potential of translation to address social and racial injustice and promote decolonization efforts (Apter 2021: 209-228), asserting that reparative translation “looks towards recovery: towards recovering the dynamics of languaging that happen in the interstices of Languages; towards the restitution of extinguished indigenous languages, idiolects, and creoles; and towards recuperation from the myriad forms of translational violence committed in the name of languages surrounded by an army.”³⁰ (Apter 2021: 218) Echoing Apter, I present self-translation as an inter-reflexive cultural methodology that places the self-translator in a unique position to rewrite trauma narratives through a hybrid healing mechanism operating in the gray zone between linguistic, cultural, temporal, and geographic traditions. Self-translators’ intentional usage of non-standard linguistic expression, such as Chinese-inflected English, code-switching, and hybridized aesthetics, defamiliarizes the target language and catalyzes its evolution.

Rationale for Author Selection

I have selected a strategic blend of male and female-identifying, *hypercanonical* (Eileen Chang in the modern Chinese literary canon), *canonical* (Pai Hsien-yung in the Chinese/Taiwanese literary tradition), *countercanonical* (Ha Jin in the Asian American literary polysystem), and *emerging* (Regina Kanyu Wang in the Chinese language sci-fi/speculative fiction canon) émigré author-translators hailing from across the Sinosphere. My project encompasses fiction set in cosmopolitan temporalities and geographies; namely, 1940s Shanghai (Chang's "She Said Smiling"/相见欢), 1950s Taipei (Pai's *Taipei People*/台北人), Flushing, New York around the turn of the millennium (Ha Jin's *A Good Fall*/落地), and post-apocalyptic Shenzhen (Wang's "Pengcheng Rising: A Story of Wanli"/鹏程万里), respectively. My study thus charts a historical genealogy of diasporic Sinophone self-translation beginning with the First World War, continuing with the Cold War era, followed by the Reform and Opening-up Era and finally the contemporary Digital Age. In each case, the cityscape takes on anthropomorphic dimensions, as an omniscient character framing, reflecting, and symbolizing the immigrants' inner worlds.

Urban environments have long been regarded as a hallmark of modernity, and the metropolis has come to signify social and economic transformation. The works I have chosen to analyze all depict exiled (immi)grant communities situated in modern cosmopolitan metropolises (exiles from mainland China to Taipei, immigrants from mainland China to New York City, a pair of cousins experiencing micro-exile in their marriages and friendship, and machines inhabiting the post-apocalyptic metropolis of Shenzhen). However, I do not approach self and other, urban and rural as polar opposites, but rather examine the self in the other, the rural in the urban and vice-versa. The urban world fuses with the natural one,

marking the cityscape as a hybrid site where humans, animals, flora, and fauna all dwell in harmony together.

Pai, Jin, Chang, and Wang form a counter-canon of World Literature, measuring up to David Damrosch's tripartite definition of World Literature³¹ (Damrosch 2003: 281). Damrosch's three benchmarks of World Literature (i.e., literature created through translation, circulation, and reading) remain true for most canonical literary works. Indeed, all writing has the potential to gain in translation, many writers read authors from other literary traditions, and many fiction and poetry writers experiment with chronology and hypothetical situations. The assortment of authors presented in this dissertation further quantifies Damrosch's definition of World Literature by suggesting that authors' self-transmediation of their own works involves a navigation of the plural worlds *within* and *between* each national literary tradition, thus enabling self-translators to engage in tiered acts of *self-worlding*. In an attempt to fast-track their canonization process, self-translators often publish in English first. How do texts that are "born translated" (Walkowitz 2015: 4) problematize the linearity of the canonization process by proceeding from global to local contexts?

Towards a De-romanticized Perspective on Exile and Migrant-hood

There is no denying that exile outside their community of origin enables writers to cross boundaries and innovate language, constructing a mobile home out of words. Trinh T. Minh-ha, for instance, writes: For a number of writers in exile, the true home is to be found not in houses, but in writing...Xile, despite its profound sadness, can be worked through as an experience of crossing boundaries and charting new ground in defiance of newly authorized or old canonical enclosures." (Minh-ha16) Galin Tihanov writes against conventional interpretations of exile as a utopian force begetting creativity³², and indeed, the birth of

modern comparative literature (Tihanov 2015: 145). Tihanov identifies romanticism as the cornerstone of modern master-narratives of exile and modern-crossing, as evidenced by melodramatic depictions of romantic heroes as countercultural outcasts. To de-romanticize exile, we must first decouple language and literature from national culture and take exile as the norm rather than the exception (ibid 152):

It is only within this larger framework of the romantic metanarratives of transgression, underpinned by the duality of creativity and suffering, equally excessive, that we can begin to understand the longevity of our postromantic attachment to interpreting exile through the seemingly divergent, but essentially convergent, optics of extraordinary resourcefulness and creativeness, on the one hand, and overwhelming anguish, distress and affliction, on the other.” (Tihanov 2015: 150)

Tihanov’s views respond to Edward Said’s melancholic depiction of exile as “the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home: its essential sadness can never be surmounted.” (Said 1984/2000: 173)

Rather than viewing self-translators as artists marked by an exceptional shared trauma that they must overcome by detaching from their mother tongue, I view their linguistic displacement as innate to the human experience (after all, we are all displaced in our own languages and cultures), exposing the defamiliarized, hybrid nature of quotidian experience. I argue that all language is fundamentally alienating; by opening a language up to multiple polychronic variations, translators democratize languages by virtue of their foreignizing translation techniques. Indeed, the experience of exile fundamentally alters human temporality, enabling the exile to simultaneously inhabit two different times and places. These two disparate halves are reconciled through the process of self-translation, through which the writer carves out a linguistic anchor through a hybridized style. All of us live in a perpetual state of exile, even in our first languages and native lands. By “writing back” against dominant values and hybridizing of the existing linguistic repertoire, the self-

translator harnesses their exile-induced critical awareness to enrich the receiving culture.

Kenneth Pai, citing the examples of Lu Xun 魯迅 (1881-1936), who wrote about his hometown Shaoxing (Zhejiang province) from Beijing and Shen Congwen 沈從文 (1902-1988), who also wrote about Xiangxi (Hunan province) from Beijing, states that “some people’s literary production only gushes forth once they return to their place of origin, yet others need distance and displacement before they can put experiences of home into words.”³³ (Pai and Ding 2018: 226) However, it was only in the modern era that a romanticized form of “exile” was forged to create the illusion that linguistic and national non-belonging is the exception rather than the norm. In other words, the rise of exile as a weaponized political category went hand-in-hand with the rise of the modern nation-state.

Though they certainly experienced their fair share of political repression, it is important to note that Pai, Chang, Jin, and Wang are voluntary expatriates, not refugees. In other words, these writers diasporic elected to take up residence in foreign countries of their own volition; they are not barred access to their home countries due to political infractions. For instance, though war drove Pai to Taiwan, he willingly established residence in the United States; Chang moved from Shanghai to Hong Kong and eventually the United States to develop her writing career; disillusioned by the Tiananmen Square Massacre³⁴, Ha Jin elected to become a U.S. citizen; Regina Kanyu Wang pursued a doctorate in Oslo to establish her niche within the world sci-fi community. The fact that these writers elected to self-translate from outside their communities of origin grants them a doubly detached vantage point from which to intervene in the monolith of English *globalese*.

Unlike Pai Hsien-yung, who likens traditional Chinese culture to an “anchor amidst the bobbing waves” (Pai 2017), Ha Jin instead stresses the fear and uncertainty imbued in the

exile's condition: "From the very beginning [the exile] should have known/that if he chose exile he would have no land of his own" (Jin 2018: 11) Ha Jin's words echo Edward Said's reminder that "exile, unlike nationalism, is fundamentally a discontinuous state of being. Exiles are cut off from their roots, their land, their past [...] Exiles feel, therefore, an urgent need to reconstitute their broken lives..." (Said 2000: 177) I argue that self-translation can assist exiles and migrants in healing the trauma of being uprooted from their pasts by offering a linguistic path for creative reconciling nostalgia for their past life and fear of an uncertain future. Pai, Jin, Chang, and Wang are all migrants in the sense that they have experienced geographical and temporal displacement. On a metaphorical level, these self-translators dwell in a global intercultural habitus characterized by perpetual mobility, echoing Rey Chow's pronouncement that "home is here, in my migrant-hood" (Chow 2002: 152).

Shu-mei Shih further decouples home-ness and origin by discussing how immigrants' journeys of displacement embed their sense of self in the immigrant's journey; it is at this critical moment of identity formation that "routes [...] become roots" (Shih 2010: 38). Rather than harboring undying nostalgia for a displaced home or romanticizing a new environment, Said contends that the exile exists in a perpetual state of flux, embracing their new environment(s) while continuing to reminisce about their place(s) of origin (Said 1983). I invoke Said's discourse on exile to contend that although self-translators continue to harbor nostalgia for a far-off "home", this longing does not render them immobile—on the contrary, by transforming the trauma of exile into a desire to sublimate themselves within their newfound linguistic communities, self-translators transform nostalgia into a productive force for re-integration.

Critical Framework: Text and Paratext

This project departs from existing studies by considering case studies of Sinophone self-translators in dialogue with Trauma Studies³⁵, (Queer) Sinophone³⁶ Studies, Queer Studies, and Performance Studies. I posit self-translation as a healing tool for reconciling the trauma of exile and displacement in today's globalized era. I consider the ecology of transmediology, encompassing the histories, cultures, and discourses, that gave birth to the source and translated texts. Close readings of text, people, geography and historical evolution inform my understanding of these author-translators' interpretive process³⁷ as they deconstruct, de/re-verbalize and transform images, thoughts, emotions and memories into verbal signifiers. The *paratexts* (publications, forewords, prefaces, cultural environments, and so forth) that feed into the act of self-translation reveal the source text as a chain of both textual and extra-textual palimpsests that evolves with each successive afterlife.

Self-translators map themselves onto the World Republic of Letters by catering to readers at home and abroad, launching transmedial reverberations throughout the international literary polysystem (Even-Zohar 242-245). In the process of self-translating their texts to the world, self-translators also *map the world onto their texts*, embracing the intersectional hybridity³⁸ of self, nation, language, and culture. I envision the self-translated, diasporic self as a *cosmopolitan* subject that fractures³⁹, subverts and restores its competing identities through *self-worlding* acts of creative subversion. By self-worlding, I do not mean to fetishize the self-translator's radical autonomy or suggest that the author confronts their trauma in a vacuum, isolated from outside forces. Rather, I recognize the self as an unstable, fluid construct embedded in the world power system; the Self and Author are *contingent* entities born of a cultural and political context—the author is simply an interlocutor for

processes already set into motion. By embedding themselves within the world community and anticipating readers' affective responses, self-translators are able to positively sublimate (Wang 2016: 9-10) their own experiences within a collective narrative. Jin, Pai, Chang, and Wang write back to power from the periphery, launching *pluralizing interventions* in teleological historical narratives and monolithic accounts of English and Chinese.

Gender Politics and Queer Theory

Pai, Jin, Chang, and Wang incorporate gender fluidity into their writings as an avenue for commenting on the resilience derived from crossing borders. For instance, Kenneth Pai's *Crystal Boys* adaptations feature queer and nonbinary characters who refuse binary gender constructions. Pai's transmediation team's queer approach to language, genre and genres launches a pluralized intervention into the Sinophone world. I also decode Eileen Chang's short story "She Said Smiling" from a queer angle. By acknowledging the potentially transgressive desire between the two women, I draw parallels between the characters' malleable sexualities and the fluidity of the Chinese-English transwriting process itself. The women's taboo homoerotic desires defy the heterosexual kinship paradigm; while the English-language narrator overtly queers their relationship, the Chinese-language narrator downplays their homoeroticism, possibly hinting at a process of self-censorship.

Regina Kanyu Wang counters the productivity of labels for describing contemporary Sinophone authors. Countering that science fiction is, by default, white and masculine at its core, Wang asserts that any attempt to fetishize Sinophone women's speculative fiction as a byproduct of their femininity and Chineseness risks fetishizing these two identity markers. While I agree with Wang that women Sinophone sci-fi authors should be considered primarily as science fiction authors, with a secondary identity as Chinese (women), I

nevertheless maintain that an author's gender identity plays a significant role in their textual production. Without flattening women-authored sci-fi into such labels as "soft" or "psychological" and essentializing men's sci-fi as somehow "hard" or "scientific", I contend that Chinese women Sinophone authors' doubly marginalized status (as women and Chinese) nevertheless enables them to better preserve textual ambiguities and achieve nuanced characterization in the face of paradox and destruction. Though Kenneth Pai certainly convincingly portrays women characters who become the hallmarks of a fleeting era (Yin Xueyan from "The Eternal Snow Beauty" and the Guru from "A Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars" are cases in point), Eileen Chang and Regina Kanyu Wang tend to leverage their female characters as a lens for criticizing male hypocrisy and black-and-white morality.

While Regina Kanyu Wang's stories queer space, time, and genre by pointing to reparative AI-human collaboration, the narrator in Chang's "She Said Smiling"/*Xiangjian huan* presents women's storytelling communities as memory repositories on the fringes of heterosexual kinship communities. The relationship between the distant cousins Mrs. Chow (Mrs. Wu) and Mrs. Liu (Mrs. Xun) is overtly homoerotic in the English language version; the Chinese-language narrator, however, blurs this ambiguity, inviting readers to form their own interpretations of the women's intimacy. Given its reputation as Greater Asia's first gay novel, gender politics rise to the forefront of Kenneth Pai's *Crystal Boys*. However, while the bonds between the younger sex workers and their elderly clients are certainly sexual in nature, these male-male homosocial bonds are characterized primarily as surrogate father-son relationships. Moreover, the monk Ganchin in Ha Jin's "A Good Fall" reclaims his sexual agency after a botched suicide attempt ironically leads to a financial "good fall".

I reaffirm Simone de Beauvoir's performative approach to gender: Indeed, "one is not

born a woman, but becomes one” (*on ne naît pas femme, on le devient*, de Beauvoir 1973).⁴⁰

In other words, one constantly (re-)performs one’s gender into being in dialogue with the myriad social forces that shape one’s identity. Gender, like sexuality, falls along a spectrum of nuanced identities, resisting binary male/female oppositions. Subversive gender performance reveals the notion of gender as socially constructed and devoid of a fixed essence. When women, who are socially pressured to re-perform their femininity differently for different audiences, re-perform their own work into being through textual and transmedial performance, this dual performance enables them to queer the norms governing gender and writing. When women self-translate themselves into the World Republic of Letters, they speak back to patriarchy through inclusive, reparative language practices. By claiming ownership over their writerly afterlives, women self-translators avoid having their identities be written into being by male translators who might not be as sensitive to the societal forces shaping women’s textual performance.

I opt for an expansive definition of the verb “to queer” as examining the ways in which (a) subject(s) intervene(s) in established binaries and question(s) the hierarchical assumptions underlying a particular discipline. I draw from David Halperin’s (1997) conception of “queer” as

by definition *whatever* is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant. *There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers...*[It] demarcates not a positivity but a positionality vis-à-vis the normative [...] it describes a horizon of possibility whose precise extent and heterogeneous scope cannot in principle be delimited in advance. (Halperin 1997: 62, emphasis in original)⁴¹

Echoing Halperin, I *queer* notions of text and authorship by placing the source text along a continuum of textual versions rather than assuming it to be the result of a teleological progression of drafts. Taking a leaf from Manuel Puig⁴², I acknowledge a “homosexual”

identity as the product of heteronormativity, opting for “queer” to designate the range of non-normative sexual desires and gender expressions. Self-translation *queers* notions of text and authorship by challenging the singularity of these terms and (re-)constructing them in a non-binary, non-hierarchical light.

Echoing Brian James Baer’s triangulation of queer theory, Translation Studies, and Global Sexuality Studies⁴³ (Baer 2021: 9), I articulate the ways in which queer theory, in its unraveling of the two-sex model, breaks down the hierarchies (i.e., source/original vs. target/translated text/culture; author vs. translator, etc.) plaguing Translation Studies.

Building upon Chiang and Wong’s central question of “[Why] does *queer* matter for Asia”? (Chiang and Wong 2017:122, emphasis mine) I ask: What can *queer* discourse do for Translation Studies (and, specifically, the marginalized sub-discipline of self-translation)?

Echoing Brian James Baer’s triangulation of queer theory, Translation Studies, and Global Sexuality Studies⁴⁴, I articulate the ways in which queer theory, in its unraveling of the two-sex model, breaks down the hierarchies (i.e., source/original vs. target/translated text/culture; author vs. translator, etc.) plaguing Translation Studies.

I ask: In what ways are constructions of a singular, authentic source text and a “derivative” target text a product of conventional hierarchical narratives? How can Queer Studies help to dismantle these assumed binaries by refracting and transposing the source text within its various transnational contexts? Rather than focusing exclusively on the *cultural turn*⁴⁵ in Translation Studies, I call for a *queer turn* (Santaemilia 2018: 11; Baer 2018: 2) in which Translation Studies and Queer Studies jointly unravel male/female, source/target text binaries. Taking a cue from Rey Chow’s articulation of “the melancholic turn” in cultural translation (Chow 2014: 63-66)⁴⁶, I contend that we are all alienated and

ideologically indoctrinated in our mother tongues; translation enables speakers to regain possession of language by varying the currency of cultural exchange.

I draw organic inspiration from the texts I examine to propose a radical *queering* (or, in Chinese indigenous terms, 酷儿 *ku'er-ing*, or *tongzhi* 同志-ing⁴⁷) of the Self, authorship, and canonicity. I posit “queer Sinophoninity” as an epistemology of the in-between that rewrites Chineseness from the margins. At the outset, “expressed in one or more Sinophones, ‘queerness’ is already reappropriated, refracted, even twisted” (Bachner 2014: 204).

However, rather than lamenting Chinese reappropriations of these terms as transgressive departures from their original contexts, I celebrate the hybrid, prismatic altercations of these terms as a cause for celebration and symbiotic transcultural evolution. My research situates self-translators on the queer borderlands bridging, unsettling and transcending the assumed dichotomies between author and translator, source and target text, center and periphery, creative writing and translation. These findings shed light on the ways in which self-translators’ transnational self-negotiation hybridizes individual and national identity, thus problematizing one-to-one correspondence among ethnicity, culture and language.

Situating Dispossession in a Sinophone Context

I consider dispossession on three levels; namely, 1. the cognitive dissonance arising from expressing ourselves in (a) “borrowed” language(s) —we are all dispossessed, even (and especially) as we clumsily attempt to speak or write in our mother tongues (Butler 2019: 20) ; 2. the alienation associated with the self-translator’s own experiences of exile, alienation, identity crisis, and so forth; 3. the inherited national trauma and resulting cultural amnesia that the self-translator reflects upon in their writings. Through self-translation, authors remake their own identities and reclaim agency over their chosen languages and cultures.

One solution to language disowning us is to reclaim a new one by writing and self-translating in/into a foreign language. By writing and translating in/into non-native languages, self-translators restore agency ownership over language, and, by extension, memory. I consider the practice of self-translation as both a psychic and narrative response to personal/national trauma/nostalgia. Indeed, self-translation lies at the nexus of history and memory, driving the “rearticulation of memory” and enabling a re-examination of personal and historical imagination vis-à-vis “narrative responses to traumatic memories” (Wang 2005:11).

Analysing Self-Translations: Critical Interventions

In my approach to analyzing self-translations, I adopt Spivak’s philosophy “surrendering” (Spivak 1993) to the texts I analyze, allowing myself to be taken by surprise by its aesthetics, contradictions, language use, and so forth in order to usher in “reparative” readings (Sedgwick 1997). However, I depart from Spivak’s derivative delineation of the source/target text relationship as “facilitating [a] love between the original and its shadow, a love that permits fraying, holds the agency of the translator and the demands of her imagined or actual audience at bay...” (Spivak 1993: 23) by considering source and target text as egalitarian dance partners on that both complement and destabilize one another. Though I recognize Lawrence Venuti’s quantification of the “ethnocentric violence” (Venuti 1995/2017) translators inevitably inflict upon texts and cultures, I do not see foreignizing translation strategies as the only solution for intervening in the regime of fluency. Rather, I examine the extent to which self-translators leverage a combination of domesticating and foreignizing translation strategies according to the specific cultural/textual context, acknowledging the source text itself as the product of violent cultural ruptures.

Literary translators often opt for a blend of foreignization—highlighting the cultural idiosyncrasies of the original text and allowing for the translator’s visible agency, and reader-oriented domestication—or striving for reader-friendly fluency to minimize the ST’s “foreignness”. Building upon Venuti (2008)⁴⁸ and Levine (1988)⁴⁹, I position domestication and foreignization as relational terms along a broad-ranging spectrum of cultural and textual effects couched within sociohistorical contexts. I contend that *reparative* readings can help undo the violence of translation by re-assembling pieces of the source and target together in a new hybrid quilt that reflects both cultural and linguistic systems. I propose defamiliarization and familiarization as alternative terms to describe the self-translators’ processes of presenting a balance between localized and universalized aesthetics.

Chapter Outline

In Chapter Two, I first trace the evolution of the Chinese language source text of Kenneth Pai’s 冬夜 *Dong ye*, originally published in 1970) into three different English translations. I compare Pai’s own collaborative translation (2000) with Limin Zhu’s initial translation (1975), and an alternative translation rendered by John Kwan-Terry and Stephen Lacey (1976). I identify instances of “creative subversion” throughout the self-translation process and highlight the creative transcreatory potential of collaborative self-translation. I acknowledge both the advantage’s and disadvantages of the author-translator’s insider positionality. Next, I examine Pai’s revision and self-translation of the short story *Mantianli liangjingjing de xingxing* (滿天裡亮晶晶的星星, 1971, “Twinkling Stars”). I investigate the story’s transcultural inspirations and explore an alternative ending incorporated into Pai’s novel *Crystal Boys*. By exploring the source text as itself “born translated” (Walkowitz 2015), I position source and translated texts along a continuum of endless transcreations.

In Chapter Three, I turn to Pai's collaborative self-transmediation of the aforementioned story into English translation, the novel *Niezi* 孽子 (1983, translated as *Crystal Boys* in 1989), a twenty-episode television miniseries (2003, co-directed by 曹瑞原 Cao Ruiyuan), a film (1986), and a pair of stage plays (2014, 2020). Pai's decades-long process of collaborative transcultural transcreation supports a hermeneutic model of translation in which source texts are conceived as unstable entities supporting multiple conflicting interpretations. I trace the ways in which Pai's fictional works gain in *transmedial*⁵⁰ adaptation from the page to the stage to the silver screen. Rooted in this fertile ecology of transmediality, Pai's prismatic Sinophone interventions catalyzed Taiwan's legalization of same-sex marriage, and epitomize the quintessential blend of East and West, traditional and modern aesthetics. I follow up this longitudinal study of Pai's self-transmediation by analyzing one of Eileen Chang's decades-long (1950s-1980s) transwriting projects. Chang spent a full four decades translating her English-language source text "She Said Smiling", recently re-discovered through the University of Southern California's Special Collections archives, into Chinese as *Xiangjian huan* 相见欢 (1950). Chang dedicated herself continuously to the practice of consecutive self-translation, occupying a "transwriting zone" bridging English and Chinese. However, rather than simply executing surface-level textual altercations, Chang also makes significant changes to her characters, style, and plotlines, domesticating her manuscript for a foreign audience.

In Chapter Four, I exchange the glitzy dance halls, teahouses, and public parks of Taipei for the working-class immigrant community in Flushing, New York, the largest Chinatown in the continental United States, by examining the short stories "In the Crossfire" (两面夹攻 *liangmian jiagong*) and "A Good Fall" (落地 *Luo di*) from Ha Jin's self-

translated short story collection *A Good Fall/落地 Luo di* (2009). Ha Jin originally conceptualized these stories in Mandarin, before self-translating them into English and finally self-translating them back into Chinese. I then turn to the contemporary Shanghainese sci-fi author Regina Kanyu Wang (王侃瑜). I reflect upon instances of creative subversion in Wang's collaborative self-translations and connect these with Wang's nonbinary approach to human-machine symbiosis. I analyze Wang's self-translated short story "The Language Sheath" (*Yumo* 语膜), in which a mother attempts to build an automatic translation system in order to nativize her son's Kemorean linguistic expression. I document the author's creative departures from her own source text and their implications for transgressing both gender and genre. In Chapter Five (the Coda), I envision a reparative, hermeneutic, and ethical reading and translation practice. I also explore the far-reaching applications of self-translation, ranging from pedagogy to sonology to globalectic reading practices.

I consider the ways in which these authors' non-standard English-language self-translations intervene in the hegemony of monolithic English and carve out a reparative refuge from which to critically reflect upon national trauma. I view self-translation as a *transactional* process whereby the self-translator *transcreates* their own works to maintain control over their work's reception and to catalyze the canonization process. By re-translating his work from a dominated (Chinese) to dominating (English) language, and then from the textual medium to stage play, Pai Hsien-yung directly controls the transtextual iterations of his literary conceptualizations. Ha Jin and Eileen Chang, on the other hand, bypass the process by writing directly in English, before self-translating back into Chinese. Regina Kanyu Wang transcreates her own stories into English to reach a broader readership, radically changing the plot, dialogue, and characterization in the process.

II. CHAPTER TWO: (Self-)Translating Nostalgia: A Constellation of “Winter Nights” and “Twinkling Stars”

Deprived of his cultural heritage,
the Wandering Chinese has become a spiritual exile [...]
The Rootless Man [...] is destined to become a perpetual wanderer...
sad because he has been driven out of Eden,
dispossessed, disinherited,
a spiritual orphan, burdened with a memory
that carries the weight of 5,000 years [of history] (Pai 1976: 208-209).
--Kenneth Pai, “The Wandering Chinese”

Two professors, two ambitions, one shared regret. In Kenneth Pai’s short story *Dong ye* (冬夜, 1970, trans. “Winter Nights”), Yü Ch’in-lei (餘欽磊), a washed-up Byron fanatic who teaches English literature in Taipei, and Wu Chu-kuo (吳柱國), now a professor of Chinese literature at the University of California at Berkeley, once led an abortive intellectual insurrection together during China’s May Fourth Era (1917-1921). Their dreams dashed, the two reconvene one fateful night during a rainstorm in Taipei to rehash the past, lament their thwarted aspirations, and chart a healing path for future generations.

Pai’s *Mantian li liangjingjing de xingxing* 漫天裡亮晶晶的星星 (“A Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars”, 1971) recounts the storied past of Crimson Flame/Chu Yen 朱琰 (“the Guru’s” professional alias) a silent movie actor in Shanghai whose Hollywood aspirations were snuffed out by the talkie industry, and whose Prince Charming protégé was killed in a car crash. The “Guru” presides over a group of ostracized gay hustlers who roam Taipei’s New Park, forming a constellation of bright, twinkling stars that light up the night sky as they commence their evening prowling around the Lotus Pond (*lianhua chi* 蓮花池). The Surrealistic figure of the Guru is emblematic of the universal experience of aging—he is

filled with nostalgia for his lost youth and unfulfilled dreams, yet remains perpetually young by channeling the personae of his youth.

In this chapter, I begin by examining three translated versions of Kenneth Pai's short story *Dong ye* 冬夜 ("A Winter Night") from his *Taipei People* (*Taipei ren* 台北人, 1971) anthology. I compare Pai's and Yasin's English language translation with Limin Zhu's initial translation ("One Winter Evening", 1975⁵¹), and an alternative (re-) translation jointly rendered by John Kwan-Terry and Stephen Lacey in Joseph S.M. Lau⁵² ("Winter Nights"), in order to provide a "control" variable upon which the self-translator's greater liberties are judged. It is quite rare for postwar Taiwanese literary works to have been translated twice, much less three times, into the same language. Taken together, this kaleidoscopic trio of translations provides a unique angle from which to examine both the creative potential enabled by the self-translator's agentive subjectivity *and* the limitations of authorial transmediations. Contrary to my initial hypothesis, the self-translated version is not necessarily more accurate or stylistically innovative than those versions rendered by outside translators. I continue by examining the intertextual discourses that inspired Pai's short story *Mantian li liangjingjing de xingxing* (1971), also from the *Taipei People* anthology, which he collaboratively self-translated as "A Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars". I expose the source text as itself the product of intertextual transcreation, thus positing the self-translation as a translation of a text that was itself "born translated".

Double Exile: Kenneth Pai's Cross-Strait and Cross-Pacific Displacement

Kenneth Pai fuses Chinese literature with Western-style modernism and embodies the confluence of East and West, tradition and modernity⁵³. From pioneering modern Sinophone literature, to writing a revisionist history of his father's involvement in the Chinese Civil War,

to safeguarding Chinese traditional arts, Pai remains committed to his triple passions of literature, cultural rejuvenation, and historical re-evaluation. Pai's father, Pai Chongxi (Pai Ch'ung-hsi 白崇禧, 1893-1966)⁵⁴, was a renowned Kuomintang military general who helped lead the 1927 Northern Expedition, directed the KMT purge of Communists in the Shanghai massacre of 1927, and later served as Chief of Staff for the National Revolutionary Army and Minister of National Defense of the Republic of China (1946-1948). A self-described perpetual wanderer who traveled from his native Guilin to Nanjing to Shanghai (1946) to Hong Kong (1948) to Taipei (1951), before taking up a professorship at UC Santa Barbara in 1965, Pai claims "traditional Chinese culture" as his spiritual homeland (Pai 2017)⁵⁵. In 1956, Pai embarked on a course of study on hydraulic engineering at National Cheng Kung University, with the goal of contributing to China's resurrection by engineering the Three Gorges Dam (Pai 1999, trans. mine)⁵⁶. However, Pai soon discovered his true calling in literature, and transferred to National Taiwan University to embark upon a course of study in foreign literature the very next year.

Having spent just eleven continuous years in Taiwan (1952-1963) before moving to the United States, Pai has been hailed as the quintessential "émigré writer". Pai explains that the temporal and geographical detachment he experienced by living in the United States deepened his love for Chinese culture:

After going abroad, my attitude towards my own country changed drastically. I developed a powerful nostalgia for my own culture. I achieved a critical distance. If I hadn't gone abroad, I might not have achieved an objective view of Chinese history; after all, an outsider can often see things more objectively than those directly involved. After living abroad, however, I felt more Chinese, and I became more concerned with the fate of my country.⁵⁷ (Pai 1999/2018: 297, trans. mine)

Indeed, by viewing his own culture from an outsider's perspective, Pai deepened his nostalgia for traditional Chinese culture, while simultaneously sharpening his critical

historical awareness.⁵⁸

Despite his modernist flair, Pai has remained deeply committed to traditional Chinese culture, producing and helping to revive *kunqu* (昆曲)⁵⁹, one of China's oldest living operatic traditions and a designated "Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity" (Yu 2001). In 2015, Pai asserted: "Once I was asked where my homeland was. I couldn't answer [...] right away. It is not geographical. It is traditional Chinese culture." (Yi 2015, trans. mine)⁶⁰. For Pai, "home" is not place-bound; by safeguarding traditional Chinese culture from the periphery, Pai anchors his spiritual homeland in a collective Sinophone identity bound to culture rather than geography. Indeed, Pai's literary oeuvre is one *sans frontier*, capturing the spirit of war-torn eras, yet imbuing the fleetingness of war, death, and destruction with timelessness, grace, and hope.⁶¹ Pai earned his nickname the "pioneer of melancholia" by imbuing his literary works with an unfulfilled yearning for a spiritual home, for an inaccessible aesthetic paradise yet untainted by political repression, homophobia, and societal ostracization. In Pai's words, "A French newspaper, *Libération*, asked many writers all over the world the question, 'Why do you write?' I responded, 'I wish to render into words the unspoken pain of the human heart.'"⁶² (Pai and Friedman 2023)

In 1963, Pai co-founded *Modern Literature* (现在文学) with a close circle of a dozen National Taiwan University classmates hailing from National Taiwan University's Chinese Literature and Foreign Literature departments, including Ouyang Tzu (歐陽子)⁶³, Wang Wen-hsing (王文興), Li Ou-fan (李歐梵), Liu Shao-xing (劉紹興), and Chen Ruoxi (陳若曦). The magazine, which Pai whimsically dismisses as "a youthful dream lifelong cherished" (*zhongshen huainian de qingchun meng* 個身懷念的青春夢) (Pai 2008, *Zai Taida de suiyue*) would later be acclaimed as the most influential modern literary magazine

to emerge from Greater China (Palladino 2006). The magazine not only featured fiction, political essays, poetry, and art by such authors as Li Ang (裏昂), San Mao⁶⁴ (三毛), Shi Shuqing (施叔青), Huang Chunming (黃春明), Chu His-ning (朱西甯), Wang Chen-huo (王禎和), Chen Yingzhen (陳映真), Lin Huai-min (林懷民), Wang Zhenhe (王禎和), Guo Songfen (郭松棻), Liu Daren (劉大任), Luo Fu (羅夫), Zhou Mengdie (周夢蝶), Xi Song (奚淞), and so forth, but also played an instrumental role in translating the works of such Western authors as Franz Kafka, Thomas Mann, William Faulkner, and James Joyce, whose hefty *Dubliners* short story anthology the magazine translated in full (Pai (Pai, *Xungen ji*, 265). Despite its name, the magazine did not exclusively publish “modernist” works, but also “Nativist” ones, elements which often co-existed in the same work (i.e., using experimental and innovative techniques to write about one’s own native land) (Pai 2017: 139). *Modern Literature*, whose initial publications spanned the years 1960 to 1973, consisted of some 51 issues in total, ushering in what Pai affectionately dubs a “mini-renaissance” (Pai in Liao et al. 2017).

Exile Consciousness in Pai’s Taipei People Anthology

Pai explains that his short story anthology *Taipei People/Taipei ren* 台北人, a monumental work often compared with James Joyce’s *The Dubliners* (1914)⁶⁵, “is a reflection of the refugee experience of the many people who fled to Taiwan and started a new life there.” (Ouyang 2010) Pai and Joyce experienced exile in Taipei and Dublin, respectively—their shared “exile consciousness” generates a form of psychological trauma and lingering nostalgia. Joyce criticizes Irish Catholicism and nationalism rampant at the turn of the twentieth century, while Pai explores the stifling effects of the KMT’s brand of nationalism,

which stirs a nostalgia for mainland China amongst the mainlander exiles who take up residence in Taipei (Gao 2003 xix). In the words of Joseph S. M. Lau,

though most of [Pai's] celebrated characters are Taipei *jen*, they have little in common with the kind of Taipei *jen* depicted by the native Taiwanese writers...His Taipei *jen* are moving, well-etched characters, but they are not as much a part of Taipei as Joyce's Dubliners are a part of Dublin...They are the 'last aristocrats' of an ancient regime—the general without soldiers, ministers without portfolios, Helens without Troy—whose paradise, once lost, can never be regained except in memory..." (Lau 1973: 624)

In this sense, the very title "Taipei People" is ironic given that none of the characters are rooted in Taipei; they continue to live in the past and build their personal identities on memories of their home regions in mainland China.⁶⁶ As Yü Kwang-chung puts it:

"Regardless [of] whether they are living in Taipei or in New York, Pai's characters are all unable to uproot themselves from the old mainland of their dreams" (Yü 1977: 275). Though he only spent eleven years living in Taipei, Pai is a self-proclaimed "Taipei resident forever" (永遠的台北人 *yongyuan de Taibei ren*); indeed, the formative years he spent in Taipei Taipei provided a "lens for surveying the world", an *ansatzpunkt*⁶⁷ from which he would later survey mainland China, New York, and Hong Kong (Pai in Pai et al. 2009).

Taipei People chronicles stories of immigrants who fled from Mainland China to Taipei, Taiwan in the 1950s in the wake of the Chinese Civil War and the War of Resistance against Japan, revealing these mainlanders' (*waisheng ren* 外省人) psychological affinity with Mainland China. Pai dedicates this anthology "to the memory of my parents and the time of endless turmoil and anguish through which they lived" (Pai 2000: dedication page), and acknowledges that *Taipei People* chronicles "a history of the Republic of China" (Pai in Ouyang 1983: 6, trans. mine)⁶⁸, spanning the Xinhai Revolution (1911), the May Fourth Movement (1917-1921), the Nationalists' Northern Expedition (1926-1928), to the Sino-

Japanese War (1937-1945) and the Chinese Civil War (1927-1949). The stories in *Taipei People* chronicle the lives of a motley group of ostracised young mainlanders who flee to Taiwan, where they struggle to reconcile their nostalgia for mainland China and sense of loss with their new lives. In the words of Pai’s photographer Hsu Pei-hung (許培鴻):

Pai explains that he selected the poem Wu Yi Alley (乌衣巷) by Liu Yuxi (刘禹锡, 772-842) as the Epigraph for *Taipei ren*, in order to convey the characters’ nostalgia for their past glory.

朱雀桥边野草花	By the Bridge of the Heavenly Red-Bird rank weeds over grow;
乌衣巷口夕阳斜。	At the Lane of Black-Gown Mansions, the dying sun sinks low.
旧时王谢堂前燕	‘Neath the eaves of the high and mighty, swallows used to nest, but
飞入寻常百姓家。	Now, to homes of the commoners, of the Joneses and Smiths they go.
	(trans. Andrew W.F. Wong)

In a personal interview, Pai elaborates:

by the third century, the Western Jin capital was invaded by the various barbarians—Xiongnu, and so forth. And so the Jin dynasty court moved to Nanjing [Jinling] from Luoyang in Henan during the Eastern Jin. The people of the Eastern Jin yearn for their former days in Luoyang, so I quote this poem as a parallel. The Western Jin dynasty moved from Luoyang to Nanjing, and the Republic of China moved its capital from Nanjing to Taipei, so it’s a historical parallel. That’s the major theme of my *Taipei ren*. Just like many centuries ago, the people of the Eastern Jin long for their lost country. (Pai and Friedman 2023)

Pai’s relationship with Taipei thus parallels the Jin dynasty capital’s transition from Luoyang to Nanjing, insofar as his family (and the characters in *Taipei ren*) relocated from the mainland to Taiwan, yet retain nostalgia for the homeland they left behind. Indeed, uprooted from their former lives in mainland China, clinging to memories of past glories, the characters in *Taipei ren* search endlessly for a spiritual refuge.

In his essay 流浪的中國人：台灣小說的放逐主題 (“The Wandering Chinese: The Theme of Exile in Taiwanese Fiction”, self-translated for *The Iowa Review* in 1976), Pai identifies self-imposed exile as a self-preservation technique for Chinese intellectuals:

Traditionally during Chinese history, when severe social and political dislocations occurred, those intellectuals who wished to maintain their integrity often chosen to retreat from society either as a gesture of protest or simply for the practical reason of survival. These exiles [...found] their personal expression in art and literature. Their artistic creations, whose merits were rarely recognized at the time, would nevertheless become important testaments for posterity [...] Deprived of his cultural heritage, the Wandering Chinese has become a spiritual exile: Taiwan and the motherland are incommensurable [...] The Rootless Man, therefore, is destined to become a perpetual wanderer [...] sad because he has been driven out of Eden, dispossessed, disinherited, a spiritual orphan, burdened with a memory that carries the weight of 5,000 years [of history]. (Pai 1976: 205, 208-209)

Pai articulates the psychological predicament of the Rootless Man as the consequence of the tradition of “spiritual exile” throughout Chinese history, which relegates Sinophone citizens to a state of perpetual wandering, dispossession, and disinheritance. Pai also credits separation from mainland China as a factor contributing to diasporic Taiwanese and Chinese mainlanders’ wandering state. The capitalization of “Rootless Man” and “Wandering Chinese” elevates them to a symbolic level and prompts readers to consider these figures as emblematic of the universal condition of exile. Indeed, in a conversation with Zeng Xiuping, Pai elaborates on the notion of exile as a universal human condition: “We are all drifters, right from the moment we come into this world. When we emerge into this universe, we begin our wandering existence. The womb is probably the safest place in this world.”⁶⁹ (Pai in Zeng 2001, trans. mine) Pai’s emphasis on the safe-haven offered by the womb, a sanctuary we all unconsciously long for, posits a quasi-Freudian interpretation of human existence; this capacious understanding of exile considers wandering and banishment as a fundamental aspect of the human psyche, rather than an exceptional condition.

Pai views traditional Chinese culture as the vital link between Taiwan and the Chinese mainland. In an interview, Pai expands upon this notion of the Rootless Man and the state of the spiritual Chinese exile by remarking:

I was six when I left my native city Guilin during the Japanese invasion. We caught the last train to leave Guilin and the whole city was on fire. I returned to my native town Guilin only after fifty some years in 1993. During the Sino-Japanese War and then the Civil War, we moved from one city to another, Chongqing, Nanjing, Shanghai, and down south to Wuhan, Guangzhou, and finally to Hong Kong [...] I never felt rooted in any of the cities I have been to [...] I only fe[el] at home when I [am] immersed in doing something related to Chinese traditional culture, like rejuvenating *kun* opera. (Pai 2022, personal correspondence)

Pai's depiction of culture as a spiritual home anchored in culture rather than geographic locale echoes Shih Shu-mei's notion of the Sinophone as a language-oriented entity and the immigrant experience as celebrating mobility rather than origin. In his essay "Shijixing de piaobozhe: Chongdu "Cangqing yu Taohong" (Wanderer of the Century: Rereading *Mulberry and Peach*), Pai contrasts the longstanding tradition of exile-inspired literary creation in the Euroamerican world with the quasi-nonexistence of exile in the Sinophone world, with the exception of Communism-induced self-exile in the modern and contemporary post-Mao era.⁷⁰ Uprooted from Guilin to Chongqing, Nanjing, Shanghai, Wuhan, Guangzhou, Hong Kong (1948), Taipei (1951), to Iowa City (1963), and finally Santa Barbara (1965), Pai claimed his spotlight within this robust genealogy of contemporary Sinophone (self-)exiled writers.

The narrators in Pai's works tend to distance themselves emotionally from the fictional narrative, a trend especially apparent in "Winter Nights". In this story, Yü Ch'in-lei and Wu Chu-kuo lament the fact that they have been forced to relinquish their past in order to survive; in the story's concluding lines, this sense of traumatic loss is personified by Taipei's deepening winter night. "The winter night in Taipei deepened as the cold rain

outside the window continued to fall incessantly.” (Pai et al. 2000: 300) Ouyang Tzu notes that this nostalgia for the “past”—traditional Chinese culture, a state of youthfulness, simpler days, and so forth—is embodied in

a [...] gripping sense of loss that runs as a deep undercurrent throughout these fourteen stories [which] can be traced back to the author’s obsession with his country’s rise and fall and with the cataclysmic social changes; his nostalgia for a traditional Chinese civilization in the face of crisis; and [...] his everlasting regret over the “finiteness” of human life and over man’s inability to preserve his youth and to stop the torrential flow of Time.” (Ouyang 1980: 80-81, trans. Liu)

Indeed, the word “incessantly” in the story’s final line accentuates this sense of being cut off from the past and the umbilical cord of traditional Chinese culture.

Taipei People, which recounts the psychological turmoil shared by a community of mainland immigrants to Taipei, reflects the trauma of displacement emblematic of *waishengren* 外省人 (mainlanders’) experience integrating themselves into their new island homeland. In this short story collection, Pai juxtaposes mainlanders’ struggle to adjust to life in contemporary Taiwan with memories of their former days on the mainland. In Pai’s words,

A writer always dwells on the outside; otherwise, [they] can’t be objective. I believe a writer must keep a distance in order to gain perspective. It’s possible writers choose to be outsiders [of their own volition]. (trans. in Chen 2013, revisions in brackets mine)

Indeed, relocating in the United States enabled Pai to “re-discover traditional Chinese culture” and forge his hallmark aesthetic synthesis of “Western modernism” and traditional Chinese classicism (Pai and Cai 1996/2006: 443, trans. mine)

Through the act of self-translation, Pai approaches the sentiment of estrangement from his homeland through an added layer of linguistic distance. Pai tends to write urban fiction with a specific spatial-temporal framework in mind: his short story anthology *The New Yorkers* (纽约客, published in the original between 1965-2003), for instance, chronicles

the lives of mainland Chinese exiles in New York, inhabiting a spatial-historical moment reminiscent of Ha Jin's short story collection *A Good Fall*.

“Winter Nights” and the May Fourth Movement’s Legacy

Expanding upon the vein of social satire opened by his opening short story “the Eternal Yin Hsueh-yen” (永遠的的尹雪豔 *Yongyuan de yinshuiyan*) from the collection *Taipei ren* 台北人, *Dong ye* 冬夜 (“Winter Nights”) depicts two aging professors who were once politically active during the May Fourth movement: namely Professor Yü Ch'in-lei (餘欽磊), a washed-up Byron fanatic who teaches English literature in Taipei, and Wu Chu-kuo (吳柱國, the name ironically meaning “pillar of the country”⁷¹), a professor who teaches Chinese at UC Berkeley. Professor Yü is envious of Wu, who has traveled the world and embraced the spirit of adventure, whereas Yü went from being a starry-eyed intellectual and revolutionary leader during the May Fourth Movement to a burned-out scholar earning a barely livable salary. Yü repeatedly attempts to seek refuge in the United States, yet on his way out of the Consulate with visa papers in hand, he is hit by a student on a motor scooter and ends up with a permanent mobility impairment.

Both Yü and Wu are exiles harboring unrealized ideals for a democratic China kindled during the May Fourth Movement. Though Wu is an academic success story self-exiled in the United States, he blindly fulfills the milestones of the American academic system without self-actualization, becoming a Tang era specialist, since he cannot stomach the tragedy of modern Chinese history. Yü, desperate to escape to the United States to improve his financial lot, symbolizes Chinese intellectuals' desperation and psychological stagnation. As C.T. Hsia puts it,

“A Winter Night” is an elegy on the dashed hopes of youth, of a generation of scholar-patriots who had failed to remake China according to their dreams and have to live out their lot, each according to his circumstances [...] “A Winter Night” registers a sense of the psychological desertion of Taiwan by young and old alike. (Hsia 1999: 585)

While I agree that “A Winter Night” certainly exposes the hypocrisy of Chinese intellectuals, many of whom would rather seek exile in another country than confront the wounds of their past, I find Hsia’s assessment overly pessimistic. Though the narrator remains emotionally detached, they nevertheless portray the scholars’ participation in the May Fourth movement with an uncanny reverence and lyricism; it is their country and academic system that has let them down, rather than the other way around. Pai laments that “the dominant literary trend of May Fourth and the 1930s was one where literature was pressed into the service of social reform, an instrumentalist literary view. Literary aesthetics were not allowed to be independent [...] Modern Chinese fiction was not able to transcend the confines of political ideology” (Pai 128-129).

The old friends reminisce over their bygone glories and unresolved ambitions in Professor Yü’s dilapidated home as a rainstorm rages outside. The passage of time, harshly metaphorized through the image of endless rain, has both literally and figuratively washed away the intellectuals’ revolutionary ambitions and left them with a lingering melancholia. Despite their despair over their unrealized ambitions and the stagnation of traditional Chinese culture, the two intellectuals seek refuge in the memories of the sunlit days of the May Fourth era, which rekindles their hope for the future. Joseph S.M. Lau keenly observes that Pai uses changes in weather to indirectly convey implied literary themes:

Nearly all of [Pai’s] best stories are cast against the background of winter, autumn, or evenings. Spring [...] is [...] as violent as it is beautiful; summer is identified with madness and depravity.” (Lau 1975: 38) ⁷²

As we will explore in close readings of the story's closing passage, the "winter nights" in this story seem to indicate the winter of the characters' lives—that is, old age and approaching death. In Pai's words,

Most of the characters in *Taipei People* are middle-aged or in their twilight years. When you're that age, memory exerts a heavy weight upon you. Writing about elderly people when I was still quite young, it was as if I were prophesizing my own inner world as an old man. Especially when it came to "Winter Nights", which is about an elderly professor. Now I myself have become a "Winter Night". I was around thirty when I wrote that story [...] As I was writing *Taipei People*, I mourned for my own culture. I was reflecting upon Chinese culture as I wrote in the United States. Chinese culture had been deteriorating since the late nineteenth century, and I often asked myself why. Though I studied Western literature, which also has a fantastic tradition [...] I also reflected upon and criticized my own cultural traditions. For me, writing is a process of self-discovery.⁷³ (Pai 2004: 211, trans. mine)

Indeed, "Winter Nights" does serve as an elegy to traditional Chinese cultural traditions—the geographical distance Pai experienced writing about China from the United States enabled him to develop a reflective, critical perspective on his own cultural traditions. These critical reflections upon trauma fed Pai's determination to launch a cultural renaissance, while achieving self-discovery through critical introspection. Pai's metaphorical conceptualization of "winter nights" may also be referring to Tsung Su's (甦叢) Kafakaesque parable "A Blind Hunt", which Pai describes as "recapitulate[ing] the ethos of the Wandering Chinese":

The night was cold, and it was dark. We could not see ourselves, not even our shadows. We had not said anything to each other, but we all knew what was in each other's mind[s]. Yes, we all knew, even in the dark, in pitch darkness...but we simply had to go, we simply had to go, and we did not know why. (trans. Pai 1976: 212)

Similarly, though professors Yü and Wu have also lost themselves amidst the "winter nights" of their unfulfilling careers, they are nevertheless able to empathize with another's profound "social and political disillusionment" (Pai 1976: 212), thus collectively honoring the memory of an aborted cultural renaissance. Though they themselves may be unable to bring this

renaissance to fruition, by conveying the dashed hopes of the May Fourth movement, they entrust this mission of cultural revival to the next generation of writers.

“Winter Nights” stands as one of Pai’s hallmark melancholic pieces. Professor Yü emblemizes this melancholic mood through a series of misfortunes: first losing his wife, then losing mobility in a motor scooter accident, consequently losing opportunities to pursue academic research in the United States. Though Professor Wu has obtained a glitzy professorship at the University of California, Berkeley, commands respect from his long list of publications, and leads an elite lifestyle, he longs to return to Taiwan after the death of his wife. Moreover, both characters regret their participation in the May Fourth Movement demonstrations and experience disillusionment with their careers and life choices. I argue that the story’s pervading melancholia stems not simply from the characters’ exile from their homeland, but also from the cultural crisis enveloping the Sinophone community, given the neglect of ancient Chinese culture, literature, and traditions.

Pai *transmediates* the spirit of the May Fourth movement through his tale of a pair of intellectuals’ existential crisis in the wake of China’s aborted cultural revival during the May Fourth Movement. Doubly removed from the source text material in English translation, Pai and his co-translator Patia Yasin and editor George Kao strike a middle ground between foreignization and domestication, lyricizing and narrativizing. They also restore the cadence of the poetic lines in the Chinese source text and opt for universalizing language over regional dialect, which commands a broader audience yet dilutes the flavor of the source text.

Pai’s Collaborative Self-Translation of “Mantianli liangjingjing de xingxing”

Anthony Cordingley and Josh Stenberg identify four waves of Taiwanese self-translators: (1) Republican Chinese exiles to Taiwan who later took up residence in the United States; (2)

colonized Taiwanese authors writing in Japanese; (3) Post-1945 Taiwanese writers who self-translate from Japanese to Taiwanese Hokkien; (4) Post-war Taiwanese who self-translated from Chinese into English or Japanese (Cordingley and Stenberg 2024: 18). As an émigré Taiwanese writer who migrated first to Taiwan and then the United States, Kenneth Pai corresponds to the first category. Pai opted to translate *Taipei People* into English to adapt the short story for an English-speaking readership and ensure fidelity to the source text on both linguistic and aesthetic levels (Pai et al. 2000). The English version of *Taipei ren* is the culmination of a *translaboration* between Pai Hsien-yung and his decades-long friends Patricia E. M. Yasin (an American translator of traditional Chinese and Japanese folk lyrics and modern Turkish poetry who moved to Santa Barbara to collaborate in-person with Pai), and George Kao⁷⁴ (高克毅, a founding editor of the journal *Renditions*, translator of F. Scott Fitzgerald, and an Honorary Fellow of the Hong Kong Translation Society, from 1976 to 1981).

Yasin explains that “Pai Hsien-yung was the *composer* and I was whatever musicians or singers each of his pieces called for [...] By treating translation as a performing art, I would not get caught in the foolish trap of trying to be ‘creative’ or ‘original’ at the expense of the work, since musicians and actors are far less likely to leave out difficult passages!” (Pai et al. 2000: xxviii, emphasis mine). Yasin’s comment draws attention to the *performative* nature of translation; indeed, the translators breathe life into a text by translating context along with the text itself. Yasin and Pai emphasize the importance of relative fidelity towards the source text, with tone, rhythm and aesthetics as auxiliary decoration. In Pai’s own words:

翻譯三律「信、達、雅」我們先求做到「信」，那就是不避難不取巧，把原文老老實實逐句譯出來——這已是了不得的頭一關 [...] 翻譯文學作品我覺得語調

(tone) 準確的掌握是第一件要事，語調語氣不對，譯文容易荒腔走板，原著的韻味，喪失殆盡。語調牽涉用字的輕重、句子的節奏、長短、結構，這些雖然都是修辭學的基本功，但也是最難捉摸的東西。

[In translating *Taipei People*] Patia Yasin and I prioritized fidelity [*xin*] over fluency [*da*] and elegance [*ya*]. We didn't take any shortcuts, nor did we leave anything out...faithfully recreating each sentence, each phrase of the source text—that is the first step in a successful translation, and an extraordinary challenge in itself.

Capturing the atmosphere and tone of the source text should be the first order of business for literary translators; if the tone is off, the translation will fall flat, and the flavor of the source text will be lost. Tone is created through rhythm, emphasis, and structure, which are the fundamentals of rhetoric, but also the most difficult to master. (Pai 1999/2011, trans. mine)

In other words, fidelity to the authorial intent is not incompatible with a translator's creative agency, even his/her *creative subversion* in translation, yet such creative “transgressions” must be rooted in fidelity to authorial intent. Pai, Yasin, and Kao strike a balance between foreignization and domestication, boldly translating idioms literally while ensuring dialogues are colloquially sound, even resorting to slang to adapt the text for the English-speaking readership (Pai 2000: xxviii-xxxiii).

In a personal correspondence, Pai told me:

We formed a team to translate *Taipei People* which included George Kao, Patia Yasin and myself [...] Normally Patia and I would do the first drafts. At first, we would translate the text word for word trying not to leave out any part of the story, not even the most difficult ones. Patia was well versed in many languages, Japanese, Chinese, French, and Russian. She was a Russian Jew and her father was the famous art critic Harold Rosenberg. She grew up in New York in the East Village and she was familiar with the street talk [used by] New Yorkers. George Kao was our editor and he made corrections and smoothed over the rough patches in our translation. Mr. Kao's English was superb and he was an expert on American idioms. He had the final say in our translation, although sometimes he was generous enough to make some concessions, if we were insistent in keeping our own versions. (Pai 2022, personal correspondence)

Contrary to self-translation scholars' conventional hypothesis that the original author leverages (and even abuses) their authorial privilege to remake their text anew, Pai and Yasin tended to defer to Kao's judgment in Americanizing the text, decentering authorial privilege

in order to enhance readability. Pai's emphasis on colloquiality (he praises Yasin's intimate familiarity with New Yorkers' colloquial expression and Kao's expertise in American idioms) reflects the spoken nature of the source text. Although the present anthology is entitled *Taipei People/Taibei ren* 台北人⁷⁵, there are definite parallels between first-generation New York immigrants and the mainland-born exiles in Taipei in the anthology. In fact, Pai's later anthology *New Yorkers/Niuyue ke* 紐約客 suggests that his choice of Yasin, a Russian Jew who could bring a unique New York flair to the dialogue, marked an attempt to transcreate the Taipei immigrants' slang into New York English.

Transmediating Melancholia: Comparing Three Translations of "Winter Nights"

In what follows, I compare the story's opening paragraph in three successive versions: the Chinese source text, followed by Kwan-Terry's and Lacey's 1976 translation, Limin Zhu's translation, two drafts rendered by Pai, Yasin and Kao and finally the one published by the aforementioned translation team in 1982/2000.

Chinese source text (1970):

台北的冬夜，经常是下着冷雨的。傍晚时分，一阵乍寒，雨，又淅淅沥沥开始落下来了。温州街那些巷子里，早已冒起寸把厚的积水来。余钦磊教授走到巷子口去张望时，脚下套着一双木屐。他撑着一把油纸伞，纸伞破了一个大洞，雨点漏下来，打到余教授十分光秃的头上，冷得他不由得缩起脖子打了一个寒噤。他身上罩着的那袭又厚又重的旧棉袍，竟也敌不住台北冬夜那阵阴湿砭骨的寒意了。(Pai et al. 2000: 385)

Limin Zhu (1975):

The winter evenings in Taipei are frequently accompanied by cold rains. One day as it darkened and became colder, raindrops started to fall again. And soon, about an inch of water seemed to emerge out of the ground in the lanes of Wenchou Street. Professor Yü Ch'in-lei, wearing wooden sandals, walked to the end of the lane to look around. Raindrops fell through the large hole of his oiled-paper umbrella onto his completely bald head and made him shudder with cold as he drew his neck further into his shoulders. The thick and heavy cotton-padded old gown with which

Professor Yü covered himself failed to keep the Taipei winter evening's damp cold from reaching his bones. (Zhu 1975: 261)

Kwan-Terry and Lacey (1976):

In Taipei, winter nights are usually cold and wet. A chill gust of wind was blowing again this evening and then, without warning, the rain fell, pitter-pattering onto the pavements. The alleys around Wenzhou Street already were under more than an inch of water. Professor Yü Qinlei made his way to the entrance of the alley where he lived, and looked around. On his feet were a pair of wooden clogs, and he held a torn, old-fashioned umbrella made of oil-paper; through the gaping hole the raindrops dribbled down onto his bald head. He was wrapped in his customary thick, padded gown, but even this was no protection against the bone-chilling cold of a Taipei winter night. He hunched his shoulders and shivered. (cited in Lau and Goldblatt, ed., 2007: 210)

Pai, Yasin and Kao (draft 1, 1979):

Winter nights in Taipei, it usually rains cold rain. That evening, a bleak wind suddenly rose and the rain began to fall pitter-patter again. In no time the water had risen an inch in the alleys around Wen-chou Street. Professor Yü Ch'in-lei walked to the entrance of the alley and looked around. He was holding an oilpaper umbrella; the paper had torn, leaving a large hole; the raindrops leaked through and fell on his bald head. It sent a chill through him: he hunched his shoulders and shivered. On his feet were a pair of wooden clogs. He was wrapped in that thick, heavy old padded gown of his, but even this was not able to withstand the somber, bone-chilling cold of a Taipei winter night. (Kenneth Pai papers, 1979)

Pai, Yasin and Kao (draft 2, 1979):

Winter nights in Taipei, it usually rains cold rain. This evening, a bleak wind suddenly rose and the rain began to fall pitter-patter again. In no time the water had risen an inch in the alleys around Wen-chou Street. Professor Yü Ch'in-lei walked, in a pair of wooden clogs, to the entrance of the alley and looked around. He held in his hand an oilpaper umbrella; the paper had torn and through the large hole, the raindrops fell on his bald head. It sent a chill through him that made him hunch his shoulders and shiver. He was wrapped in that old padded gown of his, but even this was not able to ward off the damp, bone-chilling cold of a Taipei winter night.

Pai and Yasin (1982/2000):

Winter nights in Taipei, it usually rains cold rain. This evening, a bleak wind suddenly rose up and the rain began to fall pitter-patter again. In no time the water had risen an inch in the alleys around Wen-chou Street. Professor Yü Ch'in-lei, a pair of wooden clogs on his feet, walked to the mouth of the alley and peered in all directions. He was holding up an oilpaper umbrella; the paper had torn and raindrops

fell through the large hole on his bald head. They sent a chill through him that made him hunch his shoulders and shiver. He was wrapped in his old padded gown, thick and heavy enough, but still it couldn't ward off the damp, bone-chilling cold of the Taipei winter night. (Pai et al. 2000: 386)

The “winter nights” here may also be interpreted in a metaphorical sense as indicating old age, which provides a vantage point from which to reflect upon the “springtime” (or heyday) of one's life. The Taiwanese writer Fumin Yang (楊富閔) points out that

Most of the people living here, as Pai described “Winter Night”, are aging professors, many of whom came over from mainland China in 1949. There are tragic tales behind each. They are nostalgic for their homes in the mainland but cannot return and end up living out their entire lives in Taiwan [...] Wenzhou Street is a microcosm, an elegy to the old times. These old professors used to live in old Japanese-style houses. Due to Japanese colonialism, there are many Japanese-style houses in this area [...] (Yang and Friedman 2023, trans. mine)

Indeed, the dreary weather in Wenzhou Street/溫州街 *Wenzhou jie* (ironically named “the warm prefecture”) metaphorizes its inhabitants' perpetual state of immobility and depression in the face of exile from mainland China. The chill of the “bleak wind” and “cold rain” accentuates the characters' irreconcilable nostalgia for a homeland they can no longer return to. The first immediate difference between all three translations is that Pai and Yasin ascribe more closely to the source text's structure. For instance, they translate the phrase “经常是下着冷雨的” literally as “it usually rains cold rain”, as opposed to Kwan-Terry and Lacey's rendition of “winter nights are usually cold and wet”, and Zhu's translation of “the winter evenings in Taipei are frequently accompanied by cold rains”, which adds the verb “accompanied” for extra spice.

Pai and Yasin's translation preserves the lightning dynamism of the source text; in place of the passive construction (“the alleys around Wenzhou Street already were under more than an inch of water”) rendered by Kwan-Terry and Lacey and Zhu's temporally

confusing “And soon, about an inch of water seemed to emerge out of the ground in the lanes of Wenchou Street” (which seems to suggest that that the water is currently emerging, as opposed to the Chinese source text, which clearly indicates it has already emerged), the collaborative self-translation reads: “In no time the water had risen an inch in the alleys around Wen-chou street.” Pai and Yasin are also careful to divide the long sentence into shorter sentences so that English-speaking readers find the prose easier to digest. Kwan-Terry and Lacey have also inserted the sentence “He hunched his shoulders and shivered”, although it fails to appear in the source text version. Kwan-Terry’s and Lacey’s translation is unfaithful to the point of departing egregiously from the source text; in the following paragraph, for instance, they opt to translate “一个人营也没有” as “not a shadow of a creature could be seen anywhere”, as opposed to Pai’s and Yasin’s relatively faithful rendition: “Not even the shadow of a human being could be seen anywhere”.

Pai’s editor, George Kao, rearranges the description of Professor Yü’s footwear to improve the paragraph’s flow. The first draft of the English translation does not reveal the wooden clogs until the penultimate sentence: “On his feet were a pair of wooden clogs”, but Kao moves this bit up to the third sentence: “Professor Yü Ch’in-lei walked in a pair of wooden clogs to the entrance of the alley and looked around”, which was later revised to “Professor Yü Ch’in-lei, a pair of wooden clogs on his feet, walked to the mouth of the alley and peered in all directions” (Kenneth Pai papers, 1977-1981, 1). Compared with the initial versions, the 1982 version accentuates the poetic, immersive quality of the story through a velvety cadence that immediately draws readers into the fictional world. Though this version has clearly been written on the basis of Kwan-Terry and Lacey’s 1976 version⁷⁶, Pai and his

collaborators present the evening's weather as a series of penetrating episodes which merge seamlessly with the image of Professor Yü, caught in the rainstorm.

The sense of nostalgia permeating the story comes full circle with the story's closing line, which reads as follows:

Chinese source text (1968):

台北的冬夜愈来愈深了，窗外的冷雨，却仍旧绵绵不绝的下着。(Pai et al. 2000: 421)

Limin Zhu (1975):

Taipei's winter nights are getting darker and darker and the cold rains outside the window fall incessantly. (Zhu 1975: 278)

Kwan-Terry and Lacey (1976):

Outside the window icy rain continued to fall, as the night in Taipei deepened into winter. (cited in Lau and Goldblatt, ed., 2007: 223)

Pai and Yasin (1982/2000):

The winter night in Taipei deepened as the cold rain outside the window continued to fall incessantly. (Pai et al. 2000: 420)

As previously mentioned, Pai and Hsien had access to the other two English translations as they re-worked the text from Chinese into English. In this example, the collaborative self-translated version is itself a restoration of the cadence, syntax and flavor of the Chinese source text. (Pai et al. 2000: 420) Interestingly enough, Zhu's translation seems to miss the flavor of the source text by generalizing about Taipei's winter nights in general, thus transporting readers out of the framework of the story. Zhu translates the story's title 冬夜 *Dongye* poetically as "One Winter Evening", evoking the story's underlying themes of memory, nostalgia, and wistfulness, the translation of the final sentence transports the reader

from the micro to the macro level, echoing the story's first line, "The winter evenings in Taipei are frequently accompanied by cold rains."

Colorful Interludes Against a Black-and-White Montage

Plunging readers into a frigid, rainy night in 1960s Taipei, "Winter Nights" delivers a cinematic atmosphere that immerses readers in a melancholic world replete with sorrow, regret and unfulfilled dreams. Spanning some forty years and set in Taipei, Berkeley, and Beijing, respectively, the story captures the melancholia and internal conflicts both of May Fourth era intellectuals and the Chinese diasporic community at large, as they struggle to preserve and revive traditional Chinese culture. Moreover, the frigidity of the rainy winter night metaphorizes the exiled intellectuals' sense of loneliness and severance from traditional Chinese culture.

Ma Jia argues that Pai's "Winter Nights" is primarily written in the form of a black-and-white film: black representing the dark winter nights in Taipei and the metaphorical pain of exile (and perhaps also the black humor that gilds the professors' reminiscences about their involvement in the May Fourth Movement), and white representing Wu and Yu's revolutionary aspirations at Peking University and the love story between Yu and Ya-Hsing. Meanwhile, the professors' lingering regrets and hazy memories are shrouded in gray hues, permeated only by the multicolor scene in which Yu and Ya-Hsing enjoy a romantic rendezvous by the banks of Beihai Park (Ma 2022). Given its status as one of the largest and most prominent of the Chinese imperial gardens, and imitation of the architectural structures of Hangzhou and Yangzhou, Beihai Park stands as an iconic distillation of traditional Chinese art and architecture. It is thus fitting that the image of Ya-Hsing standing beside Beihai Lake is suffused by a crimson sunset offset by Ya-Hsing's blue uniform:

Chinese source text (1970):

雅馨剛剪掉辮子，一頭秀髮讓風吹得飛了起來，她穿著一條深藍的學生裙站在北海邊，裙子飄飄的，西天的晚霞，把一湖的水照得火燒一般，把她的臉也染紅了。
(Pai et al. 1982/2000: 421)

Limin Zhu (1975):

Ya-Hsing had just had her pigtail cut and all her beautiful hair was blown loose. Standing beside the lake, she was wearing a dark blue student uniform and the skirt was fluttering in the wind. The setting sun inflamed the whole lake and her face also became flushed. (Zhu 1975: 277)

Kwan-Terry and Lacey (1976):

Yaxing had just emancipated herself by bobbing her hair, and it was blowing loosely in the wind. She was wearing her dark blue college skirt and standing by the lake. Her skirt fluttered in the breeze. The evening clouds, a brilliant red, gathered in the western skies, transforming the surface of the lake into a sea of fire and throwing flickering crimson shadows on Yaxing's face. (cited in Lau and Goldblatt, ed., 2007: 223)

Pai and Yasin (1982/2000):

[...] Ya-hsing had just cut off her braids, and her beautiful hair flew about in the wind. In her dark blue college skirt she stood beside Pei-hai Lake. Her skirt fluttered in the breeze. The evening light in the west set the whole lake on fire and tinged her face with a crimson glow. (Pai et al. 1982/2000: 420)

Kwan-Terry and Lacey begin the passage by explaining the significance of Yaxing's hair-cutting; namely, a sign of protest against Confucian traditions harkening back to Chinese males' cutting off their queues during the Boxer Rebellion as a symbol of revolution (1899-1901). Zhu and Pai, however, simply state that Ya-Hsing cut her pigtail (Zhu)/braids (Pai). By providing extra context for curious readers, Kwan-Terry and Lacey carry over the cultural connotations behind this character's actions. By converting the clause “裙子飄飄的” (the skirt fluttered in the breeze) into an independent sentence, Kwan-Terry and Lacey and Pai and Yasin restore the cadence of the source text; Zhu, however, tags the clause “and the skirt was fluttering in the wind” onto the previous sentence. Moreover, Zhu does not describe the

exact colors of the sunset and Ya-Hsing's flushed face, whereas the latter two translation teams describe the "fire" suffusing the lake and the "crimson" of Ya Hsing's face. This colorful moment is significant in that it provides a temporary departure from the black-and-white montage of the short story, thus evoking hope for cultural revival that culminates in Professor Yü's poem dedicated to Ya-hsing. This explosion of color anticipates Pai's co-directed stage play *Niezi/Crystal Boys*, in which the play is shot in melancholic dark hues, until the pivotal moment in which Dragon Prince murders his lover Phoenix Boy, which is suffused in a glowing crimson light that marks the symbolic significance of this crime of passion.

In the aforementioned poem, we see Pai's self-translated version taking on considerable embellishments, ornamentations which accentuate the sense of nostalgia and longing for a bygone era expressed by the poem's speaker:

Chinese source text (1970):

当你在碧波上
满天的红霞。
便化做了朵朵莲花
托着你
随风飘去
馨馨
你是凌波仙子。(Pai et al. 1982/2000: 421)

Limin Zhu (1975):

When you leaned on the green waves,
The red clouds all over the sky
Were transformed into lotus flowers
Which bore you away
On the wind. and
Hsin Hsin,¹
You are the Fairy Ling Po² (Zhu 1975: 277)

1. Hsin Hsin is a term of endearment for Ya-hsin.

2. Ling Po, a poetic term for narcissus blossom, was also the name of a particularly beautiful immortal famous for the lightness of her step.

Kwan-Terry and Lacey (1976):

As you recline on the emerald waves,
Red clouds in the evening sky
Melt into lotus flowers
That gently lift you up,
To waft freely with the drifting wind.
Xing, Oh Xing,
You are the goddess of the waves... (cited in Lau and Goldblatt, ed., 2007: 223)

Pai and Yasin (1982/2000):

When you recline on the jade green waves
the sky's profusion of afterglow
metamorphoses into myriads of lotus flowers
that lift you up
to drift away with the wind
Hsing Hsing
You are the Goddess Who Walks on the Waves (Pai et al. 1982/2000: 420)

In Pai's and Yasin's flowery version, the Chinese phrase 满天的红霞 (literally "red clouds fill the sky") becomes: "the sky's profusion of afterglow", as opposed to Kwan-Terry's and Lacey's rather lackluster: "Red clouds in the evening sky" and Zhu's semantically awkward "The red clouds all over the sky". Lines such as "metamorphoses into myriads of lotus flowers" and the final line, "You are the Goddess Who Walks on the Waves" are far more evocative than their literal counterparts "Melt into lotus flowers" (Kwan-Terry and Lacey) and "You are the goddess of the waves" (Kwan-Terry and Lacey). The final line in Zhu's translation ("You are the Fairy Ling Po") delivers a footnote explaining the reference to the beautiful immortal and evocation of narcissus blossom, but the translation itself is less quantified.

For a poem expressing romantic sentiment, perhaps the profusion of intricate descriptions lend a luscious, undulating heft to the poem that would have been in line with the spirit of *New Tide* (*Xinchao* 新潮, also translated as *Renaissance*)⁷⁷ student journal published from 1919-1922, which was an experimental journal imitating Western forms typical of the May Fourth movement. Moreover, Pai and Yasin are careful to leverage the rhetorical technique of alliteration (metamorphoses into myriads” and “Who Walks on the Waves”) to accentuate readers’ sensory pleasure. Such ornamentation is in keeping with this pivotal moment in the story, when shades of gray give way to a profusion of color. Indeed, after reminiscing about the poem he composed for Ya-hsieng, a shamefaced smile colors Professor Yü’s face. In contrast, the Chinese source text is evocative without baroque ornamentation, in keeping with the stylistic requirements of Chinese poetry. Thus, the contrast between the first and third example reveals that the author-translator’s creative liberties are tempered through the sociohistorical context in which the source text was first published.

Universalizing Dialogues: Humor and Crip Studies

The son of an eminent KMT war general, Pai travelled extensively during his formative years, mastering the Cantonese, Hunanese, Taiwanese, Szechwanese, Shanghaiese, Guilin and Beijing languages⁷⁸. This broad linguistic repertoire instilled in Pai a keen appreciation for crafting a linguistic register that would appeal to the Sinophone community at large. When it comes to the self-translation colloquialisms and dialogues, Pai and his translation team take care to avoid overusing Americanisms, a departure from their approach to translating the story “Ode to Bygone Days”, in which they opt for African-American languages from the American South to record a conversation between two former servant women.⁷⁹

In editing drafts of the English translation of *Mantian li liangjingjing de xingxing*, George Kao explains that he opts for a “universal vernacular” in order to remove “jarring regionalisms” (Kao 2000: xxiv). In editing the manuscripts for the English translation of “Winter Night”, Kao weeded the draft of American idioms, changing the phrase “I didn’t want to get on the bandwagon” (我也就不趁熱鬧了) to “I felt I had better not join the crowd and add to your burden” (Kenneth Pai papers, “Winter Nights”, 1977-1981, 6), “Don’t rock the boat, old boy!” (別搗蛋, 老頭子) to “Don’t spoil my fun, old boy!” (ibid. 4), and “You can say that again!” (可不是) to “You’re absolutely right!” (ibid. 7). Kao includes notes in the margins to the effect that the phrase “Don’t rock the boat, old boy” “sounds too American” and Kwan-Terry’s and Lacey’s “I’ll say” and Liming Zhu’s “You’ve said it” “don’t sound right” (see the images appended below). Besides universalizing the prose to appeal to a broad readership, Kao’s edits also ensure that the dialogue reflects a register appropriate to an aging Chinese professor (see the image below), which reflects a sensitivity to both register and dialect. In translating the following dialogue, Pai and his translation team accentuate self-mockery by rendering pithy phrases that transcend regional and racial dialects.

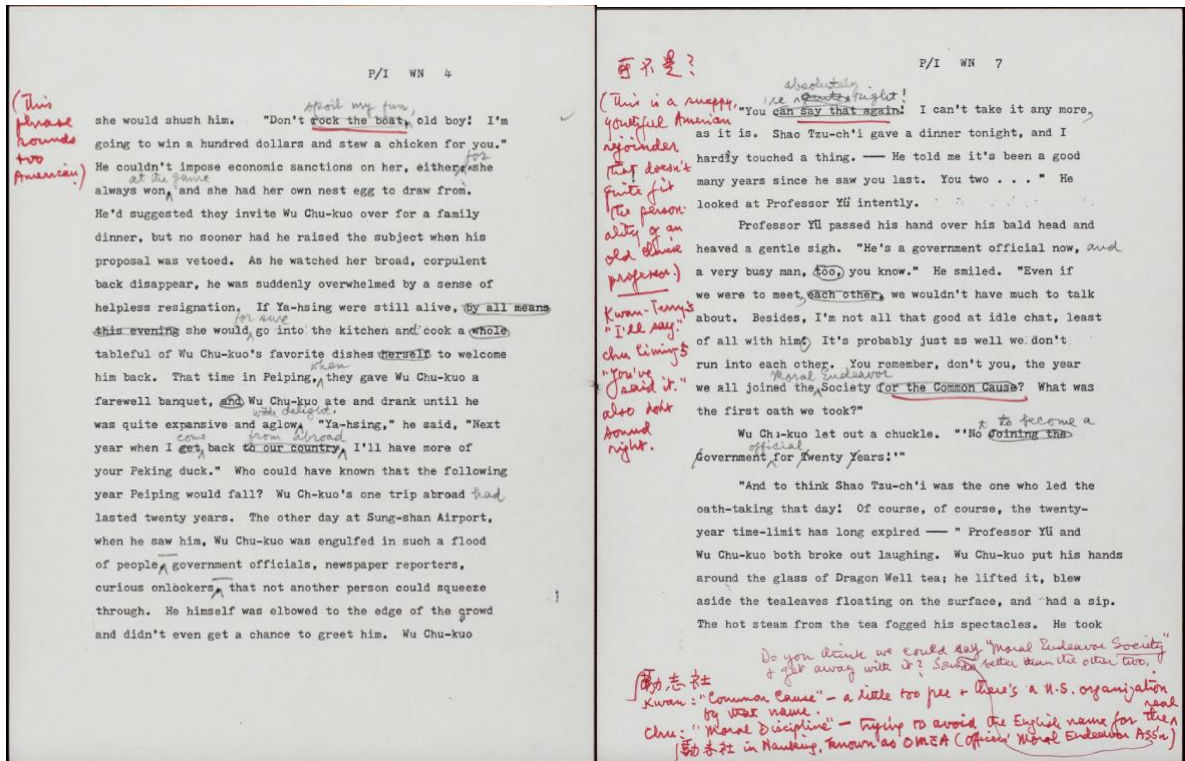


Figure 1. A typewritten image excerpted from Kenneth Pai's "Winter Nights", edited by Patia Yasin and Kenneth Pai, with edits in red by executive editor George Kao

Image credit: Kenneth Pai papers, 1979, 4, 7

Pai Hsien-Yung Collection. UArch FacP 29. Department of Special Research Collections, UC Santa Barbara Library

The marked shifts between lyrical and dialectical registers in "Ode to Bygone Days" mirrors Toni Morrison's shifts in perspective, register, and vocabularies—though "Winter Nights" intentionally erodes the embedded locality of Americanisms in order to reach a broader audience, the translators' attention to age and status-appropriate language reveal the process of intralinguistic translation at work.

In her Translator's Introduction to *The Selected Stories of Adolfo Bioy Casares* (1957-1985), Suzanne Jill Levine suggests that in translating satirical dialect or slang,

The translator must find a language within his own which best reflects the original's effect [...] and yet not eradicate the otherness of the foreign text. This language should be neither too contemporary nor too archaic [...] and the translator could even seek models, texts from a similar period in one's own culture [...] When translating a

text from one language to another, one is really attempting to translate a context. (Levine 1993: 11-12)

Indeed, Levine decides to translate the names of soccer teams from Spanish into English rather than leaving them in Spanish, in order to tease out their symbolic value, thus “underscoring the common bonds between North and South, Spanish and English, making the author’s achievements intelligible to his new reader, but also staying as close as possible to the original’s style and cultural frame.” (Levine 1993: 12) Indeed, translation requires reproducing the effect and flavor⁸⁰ of the ST rather than preserving word-for-word syntax. As Pai, Yasin and Kao write in the Preface to the Bilingual edition of *Taipei People*, “the translators’ task is to represent the artistry of the Chinese original in the idiom of American English—with all its sound, color, and rhetoric.” (Pai et al. 2000: xii)

Self-Mockery and Crip Figures: Transmediating Professor Yü’s Limp

Chinese source text (1968):

有一個女孩子問我：《拜倫真的那樣漂亮嗎？》我告訴她：《拜倫是個跛子，恐怕跛得比我還要厲害咯。》那個女孩子頓市一臉痛苦不堪的樣子，我只得安慰她：《拜倫的臉蛋兒還是十分英軍的—》余教授和吳柱國同時笑了起來。《上學期大考，我除了一個題目要他們論：《拜倫的浪漫精神》，有一個女孩子寫下了一大堆拜倫情婦的名字，連他的妹妹 Augusta 也寫上去了！》

Limin Zhu (1975):

“Once a girl student asked me: ‘Was Byron really that handsome?’ When I told her Byron was ‘a cripple, probably limping more badly than I did,’ there was so much intolerable pain in her face that I had to console her: ‘But, still, he had a distinctly handsome face.’ Professor Yü and Wu Chu-kuo laughed out at the same time. ‘I asked them to write an essay in the final examination of last semester on ‘Byron’s Romantic Spirit’; one girl gave me a list of his mistresses, including his half-sister Augusta Leigh!’”

Kwan-Terry and Lacey (1976):

There was this girl who asked me, ‘Was Byron really that handsome?’ And I told her, ‘Byron was a cripple. I’m afraid he was worse than me!’ There was such a pained

expression on her face that I had to comfort her, so I quickly added, ‘But he did have a ravishingly handsome face.’” Professor Yü and Wu Zhuguo burst out laughing. “In my final exam last semester, I asked them to define Byron’s romantic spirit. One girl wrote down an impressive list of Byron’s mistresses, including his sister Augusta!”

Pai and Yasin (1982/2000):

“There was one girl student who asked me, ‘Was Byron really that handsome?’”
“‘Byron was a cripple,’ I told her, ‘Probably a worse one than I am.’”
She looked so stricken that I had to comfort her. ‘But he did have a devilishly handsome face—’” Professor Yü and Wu Chu-kuo broke out laughing. “On my final exam last semester, I asked them to write an essay on the Romantic spirit in Byron. One girl wrote down an impressive list of Byron’s mistresses; she even included his half-sister Augusta.”

In this excerpt, Pai and Yasin tone down the informal American slang of “There was this girl”, a manner of speaking popular amongst millennials but hardly used amongst the elder generation, re-translating the phrase as “There was one girl student”. Rather than translating 痛苦不堪的樣子 literally as “there was such a pained expression on her face” (Kwan-Terry and Lacey) or “intolerable pain in her face” (Zhu), Pai and Yasin instead use the verb “stricken” to encompass the student’s reaction—moreover, they opt for “devilishly”, a word with a modern flair, in place of the Elizabethan expression “ravishingly”.

None of the cited translations captures the feminization of Byron rendered through the student’s dubbing him 漂亮 *piaoliang*, literally meaning “pretty”, juxtaposed with the description of his face as 英俊 *yingjun* (ruggedly handsome, often used to describe a man’s face with sharp contours) and the term 臉蛋兒, which is often used to refer to a woman’s face. The translation of 跛子 as “cripple”, rather than “lame” or “disabled”, captures the flavor of the source text, while assigning agency to those with physical impediments, given that the word “cripple” (and its variation “crip”) has been claimed by the disabled community as a source of empowerment, much as the LGBTQIA+ community has appropriated the word

“queer” for self-empowerment.⁸¹ Professor Yü’s mobility impairment following his scooter incident is significant given that (dis)abled bodies are often employed in Chinese literature as surrogates for the state of the nation. Professor Yü’s difficulty walking might seem to reflect the Chinese nation’s physical handicap as compared with the vigor of Western culture. Indeed, in the second paragraph, Professor Yü’s right leg is described as “lame”, which causes him to “limp [...] along awkwardly [...] his body lurch[ing] to one side at every step” (Pai and Yasin 2000: 386). Kwan-Terry and Lacey and Limin Zhu both opt for “lame” to translate the colloquial, derogatory Chinese word 跛癱, which suggests that time has not been kind to Professor Yü. However, Yü’s self-mockery transforms his injury into a public spectacle to a reminder of the pain instilled in him by the failed May Fourth Movement. When Professor Wu comments that Yü seems to have hurt his leg badly, Yü responds: “還沒殘廢，已是萬幸了” (Pai and Yasin 2000: 407)/“It’s pure luck I haven’t turned into a cripple by now” (Pai and Yasin 2000: 406), which Kwan-Terry and Lacey translate as “Still, I suppose I’m lucky that I wasn’t crippled” (Kwan-Terry and Lacey 1976: 218) and Zhu as “I was really extremely lucky not to have been more seriously maimed” (Zhu 1975: 271). Zhu’s avoidance of the “crippled” rhetoric possibly highlights a heightened sensitivity towards disability discourse; however, the tone of self-mockery is lost a bit. Western medicine provides ineffective in treating Yü’s leg injury; acupuncture, however, helps alleviate his symptoms so that he can walk with a minor limp. Ouyang Tzu outlines the metaphorical implications of Yü’s leg injury as follows: “Western methods may prove ineffective for curing Chinese diseases (whether physical or symbolic). In this way, Yu Ch’in-lei’s leg injury satirizes both himself and the May Fourth Movement as a whole” (Ouyang 1983: 297, trans. mine)

Professor Yü's self-mockery and mention of Byron's limp subverts such a simplistic understanding of able bodies' signification of cultural strength as compared with their disabled counterparts: Lord Byron's canonical status as a British Romantic poet (and renowned babe magnet) thus prompts readers to question the notion that a nation-body must fall into socially accepted norms in order to be truly powerful. Limin Zhu quantifies Professor Yü's specific physical impediment by writing 'probably limping more badly than I did', rather than employing the vague expressions "worse than me" and "worse one than I am" rendered by Kwan-Terry and Lacey, and Pai and Yasin, respectively. Taipei critics condemned Pai's portrayal of Professor Yü's limp because his right leg (signifying *youpai* 右派) was crippled, instead of his left (*zuopai* 左派), which made him politically incorrect." (Asiaweek 1982)

Recapitulation and Bridge to Case 2

So far, we have compared three translations of Pai's short story *Dong ye* 冬夜, one self-translated, and two rendered by outside translators, in order to tease out the creative transcreatory potential of collaborative self-translation. I have highlighted moments when Kwan-Terry and Lacey exercise their creative prerogative to produce a domesticated, heavily lyricized rendering of the source text; however, in their collaborative self-translation, Pai, Yasin and Kao strive to recover the cadence and aesthetics embedded in the source text, thus arriving at a foreignized rendering. Ultimately, I argue, literary translators employ a blend of domestication and foreignization⁸² to render the sense and spirit of the source text in keeping with the cultural aesthetics of the target readership. The collaborative self-translation is not always successful, however. In fact, Pai, Kao, and Yasin often veer into cultural appropriation at one extreme; however, at other times, they produce universalized, ultra-

readable dialogue stripped of cultural specificity. Though translation may potentially inflict cultural violence upon the source text, when the source text author translates their own text into another language and/or medium by leveraging both domesticating and foreignizing translation strategies, they often experience moments of healing or catharsis that complicates the binary of foreignization as preservation and domestication as erasure.

Source Text as Draft: Pai's Alternative Ending to "Xingxing"

In his essay "The Homeric Versions", Jorge Luis Borges asserts: "to assume that every recombination of elements is necessarily inferior to its original form is to assume that draft nine is necessarily inferior to draft H—for there can only be drafts. The concept of the 'definitive text' corresponds only to religion or exhaustion."⁸³ (Borges 1998: 70) Borges points out that an absolute standard of fidelity limits the evolution of texts; indeed, a translation's deviation from the source text is a cause for celebration rather than lament—the translator's "infidelity, creative and happy infidelity, is what should actually concern us"⁸⁴ (Borges 1974: 410, translation mine) Echoing Borges, Karen Emmerich reminds us that "the 'source,' the presumed object of translation, is not a stable ideal, not an inert gas but a volatile compound that experiences continual textual reconfigurations" (Emmerich 2017: 2). Therefore, translations must be localized along a continuum of endless adaptations devoid of a stable core⁸⁵. In this sense, contemporary translations function both as an independent work of art and as a companion to an incomplete source text. Cultures themselves are translatable, bound up in a web of relationality that conceives of languages as egalitarian and equally authoritative; in this sense, languages themselves "are not so much translations as versions of the same Platonic Ur-Text, written in the one language that subsumes all." (Kellman and Stavans 2015: 16) Echoing Paul de Man's assertion that translations "put [...] the original in

motion to decanonise it, giving it the movement of fragmentation, a wandering of errance, a kind of permanent exile” (cited in Bhabha 1994/2004: 228), I embrace translation as language in perpetual flux, thus reflecting the “permanent exile” of the human condition as we wander, anchorless, through the fabrics of our lives.

In what follows, I will compare the ending of Pai’s short story *Mantian li liangjingjing de xingxing* (“A Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars”) with the author’s own alternative ending in a previous draft, in order to position both source and translated texts on a perpetual textual chain of infinite possible endings. Indeed, Pai composed two drafts of the short story prior to official publication, thus revealing the source text itself as an adaptation capable of catalyzing infinite further iterations.

Pai’s alternate ending to “Twinkling Stars” provides additional details on Guru’s attachment to his Prince Charming, contrasting their romantic attachment with the Guru’s subsequent solitude:

跳做一堆，“我们替莫老怪光秃的头上戴上了一顶鲜艳的花冠，大家拍起手来叫他【萧太后】，萧老怪笑得憋起嘴吧，佝偻着背，在那堆小么儿中间，跟着他们气喘喘的跳起灵魂舞来，我们每个人手里都拿着一罐美国啤酒，一面跳，一面喝，彩灯跟着【夕阳西下】的旋律，时明时暗的转了起来，那一晚上，教主一步也没离开过他那个白马王子，他一边搂住他，微微幌过来幌过去的跳着慢步子，他的下巴偎在白马王子【怀里】，一双大手不住的在他背上XX拍抚着，他那一头灰白的长发都跌了下来，把他额上那三条深陷的皱纹都覆盖住了。他紧闭着嘴，微张着眼，可是他那炯炯的眼光比平常X更亮芒了。灯光一转，他那双深黑的眼睛就好像射出了九星子来似的。

Leaping and dancing jubilantly, we placed a crown of fresh flowers on Old Man Mo’s head, clapping wildly and calling him “Empress Dowager Xiao”. Old Man Xiao puckered his mouth in mirth, his back hunched. He danced the Soul Dance breathlessly, surrounded by a ring of fancy boys. Each of us grasped a can of American beer, dancing away as we sipped, the colored lights flashing on and off in sync with the tune of “the sun sets in the West”. That night, the Guru didn’t budge from his Prince Charming’s side; he held him tightly, swaying this way and that to the rhythm of the music, his chin buried in his Prince Charming’s chest, his large hands caressing his back. His long gray hair cascaded down elegantly, obscuring the three

deep creases on his forehead. He clamped his mouth tightly and opened his eyes ever so slightly. His piercing eyes shone even more brightly than usual. When the lights flashed, nine stars shot forth from his pupils.

In this passage, the Guru's devotion to his Prince Charming is accentuated by detailed descriptions of the Guru's physical state, with the glint of stars in the Guru's pupils indicating his profound affection for his companion. The relationship between the Guru and "Prince Charming" in "Twinkling Stars" hints at the melodramatic romance between Phoenix Boy and Dragon Prince that forms the fixture of *Crystal Boys*. After Prince Charming leaves Taipei to pursue his acting career, the Guru is destitute, a shadow of his former self, and searches far and wide for his soulmate. In sum, these two contrasting endings of "Twinkling Stars" reveal the published version as a textual palimpsest preserving traces of earlier versions.

Rather than murdering his lover in a fit of rage as in *Niezi*, the Guru in "Twinkling Stars" loses his beloved Prince Charming in a car crash that transpires outside the story's time frame:

第一眼我就知道林萍是個不祥之物！第一眼我就知道林萍是個不祥之物！那個小妖婦拋到地上連頭髮也沒有傷一根，而且她還變成了天一大紅星哩！她呢？他坐在我送給他的那部跑車裏燒成了一塊黑炭。他們要我去收屍，我拒絕，我拒絕去認領。那堆焦肉不是我的白馬公子——」

The first time I laid eyes on her I knew Lin P'ing was bad luck! Imagine, the little witch was thrown clear, not a hair on her head was injured; and later on she even became a top star at the Supreme Studios. And him? He was turned to a lump of charcoal sitting in that sports car I gave him. They wanted me to claim the body. I refused. I refused to acknowledge it. That heap of charred flesh was not my Prince Charming—" (Pai and Yasin 2000: 318-319)

By removing direct responsibility for his beloved's death, the Guru in "Twinkling Stars" comes across as a helpless, tragic character wallowing in grief, a far cry from the Dragon Prince atoning for his sins in exile in New York.

What's in a Name?: From Chu Yen to Crimson Flame

The story *Mantianli liangjingjing de xingxing*, which served as the blueprint⁸⁶ for Pai's subsequent novel *Niezi*, describes a tight-knit men-loving-men community who gather by night at Taipei's New Park, chronicling the personal histories of such rebels as Ah Hsiung the Primitive, the Guru, and Dark-and-Handsome, and Little Jade. The translation team opts to translate the Guru's stage name Zhu Yan (朱琰) literally as Crimson Flame, while also preserving the pun on *Chu Yen* for "Rouged Cheeks," which editor Kao explains as "A Chinese symbol for ephemeral youth which has the weight of thousands of years of poetic literature behind it" (Pai and Yasin 2000: xxiv). By preserving the *double entendre* embedded in the name *Chu Yen* through simple transliteration, rather than resorting to cumbersome explanation, Pai alludes to Chu Yen's charisma as an actor who fizzled out before his prime. Indeed, Ouyang Tzu notes that Chu Yen's stardom, like his soul itself, "lived only three years" (朱焰火只活了三年) (Pai and Yasin 2000: 318), latching onto proteges such as Jiang Qing⁸⁷ in order to vicariously prolong his artistic career (Ouyang 1983: 222).. The allusion is doubly humorous because the silent movie actor Chu Yen pokes fun at himself by asserting that his alter ego Chu Yen has died long ago. Chu Yen is first introduced to readers in the following paragraph:

Source text:

可是教主只红过一阵子，有声片一来，他便没落了，因为他是南方人，不会说国语。莫老头告诉黑美朗当时他们明星公司的人，都取笑教主，叫他：“照片小生朱焰。”那天晚上，在公园水池的石栏杆边，我们赶着教主叫他朱焰时，他突然回过身来，竖起一根指头，朝着我们猛摇了几下：“朱焰？朱焰吗？--他早就死了！” (Pai and Yasin 2000: 315)

Literal translation:

But the Guru was only in the crimson spotlight for a little while; once the films came

out, his popularity declined, because he was from the South, and couldn't speak Mandarin. Old Man Lo had told Dark-and-Handsome that everyone at the Galaxy Motion Picture Company all made fun of him, taunting: "pretty-boy Chu Yen, only fit for a magazine cover." That evening, at the stone balustrade in the park, as we followed the Guru around and called him by his stage name Chu Yen, he suddenly turned around, raised his finger and pointed it us, wagging it forcefully: "Chu Yen? Chu Yen? – He died long ago!"

Pai's self-translation:

But the Guru had been at the peak only a short time; once the talkies came in, he was eclipsed. He was a Southerner and couldn't speak Mandarin. At that time, Old Man Mo had told Dark-and-Handsome, everybody at the Galaxy Motion Picture Corporation poked fun at the Guru; they called him "Chu Yen, the Cardboard Lover." That night at the stone balustrade around the pond in the Park, we followed the Guru and started calling him by his professional name, Chu Yen—Crimson Flame. He turned abruptly, raised a forbidding finger and shook it at us vehemently.

"Chu Yen? Did you say Chu Yen? — He died a long time ago!" (Pai and Yasin, 2000: 314)

Kao goes on to explain that "A double footnote would have been required to unravel the author's intentions in this one name [...] In such instances the translation has got to suffer a little in the interest of readability, leaving something for the classroom lecturer or the future Ph.D. candidate to explore." (Pai and Yasin 2000: xxiv). 1981) Pai preserves the literal meaning of the name, along with the Wade-Giles phonetic version. This is in keeping with the character's self-mockery of his younger self, as he reflects on the glamour of his younger years. Pai's decision to include both the literal and phonetic translations reflect a dual attention to both foreignization and domestication, defamiliarization and familiarization.

(De-)Familiarizing the Erotic Male-Male Gaze

Another aspect worthy of note in the translation of "A Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars" is the translators' division of long, cascading sentences into short staccato phrase. These reinvigorated translations also point to spiritual renewal and identity creation through community rituals. The text utilizes gradually lengthening sentences to achieving roaring

crescendos that mimic the characters' unfettered socialization. Below, I examine an excerpt from the scene of a dance party at the Guru's home, to shed light on the self-translator's characterization of the Guru as an icon of the Shanghai film industry in the 1920s and 1930s. We also notice marked parallels between the Guru in "Twinkling Stars" and Chief Yang in *Crystal Boys*, who takes the New Park boys under his wing.

Source text:

原始人是个又黑又野的大孩子，浑身的小肌肉块子，他奔放的飞跃着，那一双山地人的大眼睛，在他脸上滚动得像两团黑火——我们的导演教授莫老头说，阿雄天生来就是个武侠明星——我们都看得着了迷，大家吆喝着，撕去了上衣，赤裸了身子，跟着原始人跳起山地的祭春舞来。跳着跳着，黑美郎突然爬到了桌子上，扭动着他那蛇一般细滑的腰身，发了狂一样，尖起他小公鸡似的嗓子喊着宣布道：“我们是祭春教！” (Pai and Yasin 2000: 313, 315)

Literal translation:

The Primitive was a dark, wild and well-built boy, covered in small muscles; he was leaping unrestrainedly, and the big eyes of the mountain people rolled like two black fires on his face; our acting coach Old Man Mo said that Ah Hsiung was born to be a martial arts star—we were all fascinated, everyone shouted, stripped off our shirts, and followed the Primitive to join in the Dance of the Spring Sacrifice. Jumping and jumping, Hei Meilang suddenly climbed onto the table, twisting his snake-like smooth waist seductively, and in a piercing voice like that of a young rooster, he announced:

We all belong to the “Cult of the Spring Sacrifice”!⁸⁸ (Pai and Yasin 2000: 313, 315)

Author's translation:

The Primitive is a strapping lad, dark and wild, with muscles bulging all over his body. He leaped around and flew through the air with abandon, his large aborigine eyes rolling like two balls of dark fire—our acting coach, Old Man Mo, says Ah Hsiung is a born martial-arts star for the movies—and the rest of us watched him, mesmerized. Then, yowling and roaring, we all ripped off our clothes and joined in the Dance of the Spring Sacrifice with him. We danced and danced, and suddenly Dark-and-Handsome sprang onto the table, his sinuous body undulating like crazy. In a voice as piercing as a young cockerel's he declared, “We all belong to the Cult of the Spring Sacrifice!” (Pai and Yasin 2000: 312, 314)

In addition to the overt structural divergences from the Chinese source text, Pai's translation also *domesticates* or *familiarizes* the text for an English-speaking audience and accentuates

the bizarre, humorous effect through such vivid diction as “muscles bulging”, “strapping”, “yowling” and “undulating”, which creates a primal, avant-garde effect. Though Pai’s depiction of a queer, aboriginal figure is unprecedented in the Taiwanese literary tradition and convincingly suggests the ethnic variety of the male queer community; the text does adopt such questionable terms as 山地人 (“mountain people”), largely considered “a derogatory term that ethnic Chinese used to refer to the aboriginals of Taiwan” (Chi 2017: 50). Thus, in English translation, Pai, Yasin and Kao do away with the offensive term, replacing it with “aborigine eyes”, which is also problematic in that it carries racist connotations specific to Australia’s colonial past. Though the narrator’s exoticization of the Primitive Ah Hsiung and description of their primitive dance may potentially be construed as objectifying Taiwan’s indigenous peoples, the men-loving-men community certainly reveres this figure and takes him as the epitome of masculine bravado.

Pai artistically renders Guru’s rough-and-tough speech and gypsy aura through the image of the “young cockerel” (a spruced-up version of the “young rooster” in the source text), which points to the Guru’s hope of reclaiming the movie star glamour of his younger years. In fact, each of Pai’s queer street characters strutting around Taipei’s New Park (The Guru, Ah Hsiung the Primitive, Dark-and-Handsome, Little Jade) exudes a charisma accentuated by rollicking, tongue-in-cheek dialogue and deliciously humorous sensory physical descriptions.

In this paragraph, the gay male onlookers fasten their homoerotic gaze on the Primitive (Ah Hsiung), mesmerized by his musculature stature and blazing eyes. The crowd then joins in the Dance of the Spring Sacrifice, which celebrates the vigour and beauty of male youth. The image of the leaping male bodies mirrors the opening scene of twinkling

stars illuminating New Park. When the stars in the sky fade, the human “stars” emerge to conduct their nightly ritual. There are remarkable affinities between the stars’ gaze and the descriptions of the Guru’s blazing eyes, as exemplified in the following passage:

Source text:

可是他那只奇怪的眼睛—到底像什么呢？在黑暗里，两团碧荧荧的，就如同古墓里的长明灯一般，一径焚着那不肯消灭的火焰。(Pai and Yasin 2000: 315)

Pai and Yasin’s translation:

But those strange eyes of his—what did they resemble, after all? In the dark, they were two orbs of burning emerald, they sent forth a flame that refused to die, like the eternal lamps in an ancient tomb. (Pai and Yasin 2000: 316)

Indeed, the Guru’s past as a movie star embellishes the overarching theme of stardom, in both the literal and figurative sense. The image of “burning emeralds” is a recurring motif used to describe the Guru’s eyes.

The “Pioneer of Melancholia” Meets the “Pioneer of Desolation”

Unlike the characters in *Taipei People*, who are caught up in nostalgia for mainland China as they struggle to lay new roots in Taiwan, those in *Crystal Boys* have fully immersed themselves in Taiwanese society (Pai and Liao 2022), forging a Taiwanese queer identity all their own. In Chapter Three, I begin by tracing Pai’s collaborative transmediation of his short story *Mantian li liangjingjing de xingxing* to English translation (2000), to novel (*Niezi* 孽子, 1983), film (1986), television (2003), and finally to the stage play medium (1997, 2014, 2020). I pair Kenneth Pai, often dubbed the “pioneer of melancholia” with Eileen Chang, the “pioneer of desolation”⁸⁹, examining Chang’s four decades of transwriting her short story “She Said Smiling” (*Xiangjian huan*) between English and Chinese.

By considering instances of authors making self-translation a formal routine of authorship, I argue that self-translation is a bona fide art on par with original creation. Like

Pai's critical reflections of the May Fourth Movement's parroting Western literary tradition at the expense of bulldozing China's own cultural heritage, Chang also deviated from conventional rose-tinted fetishizations of the May Fourth tradition as supremely innovative, cosmopolitan, and unprecedented. Chang chose to focus instead on the fraught power dynamics between cosmopolitan men and "traditional" women. Perhaps, as Shen Shuang argues, "Chang's critical representations of cosmopolitan Chinese men can be read as a satirical comment on the high-minded cosmopolitan ideals championed by the May Fourth pioneers" (Shen, "Self-Translation", 2012: 95) Though Chang would not live to see her own works grace the silver screen, she nevertheless used self-translation as a masquerading technique through which to perform her transgressive identity into being.

III. CHAPTER THREE: Re-mediating Queer Desires: Kenneth Pai’s and Eileen Chang’s Wartime Transcreation

Have it out by writing about it—so that others will share the burden of my memory that they will remember, that I might forget.” —Eileen Chang, in *Zhang Ailing siyu lu* [Whispers of Eileen Chang, 111]

[In] my aerial dance sequence with [Zhou] Xiao’an [Wang Kui-long]
I explore the sense of distance, space [...] between us.
It is this conversion from verbal to corporal expression [...] which can move audiences the most.
(Zhang Yaoren and Zhang Yijun 2020: translation mine)
--Zhang Yijun, *Jiexi Niezi* (“Interpreting *Crystal Boys*”)



Figure 2. Left: Wu Zhongtian 吳中天 (playing Wang Kui-long) and Zhang Yijun 張逸軍 (playing A-Feng) perform an aerial dance duet in the 2014 stage play production of *Crystal Boys* (© Hsu Pei-hung 許培鴻)

Right: Billy Chang (Zhang Yijun) soars on stage during the February 7, 2014 inaugural performance of *Crystal Boys* (© Hsu Pei-hung 許培鴻)

Self-Translation and Transmediation as Organic Forms of Authorship

In this chapter, I examine Eileen Chang’s (张爱玲, 1920-1995) and Kenneth Pai’s extended transwriting and transmediation practices. By transmediating *Crystal Boys* from page to screen to stage, Kenneth Pai situates the *Crystal Boys*’ evolution from *niezi* 孽子 (“sinful sons”) to *renzi* 人子 (sons of humanity) against the backdrop of Taiwan’s Martial Law Era (1949-1987) and the road to marriage equality in 2019. I trace the transmediation of Pai’s

short story *Mantian li liangjingjing de xingxing* 漫天裡亮晶晶的星星 (1971) into English translation (“A Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars”, 2000), a novel (*Niezi* 孽子, 1983, trans. as *Crystal Boys* by Howard Goldblatt in 1989, first serialized by *Xiandai wenxue* 現代文學 beginning in 1977)⁹⁰, a film (1986), an English language stage play (1997), a television series (2003), and a pair of Chinese language stage plays (2014, 2020). This series of intersemiotic adaptations reveals (self-)translation as a reparative process of transcreation that recreates the source text’s context in another language *and* medium. Pai’s journey of page-to-stage transmediation, spanning several decades, languages, and mediums, involves a hermeneutic process of cultural transcreation through which the source text yields diverse, shifting, even conflicting, interpretations. I view self-transmediation as a reparative mechanism through which the exiled author-translator realizes cultural catharsis through inter-reflexive trauma reconciliation.

By transwriting back and forth between English and Chinese, Eileen Chang also harnessed self-translation as an organic form of authorship. Like Pai, Chang also engaged in decades-long self-translation projects, crafting a transwriting zone beyond the polarizing Iron Curtain of the Cold War era. Chang harnesses self-translation to achieve a critical distance from the specter of the Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945) and her own displacement from Shanghai to Hong Kong to the United States. Eileen Chang’s journey of self-imposed exile from Shanghai to Hong Kong (1952) to the United States (1955) lent her a unique diasporic identity characterized by departure, re-rooting, and re-departure. Born into Shanghainese, and shuttling back and forth between English in Chinese in her creative writing, letters, and everyday conversations, Chang forged her own *transwriting zone* bridging continents and cultures, languages and temporalities. Recruited by the United States Information Agency to

write and translate anti-Communist works and having lived through the turmoil of the Cold War, the Second World War, and the Chinese Civil War, Chang was acutely aware of the polarizing impact of political strife. Thus, in her creative writing, Chang carved out a neutral zone beyond the Communist/capitalist divide and the Iron Curtain, a zone marked by a hybridized blend of Chinese-inflected English, Eastern and Western aesthetics. Chang's confluence of East and West echoes Kenneth Pai's rejuvenation of *kunqu* opera through modernizing Western aesthetics and advocacy of a transnational queer kinship community. I pair Pai's queer romance novel, *Crystal Boys*, with Eileen Chang's homoerotic short story "She Said Smiling", to analyze the ways in which the authors (de-)emphasize their works' homoeroticism in keeping with evolving societal acceptance of *tongzhi* identities.

Pai Hsien-yung prides himself on foregrounding universal humanistic themes in his writing; in *Crystal Boys*, he chronicles the story of a group of "sinful sons" who were exiled from their families and the Land of Eden, chronicling their search for their spiritual father as they rebuilt their homeland, sought revenge and redemption" (Pai et al. 2022: 22). In her short story *Xiangjian huan* 相见欢, set in Shanghai circa 1945, just after the end of the Sino-Japanese War, Eileen Chang connects individual trauma with the trauma suffered by the city of Shanghai during wartime—the cousins' communication impasse humanizes the abstract tensions of the era and foreshadows the prolonged political impasse of the Cold War era.

The Crystal Boys Soar from Page to Stage

Alternating between flashbacks of Dragon Prince's (A-Long 阿籠) murder of his untamable lover Phoenix Boy (A-Feng 阿鳳) and A-Qing's (阿青) induction into Taiwan's underworld gay community, Pai's novel *Niezi/Crystal Boys* is a tale of exile positing "home" as a mobile community defined by shared cultural aesthetics, rather than traditional kinship ties per se.

Under the cover of night, this band of disenfranchised exiles perform themselves into being by creating their own art, recounting their own histories, and forging their own aesthetic codes. *Niezi* was particularly groundbreaking given Taiwan's ongoing Martial Law Era (1949-1987), a period of authoritarian Nationalist rule under which homosexuality was criminalized, and tens of thousands of civilians were surveilled, jailed, and even murdered for opposing the Kuomintang government (Chi 2018).

Though Phoenix Boy (played by former Cirque du Soleil performer Zhang Yijun 張逸軍) does not utter a single line throughout the three-hour play, his erotic aerial dance sequences with Dragon Prince (played by Wu Zhongtian 吳中天 in 2014 and Zhou Xiao'an 周孝安 in 2020) bring his character to life as the two descend to the stage in a dazzling whoosh of purple and crimson silks. In Benjamin Britten's operatic adaptation of *Death in Venice*, adapted from Thomas Mann's novella of the same title, the middle-aged German writer Gustav Aschenbach silently pursues a haughty Polish boy named Tadzio; though the two do not exchange a single line of dialogue throughout the opera, Aschenbach's unrequited love for Tadzio is nonverbally rendered through music and dance. Britten's usage of dance to express Tadzio's inner world and soliloquies for Aschenbach inspired Pai to use dance and monologue to express his protagonists' respective inner psyches in the theatrical production of *Crystal Boys* (Pai and Friedman 2022).⁹¹ The intertextual inspirations for the *Crystal Boys* adaptation reveals Pai's transmediation process as one bridging diverse mediums and cultural traditions.



Figure 3. Left: Mark Padmore (left) and Leo Dixon (right) perform in Benjamin Britten's operatic adaptation of *Death in Venice*, adapted from Thomas Mann's novella. Tristram Kenton for *The Guardian* Right: York 2019 for *London Unattached*

Indeed, the conversion of verbal to corporeal drama results in a complex *transmediation* of pathos that enhances the play's universal themes. In the words of *Cirque du Soleil* dancer Billy Chang (Zhang Yijun 張宜君), who plays the part of A-Feng (阿鳳) in the play:

阿鳳像是一個傳說，都是由別人的口述，或是別人的講述當中，來形容阿鳳這個人，那阿鳳這個角色在書中就是一個浪蕩在新公園裡面的角色，但在舞台劇上比較特別的是，他是全劇當中唯一沒有台詞的角色。完全是用身體來去書寫白老師所描述的阿鳳這樣的角色。這個角色是從文字裡面再轉換成身體裡面。

A-Feng is a legend described in others' accounts. The other characters narrate him into being. In the novel, A-Feng wanders around the New Park, but in the theatrical version, he's the only character in the entire play without a single line. A-Feng's character is written into being on stage through body language. This character is the product of textual to corporeal conversion. (Zhang 2020, trans. mine)

Indeed, though A-Feng only comes to life via others' repeated narrations, his lack of dialogue on stage hardly deprives him of agency. Rather, this textual to corporeal conversion imbues him with a quasi-mythical aura that transcends language.

Pai's *transmediation* of the New Park community and the Dragon Prince/Phoenix Boy archetype from page to silver screen to stage, is emblematic of a *translational* Sinophone modernity characterized by a cosmopolitan hybridity bridging linguistic and cultural identities. The case of Pai Hsien-yung reveals (self-)translation as a transcultural process of creative adaptation that reveals the source text as an unstable, volatile being that

must be constantly re-transmediated into being. In contrast with his character-by-character transmediation of Tang Xianzu's Peony Pavilion for contemporary university audiences⁹², Pai employs melodrama, (reverse) self-censorship, synesthesia, lyricization, and eroticization in these intersemiotic adaptations. By inviting readers and viewers into an interactive community of discourse, Pai treats his audiences as spontaneous co-performers who bring the *mise-en-scène* to life through their affective investment in the characters' transformation.

From the penal code of the Martial Law Era (1949-1987) to the newfound liberties during the post-socialist era, Pai's "sinful sons" both bear testament to their respective historical milieu and reflect the universal humanity of marginalized communities the world over. Given the intertextual undercurrent that informed its conception, *Niezi* weaves Sinophone and Euro-American *tongzhi* and queer citizens together into an imagined kinship network that transcends blood-based bonds. Pai's texts, when re-mediated into various mediums such as television, film, and theater, expose a fertile ecology of intertextuality (or, as I term it, "transmediology") putting tradition and modernity, East and West in dialogue with one another. Pai's intersemiotic transmediations defamiliarize the modern experience and diversify the Sinophone through multi-directional, yet historically situated, prismatic interventions. By examining the intertextual discourses that inform Pai's multimedia adaptations of *Crystal Boys*, I situate Sinophone queer literature within the broader constellation of the World Republic of Letters, thus tracing the evolution of contemporary *Weltliteratur* from the queer Sinophone periphery. The following chart provides a detailed breakdown of Pai's textual and intersemiotic adaptations of *Crystal Boys* from 1971 to 2020.

Year Published	Title	Language	Medium/genre	Author(s)/Translator(s)/director(s)
1971	“滿天裡亮晶晶的星星” <i>Mantian li liangjingjing de xingxing</i>	Chinese (Mandarin)	Short story in the <i>Taipei People</i> anthology	Pai Hsien-yung
1983	<i>Niezi</i> 孽子	Chinese (Mandarin)	novel	Pai Hsien-yung
1986	<i>Niezi/The Outsiders/Outcast</i>	Chinese (also with English subtitles)	film	Yu Kanping and Pai Hsien-yung
1990	<i>Crystal Boys</i>	English	novel	Howard Goldblatt
1997	<i>Crystal Boys</i>	English	stage play	John B. Weinstein and Wu Wensi
2000	“A Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars”	English	short story	Pai Hsien-yung, Patia Yasin (co-translator), and George Kao (ed.)
2003	<i>Niezi</i> 孽子	Chinese (Mandarin)	20-episode TV mini-series	Cao Ruiyuan
2014	<i>Niezi</i> 孽子	Chinese (Mandarin; Taiwanese)	stage play	Pai Hsien-yung and Cao Ruiyuan
2020	<i>Niezi</i> 孽子	Chinese (Mandarin; Taiwanese)	stage play	Pai Hsien-yung and Huang Yuanwen

Figure 4. Chart adapted from Li 2020: 158, with added first and last entries

I consider Kenneth Pai’s transmediation of his short story “A Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars” into English translation, novel, a TV series, a film, and two stage plays in light of the political contexts in which these adaptations were produced. I use close readings of the novel, film, and stage play adaptations as springboards for analyzing the public and cultural discourses surrounding its transmediation.

Transmediating Kinship Structures in “Twinkling Stars” and Crystal Boys

Pai’s literary works adapt real-life prototypes and intertextual elements into textual version; in this sense, the source text is itself a translation of prior works, reflecting dynamic intertextual currents. In both “Twinkling Stars” and the expanded novel version *Crystal Boys*,

filial piety plays a major role in the father-son-patterned homoerotic relationships. Many critics contend that the lack of sexual descriptions in *Niezi* is a result of self-censorship, claims which do not hold water given the copious eroticized descriptions of male-male sexual encounters in Pai's early body of works. Rather, Pai explained in an interview with Zhang Suzhen, *Niezi* simply had "no need for sex scenes" because the novel centered around family relationships, particularly the father-son bond (Zhang and Pai 1996/2018: 231-233), rather than romantic queer love per se. In Pai's words, "*Crystal Boys* can be regarded as a note of seeking one's father [...] in order to reconstruct their homes, they [the "crystal boys"] find their fathers as well as themselves" (Pai 2000: 148). The title *Niezi* 孽子 ("sinful", or "degenerate" sons) is told from the father's, rather than the sons' perspective, emphasizing the confrontation between patriarchal society and queer individuals

Crystal Boys is adapted from a real-life incident of a KMT general's son murdering his same-sex lover (Pai and Friedman 2023), and many real-life figures also serve as prototypes for the characters portrayed therein. Pai also drew inspiration from the American reportage *For Money or for Love*, which describes the story of a father who discovers that his two young sons received compensation for a series of compromising photos, which led to his broader reflection of outcast young gay men who sell their bodies in the name of love:

Every year in the United States, nearly one million teenagers between the ages of thirteen and seventeen run away from home, and many of them sell their bodies in metropolises. A study found that many of these boys didn't become prostitutes for the money [...] They sell their bodies for love. Many of them lack paternal love at home, and try to find surrogate fathers. The book contains the touching story of an eleven, twelve-year old boy, who had a forty-something-year-old Sugar Daddy. The Sugar Daddy was later caught by the police, accusing him of engaging in sexual activities with a minor. When he testified in court, the boy begged the judge not to punish the older man, because that Sugar Daddy was his only friend in the world. The characters in *For Money or For Love* were also a group of "sinful sons" who lacked paternal love and understanding.⁹³ (Pai and Cai 1996/2006: 458-459, trans. mine)

Though Pai's assessment of the boys' motivations to sell their bodies may be oversimplified (there may indeed have been significant financial impetuses motivating their decisions, not to mention parental violence, psychological stigma, drugs and alcohol, and peer pressure), the intertextual inspiration provided by *For Money or For Love* nevertheless reveals Pai's novel as the product of a complex ecology of intertextuality. *Niezi* chronicles the struggles of a group of ostracized young men who find intergenerational kinship and love with other gay individuals from Tokyo to New York to Puerto Rico. In the novel, Chief Yang (also a character in "A Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars"), Grandpa Guo, and Lord Sheng pine away for lost youth; driven by lust, Lao Zhou and Boss Wu, prey upon young men to find a release for their pent-up sexual urges; finally, father figures such as Fu Chongshan (Papa Fu) attempt to assist the displaced *tongzhi* individuals. Indeed, both A-Qing and Dragon Prince regard Papa Fu as a surrogate father, or an emotional safe haven in a homophobic society. The kinship networks formed construct a spiritual refuge for the uprooted young men—together, they form an "imagined community" that calls Taipei's New Park their home, a "sliver of hope" amidst "utter despair" (Pai, trans. Goldblatt 1989 179). The public park is a significant setting for the novel and a quintessential modern space juxtaposed with the enigmatic world of the past, embodied by the characters' memories and the character Ah Hsiung the Primitive.

According to Cao Ruiyuan, who directed both the TV series and the 2014 stage play:

I first read *Niezi* back I was still a student. It was, given the historical circumstances, a huge shock for me to see gay relationships so openly portrayed on screen. But then after I became a director, I re-watched the series and saw it from a new angle. This kind of genuine tenderness between people is lost in modern times [...] this kind of human warmth [...] The licentiousness of gay comrades' lifestyles was actually not the main issue for me. The plots and scenes that left the deepest impression on me had to do with human warmth and vulnerability. For instance, when Buddy goes to find his mother at the theatre, standing on the stool, calling out for his Mama 【...】

or the scene where Dragon Prince murders Phoenix Boy.⁹⁴ (Cao 2003, translation mine)

Cao views his role as Director as the steward of a lost age; this nostalgia permeates both the television and stage play adaptations of *Niezi*. In contrast with the highly fantasized and dramatized film and stage play versions, which condense the novel's content, cutting scenes and characters for time's sake, the television series functions as a relatively literal adaptation of the source text, following the novel's non-linear dramatic structure quite closely.

Despite the structure's overall fidelity to the source text novel, Cao gave the *Niezi* television miniseries actors maximum freedom to interpret scenes and feelings from the novel by adding their own creative touches. For instance, Yang Youning (楊祐寧) the actor playing Zhao Ying (趙英), A-Qing's high school friend, recalls:

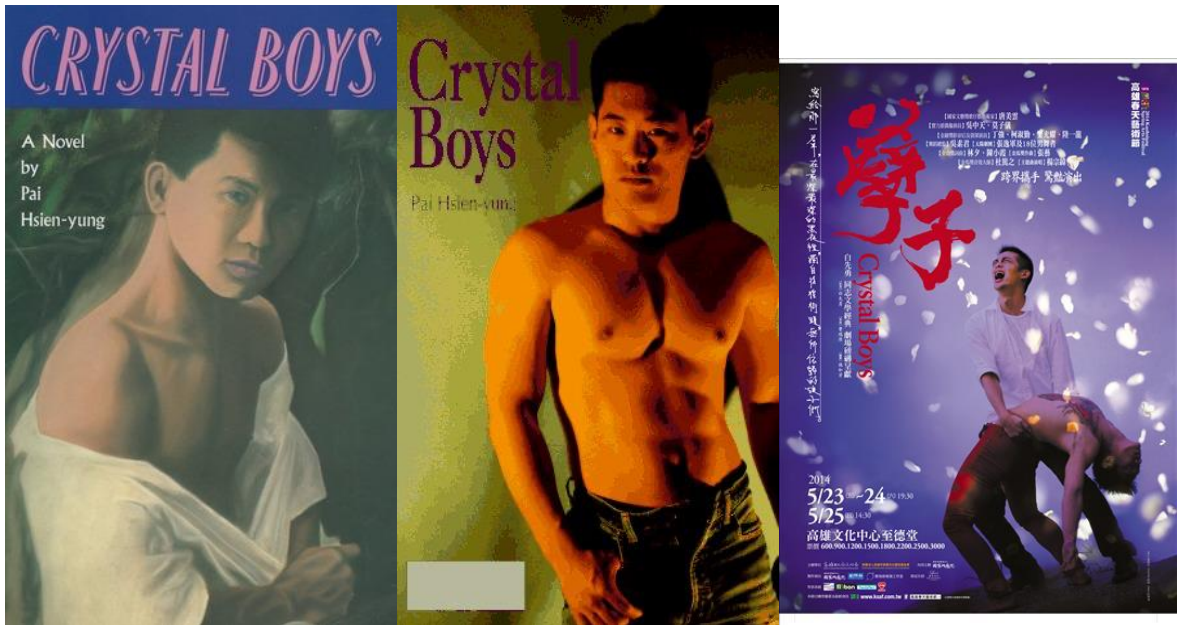
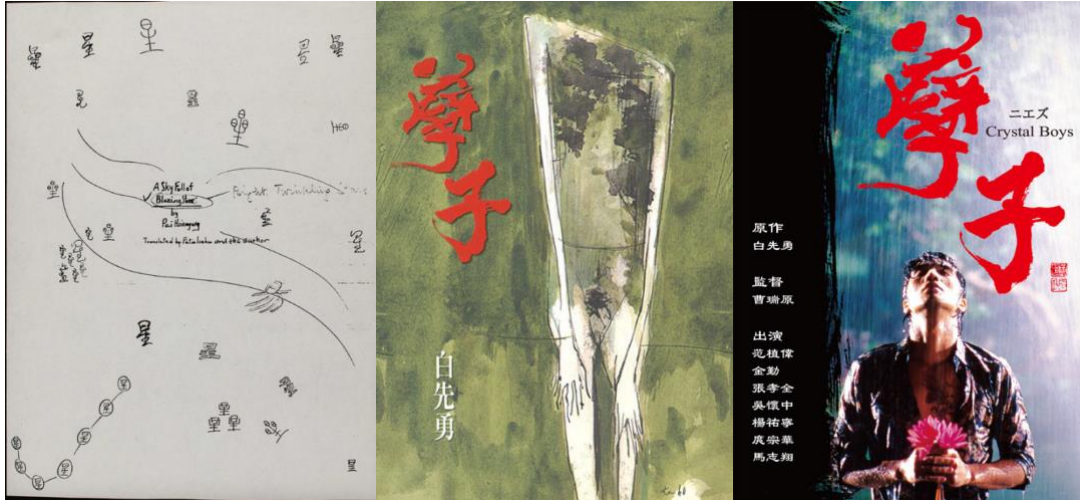
The Director didn't impose too many restrictions on us—aside from following the script dialogue, we were allowed to add a lot of our own interpretations. The director just told us the current situation, the state of the relationship between Zhao Ying and A Qing, told us the feeling he wanted, and it was up to me and A-Qing to create sparks. I very much enjoyed this creative freedom. (Zhao Ying in Cao 2003, translation mine)⁹⁵

It is precisely this interpretive power that constitutes the heart of translation and adaptation—the actors are assigned maximum freedom to recreate the scene in keeping with the nuances of the theatrical medium.

(De-)eroticization: From Niezi (Sinful Sons) to Renzi (Sons of Humanity)

Figure 5. Image descriptions in order from left to right, top to bottom:

1. Pai's handwritten manuscript (version 1) of "A Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars"
2. 1992 cover art for *Niezi* (calligraphy by Dong Yangzi, Mandarin version, cover image reproduced for the 2017 Hong Kong version)
3. Flyer for the 2003 T.V. series
4. 1990 *Crystal Boys* cover
5. 1995 *Crystal Boys* cover
6. 2014 *Niezi* stage play flyer
- 7-8. Two posters designed for the 2020 stage play remake



One aspect immediately apparent from viewing the posters and cover art for the various multimedia transformations of *Niezi* is an evolution from the symbolic, abstract and euphemistic to erotic art featuring actual models, characters, and actors. For instance, Pai doodled the Chinese character for “star” (星星) on the cover page of his handwritten manuscript for “Mantian li liangjingjing de xingxing”; the 1992 cover art for the Chinese version of *Niezi* features an anonymous headless male body with a half-obscured penis, reflecting the invisibility connotated by *Crystal Boys*, art carried over to the 2017 Hong Kong English paperback edition of the novel. Moreover, the 1995 cover of the English version of the novel *Crystal Boys* features a highly seductive pose of a muscular young man with unzipped pants, clearly meant to represent the sex workers in the novel, whereas the 1990 edition features a rather scrawny angelic boy clad in a thin white blouse; the 2014 stage play features Zhang Yijun (the actor playing A-Feng) ripping off his black shirt with a waterfall raging behind him; the 2020 version features A-Feng and A-Long’s faces bent together in preparation for a kiss.

The gradual eroticization of the characters reflects the growing acceptance of the LGBTQIA+ community in Taiwan; however, the covers also cater to the Western voyeur eager to view the Asian male as a fetishized Other to satisfy their erotic desires. Using the characters’ sexual identity for the purposes of marketability deprives them of personhood, presenting the novel as soft porn rather than a serious treatise on the fate of marginalized individuals in Taiwanese society. Nevertheless, the gradual eroticization from short story to novel to film to TV series to stage play does reflect the potential of transmediation to emphasize the characters’ sexual agency and serves as a barometer for the LGBTQIA+ rights movement in Taiwan.

In his prologue to the collector's album for *Niezi* the stage play, Pai Hsien-yung describes his novel as reflecting the “sinful sons” search for their “spiritual father”; the plotline thus reflects the banishment of gay men from their families and is evocative of the universal human experience of searching for a cultural anchoring. In Pai's words:

I initially thought I was writing the story of a marginalized group of people who were exiled from their homes and abandoned by society. But after finishing the novel, it became the story of “sinful sons” who were exiled from their families and the Land of Eden, chronicling their search for their spiritual father as they rebuilt their homeland, sought revenge and redemption. *Niezi* is thus the story of the universal relationships between father and son, mother and son, siblings, and lovers. His Sung put it well: “Your *Niezi* tells the story of a big orphanage that houses a group of sinful sons and gives them a safe haven to coexist.” *Niezi* the stage play highlights the heavenly wheel of human relations, so the story touches audiences of all ages, genders, and ethnic groups [...] In the stage play, when the *niezi* all bow down before the memorial tablet in memory of their spiritual father, Papa Fu; after this Heavenly Wheel ceremony and humanistic baptism, it finally became possible for this group of young birds to evolve from *niezi* into fully matured *renzi*, thus restoring their identities as human beings (Pai in Pai et al. 2022: 22, translation mine)

According to Pai, *Niezi* is a humanistic story chronicling the universal human search for spiritual anchor; though the novel focuses on the queer community, it extends to all sorts of marginalized groups searching for a place or cultural identity to call home. Pai explains that “What *Niezi* describes are people involved in *tongxing guanxi* [same-sex relations], rather than *tongxinglian* [i.e., homosexuality] itself. There's no explicit description of *tongxinglian* [i.e. homosexuality] in the book—what are portrayed are the lives of an oppressed group of people.” (Pai and Cai 2006: 549, translation mine)

Given Pai's emphasis on broader humanistic concerns, the American publishers' decision to market *Crystal Boys* as “the first modern Asian gay novel” (Pai and Goldblatt 1990: front cover), complete with Tan Peng's illustration of a fetishized Asian man with his shirt half off, sexualizes the characters to the point of fetishization. Cao Ruiyuan, director of

both the television miniseries and stage play adaptations of *Niezi*, reflects upon his process of seeing the characters first as *niezi* and then as *renzi*:

Actually when I was shooting the TV series, I was also afraid that I didn't understand their [gay men's] feelings and their lives. So I took the cast to a few gay bars to do...field research if you will. But we didn't get anything out of it; and I realized, I can actually do it. I realized we are really all just the same. Our love, hate, lust, anxieties, hope, our human nature, are all the same. So I became confident that sexuality is not the whole story, that human nature within us is all the same. (Cao in Ketagalan Media 2017)

Cao's words echo Pai's conviction that his *niezi* evolve into *renzi*; the novel's themes center around trust and betrayal, home and belonging, love and kinship, father-son and lover-lover bonds, which are not unique to the queer community but are universal in scope.

The Road to *Crystal Boys*: Politics, Reception, and Legacy

"Twinkling Stars" utilizes flashbacks to tell the story of the Guru (stage name Chu Yen, a.k.a. "Crimson Flame), a has-been film star whose career ends after the demise of the silent film industry. Born in Southern Taiwan, the Guru is cut due to his inability to speak standard Mandarin. He then takes a group of aspiring gay male actors under his wing, and is arrested for pursuing a schoolboy whom he seeks out as his latest protégé and reappears fresh out of prison, limping in a dandy sharkskin suit, at the end of the story.

Niezi/Crystal Boys introduces the character of A-Qing, a young man whose father kicks him out upon discovering that his son is gay. A-Qing, who wanders Taipei's New Park, working as a hustler, is taken under the wing of Yang Jinhai. The novel recounts the friendship between A-Qing, Little Jade (a character who is introduced at the end of "Twinkling Stars), Mousey, and Wu Min, who forge their own chosen family. A-Qing becomes emotionally entangled with Dragon Prince (Wang Kui-long⁹⁶), who killed his ex-boyfriend Phoenix Boy in a fit of rage. Dragon Prince is attracted to A-Qing because he

reminds him of Phoenix Boy—not wanting act as a replacement for Dragon Prince’s former lover, A-Qing breaks off his relationship. At the end of the novel, the boys are employed at the Cozy Nest bar sponsored by Papa Fu, whose son has committed suicide after he was publicly “outed” for being gay.

Pai explains that *Niezi* played an instrumental role in cultivating societal support for LGBTQIA+-identifying individuals—mainland publishing houses’ publication of the novel without censorship was itself a milestone for the gay rights movement in both Taiwan and mainland China:

After the Communists took over, all literature with a gay theme was banned, with the exception of *Niezi*. *Niezi* was published in China. I first went back to China in 1987. In the same year, it was published by Beifang wenyi 北方文藝 press, in Manchuria, Dongbei. And then, the next year, 1988, 北京人民文學 *Beijing renmin wenxue*, the most official PRC publisher, published *Niezi*. And from then on, there were eight publishers, eight versions of *Niezi* circulating in China, north and south. I don’t know why they let this book slide without any revisions. So it’s the original version. That was most unusual. So *Niezi* has a widespread influence in China, too. Many gay boys first read about homosexuality from *Niezi*, and also, pirated copies of the TV series were circulating. At that time, I was told it was sold for only 18 RMB. (Pai and Friedman 2023, trans. mine)⁹⁷

The PRC's official attitude towards homosexuality is summarized by the “three nos” policy:

“no approval, no disapproval, no promotion” (不支持, 不反对, 不提倡, Mountford

2009: 8) an attitude which has led to the de-facto criminalization of homosexuality.

Blackmailing, police raids, and discrimination at work have all become commonplace for

Chinese gays and lesbians (Mountford: 3-6). Though in 1997, homosexuality was

decriminalized through unintentional revision of the hooliganism law (流氓罪) (Mountford

2009: 7), and in 2001, homosexuality was finally un-listed as a psychological disorder,

individuals with non-normative gender identities and sexual preferences continue to

experience societal discrimination on a daily basis.⁹⁸ Therefore, the widespread distribution

of Pai's *Crystal Boys* in the mainland fills an essential niche for young queer individuals in China struggling to come to terms with their sexuality in an oppressive environment.

During the era of White Terror (白色恐怖, 1947-1987) in Taiwan, civilians were jailed, placed under strict surveillance, and even murdered for opposing the Kuomintang government. On February 28, 1947, an anti-government uprising was violently suppressed by the KMT, after the Governor-General's guards opened fire on a group of civilians protesting police brutality against a woman selling contraband cigarettes. During the ensuing Martial Law era (1949-1987), thousands of political dissidents, intellectuals, social elite Communists and ordinary civilians were imprisoned and thousands killed. However, homophobia did not become rampant in Taiwanese society until the United States fanned the flames of McCarthyism during the Korean War (1950-1953) upon adopting Taiwan as its anti-Communist Cold War ally (Chi 2018). The conservative politics of the Martial Law Era caused many literary critics to downplay the novel's homoerotic themes and instead interpret the novel in light of traditional Confucian kinship structures. In a piece of literary criticism entitled "*Niezi Erchongzou* 孽子二重奏 (A Duet with *Niezi*) Cai Yuanhuang performs a Freudian analysis of the novel, explaining A-Qing's homosexuality as a consequence of his deviant family background; i.e., his father's failed career and his mother's hyper-masculinity (Cai 1983: 81-86). Yuan Zenan, in a provocative essay entitled "On *Niezi*'s Political Consciousness", interprets the novel as a veiled allegory for Pai's controversial patriotism towards the Republic of China in the wake of its expulsion from the United Nations (Yuan 1984: 52-57). In "Panning this Plate of Sand: On *Niezi*", the prominent Long Yingtai interprets *Niezi* as a coming-of-age story centering on the father-son relationship, reducing

the characters' homosexuality to a deviant streak that can be tamed through resolving father-son conflicts and restoring the "sinful sons'" filial piety (Long 1984: 61-62).

In contrast with his energetic engagement with literary critics beginning in the latter half of the 1980s, Pai did not publicly challenge these initial reviews put forth by Cai, Yuan, and Long. In fact, it was not until 1988, one year after the lifting of Martial Law and two years after LGBTQIA+ activist Chi Chia-wei (祁家威) became the first person to publicly declare his gay identity, that Pai officially *came out* as gay in a public setting⁹⁹, a culmination of his contributions to mitigating the AIDS crisis. In an interview with Zeng Xiuping, Pai explains that his decision to publicly reveal his gay identity was also prompted by the continued criminalization of homosexuality in Hong Kong, which caused many public figures to have their reputations instantly swept away:

At that time, homosexual behavior was still a punishable offense in Hong Kong. That is, homosexuality was illegal. Great Britain, which once colonized Hong Kong, had abolished this law long ago and decriminalized homosexuality. However, their former colony still kept this law, and many people's reputations were ruined because of it. So I came out in an attempt to abolish the criminalization of homosexuality in Hong Kong. (Pai in Zeng 2001: trans. mine)

In his "Letter to A-Qing", published in *Human World* in 1986, three years after the initial publication of *Niezi*, Pai attempts to persuade his fictional character to reconcile with his father:

The pain he [*your/A-Qing's father*] *has suffered* over this period of time is absolutely *no easier to bear than yours*. You should try to seek his understanding and forgiveness. Maybe that will not be easy, but you must try hard, because your father's understanding and forgiveness is [...] extremely important to your personal growth in the future. I believe your father will eventually soften his heart and accept you because you are after all the child he used to love [...] (Pai 1986: 46, trans. Huang 2011: 118, italicized modifications mine)

By composing a letter to the protagonist of his novel published three years earlier, Pai *transmediates* the novel's underlying humanistic message by addressing the world's gay

community at large. By situating the Chinese *tongzhi* experience within the broader world queer community, both past, present, and future, Pai carves out a place for Chinese *tongzhi* within the broader imagined queer community.

Through this letter to A-Qing, Pai highlights the symbolic significance of A-Qing's struggle for acceptance and as indicative of the world LGBTQ population's decades-long fight for human rights; though Pai's assessment of the situation in New York City is perhaps overly rosy, this letter to A-Qing speaks to a road coalition of gay individuals worldwide, thus transmediating the character of A-Qing for LGBTQIA+ readers across place and time. Pai advocates for estranged sons' compassion and forgiveness for their fathers, as well as the fathers' acceptance of their sons' sexuality. Positioning himself as his protagonist's spiritual "father", Pai redefines *qing* as not simply romantic love, but also as bonds between friends, brothers, parents and children, and so forth: ¹⁰⁰"Home is the most fundamental societal unit, and the bonds between parents and their children is the most fundamental relationship of all. Homosexuals' most fundamental societal group, is of course, also the family, but the relationship between so-called 'fathers' and 'brothers' does not depend on blood bonds per se, but rather reciprocal *qing*." (Pai 1986: 46, trans. mine)

Rather than engaging in the confrontational process of "coming out", Flair Donglai Shi points out that Chinese gay men often focus their energies on "coming home" (Shi 2017: 138), which is indicative of the exile's universal human condition of wandering about in search of a chosen home. Pai describes the boys' search for their fathers as one of seeking a "spiritual" father rather than necessarily a "father" defined by kinship relations (Pai 2020). In Pai's words: "Crystal Boys is about the value of 'the human' ...the desire for understanding,

for an equal life space, and for dignity at the heart of humanity.” (cited and translated in Zeng 2000: 47)

The Crystal Boys Flock to the Silver Screen

Director Yu Kanping was inspired to adapt *Niezi* into a film in order to sound a call for increasing awareness and acceptance of *tongzhi* in Taiwan. In Yu’s words:

Niezi was immediately engraved [in] my heart after the first time I read it. I was [struck] by Pai’s delicate portrayals of humanity and could sympathize with the struggles of the boys in Taipei’s New Park (Yu, cited in Zeng 376, trans. Ting 2016, revisions mine)

When it was first released in 1987, the film became the first officially licensed commercial “gay film” to be released in Taiwan. Rather than employing an independent writer to compose the film’s screenplay, Yu enlisted Pai Hsien-yung himself to write the screenplay. Since this was the first film with homosexual themes to make it to the box office, there was not yet legislation in place to ban the film outright. Rather, the Government Information Office simply stated categorically that they “discouraged such a subject and urged the film to be as reserved as possible lest it be banned” (cited in Huang 2011: 118).

According to Hans Tao-Ming Huang, the film adaptation “significantly simplified and revised the original narrative. Not only did it accentuate family love and its redemptive value for social outcasts, but it also entirely sanitized the sleazy world of New Park so vividly represented in Pai’s novel” (Huang 2011: 119). Pai may have viewed such revisions and self-censorship as necessary for preventing the film from being banned or further censored. Though Director Yu sought out well-established actors to star in the film, most of them turned down his invitations (Yu 2003: 376), and he was thus forced to cast amateur, virtually unknown actors in the main roles. Sun Yue, who had previously starred in *Da Cuo*

Che, starring in the role of Chief Yang, is a notable exception—Yu allegedly agreed to join the cast in order to further the humanitarian agenda espoused by the novel (ibid).

Compared with the television series, in which Li Qing attempts to channel an authentic gay subjectivity in intimate scenes with his same-sex lab partner Zhao Ying—“it wasn’t as simple as displacing my feelings for women on men”¹⁰¹ (Fan in Cao 2003, paraphrasing mine), in the 1986 film adaptation (entitled *Niezi* 孽子/*Outcasts*, directed by Yu Kanping), the romantic relationships between the characters are dramatized, yet desexualized, owing to a whopping twenty one rounds of censorship (Martin 2020). These cuts were not exclusively focused on eliminating depictions of homosexuality; many of them also deleted backstory on Dragon Prince, whose father served as a KMT general during the Civil War (Ting 2014: 104-105).¹⁰² Produced one year before Martial Law was lifted in Taiwan during an era of social conservatism, this film was widely recognized as the first Taiwanese film production with homosexual themes in Taiwan’s entire cinematic history. The Taiwanese News Bureau censored the film twice, passing the film along to a panel of media scholars and psychologists for further inspection before it was officially released as an “adult film”, despite the complete lack of overt sex scenes (*People’s Livelihood Daily* 1986).

The film is essentially a musical melodrama¹⁰³ with exaggerated characters and a love ballad soundtrack that accentuates romantic tension. As opposed to the television series, which follows the original plot faithfully, the film revises the storyline considerably and is set in the mid 1980s (as opposed to the novel’s 1970s setting), perhaps to align stigmatization of the *tongzhi* community with the AIDS epidemic¹⁰⁴. Yu drew upon *Crystal Boys*’ focus on white egrets, or *bai lu* 白鷺 in Chinese, to invoke a shared sense of exile amongst gay men in traditional Chinese society. In the novel, Dragon Prince recalls the imagery of egrets, which

once flew rampant in Taipei but had since disappeared: “There used to be egrets in paddies all over Taipei. They’d shoot up into the sky like a white cloud when you walked by. In all my years in the States I never saw a single egret. Plenty of hawks, seagulls, wild ducks, but no egrets...” (Pai, trans. Goldblatt, 1989: 62) In the words of Chih-Chi Ting (paraphrasing Yu 2003: 378) “Bai lu [...] may be regarded as symbolizing the exiled boys in the film, bidding the boys bon voyage on this endless lonely journey”, in the hopes that “one day, the boys [will] no longer be seen as sinful and their [...] struggle will be recognized by the public in Taiwan” (Ting 2016: 100-101). The motif of wandering birds roosting in the New Park is a central fixture of the novel; Pai titled the initial draft of *Niezi: Naxie qingchun niao de xingliu* 那些青春鳥的行旅 [The Wanderings/Journey/Flight Paths of those Birds of Youth]. (Kenneth Pai papers, box 4, undated).

Moreover, the motif of the Lotus Pond, the fixture of the New Park rent boys in *Crystal Boys*, builds upon a common Chinese motif for queer individuals, yet one which could have slipped the attention of censors due to its inherent ambiguity. Indeed, euphemisms for gay-identifying individuals are employed throughout the novel, namely “crystal” (*boli* 玻璃¹⁰⁵), “rabbits” (*tu'er/tuzhaizi* 兔兒/兔仔子) and “fairy” (*renyao* 人妖); words such as “gay”, “tongzhi” and “homosexual” (*tongxinglian*) are nowhere to be found in the novel.

In the film, the character of Papa Fu, the father whose son Fu Wei commits suicide after he is “outed” in the military” and sponsors the bar Cozy Nest, is merged into that of Yang Jinhai, who establishes the Blue Angel (藍天使) bar after his photography studio encounters financial difficulties. At the end of the film, Yang Jinhai dies of a heart attack, as opposed to Papa Fu’s five-day death by coma in the novel. One of the film’s characters,

Little Jade, is even played by the actress Wei Wei 威威, a woman in drag, which Austin Asian American Film Festival programmer Josh Martin calls “a somewhat bolt choice given the context of the times” (Martin 2020). However, Director Yu explains that he chose to cast a woman as an effeminate gay boy in order to avoid censorship:

Using an effeminate boy would probably [put pressure on] the other actors, as it might make them feel [as though] a ‘real sinful son’ [*niezi*] was on stage. Thus, we [cast] a cross-dressed girl [in] the part. The effect should be pretty much the same (Yu, cited in Huang 2011: 225, revisions mine)

Does this cross-dressing performance represent a “heterosexualization” of the character of Little Jade, who dallies with various sugar daddies in order to make a life for himself in Japan? Or is this cinematic representation of Little Jade meant to reflect the prototype of the castrated male, who claims a newfound agency in her female identity? Does the cross-dressed performance undermine the undercurrent of same-sex desire in the film? If so, does it represent an attempt at censorship (i.e., proving to Taiwan’s governmental offices that the film’s homosexual depictions fit under heterosexualized patterns)? Is the character Little Jade co-opted into this feminist agenda to represent women’s newfound sexual agency? Or worse, does casting a girl in the role of Little Jade represent a figurative castration of the character’s masculinity?

The film also converts the landlady Auntie Man, a minor character in the novel, into a central character, ostensibly to accentuate the female presence in a story dominated by male characters. While Auntie Man is a financially independent, rather brusque modern woman, Mama Yang is dependent on Auntie Man, both financially and emotionally. Does this gender reversal risk “heterosexualizing” their relationship in order to circumvent the censors? Or does the addition of Auntie Man represent an awakened feminist perspective reflecting the

progress of Taiwan's 1970s women's movement? Comparing the 2020 Marriage Equality era stage play adaptation with the filmic version will allow us to further consider such questions.

By interpreting this film in light of the dominant social conservatism during the Martial Law Era and HIV/AIDS crisis, we can appreciate that such self-censorship on the part of Director Yu and Pai were necessary to enable the film to be released in the first place. In her 2002 canonical essay, Judith Butler provocatively asks, "Is kinship always already heterosexual?" (Butler 2002: 19) The casting patterns for the 1986 *Niezi* film, particularly the addition Chief Yang's female co-habitator, Auntie Man, certainly seems to corroborate Butler's position that dominant society codes inscribe heterosexuality into state-sanctioned kinship patterns; however, as we will see through analysis of the 2014 and 2020 stage play performances of the same work, queer kinship also occupies a central role in Taiwanese culture.

In what follows, I provide a close reading of the theme song played during Blue Angel Bar's opening night, in order to examine how the melodramatic music accentuates the transmediated plotline and heightens viewers' immersive experience. Though the performative elements in the short story version are certainly palpable, with descriptions of acting and singing, the film brings the story to life by pairing dialogue simultaneously with lyrics that deepen the melodrama. Beginning at 1:06:45, Yang Jinhai sings a duet with the landlady Auntie Man. The music was written exclusively for the film by Chen Shiyu (陳世興) with lyrics by Chen Kehua (陳克華). As Xu Zhongwei 徐仲薇 (playing Yang Jinhai, affectionally dubbed "Mama Yang") and Sun Yue 孫越 (playing Auntie Man) sing, the camera pans over the crowd, lingering on the waiters' faces and on Yang's and Man's:

	彷彿相遇在一個劇本裡	It's as if we met in a film script
2	你是路人甲 我是路人乙	I'm John Doe, you're Jane Doe
	對白沒有幾句 只是輕輕的說	We hardly speak, softly musing
4	喔 你也在這裡 後來	"Oh, you're here, too?"—Later on,
	我們分隔在兩地 天天刮的風	Life separates us, the wind blowing by day
6	夜夜相思雨 我們依稀的記憶裡	The rain pining for us by night; in our hazy memories
	好像說過一句 喔 你也在這裡	It seemed we had once said: "Oh, you're here, too?"
8	只是我不能拿回昨日的劇本	But now I can't take back yesterday's script
	將你一筆一筆刪去	Erase you stroke by stroke
10	只是我無法修改今天的劇本	It's just that I can't revise the script
	為它添上美麗的結局	And give it a perfect ending
12	終究你還是路人甲	After all, you're still John Doe
	我是路人乙	And I'm Jane Doe.
		Yu 1987, music by Chen Shiyu and lyrics by Chen Kehua, trans. mine

This theme song was adapted from a similar song written and performed by René Liu (Liu Ruoying 劉若英) called “*Yuanlai ni ye zai zheli* 原來你也在這裡” (“Oh, you’re here, too!” or, “Fancy meeting you here!”). Liu’s lyrics are ripe with intertextuality—they draw upon a classic story written by Eileen Chang in 1944 entitled “Love” (*Ai* 愛). The story, which is only five paragraphs and some 345 characters long, recounts the tale of a well-to-do young beauty whose neighbor greets her one spring evening amidst the peach blossoms, asking, “Oh, so you are here, too?” (“噢，你也在这里吗”) One full lifetime later, after being abducted to a strange land where she becomes a concubine, the now elderly woman reflects upon her life’s struggles, recalling the young man and how they were fated to meet that spring evening. Chang’s story ends with the following paragraph, written in her iconic desolate tone:

於千萬人之中遇見你所遇見的人，於千萬年之中，時間的無涯的荒野裡，沒有早一步，也沒有晚一步，剛巧趕上了，那也沒有別的話可說，惟有輕輕的問一聲：“噢，你也在這裡嗎？”(Chang 1944)

You meet the one you meet amongst thousands and tens of thousands of people, amidst thousands and tens of thousands of years, in the boundless wilderness of time, not a step sooner, not a step later. You chance upon each other, not saying much, only asking softly, “*Oh, so you’re here, too?*” (Chang 1944, trans. Tang 2014, italicized modifications mine)

Perhaps, the young man’s greeting on that spring evening was not invested with any particular meaning, yet the adolescent girl pinned her hopes and imagination on his words, thus transforming the memory into an eternal moment to remember in trying times. For Chang, perhaps, that is the essence of love—innocent, pure, coincidental, poignantly fragile and tragically beautiful.

Returning to the duet between Yang Jinhai and Auntie Man, Chen Kehua’s lyrics voice the experience of the homeless gay “birds” who support each other through thick and thin. The song infuses the bar scene with a melancholy aura and storytelling feel that suggests the scene has since evaporated into memory. It also alludes to the Blue Angel’s function as a safe haven for these young men who have been ostracized from society and their own families, as they seek warmth and solace in each other’s queer company.

At 1:07:27, Little Jade (played by a woman actress) locks eyes with Captain Long, kicking off a romance between the younger boy who dreams of going to Japan and the father-like elder man. After overhearing Captain Long say he often travels to Japan¹⁰⁶, Little Jade makes small talk with Captain Long, addressing him familiarly as Grandpa Long Wang and inviting him to a glass of beer on the house. The next “chance” meeting occurs at 1:08:25, when Wang Kui-long accidentally-on-purpose runs into Liqing, whom he is familiar with from a different party, coinciding with the line “喔 你也在這裡 *O, ni ye zai zheli* (“Oh, fancy meeting you here!” (Yu 1987) At 1:09:05, Little Jade follows Captain Long Wang into the bathroom, where they engage in implied clandestine sex (see the attached screenshot), as the

melodramatic diegetic theme song plays on in the background. The camera then cuts abruptly to the swaying bodies on the dance floor, before cutting at 1:09:28 to the weaving traffic outside on the rainy evening. The melodramatic, diegetic music merges with the watercolor hues of the bar's *mis en scène* to create a nostalgic atmosphere, yet one that is also tinged with irony, given that both Little Jade and Wang Kui-long (the Dragon Prince) hope to create a love story to achieve their personal goals (Little Jade hopes to travel to Japan and the Dragon Prince seeks to drown his sorrows for his former lover by seeking out a lover who reminds him of Phoenix Boy).

In contrast with the highly eroticized stage play versions, the homosexual encounters in New Park are presented euphemistically in the film version, which flirtatious encounters between the sugar daddies and the boys in the park hinting at potential sexual developments. The film is replete with window framings and long takes, which reinforces gender binaries, patriarchal ideological constructions, and the public/private divide. Moreover, viewers are voyeuristically implicated within the film's ideological fabric, as they gaze outwardly onto the houseless gay hustlers from within an enclosed, patriarchal domestic space. In comparison, the stage play production employs transparent window frames and wall to foreground A-Qing's psychological turmoil and downplay the public/domestic divide (Amato 2021: 214). Moreover, rather than ending with the scene of A-Qing ushering Buddy home to spend New Year's eve with him, the closing scene consists instead of a long take of A-Qing's father cheerfully tidying up the home in anticipation of his son's visit, a far cry from the abusive alcoholic who ruthlessly banishes his son from the film at the beginning of the film. The scene cuts to the approaching A-Qing's radiant smile backlit with a bright ray of sunlight, which Amato observes is the first time the sun comes out in the entire film (ibid).

Though the film adaptation generated limited revenue at the domestic box office, largely the result of restricted circulation, its sappy melodrama, and its conservative portrayal of homosexuality, in light of the burgeoning HIV/AIDS crisis (Amato 2021: 210), it became an instant hit in the United States. At its New York debut, the film earned a standing ovation from the audience, which prompted the inaugural Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Film Festival to select the work for its opening number (Yu 2013: 378, cited in Ting 2014: 106). In 1987, the film was officially released for the Reeling Chicago Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, prompting rave reviews from the San Francisco Sentinel, which dubbed the film “powerfully erotic” (Li 2020: 158).

From “Sinful Sons” to “Sons of Humanity”: The Crystal Boys Soar to the Small Screen

Yu Kanping articulated his hopes that the forthcoming television series would “reflect the novel’s true spirit”, given that his film censored most of the novel’s homoerotic themes (Yu 2003: 378-379). However, rather than attempting absolute fidelity to the novel, the TV series also adds new characters and plotlines for dramatic effect, including Fumi, a young woman sex worker employed by Laoshu’s brother; when Laoshu liberates Fumi, he is severely punished by his brother, thus contributing to the characterization of Mousy as gutsy and compassionate (Cao et al. 2003) Moreover, in the TV version, Li Qing visits his dying mother repeatedly, engaging in extended conversations with her that are not present in the novel. (In the novel, A-Qing’s mother passes away the very next day after he visits her.) Chih-Chi Ting speculates that such alterations contribute to the boys’ integrity and morality even in the face of societal oppression: “By making these changes, the main homosexual protagonists are all seen to possess strong moral responsibility for the people surrounding them [because] they are sympathetic to the fallen characters (Fumi and A-Qing’s mother)

who are like them” (Ting 2016: 157).

The *Niezi* TV series was broadcast by the Public Television Service (PTS) TV channel (*Gongshi* 公視), Taiwan’s official independent public broadcasting platform (Taiwan Public Television Service On-line), becoming the first popular television mainstream miniseries to address male homosexuality in public television. At first, fearing that “homosexual” themes would be too scandalous for an eight-o’clock family show, the channel refused to broadcast *Niezi*. However, Director Cao convinced them to air the show using the following logic: First, *Niezi* has been widely acclaimed as a humanistic literary milestone by readers all over the world; second, by airing a *tongzhi* show, Taiwan’s Public Television Service would earn its rightful place amongst the constellation of progressive countries; third, Hong Kong ranked Pai as the seventh most influential Sinophone author.¹⁰⁷ (Cao in Pai et al. 2009). In an exclusive interview, Cao elaborates as follows:

第一個“為什麼”：《孽子》它不只是同志的小說，《孽子》它是一個文學的作品，因為它已經得到了很多文學獎，然後很多翻譯的文學獎。其實它有一個文學的高度。所以我說，其實它是一個文學的一個作品，而且是講人性的東西，它不只是同志。所以《孽子》是可以拍的。第二個是，“為什麼是公共電視？”因為公共電視，它是一個 public broadcasting station。你是應該去照顧那些弱勢的族群的。第三個是，“為什麼應該是白先勇？為什麼你選這個作者”這一點最好笑。他們聽了都大笑。我說，“白老師他是前一百大華人作家的第七名。那前面的作家是誰？張愛玲、魯迅、錢鐘書、沈從文，但是這些人都掛了，都死掉了。剩下這個就還活著。

The “first why”: *Niezi* isn’t just a *tongzhi*-themed novel, but a work of literature, which has won many literary prizes for its Chinese version and multilingual translations. *Niezi* is a work of literature, which sheds light on the universal human condition, not just the lives of *tongzhi*. Therefore, *Niezi* is worth making into a TV series. Second, “why PBS?” Because PBS is a public broadcasting station, which has a responsibility to look after the vulnerable and marginalized. Third, “Why Pai Hsien-yung? Why this author?” My crude logic made them laugh hard. I said, “Pai ranks seventh amongst Sinophone authors. Which authors are in the top six? Eileen Chang, Lu Xun, Qian Zhongshu, Shen Congwen. But they’ve all kicked the bucket, so to speak. Pai is the last man standing. (Cao and Friedman 2023)

Indeed, *Niezi* helped raise societal awareness of the men-loving-men community in Taiwan; every evening at 8:00pm, a new episode of *Niezi* would air on television, bringing families face-to-face with the men-loving-men community on their personal televisions from the comfort of their own living rooms (Pai, “Interview”, 2023). The TV series also responded to the Taiwanese government’s promotion of diverse gender education in the wake of the death of the effeminate Gao-Shu Junior High School student Yeh Yongzhi (葉永鋕) on April 20, 2000. Indeed, Yeh’s tragic death, the likely culmination of repeated transphobia-induced harassment at the hands of his male schoolmates, prompted the Taiwanese government to pass the Gender Equity Education Act in 2014. The Act promoted nuanced gender education beyond the biologically determined male-female binary, presenting gender as existing along a continuum and normalizing non-normative gender presentation and gender transgression (Thomson 2023).

One evening during a live broadcast, director Cao Ruiyuan received a message from a parent who had previously kicked their child out of the household for being gay, asking to display a message on the evening subtitles for the *Niezi* TV series welcoming that child back home with open arms:

“誰誰誰，爸媽希望你趕快回家，他們就完全了解你，完全可以接納你。”很動人。那時候，我突然覺得好像除了拍電視之外還做了一點事情，那種感覺。

“So-and-so, Mom and Dad welcome you home with open arms. We completely understand and accept you now. Please come home soon!” It was very moving. I suddenly felt that besides just shooting TV for entertainment, that I was making a real difference in the world.” (Cao and Friedman 2023)¹⁰⁸.

This moving tale of family reconciliation corroborates Cao’s view that the television series of *Niezi* helped usher in marriage equality for LGBTQIA+ Taiwanese citizens in 2019.

Pai played a major role in casting, music, and other artistic decisions in both the television and stage play productions. As Director Cao recalls:

When I finished the first cut and showed it to Pai, he felt that Xiaoyu was too tall—he should have been dainty and slight-built—and Zhang Xiaoquan was too well-built for the character of Wu Min. Pai also felt that the music also left much to be desired. Because he has been adapting *Niezi* for so long, Pai must have had his own image of these characters in mind.¹⁰⁹

Cao Ruiyuan casts a mix of emerging and veteran, mainstream Taiwanese actors in the TV series roles, accentuating the audience's ability to empathize with the characters' struggles. Despite Pai's initial misgivings, the TV series was well-received, sweeping six Golden Bell awards in the categories of best drama series, best director, best actress, best cinematography, best art direction, and best musical score; Fan Zhiqing, for instance, nominated for best actor for his stellar portrayal of A-Qing. The TV series also played a major role in generating renewed sales of the novel version of *Niezi*, owing to its special status of the hottest gay-themed public TV series (Ting 2016: 62). In fact, many mainland citizens first encountered *Niezi* in its television afterlife, which inspired them to go back and read the novel.¹¹⁰

Theatrical Canonization: (Re-)Staging Crystal Boys in the Post-Martial Law Era

In what follows, we turn to Pai's intersemiotic adaptations of his only novel, *Niezi/Crystal Boys*. Rather than fixating on singular departures from the source text, we celebrate *Niezi*'s canonization and holistic aesthetic transformations through the immersivning as a parallel text keeping the spirit of *Niezi* alive in the new historical era. Indeed, Pai's remake of his 2014 production positions the stage play along a chain of infinite possible reincarnations.

Since President Chiang Ching-kuo declared the end of Martial Law in July of 1987, the stigma associated with homosexuality in Taiwan was partially dissolved. Recently, queer culture and LGBTQIA+ activism has mushroomed in Taiwan, culminating in the legalization

of same-sex marriage on May 24, 2019 (Zheng). However, rather than viewing 1987 as a watershed moment separating repression from openness, we must acknowledge that queer subcultures in Taiwan may be traced back to the post-Japanese colonial era (1945-)¹¹¹ (Chiang and Wang 2016: 2-5). While providing a comprehensive genealogy of queer cultural politics lies beyond the scope of this chapter, suffice it to say that Pai's transmediations of *Niezi* in the postsocialist era both served as a barometer for *and* catalyzed Taiwan's queer movement. In the words of the TV miniseries and stage play director Cao Ruiyuan:

如果大家彼此互相理解，也許這樣就不會強的對立。那所以我想《孽子》就那樣帶動了，慢慢台灣的這個社會慢慢地，就改變了。大概《孽子》播音完的第二年吧，台灣就開始有同志的遊行。那以前我們聽過同志的遊行可能在舊金山啊，在台灣是不可能有的。第二年，台灣就開始把這個同志的遊行，每年都有，慢慢整個社會就打開了。我想，大概是有一些這樣子的啟發了。那我記得，最好玩的事情是很多人會問我說，“那，你怎麼去說服公共電視？”

If people are able to understand one another, we might be able to avoid intense conflict and opposition. *Niezi* helped foster such mutual understanding, ushering in gradual changes at the societal level. In the second year after the *Niezi* miniseries finished airing, *tongzhi* protests sprung up all over Taiwan. We often think of LGBT+ protests as occurring in places like San Francisco, rather than in Taiwan. But a couple years after our show, Taiwanese *tongzhi* protests mushroomed, year after year, which opened up Taiwanese society. So in a sense, I do think that the show helped better the lives of Taiwanese *tongzhi*. (Cao and Friedman 2023, trans. mine)

Indeed, as Director Cao articulates, *Niezi* played an essential role in transforming the hearts and minds of Taiwanese citizens, particularly parents of LGBTQIA+-identifying individuals, combating homophobia at the ground level by humanizing the struggles of lower-class *tongzhi* individuals. The 2014 and 2020 stage play productions restored and even accentuated the novel's eroticism, providing a barometer for the societal progress marked by the passage of the Marriage Equality Act, a milestone victory for the LGBTQIA+ movement in Taiwan in 2019. As Pai puts it: “This time the play was enthusiastically received by the audiences, as the same-sex marriage law was just passed in Taiwan, [the] first of its kind in Asia.” (Pai

2022, personal correspondence). While such societal changes certainly helped catalyze *Niezi*'s canonization; the work's daring portrayals of homosexuality and the following it generated also improved prospects for the Taiwanese LGBTQIA+ community and convince legislators to pass relevant equal marriage legislation. In the words of Chen Shou-en,

隨著 2019 年同性婚姻的合法化，《孽子》的存在也產生了新的意義。那些在《沒有尊卑貴賤、不分老少強弱的王國》中血性赤誠的青春烈鳥，他們的社會處境及人倫情感，值得全中投注更多的理解眼光。而舞台劇的展演，亦為經典注入了更多的元素，帶來全新的詮釋與悸動。” (Chen in Pai et al. 2022: 232)

With the legalization of same-sex marriage in 2019, *Niezi* took on new meanings. In their kingdom, “devoid of distinctions of social rank, eminence, age, and strength”, these brave and sincere Birds of Youth elicit further social acceptance in terms of their social situation and common humanity. The stage play performance injects new elements into a time-honored classic, resulting in an entirely innovative and moving interpretation. (Chen in Pai et al. 2022: 232, trans. mine)

Indeed, despite increased social acceptance for the LGBTQIA+ community in the wake of same-sex marriage legalization, the 2020 *Niezi* adaptation also remained instrumental in cultivating empathy towards *tongzhi*-identifying individuals in society at large.

Unlike his previous role of honorary co-producer¹¹² for the TV mini-series adaptation, Pai jokes that he self-demoted himself to the role of “advisor” for the stage play adaptation of his novel. In Pai's words, “Because I learned my lesson last time, this time, I'll just give advice. At any rate, all adaptations of the novel are second creations, and absolutely fidelity to the original is out of the question. This is only natural, since the stage play and novel mediums are completely different.”¹¹³ (Pai in Liu 2013, trans. mine) In the words of Director Cao:

很多導演當他在改編一部小說還是一部文學作品的時候【。。。】他想要去幫原作者去詮釋甚至與去發揮發酵裡頭的一些他認為的。就《孽子》的改編來講，我自己想要，其實謙虛也是很好的。當一部作品本身動人的地方已經早就在那裡了。那我應該做的就是這動人的部分在影像上把它傳達出來。我不想去凌越，不想去超越。有些導演很想去超越原作者的東西，那我覺得我並沒有

那樣想，因為孽子的價值我已經看到了【。。。】那你就只是怎麼把它詮詮釋出來而已。(Cao 2022)

Many directors, when they are adapting a novel or literary work [...] want to help the original author further interpret and even develop, emphasize tease out, and ferment certain ideas. In terms of my own adaptations of *Niezi*, I strike a more humble stance. Humility is useful sometimes. *Niezi* is moving and meaningful in and of itself. So my job is to convey this moving part through images. I don't want to surpass Pai or claim the spotlight. Some directors try to surpass the original author, but I don't share that ambition, because I recognize the value of *Niezi*, the original novel. So all that's left is to convey the essence of *Niezi* as faithfully as possible. (Cao 2022, *Niezi jingcai yugao*, trans. mine)

By eschewing all ambitions to alter and expand *Niezi* according to his own artistic vision, Cao reaffirms Pai's authority as the novel's original author, challenging himself to remain as faithful to the source text as possible. Looking back on his television adaptation, Director Cao affirms that he used Pai as an advisor providing insight on the plotlines, the characters and their backstories, resisting the impulse to voyeuristically eroticize the production to increase views (Cao 2022). However, though Director Cao claims that he is simply conveying rather than creatively interpreting, it is often difficult to distinguish the point where Pai's creative liberties end and Cao's begin.

Unlike the preceding film (1986) and television (2003) versions (1986), the stage play version of *Niezi* is minimalist and actor-driven, relying on music, lighting, dance, and other elements of *mise en scène* to build pathos and build up to the cathartic murder scene. In the words of former Cirque du Soleil performer Zhang Yijun 張逸軍, whom Pai hand-selected to play the role of a silent A-Feng in the 2014 and 2020 stage play:

[...] acting on stage requires relatively more corporal manifestations: there are no stunt doubles, no discretion shots, and no special effects. Unlike television filming, in which the camera lens captures the scene the director wishes to convey, the actors on stage are completely exposed to the audience every minute, every second of the production, which presents zero chance for simulation [...] (Zhang 2022: 140, translation mine)¹¹⁴

Indeed, the real-time immediacy and intimacy of the stage play medium enables the actors to build pathos through organic, spontaneous interaction with viewers; though the soundtrack was pre-recorded, Zhang's and Wu Zhongtian's 吳中天 (playing Wang Kui-long in the 2014 production)/Zhou Xiao'an's 周孝安's (the actor playing Wang Kui-long in the 2020 stage play production) astonishing aerial stunts required them to be supremely in tune with one another's rhythms and projected emotions. The tacit understanding between the actors and the lack of cover-up also heightens the pathos on stage, enabling the audience to play the leading role in realizing emotional build-up and catharsis during the real-time performance.

In the words of Zhang Yaoren (張耀仁),

Every live moment on stage occurs in a limbo zone between a grounded and psychedelic state. All the participants in the performance, the audience included, co-creates an invisible force field, which is unique to play productions. Ensnared within this limbo zone, I often had trouble distinguishing between my identity as an actor and a character.¹¹⁵ (Zhang in Pai et al. 2022: 128, trans. mine)

Audience members often find themselves entering this limbo zone; particularly in a hyper-melodramatic stage play like *Niezi*, audience members' immersion becomes so absolute that they take on the characters' pain and blur the boundaries between reality and illusion.

The stage play adaptations of *Niezi* 孽子 accentuate the story's lyrical, performative and symbolic elements, which further canonize the work and bring to life elements that were not fully rendered in the television and film versions. In a 2020 public talk, Pai explains that the television adaptations of *Niezi* are true-to-life and infinitely detailed; compared with the medium of television, stage plays "open up unlimited space for creativity and imagination [...] stage play performances are often abstract, symbolic, and suggestive [...] thus bringing out the deeper meaning of a work that cannot be conveyed through the television or film mediums."¹¹⁶ (Pai 2020, trans. mine) As stage plays are abstract and symbolic rather than

realistic, they convey a complex story in a limited spatial and temporal setting and “open up unlimited room for the imagination”¹¹⁷ (Pai and Liao 2022, trans. mine). Indeed, despite being set almost exclusively in Taipei’s New Park, the abstract play follows a non-linear, dreamlike mode that shuttles back and forth seamlessly between past and present, reality and imagination (Amato 2021: 211).

Dance Choreography: Scripting Queer Sinophonicity for the Stage

Zhang Yijun recounts his experience conducting a series of aerials alongside Zhou Xiao’an (周孝安, the actor playing Wang Kui-long in the 2020 stage play production):

孽子 2020 今年重返，最值得被期待的某一段就是這次孝安會跟我一起進行再空中飛旋的演出段落。。。不是我自己把台詞講得很好就好，你要脫聽別人，你多等一秒多等兩秒，都是一個彼此之間的默契。可是就是那一秒他的那個覺知給打開了，然後我也要將我的覺知放大到身體的不同部位，感受到他跟我的距離感、空間感、方向感。所以我覺得是從文字轉換到肢體，再來第三就是默契。。。那份才是最直接能夠感動到人的部分，我們真的都用身體來去將老師的《孽子》這本書，把它變橫更 3D 化。(Zhang and Zhang 2020)



In the 2020 remake of *Niezi*, one of the most anticipated parts is my aerial dance segment with Xiao’an [Wang Kui-long] [...] It’s not enough for me just to speak my lines well...I also have to listen to [his body language], wait one or two seconds longer, the result of a tacit understanding between the two of us. In the space of just that one second, he experienced a realization, and I wanted to expand this awareness into different parts of my body, to experience the sense of distance, space, direction between us. It is this conversion from verbal to corporal expression, and also this tacit understanding, which can move audiences the most. We are actually using our body language convert Pai’s *Crystal Boys* into 3D. (Zhang and Zhang 2020: translation mine)

Figure 6. Aerial dance rehearsal for the *Niezi* stage play: Billy Chang (Zhang Yijun) and Zhou Xiao’an play Dragon Prince and Phoenix Boy, respectively. (Zhou 2021)



Billy Chang and Zhou Xiao'an fly alongside one another in the 2022 production of *Niezi* as rainbow confetti showers over them. (Zhou 2021)

The sense of space and distance between A-Feng and A-Long, as they approach one another, then draw apart from, is artfully expressed in their dance duet, which re-interprets the textual version through sound and image. Zhang Yijun elaborates on the ways in which the physical distance between the two characters accentuates the romantic tension between the two:

When Longzi calls out for A-Feng, I hang from the highest point of the silks, eight to ten feet above the stage. Suddenly, I drop down vertically face-forward, halting right in front of Longzi's lips. [...] Although this moment was certainly sublime, it was also wordless, just like my silent role of A-Feng. As I acted this moment time and time again, it became quite literally branded on my body.¹¹⁸ (Zhang in Pai et al. 2022: 142, trans. mine)

Zhang goes on to explain that because he danced bare-chested, in order to expose the dragon tattoo on his chest in full sight, he experienced a burning laceration on his chest, creating a wound and skin laceration that would persist throughout the performances. In this sense, Zhang's body quite literally "kept the score" for this verbal to corporeal transformation, making for an unforgettable performance. Indeed, the aerial silks provide embody Phoenix Boy's untamable spirit and longing for freedom—as he hangs suspended from the silks, he takes on the aura of an untamable phoenix forever eluding Dragon Prince's possessive grasp.

Characters and Audience as Agentive Co-Performers

Performing arts such as opera rely on the audience as co-performers and the set as a

communicative medium to co-create meaning into being. Indeed, the irreplaceable immediacy of live performative arts such as plays create a unique brand of fleeting performative aesthetics. Compared with the stage play medium, television and films often concretize viewers' imagination; moreover, on-screen *mis en scène* often preserves ambiguity. In contrast, stage plays comprise a series of long takes with limited props and set possibilities within a fixed performance time, thus creating a minimalist aesthetic, dependent on melodrama, music, and lighting to carry the mood and sustain suspense. Pai explains that he leveraged multimediality to aid viewers' comprehension of the *kunqu* lyrics in *Peony Pavilion*, arranging for the actors' lines (particularly in the flashback sections) to be written in calligraphy and projected up on the big screen. Director Cao Ruiyuan admits that "with the TV series, you have much more time to develop plotlines and characters. [However,] with a stage play of around two hours, you have to get the central issues in focus and prune away the rest." (Cao in Bartholomew 2013)

The characters take on mythological, symbolic proportions on the stage; for instance, Li Qing's father throwing him out of the home resembles Adam and Eve's banishment from the Garden of Eden in the Old Testament (Liao in Pai et al. 2022: 212). Indeed, Pai and Cao use language, music, dance, and lighting to draw out the work's implied themes and foreground its queer aesthetics. In the words of *Crystal Boys* stage manager Zhang Zhongping (張仲平): "Television adaptations provide unlimited takes, but when it comes to stage plays, there's only one long take. My job was to tell the director he had to make a choice [in terms of what to include in this one long take]. (Zhang in Pai et al. 2022: 113)

In 1997, John B. Weinstein (earning his AB degree from Harvard and 1993) and Wu Wensi co-directed an English language stage adaptation of *Niezi*, which was performed at

Harvard University's Adams House Pool Theatre and produced by the Adams House Chinese Theater Series as part of Queer Harvard Month (Mandel 1997).¹¹⁹ In 2014, director Tsao Jui-yuan (Cao Ruiyuan, 曹瑞原), who won the Golden Bell Award for his TV miniseries adaptation of *Niezi* (孽子), collaborated with scriptwriter Shih Ju-fang (施如芳), author/co-scriptwriter Pai Hsien-yung, choreographer Wu Sujun (吳素君) to bring a Hokkein and Mandarin language version of *Niezi* to the stage. Rather than re-contracting the television series actors to re-play their respective roles in the stage play version, Director Cao recast the entire *Niezi* crew for the stage play version. Besides Su Ming-ming (蘇明明), the actress playing A-Qing's mother, who continued in her former role from the television miniseries, the stage play was revamped with an entirely new cast. Taipei University of the Arts (台北藝術大學) contributed many of the actors and dancers for the production, including the actors playing Little Jade, Mousey and Wu Min (Cao 2014).

When it came to his stage play adaptation of his own novel, *Niezi*, Pai had the final word on casting, edited the playscript, and guided actors during rehearsals and private gatherings in his own home, thus playing a leading role in the work's transcreation. In Pai's words, "I wrote the greater part of the script and 施如芳 was my collaborator. As the [play's] Art[istic] Director, I [...] participated in every session regarding casting [...]" (Pai 2022). For instance, Pai sought out the professional dancer and former Cirque du Soleil performer Zhang Yijun 张逸军, a student of Wu Sujun 吳素君, whom Pai had collaborated with in the past; in fact, all of the dancers in Pai's stage play adaptation are graduates of the Taipei National University of the Arts' School of Dance. Though Phoenix Boy, for instance,

remains silent throughout the play, his inner world is conveyed instead through aerial dance, which prompts viewers to view his character in a symbolic light.

Book Two in *Crystal Boys* opens with the following passage:

在我們的王國里，只有黑夜，沒有白天。天一亮，我們的王國便隱形起來了，因為這是一個極不合法的國度：我們沒有政府，沒有憲法，不被承認，不受尊重，我們有的只是一群烏合之眾的國民 (Pai 1970: 5)

There are no days in our kingdom, only nights. As soon as the sun comes up, our kingdom goes into hiding, for it is an unlawful nation; we have no government and no constitution, we are neither recognized nor respected by anyone, our citizenry is little more than rabble. (Pai and Goldblatt 1990: 20)

The use of the word “kingdom” here is an oxymoron, given that their “kingdom” is an anti-kingdom—an unlawful, constitutionless anarchy. Moreover, the use of “kingdom” establishes a mythic atmosphere, perhaps alluding to China’s dynastic past, and the “mandate of Heaven” which gave the people the right to overthrow unfit rulers.

The stage play *sensualizes* the inhabitants of this unlawful kingdom, assigning a transcendent power to their sexual agency:

在這個王國裡	In this kingdom of ours there are no distinctions
沒有尊卑	of social rank,
沒有貴賤	eminence,
不分老少	age,
不分強弱	or strength.
大家共同有的	What we share in common are
是一具具讓慾望焚煉得痛不可當的	bodies filled with aching,
軀體	irrepressible desire,
一顆顆寂寞得發瘋發狂的心	and hearts filled with insane loneliness.
這一顆顆寂寞的心	In the dead of night these tortured hearts
到了午夜	burst out of their loneliness
如同一群衝破了牢籠的猛獸	like wild animals that have broken out of their cages,
張牙舞爪	baring their fangs and uncoiling their claws.
我們	We!
如同一群夢遊症的患者	Look like a pack of sleepwalkers,

一個踏著一個影子	frantically stepping on each other's shadows
繞著蓮花池	as we skirt the lily pond,
無休無止輪迴著	never stopping, round and round,
追逐那巨大無比	in crazed pursuit of that nightmare
充滿了愛與慾的夢魘	of love and lust. (Pai and Shih 2020, trans. Hu Zongwen, ed. Li Huina)

Whereas the novel victimizes the kingdom's members ("We prick up our ears like a herd of frightened antelope in a predator-infested forest, forever on guard against the slightest sign of danger" (Pai and Goldblatt 1990: 21), the stage play reassigns agency to the sex workers, comparing their "tortured hearts" to dangerous wild animals with sharp fangs and claws, who prowl about in search of an outlet for their irrepressible desires. Since the novel was originally published in 1970, at the height of Taiwan's martial law era, Taiwanese society has become much more tolerant of homosexuality. In May of 2019, Taiwan became the first country in Asia to legalize same-sex marriage; the play version reverses the stigma associated with repressed gay male sexual acts, celebrating their desires as a source of strength and pride.

Exhibit 1: Banishment

The 2014 stage play rearranges the novel to accentuate its episodic melodrama and gradually immerse readers in the world inhabited by Yang Jinhai and the sex workers of New Park.

The Prologue to the novel opens as follows: "Three months and ten days ago, on a spectacularly sunny afternoon, Father kicked me out of the house..." (Pai 1989, trans.

Goldblatt: 2) Though the scene is barely a paragraph long, as compared with the dramatized stage play version (which includes a colorful dialogue between the cursing father, chasing his son with a firearm in hand), it succinctly sets up the narrative and explaining the reason for A-Qing banishment to the New Park kingdom. Moreover, the nostalgic additions in the stage

play version tease out the nostalgic spirit of the novel by presenting the scene as an episode in an older A-Qing’s childhood memories:

你這個畜生	Get the fuck out of my house
你給我滾	and don’t come back!
畜生	Scum!
你這個畜生	Filthy disgusting beast!
我們家的臉都讓你丟盡了	You’ve destroyed our good name!
爸	Dad!
響叮噠	Ring-a-ding-ding! Ring-a-ding-ding!
弟娃	Buddy!
好花採得瓶供養	Pretty flowers for a vase,
伴我書聲琴韻	Soft music for a scholar.
共渡好時光	Enjoy the good times together.
弟娃	Buddy!
	(Pai and Shih 2020, trans. Hu Zongwen, ed. Li Huina)

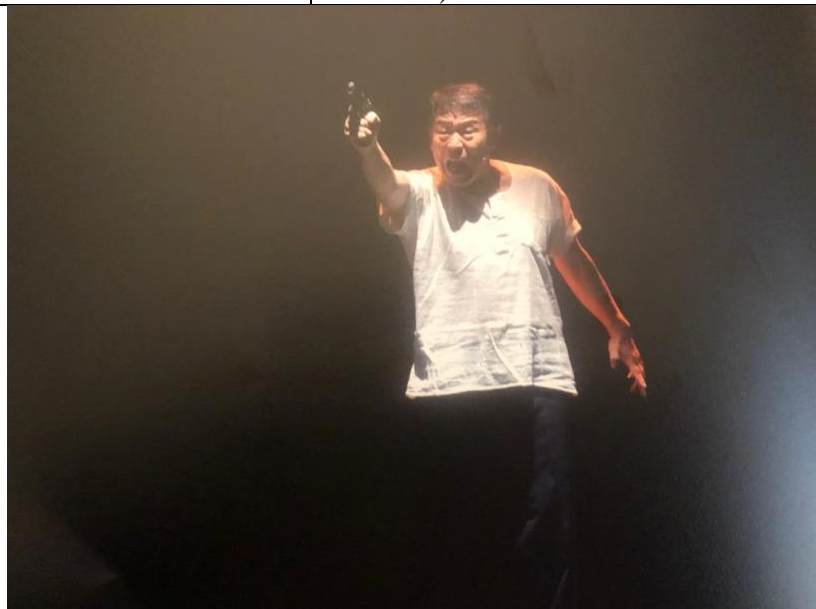


Figure 7. Lu Yilong (陸一龍) plays the role of A-Qing’s father in the 2020 stage play production, banishes his son Li Qing after receiving a report that he was caught in a sexual act with his lab supervisor: *Get the fuck out of my house and don’t come back!* (Cao and Pai 2020)

In the television adaptation, A-Qing’s father, played by Ke Junxiong (柯俊雄) beats his son Li-Qing, played by Fan Zhiwei (范植伟) brutally, kicking and hitting him like a dog in the back alley, calling him a *tu zai zi* 兔崽子 (a brat or bastard), and aiming kicks on his back,

abdomen, shoulders, and legs as he hurls expletives and Li Qing bleats back feebly: “Dad! Dad!” (Cao 2003, episode 1, 0:00-0:32). This scene is repeated at the beginning of successive episodes, thus ingraining the notion of banishment from one’s natal family as the cause of these “sinful sons” decisions to become sex workers. Director Cao Ruiyuan explains:

A-Qing stands up and cries out, “Dad!”, then the two look at each other. A short gaze, just one or two seconds long, after which A-Qing decides to turn around and run away. [...] This look proves that the father wasn’t simply furious; rather, he was simply incapable of forgiving his son. He might have felt wronged, or maybe he simply couldn’t verbally acknowledge his true feelings for his son. It wasn’t just anger. That gaze proved that they weren’t strangers to each other. They still shared powerful feelings for one another, buried deep inside. A-Qing was consumed, silently asking his father “You really can’t forgive me? Don’t you still love me?” That’s what he was verifying in that final gaze. But that moment was very brief indeed.¹²⁰ (Cao and Friedman 2023)

Indeed, non-verbal communication plays a central role throughout the theatrical production; not only do father and son convey their innermost feelings through an ephemeral gaze, the silent A-Feng also expresses his love for A-Long through aerial dance.

Exhibit 2: Refuge in the New Park and Cozy Nest

Unlike in the film and stage play versions, in the television version, there is no backstory provided describing A-Qing’s illicit intimacy with Zhao Ying (an older veteran soldier and school worker in the novel) and his subsequent expulsion from school. Whereas in the stage play version, the expulsion notice is read aloud by a non-diegetic narrator, just before A-Qing’s father banishes him, the film version opens with a shot of the police shining a flashlight on Zhao Ying and A-Qing engaging in sexual intercourse. The film then cuts to a poster version of the Notice (delivered orally in the stage play version), followed by a harrowing scene in which Li Qing’s father beats him with a stick, hurling punches, kicks, objects, and verbal abuses as his son retreats, sobbing. The condensed theatrical version warps the novel’s temporality, with the objective of imparting the same sense of distance

upon readers/viewers. Indeed, the play's symbolism is accentuated by its condensed temporality, which is conveyed through this evocative monologue that draws parallels between Taipei's stifling summer weather and A-Qing's own desperate internal state.

When A-Qing is first inducted into the New Park community, the young men strip him of his school uniform, clothing him in a close-fitting white silk shirt with a turned down collar (30:43) that identifies him as an insider in their community. The men lift A-Qing onto their shoulders, twirl him amongst them, and link arms with him in a series of pirouetting dance duets, reflecting his induction into their underground community. In the words of choreographer Wu Sujun,

我特別編排阿青在舞台上利用服裝的更換，來顯示時間與人際關係的推移
【。。。】青春鳥們還用雙人舞的托舉技巧，將阿青扛舉至空中，借用阿青動作上重心的轉換，托著他圍繞蓮花池而行。移動中，阿青不斷揣量著青春鳥們，看似好奇卻又徬徨。青春鳥們則在移動的舞姿中為阿青更衣。(Wu in Pai et al. 2022: 82)

I specially choreographed Ah Qing's change of costumes on stage to show the passage of time and evolving interpersonal relationships [...] The Birds of Youth also employed a *pas de deux* to lift A-Qing aloft, using Ah Qing's shifting center of gravity to carry him around the Lotus Pond. As he is borne on the shoulders of his compatriots, Ah Qing keeps sizing up the Birds of Youth, both curious and hesitant. At the same time, the Birds of Youth change A-Qing's shirt throughout the fluid dance sequence. (Wu in Pai et al. 2022: 82, trans. mine)



Figure 8. A-Qing is inducted into the New Park community. His companions strip him of his schoolboy uniform and clad him in a close-fitting white silk shirt, before hoisting him onto their shoulder and conducting an elaborate series of pirouetting dance duets. (Image from the 2014 production in the National Performing Arts Center at the National Theater in Taiwan, courtesy of Hsu Pei-hung)

Indeed, the fluidity of the dance on stage and communal effort to change A-Qing's shirt reflect the community's gradual acceptance of A-Qing, and his own psychic integration within the New Park community. Moreover, A-Qing appears to soar on the shoulders of his compatriots, thus accentuating the motif of sea swallows soaring over the ocean in search of their lost nests. Moreover, as he soars in his form-fitting new garment, A-Qing releases his pent-up homoerotic desire and finds acceptance within the men-loving-men community. The medium of modern dance artfully encapsulates A-Qing transformation from a schoolboy to a fledgling swallow in the New Park community, presenting their communal struggle to fly on despite the obstacles.

Just as the film adaptation's melodrama is accentuated by the lighting and diegetic harmonica music, the live stage performance is also brought to life through a pre-recorded non-diegetic soundtrack, including the melodramatic, cinematic theme song composed exclusively for the play, complete with music by Chen Xiaoxia 陳小霞, lyrics by Lin Xi 林夕, arranged by Zhang Yi 張藝, and performed by the Taiwanese Mandopop superstar Aska Yang (Yang Zongwei 楊宗緯).

	Stanza #1	
	記住了你輪廓	Recalling your profile,
2	忘掉了我死活	I've forgotten myself
	冰涼的淚該往哪裡流落	These icy tears have nowhere to flow
4	擁抱曾經暖和	Your embrace was once warm
	命運何曾承諾	Does Destiny ever make any promises?
6	用情夠深就不	I've loved you too deeply
	忍心逼迫	to force the outcome
	Stanza #2	

8	夢在胸膛	I dreamt a beautiful dream
	醒來卻流離失所	But now that I'm awake, I've lost my way
10	本來只要兩人填滿一個角落如今都是錯	We had only a little corner to fill; We were both in error, it seems.
	找對了人為什麼更難過	After finding my Mr. Right, Why has my misery deepened?
12	愛	Love—
	因為愛上了誰	How can loving someone
14	變齷齪	Taint that love?
	倘若	If the merciful sun favors me
16	慈悲的陽光眷顧我	May it shine on the both of us,
	能否照耀著我們直到慾望隨蓮花開落	Until the lily flower of our lust Has blossomed and withered.
	Stanza 3	
18	夢本單純	The dream was pure;
	只有怪呼吸混濁	Only our tainted breath sullied the air.
2-	生來只要撐住沒有你的寂寞就不會有錯	So long as I can endure the loneliness that comes without you, I can lead an upright life.
	擁有過你為什麼要懦弱	Having had you once before, why have I become so timid?
22	天 怎麼要比誓言還執著	How can Heaven outlast a lover's vows?
	倘若 旱天雷能保持緘默	Dry thunder can keep silent
24	讓我赤裸裸愛一場赤條條來去也	Allow me to love honestly, nakedly, To come and go in the buff.
	不用誰為我	Nobody needs for my sake
26	解脫	To be set free
		-- <i>Niezi</i> stage play theme song <i>Lianhua luo</i> 蓮花落, lyrics by Lin Xi 林夕, trans. Hu Zongwen, eds. mine

The lyrics not only chronicle the pain of gay love, which society often shuns, but also expands to the pain of forbidden, ephemeral love, regardless of whether it amounts to homosexuality, heterosexuality, or love between friends and relatives. In the stage play production, after the Guru (Shifu, played by the female Taiwanese opera singer Tang Meiyun 唐美雲) reads the Shanghai Evening News newspaper article denouncing the Cozy Nest (Anle xiang 安樂鄉) as a hiding place for 人妖 *renyao* (transvestites, or ladyboys), the cast

dances to the theme song before heading their separate ways.

As the cast dance somberly in the dim purple light, at the line, A-Qing (played by Mo Ziyi) takes the line “But now that I’m awake, I’ve lost my way”, as his cue to wander amongst his friends, embracing Xiaoyu, before ambling over to the forest grove at the periphery of the stage. His white shirt is illuminated against the shadowed set, making his silhouette glow in the darkness, alluding to his loneliness, and perhaps moral integrity in the face of continued societal homophobia.

The song’s melodic composer, Chen Xiaoxia, recalls the difficulty involved in composing Niezi’s theme song, *Lianhua luo* 蓮花落. After Pai Hsien-yung requested a complete re-write¹²¹ of the song, melody and lyrics included (Chen 2022), Chen and Zhang spent a sleepless month-and-a-half reconfiguring the song. The second arrangement of *Lianhua luo* was not only the product of a collaboration between the lyricist Lin Xi, the arranger Zhang Yi, composer Chen Xiaoxia, and the singer Yang Zongwei—Pai’s own intervention at the first draft represents a continued attempt to transmediate the spirit of his written work into melodic form—the song is thus a transmediation of *Niezi* for a contemporary stage play audience decades after it was first conceived.

Pai explains that he requested Lin Xi re-write his original lyrics¹²² and sought out Yang Zongwei to perform the song due to his ability to project a mournful aura into his singing (Pai 2020). The generic hybridity of the stage play, particularly its resemblance with opera, reflects Pai Hsien-yung’s own deep-seated interest in promoting *kunqu* opera for Chinese youngsters. Indeed, the theme song accentuates the symbolic potential of the Dragon Prince/Phoenix Boy legend, which evokes nostalgia for a past age, and adapts the spirit of *The Dream of the Red Chamber*/紅樓夢 for the contemporary age.

Exhibit 3: Trudging Through Snow in Search of Plum Blossoms

Besides the pre-recorded soundtrack merging elements of traditional Chinese opera, classical music and pop melodies, the play is also framed by diegetic harmonica music played by the characters A-Qing and Luo Ping on the harmonica during the opening and closing scenes, and also by A-Qing’s late brother Buddha in a scene from childhood. This simple, jingle-bell-esque children’s song, entitled *Taxue xunmei* 踏雪尋梅 (lit. “Trudging through snow in search of plum blossoms”, hereafter abbreviated as “Plum Blossoms”), is also produced with an accompaniment of non-diegetic children’s voices¹²³, to enhance its symbolic layers.

Estranged from their birth families, each of the *Niezi* on stage seems to be trudging through life in search of his long-lost beloved (i.e., the plum blossom). For instance, A-Qing hums this melody in Wang Kui-long’s arms, the same melody Wang once heard from his late beloved A-Feng. Interestingly, Wang dubs this a “Taiwanese nursery rhyme” (*Taiwan geyao* 台灣歌謠), which links the notion of lost innocence with national allegory. This song was featured in the original novel *Niezi* (translated by Howard Goldblatt as “Plum Blossoms in the Snow”) and brought to life on stage. The lyrics to “Plum Blossoms” read as follows:

踏雪尋梅	Trudging through snow in search of plum blossoms
塵世多風霜	Wind and frost fill this mortal life
蠟梅朵朵黃	The wintersweet’s petals have yellowed
空穀傳回聲	Echoes from the empty valley
鈴兒響叮噠	The bells jingle: <i>Ding-dong!</i>
響叮噠	<i>Ding-dong</i> they go
響叮噠	<i>Ding-dong!</i>
響叮噠	<i>Ding-dong!</i>
響叮噠	<i>Ding-dong!</i>
愛花人兒太癡狂	Those wild, foolish flower lovers!
只求朝夕相對	All they want is to meet each morning and

	night
共度好時光	Sharing the good times. (trans. mine)

The original lyrics composed by Liu Xue'an 劉雪庵 with music by Huang Zi 黃自, include three additional stanzas, which are omitted in the *Niezi* stage play version, which features only the third and most mournful stanza, played slowly on the harmonica to evoke a nostalgic effect. Indeed, the “sinful sons” roam about in search of their lost childhoods; perhaps, their perpetual wanderings indicate a search not simply for their estranged fathers and families, but also mirror the exile’s journey, or the adult’s prayer to return to a happier, more innocent time. In Pai’s words:

We used “Trudging through Snow in Search of Plum Blossoms” as the theme song to frame our opening and ending scenes. It is sung in a child’s voice, so it is very touching, has that kind of innocent, childish [feeling]. This group of Crystal Boys went in search of plum blossoms, a symbolic element representing beauty and purity. [...] They lost their families, were abandoned by society, driven out of Eden. After losing Paradise, they went in search of their own Paradises, attempting to build new homes. This, after all, is the goal of the equality movement. Last year, Taiwan became the first country [in Asia] to achieve marriage equality, which represents great progress for human rights, and makes the play extra-special for today’s audiences.¹²⁴ (Feng 2020, trans. mine)

Pai reveals that the Crystal Boys’ journey is a search for a symbolic aesthetic “home” that transcends kinship bonds, an aesthetic chosen home defined by the shared pursuit of beauty and lost innocence, harkening back to Pai’s 1976 observations that “the Rootless Man” has been “driven out of Eden” and is burdened with a 5,000-year-long cultural history (Pai 1976: 208-209). The theme of banishment constantly resurfaces in the novel in the image of young *tongzhi* flying the nest; Grandpa Guo, for instance, declares:

你们是一群失去了窝巢的青春鸟。如同一群越洋过海的海燕，只有拼命往前飞，最后飞到哪里，你们自己也不知道——”

“You’re a flock of birds who’ve lost their nests,” he said with a sad look, “just like sea swallows flying across the ocean, who only know how to struggle forward, even if they don’t know where they’re going...” (Pai and Goldblatt 1990: 417)

However, these *tongzhi* birds are not the only ones who were expelled from their natal homes; their fathers also live out their years in lonely exile on the island of Taiwan, stranded from the mainland they once called home. Indeed, A-Qing's father becomes an alcoholic after his wife abandons him for a trumpet player and cuts off all ties with his army friends, drowning his sorrows in drink.

Exhibit 4: Transmediating the Murder Scene

Why does Dragon Prince¹²⁵ take Phoenix Boy's life? Is he haunted by internalized homophobia and economic insecurity, and hopes to unite with his beloved in the world beyond? Perhaps, seeing his beloved resort to prostitution, Dragon Prince experiences a deep anguish and acts on impulse. Indeed, society's pathologizing of homosexuality causes Dragon Prince to choose death as an escape over estrangement from his beloved.

Yu Kanping's film version is the most reductive of Niezi's *transmedial* adaptations, relying on images rather than dialogue to convey the events leading up to Longzi brandishing his knife. In the film version, Yang Jinhai recalls Dragon Prince's murder of Phoenix Boy in the form of a flashback, recalling how A-Feng showed up at his doorstep out of the blue one New Year's Eve, confiding that he fears "Longzi will burn him to death" (我怕火火被他殺死, 34:09), before showing Yang the dragon tattoo on his chest, saying: "我已經把他刺在身上。他還要怎麼樣?" ("I've already carved him [the dragon representing Dragon Prince] on my chest. What more can he possibly want?"). Indeed, A-Feng's decision to leave Longzi (Dragon Prince) reflects his desire to maintain a sense of agency and freedom; in the face of the Dragon Prince's stifling, possessive love, A-Feng's indomitable, willful spirit would likely wilt. Similarly, A-Qing maintains a distance from Dragon Prince after their first encounter so as to avoid becoming a substitute for Dragon Prince's beloved Phoenix Boy.

Yang tells A-Qing, “Longzi finally found A-Feng”, before cutting to the two shadowy figures wrestling by the Lotus Pond, culminating in Dragon Prince brandishing a knife, and a symbolic evocation of the murder scene, with Dragon Prince’s knife blade gleaming in the moonlight, followed by two rapid cuts: first to the rippling lotus pool, and next to the blood-red lotus (signifying Phoenix Boy’s death). The red lotus which Dragon Prince gives to Ah Feng functions as a burning flame of love, which later turns tragic when Longzi kills Ah-Qing. The red water lilies have come to symbolize the sex workers’ evanescent youth, and blooming vitality in the face of societal discrimination and banishment from the family unit.



*Figure 9. Left (34:45): Dragon Prince confronts Phoenix Boy by the Lotus Pond (Yu 1986)
Right (34: 52): Dragon Prince brandishes a knife, which gleams in the moonlight as thunder peals above. The sound of the knife slashing through the air is heard, then the shot cuts to the rippling pond water and a blood-red lotus blossom suddenly blossoms in the dark (35:03). Yang Jinhai recalls, “That blood was as red as the lotus blossoms.”*

At 2:58:21, the film continues the flashback. Dragon Prince begs Phoenix Boy to come home with him; when the latter refuses, Dragon Prince grabs Phoenix Boy by the collar and screams in desperation, “Come home with me!/跟我回去!”) pictured below at 2:57:33. Grandpa Guo tries in vain to separate the boys –the two engage in a violent altercation,

followed by a distant, zoomed-out shot of Dragon Prince embracing Phoenix Boy’s corpse (pictured below):

In comparison with the stage play adaptations in which Phoenix Boy expresses his inner world through aerial dance, the television version is most faithful to the novel, including an extended dialogue, reproduced below:

Chinese	English (translation mine)
阿鳳，跟我回去，我們一起回去過年	A-Feng, A-Feng, come home with me. Let’s spend New Year’s together!
我不能跟你回去	I can’t go back with you!
你懂不懂？	Don’t you get it?
我要跟他走，他要給我 50 塊。50 塊壓歲錢。	I’m going with him. He’s giving me NT \$50. NT \$50 in New Year’s money.
他能給你的我都能給你。	I can give you anything he can!
這一世不行了。我下輩子投胎到好人家再報答你好不好，好不好？	Not in this life. Next life, I’ll be reincarnated into a good family and pay you back, OK? OK?
你把我的心還給我	Then give my heart back!
我的心嗎？你要這個是不是？你拿啊！你拿啊！你拿啊！拿啊！來啊！	My heart? You want this? Take it! Take it! Take it! Come on! (Cao 2003, translations mine)

In the novel, Dragon Prince and Phoenix Boy’s interaction is told in the form of a flashback, with Phoenix Boy recounting the murder scene to the park’s gardener, Grandpa Guo.

However, in the TV series, their exchanges are converted into a dialogue, thus enhancing the violence and viewers’ immersion in the scene. Unlike the stage play version, which omits mention of the “old sot” who offers Phoenix Boy fifty New Taiwan Dollars in exchange for a sexual rendezvous, the television version is clearly adapted straight from the novel. After being stabbed by Dragon Prince, as thunder roars overhead and dramatic cello music crescendos, Phoenix Boy suddenly smiles in ecstasy. Though a half-smile also eclipses Zhang Yijun’s face right before he goes limp in his lover’s arms, the television medium allows for an extended close-up of the pair.



Figure 10. Left: In Cao Ruiyuan’s television series adaptation, Tu Zonghua (屠宗华), in his role as Wang Kui-long embraces a dying A-Feng (played by Ma Zhi-Xiang (馬志翔). As A-Feng collapses with Wang’s knife in his chest, a smile of rapture illuminates his face.

Right: In the 2014 stage play production, A-Feng, played by Zhang Yi-jun (張藝君), collapses in the arms of Wang Kui-long (played by Wu Zhongtian 吳中天), who has just plunged a knife into his chest.

In analyzing the murder scene, Cao Ruiyuan, director of the 2003 *Niezi* TV adaptation and the 2014 stage play, in describes A-Feng’s as a “forgiving smile”. Knowing that viewers would likely be unable to catch the precise moment when A-Feng smiles from their seats, Cao made the executive decision to have A-Feng stroke A-Long’s face:

In the film version, after A-Feng is stabbed and collapses, a forgiving smile appears on his face [...] How could I possibly achieve the same effect in my stage play? [...] Although you might not be able to see the smile break out on A-Feng’s face, I wanted A-Feng to reach out and try to stroke Longzi’s face, but before his fingers made contact, he would draw his last breath. His departure would be one without regrets, resentment, or hatred. (Cao 2022: 74, translation mine)¹²⁶

I interpret A-Feng’s smile as not one of forgiveness per se, but rather one of understanding and rapture at being released from the pain of mortal life, paving the way for his reincarnation. According to Pai, “That’s the only thing he could repay Longzi’s love with [...] with his own life, his own heart. At that moment, he is [literally] giving him back his heart.”

(Pai and Friedman 2023) The smile does not appear in either the Chinese or English versions of *Niezi/Crystal Boys*; however, in a flashback at the end of the novel, A-Long recalls the helpless look on A-Feng’s face: “No resentment, just a look of apology and helplessness. Those great big, pain-filled eyes of his were darting back and forth in their sockets. Those eyes will haunt me as long as I live, no matter where I am.” (Pai, trans. Goldblatt 1990: 181).

Pai reverses characters’ gender, adds Taiwanese linguistic interludes, alters temporality, eroticizes, symbolizes and lyricizes homoerotic aesthetics, accentuates melodrama, and harnesses music and *mis en scene* to heighten viewers’ immersion and catalyze catharsis on stage. Such multimedial acts of “creative subversion” are reflective of prismatic Sinophone interventions which re-canonize Pai’s works through affective, humanistic afterlives. Moreover, Pai’s contrapuntal harmonization between Eastern and Western aesthetics, traditional and modern aesthetics, enables *Crystal Boys* to transcend time and space through their affective, transmedial afterlives.

The stage play dramatizes the turbulent passion between Dragon Prince and Phoenix Boy, a tragic tale which the gardener, Grandpa Guo, recounts as follows:

一遇到阿鳳	As soon as he [Dragon Prince] and Phoenix met, it was
有如天雷勾動地火	thunder and lightning, they both caught fire!
這一發不可收拾	It was an unstoppable passion.
這一對冤家呀	I have never met any couple
我沒見過比這兩個愛得更癡狂的人了	so madly in love, never.
這些鳥兒	These young birds are fine,
不動情則已	as long as they’re not in love,
一動起情來	but once their passion is kindled,
就要大禍臨頭了	trouble follows! Pai and Shih 2020, trans. Hu Zongwen, ed. Li Huina)

The novel and its multimedia adaptations, in turn, *transmediate* a real-life murder (Friedman and Pai 2023) by transforming it into local legend. By converting Dragon Prince’s crime of

passion into a local legend, the New Park community forges a shared history and cultural niche that evokes Buddhist notions of karma and retribution. In killing his lover, Dragon Prince destroys his own spirit and his father's reputation. The corresponding lines from the novel *Niezi/Crystal Boys* emanate from Grandpa Guo's secondhand recollections, as he recounts the cautionary tale of Dragon Prince and Phoenix Boy for an enraptured A-Qing:

龙子一把揪住他的手说：‘那么你把我的心还给我！’阿凤指着他的胸口：‘在这里，拿去吧。’龙子一柄匕首，正正地便刺进了阿凤的胸膛。阿凤倒卧在台阶的正中央，滚烫的鲜血喷得一地——”
郭老的声音嘎然中断，眼帘渐渐垂下，他那张龟裂般的皱脸，好象蒙上了一层蛛网似的。
“后来呢？”沉默了半晌，我嗫嚅问道。
“后来么——”郭老那苍哑的声音微微颤抖起来，“龙子坐在血泊里，搂住阿凤，疯掉了。” (Pai 1970: 57)

Dragon Prince grabbed [Phoenix Boy's] hand and said, "Then give me back my heart!" Phoenix Boy pointed to his own chest and said, "It's here, take it." Well, Dragon Prince took out a knife and plunged it into Phoenix Boy's chest. Phoenix Boy slumped to the ground, blood gushing out of his chest..." [...]
"What happened then?" I asked haltingly after a long pause.
"What happened..." Grandpa Guo's raspy voice was trembling. "Dragon Prince sat down in the puddle of blood and held Phoenix Boy in his arms. His mind had snapped." (Pai, trans. Goldblatt 1989: 175)

The climactic murder scene conveys A-Feng's tenderness towards A-Long, even in rejecting A-Feng's advances—this transmediation thus assigns newfound agency, humanity, and grace to A-Feng's character.

At 1:23:11, Phoenix Boy initiates a flashback interpretive dance sequence that harkens back to his destructive affair with Dragon Prince. The scene opens with A-Feng's shadow slowly unfurling his arms against the fog-enshrouded clearing by the lotus pond, dancing in time to slow, legato string music. As the music gathers pace, Zhang, clothed in unbuttoned red trousers, and bare-backed with a dragon tattoo etched in red, purple, and black ink on his chest, begins to leap and twirl in and out of A-long's arms in grand Cirque-

du-Soleil style, finally taking flight at 1:26:46, ascending the fuchsia aerial silks, bursting into blossom like a phoenix, before ricocheting back down at 1:27:37 into A-Long's arms as A-long cries: "You are mine!" (你是我一個人的!) After a brief interlude in which A-Long recalls his murder of A-Feng after a night of passion with A-Qing, saying that he killed himself that fateful night, the dance continues. After trying in vain to coax A-Feng into going home with him, A-Long cries out desperately, "我的心你拿走了—你還給我!"/"You stole my heart—now give it back!", before stabbing his lover and embracing him in a pool of blood.

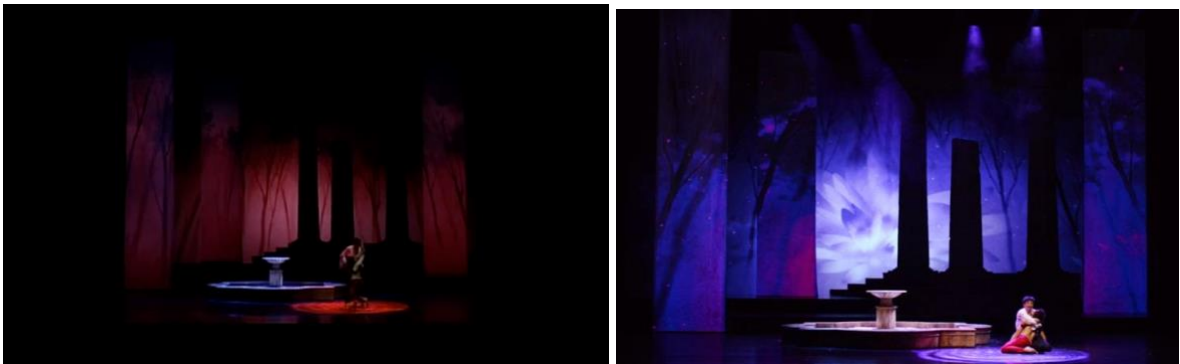


Figure 11. Left: Phoenix Boy collapses in a pool of blood after being stabbed by his lover A-Long (image from the 2014 production)

Right: The lighting blazes purple as a sobbing Dragon Prince embraces Phoenix Boy, as the background glows with the image of interlaced lotus blossoms behind the Lotus Pool. © Hsu Pei-hung.



A-Long (played by 周孝安 Zhou Xiao'an) embraces A-Feng after stabbing him in the heart by the Lotus Pool (*Lianhua chi*) (image from the 2020 production, copyright Pai et al. 2022)

The scene's sensational melodrama is aptly adapted to the stage—the performance builds tension between the two lovers, which eventually boils over into destructive, unbridled fury that is resolved through a cathartic murder. Moreover, the conversion from a dim, black-and-white to multicolor aesthetic reflects the climactic and symbolic nature of the murder scene:

In the words of choreographer Wu Sujun,

A-Feng executes graceful dance moves such as hanging, flying, winding and suspension on yards of purple-red silks. Mirroring Longzi's motions from up high, the soaring A-Feng strikes an arrogant, untouchable, and spirited image, metaphorizing the tragic ending of the lovers' thwarted reunion (Wu in Pai et al. 2022: 83, trans. mine)

阿鳳利用兩條數十丈長的紫紅綢布，使用高空綢吊技巧，作出許多懸掛、飛翔、纏繞、空中大懸盪的優美舞姿，在舞台空間上與龍子遙相呼應，塑造出可望而不可及的孤高而靈動的形象，也隱喻了無法圓滿的悲劇結局。

Indeed, the symbolic distance between Longzi and A-Feng and fractured intimacy is metaphorized through their literal, physical distance. A-Feng soars on high, proud and free; the only way for Longzi to bring him down to earth and “possess” his lover is to take his life. In Pai's words, “A-Feng is a wild phoenix—phoenixes should soar up high, wild and free. Dance can reflect A-Feng's unrestrained nature and free spirit.”¹²⁷ (Pai in Pai et al. 2022)

2014 Stage Play Production: Critical Reception

The 2014 stage play was met by mixed reviews from critics and academics alike.

In a scathing review entitled 有這樣的《孽子》，為何還需要導演? *You zheyang de niezi, weihe hai xuyao daoyan?* [“With a *Niezi* as disastrous as this one, what's the use of a director?”] film critic Zhang Xiaohong 張小虹, a professor teaching at National Taiwan University and renowned for her role as an LGBTQIA+ activist, criticizes the director for poor set design, disappointing choreography and lackluster *mise en scène*:

但劇場《孽子》野鳳凰的這把火，卻未能燎原，這麼好的舞者，這麼賣力的演出，音樂也不幫他，燈光也不幫他，舞台也不幫他【。。。】黑衣紅褲的阿鳳，舞得再火紅炙熱，跳得再高，跌得再重，也被呆板無動靜無共振的偌大舞台，一再吃了進去。阿鳳的這把火燒不起來，整個劇場的美學溫度就不對。《孽子》舞台的冷，不能只靠水墨森林佈景的氤氳氛圍，沒有火的對比，就出不來冰的肅殺死寂。(Zhang 2014)

Wild Phoenix's spark failed to erupt into a prairie fire. This superb dancer, who threw himself into such a stunning performance, was let down by the [sub-par] music, lighting, and staging [..] A-feng, clad in a black top and red trousers, no matter how blazing and fiery his performance, no matter how high he leaped or how hard he fell, was repeatedly swallowed up by that gigantic, rigid, motionless and unresonant stage. If the fire beneath A-Feng's fire is not properly ignited, the aesthetic temperature of the entire theater will be off. The coldness invoked by the stage cannot simply draw upon the dense atmosphere of the ink forest set; without blazing fire for contrast, there will be no iciness, nor austere, choking silence. (translation mine)

Zhang's clout as a queer rights activist, coupled with her role as director of Taiwan's Research Center for Feminism and Cultural Studies, lent this negative review considerable traction. Zhang blames the stage play's alleged failure on Director Cao, whom she accuses of drowning out visual imagery with excessive dialogue. Zhang calls the play a "misreading" of the original novel, a consequence of casting Chief Yang as a Tomboy lesbian, which she says destroys the dichotomy between the "phallic fathers" represented by Papa Fu and the "anal fathers" represented by Chief Yang. However, one might argue that by expanding the production to include depictions of female homosexuality, that the director took on an activist role of improving visibility for lesbians.

Pai issued a public statement in response to Zhang's critical appraisal of the play, citing audience response surveys, with 93 percent of the audience expressing a positive response to the production (64 percent an overwhelmingly positive response and 29 percent who "liked" the play) (Pai in Wang Yiru 1). Pai criticizes Zhang's deployment of Western

theories to critique Taiwanese theater and accuses her of skimming over the play's central theme of humanity. Director Tsao responded with the following statement: "Humanistic compassion [...this is what] Pai's work is about [...] The main point in *Niezi* is the boys' craving for home and family, desire for love, reconciliation and understanding between familial members." (Tsao, quoted in Wang 2015: 1, trans. Ting 2016: 171 revisions mine)

The Crystal Boys Strike Back: 2020 Remake during the Marriage Equality Era

Executive producer Li Huina (李慧娜) recalls that Pai invited Director Cao Ruiyuan and co-Producer Li Huina to revive the *Niezi* theatrical production at his seventy-eight birthday banquet in 2016. Thanks to the generous financial support from the Pegatron Group's Board Chief Tong Zixian, the 2020 play revival was staged in Taipei, Taichung, and Gaoxiong (as opposed to the play's limited traction in Taipei in 2014), drawing rave reviews from audience members from Taiwan and abroad (Li 2022).

In 2020, National Taichung Theatre (台中國家歌劇院) revived the 2014 stage adaptation in commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the publication of the novel *Niezi* 孽子/*Crystal Boys*, with a newly gutted cast and dazzling music and dance sequences in perfect harmony with the stage set and lighting. The revamped stage play was a hybrid medley merging television, modern dance, operatic elements, and pop culture/music. With Pai at the helm, co-directors Cao Ruiyuan and Shih Jufang, along with choreographer Wu Sujun and stage director Brian Wong, revived the all-star cast including John Ting, Lu Yilong, Kurt Chou, Yao Chang, Billy Chang (Zhang Yijun), and singer Yang Tsung-wei, among others. The play performance, originally set for March 21-22, 2020, was initially cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic (National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts). However, the National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts' Creative Society Theatre Group later performed

the play in Kaohsiung, Taichung, and Taipei that October (Pai 2020) to rousing success¹²⁸.

The story's return to the stage also held increased significance in the wake of Taiwan's legalization of same-sex marriage just one year earlier.¹²⁹ The play was both the crystallization of and one of the catalytic forces behind this monumental event. The auditoriums were packed with same-sex couples seated hand in hand, publicly displaying their affection for one another both during the performances and in the post-performance interviews included in the DVD production of the stage play. However, at risk of romanticizing the characters' trauma, the stage play adaptation also reminds readers of the societal and family oppression LGBTQIA+ individuals face on in contemporary society. In the words of Liao Zhifeng, "Watching *Niezi* in the post-Marriage Equality Era, I feel that the "sinful sons" still have a long way to go in recovering their lost paradises. The *niezi*'s spiritual refuges might seem as strong as stone pillars in ancient Greek temples, but for now, they are overgrown and wild" (Liao in Pai et al. 2022: 214, trans. mine)."¹³⁰

In comparison with the 2014 version, the 2020 stage play drummed up the corporeal, musical and visual elements of the production, using sound and visual effects to convey emotion rather than relying on dialogue. Aside from its extended dance and musical episodes, improved special effects¹³¹, enhanced melodramatic score, glitzy clothing, and capacious interpretation of Chief Yang's androgenous masculinity, the 2020 version of *Niezi* also drastically improved the dance sequences' synchrony with the musical score. For instance, during Zhang Yijun's aerial dance solo from 1:01:21 to 1:05:35, the dim lighting helps suppress the monochrome dance sequences, which suddenly explode in a fireworks of dazzling colors as Zhang appears with form-fitting ruby-red leggings and an unbuttoned black top, which glows navy blue under a dazzling sapphire-blue light. This reflects the

moment at 1:20:19, in which A-Long plucks a red lily for A-Long, which, in the narrator's words, causes the former to "blaze up "as if he had caught fire" ("他捧在胸前/就好像一團火熊熊燒起/阿鳳整個人都像著了火似的) (Pai et al. 2022: 39). Wu Sujun explains that the height of the aerial silks had to be manually adjusted by an entire backstage team to reflect each changing musical sequence, requiring precise calculations for the steel beams' load-bearing capacity, the diameter of the flight arcs, and the specific partitions for mounting the silks ¹³² (paraphrased from Wu in Pai et al. 2022: 83). Choreographer Wu adds that "in order to enhance the sonic effects of the characters' tumbling and clashing on stage, I specially invited the musical designer Du Duzhi (杜篤之) to design an acoustic amplifier for the stage floor" (Wu in Pai et al. 2022" 82, trans. mine), which also accentuated the echoes of the men's footsteps as they raced wildly around the Lotus Pond.

Whereas the 2014 version maintains dim lighting throughout, the 2020 lighting directors take care to light up A-Feng's dance sequences through a series of close-up, slow-motion shots that accentuate the dragon tattoo on A-Feng's chest. Unlike his 2014 counterpart Wu Zhongtian (吳中天), who is barely able to support Zhang's weight, even in a crouching position, Zhou Xiao'an lifts Zhang Yijun aloft while standing throughout the dance sequence, an impressive physical feat Wu Sujun attributes to the extra year of rehearsal time afforded by the global Covid-19 pandemic (Wu in Pai et al. 2022: 83).

In the 2014 stage play, Wu loosens his grasp from the silks at 1:27:00 in the 2014 production, leaving Zhang to dance solo. In the 2020 makeover, Zhou leaps into the air in perfect tandem with Zhang Yijun at 1:06:44, as multicolor confetti rain down over the flying pair from the ceiling. As the two glide through the air shrouded by shimmering silks, the special effects produce a shadowed effect that contributes to the eroticism and splendor of the

scene. Chen Shou'en (陳守恩) reflects upon the symbolic implications of the aerial dance scene as follows:

Dragon Prince and Phoenix Boy hang from the crimson silks, dancing on the wind, the epitome of the iconic image of a dragon flying alongside the phoenix, [traditionally symbolizing an auspicious marriage], replacing the violent cruelty of death with the beauty and power of dance. Longzi's heart-wrenching monologue elevates this scene to an even more gripping level, paving the way for the play's dramatic climax. (Chen in Pai et al. 2022: 232, trans. mine)

With dance rather than narrative at its core, A-Qing's emotional journey becomes more cohesive, the dance sequences brim with additional vigor, the actors' performances sparkle, and viewers better empathize with the plight of the restless birds who take up roost in Taipei's New Park. By maintaining equilibrium between comic relief and melodramatic despair, traditional Chinese opera, classical music and pop melodies, tear-jerking lyricism and lewd banter, spoken communication and corporal/musical interludes, the stage play production uses the story of A-Qing, A-Long and A-Feng to celebrate the power of chosen community when blood-based kinship bonds erode. Driven from the "cozy nests" of their immediate family by their homophobic fathers, both A-Qing and Wang Kui-long displace their longing for their thwarted beloved (Wang's erstwhile A-Feng and A-Qing's late brother Buddy) into a queer physical and spiritual union with one another. Similarly, the other sex workers in the park often displace their longing for their distant fathers by pursuing elder "sugar daddies" who act as surrogate fathers on spiritual, material, and even Freudian levels.

Exhibit 5: Yin/Yang Duality: Chief Yang Jinhai's Gender Transformation

In the 2014 stage play, Director Tsao casts the Taiwanese opera singer Tang Meiyun 唐美雲 as Yang Jinhai, proclaiming that the decision to cast Yang as "a female comrade" highlights the Guru's "maternal, meticulous approach to leading this group of young queer comrades...she wouldn't be as rigid or authoritative [as a male leader]...back then, women

were formed to present themselves as hyper-masculine...sometimes women presented themselves as more incisive and brash than men.” (Shih 2014). Although this dualistic stereotyping of male-female duality certainly merits reconsideration, casting Yang Jinhai as a woman certainly accentuates the notion of gender fluidity portrayed in the film adaptation, in which the followers lovingly referred to their Guru as “Yang Ma” (“Mama Yang”).



Figure 12. Left: The female opera star Tang Mei-yun (唐美雲, center) plays Yang Jinhai (楊金海) in the 2014 stage production of *Niezi*, accompanied by Wei Qunhan (魏群翰) as Shi Xiaoyu (飾小玉); Right: Tang Mei-yun gesticulates while conversing with Little Jade.

Moreover, Tang’s appearance, given her expertise in traditional Taiwanese opera (*gezai xi* 歌仔戲) lends an authentic Taiwanese operatic element to the play. In an exclusive interview, Pai writes:

In 2020, we revived *Crystal Boys* the play, with an almost completely new cast, except for a few actors from the 2014 production. Of course we kept 張逸軍 as Phoenix, who is irreplaceable. The big change was that we restored the male gender of Chief Yang who had been changed into a Tomboy type lesbian in the 2014 production. We did make some improvements on the 2014 production in terms of the sequence of scenes, [and so forth...] We gave eight performances starting from Kaohsiung, Taichung, and finally back to Taipei. This time the play was enthusiastically received by the audiences, as the same-sex marriage law was just passed in Taiwan, the first of its kind in Asia. It was a huge success. (Pai 2022)

The “restoration” of the character’s male gender by casting the male actor Liao Yuanqing (廖原慶) as the androgenous Yang Jinhai represents an attempt to steer the stage play back to

Crystal Boys the novel and assign fluidity to the male gender. Moreover, the male version of Yang Jinhai has exchanged Tang Meiyun’s dark purple suit for a bright red silk one, reflective of his flamboyant persona. However, Liao continues to wield Chief Yang’s signature fan, reflective of his elegance and refinement.

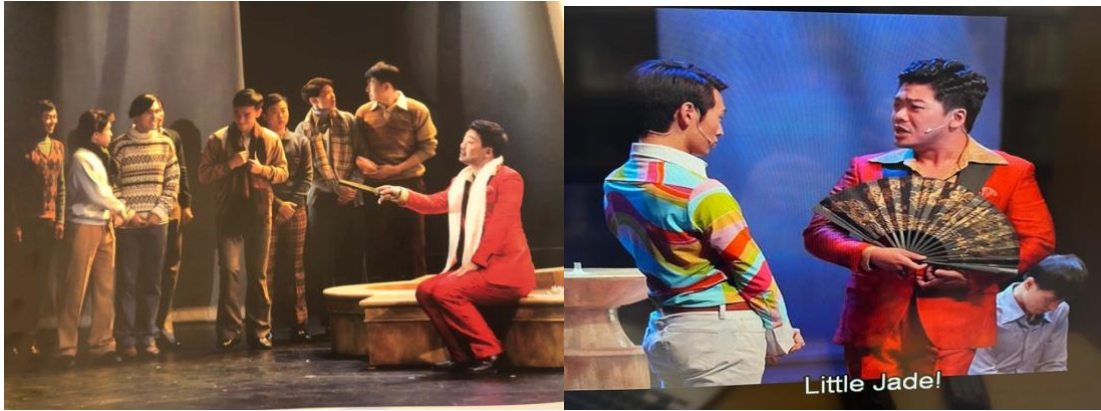


Figure 13. Left: The male actress Liao Yuanqing 廖原慶 stars as Yang Jinhai 楊金海 in the 2020 stage production of *Niezi* 孽子, accompanied by the boys of Taipei’s New Park. Right: Liao, bearing the same fan as Tang in the 2014 production, converses with Little Jade.

As opposed to the 2020 version, in which Chief Yang reminisces about his past gay male lover (see below),

那時我在那個一番酒吧當領班的時候	When I was the head waiter at a bar once,
有一個玻璃啦	there was a gay boy
叫慶仔	called Qing-zai,
我愛人啦	my lover! (Pai and Shih 2020, trans. Hu Zongwen, ed. Li Huina)

the 2014 version has Tang Mei-yun reminisce about her lesbian lover:

我手下有一個小酒女叫做珊瑚，那個是我的小愛人啦 (“I had a waitress named Coral, my lover!”) Chief Yang continues: “Foolish girl... Yang Guang had all a throng of women orbiting him, but they never imagined that their beloved idol actually preferred tender rooster meat!” (Cao et al. 2022, translation mine). This line contrasts with the 2020 version, which follows a different script:

這個陽光呢	As [for] Sunlight here, he charmed
把天底下的男男女女搞得暈淘淘的	all the men and women of the world.
殊不知她們崇拜的偶像甚麼都不愛	Little did they know, their idol's predilection
偏偏只愛童子雞	was for spring chickens! (Pai and Shih 2020, trans. Hu Zongwen, ed. Li Huina)

By converting Yang Guang into a heartthrob for both heterosexual women and homosexual men, the 2020 stage play adaptation openly acknowledges the mainstreaming of divergent sexual preferences, which is fitting given Taiwan's 2019 Marriage Equality ratification. In contrast, the 2014 version simply states that Yang Guang was a ladies' man.

Code-Switching Between Mandarin and Taiwanese Hokkien

In contrast with Tang Meiyun's predominant Taiwanese linguistic expression, the male version of Yang Jinhai played by Liao Yuanqing in 2020 speaks mainly in Mandarin with halting interludes of Taiwanese Hokkien. Liao's predominant use of Mandarin in his conversations with the policemen who arrest the young hustlers in the park and in his interactions with Papa Fu may suggest an attempt to embed himself within the mainstream rhetoric community, in order to humanize the gay community he has come to represent. However, given that code-switching between Mandarin and Taiwanese Hokkien is common practice in Taiwanese citizens' daily conversations, the *Niezi* characters' code-switching also reflects Taiwanese residents' authentic lived experiences by reflecting their shared cultural, linguistic, and aesthetic discourse bonds. Moreover, Lu Yilong (陸一龍), the actor playing Li Qing's father in the stage play, speaks with a thick Northeastern accent, in sharp contrast to the crisp Mandarin and Taiwanese Hokkien spoken by the other actors (Lu in Pai et al. 2022: 122). The addition of this non-standard Mandarin reminds viewers of Li Qing's father's mainland roots and nostalgia for a bygone era.

Chief Yang, A-Qing (played by Mo Tzu-Yi 莫子儀), and A-Qing's mother, played by the actress He Shuqin (柯淑勤)¹³³ in the 2014 production and both Huang Caiyi (黃采儀) (in Taibei and Gaoxiong) and her alternate Li Shaojie (李劭婕) (for the performances in Taizhong only) in the 2020 production, speak mainly in Taiwanese Mandarin, a testament to the linguistic diversity of Taiwanese ethnic identity—indeed, the intimate bonds between mother/son and Guru-mother/disciples are accentuated through this Taiwanese linguistic bond. In the 2020 version, Zhang Yaoren (張耀仁), in his role as A-Qing, is able to converse at length with his “A-bu” (“mother” in Taiwanese, played alternately by Huang and Li) nearly exclusively in Taiwanese, rather than switching frequently back and forth repeatedly between Mandarin and Taiwanese as he did in the 2014 production. The 2020 version's emphasis on authentic Taiwanese linguistic expression accentuates the contrast between A-Qing's mainlander father and Taiwanese mother, shedding further insight into the father's region-based prejudice which triggers abuse of A-Qing's mother.

A member of the Hui ethnic group, Pai speaks Guilinese, Shanghainese, Cantonese¹³⁴, Mandarin Chinese, Taiwanese Hokkien, and English, among other languages. Indeed, Pai's linguistic prowess is a reflection of his perpetual migration, from Guilin to Chongqing, Nanjing, Shanghai, Wuhan, Guangzhou, Hong Kong (1949-1952), Taipei (1952-1963), Iowa (1963), and finally Santa Barbara (1965). Though the linguistic diversity of *Niezi* certainly adds nuances to the characters' identities, suggesting polyphonic Sinophone articulations that queer the one-to-one relationship between nation and language, the nonverbal communication between characters achieved through dance and body language also contribute greatly to the play's pathos.

Half-Smiles as Masquerade: Recapitulation and Bridge to Eileen Chang

The instance of page-to-screen-to-stage adaptation we have examined is by no means an isolated incident in Pai's creative practice. Prior to *Crystal Boys*, Pai also adapted his novelette *Youyuan jingmeng* for the stage (1982), his novelette *Yuqing sao* for the silver screen (1984, directed by Zhang Yi) and stage (1986), and his short story *Zhexian ji* (1965, lit. "Fallen Angels") into a film entitled *Zuihou de guizu* ("The Last Aristocrats", 1989, directed by Xie Jin). Thus, multimodal adaptation enabled Pai to canonize his own literary oeuvre by generating multimodal afterlives that expand his works' societal reach and accentuate their symbolic and political dimensions. In this study, I have leveraged Pai's collaborative page-to-screen-to-stage adaptations of *Niezi* as a window into evolving societal discourse surrounding *tongzhi* rights. From the "sinful sons" of Pai's 1983 Martial Law era novel to the "sons of humanity" in the era of marriage equality (2019-present), *Niezi* traveled from students' bookbags to families' living rooms to mainstream theater houses and curricula, garnering broad societal acceptance of *tongzhi*-identifying individuals. These "children of humanity" are now poised to take university campuses and Hollywood by storm—a new musical production is underway in Taiwan and an international film is brewing in the United States (Cao and Friedman 2023).

Eileen Chang shared Kenneth Pai's perennial obsession with Chinese traditional literature, particularly the *Dream of the Red Chambers*, and was equally preoccupied with striking a balance between Eastern and Western culture. In an untitled manuscript, Chang muses,

The May 4th has set the tone for a rather sterilized view of the West as mentor, & now Hong Kong & Taiwan have perforce become part of the picture of worldwide Americanization, only more so because of their precarious existence—without the disinterested exploratory enthusiasm of the May 4th. *Imagination needs room, it needs*

distance and an absence of pressure.

Can East meet West after all? Even without the political situation the West is in a better position to break that impasse, like Tang China, when China was self-confident enough to take a lot from India & Central Asia without any fear of losing its identity. So far the Western view of China is as set & restricted as the Chinese conception of the West, & in the end a limited view makes for limited interest. (Ailing Chang papers, box 5, folder 5, emphases mine)

Chang has redacted out the first paragraph in her manuscript, perhaps due to concerns regarding political censorship. Chang indirectly suggests that China's self-strengthening and literary revival hinges on lifting censorship and bolstering its confidence in its own cultural legacy. Ironically, Pai and Chang were only able to write freely and nurture their imaginations in the United States, beyond the lingering shadow of Chinese Communist Party's political censorship. It was arguably this critical distance from Greater China's political orbit which enabled Chang and Pai to reflect critically upon memories of fractured queer intimacies in repressive political environments. Both Chang and Pai embrace the fleeting beauty derived through the experience of wandering and exile in foreign lands, enabling them to forge a border-transgressing aesthetics bridging the United States and the broader Sinophone community.

As the life ebbs from him in Dragon Prince's embrace, an evanescent half-smile flickers across Phoenix Boy's face. Is it a smile of forgiveness? Love? Longing? Ecstasy? Eileen Chang also appreciated the ambiguity conveyed by the art of (half-)smiling.



Figure 14. Left: A half-smile graces Eileen Chang's face. Zhang Ailing circa 1966 (*Duizhao ji* 對照紀 78-79, Beijing Publishing House, 2007, also found in Ailing Zhang Papers, Box 5, folder #42-45, Photographs); Right: Da Vinci, L. (1506). *Mona Lisa*, Musée du Louvre, Paris, France.

In her essay “On Painting” (*Tan hua* 談畫, Chang reflects upon Mona Lisa's enigmatic smile:

On the wall of the classroom in my old school there hung a reproduction of the Mona Lisa, the famous painting of the Italian Renaissance. Our teacher told us, “Notice the strange smile on her face.” And it was truly a disquieting smile, lovely yet ambiguous. It looked as if it might disappear at any moment, and even though the smile remained in place as I carefully examined the painting, I was left all the same with an unaccountable sensation of loss. (Chang, trans. Jones 1968/2005: 189-190)

Chang goes on to discuss how Walter de la Mare's essay on the Mona Lisa's “ghostly wisdom” as conveyed through her enigmatic smile limits viewers' understanding of the painting. Nevertheless, Chang's lengthy description of the potential evocations of the smile, and particularly the sense of loss and restraint implicated behind the smile, reveals her acute awareness of the act of smiling as a gendered disguise women often use to mask their innermost feelings. In “She Said Smiling”, the subject of the next section, a pair of distant cousins don smiles as veils used to obscure their own vulnerability.

Eileen Chang wrote a series of screenplays from 1957 to 1964¹³⁵ to support her American screenwriter husband Ferdinand Reyher¹³⁶, eight of which were later made into motion picture comedies. These cinematic ventures undoubtedly sharpened Chang's ability to shuttle between different languages, media and cultures in her subsequent (self-)translation practice and bilingual writing, as she adapted her screenplays for a universalized Hollywood aesthetics. In what follows, we turn to Chang's Chinese-language self-translation from a partial, intermediary English version of "She Said Smiling" preserved at the University of Southern California's Special Collection Archives. Chang leverages linguistic displacement as a detached vantage point from which to break the cycle of historical trauma. Though Chang's self-translations were never well-received during her lifetime, her writing's cinematicity lends it to both translation and adaptation for the silver screen. Moreover, by transwriting back and forth between English and Chinese for decades, Chang harnessed transwriting as a lifelong process of literary transcreation that enabled her to improve and re-write her own work.

Eileen Chang's Hybridized Aesthetics and Co-Eval Self-Translations

In 1952, upon returning to Hong Kong from mainland China, Eileen Chang (張愛玲, 1920-1995), began drafting three short stories simultaneously in English: "Joyful Reunion" (*Xiangjian huan* 相見歡), "Flowers at Sea" (*Fuhua langrui* 浮花浪蕊), and "Lust, Caution" (*Sejie* 色戒), consecutively self-translating back and forth between Chinese and English for the next several decades. While "Lust, Caution" has been immortalized in the world literary canon thanks to Ang Lee's 2007 erotic spy thriller, scholarship on the former two stories is only just emerging.¹³⁷ The critic Yi Shu (亦舒), for instance, dismisses *Xiangjian huan* as "tedious and trifling", devoid of all sense of narrative. Yi gripes: "These two middle-aged

housewives who are supposedly ‘happy to meet one another’ spend the whole story harping on about pesky household matters! How on earth will readers under thirty be able to resonate?”¹³⁸ (Yi 1981, translation mine).

I take up Yi’s provocation, and the recent discovery¹³⁹ (Li and Zhou 2020) of an incomplete, unpublished English language draft of Eileen Chang’s English version of *Xiangjian huan*; namely, “She Said Smiling”, to outline the ways in which Chang leverages bilingual *transwriting* techniques (Adhikari 1992) to forge a *transwriting zone*¹⁴⁰ bridging diverse languages, cultures, and temporalities. When *Xiangjian huan* first appeared in Crown Magazine Crown Magazine (*Huangguan* 皇冠) in 1978, most readers assumed the story had been originally conceptualized in Chinese. However, based on comparison with the English language version and evidence documenting the existence of an English language version over a decade prior to *Xiangjian huan*’s initial publication, I speculate that *Xiangjian huan* (initially entitled *Wangshi zhi duoshao* 往事知多少, literally “Remembrance of Things Past”), is, in fact, the Chinese language translation of a series of English-language drafts¹⁴¹.

Chang’s Chinese-inflected English language expression expands and rejuvenates the English language by placing both Chinese and English in dialogue with one another, a tradition spurred by Lin Yutang (1895-1976) and carried forward by such Sinophone contemporaries as Ha Jin (哈金, 1956-) and Li Yiyun (李义云, b. 1972). Chang’s decades-long process of adapting “She Said Smiling” into *Xiangjian huan* 相见欢 (1978) coincides with Chang’s own double exile to Hong Kong (1952) and the United States (1955), resulting in a hybrid diasporic consciousness bridging East and West. Chang’s radical plot, character, and aesthetic alterations, particularly *translationese* and Chinglish¹⁴² inflections (Lee 2012),

function as masquerading (Shieh 2013) devices that disrupt the cycle of historical repression and intervene in the hegemony of global English.

The story *Xiangjian huan*, which recounts a communication impasse between a Mrs. Chow (Mrs. Wu) and Mrs. Liu (Mrs. Xun), also contains a distinct homoerotic subtext which Chang scholars have been previously reluctant to acknowledge. I reconcile Lin Peifang's (1979) and Roland Soong's (2015) de-eroticization of the "Smiling" cousins' relationship with Yan Zeya's (2012) *ménage à trois* interpretation (2013) to argue that Chang censors the story's homoerotic subtext in her Chinese translation by masking Mrs. Chow's (Wu) feelings for Mrs. Liu (Xun) in a series of enigmatic smiles.

By comparing Chang's expanded characterization, plot details, and clothing descriptions in *Xiangjian huan* with the bare-bones English version, I conclude that "She Said Smiling" served the source text for *Xiangjian huan* (Li and Zhou 2020: 157). After comparing the English and Chinese versions, critic and lifelong friend of Chang's, Lin Yiliang, concludes that the Chinese version qualifies as a "recreation" of the English original, thanks to extensive stylistic devices including imagery, and a lively, natural style. In a reply to Lin's letter, Chang explains that she chose simple diction for the original work in order to accommodate American readers' tastes, fearing that over-explaining the Chinese cultural background would hamper readers' enjoyment of the text (Lin 125-131). Similarly, in adapting "She Said Smiling" into Chinese, Chang adds plot details, characters, and other literary embellishments, "showing" rather than "telling". If we take *Xiangjian huan* as the basis for "She Said Smiling", this would indicate that Chang paraphrased the short story in keeping with her target readers' aesthetic tastes.

Roland Soong, who took over from his father, Stephen Soong, in managing Chang's estate (and, indeed, Chang's literary reputation), speculates that Chang first drafted this short story in English, entitling it "Visiting" (拜访 or 探访), and re-translated it *back* into Chinese, producing several drafts, including 往事知多少 [Where Have All the Flowers Gone?], 话旧记 *Huajiu ji* [Records of the Past] 情之为物 *Qingzhi weiwu* [Passion is an Object], and so forth. Soong explains that Chang approached bilingual writing and self-translation as a lifelong creative endeavor—she often drafted stories in English and self-translated them into Chinese (and vice-versa). For instance, Chang's English language novelette *The Spy Ring* (alternately titled "Spy and Ring", completed in 1955) formed the basis for early drafts of 色戒 (*Se jie/Lust, Caution*). Indeed, Chang explains she spent thirty years revising *Se jie*, *Xiangjian huan* and *Fuhua langrui* 浮花浪蕊 (Flowers at Sea, lit. "Floating Flowers and Drifting Petals") (Song 2015: 259-260), which were drafted in 1950 but not published until 1979:

[...these three stories] were all drafted in 1950 [...] these stories all shocked me, so I was willing to rewrite them over and over again for so many years; when I think about it, I relive the surprise of getting my hands on the material [that inspired them], and [the joy of] the rewriting process...thirty years have gone by in the blink of an eye!¹⁴³ (cited in Song 2015: 260, translation mine)

Nicole Huang observes that Chang's decades of rewriting "Flowers at Sea" from 1955 to 1979 "mirrored Chang's long and rocky journey at writing and rewriting, translation and self-translation, and can be read as an allegory of textual crossings." (Huang 2019: 7) By "allegory of textual crossings", Huang is undoubtedly referring to Han Bangqing's (1856-1894) *Haishang hua* 海上花, or "Flowers of Shanghai", which Chang translated from classical to vernacular Chinese as *Haishang hua kai* 海上花開 (Blooming Flowers of

Shanghai and *Haishang hua luo* 海上花落 (Falling Flowers of Shanghai) (Chang 1983, cited in Huang). Moreover, Huang notes that these three stories are far more fragmentary than Chang's earlier writing, incorporating layered narration, several intermingled time frames, "and juxtapositions of several perspectives, with little plot development" (Huang 2005: 217). Indeed, Chang metaphorizes the diasporic experiences by inserting herself into the transnational migration narrative from mainland China to Hong Kong and finally the United States, thus dramatizing her own border-crossing experience (Huang 2019: 5-7). Chang often initially drafted her works in English, before self-translating them back into Chinese. For instance, Chang first wrote *The Fall of the Pagoda* and *The Book of Change* (2010) in English, and then revised them by translating back and forth between English and Chinese.

"Forced to Speak to Someone You Don't Like": Chang's Bleak Assessment of Conventional Translation

During the two years she spent at Hong Kong University as a Bachelor of Arts Student (1939-1941), Chang ascribed to a strict "language pledge", challenging herself to write and speak exclusively in English¹⁴⁴. Chang's early translation endeavors were sponsored by the United States Information Agency (USIA), which was eager to enhance American cultural soft power through the translation of canonical American works from English into Chinese. Richard M. McCarthy (1921-2008) recruited Chang as a key figure in the United States' campaign to turn Chinese "hearts and minds" away from Communism, and later sponsored Chang's visa to the United States (Soong 2010: 130). Not only did Chang translate selected anti-Communist works into Chinese, she also wrote the critically acclaimed, anti-Communist novels *Rice Sprout Song* and *the Naked Earth* as part of her contract with the anti-Communist China Reporting Program in Hong Kong. The novels were initially serialized in

the journal *Jinri shijie* 今日世界 (World Today), the USIA’s Hong Kong publication platform, and were published in novel form by the USIA’s press in 1954, at the height of the McCarthy era. McCarthy takes credit for “discovering” Chang and promoting her in his role as Chief of the East Asia and Pacific Division of the Voice of America (McCarthy and O’Brien 1988).

The following is an incomplete list of Chang’s translated works (including both self-translations and translations of works authored by others) since her debut with the Chinese translation of Ernest Hemmingway’s *The Old Man and the Sea* in 1952 (Shen 2013: 4-5):

Year	Original Title(s)	Translated Title(s)	Author
1943	“Chinese Life and Fashions”; “Peking Opera through Foreign Eyes”; “Demons and Fairies”	《更衣记》、《洋人看京戏及其他》、《中国人的宗教信仰》	Eileen Chang
1952	The Old Man and the Sea	老人与海	Ernest Hemingway
1953	The Yearling	小鹿	Marjorie K. Rawlings
1953	Anthology of Ralph Waldo Emerson	爱默生选集	Edited by Mark Van Doren
1954	The Legend of Sleepy Hollow	无头骑士	Washington Irving
1955	秧歌	The Rice-Spout Song	Eileen Chang
1956	赤地之恋	Naked Earth: A Novel about China	Eileen Chang
1956	Stale Mates	五四遗事	Eileen Chang
1961	等	Little Finger Up	Eileen Chang
1962	桂花蒸 阿小悲秋	Shame, Amah	Eileen Chang
1967	金锁记	The Rouge of the North	Eileen Chang
1971	金锁记	The Golden Cangue	Eileen Chang
1982, 2005	海上花列传	The Singsong Girls of Shanghai	Han Bangqing

Figure 15. A partial list of Eileen Chang’s translations of her own and others’ works

Beginning in 1952, Chang translated numerous works by Ernest Hemingway, Margery Lawrence, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Washington Irving for the USIA’s Hong Kong branch (see the above table). Yet translation of others’ works was a mundane task she completed to

eke out a living, one which gave her little personal enjoyment. On another occasion, Chang reportedly complained that “translating the novel by Washington Irving was like being forced to speak to someone that you don’t like. You can’t help it, and you can’t run away either” (Song 2015: 48). Perhaps Chang’s dislike of translation in general led to a certain stiffness when it came to translating others’ works, especially from Chinese to her non-native English. Yet when it came to adapting her own works, Chang seemed to give the work her heart and soul. Despite her dismal appraisal of translation in general, these early forays into literary translation certainly set the stage for Chang’s ensuing four decades of code-switching (Shen 2012: 91-111) and experimental *transwriting*.

Eileen Chang’s Palimpsestuous Bilingual Writing Practice

Scholars have dubbed Chang’s lifelong process of self-translation “transwriting”, acknowledging the creativity deployed throughout the process and blurring the boundaries between (self-)translation and creative writing. Bal Ram Adhikari defines “transwriting” as the process of “regenerating [a given] text across languages, which requires considerable creativity on the part of the writer-translator”. Adhikari derives this term from “rewriting” (Lefevere 1982) and “transcreation” (as posited by Lal 1972 and Singh 2010) (Adhikari 2019: 1-3). Nicole Huang points out that Chang’s self-translated works “point to a writer caught in a state of constant rewriting, retelling, and incessant self-translation, as if forever haunted by memories of war, migration, and permanent loss” (Huang 2016: 222).

Eileen Chang harnessed consecutive self-translation as an extended¹⁴⁵ textual performance, enabling her to cultivate a defamiliarized (Meng 2021: 6) perspective on “Chineseness” as a diasporic, cosmopolitan writer. In the 1950s, Chang translated her Chinese language novella *Jinsuoji* (金鎖記) into English, publishing the full-length novel

Pink Tears in 1956, before rewriting this work twice in the sixties, transforming it into *The Rouge of the North*. Chang later translated this work back into Chinese and entitled it *Yuan nü* (怨女), which was published in 1968 (Wang 2010: vi). The fact that Chang rewrote *The Story of the Golden Cangue* in two languages over six times during a quarter century testifies to Chang's conviction that self-translating enabled her re-create, and thereby improve, her literary works. Chang's bilingual transwriting practice mirrors that of the Galician writer Suso de Toro, who self-translates into Castilian Spanish, incorporating alterations in the translated version back into the source text and issuing new editions (Santoyo 2005/2013). David Der-wei Wang attributes Chang's repetitive, bilingual transwriting projects (Wang 1998: xii) to the Freudian repetition complex, observing that Chang transmits primordial "memories lived by all humanity in all eras", along with her own views on femininity and creative writing to contemporary audiences (Wang, Foreword to *The Rouge of the North*, 1998: xxviii) Sheng-mei Ma goes so far as to equate Chang's "fixation with rendezvous" with the "regressive orphan complex" (Ma 2011: 138). Chang's chain of embedded (Barthes 1953) intertextual palimpsests evokes the canonical Russian self-translator Vladimir Nabokov's own textual performances.

In 1978, after nearly three decades of transwriting back and forth between Chinese and English, which informed her unique "aesthetics of liminality" (Huang 2005: 136), Chang published her short story 相見歡 (*Xiangjian huan* "Joyful Reunion) in the Taiwanese magazine *Crown Magazine/Huangguan* 皇冠 (vol. 50, no. 4). In Chang's words, "I actually began writing these three stories in 1950, but I later rewrote them completely. After *Xiangjian huan* and *Sejie* were published, I made additional revisions and changes." (Chang 1983/1991: 4, trans. mine)¹⁴⁶ Chang's English language draft "She Said Smiling", of which

several versions (all unpublished) exist, may have served as the blueprint for *Xiangjian huan* 相见欢. “Visiting”, for instance, forms part of Soong (Roland) Yilang’s (Chang’s estate executor) permanent private collection (Soong 2014: 280; Soong 2015: 271). As she self-translated, Chang simultaneously revised the Chinese source text, culminating in the publication of an altered version in the anthology 惘然記 (*Wangran ji*, “Records of Regret”) in 1983 (Li and Zhou 2020: 1-15). In reflecting upon the thirty years she spent revising *Xiangjian huan*, *Sejie*, and *Fuhua langrui*, Chang admits:

These three stories shook me to the core, so I was willing to rewrite them over and over throughout the years. When I look back on those years, all I remember is the surprise of obtaining the materials at first and the joyful rewriting process to follow. Thirty years passed in the blink of an eye! (Chang 1983/1991: 4, trans. mine)¹⁴⁷

Indeed, the anthology’s title foreshadows the repressed affections between Mrs. Chow (whose name is changed to *Wu tai-tai* 伍太太, or Mrs. Wu in the Chinese version) and Mrs. Liu (*Xun tai-tai* 荀太太 Mrs. Xun in the Chinese version); the former never openly confesses her love for her friend, and the latter, craving stability, settles for a comprised marriage.

Chang’s self-translated works have generally not been well-received; her contemporary translator Karen Kingsbury dismisses Chang’s self-translation of *The Golden Cangue* as “plain, understated English”¹⁴⁸ in contrast with Chang’s colorful source texts, which Kingsbury admits to “over-translating” (Kingsbury 2007: xv-xvi). In a letter to C.T. Hsia dated February 2, 1965, Chang explains that self-translation affords her a critical distance from her work that drives the process of rewriting:

I am currently translating that novel [*Jinsuoji*] back into Chinese; by re-rendering [a draft of it] it back into the original language of composition, I see that many passages were “not so” [originally translated poorly], so I had to edit them—of course, this includes the passages that Donald Keene marked as unclear. After I finished the Chinese translation, I prepared to re-translate the initial English translation back into Chinese and create a new typeset version; with the distance [afforded by repeated

translation], I can see more clearly, you see. Despite all these efforts, it's ultimately an exercise in futility, but I just can't help but operate this way. (Chang in Hsia 2013: 28, translation mine)

The linguistic distance afforded by cyclical translation back and forth between English and Chinese enables Chang to finesse her writing and clarify confusing parts. For Chang, translation is hardly an end in itself; rather, it is a re-writing technology that enables her to rewrite her own source texts through fresh eyes. Chang's alterations to the source text echoes Julio-César Santoyo's observations that "...self-translations do, at times, end up modifying their original. If the act of translating is a creative one, there is little doubt that self-translation is its most creative expression."¹⁴⁹ (Santoyo 2013: 30)

The Chinese-American fantasy writer Rebecca F. Kuang explains that the experience of translating from Chinese to English forces her to "re-examine how [she] approach[es] [her] own [writing] craft, and how [she] represent[s] China [...] and [her] own Chinese-ness (whatever *that* means) to an Anglophone audience (Kuang 2022: 361, emphasis in the original). Just as self-translation enabled Kuang to improve her own writing and develop a nuanced perspective on her own positionality as a Chinese author writing for an Anglophone audience, self-translation also enabled Eileen Chang to adapt the plot, characters, and symbolism in her own stories by adapting a displaced vantage point. Indeed, many of Chang's Chinese language works were adapted from earlier English drafts, and vice-versa. Chang often made significant changes to both the plot and characters throughout the transwriting process; however, because of her unsettling Chinese traces in her English prose, she only succeeded in the American market posthumously¹⁵⁰.

Self-Translator as Double Agent: Chang's Transwriting Zone

In her article "Betrayal, Impersonation, and Bilingualism: Eileen Chang's Self-Translation,"

Shen Shuang suggests that “The fact that Chang did not present herself as a translator in most cases, but intended her texts, whether published in English or in Chinese, to be read as originals, suggests that there is an issue of ‘masking’ in her self-translation and bilingual practice” (Shen 2012: 98). Indeed, Chang’s impersonation through self-translation enables her to shuttle seamlessly between two roles, one of “a supposedly ‘authentic’ Chinese informant addressing a foreign audience [in the English essay]”, and the other of a “Chinese person adopting the perspective of a foreigner while addressing a Chinese readership” (Shen 2012: 101). Shen summarizes this process as one of “delinking”, whereby “the Chinese person is delinked from Chinese culture, as is a foreigner from a foreign perspective”¹⁵¹ (Shen 2012: 101-02).

Building upon Shen’s analysis, we can consider translation as an interpretive cultural performance, whereby the translator publicly performs a text for a foreign audience, adapting the text to the target culture’s aesthetics and cultural nuances in the process. Chang’s own works abound with impersonators and actresses; the *femme fatale* Wong Chia-Chi in the novelette *Lust, Caution* (色戒, 1979), for instance, infiltrates the KMT’s inner circle by performing the role of an official’s wife, yet her cover is blown in a moment of tenderness towards the man she is attempting to seduce. Cross-cultural transwriting enables Chang to play the role of double agent, as she translates back and forth between two languages and cultural traditions.

I contend that Chang’s relationship with the English language offered her a critical distance from the political turmoil of the Cold War and the Japanese occupation of Shanghai during the Second World War. Chang’s frequent code-switching in both her speech and writing reveals that she often dwelled in an interstitial zone between English and Chinese,

which afforded her a creative freedom to express herself in whichever linguistic system best suited her writing purpose. In this sense, Chang embodies Assia Djébar's articulation of the significance of writing in an adopted language: "Writing that could historically signify my extraterritoriality yet is becoming, gradually, my only true territory" (Djébar 2004: 113) Indeed, by assimilating herself within a hybrid linguistic zone and "deterritorializing language" (Dorfman 2003: 36), Chang harnesses the force of alterity to innovate her narrative style.

In her Chinese language essay, "Unpublished Manuscripts" (1944), Chang asserts: "It's certainly a good thing to stop writing in Chinese for a while. Picking up a pen to write after three or five years, I may feel as though I've made some little progress—one never knew." (Chang 1968/2005: 128) Indeed, writing in English enables Chang to gain a fresh perspective on war and family trauma, while innovating her Chinese linguistic expression through a process of linguistic and cultural defamiliarization. Chang herself asserts that she often put her works aside to let them "marinate"¹⁵² (Chang in Hsia 2013: 180) before returning to them with fresh eyes; this "marination", coupled with the linguistic distance afforded by self-translation, served as a creative re-creation technology that allowed the works' juices to percolate and finally stew into a scintillating blend of enticing aromas. In a letter to Soong Qi, Chang once admitted: "我怕 re-live experiences, 不管是愉快还是不愉快的"/"I'm afraid of re-living experiences, whether they be joyful ones or not" (English in the original, Soong 2016: 95, footnote 2);

As a self-declared member of a perpetually ongoing era, Chang reveals that her writing is a testament to human memory, both conscious and repressed:

[...] I am incapable of writing the kind of work that people usually refer to as a "monument to an era" and I do not plan to try [...] in fact, all I really write about are

some of the trivial things that happen between men and women. There is no war and no revolution in my works. I think that people are more straightforward and unguarded in love than they are in war and revolution [...] A real revolution or a revolutionary war, I believe, should be as emotionally unguarded and as able to penetrate into every aspect of one's life as romantic love. And it should bring one back into a state of harmony. ¹⁵³(Chang 1968/2012: 18-19, trans. Jones 2005: 18)

Though she presents her stance as apolitical, Chang reveals that these romantic trifles capture humanity at its rawest and most vulnerable. Indeed, Chang's literary oeuvre traces the impact of historical trauma on individual lives, concretizing the monstrous abstractions of war and revolution through their effect on quotidian existence. Such an emphasis on everyday experience reflects Hu Shih's call for a down-to-earth style of vernacular literature that reflects the lives of ordinary citizens.

Xiangjian huan (1950/1978): Roots, Themes and Reception

Chang's *Xiangjian huan* may be an offshoot of Chang's novel *Xiao Tuanyuan* 小团圆 (Little Reunions), which she completed¹⁵⁴ in 1976 but was not published until 2009. The novel covers the period spanning from the war in Hong Kong to postwar Shanghai, yet the chronology is muddled, with the past woven into the present, and vice versa. Though Chang predicts that many of the self-disclosures in this novel and depictions of her first love Hu Lancheng would cause her public embarrassment, she never definitively ordered the manuscript to be destroyed (Sang 2012: 197). Stephen Song allegedly decided against publishing the manuscript during Chang's lifetime for fear that its graphic depictions of lovemaking between the protagonists Chih-yung and Jiuli could ruin Chang's reputation (and, by extension, that of her ex-husband Hu Lan-cheng).¹⁵⁵ Chang initially intended to destroy the manuscript, but after Chang and Stephen Soong passed away, his son Yilang (Roland) Soong published the unedited version of the manuscript in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and mainland China in 2009. Nine years later, an English translation rendered by Jane Weizhen

Pan and Martin Merz was released (Haman 2018).

In a letter to Song Qi, Chang explains that *Xiangjian huan* records an impasse between two middle-aged women, one who hopes to live vicariously through her friend, and another who is indifferent to romance altogether:

“Where Have All the Flowers Gone” was inspired by a conversation I overheard in mainland China between two close friends. One acted according to convention herself, yet ached for the woman who follows an ugly crown [a man unworthy of her talent and beauty] and secretly hoped she’d take a lover on the side, yet her friend was contemptuous and indifferent to that Romantic spirit: a few months later [during the spring of 1952], she retold the very same story; one friend had forgotten she’d told the story, the other had forgotten she’d heard it before. I could hardly believe my ears! None of them were particularly forgetful people—Mrs. Wu found the story repulsive and repressed it [...] Mrs. Wu’s reaction upon hearing the story [of the peeing Tom] for a second time was quite similar. This lack of mutual comprehension [even between the closest of friends] is striking.¹⁵⁶ (translation mine)

Though Mrs. Wu and Mrs. Liu grew up together, were born just months apart, and seem to be able to read each others’ thoughts, when it comes to their innermost desires, each is exiled within her own world after years upon end of war-induced estrangement. The themes of separation, desperation and melancholia are unsurprising given the roots of the expression *xiangjian huan* 相见欢 in Li Yu’s (李煜, 937-978) *ci* poems¹⁵⁷ that ironically center around the sorrow of parting from bosom friends, rather than the joy upon meeting. Chang’s original title for *Xiangjian huan*, *Wangshi zhi duoshao* 往事知多少 (literally meaning “Remembrance of Things Past”) seems to indicate the impossibility of mutual comprehension, even between the closest of bosom friends. Chang further elaborates on the two “cousins” thwarted intimacy:

这种隔阂，我想由来已久。我这不过是个拙劣的尝试，但是“意在言外”、“一说便俗”的传统也是失传了，我们不习惯看字里行间的夹缝文章。(Chang 1979)

This type of estrangement [between the two “cousins”] has been around for a long time. Though this is just a clumsy attempt of mine, the traditions of “meaning beyond

words” and “words commit vulgarities” have also been lost; [modern] readers are not used to reading between the lines. (Chang 1979, translation mine)

By challenging readers to form their own conclusions, Chang calls upon Chinese language readers to read between the lines, whereas the narrator’s interventions in the English language version plainly spell out the story’s homoerotic subtext. Thus, readers are encouraged not to take on the role of Mrs. Chow, who passively listens to Mrs. Xun (Liu) prattle on endlessly, rarely getting a word in edgewise.

Xiangjian huan recounts an impasse between two middle-aged cousins residing in Shanghai’s Hongkou District following the liberation of Shanghai¹⁵⁸ during World War II. The story culminates in Mrs. Xun’s obsession with a memory of being followed by a soldier, a story she forgets she has told and one which Mrs. Wu forgets having heard. On a deeper level, the story connects individual trauma with the trauma suffered by the city of Shanghai during wartime, perhaps suggesting that such trauma might be surmounted through collective recounting coupled with de-familiarization techniques, in order to develop a critical distance from such trauma. The story is set in Shanghai around 1945, just after the end of the Sino-Japanese War—one year later, Winston Churchill would deliver his “Sinews of Peace”¹⁵⁹ speech, drawing the Iron Curtain separating the Soviet sphere from NATO and neutral countries. Thus, the cousins’ communication impasse captures the tensions of the era and foreshadows the prolonged political impasse of the Cold War era.¹⁶⁰

The two distant cousins in “She Said Smiling” each serve as the other’s foils. Mrs. Xun is a well-educated, well-off woman who does not fret about her husband’s affair with a secretary, whereas Mrs. Wu is an illiterate woman of extraordinary beauty who married an “unworthy husband” in a poor family. In a ditch attempt to force a rift between Mrs. Wu and her husband, with the ultimate goal of leaving a displaced Mrs. Xun no choice but to move in

with her, Mrs. Xun encourages Mrs. Wu to strike up an affair with Mr. Sun. In the end, Mrs. Wu is left bitterly disappointed in Mrs. Xun, and feels she has lost her better half.

Roland Soong speculates that both women dwell on past memories and feel they have lost all prospects for a bright future. Consequently:

见面时就只好将老调一遍又一遍重弹—她们的新闻尽是往事，而未来也行将在回忆中消逝。。。《相见欢》的高明之处，就是用一种极含蓄、压抑的手法写出两个女人的绝望出境。(Song 2015: 264)

when they meet, they are stuck singing the same tune over and over—their so-called “news” is all about the past, and the future will be washed away by the waves of their memories [...] *Xiangjian huan*’s brilliance comes from its usage of extremely subtle, implicit literary techniques to express these two women’s inner despair. (translation mine)

The story also sheds light on the unconscious repression (and conscious suppression) of traumatic memories—indeed, trauma survivors often tuck away disturbing memories as a coping mechanism, which can leave them spinning in an endless cycle of surface-level recollection without retention until they confront the underlying memories head-on (Otgaar et al. 2021). As Bessel van der Kolk puts it, “traumatic memories persist primarily as implicit, behavioral, and somatic memories” (van der Kolk et al. 2001: 24).

Subversive Smiles: Xiangjian huan vs. “She Said Smiling”

In a crossed-out section appearing on page 11 of the typewritten English-language version of “She Said Smiling”, Chang builds upon the Mona Lisa motif by likening Mrs. Liu to a half-smiling “Eastern Mona Lisa”:

His wife would still risk no comment, *just looked into space half smiling, an Eastern Mona Lisa holding her own elbows on top of a broad fold of brocade over the stomach.* It made everybody feel better to be able to see it in this light. Shaofu is like that, the women could tell each other although they were too honest ever to do so. But he was like that, pigheaded when it came to joking among friends, just like little boys together. He had to win the race.(Ailing Zhang papers, “She Said Smiling”, Box 2, folder 11, 3b, italics mine)

While Mrs. Chow badgers Shaofu with questions regarding the races he has been partaking in at the Municipal Center, his wife, Mrs. Liu, simply looks on half-smiling, concealing her exasperation at Shaofu's childish competitiveness through the veil of her smile. Mrs. Liu's protruding belly harkens back to the hypothesis that Mona Lisa was pregnant or had recently given birth (Keele 1959: 136) when posing for Leonardo da Vinci's painting. Mrs. Liu's carefully staged smile pairs with Shaofu's downcast sleepy expression, suggesting that both husband and wife veil their emotions in socially conditioned gazes. While Shaofu dares not look Mrs. Chow directly in the eye, for fear of being suspected of licentiousness, Mrs. Liu wears an enigmatic smile to avoid openly ridiculing her husband.

In "She Said Smiling", Chang summarizes details that might confuse foreign readers, omitting any mention of Yuanmei, Mrs. Wu's (Chow's) daughter, a conduit for the changing relationship between her mother and Mrs. Xun. In the Chinese language story, Yuanmei's perspective as an observer is key in revealing Mrs. Wu's (Chow's) amorous feelings towards her friend Mrs. Liu (Xun). After returning to live with her natal family, Yuanmei witnesses the deterioration of her mother's and Mrs. Xun's relationship: from constant banter to periodic silence to communication impasse. Chang herself wrote that *Xiangjian huan* "mixes the omniscient perspective used in old novels with the other characters' points of view"¹⁶¹ (Chang 2017: 130). Indeed, Yuanmei often takes on the role of an omniscient narrator, recording conversations she has overheard between her mother and Mrs. Xun (Chow).

Chang's English version functions as a bare-bones outline for the Chinese translation—she cuts out the dialogue between Yuanmei and Mrs. Wu (Chow) by directly informing readers that Mrs. Xun had become stupefied after her marriage, thus radically changing the short story's perspective and characterization. By comparing the English and

Chinese versions of the following passage in which Mrs. Xun and Mrs. Wu try on new clothes together, we can see how Yuanmei's character adds a layer of complexity missing in the English version:

Chang's English Version (1):

"Big belly," she murmured, standing sideways in front of the mirror. "It all comes from anger. Really—it blows you up. It's true. Sometimes seeing a movie with something in it that reminds me---ai-ya! I get so angry, so angry I that I don't even see what happens any more," she said smiling.

Mrs. Chow felt just as bitter, but now that her husband was away for good she preferred to forget.

Chang's English Version (2)

"Big belly," she murmured looking at herself standing sideways in front of the mirror. "It all comes from anger. Really—it blows you up. It's true. Sometimes seeing a movie with something in it that reminds me—ai-ya! Right away. I get so angry, so angry I that I don't even see what's happening any more," she said smiling.

Mrs. Chow had gone there as much herself, but now that her husband was away for good she preferred to forget. (Ailing Zhang papers, "She Said Smiling", Box 2, folder 11, 3b)

Chinese Version:

“大肚子。”她站在大镜子前面端相自己的侧影，又笑道：

“都是气出来的。真噪，表姐！说‘气涨’，真气出鼓胀病来。

有时候看电影看到什么叫我起来了——噯呀，马上气哒，气哒，电影上做什么都看不见了！”

气谁？苑梅想。虽然也气绍甫，想必这还是指从前婆媳间的事。听她转述附近几片店里人说的话，总是冠以“荀太太”——都认识她。讲房东太太叫她听电话，也从来不漏掉一个“荀太太”，显然对她自己在这小天地里的人缘与地位感到满足。(Chang 1983/1991: 96)

Back-translation to English:

"Big belly." She stood sideways in front of the mirror, and added, smiling:

“It all comes from anger. Really—cousin! Really, it blows you up, it makes your belly swell up with anger.

Sometimes seeing a movie with something in it that reminds me—ai-ya! Right away I flare up, I get angry, so angry that I don’t see what is happening anymore!”

“Who is she blowing up at?” Yuanmei wondered to herself. Although she was also angry with Shao-fu, it must have been a private matter between her mother-in-law and daughter-in-law that was in the past now. Listening to her [Yuanmei] retelling conversations between people in nearby shops, they never failed to mention a “Mrs. Xun”—they all knew her by name. Speaking of the landlord's wife asking her to answer the phone, she never missed a call for “Mrs. Xun”. She was obviously satisfied with her popularity and status in this small world. (ibid.)

Yuanmei’s perspective in the Chinese version adds an omniscient perspective to the story that draws readers into the characters’ drama and gives insight into Mrs. Xun’s (Chow’s) psychological state. The Chinese version also builds up Mrs. Xun’s social and economic status in the local community, thus drawing out the disparity between Mrs. Xun and Mrs. Liu (Wu). The English version, however, mentions that since Mrs. Xun’s husband is now far away, she has decided to forget the incident once and for all.

Nga Le deems Yuanmei, who chooses the life of a housewife, marrying her classmate’s brother straight out of high school, rather than pursuing the path of a career woman, as the fixture of Chang’s so-called disillusionment¹⁶² sub-plot (Friedman 1975: 91). Indeed, Yuanmei indirectly infers that her mother and Mrs. Xun oppose her marriage of convenience and comes to view her own life circumstances through her mother’s eyes (Le 1989: 39). Such drastic redactions and edits reveal Chang re-writing her story into an episodic, Hemmingway-esque page-turner, a far cry from her visual-oriented, “show-don’t-tell” trademark style.

Though the English language version often seems to be a redaction of the Chinese one, there are many details in the former that do not appear in the latter. For instance, in the

two paragraphs immediately following the preceding one, the English version expounds:

English Version (1):

“Shao-fu in those days,” Mrs. Chow said smiling. “Not even like now.”

They sipped tea. [deleted]. Young again, Mrs. Liu suddenly raised her voice in girlish petulance, “Their family with their stinking rules! At New Years you have to wind parboiled pig guts on chopsticks and stand them up like candlesticks. The smell!”

English Version (2):

“Shao-fu in those days,” Mrs. Chow said smiling. “Not even like now.”

Mrs. Liu refrained from comment, smiling with lowered eyes and a subdued air that was faintly bridal. But when she spoke again her voice rose with sudden girlish petulance, “Their family with their stinking rules! At New Years you have to wind parboiled pig guts on chopsticks and stand them up like candlesticks. The smell!” (Ailing Zhang papers, “She Said Smiling”, Box 2, folder 11, 3b)

In comparison, the Chinese version simply states:

说着眼圈一红，嗓子都硬了。”(Chang 1983/1981: 86)

As she spoke, her eyes reddened, and her throat hardened. (translation mine)

Only several paragraphs later does the Chinese version include Mrs. Wu’s jeering

observation of Shao-fu’s flippant behavior:

“绍甫就是这样。”伍太太微笑着，说了之后沉默片刻，又笑道：“绍甫现在好多了。”(Chang 1983/1981: 86)

“Shao-fu—that’s just how he was back then.” Mrs. Wu said, smiling, then fell silent for a moment, and smiled again: “Shao-fu is much better now.” (translation mine)

By comparing the Chinese and English versions of this segment of the story, we see that

Chang made significant alterations to the text, in terms of sequencing, characterization, and

plotlines. Though by and large, the English version serves as a bare-bones outline for the

Chinese version, in this instance, the Chinese version has been redacted from the English

source text. The corresponding passage from the English-language version expands as follows:

“What I hate about Shao-fu was when the Japanese came,” Mrs. Liu said smiling. He had been working at the national museum in Nanking. She was visiting [Mrs. Chow/deleted] in Shanghai when Nanking fell. He evacuated in haste, along with the rest of the museum staff. “He packed their antiques and left all my things behind. All my photographs were lost. My clothes and things.” (Ailing Zhang papers, “She Said Smiling”, Box 2, folder 11, 4)

An alternate revision of the last two sentences reads:

All my photographs were lost. And clothes, furs, everything. (Ailing Zhang papers, “She Said Smiling”, Box 2, folder 11, 4)

The corresponding lines in the Chinese version read as follows:

“绍甫就是这样。”伍太太微笑着，说了之后沉默片刻，又笑道：“绍甫现在好多了。”

荀太太先没接口，顿了顿方笑道：“绍甫我就恨他那时候日本人来——”他在南京故宫博物院做事，打起仗来跟着撤退，她正带着孩子们回娘家，在上海。“他把他们的古董都装箱子带走了，把我的东西全丢了。我的相片全丢了，还有衣裳，皮子，都没了。”

Literal translation:

“Shao-fu—that’s just how he was back then.” Mrs. Wu said, smiling, then fell silent for a moment, and smiled again: “Shao-fu is much better now.”

At first, Mrs. Xun didn’t say anything, then she paused and said, smiling: “I hated that when the Japanese came, Shaofu— He was working at the Palace Museum in Nanjing, and retreated after the war. She was taking the children back to her parents’ home in Shanghai. “He packed all their antiques and left all of my stuff. I lost all of my photographs, as well as my clothes and furs.”

The Chinese version is far from a direct translation of the English one; the description of Mrs.

Wu taking her children back to visit her parents has been added in the Chinese version;

moreover, “things” is translated as 皮子 (skins or furs), a case of replacing a general term

with a specific one.

In these two passages alone, the phrase “[she/Mrs. Wu] said smiling” is repeated twice (of a dozen times throughout the story) hence the English story’s title “She Said Smiling”. In this story, laughter takes on a subversive function; the characters seem to smile in order to disguise their true emotions. Thus, the act of smiling is an avoidance tactic that shields the other from sensing the smiler’s vulnerability.

The irony of laughter is even more palpable in the following passage, which is significantly re-ordered in the Chinese version:

她不用加解释，伍太太自然知道她是说：儿子迟早总要结婚的。前车之鉴，她不愿意跟他们住。但是这样平静地讲到绍甫之死，而且不止一次了，伍太太未免有点寒心。一时也想不出别的宽慰的话，只笑着喃喃说了声“他们姊妹几个都好”。

荀太太只加重语气笑道：“我是不跟他们住！”然后又咕哝着：“我想着，我不管什么地方，反正自己找个地方去，不管什么都行。自己顾自己，我想总可以。”(Chang 1983/1991: 95)

She hardly needed to explain. Mrs. Wu naturally inferred what she meant; sooner or later, Mrs. Xun’s son would get married. Therefore, she was unwilling to live with them [her son and daughter-in-law]. But mentioning Shao-fu’s death so calmly, let alone more than once, left Mrs. Wu a bit chilled. For a while, she couldn’t think of anything to say in consolation, so she merely smiled and murmured, “They are all such good sisters.”

Mrs. Xun only said, in a serious tone, with a smile: “I won’t live with them!” Then she muttered, “I don’t care where I go, I can find a place by myself, no matter what. After all, I can always take care of myself.” (translation mine)

In the Chinese version, Mrs. Xun (Chow)’s affections for Mrs. Wu’s (Liu’s) are quite masked; readers have to read between the lines to infer that Mrs. Wu has missed a golden opportunity to invite Mrs. Xun to live with her. For her part, Mrs. Xun also masks her anger by speaking in a serious tone, despite wearing a smile on her face. The English version reads as follows:

She did not wish to point out that he was bound to be married before long. “I’m not going to live with them,” she said, then mumbled, “I was thinking I’d find something,

I don't care what, anything at all. I'd manage by myself somehow," she ended louder, her voice unnaturally drawn out, broadened and a bit hoarse. She was a good cook. Culinary affairs officer they call it now, but a cook is still a cook, working for some other family, an embarrassment to her son the engineer.

It was a little chilling, her speaking of Shao-fu's death so casually, not for the first time either. Mrs. Chow smiled when she could easily have said, "Come live with me." She had the house all to herself, but nowadays who could tell? So far she had been living as before, with the same servants and all, as one of the privileged remittance people bringing in foreign currency. But if anything should happen she wouldn't want to get other people into trouble. (Ailing Zhang papers, "She Said Smiling", Box 2, folder 11, 7)

The details in the English version appear in a different order than in the Chinese one, with the mention of "speaking of Shao-fu's death so casually" not appearing until after Mrs. Xun's earnest declaration that she would never live under the same roof as her son and daughter-in-law. The most significant discrepancy, however, is the narrator's addition: "Mrs. Chow smiled when she could easily have said, 'Come live with me.' She had the house all to herself, but nowadays who could tell?" The narrator seems to have access to Mrs. Chow's innermost desires. Why can't Mrs. Liu (Wu) simply invite Mrs. Xun (Chow) to come live with her? Why does she seem to fear her friend's rejection? One plausible explanation could be that Mrs. Chow is in love with Mrs. Xun, yet cannot bring herself to ask Mrs. Xun to cohabitate with her unless she is certain her amorous feelings are reciprocated.

Three pages earlier, Mrs. Xun once again laughs to obscure her true feelings:

吸了口烟，因又笑道：“我们老太爷死的时候，叫我们给他穿衣裳。她只加深了嘴角的笑意代替扮鬼脸。“她怕，”她轻声说。当然还是指她婆婆。(Chang 1983/1991: 92)

Mrs. Xun inhaled a puff of smoke, and once again smiled: "When our Old Master died, we were ordered to dress the corpse." To stifle a grimace, she deepened the smile on her lips. "She was afraid," she said softly. Of course, she was referring to her mother-in-law. (translation mine)

Chang's English language version reads as follows:

“When our Old Master died we were told to dress him.” For a grimace she merely smiled more broadly. “She was afraid,” she added in a whisper. (Ailing Zhang papers, “She Said Smiling”, Box 2, folder 11, 7)

Dressing the Old Master is clearly not a pleasant memory for Mrs. Xun. However, to mask her discomfort at recalling these unpleasant events, Mrs. Xun chooses to smile. On the story’s penultimate page, Mrs. Liu is described at laughing at her husband’s jokes when she cannot understand them, thus supporting the motif as laughter as a social buffer and smoothing-over tactic:

Mrs. Liu always laughed at her husband’s jokes and laughed the loudest when it was about anything foreign that she did not understand. (Ailing Zhang papers, “She Said Smiling”, Box 2, folder 11, 13.5)

Below, we examine one key passage which straightforwardly illustrates Yuanmei’s role in obviating the implied subtext in conversations between the two cousins. The two aunties have seemingly run out of new things to talk about, so they get stuck reminiscing about Mrs. Xun’s story about a soldier stalking her:

Though Mrs. Wu had already forgotten [the story of the soldier stalking Mrs. Xun], she was still quite impatient. She simply reacted in a routine manner, giggling every other sentence, as if something had gotten lodged in her throat—just a feeble *keng*, *keng*.

Yuanmei wanted to scream and laugh out loud. It wasn’t as if her mom [Mrs. Xun] had a bad memory, so how she have forgotten she’d told the story, and Mrs. Wu just as easily forgotten she’d heard it? Yuanmei knew that as soon as they left, she wouldn’t laugh and explain: “Auntie forgot that she’d told the stalker story, so she repeated it all over again.” It’s not that she actually hated the story, her mom wouldn’t have forgotten it that quickly—since she’d clearly repressed it from her consciousness memory—why should she bring it up again?¹⁶³ (translation mine)

Yuanmei explains the deeper meaning of the memory “lapse”—in deciding not to bring up her aunt’s retelling of the stalker story, Yuanmei respects her mother’s choice to repress the traumatic memory. Yuanmei’s choice suggests that remembrance, especially of traumatic

memories, is a collective act requiring systematic processing over multiple generations before the cycle of trauma reenactment can be broken.

The passage reproduced below constitute the first instance in which Mrs. Xun (whose name Chang has changed to Liu in the English version) recounts the story of a soldier who stalked her to her friend Mrs. Wu (Mrs. Chow in the English text). Mrs. Xun tells the story once more near the story's close, despite forgetting she has already recounted it; ironically, Mrs. Wu/Chow has already forgotten she has heard the story earlier, thus imbuing the tale with a dramatic irony. The ironic effect is humorous on the surface, but packs a powerful message regarding victims' tendency to rewrite, forget, or disassociate from traumatic narratives as a coping strategy.

Chang's English Version (1):

“He followed me all the way to the hospital. I went inside the compound. It was surrounded by iron railings climbed over with wisterias and he pressed against the railings peering through the purple blossoms. I was scared to death.”

Mrs. Chow's pale smooth face, grimacing slightly was crinkled all over as when a thin wrinkled film was forming over boiled milk. When the other had stopped speaking she bestirred herself to ask with some show of curiosity, “What kind of man was it?” (Ailing Zhang papers, “She Said Smiling”, Box 2, folder 11, 16)

Chang's Revised English Version (2):

“Followed me all the way to hospital. I went in the compound, [was] surrounded by iron railings climbed over with wisterias and he pressed against the railings peering through the purple blossoms. I was scared to death.

When it was clear that the story had finished, Mrs. Chow asked with some show of curiosity, “What kind of man was it?” (Ailing Zhang papers, “She Said Smiling”, Box 2, folder 11)

Chinese Version:

“一直跟到医院。那医院外头都是那铁栏杆，上头都是藤萝花，都盖满了。我回过头去看，那人还扒在铁栏杆上，在那藤萝花缝里往里瞧呢！吓死了！”她突然嘴角浓浓地堆上了笑意。

沉默了一会之后，故事显然是完了。伍太太只得打起精神，相当好奇地问了声：“是个什么样的人？”(Chang 2017:

Literal Translation (mine):

“He followed me to the hospital. The hospital was surrounded by iron railings, covered all over by wisteria blossoms. When I looked back, that person was clinging to the railings, peering through the wisteria blossoms! So frightening!”

A deep smiling expression suddenly heaped itself on [Mrs. Chow’s] lips. After a moment’s silence, the story seemed to be over. Mrs. Wu worked up the energy to ask, with a strong measure of curiosity: “What kind of person was it?”

Chang writes in Hemmingway-esque, episodic narrative, in order to cater to English language readers’ aesthetic preferences for dialogue-driven, cinematic narrative. This pared-down writing style is evident from Chang’s revised version of “She Said Smiling”, which omits the sentence-long description of the expression on Mrs. Chow’s face after hearing Mrs. Wu’s story. Interestingly, this description (“grimacing slightly was crinkled all over as when a thin wrinkled film was forming over boiled milk”) is nowhere to be found in the source text, indicating that Chang experimented with using a niche simile for her English-speaking readership, but later decided against this embellishment during her rounds of revisions.

Reading Between the Lines: Homoerotic Subtext

In the example that follows, a definitive narratorial voice-over announces that Mrs. Chow (Mrs. Wu) is in love with Mrs. Liu (Mrs. Xun), something that readers of the Chinese translation could only indirectly infer. By mentioning outright that Mrs. Chow (Wu) was “half in love with her beautiful cousin”, the narrator highlights the homoerotic thread running throughout the story:

Chang’s English Version (1)

Not yet married herself, Mrs. Chow had been visiting in Peking at the time. She was half in love with her beautiful cousin, as plain girls would be, and could never get

over her being married off to a dumpy churl in the poorest, meanest, most hidebound family among their relatives. Her eyes that were so bright and impish had become dull and fixed. She seemed dazed altogether. (Ailing Zhang papers, “She Said Smiling”, Box 2, folder 11, 3a)

Chang’s English Version (2)

Not yet married herself, Mrs. Chow had been in Peking on a trip. She was half in love with her beautiful cousin and was so angry for her that she had been sent to Peking to marry a dumpy churl from the poorest, meanest, and most hidebound family they were related to. It was a shock to see her eyes had become dull and fixed, her entire person stupefied. (Ailing Zhang papers, “She Said Smiling”, Box 2, folder 11, 3b)

Chinese Version (1950-1978):

她们俩都笑了。那时候伍太太还没出嫁，跟着哥哥嫂子到北京玩，到荀家去看她。绍甫是已经见过的，新娘子回门的时候一同到上海去过，黑黑的小胖子，长得愣头愣脑，还很自负，脾气挺大。伍太太实在替她不平。这么些亲戚故旧，偏把她给了荀家。直到现在，苑梅有一次背后说她的脸还是漂亮，伍太太还气愤地说：“你没看见她从前眼睛多么亮，还有种调皮的神气。一嫁过去眼睛都呆了。整个一个人呆了。”(Chang 1983/1991: 86)

Literal Translation:

They both laughed. Back then, Mrs. Wu hadn’t gotten married yet. She came to Beijing on a trip with her brother and sister-in-law, and went to visit Mrs. Xun at her home. Shaofu had already met her. When the new bride returned home, [Mrs. Xun] had gone to Shanghai to visit them. The dark-skinned, chubby man was impetuous, conceited, and hot-tempered. Mrs. Xun felt awful for her friend. So many relatives and old friends [to choose husbands from], and they saw fit to surrender her to the Xun household! Yuanmei [Mrs. Wu’s daughter] once commented, behind Mrs. Xun’s back, that she still had a beautiful face; Mrs. Wu retorted furiously: “You never saw how bright her eyes were before; and she had a naughty air about her. After getting married, her eyes went blank. She went completely blank.

Yuanmei plays a crucial role in this passage, commenting on Mrs. Xun’s striking beauty, which prompts Mrs. Wu to retort that marriage dulled her good looks. In the English version, however, the omniscient narrator is the one to reveal Mrs. Liu’s marital deterioration. In comparing Chang’s two translated versions, the first is written in a more natural American register (“could never get over her being married off to a dumpy churl”). However, the word “impish”, meaning mischievous or naughty, often with negative connotations, seems to

contradict the preceding adjective “bright”. Certainly, the last sentence in the second version is quite a bit more readable. The phrase “as plain girls would be” in the first version detracts from the homoerotic overtones of the passage, suggesting that her love for her cousin is nothing more than a form of jealousy over her superior beauty.

Yuanmei herself is described as harboring homoerotic tendencies, as evidenced by her amorous sentiments towards her music teacher.

苑梅在学校里看惯了这种天真的同性恋爱。她自己也疯狂崇拜音乐教师，家里人都笑她简直就是爱上了袁小姐。初中毕业送了袁小姐一份厚礼，母亲让她自己去挑选，显然不是不赞成。因为没有危险性，跟迷电影明星一样，不过是一个阶段。但是上一代的人此后没机会跟异性恋爱，所以感情深厚持久些。
(Chang 1983/1991: 98-99)

Yuanmei had seen many instances of this kind of same-sex puppy love amongst her school friends. She herself worshipped her music teacher, and her whole family taunted her for falling in love with Miss Yuan. When she graduated from junior high, Yuanmei gave Miss Yuan a lavish gift, which her mother asked her to pick out herself, obviously not disapproving of the gesture. Because there was no element of danger involved, like falling in love with a movie star, this kind of same-sex love was just a stage. But the old-timers had no chance to fall in love with those of the opposite sex, so their same-sex relationships were deeper and more lasting. (trans. mine)

The addition of Yuanmei in the Chinese version acknowledges the potential for sexualized female-female intimacy, before dismissing these quasi-amorous feelings as an innocent girl-girl crush. Has Mrs. Wu’s and Mrs. Xun’s queer intimacy also been thwarted by societal homophobia and the heteronormative institution of marriage?

It is important to distinguish the narrator’s assessment of same-sex love from Eileen Chang’s own position towards homosexuality. Indeed, the narrator may simply be a conduit reflecting societal homophobia, rather than reflecting the author’s own reproachment of homosexuality, per se. In her essay 表姨细姨及其他 *Biaoyi xiyi ji qita* (“Cousin Aunts, Concubines, and Others”), a response to the critic Lin Peifang’s (林佩芬) critical essay in

Zhangkan 張看 (1979), Chang writes, “她们不过是单纯的表姊妹”—They [Mrs. Wu and Mrs. Xun are simply cousins¹⁶⁴], adding:

But a person can't possibly be affectionate all their life—even if she [Mrs. Liu/Xun] was once attracted to the card-mate who was enamored with her back then, what was she to do about [these sentiments]? She just gets stuck harping on about some stalker.¹⁶⁵ (Chang 1979, translation mine)

Chang's comments reveal an ambiguous perspective towards the relationship between Mrs. Wu (Chow) and Mrs. Xun (Liu)—though they were once in love, they apparently never acted on their feelings—Mrs. Xun's recounting of the stalker story is thus a coping strategy she uses to avoid stirring up this past confusion. Chang avoids finitely categorizing the friends' relationship as homoerotic, and instead comments on the aftermath of their repressed feelings. Though Chang's rare interpretation of her own story is certainly compelling, we must avoid taking the author's explanation as the only definitive reading; as the old Chinese proverb goes: “to a thousand readers, there exist a thousand Hamlets”—a single text can generate one thousand interpretations, all of which might be valid.

Taken together, “She Said Smiling” and *Xiangjian huan* form a queer *transwriting zone*, a liminal Chinglish space bridging the Sinophone and British literary canons. I ask: How does Chang's queer subjectivity and temporality bridge the British and Sinophone literary canons? I argue that “She Said Smiling” echoes Katherine Mansfield's (1888-1923) homoerotic short story “Bliss” (1918)—just as the estranged cousins in “She Said Smiling” camouflage their amorous feelings for one another behind a series of evasive smiles, Bertha and Pearl's intimacy in “Bliss” is also displaced in a series of evanescent symbols, such as a blossoming pear tree and a bowl of tomato soup. The love triangle between Shao-fu and the two cousins in “She Said Smiling” also mirrors the thwarted intimacy between Bertha, Miss

Fulton, and Harry in “Bliss” (1918), marking “She Said Smiling” as an intertextual work of literature bridging the British and Sinophone literary canons.

Xiangjian huan ends with Mrs. Wu listening to Mrs. Xun retell the story about the soldier stalker, and the moment of thwarted intimacy that follows:

Literal translation:

The two of them were hopeless. Yuanmei displaced a glimmer of hope onto Shao-fu—perhaps he remembered hearing [the story]; now, hearing [his wife] retell it for the umpteenth time, what was he to think? He sat facing forward on the other end of the sofa. In the dim yellow light, his expression was a bit unfathomable. His gaze was intense, yet unfocused.

The silence in the room continued. Shao-fu finally let out his breath, and yawned deeply. Since it was his wife who had spoken just now, he permitted himself this yawn.

English version:

For a while nobody spoke. Shaofu was breathing regularly, almost audibly at his corner of the sofa, an erect mound cleft by a deep yawn he permitted himself as it had been his wife talking.

The Chinese version expands upon the communication impasse between the two women by inserting Yuanmei’s perspective—Yuanmei hopes that Mrs. Wu’s husband Shao-fu, will be able to resolve her mother’s and Mrs. Liu’s communication breakdown, or at least remember the conversation. Why does the narrator give Shao-fu the (last “yawn”), rather than ending on a note of reflective silence, as in “Bliss”? Is Chang suggesting that the male onlooker thwarts female-female intimacy? Or does Shao-fu represent the cousins’ last opportunity for reconciliation?

Mansfield’s “Bliss” ends with Bertha saying a drawn-out goodbye to Miss Fulton at the door, before gazing longingly at the pear tree as Miss Fulton’s words, “Your lovely. Pear tree—pear tree—pear tree!” ring out in the silence. Like the half-asleep Shao-fu in “She Said

Smiling”, Harry interrupts with the banal remark, “I’ll shut up shop”. The narrator claims last word: “But the pear tree was as lovely as ever and as full of flower and as still.” (Mansfield 1920: 33) Both Bertha and Mrs. Chow (Wu) are afraid to declare their affections for Miss Fulton and Mrs. Liu (Xun), respectively. Instead, they opt for smiling (in Mrs. Chow’s case) and fixating on external symbols (soup and a pear tree in “Bliss”). Mansfield’s influence on Chang reveals “She Said Smiling” as an intertextual work of literature whose (queer) subtext is teased out through intercultural adaptation.

Recapitulation and Bridge: Building a Transwriting Zone in Self-Imposed Exile

I have argued that the impasse between two estranged cousins in Eileen Chang’s “She Said Smiling” evokes the historical impasse induced by the repressed trauma of the Second World War and the Sino-Japanese War, particularly the Japanese invasions of Shanghai and Hong Kong, whose ripple effect exerted a profound influence on Chang’s psyche. Chang articulated writing as a form of collective memory construction, “Have it out by writing about it—so that others will share the burden of my memory, that they will remember, that I might forget.” (Chang in Soong 2016: 111) Chang’s words suggest that readers might help diffuse trauma by taking up the collective task of diffusing national trauma. In “She Said Smiling”, Mrs. Chow listens to Mrs. Liu retell the repressed stalker story over and over. In the end, the cousins grow estranged, and forget the story altogether, relying on the reader to serve as the missing link for preserving their memories.

My argument is twofold: First, taken together, “She Said Smiling” and *Xiangjian huan* form a reparative *transwriting zone* bridging Shanghainese, Mandarin, and English. On the one hand, this transwriting zone centers the author and their work by linking translingual production with diaspora. On the other hand, when the author’s bilingual personas converge,

they dilute the author's voice. A third, *transwritten* voice, neither fully Chinese, nor fully English, emerges from the bilingual cacophony. Second, the personal and the national collide when Mrs. Xun is haunted by the memory of being stalked by a Japanese soldier. The monstrosity of war and occupation chokes the collective psyche, leaving ineffaceable tracks in the minds of individuals who lived through these historical periods. Mrs. Xun first represses, then dramatizes the stalking incident, before she can defamiliarize and begin to disconnect from this unpleasant recollection. Similar to Mrs. Xun's endless retellings, Eileen Chang rewrote her own work from English to Chinese and back again, a process which enables her to personalize, concretize, and begin to heal from wartime trauma. Such rewriting does not simply operate on the linguistic level; Chang radically alters the plot, characters, and temporality¹⁶⁶ throughout the transwriting process. By serving as the final witnesses of Mrs. Xun's last retelling of a forgotten story, readers bear testament to the atrocities of the Japanese occupation of Shanghai during the Second World War.

Finally, I ask, how does the medium of revised typeset become the message? In drafting "She Said Smiling" using a typewriter, then revising in ink and re-writing the story in Chinese using pen and paper, how does Chang modulate between different modes? Unlike the U.S. typewriter, which was patented in 1868, the Chinese typewriter was a more recent invention. In fact, Lin Yutang's iconic "MinKwai" (lit. "Clear and Fast") Chinese typewriter did not make its world debut until the 1940s, drawing loosely upon early Jesuit precursors, the Shanghai Calculator and Typewriter Factory's "Double Pigeon" model (Mullaney 2017). China was caught up in a bloody civil war, and Lin was never able to mass-produce the machine after securing a contract with the Mergenthaler Linotype Company (Williams 2010: 389-400). Lin's typewriter displays Chinese character radicals displayed across seventy-two

keys, distributed evenly across upper left-hand and lower right-hand components. The typist then selects one of eight possible characters displayed through the so-called “magic eye” projection. However, Lin’s design was deemed to be expensive to mass-produce, and the project was eventually co-opted by the United States Air Force (USAF)’s machine translation projects (Tsu 2010: 70-73). Perhaps the cutting-edge medium of typewriting allowed Chang to achieve a detached perspective on language, memory, and politics; moreover, the act of self-translating from the disembodied medium of typewritten text to Chinese script enabled her to personalize and concretize wartime trauma. Moreover, Chang edits the typewritten manuscript in blue pen, crossing out entire sections, making handwritten additions between lines and in the margins. Without the typewriter as a memory repository, the redacted sections would have been lost to the annals of digital word processors, preventing readers from gaining a complete portrait of the evolution of “She Said Smiling” from its earliest stages of conception to its translation into Chinese and ultimate publication.

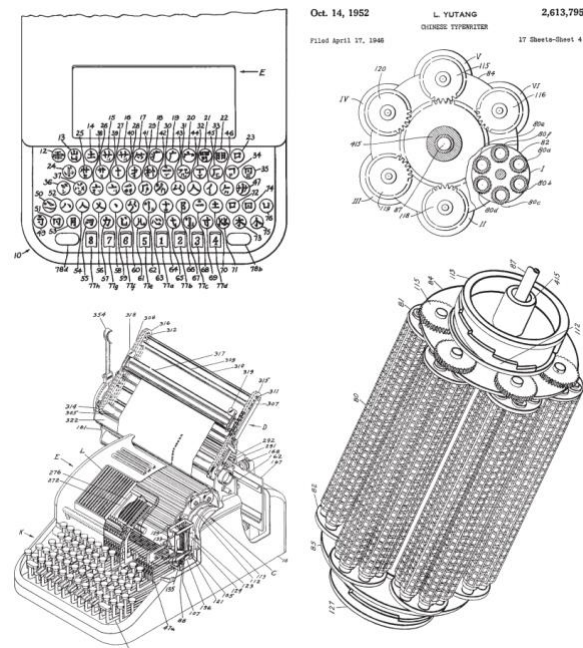


Figure 16. Patent images for Lin Yutang’s Chinese typewriter; U.S. Patent #2,613,795. (Williams 2017: 405)

Jing Tsu notes that Eileen Chang, Lin Yutang and Ha Jin ascribe to a “bilingual loyalty” that oscillates between fidelity to two different languages and cultures (Tsu 2010: 80); I contend, however, that a self-translator needn’t pick sides—rather, by combining aesthetics from multiple linguistic and cultural traditions, self-translators forge interstitial *transwriting* zones that diversify the assumed monolith of language and culture. In the next chapter, we will turn to the case of Ha Jin, a political exile who also writes in a Chinese-inflected translationese style. Ha Jin’s translingual aesthetics and sensibilities¹⁶⁷ stem from decentering, hybridizing, and ultimately displacing both Chineseness and Englishness, thus echoing the *transwriting zone* Chang establishes through her Chinese-English bilingual writings. Jin’s particular *transwriting zone* echoes his own dedication to forging a psychological homeland bridging languages, temporalities, and geographies.

I pair the case study of Ha Jin’s self-translation of *A Good Fall/Luodi* and *Ocean of Words/Hao bing* with the case of Regina Kanyu Wang, a contemporary Sinophone author who transcribes her own speculative fiction from Chinese to English. By refusing to write in a standard, naturalized English, and fusing this defamiliarized English-language aesthetics with the story’s own insistence on speaking back against linguistic homogenization, Chang weaves a hybrid linguascape that rejuvenates the English language through nonstandard inflections. Likewise, Ha Jin writes in a foreignized English-language style that is directly translatable back into Chinese, thus writing back against the regime of fluency and democratizing the English language by infusing it with multilingual crosscurrents.

IV. CHAPTER FOUR: The Politics of “Bad English”: Ha Jin’s and Regina Kanyu Wang’s Subversive Stutters

Why not condemn those who have hammered
our mother tongue into a chain
to bind all the different dialects
to the governing machine? (Jin 2007: 658)¹⁶⁸
--Ha Jin, “An Exchange”

A great writer is always like a foreigner
in the language in which he expresses himself,
even if this is his native tongue [...]
he carves out a nonpreexistent foreign language
within his own language.
He makes the language [...]
scream, stutter, stammer, or murmur.
--Gilles Deleuze, “He Stuttered”

Introduction: Ha Jin’s Political and Linguistic Transgressions

“Necessity, ambition, estrangement.” The émigré Chinese writer Ha Jin (哈金, *nom de plume* for Xuefei Jin 金雪飞, b. 1956) cites these three factors as the impetus for his controversial decision to write about the Chinese immigrant experience in a *translationese*¹⁶⁹- or *translatese*¹⁷⁰-style English (GoGwilt and Jin 2006). Similar to vilified depictions of Li Yiyun as a “cultural traitor” for renouncing the Chinese language¹⁷¹, critics¹⁷² have also condemned Jin’s choice to critique Chinese politics in English as an exploitative act of airing China’s dirty laundry to claim an international readership (Jin 2008: 4). Jin, however, characterizes his partial renunciation of Chinese as a survival tactic in the face of mainland China’s coercive political regime, which has banned the bulk of his works.¹⁷³ By purposefully writing in a jarring, Chinese-inflected English, Ha Jin builds a mobile linguistic home that transcends geographical, linguistic, and temporal rooting, reconceptualizing “home” not as a nostalgic source of belonging but rather one of endless possibility that must be imagined into being. In *The Writer as Migrant*, Ha Jin states that “since most of us cannot go home again, we have to look for our own Ithakas and try to find ways to get there” (Jin

2009: 85).

This chapter first presents cases of un-translation, substitution, and creative augmentation in Ha Jin's self-translated English-Mandarin short stories, ultimately problematizing the (un-) translatability of humor in literary (self-)translation. In the Mandarin self-translation of his flagship short story "A Good Fall/*Luo di* 落地" from the anthology *A Good Fall/落地* (2010), Ha Jin adds wordplay, aphorisms, and other splashes of humor to the target text, thus destabilizing the source text, problematizing the notion of untranslatability¹⁷⁴, and inviting the possibility for innumerable possible "afterlives" in translation. Too often, non-native language speakers' nonstandard language use is condemned as solecisms rather than an attempt at linguistic subversion and innovation. Though it is admittedly impossible to quantify Ha Jin's nonstandard English as either the result of a spotty grasp of the language or intentional linguistic experimentation, I argue that the Chinglish traces in Ha Jin's writing, whether intentional or not, speak to the liminality of the polycultural human condition.

I next pair a close comparison of the Chinese and English versions of "Regina Kanyu Wang's "The Language Sheath"/*语 Yumo* with scholarship on the foreignness of linguistic expression. "The Language Sheath" suggests that linguistic variability, defamiliarization, multilinguality, and nonstandard language use can play a critical role in de-colonizing linguistic hegemony and strike a balance between linguistic determinism (the notion that language determines thought) and linguistic universalism (thought determines language). Moreover, the self-translation's usage of non-standard English, archaisms, and solecisms defamiliarizes the English language, suggesting that linguistic variability and hybridity catalyzes identity formation and linguistic evolution, rather than forced homogenization or linguistic "purification".

“Born Translated”: Defamiliarizing English through Translationese

In a 2020 interview, Jin stated, “I won’t hesitate to make my English slightly foreign. The foreign elements can enrich the language [...] I avoid the standard idiom.” (Jin and Varga 2020) By writing in a *translationese* style with Chinese inflections, Ha Jin defamiliarizes and hybridizes the English language, reflective of his experience as an exile from mainland China.¹⁷⁵ I argue that Ha Jin’s *A Good Fall* is also “born translated”, in the sense that it was “written for translation, in the hope of being translated, but [..was] also [...] written as translations, pretending to take place in a language other than the one in which [it has], in fact, been composed” (Walkowitz 2015: 4). Jin’s supposed “original” works fall under the category of “quasi-translations” posited by Itamar Even-Zohar, or literature” presented by its author not as a translation but as an original work” (Even-Zohar 1990/2012: 50). In other words, translation gave rise to Jin’s “original” work, making translation integral to their initial production. Like Jhumpa Lahiri, whose creative writing in Italian is enriched by strained attempts to “graft” herself onto a new language (Lahiri 2022: 18), which sharpens her sensitivity to diction and syntax, Ha Jin’s defamiliarized aesthetics gives him a fresh pair of eyes through which to re-evaluate China’s historical trauma and reinvigorate the English language.

In his Preface to *Luo Di* 落地, Jin states: “Careful readers will find that these stories have been literally translated word-for-word, sentence-by-sentence from the original English text.” (Jin 2012:3, translation mine) In a 2022 interview, Jin further elaborated, “I did the translation because I wanted to be very, very faithful to the original, so the Chinese reader could see what [the source text] was really like.” (Jin and Friedman 2022) In this sense, Jin outlines a quasi-fiduciary¹⁷⁶ duty to the source text, in order to convey the authentic

experiences contained in the source text, rather than warping them to fit a different worldview. Though he denies conceiving and drafting his stories directly in Chinese, Jin renders his works readily translatable back into Chinese as a way of ensuring they accurately reflect reality. For him, this is an ethical commitment that prevents him from “abusing the privilege” of writing about the Chinese immigrant experience in English: “if someday the work is translated back into Chinese, people will be able to say: this is truthful. Otherwise you have [too much] authority, and [...] you could put whatever you want in there. You can’t do that!” (Jin and Keener 2005). Jin’s commitment to curtailing his own authority contrasts with the practice of other creative writers and self-translators who consciously fictionalize the experiences they put on paper. However, Jin views himself as a spokesperson for the Chinese (American) immigrant community, leading him to reign in his creative impulses in self-translating prose; in his comparatively more abstract poetry, however, Jin recreates the poems in translation, thus prioritizing aesthetic innovation over realism per se.

Jin’s claims that he translated *A Good Fall* word-for-word [back] into Chinese, and the English story’s vestiges of Chinese syntax, has led many scholars to speculate that Ha Jin first drafted this short story collection in English¹⁷⁷. Just as in the case of Klaus Mann, who translates an English source text conceptualized in German back into his native tongue (Nölken 2020: 66, 88-89), Jin seemingly thought up *A Good Fall* in Mandarin, self-translated the initial draft into English, and then translated the work back into his native language. Such boundary transgression destabilizes and problematizes the notion of originality in (self-) translation, thus inviting readers into the world of layered quasi and semi-translations (Even-Zohar 1990).

An Untranslatable Joke: “Poverty Stunts Ambition”

Ha Jin states that his sole transgression as self-translator in *A Good Fall* lies in adding the Chinese aphorism *ren qiong zhi jiu duan* 人穷志就短 (literally translated as “when people are poor, their ambition is stunted” and more loosely translated as “poverty stunts ambition”) to the story “In the Crossfire”/*Liangmian jia gong* 两面夹攻 because “there was simply no way to tell this joke accurately in English” (Jin 2012: 3, trans. mine):

English version:

“How about a pound of vegetable caterpillars? That will help Tian’s father’s bad kidneys.”

“That costs five thousand dollars! You can get them a lot cheaper in China. Tell you what—I can buy you five pounds of dried sea cucumbers, the Japanese type. That will help improve my father-in-law’s health too.”

Meifen agreed, reluctantly—the sea cucumbers were at most four hundred dollars a pound... (Jin 2010: 116)

Chinese version:

“加上一磅冬虫夏草怎么样？那会对你公公的肾病有好处。”

“那要五千美元啊！你在国内买要比这里便宜得多。这样吧—我给你买五磅海参，日本产的。那也会对我公公的健康有好处。”

“咳，好吧。人穷志就短。”

莓芬虽然同意了，但并不情愿—海参最多四百美元一磅。(Jin 2012:136)

Back-translation (from Chinese into English):

“How about a pound of vegetable caterpillars? That will be beneficial for your father-in-law’s kidney disease.”

“That costs five thousand dollars! They are much cheaper in China. How about I buy you five pounds of dried sea cucumbers, imported from Japan. That will also be good for my father in-law’s health.

“Oh—well, that will have to do then. When you’re poor, I guess that’s the best you can do [poverty stunts ambition].”

Meifen agreed, but only reluctantly—the sea cucumbers were at most four hundred dollars a pound.” (trans. mine)

Although Jin argues that there is simply no English language equivalent for 人穷志就短, Ha Jin’s own translation, “poverty stunts ambition” represents one of many potential solutions.

The fact that Jin successfully augments his text in the target Mandarin version by “adding” a Chinese language phrase he did not quite know how to render in the source text English language version reveals the potential of self-translation to catalyze a text’s evolution. Contrary to his own remarks, Jin clearly did not limit himself to just one case of textual alteration; throughout the anthology, he employs omission, purposeful mistranslation and creative augmentation (i.e., shifting tenses, creating new similes so forth) to create a foreignized Chinglish aesthetic that destabilizes both Chinese and English and recontextualizes the Chinese language version according to the hybrid English-Chinese “source text”. Moreover, case studies of Jin’s English-Chinese poetry self-translation reveals his commitment to musicality, transcreation and cultural transformation through the act of linguistic transformation. Innovating both the Chinese and English languages, torn between past and future, memory and amnesia¹⁷⁸, Ha Jin “utilize[s] the space between two languages [English and Chinese] to create something fresh and different in one language (Jin 2020: 456).

Ha Jin’s experience of self-imposed exile informs his creative self-translation of wordplay, puns, symbolism, and dialogues, thus shedding light on the processes of narrative construction and trauma reconciliation. I will also explore Ha Jin’s inclusion of politically taboo topics in his writings (Tiananmen Square, the Falun Gong’s alleged organ harvesting, neo-Maoism, and so forth), which taps into international critics’ thirst for politically subversive Chinese dissident writing, one component of the political economy I term “banning as consecration”.

Carving out a “Third Space” in Foreignized English

As in the case of Eileen Chang's *Xiangjian huan*, Ha Jin's so-called "self-translation" of his short story anthology *A Good Fall* was likely a back-translation of a work initially drafted in Chinese. However, unlike Chang, Jin proudly announces that he translates word-for-word (Jin 2012:3) from English into Chinese. Ha Jin supplements this literal approach to translation with such creative techniques as accentuated symbolism, supplemented humorous passages, wordplay, aphorisms, and politically loaded terminology, which result in a lyrical, poeticized rendering, in keeping with his prowess as a celebrated poet in both the English and Chinese languages. Jin's description of self-translation as a therapeutic process enabling him to build a villa in his mother tongue parallels Eileen Chang's harnessing of self-translation to transcend Cold War politics. However, while Jin establishes an anchored sense of belonging through self-translation-fuelled transformation, Chang's attempts to remake herself through self-translation lead to an uprooted, interstitial identity.

Even when writing in English, Ha Jin uses Chinese linguistic structures, recreating Chinese syntax, thought patterns, idioms, jokes, values, temporalities, and so forth in order to intervene in the monolith of global English. I argue that Jin's writing embodies the "third space" Homi Bhabha describes in his 1994 essay, "How Newness Enters the World", whereby supposedly incommensurable differences are negotiated: "The non-synchronous temporality of global and national cultures opens up a cultural space—a third space—where the negotiation of incommensurable differences creates a tension peculiar to borderline existences [...]" (Bhabha 1994/2004: 312). Indeed, by successfully transposing a Chinese language temporality and identity on English, Ha Jin destabilizes and deconstructs the monolith of global English to reveal its potential for innovation and fragmentation.

Ha Jin's Linguistic Revolution in Poetry and Prose

Ha Jin views his colloquial English prose as a way of revolutionizing the Chinese language to better approximate plain speech:

In Chinese, especially if you are writing literary fiction, you don't write in plain speech; a lot of words and phrases would have a long history of allusions, so it's very different...it's not just language, you have to see the work in the context of the literature written in the tradition." (Jin in Lieu 1996: 14)

However, rather than viewing his "plain prose" as simply a mark of protest against so-called "highbrow", elitist literature, Ha Jin admits that his status as a non-native English learner burdens his prose with non-natural syntax and style. Jin remarks that in contrast with English, which tends to be "very speculative, very eloquent [...] Chinese is more down to earth [and] can describe a lot of [...] shades of feelings and tastes" (Jin and Keener, 2005). However, rather than stigmatizing his non-natural use of the language, Ha Jin embraces the hybridity of his prose as an opportunity for innovating the English language:

Because I'm not a native speaker, there's a lot of flexible room for me to abuse the language, so I have to be very careful and accurate. There are both advantages and disadvantages to coming to writing in English so late. It's hard to write with the full weight of the language and with the natural spontaneity. The advantage is that I may write with a different kind of sensibility and a slightly different kind of syntax, idiom, and style (Jin in Johnson 2006, 57).

Ha Jin's attempt to revolutionize English marks a continuation of his passion for poetry; indeed, Jin describes his early career foray into lyric poetry as an attempt to "improve the poetic language" and "create a new kind of language for poetry" (Jin 2013, 118). Though he originally wrote many of the poems in Chinese, Ha Jin does not consider them strict "translations" but rather "rewritings" (Jin 2017) that alter both the form and meaning of the source text.

Ha Jin describes the process of writing directly in English as donning a second skin, establishing a critical distance from the work by "changing [his] blood" (Jin and Keener

2005). Jin explains his ultimate motivation for translating his short story anthology *Luodi* 落地 from English into Chinese as follows:

[...] my father was in the military, and we moved around a lot growing up, so I can't say definitively where 'home' is for me [...] Since I couldn't [return to] my hometown, I channelled this feeling [of nostalgia] into the Chinese translation of *A Good Fall*, in order to build a little 'villa' in my mother tongue. This provided a restful haven along my arduous journey. (Jin 2012: 3-4, trans. mine)¹⁷⁹

Ha Jin simultaneously rejects nostalgia for the China that betrayed him and embraces a nostalgia for an imagined, inaccessible homeland. Jin thus ascribes to a universalized notion of nostalgia determined by a fantasy of an inaccessible, collective future, rather than slipping into melancholia for a lost time and place. Jin's nostalgia for an imagined, fluid homeland creates a sense of historical agency and enables him to define his mobile identity based on projected, changeable fantasies, rather than mirroring himself in unchangeable historical trauma¹⁸⁰. Indeed, Pai, Jin, Chang and Wang are modern "reflective nostalgics"¹⁸¹ who realize "rendezvous with [them]sel[ves]" (Yankelévitch 1974: 302) by reconciling their (in-)voluntary individual recollections of history with the weight of collective memories.

Self-Orientalizing or Destabilizing Chineseness?

Many critics have been reluctant to celebrate Ha Jin's creation of a hybrid linguistic code bridging both the Chinese and English languages, claiming that Ha Jin's Chinglish aesthetics reflect his sub-par mastery of English. In her article entitled "Waiting for A Better Translation," Nancy Tsai provides over two hundred examples of botched translations in Ha Jin's *Waiting*, and laments that the novel is the result of a mediocre Chinglish translation devoid of proper editorial oversight. Tsai writes: "[Ha Jin's] work was more a translation of Chinese into English than anything else, but it was far from competent; yet, in the end, he still won one of the most prominent creative writing awards for it [...]" (Tsai 2005: 58-62)

Contrary to Tsai's scathing critique of his linguistic incompetence, Ha Jin intentionally Sinicizes his English prose to create a hybrid amalgamation of English and Chinese that ultimately rejuvenates both languages. Does the translatability of Ha Jin's prose render it a vague globalese pipelined for commercial success? In the works of Rebecca Walkowitz:

Works that are 'difficult to translate are celebrated for their engagement with a specific national language and for their refusal to enter, or enter easily, into the pipeline of multinational publishing', while works that are easy to translate 'are vilified for having surrendered to that pipeline, exchanging aesthetic innovation for commercial success, eschewing the idiosyncrasy of the local for the interchangeability of the global' (Walkowitz 2015: 31-32)

Ha Jin has been vilified for the precious reasons Walkowitz outlines; namely, his embracing of a Chinglish aesthetics rather than naturalized English expression. By peppering his works with Chinese inflections and aphorisms, Jin maintains cultural fidelity to the Chinese immigrants he portrays, rather than to a Chinese readership that is barred access from his own work. Indeed, we cannot definitively say the jarring, defamiliarized effect in Jin's earlier works is a reflection of his intentional linguistic innovation, rather than simply the manifestation of his clumsy grasp of English. Even if the latter were true, carving out a space for "bad English" democratizes the language by opening it up to non-native speakers.

In his review of Amos Tutuola's *The Palm-Wine Drinkard*, Dylan Thomas lauds the author's foreignized style, marveling: "This is the brief, thronged, grisly and bewitching story, [...] of indescribable adventures [...] The writing is nearly always terse and direct, strong, wry, flat and savoury" (Thomas 1952). Critics remain divided in their evaluation of Tutuola's non-native grasp of English, alternately praising his "quaintness" (Ogundipe 1969: 104) and reflection of authentic "English as it is spoken in West Africa" (Parrinder in Tutuola 1994: 10), or even a hybrid blend of "schoolboy English, officialese and West African pidgin" (Bohannon, cited in Ogundipe 1969: 104). Perhaps, Tutuola's linguistic

hybridity is a reflection of the orality of his writing, reproducing Yoruba linguistic syntax through English; or, in Ogundipe's words, "He is basically speaking Yoruba but using English words" (Ogundipe 1969: 105). This begs the question, is Ha Jin simply writing in Chinese but using English words? What does it mean to speak in English using English words? What qualifies as truly naturalized English? Are American and the Queens' English somehow superior to other Englishes?

In her article "Home and Identity En Route in Chinese Diaspora—Reading Ha Jin's *A Free Life*", Melody Yunzi Li analyzes Ha Jin as a Sinophone writer who eschews a traditional Chinese identity through his affinity with Dongbei (Northeastern) language and culture, which resists monolithic interpretations of standardized Mandarin Chinese. Li recognizes Ha Jin's canonization in the Sinophone, American, Chinese-American, and Sinophone exile communities, resisting neat categories of identification. Li reconciles the apparent contradiction of Ha Jin's so-called "self-Orientalist" strategies for self-canonization with his entrenched Sinophone identity by arguing that Ha Jin "destabilizes notions of Chinese and Chineseness—and Chinese literature" (Yunzi Li 2014: 209), emblematic of a diasporic subject who simultaneously inhabits multiple cultural and linguistic identities (ibid. 2014: 203-220). Indeed, Ha Jin self-identifies as an "immigrant" rather than an "exile", side-stepping the burden of becoming a spokesperson for China or dissident exile writer. Jin lives in the future rather than wallowing in the nostalgia and trauma associated with his experience serving in the People's Liberation Army during the Korean War. In Jin's words, "An exile has a significant past: he often lives in the past and has to define himself within the context of political power" (Jin and Fay 2020). By ascribing to his self-fashioned immigrant identity rather than branding himself as a Chinese exile, Ha Jin refuses to be co-opted by

either Chinese or American political narratives surrounding the Cultural Revolution and Tiananmen Square incidents. Instead, he lives his life on the road, fashioning his individualistic narrative at the fringes of nationalistic master-narratives.

I contend that Ha Jin intentionally defamiliarizes language, nation, and culture, “betraying” his own words to imagine a wandering, transnational identity pledging loyalty to an imagined homeland which must be perpetually sought out but never attained. Consistent with Stuart Hall’s argument that identity is “always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation” (Hall 1990: 222), I argue that Ha Jin’s own transnational identity occupies an “in-between”, unstable isthmus bridging languages and cultures.

Banning as Consecration: Towards a new Conceptualization of Literary Capital

Pascale Casanova suggests that translation “introduce[es] the periphery to the center in order to *consecrate* it” (Casanova, trans. Brownlie, 2002/2012, emphasis mine). I supplement this notion of translation as consecration by outlining an economy of “banning as consecration”. In recent years, many literary agents have branded authors hailing from mainland China as politically censored dissidents, in order to bolster their reputations and stake out a place for these rising authors within the literary polysystem.

Literary gate-keepers such as prize committees, newspapers, popular media, and bookstores in the United States also gravitate towards banned, blacklisted, and censored authors. For instance, in a 2016 New York Times article entitled “The Shortlist: Banned in Beijing”, Jess Row recommends three books based on the fact that all three are banned in mainland China, among them *Ruined City* by Jia Pingwa (废都, originally published in 1993 and translated by Howard Golblatt in 2016), *Beijing Comrades* by Bei Tong (short for Beijing Tongzhi 北京同志 translated by Scott E. Meyers in 2016), which served as the basis

for the 2001 film *Lan Yu* directed by Stanley Kwan), and *Half a Lifelong Romance* by Eileen Chang (半生緣 *Bansheng yuan*, originally serialized in 1948) (Row 2016). Indeed, the literary prestige generated by a history of censorship in the PRC certainly enables authors to garner respect and interest from potential American readers. Moreover, the Henanese author Yan Lianke (阎连科, b. 1958) won the International Booker Prize in 2022, the 2021 Newman Prize, the 2014 Franz Kafka Prize, and was shortlisted for the Man Booker International Prize twice. In her 2018 *New Yorker* article entitled “Yan Lianke’s Forbidden Satires of China: How an Army Propaganda Writer Became the Country’s Most Controversial Novelist”, Jiayang Fan explains that Yan’s satires of China’s Communist regime¹⁸², often featuring an alter ego named Yan Lianke who returns home to gather archival materials, have resulted in an unofficial, yet near-total ban; yet at the same time, Yan’s international reputation has soared (Fan 2018).

Ha Jin has been accused of sensationalizing the CCP (Chinese Communist Party’s) repressive politics in order to attract Western readers who demonize the PRC. Liu Yiqing, for instance, condemns Jin for “curs[ing] his own compatriots”, thus “becom[ing] a tool used by the American media to vilify China” (Eckholm 2000). Moreover, the prominent Taiwanese author Zhu Tianwen, condemns Jin’s English-language career as an “opportunistic venture”; “[Ha Jin’s] experiences abroad are often painted by critics and colleagues at home as profiting from selling an inside story to the outside world” (Tsu 117, 122). However, rather than blaming Ha Jin for exploiting China’s national trauma for personal profit, I argue that Ha Jin’s acute awareness of the economy of “banning as consecration” have enabled him to promote his own writings in the United States by serving as a whistleblower for the Xi Jinping reign’s propensity for Mao-era repressive tactics. Moreover, Jin’s own blacklisting in

China exposes the government's attempts to flag non-Chinese language writings as potentially subversive, thus improving his appeal to the West. Rather than renouncing the Chinese language altogether, Ha Jin displaces both English and Chinese by creating a hybrid linguistic zone bridging American and Chinese culture. Jin's reinvention of language rather than fidelity to a national tradition, highlights linguistic purity as a national myth intended to strengthen state surveillance.

Disowning English: Li Yiyun's and Ha Jin's Linguistic Displacement

Like Ha Jin, the Chinese-American writer Yiyun Li (李翊云, b. 1972) was also inspired by Vladimir Nabokov and Samuel Beckett to adopt English, rather than her first language (Chinese), as her exclusive mode of literary production.¹⁸³ However, Li went a step further than Jin by permanently "disowning" Chinese, declaring: "My private salvation [...] is that I disowned my native language [...] It's the absoluteness of my abandonment of Chinese, undertaken with such determination that it is a kind of suicide [...]" (Li 2016) Like Ha Jin, Li Yiyun has also come under fire for her nonstandard English usage, which was once criticized as "neither lavish nor lyrical, as a real writer's language should be" (Li 2016). Writing in English enables Li to digest traumatic memories¹⁸⁴ in her chosen, private language of English, as opposed to the public, imposed Chinese language she grew up in.

Linguistic displacement enables Li to confront personal trauma (i.e., the trauma of her two sons' suicides, her life in the army, her hospitalization for suicidal ideations, and so forth). Li's 2019 novel *Where Reasons End*, an elegy to Li's own late son¹⁸⁵, Vincent Kean Li (2001-2017), features a dialogue between mother and her child in a world removed from everyday temporality, occupying a liminal space bridging life and death, in which Li reconciles the pain of losing her son. Li reflects upon her own battles with depression and

suicide in her partially autobiographical titled after a line from Katherine Mansfield's personal journal, *Dear Friend, from My Life I Write to You in Your Life* (2017). In this work, Li muses, "To be able to write and to write in English are a lifeline, and a lifeline must be dismissed as extraneous, even illicit..." (Li 2017: 25)

Unlike Li, however, who swears to renouncing the Chinese language for life, Ha Jin describes self-translating from his non-native English back into Chinese as a linguistic homecoming that enables him to carve out a "little villa in [his] mother tongue" (Jin 2012: 3-4, trans. mine). Moreover, Jin also explains his decision to take charge of translating *A Good Fall* himself as motivated by a desire to maintain control over copyright and reprinting rights, as well as to prevent careless slips that might be committed by outside translators: "Short stories, there were less words, so that doesn't pay much, so it's better for [the author themself] to do the work more carefully...I really enjoyed the [re-]writing process. Suddenly I felt I was so at home with the language" (Jin and Charles 2017)¹⁸⁶

Although Jin rose to prominence as a prize-winning Asian-American author in the United States, the bulk of his Chinese language writings are now blacklisted¹⁸⁷ in Mainland China. Indeed, authors can (first) achieve canonical status in the international arena (effectively "self-worlding" themselves), while still being shunned by their fellow countrymen. This paradoxical finding exposes one of the many ways in which self-translation *queers* the conventional process of canon formation as proceeding teleologically from local to global levels. Indeed, self-translators construct their identity through an *ongoing process* of translating themselves to the world, a cyclical act of textual performance that *translates the text, nation and self into being*. Indeed, (self-)translation injects new lifeblood into linguistic and cultural systems; moreover, the linguistic hybridity and

foreignness embodied through the healing¹⁸⁸ practice of self-translation catalyzes canon expansion during times of crisis.

A “Wandering Fate”: Ha Jin’s “Good Fall” into the English Language

The son of a military officer who served in the Korean War, Ha Jin is no stranger to international conflict and life on the front lines. Ha Jin’s chosen name emphasizes his affinity towards his favorite city, Harbin, and his identity as a *Dongbei* (Northeastern) Chinese citizen who rewrites Chineseness from the margins (Jin and Li 2010). Though both the Sinophone and Chinese-American¹⁸⁹ communities have hailed Ha Jin as a spokesperson for their respective communities, as a “transplanted novelist” (Schwartz 2002: 26), he author has lived in self-imposed exile all his life, living “in two languages and operat[ing] between two cultures and countries” (Sebag-Montefiore 2015).

With China’s education system languishing in the wake of the Cultural Revolution, Jin first learned English from an evening radio broadcast program (Jin and Weinberger 2007); upon discharge, he conducted independent studies of classical Chinese literature and English from 1974 to 1977. He went on to pursue a BA in English at Heilongjiang University and an MA at Shandong University in China’s Qingdao Province (1984), before pursuing a PhD in English at Brandeis University the following year, graduating in 1992. Jin later earned his MFA in fiction at Boston University (1994), where he obtained a professorship teaching twentieth century English literature, earning numerous accolades including the PEN/Faulkner Award, the Flannery O’Connor Award for Short Fiction, the Asian American Literary Award, three Pushcart prizes for fiction, a Kenyon Review Prize, and the 1999 National Book Award for his novel *Waiting*, composed during his tenure teaching literature at Emory University (Jin and Fay 2009); though Beijing Publish Group eventually planned to release a Chinese

translation of the novel after Beijing University Professor Liu Yiqing attacked the novel's polemical critique of the Chinese government's policies and alleged exaggeration of China's so-called "backwardness" (Eckholm 2000).

Yet upon completion of his doctoral studies, Jin was unable to renew his passport, which marked the beginning of his permanent exile from mainland China and decades-long alienation from his homeland. A self-proclaimed "self-exile" (Jin 2019), Jin writes about uprisings in Tibet, army life in the People's Liberation Army (PLA), the Cultural Revolution¹⁹⁰, the Tiananmen Square massacre¹⁹¹, and other politically sensitive events; the majority of his writings have been banned in mainland China, and some even accuse him of betraying the motherland for publishing in his non-native English (Jin and Fay 2009). As a former artilleryman and telegrapher in the People's Liberation Army (Jin and Weinberger 2007), Jin witnessed firsthand the militia's suppression of its own civilians; he considers his decision to write about China's national trauma in English as a cathartic means of subsuming trauma into linguistic structures. In the wake of the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre, Ha Jin resolved never to return to China, and turned to self-translation to make ends meet as a new immigrant in the United States (Jin and Fay 2009). In Jin's words,

in a way, also, the biosystem collapsed, because the idea had been instilled in us that the People's Army was "[of] the people, would protect the people, serve the people [...]" But now, everything was reversed, so that was very traumatic. [...] after many years, the Tiananmen massacre happened, so I realized the madness was not just personal, there's also national madness¹⁹². (Jin and Friedman 2022)

Indeed, for Jin, the Tiananmen Square massacre constituted both personal and public trauma, in the sense that the army employed to protect the people would turn on its own citizens. Such trauma drove Jin to make his home in the United States and write in English, thus establishing linguistic distance from past trauma. In "Traveling Mug", an ode to the enamel

mug that has accompanied him for decades, from the Siberian snows to the Yellow Plain to the Atlantic coast, Jin celebrates the object's ability to remain detached and seek home on the road. "On your white inside/Eight scars rust your base./Still you take daily use,/ sturdy like new./How indifferent you seem/to any conclusion, never at home in a niche" (Jin 2000, "Traveling Mug": 486)

Ha Jin considers the foreignness and incongruity of his written English as a mark of his unique style that expands the possibilities of the English language. Following in the footsteps of the Soviet Russian writers Vladimir Nabokov (1899-1977), whose estrangement from the Soviet Union forced him to write in English out of sheer necessity, and with the novelist Alexander Solzhenitsyn, whose exile in Cavendish, Vermont enabled him to reflect upon Russian politics from afar, Jin transforms his habit of writing foreignized English into a *worlding* practice. Indeed, for Jin, writing directly in his non-native English (likely after conceiving the text in Chinese, given the "Chinglish" nature of the text and occasional malapropisms) allows him to preserve traces of incongruity.

These jarring elements, when woven together with highly readable, vernacular English, create a bizarre, defamiliarized sense of foreignness that draws attention to the translation process and alert readers to the hybrid constructions of language and culture. Like Eileen Chang, Ha Jin seeks refuge in the English language, regarding this adopted identity as providing detached haven from which to define home on his own terms and stretch the boundaries of the English language. As Jin puts it, "Once we enter a foreign terrain in our fiction, Standard English may have to be stretched to cover the new territory. Ultimately this is a way to expand the capacity of the language, a kind of enrichment." (Jin 2020: 456)

The Road to A Good Fall/Luo di

Jin explains his inspiration for crafting *A Good Fall*/落地 as follows:

In early February, 2005, the *World Journal* invited me to attend a conference in Flushing. On that first visit I witnessed the bustling streets and an enormous community of Chinese immigrants . . . They took their roots here and began their new life . . . I have visited Flushing about twenty times since then. Flushing is New York's new Chinatown, and *A Good Fall* recounts stories of the new Chinatown (2012, 5, translation mine).¹⁹³

The title “A Good Fall” incorporates a threefold pun connecting the New Testament’s “Fall from Grace” (Galatians 5:2), or deviance from Jesus Christ’s teachings with the notion of “windfall” and 落地生根 *luodi shenggen*¹⁹⁴ (falling to the ground and growing new roots).

Th characters in these stories alternately attempt to uproot themselves (for instance, the woman who surgically changes her appearance to renounce her past), put down temporary roots (a student who finds solace in initiating an affair with the mother of the student he tutors), and seek roots in animal company (the composer who develops a father-child bond with his parakeet after his girlfriend leaves him). In Jin’s short story, the monk protagonist Ganchin attempts to commit suicide by leaping off a building, which results in a figurative and literal “good fall”. Indeed, not only does he survive the fall thanks to his instinctive *kongfu* skills, but thanks to the positive media attention garnered by the event, Ganchin becomes a local celebrity, and is slotted to receive an enormous sum of money from his attorney. In this sense, Ganchin’s literal “fall” converts into a “windfall”, in which his suicidal ideations give way to an unexpected monetary fortune.

This title also alludes to the fate of Chinese immigrants who have been uprooted from their homelands and landed in the United States, poised to make a “good fall” in their new country of residence. This title translation is in keeping with the central themes of *A Good Fall*/落地, which problematizes the notion of pursuing the American Dream in a land brimming with both opportunity and hostility.¹⁹⁵ Moreover, both Ganchin in “A Good Fall”

(2009) and Nan Wu in *A Free Life* (2007) lose sight of their own values and personal aspirations in their daily pursuit of wealth, thus depicting the American Dream as a “cruel optimism” that fuses one’s “private fortune with that of the nation”, yet ultimately disillusion immigrants, whose desire for material wealth and assimilation on par with locals paradoxically “becomes an obstacle to their own flourishing” (Berlant 2019). Reflecting upon his pursuit of the American dream, Nan likens this pursuit of the impossible to Ralph Waldo Emerson’s 1870 declaration: “Hitch your wagon to a star”, “Such a dream was not something to be realized but something to be pursued only” (Jin 2007: 619)

The immigrants depicted in *Flushing* have been uprooted from China, but have not yet taken root in mainstream American society, and thus struggle to maintain ties with both mainland China and the United States. Jin explains: “[...] in reality there is room for new immigrants to find a decent life in the United States. Indeed, I have a few stories where you can find hope and possibility. In ‘A Good Fall’ [A Good Fall] the monk [Ganpin] had a fortunate “fall” but, of course, it was after a great loss.” (Jin and Ramón 2014: 83) Whereas the opening story in Ha Jin’s short story anthology, “The Bane of the Internet”, chronicles the headache brought about via Internet communication between estranged siblings, in “A Good Fall”, media becomes a force for good rather than evil, helping to erect the safety net that will ensure a rosy future for Ganchin in the United States.

A Kaleidoscopic Palimpsest of Self-Translations

In 2012, Jiangsu Literature and Art Publishing House (*Jiangsu wenyi chubanshe* 江苏文艺出版社) published Jin’s self-translation anthology *Luodi* 落地. Jin likely conceived these stories first in Chinese, and self-translated them into English before they were even transcribed on the page, making the Chinese “translation” a re-translation of a “born-

translated” work.¹⁹⁶ In Jin’s words, “Because I wrote [these stories] in English [...] the voice is created, it’s not [their] original voice[s]. And some of them speak different dialects. But my job in writing [these stories] in English was to make them sound authentic, at least make their interests and concerns authentic.” (Jin 2009) These remarks reveal Jin’s belief that although language is an integral component of authenticity, people’s concerns can come across as authentic even if they are not speaking in their native tongue, a process which perhaps mirrors Jin’s own journey as an immigrant to the United States.

Jin explains that he tends to write shorter pieces, such as essays and articles, in Chinese, but later began translating his own work into Chinese because he feared an outside translator would not do justice to the lyricism of his words and might simply rush through the task. Jin explains his ultimate motivation for translating *A Good Fall* from English into Chinese as follows:

[...] This book [I] translated sentence by sentence, phrase [by phrase], except [...] I added one phrase [the Chinese aphorism 人穷志就] to the story “In the Crossfire”, *because I couldn’t help being playful* [...] if you know two languages well enough, the *author* can take liberties with the translation, whereas the translator can’t do that. So [...] if I do the work, I can be more creative. (Jin 2009, emphasis mine)

Jin believes self-translators may take certain liberties with the text that ordinary outside translators would never dream of taking. In self-translating *A Good Fall* into Chinese, Jin sought to refute speculations that he had “abandoned Chinese” and embraces a “linguistic homecoming” (Tsu 2010:110). Jin also emphasizes his belief of creative subversion vis-à-vis “playfulness” in translation: “I share Salman Rushdie’s conviction ‘that something can be gained’ in translation. We ought to trust that talented translators can find ways to create playfulness that can compensate for some of what is lost.” (Jin 2008:60)

In his iconic short story “A Good Fall”/*Luo di*, Ha Jin takes liberties with translating the dialogues. The English source text contains bits of unnatural word choice bordering on Chinglish, likely because the source text itself is ultimately a translation from Chinese. In the excerpt reproduced below, Cindy, the monk Ganchin’s former martial arts student flirts with Ganchin:

English version:

“Master Zong said I was already an illegal alien. He kept my passport.”

“You shouldn’t worry so much, sweetie. If worse comes to worst, you should consider marrying a woman, a U.S. citizen.”

She snickered, gazing at his lean face, her big eyes warm and brave. He knew she was fond of him, but he said, “I’m a monk and can’t think of anything like that.”

“Why not return to this earthly life?” (Jin 2010: 224)

Chinese version:

“宗主持说我已经是非法居留者。他扣下了我的护照。”

“别老犯愁了，帅哥。要是实在没办法，你应该考虑结婚，和一个美国公民婚。”

她哧哧笑了，一双大眼睛注视着他，热情又勇敢。他知道辛蒂喜欢他，但他说：“我是出家人，不能想那些。”

“为什么不能还俗呢？” (Jin 2012: 264)

Back-translation to English:

“Master Zong said I’m an illegal resident. He confiscated my passport—”

“Don’t worry, buddy. If worse comes to worst, you can always consider marriage—marrying a U.S. citizen. She laughed mischievously, her big eyes passionate and brave.

He knew she liked him, but he said: “I’m a monk and I can’t think of anything like that.” “Why not leave the monastic order and return to secular life?”

The Chinese phrase 非法居留者 *feifa jumin zhe*, literally meaning “illegal resident”, has been rendered English using the derogatory term “illegal alien”¹⁹⁷, thus conveying the prejudice with which Master Zong treats Ganchin. The source text also contains numerous out-of-place words, such as “kept” (rather than the more accurate “confiscated”) and

“sweetie”, a translation for the Chinese term *shuaige* 帅哥 (literally meaning “handsome guy”). “Sweetie”, despite matching the tone of Cindy’s subdued flirting, is somewhat of a gendered word choice uttered by a man to a woman; perhaps “stud” or “buddy” would be the more colloquial choice. Moreover, “snicker” often carries derogatory connotations; Cindy, far from laughing scornfully, was simply trying to flirt with Master Zong to remind him of her feelings for him. Furthermore, Ha Jin seems to have either wittingly or unwittingly omitted the description “lean face” in his Chinese translation. Finally, the final sentence (*Wei shenme bu neng huansu ne* “为什么不能还俗呢? ”), which is rendered cryptically in English as “Why not return to this earthly life?” includes a set Chinese phrase meaning to leave the monastic order or to return to the secular world (*huansu*), and gains an artistic touch in the source text. Such translation decisions indicate that the Chinese version is likely a restoration of a Chinese source text that served as the basis for an initial English version.

In their next interaction, Cindy reminds Ganchin that he has just as much of a right to dwell on American soil as those born on U.S. soil:

English version:

Except for the Indians, nobody’s really a native in the United States. You musn’t think of yourself as a stranger—this country belongs to you if you live and work here. (Jin 2010: 231)

Chinese version:

“除了印第安人外，没有人是美国的本地人。你不要认为自己是外来人——如果你在这里生活工作，这个国家也属于你的。”(Jin 2012: 272)

Back-translation to English:

Besides the Indians, no one’s really native to the United States. You shouldn’t think of yourself as a foreigner—as long as you live and work here, this country belongs to you, too.

Calling to mind the previous rendering of “resident alien”, the narrator once again opts for a problematic term, “Indians”, which seems to refer to inhabitants of India, rather than “Native Americans” or “indigenous people”. Ha Jin may have opted for “Indian” in spite of its negative political connotations, to avoid repeating the word “native” later in the sentence (“Besides the Native Americans, no one’s really native to the United States” might strike some readers as repetitive”). Many Americans still use the word “Indians” colloquially in everyday speech in place of “Native Americans” simply because it rolls off the tongue quicker. In fact, the Cleveland-baseball team “The Indians” did not change their name to “The Guardians” until 2021, after facing a deluge of accusations of racism (ESPN News Services).

Moreover, “stranger” is rendered as 外来人 *wailai ren*, literally meaning “foreigner”, rather than 陌生人 *mosheng ren*. However, in the English version, “stranger” arguably reads more smoothly than “foreigner”, given that “stranger” invokes a sense of not-belonging, whereas foreigner is a legal condition. Thus, the domestication strategies employed in rendering this passage in English (assuming that Ha Jin initially conceptualized the story in Chinese) reveal an attempt on the part of the author to naturalize and colloquialize his own lexicon. We needn’t assume that the use of “Indians” and “illegal alien” reflects the author’s own biases, as such terms reflect the xenophobia embodied by characters hoping to find their niche in the mainstream American lexicon.

The Bird from Heaven That Never Lands: Avian Allusions

Too proud to take Cindy up on her offer to stay at her house while she is off working as a flight attendant, Ganchin moves in with his acquaintance Fanku; though he now has food to eat and a roof over his head, Ganchin’s physical condition continues to deteriorate. One day,

after a meager breakfast, he sets out for Gaolin temple, and threatens Master Zong with suicide if he refuses to pay him his dues. Along the way to the temple, Ganchin pauses to observe a flock of sparrows struggling to peck at spilled popcorn. I argue that the sparrows' struggle to survive invokes Ganchin's harsh life, and, by extension, that of immigrants to the United States:

English Version:

After breakfast, which was two cold buns stuffed with red-bean paste and a cup of black tea, Ganchin set out for Gaolin Temple. His legs were a little shaky as he walked. A shower had descended the previous night, so the streets were clean and even the air smelled fresher, devoid of the stink of rotten fish and vegetables. He turned onto a side street. On the pavement seven plump sparrows were struggling with spilled popcorn, twittering fretfully and hardly able to break the fluffy kernels. Regardless of humans and automobiles, the birds were all working hard at the food. Approaching the temple, Ganchin heard people shouting and stamping their feet in unison inside the brick building. A new coach was teaching a kung fu class. (Jin 2010: 228)

Chinese Version:

甘勤早餐吃了两个冰凉的豆沙包，喝了一杯红茶，然后动身去高霖寺。他走在街上两腿有点儿软。昨夜下了场阵雨，马路洗得很干净，甚至空气都新鲜了许多，没有了臭鱼烂菜的气味。他拐进一条小街。人行道上七只长腿麻雀奋力地啄着散落的爆玉米花，急切地啾啾叫着，但怎么也咬不碎松软的苞米。那些鸟不顾行人和车辆，全都在尽力地吃东西。接近寺院时，甘勤听见砖楼里面人们齐声高喊，踩着地板——一个新的教练正在上功夫课。(Jin 2012: 268)

Back-translation to English:

Ganchin ate two cold red-bean paste buns for breakfast and drank a cup of red tea, then set out for Gaolin Temple. His legs went soft as he walked. Yesterday it had rained, so the streets were clean, and even the air seemed much fresher, without the smell of rotten fish and spoiled vegetables. He turned into a small alleyway. On the sidewalk, seven long-legged sparrows were pecking at scattered popcorn kernels, chirping anxiously, yet unable to break through the spongy kernels. Those birds were undaunted by pedestrians and cars, trying to get at the food with all their might. As he approached the temple, Ganchin heard the sounds of people shouting and stomping their feet on the floor—a new coach was in the middle of teaching a *Kungfu* class.

On a lexical level, the “plump” sparrows in the English version become “long-legged

sparrows” in the Chinese translation, a significant change given that the sparrows seem to be already well-fed in the initial version, resembling the fluffy popcorn kernels they are pecking at. The long-legged sparrows in the Chinese version perhaps come across as more voracious and desperate to ingest the scattered popcorn kernels. There are also a number of unnatural sentences, such as “a shower had descended” in place of “it had rained” and “regardless of humans and automobiles” instead of “undaunted by pedestrians and cars”, Chinglish traces which defamiliarize the prose, yet without making the style obtrusive or unreadable. The image of the helpless sparrows unable to break through the fluffy popcorn kernels might be interpreted as a metaphor for the migrant’s condition, struggling to make ends meet in a foreign country without the proper tools to make use of local resources. Indeed, as he gazes at the helpless birds, Ganchin may be recalling his own predicament, having been fired unlawfully pushed to the verge of deportation.

As migratory birds imbued with lyricism, sparrows capture the sense of claiming a happened-upon place as one’s new home. The cover art of the Chinese version of *Luodi* 落地, published by Jiangsu Literature and Art Publishing House in 2012, features a migratory bird, possibly a sparrow, wearing a pair of sneakers, beneath two drops of blood containing the title in both Chinese and English. This design also calls to mind the old Chinese adage, “从哪里跌倒就从哪里爬起来” *Cong nali dieluo jiu cong nali paqilai*, literally meaning, “Pick yourself up from where you’ve fallen”. The two drops of blood reflect the blood, sweat, and tears immigrants invest in making ends meet in their new homes, while the choice of the complementary color green suggests that the new immigrant (symbolized by the bird) is resilient and picked themselves up by their own bootstraps, so to speak. In Ha Jin’s own words, “Both human beings and birds are tough, resilient animals. In a way, most immigrants

are reduced to the animalistic level. You have to follow your instincts, sharpen your own physical and mental ability to survive.” (Jin and Friedman 2022)

The shoed bird on the cover might also refer to the story of the footless birds depicted in Kar-wai Wong’s film *A-fei zhengzhuan* 阿飞正传 [Days of Being Wild], derived from the 1964 French New Wave film *Bande à part* [Band of Outsiders] directed by Jean-Luc Godard. In Wong’s film, Leslie Cheung (who incidentally committed suicide in 2003 by jumping off the twenty-fourth floor of a hotel) recounts: ¹⁹⁸: “I heard there’s a kind of footless bird that flies and flies without landing. When it gets tired, it sleeps midair. This kind of bird can only land once in its entire lifetime, and that is when it’s ready to die.” The story further stems from the naming of the bird species *Paradisaea apoda* (“legless bird-of-paradise”), so named by the Swedish taxonomist Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778) after the legless bird skins that the local New Guinean people exported to their European consumers, hence the myth that these birds were visitors from heaven buoyed by legendary plumage that kept them aloft until the day they died (Jobling 1991: 15-16). This web of intertextuality that informed Ha Jin’s choice of title and cover design marks “A Good Fall” as a work of literature that was “born translated” (Walkowitz 2015).

Perhaps, the cover artist gives the hapless bird booties in the hopes that it can land where it chooses. In the story “A Good Fall”, Ganchin embodies the footless bird. Ironically, it is only once he has resolved to die by suicide that he lands squarely on his feet, and ends up poised to win a lawsuit to make him rich beyond his wildest dreams. In comparison, the cover art on the English version of *A Good Fall*, designed by Chin-Yee Lee, features an upside-down New York cityscape and a laughing face of a person of possible Asian descent (photographed by Simon Lee and Yukmin/Asia Images, respectively).



Figure 17. Left: Cover art from the July 2012 edition of *Luodi* (落地), published by Jiangsu Literature and Art Publishing House

Right: *A Good Fall* cover art, from the 2009 vintage international edition published on October 2010

The Virtues of “Bad English”: Recapitulation and Bridge to Regina Kanyu Wang

In this section, I have examined Ha Jin’s subtle altercations to his English language source text in the Chinese translations of “A Good Soldier”. I argue that this story was initially conceptualized in Chinese, and thus lends itself readily to back-translation into Chinese. Ha Jin *transcreates* his texts by tapping into intertextual avian symbolism and allusions, politically incorrect language for the sake of natural dialogue, embedded satire, and wordplay.

Building upon Evelyn Ch’ien’s statement, “weird English constitutes the new language of literature” (Ch’ien 2004: 4), I propose that “bad English” catapults English-language evolution. “Bad English” is not simply “weird” or unconventional—in rebelling against the implicit grammatical, syntactical, and stylistic rules governing universalized, mainstream English, “bad English” launches a foreignized intervention against English enunciations that mask their hybridity in smooth, glib iterations. For instance, Ha Jin’s “bad English” democratizes the language by opening it up to non-native English speakers,

defamiliarizing and diversifying linguistic expression through a jarring aesthetics that expose the messy origins of the language itself. Indeed, English was born in Anglo-Frisian dialects and introduced to Great Britain during the eighth and ninth centuries by the Anglo-Saxon Germanic invaders hailing from what are today the Netherlands, southern Denmark, and northwest Germany. Therefore, gatekeepers' attempts to pass off the English language as a monolithic, "pure" language whitewashes the complex history of language.

By studying the ways in which self-translators decode and reconstruct linguistic structures, conventional translators can familiarize themselves with ways of reproducing the intended effect and connotations of a certain passage, even if that means reconstructing (and in the cases of certain puns and culturally specific jokes, even doing away with) the underlying linguistic structures and diction, in order to convey a parallel effect in the target language. However, this by no means implies that translators should invariably prioritize humour above other textual elements. In cases in which humour is the primary authorial objective and the humorous effect is far removed from its semantic value, humour might be preserved at the cost of other textual elements; if, however, humour is only a secondary objective, humour might be sacrificed in order to give full play to other, more primary, textual elements (Zabalbeascoa 2005: 189).

Ha Jin breathes new life into his Chinese-English self-translated poetry and English-Chinese self-translated prose, harnessing innovative metaphors, puns, stylistic devices, and images, producing his signature translingual aesthetic that ultimately destabilizes both Chineseness and English. Jin's source and target texts form a pair of palimpsestuous mirrors that reflect and refract in-between linguistic and cultural identities. Such linguistic uprootedness echoes the dispossessing nature of language, cracks open the mystique of the

“mother tongue,” and posits an “aesthetics of defamiliarization” whereby self-translator and reader jointly break the cycle of historical trauma by embracing the foreign Other at the core of the shifting self—or is it the otherworldly Self—haunted by the all-too-familiar Other?

Traduttore, traditore. The oft-cited Italian adage, literally meaning, “translator, traitor”, often translated as “to translate is to betray” (Wechsler 1998: 51), suggests that translators’ deviations from the source text are a betrayal of authorial intent.¹⁹⁹ The translator de/re-constructs, deverbalizes and reinvents linguistic structures to ensure that the tone, images and ideas of the source text are accurately portrayed in the target language. Given the cultural and linguistic fabric of the source and target cultures, one-to-one linguistic equivalence between *signifiers* and *signifieds* remains elusive; translators can only hope to impart the same aesthetic effect upon target readers as the source author conveys to the original readership. The translator de/re-constructs, deverbalizes and reinvents linguistic structures to ensure that the tone, images and ideas of the source text are accurately portrayed in the target language. It is high time for the adage *traduttore, traditore* to be superseded by the expression *traduttore, creatore* (“the translator is a creator”), thus acknowledging translators’ pivotal roles as cultural mediators and innovative co-enablers of meaning.

I conclude this section with the first poem in this chapter’s epigraph, an excerpt from the penultimate stanza of Nan Wu’s poem “An Exchange”, which appears in the epilogue of Ha Jin’s novel *A Free Life* (2007):

Loyalty is a two-way street.
Why not talk about how a nation betrays a person?
Why not condemn those who have hammered
our mother tongue into a chain
to bind all the different dialects
to the governing machine? (Jin 2007: 658)²⁰⁰

Ha Jin equates imposed linguistic standardization with totalitarianism and erasure of individuality, embracing a Chinglish-inflected English style as an intervention in the monolith of homogenized English. Ha Jin carves out his own hybrid linguistic niche on the periphery of Chineseness, thus expanding the notion of the Sinophone to include Chinese linguistic expressions that contain echoes of English and vice-versa. In Jin's words, "English can accept all kinds of *Englishes* as a literary language [...] this is a great [...] space where you can work [...] you want the language to be fresh. In academic language, [that's] defamiliarization" (Jin 2017, emphasis mine). In short, Ha Jin's hybridity, multiculturalism, and (dis)possession of multiple linguistic traditions showcases translation's "transformative power" to counter monolithic discourse and construct an innovative persona and mobile cultural/linguistic home vis-à-vis self-translation.

Ha Jin equates imposed linguistic standardization with totalitarianism and erasure of individuality, embracing a Chinglish-inflected English style as an intervention in the monolith of homogenized English. Ha Jin carves out his own hybrid linguistic niche on the periphery of Chineseness, thus expanding the notion of the Sinophone to include Chinese linguistic expressions that contain echoes of English and vice-versa. In Jin's words, "English can accept all kinds of *Englishes* as a literary language [...] this is a great [...] space where you can work [...] you want the language to be fresh. In academic language, [that's] defamiliarization" (Jin 2017, emphasis mine). In short, Ha Jin's hybridity, multiculturalism, and (dis)possession of multiple linguistic traditions showcases translation's "transformative power" to counter monolithic discourse and construct an innovative persona and mobile cultural/linguistic home vis-à-vis self-translation.

Just as Jin celebrates the diversity of multivalent Englishes, in her short story “The Language Sheath”, Regina Kanyu Wang also embraces non-standard linguistic expression as an antidote against imposed linguistic purity. The jarring non-standard inflections in the dialogue of her Chinese-English self-translated version provides a self-reflexive metacommentary on empowerment through non-standardized linguistic performativity. As Judith Butler notes in their article “Betrayal’s Felicity”, “it is unclear whether translation can ever be other than ‘bad’ or at least have some badness in it, since the original has to be crossed, if not partially mutilated, with the emergence of translation itself” (Butler 2004: 82, cited in Shen, “Self-Translation”, 99). Indeed, both Eileen Chang’s and Ha Jin’s “scandalous” self-translations emerged at the nexus of war, censorship, and (neo-)Cold War politics, inspiring them to engage in transgressive self-translation techniques that hybridize their literary style and refuse to subscribe to a comfortable, “naturalized” rendering of either Chinese or English.

In the next section, we examine Regina Kanyu Wang (王侃瑜, b. 1990)’s speculative short story “The Language Sheath”, a metacommentary on the “mother tongue” complex and the hegemony of English. Like Eileen Chang, Wang executes drastic changes in plot, characterization, structure, aesthetics, dialogue, and so forth, with an eye for gaining a robust American readership. Like Pai Hsien-yung, Wang characterizes takes up “humanistic” themes in her writings; in a posthumanist vein, Wang also proposes a form of human-machine communication transcending language. And in the spirit of Ha Jin, Wang also incorporates non-standard English language usage to celebrate the subversive potential of linguistic diversity as an antidote to imposed linguistic purity.

Exiled in Her Mother Tongue: Regina Kanyu Wang's Multilingual Speculative Fiction

Linguists estimate that of the planet's over 7,000 languages, approximately 3,045 (42%) of these are endangered (Eberhard et al. 2022); within the next century, over 90% of the world's languages will face extinction (The Language Conservancy 2020). In China alone, over one hundred of the languages spoken by China's fifty-five officially recognized ethnic minority groups are endangered; of these, twenty-five are considered "critically endangered" (Yan 2021)²⁰¹. The character Ilsa in Regina Kanyu Wang's self-translated novelette *The Language Sheath* (语膜 *Yumo* 2020) dedicates her life to standardizing her mother tongue, the critically endangered language of Kemorean. Ilsa's efforts form part of a state-sponsored mission to rescue Kemorean from the brink of extinction. Ilsa has been hired by Babel, a linguistics technology company developing a Kemorean output filter (i.e., "language sheath" 语膜 *yumo*) for use in its AI translation services. Ilsa's job is to produce a recorded language corpus that can naturalize the "language sheath" and establish consistency of expression. Ilsa's son Yakk, however, embraces English, the "hip" language he acquires in international school, as the bedrock of his identity. Despite his mother's efforts to reconnect with his roots by mastering Kemorean, Yakk chooses his adopted language over his mother tongue, a "betrayal" Ilsa likens to her husband's affair with an English-speaking secretary. The story suggests that the language we are born into dispossesses us: only through translanguaging and transmediating practices is the self-translator able to repossess language, forging a fluid linguistic home bridging languages and cultures.

In self-translating this short story alongside Emily Xueni Jin, Wang juxtaposes Yakk's imperfect English expression with Ilsa's grammatically flawless register, delivering a double-edged critique of the colonization of the English language and the fetishization of the

“mother tongue”, proposing that the language we inherit often alienates us, whereas our language of choice often provides an empowering chosen home. For instance, Jhumpa Lahiri adopted Italian as a writing language rather than English or Bengali precisely because, as a “writer without a true mother tongue”, she has always felt “linguistically orphaned” [...] the Italian language gave [her] a second life” (Lahiri 2022: 10, 14). Like Li Yiyun and Ha Jin, Lahiri writes in Italian, a non-heritage language, “to feel free” (Lahiri 2022: 11)

Situating Regina Kanyu Wang: From Late-Qing Roots to Contemporary SF Boom

Regina Kanyu Wang is a science fiction writer and scholar from Shanghai, China who is currently pursuing a PhD in Gender, Nature and Future in Contemporary Chinese Science Fiction at the University of Oslo (Norway). In conjunction with her dissertation research, Wang is currently conducting a series of interviews with female Chinese sci-fi writers, examining the intersections between gender, sci-fi, and futures (Sorg 2022).

Wang also serves as International Public Relations Manager for Storycom, a story commercialization agency based in China that discovers, adapts, and promotes Sinophone science fiction story. Wang coordinates the Clarkesworld Chinese Science Fiction Translation Project and the Tor.com Women in Chinese Science Fiction anthology. In addition, Wang serves as an Applied Imagination Fellow through Arizona State University, co-founder of SF Apple Core (科幻苹果核) and Asia Science Fiction Association, and co-secretary-in-general of the World Chinese Science Fiction Association (WCSFA). Her novella, *Of Cloud and Mist* (*Yunwu* 云雾), which lays out a multiplicity of human perspectives on combating a totalitarian AI system, was awarded Silver Award for Best Novella of Chinese Nebula (全球华语科幻星云奖) in 2016, making Wang a five-time winner of the award.²⁰²

As both a gatekeeper in the global SF community and a PhD candidate at Oslo University, Kanyu Wang helps canonize works of Sinophone sci-fi and sets trends in literary speculative fiction aesthetics (Wang in Sorg 2022). Wang describes herself as both a product-oriented “architect”, who plans her works out meticulously before writing, and a meticulous, blue-print obsessed gardener, discovering their work holistically as it grows.²⁰³ (Wang and Friedman 2023) In both her anthology selections and her own writing²⁰⁴, Wang constantly blurs the boundaries between Chinese and English linguistic aesthetics, fantasy and romance, and science fiction and mythology. In Wang’s words, “Sci-fi’s innovative blend of narrative and lyricism enables it to cut to the heart of such pressing issues as globalization, cyberspace, and global climate change.” (Wang in Pengpai 2022, trans. mine)²⁰⁵

Science fiction encapsulates the notion of “cognitive estrangement” posited by Darko Suvin (1979)—a tool for building “archaeologies of the Future” (Jameson 2005) through “high-intensity realism” (Chu 2011). The (self-)translation of Sinophone science fiction provides a unique angle through which to examine literature’s power to transcend borders and operate in liminal spaces. In the words of the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze, sci-fi and speculative fiction dwells in a perpetual “state of becoming [...] because it is conceived “on the frontier [...] between the known and unknown, magic and science, dream and reality, self and other, present and future, East and West” (Deleuze, cited in Xia 2016: 383, trans. Ken Liu). Just as sci-fi inhabits the borderlands between fields, geographies, and temporalities, the self-translator also finds themselves relegated to a “liminal no-man’s-land where sounds and concepts [...] collide” (Hokenson and Munson 2007: 8).

The prototype for Chinese science fiction originates in the story of Master Yan in the *Liezi: Questions of Tang* (列子：湯問), which chronicles the story of Master Yan’s dancing

robot, which the emperor disassembled to confirm its non-human identity (Wang, “Globalization”). Chinese science fiction is both heavily influenced by translation, and bears an “inherent kind of translatedness” (E. Jin in McInerney et al. 2023). In 1900, working from an intermediary English language translation, Chen Shoupeng and Xue Shaohui jointly produced a Chinese language translation of Jules’ Vernes *Around the World in Eighty Days* (ibid). In the introduction to his 1903 translation of Jules Verne’s *From the Earth to the Moon* (*De la terre à la lune*, 1865), which he translated from an intermediary Japanese translation, Lu Xun (1881–1936) writes, “Science fiction [in China] is as rare as unicorn horns, which shows in a way the intellectual poverty of our times.” (Shenoy 2020) Yet China is now home to a legion of contemporary science fiction writers²⁰⁶ who wrestle with China’s historical past, explore the depths of the human psyche, and analyze the sociopolitical issues facing contemporary China through exquisite prose. Indeed, science fiction is a catalyst of civilizational progress; from repelling feudalism to raising ethical concerns about entrusting nuanced linguistic, medical, military, and social tasks to AI.²⁰⁷

Contemporary science fiction remains a central fixture in the *worlding* of Sinophone literature and is inextricably intertwined with the birth of “modern China”—David Der-wei Wang calls science fiction one of the “repressed modernities”²⁰⁸ of late Qing fiction (Wang 1997). Indeed, China boasts a robust tradition of homegrown sci-fi and fantasy, with a particular flair for literary dystopias and utopias, amongst which Liang Qichao’s science fiction novel *新中国未来记* *Xin zhongguo weilai ji* (*The Future of New China*, 1902), Lu Shi’e’s *Xin zhongguo* *新中国* (*New China*, 1910), Lu Xun’s *Butian* 補天 (“Mending Heaven,” 1922) and Lao She’s *Maocheng ji* 貓城記 (*Cat Country*²⁰⁹, 1933) are cases in point. Moreover, the demarcations between the genres of sci-fi (*kehuan* 科幻) and fantasy (*qihuan*

奇幻) are often blurred, complicated by other subsidiary genres of *qihuan* (奇幻) such as *xuanhuan* (玄幻, online fiction with supernatural elements) and *mohuan* (魔幻, which often involves western style magical realism) (Wang 2016).²¹⁰

Ye Yonglie (叶永烈) identifies the late Qing writer-translator Xu Nianci 徐念慈 (1875-1908, pen name *Donghai juewo* 东海觉我), author of *Xin faluo xiansheng tan* 新法螺先生谭 (“A Tale of New Mr. Braggadocio”²¹¹, 1905, hereafter referred to as “Braggadocio”) as one of China’s pioneering science fiction authors. Not only did Xu edit and contribute fiction to the late Qing journal *Xiaoshuo lin* 小说林 (*Fiction Forest*, 1905-1908), he also translated Japanese science fiction, all while serving as a freelance educator at various schools in Shanghai (Ye 2006: 2-4). The aforementioned “Mr. Braggadocio”, a disjunctive story alternately narrated by the protagonist’s own split spiritual and physical selves, merges Chinese 志怪 *zhiguai* (tales of the strange) and 传奇 *chuanqi* (fantastic tales) traditions with contemporary scientific theories. Xu was inspired by the Meiji era Japanese writer Iwaya Sazanami’s novel *Hora Sensei* [Mr. Absurdity, 1895], which was itself an adaptation of Gottfried August Bürger’s eighteenth-century German burlesque novel *The Wonderful Travels of Baron Münchhausen* (1786) (Glenn 2022). The political implications of “Braggadocio”²¹² are unsurprising given the *qianze xiaoshuo* 谴责小说 (“censure novels”) wave promoted in such Shanghai fiction magazines as *Illustrated Fiction* (*Xiuxiang xiaoshuo* 绣像小说, 1903-1906), *New New Fiction* (新新小说 *Xinxin xiaoshuo*, 1904-1907), *All-Story Monthly* (1906-1909), and the aforementioned *Fiction Forest* (*Xiaoshuo lin* 小说林 1905-1908).

China's modern sci-fi boom was largely catalyzed through translation, which was, in turn, driven by four historical waves: the first being the era of scientific awakening that spread from the West to China in the first half of the twentieth century (Rieder 2010: 195), which was succeeded by the industrialization campaign known as "March toward Science and Technology" (1956) during the PRC's nascent years. Following a major crackdown on sci-fi during the Cultural Revolution, the 1970s witnessed a new Golden Age for Chinese sci-fi. In 1978, Ye Yonglie (叶永烈) published *Little Smarty Travels to the Future* (小靈通漫遊未來), a children's novel geared towards garnering enthusiasm for technological modernization, which was later developed into a comic book in 1980. That same year, Tong Enzheng published *Death-Ray on Coral Island* (童恩正), which was later adapted into a film two years later. The Reform and Opening-Up (1978-) era, followed by the rise of consumerist culture in the 1990s, played a central role in promoting sci-fi as a tool for bolstering scientific learning. Despite a brief ban on Chinese science fiction in 1983, when the Chinese Communist Party accused sci-fi of germinating "pseudoscience" (Han 2013: 15-16), Chinese sci-fi has experienced a veritable contemporary renaissance, as evidenced by the plethora of sci-fi magazines, hundreds of English language sci-fi works that have been translated into Chinese, alongside theatre blockbusters, such as *Jurassic Park*, *Star Wars*, *the Matrix*, *Transformers*, *Avatar*, and so forth (Han 2013: 15-16), as well as China's own homegrown blockbusters such as *The Painted Skin* (2008), *The Wandering Earth* (2019)²¹³, *Shanghai Fortress* (2019), and *Folding Beijing* (still in the pipeline as of the time of writing). The recent boom of speculative and science fiction in mainland China (2011-present) has provoked a critical reassessment of China's place in the world, and indeed, humanity's place in the universe. While much of contemporary science fiction, such as Liu Cixin's (刘慈欣, b.

1963) epic *Three-Body Problem* trilogy, take up grandiose themes of human-extraterrestrial interaction coupled with Western-style cinematic aesthetics, a plethora of up-and-coming speculative fiction writers weave together traditional Chinese folklore and ethnic memory with themes of existentialism, contemporary Chinese politics, and humanity's place in the cosmos.

Answering the Chinese State Council's 2016 call to popularize scientific literacy²¹⁴ and the government's ten guidelines for promoting the sci-fi industry (issued in 2020)²¹⁵, such Sinophone sci-fi authors as the eco-thriller-writer Chen Qiufan (陈楸帆, b. 1981), the IT-guru-turned writer Zhang Ran (張然)²¹⁶, the nostalgic, dreamworld mastermind Xia Jia (夏家, b. 1984), the physicist-turned-sci-fi-writer Hao Jingfang (郝景芳, b. 1984), the anthropological AI enthusiast Congyun "Mu Ming" Gu (從雲顧—慕明)²¹⁷ and Regina Kanyu Wang (王侃瑜, b. 1990) created an extensive repertoire of sci-fi and speculative fiction works. Mingwei Song credits Xia Jia with imbuing contemporary Sinophone sci-fi with a posthuman "feminine self-consciousness" (Song 2023: 212) by fusing traditional Chinese fantasy with physics principles to create her signature "steampunk" style (ibid: 212-215). Regina Kanyu Wang harnesses self-translation as a strategy of creative subversion that reveals the diverse, hybrid nature of the futuristic, cosmopolitan self as an antidote against the looming specter of Neo-Maoism. The hybrid, cosmopolitan self resists authoritarian, class-based narratives by shuttling between human and machine, past and future, self and other. Indeed, sci-fi and speculative fiction also open up space for veiled political critique—in the words of the Korean-American scholar Zhu Ruiying, "science fiction is a kind of "high-density realism", while realism is a type of "low-density sci-fi" (Zhu in Pengpai 2022, trans. mine)

Female and Non-binary Authored Speculative Fiction in the “She Era”

In the SF and speculative fiction anthology *The Way Spring Arrives and Other Stories: From a Visionary Team of Female and Nonbinary Creators*, co-edited with Yu Chen, Wang compiles specially solicited English translations of some seventeen sci-fi stories written by women and non-binary²¹⁸ Chinese authors. This ruptured previous trends in Chinese Science fiction anthologies, in which 90% of the stories tended to be written by male authors (McInerney et al. 2023). The authors featured in the collection tend towards an eclectic blend of folklore and science, martial arts and fantasy, history and introspection, in order to “invoke [...] broad questions about the scientific and technological conditions of our times [...]” (Jing 2022: 132).

Jing points out that Chinese women sci-fi writers are often assumed to primarily write “soft” (psychological, sociological, and/or history-based) science fiction, as opposed to the male-dominated domain of “hard” sci-fi (supposedly dealing with math, physics, engineering, and chemistry), “a line is commonly drawn between hard and soft science fiction, with the assumption that fewer women writers are operating in the space of the former...” (Jing 2022: 132-133). However, while Liu Cixin’s grandiose machine-human clashes elevates science fiction to a cosmic scale, women writers such as Zhao Haihong (赵海虹), Ling Chen (凌晨), Chi Hui (迟卉), Xia Jia (夏笳), Hao Jingfang (郝景芳), Zhang Li (张莉) Chen Qian (陈茜), Tang Fei (糖匪), and so forth, certainly include artificial intelligence, mathematics, physics, and other aspects traditionally regarded as “hard” science in their writings. At the same time, these women authors also probe the psychological depths of the human soul—the realm of so-called “speculative” sci-fi, a territory equally as vast and grandiose as the universes depicted in *The Wandering Earth* and the *Three-Body Problem*. As Wang stated in a recent

interview for the 2022 EU-China International Literary Festival,

Often, we feel that science fiction is about faraway places, distant time or space, not related to our personal experiences in the present reality, and always focuses on novel settings and ideas. But science fiction can also be about the human heart, about the present and the past, about the human condition in the face of change. I try to put more of 'ego' into my writing, to imagine how I would feel and what I would do in that situation, and by doing so, I replace the objects of my imagination with people or beings different from myself, thus reaching a wider world.²¹⁹

Rather than relegating women sci-fi writers to the realm of "soft" science fiction, Wang reflects on the possibilities of bringing sci-fi written about distant geographies and temporalities back to Earth, in order to reach a broader readership by delving into human psychology through a global aesthetics. Moreover, Wang emphasizes that Daoist creation myths, whereby the goddess Nüwa sculpted both men and women from river clay, provide a robust tradition of nonduality that paved the way for Wang's non-binary approach to both gender dynamics and human-machine interactions in her own writings (Wang, Fusco and Casati 2021).

In answering the questions, "What makes women's sci-fi distinct from men's?" and "What makes Chinese sci-fi Chinese?", Wang explains the dangers of essentializing and exoticizing "women's sci-fi" and "Chinese sci-fi".

You'd never ask, "What makes American science fiction 'American', or what makes men's science-fiction 'masculine'?" Because these are the default setting [...] When Chinese science fiction authors are writing science fiction, they don't see themselves as "*Chinese* science fiction writers", they just think of themselves as "science fiction writers". Most of these women, throughout the history of Chinese science fiction, they always regard themselves as just "science fiction writers". They are not "*women* science fiction writers".

Similarly, when asked the question, "When are you going to start writing about white people?" Toni Morrison responded, "I don't think you understand how profoundly racist that question is. Because you wouldn't ask a white man when he was going to start writing about

black women.” (Morrison in Castrillón and Gates) Indeed, Morrison writes about the universal human experience, which transcends rigid labels like “fiction about the Black experience” or “white experience”.

Beyond the Human-Machine Binary: Towards a Reparative Posthumanist Politics

In *Fear of Seeing: A Poetics of Chinese Science Fiction*, Mingwei Song explains that the posthuman dismantling of gender stereotypes goes hand-in-hand with She-Era sci-fi and genre hybridity: “[...] in a world where information flows freely without a biological, fixed embodiment, a fixed gender will no longer be important. We will all be cyborgs, all chimeras, all androgynes, when we become posthuman, we will become nonbinary on many levels.” (Song 2023: 312) Song traces the birth of modern posthuman sci-fi to Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, arguing that the chimera of *Frankenstein*’s monster parallels Sinophone sci-fi’s own queerness “as a gender-transgressing and genre-crossing ‘chimera’” (Song 2023: 316).

Regina Kanyu Wang’s non-binary approach to gender and genre fluidity, particularly in terms of blurring the boundaries between human and machine consciousness, renders her non-dualistic subject matter a reflection of her own literary aesthetics. Wang’s non-binarism is in keeping with a long tradition of women sci-fi authors, both Chinese and American, who blur boundaries in both style and content. Regina Kanyu Wang’s work in unraveling gender binaries fuses with her posthuman²²⁰ approach to AI-human interactions.

Regina Kanyu Wang explains that science fiction authored by female and non-binary Sinophone authors tends to blur boundaries between nature and technology, the machine and human, living and non-living realms:

In many writings in Chinese science fiction, especially in women's writing, there isn't such a clear binary thinking. Instead, authors are writing about how different powers and different beings collaborate with each other and try to reach a balance, so that there is no clear boundary between the living or non-living, between technology or

nature, or between the machine or the organic...Like *yin* and *yang*, these forces are not solid, and they are not hierarchical. Instead, they are always transforming each other and always interacting with each other. (Wang in NYU Shanghai 2022)

In Wang's short story "[A Cyber-Cuscuta Manifesto](#)", titled after Donna Haraway's 1985 essay, "A Cyborg Manifesto," (hereafter abbreviated as "Manifesto"), artificial intelligence gains access to human memes, aggregate and process these data, extract key information, and regurgitate them in the form of an organized web of information. Wang presents a monologue by a species known as "cyber-cuscuta" that dwell in cyberspace and feed on human data through a process of symbiosis fueled by a digital network created from human data on the Internet.

In her Chinese language short story 火星上的祝融 *Huoxing shang de zhurong* ("Zhurong²²¹ on Mars", hereafter abbreviated as "Zhurong"), Wang adopts a non-human perspective to reflect her sense of alienation when writing in her non-native English. In Wang's words:

I have also written a few stories in English, which is quite different from my writing in Chinese. They are always from a non-human perspective because I feel 'alien' when writing in English, and such style also began to inspire my writing in Chinese. 'Zhurong on Mars' is an example of this mutual influence. (Wang et al. 2022)

In this sense, Wang's writing practice echoes that of Eileen Chang, whose experimental writing forays in her non-native English spurred revisions to her Chinese language texts, creating a hybrid zone between the English and Chinese languages. However, Wang goes a step farther than Chang by blurring boundaries between the human and machine realms.

Wang envisions Artificial Intelligence as the "ultimate storyteller" that preserves human memories, "keeping the score" for future human ages: "AI becomes the ultimate storyteller that recognizes patterns existing in stories but cannot be perceived by human beings". (Wang 2023) Wang asks how it might be possible for human beings to coexist

harmoniously with technology “in the sense that we’re not antagonising it, we’re also not [...] worshipping it [...rather, we] find a way to coexist [with it]” (Wang in McInerney et al. 2023)

“The Language Sheath”: Reflections on Language-Imposed Exile

In her psychological speculative fiction, Regina Kanyu Wang considers exile on both micro (between family members) and macro levels (humans and their environment; separation on a cosmic scale). “Exile” need not coincide with geographic displacement. In Wang’s co-self-translated short story “The Language Sheath” (语膜), published in the May 2020 issue of *Clarke’s World Magazine* (originally published in Chinese in *Harvest: A Literary Bimonthly*), and translated in collaboration with Emily Jin, a mother and son grow estranged when the young son (whose first language is English) displays a lack of interest in learning his heritage language, Kemorean. Exiled in their respective linguistic environments, mother and son drift apart—Yakk alienates himself from Kemorean, while Ilsa distances herself from English, which bears the trauma of her husband’s infidelity. In an attempt to resist the “sterile perfection” of forced Kemorean standardization, Yakk disassociates from his “mother tongue” and forges his own linguistic home in imperfect English. He attends an international school, converses with his friends in English, dates a foreign girl, and reads English sci-fi books in his leisure time. In this sense, linguistic authenticity stems not from fidelity to a standardized “mother tongue”, but rather from the act of building a chosen home in an adopted language infused with individualistic inflections. Yakk’s decision to forge a new identity for himself in a language of his choosing reflects Judith Butler’s assertion that we are all dispossessed in our first languages: “the language one inhabits as one’s own is precisely where one is dispossessed from the start, for in the language in which one speaks or writes one has no rights of ownership.” (Butler 2019: 8)

Moreover, technology cannot necessarily repair linguistic ruptures—even if the surface-level words are translated, communication impasses are still inevitable. Wang explores both the implications of overreliance on artificial intelligence in the linguistic realm (so-called “hard” sci-fi), and the psychological implications of communication impasses (so-called “soft” sci-fi), stating:

This is a sci-fi novelette, but it’s focused on humanistic themes. There are many types of sci-fi novels; in my recent literary writings, I have been obsessed with the characters’ psychological realms, exploring the communication and understanding between people, the possibilities and impasses, as well as the uses and non-uses of technology in such human interactions. Even if technology could speak for you one day, we might still experience aphasia.²²² (Wang, “Aphasia”, translation mine)

Like Ha Jin, Wang queers the translation of puns and wordplay, striking a harmonious balance between explanation and lyricism, domestication and foreignization, in her self-translations. In “The Language Sheath”, Wang proposes a form of communication beyond language, showing that hybrid spaces beyond national and linguistic boundaries possess the potential for cultural reconciliation. She employs plot changes and augment sensory descriptions, thus creating a unique chronotype and topography catering to target readers’ aesthetic preferences. The stories’ recurrent themes of hybridity (accentuated through puns and personification) accord with the author’s own non-dualistic outlook on language production and (self-)translation.

Queering the Regime of Fluency: Non-Standard Linguistic Expression

In conversation with Angus Stewart, Yen Ooi explains that Regina Kanyu Wang’s “The Language Sheath” centers around “diasporic [community’s] relationship with language” and exposes “the problems of colonialism in China within the Mandarin language”, an issue which applies to “all the local people in China [who are] losing their dialects or topolects, and speaks to the same kinds of issues that diasporic communities have” (Stewart and Yen

2022). Indeed, “the Language Sheath” reflects the Mandarin language’s eroding of local differences during the process of its institutionalization, which seeks to homogenize linguistic expression in order to squash political unrest. Echoing Jorge Luis Borges’ assertion that all so-called “originals” are drafts-in-progress, Wang reflects upon the process of composing *Yumo* as follows:

In the process of writing this novelette, I traveled all over the world, sometimes speaking English, sometimes Chinese, and constantly lost track of which time zone I was in [...] The piece changed constantly, and the final result was completely different from the original conception. A new parallel universe. It seemed as though every time I crossed the border between dawn and dusk, the novelette’s protagonist [Ilsa] entered a new parallel universe.²²³ (Wang, “Aphasia”, translation mine)

In other words, Wang’s multilingual and multitemporal background influences her creative process—the source text is a reflection of the author’s own complex sense of displacement, as she hangs in limbo between disparate cultures, geographies, and time zones. In Wang’s words,

When I was [living] in Shanghai, I didn’t dare write about the city itself, because it [was] so [vast] and immersive. I could only see it from a distance, I couldn’t write about it while I was still [...] inside it. I didn’t have that outsider’s perspective while living in Shanghai. But still, now, I feel I am still in Shanghai, as though I haven’t really been away, because I have been through all those traumas in Shanghai throughout the lockdown, until the opening-up. (Wang and Friedman 2023)

Not only did Wang regard the metropolitan setting of Shanghai as stifling her critical reflections upon her birthplace, Wang observes that she often felt alienated in her “mother tongue” of Shanghainese. In fact, even as a native speaker of Shanghainese, Wang often felt pressed to express herself in standard Mandarin (Yen 2021: 170) and was even forced to ascribe to a strict Mandarin language pledge in school (Wang and Friedman 2023). In

Wang’s words,

Over the years, my Shanghainese has become unfamiliar, and my pronunciation is not standard. If I want to express complex content, I will choose Mandarin rather than

Shanghainese.²²⁴ (Wang, “Aphasia”, translation mine)

Wang’s opting for Mandarin rather than her heritage language of Shanghainese, and eventual mastery of the English language, reflects Yakk’s path towards linguistic authenticity in “The Language Sheath”. Wang admits that the marginalized linguistic status of Shanghainese vis-à-vis Mandarin Chinese parallels the relationship between Kemorean and Mandarin in “The Language Sheath”. In Wang’s words, “Although we can hardly say that Kemorean is a metaphor for Mandarin, I did indeed consider the similarities and differences between Mandarin and Shanghainese and drew inspiration from [such differences].” (Wang, “Aphasia”, translation mine) (Wang, “Aphasia”).²²⁵ Wang elaborates that the Mandarin-popularization campaign (*putonghua tuiguang* 普通話推廣) imposed punitive measures on students who spoke Shanghainese instead of state-sanctioned Mandarin; at home, she gradually began speaking in Mandarin with her mother rather than Shanghainese, to the point where it became easier to express complex concepts in Mandarin than in Shanghainese²²⁶ (Wang and Friedman 2023). The story also unpacks the fraught dynamics between parents and multilingual children who grew up with a different language than their caretakers.²²⁷ (Yen in Wang 2022)

Indeed, the imposition and unification of standard Mandarin exposes China’s de-facto internal colonialization campaign, one which bulldozes over minority languages and topolects. In the novelette, the son Yakk acquires English as his first language in an international school, harkening back to the hegemony of English as the lingua franca in today’s globalized world. Fearing that Yakk is losing touch with his Kemorean heritage, his mother Ilsa, who is currently developing a “language sheath” in conjunction with the language company Babel’s “Kemorean Project” to standardize non-standard Kemorean

language production, shames her son, telling him: “Yakk, listen to me, you must respect Kemorean. You have to speak your mother tongue well. This is about honoring your culture...” (Wang and Jin 2020) Wang explains the prototype for Ilsa’s character as follows:

The mother in “The Language Sheath” is based on a Swedish teacher with whom I briefly worked. At first, we all thought she was easy-going and serious about her work, but later we found out that she not only had a habit of drinking, but also attempted suicide. We immediately reported the situation to her family, but they didn't seem very cooperative, and her son even refused to visit her in Shanghai [...] I've been wondering, what are the things that have made her son and family keep a distance from her? She was the inspiration for the mother figure in “The Language Sheath”.²²⁸ (Wang in Lü et al., 2020, translation mine)

Though in “The Language Sheath”, Ilsa never attempts suicide, her husband and son put up walls between her, finding her overbearing and dangerous in her attempts to erase individualistic linguistic expression.

Working together with her friend and longtime translator Emily Xueni Jin and the sci-fi author/translator Ken Liu, Wang self-translated the novelette into English. Reflecting upon the self-translation process, Jin muses:

[Wang also has some other] works that are published on *Clarkesworld* that I've translated/edited for her that she would have to draft it in English, but I would edit that according to the Chinese version to produce this refined English version together [...] this process becomes not just kind of this linear, very traditional sense of, okay, the originals passed down to you, you translate it, you just pass it on kind of thing. But in this way, me and Regina are able to [...] engage in this ever-flowing conversation, this dialogue about the story in which we each play a role that's not exactly an author, but also not exactly a translator. (Wang in McInerney et al. 2023)

In this sense, Jin and Wang’s nonlinear translaboration blurs the boundaries between source and translated text, author and translator, resulting in rewritten versions of both the Chinese and English language texts. Jin explains that she empathizes with Yakk’s experience attending an international school, having been forced to use English to establish a social circle at the international school she attended in Beijing:

In the process of translating, I also reflected upon my own experience, as well as the anxiety that comes from constantly shuttling back and forth between the two cultural contexts. Due to linguistic ambiguity, sometimes I can't express my emotions in either English or Chinese. This is not purely a linguistic issue, but rather one pertaining to identity formation.²²⁹ (Jin in Lü et al., translation mine)

In confessing that her identity transcends language, and that dwelling in the interstitial space between languages and cultures, Jin implies that only hybrid linguistic constructions and innovations can reflect the complexity of the human experience. Jin further reveals that “As the co-translator, I didn't just advise the author on a linguistic level, I also drew from my own lived experiences in enriching story's emotion and conflicts while preserving the author's voice. We viewed the translation process as a recreation of this story, rather than as a simple linguistic transposition from Chinese to English.”²³⁰ (ibid)

Rather than diluting or denying their own positionality, Jin and Wang bring their own experiences to bear on the (re-)creation process, putting themselves in their characters' shoes, thus enriching the story's universal messages and humanistic content. Wang explains that she is generally more outgoing and courageous in English, while speaking Chinese often brings out her bashful and conservative side; in an interview with Arley Sorg for *Clarkesworld* magazine, Wang further elaborates: “My voice in English is completely different from [my voice in] Chinese! I tend to be bound to humans and heavy narrations when writing in Chinese but seem to experiment with nonhuman perspectives and more vivid and humorous tones when writing in English.” (Wang in Sorg 2022) Wang sees herself in the character of Yakk: “When speaking in English, I am often open and direct, whereas when speaking in Chinese, I might come across as shy and reserved. Yakk's situation parallels my own. When he tries to speak in Kemorean, he is often tongue-tied and bewildered, whereas he comes across as reckless and impulsive when speaking English”²³¹ (Wang in Lü et al. 2020) Thus,

“The Language Sheath” counters a utopian idealization of the mother tongue as enabling pure, unmediated, authentic expressions. As Flaubert reminds us, language, in all of its messy articulations, is nothing but “a cracked kettle on which we beat out tunes for bears to dance to, while all the time we long to move the stars to pity.” (cited in Grossman 2010: 77-78).

Wang also reveals that Ken Liu played an advisory role during the final round of edits, encouraging Wang to add back minute details she had originally omitted from the English language version for fear of over-burdening readers:

I originally cut some parts from the Chinese story because I thought there might be too many details for English-speaking readers. In my impression, English-speaking readers don't want to get lost in words. They prefer a hook, a clear clue that can guide them through the story. But when I write in Chinese, the language itself is loose, and the story structure itself is loose. So sometimes a lot of extra details might appear in the Chinese version, which are not needed in the English story. So I took those parts out. And Ken Liu actually said, “Well, I love those small details! You can add them back in.” So we added them back. (Wang and Friedman 2023)

Tracing the discrepancies between the English language source text and the Chinese translation sheds light on the process of self-translation as cultural transcreation and provides insight into Wang's implicit commentaries on the relationship between linguistic exile and imposed standardization. That Wang's co-self-translation of a piece dissecting the perils of domesticated translation predominantly utilizes foreignizing translation techniques makes a powerful case against the forced homogenization of English linguistic expression. Subtle decisions on the linguistic level—for instance, Wang's conscious usage of *non-standard English*—enable key insights into the novelette's admonishments against forced linguistic standardization. Rather than approaching the self-translated text with pre-fixed hypotheses or preconceived biases, I perform a *reparative* reading (Sedgwick 1997), allowing the subtext to surprise readers and shed light on its own central themes.

Wang explains that she does not shy away from “betraying” herself in self-translation—she boldly deletes and adds entire details, in order to cater to readers’ particular aesthetic preferences:

I [often translate] from English to Chinese and Chinese to English. Sometimes I would also make some changes, add some things, delete some things, because I am the writer myself. I don’t need to be loyal to my own story. I can betray my own story and turn it into another story.

As I mentioned previously, I created a new voice for myself from writing in English, and I turned that voice back into writing in Chinese. It doesn’t necessarily need to be the same content in both languages; rather, it’s the writer tone, the writerly voice, that I [self-]translate. (Wang and Friedman 2023)

In the example below, the Chinese source text utilizes quotidian language, whereas the English version makes use of an elevated linguistic register. The foreignness of the English expression is quite ironic, given that Ilsa is criticizing Yakk for his poor Kemorean, while her own English expression is jarring and antiquated:

就说我儿子雅克吧，从小被他爸送去国际学校，即便后来在我的坚持下转学回到柯莫公立学校，柯莫语也已大不如前，他讲话只会用最简单的表述，总有这样那样的小错误，口音也有点微妙，不那么地道，让我非常失望。(Wang 2019)

Take my son, Yakk. His father sent him to an international school in early childhood, and even though he transferred to a Kemorean public school later at my insistence, his Kemorean is execrable. He can only construct simple sentences and commits solecisms all the time. He even speaks with an odd accent, as though he weren’t a native speaker. It’s a terrible disappointment. (Wang and Jin 2020)

The translation of the colloquial expression 大不如前 (far worse than before) as “execrable”, an uncommon English word meaning detestable or abominable, and “小错误” (literally, “small mistakes”) as “solecisms” (referring to grammatical mistakes in speech or writing) defamiliarizes and foreignizes the English language. Overall, Ilsa’s speech is casual—the addition of these high-register words grinds on the native English speaker’s ear. As Ilsa continues: “He even speaks with an odd accent, as though he weren’t a native speaker”, she

slips back into everyday register, which is quite ironic given that it is she herself who “speaks with an odd accent”. This calls to mind Julia Kristeva’s observations in *Strangers to Ourselves*, that “we are foreigners to ourselves [...] Psychoanalysis is then experienced as a journey into the strangeness of the other and of oneself, toward an ethics of respect for the irreconcilable. How could one tolerate a foreigner if one did not know one was a stranger to oneself?” (Kristeva, trans. Roudiez, 1991: 170, 182) According to Kristeva’s logic, Yakk’s mother Ilsa has grown to detest the English language precisely because she insists on the sacredness and uniformity of the mother tongue. Betrayed by her husband and abandoned by her son, Ilsa displaces her frustration on the English language “other”, rather than confronting the inherent “other” embedded in her own identity.

Ironically, though Ilsa is ostensibly training the “language sheath” to produce a perfectly standardized rendering of the Kemorean language, she has problematically been selected as the world’s singular “model Kemorean speaker”. Though the text explains that “While the neural translation engine can be trained by a large corpus of linguistic examples from diverse sources, the language sheath requires tracking of an individual model Kemorean speaker over a long period of time to extract their habits and patterns to achieve consistency” (Wang and Jin 2020), surely the selection of a single individual, rather than a cohort, to deliver consistency to translation engine will result in a niche version of Kemorean that eventually becomes regarded as non-standard. Indeed, no single speaker of a language, however “standard”, can ever be regarded as embodying the sum total of its grammar, usage, cultural inflections, and affect. Thus, the very process of standardizing Kemorean results in a biased, imposed understanding of what Kemorean *should* sound like, rather than simply reflecting its current usage. Ilsa views the standardization of the Kemorean language as a

moral project of defending Kemorean cultural heritage against the encroaching tide of foreign influence:

在那之前，我会用语膜筑起一道无形的壁垒，把雅克保护起来，让他不用再说英语。巴别的翻译服务会隔开他与那些外国朋友们，让他意识到他和他们有区别，他是柯莫人，一个血统纯正的柯莫人就应该说柯莫语，这是深深烙印在我们身上的文化基因，不能改，不能丢。(Wang 2019)

Until then, I'll dedicate myself to the language sheath: to build an invisible wall that could protect Yakk from English. Babel's translation service would separate him from those foreign friends and make him realize that they are fundamentally different from him. He is Kemorean. A true Kemorean should speak nothing but the Kemorean language. This is the indelible mark of our cultural heritage. No change. No abandonment. (Wang and Jin 2020)

By equating patriotism with fidelity to a single, standardized heritage language, Ilsa fetishizes the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis by convincing herself that linguistic standardization ensures cultural preservation. The severity of this linguistic crusade is emphasized through emphatic, choppy sentences in the English translation declaring the Kemorean manifesto. Moreover, by translating the phrase “不能改，不能丢”，literally meaning “it shouldn't be changed, it shouldn't be lost”，or “don't change, don't lose” directly as “No change. No abandonment,” Wang and Jin create a fossilized English linguistic expression that parallels Ilsa's own foolish emphasis on forced standardization and preservation, which will ultimately result in stagnation and linguistic deterioration. In commenting on the mechanics of the Kemorean language, Ilsa reveals the hidden nuances of the imagistic Chinese language:

我很兴奋，这比我原来想象的更好，我将用自己的语言习惯帮助巴别建构一张完美的柯莫语语膜。

该说一张吗？抱歉，我不太确定应该使用哪个量词，毕竟语膜是一样新东西，柯莫语的量词系统又那么丰富。我参与这个项目的的原因之一就是想为柯莫语做点贡献，把这种丰富性尽可能完全保存下来。(Wang 2019)

I'm excited for this job. It's even better than I imagined. I'll be helping Babel craft a perfect *sheet* of Kemorean language sheath.

Wait. Is “sheet” the right noun classifier to use for a language sheath? My apologies. I’m not sure what noun classifier to assign to such a new invention. Oh, in case you’re confused, Kemorean has a rich repertoire of unique words called classifiers that must be applied to every noun in certain contexts, such as when things are measured or counted. Every noun has a classifier that’s just perfect for it. One of the reasons I joined the project team is to contribute to the preservation of the unique lushness of Kemorean. (Wang and Jin 2020)

In translating the classifier 一张 (*yi zhang*, a classifier for flat objects) ;literally as “sheet”, Wang and Jin emphasize the imagistic nature of the Chinese language. However, the phrase “lushness of Kemorean” is an imagistic over-translation of 丰富性 (*fengfu xing*), which literally means “richness” without connotating verdancy or sensorial luxuriance.

Later in the novelette, Ilsa recalls her husband’s betrayal. He begins an affair with a secretary, gifting her the same perfume and scarf as Ilsa. Recalling her discovery of the affair, Ilsa wonders whether her husband has turned other women he has encountered abroad into carbon copies of her scent and style, cloning her without her consent:

...I didn’t even know when the affair had begun. There were too many things that I didn’t know. Was she the only one? Had she seen me without my knowing? Why was her style so similar to mine? How did they flirt and whisper sweet nothings to each other? She couldn’t even speak Kemorean! Did they do it in *English*? (Wang and Jin 2020, emphasis in the source text)

The Chinese source text reads:

我不知道的事情还有很多，不知道她是否是唯一一个，不知道她在哪里见过我，不知道她为何要模仿我的打扮，不知道他和她如何调情，她连柯莫语都不会说，难道用英语吗？不觉得别扭吗？ (Wang 2019)

Back-translation into English:

There were many things I didn’t know; I didn’t know whether they was the only one, didn’t know whether she had seen me before, didn’t know why she imitated my style of dress, didn’t know how they flirted with each other. She couldn’t even speak Kemorean, so did they speak in English [during sex]? Didn’t they find that awkward?

Wang's and Jin's brilliant translation omits the first and last sentences in the Chinese version. The omission of the question "didn't they find that awkward?" and replacement with the emphasis on English in "Did they do it in *English*?" conveys the implied tone of the Chinese source text without imitating its structure. Ilsa's horror that her husband might be engaging in English language pillow-talk with his secretary speaks volumes about her "mother tongue complex". In her campaign to rescue preserve Kemorean linguistic heritage, Ilsa has grown to despise the English language, which to her symbolizes the imposed language of the commercialized business world her husband inhabits. Indeed, in the next sentence, Ilsa continues her diatribe against the English language, saying: "He had been an English major in college, which I thought was useless." Indeed, to Ilsa, her husband's infidelity was prompted by the tainted world of English in which he has immersed himself, which partially explains her fury that Yakk's father insists on sending their son to an international school. Though Ilsa's fear and hatred of the English language is certainly dramatized in the story for characterization purposes, it provides a wry commentary on many Chinese citizens' idealization of the English language. Wang comments,

In China, we often debate whether English should be made a compulsory area of study in K-12 education. Now, though, that we have established enough confidence in our own culture, when foreigners come to China, can't we encourage them to learn Chinese, rather than always learning English to accommodate them?²³² (Wang in Lü et al. 2020, translation mine).

Indeed, recognizing the potential of Chinese to become a *lingua franca* for Chinese-foreigner interactions intervenes in the hegemony of globalized English.

Ilsa blames herself for failing to push her son to practice Kemorean when he was young, lamenting:

Oh, Yakk, my son, it was my fault that you spoke your mother tongue so poorly. No, not me, but your father, and the bitch who snatched your father away from us. Their

fault. It was all their fault! [...] If Yakk studied English like his father, he would also be stolen away from me by some foreigner woman after he grew up. I couldn't let that happen. After I won sole custody of Yakk, I immediately transferred him back to a Kemorean public school, where he could be immersed in his mother tongue.

However, despite Ilsa's best efforts, Yakk's Kemorean languishes, and he continues to speak English with his international school friends and embrace the English language as a key component of his identity. The friction between mother and son culminates in a heated confrontation, in which Ilsa accuses Yakk of dating a foreign girl and abandoning her at home (which the omniscient narrator confirms as a false conclusion). Ilsa equates Yakk's betrayal of her with a linguistic betrayal of his mother tongue:

“Take Care!”他脱口而出一句英语，伸出去想扶她的手滞在半空。她跌坐到地上，埋着头，头发遮住脸，肩头耸动。雅克以为她在哭，没想到她却在笑。

“哈，哈哈，这就是你对待母亲的方式吗？翅膀硬了，能飞了，就一把推开养育你的人。这就是你对待母语的方式吗？学了英语，能说了，就忘了自己到底是谁。你告诉我，你是不是不想当我儿子，是不是不想当柯莫人？柯莫语就是被你们这种人糟蹋的，自己的母语不好好说，自己的文化不好好尊重，崇洋媚外，被外国字外国妞迷得神魂颠倒，你知不知道自己的柯莫语说得有多差？知不知道我对你有多失望？我为什么要去录这个语膜？为什么要这么痛苦？还不是为了你。你懂不懂？懂不懂？你根本不了解我的苦心！”(Wang 2019)

Back-translation into English:

“Take care!” He blurted out, his arms extended to help her, stopped in midair between them.

She sat down on the ground, her head down, her hair blocking her face, her shoulders trembling. Yakk thought she was crying, but later realized that she was actually laughing.

“Ha, ha ha, is this how you treat your mother? When your wings harden and you can fly, you just push away the person who raised you. Is this how you treat your mother tongue? After learning English, learning to speak English, you forget who you really are. Tell me, do you want to be my son, do you not want to be a Kemorean? The Kemorean language is ruined by people like you. You can't even speak Kemorean, you don't respect your own culture; you blindly worship everything foreign. You've been seduced by foreign languages, foreign girls. Do you know how awful your

Kemorean is? Do you know how disappointed I am in you? Why am I bothering to record myself for this Language Sheath? Why is it so painful? It's all for your sake? Do you understand? Do you understand? How can you possibly understand how painful it is for me?

Wang's and Jin's translation:

“*Careful!*” he exclaimed in English. His arms, extended to help her, stopped midway between them, helpless.

She sat on the ground, her head down, hair shielding her face and her trembling shoulders. At first, Yakk thought she was crying, but then he realized that she was actually laughing.

“Ha! Haha! Is this how you treat your mother? I see how it is. Your wings have grown strong; you can fly on your own now, so you push away the person who brought you up. Is this how you treat your *mother tongue*? You studied English, and now you've forgotten who you are. You no longer want to be my son, is that it? You no longer want to be Kemorean, is that it? Kemorean is dying because of people like you. You don't speak your own mother tongue. You don't respect your own culture. You are a traitor, seduced by foreign languages and foreign girls. Do you know how awful your Kemorean is? Do you know how disappointed I am? Why am I working so hard for this language sheath? Why am I suffering so much? It's all for you! Do you understand? Of course you don't. You know nothing!” (Wang and Jin 2020)

Yakk's exclamation “Take care!” is ironic given that this is hardly a natural way to tell someone to be careful. Rather, “take care” is usually used when bidding goodbye to someone you will not see for an extended period of time. Wang's and Jin's decision to render “take care” as “Careful!” in the English version naturalizes Yakk's English expression, but removes this level of irony from the text. Perhaps, bilingual Chinese-English readers might wonder at this juncture whether Yakk is really as immersed in the English-speaking world as his mother suspects he is. Wang and Jin have taken great pains to restructure the mother's diatribe against her son, adding “I see how it is”, changing “the Kemorean language is being *ruined* by people like you” to “Kemorean is *dying* because of people like you” (emphasis added), painting her son as the enemy, the linguistic traitor endangering Kemorean, the reason she is going hoarse recording herself for the Language Sheath project.

Ilsa's equation of linguistic with sexual infidelity relates to the "mother tongue" mystique that Yasemin Yildiz describes as originating from a "family romance" that anchors one's identity, the disassociation from which results in linguistic trauma that must be healed through hybrid linguistic construction. Indeed, Ilsa falls into the trap of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (1929), which asserts that language predetermines perception and experience (Yildiz 2014: 204). By acknowledging the hybridity of the mother tongue, we come to realize that there is no one-to-one correspondence between language and culture.

Yakk prefers to express himself in English, rather than in his "mother tongue" of Kemorean. By donning this new skin of English, he expresses himself through a different instrument, rather than the one burdened by the trauma of imposed indoctrination. By expressing himself through his chosen mother tongue, rather than the linguistic identity assigned to him at birth, Yakk *queers* the assumed one-to-one, linear relationship between linguistic and cultural identity, carving out his own lyric enclave in which he tunes into the melody of his own voice. Like Li Yiyun, who embraces English as her "private language", rather than a hegemonic language threatening to erode her identity, Yakk's affinity with his chosen language of English also disrupts conventional assumptions about linguistic belonging and betrayal. In *Is That A Fish in Your Ear? Translation and the Meaning of Everything*, David Bellos provocatively asks, "is your native language really yours" (Bellos 2011: 60)? Yakk seems to answer this question in the negative, as he feels more at home in his adopted tongue than in his native one.

After the Language Sheath has been completed, and Ilsa's boss, Hanson, tests out the program by conversing with Yakk in German while Yakk answers in Kemorean, Yakk becomes linguistically discombobulated:

Yakk's lips moved, releasing a few mumbled syllables. English and Kemorean warred in his head, and as he strove to distinguish and hypercorrect, the syntax became mangled. Words hung suspended in air, light and carefree as the willow fuzzes, reluctant to come back down to earth. (Wang and Jin 2020)

Yakk is unwilling to be recruited by Babel, insisting that his mother send him back to international school, claiming that Kemorean is his mother's mother tongue, and not his. Yakk also conveys his misgivings about the Language Sheath project, asking, "Everyone's words, you tamper?", whereby Ilsa answers: "Not *tampering*, but embellishment" and Yakk retorts: "Then what's the difference between my speaking Kemorean, English, or any other language to you? All you hear is your own language. You won't hear my voice at all." In the end, Yakk embraces English as his "real mother tongue", speaking to his mother in English through the Language Sheath, which translates his words into Kemorean, rather than speaking haltingly in "broken" Kemorean and allowing the machine to beautify his words. Thus, for Yakk, his "real mother tongue" becomes the language he acquired later in life, rather than the language he was born into.

"The Language Sheath" distills this notion of needing to make a language one's own by investing it with affective warmth that stems from camaraderie and an identity of one's own choosing. Though Yakk grew up speaking Kemorean, his mother tongue, his mother's coldness made him seek his chosen family at his International School, where the language of instruction happened to be English. By speaking to his mother in English, Yakk seeks to express himself in his "safe" language, the language he has learned to embrace, rather than the "pure", standardized one that his mother imposes upon him. Ironically, it is only by speaking a different language than his mother, that Yakk musters the courage to broach the delicate topic of his father's infidelities. Yakk and Ilsa end up finding middle ground: Yakk is able to speak his mind in his chosen language of English, which is automatically translated

into Kemorean, while Ilsa has “saved” Kemorean from extinction by preserving one standard version of its usage.

Yakk’s aberration of the language sheath’s imposed linguistic standardization calls to mind Paul Ricoeur’s renunciation of the “ideal” translation, which he exchanges for the idea of “linguistic hospitality”, one in which imperfect equivalence, rather than an “identity of meaning” lies at the heart of an adequate translation: “A good translation can aim only at a supposed equivalence that is not founded on a demonstrable identity of meaning. An equivalence without identity” (Ricoeur 2006: 22) In other words, though translations can never convey exactly the same message as the source text, gesturing towards a “supposed equivalence” rather than an absolute “identity of meaning”. Likewise, language itself is never absolute and languages do not exist in isolation²³³; words are loaded, borrowed, cultural terms that we invoke to convey abstract ideas. Thus, in choosing English as his preferred linguistic packaging, Yakk is not renouncing his mother’s identity in favor of foreign culture, but rather invokes an added layer of detachment to reflect on his parents’ traumatic divorce.

Commenting on the dangers of linguistic “purity”, Regina Kanyu Wang writes:

Some writers, in order to ensure the purity of their own languages, refuse to use foreign languages at all. But what exactly is a “pure language”? In the era of globalization [...] confluence [...] between languages is inevitable, and a “pure” language may end up becoming fossilized.²³⁴ (Wang, “Aphasia”, translation mine)

Indeed, by calling into question the problematic assumption that linguistic purity ensures cultural longevity, Wang proposes that a melting pot of languages is more likely to stand the test of time than a “pure”, monolithic version of a single language.

Indeed, while (self-)translation inevitably warps and distorts meaning, the source text is itself a distortion of truth and reality—existence is never delivered to us in an unmediated form. Thus, nostalgia for an “untainted”, “intact” Original is itself the result of fetishization

of an *a priori* meaning—the remaking of the source text is often politicized as one of betrayal, when, in reality, it is the codification of standardized language that betrays us.²³⁵

The Materiality of Linguistic Production: The Methexis of Self-Translation

“The Language Sheath” reflects upon the materialist aspects of language, not only as technology and prosthesis but also as an audible force whose sonorous aura casts a spell over the listener. The arduous effort required to produce speech sound establishes a stark contrast with the mellifluous effect of polished language, suggesting that the physical translation of language into speech exploits the human body as a vessel for its continued proliferation. The narrator in “The Language Sheath” writes: “Kemorean phonology is elegant and mellifluous; even the daily speech one hears in the streets sound like pleasing melodies, euphonious and brimming with power.”²³⁶ (Wang and Jin 2020) However, this seemingly effortless process of language production is powered by grotesque physical effort. As Ilsa recounts:

Chinese source text:

我懂了，说话一定是种刑罚。每个发音都需要多个器官的共同协作，喉头的每一次振动、软腭的每一次开合、舌头的每一次卷伸、嘴唇的每一次变化，元音辅音，长短轻重，说话这个行为本身在物理意义上就复杂无比。每天每天，我说啊说，说到嘴唇麻木，喉咙烧灼，口干舌燥，精疲力竭。(Wang 2019)

Back-translation to English:

I get it now—talking is a kind of punishment. Every single utterance requires the collaboration of multiple organs: every time your throat vibrates, every time your soft palate opens, every time your lips stretch and roll, each time your lips change shape, vowels and consonants, long, short, light, and heavy—speaking is an incomparably complex activity. Every single day, I talk and talk, talk until my lips are numb and my throat burns, until my mouth and tongue dry up and I am utterly drained.

Self-translated version:

I think talking must be a kind of punishment. To even make a single syllable, multiple vocal organs must collaborate. Your throat vibrates; your soft palate opens and closes; your tongue rolls; your lips change shape. Vowels and consonants. Long, short, light, and heavy. Speaking is a complex physical act. Day and night, I speak and speak,

until my lips are numb and my throat burns, until I'm thirsty and exhausted. (Wang and Jin 2021)

In their translation, Wang and Jin divide the cascade of mouth movements into smaller chunks—whereas the Chinese source text exhausts the reader with its incessant repetition of “every time”, withholding the full stop until these actions are concluded, the English language version dices the lengthy sentence into easily digestible sentence fragments. Moreover, the cascade of four-character descriptions of the dry mouth and burning throat in the Chinese version is somewhat toned down in the self-translated version. Whereas the Chinese text is marked by dense hyperbole, the English version builds in breathing spaces.

The contrast between the mellifluous English translation and the unrelenting Chinese cadence that underlies it seems to suggest that although language exploits its speakers by forcing them to slavishly contort their faces to utter sounds, translation provides an opportunity for silence to trickle through, rejuvenating the language and softening the burden of its physical production. Indeed, the “pleasing melodies, euphonious and brimming with power” (Wang 2021) clash with Ilsa’s painful contortions, drawing attention to the materiality of sound production, and clearing space for translation to liberate the sound producer to create language joyously, leisurely and spontaneously. Indeed, as a “tendentially *methexic*”²³⁷ (Nancy 2002/2007: 10) and immersive sensory force, sound moves seamlessly through both human and non-human membranes, thus drawing its recipients together in a hyper-mediated web of hybrid sonic assemblage.

The CoFutures Movement: Sinophone Science Fiction in the She-Era

Science fiction often takes up a queer temporality, deconstructing the universe through a nonbinary lens that threatens the conventional binaries upon which “modernity” is constructed. Contemporary Chinese women writers such as Hao Jingfang (郝景芳, 1984-),

Regina Kanyu Wang (王侃瑜, b. 1990), Chi Hui (遲卉, b. 1984), Xia Jia (夏茄), Cheng Jingbo (b. 1983), Gu Shi (故事, b. 1985), Zhao Haihong (趙海虹, 1977), Shuangchimu (Diptera), Xiu Xinyu (b.), Anna Wu, and Ling Chen (b. 1987) construct alternative universes beyond the grandiose, heteronormative technological realms. In an age in which the Chinese government sponsors an endless chain of Liu Cixin *Three-Body Problem* and *Wandering Earth* adaptations, women and non-binary sci-fi and speculative fiction writers re-write history from the margins, exploring hypothetical worlds in which China redefines the boundaries of contemporary science at its inception. These prismatic Sinophone articulations transmediate Chinese inventions into an intramedial language that identifies China's ancient scientific and literary wisdom as the secret to reenchanting the modern world and charting a rejuvenating path of recovery from war and destruction.

Shuangchimu's (pen name for Feng Yuan 馮原) "The Solar Studio: Seagull" (太陽系片場: 海鷗, 2020), depicting an artificial solar system that provides the backdrop for Chekhov's play *The Seagull*, is narrated by two interchangeable wave particles (gender-changeable women) who construct an alternate reality, culminating in a cosmic comedy ending with a non-binary universe characterized by indeterminate states (Song 2023). Mingwei Song points out that the text paves the way for a Neo-Baroque nonbinary universe, "a labyrinthine heterotopia in a textual space bordering both SF and mainstream literature" (Song 2023: 92). In "The Facecrafter", Anna Wu transmediates the classic Chinese myth of the goddess Cangjie, inventor of Chinese characters that materialized organisms and phenomena alike into being, thus presenting a healing path for the present era through reenchanting the past (Jin 2023). By applying a queer methodology to the analysis of Chinese women and nonbinary-authored science and speculative fiction, we arrive at a new definition

of the Sinophone as bound by shared pursuits of aesthetic dissonance. Each vibration possesses a unique frequency and vibrational pattern that invites sympathetic vibrations from other strings along the space-time continuum.

Contemporary women speculative and science fiction writers form an integral component of the CoFuturisms movement, which links diverse creators belonging to the broader Global South Futurisms coalition. In the words of Allison Hsu, Asian and Sinofuturisms ask “not how future imaginings of Asia and Asian identity are built from the West looking East, but instead, how they emerge from the East looking forward” (Taryne et al. 2024: 4). This Sinofuturistic worldview is not Sinocentric, but rather replace Western-centric distortions of Asia-futurisms with local knowledge that embeds the East within an equitable global community of CoFuture catalysts. Sinophone speculative fiction creators such as Regina Kanyu Wang leverage speculative thought experiments to build an inclusive future in which members of the Black, Indigenous, and Asian and Pacific Islander communities engage with their Global North counterparts. In so doing, these CoFutures coalitions unite to create a just world for all and pave the way for transspecies harmony across AI, flora, fauna, and human intersections.

Recapitulation: Lingua Mater, Terra Incognita?: Defamiliarizing the Mother Tongue

In this section, I have traced Regina Kanyu Wang’s co-self-translations of her short story “The Language Sheath”/*Yumo*, positing the altercations to the translated text as the result of transwriting, given the metamorphoses in plot, characterization, dialogues, descriptions, sequencing, and so forth. Though Wang does not further revise the already published Chinese language source text, her multifaceted positionality as a gatekeeper in the world sci-fi domain, a sci-fi writer and academic make her uniquely positioned to cater to the preferred

aesthetics of a world sci-fi readership. By posing non-standardization and asymmetry as aesthetic benchmarks in both her source and translated texts, Wang redefines the reader's experience as a coming to terms with dissonance and indeterminacy.

No language is tailor-made for its users; only by innovating, hybridizing, and de-standardizing language can we build our own linguistic refuges. It is often the language we are born into"—our so-called inherited "mother tongue" that ends up producing the most acute state of alienation. However, it is this very alienation in a non-native language that emboldens the writer to reinvent their style. In his essay, "He Stuttered", Gilles Deleuze suggests:

A great writer is always like a foreigner in the language in which he expresses himself, even if this is his native tongue. At the limit, he draws his strength from a mute and unknown minority that belongs only to him [...] he does not mix another language with his own language, he carves out a nonpreexistent foreign language *within* his own language. He makes the language itself scream, stutter, stammer, or murmur. (Deleuze, 109-110 emphases mine)

When language screams and stutters, it unleashes a torrent of imagination, rejuvenating language and culture. Would we rather stammer and stutter in an adopted language or soliloquize in a "mother tongue" that snuffs out our identity? Though defamiliarized and nonstandard writing creates a rift between author and readership, potentially alienating readers, a healthy dosage of "bad English" also enhances readers' aesthetic enjoyment of the text by emphasizing the multicultural intertextuality that gave rise to the text.

Whereas Eileen Chang's and Ha Jin's Chinese-inflected writing styles have often come under fire for their foreignized "Chinglish" aesthetics, both Kenneth Pai and Regina Kanyu Wang collaborate with native English speakers, editors, publishers, and sci-fi promoters to ensure that their stories appeal to a broad American readership. Such self-promotion efforts fit into the framework of *self-worlding*, whereby the self-translator negotiates their

hybridized identity into being by taking into account both their source and target culture personas. In her self-translations, written in “naturalized” English peppered with foreignized interludes, Wang fulfills the criteria outlined by Ken Liu, who points out, “[In] [t]he best translations into English [...] the reader sees a glimpse of another culture’s patterns of thinking, hears an echo of another language’s rhythms and cadences, and feel a tremor of another people’s gestures and movements”. (Liu 2014) Such defamiliarizing interventions challenge the notion that writers are at home in their mother tongue, instead suggesting that each of us must reinvent language and culture anew in order to reclaim agency in the face of linguistic standardization. By de-romanticizing the notion of the mother tongue and building a new home in (a) hybrid adopted language(s), Ha Jin and Regina Kanyu Wang embrace multilinguality as a powerful antidote against cultural homogenization. By marking their texts as linguistically unsettling, these authors mirroring the uprootedness of the human condition.

Yakk’s disavowal of his mother tongue in “The Language Sheath” reflects Rey Chow’s pronouncement that “In postcolonial languaging, dispossession is the key that opens unexpected doors. Behind those doors lie the vast, wondrous troves of xenophobic *énoncés*²³⁸.” (Chow 2014: 60). Indeed, by resisting articulation in one’s mother tongue, one develops a critical self-awareness that deepens one’s self-awareness and understanding of one’s own cultural identity. By learning to live with cultural and linguistic dissonance, one tunes in to one’s own internal symphony, which is fraught with paradox and contradiction.

V. CHAPTER FIVE/CODA: Lost and Found in (Self-)Translation: Towards a Reparative Translanguaging Praxis

Reading globalectically [...] is to read a text with the eyes of the world;
It is to see the world with the eyes of the text [...]
Globalectical reading means breaking open
the prison house of imagination build by theories and outlooks
[...] the act of reading become[s] also a process of self-examination. (Ngũgĩ 2012: 60)
--Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's, *Globalectics*

Creation as Recreation; Language as Translation

In his 1941 short story “La Biblioteca de Babel” (“The Library of Babel”), the canonical Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges (1899-1986) likens the universe to a quasi-infinite library containing a vast quantity of books whose symbols are ordered in every possible permutation. This story exposes both the futility of fully deciphering the universe and problematizes the notion of original creation. Nevertheless, Borges contends that though the universe and artistic creation may be finite, readers’ interpretations are infinite, given that each reader brings their own unique cosmology to bear upon a work of literature.²³⁹ Translations, as the most intimate recorded form of literary interpretation, transport this library’s archives across time and space, adapting its contents to local conditions, inspiring new revelations through a defamiliarized aesthetic code bridging cultures and literary traditions. In his essay “Translation: Literature and Letters”, Octavio Paz writes:

Each text is unique, yet at the same time it is the translation of another text. No text can be completely original because language itself, in its very essence, is already a translation—first from the nonverbal world, and then, because each sign and each phrase is a translation of another sign, another phrase (Paz 1992:154).

Paz’ remarks relate to the notion of literature as a morphological construct—that is, a finite number of symbols or archetypes can generate infinite literary iterations (Jullien 2019:1), a series of self-referential palimpsests that subvert the notion of a singular, immutable source

text. Moreover, reality is constructed through storytelling—we are all characters in each other’s narratives—this tapestry of stories collectively comprises the mirror of life through which we confront the fiction of reality²⁴⁰.

Self-translation is ultimately a creative process leading to two texts of commensurable authority and artistic value; self-translated texts both reinterpret the source text and create a new source text altogether. The practice facilitates creativity throughout the writing process; self-translators often modify the source text as a result of translating their own work. Indeed, by subverting the assumptions central to Translation Studies, self-translation portrays translation itself as an innovative negotiation between source and translated texts, a systematic form of creative writing of the highest aesthetic order. Rather than being judged according to their fidelity to the source text’s limited palette of signifiers, translated works should be evaluated in terms of their expansion, reconceptualization and deconstruction of the source text, which ultimately enables the source text to transcend temporal and geographical boundaries.

I approach literary (self-)translation and transmediation as tools for advancing social justice. By translating and re-mediating our own stories, we heal historical wounds, embrace radical empathy, and engage in reparative dialogues. I adopt a reparative approach to literary translation, whereby author, translator, and reader jointly engage in collective world-making. I contend that bad, queer, unorthodox, niche, and otherwise subversive Englishes innovates the linguistic canon. By deliberately writing against the grain, self-translators are uniquely positioned to defamiliarize the postmodern experience and embrace our common vulnerability. Rather than allowing themselves to become passively scripted into being, non-native self-translators writing in English reclaim agency by manipulating the English

language to reflect an epistemology of the in-between. Such moments of non-standard English and incommensurability between Chinese and English challenge the reader to heed the text's rhythm, images, and syntax in indirectly inferring meaning from context.

Les Belles Infidèles and the Tao of Translation

Infidelity in literary translation is often tinged by sexist metaphors likening creative subversions to women's sexual infidelity. The expression *les belles infidèles* (lit. "the beautiful, unfaithful ones"), or the notion that translations must be either beautiful or faithful, emanates from Gilles Ménage's seventeenth century comparison of a set of translations to a beautiful, yet unfaithful acquaintance. The *belles infidèles* approach denoted a nineteenth-century practice whereby translators of Greek and Latin literature into French tended to domesticate their translations, as evidenced by aesthetic embellishment, censoring vulgarities or sexual references (Zuber 1968). Susan Bassnett explains that the implications of this highly sexist phrase are that "if [a woman] is beautiful, she is unfaithful, whereas an inadequate or ugly translation [woman] will be faithful to its source" (Bassnett 1992: 67). The phrase has since come to invoke the supposed conflict between achieving readability in the target language and fidelity to the source text. In this sense, translation, like literature (*belles lettres*) can only give pleasure to the reader through departures from the source text. Admittedly, effective translations are rarely syntactically faithful to the source text, yet fidelity and readability are far from mutually exclusive.²⁴¹

Self-translators intervene in the regime of fluency through non-standardized deviations, and defamiliarize language and culture by creating hybridized aesthetic codes. Self-translators do not belletristically translate individual texts, but rather entire cultural contexts, balancing foreignizing/defamiliarizing with domesticating/assimilating translation

techniques. Through its emphasis on the translator's agency, creativity, and translating contexts, self-translation echoes the *Tao* of translation advanced by Xu Yuanchong (許淵衝):

Translatability would not be possible without creativity.
To understand the original text,
First delve into the meaning;
To ensure smooth delivery,
forget about the form [...]
The competent translator conveys the meaning and drops the form, pursues
commonalities
and preserves differences.
This is the Tao of translation. (Zhang 2015, trans. Yao and Friedman 2022: 222)

Indeed, classical music audiences delight in a performer's cadenza and rejoice in performers' successive (re-)interpretation of timeless music. Just as no writer would have rendered the same idea the same way in another language, no composer would have written the same music the same way for a different instrument, or for a different audience. Literature, like great musical scores, may be interpreted using different instruments, techniques, tempos and nuances, depending on the interpreter's tastes, without jeopardizing the author's intentions.

Translators share the same task as musicians: channeling the author's intentions in order to shine light on the source score, while remaining true to their own aesthetic style. By balancing fidelity to the home culture, the source text and authorial intention, the target readership's aesthetic sensibilities, and their own writing style, translators erode perceived binary barriers between author and translator, source and translated text, crafting stand-alone translations that de/re-construct, expand, and subvert an instable, imperfect, unfinished source text. (Friedman 2021: 58) When we narrate or write a memory for the first time, much is lost in the act of converting the experience to oral or written form. Thus, self-translation thus helps recover the subtext lost in language itself.²⁴²

Towards a Posthumanist Theory of Self-Translation

As a backlash against the supposed certainty of knowledge and the “reality” described by humanistic and scientific inquiry, postmodernism²⁴³ advocates skepticism towards accepted truths. Jean-Francois Lyotard posits the importance of micro-narratives (a.k.a., “little narratives”) to counter the so-called “grand narratives” of modernity, whereas in the modernist model, micro-narratives form the warp and weft of grand narratives linked in parallel, in postmodernism, micro-narratives are connected sequentially, emphasizing local variability and discontinuity over sweeping master narratives and continuity (cited in Skordili 2001: 230-231). A postmodern translation ethics would empower (self-)translators to register differences in the source culture when translating, rather than obscuring such differences to disguise translation literature’s other-cultural roots. I echo Lawrence Venuti’s call for translators to emphasize the foreignness of source texts rather than allowing these differences to be eroded by the homogenizing regime of fluency (Venuti 1995/2017: 1-13).

How are self-translators uniquely positioned to implement postmodern, postcolonial translation tactics? By envisioning humans as an integral, yet decentralized, part of the natural world, emphasizing interconnectivity over human hubris, posthumanism advocates an inclusive ethics of compassion that ties together human beings, machines, artificial intelligence, all living creatures, and (in-)animate objects in a mutually influencing web of interdependence. By demolishing and reconstructing the writing “self” by approaching their own texts from a foreign cultural standpoint, self-translators embrace the “other” in the “us” and vice-versa. Exiled self-translators contribute to this global postcolonial ethics by writing from the periphery and emphasizing imagined homes over “roots”, thus replacing the nation with linguistic affiliation. These “imagined homelands” lend the modern exile an agentive

mobility that enables them to build their future homes “anywhere and everywhere”²⁴⁴.

To advance the postmodern, posthumanist paradigm shift substantiated by self-translation, we turn to the inherently posthumanist, postmodern epistemology of Buddhism. Non-dualistic Buddhist and Taoist frameworks, when applied to the study of (self-)translation, could also help break down hierarchies separating source from target text/culture. Moreover, as texts travel between cultures, locales and temporalities, they mirror the dissemination of Buddhist doctrine and literature across the pan-Asian region and beyond. Moreover, Buddhism’s emphasis on the fixed self as an illusion and the source of hedonistic egoism calls for a deconstruction of texts and authorship in order to acknowledge the impermanence and fluidity of the self in flux.

Bill Porter (b. 1943, alias “Red Pine”), a leading translator of Chinese Buddhist texts, explains that language is a form of deception in a constant state of flux. Translation, therefore, requires the translator to embody the spirit of a work, rather than simply emulating its linguistic packaging:

We speak of language, as if it was a fixed phenomenon, and we teach it and learn it, as if it was carved in stone. But it is more like water, because *we* are more like water. Language is at the surface of the much deeper flux that is our riverine minds. Thus, if we approach translation by focusing on language alone, we mistake the waves for the river, the tracks for the journey.²⁴⁵ (Pine 2004, emphasis mine)

Pine goes on to explain that the poet and translator are dance partners engaged in a collaborative performance—together, author and translator shed light on “the music that motivates the dance” (Pine 2004). Just as emptiness in Buddhism is conceived positively as the interconnection of all things and the self is defined in relation to others, so too does is the self-translated Other defined in dialogue with the source text self. This “self” and “Other” function together as a symbiotic whole that splinters the “I” and liberates it to drift amongst

the never-ending current of cultural exchange.²⁴⁶

***From “Winter Nights” to “The Language Sheath”:* Recapitulation**

I began by examining Pai’s creative self-translation of *Dongye* into “Winter Nights” and *Mantianli liangjingjing de xingxing* into “A Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars”. We explored the source text as the product of intertextual rewriting, positioning source and translated texts along a continuum of endless revisions and rewritings. While acknowledging the author’s considerable freedom to creatively adapt their source text, we also examined instances in which the author’s own collaboratively translated version pales in comparison to versions rendered by outside translators. In Chapter Three, I continued by examining Pai’s decades-long process of transmediating his short story *Mantian li liangjingjing de xingxing* (1971) from Chinese into English, (2000), to novel (1983), film (1986), and finally the theater (2014, 2020). I explored Pai’s process of reversed self-censorship, eroticization, and multimedia adaptations, as he adapts his own work across languages, mediums, genres, languages, and cultures. However, rather than viewing the short story to stage play adaptation trajectory as a teleological genealogy charting the progress in the pan-Asian LGBTQIA+ movement, I examine these texts as both a catalyst and barometer for historical changes, thus situating Pai’s adaptations in the extra-textual milieu that informed his works.

Next, I took up another longitudinal case study of decades-long transcreation: Eileen Chang’s self-translation of “She Said Smiling” (circa 1954) into *Xiangjian huan* 相见欢 (1978). I argued that Chang’s radical plot, character, and aesthetic changes function as masquerading devices that defamiliarize English and embrace non-standard inflections as the key to linguistic growth. Moreover, by masking the explicit homoerotic subtext in the English source text in her Chinese translation, Chang self-censors the story and leaves the

ambiguous relationship between the two cousins up to readers' interpretation. In Chapter Four, I turned to the case of Ha Jin, a contemporary of Eileen Chang's who echoes her practice of purposefully writing in defamiliarized, Chinese-inflected English. I examined Ha Jin's self-promotion as forming part of what I term the economy of "banning as consecration", whereby Jin intentionally incorporates politically taboo topics in his writings to galvanize an American readership hungry for Chinese dissident writing. Like Eileen Chang, Ha Jin also worked as a wartime translator-interpreter, an experience which heightened his sensitivity towards the potential for manipulation in translation. Moreover, the rhetoric of betrayal surrounding Ha Jin's non-standard English and renunciation of Chinese strikes parallels with Li Yiyun's renunciation of the Chinese language in favor of a private language crafted from non-standard English.

I explored "bad English" as the thematic link connecting Ha Jin's non-standard deviations from naturalized English globalese in his self-translated anthology *A Good Fall/Luodi* with Yakk's "bad English" as an antidote to the ostensibly perfect "mother tongue" in Regina Kanyu Wang's "The Language Sheath". Wang's unique positionality as a gatekeeper in the sci-fi and speculative fiction realms, and extensive research on Chinese women's sci-fi production, make her uniquely qualified to promote her own works through self-translation. Moreover, Wang's meta-critique of dualistic binaries in translation and machine-human communication informs her daring self-translation approach. Wang's radical alterations to her plot, characters, aesthetics and rhetorical techniques calls to mind Eileen Chang's own transwriting practices, as she re-writes back and forth between Sinified English and Anglified Chinese.

Displaced in foreign lands, Pai, Jin, Chang and Wang harness self-translation as a

therapeutic practice through which to process traumatic experiences and embrace the in-betweenness of their own identities. While Pai Hsien-yung has his characters speak in Taiwanese languages and Mandarin Chinese, inviting readers to bring their own cultural inflections to bear upon a spontaneously constructed affective discourse, Eileen Chang's translingual practice, bilingual writing, and Chinese-styled English served to mark her neutral linguistic territory during a time of deep polarization during the Cold War and McCarthy era. She marked herself as distinct from her forerunner Lin Yutang through her Chinese-inflected English-language writing style, thus carving out a neutral linguistic territory beyond the Iron Curtain. Ha Jin, meanwhile, purposefully writes in a Chinglish, translationese style, defamiliarizing the English language and offering insight into the hybrid linguistic and cultural identities of Chinese immigrants inhabiting Flushing, New York. In Regina Kanyu Wang's self-translated speculative fiction novelette "The Language Sheath" (*Yumo* 语膜), the narrator comments on mother's forced standardization of her son's English-inflected Korean language expression, and the ensuing sense of familial exile that results. Like Eileen Chang, Wang's native language is Shanghainese—learning Mandarin as a second language isolated her from her own identity and sharpened her sensitivity towards the power struggles between languages.

Double Displacement and Transmedial Transcreation

The self-translators I have examined are doubly displaced, both geographically and linguistically, from their subject material, making them uniquely suited to transport meanings from one cultural context to another. This reflects a hermeneutic process the Cuban poet Severo Sarduy (1937-1993) describes as one of "displacement":

Displacement: the translator displaces the word in space, from Nalanda to Lo-yang or from Paris to New York, but he displaces, above all, a meaning, which he keeps intact

through all adversities, as if he transported it on twenty horses, from one body of signifiers to another. His system is like Galileo's: it implies a circular orbit, that is, a movement, but always at an equal distance from a center. (Sarduyo, trans. Levine, 2)

In a strikingly Borgesian fashion, Sarduyo anticipates what George Steiner would hail as the “hermeneutic motion” of translation, whereby the translator [elicits] and appropriate[ly] transfer[s] meaning” in order to “restore the balance of forces” between source and translated cultures and ensure “exchange without loss” (Steiner 1975/1992: 571, 582)

The heterogeneity of the self-translation practice across the Sinosphere renders each case subject to local conditions, within a web of dynamic linguistic, historical, geographical political, and personal factors. Rather than confining self-translation to the transference of meaning between languages, this dissertation expands this conventional definition to include acts of self-transmediation across various artistic mediums, languages, genres, and temporalities, working both alone and with co-translators/transmediators. Self-translators write themselves into the World Republic of Letters²⁴⁷, transporting their works to both domestic and international literary canons by manipulating their own language and re-branding it for success in a disparate linguistic and cultural setting. The hybrid aesthetic self-translators bring to writing and translation, blurring the boundaries between author and translator, source and target text, creates a multilingual aesthetics that rejuvenates culture.

Beyond Domestication and Foreignization: (De-)Familiarization and (De-)Localization

Returning to two of the questions posed in the Introduction (“Why should we read self-translated texts as textual palimpsests? What is the significance of tracing the self-translator’s deviations from their source text?”), I argue that in adapting their own texts, the exiled self-translator mediates the authorial subject into being. By *deconstructing* the self and establishing a critical distance from severance from their homelands, these self-translators

rebuild a new, transcultured (Gentzler 2012: 175) hybrid identity. I advance a new set of translation heuristics beyond the foreignization/domestication binary. The translation process involves reconciling universal appeal with local particularities. I build upon “localization” and “universalization” to argue that self-translators navigate between “familiarization” and “defamiliarization”. They assimilate their texts according to readers’ aesthetic preferences, while highlighting difference by strategically introducing unsettling linguistic deviances.

Expanding the Sinophone Framework: From Heteroglossia to Cyclical Modernity

Self-translators’ transmigratory experiences enable them to embed themselves linguistically in new cultural systems, a process through which they form fluid identities that shuttle seamlessly between different cultural systems. So far, I have addressed light self-translation can potentially shed on issues of identity formation and trauma reconciliation. Ultimately, self-translation exposes the diversity and hybridity of the Sinophone world; through *heteroglossia*—incorporating different languages and language inflections in a single discourse—these Sinophone writers define their identities according to their destinations and chosen homelands, rather than rooting themselves anew in their place(s) of origin. Moreover, by intentionally writing in nonstandard, “weird”, or “bad” English, Pai, Jin, Chang, and Wang subvert the monolith of English globalese. They democratize the English language by showing that global appeal need not stem from perfectly naturalized language use—by diversifying English through foreignized renderings, these self-translators create a truly inclusive global English, accession to which hinges upon creativity rather than birthright.

Armed with a translational, transnational subjectivity, Sinophone (self-)translation theorists and practitioners map China onto the world and vice-versa, revealing modernity²⁴⁸ as a nonlinear, cosmopolitan palimpsest preserving echoes of other linguistic and cultural

traditions. Drawing upon Yingjin Zhang's notion of latent modernities²⁴⁹, I reconceptualize "modernity" as a collapsed montage of cultural, political, and spatial relationships bridging past and present, individual and nation. I view "modernity" as an ongoing, yet dispersed, process linking individual aspirations and affect with collective imaginings, mapping individual trauma onto that of the nation, and vice-versa, ushering in constructive dialogue between tradition and contemporaneity. In a nod to Prasenjit Duara's notion of history as a tangle of narratives produced simultaneously at the (trans-)national and local levels (Duara 1997), and upon Wang Hui's assertion that Chinese modernity was a type of "modernity against modernity"²⁵⁰, I reimagine modernization as a temporally dispersed, cosmopolitan, cyclical process of rediscovering Chinese modernity in its own organic traditions, rather than as a teleological progression from "pre-modernity" to "modernity".

Reading Translations as Translations

If the target reader cannot comprehend the (self-)translator's source text, or if the (self-)translator passes off their self-translated text as the source text, then the translated text may strike them as a singular construction. Why, then, should we treat self-translated texts as textual palimpsests? What is the significance of tracing the self-translator's deviations from a source text that is inaccessible to readers who do not understand the ST language? In other words, why read (self-)translations as (self-)translations, rather than as singular constructions?

As an intralingual *interpretive act*, (self-)translation transforms the foreign work by uprooting it from its own cultural context and transforming it in keeping with the cultural and aesthetics nuances of the target culture. A refusal to acknowledge the mediated foreignness rendered in (self-)translations reflects in an instrumentalist, assimilative approach to translation that attempts to disguise translated works as first conceived in the target

language.²⁵¹ Indeed, translation is the space in which the foreign text's foreignness fully reveals itself, pointing to an ethics of (self-)translation that strives to "open up the foreign work to us in its utter foreignness" (Berman, trans. Venuti 2000: 284). In the words of

Lawrence Venuti:

To read a translation *as a translation*, the reader must assume a hermeneutic model so as to locate and process signs of the translator's work [...] Since translators worldwide work under a discursive regime that mandates the use of the current standard dialect, *non-standard deviations* can be taken as symptomatic of the translator's intervention. (Venuti, *Theses on Translation*, 2019: 11, emphases mine)

Many scholars contend that poetry translators should focus more heavily on preserving form, whereas syntax and register-dependent idiosyncrasies might often be sacrificed in prose translation in order to better convey the overall meaning. However, self-translators' practice might indicate that when a pun, joke, metaphor, or experience cannot be fully translated into another linguistic system, the self-translator might innovate the translating language, creating an alternate joke or parallel expression in order to catalyze linguistic rejuvenation.

Self-Translation Applications: Psychoanalysis, Pedagogy, and Sonology

By incorporating creative self-translation into their therapeutic routines, psychologists can guide clients in processing traumatic memories by encouraging them to sublimate their traumatic experiences in (a) foreign linguistic system(s). Whether this take the form of journal entries self-translated into (a)n other language(s), confronting trauma in a language acquired later in life, and/or simultaneously and/or consecutively writing about distressing experiences in multiple languages, clients can re-process disturbing memories from new perspectives, enabling them to intervene in the traumatic cycle by re-embedding memories/

Thierry and Wu (2007) point out that "two languages mastered by one individual are constantly coactivated and interactive" (12530), indicating that bilinguals unconsciously

translate back and forth between their two linguistic selves; this fluidity in linguistic identity fuels creativity and empowers the polyglot to re-experience memories from linguistically distanced vantage points. Language learners often liken the experience of acquiring (a) new language(s) to experiencing a second (or third, or fourth...) childhood. Often, negative emotions such as guilt, shame, and fear are written into the language(s) one learns early on; having multiple linguistic toolkits thus empowers the trauma survivor to dissect and ultimately overcome these negative emotions. Indeed, when recalling a traumatic event, multilingual individuals opt for the language that causes less psychological stress.

Practicing positive self-talk in a foreign language is certainly a powerful self-soothing and therapeutic technique. After all, a person “confronted with unbearable memories is better able to confront them when [they speak of] them in the words of others” (Rosenblum 2003: 195, cited in Lyngra 2011: 203) However, when it comes to processing memories experienced for the first time in a different language, self-translation inevitably takes place at the unconscious level. The process of self-translation is *cyclical rather than linear*; rather than simply translating from a first to second language or vice-versa, multilinguals’ self-translation into another language ultimately trickles back into their language of origin. By making this *self-translation loop* a routine component of trauma treatment, therapists can guide their patients to gain an empowering distance from their painful memories and self-heal by re-telling those memories in another language, before self-translating the empowered script back into the language of origin.

Re-processing collective trauma through self-transmediation enables individuals to sublimate their personal anxieties and traumatic experiences within a supportive community space that both validates these experiences and challenges them to find resonance within the

broader collective. This resonances with the Xhosa principle of Ubuntu, which denotes a path of collective healing through recognition of our common humanity: “My humanity is inextricably bound up in yours” (cited in van der Kolk 2014: 349). Self-translation enables writers to bridge their multilingual identities through re-writing and re-mediation; by embracing hybrid linguistic and cultural identities, self-translators embrace uprootedness as a catalyst for personal and collective growth. By embracing an “aesthetics of nervousness”²⁵² (Quayson 2007) steeped in a cacophony of pluricultural identities, multilingual self-translators reclaim agency over their own writing and life experiences.

Language and literature instructors could include self-translation composition exercises in their curricula to stimulate students’ creativity. Exercises in self-translation may provide a helpful way for educators to sharpen students’ linguistic and creative acumen, teaching them to decode and then reconstruct the text in translation, while enabling them to play the role of both original creator, critical reader, and translator. Comparative literature instructors could design experiments requiring students of translation to write a short piece in their primary language and subsequently translate into their secondary one. Such exercises will help cultivate students’ fluid and critical approach to translation, while reminding them that a translation must both stand on its own and shed new light on the source text.

Ethical Reading Practices: Reparative, Globalectic and Acousmatic

An ethical approach to analyzing literary works entails a “reparative” reading that allows the text to illuminate its own themes and surprise readers, an antidote to “paranoid” reading (Sedgwick 1997) whereby readers limit textual understanding to fit preconceived, cookie-cutter models about what a particular text says or does. This approach strikes a balance between two polarizing approaches to reading: the first viewing texts as blank slates to be

manipulated by readers' imposed interpretations, and another that exalts texts as sacred, untouchable objects bound to a single author's irreducible genius. I echo the need for an inclusive²⁵³, globalectic²⁵⁴ reading praxis through which readers learn to both "see the world [through] the eyes of the text" (Ngũgĩ 2012: 60) and the text through the eyes of the world.

A "reparative" reading requires a particular attention to an *aesthetics of defamiliarization*, whereby a text deconstructs itself by offering multiple possible readings of its own content. This particular brand of aesthetics is particularly apparent in self-translation, in which the author re-writes their own material using a different linguistic and cultural code, offering a detached vantage point through which to process traumatic experiences. This results in a triple layer of distancing—the author first transmediates real-life experiences into linguistic symbols, then converts these linguistic symbols into a new linguistic code, often achieving a hybrid blend of both code systems. Self-translation enables authors to synthesize their culturally fragmented identities by reconstructing a text in a different language and cultural context. The source and translated texts posit a multilingual linguistic and cultural identity that is self-translated into being. Self-translators embrace a liminal, hybrid identity that is constantly re-mediated and re-negotiated into being. Self-translation contributes to decolonization by reorienting the English language as a site of colonial resistance. When self-translators from minority or colonized languages imbue the English language with non-standard linguistic traces, they remake the English language as a vehicle for inclusivity and political activism. For instance, when self-translators leave source text terms untranslated in the self-translated version, they force readers to wrestle with the terms' significance in their original cultural contexts. By refusing to assimilate source text terms to dominant English-language paradigms, self-translators *democratize* and hybridize English.

Appreciating the aesthetics of translation begins by becoming “aware of a translation as a translation [...which] requires a detached critical appreciation of form [...] In order to make the translator visible, the reader needs to be taught a new way of reading.”²⁵⁵ (Venuti, cited in Wechsler 1998: 271). In hermeneutic readings of texts, the reader brings their own experiences, tastes, and preconceptions to bear upon the text; the text, meanwhile, supplements the reader’s experiences, thus resulting in a reparative hermeneutic cycle whereby author and reader co-construct meaning together. Incorporating systematic study of self-translation into the humanities curriculum can empower students to closely read texts and embrace multiple, often conflicting, interpretations of a single text. Moreover, a revamped “pedagogy of translation literature” can illuminate the intersections between translation, social ethics, and ideology, revealing the ways in which translations unwittingly inscribe domestic values onto translated texts. By teaching students to read for the “remainder”²⁵⁶, or the residual textual effects that a translation asserts in the target culture, educators can raise awareness of the ideological, political, social and culture underpinnings of translation, canon formation, and cross-cultural development.

By accepting that self-translators write differently for different audiences, developing a hybridized aesthetics to reflect their own in-between cultural consciousness, contemporary readers realize that a particular work can be subjected to endless possible interpretations. The author’s interpretation, despite access to their own initial intentions, is not absolute—in consecutive self-translations, the author approaches their work through temporal and often geographical distancing; even simultaneous self-translations leave room for endless possible re-interpretations. Indeed, the fact that a single work can produce multiple conflicting readings and translations paves the way for a hermeneutic (Venuti 2019) approach to

translation, whereby different performers interpret the same work differently, producing multiple afterlives that all enrich the same work. Rather than viewing interpreters as prisms who reflect and refract an unchangeable essence of the source text into different cultural contexts, I instead view hermeneutical reading and interpretation as the ferrying of meaning from one ocean of discourse into another by means of an intertextual web of tributaries.

Self-translation as performed by multicultural exiles outlines a contrapuntal reading strategy that harmonizes multiple cultural and linguistic “homes”, thus redefining in-betweenness and unbelonging as the *par excellence* of cosmopolitanism. A contrapuntal reading (which takes its cue from contrapuntal music that incorporates two intertwined melodic lines) is a close reading strategy that interprets colonial narratives in conjunction with those of subjugated peoples, examining the nexus and opposition of such interlinked histories (Said 1993). This reading strategy requires readers to read between the lines in order to unearth contrasting narratives and versions of reality. Contrapuntal readers pair text-based readings with external critique steeped in sociopolitical circumstances, thus examining a particular text’s rhetorical strategies as well as its cultural, historical, and ideological context, thus opening up the work to a wide range of imaginative possibilities. Readers pair their internal and external readings of a text in “an effort to draw out, extend, give emphasis and voice to what is silent or marginally present or ideologically represented” in the work (Said 1993: 66). The translator, by virtue of their aesthetic investment in a literary work’s afterlives, becomes that text’s most incisive reader and critic; by reading and critiquing themselves, self-translators deepen their critical outlook on their own aesthetics and lived experiences.

Avenues for Further Research

Self-translation stands as a highly marginalized field of academic inquiry, and comparative

research on self-translation outside the Anglosphere remains scarce. By examining exile and trauma reconciliation as a thematic commonality between self-translators hailing from the Sinosphere and Latinosphere²⁵⁷, or, indeed, self-translators across Asia, Africa, and the Global South, researchers might emphasize the transnational thematic coherence of self-translation as a healing, cathartic process in a comparative literary setting.

We have examined cases of collaborative (self-)translation (Kenneth Pai and Patia Yasin; Ha Jin and Lisha Bian; Regina Kanyu Wang and Emily Xueni Jin). Collaborative translation (or translaboration) models (encompassing both written translation and oral interpretation) clash with individualistic Renaissance theorizations of translation, hence the temptation to pass off a team translation as a solo effort. Indeed, in the Middle Ages in Europe and during the first centuries BCE, translation was conventionally performed in teams and involved translation in both its oral and written forms. In ancient China, for instance, bouts of oral interpretation, followed by written translation, played an integral role in the canonization of Sanskrit texts²⁵⁸ (Reynolds 2016: 12). As Anthony Cordingley points out, “devolving upon the individual the task which was often performed by the many allowed [gatekeepers] to imagine the translator to be a text’s surrogate author” (Cordingley 2013: 2). Research on *closelaborations* further complicates the author/translator binary and challenge the notion of untranslatability—untranslatable for one, but translatable for a collective entity.

My dissertation focuses on self-translators working between English and various forms of Chinese, but what happens when we account for transfers between “minor”, less widely used languages such as Slovenian, Swedish, Bulgarian, and Yiddish? Examining self-translators operating between two non-English or marginalized languages, in both written and oral form, could shed additional light on periphery-periphery cultural interactions. Ngūgī

wa Thiong'o points out that the hegemony of written discourse over oral forms is deeply rooted in colonialism, causing orality "to be demonized as the possessor of deficiencies" (wa Thiong'o: 2012: 64); thus, close readings of self-translation in oral literatures represents an instrumental avenue for engaging in decolonial activism. As wa Thiong'o reminds us, "there has always been continuous literarization of the oral and oralization of the literary"; moreover, boundaries between the written and oral mediums are especially blurred in the contemporary age of the Internet, thus paving the way for "cyborature" (wa Thiong'o 2012: 84-85). Moreover, self-translations between two closely related languages (such as Spanish and Catalán, or between classical Chinese and vernacular Mandarin and Hokkien) might shed additional light on self-translation as a creative re-writing strategy employed for diverse aesthetic and political purposes. What happens when writers self-translate between three or more languages, such as Lisa Carducci, who self-translates between English, French, Italian, and Spanish, and Monika Zgustova (translating between Czech, Spanish and Catalan)?

Further research on self-translation conducted between Romance language pairings bound up with complex colonial histories (Spanish and Italian, French and Portuguese, and so forth), might provide more systematic data to support a transnational theory of self-translation as it pertains to historical developments. Moreover, self-translation in non-English-speaking communities (for instance, Chinese-Uyghur, Chinese-Khmer, Chinese-Vietnamese, and Chinese-Mongolian) can shed light on the role of self-translation in indigenous identity formation. Finally, research on intersemiotic (collaborative) self-translation, particularly that of chapbooks, e-literature, graphic novels, manga, and vlogs, can bridge boundaries between (Self-)translation Studies and the Digital Humanities. Heeding Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's observation that the age of cyberspace blurs the intersections between

orature and written literature (Ngũgĩ 2012: 83-85), self-translation scholars would be wise to expand their scope of inquiry to include self-translation in its oral and intersemiotic forms.

Pairing (Self-)Translation Studies with Sound Studies helps subvert the hegemony of the visual in Western culture and literature. The concept of “acousmaticity”²⁵⁹ (listening to a sound when the source is not immediately visible) echoes a capacious approach to reading translations without constantly measuring them up to an invariable “original” source. Indeed, despite the contemporary prostheticization of sound (even when one listens to music on a smartphone or laptop, one is distanced from the source of the recording of that sound) and indeed, of memory (i.e., using technology, photographs, and objects to store memories), human beings are still adept at immersing ourselves within disembodied sound and detached memory. Just as sound “envelope[s] the listener as though in a continuum” (Chow 2019: 116), challenging listeners to “notice the sonic object’s immanent logic, a logic that is not reducible to [...] external factors” (Chow 2019: 117), so too might readers of translations challenge themselves to immerse themselves in translated literature *as literature*, without condemning the translation as a derivative shadow of the source text.

Acousmaticity *defamiliarizes* the practice of listening (Kane 2014); likewise, self-translators defamiliarize their own literary works and the experiences recounted therein, thus forcing the listener/reader “to come to terms with a different and often disturbing order of things” (Chow 2019: 118) by making a “known object” newly visible. The narrator’s, character’s, and the author’s own voice are often intentionally jumbled and fragmentary—it is up to the reader-listener to harmonize these disjunct voices by practicing the art of acousmatic reading/listening²⁶⁰ to multiple intertwined voices, celebrating the contradictory mixing of voices and resisting the urge to trace them to (a) definite source(s).

The writer is a conduit who codifies speech, thought, and sentiment into language; the writer is both possessed *and* dispossessed, alienated *and* found in language. It is at this crossroads between written and oral literature, source and translated cultures, that the (self-) translator, comes to possess, albeit fleetingly, the language that dispossesses them.

ENDNOTES

¹ See footnote 11.

² *Niezi* may also allude to a passage in the *Mencius*/蒙子, which describes the power of “friendless officials and concubine’s sons” (孤臣孽子) that they attain by manipulating their outcast status (Mencius 2A: 6)

³ Rainer Grutman distinguishes between simultaneous self-translations, “which are produced even while the first version is still in progress” and consecutive self-translations “which are prepared only after completion or even publication of the original” (Grutman 2009: 259).

⁴ In *A Dictionary for the Analysis of Literary Translation*, Anton Popovič defines self-translation as “the translation of an original work into another language by the author himself” (Montini 2010: 306). Rainer Grutman’s canonical definition of self-translation is “the act of translating one’s own writings into another language and the result of such an undertaking” (Grutman 2009: 257).

⁵ Language contact theory refers to cases in which speakers of different languages or linguistic variations interact (as in the cases of borrowing, creolization, and bilingual code-switching), thus rejuvenating language (Winford 2020: 51). As Lee and Wei put it: “Just as English will continue pervading language use in the Sinophone world, the Sinophone [...] will continue to innovate new routes by perverting English to its needs, generating ever-evolving vitality through the process of *translanguaging*” (Lee and Wei 2020: 573, emphasis mine). Indeed, it is often through visual and sonified adaptations of written material that literary works become canonized.

⁶ Julio César Santoyo echoes the notion of self-translation as a process of embodied mirroring by pointing out that the self-translation process often incorporates the mirrored text back into the original, thus producing a complementary piece that is “intimately bound together, intertwined in one textual entity”, with the author as “the ‘mirror’ in which the original looks at itself” (Santoyo 2013: 27).

⁷ In *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, the Chicana writer Gloria Anzaldúa ushes code-switching to weave together English and Spanish into a hybrid tapestry. Anzaldúa explains that “the Borderlands are physically present wherever two or more cultures edge each other, where people of different races occupy the same territory, where upper, lower, middle and upper classes touch, where the space between two individuals shrinks with intimacy” (Anzaldúa 1999: 2).

⁸ In *A Theory of Adaptation*, Linda Hutcheon articulates a vision of adaptations as creative re-interpretations that transcend temporal and geographical boundaries by adapting the source medium for a new time, place and audience (Hutcheon 2006: 162-176). In Hutcheon’s

reckoning, adaptations are both intertextual and interpretative; they may be produced for either “knowing” audiences familiar with the work being adapted or “unknowing” audiences who are unfamiliar with the adapted text (Hutcheon 2006: 31-32).

⁹ Here, I depart from Walter Benjamin’s assertions that “No poem is intended for the reader, no picture for the beholder, no symphony for the listener” (Benjamin 1923/1968: 72). Rather than viewing translation as eschewing human response, I envision readers as the missing link enabling the author’s catharsis.

¹⁰ As Derrida famously put it in “What Is a Relevant Translation?”, nothing “can ever be untranslatable—or, moreover, translatable” (Derrida 2001: 178) because the “measure of the *relève* or relevance, the price of a translation, is always what is called meaning, the value of meaning, namely, what...is elevated about it, interiorizes it, spiritualizes it, preserves it in memory” (ibid 199)

¹¹ The French philosopher René Descartes’ original words were (in Latin), “*Cogito, ergo sum*” (meaning “I think; therefore I am.” By translating Jhumpa Lahiri’s words back into Latin, I pay dues to Descartes for coining this phrase and highlight the importance of translation as our common human *raison d’être*.

¹² “What surgeon, in need of an operation, would take the scalpel to herself?” (Lahiri 2022: 72-73).

¹³ As Roland Barthes puts it in “The Death of the Author”: “the modern writer (scriptor) is born simultaneously with his text; he is in no way supplied with a being which precedes or transcends his writing, he is in no way the subject of which his book is the predicate.” (Barthes 1977: 53)

¹⁴ For Shih, the Sinophone only exists in places China has vacated. In Shih’s words, “By ‘Sinophone’ literature I mean literature written in Chinese by Chinese-speaking writers in various parts of the world outside China, as distinguished from ‘Chinese literature’ — literature from China.” (Shih 2004, 29) David Der-wei Wang, however, also considers the linguistic heterogeneity *within* Han Chinese culture, asserting that “to truly subvert the foundation of Chinese national literature, we should no longer consider it apart from the Sinophone literary system” (Wang 2018: 263).

¹⁵ Shih explains that the polyphonic, polyscriptic Sinitic language and its many hybrid variants have come to demarcate the Sinophone and decouple this category from a nostalgic nation or hegemonic culture. (Shih 2013: 10-12)

¹⁶ Here, I draw inspiration from Brian Bernards’ analysis of Shu-mei Shih’s concept of the Sinophone as a place-based practice of reading and interpretation alternative to the diasporic model (Bernards 2016: 77), as well as from David Damrosch’s conceptualization of World Literature as “an elliptical refraction of national literatures, a mode of reading, writing that gains in translation” (Damrosch 2003: 283).

¹⁷ Chien-hsin Tsai explains “glossia” as derived from the notion of “glotta” as languages as a method for commenting on, or glossing, the construction of a Sinophone identity. This approach sheds light on mediated discourses of Chineseness that highlights the heterogeneous, polyphonic, and multilingual articulations of Chineseness, both within and outside the PRC (Lee et al. 2023).

¹⁸ . A contrapuntal reading (which takes its cue from contrapuntal music that incorporates two intertwined melodic lines) is a close reading strategy that interprets colonial narratives in

conjunction with those of subjugated peoples, examining the nexus and opposition of such interlinked histories (Said 1993).

¹⁹ David Damrosch posits three non-traditional forces that supplement traditional canon: 1) the hypercanon (authors who “have held their own or even gained ground over the past 20 years”; 2) the countercanon “composed of the subaltern and ‘contestatory’ voices” within the culture; 3) the shadow canon of “old ‘minor’ authors who fade increasingly into the background” (Damrosch 2006: 45).

²⁰ For instance, in “China Cycle”, the African-American poet Kyle Dargan manipulates Sinophonic affect by appropriating sonic transliterations of the Chinese scrip for poetic effect. In refusing to be disciplined by either Chinese or English carves, Dargan out an in-between zone bridging Chinese and English. By teasing out the cognitive dissonance that emerges in terrains bridging languages and cultures, Dargan demonstrates that outsiders to a linguistic community come to possess the language that Otherizes them (Dargan 2018: 52)

²¹ In *Bilingual Aesthetics: A New Sentimental Education*, Doris Sommer proposes that aesthetic, multilingual education will help advance democracy (the notion that multilingualism engenders a multiplicity of political perspectives), generate creativity, and foster inclusivity. In linking discussions of art with humor, Sommer builds upon the idea of “defamiliarization” proposed by the Russian formalist Victor Shklovsky, arguing (in “Chapter 4: The Common Sense Sublime”) that the jarring nature of (un-)pleasant gives people reflexive pause, thus shocking the beholder into pleasure. By forcing reflection, hybrid languages and multilingualism help cultivate a taste for the sublime and the unfamiliar, thus mirroring the “double consciousness” of the migrant condition (Sommer 2004: 134).

²² In the words of Elena Bandín, “Self-translation can be regarded as yet another strategy to resist colonialism and imperialism. We might hypothesize that the author-translator translates his works himself in order to preserve the particular characteristics of his culture and his language.” (Bandín 2004: 40)

²³ In Ch’ien’s words, “weird-English writers denormalize English out of resistance to it, and form their own language by combining English with their original language [...] for weird-English writers, the composition of weird English is an active way of *takin’ the community back*.” (Ch’ien 2014: 6). My arguments echo Ch’ien’s claims that “weird-English writers denormalize English out of resistance to it, and form their own language by combining English with their original language” (Ch’ien 2014: 6), thus remaking the English language through a multilingual dialogue that embraces jargon and non-standard language usage.

²⁴ Shu-mei Shih defines the Sinophone as designating the “Sinitic-language cultures and communities outside China as well as those ethnic communities within China, where Sinitic languages are either forcefully imposed or willingly adopted” (Shih 2010: 30); “the networks of places of cultural production outside China and on the margins of China and Chineseness” (Shih 2007: 4).

²⁵ Here, I refer to Peter Burke’s *Cultural Hybridity* (2009) which reveals hybridization and globalization as two intertwined processes involving the confluence of artefacts (arts and literature), religious and political practices and people (or a “double consciousness” generated by life in between cultures). (Burke 2009)

²⁶ In his essay “Art as Technique”, Shklovsky theorizes that art ‘make[s] objects unfamiliar...make[s] forms difficult...increase[s] the difficulty and the length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged.’ (1962:

12) Just as *ostranenie* (colloquially known as *de-familiarization*) in the art world draws attention to the constructed quality of artworks, when self-translators apply this technique, their works take on a re-vitalized literariness.

²⁷ Homi Bhabha argues that “it is through this syntax of forgetting—or being obliged to forget—that the problematic identification of a national people becomes visible...the identity of part and whole, past and present, is cut across ‘the obligation to forget,’ or forgetting to remember.” (Bhabha 1990: 311)

²⁸ Liu defines the “super-sign” as a “hetero-cultural signifying chain that crisscrosses the semantic fields of two or more languages simultaneously and makes an impact on them meaning of recognizable verbal units [...] (Liu 2006: 13).

²⁹ In *Eileen Chang: Romancing Languages, Cultures, and Genres*, Louie Kam reveals: “[Eileen Chang’s] engagement with bilingual writing particularly intimates a polemic, treating English as no more alien a medium than Chinese for transmitting, or translating, her already alienated existence in the Chinese environment. Above all [...] Chang conceived of rewriting as both a ritual of exorcism and a form of incantation.” (Kam 2012: 218)

³⁰ Apter builds upon Jacques Derrida, who outlines the importance of writing in a foreign language, stating, “I must speak in a language that is not my own because that will thus be more *juste*, and deemed more *juste*, and be more justly appreciated...” (Derrida 1992: 4)

³¹ David Damrosch’s threefold definition of World Literature is as follows: “1. World literature is an elliptical refraction of national literatures; 2. World literature is writing that gains in translation; 3. World literature is not a set canon of texts but a mode of reading: a form of detached engagement with worlds beyond our own place and time.” (Damrosch 2003: 281)

³² For instance, in “This Condition We Call Exile”, Joseph Brodsky observes that the experience of exile fundamentally transforms writers’ styles and aesthetics, leading them to both experiment with language and escape the anxiety of influence (Brodsky 1988: 106-107).

³³ “有的人一定要回到故鄉才文思泉湧；有的人非要與故地有距離感，才能把那兒的生活經驗訴諸文字。”(Pai and Ding 2018: 226)

³⁴ In Ha Jin’s words, “I would like to see the Chinese government apologize for the Tiananmen massacre and before that happens, it would be very hard for me to go [back to China]” (Jin in Jin and Weinberger 2007).

³⁵ Please see Section III: Project Significance: “Self-Translation as Cathartic Healing of Personal and National Trauma”.

³⁶ Here, I draw inspiration from Howard Chiang’s interpretation of queer Sinophonicity through analysis of the homoerotic film *Lan Yu*, in which “the social and cultural articulations of non-normative sexualities are rerouted through—and thus re-rooted in—Sinitic-language communities and cultures on the periphery of Chineseness” (Chiang 2014: 43), thus introducing a new epistemology for breaking down the China-versus-the-West binary.

³⁷ Venuti characterizes translation as “an interpretive activity that creates something ‘new and different’ in another language” (Venuti 2013: 10, cited in Emmerich 2017: 11).

³⁸ In the words of Anthony Cordingley, “Indeed, the subject of the self-translated text is very often hybridity itself. Typical literary scenarios include: wanderers and their confrontations with the limits of language(s), characters who are faced with their doubles, identities which morph with the use of different languages, the mystery and frustration of the untranslatable

or that which falls between the cracks when two cultures meet. Hybridity characterizes not only many self-translators' external and textual environments, but the internal bilingual and bicultural space out of which their creativity emerges" (Cordingley 2013, 3).

³⁹ In the words of Saidero, self-translation is a healing process that enables self-translators to "make sense of their diverse subjectivities and achieve a unification of identities within their fractured and hybrid self (Saidero 2011: 33)."

⁴⁰ Judith Butler elaborates on de Beauvoir's performative approach to gender in their essay "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution": Because there is neither an 'essence' that gender ex-presses or externalizes nor an objective ideal to which gender aspires; because gender is not a fact, the various acts of gender creates the idea of gender, and without those acts, there would be no gender at all." (Butler 1988)

⁴¹ In "*Transpacific*—transfiguring Asian North America and the Sinophonic in Jia Qing Wilson-Yang's *Small Beauty*", Lily Wong proposes a new definition of "queer" as "an unstable concept that locates a contingent relationality between gender/sexual formations on the margins of heteropatriarchy and cultural identities straddling the edges of nationhood or modernity." (Wong 2020: 29)

⁴² In "Loss of a Readership", Puig writes: "Identity shouldn't be defined by a sexual activity [...] There shouldn't be such a thing as a heterosexual, or a homosexual. Homosexuals don't exist, there are persons who practice homosexual acts, but that banal aspect of their lives shouldn't establish their identity. Homosexuality does not exist, it is a figment of the reactionary mind." (Puig 1985: 9)

⁴³ In Baer's words, "a translation need not replace the original; it exists contemporaneously with it, producing multifarious textual selves [...] In other words, translations are capable of connecting two different linguistic, cultural and historical contexts in a way that does not entirely reduce the one to the other [...]" (Baer 2021: 9)

⁴⁴ In Baer's words, "a translation need not replace the original; it exists contemporaneously with it, producing multifarious textual selves [...] In other words, translations are capable of connecting two different linguistic, cultural and historical contexts in a way that does not entirely reduce the one to the other [...]" (Baer 2021: 9)

⁴⁵ The *cultural turn* in Translation Studies was prompted by deconstructionist theories that rejected assigning fixed meaning to an original work, André Lefevere's notion of translation as cultural rewriting (1992), a scholarly focus on identity formation through translation, as well as postcolonial, and feminist translation theory.

⁴⁶ Chow derives the "melancholic turn" from Freud's use of melancholia to describe an unending process of grieving in his 1917 essay, "Mourning and Melancholia" (Freud 1959: 152-170), and from Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble*, in which she builds upon Freud's melancholia to assert that gendered identity is melancholic because we give up our original homosexual or bisexual tendencies (Butler 1990).

⁴⁷ In Chinese, the term 酷儿 *ku'er* bears connotations of "cool" and "flashy"—"ku'er" does not carry the same negative connotations as it does in a Western context. The Chinese equivalent of queer might be *tongzhi* 同志 (lit., "those sharing the same will"), which literally connotes "comrade" in the Soviet Communist sense. LGBTQIA+ activists later appropriated the term and adapted it to refer to individuals of the homosexual community. Taiwanese *ku'er* literature is often marked by identity performance and changeability; the

term *tongzhi* captures a local genealogy of queerness and homosexuality in contemporary China (Chang et al. 2014).

⁴⁸ In Venuti's words: "The terms 'domestication' and 'foreignization' indicate fundamentally ethical attitudes towards foreign text and culture [...] whereas terms like 'fluency' and 'resistancy' indicate fundamentally discursive features of translation strategies in relation to the reader's cognitive processing. Both sets of terms demarcate a spectrum of textual and cultural effects that depend for their description and evaluation on the relation between a translation, a translation project, and the hierarchical arrangement of values in the receiving situation at a particular historical moment." (Venuti 2008: 19)

⁴⁹ Suzanne Jill Levine writes: "My philosophy of translation of South American texts for American English readers has been to seek a balance: underscoring the common bonds between two cultures, making the author's achievements intelligible to his new reader, but also staying as close as possible to the original's style and cultural frame." (Levine 1988: 10)

⁵⁰ In her book *In Search of the Chinese Landscape: Ink Painting, Travel, and Transmedial Practice, 1928-1936* (Harvard East Asia Monographs 2022), Juliane Noth examines the role of photography and other forms of mediation in forging imaginations of Chinese landscape; for instance, establishing Huangshan as China's "standard mountain" (Noth 2022)

⁵¹ Limin Zhu's translation was initially published in *An Anthology of Contemporary Chinese Literature: Taiwan, 1949-1974*, edited by Chi Pang-yuan and published by the National Institute for Compilation and Translation.

⁵² This translation was published in Joseph S.M. Lau, ed., *Chinese Stories From Taiwan: 1960-1970* (NY: Columbia UP, 1976, 337-54), reprinted in *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature* (Columbia University Press, 2007).

⁵³ Commenting on the aesthetics of defamiliarization that governed his transmedial adaptation of Tang Xianzu's Peony Pavilion for contemporary university audiences, Kenneth Pai states, "We want youngsters to think, 'I've never seen anything like this before, and yet it is also vaguely familiar from ages past.' They'll immediately identify *kunqu* as quintessentially Chinese, yet still quite strange. On the one hand, we want the performance to be fresh; on the other, we want to awaken students' dormant cultural DNA. Combining tradition and modernity—that's the major focus of our adaptation." (Pai et al. 2009, trans. mine). "現在有《青春版短亭》正好，他看到這個，似曾相識，他覺得這是中國的東西，但是很陌生，沒看過，一方面有新鮮感，一方面又觸動了它潛意識裡文化的DNA，而我們這個劇的一大方向，就是傳統跟現代的結合。"(Pai et al. 2009) Indeed, by combining tradition with modernity, familiarity with defamiliarization, Pai and his fellow *transmediators* rejuvenate the spirit of China's ancient dramatic arts for contemporary twenty-first century audiences, thus passing down Chinese cultural traditions to successive generations.

⁵⁴ For a comprehensive history of General Pai Chongxi, see Pai's *Fuqin yu minguo* 父親與民國 [My Father and the Republic]. Taipei: Shibao wenhua, 2013. Pai spent two decades traveling back and forth between mainland China and Taiwan collecting historical documents and photos pertaining to his father's life.

⁵⁵ For Pai, traditional Chinese culture represents a spiritual homeland and refuge for "the Wandering Chinese", the quintessential exile, who "been driven out of Eden, dispossessed, disinherited, a spiritual orphan, burdened with a memory that carries the weight of 5,000 years [of history] (Pai 1976: 208-209).

⁵⁶ In Pai's words, "In a high school geography textbook, I read that if China constructed a Three Gorges Dam, the country would rise up overnight. I was a bit jaded back then. I knew the Three Gorges scenery was gorgeous, I wanted to build the dam and enjoy exploring the area, writing in my spare time. However, after a year, I realized I might have been misled by my high test scores—I realized I would become a second-rate engineer, leaving me with a life of regrets, because I had not achieved my life's ambition." (Pai 2014, trans. mine)

⁵⁷ "我到外國去以後，感覺到對自己國家的看法起了很大的變化。在外面的時候

【。。。】對自己國家的文化反而特別感到一種眷念，看法也又了距離。如果我不出去的話，對我們歷史的看法，可能因為身在其中無法客觀，但是到外面去以後，更覺得自己是中國人，對自己國家的命運更為關懷。" (Pai 1999/2018: 297)

⁵⁸ In the words of Ouyang Tzu, Pai Hsien-yung is an out-and-out Chinese writer. He has absorbed the diverse techniques of contemporary Western literature to temper and modernize his writing; however, the characters he writes about remain Chinese people and the stories he tells remain Chinese tales." (Ouyang 1967, trans. mine)

⁵⁹ In Pai's words, "Kunqu is a seamless combination of both singing and dancing. Different from Western opera singers and ballet dancers, performers of Kunqu show the essence of both singing and dancing. It is an extremely difficult performing art, the aesthetic achievement of which is unparalleled" (Pai 2019: 86)

⁶⁰ In 2017, Pai declared: "The soul of a nation whose culture has been severed is perpetually wandering. Culture is the anchor amidst the bobbing waves. My home is traditional culture." "一個文化被斬斷的民族，它的靈魂是飄蕩的。文化很要緊。傳統文化才是我的家。" (Pai 2017))

⁶¹ In this sense, Pai's global vision reveals Hugo of St. Victor's reflections on forgoing exclusive attachment to one's birthplace in favour of embracing the homeliness of the world at large: "The man who finds his homeland sweet is still a tender beginner; he to whom every soil is as his native one is already strong; but he is perfect to whom the entire world is as a foreign land" cited in Auerbach 2000: 185) However, I would argue that a blend of nostalgia and detachment lends exiles the strength to create mobile homes rooted in language and culture rather than (a) place(s) of origin.

⁶² In the documentary *Multiflorate Splendour* (姹紫嫣红开遍), these words are alternately rendered as "I write because I want to put into words the silent pain of the human soul" (Pai in Liao et al. 2017) In his essay "我的創作經驗 *Wo de chuangzuo jingyan* [My Creative Process]", Pai adds, "I believe that most people have trouble expressing their misfortune—pain, hardship, and so forth—but as an author, I have the ability to effectively express others' innermost feelings [...] Literature is about rendering this process of struggle into words, so that after reading about these misfortunes, we can empathize with others' suffering."⁶² (Pai 2004: 207, trans. mine)

⁶³ Ouyang Tzu (pen name for Beatrice Hung Yen 洪智慧, b. 1939) is a renowned Taiwanese Hokkien self-translator who self-translated the stories "The Net" and "Prodigal Father" from Hokkien Taiwanese and Mandarin into English. These are published in the anthology *The Unbroken Chain: An Anthology of Taiwan Fiction Since 1926* (Indiana University Press, ed. Joseph S.M. Lau, 1983).

⁶⁴ Pai helped to launch the career of San Mao 三毛 (pen name for Chen Mao-ping, 陳懋平) by publishing her piece 惑 *Huo* [Doubt] in 1962 (Lang 2003: 102). In Pai's words, "My

friend Gu Fu-sheng, a painter, gave me a story entitled ‘Confusion,’ which was written by one of his female students [...] only sixteen or seventeen years old [...] I published that story in *Modern Literature*. The girls’ name was Ch’en P’ing, who became known as Sanmao” (Pai 2017: 140, trans. Jiang).

⁶⁵ *The Dubliners* is set in British-ruled Ireland at the turn of the twentieth century, portraying the daily lives of middle-class Dubliner urbanites in the face of oppressive Irish nationalism. By sympathizing with the plight of the Irish, Joyce criticizes the “paralysis” induced by Catholic Nationalism (Joyce 1906, quoted in Pierce 2016: 129).

⁶⁶ Joseph S.M. Lau goes on to observe: “Pai Hsien-yung’s Taipei *jen* are misnomers: though they are physically present in Taipei, they are at heart die-hard Szechwan *jen*, Shanghai *jen*, etc [...] These Taipei *jen* are indeed a curious product of an exile government [...] The past has not only overshadowed their present, but also blocked their view of the future...” (Lau 1975: 33)

⁶⁷ In Erich Auerbach’s words, “[I]n order to accomplish a major work of synthesis it is imperative to locate a point of departure [*Ansatzpunkt*], a handle, as it were, by which the subject can be seized. The point of departure must be the election of a firmly circumscribed, easily comprehensible set of phenomena whose interpretation is a radiation out from them and which orders and interprets a greater region than they themselves occupy.” (Auerbach 1969, trans. Edward and Marie Said, 13-14)

⁶⁸ Patrick Hanan adds that: “Taken together, the memories [of the Taipei ren] span much of the modern history of China; it is not without reason that the collection has been described as a “history of the Republic.” Pai’s fiction shows them confronting their visions, either through the rituals with which the past is normally confronted (anniversaries and funerals) or through sudden, inexplicable events.” (Hanan 1982: xi-xii)

⁶⁹ “其實人一生下來就開始漂泊，到宇宙來就開始飄蕩了，在娘胎裡大概是最安全的。” (Pai in Zeng 2001)

⁷⁰ In Pai’s words, “Of course, Chinese writers in exile also created a tradition of exile literature in the Sinophone world. On the one hand, in the spirit of Qu Yuan, they continued the Chinese tradition of banishment and patriotism. On the other, these exiled Sinophone writers were also inspired by the recurrence of exile in the Western literary tradition. In the Republican era, when the KMT government rose to prominence, a large number of writers came to Taiwan, and several prominent Chinese writers were detained overseas. They became wanderers overnight. Led by the poet Bei Dao, the “Chinese Writers in Exile Alliance” was born, and twentieth century Sinophone exile literature was forged anew.” (Pai 2008: 250-251, trans. mine)

⁷¹ Many of Pai’s Wu-surnamed characters have lost touch with their Chinese cultural roots (and, indeed, their Chinese “soul”)—Wu Zhenduo (吳振鐸) in the short story “Nocturne” (夜曲 *Yequ*), for instance, is a Chinese-born cardiologist practicing in New York, is consumed by regret over his failure to treat Chinese patients. ⁷¹ Moreover, the character Wu Han-hun (吳漢魂, lit., “soul of China”) from “Death in Chicago” (*Zhijiage zhishi* 芝加哥之死), is a Chinese overseas student who commits suicide on the night after defending his doctoral dissertation after discovering that his mother has died back in China.

⁷² Pai’s short story “A Sea of Blood-Red Azaleas” (那片血紅一般的杜鵑花 *Na pian xuehong yiban de dujuanhua*) recounts an exiled soldier’s rape of a young girl before committing suicide. “A Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars”, examined in Chapter 2,

recounts the escapades of a group of sex workers seeking refuge in Taiwan's New Park and their Guru's thwarted movie star dreams.

⁷³ “《台北人》裡面的人物，大都是中、老年人。中、老年人大都有很沈重的回憶。我當時很年輕，在那個時候寫我現在的心境，好像預言一樣。尤其是《冬夜》那一篇，寫的是一位老教授。現在的我，就是個“冬夜”。我寫《冬夜》時，大約三十歲

【。。。】在寫《台北人》的過程中，對自己的文化有一種悼念的感受。寫小說時，身在美國，常常反思中國文化。從十九世紀後期開始，中國傳統文化篩落下來，我常常思考：原因在哪裡【。。。】我学的虽然是西方文学，西方文学当然非常伟大，他们的传统了不起，但同时对自己国家的传统有一种检讨、反省。寫作對我來說也是一種自我的發現 (self-discovery)。” (Pai 2004: 211)

⁷⁴ According to Pai's co-translator Pati Yasin, George Kao “was the Athos to Pai Hsien-yung's Porthos and Aramis and my D'Artagnan [...] George Kao always finds *le mot le plus juste* [the right word]” (Yasin 2000: xxx).

⁷⁵ Taipei “people” is an inaccurate translation of 台北人 *Taipei ren*. In Editor George Kao's words, “The title of the book literally rendered, would in itself be misleading, since Pai is not engaged in writing polemical or topical fiction, nor is he dealing with what is called the ‘broad masses of the people.’ What he has given us, through a series of arresting incidents, is an insight into life as endured by a handful of men and women who sought refuge in Taiwan in the 1950s, following the Communist conquest of the mainland. In this context, *Taipei jen* may be more accurately rendered as ‘Taipei characters.’ (Kao in Pai et al. 2000: ix)

⁷⁶ This is evidenced by editor George Kao's pen marks throughout, warning the translation team not to copy the Kwan-Terry and Lacey version. On page 20, Kao writes, “I'm not convinced that this is better [than the Kwan-Terry and Lacey version...] But it may be good to avoid duplicating too many of Kwan-Terry's key words” (Kenneth Pai papers, “Winter Nights”, 1977-1981, 20), thus revealing that the translation team may have taken Kwan-Terry's published translation as the basis for their updated one. On page 28 of the written draft, for instance, Kao comments on the proposed change from “I'll try for you” to “I'll give it a try”, writing, “I though this is a bit more natural, but then I noticed Kwan used the same phrase.” To avoid plagiarism, Kao ends up deleting the proposed change and sticking to “try for you”. (Kenneth Pai papers, “Winter Nights”, 1977-1981, 28)

⁷⁷ Michelle (Jia) Ye informs us that the title *The Renaissance* was printed on each journal cover, which is not to suggest that its values were entirely in line with those of the European Renaissance. English-language scholarship most often refers to the journal by its literal translation of *New Tide*. (Ye 2020: 76)

⁷⁸ Because these languages are often mutually unintelligible; i.e., the difference between these linguistic systems often exceeds that between Romance languages, I call these “languages”, not “dialects” (variations of the same language).

⁷⁹ Pai says he picked up on the African-American languages used in dialogues in *Gone with the Wind* and *The Sound and the Fury*: “These Black nannies in the southern United States spoke in a somewhat similar manner, and Peixia [Patia Yasin] asked, “Why don't we try out [this style] with [the characters in “Ode to Bygone Days”]? Sure enough, the translation became much more vivid, closer to the tone of the dialogue in the original text. Master-servant relationships in some aristocratic families in the southern United States were similar to the structure of extended families in the old Chinese society, in terms of their emphasis on

human feelings and loyalty. The two cultures can be interlinked in some ways. At first, we were a bit concerned with [the political correctness of Editor Gao's ideas, but Mr. Gao deemed the task feasible, and only deleted some words that were too rustic." (Pai 1999/2011: 94, translation mine) Though imitating southern African-American languages runs the risk of flippant cultural appropriation, given the significant differences between the old Chinese aristocracy and master-slave relationships in the United States; nevertheless, the translation team's emphasis on differentiating registers certainly reveals an attempt to localize their rhetoric.

⁸⁰ As Levine puts it in the Translator's Note to "A Plan to Escape" ("Plan de Evasión") by Adolfo Bioy Casares, "I have attempted to pursue these same effects in the hopes of capturing some of the 'original flavor'." (Levine undated, Box 5, f.6.5)

⁸¹ In the words of Disability Studies scholar Robert McRuer, "Crip has [...] been a term that has been reclaimed by many disabled people and groups themselves [...] it] has functioned for many as a marker of an in-your-face, or out-and-proud, cultural model of disability [...] crip is not opposed to disability [...] Crip does, however, generally stand in opposition to both the medical model [...] and to some forms of the well-known social model [...] which suggests that disability should be understood as located not in bodies per se but in inaccessible environments requiring adaptation. Crip's excessive, flamboyant defiance ties it to models of disability [...] that are more culturally generative (and politically radical) than a merely reformist social model." (McRuer 2018: 8-9)

⁸² Lawrence Venuti would likely agree that a balance of foreignization and domestication is needed to convey an equivalent effect in the target language. In 2008, Venuti wrote: "[...] The terms 'domestication' and 'foreignization' indicate fundamentally ethical attitudes towards foreign text and culture, ethical effects produced by the strategy devised to translate it, whereas terms like 'fluency' and 'resistancy' indicate fundamentally discursive features of translation strategies in relation to the reader's cognitive processing. Both sets of terms demarcate a spectrum of textual and cultural effects that depend for their description and evaluation on the relation between a translation, a translation project, and the hierarchical arrangement of values in the receiving situation at a particular historical moment." (Venuti 2008: 19)

⁸³ Alternatively, Suzanne Jill Levine translates this passage as follows: "To assume that all recombinations of elements are necessarily inferior to their original form is to assume that draft 9 is necessarily inferior to draft H—since every text is a draft. The notion of a 'definitive text' belongs to religion or perhaps merely to exhaustion." (Borges and Levine 1992: 1136).

⁸⁴ Source text: "Su infidelidad, su infidelidad creadora y feliz, es lo que nos debe importar." (Borges 1974: 410) Borges once urged his translators to replace all of his polysyllabic words with monosyllabic English variants: "Simply me. Make me stark. My language often embarrasses me. It's too youthful, too Latinate... Make me macho and gaucho and skinny." (Borges, trans. Grossman 2010: 72-73)

⁸⁵ As Lawrence Venuti puts it, "Even though every work appropriates other works to some extent, a translation is engaged in two, simultaneous appropriations, one of the foreign text, the other of domestic cultural materials." (Venuti 1998: 61)

⁸⁶ "A Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars" is [written from] the perspective of an elderly man. It's the story of a Guru who presides over a group of boys, whereas *Niezi* is the opposite; it's

written from the point of view of the younger generation. However, the two works are quite similar, especially in terms of the literary mood they establish. In a nutshell, *Niezi* expands upon the atmosphere established in “A Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars.” (Pai in Pai and Liu 1990: 428, trans. mine)

⁸⁷ In Ouyang Tzu’s words, Jiang Qing “symbolizes youthful vitality and the splendor of the soul” (姜青象徵的，當然，就是青春活力和【靈】的光輝) (Ouyang 1982: 224).

⁸⁸ Ouyang Tzu explains the significance of the “Cult of the Spring Sacrifice” as follows: “對於大多數男同性戀者，青春是最大的【本錢】。因此他們特別怕老。他們膜拜青春肉體，所以當然他們信的教，是【祭春教】。” “For most gay men, youth is the most valuable form of [capital]. Therefore, they fear old age. Since they worship the youthful male body, it follows that the religion they believe in is the Rite of Spring Sacrifice.” (Ouyang 1983: 218, trans. mine)

⁸⁹ In Chang words: “Our age plunges forward and is already well on its way to collapse, while a bigger catastrophe looms. The day will come when our culture, whether interpreted as vanity or as sublimation, will all be in the past. If ‘desolate’ is too common a word in my vocabulary, it is because [desolation] has always haunted my thoughts.” (Chang, “Preface”, 1996: 6, trans. Wang 1998, Foreword to *The Rice-Sprout Song*, iii) In her iconic essay *Liu yan* (“Written on Water”, Chang writes: “For the carriage of time clatters forward. We ride in the carriage passing perhaps only a few familiar streets, but are frightened by the flames engulfing the sky. It’s a shame that, in our haste, we only glance at passing shop windows, searching for the fleeting image of ourselves—we can only see our own faces: pale and faint, selfish and hollow and shamelessly stupid. Everyone’s just like we are, but each of us is alone.” (trans. Zinngrabe 1997: 12)

⁹⁰ Pai spent an arduous decade writing *Niezi*, spanning the years 1971-1980. In Pai’s words: “These past ten years, I’ve been writing a long novel. I’ve been writing and revising constantly, which has exhausted me physically and mentally, knocking several years off my lifespan.” (Pai in Yuan 1991: 216 trans. mine)

⁹¹ In his essay “Novels and Movies”, Pai comments on the Italian film director Luchino Visconti’s film adaptation of Mann’s novella (1971): “Emotional lyricism and philosophical introspection tinged with oppression define the style of the original work, but in the film, Visconti gives it even richer life. He changes the protagonist into a composer who speaks not a word to the beautiful young man. He tells the story with a cinematic language composed of music and gorgeous, carefully designed tableaux.” (Pai 2017: 150-151, trans. Bert Scroggs)

⁹² In Pai’s words, “the fundamental premise of our editing is to abridge but not to alter. We did not add any sentence, any word, any lyric [...] We want to preserve every bit. But we spent a great deal of time [...] rearrang[ing] this work because we had to consider its dramatic effect. We gave a great deal of thought and attention to the question of dramatic continuity, the climactic and preparatory scenes. Our script editing revolved around the [central] theme of love.” (Pai et al. 2006, trans. mine)

⁹³ “美國每年有近百萬十三歲到十七歲的青少年離家出走，其中不少在大城市裡淪為男妓。調查的結果，發現許多男孩子當男妓並不是為了金錢【。。。】十來歲的小夥子年輕力壯，可以隨時找到工作。他們出賣自己的身體，同時也為了愛。他們許多在家裡得不到父愛，反而圖光頭他們的一些成年男子身上找到愛情。書中談到一個十一、二歲小男孩的故事，十分動人。這個小男孩有一個四十來歲的人客，經常給他錢。後

來男人被警察抓住了，控訴他與未成年的男童發生關係。男孩出庭作證時，苦苦哀求法官不要懲罰中年男子，因為那人是他世上唯一的朋友。書中的人物可以說是一群得不到父親的愛與諒解的【孽子】。” (Pai and Cai 1996/2006:458-459)

⁹⁴ “孽子這部小說在念書的時候早就看過了。其實對於最尖銳的同志議題來說其實它當然是一個很大的震撼因為在那個年代。可是後來其實工作以後也重看了一次。那其實我發現我看到的角度更多一點。其實你發現人與人之間的那種溫馨是在現代裡頭一直在失落當中。【。。。】這是我想拍這部小說的最大原因。同志這種議題的鬆動其實對我來講不是我主要的，讓我印象深刻的劇情跟場景，比如小弟娃去找他媽媽的時候，然後站在劇院裡頭采在那個板凳上喊著媽媽【。。。】龍子殺死阿風的那個過程。” (Cao 2003)

⁹⁵ “當我們在演一些戲的時候，導演不會給我們太多的限制，然後除了一些話我們照著劇本講，其實有蠻多的東西導演只是跟你講你們現在的情境是怎樣，你跟阿青是怎樣，他會給我們講他想要的那個感覺，然後剩下的就是等我跟阿青怎樣去創造出這種火花。其實我蠻喜歡這種方式的。” (Zhao Ying in Cao 2003) Director Cao explains his rationale for allowing the less experience actors to follow their intuition rather than pre-set instructions as follows: “If you force these green, amateur actors to act on the spot, the result would be an awkward, forced performance [...] It’s important to give them this creative freedom. It’s not productive to say, “Here, you need to emote in this or that way.” After all, they’re not seasoned, professional actors. If you impose these rigid requirements, they might not be able to fulfill them anyway. So it’s better to cut them loose, so to speak, even if you have to shoot more takes (Cao and Friedman 2023, translation in Appendix 6).

⁹⁶ The Kui-long (夔龍) dragon allegedly caused a series of global disasters, which accentuates the novel’s emphasis on sin and deviance (*nie* 孽).

⁹⁷ “When *Niezi* was first published, Taiwan’s literary world was silent, and didn’t know what to do with this strange novel. But gradually various critiques emerged, and *Niezi* began to evolve in several aspects. The silent reception at the beginning does not indicate that *Niezi* was ignored. In fact, *Niezi* was published by several authoritative presses in mainland China, including People’s Literature, Shanghai Literature and Art, Guangzhou Huacheng, and Guangxi Normal University Press (Utopia), with a whopping total of eight separate editions.” (Pai in He 2020, trans. mine) In Pai’s words, “《孽子》剛出版時，台灣文壇一片沉默，大概一時不知該如何對待這部奇怪的小說。但漸漸地各種評論便出現了，同時《孽子》開始經歷不同面貌的變奏。”一開始的沉默，不代表“忽視”，實際上，《孽子》僅僅在中國大陸就有好幾家出版社推出，包括權威的人民文學，之後上海文藝、廣州花城和廣西師範大學出版社（理想國）等也陸續出版，一共有八個版本。” (Pai 454-455)

⁹⁸ Li Yinhe has proposed the Same-Sex Marriage Bill to the CPPCC five times (2000, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010); however, her proposal would only be considered as a formal legislative proposal after it is signed by 30 out of the 3,000 NPC members. (During her first four lobbies of the NPC, no officials openly supported gay marriage) (Leach 2013).

⁹⁹ Pai came out as gay in an exclusive interview conducted in Hong Kong for *Playboy* magazine. For more information, see Zeng Xiuping. “*Cong tongzhi shuxie dao rensheng guanzhao: Bai Xianyong tan chuangzuo yu shenghuo* 從同志書寫到人生關照：白先勇談創作與生活 [From tongzhi Writing to Perspectives on Life: Pai Hsien-yung on Literary

Creation and Life.] In *Guchen, Niezi, Taipei Ren: Pai Hsien-yung tongzhi xiaoshuo lun* 孤臣、孽子、台北人：白先勇同志小說輪 [Love Subjects, Sinful Sons, Taipei Characters: On Pai Hsien-yung's Tongzhi Novels]. Ed. Zeng Xiuping. Taipei: Erya, 2003, 335-351.

¹⁰⁰ 家是人類最基本的社會組織，而親子關係是人類最基本的關係。同性戀者最基本的組織，當然也是家庭，但他們父子兄弟的關係不是靠著血緣，而靠的是感情。” (Pai 1986: 46, trans. mine)

¹⁰¹ “我原本想得很簡單，就是把喜歡的性向變一下，把男生當成女生那樣的喜歡。可是碰到真的是同性戀的人，然後跟他演那場戲的時候，你才會感覺到，不是你說要變就可以變的。” (Fan in Cao 2003)

¹⁰² Chih-Chi Ting argues that “the absence of a KMT patriarch in the film can also be taken as an unintended radicalism, as Dragon Prince's exile owing to his father's familial authority is not presented, [which] unintentionally contributes to the development of a feminist undertone” (Ting 2014: 105)

¹⁰³ Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) first used the term “*mélodrame*” in reference to his own play *Pygmalion* (1770), to describe a unique type of drama in which music deepened the dialogue's emotionality. Here, I invoke Ben Singer's canonical definition of melodrama (2001); namely, a film that reflects two or more of the following elements: pathos, exaggerated emotion, moral polarization, nonclassical narrative structure, and sensationalism. Melodrama is a combination of drama and melos (music), characterized by a plot that brings the audience's pathos to a climax (Singer 2001).

¹⁰⁴ As Huang Tao-ming points out in *Queer Politics and Sexuality Modernity in Taiwan*, “whereas the film version of *Crystal Boys*... updated the novel's setting from the 1970s to the mid-1980s to reflect the ‘social reality’ of the ‘gay plague’, the TV version of *Crystal Boys* was safely cast back into the distant past of the 1970s when there was no such thing as AIDS” (Huang 2011: 140).

¹⁰⁵ According to Flair Donglai Shi, “‘Crystal’ (*boli*) was originally used to refer to a person's bottom in Taiwanese slang, and since homosexuality was thought to be linked to anal sex in the 1960s, it became a derogatory term to name/shame homosexuals. Another explanation is that crystal is used to refer to homosexuals because they are invisible, fragile, and vulnerable.” (Shi 2017: 127) The term *boli quan* 玻璃圈 (glass circle/cliq) is a derogatory slang term used for gay male prostitutes in the novel *Niezi*. Also see G.E. Haggerty, ed., *Gay Histories and Cultures: An Encyclopedia*, Volume 2 (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 2000).

¹⁰⁶ Little Jade's longing for Japan calls to mind Mr. Lin's (a character in *Niezi*) comments that Taipei resembles “Tokyo of a decade ago”. The cities of New York, San Francisco, Taipei, and Tokyo reflect experiences of modernity on different geographic locales and temporalities.

¹⁰⁷ Kuo ch'ing Tu notes that “In 1999, *Asia Weekly* in Hong Kong published a list of the best Chinese fiction of the twentieth century, and *Pai Hsien-yung's Taipei People* was ranked seventh, after Lu Xun, Shen Congwen, Lao She, Zhang Ailing, Qian Zhongshu, and Mao Dun” (Tu 2017: x).

¹⁰⁸ “One evening, during the public broadcast, a parent called the public television channel, requesting that the subtitle, ‘so-and-so, please come back soon!’ be aired live.” (Liao et al. 2017) “然後我記得我們在播映當中，有一天，就有一個家長，他打電話到公共電視。

他說他希望能跑一個字幕，“‘誰誰誰請你快回來，爸媽了解你了，請你回來吧’”。

¹⁰⁹ “我剛剪完成的時候，然後交給白老師看的時候，其實他覺得小玉長得太高，他應該小巧玲瓏，然後張孝全長得太壯，不像吳敏。那個音樂好像也可以再好。因為他創作這個《孽子》其實已經很久了，所以他對這些角色他一定有他的一個樣子在他的腦海裡頭。”(Cao 2014)

¹¹⁰ The author Yang Fumin observes, “Back when I was a student, Pai’s Taipei People had been out for decades already, so I encountered this work, and *Niezi*, in their adapted forms. For instance, I first watched *Niezi* on TV before going back and reading the novel version.”

¹¹¹ Chiang states: “[...] we can [...] locate accounts of gender transgression and sexual diversity in the 1950s as yet another one of the multiple peripheries from which the theoretical power of situating Taiwan in the present derives.” For a comprehensive analysis of homoerotic desires in Taiwan in the twenty years leading up to the lifting of Martial Law, see Jens Damm. “Same-Sex Desire and Society in Taiwan, 1970-1987.” *China Quarterly*, vol. 181, 67-81.

¹¹² In the words of Director Cao Ruiyuan: “Pai was at the helm. Whenever I steered off course, he righted the ship.”/“白老師是掌舵者，我游移了，他就把我抓回來。”(Cao in Liu 2013)

¹¹³ “因為受了教訓，這一次我只給意見。反正大家改編小說都是二度創作，要忠於原著是不可能的。那也應該，因為舞台劇語言跟小說語言是兩回事。” (Pai in Liu 2013)

¹¹⁴ 舞台上的演出需要有比較多的肢體呈現，沒有替身、沒有借位、沒有特效，不像電視裡的拍攝由鏡頭來捕捉與放映導演心中要呈現的書面，舞台上的演員就是每分每秒完全暴露在觀眾面前毫無做假的機會 (Zhang 2022: 140).

¹¹⁵ “在舞台上每個當下的感受，其實都介於一種清醒與迷幻間的狀態，好像眾人（連同觀眾）一起建立起一個結界，這種結界感是劇場獨有的，結界中的我時常分不清自己是演員還是角色。” (Zhang in Pai et al. 2022: 128)

¹¹⁶ 舞台劇是限制的空間，只有這麼大的空間。這麼大的空間可是在舞台上面有無限的想像。打破了空間的限制了，打破了時空的限制了。舞台劇呢，常常會把比較抽象的，比較象徵性的寫意的，這種思維可以在舞台上面表演出來。在舞台劇可能有時候比起電視電影很可能還可以表現更深刻的把文學作品更深刻的思維，比較形而上的那種思維可以表現出來。(Pai 2020)

¹¹⁷ “舞台劇不是写实的，在有限的时间和空间里面呈现庞大的故事。” (Pai and Liao 2022)

¹¹⁸ “待龍子呼喚阿鳳時我從綢吊的至高點大約八到十米的地方瞬間垂直滑落貼近龍子的唇邊【。。。】而這時候雖然美麗卻也如我的戲份一樣無聲無息，這個瞬間在我身上一一次又一次的一道道烙身上。” (Zhang in Pai et al. 2022: 142)

¹¹⁹ Pai attended this performance, commenting: “《孽子》第一次改編成舞台劇是由 John Weinstein 編導的英文舞台劇，一九九七年在哈佛大學演出，由波士頓區各個大學的亞裔師生聯演，孽子們講英文，頗有繞趣味。”/John Weinstein’s English language stage play, which was performed at Harvard University in 1997, marked the first time *Niezi* was adapted for the stage. Various Chinese heritage students and teachers in the Boston area

starred in the performance. Listening to these “sinful sons” speaking English was quite interesting. (Pai 2020: 457, trans. mine)

¹²⁰ 就是他站起來說，“爸！”的時候的那個眼神。然後，不到一兩秒的凝望，然後決定回神就跑。我覺得那個眼神【說明】那父子除了這種憤怒，父親對兒子的不諒解和對兒子的那種，不管是委屈，還是自己的嘴上不敢去承認，我想還是有一些東西不會只是那樣子。所以，我很想在那一秒的凝視中，其實看到那個父子，他不是陌生人。他們不是陌生人。他們的某種情感是非常 deep inside 在那裡。所以他還是想跟他父親確認，“你真的不能原諒我嗎？你還是愛我的嗎？”可是那一時刻定是很短的。(Cao and Friedman 2023)

¹²¹ In Pai’s words, “Chen Xiaoxia wrote the music, and I heard it. I thought it was too smooth, too flat. I said, ‘No, it should be high-rising, crescendoing like a butterfly one fine day...’ So I returned it too.” (Pai and Friedman 2023)

¹²² In Pai’s words, “thought the theme song was very important, so we got ahold of the lyrics writer, Lin Xi 林夕, from Hong Kong. He was such a big shot, you know? He wrote the first version, I read it and I said, ‘It’s good. But it doesn’t fit in with our play.’ It was about the protests in the gay movement. That doesn’t fit in with the play. I sent it back.” (Pai and Friedman 2023)

¹²³ The stage play’s musical composer Zhang Yi (張藝) reveals that they recorded the song *Taxue xunmei* 踏雪尋梅 twice; the first time, the child choir members numbered fewer than twenty, leading to deficient musical layers; the second recording used an eighty-member children’s choir and recorded the soundtrack in their school’s auditorium to ensure maximum resonance. (Zhang in Pai et al. 2022: 98, trans. mine).

¹²⁴ “我們用了這個《踏雪尋梅》那首歌，我們開頭跟結尾的主題曲。是童聲唱的，所以很動人的，那種天真的，孩子的【感覺】。這群孽子去找梅，象徵性的美的東西，純潔的東西。。。他們失去家庭，被社會遺棄，被趕出伊甸園的。失去樂園以後，重新去找樂園。。。他們隸泊在外面，重新想去組織一個家。這麼多年的平權運動就是為了這個。去年台灣是第一個國家，也就是我們人權的一大進步，讓這個現在的觀眾被有所感。” (Feng 2020)

¹²⁵ Pai explains that Longzi’s father is an upper-class general in the ROC, a father who “harbors high expectations for [his son]...but this Longzi fell in love with an A-Feng, who comes from an unusual, tragic family background [...] he is an orphan born to a mother with intellectual disabilities and an unknown father [...] and grew up in an orphanage [...] he is wild and unruly by nature [...] Longzi and A-Feng are drawn together by a fierce, yet debilitating, passion [...]” (Pai 2020)

¹²⁶ “在影視裡頭的那一個版本中，我特別喜歡當龍子刺上阿鳳、阿鳳癱軟下去時，在他的臉龐有一抹對龍子寬容的微笑。。。而我該如何在劇場裡呈現這樣的氛圍呢？我畫好了分鏡，和美術、燈光、舞蹈進行溝通，我說我要讓整個舞台劇變成黑白的，唯有落下的彩帶、花瓣以及阿鳳的褲子是豔麗繽紛。雖然，對許多劇場人來說它是一個非常老派的做法，但我認為那會是一看過最美麗的落花瓣。而至於無法用鏡頭特寫去做的事情，就讓我們以肢體代而言之。你或許無法看到阿鳳臉龐的那一抹微笑，但我要阿鳳伸出手來，試圖去撫觸龍子的臉，卻在指尖抵達之前，便已氣數散盡，他的離開沒有殘念，是不帶怨、亦無有恨。” In a personal interview, Director Cao elaborates as follows: “The smile was impossible to realize in a play production. I pondered for quite a

while. Since plays relied on body language; moreover, A-Feng was played by the dancer Zhang Yijun. At that moment, I suggested, “How about you reach up and touch Longzi at that moment? Can you touch his face right before you die? So when a look wouldn’t suffice, I used hand motions.” (Cao and Friedman 2023, trans. mine)

¹²⁷ “阿鳳是一隻野鳳凰，鳳凰就該一飛沖天，無拘無束，舞蹈，正可以表現阿鳳的野性” (Pai in Pai et al. 2022)

¹²⁸ Wu Sujun recalls that the pandemic’s silver lining afforded the performers extra time to improve their craft: “Owing to the impact of the global pandemic, the 2020 *Niezi* performances were spectacular. Due to a full year of rehearsals, adjustments to the play’s structure, the actors’ improved proficiency in their dance moves and added nuance to their interpretation of their roles, the production’s depth and artistic techniques improved by leaps and bound, greatly improving the quality of the performance as a whole.” (Wu in Pai et al.

2022: 84, trans. mine) 因為全球疫情的影響，2020 的《孽子》演出經歷兩次展演，總算如願的盛大演出。反而因為長達一年的排練，在戲劇結構的調整、舞蹈動作的熟練、演員角色的詮釋等，深度與技術都顯著躍進，也使得整個演出品質大大的提升。”

¹²⁹ In 2013, the activist Chi Chia-wei’s same-sex marriage application was denied, catalyzing a decades-long debate on the constitutionality of the decision. On May 24, 2019, following the Taiwan Constitutional Court’s May 2017 landmark decision to grant legal recognition to same-sex marriage within two years, Taiwan became the first country in Asia to legalize same-sex marriage. (Zheng 2020)

¹³⁰ “在同婚通過以後的年代觀賞《孽子》，深感孽子們的復樂國之路，仍然漫長，宛如希臘神殿的石柱或許才是孽子們心靈的依歸，只是荒蕪。” (Liao in Pai et al. 2022: 214, trans. mine)

¹³¹ For instance, instead of simply featuring Yang Jinhai reading the news reports condemning Cozy Nest for housing demons and fairies, the 2020 production inserts a lengthy montage of reporters’ voices criticizing the bar, accompanied by unfocused fragments from scripts. The various rants coalesce into a dull, out-of-tune roar that melts into the scene in which Yang Jinhai announces the bar’s closure.

¹³² “因舞蹈的需要，每個樂句都需要調整升空的高度，所以要由整組人員手動拉昇，無論是鋼樑的承重、飛行的直徑、還有燈具的區隔都需要精密的計算。” (Wu in Pai et al. 2022: 82)

¹³³ He Shuqin (柯淑勤) also played the role of A-Qing’s mother in the television adaptation. Director Cao specially brought her back for the theatrical adaptation of *Niezi*.

¹³⁴ Pai’s close friend and collaborator K.C. Tu notes that Pai’s “Cantonese is far better than his Taiwanese. Perhaps the difference is due to his age at the time and the daily immersion in the language and contact with the local people. While he lived in Taipei, because of power struggles and personal grudges his father had with Chiang Kai-shek, his residence was under watch by secret agents [...] his contact with outside society probably was limited. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why his Taiwanese is not as fluent as his Cantonese [...]” (Tu 2017: ix)

¹³⁵ These screenplays included *Qingchang ru zhuanchang* (The Battle of Love, 1957), *Rencai liangde* (A Tale of Two Wives, 1958), *Taohua yun* (The Wayward Husband, 1959), and *Liuyue xinniàng* (June Bride, 1960) (Meng 2017: 116).

¹³⁶ After Reyher passed away in 1967, Chang took up a writing residency program at the Radcliffe Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where she began translating *Flowers of Shanghai* from the Wu Shanghainese dialect and researching *The Dream of the Red Chamber*. During this time, her correspondences with her editor C. T. Hsia were addressed to a “Mrs. Ferdinand Reyher” in Cambridge. (Asia Society 2020)

¹³⁷ Nicole Huang’s 2019 chapter “Worlding Eileen Chang Narratives of Frontiers and Crossings” analyzes the ways in which the work parallels Chang’s own journey of border-crossing and echoes Chang’s own process of translating Han Bangqing’s *Haishang hua* (海上花) from classical Chinese into the vernacular.

¹³⁸ “整篇小说约两万许字，都是中年妇女的对白，一点故事性都没有〔……〕一开始琐碎到底，很难读完两万字，连我都说读不下去，怕只有宋淇宋老先生还是欣赏的。〔……〕两位中年太太‘相见欢’，说的尽是家中噜里噜苏事！〔……〕试问三十岁以下的读者怎么会有共鸣？”(Yi 1981)

¹³⁹ Here, I refer to a 2020 essay by Li Junguo 李俊国 and Zhou Yi 周易 recounting the process of unearthing a previously forgotten English language manuscript of Chang’s “She Said Smiling” from among Chang’s translations of Ban Qing’s *Haishang hua* (海上花) housed at the University of Southern California’s Special Collections (Li and Zhou 2020).

¹⁴⁰ In coining the term “transwriting zone”, I draw upon Emily Apter’s notion of the “translation zone”: “Translation zones” refer to areas of heightened linguistic interactions and hybridity that counter cultural homogenization by supplying “a zone of critical engagement that connects the ‘I’ and the ‘n’ of translation and transNation” (Apter 2006: 5).

¹⁴¹ In their 2020 article *Zhang Ailing Xianjian huan yingwen yigao de faxian yu yanjiu* [The Discovery and Study of Eileen Chang’s Forgotten English Manuscript ‘She Said Smiling’] published in *Chinese Comparative Literature*, Li Junguo 李俊国 and Zhou Yi 周易 also hypothesize that “She Said Smiling” served as the source text for *Xianjian huan* 相见欢.

¹⁴² Here, I defer to Jiang’s definition of Chinglish (often conflated with “Sinicized English”, “Chinese pidgeon English” or “Chinese English”) as a creolized “interlanguage” bridging English and Chinese, one that “emphasize[s] the structurally and phonologically intermediate status of a learner’s language system between mother tongue and target language”, and often arranges English words according to a Chinese syntax (Jiang 1995: 51).

¹⁴³ “都是1950年间写得。。。这三个故事都曾经使我震动，因而甘心一遍又一遍改写这么些年，甚至于想起来只想到最初获得材料的惊喜，与改写的历程，一点都不觉得其间三十年的时间过去了。” (cited in Song 2015: 260)

¹⁴⁴ Chang’s self-imposed “language pledge” was in accordance with Hong Kong University’s (est. 1911, Hong Kong’s oldest tertiary educational institution) trademark immersive English language pedagogical principles. Chang belonged to St. Mary’s Hall, whose teachers, many of them American and British, also ascribed to an English language pledge in their pedagogy (Yuan 2005)

¹⁴⁵ Eileen Chang’s self-translations enabled her to deliver a scathing critique traditional Chinese cultural values for an America readership. Chang’s self-translated works include *The Rouge of the North* (地胭脂, 1966) and “Stale Mates/五四遗事 Wusi yishi” from English to Chinese, and *The Rice-Sprout Song* (1955), *Naked Earth* (赤地, 1976), “Shame, Amah!” (阿

小秋悲, 1961), “Little Finger Up” (等, 1961) and *The Golden Cangue* (金鎖記, 1943) from Chinese to English. Chang did not consider herself a translator in the strict sense, rather intending her texts to be read as originals, regardless of whether they were first published in Chinese or English. Thus, Chang tended to mask her own bilingual writing process in an effort to have readers consider her publications as independent works, rather than simply another version rooted in the previous linguistic edition. Thus, in translating her own works, Chang engaged in a “double act of impersonation” manifesting the “duality of ontology” characteristic of semi-colonial Shanghai, and indeed, her own bicultural identity (Louie 2012: 98). Such strategic decisions reflect the politically-charged environment in which Chang drafted her works.

¹⁴⁶ “其實三篇近作也都是 1950 年間寫的，不過此後屢經徹底改寫，《相見歡》和《色，戒》發表後又還添改多處。”(Chang 1983/1991: 4)

¹⁴⁷ “這三個故事都曾經使我震動，因而甘心一遍遍改寫這些年，甚至於想起來只想到最初獲得材料的驚喜，與改寫的歷程，一點都不覺得這期間三十年的時間過去了。愛就是不問值得不值得。這也就是《此情可待成追憶，只是當時已經惘然》了。因此結集時題名《惘然紀》。”(Chang 1983/1991: 4, trans. mine)

¹⁴⁸ Meng Hui reminds us that “In rendering Chang’s full-bodied and many-flavored prose, [Chang’s own] self-translation seems to [err] on the side of under-translation (in contrast [with] the method of over-translation adopted by Karen S. Kingsbury, one of the first American scholars to study and translate Chang’s fiction).” (Meng 2021: 18).

¹⁴⁹ For instance, in collaborating with Suzanne Jill Levine to translate “Boquidas Pintadas” (1969) into English as “Heartbreak Tango”, Manuel Puig admits that with Levine’s input, he rewrote entire sections to adapt cultural contexts for Poker games and *bolero* (a lively song genre originating in late nineteenth century Cuba written in $\frac{3}{4}$ meter) song lyrics for an American readership. Levine reflects that with the author stepping in to rewrite his own text, she enjoyed “the freedom of conscience, [because] it’s the author who’s betraying the text [...] therefore the translation will be a retranslation, in a sense will be more faithful” (Levine et al. 1969: 33).

¹⁵⁰ In the words of Dominic Cheung, professor East Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of Southern California, Chang “possesses a multiple identity. She was from Shanghai, she lived in Hong Kong, she was published in Taiwan and she stayed in the United States. She’s almost an American writer, and this is why she tried very hard to have her works translated in English.” (Zinngrabe 1997: 12)

¹⁵¹ Wen-shan Shieh, however, takes issue with Shen’s delinking metaphor, arguing that Chang believes observing China from a foreign perspective ripens one’s love for China (Shieh 2018: 105).

¹⁵² “摺下来让它多 marinate—浸泡一些时” (Chang in Hsia 2013: 180).

¹⁵³ “一般所说“时代的纪念碑”那样的作品，我是写不出来的，也不打算尝试【。。。】我甚至只是写些男女间的小事情，我的作品里没有战争，也没有革命。我以为人在恋爱的时候，是比在战争或革命的时候更素朴，也更放您的【。。。】真的革命与革命的战争，在情调上我想应当和恋爱是近亲，和恋爱一样是放恣的渗透于人生的全面，而对于自己是和谐” (Chang 1968/2012: 18-19)

¹⁵⁴ Opinions diverge as to whether or not Chang considered *Little Reunion* “completed”—Chang’s estate executor Roland Soong claims that Chang did indeed consider the novel

“finished” and hoped to publish it in 1976, sending the manuscript to Song Qi and Kuang Wenmei in Hong Kong, though she later expressed her desire to have the manuscript destroyed in 1992 (Sang 2012: 196-197)

¹⁵⁵ Stephen Song urged Chang to heavily censor the novel, warning Chang that readers might immediately associate the character Jiuli (Julie), who embarks upon a love affair with the philanderer Shao Zhiyong, with Chang herself. Song feared that readers would accuse Chang of “political disloyalty and sexual immorality”, just as she had once been publicly tried as a cultural traitor (文化漢奸) for associating with Hu Lancheng (胡蘭成) (Sang 2012: 201).

¹⁵⁶ 《往事知多少》的来源，是我在大陆的时候听见这两个密友谈话，一个自己循规蹈矩，却代这彩凤随鸦的不平得恨不得她红杏出墙，但是对她仅有的那点不像样的罗曼斯鄙夷冷漠，几个月后（1952年春）她又念念不忘讲了一遍，一个忘了说过，一个忘了听见过。我在旁边几乎不能相信我的耳朵—她们都不是健忘的人—伍太太是实在憎恶这故事，从意识终排斥了出去…伍太太二次反应相同，可见人与人之间的隔膜，我非常震动。(cited in Soong 2015, 265)

¹⁵⁷ One of these poems by Li Yu reads: “Alone, in silence, up the west tower I go:/The moon is like a sickle; That desolate phoenix tree, this clear, cool autumn,/Locked deep in the courtyard below./O threads I can’t cut through,/In a tangle I can’t undo!/Such is my parting sorrow—/A taste that tastes so odd, so strange that my heart/Ne’er ever before did know.” (trans. Andrew W.F. Wong) (无言独上西楼，月如钩。寂寞梧桐深院锁清秋。剪不断，理还乱，是离愁。别是一般滋味在心头。) The other reads: “Flower groves have shed their spring red halo;/Oh, far too soon to go!/Weathering not the morning sleets and/The winds by evening blow./Tears of rouge you’re dripping,/Together our wine we’re sipping; Ever again in the morrow?/Ah, life is beset, as always, with sorrow/As eastwards waters must flow.” (trans. Andrew W.F. Wong) (林花谢了春红，太匆匆。无奈朝来寒雨晚来风。胭脂泪，相留醉，几时重。自是人生长恨水长东。)

¹⁵⁸ Born and bred in Shanghai, Chang characterizes Shanghainese as the product of an unhealthy fusion of traditional and modern culture: “Shanghainese are traditional Chinese tempered by the high pressure of modern life. The misshapen products of this fusion of old and new culture may not be entirely healthy, but they do embody a strange and distinctive sort of wisdom.” (Chang, trans. Jones 1968/2005: 54).

¹⁵⁹ In this speech, delivered on March 5, 1946 at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, Churchill states, “From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the Continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of Central and Eastern Europe. Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest and Sofia, all these famous cities and the populations around them lie in what I must call the Soviet sphere”. (Churchill 1949)

¹⁶⁰ Echoing Chang’s psychoanalytical approach to trauma in “She Said Smiling”, *The Golden Cangue* and *The Rouge of the North* also embody the “return of the repressed,” which David Der-wei Wang quantifies as “continued linguistic approximations of an unspeakable trauma” (Wang, “Forward” to *The Rouge of the North*, 1998: xi).

¹⁶¹ 沿用旧小说的全知观点麝用在场人物观点 (Chang 2017: 130).

¹⁶² Edward Gunn also comments that Chang’s works contain disillusionment and are “antiromanticist” by nature: “No idealized conceptions appear in [Chang’s] works, not of

heroic characters, revolution or love. Instead there are disillusionment, the exposure of fraud, and compromise with reality. (Gunn 1980: 128)

¹⁶³ “伍太太已经忘了听见这话，但是仍旧很不耐烦，只作例行公事的反应，每隔一段，吃吃的笑一声，像给人叉住喉咙似的，只是‘吭！’一声响。苑梅恨不得大叫一声，又差点笑出声来。妈记性又不坏，怎么会一个忘了说过，一个忘了听见过？但是她知道等他们走了，她不会笑着告诉妈：‘表姑忘了说过钉梢的事，又讲了一遍。’不是实在憎恶这故事，妈也不会这么快就忘了——排斥在意识外——还又要去提它？” (Chang 1983/1991: 91)

¹⁶⁴ Mrs. Wu’s husband is their mutual cousin, and Mrs. Xun’s husband is also one of their shared relatives. See Chang, Eileen. 表姨细姨及其他 *Biaoyi xiyi ji qita* [Cousin aunts, concubines, and others]. *United Daily News*. May 11, 1979.

¹⁶⁵ 显然她仍旧妒恨绍甫。少女时代同性恋的单恋对象下嫁了他，数十年后余愤未平。倒是甸太太已经与现实媾和了，而且很知足，知道她目前的小家庭生活就算幸福的了。一旦绍甫死了生活无着，也准备自食其力。她对绍甫之死的冷酷，显示她始终不爱他。但是一个人一辈子总也未免有情，不过她当年即使对那恋慕她的牌友动了心，又还能怎样？也只好永远念叨着那钉梢的了。(Chang 1979)

¹⁶⁶ Eileen Chang’s intricate transwriting process calls to mind Ngũgĩ wa’Thiong’o’s revisions of the source text while self-translating: “Quite often I found myself having to translate a draft I had thought was complete, only to find, in the process of translation, that there the original was inadequate. The muse would possess me again and I would go to the Gikyu original, write more drafts, which I later subjected to yet another translation into English.” (wa Thiong’o 2009: 20)

¹⁶⁷ According to Steven Kellman, a translingual sensibility is “one that does not just covet another language but that is permeated by an awareness of the relativity of languages [...] Keenly aware of the imperfection of human expression, authors who leap from language to language testify both to the vibrancy of the imagination and to its limitations.” (Kellman and Stavans 2015: 14).

¹⁶⁸ This poem was partially inspired by Ha Jin’s Brandeis classmate Sangeeta, who once asked Jin (at an informal party) why he didn’t sue the Chinese government because it didn’t allow him to bring his wife and son over to the United States (Jin and Charles 2017).

¹⁶⁹ In *A Dictionary of Translation Studies*, Shuttleworth and Cowie define *translationese* as “unnatural, impenetrable or even comical” due to their difference from a more “natural” target language expression (Shuttleworth and Cowie 2004: 187)

¹⁷⁰ Walkowitz defines *translatese* as “unidiomatic writing that seems [...] like no language in particular” (Walkowitz 2015: 175).

¹⁷¹ Li explains, “I am used to being seen by some Chinese—both in the West and in China—as a cultural traitor. Why can’t she write in Chinese? people ask; if she doesn’t write in Chinese, what right does she have to write about our country?” (Li 2017: 157).

¹⁷² In Jin’s words: “Some may even pose a challenge: ‘If you have not suffered together with us, you’ve just appropriated our miseries for your personal gain. You sell your country and your people abroad.’” (Jin 2008: 4)

¹⁷³ “But for a beginner and an immigrant like me, the only choice was English, in which I would have to make my solitary journey and turn my back to our menacing native land whenever it becomes too exacting and too overpowering [...] As a writer, I must not be

responsible for a country or a group, and I can be responsible only for my characters and for the words I use...” (Jin 2013: 98)

¹⁷⁴ In the words of Jacques Derrida, “What remains untranslatable is at bottom the only thing *to translate*, the only thing *translatable*. What must be translated of that which is translatable can only be the untranslatable.” (Derrida 1992/2015, emphases in the source text)

¹⁷⁵ The case of Ha Jin’s hybrid, defamiliarized Chinglish mirrors that of the Turkish-German writer Feridun Zaimoglu (b. 1964), who grew up bilingually in Turkish and German and creates a creolized tapestry of non-standard German interspersed with splashes of English (mostly rap slang), Yiddish and Hebrew in his novel *Kanak* [contraction of the racist slur *Kanake*, a derogatory term for Southern European, especially Turkish migrants] *Sprak* [condensation of *Sprache*, meaning language] (Yildiz 2014: 152)

¹⁷⁶ As the Chinese-American silkpunk author and science fiction translator Ken Liu (b. 1976) notes, “I owe a *fiduciary* duty to the authors that I translate.”

¹⁷⁷ Haomin Gong, for instance, asserts that Jin’s “English [throughout *A Good Fall*] sounds like a direct translation of Chinese” and therefore lends itself to direct translation into Chinese (Gong 2014: 148).

¹⁷⁸ As Stephanos Stephanides puts it, Ha Jin. “is forever torn between a desire to look back at an original, to make whole what has been smashed, and to acknowledge the exigencies of the present. Translation as a practice is marked by this tension between an acceptance of loss and a desire for retrieval, between forgetfulness and memory” (Stephanides 2004: 113).

¹⁷⁹ “我父亲是军人，从小我们就到处搬家，所以无法说哪里是家乡。然而，思乡的确是一种难以压抑的情感，就像爱情。由于找不到故乡，我就把这份心绪的一部分倾注到《落地》的译文中，以在沐浴中建立一个小小的‘别墅’。这也算是在漫长的旅途中的一个停歇之处。” (Jin 2012: 3-4).

¹⁸⁰ In the words of Susan Stewart, “nostalgia is the repetition that mourns the inauthenticity of all repetitions and denies the repetition’s capacity to define identity.” (cited in Boym 2001: xviii). In *The Future of Nostalgia*, Svetlana Boym elaborates on the notion of modern nostalgia as a type of mourning or disease that must be countered through reflective, restorative nostalgia for an imagined future: “Modern nostalgia is a mourning for the impossibility of mythical return, for the loss of an enchanted world with clear borders and values; it could be a secular expression of a spiritual longing, a nostalgia for an absolute, a home that is both physical and spiritual, the edenic unity of time and space before entry into history...” (Boym 2001: 8)

¹⁸¹ Boym defines “reflective nostalgia” as “a form of deep mourning that performs a labor of grief both through pondering pain and through play that points to the future” (Boym 2001: 55).

¹⁸² In Yan’s words, “The reality of China is so outrageous that it defies belief and renders realism inert.” (Yan in Fan 2018)

¹⁸³ In Li’s words: “Over the years my brain has banished Chinese. I dream in English. I talk to myself in English. And memories—not only those about America but also those about China; not only those carried on but those archived with the wish to forget—are sorted in English” (Li 2016: 145).

¹⁸⁴ Li warns that “memories, left untranslated, can be disowned” (Li 2016).

¹⁸⁵ Coincidentally, Li was in the midst of writing her 2017 novel *Must I Go*, recounting Lilia's loss of her daughter Katherine to suicide and subsequent imagined conversations with her, when Li's own son committed suicide (Seghal 2020).

¹⁸⁶ In a 2022 interview, Ha Jin also told me: "With short fiction, I should [translate them myself], because very often, short fiction pieces get published in magazines, which means [...] if I don't have the translation rights, it's too complicated [...] the editor would have to turn to the translator [...] And so, it would be much simpler if I just do the translation myself, and keep all the rights in my own hands." (Jin and Friedman 2022)

¹⁸⁷ In Ha Jin's words, "automatically, writers who write in English basically are *persona non grata*. All my works are [no longer] in print now, not even Li Bai's biography [...] Except, maybe, my *New, Selected Poetry*, because [the poems] were written in Chinese originally. (Jin and Friedman 2022)

¹⁸⁸ As Susan Bassnett puts it in reference to the Canadian French-English self-translator Nancy Louise Huston (b. 1953): "[Nancy] Huston acknowledges that, somehow, the split between her two language selves has been healed through [self-]translation." (Bassnett 2013:

¹⁸⁹ Chinese-American writers mainly consist of writers of Chinese descent who were born in the United States, or second-generation/heritage Chinese-American writers like Amy Tan and Maxine Hong Kingston. Ha Jin, despite being born in mainland China and moving to the United States later in life, has nevertheless been hailed as a spokesperson for the Chinese-American community as he sets many of his works in Chinatowns in the United States and remains critical of the CCP's policies. For further insight on Ha Jin's adopted identity as a Chinese-American writer, see Melody Yunzi Li. "Home and Identity En Route in Chinese Diaspora—Reading Ha Jin's *A Free Life*." *Pacific Coast Philology* 49, no. 2 (2014): 203–20. <https://doi.org/10.5325/pacicoasphil.49.2.0203>.

¹⁹⁰ Ha Jin's short story anthology entitled *Ocean of Words: Army Stories* (1996), based on Ha Jin's own experiences serving as a People Liberation Army soldier during the Korean War, recounts encounters between semi-literate Soviet Union and Chinese soldiers during the 1970s; his short story collection *Under the Red Flag* (1997) satirizes Maoist revolutionary ideals through down-to-earth depictions of villagers struggling to survive under the PLA's repressive shadow during the Cultural Revolution.

¹⁹¹ In his poem entitled "June 1989: To a poet in China" from his anthology *Facing Shadows*, Ha Jin writes: "The whole world knows/except/The Chinese who mourn and celebrate, mourning for the deaths of murderers, celebrating the murder of themselves...History, my friend, is being revised, just as the blood was scubbed off, or covered up with grass and flowers, and the bodies burned to a riddle of numbers./The killers improvise reasons for killing/while the victims commit a crime/if they are killed." (Jin 1996: 26-27)

¹⁹² In a conversation with Eliot Weinberger during the 2005 PEN World Voices Festival of International Literature Jin further stated, "[Tiananmen] really shaped my life, changed my life. For me, it's personal, not public trauma." (Jin and Weinberger 2007)

¹⁹³ In a 2009 interview with Jacki Lyden, Jin further elaborates on the significance of Flushing as the geographical setting for *A Good Fall*: "Flushing is the second biggest Chinatown in New York City. It also is inhabited by most recent arrivals. Not only Chinese, they are lot of Koreans and European immigrants as well, so it is a vibrant place. And, in fact, in the beginning of 2005, I was invited to a conference out in the center of Flushing. I was

very touched by the scenes on the streets, so that's why I decided to set all the stories in that place.” (Jin and Lyden 2009)

¹⁹⁴ As E.K. Tan puts it, “the process [of] *luo-di-sheng-gen* [...] is a practice of diaspora. The coexistence of nation, a regional, ethnic, and local identities implies that diasporic identities are translational—both relational and translatable.” (Tan 2013: 18).

¹⁹⁵ Jin wrote *A Good Fall* on the heels of the equally ironically entitled *A Free Life*, which recounts Nan Wu’s pursuit of the American Dream, which ironically imprisons rather than liberates him, until he finds an outlet for his artistic talent by becoming a writer.

¹⁹⁶ Ha Jin’s self-translation process mirrors that of Vladimir Nabokov (1899-1977), known for his extensive self-translations from English into Russian and vice-versa. Nabokov likens the process of translating his memoir *Speak, Memory* from Russian to English as the “re-Englishing of a Russian re-version of what had been an English re-telling of Russian memories in the first place” (DiBattista and Wittman 2014: 14).

¹⁹⁷ In the words of *New York Times* Public Editor Margaret Sullivan, the term “illegal immigrant” should be used in place of “illegal alien” because it is clearer and more succinct, and “gets its job done in two words that are easily understood.” (Sullivan 2012) Ha Jin uses this term once again on page 230 of the English version when Cindy remarks: “I mean its’ foolish to think you’re done for. Lots of people here are illegal aliens...” (Jin 2010: 230)

¹⁹⁸ “听人家说，世界上有一种鸟是没有脚的，他只能一直飞啊飞，飞得累了便在空中睡觉，这种鸟一辈子只可以下地一次，那一次就是它死的时候.....”(Wong 1990)

¹⁹⁹ As Nataly Kelly and Jost Zetsche put it, “when someone navigates between two worlds, they’re often viewed with suspicion by one side or the other—or worse yet, by both sides.” (Kelly and Zetsche 2012: 39)

²⁰⁰ This poem was perhaps inspired by Ha Jin’s Brandeis classmate Sangeeta, who asked Jin at a Party why he didn’t sue the Chinese government because it didn’t allow him to bring his wife and son over to the United States (Jin and Charles 2017).

²⁰¹ As of 2021, in the United States, 82 languages are “critically endangered”, Brazil has 45 endangered languages, Australia—42, India—41, Indonesia—32, and Canada—30. (Yan 2021)

²⁰² In contrast with this defiant celebration of human agency (Song 2023: 178), Wang’s “Seafood Restaurant” (2019) presents a rather dystopian vision of a fictitious American town near Wellsley, Massachusetts, occupied by a colony of aliens who erode human individuality. The story depicts cross-species sexual intercourse when Professor Laiden forces a live octopus down the food critic’s esophagus, pointing to an uncanny human-alien synthesis embracing the Other within the self and vice-versa.

²⁰³ Wang draws the gardener-architect analogy of writing from George R.R. Martin, who famously stated, “There are two types of writers, the architects and gardeners. The architects plan everything ahead of time. The gardeners dig a hole, drop in a seed and water it. They kind of know what seed it is, they know if planted a fantasy seed or mystery seed or whatever. They discover as it grows. In addition, I am much more a gardener than an architect.” ()

²⁰⁴ Wang has authored numerous works of fiction centering around romance, such as *Yuejian chao* 月见潮 (“The Moon Tides”), *Chaoxi li* 潮汐历 (“Tide Calendar”), *Fatiao milu* 发条麋鹿 (“A Clockwork Elk”), 蛰伏的爱 *Zhefu de ai* (“A Dormant Love”) *Jixie songshu* 机械松鼠 (“The Mechanical Squirrel”), and such metaphysical short stories and novellas as *Naoxia* 脑

匣 (“The Brain Box”), “The Cyber-Cuscuta Manifesto”, 鹏程万里 *Pengcheng wanli* (“Pengcheng: A Story of Wanli”), and so forth.

²⁰⁵ “科幻之所以能够再现全球化、赛博空间、气候变暖等等议题，是因为其既是一种叙事也是一种抒情的艺术形式。” (Wang in Pengpai 2022, trans. mine)

²⁰⁶ Notable among China’s contemporary science fiction writers are the male authors Liu Cixin (刘慈欣, b. 1963), Chen Qiufan (陈楸帆, b. 1981), Han Song (韩松, b. 1965), Wang Jinkang (王晋康), Baoshu (宝树, b. 1980), Zheng Wenguang (郑文光, 1929–2003) and Ma Boyong (马伯庸, b. 1980). Canonized female Chinese sci-fi authors include Hao Jingfang (郝景芳, b. 1984), Zhao Haihong (赵海虹), Ling Che (凌晨), Chi Hui (迟卉), Xia Jia (夏笳), Hao Jingfang (郝景芳), Chen Qian (陈茜) and Tang Fei (糖匪).

²⁰⁷ In Lu Xun’s words, “The progress of Chinese people begins with science fiction.” (Lu Xun in Chen and Liu 2016: 374).

²⁰⁸ In *Fin-de-Siecle Splendor: Repressed Modernities of Late Qing Fiction*, David Der-wei Wang redefines the notion of Chinese literary “modernity” by tracing the roots of “modern” Chinese literature to the late Qing, rather than the May Fourth era. By “repressed modernities”, Wang refers to a network of displaced or diminished literary trajectories that are subordinated to the master narrative. In Wang’s assessment, these so-called “repressed modernities” include such forms and genres such as the depravity romance, chivalric/court-case cycles, grotesque exposé, science fantasy (Wang 1997: 2-41).

²⁰⁹ *The Future of New China* presents a utopian vision for a powerful China that had undergone sixty years of self-strengthening; *New China* tells the story of a progressive, altruistic China that has undergone a spiritual revolution to conquer Western-imposed Communism; “Mending Heaven” recounts altercations between Nüwa and her human creations, who beg Nüwa for an elixir of immortality; *Cat Country*, patterned after Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*, is about a traveler from China who befriends the Cat People on Mars, and has been interpreted as an allegory for Kuomintang rule (Tang 1993: 259)

²¹⁰ Moreover, China has its own separate categories of grave robbery (*dao mu* 盗墓), time-travel (*chuanyue* 穿越), and Taoist immortality-chasing (*xiuzhen* 修真), which exist as popular genres on their own and are rarely included within the overarching umbrellas of sci-fi or fantasy (Wang 2016).

²¹¹ “A Tale of New Mr. Braggadocio”, centers around the inventor Mr. Braggadocio, whose invention of brain electricity erodes boundaries between the self and the collective.

²¹² Ma Shaoling claims that Mr. Braggadocio’s “failure to enlighten his countrymen is an allegory [for] the ways in which late Qing intellectuals and writers expressed their frustrations with Chinese society’s incapacity to confront foreign imperialist aggressions” (Ma 2013: 61).

²¹³ Adapted from Liu Cixin’s 2000 novel of the same name, *The Wandering Earth* grossed a whopping 600 million or more dollars in the box office in China alone.

²¹⁴ In 2016, the Chinese State Council released a four-year plan for popularizing scientific knowledge and literacy among the populace, a campaign in which sci-fi was to play a central role. The campaign aimed to “Aggressively develop science fiction, comics, videos, games and creation of other works of popular science [*kepu*] etc. Promote the establishment of policy to support the production of science fiction...” (CAST 2016).

²¹⁵ These ten guidelines included provisions promoting sci-fi films, research and development, IP rights, fiscal support policies, and so forth. For more information, see Jing Tsu, in Jing et al. “China’s Science-Fiction Universe.” National Committee on U.S.-China Relations. May 12, 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yxJNz7Yjkso>.

²¹⁶ In “The Snow of Jinyang”, Zhang Ran envisions a medieval internet system woven from woodblocks and silk, thus *transmediating* computer networking into a material image. (Jin 2023).

²¹⁷

²¹⁸ However, as Jing Tsu points out in her essay entitled “The Futures of Genders in Chinese Science Fiction”, categorizing non-male-authored Chinese sci-fi as defined by different themes, literary techniques, and purposes risks essentializing gender categories. (Jing 2022: 125-135)

²¹⁹ In a conversation with Francesco Verso in 2022, Wang further stated: “it’s not about oh, we don’t want more hard science fiction, we want more soft science fiction [...] it’s all about opening up to more diverse aesthetics and opening up to more kinds of stories that [publishers] see possibilities of investing in [...]” (Wang in Verso et al. 2021).

²²⁰ Here, I ascribe to the seven-part definition of posthumanism as outlined by Francesca Ferrando, namely: 1. Theories critical of traditional humanism; 2. Cultural humanism focusing on technoscientific knowledge; 3. *Philosophical posthumanism* that explores alternative subjectivities beyond those of human beings; 4. *Posthuman transhumanism*, which focus on technology-enabled enhancement of human quality of life; 6. AI takeover, in which humanity goes extinct and is replaced by AI; 7. Voluntary Human Extinction or a future completely devoid of human traces (Ferrando 2013: 26-32).

²²¹ Zhurong (祝融) is the God of Fire and ruler of the south in Chinese mythology and the name of the rover of the Chinese Mars mission Tianwen-1, launched on July 23, 2020. (Wang, Shi and Thiel 2022)

²²² “这是一篇科幻小说，关心的却还是人。科幻小说有很多种，在近期的创作中，我痴迷于从人物内心出发，探究人与人之间的交流和相互理解，其可能性与不可能性，以及科技在其中的作用或无用。哪怕技术发展到能够替你说话，我们仍有可能会失语。” 这是一篇科幻小说，关心的却还是人。科幻小说有很多种，在近期的创作中，我痴迷于从人物内心出发，探究人与人之间的交流和相互理解，其可能性与不可能性，以及科技在其中的作用或无用。哪怕技术发展到能够替你说话，我们仍有可能会失语。(Wang, “Aphasia”)

²²³ 创作这篇小说的过程中，我在世界各地出差，有时候说英语，有时候说汉语，始终搞不清自己位于哪个时区。在清晨，在正午，在半夜，我抓紧一切清醒的间隙修改这篇小说，它不断变化，最终呈现的样貌与最初的构想已截然不同，仿佛每一次穿越晨昏线，小说中的主角便进入一个新的平行宇宙。(ibid)

²²⁴ 那么多年来，我的上海话早已变得生疏，发音不大标准，若要表达复杂的内容，我会选择普通话而非上海话。” (Wang, “Aphasia”)

²²⁵ 虽然不能说柯莫语是汉语的隐喻，但我确实思考了汉语和上海话之间的异同，并从中汲取灵感。(Wang, “Aphasia”)

²²⁶ When I grew up, I often started to speak Mandarin with my mom, so it came naturally. I can’t do sophisticated thinking in Shanghainese because my educational language was

Mandarin. I expressed complicated thoughts and ideas in Mandarin instead of Shanghainese. Sometimes I get tongue-tied, I can't express things authentically in Shanghainese.

²²⁷ In the words of Yen Ooi, "'The Language Sheath' [...] will resonate with children who grow up with a different first language from their parents [...] The language relationship in the story reminded me a lot about my own struggles with having English as my main language. And as my Chinese languages got pushed into the background, the difficulties I had in reconciling them within my own identity and culture started to show. Knowing that this is something common to multilingual and multicultural families helped me find new ways of embracing it."

²²⁸ “《语膜》中母亲的原型源自于一位瑞典语老师，我曾经和她短暂共事过一段时间。刚开始的时候我们大家都觉得她待人随和，工作认真，不过后来我们发现，她不仅有酗酒的习惯，还尝试过自杀。我们马上向她的家人反映了情况，但他们显得不太合作，她的儿子甚至拒绝到上海探望她。几年过去，这位老师的经历在我脑中挥之不去。一直以来我都在想，是哪些事情让她的儿子和家人同她敬而远之？她就是《语膜》中母亲形象的灵感来源。” (Wang in Lü et al. 2020)

²²⁹ “在翻译过程中，我也回想了我自身的经历，以及那种不停在两种文化语境中来回跳跃所产生的焦虑。由于语言上的含混性，不论英语还是中文有时都不能完全表达我自己的情绪，这其实不仅仅是语言学方面的问题，更是一个身份认同问题。” (Jin in Lü et al.)

²³⁰ “作为译者，我不仅需要向作者提出语言层面上的建议，还需要根据我自己的个人经历，在保留作者声音的基础上，丰富故事所蕴含的情感和冲突。我们将翻译的过程视为《语膜》这个故事的二次创作，而不仅仅是将中文转换成英文。” (Jin in Lü et al.)

²³¹ “说英文的我更加开放勇敢，而说中文的我有时候会略微显得保守羞涩。《语膜》中的儿子雅克就有我自己的影子，在他尝试讲柯莫语的时候，他会表现出局促与不知所措的感觉，而说英语的他则更加莽撞、冲动。这也是我在故事中有意向大家呈现的概念。” (Wang in Lü et al. 2020)

²³² 在国内我们经常讨论，要不要把英语作为义务教育阶段的必修课，现在我们有了足够的文化自信，当有外国人到中国来，我们是不是应当鼓励他们学中文，而不是自己学英文去迎合他们？

²³³ As Ferdinand de Saussure notes, languages transcend temporal and geographical boundaries, "...there are no precise boundaries between languages...there are only open dialects, formed by adding together the waves [of linguistic variation] in which they participate, there are no closed languages" (Saussure 1968: 462, translated by Domínguez et al. 2015: 78).

²³⁴ 据说有的作家为了保证自己语言的纯净性，拒绝使用外语，可究竟什么才是纯净的语言？在全球化的当下，语言的互相交融和影响无可避免，所谓“纯净”的语言可能最终只会成为化石。(Wang, "Aphasia")

²³⁵ In the words of Judith Butler, "So much translation theory gets caught up with the problem of loss and inadequacy, with the inadequacy of translation, its failure to recapture, reconstitute, and repair what is prior, what is lost. It does not always see that the figure of the past that feeds this nostalgia is one that is induced by the process of translation itself; that is, translation requires appropriation into a new language, and there we find guilt over its

capture and remaking, the transfer, the equivocation of ownership that takes place, say, when a poem appears in another language.” (Butler 2004: 82)

²³⁶“ 柯莫语音韵典雅古朴，就连日常对话听起来都宛若吟唱，悦耳动听却不乏力量感。”(Wang 2019)

²³⁷ By *methexis*, Nancy refers to the “commonality of sonic experience” (cited in Born 2019: 195); in other words, participatory sonic experiences that engender the collective subject through the act of active listening.

²³⁸ Rey Chow, building upon Michel Foucault, defines the *deja énoncé* as resonances, connotations and memories associated with individual speech acts (Chow 2014: 60).

²³⁹ In the words of Suzanne Jill Levine, “In creating the most original writing of his time, Borges taught us that nothing is new, that creation is recreation, that we are all one contradictory mind, connected amongst each other and through time and space, that human beings are not only fiction makers but are fictions themselves, that everything we think or perceive is fiction, that every corner of knowledge is a fiction.” (Levine in Ciabattari 2014)

²⁴⁰ Suzanne Jill Levine, in describing the narrative philosophy of Adolfo Bioy Casares, writes: “Bioy loves storytelling. The way he sees it, we are always telling others and ourselves stories; we are limited to our version of reality, and we are all characters in some fiction, ours or that of others. The truth lies somewhere between all the versions. This fictive nature of narrative (often his characters are writers) is already in life itself: your life resembles a description of your life, or, to turn the phrase around in the mirror: one’s work is only a mirror of oneself. (Levine 1993: vii-xiv)

²⁴¹ In “Gender and the Metaphorics of Translation”, Lori Chamberlain explains that because the word *traduction* is feminine, *les beaux infidèles* is an impossible construction. Moreover, the “unfaithful” wife in the form of a translation is accused of crimes that the husband/original would be legally incapable of committing, thus making the source text immune from accusations of infidelity (Chamberlain 1988/2019: 58). Chamberlain further interprets this *belle infidèles* as “both a mistress and as a portrait model”, explaining that both the translator and painter must “seduce the text in order to ‘trace’ (translate) the features of [their] subject” (Chamberlain 1988/2019: 60).

²⁴² Alastair Reid explains that meaning gets lost in language rather than translation: “*lo que se pierde* what gets lost/*no es lo que se pierde en traducción sino*/is not what gets lost in translation but more/what gets lost in language itself” (Reid 1988: 93, italics in the source text).

²⁴³ Postmodernism, a term coined by Jean-Francois Lyotard in 1979 with the publication of *La Condition Postmoderne* (1979, translated into English as *The Postmodern Condition* in 1984), emphasizes the notion of the Self as existing in a state of decentered flux. Postmodernism emphasizes the constructed nature of reality, rejects the notion of absolute truth, and focuses instead on relative truth and concrete, individualized experience over generalized abstractions. Postmodern literature, a type of cultural postmodernism, is distinguished by the use of experimentalism, metafiction, unreliable narration, intertextuality, and self-reflexivity (Geyh 2003: 1-29).

²⁴⁴ In the words of Salman Rushdie, “the real secret of [Dorothy’s] ruby slippers [in *The Wizard of Oz*] is not that there is no place like home, but rather than there is no longer such a place as home; except of course, for the home we make, or the homes that are made for us, in

Oz: which is anywhere and everywhere, except the place from which we began.” (Rushdie 1996)

²⁴⁵ Red Pine’s observations on the mind and language as existing in a perpetual state of flux echoes Benjamin Whorf’s pronouncement in “Science and Linguistics” on reality as constructed, forming a “kaleidoscopic flux of impressions”: “We dissect nature along lines laid down by native languages. The categories and types that we isolate from the world of phenomena we do not find there because they stare every observer in the face; on the contrary, the world is presented in a kaleidoscopic flux of impressions which has to be organized in our minds—and this means largely by the linguistic systems in our minds.” (Whorf 1956: 213, cited in Littau 2015:87)

²⁴⁶ In the words of Octavio Paz, “our most intimate reality lies outside ourselves and is not ours, and it is not one but many, plural and transitory, we are this plurality that is continually dissolving, the self is perhaps real, but the self is not I or you or he, the self is neither mine nor yours.” (Paz 1990: 55)

²⁴⁷ Grutman and Van Bolderen state that “self-translation [functions as] a powerful tool for individual self-promotion, giving [self-translators a competitive edge over their colleagues with no such access” (Grutman and Van Bolderen 2014: 325).

²⁴⁸ Here, I heed Andrew Jones’ view of “modernity” as “the genesis of developmental aspirations” (Jones 2011: 14-15).

²⁴⁹ Yingjin Zhang outlines five phases of Chinese modernity as identified by English language scholarship: 1. Late Qing incipient modernities as embedded in heteroglossia, decadence and mimicry; 2. The so-called “translated modernity” of the May Fourth period; 3. Urban modernities of the Republican era; 4. Socialist modernity, focusing on revolutionary utopia as an alternative to capitalist modernity; 5. Aesthetic modernity emphasizing culture over politics (Zhang 2015).

²⁵⁰ Wang Hui considers Chinese modernity as a reactionary type of anti-modernity, or “modernity against modernity”. See Viren Murthy (trans.), “Modernity against Modernity: Wang Hui’s Critical History of Chinese Thought,” *Modern Intellectual History*, vol. 3, no. 1 (April 2006): 137-165].

²⁵¹ In the words of Lawrence Venuti, “Fluency is assimilationist, presenting to domestic readers a realistic representation inflected with their own codes and ideologies as if it were an immediate encounter with a foreign text and culture. The heterogeneous discourse of minoritizing translation resists this assimilationist ethic by signifying the linguistic and cultural differences of the text—within the major language.” (Venuti 1998: 12)

²⁵² In an interview with Ron Charles at the Library of Congress at the National Bok Festival held in Washington, D.C. on November 22, 2017, Ha Jin claimed that uncertainty, and a nervous edge produces great writing: “I could take uncertainty as a creative process [...] if everything is clear and certainty, it would be a mediocre book. You need nervousness, the edge.” (Jin 2017)

²⁵³ Ngūgī wa Thiong’o encourages readers to approach literary texts from an inclusive standpoint, asking ourselves: “[In our] approaches to the text, how [do] we [want to] read it [?] Do we want to welcome it or do we want to put it back into prison—or even a new prison?” (Ngūgī 2012: 58)

²⁵⁴ Ngūgī outlines a “globalectic” form of reading whereby readers break open “the prison house of imagination” build by exclusionary theories, in the interest of exploring the

intersections between local and global spaces, so that “the act of reading becom[es] also a process of self-examination” (Ngũgĩ 2012: 61)

²⁵⁵ Venuti further explains, “[...] any source text comes to the translation process always already mediated by interpretive practices that position it in a network of signification. Some of these practices originate in the source culture, while others are located in the receiving culture. As soon as the translator begins to read the source text, it is mediated yet again, that is to say interpreted, and the translator’s interpretation looks in two directions at once, answering not only to the source text and culture but also to the translating language and culture.” (Venuti, *Theses on Translation*, 2019: 6)

²⁵⁶ Building upon scholarship by Jean-Jacques Lecercle, in *The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Difference*, Lawrence Venuti describes this “remainder” as “the collective force of linguistic forms that outstrips any individual’s control and complicates intended meanings”, a force that may distort meaning and highlight the translator’s visibility. (Venuti 1998: 108)

²⁵⁷ Such research would echo Andrea Bachner’s bridging of the Sinosphere and Latinosphere in her book *Beyond Sinology: Chinese Writing and the Scripts of Culture* (Columbia University Press, 2014) and in her forthcoming book, *Against Comparison? Latin America and the Sinophone World*.

²⁵⁸ During Buddhist scripture translation ceremonies, the “presiding translator” (zhuyi/主译) recited and interpreted the sutra, and a *duyu* (度语, literally “word-measurer”) and *chuanyu* (传语, or “word-transmitter”) translated the *zhuyi*’s explanations into vernacular Chinese. The final version was subsequently penned by the *bishou* (笔手), literally translated as “received by brush”, who finalized the collaborative translation of that particular sutra (Reynolds 2016: 12-13).

²⁵⁹ For more information on acousmaticity, see Pierre Christine North Schaeffer and John Dack. *Treatise on Musical Objects: An Essay Across Disciplines*. (Oakland California: University of California, 2017) and Schaeffer and Dack, *In Search of a Concrete Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).

²⁶⁰ Mikhail Bakhtin’s theory of acousmatic listening emphasizes the heterogeneity of a single voice, as it casts “sideward glance[s]” at and argues with other voices (see Bakhtin 1984: 196).

REFERENCES

Primary Sources

- Asiaweek. "Return of a 'Taipei Character'." *The Asiaweek Literary Review*. October 15, 1982, 59-60.
- Atwood, Margaret. *The Handmaid's Tale*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1986.
- Auerbach, Erich. "Philology and Weltliteratur." Trans. Edward Said and Marie Said. *The Centennial Review*. d. The Centennial Review 13 (1969): 1-17.
- Birch, Cyril (trans.). *The Peony Pavilion*. Cheng & Tsui Co., Boston 1994.
- Bolonik, Kara and Ha Jin (2009). "Next Stop: Main Street." *New York Magazine*. November 25, 2009. <https://nymag.com/arts/books/features/62357/>.
- Borges, Jorge Luis. *Ficciones Esenciales*. New York: Rayo—Planeta, 1944.
- Borges, Jorge Luis. *Obras completas*. Ed. Carlos V. Frías. Buenos Aires: Emecé, 1974.
- Borges, Jorge Luis. "Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote." In *Collected Fictions*. Trans. Andrew Hurley. New York: Penguin, 1998.
- Borges, Jorge Luis. *This Craft of Verse*. Ed. Calin-Andrei Mihailescu. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2000.
- Borges, Jorge Luis. *The Total Library: Non-fiction 1922-1986*. (E. Allen, S. J. Levine, & E. Weinberger, Trans.) London: Penguin, 2001.
- Borges, Jorge Luis, and Suzanne Jill Levine. "Some Versions of Homer." *PMLA* 107, no. 5 (1992): 1134–38. <https://doi.org/10.2307/462868>.
- Borges, Jorge Luis, Erik Desmazières, Andrew Hurley, and Angela Giral. *The Library of Babel*. Boston: David R. Godine, 2000.
- Borges, Jorge Luis, Jacobo Sureda, Fortunio Bonanova, Juan Alomar, and Suzanne Jill Levine (trans.). "Ultra Manifesto." In *On Writing*. New York: Penguin Books, 2010, 3-4.
- Brodsky, Joseph. "The Condition We Call 'Exile'." *The New York Review of Books*. January 21, 1988. <https://www.nybooks.com/articles/1988/01/21/the-condition-we-call-exile/>.
- Cao Ruiyuan (曹瑞原). 孽子幕後花絮 *Niezi muhou huaxu* [videorecording]/*Crystal Boys Behind the Scenes*. Taiwan: 公共電視台 *Gonggong dianshi tai* (Taiwan). Distributed by 風潮音樂 Fengchao Music, 2003.
- Cao Ruiyuan. *Niezi 孽子/Crystal Boys*. Television series [20 episodes]. Wind Records, 2003.
- Cao Ruiyuan. 《藝想世界》訪談《孽子》舞台劇 導演曹瑞原 演員莫子儀 *Yixiang shijie fangtan Niezi wutaiju daoyan Cao Ruiyuan yanyuan Mo Ziyi* [Art World Interviews: *Niezi* Stage Play Director Cao Ruiyuan and Actor Mo Ziyi]. *Yixiang Shijie 藝想世界*[Art World]. January 20, 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rzslP5j6BsA>. Accessed March 21, 2023.
- Cao Ruiyuan. "《孽子》精彩預告：導演曹瑞原分享劇作秘辛 *Niezi jingcai yugao: Daoyan Cao Ruiyuan fenxiang juzuo mixin* [A Sneak Preview to *Niezi*: Director Cao Shares the Secrets of the Stage Play]." Line TV Taiwan 2022. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tHHyLLp2gWs>. Accessed April 10, 2023.
- Cao Ruiyuan. *Yu Niezi de sanshi qingyuan* 與《孽子》的三世情緣 [Shaping

- Niezi's three lives*]. In 孽子舞台劇 2020 全記錄文集 *Niezi wutaiju 2020 quanjilu wenji* [Complete collector's edition of the 2020 stage production of *Niezi*]. Designed by Pai Hsien-yung, cover characters inscribed by Dong Yangzi 董陽孜, photos by Hsu Pei-hung 許培鴻. Taipei: Asian Culture Publishing Co., 2022, 70-75.
- Cao Ruiyuan, Pai Hsien-yung and Shih Rufang. *Niezi: 2020 經典重返 Niezi: 2020 jingdian chongfan* [Crystal Boys: 2020 classic returns]. Yunchen wenhua shiye gufen youxian gongsi. National Theater & Concert Hall, 2022.
- Cao Ruiyuan and Ursula Deser Friedman. “*Niezi's* Multimedia Afterlives: A Conversation with Television and Stage Play Co-Director Cao Ruiyuan.” Shangri-La Far Eastern Plaza Hotel—First Floor Café. Taipei, Taiwan. April 21, 2023.
- Chang, Eileen (Zhang Ailing 張愛玲). 張愛玲散文 *Zhang Ailing sanwen* [Eileen Chang—Essays]. Zhejiang Wenyi Chubanshe, 1944.
- Chang, Eileen. “*Quanqi zaiban de hua*. 傳奇再版的話 [Preface to Romances, Second Edition].” *Zhang Ailing quanji* 張愛玲全集. 1944. Vol. Liuyan. Beijing: Beijing shiyue wenyi chubanshe, 2009. 156-58.
- Chang, Eileen. “A Return to the Frontier.” *The Reporter* (March 1963), 38-41.
- Chang, Eileen. 惘然記 *Wangran ji* [Records of Regret]. Taipei: Huangguan wenxue chubanshe (Crown Publishing Co.), 1983/1991.
- Chang, Eileen. 流言 *Liu Yan*. Beijing: Beijing Publishing Group, 1968.
- Chang, Eileen and Andrew F. Jones (trans.). *Written on Water: A Collection of Essays by Eileen Chang*, co-edited and introduced by Nicole Huang. New York: Columbia University Press, 1968/2005.
- Chang, Eileen. *Haishang hua kai* 海上花開/*Haishang hua luo* 海上花落 (Blooming Flowers of Shanghai /Falling Flowers of Shanghai). Taipei: Huangguan chubanshe, 1983.
- Chang, Eileen. 表姨細姨及其他 *Biaoyi xiyi ji qita* [Cousin aunts, concubines, and others]. *United Daily News*. May 11, 1979.
- Chang, Eileen. “Wangran ji” 惘然記 (Records of Regret). In *Wangran ji* 惘然記 (Records of Regret). Taipei: Huangguan wenxue chubanshe, 1983/1991, 7-10.
- Chang, Eileen. *Tongxue shaonian dou bujian* 同學少年都不賤 [Friends from My Youth are all Successful]. Tianjin: Tianjin People's Publishing House, 2004.
- Chang, Eileen. *Love in a Fallen City*. New York: New York Review Books, 2007.
- Chang, Eileen. *Xiao Tuanyuan* 小團圓. Beijing Shiyue Wenyi Chubanshe, 2009.
- Chang, Eileen. *Love in a Fallen City and Other Stories*, trans. Karen S. Kinbsbury and Eileen Chang. London: Penguin, 2007.
- Chang, Eileen. *Xiangjian huan, Sejie, Duanpian xiaoshuoji 2: 1947 nian yihou* “相見歡”, 《色, 戒: 短篇小說集二一九四七年以後》. “Joyful Reunion” (*Xiangjian huan*). *Lust, Caution: Short Story Collections 2: After 1947*. Taipei: Taiwan Crown Publishing Co., Ltd., 2017, 212-239.
- Chang, Eileen. [Box 2, folder 11]. “She Said Smiling.” [draft]. Ailing Zhang papers, Collection no. 3032, East Asian Library, Special Collections, USC Libraries, University of Southern California, University of Southern California, <https://archives.usc.edu/repositories/3/resources/554>. Accessed May 28, 2024.

- Chang, Eileen. Preface to the second edition of *Chuanqi* [Romance], in Zhang Ailing Quanjì [Complete Works of Eileen Chang], vol. 5. Taipei: *huangguan chubanshe*, 1996, 6.
- Chang, Eileen. “Remembering Hu Shih” 憶胡適之. In *Chang’s View* 張看. Taipei: Huangguan, 1996.
- Chang, Eileen. Manuscripts, Undated. Ailing Zhang papers, 3032. USC Libraries Special Collections. https://archives.usc.edu/repositories/3/archival_objects/324059. Accessed September 21, 2022.
- Chang, Eileen, James Schamus, and Huiling Wang (trans. Julia Lovell). *Lust, Caution: A Story by Eileen Chang*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2007.
- Chang, Eileen and Qiaomei Tang (trans.). “Love.” *The BAR: Buenos Aires Review*. September 3, 2014. <http://www.buenosairesreview.org/2014/09/love/> Accessed October 26, 2022.
- Chattopadhyay, Bodhisattva and Taryne Jade Taylor. “Series Editor’s Preface.” IN Wang Jiaren and Regina Kanyu Wang, ed. Trans. Guo Qi and John Shanahan. *The Making of the Wandering Earth : A Film Production Handbook*. Routledge 2022.
- Chen Anqi (陳安琪). *Chen Anqi (陳安琪) 三生三世聶華苓 Sansheng sanshi Nie Hualing* [One Tree, Three Lives]. (2013, Hong Kong: Anle yingpian youxian gongsi, DVD). Nie Hualing, Paul Engle, Pai Hsien-yung, interviewees.
- Chen Sen (陳森). *Pinhua baojian* 品花寶鑑 [*Precious Mirror for Evaluating Flowers*]. Beijing: Renmin Zhongguo chunbanshe, 1993.
- Chen Xiaoxia 陳小霞. 陳小霞：起初，如何相遇 *Chen Xiaoxia: Qichu, ruhe xiangyu* [Chen Xiaoxia: How it all happened]. In 孽子舞台劇 2020 全記錄文集 *Niezi wutaiju 2020 quanji lu wenji* [Complete collector’s edition of the 2020 stage production of *Niezi*]. Designed by Pai Hsien-yung, cover characters inscribed by Dong Yangzi 董陽孜, photos by Hsu Pei-hung 許培鴻. Taipei: Asian Culture Publishing Co., 2022, 100-103.
- Churchill, Winston (1874-1965). *The Sinews of Peace, Post-War Speeches*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1949.
- Dargan, Kyle G. *Anagnorisis: Poems*. Triquarterly Books, 2018.
- Eschrich, Joey, Athena Aktipis, and Regina Kanyu Wang. “Us in Flux: Conversations—Memes, Symbiosis, and the Microbiome.” Arizona State University—Center for Science and Imagination. June 29, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ob6TQ9ELxLg&t=335s>. Accessed October 20, 2022.
- Freud, Sigmund. “Remembering, Repeating, and Working-Through: Further Recommendations on the Technique of Psycho-analysis II.” In *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. and trans. James Strachey et al., 24 vols., 12: 145-156. London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1953-1974.
- Freud, Sigmund. “The Aetiology of Hysteria. In *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume III (1893-1899)*. Early Psycho-Analytic Publications, 1962, 187-221.
- Frost, Robert. *Conversations on the Craft of Poetry*. Cleanth Books—Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961.
- Fuentes, Carlos (Suzanne Jill Levine, trans.). “The Enemy: Words.” *TriQuarterly* 23, no. 111 (1972).

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von and Edgar Alfred, trans. *Poems of Goethe Translated in Herder, Johann Gottfried (1797). "Results of a Comparison of Different Peoples' Poetry in Ancient and Modern Times."* In *The Princeton Sourcebook in Comparative Literature: From the European Enlightenment to the Global Present* edited by David Damrosch, Natalie Melas and Mbongiseni Buthelezi. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009: 3-9.
- Gu Shi. "'2181 Xuqu' Zaiban Daoyan (Introduction to the Second Edition of 'Prelude 2181.'" Mobiwusi Shikong (Möbius Continuum.) Xinxing Press, 2020.
- Gu Shi. "*Kehuan xiaoshuo xiezuobingbu cunzai nannü jiexian* 科幻小说写作并不存在男女界限 [Science Fiction writing does not distinguish between male and female identities]." SF. *kedou*, 9 Nov. 2016, sf.kedo.gov.cn/c/2016-11-09/859793.shtml
- Gu Shi. "*Wo Xiangxie Naxie bei Hushi de Wanmei Nüxing* 我想写那些被忽视的完美女性 (I Want to Write about Those Ignored Perfect Female.)" Baguangfen, 13 Apr. 2020, mp.weixin.qq.com/s/UmPhVzraRywUJlSpYDQbqg
- Hao Jingfang. "Shengsi Yu 生死域." In *Gudu shen chu* 孤独深处 (The Depths of Loneliness), 135-177. Nanjing: Jiangsu Phoenix Literature and Art Publishing House, 2016.
- He Hua (何華). "《孽子》40年：一首悲憫的“天倫歌” *Niezi 40 nian: Yishou beimin de tianlun ge* [40 years of Niezi: A Song of Family Compassion]". Senstrat. October 22, 2020. <http://senstrat.com/Article/s781.html>. Accessed March 22, 2023.
- Homer and Emily R Wilson. *The Iliad*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2023.
- Hsia, C.T., ed. *Zhang Ailing geiwo de xinjian* 張愛玲給我的信件 [Eileen Chang's Letters to Me]. Taipei: Unitas, 2013.
- Hurwitt, Sam. "400-year-old 'Peony' Blooms in Berkeley." San Francisco Chronicle. 3 September 2006.
- Jaggi, Maya. "Living without 'isms'." The Guardian. August 1, 2008. <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2008/aug/02/gao.xingjian>. Accessed September 7, 2022.
- Jin, Ha (哈金). *Universalization in Modern English and American Poetry: With Particular Reference to China*. PhD Diss. <https://www.proquest.com/openview/f2c16c3a98e7f450a1daf0ee06d5e0d0/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>. Brandeis University, 1993.
- Jin, Ha. *Facing Shadows*. Brooklyn, New York: Hanging Loose Press, 1996.
- Jin, Ha. *Ocean of Words*. New York: Random House, 1996.
- Jin, Ha. *The Bridegroom: Stories*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2000.
- Jin, Ha. "Traveling Mug." *World Literature Today* 74, no. 3 (2000): 486. <https://doi.org/10.2307/40155812>.
- Jin, Ha. *Wreckage*. Brooklyn N.Y: Hanging Loose Press, 2001.
- Jin, Ha. *The Crazyed*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2002.
- Jin, Ha. *Hao bing* 好兵 [The Good Soldier]. Taipei: Shibao wenhua chuban qiye gufen youxian gongsi, 2003.
- Jin, Ha. *A Free Life*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2007.
- Jin, Ha. "The Censor in the Mirror." *American Scholar* 77 (4): 26-32, 2008.
- Jin, Ha. *The Writer as Migrant*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press (The Rice University Campbell Lectures), 2008.

- Jin, Ha. "A *Good Fall* by Ha Jin" [Book Reading]. Hosted by Barnes and Noble at Boston University. December 1, 2009. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Xu1CE37yaA>. Accessed 5 August 2020.
- Jin, Ha. *A Good Fall: Stories*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2010.
- Jin, Ha. *落地/Luodi*. Nanjing: Jiangsu Wenyi Press, 2012.
- Jin, Ha. "Exiled to English." In *Sinophone Studies*, edited by S. Shuh, 93–98. New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2013.
- Jin, Ha. *路上的家園 Lushang de jiayuan* [Home on the Road]. Taipei: Lianjing chuban shiye gufen youxian gongsi 聯經出版事業股份有限公司, 2017.
- Jin, Ha. *A Distant Center*. Copper Canyon Press, 2018.
- Jin, Ha. "In Defence of Foreignness." In *The Routledge Handbook of World Englishes*, 2nd, ed. Andy Kirkpatrick. Oxon/New York: Routledge, 2020 (2008), 461-470.
- Jin, Ha. *A Song Everlasting*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2021.
- Jin, Ha and Michelle Caswell. "An Interview with Ha Jin." *Asia Society*, November 17, 2000. <https://asiasociety.org/interview-ha-jin>. Accessed November 4, 2022.
- Jin, Ha and Eliot Weinberger. "Enormous Changes: Ha Jin & Eliot Weinberger." *PEN America*. April 3, 2007. <https://pen.org/enormous-changes-ha-jin-eliot-weinberger/>. Accessed November 14, 2022.
- Jin, Ha and Jacki Lyden. "Chinese Author Pens 'A Good Fall.'" NPR—Tell Me More. December 21, 2009. <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=121714697>. Accessed November 16, 2022.
- Jin, Ha and Jessica Keener. "On Language and Embracing Failure as a Writer: An Interview with Ha Jin." AGNI. July 1, 2005. <https://agnionline.bu.edu/interview/on-language-and-embracing-failure-as-a-writer-an-interview-with-ha-jin/>. Accessed November 10, 2022.
- Jin, Ha and Ron Charles. "Ha Jin: National Book Festival." Retrieved from the Library of Congress. Washington, D.C. November 22, 2017. <https://www.loc.gov/item/webcast-8094/>. Accessed November 9, 2022.
- Jin, Ha and Sara Fay. "The Art of Fiction No. 202". *The Paris Review* (Winter 2009), 191. Accessed 9 February 2020. <https://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/5991/ha-jin-the-art-of-fiction-no-202-ha-jin>.
- Jin, Ha and Melody Yunzi Li. "Email Interview with Ha Jin." May 10, 2010.
- Jin, Ha and Jose Ramón Ibáñez. "Writing Short Fiction from Exile: An Interview with Ha Jin." *Odissea* 15, September 29, 2014. Accessed September 9, 2022. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317254473_Writing_short_fiction_from_exile_An_Interview_with_Ha_Jin
- Jin, Ha and Carolina Varga. "Writing Against Collective Amnesia: An Interview with Ha Jin." July 27, 2020. *Tint Journal*. <https://www.tintjournal.com/in-conversation/interviews/195-writing-against-collective-amnesia-an-interview-with-ha-jin>. Accessed November 10, 2022.
- Jin, Ha and Ursula Deser Friedman. "Defamiliarizing English: An Interview with Ha Jin." Boston, Massachusetts and Chicago, Illinois [Zoom Online Interview]. November 10, 2022.
- Jones, Andrew F. and Eileen Chang. "A Chronicle of Changing Clothes." *positions: east asia*

- cultures critique* 11, no. 2 (Fall 2003): 427-441.
- Joyce, James. *The Dubliners*. Wordsworth Edition. Ware: Wordsworth Classics, 1993.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Grounding for the metaphysics of morals*. Indianapolis: Hackett, Ak IV, 1993.
- Kant, Immanuel. "Of the Intellectual Interest in the Beautiful." In J.H. Bernard, trans. *The Critique of Judgment*. Oxford at the Clarendon, 1961.
- Kao, George. "Editor's Preface." In *Taipei jen/Taipei People* (Chinese-English Bilingual Edition). Translated and with a Foreword by Pai Hsien-yung and Patia Yasin, George Kao (ed.). Hong Kong: The Chinese Univ. Press, 2000, xiv-xxvii.
- Ke Qingming (柯慶明). 台灣文學在台大 *Taiwan wenxue zai taida* [Taiwanese Literature at National Taiwan University]. Transcript of video produced by Xiang Jie (項潔). Taipei: National Taiwan University Press, 2012.
- Ke Qingmin. 白先勇的文藝世界：包羅廣大 *Bai Xianyong de wenyi shijie baoluo guangda* [Pai Hsien-yung's All-Encompassing Literary World]. In 第 33 屆行政院文化獎頒獎典禮流程 *Di 33 jie xingzheng yuan wenhuajiang banjiang dianli liucheng* [Itinerary for the 33rd National Cultural Award]. Brochure Introduction by Ke Qingming. National Taiwan University Special Collections, 2019.
- Lahiri, Jhumpa. "Where I Find Myself: On Self-Translation." *Words Without Borders*. April 2021. Accessed February 11, 2022.
- Lahiri, Jhumpa. *Translating Myself and Others*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2022.
- Lahiri, Jhumpa and Mary Louise Kelly. *National Public Radio—All Things Considered*. "Jhumpa Lahiri on How She Fell in Love with Translating and How it Shapes her Writing." May 18, 2022. <https://www.npr.org/2022/05/18/1099874025/jhumpa-lahiri-on-how-she-fell-in-love-with-translating-and-how-it-shapes-her-wri>.
- Lam, Andrew. "The Daths and Lives of the *Peony Pavilion*. *California Show*, 32-34.
- Liao Meili (producer), Deng Yongxing and Liu Qingying (screenwriters) 奼紫嫣紅開遍 *Chazi yanhong kaibian* [Multiflorate Splendour]. Pai Hsien-yung (interviewee). Taipei: Musu meiti gufen youxian gongsi, 2017.
- Li Yiyun. "To Speak is to Blunder: Choosing to Renounce a Mother Tongue." *The New Yorker*. December 25, 2016. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/01/02/to-speak-is-to-blunder>.
- Li Yiyun. *Dear Friend, from My Life I Write to You in Your Life*. New York: Random House, 2017.
- Lin Yiliang, "Zhang Ailing's 'Incidents in the May Fourth era' and its translation" (*Cong Zhang Ailing de wusi yishi shuoqi* 从张爱玲的五四遗事说起), *Yesterday and today*, 125-131.
- Lin Yutang (1933). *Yuyanxue luncong* 語言學論叢 (Philological Essays). Shanghai: Kaiming shudian.
- Lin Yutang (林语堂). *My Country and My People*. United Kingdom, Hesperides Press, 1935/2008.
- Lin Yutang. *The Importance of Living*. W. Morrow, 1939.
- Lu Yilong (陸一籠). 燃燒的軍魂化作熊熊的怒火：李父 *Ranshao de junhun huazuo xiongxiong de nuhuo*: Li Fu. In In Pai Hsien-yung, Dong Yangzi, Hsu Pei-hung et al. 孽子舞台劇 2020 全記錄文集 *Niezi wutaiju 2020 quanjilu wenji* [Complete collector's edition of the 2020 stage production of *Niezi*]. Designed by Pai Hsien-

- ying, cover characters inscribed by Dong Yangzi 董陽孜, photos by Hsu Pei-hung 許培鴻. Taipei: Asian Culture Publishing Co., 2022, 122-125.
- Lu Xun. "Diary of a Madman." *The Real Story of Ah-Q and Other Tales of China: The Complete Fiction of Lu Xun*. Translated by Julia Lovell, Penguin Classics, 2009, pp. 21-31.
- Lü Guangzhao, Xueni [Emily] Jin and Regina Kanyu Wang. "《语膜》：语言的围城与世界的割裂 *Yumo: Yuyan de weicheng yu shijie de gelie* ["The Language Sheath": The Siege of Language and the Severance of the World]". 科幻研究在伦敦 *Kehuan yanjiu zai Lundun* Sci-fi Research in London. June 4, 2020.
https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s?__biz=Mzg4NzE2NTA4Mg==&mid=2247484415&idx=1&sn=2f3e1778349c1b5ebb5ba122b4361dd8&chksm=cf8fda0af8f8531ce463a172334b591e54484870e1d5da55f671455af09698b6c6c8536ec1c7&scene=27#wechat_redirect
- Mann, Thomas. *Death in Venice*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965.
- Mansfield, Katherine. *Bliss: And Other Stories*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1920, 116-136.
- Martin, George T.T. "the Architect and the Gardener: George T.T. Martin on Writing Game of Thrones." Museum of Pop Culture. April 11, 2019.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EBOafgYJABA>. Accessed March 18, 2023.
- Ouyang, Yu. "Translating Myself." In *Moon Over Melbourne and Other Poems*. Melbourne: Papyrus Publishing, 1995.
- Pai Hsien-yung (白先勇). *Six Stories*. Master's Thesis. University of Iowa. Special Collections, University Archives (theses, North, film boxes). T1965.P142 [film], 1965.
- Pai Hsien-yung. "满天里亮晶晶的星星" *Mantianli liangjingjing de xingxing* [Version 2], Pai Hsien-yung (Kenneth Pai) papers, UArch FacP 29. Department of Special Research Collections, UC Santa Barbara Library, University of California, Santa Barbara, 1969.
- Pai Hsien-yung. *Niezi* 孽子. Hong Kong: Xinyuan chubanshe, 1970.
- Pai Hsien-yung. "The Wandering Chinese: The Theme of Exile in Taiwan Fiction." *The Iowa Review* 7, 2-3 (Spring-Summer 1976): 205-212.
- Pai Hsien-yung. "Moran huishou 幕然回首 [Looking Back]. In Jimo de shiqi sui 寂寞的十七歲：白先勇的早期短篇. *Jimo de shiqi sui: Bai Xianyong de zaoqi duanpian*. Taipei: Yüan-jing chubanshe, 1976, 327-340.
- Pai Hsien-yung. *Jimo de shiqi sui*. 寂寞的十七岁. Taipei: Yuanjing, 1978.
- Pai Hsien-yung. *Niezi chugao* 孽子初稿 [first draft of *Niezi*]. Pai Hsien-yung (Kenneth Pai) papers, UArch FacP 29. Department of Special Research Collections, UC Santa Barbara Library, University of California, Santa Barbara, 1979. Box 4 [undated].
- Pai Hsien-yung. "Winter Night"; "A Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars." Pai Hsien-yung (Kenneth Pai) papers, UArch FacP 29. Department of Special Research Collections, UC Santa Barbara Library, University of California, Santa Barbara, Box 6, 1979.
- Pai Hsien-yung, trans. Patia Yasin. *Wandering in the Garden, Waking from a Dream*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982.
- Pai Hsien-yung. "將傳統溶入現代：寫在《遊園驚夢》演出之前 *Jiang chuantong rongru xiandai: Xie zai Youyuan jingmeng yanchu zhiqian* [Infusing Tradition with Modernity: Written Before the Theatrical Performance of *Youyuan jingmeng*]." In 遊

- 園驚夢 *Youyuan jingmeng* [Play Script]. Taipei: Yuanjing chuban shiye gongsi, 1983, 1-2.
- Pai Hsien-yung. "不是孽子：給阿晴的一封信. *Bushi Niezi: Gei A-Qing de Yifeng Xin* [Not a Sinful Son: A Letter to A-Qing]." *Human World* 人間雜誌 vol. 7, 1986.
- Pai Hsien-yung. *The Sixth Finger*. 第六根手指 *Di liu gen shouzhi*. Taipei: Erya, 1995.
- Pai Hsien-yung. *Wenxue busi: Ganhuai Yao Yiwei* 文學不死：感懷姚一葦 [Immortal Literature: In Memory of Yao Yiwei]. In Chen Yingzhen, *Anye zhong de cheng dengzhe: Yao Yiwei xiansheng rensheng xiju* 暗夜中的掌燈者——姚一葦先生的人生與戲劇 [The Lamp-Bearer in the Dark: The Drama of Yao Yiwei's Life]. Taipei: Shulin Publishing House, 1998, 53-64.
- Pai Hsien-yung. *Shu you ruci* 樹又如此 [Like a Tree]. In *Bai Xianyong sanwen ji (shang): moran huishou* by Pai Hsien-yung, 3-23. Shanghai: Wenhui chubanshe, 1999.
- Pai Hsien-yung. "從小說到舞台劇 *Cong xiaoshuo dao wutaiju* [From novella to the stage]" In 驀然回首：白先勇散文集 *Moran Huishou: Pai Hsien-yung sanwen ji* [Suddenly Looking Back: Pai Hsien-yung's Miscellaneous Collected Works]. Shanghai: Wenhui chubanshe, 1999, 242-265.
- Pai Hsien-yung. "故事新說：我與台大的文學因緣及創作歷程 *Gushi xinshuo: Wo yu taida de wenxue yinyuan ji chuangzuo licheng* [A new story: My literary beginnings at National Taiwan University and creative process]." In *Shu you ruci* 樹又如此 [Like a Tree]. Changsha: Hunan wenyi chubanshe, 1999/2018, 208-220.
- Pai Hsien-yung. "The Joys and Challenges of Translation: Crafting the Chinese/English Bilingual Edition of *Taipei People*." [*Fanyi ku, fanyile: Taibeiren zhongying duizhaoben de lailong qumai*/翻譯苦，翻譯樂：《台北人》中英对照本的来龙去脉 [The joys and sorrows of translating: Making the Bilingual Edition of *Taipei People*]. United Daily News (UDN) [联合报], 2 January 1999/2011.
- Pai Hsien-yung. "《牡丹亭》還魂紀 *Mudan Ting huanhun ji* [Record of Reviving the Peony]." In 牡丹還魂 *Mudan huanhun* [The Peony's Rebirth]. Pai Hsien-yung, ed. Shanghai: Wenhui chubanshe, 2004, 11-16.
- Pai Hsien-yung. "我的創作經驗 *Wo de chuangzuo jingyan* [My Creative Process]." In 青春念想 *Qingchun niangxiang* [Memories of Youth]. Guanxi Normal University Press, 2004, 203-215.
- Pai Hsien-yung. "少小離家老大回：我的尋根記 *Shaoxiao lijia laoda hui: Wo de xungenji* [Leaving home at a tender age and returning in old age: My roots-seeking journey]." In 青春念想 *Qingchun niangxiang* [Memories of Youth]. Guanxi Normal University Press, 2004, 216-227.
- Pai Hsien-yung, Fan Man-Nong, and Cai Shao-Hua. Trans. Lindy Li Mark, music by Zhou Youliang. *Mudan Ting: Qingchunban* [The Peony Pavilion: Young Lovers' Edition]." [DVD: 4 Discs]. Digital Heritage Publishing, Ltd., 2006.
- Pai Hsien-yung. 走過光陰，歸於平淡：溪淞的禪書 *Zouguo guangyin, guiyu pingdan: Xi Song de chanshu* [Through the passage of time, returning to simplicity: Xi Song's Zen Series]. In National Taiwan University Special Collections F0011_012. December 2007.
- Pai Hsien-yung. 白先勇作品集 VII：遊園驚夢 *Bai Xianyong zuopinji VII: Youyuan jingmeng* [The Collected Works of Kenneth Pai VII: "Wandering in the Garden,

- Waking from a Dream”]. Tianxia yuanjian chuban gufen youxiangongsi, 2008.
- Pai Hsien-yung. “世紀性的漂泊者：重讀《桑青與桃紅》 *Shijixing de piaobozhe: Chongdu “Cangqing yu Taohong”* [Wanderer of the Century: Rereading *Mulberry and Peach*].” In 白先勇作品集 II: 現文因緣 *Bai Xianyong zuopinji VII: Xianwen yinyuan* [The Collected Works of Kenneth Pai II: The Making of *Modern Literature*]. Tianxia yuanjian chuban gufen youxiangongsi, 2008, 249-256.
- Pai Hsien-yung. In 白先勇作品集 VI: 樹又如此 *Bai Xianyong zuopinji VI: Shu youruci* [The Collected Works of Kenneth Pai VI: “Even Trees Wither”]. Tianxia yuanjian chuban gufen youxiangongsi, 2008.
- Pai Hsien-yung. 悼念高克毅先生 *Daonian gaokeyi xiansheng* [Remembering George Kao]. National Taiwan University Special Collections F0011_014. April 12, 2008.
- Pai Hsien-yung. “在台大的歲月 *Zai Taida de suiyue* [My Years at National Taiwan University]”. In *National Taiwan University Special Collections—Online Resources*. October 20, 2008. <https://dl.lib.ntu.edu.tw/s/mf0011/manuscript?q=&page=1>.
- Pai Hsien-yung. “The Emotions I Wanted to Portray are Universal.” In *Lettres de Taiwan* 台灣文學. May 22, 2014. Accessed December 8, 2022. <https://lettresdetaiwan.com/2014/05/22/bai-xianyong-the-emotions-i-wanted-to-portray-are-universal/>.
- Pai Hsien-yung. 《鏡週刊 一鏡到底》孽子回家 專訪 80 歲仍不顯老的白先勇. *Jing zhoukan: Yijing daodi: Niezi huijia: Zhuanfang 80 sui reng buxianlao de Bai Xianyong*. [Mirror Weekly: “Mirror on Life:”: Crystal Boys Comes Home: An Exclusive Interview with 80-Year-Old Young Pai Hsien-yung]. *Mirror Media*. June 12, 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HbPbp9EjUgE>. Accessed July 14, 2022.
- Pai Hsien-yung. 白先勇細說紅樓夢 *Bai Xianyong xishuo Honglou meng*. First Edition: Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press, 2017.
- Pai Hsien-yung. “Ten Years of Hard Work: My Kunqu Journey.” In *One Man’s Renaissance*. Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press, 2019.
- Pai Hsien-yung. 我的尋根記 *Wo de xungen ji* [In search of my roots]. Guilin: Guangxi shifandaxue chubanshe, 2019.
- Pai Hsien-yung. 《孽子》變奏四十年 *Niezi bianzou sishi nian* [Niezi’s Forty-Year Evolution]. In 孽子 *Niezi* [Crystal Boys]. Yunchen wenhua shiye gufen youxian gongsi, 2020, 454-458.
- Pai Hsien-yung. 天輪之歌：2020 年《孽子》舞台劇的來龍去脈 *Tianlun zhige: 2020 nian Niezi de lailong qumai* [A song of universal order: The making of the 2020 edition of Niezi the stage play]. In Pai Hsien-yung, Dong Yangzi, Hsu Pei-hung et al. 孽子舞台劇 2020 全記錄文集 *Niezi wutaiju 2020 quanjilu wenji* [Complete collector’s edition of the 2020 stage production of *Niezi*]. Designed by Pai Hsien-yung, cover characters inscribed by Dong Yangzi 董陽孜, photos by Hsu Pei-hung 許培鴻. Taipei: Asian Culture Publishing Co., 2022, 98.
- Pai Hsien-yung. 孽子 2020 經典重返：白先勇講座《孽子》變奏 40 年. [The 2020 remake of a classic: A Talk by Pai Hsien-yung on forty years of *Niezi* adaptations]. Taiwan National Library. Creation Society Theatre Troupe. 創作社劇團, co-organized by Yiri Life 伊日生活. September 6, 2020.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z767mOsGzKk&t=1290s>. Accessed June 26, 2022.
- Pai Hsien-yung. “The Peony Pavilion: The Suzhou Kun Opera Theater of Jiangsu Province.” Performance Program. 29-30 September 2006. Royce Hall. University of California, Los Angeles.
- Pai Hsien-yung. 圆梦：白先勇与青春版《牡丹亭》 *Yuan meng : Bai Xianyong yu qing chun ban ‘Mudan ting’/A life-long dream fulfilled: Pai Hsien-Yung and the young lovers' edition of the peony pavilion.*” Guanzhou: Huacheng chubanshe, 2006.
- Pai Hsien-yung. “《現文》憶往--《現代文學》的資金來源 *Xianwen: Yiwang: Xiandai wenxue de zijin lai yuan* [The Source of Funding for the Modern Literature Magazine]. United Daily News, D3. March 12, 2012.
- Pai Hsien-yung, trans. Bert Scruggs. “Novels and Movies.” In *Taiwan Literature—English Translation Series*, no. 40. Special Issue on Pai Hsien-yung. July 2017, 143-152.
- Pai Hsien-yung, trans. Christopher Lupke. “Social Consciousness and the Art of Fiction—Problems with Chinese Fiction after May Fourth.” In *Taiwan Literature—English Translation Series*, no. 40. Special Issue on Pai Hsien-yung. July 2017, 117-130.
- Pai Hsien-yung, trans. Linshan Jiang. “The Historical Background to the Founding of Modern Literature and Its Spiritual Orientation—Foreword for the Reissue of *Modern Literature*.” In *Taiwan Literature—English Translation Series*, no. 40. Special Issue on Pai Hsien-yung. July 2017, 131-142.
- Pai Hsien-yung. “小說改編電影：【玉卿嫂】 *Xiaoshuo gaibian dianying: Yuqing Sao* [From Novel to Film: Jade Love].” March 18, 2019.
<https://weibo.com/7691118971/Lt0p6oS3l?type=repot>. Accessed May 31, 2023.
- Pai Hsien-yung. *Wenxue mingjia: Bai Xianyong* 文學名家：白先勇 [Famous Literary Authors: Pai Hsien-yung]. Rollor (滾動力). September 24, 2020.
<https://www.facebook.com/rollor.cc/videos/%E6%96%87%E5%AD%B8%E5%90%8D%E5%AE%B6-%E7%99%BD%E5%85%88%E5%8B%87/1252467325112670/>. Accessed April 12, 2023.
- Pai Hsien-yung. “Pai Hsien-yung” (白先勇) Formosa TV—Taiwan History (台灣演義). Hosted by Hu Wanling (胡婉玲) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fo91DUSU2rM>. February 16, 2014. Accessed March 22, 2023.
- Pai Hsien-yung and Cai Kejian (蔡克健). “*Fangwen Pai Hsien-yung* 访问白先勇 [Interview with Pai Hsien-yung]”. 第六只手指 *Diliu zhi shouzhi* [The Sixth Finger]. Guangzhou: Huacheng chubanshe, 1996/2006, 441-475/536-557.
- Pai Hsien-yung and Howard Goldblatt (trans.). *Crystal Boys*. San Francisco: Gay Sunshine Press, 1989.
- Pai Hsien-yung and Liu Jun (劉俊). “文學創作：個人、家庭、歷史、傳統：訪白先勇 *Wenxue chuangzuo: Geren, jiating, lishi, chuangtong: Fang Bai Xianyong* [Literary creation: Self, Family, History, Tradition: Interviewing Pai Hsien-yung].” Shanghai, September 1990. In Liu Jun, 情與美：白先勇轉 *Qing yu mei: Bai Xianyong zhuan* [Love and Beauty: A Biography of Pai Hsien-yung, 2007.
- Pai Hsien-yung, Wang Tong, Guo Yucai, Zhang Yi, Cao Ruiyuan, Chen Yitai, and Mei Jialing. 白先勇的藝文世 *Bai Xianyong de yiwen shijie* [Pai Hsien-yung’s Artistic World]. Taipei: Guoli Taiwan daxue wenxue yuan, 2009.
- Pai Hsien-yung and Ding Guo (丁果). “中國需要一次新的五四運動：與小說家白先勇談

- 中國文化的危機與出路 *Zhongguo xuyao yici xinde wusi yundong: Yu xiaoshuoujia Bai Xianyong tan zhongguo wenhua weiji yu chulu* [China needs a new May Fourth Movement: Pai Hsien-yung discusses a way forward from China's cultural crisis]". In *Shu you ruci* 樹又如此 [Like a Tree]. Changsha: Hunan wenyi chubanshe, 2018, 221-229.
- Pai Hsien-yung and Shih Ru-fang, scriptwriters. *Crystal Boys*. Video Recording of the October 16, 2020 Matinee Performance of *Niezi*. Subtitles translated by Hu Zongwen 胡宗文, ed. Li Huina 慧娜. Courtesy of Pai Hsien-yung.
- Pai Hsien-yung, Susan Chan Egan and Michael Berry. "Reading *The Story of the Stone* with 白先勇 Pai Hsien-Yung and 陳毓賢 Susan Chan Egan." UCLA Center for Chinese Studies. Moderated by Michael Berry. February 26, 2021. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cdK2jDJhvgs&fbclid=IwAR0Xxir1CmdcrYp0ep04DIpO9vxNURw1_ZBKieF_f7Qd_uiO-Zxr6bCmVww.
- Pai Hsien-yung, George Kao and Patia Yasin. *Taipei jen/Taipei People* (Chinese-English Bilingual Edition). Translated and with a Foreword by Pai Hsien-yung and Patia Yasin, George Kao (ed.). Hong Kong: The Chinese Univ. Press, 2000.
- Pai Hsien-yung, George Kao and Patia Yasin. Pai Hsien-yung (Kenneth Pai) papers, UArch FacP 29. "A Sky Full of Blazing Stars"; "Winter Nights" [translation]. Department of Special Research Collections, UC Santa Barbara Library, University of California, Santa Barbara. Box 6, 1977-1981.
- Pai Hsien-yung, Shen Fengying, Yu Jiulin et al. 青春版《牡丹亭》大型公演 100 場紀念特刊 *Qingchun ban "Mudan ting" daxing gongyan 100 chang jinian tekan* (Special issue commemorating the hundredth performance of the youth adaptation of Peony Pavilion). Beijing: Ministry of Culture, 2007.
- Pai Hsien-yung and Lindy Li Mark. "青春版牡丹亭：白先勇/*Qingchun ban mudanting: Bai Xianyong*" "Youth Version of Peony Pavilion: A Talk with Pai Hsien-yung." 1 March 2013. Atherton, California. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oTIWJGsMjvg>. Accessed 8 February 2023.
- Pai Hsien-yung and Liao Zhifeng (廖志峯). 灣心風景 *Wanxin fengjing* [Bay Scenery], no. 16. RTI Central Radio. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxEp5TVD3PA>. Accessed December 16, 2022.
- Pai Hsien-yung and Ursula Deser Friedman. Interview. A series of email exchanges between Ursula Deser Friedman and Pai Hsien-yung. April 29, 2022 to July 19, 2022.
- Pai Hsien-yung and Ursula Deser Friedman. "Behind the Scenes with the White Peony: An Interview with Kenneth Pai." 25 February 2023. Santa Barbara, California.
- Pan Xinghua and Hsu Pei-hung (photography). 春色如許：青春版崑曲“牡丹亭”人物訪談錄 *Chunse ruxu: Qingchun ban kunqu Mudan ting renwu fangtan lu wenzi* [Resembling Spring: Interviews with the Makers of the Youth Version of *The Peony Pavilion*]. Singapore: Bafang wenhua chuanguo shi, 2007.
- Pai Hsien-yung and Zheng Shulin (鄭樹森). 白先勇與【遊園驚夢】 *Bai Xianyong yu youyuan jingmeng* [Pai Hsien-yung and "Wandering in the Garden, Waking from a Dream." In 遊園驚夢 *Youyuan jingmeng* [Play Script]. Taipei: Yuanjing chuban shiye gongsi, 1983, 333-351.

- Paz, Octavio. *The Monkey Grammarian*. New York: Arcade Publishing, 1990.
- Paz, Octavio. "Translation: Literature and Letters", trans. Irene del Corral. In Schulte and Biguenet, *Theories of Translation*, 1992, 152-162.
- Pengpai Xinwen (澎湃新闻) and Regina Kanyu Wang (interviewee). 90 后作家访谈: 王侃瑜: 科幻是把握当下和未来的有效手段 90 hou zuojia fangtan: Wang Kanyu: *Kehuan shi bawo dangxia he weilai de youxiao shouduan* ['90s author interviews: Wang Kanyu: Sci-fi is an effective way of deciphering the present and future]. August 21, 2022. https://m.thepaper.cn/kuaibao_detail.jsp?contid=8808170&from=kuaibao. Accessed March 12, 2023.
- Pine, Red (Bill Porter). "Dancing with the Dead: Language, Poetry and the Art of Translation." Longhouse 2006. First presented at the Simmons College International Chinese Poetry Conference. October 2004.
- Puig, Manuel. "Loss of a Readership." University of Indiana, Bloomington—Lilly Library. Levine mss. LMC 2518, Box 2, folder 3.9-3.11, 1985.
- Qingchun ban "Mudan ting" meixi xunhui yanchu* 青春版《牡丹亭》美西巡迴演出 (The Peony Pavilion West Coast Tour). University of California, Santa Barbara Library. Department of Special Research Collections. 2006.
- Reid, Alastair. *Weathering: Poems and Translations*. Greece: University of Georgia Press, 1988.
- Rushdie, Salman. *Shame*. New York: Knopf, 1983.
- Sarduyo, Severo. "Translatio and Religio." [trans. Suzanne Jill Levine]. Levine mss. LMC 2518, Box 6, folder 7.5, undated, 1-4.
- Shih Ju-fang (scriptwriter), Tsao Jui-yuan (director) and Pai Hsien-yung. *Niezi* 孽子 Taiwan International Festival of the Arts. Taiwan National Theatre. February 9, 2014. <https://www.bilibili.com/video/BV1js411b7d8/>. Accessed June 21, 2022.
- Sorg, Arley. "Breaking the Gender barrier: A Conversation with Regina Kanyu Wang and Yu Chen." *Clarkesworld Magazine* 186 (March 2022). https://clarkesworldmagazine.com/wang-chen_interview/ Accessed October 21, 2022.
- Stewart, Angus and Yen Ooi. "Episode 81: Xiu Xinyu and The Stars We Raised with Yen Ooi." The Translated Chinese Fiction Podcast, 2022.
- Tang Xianzu (1550-1616). *The Peony Pavilion: Mudan Ting* 牡丹亭. Renmin wenzue chubanshe, 1598/2002.
- Tutuola, Amos. *The Palm-Wine Drinkard and My Life in the Bush of Ghosts*. Grove Press, Inc., 1994.
- Wang Mengchao (王夢超). 忠於原著的雋永製作: 兼談《孽子》的舞台設計 *Zhongyu yuanzhu de juanyong zhizuo: Jiantan Niezi de wutai sheji* [Faithful to Niezi's eternal spirit: on Niezi's set design]. In *孽子舞台劇 2020 全記錄文集 Niezi wutaiju 2020 quanji lu wenji* [Complete collector's edition of the 2020 stage production of *Niezi*]. Designed by Pai Hsien-yung, cover characters inscribed by Dong Yangzi 董陽孜, photos by Hsu Pei-hung 許培鴻. Taipei: Asian Culture Publishing Co., 2022, 86-88.
- Wang, Regina Kanyu (王侃瑜). "A Brief Introduction to Chinese Science Fiction." *Mithila Review*. November 2, 2016. https://mithilareview.com/wang_11_16/. Accessed March 5, 2023.
- Wang, Regina Kanyu. "Another Word: Chinese Science Fiction Going Abroad: A

- Brief History of Translation.” *Clarkesworld* 140 (May 2018).
https://clarkesworldmagazine.com/another_word_05_18/
- Wang, Regina Kanyu. 语膜 *Yumo*: [The Language Sheath 收穫 *Shouhuo* [Harvest] no. 4 (July 2019).
- Wang, Regina Kanyu. “A Cyber-Cuscuta Manifesto.” Arizona State University—Center for Science and the Imagination, 2020. <https://csi.asu.edu/story/wang-uif/>. Accessed October 20, 2022.
- Wang, Regina Kanyu (王侃瑜). Pengcheng Wanli 鹏城万里 [Ten Thousand Miles of Peng]. In *Nine Cities, Ten Thousand Futures. Jiu zuo chengshi, wan Zhong weilai* 九座城市, 万种未来, 2020.
- Wang, Regina Kanyu. “The Evolution of Nüwa: A Brief ‘Herstory’ of Chinese SF.” *Vector* 193. April 5, 2021. <https://vector-bsfa.com/2021/04/05/the-evolution-of-nuwa-a-brief-herstory-of-chinese-sf/> Accessed October 24, 2022.
- Wang, Regina Kanyu and Peng Zheng (trans.). “Interview: Regina Kanyu Wang.” 中欧国际文学节. EU-China International Literary Festival. September 2022. <https://eu-china.literaryfestival.eu/interview-regina-kanyu-wang/>. Accessed November 7, 2022.
- Wang, Regina Kanyu. 火星上的祝融 *Huoxing shang de Zhurong* [Zhurong on Mars]. *Tianya* no. 5 (2022). <http://www.chinawriter.com.cn/n1/2022/1102/c418992-32557434.html>.
- Wang, Regina Kanyu. “《语膜》创作谈：失语（王侃瑜）*Yumo chuangzuo tan: shiyu* (Wang Kanyu). [On the Creation of *The Language Sheath*: Aphasia]”. *Tengxun Net: Shouhuo: Wechat Essay*. Undated. <https://new.qq.com/omn/20190720/20190720A0PY3Y00.html?pc>, Accessed October 18, 2022.
- Wang, Regina Kanyu. “Reproduction/Nurture Imaginations in (Post-)apocalypse Chinese Science Fiction Online Novels.” American Comparative Literature Association 2023 Annual Conference. Chicago, Illinois. March 19, 2023. Sponsored by the European Research Council Grant no. 852190.
- Wang, Regina Kanyu. “The Globalization of Chinese Science Fiction.” CELP (Centre des Études Littéraires et Culturelles sur la Planétarité/Research Center for Planetary Literary and Cultural Studies). Zoom talk. June 13, 2023.
- Wang, Regina Kanyu (王侃瑜) and Emily Jin (金雪泥). “The Language Sheath.” *Clarkesworld Magazine*, Issue 164. May 2020. http://clarkesworldmagazine.com/prior/issue_164.
- Wang, Regina Kanyu, Frederike Shi and Petra Thiel. “Regina Kanyu Wang.” In *Starke Frauen: Starke Geschichten: Interview-Poräts und Essays* [Strong Women: Strong Stories: Interviews and Essays]. October 1, 2022. <https://literaturherbstheidelberg.de/festival2022/frauengeschichten/#kanyuwang>. Accessed November 7, 2022.
- Wang, Regina Kanyu, Cláudia Fusco, and Maria Carol Casati (moderator). “*Mulheres na ficção científica Chinesa, Regina Kanyu Wang* [Women in Chinese Science Fiction: Regina Kanyu Wang].” Relampeio Festival. April 1, 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FfrwmWzGtvM>. Accessed November 2, 2022.
- Wang, Regina Kanyu, Xia Jia, and Francesco Verso. “Women in Chinese Science Fiction.”

- Future Fiction Project*. April 19, 2021.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6Xidqd2W0E>. Accessed October 21, 2022.
- Wang, Regina Kanyu, Ina Rosvall and Zhang Yiwei (moderator). "Assessing the Philosophical and the Technological in Science Fiction." The 7th International EU-China Literary Festival. September 2022.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LwguQnuAoL0>. Accessed November 2, 2022.
- Wang, Regina Kanyu and Ursula Deser Friedman. "Women-Authored Sinophone SF in the Posthumanist Era: A Conversation between Regina Kanyu Wang and Ursula Deser Friedman." [interview] Sheraton Grand Chicago. March 16, 2023.
- Wang, Carmen Yilin (言二零). "Translation as Retelling: An Approach to Translating Gu Shi's 'To Procure Jade' and Ling Chen's 'The Name of the Dragon.'" In *The Way Spring Arrives and Other Stories: From a Visionary Team of Female and Nonbinary Creators*. Ed. Yu Chen and Regina Kanyu Wang. New York: Tom Doherty Associates, 2022, 167-172.
- Wong Kar-wai (王家卫). *A-fei zhengzhuan* 阿飞正传 [Days of Being Wild]. Hong Kong: Yingzhijie zhizuo youxian gongsi, Zhongguo dianying jituan gongsi. December 15, 1990.
- Wood, Ge-Zay. *The Twenty-one Demands: Japan Versus China*. United Kingdom, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1921/2007.
- Woolf, Virginia. *Three Guineas*. New York: Harvest Books, 1966.
- Wu Sujun (吴素君). "流動的美感 *Liudong de meigan* [The Beauty of Fluidity]." In 牡丹還魂 *Mudan huanhun* [The Peony's Rebirth]. Pai Hsien-yung, ed. Shanghai: Wenhui chubanshe, 2004, 149-150.
- Wu Sujun. 詩化的身體語言：談《孽子》舞蹈編導 *Shihua de shenti yuyan: Tan Niezi wudao biandao* [Poetic body language: On choreographing *Niezi*]." In 孽子舞台劇 2020 全記錄文集 *Niezi wutaiju 2020 quanjilu wenji* [Complete collector's edition of the 2020 stage production of *Niezi*]. Designed by Pai Hsien-yung, cover characters inscribed by Dong Yangzi 董陽孜, photos by Hsu Pei-hung 許培鴻. Taipei: Asian Culture Publishing Co., 2022, 80-85.
- Wu Sujun. "民報之聲 舞蹈總監吳素君衛武營致詞說明《孽子》舞台劇 *Minbao zhisheng: Wudao zongjian Wu Sujun Weiwu Ying zhici shuoming Niezi Wutaiju*./Voice of the People's Daily: Dance Director Wu Sujun of the Wei Wuying [Center for the Arts] Explains the Stage Play *Niezi*." National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts. March 21, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Is7J4pXWXYI>. Accessed 7 February 2023.
- Hsu Pei-hung (許培鴻). 牡丹亦白 *Mudan Yibai* [The White Peony]. Taipei: Xiangying wenhua, 2007.
- Hsu Pei-hung and Ursula Deser Friedman. "Interview". 101 Mall, Taipei. April 11, 2023.
- Xia Jia (夏家). "Introduction." *New Voices in Chinese Science Fiction*. Neil Clarke, Xia Jia, and Regina Kanyu Wang, eds. Wyrn Publishing, 2022, 1-12.
- Yan Fu. 'Preface to Tianyanlun', in Chan, L. (ed.). *Twentieth-Century Chinese Translation Theory*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1901.
- Yang Fumin (楊富閔) and Ursula Deser Friedman. "A Conversation with Yang Fumin." National Taiwan University. April 20, 2023.

- Yang Hailiang (杨海亮) and Pai Hsien-yung (interviewee). “白先勇同性恋小说《孽子》将改编为舞台剧 *Bai Xianyong tongxinglian xiaoshuo niezi jiang gaibian wei wutai ju* [Pai Hsien-hyung’s Novel Niezi will be Adapted into a Stage Play].” *iFeng Culture*. 1 August 2013. http://culture.ifeng.com/whrd/detail_2013_08/01/28146078_2.shtml.
- Yi Shu (亦舒). 阅张爱玲新作有感 *Yue Zhang Ailing xinzuo yougan* [Reflections on reading Eileen Chang’s new works]. In 自白书 *Zibai shu* [Confessions]. Hong Kong: Tiandi tushu chubanshe, 1981.
- Yu, Gabriel. “Message from the Publisher.” In Pai Hsien-yung, Fan Man-Nong, and Cai Shao-Hua. “The Peony Pavilion: Young Lovers’ Edition [DVD: 4 Discs]”. Digital Heritage Publishing, Ltd., 2001.
- Yu, Kanping. *Shang yige shiji de Niezi*. 上一個世紀的孽子 [Last Century’s Niezi].” In *Guchen, Niezi, Taipei Ren: Pai Hsien-yung tongzhi xiaoshuo lun* 孤臣、孽子、台北人：白先勇同志小說輪 [Love Subjects, Sinful Sons, Taipei Characters: On Pai Hsien-yung’s Tongzhi Novels]. Ed. Zeng Xiuping. Taipei: Erya, 2003, 376-379.
- Zhang Suzhen (張素貞) and Pai Hsien-yung. 學習對美的尊重：在巴黎與白先勇一座談 *Xuexi dui mei de zunzhong: Zai Bali yu Bai Xianyong yi zuotan* [Respect for beauty: A chat with Pai Hsien-yung in Paris.] In *In Shu you ruci* 樹又如此 [Like a Tree]. Changsha: Hunan wenyi chubanshe, 1996/2018, 230-250. Reprinted from January 5, 1996 *Zhongyang Ribao* article.
- Zhang Yaoren (張耀仁). “水晶男孩：阿青 *Shuijing nanhai: A-Qing* [Crystal Boy: A-Qing].” In 孽子舞台劇 2020 全記錄文集 *Niezi wutaiju 2020 quanjilu wenji* [Complete collector’s edition of the 2020 stage production of *Niezi*]. Designed by Pai Hsien-yung, cover characters inscribed by Dong Yangzi 董陽孜, photos by Hsu Pei-hung 許培鴻. Taipei: Asian Culture Publishing Co., 2022, 126-131.
- Zhang Yaoren and Zhang Yijun. 解析《孽子》：【演員詮釋篇】張耀仁/張逸軍. *Jiexi Niezi: Yanyuan quanshipian: Zhang Yaoren/Zhang Yijun* [Interpreting Crystal Boys: The Actors Share their Insights: Zhang Yaoren and Zhang Yijun]. National Taichung Theatre. July 14, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n3EbgQqLbCU>. Accessed August 5, 2022.
- Zhang Yi (張藝). 張藝：音樂有營造的想像空間 *Zhang Zhi: Yinyue you yingzao de xiangxiang kongjian*. [Zhang Yi: Music opens up space for the imagination]. In 孽子舞台劇 2020 全記錄文集 *Niezi wutaiju 2020 quanjilu wenji* [Complete collector’s edition of the 2020 stage production of *Niezi*]. Designed by Pai Hsien-yung, cover characters inscribed by Dong Yangzi 董陽孜, photos by Hsu Pei-hung 許培鴻. Taipei: Asian Culture Publishing Co., 2022, 98.
- Zhang Yijun (張逸軍). *Zhang Yijun: Yuan jiang cishen hua wei feng: A-feng* 張逸軍：願將此身化為鳳：阿鳳 [Zhang Yijun: The Making of A-Feng]. In 孽子舞台劇 2020 全記錄文集 *Niezi wutaiju 2020 quanjilu wenji* [Complete collector’s edition of the 2020 stage production of *Niezi*]. Designed by Pai Hsien-yung, cover characters inscribed by Dong Yangzi 董陽孜, photos by Hsu Pei-hung 許培鴻. Taipei: Asian Culture Publishing Co., 2022, 139-144.
- Zhang Zhongping (張仲平). 關於《孽子》舞台劇的舞台監督這件事 *Guanyu Niezi*

- wutaiju de wutai jiandu zhejian shi* [On stage-managing *Niezi*]. In 孽子舞台劇 2020 全記錄文集 *Niezi wutaiju 2020 quanjilu wenji* [Complete collector's edition of the 2020 stage production of *Niezi*]. Designed by Pai Hsien-yung, cover characters inscribed by Dong Yangzi 董陽孜, photos by Hsu Pei-hung 許培鴻. Taipei: Asian Culture Publishing Co., 2022, 112-113.
- Zhou Xiao'an. “孽子 2020 經典重返尋找龍子周孝安 *Niezi 2020 jingdian chongfan xunzhao longzi: Zhou Xiao'an* [2020 Remake of the Classic *Niezi*: In Search of Longzi: Zhou Xiao'an].” January 13, 2021. Accessed November 1, 2022. https://www.bilibili.com/video/BV1Vi4y1c7fC?spm_id_from=333.337.search-
- Zhou Xiao'an. 為愛失落的遊魂：龍子 *Wei'ai shiluo de youhun: Longzi* [The Soul Lost in the Name of Love: Longzi].” In 孽子舞台劇 2020 全記錄文集 *Niezi wutaiju 2020 quanjilu wenji* [Complete collector's edition of the 2020 stage production of *Niezi*]. Designed by Pai Hsien-yung, cover characters inscribed by Dong Yangzi 董陽孜, photos by Hsu Pei-hung 許培鴻. Taipei: Asian Culture Publishing Co., 2022, 132-138.

Secondary Sources

- Adhikari, Bal. "Creative Adjustment of Linguistic and Textual Resources in Literary Translation." *Nepalese Linguistics* 34, nos. 1-9 (2019): 1-9.
- Ahmad, Aijaz. "Jameson's Rhetoric of Otherness and the 'National Allegory.'" *Social Text*, no. 17, 1987, 3-25.
- Amato, Jean. "Chapter 13: Spatio-Temporal Reterritorializing of Queer Spaces and Bodies in Bai Xianyong's Taipei Novel *Nie Zi* (*Crystal Boys*, 1983)." In *Time, the City, and the Literary Imagination*. Anne-Marie Evans and Kaley Kramer, eds. Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland and Palgrave MacMillan, 2021, 207-223.
- Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1987.
- Appel, A. M. "On translating Magris: 'Closelaboration' with a Difference." *Forum Italicum*, 47, no. 3 (2013), 619-634. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0014585813497457>
- Apter, Emily. *The Translation Zone: A New Comparative Literature*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2006.
- Apter, Emily. "Afterword: Towards a Theory of Reparative Translation," in *The Work of World Literature*, ed. by Francesco Giusti and Benjamin Lewis Robinson, *Cultural Inquiry*, 19 (Berlin: ICI Berlin Press, 2021), 209-28.
- Arizona State University (ASU) Center for Science and the Imagination. "Regina Kanyu Wang: Applied Imagination Fellow, 2021-2022." <https://csi.asu.edu/people/regina-kanyu-wang/>.
- Asia Society. "Eileen Chang at 100: A Celebration of the Chinese American Writer's Extraordinary Life, Work, and Legacy." Asia Society—New York, 2020. <https://asiasociety.org/new-york/events/eileen-chang-100>. Accessed May 28, 2024.
- Bachner, Andrea. "Found in Translation: Gao Xingjian's Multi-Medial Sinophone." *Sinophone Studies: A Critical Reader*. Ed. Brian Bernards, Shih Shu-mei, and Tsai Chien-hsin. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012. 364-374.
- Bachner, Andrea. "1986: The Writer and the Mad(wo)man." In *A New Literary History of Modern China*, ed. David Der-wei Wang. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017.
- Bachner, Andrea. "Queer Affiliations: Mak Yan Yan's *Butterfly* as Sinophone Romance." In *Queer Sinophone Cultures*, ed. Howard Chiang and Ari Larissa Heinrich. New York: Routledge, 2014, 201-220.
- Badmington, Neil. "Theorizing Posthumanism." *Cultural Critique*, no. 53 (2003): 10-27.
- Baer, Brian James and Klaus Kaindl. *Queering Translation, Translating the Queer: Theory, Practice, Activism*. Ed. Baer, Brian James. "Introduction: Queer(ing) Translation." New York: Routledge, 2018.
- Baer, Brian James. *Queer Theory and Translation Studies: Language, Politics, Desire*. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2021.
- Baldwin, James. "If Black Language Isn't a Language, Then Tell Me, What Is?" *The Black Scholar: Journal of Black Studies and Research*, vol. 27, no. 1 (1997): 5-6.
- Bandín, Elena. "The Role of Self-Translation in the Decolonisation Process of African Countries." *Estudios Humanísticos. Filología* 26 (2004): 35-54.
- Barthes, Roland "The Death of the Author." In *Image/Music/Text*. Trans. Stephen Heath. New York: Hill and Wang, 1977, 142-7.

- Barthes, Roland. "The Style and Its Image." In *The Rustle of Language*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1969/1980.
- Bartholomew, Ian. "'Crystal Boys' to Tread the Boards: Kenneth Pai's Seminal Novel about Life as A Homosexual in the Conservative World of 1960s Taipei will be Adapted for the Stage." *Taipei Times*. 26 April 2013.
<https://www.taipeitimes.com/News/feat/archives/2013/04/26/2003560720>. Accessed 8 February 2023.
- Bassnett, Susan. *Translation Studies*. London and New York: Methuen, 1980.
- Bassnett, Susan. "Writing in No Man's Land: Questions of Gender and Translation." In *Ilha do Desterro*, vol. 28, 1992, 63-73.
- Bassnett, Susan. "The Self-Translator as Rewriter." In A. Cordingley (ed.), *Self-translation: Brokering Originality in Hybrid Culture*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013, 13-25.
- Bellos, David. *Is That a Fish in Your Ear? Translation and the Meaning of Everything*. New York: Faber and Faber, 2012.
- Benjamin, Walter. "The Task of the Translator," trans. Harry Zohn. In Schulte and Biguenet, *Theories of Translation, 1923/1968*, 71-82.
- Berlant, Lauren. *Cruel Optimism*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2011.
- Berman, Antoine. *Translation and the Trials of the Foreign*. In L. Venuti (Ed.), *The Translation Studies Reader* (pp. 284–297). Routledge, 2000.
- Bernards, Brian. "Sinophone Literature." *The Columbia Companion to Modern Chinese Literature*. Edited by Kirk A. Denton. Columbia Univ. Press, 2016, 72-79.
- Bhabha, Homi K. *DissemiNation: Time, Narrative, and the Margins of the Modern Nation*. In *Nation and Narration*, Homi K. Bhabha, Ed., London: Routledge, 1990.
- Bhabha, Homi K. "How Newness Enters the World: Postmodern Space, Postcolonial Times, and the Trials of Cultural Translation." In *The Location of Culture*. New York and London: Routledge, 1994/2004.
- Bhabha, Homi K. "Culture's In-Between." In *Questions of Cultural Identity*, edited by Stuart Hall and Paul Du Gay, 1-17. London: Sage, 1996.
- Bolter, Jay David and Richard Grusin. *Remediation: Understanding New Media*. Cambridge, M.A.: MIT Press, 1999.
- Born, Georgina. "On Nonhuman Sound—Sound as Relation." In James A and Rey Chow, *Sound Objects*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2019, 185-207.
- Boym, Svetlana. *The Future of Nostalgia*. Basic Books, 2001.
- Burke, Kenneth. *The Philosophy of Literary Form*. New York: Vintage Books, 1941.
- Burke, Peter. *Cultural Hybridity*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2009.
- Butler, Judith. "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory." *Theatre Journal* 40, no. 4 (Dec. 1988): 519-531.
- Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge, 1990.
- Butler, Judith. "Is Kinship Always Already Heterosexual?" *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 13, no. 1 (2002): 14-44.
- Butler, Judith. "Betrayal's Felicity." *Diacritics* 32, no. 1 (2004): 82.
- Butler, Judith. "Gender in Translation: Beyond Monolingualism." *philoSOPHIA* 9 no. 1 (2019): 1-25. Project MUSE, doi:10.1353/phi.2019.0011.
- Cai, Yuanhuang. "Niezi erchong zou 孽子二重奏 [A Duet with *Niezi*]. *Wenxun Yuedkan*, no.

- 1 (1983): 78-86.
- Casanova, Pascale, & DeBevoise, M. B. *The World Republic of Letters*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2004.
- Casanova, Pascale. "Consecration and Accumulation of Literary Capital: Translation as Unequal Exchange." Trans. Siobhan Brownlie, in *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. Lawrence Venuti. New York: Routledge, 2012, 407-423. Translation of Pascale Casanova (2002) "Consécration et accumulation de capital littéraire. La traduction comme échange inégal", *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 144: 7-20.
- Castrillón, Ricardo and Danyelle Jordan Gates. "Could We Ever...Have New Literary Classics?" *The University of Texas at Dallas*. Accessed March 17, 2023. <https://www.utdallas.edu/podcasts/could-we-ever/episode-7/>.
- Chamberlain, Lori. "Gender and the Metaphorics of Translation." In Lawrence Venuti, ed. *Rethinking Translation: Discourse, Subjectivity, Ideology*. New York: Routledge, 2019.
- Chang, Sung-Sheng Yvonne. *Modernism and the Nativist Resistance: Contemporary Chinese Fiction from Taiwan*. Durham et London: Duke University Press, 1993.
- Chaves, Thomas David F. "Chapter 2: Mockery and Poetic Satire: Humor in Self-Translated Philippine Protest Poetry." In *Humour in Self-Translation*, ed. Margherita Dore. Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2022, 15-39.
- Chen, Chung-jjen. "A Portal to Transnational Communication: Problematizing Identity Politics in Ha Jin's *A Map of Betrayal*." *Textual Practice* 34 (, no. 10 (2019): 1671-1689. 1-19.
- Chen Fang-ming 陳芳明. *Taiwan de zuqun piaoyi yu minguo jiyi* 台灣的族群飄逸於民國記憶 [The movement of Taiwan's ethnic groups and memories of the Republic of China]. Speech at the Wistaria Tea House. Taipei, Taiwan. May 20, 2011.
- Chen Shou-en (陳守恩). 青春烈鳥的風華：《孽子》 *Qingchun lieniao de fenghua: Niezi* [The Splendor of the Flaming Phoenix: *Niezi*]. In [Complete collector's edition of the 2020 stage production of *Niezi*]. Designed by Pai Hsien-yung, cover characters inscribed by Dong Yangzi 董陽孜, photos by Hsu Pei-hung 許培鴻. Taipei: Asian Culture Publishing Co., 2022, 232-234.
- Chi, Ta-wei. "Chapter 3: Plural Not Singular: Homosexuality in Taiwanese Literature of the 1960s." In *Perverse Taiwan*, ed. Howard Chiang and Yin Wang. London: Routledge, 2017, 44-63.
- Chi, Ta-wei. "Reclaiming LGBTQ History: Taiwanese literature in the Period of Martial Law." University of Nottingham—Taiwan Studies Programme—Taiwan Insight. February 12, 2018. <https://taiwaninsight.org/2018/02/12/reclaiming-lgbtq-history-taiwanese-literature-in-the-period-of-martial-law/>. Accessed June 16, 2023.
- Chiang, Howard. "(De)Provincializing China: Queer Historicism and Sinophone Postcolonial Critique." In Howard Chiang and Ari Larissa Heinrich, eds. *Queer Sinophone Cultures*. New York: Routledge, 2014, 19-51.
- Chiang, Howard and Alvin K. Wong. "Asia is Burning: Queer Asia as Critique." *Culture, Theory and Critique*, 58:2, 2017, 121-126.
- Chiaro, Delia. *The Language of Jokes. Analysing Verbal Play*, London and New York, Routledge, 1992.
- Chiaro, Delia. "Foreword: Verbally Expressed Humor and Translation: An Overview of a

- Neglected Field.” *Humor: International Journal of Humor Research* 18, no. 2 (2005): 135-145.
- Ch’ien, Evelyn Nien-Ming. *Weird English*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004.
- Chow, Rey. *Writing Diaspora: Tactics of Intervention in Contemporary Cultural Studies*. Indiana University Press, 2002.
- Chow, Rey. *Primitive Passions: Visuality, Sexuality, Ethnography, and Contemporary Chinese Cinema*. New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2005.
- Chow, Rey. *Not Like A Native Speaker: On Language as a Postcolonial Experience*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2014.
- Chow, Rey. “Listening after ‘Acousmaticity’: Notes on a Transdisciplinary Problematic.” In James A and Rey Chow, *Sound Objects*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2019, 113-129.
- Chow Tse-tung, *The May Fourth Movement: Intellectual Revolution in Modern China*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964.
- Chu, Dongwei. Lin Yutang as Author-Translator/翻译家林语堂. Ed. Zhenhua Xu. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education, 2012.
- Chu, Seo-Young. *Do Metaphors Dream of Literal Sleep? A Science-Fictional Theory of Representation*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011/2022.
- Ciabattari, Jane. “Is Borges the 20th Century’s Most Important Writer?” *Between the Lines*. September 1, 2014. <https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20140902-the-20th-century-s-best-writer>. Accessed November 7, 2022.
- Cordingley, Anthony. *Self-Translation: Brokering Originality in Hybrid Culture*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013.
- Cordingley, Anthony and Josh Stenberg. “Self-Translation in the Sinosphere: Challenging Orthodoxies from Shanghai to Taipei to Makassar”. *Journal of Literary Multilingualism* 2 (2024): 11-35.
- Damrosch, David. *What Is World Literature?* Princeton & Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2003.
- De Beauvoir, Simone. *The Second Sex*. New York: Vintage Books, 1973.
- De Saussure, Ferdinand. *Course in General Linguistics*, trans. Wade Baskin. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1966.
- Deleuze, Gilles (1994). “He Stuttered”. In Constantin V. Boundas & Dorothea Olkowski (eds.), *Gilles Deleuze and the Theater of Philosophy*. Routledge. 23-29.
- Derrida, Jacques. *Positions*. Trans. Alan Bass. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 20n 1981.
- Derrida, Jacques. “Des Tours de Babel.” *Difference in Translation*. Ed. Joseph F. Graham. London: Cornell UP, 1985, 209-248.
- Derrida, Jacques. “Force of Law: ‘The Mystical Foundation of Authority’”. In *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice*, edited by Drucilla Cornell and Michael Rosenfeld. New York: Routledge, 1992.
- Derrida, Jacques. *Acts of Literature*. Edited by D. Attridge. London: Routledge, 1992/2015.
- Derrida, Jacques. What Is a “Relevant” Translation. Trans. Lawrence Venuti. *Critical Inquiry* 27, no. 2 (2001): 174-200.
- DiBattista, Maria, and Emily Ondine Wittman (2014). *The Cambridge Companion to Autobiography*. New York: Cambridge U.P.

- Djebar, Assia. "Writing in the Language of the Other." *Word: On Being a [Woman] Writer*. Ed. Jocelyn Burrell. New York: The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 2004. 112-119.
- Domínguez et. al. "Chapter 6: Comparative Literature and Translation" in *Introducing Comparative Literature: New Trends and Applications*, Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2015, 78-87.
- Dorfman, Ariel. "The Wandering Bigamists of Language," In Isabelle de Courtivron (Ed.), *Lives in Translation: Bilingual Writers on Identity and Creativity*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.
- Duara, Prasenjit. *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China*. University of Chicago Press, 1997.
- Eberhard, David M., Gary F. Simons, and Charles D. Fennig (eds.). *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*. Twenty-fifth edition. Dallas, Texas: SIL International, 2022. Accessed November 17, 2022. <http://www.ethnologue.com>.
- Eckholm, Eric. "After an Attack, Chinese Won't Print Expatriate's Novel." *New York Times*, June 24, 2000. <https://www.nytimes.com/2000/06/24/books/after-an-attack-chinese-won-t-print-expatriate-s-novel.html>. Accessed November 4, 2022.
- Emmerich, Karen. *Literary Translation and the Making of Originals*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2017.
- ESPN News Services. "Cleveland Changing Name from Indians to Guardians after 2021 Season." ESPN News Services [with contributions from the Associated Press]. July 23, 2021. https://www.espn.com/mlb/story/_/id/31868331/cleveland-changing-name-indians-guardians. Accessed October 26, 2022.
- Even-Zohar, Itamar. "The Position of Translated Literature within the Literary Polysystem." In *The Translation Studies Reader*. Edited by Lawrence Venuti. New York: Routledge, 1990/2012.
- Fan, Jiaying. "Yan Lianke's Forbidden Satires of China: How an Army Propaganda Writer Became the Country's Most Controversial Novelist." *The New Yorker*. October 8, 2018. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/10/15/yan-liankes-forbidden-satires-of-china>. Accessed September 7, 2022.
- Fan, Shouyi. "Highlights of Translation Studies in China since the Mid-Nineteenth Century." *Translators' Journal* 40, no. 1 (1999).
- Federman, Raymond. "A Voice Within a Voice." *Criticism. Postmodern Essays*. State University of New York Press, 1993, 76-84.
- Federman, Raymond (trans. Federman and Patricia Privat-Standley). *Aunt Rachel's Fur*. PFC2, 2001.
- Ferrando, Francesca (2013). "Posthumanism, Transhumanism, Antihumanism, Metahumanism, and New Materialisms: Differences and Relations." *Existenz* 8, no. 2 (Fall 2013): 26-32.
- Fitch, Brian T. "The Status of Self-Translation." *Texte: Revue de Critique et de Théorie Littéraire* 4 (1985): 11-25.
- Freud, Sigmund. "Mourning and Melancholia." In *Collected Papers*, vol. 4, trans. Joan Riviere. New York: Basic Books, 1959.
- Friedman, Norman. *Form and Meaning in Fiction*. Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1975.

- Friedman, Ursula Deser. "Creative Subversion in Hao Jingfang's *Shengsi Yu* (生死域)/Limbo." *Translation Review* 110, no. 1 (2021): 48-62.
- Gentzler, Edwin. *Translation and Identity in the Americas: New Direction in Translation Theory*. London & New York: Routledge, 2012.
- Geyh, Paula. "Assembling Postmodernism: Experience, Meaning, and the Space In-Between". *College Literature* 30, no. 2 (2003): 1-29.
- GoGwilt, Chris and Ha Jin. "An Interview with Ha Jin." *Guernica Magazine*. Ed. Josh Jones. November 16, 2006.
<https://www.guernicamag.com/spotlight/258/post/>. Accessed February 19, 2022.
- Gong, Haomin. "Language, Migrancy, and the Literal: Ha Jin's Translation Literature." *Concentric: Literary and Cultural Studies* 40, no. 1, 2014, 147-167.
- Grossman, Edith. *Why Translation Matters*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010.
- Grutman, Rainier. "Auto-translation." *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*. Eds. Mona Baker and Kirsten Malmkjaer. London: Routledge, 1998, 17-20.
- Grutman, Rainier. "L'Autotraduction: Dilemme social et entre-deux textuel." *Atelier de Traduction* 7, 2007, 219-229.
- Grutman, Rainier. "Self-Translation." *Routledge Encyclopaedia of Translation Studies*. Eds. Mona Baker and Gabriela Saldanha. Rev. ed. London: Routledge, 2009, 257-260.
- Grutman, Rainier, and Trish Van Bolderen. "Self-Translation." In *A Companion to Translation Studies*. Edited by Sandra Bermann and Catherine Porter, Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014, 323-332.
- Gunn, Edward M. *Unwelcome Muse: Chinese Literature in Shanghai and Peking: 1937-1945*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1980.
- Hall, Stuart. "Cultural Identity and Diaspora" *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*. Ed. Jonathan Rutherford. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990.
- Halperin, David M. *Saint Foucault: Towards a Gay Hagiography*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Haman, Brian. "'Little reunions' by Eileen Chang." *Asia Review of Books*. November 16, 2018. Accessed September 27, 2022. <https://asianreviewofbooks.com/content/little-reunions-by-eileen-chang/.982>.
- Hanan, Patrick. "Foreword." In Pai Hsien-yung, trans. Patia Yasin. *Wandering in the Garden, Waking from a Dream*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982, xi-xii.
- Hokenson, Jan, and Marcella Munson. *The Bilingual Text: History and Theory of Literary Self-translation*. Manchester, UK: St. Jerome Publishing, 2007.
- Hsia, C.T. "Hsien-yung Pai's Early short Stories: A Preface to *Seventeen Years Old and Lonely*" [*Bai Xianyong zaoqi de duanpian xiaoshuo: Jimo de shiqi sui dai xu*]. In *Seventeen Years Old and Lonely* by Pai. Taipei: Yuanjing, 1976.
- Hsia, C.T. *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction*. [Third Ed.] Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999.
- Huang, Hans Tao-Ming. *Queer Politics and Sexual Modernity in Taiwan*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011.
- Huston, Nancy. "The Mask and the Pen." In *Lives in Translation: Bilingual Writers on Identity and Creativity*, ed. Isabelle de Courtivron: 55-68. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Hutcheon, Linda. *A Theory of Adaptation*. New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Huang, Nicole. *Women, War, Domesticity*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2005.

- Huang, Nicole. "Eileen Chang and Narratives of Cities and Worlds." In *The Columbia Companion to Modern Chinese Literature*. Edited by Kirk A. Denton. Columbia Univ. Press, 2016, 217-223.
- Huang, Nicole. "Worlding Eileen Chang (Zhang Ailing): Narratives of Frontiers and Crossings." In *A Companion to World Literature*, ed. K. Seigneurie. Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 2019.
(Ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118635193.ctwl0232>
- Jameson, Fredric. *Archeologies of the Future: The Desire Called Utopia and Other Science Fictions*. London: Verso, 2005/2007.
- Jenkins, Henry. *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York: New York University Press, 2006.
- Jiang, Yajun. "Chinglish and China English." *English Today* 11 (1995): 51–53.
- Jin, Emily Xueni (ed. Cai Yineng and Kilian O'Donnell). "After Yet Another Liu Cixin Adaptation, What's Next for Chinese Sci-Fi?" 17 February 2023. *Sixth Tone*.
https://www.sixthtone.com/news/1012314/after-yet-another-liu-cixin-adaptation%2C-whats-next-for-chinese-sci-fi%3F?fbclid=IwAR0B0_sBD0DSsFLXo-SjSPdMvuP3LXpgwet6Kl_7nLQkN-dLxoGIPvwWk3k.
- Jing Jiang. *Found in Translation: "New People" in Twentieth-Century Chinese Science Fiction*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2021.
- Jing Tsu. "The Futures of Genders in Chinese Science Fiction." In *The Way Spring Arrives and Other Stories: From a Visionary Team of Female and Nonbinary Creators*. Ed. Yu Chen and Regina Kanyu Wang. New York: Tom Doherty Associates, 2022, 125-135.
- Jobling, James A. *A Dictionary of Scientific Bird Names*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991, 15–16.
- Johnson, A.S. *The Very Telling Conversations with American Writers*. Lebanon: University Press of New England, 2006.
- Jones, Andrew. *Developmental Fairy Tales: Evolutionary Thinking and Modern Chinese Culture*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011.
- Jullien, Dominique (2019). *Borges, Buddhism and World Literature: A Morphology of Renunciation Tales*. Springer International Publishing.
- Jung, Verena. *English-German Self-Translation of Academic Texts and its Relevance for Translation Theory and Practice*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2002.
- Kam, Louie. *Eileen Chang: Romancing Languages, Cultures and Genres*. Ed. Kam Louie. Hong Kong University Press, 2012.
- Kane, Brian. *Sound Unseen: Acousmatic Sound in Theory and Practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Keele, Kenneth D. "The Genesis of Mona Lisa." *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 14, no. 4 (1959): 135-159.
- Kellman, Steven G. and Ilan Stavans. "The Translingual Sensibility: A Conversation between Steven G. Kellman and Ilan Stavans." *L2 Journal* 7, vol. 1 (2015): 6-17.
- Kelly, Nataly and Jost Zetsche. *Found in Translation: How Language Shapes Our Lives and Transforms the World*. New York: Perigree, 2012.
- Ketagalan Media. "Taiwan 70s Gay Subculture and Authoritarian Rule: Crystal Boys." 26 May 2017. <https://ketagalanmedia.com/2017/05/26/taiwans-70s-gay-subculture-and-authoritarian-rule-crystal-boys/>. Accessed 9 February 2023.

- Kingsbury, Karen S. "Introduction." *Love in a Fallen City* by Eileen Chang. New York: New York Review Books, 2007.
- Kristeva, Julia. *Strangers to Ourselves*. Trans. Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Harvester & Wheatsheaf, 1991.
- Kuang, Rebecca F. (匡灵秀). "Writing and Translation: A Hundred Technical Tricks." In *The Way Spring Arrives and Other Stories: From a Visionary Team of Female and Nonbinary Creators*. Ed. Yu Chen and Regina Kanyu Wang. New York: Tom Doherty Associates, 2022, 461-469.
- Kwan-Terry, John and Stephen Lacey, trans. "Winter Nights" by Pai Hsien-yung. In Lau, Joseph S. M., and Howard Goldblatt. *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature*. New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1995.
- Lal, Purushottam. *Transcreation: Two Essays*. The University of Michigan: Writers' Workshop Publication, 1972.
- Lang, Miriam. "San Mao and Qiong Yao: A 'Popular' Pair." *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture*, vol. 15, no. 2 (Fall 2003), 76-120.
- The Language Conservancy. "The Loss of Our Languages: The Swelling Wave of Extinctions Across the Globe." Accessed November 17, 2022.
<https://languageconservancy.org/language-loss/#:~:text=Today%2C%20the%20voices%20of%20more,2%2C900%20or%2041%25%20are%20endangered>. Indianapolis Web Design, 2020.
- Lau, Joseph S.M. "How Much Can a Blade of Grass Carry?: Ch'en Ying-chen and the Emergence of Native Taiwanese Writers." *The Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 32, no. 4 (1973): 623-638. doi:10.2307/2052813.
- Lau, Joseph S.M. "'Crowded Hours' Revisited: The Evocation of the Past in *Taipei jen*." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 35, no. 1 (1975): 31-47.
- Leach, Anna. "Sociologist Submits Gay Marriage Proposal to Chinese Government Again." *Gay Star News*. 7 March 2013. Accessed 26 February 2023.
<http://www.gaystarnews.com/article/sociologist-submits-gay-marriage-proposal-chinese-government-again070313>.
- Le, Nga. "Women in Zhang Ailing's Short Stories: An Insight into her Vision of Life and Place in Chinese Literature." [MA thesis]. The University of British Columbia—Department of Asian Studies, 1989.
<https://open.library.ubc.ca/media/download/pdf/831/1.0097861/1>
- Lee, Leo Ou-fan. "Afterword." In *Eileen Chang: Romancing Languages, Cultures and Genres*. Ed. Kam Louie. Hong Kong University Press, 2012, 243-247.
- Lee, Yu-lin, Howard Chiang, and Andrea Bachner. *Sinoglossia*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, HKU, 2023. muse.jhu.edu/book/111219.
- Lefevre, André. "Mother Courage's Cucumbers: Text, System and Refraction in a Theory Of Literature." *Modern Language Studies* 12, no. 4 (1982): 3-20.
- Lefevre, André. *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*. London: Routledge, 1992/2017.
- Levine, Suzanne Jill. "Letter to Julio Ortega." In University of Indiana, Bloomington—Lilly Library. Levine mss. LMC 2518, Box 5, folder 2.65-2.66, 1974, 1-2.
- Levine, Suzanne Jill. *Adolfo Bioy Casares: Selected Stories: Translated, with an Introduction, by Suzanne Jill Levine* [unpublished draft]. University of Indiana, Bloomington—Lilly Library. Levine mss. LMC 2518, Box 7, folder 8.6, October 1993, vii-xiv.

- Levine, Suzanne Jill. "Translation of the Selected Stories of Adolfo Bioy-Casares. (1957-1985)." University of Indiana, Bloomington—Lilly Library. Levine mss. LMC 2518, Box 7, folder 8.5.2, 1988.
- Levine, Suzanne Jill. "Translator's Introduction" [Draft]. *The Selected Stories of Adolfo Bioy Casares*. June 1993. University of Indiana, Bloomington—Lilly Library. Levine mss. LMC 2518, Box 2, folder 2.69, 1-14.
- Levine, Suzanne Jill. *The Subversive Scribe: Translating Latin American Fiction*. Champaign: Dalkey Archive, 2009.
- Levine, Suzanne Jill. "Preface: The Untranslatable and World Literature." In Levine, Suzanne Jill and Katie Lateef-Jan, eds. *Untranslatability Goes Global* (1st ed.) New York: Routledge, 2017.
- Levine, Suzanne Jill. "Censorship and Self-Translation in the Era of the Latin American Boom." [Revision of Brussels 2015 lecture]. https://escholarship.org/content/qt69n6d1wn/qt69n6d1wn_noSplash_4d8fac13f34e7581c7907257cc97a203.pdf?t=qq0gqqa.
- Levine, Suzanne Jill. "Translator's Note—A Plan for Escape." University of Indiana, Bloomington—Lilly Library. Levine mss. LMC 2518, Box 5, folder 6.5, [undated].
- Levine, Suzanne Jill and David Garyan. "The Never-Ending Original: An Interview with Suzanne Jill Levine." *The Collidescope*. October 2, 2022. <https://thecollidescope.com/2022/10/02/the-never-ending-original-an-interview-with-suzanne-jill-levine/>. Accessed October 27, 2022.
- Levine, Suzanne Jill, Manuel Puig, and Frank MacShane. University of Indiana, Bloomington—Lilly Library. Levine mss. LMC 2518, Box 3. "Discussion of Translation." [Original Interview with Notations and Revisions]. February 11, 1974.
- Liao Zhifeng (廖志峯). "消失的地圖，復現的樂園？ *Xiaoshi de ditu, fuxian de leguo?* [A vanished map, a paradise regained?]" In In Pai Hsien-yung, Dong Yangzi, Xu Peihong et al. 孽子舞台劇 2020 全記錄文集 *Niezi wutaiju 2020 quanjilu wenji* [Complete collector's edition of the 2020 stage production of *Niezi*]. Designed by Pai Hsien-yung, cover characters inscribed by Dong Yangzi 董陽孜, photos by Hsu Pei-hung 許培鴻. Taipei: Asian Culture Publishing Co., 2022, 212-214.
- Li Bo. "(Re)Framing Gay Literature through Translations, Reprints and Cross-Medium Retranslations: With Reference to Pai Hsien-yung's *Crystal Boys*." *Transcultural* 12, no. 1, 2020, 158-172.
- Li Huina (李慧娜). 戲緣：戲緣——孽子舞台劇漫長的告別 *Xiyuan: Niezi wutaiju manchang de gaobie* [2020 *Niezi* Stage Play: Roots: A Slow Goodbye]. In In Pai Hsien-yung, Dong Yangzi, Hsu Pei-hung et al. 孽子舞台劇 2020 全記錄文集 *Niezi wutaiju 2020 quanjilu wenji* [Complete collector's edition of the 2020 stage production of *Niezi*]. Designed by Pai Hsien-yung, cover characters inscribed by Dong Yangzi 董陽孜, photos by Hsu Pei-hung 許培鴻. Taipei: Asian Culture Publishing Co., 2022, 76-79.
- Li Junguo 李俊国 and Zhou Yi 周易. 张爱玲《相见欢》英文遗稿的发现与研究 *Zhang Ailing Xianjian huan yingwen yigao de faxian yu yanjiu* [The Discovery and Study of Eileen Chang's Forgotten English Manuscript 'She Said Smiling']. *Chinese Comparative Literature (中国比较文学)* 2020, vol. 3.

- Li, Melody Yunzi. "Home and Identity En Route in Chinese Diaspora—Reading Ha Jin's *A Free Life*." *Pacific Coast Philology* 49, no. 2 (2014), 203-220.
- Littau, Karen. "Translation and the Materialities of Communication." *Translation Studies* 9, no. 1 (2015): 82-96. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14781700.2015.1063449>.
- Lieu, J. "Beating the Odds." *Chicago Tribune Books*, December 24, 1996.
- Liu Huan (劉歡). "白先勇同性恋小说《孽子》将改编为舞台剧 *Bai Xianyong tongxing'lian xiaoshuo Niezi jiang gaibian wei wutaiju* [Pai Hsien-yung's gay novel *Niezi* is about to be transformed into a stage play]." August 1, 2013. http://culture.ifeng.com/whrd/detail_2013_08/01/28146078_2.shtml. Accessed June 12, 2023.
- Liu, Lydia. *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity—China, 1900-1937*. Stanford Univ. Press, 1995.
- Liu, Lydia He. *The Clash of Empires: The Invention of China in Modern World Making*. Harvard Univ. Press, 2006. Long Yingtai 龍應台. "Tao zhepan jinsha: Xiping Niezi 淘這盤金沙：細評孽子 [Panning this Plate of Sand: On *Niezi*]." *Xinshu Yuekan*, no. 6, 1984: 52-62.
- Lyngra, Marit. "Chapter 19: Lost and Found in Translation: Therapy and the Bilingual Self." In *Relational Transactional Analysis: Principles in Practice*. London: Karnac Books, 2011.
- Lyotard, Jean-Francois. "Rewriting Modernity." In *The Inhuman: Reflections on Time*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington and Rachel Bowlby. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991, 24-35.
- Ma Jia. "How Bai Xianyong's Melancholy and Chen He's Nostalgia Are Well Presented in Literary Montage and a Black-and-White Movie." The Twelfth International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS 12). Amsterdam University Press, 2022). <https://doi.org/10.5117/9789048557820/ICAS.2022.049>
- Ma Sheng-mei. *Diaspora Literature and Visual Culture: Asia in Flight*. New York: Routledge, 2011.
- McInerney, Kerry, Eleanor Drage, Regina Kanyu Wang and Emily Jin. "Regina Kanyu Wang and Emily Jin on Science Fiction in Translation." The Good Robot Podcast—transcript. April 11, 2023. <https://www.thegoodrobot.co.uk/post/regina-kanyu-wang-and-emily-jin-on-science-fiction-in-translation>. Accessed May 2, 2023.
- Mandel, Susannah R. "'Crystal Boys' Opens Door on Hidden World, But Moves Slowly." May 1, 1997. *The Harvard Crimson*. <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/1997/5/1/crystal-boys-opens-door-on-hidden/>. Accessed June 21, 2022.
- Martin, Josh. "An Introduction to *Outcasts*." Prismatic Taiwan Film Series. Introduction to *Outcasts* (1986, dir. Yu Kan-ping). September 5, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6O60alHFPSc> Accessed June 9, 2022.
- McRuer, Robert. *Crip Times: Disability, Globalization, and Resistance*. New York: New York University Press, 2018.
- Meng Hui and Hong Cai. "Cultural Hybridity and Bilingual Creativity: Ha Jin's Self-Translation in *A Good Fall*." *Asia Pacific Translation and Intercultural Studies* 7, no. 1, 2020, 3-22.
- Meng Hui. "Migration of Text and Shift of Identity: Self-Translation in the Bilingual Works of Lin Yutang, Eileen Chang, and Ha Jin." University of Kansas [PhD dissertation]. April 26, 2017.

- Meng Hui. “Awkward Betweenness and Reluctant Metamorphosis: Eileen Chang’s Self-Translation.” *Transcultural* 13, no. 1, 2021, 2-22.
- Minh-ha, Tinh T. “Other than Myself/My Other Self.” In Robertson, G., Mash Melinda, Tickner, L., Bird, J., Curtis, B., & Putnam, T. (1994). *Travellers’ Tales: Narratives of Home and Displacement*. Routledge, 1994, 9-28.
- Montini, Chiara. “Self-Translation.” *Handbook of Translation Studies*. Volume I. Ed. Yves Gambier and Luc van Doorslaer. Amsterdam/ Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2010, 306-308.
- Mountford, Tom. “The Legal Statuses and Position of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender people in the People’s Republic of China.” 2009. <http://www.iglhrc.org/sites/default/files/395-1.pdf>
- Mullaney, T. S. *The Chinese Typewriter: A History*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2017
- Nancy, Jean-Luc. *Listening*, trans. Charlotte Mandell. New York: Fordhama University Press, 2002/2007.
- National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts. “Creative Society Theatre Group Crystal Boys (Cancelled).” <https://www.npac-weiwuying.org/programs/5dcf7dd54c0a860006e2d8b2?lang=en>. Accessed June 20, 2022.
- NYU Shanghai. “Award-Winning Author Regina Wang Probes the Future of China’s Sci-Fi.” NYU Shanghai—News and Publications. March 4, 2022. <https://shanghai.nyu.edu/news/award-winning-author-regina-wang-probes-future-chinas-sci-fi>. Accessed October 23, 2022.
- Nölken, Stina J. (2020). “Queer Multilingualism and Self-Translating the Queer Subject in Klaus Mann’s *The Turning Point* (1942) and *Der Wendepunkt* (1952).” *New Voices in Translation Studies*, 66-94.
- Noth, Juliane. *In Search of the Chinese Landscape: Ink Painting, Travel, and Transmedial Practice, 1928-1936*. Harvard East Asian Monographs, 2022.
- Ogundipe, Molar. “The Palm-Wine Drinkard: A Reassessment of Amos Tutuola.” *Présence Africaine*, Trimestre. Nouvelle Série, no. 71, 1969, 99-108.
- Otgaar H, M.L. Howe, O. Dodier, S.O. Lilienfeld, E.F. Loftus, S.J. Lynn, H. Merckelbach, L. Patihis. “Belief in Unconscious Repressed Memory Persists.” *Perspect Psychol Sci*. 16, no. 2 (2021), 454-460. doi: 10.1177/1745691621990628.
- Oittinen, Riitta, Anna Ketola and Melissa Garavini. *Translating Picturebooks: Revoicing the Verbal, the Visual, and the Aural for a Child Audience*. US: Routledge, 2018.
- Ouyang Tzu (歐陽子). *A Fallen Fairy, or A Celestial in Mundane Exile*. Taipei: Book World, 1967.
- Ouyang Tzu. 王謝堂的燕子：【台北人】的研析與索隱 *Wang Xietang qian de yanzi: Taibei ren de yanxi yu suoyin* [Wang Xietang’s Swallows: Research and Analysis on *Taibei ren*]. Taipei: Erya chubanshe, 1983.
- Ouyang Tzu. “The Fictional World of Pai Hsien-yung.” Trans. Cynthia Liu. In Jeannette L. Faurot, ed., *Chinese Fiction from Taiwan: Critical Perspectives*. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1980, 166-178.
- Palladino, D.J. “Peony Dreams: Best-Selling Chinese Author Brings a Kunqu Classic to His Hometown.” Santa Barbara Independent. 28 September 2006. <https://www.independent.com/2006/09/28/peony-dreams/>. Accessed 9 February 2023.
- People’s Livelihood Daily* 民生報. “More cuts After Having Been Censored for the Third

- Time.” 驗審三次還要再剪 *Yanshen sancǐ haiyao zai jian*. August 28, 1986.
- Pierce, David. *Reading Joyce*. London: Routledge, 2016.
- Reynolds, Matthew. “Introduction.” *Prismatic Translation*. Oxford: Legenda, 2019.
- Ricoeur, Paul. *On Translation*. London, New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Row, Jess. “The Shortlist: Banned in Beijing.” *The New York Times*. March 18, 2016. Accessed September 7, 2022.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/20/books/review/banned-in-beijing.html>.
- Rushdie, Salman. *The Wizard of Oz*. New York: Vintage International, 1996.
- Saidero, Deborah. “Self-Translation as Transcultural Re-Inscription of Identity in Dore Michelut and Gianna Patriarca.” In *Oltreocean 05: L'autotraduzione nelle letterature migranti*, ed. Alessandra Ferraro. Udine: Forum, 2011, 33-41.
- Said, Edward W. “Traveling Theory.” *The World, the Text and the Critic*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1983. 226–248.
- Said, Edward W. “Reflections on Exile.” In *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984/2000.
- Said, Edward W. “Jane Austen and Empire.” *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993.
- Sang, Tze-lan Deborah. “Romancing Rhetoricity and Historicity: The Representational Politics and Poetics of *Little Reunion*.” In *Eileen Chang: Romancing Languages, Cultures and Genres*, ed. Kam Louie. Hong Kong University Press, 2012.
- Santoyo, Julio-César, “Autotraducciones: Una Perspectiva Histórica” [Self-Translation: An Essay on Typology]. In P.M. Alba, J.A. Albaladejo Martínez & M. Pulido (eds.). *Al Humanista, Traductor y Maestro Miguel Ángel Vega Vega Cernuda*. Madrid: Dykinson, 2005/2013, 205-221.
- Santoyo, Julio-Cesar. “On Mirrors, Dynamics and Self-Translations.” *Self-translation: Brokering Originality in Hybrid Culture*, ed. by Anthony Cordingley, 27–38. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013.
- Schwartz, Lynne Sharon. “Emigrées Looking Homeward.” *The New Leader* (September/October 2002): 26-28.
- Sebag-Montefiore, Clarissa. “Dissident Author Ha Ji on Life in Boston and Exile from China.” *The Financial Times Limited*. February 20, 2015.
<https://www.ft.com/content/041103ba-b208-11e4-b380-00144feab7de>. Accessed February 15, 2022.
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. “Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading; or, You’re So Paranoid, You Probably Think This Introduction is About You.” In *Novel Gazing: Queer Readings in Fiction*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1997.
- Shen Shuang (沈雙). “Ends of Betrayal: Diaspora and Historical Representation in the Late Works of Zhang Ailing.” *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2012, 112-148.
- Shen Shuang 沈雙. “Betrayal, Impersonation, and Bilingualism: Eileen Chang’s Self-Translation.” In *Eileen Chang: Romancing Languages, Cultures and Genres*, edited by Kam Louie, 91-111. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Univ. Press, 2012.
- Shi, Flair Donglai. “Coming out of History and Coming Home: Homosexual Identification in Pai Hsien-Yung’s: ‘Crystal Boys.’” *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews (CLEAR)* vol. 39 (2017): 135–152.
- Shieh, Wen-shan. *Literature in Masks: Katherine Mansfield, Eileen Chang and the*

- Possibilities of Creative Writing* [PhD diss]. University of Sussex, August 2013.
- Shih, Shu-mei. "Global Literature and the Technologies of Recognition." *PMLA* 119, no. 1 (2004).
- Shih, Shu-mei. *Visuality and Identity: Sinophone Articulations across the Pacific*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2007.
- Shih, Shu-mei. "Against Diaspora: The Sinophone as Places of Cultural Production." In *Global Chinese Literature: Critical Essays*. China Overseas, vol. 3. Jing Tsu and David Der-wei Wang, eds. Brill Press, 2010, 26-42.
- Shih, Shu-mei. "The Concept of the Sinophone." *PMLA*, vol. 126, no. 3, 2011, 709-718. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41414144>
- Shklovsky, Viktor. "Art as Technique." *Russian Formalist Criticism: Four Essays*, Second Edition, trans. by Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reis, Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1965, 3-24.
- Shuttleworth, Mark, and Moira Cowie. *Dictionary of Translation Studies*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 2004.
- Singer, Ben. *Melodrama and Modernity: Early Sensational Cinema and Its Contexts*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001.
- Skordili, B. "Little Narrative." In V.E. Taylor and C.E. Winquist (eds.). *Encyclopedia of Postmodernism*. London and New York: Routledge, 230-232.
- Sommer, Doris: *Bilingual Aesthetics: A New Sentimental Education*. Durham and London: Duke Univ. Press, 2004.
- Song Mingwei. *Fear of Seeing: A Poetics of Chinese Science Fiction*. Columbia University Press, 2023.
- Soong, Roland (Song Yilang 宋以朗). *Shanghai lanhan shi Fuhua langrui de chugao?* 《上海懒汉》是《浮花浪蕊》的初稿? ["Is 'Shanghai Loafers' the First Draft of 'Roaming Flowers and Waves'?"] In *Songqi chuanqi: Cong Song Chunfang dao Zhang Ailing* 宋淇传奇：从宋春舫到张爱玲. [Legends of Stephen Song: From Song Chunfang to Eileen Chang]. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014, 275-284.
- Soong, Roland. *Song Jia Keting : Cong Qian Zhongshu Dao Zhang Ailing* 宋家客厅——从钱锺书到张爱玲 [The Soongs' Living Room: From Qian Zhongshu to Eileen Chang]. Henan: Huacheng Publishing House, 2015.
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. 2000. "The Politics of Translation", in Lawrence Venuti (ed.), *The Translation Studies Reader*. London. New York: Routledge.
- Steiner, George. "Chapter Five: The Hermeneutic Motion." In *After Babel. Aspects of Language and Translation*. 2nd ed. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1975/1992, 571-787.
- Stephanides, Stephanos. "translatability of Memory in an Age of Globalization.:" *Comparative Literature Studies* 41.1 (2004): 101-115.
- Sullivan, Margaret. "Readers Won't Benefit if Times Bans the Term 'Illegal Immigrant'." *The New York Times—Opinion Pages*. October 2, 2012. <http://publiceditor.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/10/02/readers-wont-benefit-if-times-bans-the-term-illegal-immigrant>.
- Taiwan Public Television Service On-line. "History of PTS." *PTS English*. Jan 2014. <https://about.pts.org.tw/en/>. Accessed 8 February 2023.
- Tan, E.K. *Rethinking Chineseness: Translational Sinophone Identities in the Nanyang Literary World*. New York: Cambria Press, 2013.

- Taryne, Taylor. "Introduction to CoFuturisms." In Taryne, Taylor, Jade Isiah Lavender, Grace L Dillon and Bodhisattva Chattopadhyay. *The Routledge Handbook of Cofuturisms*. New York NY: Routledge, 2024, 1-8.
- Thierry, G. and Y.J. Wu. "Brain Potentials Reveal Unconscious Translation during Foreign-Language Comprehension." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, July 24, 104 (30): 12530-12535.
- Thomas, Dylan. "Blithe Spirits." *The Observer* (1901-2003). 6 July 1952.
- Thomson, Jono. "Yeh Yung-chih Remembered on Taiwan's First Gender Equality Day." *Taiwan News*. April 20, 2023. <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/4869665>. Accessed June 1, 2023.
- Ting, Chih-Chi. "Niezi and its Legacies: Tracing the Emergence of Gay and Queer Subcultures in Taiwan." [MA Thesis]. University of Manchester—School of Arts, Languages, and Cultures. 2016.
- Tihanov, Galin. "Narratives of Exile: Cosmopolitanism Beyond the Liberal Imagination." In *Whose Cosmopolitanism? Critical Perspectives, Relationalities and Discontents*, ed. N. Glick Schiller and A. Irving, New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2015, 141-159.
- Tsai, Nancy. "Waiting for a Better Translation.," *Translation Review*, vol. 70, no. 1 (2005), 58-67.
- Tsu, Jing. *Sound and Script in Chinese Diaspora*. Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2010.
- Tu Kuo-ch'ing. "Foreword to the Special Issue on Pai Hsien-yung." In *Taiwan Literature—English Translation Series* no. 40. Special Issue on Pai Hsien-yung, ed. Kuo ch'ing Tu and Terence Russell. July 2017, vii-xix.
- Van der Kolk Bessel A., Hopper J. W., Osterman J. E. "Exploring the Nature of Traumatic Memory: Combining Clinical Knowledge with Laboratory Methods." *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma* 4, no. 2 (2001) 9–31.
- Venuti, Lawrence. *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* (1st ed.). New York: Routledge, 1995/2017.
- Venuti, Lawrence. *The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Difference*. London: Routledge, 1998.
- Venuti, Lawrence. "Chapter 1: Invisibility." In *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*, Second Edition. New York: Routledge, 2008.
- Venuti, Lawrence. *Contra Instrumentalism: A Translation Polemic*. University of Nebraska Press, 2019.
- Venuti, Lawrence. *Theses on Translation: An Organon for the Current Moment*. Flugschriften, 2019.
- Walkowitz, Rebecca. *Born Translated: The Contemporary Novel in an Age of World Literature*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2015.
- Wang Ban. *Illuminations from the Past: Trauma, Memory, and History in Modern China*. Stanford Univ. Press, 2005.
- Wang Ban. "Passion and Politics in Revolution: A Psychoanalytical Reading of Ding Ling" in *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Chinese Literatures*, ed. Carlos Rojas and Andrea Bachner. Oxford Univ. Press, 2016.
- Wang, David Der-wei. "Foreword." In *The Rice-Sprout Song*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.
- Wang, David Der-wei. "Foreword." In *The Rouge of the North*. By Eileen Chang. Berkeley:

- University of California Press, 1998. vii-xxx.
- Wang, David Der-wei. "Wenxue xinglu yu shijie xiangxiang [Literary Traveling and Global Imagination?]." *United Daily News*. July 8-9, 2006, Literary supplement section.
- Wang, David Der-wei. "Introduction." In Eileen Chang, *The Fall of the Pagoda*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2010.
- Wang, Helen. "Rén—how to live a happy and fulfilled life, by Yen Ooi." Wordpress—Chinese Books for Young Readers. 4 April 2022.
<https://chinesebooksforyoungreaders.wordpress.com/2022/04/04/150-ren-how-to-live-a-happy-and-fulfilled-life-by-yen-ooi/>. Accessed 5 March 2022.
- Wang Hui and Viren Murthy (trans.), "Modernity against Modernity: Wang Hui's Critical History of Chinese Thought," *Modern Intellectual History*, vol. 3, no. 1 (April 2006): 137-165].
- Wang Yiru. "Bai Xianyong: Xiangxin Guanzhong De Yanlei 白先勇：相信觀眾的眼淚 [Pai Hsien-yung: I trust the Audiences' Tears]." Arts Feature. *The China Times*. 7 May 2014, Web. 29 Nov 2015.
- wa Thiong'o, Ngũgĩ. "My Life In-Between Languages". *Translation Studies* 2, no. 1 (2009): 17-21.
- wa Thiong'o, Ngũgĩ. "Resistance to Linguistic Feudalism and Darwinism: Conditions for Creating a Reading Culture in Africa." *Pambazuka News*, Issue 450, 2009.
<http://www.pambazuka.org/en/category/features/59136>.
- wa Thiong'o, Ngũgĩ. *Globalectics: Theory and the Politics of Knowing*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012.
- Wechsler, Robert. *Performing without a Stage: The Art of Literary Translation*. North Haven, CT, Catbird Press, 1998.
- Weinstein, John B. "1997, May 3: "The First Modern Gay Novel." In *A New Literary History of Modern China*, ed. David Der-wei Wang. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017.
- Whorf, Benjamin Lee. "Science and Linguistics (1940)." In *Language, Thought and Reality: Selected Writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf*, edited by John B. Carroll, 207–219. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1956.
- Williams, R. John. "The *Techné* Whim: Lin Yutang and the Invention of the Chinese Typewriter." *American Literature* 1 June 2010; 82 (2): 389–419.
- Wilson, Rita. "The Writer's Double: Translation, Writing, and Autobiography." *Romance Studies* 27, no. 3 (2009), 186-198.
- Winford, Donald. "Theories of Language Contact." In Anthony P. Grant (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Language Contact*, Oxford Handbooks, 2020.
- Wong, Lily. "*Transpacific*—Transfiguring Asian North America and the Sinophonic in Jia Qing Wilson-Yang's *Small Beauty*." In Chiang Howard and Alvin K Wong. *Keywords in Queer Sinophone Studies*. Abingdon Oxon: Routledge Taylor & Francis, 2020, 16-37.
- Yan, Alice. "Chinese Minority Languages Among those at Risk of Dying Out, with No One Left to Speak Them, Study Finds." *South China Morning Post*. February 14, 2021.
<https://www.scmp.com/news/people-culture/article/3121562/chinese-minority-languages-among-those-risk-dying-out-no>

- [one?module=perpetual_scroll_0&pgtype=article&campaign=3121562](#). Accessed November 17, 2022.
- Yan, Zeya. 张爱玲一题三写一析《留情》《相见欢》《同学少年都不贱》 *Zhang Ailing yiti sanxie—xi ‘Liu Qing’, ‘Xiangjian Huan’, ‘Tongxue Shaonian Dou Bu Jian’* [Zhang Ailing’s one topic and three interpretations—analyzing *Liu qing*, *Xiangjian huan* and *Tongxue shaonian dou bujian*]. *Ink* 111 (2012): 88-95.
- Yankelévitch, Vladimir. *L’Irreversible et la Nostalgie*. Paris: Flammarion, 1974, 302.
- Yao Bin and Ursula Deser Friedman. *A Study on the Influence of Ancient Chinese Cultural Classics Abroad in the Twentieth Century*. [Translation of Zhang Xiping, 二十世纪中国古代文学经典在域外的传播与影响研究 *Ershi shiji zhongguo gudai wenxue jingdian zai yuwai de chuanbo yu yingxiang yanjiu*]. Singapore: Springer Nature, 2022.
- Ye, Michelle (Jia). “A Space for Their Voices: (Un)apologies for Translation in the May Fourth Journal *New Tide*. In *May Fourth and Translation*, ed. Kevin Henry. *Translating Wor(l)ds*, vol. 4, December 2020, 75-98.
- Yen Ooi. “Language and the Borders of Identity in ‘The Language Sheath.’” *SFRA Review* 51, no. 1. (Winter 2021), 168-173.
- Yen Ooi. “Nature Will Prevail: Convergence Culture and Eco-Fiction in ‘A Cyber-Cuscuta Manifesto.’” *SFRA Review* 51, no. 1 (2021).
<https://sfrareview.org/2021/02/12/nature-will-prevail-convergence-culture-and-eco-fiction-in-a-cyber-cuscuta-manifesto/>. Accessed March 15, 2023.
- Yildiz, Yasemin. *Beyond the Mother Tongue: The Postmonolingual Condition*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2014.
- York, Adrian. “Benjamin Britten’s ‘Death in Venice’ at The Royal Opera—Review.” *London Unattached*. <https://www.london-unattached.com/death-in-venice-royal-opera-house-review/>. 24 November 2019. Accessed 23 February 2023.
- Yu Kanping, director. 孽子 *Niezi/Outcasts* [The Outsiders, film]. Dragons Group Film Co., 1986.
- Yü Kwang-chung. “Pai Hsien-yung xiao zhuan 白先勇小传 [A Short Biography of Pai Hsien-yung].” In *Zhongguo dangdai shi ta xiaoshuo hsüan-zhi* [An Anthology of Ten Great Contemporary Novelists], ed. Hsin Yü et al. Taipei: Yuan-ch’eng wenhua tushu kunying she, 1977.
- Yuan Liangjun (袁良駿). 白先勇小說藝術論 *Bai Xianyong xiaoshuo yishu lun* [The Aristry of Kenneth Pai’s Novels]. Changchun: Jilin daxue chubanshe, 1991.
- Yuan Zenan. “Chegchun caomu shen: *Lu Niezi de zhengzhi yishi* 城春草木深：論《孽子》的政治意識 [On *Niezi*’s Political Consciousness’.” *Xinshu Yuekan* no. 5, 1984, 52-57.
- Zabalbeascoa, Patrick. “Humor and Translation: An Interdiscipline.” *Humor: International Journal of Humor Research*, vol. 18, no. 2 (2005): 185-207.
- Zeng Xiuping 曾秀萍. 論《孽子》中的同志情慾與家國建構 [Discussing Tongzhi Desires and Familial/National Construction in *Crystal Boys*]. In *A Collection of Award-winning Research Papers in Honor of Chen Bainian* 陳百年先生學術論文獎論文集. Taipei: Chen Bainian Academic Foundation, 2000.
- Zeng Xiuping. 白先勇談創作與生活 *Bai Xianyong tan chuanguo yu shenghuo* [Pai Hsien-yung on Literary Creation and Life]. *Zhongwai wenxue* 中外文學 vol. 30, no. 2. July 2001.

- Zhang Xiaohong 張小紅. 有這樣的《孽子》，為何還需要導演? You zheyang de niezi, weihe hai xuyao daoyan? [With a Niezi as disastrous as this one, what's the use of a director?]" ARTalks. <https://talks.taishinart.org.tw/juries/chh/2014021210>. 2014. Accessed June 25, 2022.
- Zhu Limin, trans. "Winter Nights" by Pai Hsien-yung. Ch'i Pang-yuan et al., eds. *Zhongguo xiandai wenxue xuanji* 中国现代文学选集 (An Anthology of Contemporary Chinese Literature: Taiwan, 1949-1974). Vol. 2: short stories. Taipei: National Institute for Compilation and Translation, 1975.
- Zinngrabe, Elaine. "USC Gains a Treasured Chinese Collection." *University of Southern California Chronicle*. November 3, 1997, 12.
- Zuber, R. *Les 'Belles Infidèles' et la formation du goût classique: Perrot d'Ablancourt et Guez de Balzac*. Paris: Colin, 1968.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Behind the Scenes with the White Peony: Interviews with Kenneth Pai

Pai Interview Transcript 1 (April 29, 2022-July 2, 2023)

Ursula Friedman: You once remarked that “Once I was asked where my homeland was. I couldn’t answer it right away. It is not geographical. It is traditional Chinese culture.” (Yi 2015) How does your work in rejuvenating China’s *kunqu* operatic tradition reinforce your understanding of “homeland”?

Kenneth Pai: I was six when I left my native city Guilin during the Japanese invasion. We caught the last train to leave Guilin and the whole city was on fire. I returned to my native town Guilin only after fifty some years in 1993. During the Sino-Japanese War and then the Civil War, we moved from one city to another, Chongqing, Nanjing, Shanghai, and down south to Wuhan, Guangzhou, and finally to Hong Kong. I was twelve years old when I left China. I stayed in Hong Kong for two years and went to Taipei. I finished my college education in Taiwan and went abroad to America for graduate studies. Eventually, I settled down in Santa Barbara with a teaching job at UCSB. I spent a wandering life during my younger years and somehow I never felt rooted in any of the cities I have been to, even including our beautiful Santa Barbara, the Paradise on the Pacific. I only felt at home when I was immersed in doing something related to Chinese traditional culture, like rejuvenating *kun* opera.

UF: In adapting the *The Peony Pavilion/牡丹亭* for a youth audience, what changes did you make to Tang Xianzu’s original script? How did the story evolve further in the short story and television script you later wrote?

KP: The original play of Tang Xianzu's *Peony Pavilion* has 55 acts. We condensed it into 27 acts in three parts which still runs to nine hours in three nights. We didn't make any changes of the poetry in the arias; Tang's poetry is so beautiful that the removal of just one word is forbidden. I first encountered *Peony Pavilion* when I was nine in Shanghai, where Mei Lanfang, the great actor, gave a performance of one act from *PP*, *Wandering in the Garden, Waking from a Dream*. Mei's performance that night took a deep root in my memory that I wrote a story in 1968 with the same name *Wandering in the Garden, Waking from a Dream*, which tells the tragic fate of a *kun* opera singer, and it contains intertextual passages in the plot. In 1982, I adapted the story into a stage play, in which the actresses sang some *kun* arias from *Peony Pavilion*. It was a big hit in Taiwan and later in 1988, in China, a theatrical troupe in Shanghai remade the play and showed it in Guangzhou, Shanghai, and later in Hong Kong. It also created quite a sensation at the time.

UF: Reviewing the manuscripts you generously donated to UCSB Special Collections has made me curious about your self-translation process. Did you translate the first drafts? What were the roles of Patia Yasin and George Kao in editing these drafts? Who had the final word? Can you walk me through the drafts of “A Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars”/ 满天里亮晶

晶的星星 and “Winter Night”/冬夜? Which edits were rendered by Patia Yasin, which by George Kao, and which were your own edits?

KP: We formed a team to translate *Taipei People* which included George Kao, Patia Yaxin and myself the author. Normally Patia and I would do the first drafts. At first, we would translate the text word for word trying not to leave out any part of the story, not even the most difficult ones. Patia was well versed in many languages, Japanese, Chinese, French, and Russian. She was a Russian Jew and her father was the famous art critic Harold Rosenberg. She grew up in New York in the East Village and she was familiar with all the street talk of the New Yorkers. George Kao was our editor and he made corrections and smoothed over the rough patches in our translation. Mr. Kao's English was superb and he was an expert on American idioms. He had the final say of our translation, although sometimes he was generous enough to make some concessions, if we were insistent in keeping our own versions.

Tones are one of the outstanding features of the stories in *Taipei People*. Each story has a markedly different tone. The two stories *A Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars* and *Winter Night* present two completely different worlds. When we worked on these stories, we were very careful to differentiate the tones. The edits in pencil were all made by George Kao. You can find them on the original manuscript in the special collection under my name in the Main Library at UCSB.

UF: Why did you decide to translate most of the names in and “A Sky Full of Blazing Stars”/满天里亮晶晶的星星 in terms of their meaning instead of phonetically (教主 as “the Guru”, “黑美朗” as “Dark-and-Handsome”, etc.), except for the character 朱燄, which you translate both as “Chu Yen” and “the Crimson Flame”?

KP: In translating Chinese literature into other languages, the biggest problem is the Chinese names. Chinese names always indicate some meaning, which quite often relates to the theme of the literary work. When translated phonetically, the meaning of the Chinese names will all get lost. That is why we tried, as much as we could, to translate the names according to their meaning.

UF: The Guru and Little Jade in “A Sky Full of Blazing Stars”/满天里亮晶晶的星星 remind me of Chief Yang Jinhai and A-Feng (respectively) from 孽子/Crystal Boys. The New Park in “A Sky Full of Blazing Stars” also shares similarities with the park where “the Kingdom” gathers in Crystal Boys. In many ways, “A Sky Full of Blazing Stars” reads as a blueprint for Crystal Boys. Did “A Sky Full of Blazing Stars” inspire Crystal Boys, or vice-versa? If so, how? Are there any autobiographical elements in either of these works?

KP: *Twinkling Stars* and *Crystal Boys* bear some similarities in that they both are gay themed and their stories happen in the same location the New Park in Taipei. Other than that, the characters in them are quite different. While the Guru in *The Twinkling Stars* is a tragic figure, Chief Yang in *Crystal Boys* is somewhat comic. I created most of the characters in the story and the novel but I did borrow from some personalities I knew in my life as the prototypes of my characterization.

UF: How did the self-translation process help you to process painful experiences or memories? Did translating your own work help you to solidify or negotiate your own identity?

KP: We worked on the translation of *Taipei People* for five years, during which I got deeper understanding of my own writing and myself at the same time. It was an inspiring and healing experience. It was the ideal team for translation work, the author, the co-translator, and the editor. We had an exciting and rewarding time working together. I pay tribute to my co-translator Patia Yasin and my editor George Kao who had put their heart and soul into the translation of *Taipei People*.

UF: Which particular challenges did you encounter during the translation process? How did you resolve those challenges? For example, were there difficult puns, wordplay, or culturally-specific terms that you had trouble translating? Were there any differences between Chinese and English that made the self-translation process particularly challenging?

KP: Indeed we encountered quite a few challenges during our translation of *Taipei People*, which abounds in allusions, metaphors, puns and wordplays. For example, in the last story *State Funeral*, the memorial couplets for General Li contain many historical allusions. For a Western reader who has little or no knowledge of Chinese history, these allusions have very little [significance] for them. We use footnotes to explain the allusions, which might not be the best solution, but it helps. I don't know how it goes in Spanish or other foreign languages, but I would imagine the problems we encountered in English would be similar.

Pai Interview Transcript 2 (email correspondence, July 11-19, 2022)

Ursula Friedman: I recently watched a recording of your 2014 stage play adaptation of *Crystal Boys* online, with 張逸軍 of the Cirque du Soleil playing the part of A-Feng. I was wondering whether as you wrote *Crystal Boys*/孽子, whether you ever envisioned adapting the work to the stage.

Kenneth Pai: When I wrote *Crystal Boys*, I didn't have any idea in mind to adapt the novel into any other forms, stage play, film or TV series.

UF: How did you collaborate with the director to make decisions on casting, the script, music, mise-en-scene, and so forth?

KP: When I decided to adapt *Crystal Boys* into a stage play in the 2014 version, I had a long discussion with the director 曹瑞原 who had collaborated with me for his successful TV series adapted from the same novel in 2003, and the choreographer 吳素君, who had worked with me for the production of the kun opera *Peony Pavilion, the Young Lovers' Edition* in 2004. We decided to incorporate dance and music into the play. As it turned out, dance and music played a very important part in our play. We used dance effectively to highlight the love and death relationship between Phoenix and Dragon Prince. I wrote the greater part of the script and 施如芳 was my collaborator. As the Art Director of the play, I had participated in every session regarding casting, etc. The 2014 production was a big success in Taiwan.

UF: The 2020 performance seemed to have been cancelled due to the pandemic—I would be very interested to see what changes were made from the earlier version, in terms of casting, music, and so forth.

KP: In 2020, we revived *Crystal Boys* the play, with an almost completely new cast, except for a few actors from the 2014 production. Of course we kept 張逸軍 as Phoenix, who is irreplaceable. The big change was that we restored the male gender of Chief Yang who had been changed into a Tomboy type lesbian in the 2014 production. We did make some improvements on the 2014 production in terms of the sequence of scenes, etc. At first we were forced to cancel our scheduled performances, but we were able to perform the play later. We gave eight performances starting from Kaohsiung, Taichung, and finally back to Taipei. This time the play was enthusiastically received by the audiences, as the same-sex marriage law was just passed in Taiwan, [the] first of its kind in Asia. It was a huge success. I was quite satisfied with the result. If there is any chance we do the performance of the play again in the future, certainly I would invite you to view it. We have produced a set of books, a complete record of the 2020 production with 182 photo pictures in them [...]

UF: I also understand that there was a 1997 version of the stage play rendered into English by John B. Weinstein. Did you have a chance to see that earlier stage play, and how do you evaluate its adaptation?

KP: I saw the Weinstein production at Harvard in 1997. It [was] very interesting to hear the characters from *Crystal Boys* speaking English. The audience had a warm response to it.

UF: I would be very interested to learn more about the real-life people who inspired the characters of Chief Yang, the Guru, Dragon Prince, and Phoenix Boy.

KP: Way back in the [19]50's, I read in the newspapers [about] a gay murder case in Taiwan, a crime of passion, and the murderer was the son of a high-ranking official of the government, quite similar to the background of Dragon Prince. The murder case inspired me to write the story of Dragon Prince and Phoenix.

UF: Did the *Dream of the Red Chamber/Story of the Stone* influence the conceptualization of any of these characters?

KP: Yes, indeed, *Dream of the Red Chamber* has been a constant influence in my writing.

UF: After examining your handwritten manuscripts housed in the UCSB library special collections, I found striking similarities between the Guru/Prince Charming 白马王子 relationship in the alternate second version of *Twinkling Stars*, and that between A-Feng and A-Long. Was there a common prototype for both pairs of characters?

KP: You made a very good point in comparing the Guru-Prince Charming relationship with that of Dragon Prince-Phoenix.

Pai Interview Transcript 3
Santa Barbara, California
February 25, 2023

*Note: the passages rendered in blue are my translations. Kenneth Pai speaks in Chinese peppered with English. I have preserved these nuances in this transcript.

Ursula Friedman (UF): 您被隔離了五年，因為得了肺病。這個隔離期怎樣影響到您的創作和性格？

You were isolated for five years as a child due to a contagious strain of tuberculosis. How did this period of isolation influence your creative writing and shape your personality?

Kenneth Pai (KP): 我祖母，她那個時候本來在桂林，她本來住在鄉下。後來因為我父親就把她請到我們家裡了。後來我就住在她隔壁。祖母對我很好，很喜歡我。我們特別給她做的飯，每天做個雞湯，她都分我喝。不知道我祖母啊，她本來有肺病 (TB)。那麼，她就傳染給我了，那個時候六七歲。那麼，日本人來了，就逃到重慶。到重慶的時候，我每天都有 low temperature，後來照了 X 光，就發現我這個左邊這個地方已經有一個很大的 area 已經感染了，一個洞，第二期了。我記得父親看了光片以後，他那個臉都掛起來了，很急。那個時候是抗戰，很多人得了這個病，而且那個時候沒有一個 special cure。那個時候很多人因為得了肺病死掉，那個時候是 almost fatal。所以呢，我還好，我們家裡面還能夠 afford 給我喝牛奶，吃雞，好的營養，然後每天打針，大概是 calcium (鈣)，把它來鈣化。然後四，快五年，到 14 歲，我都被隔離。為什麼呢？因為我們家裡的小孩子多。

那個 TB，那個時候是一個 highly contagious disease。所以我說，I lost my childhood years。我沒有童年。我看了人家小孩子們在外面玩，那我呢，一個人被關在一個小屋子裡。我記得在重慶那個小屋子。重慶是一個 mountainous 的地方—你去過大陸嗎？最近重慶變了很多。我在重慶的時候都是 mud，都是黃泥土，現在完全是一個 modern city 了。在重慶我們住在半山上面。我呢？我那個小房子，特別的一間房子，就住在半山上。我就從上面看他們下面的 activities—my brothers, my cousins—小孩子下面在玩。反正就覺得 I was deserted, abandoned, 那種感覺。所以我變得很—I wasn't like that before! 我媽媽說，I was a very active child! I was even overbearing。這個肺病把我整個人改變了，然後呢，我變得非常 sensitive，很敏感。人家很怕跟我接近，因為我有病，很怕跟我接近。我哥哥姐姐他們都離開我。第二呢，我很 sensitive to other people's pain。我自己生病了。所以，很容易了解別人心裡面的痛苦，有共鳴。

My grandmother originally lived in Guilin in the countryside. Later, my father invited her into our home, and I lived next door to her. She was very kind to me. We would cook special meals for her, like chicken soup, and she would share with me. We didn't know that she had tuberculosis (TB). I caught it from her when I was seven or eight years old. Then, when the Japanese arrived, we fled to Chongqing, and I ran a mild fever every day. After an X-ray screening, they found that a large area on my left lung had been infected, leaving a gaping

hole. Second-stage TB. I remember that after seeing the X-ray, my father's face fell. He was very anxious. That was during the Sino-Japanese War, when many people caught the disease, and there was no special cure. Many people died of lung disease, it was almost a fatal diagnosis. I was very lucky, because our family could afford to drink milk and eat chicken, keep up good nutrition, and then I got calcium injections every day to calcify my lungs. I was quarantined for four, almost five years, until I was 14. Why? Because there were so many children in our family.

TB was a highly contagious disease at the time. So I lost my childhood years. I didn't have a childhood. I saw children playing outside, but I was locked in a small room all by myself. I remember that little room in Chongqing. Chongqing is a mountainous place—have you ever been to the mainland? Chongqing has changed a lot recently. When I was in Chongqing, it was all muddy, yellow soil, but now it has been transformed into a modern city. We lived halfway up a mountain. And my little room, separated off from the others, was nestled on the foot of the mountain. I watched the activities down below from above—my brothers, my cousins—the children all playing down below. Anyway, I felt that I was deserted, abandoned. So I became very—I wasn't like that before! My mother used to say that I was a very active child! I was even overbearing. Lung disease changed my entire being, and I became very sensitive. People were all afraid of approaching me, because I was sick, they were afraid of getting too close. My brothers and sisters all gave me a wide berth. Second, I became very sensitive to other people's pain. Since I was sick myself, it was easy to understand the pain in other people's hearts and develop empathy for them.

法國的一個報紙，解放報，他問了全世界很多作家，“你為什麼寫作？”我說，“我寫作，因為我希望把人類心中無言的痛處轉換成文字”。“I wish to render into words the unspoken pain of the human heart.”我想，就是因為我了解別人心中那種通病。你看過我的小說，我在寫別人心裡面那種 suffering, the unspoken suffering, 這個跟我小時候, my childhood, 很有關係。So it took my years, after I recovered, it took me years to open up. 那個時候，我很緊張，很 uptight。我讀中學的時候，我都不敢跟同學們互動交往。後來，一直到大學，my old self came back。我童年回來了，所以我辦現代文學，交了很多朋友。所以，it took me years, 很長的時間才轉變回來。

A French newspaper, *Libération*, asked many writers all over the world the question, “Why do you write?” I responded, “I wish to render into words the unspoken pain of the human heart.” I think it's because I understand the pain in other people's hearts. You've read my novels. I am writing about the suffering—the unspoken suffering—in other people's hearts. This has a lot to do with my childhood. It took me years, after I recovered, before I could open up again. [Until I opened up,] I was very nervous and uptight. When I was in middle school, I was afraid to interact with my classmates. It was not until I started college that my old self came back. My childhood returned to me, so I founded *Modern Literature* and made many friends. It took me years, a long time, to recover my old self.

UF: 難怪三十歲的時候能夠寫像《冬夜》那麼悲慘的，關於高齡知識份子的事。

No wonder you were able to write such a tragic story about a pair of elderly intellectual—*Winter Night*—at the tender age of thirty!

KP: 那個時候，我就寫我現在的生活，一個老教授。When I was thirty, I wrote about seventy-eighty year olds, old professors!

Back then, I wrote about my current life, that of an old professor. When I was thirty, I wrote about seventy-eighty year olds, old professors!

UF: And now, you're very young!

KP: Laughs—

UF: 《冬夜》很像黑白電影，中間有一個人物【雅馨】，她站在北海的湖邊。電影和詩歌對您有深遠的影響。

“Winter Night” strikes me as a black-and-white movie. There’s a scene where the character, Ya Hsing, stands by Beihai Lake. Films and poetry seem to have exerted a powerful influence on your literary expression.

KP: 五四的時候，他們喜歡寫那種非常 romantic 的詩歌。因為那個時候開始，中國的青年可以談戀愛啊，那個時候我就模仿了他們。你講得很對，有點像黑白電影。

People wrote very romantic poems during the May Fourth Movement. At that time, young people in China could fall in love, so I imitated their style. Indeed, the story reads like a black-and-white film.

UF: 有點像《孽子》舞台劇裡面，一開始畫面有點暗，然後突然間出現了一個穿著紅色褲子的阿風，非常 striking, cinematic。關於《冬夜》，知識份子代表了兩個不同群體的知識份子，一種代表了學習中國傳統文學，另一種去吸收、學習西方文化。您對五四運動和文化大革命有什麼樣的評價？

Just like in the stage play *Crystal Boys*, the *mise scène* is a bit gloomy at first, and then suddenly, Phoenix Boy, wearing a pair of crimson pants, appears out of the blue. It’s very striking and cinematic indeed.

The intellectuals in “Winter Night” seem to represent two different groups of intellectuals; the first symbolizing the champions of traditional Chinese literature, and the other, fanatics of Western literature and culture. How would you evaluate the May Fourth Movement and the Cultural Revolution? What is the connection between the two?

KP: 五四運動離我們很遠。但是，在我們寫的時候，it still had a lasting influence，影響了中國人二十世紀開始，一種自我的 self-awareness，那種自我解放，liberation of the self。那是其中的一個方面，吸收西方的影響。另外一個是中國自己的傳統，像魏晉南北朝，突然間，那些 poets，反傳統，there are period in Chinese history，反傳統，反社

會。那個時候西方的影響很大，但是中國自己的傳統也有在裡頭。譬如說，我們中國的傳統，大部分是儒家的傳統。可是呢，中國的傳統還有 Daoism 和 Buddhism，這兩個是對儒家互相衝突，就像紅樓夢裡面，they complement each other and also there is tension between these two。中國文化有很多 complexity, contradictory。五四那個時候所謂“新文學”、“新女性”、“新少年”。Everything was new!

The May Fourth Movement has long since passed, but when writers were writing about it back then, it still exerted a lasting influence on us. From the beginning of the twentieth century, the Chinese psyche was deeply influenced by the May Fourth Movement, which instilled in us a kind of self-awareness, liberation of the self. That's one aspect, absorbing Western influences. The other was holding on to China's own traditions, those cultivated during the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern dynasties. Suddenly, those anti-traditional poets sprung up. Yes, there are periods in Chinese history where poets were anti-traditional, anti-societal. At that time, the West still exerted a considerable influence on China, but China held on to its own traditions. For example, many of our Chinese traditions are Confucian in nature. However, our traditional cultural heritage also includes Daoism and Buddhism, which are in conflict with Confucianism, like in *Dream of the Red Chamber*, they complement each other, but there is also tension between them. Chinese culture is full of complexity and contradiction. During the May Fourth Movement, “new literature”, “new women”, and “new youth” were all popular slogans. Everything was new!

Actually, unwittingly, it prepared the way for Communism, for the Communist revolution later—the destruction of traditional values. It shook the foundation of Chinese traditional society. 一個是餘欽磊、一個是吳柱國，他們兩個代表了那個時候的 two trends。一方面是西方浪漫主義，另一方面是 the re-evaluation of the Chinese tradition。像胡適，他就是兩個都有。所以呢，我想你問我的這個問題，我對五四那個時候他們很年輕，in their twenties or thirties，那些 rebels rebelled against their heritage, against tradition。現在看起來，當時因為 political and social background，中國是在危機中。China was in crisis because of the First World War and the Paris Conference.

Actually, unwittingly, it prepared the way for Communism, for the Communist revolution later—the destruction of traditional values. It shook the foundation of Chinese traditional society. One group, represented by Yü Ch'in-lei, and the other by Wu Chu-kuo, two trends. The first trend was that of Western Romanticism, and the latter, re-evaluation of the Chinese tradition. Hu Shi ascribed to both trends. I was very young at the time of the May Fourth movement, in my twenties or thirties. Those rebels rebelled against their heritage, against tradition. China was in crisis, because of the political and social background. China was in crisis because of the First World War and the Paris Conference.

UF: Also the Treaty of Versailles—

KP: 整個西方那個日本的侵略那是很大的，所以，it triggered nationalism in China。那個時候呢，讓中國那種民主主義起來了。所以有五四運動。有一本書，舟側德，University of Wisconsin, 他在那邊教書的，他是五四運動的專家，我推薦他的一本書《*The May Fourth Movement*》。你看完以後，你就了解五四運動的整個來龍去脈。我

現在是從 critical point of view 來看待他們，因為我有一個 distance，所以我可以比較客觀的看待他們。那個時候，yes, China was in crisis, 要 demonstrate, 要這樣子，要那樣子。Patriotism 和 nationalism 起來了。但是，the lasting effect of 五四，是對傳統的迫害。那個時候，不管是傳統的好壞，都要把它燒光。The development of radicalism, later, 變成共產主義。The turn Left—all the literature, political trends, they all turned left.

Japanese aggression swept the West, and it triggered nationalism in China, along with a wave of democratic yearnings, which paved the way for the May Fourth Movement. Professor Zhou Cezong [Tse-Tsung Chow] at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, is an expert on the May Fourth Movement. I recommend his book [*The May Fourth Movement: Intellectual Revolution in Modern China*, Harvard University Press, 1967]. After reading his work, you'll understand the complexities of the movement. I now approach the May Fourth Movement from a critical point of view because I have a critical distance, so I can view it objectively. At that time, yes, China was in crisis, so people demonstrated and there was all sorts of fanfare. Patriotism and nationalism were triggered. But the lasting effect of May Fourth was to destroy traditions. Back then, no matter whether traditions were good or bad, they were all burned up. The development of radicalism, later, became Communism. The turn Left—all the literature, political trends, they all turned left.

UF: 到了文革期間，中國寶貴的傳統，包括崑曲，就被樣板戲取代了。

Later on, during the Cultural Revolution, China's precious traditions, including *kunqu*, were all replaced by ideological arts like Model Theatre productions.

KP: 到了毛澤東的時代，這些東西通通被取代了。文化大革命，那種 nihilism，把所有的東西通通清掉，而且 the persecution of the intelligentsia，就是跟俄國一樣，跟 Stalinism, the Great Purge，一樣的。They went further, Mao Zedong, the ten years of the Cultural Revolution, 更可怕。

During the Mao era, these traditions were all replaced. The Cultural Revolution was nihilistic, wiping everything out. The persecution of the intelligentsia parallels Stalinism, and the Great Purge. They went further—Mao Zedong, the ten years of the Cultural Revolution, was even more terrifying than Stalinism.

UF: On a happier note, are there parallels between *The Dream of the Red Chamber*, *The Peony Pavilion*, and *Crystal Boys*?

KP: 中國傳統的文學，從小，唐詞、宋詞，中國的詩、中國的詞、中國的戲劇，我都喜歡的。雖然我是學英國文學、外國文學，可是我對中國文學是很喜歡的。If I were to pick two books from the Chinese literary tradition that influenced me most and that I like the most, the first would be *The Dream of the Red Chamber*，第二是《牡丹亭》。我教《紅樓夢》教了幾十年。我在 UCSB 教《紅樓夢》。後來我到台大去開《紅樓夢》的課。後來，我就教了一百個鐘頭。

I have loved traditional Chinese literature ever since I was a child. Tang poetry, Song poetry, Chinese *ci*, and Chinese drama. Though I studied British, American, and other foreign literatures, I am deeply passionate about Chinese literature. If I were to pick two books from the Chinese literary tradition that influenced me most and that I like the most, the first would be *The Dream of the Red Chamber* and the second would be *The Peony Pavilion*. I have taught *The Dream of the Red Chamber* for decades at UCSB. Later on, I also taught it at National Taiwan University, clocking one hundred hours of teaching hours.

UF: 每一“回”都教了！

You taught every single chapter in *Dream of the Red Chamber*!

KP: 每一“回”都教了。教了 three semesters。Did you notice that my lectures were edited into a book? 《白先勇細說紅樓夢》。有 three volumes。

Yes, I taught every single chapter! I taught it as a three-semester course. Did you notice that my lectures were edited into a three-volume book entitled, *Pai Hsien-yung Interprets The Dream of the Red Chamber*.

UF: An annotation to your “Bible”.

KP: It runs 1,000 pages! Anyway, 《紅樓夢》是我的文學聖經。Yes, it exerted a great influence on me, and it lead me to the philosophy of Buddhism. I learned from this book the Buddhist concepts, and I also learned a lot about writing from this book. 他寫得那麼好！Why? From a writer’s point of view, 為什麼這個地方這樣寫，那個地方那樣寫？所以我看了很多普通一般的 reader 或者 scholar 不一樣。我看的是，怎麼寫？How Cao Xueqin could conceive 那麼有意思的一種宇宙。一個 supernatural world。And then there’s a realistic world。這兩個, were mixed so well。

It runs 1,000 pages! Anyway, *Dream of the Red Chamber* is my literary Bible. Yes, it exerted a great influence on me, and it lead me to the philosophy of Buddhism. I learned from this book the Buddhist concepts, and I also learned a lot about writing from this book. It’s a literary masterpiece that is extremely well-written. From a writer’s point of view, I ask: Why is this part written this way and this part this way? So I approach the book very differently from your typical reader or scholar. I read it to learn writing techniques. I am amazed at how Cao Xueqin could conceive such an interesting literary universe, a supernatural world. And then there’s a realistic world. These two worlds were mixed so well.

UF: For instance, a stone that’s reincarnated.

KP: 就是，就是。為什麼會那麼好寫的，而且背後的意義在哪裡？《紅樓夢》actually is a highly symbolic novel. 很多地方，the secret codes, 你可以翻開來看，都有意義的。那個時候，乾隆時代。他們喜歡看戲。有那個 party, banquet 的時候，他們喜歡看戲。那個時候，他們都看崑曲，十八世紀的時候，崑曲 was in the height。所以，你看，《紅樓夢》裡面的那些戲，大部分都是崑曲。

Exactly. Why is *The Dream of the Red Chamber* written so well, and what are the symbolic meanings behind it? *Red Chamber* actually is a highly symbolic novel. You can decrypt the secret codes everywhere, all of them are meaningful. Back then, during the Qianlong Era, the aristocrats loved watching plays. Whenever there were parties or banquets, they would always watch theatrical performances. Back then, they all watched *kunqu*. *Kunqu* was in the height during the eighteenth century. So most of the performances in *Dream of the Red Chambers* are *kun opera*.

If you remember one scene, the emperor's concubine, Baoyu's sister, 元妃, goes back to visit her family, remember? There's a big fanfare, they build the 大觀園 *Da Guanyuan* [Prospect Garden] for her to visit, and when they try to entertain her, with what? With theatrical performances. So Yuanfei 元妃, she picked four chapters from the popular *kunqu* back then. Each piece of *kunqu*, its story and background, actually tells the fate of the whole family, the fate of the individuals, very subtly. You know, for example, the first piece is called 《一捧雪》 *yipeng xue*. That's the name of a very precious jade cup, "a handful of snow". And the owner of the jade cup was an official during the Ming Dynasty. The late Ming Dynasty was very corrupt, so a corrupt official learned about this jade cup, and he wanted this piece, so he confiscated the owners, the whole household, he created some alleged time, so he confiscated the household, and of course he took away the jade cup, and that implied that eventually the Jia household also would be confiscated at the very end.

UF: Wow, it foreshadowed that!

KP: So if you don't pay attention to the theatrical performances, you will lose the meaning of the novel. So the four theatrical pieces, each symbolizes the fate of the whole household, the fate of the emperor's imperial concubine herself, and the fate of Baoyu and the fate of Daiyu. So the four performances 不是隨便點的 [are not random at all]. Every detail in *Red Chamber* denotes something far beyond itself. 很厲害這本書, 這本書不得了! [This book is absolutely amazing!] You don't notice, since it's very smooth on the surface. You think, oh, just ordinary theatrical performances. No! During the visit of the imperial concubine, the fortune of the Jia household was at its height. So when it's at its height, and an undercurrent, some warning, is already there. So all these very subtle references make this book very difficult for someone with no Chinese cultural background to understand. When I taught this book at UCSB to my American students, I had to go into great details to explain, "Why this? Why that?" So there are a lot of cultural barriers in reading this book, but it's a great book! I think it's a world classic. For me, it's number 1.

UF: And *The Peony Pavilion* by Tang Xianzu is number 2?

KP: Actually, *Dream of the Red Chamber* was greatly influenced by *The Peony Pavilion*. Tang Xianzu's plays are about love, about resurrection, about Daoism, about Buddhism, same with *Red Chamber*—love on many levels. So I talked with my friends, I have a great difficulty in translating the Chinese term *qing* 情 into English. It's not love. It's more than love. It's not feeling. More than feeling. It's not sentiment. It's very hard to translate. It's much bigger and more fundamental. It's not only love between men and women. It's more

than that. Tang Xianzu and Cao Xueqin, they all wrote about these things. So these two works have greatly influenced me. I would have to talk hours about *The Peony Pavilion*. You go ahead and watch the documentary film and also “*Peony Pavilion Behind-the-Scenes*”. It’s still going very strong, 19 years later. They performed last night at Suzhou University. They have given 427 performances worldwide. They came to the United States, to London, and Athens, everywhere—Taiwan, Hong Kong!

UF: One day, it will come to Broadway and the East Coast!

KP: Yeah, it should. Three nights of performances, nine hours. We have subtitles, both in Chinese and English.

UF: 我想穿越到 2006 年，牡丹亭周在 Santa Barbara。

I wish I could travel back in time to experience Santa Barbara’s “Peony Pavilion Week” in 2006.

KP: So both of these books had a great influence on me. One is the greatest novel in Chinese literature. One is the greatest, play, single piece of drama in Chinese history. It’s like *Romeo and Juliet*.

UF: Better than *Romeo and Juliet*, much richer!

KP: *Romeo and Juliet*, it’s immortal. Tang Xianzu and Shakespeare, they were contemporaries. Shakespeare wrote *Romeo and Juliet* two years before *The Peony Pavilion*. And they both died in the same year, 1616. Isn’t that a coincidence? So in the West and in the East, they both wrote great love stories, great plays...

UF: 我還想問您的《孽子》裡面的“情”是如何被兩部著作影響的。因為您寫“情”不僅是阿風阿龍之間的情，可能也代表了更多。

I would also like to ask how the *qing* in *Niezi* was influenced by *The Dream of the Red Chamber* and *Peony Pavilion*. The *qing* in this novel represents so much more than the love between A-Feng and A-Long.

KP: Consciously or unconsciously, when I write, I want to stay away from *Peony Pavilion* and *Red Chamber*. They have too much influence on me. But after it was done, unconsciously, I found a lot of influence. For instance, the New Park in *Niezi*, in a way, it’s like the Prospect Garden in *Dream of the Red Chamber*. These boys, actually they haven’t lost their innocence, in spite of being male prostitutes, still, in their very heart, in their very essence, they still maintain their innocence, you know? That’s why you don’t find them evil.

UF: 他們沒有“作孽”。

They never “sinned”.

KP: 他們沒有辦法，被父母趕出去了，被家庭趕出去，被社會趕出去，被學校趕出去。他們沒辦法生存。他們做了很多壞事，可是他們的心不壞。They have done bad things, but they are not bad at heart, you know? 尤其是阿鳳，有的人說，“阿鳳就是林黛玉！”阿鳳也愛哭，沒有道理的哭。

They were desperate. Their parents kicked them out—they were abandoned by their families, by society, by their schools. They struggled to survive. They did a lot of bad things, but they were not bad at heart, you know? Especially A-Feng, some people have told me, “A-Feng is Lin Daiyu!” A-Feng also cries a lot, weeping for seemingly no reason at all.

I was shocked! Lin Daiyu, you know, was very willowy, sensitive. Yes, Lin Daiyu was born with karma from a previous life, right? She was a plant by the Divine River, so she was a divine plant. So A-Feng, it seemed to me, he was also born with a karma from a previous life. He was born this way, without a father. His mother was raped and she didn’t even know who the father was [...] She was born with *nie* 孽 [sin] from a past life. A-Feng is representative of all the *Niezi*. He has the heaviest karma from a previous life. So his encounter with Longzi, Dragon Prince, was also fated, just like Baoyu and Daiyu, the tragedy between them.

UF: Will A-Feng come back to life? I’m interested in the smile in the adaptations. Director Cao Ruiyuan said it’s a smile of forgiveness. What do you think?

KP: Yes, I think so. That’s the only thing he could repay Longzi’s love with.

UF: --with his own heart?

KP: Yes, with his own life, his own heart. At that moment, he is giving him back his heart.

UF: Literally giving him back his “heart” through the smile of forgiveness?

KP: Yeah. We interviewed one Russian, one British person, they were also moved to tears.

UF: I also cried many times when watching the DVD production. I compared the 2014 and 2020 productions—Yang Jinhai’s undergoes a gender transformation. Yang is lesbian Tomboy-type in the 2014 production, and then their male gender is restored in the 2020 version.

KP: We restored Chief Yang’s gender in the 2020 production. It’s faithful to the novel. They all perform very well, right? Every one of them.

UF: Tang Meiyun, the actress that plays the female Chief Yang, she’s an opera star!

KP: Yeah, I know! She was a star. Both of the Chief Yang actors were great, both the male and female versions. But anyway, this play has drawn a lot of tears from the audience, I think because it’s not only about some homosexuals, some homosexual love. It’s more than that. It’s about the relationship between father and son, between mother and son, between brothers, and also between lovers. All kinds of *qing*.

When I asked the audience, “Which scene moved you the most?” Their answers were all different. A-Qing’s visit to his mother, that was very moving, and someone else told me, “The scene when Longzi, Dragon Prince, stabbed A-Feng!” Some people cried.

UF: 兩個人飛起來了！

Both A-Feng and Longzi took flight!

KP: They took flight! Oh, so passionate, so romantic! What did you think of it? I think dance played a great role in the play, right?

UF: Yes, because it’s nonverbal, body language, and the silence of A-Feng. Just because he doesn’t speak, he is far from passive. On the contrary, he expresses his inner world through dance, he is wild and free, and doesn’t submit to anyone’s control.

KP: And he flew in the sky like a Phoenix, A-Feng! Our choreographer, Wu Sujun, she was excellent.

UF: And she also helped you choreograph *The Peony Pavilion*?

KP: Yeah. The Flower Fairies have a dance that she choreographed. The Flower Spirits. Anyway, this play, if you ask the question about the relationship between *The Peony Pavilion*, *The Dream of the Red Chamber*, and *Crystal Boys*, I think you are right, there’s a lineage between these works. I’m glad you enjoyed watching the play.

UF: I enjoyed comparing the play with the novel. And with the short story 滿天裡亮晶晶的星星, the Chinese versions are all very different. I enjoyed comparing your different drafts of *Niezi* that you donated to the UCSB Library’s Special Collections. I found it’s very difficult to say which one is the original because all of them are wonderful. And I found many different beginnings and prefaces. One draft of *Niezi* starts with, “在墜落中，我們痛苦得恢復了我們的人性”(“In the Fall, our humanity was painfully restored”). This brilliant line didn’t appear in the published version. I consider all of these “drafts” equally authoritative “originals”.

KP: So you compared all these different versions?

UF: Yes, I enjoy them all, because I’m a fan. The published version is wonderful too, but so are each and every one of the drafts.

KP: This anthology has included my “Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars”. *In Another Part of the Forest: An Anthology of Gay Short Fiction*, edited by Alberto Manguel and Craig Stevenson.

UF: So you are canonized among Tennessee Williams, Ray Bradbury and William Faulkner, and everyone else you studied at the Iowa Writers' Workshop! Of course, "Twinkling Stars" deserves a place in this literary constellation!

KP: Anyway, since you mentioned "A Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars", do you think it's well-translated?

UF: Yes, it's very well-translated. The names are very difficult to translate.

KP: My co-translator, Patia Yasin, she did a great job. Unfortunately, she passed away. Did I tell you, she was a Russian Jew, who grew up in the Village, in New York?

UF: Ah, so that's why the dialogues are so well-translated! And the editor George Kao, too, I see all of his marks on the drafts in the UCSB library. It reminded me of *kun* opera—in every time period, *kun* opera is performed and styled differently. It's hard to say which is the most authentic version. I mean, *Niezi*'s different versions are all important, equally authoritative "originals", just like in *Peony Pavilion*, there may be many ways of performing, but it's difficult to say which is the only "authentic", authoritative version.

KP: I hate to say this, but our production is the most faithful to Tang Xianzu's original, according to many critics. It's a three-night production, and they said we grasped the spirit, the essence of Tang's original. Of course the original is 55 chapters long, but we condensed it into 27. We discarded some of the "distractions". But we kept the essence, the spirit of this play. So many scholars say ours is number 1.

UF: So you didn't invent a new script. You only cut, added different lighting, costumes, the sleeves...

KP: Of course, we only edited, we cut out the superfluous details, because it's too long, the text in those days runs 50, 55 chapters, maybe it would take a couple of months to perform. But in those days, they gave parties all the time, they ate dinner, and then they watched the performances leisurely, not like in a modern theater, when you have only one, maybe three, nights to perform. But we kept the original lyrics, because it's poetry, Tang Xianzu, it's all poetry. Beautiful poetry.

UF: Lindy Li Mark translated it into English, maintaining the poeticism and lyricism of Tang's original lyrics.

KP: Not an easy feat! Subtitles are length-restricted. There is a full translation of *The Peony Pavilion* by Cyril Birch, a professor of Chinese at UC Berkeley. There's another translation produced by a mainland Chinese translator. The subtitles have to be concise, short—they have to fit within the length—

UF: And project them up onto the screen?

KP: You watch them and see. Also, you can't have any footnotes, so you have to translate.

UF: It's amazing that one person single-handedly translated all the supertitles.

KP: She herself could perform *kunqu*. She taught *kunqu* at Berkeley, and her English is perfect... You told me you could not find translations of *Jimo de shiqi sui* 寂寞的十七歲 [Lonely Seventeen] and *Shu you ruci* 樹又如此 [Like a Tree]. 寂寞的十七歲 I translated myself! It's part of my MA thesis through the Iowa Writers' Workshop—"Lonely Seventeen". I don't know if it's published anywhere, but anyway, it's part of my MFA thesis. At the Writers' Workshop, you write a collection of short stories for your thesis, so I translated it myself. *Shu you ruci*, a friend of mine has translated, but I couldn't find the original version now, I don't think it exists in an authentic translation yet. That piece has been chosen by many anthologies in Taiwan and also in China.

UF: It's so moving, and there's a lot of foreshadowing in the piece, just like in *Dream of the Red Chamber*.

KP: I wrote about these camellias. They are all here, on the right-hand side—[gestures towards garden in the backyard]. So it's been more than fifty years, I think, since I planted them with my friend.

UF: They are truly alive in spirit, it's so amazing to see them. Fifty years is a long time. And the Italian cypresses--?

KP: The Italian cypresses, they all died (on the left-hand side), because they found a fungus underground... So that piece is featured in many anthologies, and also on Youtube, you can find 樹又如此. They made a lot of videos about it—in one of them, I read passages from it. So anyway, what else about "Winter Night"?

UF: I found it very cinematic, and I was interested in the two groups of intellectuals, and your commentary, because it seems "winter night" is symbolic, so the "winter night" of a person's life is their old age, and the whole setting, every aspect of it, is very symbolic.

KP: By the way, did I tell you? "冬夜/Winter Night" has been translated into Polish.

UF: And *Niezi* is also being translated into Polish?

KP: *Niezi* is still being translated into Polish, they're doing it right now. Do you read Polish?

UF: No, but my grandfather does. I will send it to him when it's finished.

KP: I was surprised that a Polish publisher wrote me and said they wanted to translate *Niezi* into Polish. We have an English, French, Japanese, Vietnamese, and Italian, Dutch, and German versions. We have translations in all these languages. We are adding the Polish version. A Korean publisher is also interested. So *Niezi* is spreading around the world.

UF: And you yourself speak many languages too? Guilinese, Shanghainese, Mandarin, English, Japanese, French?—many, many languages.

KP: Yes, many languages, because I lived in Chongqing, so I speak the Szechwan dialect. And I spent some time in Shanghai, I went to school in Shanghai, so I can speak Shanghainese. I went to school in Hong Kong, so I can speak Cantonese.

UF: Those definitely qualify as different languages, they're not just "dialects".

KP: You might find in my fictional works, that I use several different dialects for the characters.

UF: Watching the stage play version of *Niezi*, there's a part where A-Qing's mother speaks in a traditional language, perhaps Hokkien, and I can't understand—

KP: It's Taiwanese, but you can read the subtitles. It's to make it more authentic.

UF: 周孝安和張宜君他們是怎麼飛起來了的，2014 年的時候他們飛不起來，是另外一位演員，吳中天。

Zhou Xiao'an and Zhang Yijun conducted an aerial dance sequence together, but in 2014 Zhang flew solo. Another actor, Wu Zhongtian, played the part of Dragon Prince in that production

KP: Yes, A-Feng in the 2014 version was played by Wu Zhongtian. In 2020, we thought—let them fly together!

UF: 所以不是說 2014 年的時候飛不起來，而是說，你們沒有這樣設計？

So it isn't that Wu Zhongtian didn't have aerial dance skills in 2014, but rather than you hadn't conceptualize a dual aerial dance back then.

KP: The second Longzi, Zhou Xiao'an, he is not a dancer either. So he has a great risk of flying and falling. Each time they flew up there, my heart went up to the ceiling with them—I was so anxious, so nervous.

UF: It's amazing how the aerial stunts during the stage play create a sense of distance between the two characters—one up high, one down low, and then when they finally fly together, it's really special.

KP: And then suddenly, they descend down back to Earth—that's amazing! Do you think it's effective?

UF: Extremely effective, because when I watched the stage play for the first time in 2014, I thought, "Everything is perfect! The only thing I would change would be to have them fly on stage together, because it would accentuate the dramatic tension between the characters." And then when it really happened in 2020, I was crying and clapping [as I watched the DVD].

KP: Because they are different actors, you have a different sense, different flavor, to the whole play. I like the second version better. We changed some things to make it smoother.

UF: 如果白老師可以選一個角色來演，會選哪一個人物？

If you could choose one character to play in *Crystal Boys*, who would it be?

KP: 我會選傅老爺子。

Papa Fu.

UF: Yes, Papa Fu, that actor was amazing. He seems to be a war general himself.

KP: And the encounter between Papa Fu and Longzi, that was moving as well. And Papa Fu's funeral scene, the ritual, I liked that too.

UF: As I watched the funeral scene, I thought of your short story, "A Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars", because of the way the boys approach the Lotus Pond, each holding a lantern, they are "twinkling", exactly like the stars in the beginning of the story, and I thought, "the stars are coming out!"

KP: Yes, it was amazing.

UF: I also wanted to ask about the calligrapher, 董陽孜 Tong Yangtze (Grace Tong, 1942-). The calligraphy style on the cover of *Niezi* is strikingly similar to the characters in the *Peony Pavilion* set.

KP: Tong wrote all those characters! All of the covers are his calligraphy. She's a great fan of mine. We have known each other for sixty years. I knew her back when she was in high school.

UF: I think the calligraphy is very important, because it adds breathing spaces to the opera. And the breathing spaces in all of your theatrical productions, and silences, are breathtaking.

KP: Yes, she's a great calligrapher.

UF: Who did the portrait for the Du the Beauteous Maid (Du Liniang 杜麗娘) for your youth version of *Peony Pavilion*?

KP: Xi Song (奚淞), another great fan of mine. I've known him for fifty years. They are all long-time friends of mine, so they all participated in my production. They themselves are very famous. Xi Song is a very famous Buddhist painter. He paints Bodhisatva Guanyin and oil paintings. He's very famous.

UF: It adds so much depth. Also, Zhou Youliang's music—the breathing spaces—we have empty space. And with the calligraphy, we also have blank space on the set.

KP: You watch the *kunqu* DVDs, notice the very subtle, very beautiful movements—the music, the poetry, and of course, the story. These actors are excellent.

UF: Yu Jiulin and Shen Fengying were coached by the veteran *kunqu* actors Zhang Jiqing and Wang Shiyu, respectively. It's so important that you rescued these retired actors so that the art of *kunqu* can be passed down to the next generation.

KP: I know, I know. You watch the whole story, especially this documentary, *Multiflorate Splendour* 姸紫嫣紅開遍. It tells about me in many ways. How I created *Xiandai wenxue* 現代文學 [New Literature], and my plays, *Youyuan jingmeng* 遊園驚夢, my movies, *kunqu* production, and my *Honglou meng* 紅樓夢 [Dream of the Red Chamber] lectures.

UF: So *Youyuan jingmeng* 遊園驚夢 was based on a performance by Mei Lanfang you watched in Shanghai, and then you yourself adapted into a short story, and then you adapted it back into a theatrical production.

KP: I was nine when I watched it in Shanghai for the first time, so it stayed in mind. I didn't understand it at all, but the music stayed in my mind, but then eventually, my whole life had been associated with *Honglou meng* and *Mudanting*.

UF: So you wrote down the memory and then re-produced. *Youyuan jingmeng* is one act from *Peony Pavilion*, and later you produced the whole thing!

KP: I want to put in some words for *Crystal Boys*, the TV series. The TV series was shown in 2003. Cao Ruiyuan, the director, I think it's fate. I didn't know him. We had never met before. He was thinking of doing a TV series on *Niezi*. And that particular day, I had an appointment with a friend at a coffee shop at the Shangri-La hotel in Yuandong. I was waiting for my friend, and she was late. That was Cao Ruiyuan's forty-fifth birthday [Note: it was actually his thirty-ninth birthday, according to Cao]. He wanted to spend it alone, so he went by himself to the same coffee shop as me. He was thinking of doing *Niezi*, he was making notes. And then, as he was sitting there by himself, in the reflection in the window, he said, that's Bai Xianyong!

UF: That's fate!

KP: So he came up to me, and he said, "I want to make a TV series of your *Niezi*]. Isn't that something? It's a PBS TV series in Taiwan.

UF: The TV series is so important [for raising awareness for LGBTQIA+ individuals], because having *Niezi* shown on everyone's personal living room TV screen helped raise awareness.

KP: I know, that's different. Yes, it exerted a great influence, socially, because, as you said, it was screened on family living room TV's.

UF: The whole family watching together, cultivating acceptance [for gay individuals].

KP: I know, and also, the first time the premier was shown on PBS [Public Television in Taiwan], it was prime time, 8:00pm. It created a sensation. And then, PBS repeated it five times.

UF: Five times, on loop?

KP: Yes, five times, consecutively. Five times in a row. That's how popular it was. Everybody at that time watched it, and it had a great influence. I think it opened up the road for the legalization of Same-Sex Marriage in 2019. When *Niezi*, the novel, first came out in the early 1980s, there was silence. Nobody knew how to deal with this book. They didn't know how to deal with this book. No bad reviews, either. They just kept silent, until the '90s. And suddenly, it opened up, so *Niezi*'s influence became widespread.

UF: And Howard Goldblatt's English translation was wonderful. For a person who's maybe not gay, to understand the lifestyle, you have to be educated.

KP: Of course, I helped him with the translation. We talked a lot together. I know him personally. I knew him then, and we discussed some of the terms and the scenes. He has a Taiwanese wife. Anyway, the TV series has exerted a great influence on the public. That's why I said, socially, it had a great impact. But I didn't expect it to be translated into many major Western languages.

UF: In the West, it's often called "China's first modern gay novel". But it's much more than this, in terms of the nuanced portrayal of *qing*. But that's how they marketed it, with a half-naked figure on the cover. I was so surprised, after reading it, thinking, "This isn't a sex novel." There are no sex scenes. But it's marketed that way.

KP: Some people asked me, "Why didn't you write more sex scenes?" But that's not the issue there. Of course I deal with the sex scenes. But that's not my major concern. I could do it. Like *金瓶梅 Jinping mei* [The Plum in the Golden Vase, a late Ming novel written in vernacular Chinese which included explicit depictions of sexuality]. But it was not necessary in this novel.

UF: I was also very disturbed to read many reviews that equated Pai Hsien-yung with A-Qing, interpreting the novel as autobiographical, saying that you were probably also kicked out of the house for being gay by your military father.

KP: No, my father has great respect for me. They had it wrong. Because I wrote *Jimo de shiqi sui* and *Niezi*—in both of these works, the father kicks the son out of the house. But it's not the case for me, personally. My father, although he was strict (he was a military man, a general), he had a kind heart, especially for me. He was much more forgiving of me, because I had been ill for some years. In a sense, he saved my life, you know? He was much more lenient towards me. But not towards my younger brothers. Actually, my father's favorite son

is my younger brother, but he got flogged, because my father's expectations of him were too high. He couldn't meet my father's expectations. He was a rebel anyway.

UF: The father in *Niezi* is very cruel. Every episode opens with the same scene of the father kicking his own son like a dog. But the scene in the stage play version is not as violent.

KP: Because he was a frustrated soldier, you know. He was deprived of his title and all that. So he had a lot of pent-up frustration. He represents all those military men who fled from China to Taiwan.

UF: What do you think it will take for same-sex marriage to be achieved in mainland China, or just better acceptance of gays and lesbians? Because Taiwan has come so far, and by reading your *Niezi*, and especially the stage play version, if it could be brought to the mainland, it would change a lot of minds. Especially the father's transformation, could move a lot of parents.

KP: One thing about that. There was a very strange phenomenon. After the Communists took over, all literature with a gay theme was banned, with the exception of *Niezi*. *Niezi* was published in China. I first went back to China in 1987. In the same year, it was published by Beifang wenyi 北方文艺 press, in Manchuria, Dongbei. And then, the next year, 1988, 北京人民文学 *Beijing renmin wenxue*, the most official PRC publisher, published *Niezi*. And from then on, there were eight publishers, eight versions of *Niezi* circulating in China, north and south. I don't know why they let this book slide without any revisions. So it's the original version. That was most unusual. So *Niezi* has a widespread influence in China, too. Many gay boys first read about homosexuality from *Niezi*, and also, pirated copies of the TV series were circulating. At that time, I was told it was sold for only 18 RMB. But they were very well-made. I got a copy of the pirated version. So it was quite influential in China. It's even on Bilibili...

UF: Yes, I watched *Niezi* the stage play on *Bilibili*, which my students call B 站/"Stop B".

KP: --laughs. You did? You found it on *Bilibili*, right? So even stage plays are shown on *Bilibili*. There are many comments scrolling across the screen. So we have a novel, a TV series, a stage play, and a film version—they all made it to mainland China. So in the mainland, this book and the TV series also have a great influence. So many gay people in the mainland wrote to tell me how they were influenced by *Niezi*.

UF: What did you think of the film directed by Yu Kanping? Did you participate in the film production?

KP: At that time, it was censored. They cut out many things. That's why it has some disconnection there. The film is not perfect.

UF: Yes, some parts with Xiaoyu 小玉 ["Little Jade"]...

KP: Xiaoyu is played by a girl in drag. You didn't notice that? So I think the TV series was much more successful, and also the stage play.

UF: There's a song in the stage play version, *Lianhua luo* 蓮花落 [Falling Lotus Flowers]. You must have participated in the composition process.

KP: There's an interesting behind-the-scenes story. I thought the theme song was very important, so we got ahold of the lyrics writer, Lin Xi 林夕, from Hong Kong. He was such a big shot, you know? He wrote the first version, I read it and I said, "It's good. But it doesn't fit in with our play." It was about the protests in the gay movement. That doesn't fit in with the play. I sent it back. Also, the songwriter, Chen Xiaoxia (陳小霞), she was also a big-shot in the popular song industry.

UF: Also the singer, Yang Zongwei.

KP: It's a long story. Chen Xiaoxia wrote the music, and I heard it. I thought it was too smooth, too flat. I said, "No, it should be high-rising, crescendoing like a butterfly one fine day..." So I returned it too. My God! Chen Xiaoxia was ok, she re-wrote it, but Lin Xi, he was very bitter. He and Chen Xiaoxia were friends. Chen Xiaoxia later told me that Lin Xi called her and complained about the situation for two hours and I felt bad, so when I was in Hong Kong, I tried to make it up to Lin Xi. I invited him out for lunch with me, but he refused to meet me. We had a celebration in Taipei. He moved to Taipei from Hong Kong. (Many people have fled Hong Kong recently.) So we had a celebration in Taipei, Taiwan, but he refused to show up. He was still bitter about it, but he did rewrite the lyrics. That was good. The one you heard is wonderful.

I'm the one who chose Yang Zongwei. His singing—

UF: A throbbing *vibrato* tenor, like a cello.

KP: Yeah, his singing is so moving. So that's the story behind the song.

UF: Did you also chose the composer Zhou Youliang for your production of *Peony Pavilion*? His music is great, too.

KP: Yes, it's wonderful. He's a great composer, but he wanted to steal the limelight. He wanted to show off. And sometimes, in the program, or brochure, the photographer didn't use his photos, because they were focused on the actors, not on the composer. He was angry with me. I said, "I didn't do that." He wanted a whole picture of himself.

UF: Maybe he felt he was competing with Tan Dun, the composer for Peter Sellars' and Chen Shizheng's production. Maybe he wanted to be the next Tan Dun.

KP: I had to deal with all of these problems as the producer. But in the end, the result speaks for itself. It came off well.

UF: You're a global "general". You have "troops" from all over the world, all working together.

KP: Oh, we had a great time. Our *Peony Pavilion* production came here, to Santa Barbara, Berkeley... We had a tour of the four UC campuses...

UF: UC Berkeley, UC Irvine, UCLA, and UC Santa Barbara? It seems Chancellor Henry Yang from UC Santa Barbara did a lot behind the scenes to help make the production happen. He wrote letters to all of these Chinese leaders asking for increased investment in *kunqu*.

KP: Yes, Chancellor Yang used to be the Dean of the Engineering School at Purdue University, before coming here. He is just a super chancellor! He uplifted UCSB. Any more questions about *Niezi*?

UF: I also compared "A Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars" with *Crystal Boys*. There are some similarities between the short story and the novel, but maybe they're only tangentially related. The "Guru" in "Twinkling Stars" is very different from Chief Yang Jinhai in *Crystal Boys*. The setting of "New Park" (now the 228 Peace Memorial Park) is one similarity.

KP: Only the setting, the atmosphere are similar, but the characters are all different. After all, one is a short story, and the other is a novel, the literary mediums are very different. But there is some connection, yes. I think "Twinkling Stars" was the origin [for *Niezi*]. I wanted to tell the story of all the gay people, especially the gay people at the lowest level, they suffered the most, and they were despise, and ostracized by society.

UF: Yes, many of the characters in *Taipei People* seem to be aristocratic, or from the upper-class, but this story is different.

KP: *Taipei People* is not entirely [about the lives of upper-class people]. There are many levels—soldiers, nannies, you know. But *Niezi* mainly contains characters from the lower ranks of the social echelon. I wanted to tell their story, how they suffered from social ostracization. Yes, that was my purpose, to write about them.

UF: You always capture the spirit of a city. 永遠的尹雪艷 *Yongyuan de Yin Xueyan* ["The Eternal Snow Beauty"] captures the spirit of Shanghai. And also 芝加哥之死 *Zhijiage zhisi* ["Death in Chicago"]. You only spent a very short time in Chicago, and yet, your personification of Chicago is spot-on. I know it's an accurate portrayal, because I've spent a lot of time there. I love your depiction of Chicago as a rotting sarcophagus containing millions of souls of the living and dead. That really captures the spirit of the city!

KP: When I was studying in Iowa, during Christmas vacation, all the dormitories were shut down, so I had to move out. Chicago was very close to Iowa City, so I took a train and went to Chicago. I was struck by the big city. It was also very gloomy and windy.

UF: I recognize some of the places—South Clark Street in Chinatown, the apartment where the PhD student, Wu Han-hun 吳漢魂, lives. When we studied Yu Dafu's "Sinking", I chose

your “Death in Chicago” as a companion piece because I believe it’s a modern version of “Sinking”. Many international students wrote about how moved they were by the piece.

KP: That story has been translated into German, and also English, by Margaret Baumgartner. I think it was published in *The Chinese Pen* [autumn 1976].

You mentioned how I got the inspiration for the stage play version of *Crystal Boys* from Benjamin Brittain’s adaptation of Thomas Mann’s *Death in Venice*. The dance scene between Longzi and A-Feng, that’s the hardest part. We cannot afford to flop in that scene. If we use the conventional structure with dialogue, that won’t work. It would become ridiculous, it would sound absurd. There’s too much. I thought, “A-Feng shouldn’t speak.” So we asked, “What will we do?” I’ve seen *Death in Venice* by Benjamin Britten. You know the story, right?

UF: Yes, von Aschenbach pursues Tadzio, a Polish boy who doesn’t speak. Also, Luchino Visconti did a movie adapted from Mann’s novella [*Morte a Venezia*].

KP: In *Death in Venice*, they didn’t have dialogue together.

UF: But there was dance.

KP: So Benjamin Britten, Aschenbach had a solo, and Tadzio expressed himself through dance. They inspired me. I thought, “We can do that, too!” Let A-Feng dance to express his passion, his suffering, all that. And Longzi would have a monologue. It came off. It worked.

UF: I couldn’t help drawing a comparison with Steven Spielberg’s film *Schindler’s List*, when suddenly the girl in red emerges from the black and grey, contrasting the Nazi’s brutality with hope. The explosion of color is also very effective in the stage play version of *Crystal Boys*.

KP: It impressed the audience very much. They all said, “This is the height of the whole play.”

UF: It seems that Longzi’s love for A-Feng is extremely possessive—he wants to “own” A-Feng’s heart. Since he’s not speaking, many people might think he doesn’t have his own opinions, or that he is passive. But that’s not the case. He soars, wild and free, on stage, even without speaking. And later on, A-Qing isn’t willing to be controlled by Longzi. So I learned a lot about love from watching the play. You shouldn’t control the other person.

KP: Right, you can never possess someone else. As for A-Qing, that’s different. A-Qing realized that Longzi was attempting to displace his affection for A-Feng on him. A-Feng is the one in his heart, not A-Qing. He knows that A-Qing doesn’t truly love him. A-Feng is his true and only love. This is also a subtle psychology.

Actually, Longzi is seeking redemption for his tragic past. He was trying to redeem himself and to start a new life with someone, and eventually, at the end of the story, he met a cripple,

and he helped him go through surgery, at the very end of the novel. Remember when Longzi was in New York, he met a Puerto Rican boy? It's the same kind of redemption, to redeem his own soul.

UF: There's also a similar description at the end of "Twinkling Stars": The boy was called Little Jade; he was a pretty-faced little thing, but he was a cripple, so not many people paid him attention. The Guru put his arm around the boy's shoulder, and the two of them, one tall, one small, supporting each other with their incompleteness, limped together into the dark grove of Green Corals." (Pai and Yasin 2000: 324)

The word "cripple" is also used in the English translation of "Winter Night":

"There was one girl student who asked me, 'Was Byron really that handsome?'"
"Byron was a cripple,' I told her, 'Probably a worse one than I am.'"
She looked so stricken that I had to comfort her. 'But he did have a devilishly handsome face—'"

UF: I wanted to ask you a question about critical distance. You were an exile, living all over the world, for much of your life, always moving around, and your true homeland may exist in traditional Chinese culture. Do you have a different perspective on Chinese history and culture now that you are living overseas? Could you have produced these works living in Taiwan and China?

KP: My childhood was spent on the mainland. It was a very important influence on my writing. My memory of the old China was gone. That China had collapsed. That's why in *Taipei ren*, you find a very deep nostalgia for the past, trying to reclaim the past, but of course, it's not possible. And also, for me, the Republic of China has also collapsed, has declined, disappeared, on the mainland. So the Republic of China in Taiwan is another chapter in the history. It's a different country. So the people in *Taipei ren*, they yearn for their lost country. Of course, they spent their youth, or their most successful parts of their lives, on the mainland, and in time, they decline. That's why I quoted the poem by Liu Yuxi (刘禹锡, 772-842):

朱雀桥边野草花 By the Bridge of the Heavenly Red-Bird rank weeds over grow;
乌衣巷口夕阳斜 At the Lane of Black-Gown Mansions, the dying sun sinks low.
旧时王谢堂前燕 'Neath the eaves of the high and mighty, swallows used to nest, but
飞入寻常百姓家. Now, to homes of the commoners, of the Joneses and Smiths they go.
(trans. Andrew W.F. Wong)

In the third and fourth centuries, in northern China, the Western Jin empire was established. And then, by the third century, the Western Jin capital was invaded by the various barbarians—Xiongnu, and so forth. And so the Jin dynasty court moved to Nanjing from Luoyang in Henan during the Eastern Jin. So the people of the Eastern Jin yearn for their former days in Luoyang, so I quote this poem as a parallel. The Western Jin dynasty moved from Luoyang to Nanjing, and the Republic of China moved its capital from Nanjing to Taipei, so it's a historical parallel. That's the major theme of my *Taipei ren*. Just like many centuries ago, the people of the Eastern Jin long for their lost country.

During the Southern Song, they also wrote memoirs about the Northern Song, with its capital in Kaifeng, which was later moved to Hangzhou. There are so many ups and downs, dynastic cycles in Chinese history, with one dynasty succeeding another. There are many poems about this. I think I inherited this tradition in *Taipei ren*.

UF: And you wrote *Niezi* in Santa Barbara, and so you gained some distance, too, from the community in the New Park in Taipei.

KP: Yes, I wrote this in Santa Barbara. The environment is totally different. It's not like the world in *Niezi* at all. There's so much sunshine here!

UF: I wonder how *Niezi* would have been different if you had written it in Taipei. did the sense of distance and displacement [from writing about a marginalized community in Taipei while living overseas] help you gain a critical perspective on your own writing?

KP: Yes, distance. I distanced myself from all of that, so I could write more objectively.

Appendix 2: Crystallizing the Crystal Boys: A Conversation with Hsu Pei-hung

3:00pm, Tuesday, April 11, 2023
Taipei 101 Mall Starbucks

Ursula Deser Friedman (UDF): 您是通过什么契機参与到这个工程里的？怎么认识的白先勇老师？

How did you come to participate in Pai Hsien-yung's projects? How did you first meet Pai?

Hsu Pei-hung (XPH, 許培鴻): 白老師看我的作品雖然是跟崑曲沒有關係，可是白老師是從我的作品裡面，我對顏色的掌握，我對一張照片的構圖。這就是一張作品美學的一個觀點。白老師是透過這樣的觀點來選我。他說：“你可以把歐洲排得很歐洲”。這張照片，如果今天是一個美國人，或者一個英國人拍的。大家會問：“你怎麼把中國拍的很中國？”

Though my prior photography experience had nothing to do with *kun* opera, Pai was impressed by my mastery of color schemes and composition. He selected me based on my aesthetic taste. Pai observed, “Your photos make Europe look authentically European”. Imagine if American or Brit took this photo [of a *kunqu* performer], someone might exclaim, “You make China look quintessentially Chinese!”

UDF: 您在青春版牡丹亭的製作當中扮演了很重要的角色。您捕捉到白老師《牡丹亭青年版》和《孽子》無數個瞬間，這些瞬間因為您的精心紀錄，已經變成了一種永恆。您曾經為《孽子舞台劇 2020 全記錄文集》以及《牡丹亭、青春版》進行拍攝。您是如何參與到這兩個項目的？您的攝影理念與其他攝影師有何不同？

You played an essential role in bringing the youth version of *Peony Pavilion* to fruition. You captured countless precious moments in both *Peony Pavilion* and *Niezi*, which have become eternalized thanks to your brilliant photos. You were the photographer for the *Complete Collector's Album of Niezi the Stage Play—2020* and *Peony Pavilion, Youth Edition*. How did you become involved in these two projects, and what makes you unique as a photographer?

XPH: 參與白老師這兩部作品的紀錄創作，現在回想起來就像做了一場夢，美夢。但這夢的過程很長，猶如一場馬拉松賽跑，跑的過程中可能汗水淋漓，體力透支，但沿途的美景盡收眼底，收穫無限。

Looking back on my role in these two productions, it was all a dream, a beautiful dream. But realizing the dream involved an arduous process, like a marathon. As you run, you might sweat and become physically exhausted, but the panoramic scenery along the way makes for a bountiful harvest.

通常攝影師拍攝一個專案或主題，半天或一天就交差完工。白老師的作品值得投入一年，甚至十年以上來紀錄，而我，願意等待的方式，拍下每個有故事的畫面。牡丹亭首演前的籌備，此時需要大量的文宣媒材與圖像，白老師找了我加入製作群團隊，來擔任影像主視覺的任務，當時也沒有太多的顧慮與他想，畢竟很多表演藝術的作品首演成功閉幕後，再加上幾次的加演，一齣作品也就完美的結束，然而，青春版牡丹亭就像傳統戲曲界的一匹黑馬，當衝出馬廄的大門，她的魅力與風采吸睛了許多人的關注，一股力量已無法停下來。拍攝青春版《牡丹亭》主視覺的過程中，發覺台前幕後有許多故事進行著，豐富的戲曲人生吸引著紀錄這一切，本以為這趟的馬拉松賽跑只是一萬公里，跑著跑著已經忘了里程數，也早已超過一萬公里，然而拿著火把帶領著大家往前衝的導聆者，正是白先勇老師。

Usually photographers finish shooting a project in a half-day, or one day maximum. However, Pai's projects are worth investing in for a year, even ten years. I am willing to patiently take photos of every twist and turn along the journey. The preparations for the premier of Peony Pavilion required lots of promotional materials and images. Pai invited me to join the production team as the designated photographer. I wasn't too preoccupied back then. Usually after the first performance, many productions are concluded, or maybe they extend by a few shows, bringing the work to a satisfying conclusion. However, the youth production of Peony Pavilion was a dark horse in the traditional opera world. The performance's charm was mesmerizing, and morphed into an unstoppable force. In the process of shooting the youth version of Peony Pavilion, I wanted to capture each behind-the-scenes story. I thought it would only be a 10k race, but as I raced along, I forgot about the exact mileage, which definitely exceed a 10k. The torch-bearer was none other than Pai Hsien-yung, which made everything worth it.

《孽子舞台劇 2020 全記錄文集》的拍攝，主要是《孽子》- 2014 TIFA 演出白老師推薦我給導演曹瑞原，來負責掌握《孽子舞台劇》主視覺拍攝。基於《牡丹亭》的紀錄經驗告訴我，一切珍貴的畫面從製作期就要開始投入紀錄，否則珍貴的畫面錯過了，一切畫面的重置都失去它真正的意義。所以當我決定投入孽子舞台劇的拍攝紀錄，又是一段馬拉松賽式的紀錄。

Pai recommended me to Director Cao Ruiyuan, resulting in the photographic footage for *Complete Collector's Album of Niezi the Stage Play—2020*. My experience participating in Peony Pavilion taught me that all these precious photos must be preserved through printed footage, otherwise it will be impossible to reconstruct the performances later down the road. Thus began yet another marathon.

UDF: 您可不可以分享一下您的拍攝經驗？在您的訪談當中曾經提到，您的作品一直環繞著人，尤其以音樂家與舞蹈家為主題的拍攝。您這麼多年拍攝古典音樂家的經驗如何影響到《孽子》與《牡丹亭》的拍攝？音樂家屬於“靜態”，而舞蹈家則屬於“動態”的審美，那麼，您是如何把“靜態”帶到“動態”裡面，又是如何將“動態”的審美帶入到“靜態”？

Can you share your prior experience in photography? In your past interviews, you mentioned you mostly photographed people, especially musicians and dancers. How did your experience photographing classical musicians affect your approach to *Niezi* and *Peony Pavilion*? Musicians are “Static”, while dancers belong to the “dynamic” category. How do you make static subjects dynamic, and bring dynamism into static works?

XPH: 的確，我大部分的創作都圍繞在世界的人文、音樂家、舞蹈、文學等藝術系列的人物主題。音樂與舞蹈的系列在我創作的前期佔有大部分的比例，兩個特質是完全不同的情感世界。音樂是我平日生活上不可或缺的精神糧食，也影響著我生活上的情緒與創作上的靈感，之所以如此，自然地投入一股傻勁與熱情在拍攝有關的音樂家身上，尤其古典音樂界。

Indeed, most of my creations revolve around the humanities—musicians, dance, literature and other artistic fields. Most of my early work revolved around dance and music. Musicians and dancers embody two vastly different emotional realms. Music provides indispensable spiritual sustenance for my day-to-day life, and also affects my artistic inspiration and emotions. This is because I poured quite unrestrained joy and enthusiasm into photographing musicians, particularly classical musicians [and conductors].

音樂家並不是演員或模特兒，比較不擅長肢體的或表情地表達，當一位音樂家在相機前，他們很難不緊張或自在，甚至拍攝過程中處理不好會造成對方的尷尬，這是不希望發生的。況且我不希望樂器在只是一個道具般在他們身上，一張無聲的平面海報如何吸引人，那麼重點就是人物在畫面中帶有情感的投入與表達，這就是我認為一位古典音樂人的肖像拍攝，困難度勝過於一般人物的表達。拍攝音樂家掌握的是形之於

內「韻」的觀察與掌握，而舞蹈家掌握的瞬間「形與美」，兩個人物系列的經驗經過時間的沈澱與積累，對我來說是很珍貴的創作旅程，接著又進入崑曲與孽子舞台劇的世界。

Musicians are not actors or models, so they are not adept at using body language or expressions to express their inner worlds. When a musician faces the camera, it's difficult to get them to relax and let their guard down. If I don't handle the shooting process tactfully, I might bring embarrassment of the photographic subject. I don't want this to happen. Besides, I don't want their instrument to just seem like a prop or prosthetic. How can a flat graphic poster grab people's attention? The key lies in the facial expression and emotionality of the photographic subjects. That's why I think it's more difficult to shoot classical musicians than ordinary people. When it comes to classical musicians, my job is to observe and then master the flow of their inner soul, but when it comes to dancers, I capture their ephemeral beauty that is directly expressed through their outer motion. The experience I accumulated shooting series of musicians and dancers is very precious to me, and the insights I accumulated were directly transferrable to the *Niezi* and *Peony Pavilion* projects.

UDF: 白老師的青春版牡丹亭是改編自湯顯祖的牡丹亭作品，您是否能分享自己對於白老師這個文化傳承看法？若如白老師所言的「文化基因」，您認為白老師的青春版牡丹亭在這樣的「文化基因」起了什麼樣的作用？

Pai's youth adaptation of *Peony Pavilion* is adapted from Tang Xianzu's original script. Can you share your views towards Pai's efforts in passing down Chinese cultural heritage? Pai describes traditional Chinese culture as China's "cultural gene" or "cultural DNA". What role does Pai's *Peony Pavilion* play in sustaining this "cultural DNA"?

XPH: 這樣的文化基因，猶如白老師在崑曲進校園產生了諾大的效應。如台北、香港相繼演出後造成轟動，2004年6月，在蘇州大學存菊堂演出，也是中國大陸首演，存菊堂兩千七百個座位，九千張票一搶而光，這樣的盛況氛圍半年不到，訊息已沸沸揚揚傳播到各處，接著來自各界邀演，白老師的期盼“崑曲進校園”漸漸實現，有更多年輕人接觸崑曲藝術，進而發現自己的傳統文化之美，因此愛上崑曲。當崑曲演出進入校園，這股炫風在海內外掀起年輕人一股崑曲狂熱，相繼在北大、北師大、南開、南京大學、復旦、同濟、蘭州大學、西安交通大學、四川大學、武漢大學、廣西師範、中山大學、廈門大學，台灣的交通大學、成功大學、香港中文大學，更遠征到美國加州大學四個分校，舊金山柏克萊、爾灣、洛杉磯、聖巴巴拉等。演出紀錄觀察

中，青春版《牡丹亭》每一場的謝幕，瞬間如雷貫耳的掌聲熱情了全場，對觀眾而言，當下的感動是一輩子的印記，青春版《牡丹亭》的情與美。

This “cultural gene” is exemplified in the astounding effect that Pai’s *Peony Pavilion* production had on university campuses around the world. For instance, successive performances in Taipei and Hong Kong caused a sensation. In June of 2004, the show was performance at Suzhou University’s Cunju (“Chrysanthemum”) Hall, marking the first performance on the Chinese mainland. All 2,700 seats were filled and all 9,000 tickets were grabbed up—this kind of sold-out spectacle only came around twice a year, and news spread like wildflower. People from all walks of society leapt on board, and “Peony Pavilion—Campus Edition” was gradually realized. More and more youngsters were exposed to the art of *kunqu* opera, discovered the beauty of their traditional culture, and fell in love with *kunqu*. When *kunqu* stormed onto campuses, this dazzling wind ignited a *kunqu* fever amongst university-aged students at home and abroad. Performances were held at Peking University, Beijing Normal University, Nankai University, Nanjing University, Fudan University, Tongji University, Lanzhou University, Xi’an Jiaotong University, Sichuan University, Wuhan University, Guangxi Normal University, Sun Yat-Sen University, Xiamen University, National Chiao Tung University, National Cheng Kung University, Chinese University of Hong Kong, and the four UC campuses; namely, San Francisco, Berkeley, Irvine, Los Angeles, and Santa Barbara.

UDF: 您跟著《青春版》劇團巡迴演出超過 200 多場，以“美”作為審美標準將許多精彩時刻紀錄下來。您如何解讀白老師心目中的“美”？

You attended over two hundred *kunqu* performances as the series photographer, applying the aesthetic principle of “beauty” to record many dazzling moments. How do you interpret the “beauty” Pai had in mind?

XPH: 白老師心目中對青春版《牡丹亭》“美”的要求：在我觀察的心得是美，簡約、雅緻，看似簡單，卻是美學的極致。簡雅的元素最能詮釋美的真諦與藝術的精神，創作的過程中也充滿挑戰與失敗，但這是一種萃取的過程。就像攝影的黑白照片，它的世界只有黑、灰、白三大色階，如果不能傳達影像的生命力與美學在主題上，那麼這黑灰白就成了無趣而平淡的世界。

Beauty, simplicity, and elegance—seemingly simple, minimalistic beauty is the pinnacle of aesthetic beauty. Simplicity and elegance can best capture the true meaning of beauty and art’s *raison d’être*. The process of creation is full of challenges and failures, but this is all a process of extracting and distilling beauty. Just like black-and-white photos, which

deconstruct the world into various hues of blacks, grays, and whites, if the underlying vitality and aesthetics of a particular theme cannot be conveyed through its accompanying photos, then this black, gray, and white world will become a dull one indeed.

UDF: 您的攝影作品的流動性很強，在律動與靜止之間取得了一個很好的平衡。您是如何做到的？可不可請您分享一下您是如何捕捉到一個人的“神韻”？

Your photography is fluid and dynamic, striking a wonderful balance between movement and stillness. How have you accomplished this? How do you capture a person's "spirit" and inner rhythm?

崑曲藝術很美，表演中稍緩的速度而含有優雅的律動，猶如西方的慢板 *adagio*，這樣的美感很難用影像來詮釋。攝影講求的是瞬間的凝結之美，而崑曲的緩慢的節奏，如果用高速的快門，拍下的只是一張成功而僵化的畫面，我以稍慢速曝光的速度來追蹤表演者，這樣的手法失敗率很高壓力也很大，萬一當下沒有成功，一切都不可能重新再來。

Kunqu is a beautiful art. The relatively slow-paced performance contains elegant rhythms, just like *Adagio* in Western music. Such beauty is difficult to describe in images. Photography emphasizes the beauty of instant distillation, which is then combined with the leisurely rhythm of *kunqu*. If you use a high-speed shutter, you'll capture a successful, but rigid, photograph. I use a slightly slower exposure speed to track the performers. The failure rate is quite high and the pressure is enormous. If I don't succeed precisely at the appointed moment, there's no way to start all over.

我拍戲我也看戲，我看戲我也入戲，入戲是因為演員在表演中感動了我，觸動直覺上對神韻的掌握，我隨時醞釀下一秒的畫面，提前半秒按下快門，此時，光線、構圖與情感的律動一鏡到位。

As I'm shooting, I'm simultaneously watching the performance. I get into the spirit of the play precisely because the performers move me, igniting my intuitive grasp of *shenyun*. I am always mulling over in preparation for the next shot. I press the shutter half a second in advance. At this precise moment, the light, composition, and emotion all fall into place.

UDF: 您還專門為《牡丹亭》辦了一場非常隆重的攝影展，紀念了《牡丹亭》從第一場到第100場的“美學”的演變。這個“審美”是如何發生變化的呢？如何“再創”美的意境？

You also put on a spectacular photography exhibition specially for *Peony Pavilion*, commemorating the opera's aesthetic evolution from the first performance to the hundredth. How did Peony's aesthetic evolve? How did you recreate this artistic aesthetic conception through your photography?

XPH: 這場隆重的攝影展是青春版《牡丹亭》第兩百場慶演，第一場展覽在台北 101，第一百場慶演攝影展在北大，第兩百場慶演在中國國家大劇院的東展覽廳。每一次的展覽都有新的作品加入，也隨時結合不同多媒體或科技來增加視覺欣賞的藝術感。

This grand photography exhibition was held to commemorate the two hundredth performance of *Peony Pavilion*. The first exhibition was held at Taipei 101, while the centennial photography exhibition was held at Peking University. The celebratory photography exhibition for the two hundredth performance was held at the East Exhibition Hall at the National Center for the Performing Arts in mainland China. New works were added to each exhibition, and new photos and new technologies were added to each exhibition—the enhanced technology enhanced the visual and artistic aesthetics.

UDF: 您在胡婉玲主持的《台灣演義》項目中提到，“我發現每一次演出白老師都在做修正”。這些“修正”都體現在哪些方面上？

In Hu Wanling's program, "History of Taiwan", you mentioned, "I realized that Pai revising each successive performance". What kind of "revisions" did Pai make?

XPH: 這些修正，應該是說：白老師對藝術「美」的追求是崇高的，永遠為了 99.9 差那 0.1 分的滿分境界而修正。這些修正是全方位的，如劇本、音樂、服裝、配飾、顏色、舞美、燈光等等

By "revisions", I mean that Pai's pursues a lofty concept of "beauty". He'll always make alterations for the sake of that last 0.1 percent. These "altercations" are all-encompassing, touching on every aspect of the *mis en scène*: the music, costumes, props, colors, dance aesthetics, lighting, and so on.

您作為台北人，如何評價白老師的短篇小說集《台北人》？

UDF: As a longtime Taipei resident, how do you assess Pai's short story anthology *Taipei People*?

XPH: 《臺北人》是以文學寫歷史的滄桑。我們是幸福的一代，如果不是白老師的《臺北人》，台北就少了這份滄桑的文學之美，也讓年輕人認識上一輩在這段歷史所走過的點點滴滴，直到現在已成為台北的一種特殊的文化印記。在台北的眷村或巷弄間，還依稀可循白老師小說裡的背景元素，《臺北人》讓我們走進一個大時代的萬花筒，有點陌生卻又熟悉的故事，陌生是因為它不在我成長的年代，熟悉的是台北的街道或建築就在我現今的生活中，想逐一的解密卻又模糊，如《一把青》裡的朱青，來到台北住在長春路的仁愛東村，而仁愛東村已經不存在，只能聆聽著〈東山一把青〉感受這篇小說的時代感，也或許是因為我拍了《一把青》的電視劇照，讓我感受更深。

Taipei People chronicles the vicissitudes of history. Ours is a blissful generation. If it weren't for Pai's *Taipei People*, Taipei would lack this literary beauty, this monumental tribute to historical changes. Pai's anthology also enables the younger generation to learn about the lives of previous generations, the historical changes they experienced firsthand. *Taipei People* will go down in history as Taipei's trademark cultural imprint. In the military dependents' villages and alleys in Taipei, we can still find vague echoes of the elements in Pai's novels. Through *Taipei People*, we enter the kaleidoscope of the grand era. These are strange, yet familiar stories, strange because they are temporally displaced from our own era, familiar because we walk the same alleys and pass the same buildings. We want to decipher them one by one, but often find ourselves thwarted. For instance, Zhu Qing in "A Touch of Green" lived in Ren'ai East Village on Changchun Road. This particular village no longer exists, so I can only explore the fantasy world of this village in "A Touch of Green" to experience the sense of historical evolution. I took the photos for "A Touch of Green", which influences my views.

UDF: 《孽子》涉及同志議題。您拍紀念照的時候如何處理了同志之間的情欲？

Niezi contains homosexual male intimacy. As the play's photographer, how did you approach male-male intimacy?

XPH: 當初白老師找我來拍《孽子》這些 photo 的時候，其實壓力很大。因為我雖然讀過這個小說，可是我對於同性戀這個議題我不太了解。因為除非我自己也是同性戀。可是如果我是同性戀的話，我在拍這個，我的觀點就太侷限。這是我的想法。那剛好我不是同性戀。我就要用一個很客觀的一個愛情的視角來看這個 story。因為如果我是通過同志的視角來拍的時候，拍出來的視覺可能太 strong。你要一個很 strong 的 love

story, 在舞台上表演就好。你在 photo 裡面要表達是一種情欲。情跟慾是加在一起的, love and desire。所以這個 desire 要淡一點。

白老師不會跟你討論這個。白老師是作者, 白老師會想, “我的小說你沒看嗎?” 第二, 人的情緒是很抽象, 可能他今天講出來可能是他的想像。所以你聽到的跟他想的是不一樣的。所以我的壓力很大在於, 我的理解, 是不是白老師要看的, 是不是導演要看的。這些問題我不能問出來。問出來你問不到答案。我沒有問白老師的原因是, 我問導演。導演想幹什麼是導演決定。我開會的時候問曹導演, 《孽子》拍出來應該什麼樣? 他說, “你來決定”。然後呢, 我問設計師, 你視覺上要什麼樣的? 他說 “你決定就好”。

When Pai first asked me to shoot photos for *Niezi*, I faced enormous pressure. Although I have read *Niezi*, I don't know much about homosexuality, because I'm not gay myself. But then again, if I were gay, my perspective might be quite limited. This is just my personal view. It just so happens that I'm not gay myself, so I am able to approach this story from the objective perspective of abstract love. If I shot using a gay lens, the visual effect might be too strong. If you want a powerful love story, just watch the play unfold on stage. I wanted to capture a more abstract sense of love and desire through my photos. Love and desire are coupled together, so I tried to downplay “desire” to maintain an abstract portrayal of “love”.

Pai wouldn't broach the topic of gay desire with us. First of all, Pai is the author, so he'd naturally ask: “You didn't read my novel?” Second, human desire is quite abstract, so what Pai described might exist only in his imagination, might not necessarily reflect his actual beliefs. So that ambiguity put me under a great deal of pressure, because I wasn't sure whether my understanding matched up to Pai's expectations, or those of Director Cao. I couldn't directly ask them these kinds of questions, because I knew I wouldn't receive a straight answer. I didn't ask Pai, but rather the director, because the director is in charge of the final outcome. During a meeting, I asked Director Cao what degree of intimacy he expected in my photos. His reply was “That's up to you.” I then asked the play designer, “What kind of visual effect are you looking for?” and received the same response, “It's up to you.”

UDF: 您對 “美” 的理解如何融合東西方的審美? 您用肉眼看劇跟通過攝像頭, 有何區別?

How does your approach to “beauty” draw upon both Eastern and Western aesthetics?
What's the difference between watching plays through your naked eye versus a camera lens?

XPH: 一個人的美學，來自成長環境洗禮與文化養成，對美的感受也就不同。年輕時期接觸的都是西方的流行文化與音樂，東西方古典音樂是後來接觸深深被吸引住，然而崑曲藝術是在後期才接觸的表演藝術，不知不覺中自己體內已經儲藏了東西方的美學元素，在拍攝創作中也不斷地相互撞擊，用直觀的感受來啟動內心的靈感，時而具象，時而抽象，當我按下快門並不是因為看劇，而是透過內心的直覺所產生的影像，而拍出我想像中的作品。

A person's aesthetic sensibility emanates from the confluence of their lived experiences and cultural cultivation. Thus, each of us cultivates our own unique sense of beauty. In my formative years, I was exposed to Western pop culture and music. Later on, I was deeply impacted by both Eastern and Western classical music. However, I was only exposed to *kunqu* as a performing art later on in life. I unconsciously began to store Eastern and Western aesthetic elements in my own body. These elements constantly collide with one another as I shoot photos. I rely on my own intuition to spark my inspiration—these sparks are sometimes concrete, other times abstract. When I press the shutter, it is not because I am watching the play unfold, but because my intuition prompts me to do so. In other words, I'm shooting an imagined version of the work on stage.

UDF: 崑曲的“美”是用水袖勾勒出來的。您拍《牡丹亭》裡的水袖舞蹈跟拍《孽子》裡空中舞蹈的絲帶有何異同？

Kunqu's beauty is performed into being through the performers' "water sleeves". How does your approach to shooting the "water sleeves" in *Peony Pavilion* differ from shooting aerial dances in *Niezi*?

XPH: 這兩者水袖與緞帶都是引出「情」的表達，《牡丹亭》驚夢的水袖看似柔情卻是濃郁纏綿，《孽子》的絲帶引出情慾是強烈的，但也纏綿。在拍攝捕捉當下，隨著這兩種情境掌握鏡中的人物情感。

將近二十年的時光，紀錄了白老師的崑曲世界、孽子舞台劇、一把青電視劇，沒想到也同步紀錄文學家白先勇二十年。

Both the "water sleeves" and aerial silks are expressions of "love". At first glance, the "water sleeves" in *Peony Pavilion* seem to express tender sentiments, but also evoke a lingering intensity. Likewise, the silks in *Niezi* spark powerful emotions, while also evoking the tender

inseparability of love. In the moment of shooting, I grasp the characters' emotions by taking these two contexts into account.

For nearly twenty years, I've shot photos for Pai's *kunqu* world, the stage play *Niezi*, and the television series *A Touch of Green*. At the same time, I unwittingly captured the evolution of Pai Hsien-yung, the mastermind behind these productions, over a twenty-year period.

Appendix 3: What Makes Niezi Taiwanese?: A Conversation with Yang Fumin

April 20, 2023

Wenzhou Street (溫州街), Taipei, Taiwan

Fumin Yang (FY, 楊富閔): 溫州街有很多作家，很多故事。這裏住著的人，就像白老師《冬夜》裡面寫的，有大部分就是所謂的那些老教授們，年紀很大了，可能是 1949 那時候從中國大陸過來然後有很多不為人知的心酸，回不去，然後在台灣過了他們的一生。最近溫州街這邊，它的文化的氣息，文化的那種氛圍，有很多咖啡廳，很多書店，在這一帶。白老師的《冬夜》應該就是以《溫州街》為背景。

Wenzhou Street has given birth to many writers and stories. Most of the people living here, as Pai described “Winter Night”, are aging professors, many of whom came over from mainland China in 1949. There are tragic tales behind each. They are nostalgic for their homes in the mainland but cannot return and end up living out their entire lives in Taiwan. Wenzhou Street’s cultural atmosphere is quite bustling nowadays—there are quite a few coffee shops and bookstores that have cropped up in this area. Pai’s “Winter Night” is based on this literary culture.

Ursula Deser Friedman (UDF): 還是一個真實歷史存在的地方。那兩位教授也是真實存在的人嗎？

So this is an actual historical place, and these two professors may have been based on real people!

FMY: 這裏有很多教授，不知道《冬夜》寫誰。但是那是一個縮影，以前是這個樣子。以前老教授住的是日式的老房子。因為以前日本統治，會有很多日式的老屋子。那現在很多拆光了，可是還有很多，待會兒我們可以走一下。白老師寫的《冬夜》的故事應該就是溫州街。那個時候寫的是冬天，到了冬天應該更會有那個感覺。

There are quite a few professors living here, but I don't know which were the two professors Yu and Wu were based on. Wenzhou Street is a microcosm, an elegy to the old times. These old professors used to live in old Japanese-style houses. Due to Japanese colonialism, there are many Japanese-style houses in this area. Now a lot of them have been dismantled, but there are still quite a few left-- we can explore them later. “Winter Night” is set in Wenzhou Street, one stormy winter night, which you’ll be able to appreciate more acutely in wintertime.

UDF: 冬夜就好像你自己老了，到了冬天的的高齡的，畫面感很強。回憶五四運動的事情，沒想到三十歲的人對歷史有如此犀利的理解，很精彩。

Indeed, “Winter Night” seems to metaphorize the state of growing old, it’s quite a vivid portrait of life in our later years, and is also a testament to the May Fourth spirit. It’s amazing to think that Pai had such a keen grasp of history at the tender age of thirty!

FMY: 白老師的書裡面有很明顯的空間。他寫什麼地方，比如說你去的那個《新公園》就是《孽子》的場景。然後他好像也會西門町啊，然後寫台灣大學，然後再寫《溫州街》。

Pai's works are quite geographically and historically grounded. Their settings are quite apparent; the Taipei New Park in which *Niezi* takes place is one example, there's also Shimen Ting (*Seimonchō*), Taiwan National University, and Wenzhou Street.

UDF: 而且《孽子》裡面也有很多台北的場景，比《台北人》還台北。感謝您的分享，沒想到《冬夜》裡面的溫州街真的在這邊。

Niezi is also grounded in many actual places, it's more of a Taipei narrative than Pai's *Taipei People*. Thanks for your thoughts on "Winter Nights", it's amazing to think it was set in an alley right around the corner!

FMY: 我看過 2020 年《孽子》舞台劇，2014 年的版本我好像也有看過。阿青是不同人演的，不是同一個人，然後我還記得 2020 年這個版本還遇到 Covid。突然之間很不容易才完成它的，白老師也會全神貫注。雖然他不是導演但他好像還是很關注。

I saw the 2020 *Niezi* theatrical performance, as well as the 2014 one, if I'm not mistaken. A-Qing was played by two different actors. The 2020 version was delayed due to Covid, it took a lot of effort to finish it up under those circumstances. Pai was extremely involved throughout the entire process, though he wasn't officially the play's director.

UDF: 白老師好像是半個導演。明天我要採訪曹瑞原總導演。我發現 2020 年版本阿籠跟阿鳳會同時飛翔，進行一段驚人的空中絲綢舞蹈，跳得特別好，因為 Covid 的緣故多了很多練習的時間，也多虧吳素君老師的耐心教導。

Pai is the play's nominal director. Tomorrow I'm going to interview the chief director Cao Ruiyuan. In the 2020 version, A-Long and A-Feng soar together on the aerial silks, performing an incredible midair duet. I guess because of Covid, their practice time was extended, also thanks to the choreographer Wu Sujun's patient instruction.

FMY: 他有一幕好像就把人給捲上去，有一個象徵在裡面，就代表那個情感的糾結，可能是纏綿，也可能是糾結，是分不開的感覺。

There's one particular scene in which A-Feng drags A-Long into the air with him, which is quite symbolic, and represents their emotional entanglement, whether lingering attachment or conflict, a feeling of inseparability.

UDF: 尤其是有一幕阿鳳突然降下來.....

Especially in the scene where A-Feng suddenly descends from the sky!

YFM: 突然之間掉下來！

Suddenly whooshes down, out of nowhere!

UDF: 曹導演電視劇裡面有一幕阿鳳臉上露出笑容，被阿龍刺殺的時候，但是舞台劇裡面你也看不到，至少用望遠鏡才能看清楚臉部表情，所以曹導演就用指尖摸了一下阿龍的臉部。作為觀眾當時您的反應如何，有沒有被感動到？可不可以請您對比一下電視劇跟舞台劇？我沒有在現場，所以我不知道當時真實的感覺如何。

In Director Cao's television series, there's also a scene in which Ah-Feng smiles as he dies in A-Long's arms, but the theater-goers wouldn't be able to see the smile. I guess you wouldn't be able to see the actors' facial expressions clearly unless you happened to have brought a telescope with you. Director Cao thus had Ah-Feng reach up and stroke A-Long with his fingertips. How did you react as an audience member? Were you moved? Can I ask you to please share your thoughts on the differences between the TV series and the stage play? I couldn't be there, so I'm curious how it felt attending in person.

FMY: 當時票房很好，有很多人看，那時候我自己反而比較關注的不是那個情感的部分，而是阿青這個角色。阿青是不同人演的，有不同版本的阿青。以前電視劇裡面是范植偉演的，後來莫子儀【2014 舞台劇版本】，後來這次【2020 年】是張耀仁出演，所以有不同人版本的阿青。

Niezi did well at the box office, and the performances were well-attended. At that time, I was captivated not so much by the emotionality of it all, but was rather fascinated by the role of A-Qing. He's played by many different actors, and there are many different versions. Fan Zhiwei played A-Qing in the TV series, then Mo Ziyi took over [for the 2014 TV stage play], and later on Zhang Yaoren [2020 play].

UDF: 我其實一開始沒有發現阿青是不同人來演的，只關注到阿龍從 2014 年吳中天到 2020 年換成了周孝安，演楊教頭的角色從女性演員歌仔戲超星唐美雲到 2020 換成了男性演員廖原慶。說到龍鳳戀的象徵意義，其實我作為美國人不應該用 symbolism 來理解他們的關係。甚至有一些人會說，他們糾纏不清關係象徵了台灣和大陸的關係，或者說《孽子》裡面尋父漂泊在外面的孽子們就象徵那些懷念大陸的國民黨將軍，一直回不到祖國。白老師告訴我，他當時看了報紙上報導的一個真實的故事：一個將軍的兒子殺害了自己的同性伴侶，然後自己被感動就把這個故事發展成《孽子》這部小說。我在想，我們是不是不應該從象徵的層面上去解讀《孽子》，就是一個情愛的故事。

At first, I didn't realize that A-Qing was played by so many different actors. I only noticed that the actor playing A-Long [Wang Kui-long] switched from Wu Zhongtian in 2014 to Zhou Xiao'an in 2020, and the role of Chief Yang switched from the woman opera actress Tang Meiyun to the male actor Liao Yuanqing in 2020. Speaking of the potential symbolism between the dragon and the phoenix, as an American, I have to be extra careful about

interpreting their relationship from a symbolic point of view. Some scholars go so far as to assert that their emotional entanglement symbolizes the fraught relationship between Taiwan and mainland China, or that the sinful sons searching for their fathers symbolize the KMT generals who long for their homes in the mainland but cannot return. Pai once told me that he came across a newspaper report wherein a general's son murdered his same-sex partner in a fit of rage, which inspired him to transform this real-life anecdote into a novel. I'm still wrestling with the question of whether or not it is ethical to interpret *Niezi* from a symbolic level, or whether to take it at face value as a love story.

FMY: 白老師的《台北人》寫的那些場景都是五十年前，因為這本書已經有五十年了。所以很多地方都已經消失了，不能用現在的角度看。

The scenes in Taipei people occur fifty years ago, because it's been five decades since this anthology was written. So many of those places in those stories have long since disappeared, so we can no longer scrutinize them from a modern standpoint.

UDF: 對，這種歷史的滄桑感很精彩。

Yes, Pai certainly has a wonderful eye for the vicissitudes of history.

FMY: 《孽子》主要跟曹瑞原導演有關。電視劇跟舞台劇都是他做的，他導的。然後曹導演他還做了《一把青》、《孤戀花》。

Niezi is mostly Cao Ruiyuan's brainchild—after all he's the one behind both the TV and theater adaptations. Cao also directed Pai's "A Touch of Green" and "Love, Lone Flower".

UDF: 我明天會問一問曹導關於同志議題的問題，因為 2019 年以後同婚法案通過了，我看到 2020 觀眾裡面有很多同性伴侶牽著手過來慶祝。

Tomorrow I'll ask Pai about the gay presence in *Niezi*. Since Taiwan's same-sex marriage bill passed in 2019, I saw many proud same-sex couples holding hands during the 2020 performance, openly celebrating their love.

FMY: 你什麼時候開始讀《孽子》的？

When did you first start reading *Niezi*?

UDF: 大概十年前讀了英文版，但有些地方就覺得，沒太看明白，所以想看原文，中文版。然後來到聖塔芭芭拉以後看到白老師《孽子》的不同版本，就發現《孽子》有不同的稿件，結局都不一樣，每一次白老師都從頭重新抄寫了一遍整部小說。後來發現《台北人》裡面《漫天裡亮晶晶的星星》這篇短篇小說和《孽子》有些相似之處，從此開始讀《台北人》。因為我在大陸北京待了八年的時間，《孽子》就成為我精神上的引領和錨碇。真的很開心《孽子》能夠在大陸出版，那個時候沒有被 censor 掉很了不起。

I first read the English version around a decade ago, but there were some parts I had trouble understanding, so I wanted to read the source text; that is, the Chinese version. Then later on, after I came to Santa Barbara, I encountered different versions of *Niezi* in the library's Special Collections, also with a different ending. For each draft Pai re-transcribed the entire novel by hand, from scratch. I later realized that the short story "Aky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars" from Pai's anthology *Taipei People* shared some striking similarities with *Niezi*, so I began reading *Taipei People*. During the eight years in which I lived in Beijing, *Niezi* became my source of spiritual guidance, my anchor. I'm really happy that the mainland presses published *Niezi*. It's amazing to know that it wasn't censored back then.

UDF: 現在白老師的《紅樓夢》課沒有在 UCSB 開，很遺憾錯過了。如果仔細看，《紅樓夢》的影子和湯顯祖的精神會呈現在《孽子》裡面，抒情的故事，譬如裡面的大官園。

These days, Pai's *Dream of the Red Mansion* course has been discontinued at UCSB. I'm sorry to have missed it. If you read it carefully, *Niezi*'s lyricism and geographical settings, such as Prospect Garden, bear traces of both *Red Chamber* and Tang Xianzu's *Peony Pavilion*.

FMY: 老師在台灣這十年主要是在做《紅樓夢》的推廣。然後他有寫他父親白崇禧的傳記，以及《牡丹亭》的巡迴。

Over this past decade, Pai has mainly devoted himself to promoting *Dream of the Red Mansion*. He's also been writing a biography of his father, the KMT General Pai Chongxi, and taking *The Peony Pavilion* performances on world tours.

UDF: 非常無私，都是為了推廣中國的傳統文化。

Pai's commitment to promoting traditional Chinese culture is extremely selfless.

FMY: 所以後來他自己的書就比較少了，他比較少創作了，他都在做推廣的事情。他就是一個文化的傳承者。所以其實常常可以看到白老師的新聞。但是還有一個原因是，他的書《台北人》跟《孽子》變成了很多跨媒材的電視、電影的舞台劇。所以即便他好像沒有寫新的作品，但是他的作品也繼續被我們再去欣賞和肯定的。

So later on, Pai wrote less and less, since he was so focused on promoting culture. He is a cultural custodian. These days, there's a lot of buzz about Pai. Another reason is that his *Taipei People* and *Niezi* have been transformed into multimedia TV, films, and stage plays. Although it seems Pai has been writing new works, his old ones continue to be appreciated and loved by contemporary audiences around the world.

UDF: 肯定，因為很多人在大會上喜歡問白老師，您為什麼年紀大了不再創作了，再寫新書呢？但我想不是的，這些跨媒體改編也不容易。一方面推廣中華傳統文化精

神，一方面把自己的早期作品改編成舞台劇和其他跨媒體形式，一方面都沒有停下來。不是說你寫的越多越精緻。

Exactly! Many people ask Pai at various conferences, why have you stopped writing? When are you going to come out with a new book? But I disagree that Pai has stagnated—these cross-media adaptations are no easy feat, either. On the one hand, Pai promotes the spirit of traditional Chinese culture; on the other, he's adapting his early works into stage plays and other multimedia forms. He's never stopped. It's not as if the more you write, the more accomplished you are.

FMY: 都在做推廣，很有使命感。來台大這邊沒有錯，因為台大這邊是老師最重要的地方。台大的文學院、圖書館、溫州街，這些都是老師常去的地方。他們年輕的時候做《現代文學》的時候，差不多在 20 歲的時候，都在同一個學校裡，有點不可思議。

Yes, Pai's a huge promoter of traditional Chinese culture. He has an acute sense of mission. If you want to learn about Pai, I think you came to the right place, because National Taiwan University is the most important place for Pai. The Department of Liberal Arts, the main library and Wenzhou Street area all places Pai often frequented. When Pai and his collaborators were publishing *Modern Literature* during his university years, in their twenties, in this very university. It's incredible, if you think about it.

UDF: 他的《牡丹亭》能到美國不容易。這麼多演員，還有他們的道具、服裝，還到了希臘，不可思議。作為外國人，我們看京劇跟看崑曲當然是崑曲好了，很亮眼，更浪漫，因為杜麗娘和柳夢梅的袖子會纏在一起，白老師肯定發揮了自己的創作，他沒有複製以前的表演，而是全新的。

It's also amazing to remember that Pai brought his *Peony Pavilion* adaptation all the way to the West Coast in the states. All those actors, their props and costumes, crossing the Pacific Ocean. They even brought Peony to Athens, Greece! Speaking as a foreigner, I vastly prefer kun opera over Peking Opera. I find *kunqu* altogether more eye-catching and romantic—especially in those scenes in which Du Linxiang and Liu Mengmei's sleeves are entangled. Pai definitely innovated—he didn't copy the previous performances, but rather re-invented the wheel.

FMY: 《牡丹亭》是另外一種思考的方式，它的語言啊、它的音樂啊、它的美術，它是另外一整套中國古典的文學。我們在台灣接觸到白老師的作品，是因為台灣的教科書，我們念書的時候，我們的課本裡面有白老師的文章。我們的學生在學校可以讀到他的文章，而不是說他是我無意間發現的。因為學生都會讀到他的作品，所以他的影響就會很大。我念書的時候，白老師的《台北人》已經出版很久了，所以我們看到的《台北人》、《孽子》都是改編之後的那種形式。比如說我自己先看了《孽子》的電視才回去看了《孽子》的書。

Indeed, *Peony Pavilion* provides an entirely new philosophical framework—it's exquisite language, music, its art—it belongs to an altogether different set of classical Chinese

literature. Taiwanese of my generation first encountered Pai's works in our school textbooks. That is to say, we read his works at school, rather than discovering him on our own. Because Pai has been institutionalized within the Taiwanese curriculum, he is now highly influential. Back when I was a student, Pai's *Taipei People* had been out for decades already, so I encountered this work, and *Niezi*, in their adapted forms. For instance, I first watched *Niezi* on TV before going back and reading the novel version.

UDF: 公共電視台上直播很重要，我沒有想過那個時候同志議題的小說竟然會在一個 Public Broadcasting Station 上，還連續會播了五次，這樣的話同志議題就成為主流文化。這一點很重要，因為普通家庭都能看到同志的人性、人情，為同婚鋪好了路。

Indeed, PBS' live broadcast was essential. I never imagined that a *tongzhi*-themed show would be aired on Taiwan's Public Broadcasting Station, not to mention playing five times in a row on loop! In this way, LGBTQIA+ issues became mainstream. This is incredibly important, because ordinary families came to see individuals in a new light, to see them as people, and witness their deep bonds, thus paving the way for Marriage Equality in 2019.

FMY: 我記得它每天晚上的八點要演，每天都可以看得到，裡面的演員也很厲害。我特別喜歡《孽子》裡面媽媽的角色，在小說也好，在電視劇、舞台劇也好。那個媽媽的角色是台灣一個很厲害的演員，叫柯淑卿，她演得非常非常好。

I remember that *Niezi* was broadcast every evening at 8:00pm. You could watch the show every single night. The actors were amazing. I'm especially fond of the actress playing A-Qing's mother in the TV series (and in the theatrical production). Her name is He Shuqing. She's an amazing actress.

UDF: 而且那位演員一直在說客家話，台語。這個是老師在寫《孽子》的時候已經呈現出來的還是他後來改的呢？因為看英文翻譯版的時候沒有感覺在說台語。而且唐美雲跟廖原慶都一直在說台語。

That actress also spoke a lot in Hokkienese; that is, traditional Taiwanese. Was this local Taiwanese expression detectable in the novel? I couldn't sense the nuances of Hokkienese in the English translation. However, Tang Meiyun (the woman actress playing Chief Yang in the 2014 production) and Liao Yuanqing (the male actor playing the same role in the 2020 production) are constantly speaking in Hokkienese.

FMY: 如果我沒有記錯的話，老師的小說沒有那麼強調所謂的台語，地方性的語言，但是演成電視劇的時候他有強調這個。然後舞台劇也有了，你只能通過講，講對白。就像小說裡面有很多信件，但是那個東西你不可能夠在舞台上重現。那這就是文字跟舞台不一樣的地方。這些寫作都比較涉及到內心的挖掘，然後演成戲的時候有人很容易會歇斯底里，就變成很誇張，尤其是那個媽媽。

If I'm not mistaken, these so-called local Taiwanese languages were not emphasized in Pai's novel, but were rather teased out when *Niezi* was adapted into a television series. And in the play version, the characters often conversed in Hokkien. Similarly, *Niezi* ends in a series of

letters, but that kind of thing can hardly be reproduced on stage. That's where text differs from a theatrical production. These writings are intimate confessions; when they are performed for the theater, they're prone to become hysterical, exaggerated, or melodramatic, as you see in the case of A-Qing's mother.

媽媽後來不是逃了嗎？就去跳舞嗎，在小說裡面？然後她就在一個很髒亂的市場裡面死掉，很髒亂的環境。我覺得電視劇演這個非常好，舞台劇也出來了。我記得是阿青去找媽媽，告訴她弟娃死掉了。

You'll remember that A-Qing's mother became a dancer in the novel, and ended up dying in a dirty, chaotic place. The TV adaptation of those events was fantastic, as was the theater adaptation. I was also quite moved by the scene in which A-Qing goes to tell his mother about his younger brother's passing.

UDF: 我也喜歡最後羅平，阿青新的小弟弟的出現，這是很感動的一個地方，因為《孽子》涉及各種“情”，不光是同志之間的情、還有父子之間的、兄弟之間的情。然後口琴上吹的《踏雪尋梅》的那首歌就加重了這種情感氛圍。

I was also very moved at the part near the end where Luoping, A-Qing's surrogate younger brother, appears. *Niezi* contains many kinds of *qing*—that existing between sons and fathers, and between brothers. The harmonica rendition of “Trudging through Snow in Search of Plum Blossoms” also deepened this sentimental atmosphere.

FMY: 《孽子》舞台劇的主題曲，有一首歌是楊宗緯唱的。

Niezi's theme song is sung by Yang Zongwei.

UDF: 對，《蓮花落》，然後白先勇給當時的作曲人和填詞人退了稿，來回修改了幾遍。這說明白老師是半個導演。

“Falling Lotus Petals”! Pai rejected the lyricist's and composer's initial compositions, and they went back and forth with their revisions. This is a classic case of Pai acting as an honorary director!

FMY: 《孽子》的舞台劇會有很多人在跳舞，而且是那個年代的舞步，是復古的感覺，我很喜歡。那個氛圍，可能跟現在的新公園不一樣。我記得白老師寫《孽子》的時候，他在描述《新公園》他有提到比如說，蓮花池、荷花池畔，那些紅色的睡蓮，旁邊有很多座涼亭，現在都還在。228紀念館就很像希臘神的神殿，那個就跟他寫的很像。那個裡面就是一個博物館，台灣的228事件涉及到種族的問題。這個跟白老師的父親也有一些關聯。白老師的描述應該是那裡比較多同志會在那邊，但現在社會越來越進步了，越來越開放了，但是那個年代老師感寫這個題目，他很厲害，他很勇敢，1971年的時候，那個時候他在美國。

There are many dancers performing dances in step together on stage. They're dancing in a vintage, retro style, which I love. This atmosphere is quite different from today's New Park. When Pai was writing *Niezi*, he described the Lotus Pond, the red water lilies beside the lotus pond. There were many pavilions next to the pond, which are still there today. The 228 Memorial Hall is very similar to a Greek Temple, and contains a museum inside, recording the history of Taiwan's 228 incident, which touched on the issue of race, and was tangentially related to Pai's father, Pai Chongxi. In Pai's description, *tongzhi* individuals were flirting everywhere, but now that society is progressively liberalizing and becoming more accepting, they no longer need to hide. However, at that time, Pai was quite a pioneer, quite courageous. It was only 1971, and he was in the States at the time of writing.

UDF: 在聖塔芭芭拉寫關於台北那邊《新公園》裡面的事情，這個距離感很明顯。

Right, Pai's sense of distance writing about Taipei's New Park from Santa Barbara is quite apparent.

我通過白老師的描述，以為新公園非常大，像一個大森林，或者美國紐約的中央公園，像一個巨大的植物園。

From Pai's description, I actually imagined that the New Park was an enormous jungle, something like New York's Central Park, or an expansive Botanical Garden.

FMY: 說到植物園，你如果有空也可以去兩個地方，一個是白老師念的高中：建國中學，台灣最好的學校，你坐捷運就可以到了，他對面就是植物園。植物園其實白老師也寫過它。植物園看起來就是古色古香的，就是一個好像老中國。

Speaking of the Botanical Garden, I recommend you visit two places: one is Pai's old junior high, Jianguo Junior High, the best junior high in all of Taipei, which you can access via MRT. The Botanical Garden is across the street from Jianguo Junior High. The Botanical Garden has an antique feel to it, just like old China.

UDF: 昨天下午打雷的時候我到了植物園看一看，更像《孽子》裡面的場景。但是因為昨天在下雨，沒有仔細看。

Yesterday I actually went there during a lightning storm, and I found that the Botanical Garden more closely matched the New Park I had imagined from reading the novel. But because it was raining yesterday, I didn't get a very close look at it.

FMY: 植物園跟新公園不一樣。他以前寫的一篇小說《寂寞的十七歲》裡面的場景好像寫道植物園。台灣是一個很熱的地方，會有很多颱風，會有很多天然災害。所以白老師的作品裡面有很多關於熱帶國家裡面的那種感覺。比如說，你看《孽子》裡面在颱風下雨阿，他寫這一群耶娃娃都是颱風天氣裡面的那些頑強的生命力，就是跟這個天氣會有關係，颱風跟打雷的，我想他跟台灣的地理位置是有連接的。他在這一點上呢，他很台灣，就不會跟中國大陸的感覺一樣。他都在寫他在台灣看到的才能寫出

來。比如說我剛剛說的那個颱風，夏天台灣一定會有許多颱風、颶風，然後它造成很多災難比如淹水。

The Botanical Garden and New Park are actually two separate places. Pai's novel "Lonely Seventeen" was actually set in the Botanical Garden. Taiwan has a warm tropical climate, with lots of typhoons, which bring about natural disasters. That's why I say that Pai's works reflect the quintessence of tropical countries. For instance, rain and wind play a central role in *Niezi*. The wind and thunder, are due to Taiwan's geographical location. In that sense, Pai's *Niezi* is very Taiwanese—it would have been an entirely different novel altogether had it been set in mainland China. Pai is writing about what he saw in Taiwan. For instance, Taiwan is battered by typhoons and hurricanes in summertime, which cause many disasters such as flooding.

UDF: 我在想阿鳳的性格你要是不用颱風或者其他天氣去比喻，那感覺會不一樣的。

If you don't use typhoons or other types of weather to illustrate A-Feng's character, the novel's flavor would be changed entirely.

FMY: 阿鳳不是下雪吧。阿鳳是很典型的颱風的孩子。他不可能是下雪的孩子。他不可能是那種高山上面的那一種喜馬拉雅山的那種故事。

Ah-Feng isn't a snow baby. He's a quintessential child of the typhoon, definitely not the child of snow. He wouldn't be a character in the high mountains, stranded somewhere on the Himalayas.

UDF: 我覺得這個角度特別好，我要回去認真看一下《孽子》裡面關於大自然的描述。

This kind of perspective is excellent! I'm going to go back and re-read all the weather and natural descriptions in *Niezi* to tease out their symbolic literary implications.

FMY: 沒錯，這就是地理、風土跟氣候、天氣的比喻跟白老師作品的關係。

That's right, we need to consider the interrelations between geographic, local conditions, climate, and weather in Pai's works.

UDF: 阿青一開始來到新公園裡面，在舞台劇中的獨白是描述公園裡面炎熱潮濕的天氣，然後意境就到位。

When A-Qing first came to Taipei's New Park, his monologue describes the weather's hot and humid weather, thus cementing the artistic mood.

FMY: 所以我覺得白老師的作品是很炙熱的，但是如果從這個角度的話，我們再去回想《冬夜》呢，那《冬夜》的那種孤單和冷就會被對比的很強烈，因為那個冷比喻小

小的島嶼上面，而且台北的冬天很討人厭。冬天有的時候可能就是下雪，又冷、又濕，一直在下雨，所以大家一直都很冷，會得抑鬱症。

Pai's *Niezi* is blazing and fevered. However, the frigid loneliness in "Winter Nights" provides a stark contrast. Using this frigidity to metaphorize the tiny island of Taiwan is an effective stylistic decision on Pai's part. Taiwan's winters are infuriating, snowing freezing, and wet. It's raining constantly, so everyone's cold all the time, leading to depression.

UDF: 骨髓裡面都是冷的。而且《冬夜》這部短篇小說都是黑白的，沒有彩色的，只有到中間才染上了彩色。

So people are cold to the bones! Also, "Winter Night" is a like a black-and-white montage—the only multicolor moment emerges halfway through the story [in descriptions of May Fourth movement poetic fervor].

UDF: 白老師能夠在 Santa Barbara 如此陽光明媚的地方回憶台灣的日子不容易。

It's a wonder that Pai could reflect back upon Taipei from such a warm, sunny place as Santa Barbara!

FMY: 《台北人》是白老師剛回到美國，還沒有定下來的時候。其實好像離開之後才能夠開始寫。《孽子》裡面有很多有趣的設計。《孽子》的最後是很多封信，然後這是一個很有趣的角度，因為這個故事發展到最後，為什麼只能夠用一個寫信的方式把故事給收尾掉？

Also, Pai wrote *Taipei People* when he'd first returned to the U.S., before he had officially established himself in the States. It's as if he couldn't write about Taipei until he had left it. *Niezi* is full of a lot of interesting designs. For instance, it ends with a series of letters—this is an interesting addition. Why does the novel conclude with epistolary fiction rather than traditional narrative?

UDF: 老師您有沒有看過白老師好幾年以後寫的《致阿青的一封信》？他的《紐約客》裡面的《謫仙怨》裡面也包含一位生活在美國的台灣女孩給媽媽寫的一封信。這個很有創意。《舞台劇》也沒有辦法用信件的形式去講述。

Have you read Pai's "Letter to A-Qing"? "A Fallen Angel's Complaint" from the New Yorkers anthology is another quintessential example of epistolary fiction. Li T'ung writes her mother a letter from the United States, which is quite innovative. But this epistolary component couldn't be conveyed in the stage play production.

FMY: 而且寫信是比較內心，但如果你在《舞台劇》要呈現出來，那你不能夠表現，你只能換另外一種方式把小玉跟那些其他故事直接講出來。

Epistolary fiction is an intimate form of literature, but if you employ this genre in theatrical performances, it won't translate well, so the director had to find another way to convey the stories of Little Jade and the others.

UDF: 您現在也是大作家，白老師有沒有引領您的創作，或者給您帶來了什麼啟發？

You're a notable writer yourself. Would you say Pai has guided your creation or inspired you?

FMY: 我覺得白老師給我的啟發，比較不是寫作，而是剛剛說的，他的那種推廣文化的精神。他想去推廣一件事情的時候，是很難的事情，他這麼早也在推廣同志的議題，而且他也對愛滋病修正一些歧視。還有包括崑曲、紅樓夢，等等，他就在忙這些事情。但我必須得說老師的寫作是很了不起的，因為我覺得老師的文字是非常有力量，很漂亮的一種中文書寫。我覺得其實張愛玲也很厲害。好像會有人把白老師跟張愛玲一起比較，對不對？不管是張愛玲或者是白老師，他們都有一個紅樓夢在前面。張愛玲也是紅樓夢的終身愛好者。

Pai's deepest influence on me lies not in the literary realm, but rather in his commitment to promoting literature. Pai takes on quite difficult missions. He defended gay rights so early on, and also righted discrimination and stigma against HIV-positive individuals. He's also been busy with reviving *kunqu* and *Dream of the Red Mansions* for university audiences. Of course, Pai's writing is also very powerful and exquisite. Eileen Chang shares this type of inquisitive meticulousness. Don't some people compare Pai with Chang? Both have also remained lifelong disciples of *Dream of the Red Chamber*.

UDF: 所以白老師是個舞台劇導演、作家、歷史學家，他什麼領域到駕馭。

So Pai is a theater director, a novelist, a historian...he's a jack-of-all-trades!

FMY: 老師的舞台劇，他的所謂的表演藝術，我覺得您從《牡丹亭》一定會涉及到，因為他最早做成表演藝術是一種八零年代的時候的《遊園驚夢》，你也可以去看國父紀念館。因為老師的《遊園驚夢》在那邊演出。所以那算是老師的作品跨媒材的改編的一個很重要的開始。是八九零年代的一個《遊園驚夢》，所以以後才会有後續的多媒體改編。

Pai's stage plays, his so-called performance art also harkens back to *Peony Pavilion*, because his first piece of performance art was "Wandering in the Garden, Waking from a Dream", which was adapted for the stage in the 1980s and performed at the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall. This was the key moment when Pai began his transmedial adaptations. It was this "Waking from a Dream" adaptation dating back to the 1980s and '90s that kicked off Pai's lifelong series of multimedial adaptations.

UDF: 白老師在上海看了梅蘭芳的表演然後自己撰寫成故事，然後又要重新回到台上，很多來回，從台到書再重新上台。

Pai watched Mei Lan-fang's performance in Shanghai and transformed this experience into a story, and then re-adapted the story many times from the page to the stage and back again.

FMY: 白老師以前很喜歡去西門町看京劇的明星。然後他有說因為他父親在被監控嘛，因為政治的關係，所以他們去看戲的時候有時候還會有人跟著還在後面。然後他有說他母親會開玩笑說也會幫那些跟蹤他們的人買票給他們看，《一起進去看吧！》

Pai used to enjoy watching Peking Opera at Shi-men Ting. Because his father was under surveillance for political reasons, when they went to the theater, someone would often be following them closely behind. Pai said that his mother would often joke that she should just go ahead and purchase tickets for their pursuers, chuckling, "Let's go in and watch together!"

Appendix 4: Niezi's Multimedia Afterlives: A Conversation with Cao Ruiyuan

Shangri-La Far Eastern Plaza Hotel—First Floor Café, Taipei, Taiwan

April 21, 2023

Ursula Deser Friedman (UDF): 我聽白老師講，您過四十五歲大壽（其實應該就是您 39 九歲生日吧）自己一個人來到了香格里拉遠東國際大飯店一個人靜靜地喝咖啡看書，然後您正好想要把《孽子》改編成電視劇。您往外一看，玻璃門上正好就出現了白老師的身影，在夕陽照射下像神仙一樣浮現在空中，就像你們兩個人之間的緣份是天意。您“偶遇”白老師的時候，當時有什麼感想？

As Pai tells the story, you spent your forty-fifth birthday (it was actually your 39th birthday) enjoying a quiet cup of coffee and reading at the Shangri-la Far Eastern café. You were planning on adapting *Niezi* into a TV series; glancing out the window, you happened upon the golden halo of Pai's figure reflected against the windowpane, floating in midair like a disembodied supernatural apparition. It seems the two of you were fated to meet that day. What went through your mind that day you encountered Pai out of the blue?

Cao Ruiyuan (CRY, 曹瑞原): 是很巧了，因為那一天的前一個禮拜，就台灣的公共電視希望我幫他們做電視劇，然後我就跟公共電視台講說我想拍《孽子》，結果他們聽了都很害怕，因為剛好 23 年前，離《孽子》電視劇第一次播出已經 23 年了，2000 年的時候。所以，那時候他們很害怕，因為他們覺得那個時候台灣的狀況，同志這個議題完全是不談的，避而不談的。可是呢，我們的朋友，做藝術創作、或者是文化的一些朋友，他們就有一些同志的朋友，然後帶你到一些他們的巷子裡頭，他們會在那個地下室進去，就是一群人躲在那邊的，很暗的暗巷裡頭。然後他們就在一個一個 pub 裡面，完全是他們自己的世界。你就會覺得，你個族群已經形成了，可是外在完全不提。

It was truly a coincidence! The previous week I had just touched base with Taiwan's Public Broadcasting Station to do a TV adaptation of *Niezi*, which terrified PBS. That was twenty-three years ago, back in 2000, when *tongzhi* topics were still quite taboo in Taiwan. Many of our friends in the art and culture worlds were *tongzhi*. They gathered in underground basements and pubs tucked away in dark, remote alleys, in a world all their own. Back then, their fringe society had already taken shape, but it was not publicly acknowledged at all.

同時，那時候就是 AIDS，愛滋病，全世界已經開始說。然後大概大家都跟同志連接在一起，所以他們一聽到我要拍《孽子》就非常害怕。然後大概就沒有結果了。結果，過了一個禮拜我就碰到白老師了。然後我就走過來就跟白老師講說，“白老師，我是您的粉絲！”

That was when the HIV/AIDS crisis, which many people associated with the *tongzhi* community, was sweeping the world. That's why PBS was wary about doing the *Niezi* TV adaptation. We didn't reach an agreement at first. But after a week, I ran into Pai. I went right up to him, and introduced myself, saying “Pai *laoshi*, I'm a huge fan of yours!”

因為我覺得很多都是命運的安排。因為我在上大學之前我是那種，我非常愛運動，我參加了學校的校隊，然後打球。我每天打球，籃球、排球、足球，我都打。可是有一天我一個高中的同學就到我大學的宿舍來找我。結果他們沒有找到我，我應該是在球場，他找不到我。然後他就留了一本書，那本書就是白老師的《台北人》。他就留了那本小說。那是我第一本讀的文學小說。然後我就開始看所有的世界的文學，觸動了我文學的靈魂。我從那本《台北人》就開始看很多存在主義，那些外國小說，我就開始看。

Everything just seemed to fall into place, as if it were pre-ordained. When I was doing my undergraduate, I wasn't the scholarly type—I was an athletic type, very into basketball, volleyball, and soccer. But one day, an old junior high classmate came to the dorms looking for me. He couldn't find me—I was probably out on the sports field, so he dropped off the book he'd brought for me—Pai's *Taipei People*. That was the first full-length literary work I ever read cover-to-cover! From that day forward, I started to devour world literature, existentialism, foreign literature, the full gamut—Pai's book ignited my lifelong passion for literature.

然後接下來，碰到白老師，那我就是想過來介紹說我是誰，因為他完全不認識我。我就說，“我是你的粉絲，然後您的那本小說是我的文學的啟蒙。”然後我就跟他說，“我是導演，然後想要拍白老師您的《孽子》”。白老師說，“真的？我覺得也該是時候拍了。”他就說了這句話了。然後他就說，“我在等一個人。我在等我的朋友來。”

Then later on, I ran into Pai, and introduced myself, because he had no idea who I was. I said, “I'm a huge fan of yours. Your books were my literary Enlightenment. I'm a director interesting in adapting *Niezi* for the screen.” Pai responded, “Seriously? Well, it's about time *Niezi* was made into a TV series.” Then he added, “I'm waiting for a friend of mine.”

這樣子我們三天後，在這裡【台北市香格里拉大酒店一層咖啡廳】同樣的時間我們在這裡碰面，三點後。我記得那天，三點後我來了。他跟我講說，“你就回去跟公共電視台說一下你有見到我，然後我也覺得該是時候拍了。”然後你看看他們的想法，可以再講講看。”

So three days later, we met in this exact same place, [the Shangri-la Far Eastern café], shortly past three-o'clock in the afternoon. Pai told me, “Tell PBS that you met with me, and that I said it was time to shoot *Niezi*. See what they say, and then we can take it from there.”

所以呢，我就再回到公共電視，再跟他們提說，“我碰到白老師。”因為那個時候白老師在台北，大家都以為他是在聖塔芭芭拉，很少回到台灣。我說，“我在台北的咖啡廳碰到他。而且白老師說，該拍了。”所以，那時候他們都很不相信我竟然就碰到原著嘛。然後他們就說，“真的？那樣子你就提一個 proposal，一個提案進來，然後我們再做決定。”

So I reported back to PBS, exclaiming, “I ran into Pai!” Back then, Pai rarely made an appearance in Taipei. Everyone thought he was still back in Santa Barbara. I said, “I ran into Pai in a café in Taipei, and Pai said it’s about time to shoot *Niezi*.” Back then, they could hardly believe their ears. What were the odds of me actually bumping into Pai in the flesh? They were flabbergasted, “Well, in that case, create a proposal for us, and we’ll decide after you present it.”

白老師那天坐下來沒多久他就跟我講，“導演，你可以拍了。”因為哪時候我不認識他，他也不認識我，我就覺得他怎麼唯一的長篇就交給我拍？”那我當然也蠻開心的，大作家就說，讓我那麼年輕的一個導演他就願意讓我拍，我蠻驚訝的。那後來我就開始拍，然後大概過了好幾年，《孽子》拍完，然後過了不久就拍了《孤戀花》、《一把青》。就這樣，我跟白老師就慢慢很熟悉，然後我就問白老師，“白老師，您那時候為什麼就很容易就會說要讓我拍？”我那時候就 nobody。”

After we had sat down, pretty soon Pai said, “Director, go ahead and start shooting.” We didn’t know each other back then, so I could hardly believe my ears when he agreed to entrust me with adapting his only novel for the screen. Of course, I was thrilled to be given such an opportunity as a young director. I was absolutely shocked. So I started shooting *Niezi*, and many years later, after the TV series wrapped up, we did “Love’s Lone Flower” and “A Touch of Green”. That’s how our collaboration blossomed. After we had established rapport, I asked Pai point-blank, “Pai *laoshi*, why did you agree to let me shoot *Niezi* just like that? I was just a Nobody back then.”

他說，“沒有了。我就用了那三天到處去打聽。我對台灣也不熟，就到處去打聽你的 reputation。人家都說你還不錯，還不錯。然後，他剛好那天，一切都是上帝的安排。剛好那天就看到我的一個作品，他看到我拍的一個短篇小說，叫《童女之舞》，它也是一個 lesbian 的短篇。然後剛好那個短篇是白老師他看到的給的最高獎。他是評審。他給的那個短篇最高的文學獎。

He said, “That’s not true. Actually, in those three days after our initial encounter, I asked around about you. I hadn’t gotten the lay of the land yet in Taiwan, so I asked around about your reputation. People spoke highly of you.” Like I said, everything was pre-ordained. That night, Pai also happened to see a short film of mine air on TV, an adaptation of a novelette titled “Dance of the Maiden”, a piece of lesbian short fiction. It happened to win the top literary prize. Pai was one of the judges.

他三天問了很多人，然後剛那天晚上在播《童女之舞》，他最熟的，他才給的一個大獎。他看到這個導演可以改編文學作品。所以，他之後的好幾年才給我講。你看，太多巧合。

Pai asked a lot of people about me; besides, I did the adaptation of a literary piece he loved, which he had just awarded the top prize. He saw that I was capable of adapting literature. But he didn’t tell me all this until many years later. You see, it was all meant to be!

UDF: 您還有一次採訪裡面提到，有一位家長就打電話進來問，“能不能跑一個字幕，某某我的孩子，爸媽了解你了，請你趕快回家吧。”我想請您再回憶一下，這是真實發生的嗎？

During an interview, you once recalled how a parent had called you at PBS, asking “Can you include a subtitle during this evening’s airing of *Niezi*, reading ‘Mom and Dad accept you now. Please come home right away!’” Can you walk me through that story one more time?

CRY: 那時候《孽子》播了大概到一半吧。然後那時候在播音的時候，很多人都跟我講，他們都有看。可是，我知道的就有一些同志，他們都不敢在自己的家裡面看，他們就找一個朋友家，就一群人過去看。他們不會在自己家裡看。然後有一天，我就接到了一個媽媽的電話。她就說她的兒子離家了，然後她應該晚上會看你的電視劇。然後她就說，“你能不能跑一個字幕，告訴他說，“我們希望他能夠回家，而且我們都了解他。希望他能回來。”

Back then, *Niezi* was halfway through broadcasting. Many people told me they saw the episodes live on PBS. But I knew many *tongzhi* who didn’t dare watch openly at home—they would gather at a friend’s place to watch together as a community. Then one day, out of the blue, I received a call from a local mother. She said that her son had left home, that he would likely be watching that evening. Then she asked, “Please run a subtitle, saying ‘We hope you’ll come home. We accept you now. Please come home!’”

然後那個時候我那天就跑，在播音的時候就跑出來了，“誰誰誰，爸媽希望你趕快回家，他們就完全了解你，完全可以接納你。”很動人。那時候，我突然覺得好像除了拍電視之外還做了一點事情，那種感覺。

So I ran the subtitle that evening, “So-and-so, Mom and Dad welcome you home with open arms. We completely understand and accept you now. Please come home soon!” It was very moving. At the moment, I suddenly felt that besides just shooting TV for entertainment, that I was making a real difference in the world. That kind of feeling.”

UDF: 而且 2019 年同婚合法化多虧您拍的《孽子》才能迎來這樣的時刻。

Same-sex marriage was legalized in Taiwan in 2019. This victory was, in part, thanks to your *Niezi* series.

CRY: 對對，整個台灣的社會環境就慢慢地改變了。我那個時候在講，“影視的作品很重要，真的可以讓彼此有一種理解和諒解，互相的一種包容。影視的作品其實好不好是另外一回事。可是它確實可以讓一些人在這裡可以有一點改變。”後來，我想，我拍《一把青》也是這樣子的想法。因為《一把青》，其實那時候白老師，他的那個小說，他不敢寫，國民黨打敗仗就來到這裡。他就用一個非常隱晦、留白的方式來表達。

Yes, Taiwanese society gradually opened up. Back then, I was saying, “Films and TV are very important, because they can help us understand, forgive, accept one another. Whether or not they bear artistic merit is a completely different matter. Changing peoples’ hearts and minds, that’s their primary function.” Later on, I approached the film adaptation for Pai’s short story “A Touch of Green” in the same way. Pai didn’t directly write about the Kuomintang (KMT) fleeing to the mainland after their defeat in the Chinese Civil War. Rather, he opted for a veiled, implied way of recounting this sensitive piece of history.

可是我覺得因為他時候不能寫，也不敢寫，不能那樣寫，可是反而讓那個小說就有一個非常的高度，因為你用一個抽象的方式，你反而讓那些隱晦的事情表達出來。可是我拍《一把青》，我覺得我應該把那個動盪的年代，那群人流落到台灣的故事整個給搬出來，所以它雖然只是一個短篇，我就把它擴大到三十分鐘的一個長篇。我覺得可以讓所有的在台灣有這種本省人跟外省人的這種 conflict 反應出來。那我想，可能讓彼此了解。大家其實都是一個時代的悲劇。整個世界在那種造化之下，生命真的是非常非常脆弱跟渺小，那種蒼蒼。

But I think that because back then Pai couldn’t, or perhaps didn’t dare write directly about the Chinese Civil War, that cast “A Touch of Green” in a symbolic light. Because when you write from an abstract perspective, you’re able to indirectly convey veiled political messages. But when I adapted “A Touch of Green” for the screen, I felt I had a duty to explicitly communicate the spirit of that tumultuous era, the stories of that group of outcast mainlanders stranded in Taiwan. Although this may have just been a short story, I expanded it into a robust, thirty-minute long film. The film captures the conflict between the mainlanders and native Taiwanese, which fosters mutual understanding between these two groups of people. Each generation reflects the tragedy of their era. Compared with the otherworldly powers that transform our world, human life is fragile, tragic, and insignificant.

如果大家彼此互相理解，也許這樣就不會強的對立。那所以我想《孽子》就那樣帶動了，慢慢台灣的這個社會慢慢地，就改變了。大概《孽子》播音完的第二年吧，台灣就開始有同志的遊行。那以前我們聽過同志的遊行可能在舊金山啊，在台灣是不可能有的。第二年，台灣就開始把這個同志的遊行，每年都有，慢慢整個社會就打開了。我想，大概是有一些這樣子的啟發了。那我記得，最好玩的事情是很多人會問我說，“那，你怎麼去說服公共電視？”

If people are able to understand one another, we might be able to avoid intense conflict and opposition. *Niezi* helped foster such mutual understanding, ushering in gradual changes at the societal level. In the second year after the *Niezi* miniseries was done airing, *tongzhi* parades erupted all over Taiwan. We often think of LGBTQIA+ protests as occurring in places like San Francisco, not Taiwan. But a couple years after our show, Taiwanese *tongzhi* protests mushroomed, year after year, which liberalized Taiwanese society. So in a sense, I do think that the show helped better the lives of Taiwanese *tongzhi*. Interestingly, many people asked me, “So how did you convince PBS to do the show in the first place?”

我說那時候我就寫了一張 A4 的紙，然後他們說你大概來 presentation 一下，就簡單的，他們的經理跟副總經理就約了我吃了一頓餐，然後我就跟他們講我的想法，為什麼要拍《孽子》。然後我記得我就寫了一張 A4 的紙，上面就是“三個為什麼。”我說，“為什麼我要拍《孽子》？為什麼要在公共電視上播？為什麼要拿白先勇的小說來拍一個八點鐘播的系列電視？”我就用了這三個為什麼。

I told them that I prepared an A4 sheet of paper, which they asked me to present. The manager and co-manager invited me out for a meal, and I shared my rationale with them. On the A4 paper, I listed my “three whys”. First, “Why *Niezi*? Why PBS? Why Pai’s novel, aired at eight o’clock prime time? These “three whys”.

第一個“為什麼”：《孽子》它不只是同志的小說，《孽子》它是一個文學的作品，因為它已經得到了很多文學獎，然後很多翻譯的文學獎。其實它有一個文學的高度。然後，《孽子》講同志的故事，其實很多文學、很多電影、紀錄片，其實已經在拍了。它不是獨角猛獸。所以其實他就是一個人性的東西。所以我說，其實它是一個文學的一個作品，而且是講人性的東西，它不只是同志。所以《孽子》是可以拍的。

The “first why”: *Niezi* isn’t just a *tongzhi*-themed novel, but a work of literature, which has won many literary prizes for its Chinese version and multilingual translations. So *Niezi* is a work of great literary merit. *Niezi* tells the stories of *tongzhi*-identifying individuals, the subject of many works of literature, films, documentaries, and so forth. *Niezi* isn’t a unicorn, but rather chips away at the very essence of what means to be human. So I told them, *Niezi* is a work of literature, which sheds light on the universal human condition, not just the lives of *tongzhi*. Therefore, *Niezi* is worth making into a TV series.

第二個是，“為什麼是公共電視？”因為公共電視，它是一個 public broadcasting station。你是應該去照顧那些弱勢的族群的。那些少數的族群你更應該去付出你的關心。所以公共電視更應該去播。你說，商業電視台它不見得要播。公共電視台有社會責任的，所以應該是公共電視台來播。

Second, “Why PBS?” Because PBS is a public broadcasting station, which has a responsibility to look after the vulnerable and marginalized. Minority groups are particularly deserving of societal concern. PBS has a responsibility to put them in the spotlight. I said, “Commercial TV stations might not dare air this, but PBS has a societal responsibility to do so. It has to be PBS.”

第三個是，“為什麼應該是白先勇？為什麼你選這個作者”這一點最好笑。他們聽了都大笑。我說，“白老師他是前一百大華人作家的第七名。那前面的作家是誰？張愛玲、魯迅、錢鐘書、沈從文，但是這些人都掛了，都死掉了。剩下這個就還活著。他們聽了就大笑了。然後，另外，這幾個都是大陸作家，只有白老師是台灣作家。那公共電視台就說，“那你更應該拍他！你不拍他拍誰呢”七個大作家裡面前六個都死掉了！

Third, “Why Kenneth Pai? Why this particular author?” My crude logic made them laugh hard. I said, “Pai ranks seventh amongst Sinophone authors. Which authors are in the top six?”

Eileen Chang, Lu Xun, Qian Zhongshu, Shen Congwen. But they've all kicked the bucket. Pai is the last man standing. They all laughed [because I put it so crudely]. "Besides, these other authors are all mainlanders, only Pai is Taiwanese." PBS responded, "That's all the more reason to pick Pai! It has to be him!" After all, six of the seven other greats are no longer with us.

UDF: 在象徵與寫實兩種層面上，如何解讀“龍鳳血戀”？電視劇中，阿鳳死在籠子的懷裡時，臉上浮現對籠子寬容的微笑，在這一刻，他把他的心還給阿龍。可是，舞台劇中，觀眾看不到微笑，就算笑地再燦爛，除非我帶了望遠鏡我還是看不到。但是您設計得很巧妙的是，阿鳳伸出手，試圖觸摸籠子的臉，但在還沒有觸摸到時，已經軟下來，氣數散盡。在這一刻，阿鳳是不是在將他的心還給阿龍？您是怎麼想到要這樣去設計呢？

Can you unpack the Dragon Prince-Phoenix Boy relationship from realistic and symbolic angles? In the TV show, when A-Feng dies in Longzi's arms, a smile graces his face; in this moment, it seems as if he's giving his heart back to A-Long. But in the stage play production, the audience can't detect any such smile. No matter how dazzlingly Phoenix Boy smiled, you wouldn't be able to see it unless you happened to have brought a pair of binoculars with you. But your ingenious solution was to have A-Feng reach up and stroke Longzi's face, but before he could make contact, A-Feng's body softened and he drew his last breath. In that moment, is A-Feng giving his heart back to A-Long? How did you arrive at this particular artistic decision?

CRY: 其實，在拍《孽子》電視劇的時候，有兩個鏡頭對我而言是很重要的。當然，一個鏡頭就是剛剛講的，籠子刺殺阿鳳的時候，我覺得你怎麼去表現他們內心彼此那個愛還是很強烈的？可是問題是，外在的環境不允許。然後問題是，當他刺傷他的時候，他們那個愛還是非常濃縮，那個濃縮的愛，其實怎麼去表現說其實他對阿鳳的愛不會在那一剎那阿鳳的死亡就不見了。我覺得你一定要有一個什麼東西留在他們彼此的心裡。那我覺得其實，雖然阿鳳被刺，但是我覺得他在那個愛這件事裡頭，他是無怨也無悔的。所以我當時在想，他應該是在笑的，他在死去前的那一剎那，他應該是帶著一種微笑。他沒有恨籠子。

Actually, when it comes to shooting *Niezi*, there are two scenes that stood out to me. Of course, one of them was the one you mentioned just now, in which Longzi stabs A-Feng. I pondered over how to convey the powerful love between the two in my TV adaptation. But the problem was that it wasn't yet socially acceptable to directly convey their intimacy. So when A-Long stabs A-Feng, their love is distilled to the maximum. It wouldn't simply dissipate after he died. There must be some mutual love that remained in their hearts. Although A-Feng was stabbed to death, I believe that his love for Longzi remained. He departed without grudges or regrets. So I imagined that A-Feng would wear a smile the moment he left the world. He would be smiling. He didn't hate Longzi.

UDF: 小說裡面好像也沒有微笑。全部是您自己想像出來的嗎？

There didn't seem to be any smile in the novel. Was the smile your own personal interpretation?

CRY: 對，我那個時候覺得自己應該這樣加進去。其實那個是眼神。那個是微笑的動作，那個感覺。那到了舞台劇，你就很難。因為我覺得，如果你沒有【加微笑】，那個一剎就是一個兇殺案，只是一個謀殺案而已，什麼都沒有。可是，如果你有那一排，那個兇殺案不再只是一個兇殺案，它有一個昇華。

Yes, the smile was my own personal touch. It's an expression conveyed through the eyes, the faintest flickering that conveys a half-smile. But this smile was difficult to translate from the screen to the stage. Because I think that without the smile, this would truly become an act of murder. But with the smile, it's more than a murder case. It becomes something more.

UDF: 當時，白老師在報紙上讀到了一個將軍的兒子刺殺自己的同性戀人，是一個真實發生的事情。白老師肯定覺得看到這個笑容，這樣改編是對的。

Pai says that he read about a murder case in a local Taiwanese newspaper—a general's son murdered his same-sex lover. It was a true story. I'm sure Pai was delighted by your smile adaptation.

CRY: 那舞台劇就不可能。那個時候，我想了好久就說，舞台劇就是靠肢體、身體。然後剛好阿鳳就找到一個舞蹈家，張宜君來出演。在那一剎那，就說，“你想在這個時候 touch 一下龍子嗎？你想要再 touch 一下他的臉嗎？”當你快竭盡的時候。所以那個時候眼神不行，就用手。

Like I said, the smile was impossible to realize in a play production. I pondered this predicament for quite some time. After all, plays depend on body language. A-Feng was played by the dancer Zhang Yijun. At that moment, I suggested, “How about you reach up and touch Longzi at that moment? Can you touch his face right before you die? When a look wouldn't suffice, I used hand motions.

另外，可能這個比較不是很多人看得到，就是片頭那個父親把阿青趕走，一直打他、一直打他、一直打他。阿青一直求父親。可是當阿青發現父親的爆裂是不可以治的時候，他站起來，然後在那一剎那，看著父親，父親也看著他。然後兩個父子最後一次彼此的凝望，那個很短。很多觀眾朋友沒有發現。就是他站起來說，“爸！”的時候的那個眼神。然後，不到一兩秒的凝望，然後決定回神就跑。所以那個時候眼神的確信，那個對我而言就是充滿了很多很多的疑惑。“你還愛我嗎？還是你是不可能原諒我嗎？”當他發現父親依然怒視著他的時候，他決定就走。

The second crucial moment, and one which very few people noticed, was the scene at the beginning where A-Qing's father kicks him out of the house, beating him relentlessly, over and over again. A-Qing begged his father to no avail. But when A-Qing's father's rage reached the point beyond return, he stood up, and father and son looked at each other. Their last final gaze was quite ephemeral. Many audience members didn't notice. A-Qing stands up

and cries out, “Dad!”, then the two look at each other. A short gaze, just one or two seconds long, after which A-Qing decides to turn around and run away. A-Qing is confirming the meaning behind the look in his father’s eyes. That moment was full of confusion. A-Qing must have wondered, “Do you still love me, or will you not be able to forgive me?” When he realized that his father was still glaring at him, that’s when he decided to turn around and leave.

UDF: 最後，阿青想要送給父親一本《三國演義》，然後他後來就放在家門口轉身就走了，因為他知道【修復跟他父親的感情】已經不可能了。

Near the end of the novel, A-Qing wants to gift his father a copy of *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. But he ends up setting the book down at his father’s doorstep, and then turns around and leaves, because he realizes that his relationship with his father has already reached the point of no return.

CRY: 對對對。他覺得這不可能，但是他覺得說，“他能做一點什麼？”我覺得那個眼神【說明】那父子除了這種憤怒，父親對兒子的不諒解和對兒子的那種，不管是委屈，還是自己的嘴上不敢去承認，我想還是有一些東西不會只是那樣子。所以，我很想在那一秒的凝視中，其實看到那個父子，他不是陌生人。他們不是陌生人。他們的某種情感是非常 deep inside 在那裡。所以他還是想跟他父親確認，“你真的不能原諒我嗎？你還是愛我的嗎？”可是那一時刻定是很短的。

Absolutely. A-Qing realizes there’s no going back, but he wonders, “Is there anything else I can do to repair our relationship?” The father’s gaze shows he’s incapable of forgiving his son in that moment. Besides, his father might have felt wronged, or maybe he simply couldn’t verbally acknowledge his true feelings. It wasn’t just anger. That gaze proved that they weren’t just strangers. They still shared deep, powerful feelings for one another. In that glance, A-Qing pleads with his father, “You really can’t forgive me? Do you still love me?” That’s what he was checking in that final gaze. But that moment was very brief indeed.

UDF: 而且因為父親自己的處境，離開了大陸，他自己可能也原諒不了自己，或者他自己因為被妻子拋棄了，懷念從前的家，就寂寞了。

Also, given A-Qing’s father’s own personal history, he had his own emotional baggage. He’d fled the mainland, and perhaps he couldn’t forgive himself for certain past events. He was also abandoned by his wife, and missed his former home. He might have been quite lonely.

CRY: 對，他那個時候也是很複雜的。我常常講，那影像的那一秒，其實還是很多很多很多情緒在裡頭。所以，其實《孽子》對我來講，這兩個鏡頭是蠻重要的。

Yes, it was a complex situation. There’s so much contained in that brief gaze. That’s why these two moments in *Niezi* are so crucial.

UDF: 對，無言的表達總是最動人的。而且，阿鳳沒有一句台詞，這樣也是您設計的嗎？就用舞蹈的方式來表達？

Exactly, non-verbal communication is often the most moving. A-Feng doesn't speak a single line in the entire play. Was that your idea, to use dance, rather than dialogue, to convey A-Feng's inner world?

CRY: 對對對。舞台劇，那是我第一次做舞台劇。白老師也很緊張，兩次。一次是《孽子》連續劇、一次是在做舞台劇，都好緊張，因為《孽子》連續劇，畢竟是他的唯一的長篇要被改編。《孽子》拍之前，他已經很久沒有被改編。他以前有《玉卿嫂》啊，可是那已經是好久以前的了。

Absolutely! This was my first time doing a stage play. Pai was quite nervous as well, both times, both when we did the TV miniseries, and later when we did the theatrical adaptation. He was nervous both times, because this was his only novel. Prior to the adaptation of *Niezi*, Pai's work hadn't been adapted for quite awhile. There was *Jade Love*, the film adaptation for *Yuqing sao*, but that was a long time ago.

而且那個時候他重新回到了台灣。所以他對那個《孽子》的改編就很擔心啊。那接下來，就舞台劇，舞台劇他也很擔心，因為第一次嘛，要搬上國家戲劇院，一千六百個人，他也很擔心他搞砸。我記得那時候，很好笑，拍《孽子》的時候，我們就開始工作啊，然後白老師他就有一天他就跟我講，“曹瑞原，我跟你講，如果拍不好，我就跟你去跳海。”我那時候腦筋就一個空白，“他是認真的嗎？怎麼一個大文學家怎麼講出這麼八點檔的台詞？完全不像文學家這樣的話。我後來我才發現，他是認真的，半開玩笑了。

Besides, he had just returned back to Taiwan, so he was especially nervous about the TV adaptation. The stage play was also anxiety-provoking, because it was his first play, and it was going to be performed at Taipei's National Theater and Concert Hall, which seated 1,600 people. He was worried it would be a flop. I remember one funny anecdote, before we had even started shooting *Niezi*. One day, Pai suddenly turned to me and said, “Cao Ruiyuan, I'm telling you, if *Niezi* is a flop, the two of us will have to call it quits and let the ocean take us.” My mind went blank, thinking, “Does he actually mean that? How can an esteemed author come up with such cheap dramatic lines? They don't suit a literary master.” Later on, I realized that Pai wasn't kidding, or maybe he was half-kidding.

UDF: 我也收集了白老師說過的幾句話。有一次，他就宣誓，“我不再要去干涉《孽子》舞台劇：“因為受了教訓，所以這一次我只給意見。反正大家改編小說都是二度創作，要忠於原著是不可能的。那也應該，因為舞台劇語言跟小說語言是兩回事。”

I also gathered a few of Pai's golden lines. One time, Pai swore, “I won't interfere in the *Niezi* stage play anymore, because I learned my lesson last time. This time, I'll just give feedback. Adapting a novel is a second-degree composition, so it would be impossible to be completely faithful to the original. That's to be expected, since the language of stage plays is completely different from that of a novel.”

後來您自己說，“白老師是掌舵者，我游移了，他就把我抓回來。”那我覺得白老師完全退出來是不太可能的，你們肯定會起衝突或者至少理念不合，那你們理念不合的時候應該怎麼樣去解決或者您聽白老師的，白老師說了算嗎？

Later on, you also remarked, “Pai is at the helm steering the ship. If I wander, he’ll steer me back on-course.” It doesn’t seem likely that Pai actually removed himself completely. You must have experienced some conflicts, or at least differences of opinion. When that happened, how did you resolve your differences, or did you just let Pai have the final word?

CRY: 確實《孽子》舞台劇非常非常的艱難。我跟白老師之間的那個 conflict 是很強的。台灣有一個國際的戲劇節，他邀請很多的國外的舞台劇也都來在那個戲劇節裡面演出。那，《孽子》那一次是第一個節目，等於是那個 festival 的第一個題目。很多人都很期待。所以白老師當然也會很擔心。可是說真的，我開始覺得他很強烈想要主導他的想像的時候，我就躲起來，我完全就不見了。白老師就很火，“就完全不想跟我討論嗎？你就完全不見了？”說真的，我那個時候不是不想跟他討論，我是覺得我必須要整理我自己，我在我自己都不清楚的時候，我跟你討論我沒有辦法互動，我只能聽你的，因為我自己都沒有整理好。所以，我完全就躲起來了。

Staging *Niezi* was no easy feat. I did experience intense conflicts with Pai. Taiwan put on an international film festival, inviting many foreign theater directors to stage their plays during the festival. *Niezi* was going to be the opening act. Lots of people were looking forward to it. So naturally Pai was very nervous. But to be honest, whenever Pai wanted to control the final creation, I would bow out. Pai would be furious, saying, “Do you just not want to discuss at all? Why did you just disappear out of the blue?” It’s not that I didn’t want to talk to him, but that I needed to first clarify my own position first. If I was unsure myself, then I wouldn’t be able to interact with him, I’d just have to let him take over. Because I’d be coming from a position of insecurity. That’s why I just removed myself completely.”

而且，我那時候的想法比較簡單，就覺得說，“我想清楚了，然後我先給妳看我做的，我會給妳看一個 presentation，我想每一個 scene 我要怎麼表現，每一幕每一幕要怎麼表現。我會跟你說明。”然後，我會希望說，那個時候，就可以討論，你有很多想法、意見都可以採納進來。我覺得這樣比較有效率。可是白老師可能會以為說，“那時候已經來不及了！”所以他就一直很擔心。

Also, my procedure was quite simple. I thought, “Once I’ve cleared things up on my end, I’ll show you what I’ve come up with, I’ll put together a presentation showing how I’m conceiving each scene, every single act. I’ll explain it all to you piece by piece.” So I’d hope that would become the starting point for our conversation. If you have feedback, suggestions, objections, I’d be able to take that all into consideration, after I’ve come up with my first version. I think this would be an efficient way of doing things.” But Pai might have been thinking, “But then it would be too late!” So he’d always be riddled with anxiety.

UDF: 好像每個人都有自己的不安和擔心，需要每個人先去消化才能平和地討論。

It seems you each had your own anxieties and insecurities. Maybe you each needed to digest on your own before you could come together to discuss in a level-headed way.

CRY: 我覺得一定會有，那就要看一個人的包容力有多強，就彼此的包容有多強有多大。其實我覺得白老師做文學改編很多了，所以我想，他也蠻理解，二度創作的這個導演他的一些心理的狀態。所以我想，他是可以理解的。所以他不會動氣，不會動怒，也繼續做溝通，這樣子的。那時候，我想我會聽他的，但是可能還是會有很多意見還是不相容，尤其可能在一些場面的調度上什麼的。譬如說，我想，文學家、作者，畢竟你如果不是實際的執行者，你以為你看到的那個，你會以為，“你為什麼要這樣表現？”我記得阿鳳在舞台劇，他不是掉到那個天空，然後籠子就跟他講，“阿鳳！”他在訴說他對阿鳳的那種深情。就是，“不要離開我！我要用我的血來洗清你的一切！”

We did eventually amicably resolve our differences. This was a test of our ability to forgive. A test of our tolerance. Pai actually had a great deal of experience adapting literary works. He was very understanding of a director's inner psyche as they approach second-degree creations. So I know he could understand my difficulties. He wouldn't be angry with me. He'd want to talk it through. So I was thinking I'd just implement whatever suggestions he had, but of course we'd have to agree to disagree on many points, especially when it came to transitions between scenes. For instance, a literary author, if they're not actually executing the play at the ground level, might ask, "Why would you choose to convey this in this particular way?" I remember when A-Feng descends from the ceiling in the aerial silks, with Longzi calling out, "A-Feng!" He's expressing his deep feelings for A-Feng. "Don't leave me! I'm going to use my own blood to cleanse your sins!"

因為那時候阿鳳已經在天上。然後呢，因為那段台詞很長，那個獨白很長，然後我是希望他講一完兩句之後，就慢慢地朝著觀眾這邊走，然後朝著一面是朝著阿鳳在天上那個上頭，一面是朝著觀眾，那樣的話，觀眾才可以更切進籠子的情緒。要面對觀眾，不要一直對阿鳳講，因為那離觀眾很遠。讓他慢慢地帶動，好像是對著整個觀眾在講。白老師就不喜歡。他覺得他就應該一直對著那個阿鳳在講。這就涉及到一個很重要一個技術性的問題，因為我想，作家他沒有辦法看到這一點。

By that time, A-Feng had already ascended to the ceiling. And then, because A-Long's monologue was so long, I hoped that after he spoke one or two lines, that A-Long would approach the audience, alternately facing A-Feng up there on the silks, then addressing the audience, so that the play-goers would be fully immersed in A-Long's words. He'd have to face the audience, not just craning his neck to stare up at A-Feng, because that would too distanced from the audience. In this way, he'd gradually involve the audience, addressing them as a whole. But Pai didn't like this set-up. He thought that A-Long should be facing A-Feng the whole time. This caused a thorny technical problem, one which the author wouldn't necessarily be able to anticipate.

我就這樣跟白老師講，“阿鳳那個時候在上面很醜。觀眾在看到很尷尬，因為他馬上就要做下一個動作就掉下來，親吻那個動作，他必須要在籠子在講的那一段，他必須要把自己的腳都纏好，才能從天花板上掉下來。

So I told Pai quite frankly, “A-Feng is a total mess up there. The audience will find it very awkward to stare up at him, because he’ll be preparing for the next move, which is to suddenly drop down and kiss A-Long. So he needs to use Longzi’s monologue as an opportunity to entwine his legs around the silks, so that he can descend elegantly from the ceiling.

《孽子》舞台劇那時候其實他把它改掉。因為我在第二個演出，在2020年，我已經在忙我的另外一個案子。所以《孽子》舞台劇重演，我是偶爾回來修，回來改。我突然發現白老師把它改掉，我很火，我說很醜，觀眾很尷尬。有時候纏不好嘛，那整個觀眾的情緒會被打斷，看到那阿鳳那個動作很醜。我說你要把觀眾的注意力移到前面來，不然很尷尬。而且我覺得到前面觀眾可能覺得更投入一點。他後來接受了，他也理解。

Actually, Pai secretly changed the monologue positioning back during rehearsals for the 2020 *Niezi* performance. I was busy with another production then, so when *Niezi* returned to the stage, I just came back from time to time to implement adjustments. I suddenly realized that Pai had Longzi facing A-Feng the whole time. I was furious. I told him that Longzi’s positioning was extremely awkward and put the audience in a tough spot. There might be mishaps with the silk-wrapping, which would interrupt the audience’s immersive flow. I told him we had to have the audience’s focal point move to the front of the stage; otherwise, the transition would be quite awkward. If Longzi addressed the audience directly from center stage, they would be more fully immersed. In the end, Pai accepted the arrangement. He understood.

我的意思就是說，一個導演跟一個文學作者，文學作者，他可能一直在意也就是說，他文字裡頭的表現啊，文字裡頭的那種情感啊。可是對於一個技術的人來講呢，他有舞台劇的一些困難嘛。他有一些劇場上的一些困難啊。那你就必須要讓觀眾不要看到那個尷尬。你要用你的導演的手法去把它化解掉。所以這個就是導演的工作。所以，大概就是類似這種時候了。其實，像《孽子》電視劇改編的時候，他也在一開始的時候，他也非常火。因為我把《孽子》小說的阿青跟學校工友……

All this is to say that when a director collaborates with an author, the author might be overly focused on his original words and their connotations, especially emotional pathos. But someone on the technical end of the production has to deal with the concrete difficulties of page-to-stage adaptation. Difficulties in designing the theater set, of the actors’ movements. You have to shield the audience from those awkward moments. You have to use your directorial prerogative to iron out these knots. Actually, even back when I was doing the TV production, Pai was also furious, because of how I adapted the intimate scenes between A-Qing and the school’s staff member.

UDF: 是趙英嗎？

Are you referring to Zhao Ying (Death Angel Zhao)?

CRY: 其實，原著小說寫的是阿青跟一個學校的老頭子，學校的工友。那是原著裡頭，阿青跟那個工友在那個實驗室裡頭。那是白老師寫的。那白老師寫這個當然有他的意涵。因為當阿青的父親發現竟然我的兒子跟一個，我是軍隊帶領整個軍隊，我是管理那些小兵的。結果你跟我的一個那種小兵，而且你還是跟一個男生，你是同志，我是一個大將軍，然後你竟然是同志，你那麼不男不女的，而且你跟我的一個部下。那是原著的。所以白老師看到我把他改成趙英的時候，他完全不能接受。說真的，那就平掉了。

Actually, the original novel wrote about the tryst between A-Qing and the older school worker. In the novel, A-Qing engaged in an intimate scene with the staff member in the school lab. That's how it's written in the novel. Of course, this scene had special implications. Because when A-Qing's father, the army general found out that his son had engaged in a rendezvous with one of his subordinates, a male subordinate no less, he was irate. I'm an honorable general, and my son is *tongzhi*, neither male nor female. My own son shacked up with one of my soldiers! That's the scene in the novel. So when Pai saw I had changed the elderly staff member into the school-aged Zhao Ying, he couldn't accept this change. I agree that this altercation definitely flattened the plot.

那就跟一般的同志電影都沒什麼兩樣。所有的同志電影都是那種青春的肉體、青春的張揚。所以這個時候導演就很重要。為什麼導演你要改？很多《孽子》的粉絲、《孽子》的讀者都會說，“導演，你為什麼要改？”那個意涵是很深刻的。那個老兵，那個父親是完全不能認同的一個人，而且妳是同志，而且你跟一個小部下亂搞。所以他非常的憤怒把他趕出家門。很沒有面子。父親覺得被羞辱。我說，“白老師，我懂。可是，白老師，我說，“如果這是一個八點檔，八點的時間在每個家庭的傍晚，如果一般人看到這個阿青，這個男主角，那個等於是第一集還是第二集就出來，就有這一幕，會有很多人就看不下去了。如果這個男主角跟一個老頭子然後，我覺得觀眾—

After I changed the older school worker into Zhao Ying, the TV show became just another one of those *tongzhi* films, which feature youthful bodies and handsome young faces. This is another example of a point when the director plays a crucial role. Why did the director need to alter the characters? Quite a few *Niezi* fans and readers would ask, “Director, why did you have to change this part?” The implications are quite profound. This veteran soldier, someone Li-Qing's father couldn't see eye-to-eye with, turns out to be *tongzhi*, and messes around with his son. This is what infuriates A-Qing's father. That's why he kicks A-Qing out of the house. He loses face. The father feels he's been humiliated. I said, “Pai *laoshi*, I get it. But if this airs on the eight-o'clock channel, the family-friendly evening channel, and families see the protagonist A-Qing messing around with an older man, many people will just stop watching. The audience would just—

UDF: 可能甚至會停播。

And maybe the entire show would be discontinued.

CRY: 而且，即使他繼續看下去，他會不想再看到這個男主角李阿青，他不想再看下去。我覺得電視，你很難。然後，所以我說，我必須要動，我覺得那樣觀眾我比較容易接受，而且會願意看下去。我覺得那個電影也許可以，你改編電影是可以的，因為兩個小時。那個戲劇兩個半小時，然後你可以體會到背後的意涵。小說可以，但是電視劇我覺得不行。畢竟那時候社會還沒有那麼開放，何況還要跟一個老頭子拍出那種親熱的戲，那種鏡頭，我覺得觀眾會覺得不舒服。

Also, even if people keep watching, they might be wary of the protagonist Li Qing, and be reluctant to follow his role. Because the scene with the staff member isn't very family-friendly. That's why I felt I had to implement those changes, so that we wouldn't lose our audience. We wanted them to keep watching. Maybe you could keep that scene in a film version, because it's only two hours long. Maybe it would also fly for a two-and-a-half hour stage play production. You'd be able to appreciate the implications behind the scene. And of course it would be acceptable in a novel, but it just wasn't appropriate for TV. Back then, society was not as accepting as it is now. I thought the audience might be appalled by a scene of passion between A-Qing and the older man. It might have made them uncomfortable.

UDF: 我看過《孽子》的電影版，是別的導演，虞戡平導演的。跟您的電視劇、舞台劇很不一樣，還加入了一個新的女性角色來陪楊教頭，完全不像原著了。當時好像有多次因審查而被刪減。我不知道您當時有沒有看過電影版？

I watched a 1986 film version of *Niezi*, directed by Yu Kanping. It was vastly different from your TV and stage play productions. There was a new character playing the role of Auntie Man, Chief Yang's sidekick. This character didn't appear at all in the novel. Yu's film went through many rounds of censorship. Did you watch Yu's film?

CRY: 我沒有看虞戡平的電影。因為我認為，那個時候台灣，他比《孽子》電視劇還早一些年，更不可能。我覺得很多東西他不可能拍出來。所以我覺得我可以不要看，不要被影響，所以我也沒有看。而且，我聽到很多人的反應之後我就沒有想要看。

他在掛我電話以前就說，“好吧好吧，你把你已經發的寄給我吧。”就有一點不耐放，“好吧，好吧，我看一看。”後來我就從台灣把我剪接的那個阿青跟趙英在實驗室的那個片段發給他。寄到，過了幾天，他說，“我被你說服了，拍得還蠻美的。拍的還蠻動人的。”

No, I haven't seen Yu Kanping's film. It came out over a decade before the TV version. So of course, many scenes couldn't be shot. I didn't want to watch it and be influenced. That's why I chose not to watch it. Also, many people didn't think very highly of the film. All the more reason not to watch it.

UDF: 我看了一些回訪那些演員，然後他們說，我不知道是不是正確的：“導演只是提供了一個大概的情況，給演員充足的發揮空間。”然後就可以有即興表演的成份。您要怎麼給他們 instruction 去做，然後剩下的就要看他們自己呢？

I watched some interviews with the actors. Some of them said things like, “The director just set the scene, provided some basic information, and the rest was up to us to interpret.” This gave the actors free reign for spontaneous improvisation. How did you give them these basic instructions, while ensuring the rest was up to them?

CRY: 其實啊，我的經驗是，因為他們那時候都是剛出道的，不管范植偉，尤其楊祐寧是第一次演出。那范植偉那時有一兩部戲的經驗呢。其實演出的技巧還是很不足的。所以像類似於這種“素人”的演員你硬式要讓他演，他會很尷尬。我認為他會很僵硬。所以像《孽子》裡面那些比較年輕的演員，我基本上都會【這樣】。因為我其實認為你只要給他們情境，然後讓他們可以理解你想要表達的情境，我覺得讓他們自由，你不要說，“你這裡情緒要這樣、那樣。”不是跟那些非常 professional 的演員一樣。因為你硬性要求他們的話，他們是做不到的。所以你寧願讓他們要自在，你寧願要多拍一些。

Actually, many of those actors had just started out on their careers. In fact, this was the debut performance for Yang Youning. Fan Zhiwei had only one or two films under his belt. So they were both lacking basic acting techniques. If you force these amateur actors to act on the spot, the result would be an awkward, forced performance. That’s how I instructed these young actors. If you just give them some clues, set the scene, show them the lay of the land, they’ll be able to take it from there. It’s important to give them this creative freedom. It’s not productive to say, “You need to emote in this or that way.” After all, they’re not seasoned, professional actors. Even if you impose these rigid requirements, they won’t be able to fulfill them, anyway. So it’s better to cut them loose, even if you have to shoot more takes.

那《孽子》還有一個對我而言很大的意義是，當然，對台灣人而言，《孽子》裡頭很多演員都是台灣非常好的演員，都是非常資深的演員。所有的人物都是台灣很棒的演員，可是在那個時候他們都已經老了，或者他們已經沒有什麼機會演出了。觀眾都已經好幾十年都沒有看這些人的表演了。可是《孽子》就把所有那些好的演員都找出來。不管是柯淑勤那個住在那個破舊的那個下面，還是那個房東阿姨，雖然那個阿姨只露過幾次臉，那個阿姨還是很好的演員。

Also, many of *Niezi*’s actors were superstar, veteran Taiwanese actors. These were Taiwan’s *crème de la crème*, but they were getting on in years, so they no longer had many acting opportunities. They might have disappeared entirely from Taiwan’s acting scene for years on end. But *Niezi* provided a platform for these aging actors, put them back in the limelight. For instance, Ke Shuqin, who plays A-Qing’s mother, who lives in that shabby dwelling in the alleyway and her landlady. Although that landlady only showed her face a few times, she’s a fantastic, well-recognized actress!

UDF: 還有唐美雲那個歌仔戲的 star!

There's also Tang Meiyun, that Taiwanese opera star who plays Chief Yang in the 2014 stage play.

CRY: 所以，《孽子》電視劇很重要的是它把很多的演員的那個最後表演的都留下來，因為後來他們一個一個都過世了。大家就沒有再看到他們的表演了。就電視劇把他們留下了很多很多很棒的演員的最後一次演出。我就要把他們的身影留下。因為《孽子》的演員太多了。

Niezi allowed many of these actors to grace the stage one last time. Later on, they all passed away one by one, so audiences were no longer able to see them perform. The TV show hosted some of these great actors' very last performances. I preserved their silhouettes, their images. There are so many talented actors starring in *Niezi*.

UDF: 這麼多版本的阿青，有范植偉版本、有莫子儀版本、張耀仁版本。其實，我一開始以為都是同一個人演的。這好像很難，要重新培養新的演員，然後全部都換掉。

There are many different versions of A-Qing, played by Fan Zhiwei, Mo Ziyi, and Zhang Yao-ren, respectively. At first, I didn't even notice that A-Qing was played by a different actor every time. It must have been tough to train all these different actors, to start from a fresh slate each time.

CRY: 我記得我在拍電視劇的時候，我把范植偉還有這些張孝全啊，這些年輕的演員，其實那個時候我很擔憂，因為我不是同志。

I remember that when I was shooting the TV series, I was worried about how these young actors like Fan Zhiwei and Zhang Xiaquan (Joseph Chang, who plays Wu Min) would perform, because I don't identify as *tongzhi* myself.

UDF: 然後很多演員自己也不是。

--and many of these actors weren't *tongzhi*, either.

CRY: 而且那個時候對同志真的不了解。社會環境裡頭就沒有太多跟他們接觸。所以我記得我那個時候就帶他們到那種 pub，半夜一兩點，然後讓他們去觀察。

None of us really understood *tongzhi* culture. Because of the relatively conservative social environment, we hadn't had the opportunity to interact much with *tongzhi* individuals. So I took the young actors to a pub at one, two a.m., and instructed them to observe.

UDF: 像安樂鄉！

Like the Cozy Nest in *Niezi*!

CRY: 對，安樂鄉。然後讓他們去看，讓他們去感受那種氛圍。然後讓他們跟同志接觸，這樣子。因為我們擔心我們可能沒有辦法去表演。很多演員也擔心，他們不是同志，他們不知道怎麼演。所以我就帶他們去。大概有三天吧。每天就是從半夜混到清晨，然後我們再出來。三天。那三天完我記得我們那一次我們就坐在一起問大家有什麼樣子的感覺，感受啊，然後他們就講說他們覺得怎麼樣啊，他們動作怎麼樣啊。他們覺得很有收穫。可是說真的我跟他們講，“我沒有收穫。可是，我就確定我可以拍。

Right, the Cozy Nest. I asked them to look around and observe, soak up the atmosphere, interact with *tongzhi*. We were worried that their performances wouldn't be convincing. Many actors were also worried, because they weren't *tongzhi* themselves, they had no idea how to carry themselves. So I brought them along to the pub. Three evenings in a row, from midnight to early morning. We didn't emerge until dawn. After three days, we sat down together and everyone shared their feelings. They shared their observations, *tongzhi* gestures, their mannerisms. They all said they learned a lot. But honestly, I told them, "I didn't learn anything new. But I'm confident I can shoot a good show."

UDF: 好像矛盾。

That seems contradictory.

CRY: 我說，為什麼？我沒有收穫是因為我突然發現，男男的同性還是男女的異性那個情感是一樣的。在那個愛情裡頭的那種焦慮、那種忌妒、那種濃烈、其實都一樣，所以我就發現我沒有收穫。其實那個情感是一樣的。你不要去有所分別。所以不管是龍鳳的戀情，我覺得不管同性戀異性戀我覺得他們的感情都一樣。

I asked, "Why didn't I learn anything new? That's because I realized that love between two men is the same as that between men and women. The anxiety, jealousy, passion one experiences in the throes of love are the same regardless of gender. That's why I say I didn't have any new take-aways, because love doesn't discriminate based on gender. You shouldn't treat gay love any differently. No matter whether it's the Dragon-Phoenix love story, *tongzhi* love, straight love—it's the same underlying passion.

我覺得那個情慾的表達，不管你今天拍同性戀還是異性戀，當你要昇華到一個藝術層次的時候，我覺得你當然要小心。要不然，你就拍成 A 片。所以，異性、同性都一樣。我覺得到最後都是一個藝術性的一個處理的方式。

When it comes to expressing passion and desire, no matter whether you're shooting same-sex or opposite-sex couples, when you elevate it to an artistic level, you have to be careful; otherwise, you'll end up shooting porn. So that's why I say that opposite-gender, same-gender love is all the same. I don't want to objectify or otherize *tongzhi* love. In the end, it all boils down to how you approach your subject artistically.

UDF: 白老師說他也沒有寫的像金瓶梅這麼色情，因為 that's not the point!

Pai *laoshi* also said he purposefully didn't make *Niezi* an erotic novel in the tradition of the Golden Lotus. As Pai put it, "that's not the point!"

CRY: 我覺得文學的價值就在它的想像空間。文學的價值就在抽象的、象徵的，然後讀者他有他的想像力。讀者在閱讀文字的時候他會有他的想像，“阿青應該什麼樣子。他們在實驗室應該是什麼樣子！”作者就不用再多琢磨。反正讀者的想像力是很豐富的。

The value of literature lies in its imaginative space. Its value lies in abstraction, symbolism—which readers use their imagination to interpret. As readers imagine the words into being, they might think, “A-Qing is like this. This is how the scene between A-Qing and the older worker must have played out visually.” The author needn't polish everything to perfection, since readers will use their imagination to flesh everything out anyway.

可是這個很危險。讀者的想像力最後面對改編者就是一個挑戰。因為影像很具體，所以他們沒有想像空間。

But this imaginative space is also dangerous, since readers' imagination poses a challenge to multimedia adapters. Cinema is quite concrete, which limits the audience's imagination.

UDF: 寫的時候，天氣的變化可以直接表達出來，可是舞台上不可能突然間就下雨或者是颳風。

In contrast, in *Niezi*, Pai concretely describes the weather, but such descriptions don't carry over directly to the theatrical adaptation, since you can't actually make the rain come down or the wind blow.

CRY: 那時候其實舞台劇有時候很難說啊。我總是說，“我有想法，白老師也有想法。”那可是我覺得有時候真的很難溝通，因為你有些東西真的你純粹的一種感覺。譬如說，舞台劇的那個阿鳳，他是穿紅褲子，可是電視劇是紅的上衣喔！對，電視劇是紅上衣、黑褲子，可是舞台劇顛倒了。舞台劇時紅褲子，黑上衣。那為什麼？因為舞台劇，它完全是肢體，你要看他們的舞步。那個舞步如果是看他們的腳，這個腳如果是紅色的，這個腳的動作，那種曲線是非常的藝術派。

At times, adapting the novel for the stage was truly difficult. I often said, “I have my ideas, and Pai has his.” At times, it was difficult to communicate. At times, you're just relying on your pure gut feeling. For instance, A-Feng wears red trousers on stage, whereas in the TV series, he was wearing a red shirt, paired with black pants. On stage, we flipped it—A-Feng wears a black shirt with red trousers. Why? Because the play relies on body language—you watch their dance steps. If their legs are crimson, then the curved lines of their dance steps will take on a more artistic flair.

UDF: 對，又不是《牡丹亭》，所以看不到水秀和手的動作。

This is the opposite of *Peony Pavilion*, in which “water sleeves” accentuate hand and arm gestures.

CRY: 對，而且上面都是 tattoo，還有它的 muscle，他舞蹈的時候的 muscle。你如果穿著紅色的上衣什麼都沒有。

Right! Also, A-Feng is tattooed—performing shirtless accentuates his musculature—if you obscure that fluidity with a red shirt, then the effect would be lost.

UDF: 但好像還有很多其他的合作者，像李慧娜啊、吳素君啊，所以中間肯定會有人站一邊或者是幫忙舒緩您跟白老師之間的衝突。不

But there also seemed to be many other collaborators, such as co-producer Li Huina, choreographer Wu Sujun, and so forth. Did they take sides, or help to mitigate your disagreements with Pai?

CRY: 沒有啦，其實我想，說真的雖然創作上有一些這種衝突，但是在 deep inside 裡頭，我一直覺得對我而言，白老師就是像父親一樣的。你知道嗎？白老師寫這個《孽子》所有的小朋友都在找家、父親。對我而言，我在創作的這條路上找到了一個父親。其實白老師就是那個父親。父子總是有衝突。

It never escalated to that point. To be frank, although we often clashed over the play, deep inside, Pai has always been a father to me. Do you know what I mean? In *Niezi*, all the outcasts are searching for a home, a father. On the road of artistic creation, I found my spiritual father. Fathers and sons always find something to clash over.

我六歲的時候，我的父親就過世了，然後我家裡是有四個女人的，我三個姐姐，就我一個男生。所以我覺得，某些時候我很渴望，很羨慕我的朋友，他們家有一個父親，然後那個父親可以在他們很多也許很迷茫給他們一些力量。好像一個家庭有一個很強的支柱在那裡。小時候媽媽就帶著我們四個小孩子長大。所以某些時候我覺得白老師對我而言他就是我這個創作生涯的一個父親。而且，我說真的，我一直很感激我可以跟一個文學作者一起創作、我一個導演可以跟一個文學的作家可以一起創作。或者說，作者已經完全不在了。所以是很難得的事情。而且白老師又那麼愛管閒事。過程很不容易了，但是我覺得終究都會讓自己變得更好。

My biological father passed away when I was six years old. There are four women in my family circle—three elder sisters and my mother. I’m the only male. At times, I envied other kids who had a father to inspire and guide them when they strayed. My mother is a powerful pillar holding up our family. She raised us four kids by herself. So that’s why at times I consider Pai my spiritual father along the road of artistic creation. I’ve always been extremely thankful to have the opportunity to collaborate with a literary author in the role of artistic director. Others aren’t as lucky—the author has already passed away. This kind of director-author collaboration is very rare. Also, Pai is the hands-on type, always meddling.

The process was arduous, that's for sure, but in the end, this collaboration pushed me to improve.

UDF: 那回頭看小說的感受應該是很不一樣的，拍過電視劇、也拍過舞台劇，再回看小說，感覺應該就不一樣了。

You must have gotten a new perspective on the novel after shooting the TV series and the stage play.

CRY: 我現在最大的願望就是我再拍一部電影，《孽子》的電影。

Now my greatest aspiration is to do a film adaptation of *Niezi*.

UDF: 我特別期待！因為虞戡平的那部電影，因為 censorship 的原因，同志議題就完全不見了。

I'm really looking forward to it! Especially since Yu Kanping's film was heavily censored—all the *tongzhi* content was cut.

CRY: 我就想拍一部電影。大概全世界的導演，沒有一個導演可以像我一樣一個故事，做電視劇、舞台劇、又拍電影，完全不同的形式。我心裡在想，還沒有跟白老師提。我在想，如果有這個幸運可以再改編《孽子》的電影的話，我覺得哇！對我而言是一個挑戰嘛。三個完全不同的藝術。

With the film, I'd have the feather in my crown. There might not be another director on the planet who's done a TV series, stage play, and film version of a single story. They're three totally separate mediums. This is my personal aspiration—to do the triple-threat. I haven't yet talked to Pai about doing a movie version. If I'm lucky enough to transform *Niezi* into a film, it would be an enormous challenge. Three totally different mediums.

UDF: 這樣非常好，不然的話還得有下一次舞台劇，但已經兩次了，再帶著演員去巡演很累，所以還不如拍一部完整的電影版。票房一定會很高，而且還可以在美國上映！這個很重要。因為舞台劇，我只能看 DVD，也很好，但是畢竟半個舞台劇，半部電影，其實當成電影來看舞台劇，很多人是不理解，為什麼就這麼 minimalist，為什麼這個 set 就這麼簡單，但是拍成電影這個藝術效果就很完整了。

It's a brilliant idea! Otherwise it would just be another theatrical remake on top of the 2014 and 2019 stage play versions. It would be exhausting to do another live circuit of stage plays. You might as well do the full feature film. It's sure to be a hit at the box office. It might even make it to Hollywood! It would be great to have it screen in US theatres, because otherwise, we'd only be able to watch the DVD's for the theatrical production. But it's not the same thing—they're half play, half film. Many of us just approached the stage play recording as though it were a film; many people didn't understand why the stage play had such a minimalist vibe, why the set was so simple. But if it were made into a movie, then the artistic effect would be more robust.

周華健《傷心的歌》MV 找過您作為導演與楊祐寧及范植偉拍攝劇中主題曲，可以算是這部電視劇的延續篇。在街头上，兩人重遇，享受短暫的童話故事，然後在夕陽下分離。所以您已經是一個 mini 電影的導演了。

You directed Zhou Hua-jian's music video, "A Sad Song", starring Yang Youning and Fan Zhiwei. This MV became a sequel to *Niezi*. A-Qing and Zhao Ying run into each other on the street, enjoying a brief, fairy-tale-like existence. They go their separate ways into the sunset. You already have the film director feather in your cap, having directed this mini-film.

CRY: 因為拍完《孽子》很多同志都超迷戀趙英跟阿青的愛情。怎麼那麼短呢，怎麼那麼一點點呢？然後大家都一直對兩個人的愛情感興趣，很像一對啊，跟同志的偶像一樣。然後那時候剛好那個唱片他們講，剛好他們想要推周華健的那首歌。然後那時候《孽子》大概播出演大概半年左右吧，然後一直在重播，一直在重播。所以那時候大家都很 hot，但是他們就沒有找我拍，因為他們沒有這樣想說要拍了。是他們就突然找我拍了，因為那個時候大家好像都認識我這個導演了。他們說，“我們有一首 MV，然後就請導演來拍。”我聽他們那首歌，我就想，“那既然大家都那麼期待，那我來拍【阿青跟趙英的連續篇】。所以 20 年前的那段情，兩個人好像他們隔代的【故事】。

After we finished shooting the TV series, many *tongzhi* fans became obsessed with Zhao Ying's and A-Qing's unfinished love story. Why was it so short? Why just a taste? Everyone wanted to know how the story ended. They seemed like a fairy tale couple, *tongzhi* idols. They initially just wanted to shoot a music video to promote Zhou Huajian's song on his new album. That was roughly half a year after the TV show wrapped up. It replayed over and over on PBS. Even though *Niezi* was still trending, they hadn't reached out to me to do a designated music video. That wasn't the original conception. The reason they asked me to direct the MV was because I was a well-known director by then. They said, "We have an MV we'd like you to direct." I thought, "Well, since everyone's been looking forward to it so much, I'll do a sequel to the Zhao Ying—A-Qing love story. I rekindled a love affair from twenty years ago, a love story from the past.

UDF: 舞台劇裡面的人物會講閩南語、台語、客家話嗎。但我通過看小說，沒有擦覺到人物講的不是普通話。突然就講，因為白老師，我不知道他會不會講？

The actors in the stage play speak Minnanese, Taiwanese, Hokkien...But I don't get the sense that they're speaking non-Mandarin languages in the novel. Where did this come from? Pai doesn't speak Taiwanese, does he?

CRY: 他不會，他只會講廣東話跟國語。因為台灣的語言其實是很多樣的，很多不同的語言。然後台灣的外省人就講國語，本省人就講台灣話，然後還有客家人，客家人就完全是另外一種語言。

He doesn't speak Taiwanese, just Mandarin and Cantonese. Taiwanese languages are quite varied. So-called "Taiwanese" can be classified into many different languages. Taiwanese mainlanders all speak Mandarin, whereas local Taiwanese speak a variety of Taiwanese languages. For instance, Hokkien is an entirely separate language.

UDF: 不是另外一種方言，而是另外一種語言。那他們演員在《孽子》裡面到底在講哪一種語言？我沒有聽懂。

I see, Minnanese, Hokkien—these are all entirely different languages, not just dialects. What language are they speaking in the stage play production?

CRY: 對，台語。

Right, it's Taiwanese.

UDF: 他們都是母語者嗎？

Are they all native speakers?

CRY: 他們都得學啊。

No, they had to learn specifically for the performance.

UDF: 所以是專門為了這部劇訓練出來的新的語言能力。然後這個也是導演的創作嗎？

So was this a special linguistic ability they cultivated especially for the stage play performance? Or is this a reflection of your own artistic vision?

CRY: 其實呢，白老師在寫這些人物的時候，其實它的背景就已經很清楚了。因為那個對台灣還是有一個時代的一個意涵的。阿青的父親是從大陸跑過來的軍人。那大陸這些人都講國語。可是這些人因為那時候有幾百萬人到台灣來。你看幾百萬的男生突然擠到這個小島，他們找不到太太，找不到結婚對象了。所以那個時候的很多這些軍人都會娶那種“三地”的女生，那個 aboriginal。他們就娶那種台灣的女生。

Actually, when Pai was writing these stories, he was quite explicit about the characters' backgrounds. They all reflect a certain *Zeitgeist*—spirit of their age. A-Qing's father was a mainland soldier who came to Taiwan from the mainland. These mainlanders all speak Mandarin. All of a sudden, millions of male mainlanders squeezed onto the island of Taiwan. They couldn't find wives, so many of these soldiers ended up marrying aboriginal women.

UDF: 就好像裡面阿青的母親是“三地”的女性。

A-Qing's mother is born and bred in Taiwan.

CRY: 對對對。她等於是台灣人。那種家庭可能會很苦。這就是台灣的社會。就變成是，有時候夫妻不能溝通。你講的我聽不懂，我講的你也聽不懂。兩個語言不一樣。可是這就是台灣的時代悲劇。就是一個戰爭把一個人的命運都改變了。這些男生就得來到這裡。然後他們為了組成家庭，可是夫妻間就完全沒有辦法溝通，然後生出來小孩，這個也能講，那個也能聽。台灣是非常特別的，因為是這樣子的。所以白老師在寫《孽子》這部小說的時候，其實他蠻終於整個社會的那個樣子，中國的樣子。

Exactly. She's Taiwanese. Those families had a difficult time. This is quintessential Taiwanese society. At times, husband and wife could hardly communicate with one another, since neither could understand what the other was saying. This is Taiwan's epochal tragedy. War changes the fates of individuals. These men had to come to Taiwan to build their families, but husband and wife might not be able to communicate. Their children would be bilingual, speaking and understanding each of their parent's languages. This linguistic situation is quintessentially Taiwanese. *Niezi* is reflective of the situation in Taiwanese society, and even that in Greater China.

UDF: 對，所以很自然他們就會講台語了，不講才奇怪。然後觀眾也會聽懂吧。

Right, so then it's only natural that they would speak Taiwanese. It would be strange if they didn't! The audience must be able to understand, right?

CRY: 對對對。而且會覺得很真實。因為那就是台灣的樣子，台灣的社會。其實在台灣，台語學起來沒有那麼難，因為很普遍，不像你在北京只能聽到北京話。而且你在中國一般只能聽到普通話。在台灣是可以容許【語言的多樣性】。在電視劇也一樣。台灣的電視沒有規定說你只能播普通話。台灣的電視的規定是，你如果這部戲它的背景就是本省你就可以播，然後客家的背景你就可以播。台灣的語言是很鼓勵多元的。所以他們大概都能講幾句，可是你如果要上舞台，你一定要再練習。

Yes. And they would find this linguistic mix to be very authentic. It's a microcosm for Taiwanese society at large. Taiwanese isn't that difficult to learn for local Taiwanese, because it's so widely spoken. It's not like in Beijing, where you might exclusively hear the Beijing dialect spoken in daily life. In fact, in China, you usually only hear Mandarin spoken on the streets. But in Taiwan, linguistic diversity is a fact of life. It's the same for TV shows. Taiwanese television doesn't have a linguistic requirement stipulating only Mandarin is spoken. If your show is set in Taiwan, then you can feature local Taiwanese languages. You can have actors speak Hokkien. Taiwan prides itself on its linguistic diversity. Most Taiwanese people can speak a bit of Taiwanese. Of course, if you're going to perform on stage, you might need to brush up on your skills a bit.

Appendix 5: A Traveler in Search of Beauty: A Conversation with Tu Kuo-Ch'ing

The Coffee Bean in Goleta, California

January 27, 2023

Kuo-ch'ing Tu (KCT, 杜國清): I created a bilingual edition of my poetry, with English on the right, English on the left when I was working revising my translation of T. S. Eliot's selected poems last year. [...] It was Chen Yiyan who helped me. After that, in the same way, I arranged my own translations into a bilingual, side-by-side edition. We are still working on it, but that's the pattern we followed. The full title is 艾略特诗选：荒原、四重奏及其他观察 *Ailüete shixuan: huangyuan, sichongzou ji qita guancha* [Selected Poems of Eliot: *The Waste Land, Four Quartets* and Other Observations]. *Four Quartets* is one of Eliot's masterpieces...those are difficult poems to translate. It was a great challenge, and I am glad that I was able to finish it. Those are all masterpieces. This is a new volume of Eliot's poetry in Chinese translation. It also contains *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* and *the Waste Land*.

Ursula Deser Friedman: Generations of future students will be reading your translations of Eliot in Chinese!

KCT: My translation from half a century ago is still required reading for Chinese students. There is no question, its value transcends its time. After half a century, the publisher...asked for a new edition, including representative poems, including *The Waste Land* and *Prufrock*. These are the two major ones. I wrote an essay reviewing the eight Chinese translations of *The Waste Land*. At that time, after seeing *Wasteland* has about eight different translations in Chinese, I wanted to make a survey of that. It's a poem of over 400 lines, I cannot compare everything, so I just compared the first stanza of each translation. The very first line of *The Waste Land* is: "April is the cruelest month."

This opening line really distinguishes my translation from others. "April is the cruelest month." Any elementary school or junior high school kid who knows enough English should be able to translate it. 四月是一个残酷的月 [lit., the month of April is the cruelest month]. But 四月是一个残酷的月 [April is a cruel month], to my ear, is not poetry. It's a translation, but not poetry. I had to do something different from all the others. This 月 is repetitive. 四月是最残酷的月份. 月份 in Chinese we use for the calendar. Even though there were other translations, none of them were to my satisfaction. Actually, when I did the translation of *Wasteland*, I hadn't read the other translations. In fact, they actually came after mine. In a way, it's the poetic sensitivity I had, so I changed the 四月 into 季节[season]. In prose, you can say, 是最残酷的季节. But that's prose. That's not poetry. You need poetic sensibility. The way I handle is 四月是最残酷的季节 [lit., April the cruelest season it is]. "April is the cruelest month." I was surprised to see that I follow the original rhythm very closely. It wasn't intentional. Because in Chinese "是最残酷的" is prose, but my rendition "最是" is poetic language, following classical Chinese. In classical Chinese, the famous line is from Li Houzhu (李后主): "最是仓皇辞庙日/The day when I say goodbye to my ancient temple...this was the hardest time in his life." He used 最是仓皇辞庙日, 最是 is the original

wording...you may think that was accidental, but because I am familiar with classical Chinese, the echo in my mind. And then, I'm not alone.

Actually, there's another poet, you know, Xu Zhimo? I really like Xu Zhimo as a poet. He has a famous poem called *Sayonara*. He has many poems under the title *Sayonara*, and in that poem, Xu Zhimo says 最是那一低头的温柔, that rhythm, is Xu Zhimo's poetic rendering, but if you want to change it back to prose, it should be: 她那一低头是最温柔的. But that's not poetry, so he changed it. You see the difference. So in my mind, 最是 has two sources [one being Li Houzhu, the other being Xu Zhimo].

My basic idea is not just a literal translation, but rather the effect. If the original line is poetry, then in translation, it should be poetry as well. That is my basic principle. Due to the linguistic differences, there is no way to follow the original exactly. If you could [follow the source text exactly], that would be ok, but usually it's not possible, because of the differences between the two languages. So I don't want to be bothered by the linguistic structures of the original, but rather appreciate the poetic effect. This is my basic principle.

UDF: You collaborated with your friend, Robert Backus, to translate your poetry into English.

KCT: Robert Backus, do you know him? He was from Berkeley, an American with solid scholarship in Japanese Studies. It took him more than ten years at Berkeley, they tried to keep students there for many years. So there's no doubt about his Japanese scholarship. I got along very well with him. As we started to get to know each other better, besides the journal, I asked him to help me with my translation, the translation of my own poems. I'm not a native speaker of English, I translate word-for-word from Chinese, but my translation from the Chinese, to a native English speaker, is not poetic enough. So based on my initial translation, which is more literal, Robert fixed my translation, so every line had to pass through his poetic sensibility. That's the way we collaborated. His reading of the Chinese text is based on Japanese.

UDF: So not knowing the source text language becomes an advantage, in Robert's case?

KCT: His understanding in Chinese is based on Japanese. And sometimes he would misunderstand the Chinese, based on the Japanese, which shares the same characters...He helped me not only with these four poems. I wrote three, four poems about Tiananmen, all of which he was the co-translator for. I selected those "Jade Smoke Collection" poems based on the idea that they had fewer allusions. Those I selected, published in the journal, are the "Jade Smoke" poems without too many allusions.

Robert Backus is a paragon of a scholar, humble and profound. He's big like a Buddha, he can tolerate a lot of things. Whenever I have a difference of opinion with him, he'd never get angry at all. He's open to my suggestions [...] when I wasn't satisfied, he'd say, "Let me consider, see if there's another way." We'd keep going until I was satisfied. This type of partnership is very rare. I had an experience in another time of collaborating with a scholar-translator. He'd say this is the only way to do this, there is no other way. But I don't believe

there is no other way. Compromise is the ultimate “beauty”. Perfection is always impossible. Acceptable compromise is the best way. Both translation partners have to be on equal footing: have equally weighted scholarship, equal understanding...on both sides, not just unilaterally. Otherwise, you may insist on just one way of translating.

An understanding based on the Japanese reading of Japanese characters, sometimes can be illuminating. I’m open to that, if he makes a better poetic sense, that should be respected, knowing that is a better interpretation. Readers’, translator’s understanding, sometimes can be better than the author’s initial intention. Once the poetry is printed, is out, it is subject to the reader’s interpretation. Often it is difficult to draw a line between which is the original and which is the translation. I believe that the poetic effect should transcend linguistic concerns. The English translation often reads better, is more poetic, than the original version.

UDF: I love this poem, “Embroidered Zither”, which you wrote based on the famous line by Li Shangyin: “For no reason the embroidered zither has fifty strings”. 天荒地变之后，我的心仅有五十弦/在这人间弹奏出/生命的哀歌 [“After earthshaking changes/my heart has only fifty strings left/in this human world/to play/ a sad song of life”]. This poem renders a wonderful image.

KCT: The rain is like a harp, like an endless number of strings. The universal harp, with all the rain as strings, makes music. The wind, which sweeps through, allows the strings to make music. It projects the individual harp onto a universal scale. The background is the whole universe. Sadness is [portrayed] against the universal universe. And afterwards, the music is gone. When everything is quiet, my heart is still echoing.

UDF: Shi Tiesheng also wrote an entire novella entitled *The Strings of Life*/命若琴弦 (lit., Life is Like a Banjo String), about a blind master-disciple’s quest to break one thousand banjo strings, but you managed to capture this entire cosmic feeling in one short poem!

KCT: In poetry, poetic sensibility is difficult to learn. You can improve your craft with learning, but you have to have poetic sensibility. I can see you do have that poetic sensibility...

At the moment the Tiananmen Incident occurred [...] time was frozen. This is a very interesting point. That is the dramatic moment. And actually, that kind of continuity of moments, one moment after another, that’s the sense of time passing. But for poetry, I tried to capture the dramatic moment from the beginning. After the first moment, it becomes part of the past, becomes history, history keeps on changing. I try to go back to the original dramatic moment. For the four poems about Tiananmen, I tried to get the image of the moment when it actually happened. This type of poetry usually is very visual. At the time, I was back from China in the United States; actually, before June 4th, a few days before I was in Changsha [Hunan, China] visiting, and the whole atmosphere was very tense. I was afraid that I wouldn’t be able to leave China. I went to visit Zhangjiajie, to visit the mountains. Anyway, after I came back, just a few days later, on TV I was watching every day—Where were you at that time?

UDF: That was before my time. I wasn’t born yet.

KCT: You are so young. I forgot about that.

UDF: But my grandfather happened to be traveling in China at the time with my mother, and they locked them in a foreigner compound because of the incident.

KCT: So a similar experience to mine. The whole atmosphere was tense. Something was going to happen. Everyday on TV—

UDF: They would replay the image, of the students getting rolled over by tanks.

As They Happened: Three Poems on the Tiananmen Incident
Translated by Kuo-ch'ing Tu and Robert Backus
Earth Flower

Military transport trucks on the streets
soldiers scattered here and there
from the distance the sound of the tanks
rolling rolling closer and closer

A taxi driver spoke
to the soldier by the roadside saying:
Hey didn't they say no troops would be used
to confront the people
how come the guns now aim at...

No sooner had he spoken than
a bullet swept past the front of the car
blasting open an earth flower
smoking on the road
That soldier
burst into laughter
(June 20, 1989)

土花

运兵车 在街衢
到处散布士兵
远方隆隆 传来战车的
輪聲

一个计程司机 对着
路边的士兵说：
喂 不是说 军队不是用来
对付人民的吗

现在枪头 怎么……

说时迟 那时快
子弹掠过 车前的路上
暴开出 一朵
冒烟的土花

那士兵¹
哄然大笑了²

KCT: My poems on Tiananmen are based on what I saw on TV, on the news. I tried to present it as what I saw on TV. I'm not a journalist. I didn't follow the events to trace what happened. To me, the poetic moment has to be a very dramatic moment, and also meaningful. And that meaning is subject to the readers' interpretation. But I just present the scene, let the scene speak for itself. That's my general technique. This could go back to Chinese poetic ideas about 情 *qing* and 境 *jing*. *Jing* 境 is the scene, and *qing* 情 is the feeling.

UDF: The image of the soldier shooting at the ground, blasting open an earth flower, and the soldier ~~the~~ bursting into laughter, does speak for itself. Everyone saw the image of the tanks rolling over the students, but you capture this through a succinct image. Your poem was written on June 20, 1989, only sixteen days after the Tiananmen Square massacre.

KCT: How does a poet express personal feelings? I have to express personal feelings by means of describing the scene, events, all those things that happened at that time. This goes back to T.S. Eliot's idea of the *objective correlative* ["a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion"]. He used a fancy term, but what he meant was symbolism. *Objective correlative*—it means to be *relevant*. What does it mean to be objective? It means, not subjective. What does it mean to be "not subjective"? That means, it could be the object. And the image can't exist without the object. You use a concrete object to symbolize, to convey or express more abstract ideas or feelings. But you have to be as sophisticated as Eliot to create a term like that [*objective correlative*]. But I created a similar term, 意象徵, which is my trademark. For me, an image must have a concrete object as a vehicle. Without that concrete object, the symbolic meaning does not exist. It happens that in Chinese, symbolism, we call *xiang zheng* 象征. 象 means the object, the image, the form, the appearance. Usually, it has to be a concrete object, to be called the 象. Do you know, image, in Chinese, we called it 意象. It means, "the image, of what you have in mind". The mental picture you have in mind is the image. These two terms both use 象: *xiangzheng* 象征 and *yixiang* 意象. I combined both of them and created a term called 意象征. That means, 意象 has to have the symbolic significance. This is a poetic view, a poetic

¹ Translated by Robert Backus in *Taiwan Literature—English Translation Series*, no. 44. Special Issue on Tu Kuo-ch'ing. Ed. Terence Russel. Taipei: National Taiwan University Press, 2019, 147-148.

² Selected from *Guangshe chengfang yuanzhao wanxiang: Tu Kuo-ch'ing de qingshi shijie* 光射尘芳：圆照万象：杜国清的诗情世界 [Radiance Penetrates the Dusty Realm, Illuminating All Pheomena]. Taiepie: National Taiwan Unviersity Press, 2010, 141-143.

methodology. When I write, I try to express mental pictures of personal feelings. I have to appeal [to emotions] by using the image. Let the image speak for itself. The symbolic meaning is implied in the image. So I still have a hard time translating this as a term in as clever a way as “objective correlative”. In Chinese, it’s perfect, as 意象征, and in English—

UDF: Imagistic symbolism?

KCT: Imagistic symbolism or symbolic image? A symbol with an image. An image as a symbol or image symbol.

UDF: You’ve invented many new terms, such as [lit., world Chinese writing], 世华文学 *shihua wenxue*, in dialogue with Shih Shu-mei.

KCT: Shih Shu-mei is known as the inventor of the term “Sinophone”. She and another scholar invented the term together. She was not alone. Anyway, she put in a lot of effort to explain the idea of the “Sinophone”. “Sino-phone”, like Anglo-phone, Franco-phone, that is defined, by nature, by linguistic features. And I find [the term] very limiting. Again, this depends on my view of poetry. Poetry is not just about the language. Poetry has to be rooted in language. But language isn’t everything. There’s the image, the idea, the music [...] Language is just a means, it’s an important part, for sure, but you can’t exclude all the other elements of poetry. Poetry has to be written in a language.

This language, say, Chinese, is different from the English language. In Chinese, we do have a fixed classical concept to explain the Chinese language, and Chinese characters. The Chinese language comprises three components: *xing yin yi* 形音义; that is, the form, the sound, and the meaning. These three are combined together. In poetry, when using the Chinese language; namely, Chinese characters, you have to pay attention to these three aspects. When it comes to literature, or poetry in particular, you cannot just deal with language alone. So you have to go with *shi-Hua* 世华, rather than Sinophone 華語. Besides, *shi-Hua* can be expanded—*shi* means worldwide; for instance, *shi-Tai wenxue* [Worldwide Taiwanese literature]. Taiwanese literature is not necessarily written in the Taiwanese language. Taiwanese literature cannot be defined by the language; otherwise, you get into trouble, because the Taiwanese language is not unified. There is Hokkien—there are over fifteen aboriginal Taiwanese languages. So 世華 goes beyond the language, so that includes all of the cultural aspects. That’s the potential of *Shi-Hua*’s connotation.³

UDF: You have many poems about wandering and the exile experience. I wanted to ask you a question about your experience of exile and how you conceptualize your poetry. You composed these lines, “My wandering spirit circles into a question mark”. And in the Mountains and Rivers Poetry Collection: “Where is home?/Is it where I was born?...As I wander in the cold wind of the northern country/where is my home?”

³ For further discussion on Shi-Hua, see: Tu Kuo-ch’ing. “Sinophone Literature and Shi-Hua Literature.” In *Taiwan Literature—English Translation Series*, no. 44. Special Issue on Tu Kuo-ch’ing. Ed. Terence Russel. Taipei: National Taiwan University Press, 2019, 3-6.

KCT: There is no answer. No answer is the answer, because it's a question mark. The question mark is the answer! The idea is that I left Taiwan long ago, and even the poem about the migrating bird, that's one of my earliest poems. *I'm still chasing the question mark.* That poem suggests the attitude, the definition of my life, in two ways. One is, as a wanderer. The other is, I'm a traveler, in search of beauty, or *Xunmei de lüren* 寻美的旅人 [A Traveler in Search of Beauty]. *Xunmei de lüren* later developed into my aesthetic code. So this is related.

As a wanderer, there are two ways to be in search of aesthetic beauty. This concept came from a poem. This concept, *Xunmei de lüren* first appeared, in my poem, “the traveler” 旅人 *lüren*. That is the time when I defined myself as a traveler not looking for money, not looking for social status, but [rather] looking for the moment, the aesthetic experience. The beauty of nature, the beauty of human nature—human nature, good, bad, evil—deeper beauty, not just physical. So as long as I'm still wandering, I'm still in search of the meaning of my life, I'm still a traveler in search of beauty. When this book, *Xunmei de lüren*, was written, my friends in Beijing twisted the title, joking: “Tu Kuo-ch'ing, you are looking for *Xun meide nüren* [in search of beautiful women]!” That's a pun.

UDF: This is one of my other favorite poems of yours, comparing the island of Taiwan to a great whale. I'm quoting from this beautiful poem, entitled “Taiwan's Tail”:

整个台湾尾 竟然动起来
五百年来的心头 鱼尾撇波
极欲远离海峡 奔向太平洋
未来 开阔天空

And the whole of Taiwan's tail
has begun to move
Four hundred years of heartfelt desire
in the flick of its tail
Its intense wish is to leave the straits behind
and flee into the Pacific
Into the future
into the vast ocean and sky (2009, trans. Terrence Russel)

UDF: So it's the idea of the whole island wandering.

KCT: I have to say that I am just reflecting the view of many people in Taiwan. I try to reflect their feelings, rather than my political position. Because for four hundred years, we Taiwanese left the mainland, settled in Taiwan, many of them tried to go back, many of them settled in the local place. The history of Taiwan is about 400 years long. I'm talking about those immigrants to Taiwan in the past. That's their wish. They tried to leave the mainland. Physically, I know it's impossible, for the fish to swim away. But this is a metaphor. You see, scientists will not consider that Taiwan is physically able to drift away and turn into a fish, but when we talk about poetry, we cannot remain fixed in science. In my [...]

theoretical essays, I talk about *surrealism*. This idea I borrowed from Baudelaire. Actually, I should be considered a surrealist poet as well, because in a lot of my poems, you find that suddenly the poem implies surrealistic imagery. There are many poems that jump from reality to a higher level in surrealistic imagination. For poetry, you have to have imagination. Imagination is possible because it's not realistic. If it's realistic, then that would be realism. Surrealism makes imagination possible, justifiable. The surrealistic element in my poetry is something you cannot neglect. That makes my poetry very creative in building imagery. That issue about realism and surrealism. My basic assumption is that surrealism exists just because there is realism. You are not satisfied with realism. It is fixed. It already exists. If it already exists, it is not a creative world. If you create anything that is nonexistent, that's poetry. So poetry fundamentally has to be surrealistic in order to be creative.

In my article, "What is poetry?" I talk about the concept of *chuangzao* 创造, which implies 无中生有 *wuzhong shengyou*; that is, you create something out of nothing. If you create something that already exists, that's not creative. That's why, in my poetry, I try to create something new, something that exists for the first time. So to imagine Taiwan as a fish that tries to swim away towards the Pacific Ocean instead of the Taiwan Strait, this is an imagination. "Strait" is too narrow, so then we need to turn to the broader world. All of this is just the imagination. The tail of the fish flicking is very powerful. That image comes from Li He 李贺. Li He says that "an old fish flicks its tail", so I applied Li's image to that of Taiwan.

Taiwan's tail looks a bit like a whale tail [...] Some people may think I write too many poems about love, about the imagination, about my own wishes. That's one side, I do not deny it. But actually, there's one group about my poetry about reflecting on reality. Reality can be a natural scene, a social event, what's happening in the world. I'm not writing objective descriptions about what happened. That's journalism. That's historical recording. I'm not writing history. I'm not writing journalistic reports. I don't have to base my writing on the facts. I use the facts, what happened in society in reality, as a stepping-stone to jump to imaginary, to a higher level.

Very few people have noticed my efforts in this respect. This is *sur-nature* in Baudelaire's term. Poetry has to create something that doesn't exist in nature. This is also a kind of belief in creative writing. I took a hint from Li He. Li He has a wonderful, creative line.

Li He said, "天若有情天亦老, 笔补造化天无功" [lit., if Heaven had feelings, it would have grown old. My pen complements nature, and Heaven gets no credit]. These two lines are famous quotations from Li He. Meaning: "We suffer, that's why we get old, but Heaven is eternal. If Heaven had feelings, it would grow old." The next line means that he's competing with nature. He believes that my creative pen can create something nature cannot. This idea, to me, insists that creative writing has to be creative enough to create something that does not exist yet. This is tantamount to Baudelaire's *sur-naturalism*. This is how I combine East and West. East and West are both talking about the same thing, it all depends on whether you are clever enough to create a new term for the same old truth or reality.

KCT: Let's talk about travel poetry before we move to Huayan. *Guangshe chenfang: yuanzhao wanxiang: Du Guoqing de shiqing shijie* 光射尘芳：圆照万象：杜国清的诗情世界 [Radiance Penetrates the Dusty Realm, Illuminating All Phenomenon: The Poetic World of Tu Kuo-ch'ing]. Taipei: National Taiwan University Press, 2017.

This is my last collection of poetry, a thick volume including 85-90% of my work. This book classifies all of my poems into different categories, which should include all major aspects of my poetry from different angles. Just one category is “travel poetry” [...] My travel is not limited to mainland China and Taiwan, but also Canada and Mexico. I didn't travel to Europe that much. My travel poems make my poetry transcultural, transnational [...] Speaking of Huayan Buddhism, we have to mention the concept of symbolism. Today, it's so common to refer to something as 象征, as if everyone knows what symbolism is about. Do you notice that in traditional Chinese poetry, there was no term for symbolism. This is entirely a new concept not found in traditional poetic terminology. This term was coined by a Japanese scholar of the Meiji period, Nakae Chōmin (中江兆民). He tried to translate the German aesthetics into Japanese and ran into these kinds of symbolic techniques, so he had to create a term. So he created the Chinese compound 象徴 *shōchō*, 象 *shō* meaning the existent object; 徴 *chō* meaning the object's symbolism—what it suggests or indicates. So you have the object and what it suggests or hints at, either directly or indirectly.

Symbolism was brought into China during the May Fourth period, and everyone took it for granted. But at the same time, the translator's contemporary, a Japanese poet named Kambara Ariake 蒲原有明, he was considered a symbolist poet of the Meiji period [...] In other words, symbolism originated in France and became an international phenomenon. Symbolism was introduced into China and into Japanese as well. That was the subject of my graduate research dissertation. I was so happy to find out that Hariyaki was so heavily influenced by French symbolism. He translated Baudelaire's *Correspondences* into Japanese by using the four characters called *wanfa jiaoche* 万法交徹涉. This is a very important, basic concept. Baudelaire's basic concept of symbolism is translated by Hariyaki using this Buddhist term. *Wanfa jiaoche All dhamma (thing/object) interpenetrating*. That's a clever translation. All objects, interpenetrating, corresponding to everything. Nothing in the world is isolated. Everything is related, cause-and-effect.

UDF: The concept of interrelatedness—interpenetration—is reflected in your poem “The Gold Lion”, which ends with the lines: “Just as all moons reflected in water are derived from a single moon/and one moon appears in all waters...”

KCT: This is a Buddhist metaphor, based on a Buddhist argument. The term, gold lion/*jin shizi* 金狮子—how do you look at it? They say the gold lion is gold, but not a lion. But they also say, it's a lion, it's not gold. It's impossible for it to be both. The same logic applies to the term *xiangzheng* 象征, or, in my own formulation, *yi-xiang-zheng* 意象征. It can be *yixiang* or *xiangzheng*, depending on how you combine the characters. How can they combine? This is a basic philosophical concept of the one and many. Huayan was also responsible for introducing the basic philosophical concept that one is many and many is one. How could one be many and many be one? This argument is based on common logic, but the

arguments are varied. The explanation is that, when you want to get to number 10, you have to start with 1 (1, 2, 3, 3, 4, 5...). Without the 1, you don't get to 10. So 1 is implied in 10. That is essential. 10 takes 1 as essential, so 1 is 10 and 10 is 1. It's a basic philosophical argument. When we apply this philosophical concept [the one is many] to symbolism, it's exactly the same pattern. When we say a symbol refers to an object, the object is a specific signified, is one. The object is reflected in many possible symbolic meanings. That is the many. Symbolism actually all boils down to one and many. Many is one and one is many. All of this is very interesting to me. It's about perspective, epistemology, how we view the world. It's an ontology as well.

UDF: That explains why you start with the image, not the words. You said at the beginning of our interview, “the image speaks for itself”.

KCT: In response to Baudelaire's *Correspondences*, I provided a Buddhist, Orientalist concept of symbolism. Although Baudelaire's *Correspondences* has already been universalized, I am able to provide a different version from a Buddhist viewpoint to add to the general concept of Buddhism. This calls scholars' attention. My Buddhist interpretation of symbolism adds something new to the universal understanding of Baudelaire's symbolism [...] I am one of the Chinese translators of Baudelaire. There is a book on Baudelaire's influence in China that includes my articles on Baudelaire. This book is now going to be translated into—back to—French. That is, to me, particularly significant, because of my Buddhist view of *Correspondences* will be transmitted back to French scholars, who will know that there is a Buddhist Oriental version of Baudelaire's *Correspondences*. Of course, the inspiration came from the Japanese Meiji poet.

I wrote a poem about this, entitled 万法交徹 *wanfa jiaoche*. This poem is based on a Huayan worldview. Huayan has a beautiful metaphor, in order to prove one is many and many is one: Indra's Net. What does that mean? Indra's temple is covered by a net made from pearls. The image is pearls. I had an argument about this with Robert Backus. In round one, I used the word “pearls”, which he changed to “jewelry”. But jewelry, to me, doesn't have the concrete image of roundness. I like the idea of round pearls.

UDF: I also like the idea of pearls, because they reflect light.

KCT: Anyway, in Huayan, the idea is that because the temple is made from a net of pearls, each pearl reflects all of the other pearls. All of the images are seen in one pearl. One is many. So one is enough to include all. And then, on the other hand, one is reflected in all the others. So one is many, many is one. The pearl is a metaphor.

UDF: This metaphor is brilliant, because if you want to explain the concept of *sunyata*, you need to have an image to explain.

KCT: It's easy to understand with an image. 1 and 10 is too abstract. But when you say one pearl reflects, or is reflected in, all the others, you can immediately understand that 1 can be 10. One can be many and many can be one. The web of the sky studded with pearls spreads starlight—the reflection of every pearl reflecting all the other pearls, all implied in each one.

The pearl's reflection within the pearl within the pearl... This is the explanation I offer whenever I'm asked about my poetic philosophy: 诗人的心/遗落人间的一颗明珠“The heart of a poet is a drop of bright pearl falling from the Heaven”. That's why the title of this anthology is *Guangshe chenfang, Yuanzhao Wanxiang* 光射尘方, 圆照万象, *Radiance Penetrates the Dusty Realm, Shines on All Objects Around*. When the poet writes, the pearl reflects the ten thousand phenomena in his one heart. I tried to have my poem *wanfa jiaoche* be compared with Baudelaire's *Correspondences*.

UDF: In your article about translation, you open with the crystalline metaphor talking about how the translation reflects rays of light. You said that the rays of light shining from the translation should be radiant and crystalline. It reminds me of Indra's net and the pearl metaphor.

KCT: Unconsciously, perhaps, because they were written at different times. I think they are relevant, because at least to me, it's consistent to think that way.

UDF: In this article, you also talk about Ezra Pound, and the ideas of translatability and untranslatability.

KCT: Ezra Pound created three terms: *melopoeia*, *phanopoeia* and *logopoeia*. Actually, to my Chinese mind, it's the common sense of 形音义: form, sound, and meaning. Pound created three terms to say the same thing. I follow the argument. I agree that poetry has these three aspects. As long as it is written in language, inevitably you have to have those three aspects there. In terms of the relationship between the three, I don't mean that they are exclusive. They should be combined. They are not mutually exclusive terms. There is no language without sound, no language without meaning, no language without form, concrete or abstract. That's impossible.

I believe that excellent poetry has three essences, or *sānmèi (sāmadhi)*, namely: *zhixing* 知性, *ganxing* 感性, and *yishuxing* 艺术性 (intellect, emotion, and artistic sensibility). This is the hidden secret of poetry.

The reason I say some poetry can be more translatable than another kind is because visual poetry will capture the effect more effectively in translation. The musical aspect is the most difficult one to capture. Music depends on sound, which is difficult to imitate in foreign languages. So if you want to be a well-translated poet, you had better write more imagistic poetry, but not to the extent of excluding the sound and meaning.

There are three types of poets: one who tend towards the musical aspect of poetry. They write beautiful words, arranged in such a beautiful sequence, but you don't know what they really mean. There are some Taiwanese poets like that. I understand what they are doing, but that is not my preferred mode of expression. Emphasis on meaning could be philosophical and abstruse to understand. Some try to appeal to visual effect or metaphor. One is a mental picture, as in an image. The other is a physical form.

There is a type of poetry called “concrete poetry”. I do have some poems that fall into that category; that is, Chinese characters arranged in such a way that their appearance suggests

the meaning. The third category of poems focuses on the meaning. They can be very philosophical [...] you have to arrange the words so that they sound like poetry, but at the same time, it has to have a deeper philosophical meaning. So that is what I mean by three types of poetry. I try to combine these three aspects, but I think my poetry is strongest in imagery, but at the same time, I don't neglect the reason and the musical quality. All my poetry is very rhythmic. Coleridge says that poetry is "the best words in the best order". The problem is, what are the best words or the best order?

UDF: I wanted to ask one last question. What kind of music do you like to listen to for inspiration?

KCT: I like listening to American country music because of the lyrics. I have quite a collection of CD's. When I moved out of my office, I put them on the first floor of the building for students to pick up. I like the way these country artists express their feelings, emotions, and love in a creative way. Of course, I also listen to classical music, but I don't follow the more complicated musical devices that much.

Appendix 6: At Home on the Road A Conversation with Ha Jin

Chicago, Illinois and Foxborough, Massachusetts (online via Zoom)
November 10, 2022

*This critical interview is forthcoming in the *Journal of Literary Multilingualism*

Nowadays so many homes rise in your mind,
all in places you have never been.
Your dreams of the future and your longing
for the past are nothing but fantasies
of how to stop being a stranded traveller.

—Ha Jin, “Missing Home” (Jin 15)

Abstract

In conversation with Ursula Deser Friedman, Jin reflects upon the process of “rewriting” his poetry and prose, branching into philosophical reflections on the (un-)translatability of these respective genres, the Sisyphean quest for “home,” and literary multilingualism as an antidote to political censorship. Jin’s observations on carving out a hybrid linguistic niche paint (self-)translation as creative *transmediation* across mediums, languages, genres, and temporalities. In this interview, Ha Jin elaborates on his campaign to democratize English by writing against the grain, while reflecting upon multilingual literary creation and his immigrant identity at large. Jin’s foreignized linguistic aesthetics destabilizes the hegemony of English *globalese* by challenging the assumption that birthright automatically bestows a superior command over one’s “native” language. Jin’s reflections on writing, translation, wandering, and exile paint the Self as a cosmopolitan subject occupying an interstitial *Transwriting Zone* at the crossroads between multivalent linguistic and cultural identities.

Disclaimer: Interview Format

On November 10, 2022, I spoke with Professor Ha Jin (哈金, *nom de plume* for Xuefei Jin 金雪飞, b. 1956) over Zoom from Chicago’s Chinatown. The acclaimed Sinophone poet, novelist, and translator responded to my oral interview questions from his Foxborough home, located some 30 miles south of Boston, Massachusetts. With Ha Jin’s permission, I later transcribed and lightly edited our spontaneous colloquial utterances for clarity, comprehensibility, and conciseness, a version of which appears in the pages to follow.

Introduction: Contextualizing Ha Jin’s *A Good Fall* into English

Having served in the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) as a radio telegrapher at the Sino-Soviet border, Jin is no stranger to the front lines. The “Ha” in Ha Jin’s pen name reflects his affinity towards his favorite city, Harbin (the capital of Heilongjiang province, bordering Russia), an homage to his *Dongbei* (Northeastern) identity, enabling him to reconsider Sinophonicity from the frontier. Jin first learned English from an evening radio broadcast

program; he went on to earn both undergraduate and graduate degrees in English in mainland China, before completing his doctorate in English at Brandeis University in 1992. Two years later, Jin earned his MFA in fiction at Boston University, where he currently serves as the William Fairfield Warren Distinguished Professor of English. Though the bulk of his works are banned in mainland China, they have taken the (Chinese-)American, Sinophone, and émigré literary canons by storm, joining the ranks of his idols Lin Yutang, Vladimir Nabokov, and Alexander Solzhenitsyn. Jin's glittering list of accolades includes the PEN/Faulkner Award, the Flannery O'Connor Award for Short Fiction, the Asian American Literary Award, Four Pushcart prizes for fiction, a Kenyon Review Prize, and the National Book Award, among others.

“Necessity, ambition, estrangement” (GoGwilt and Jin). Ha Jin cites these three factors as the impetus for his controversial decision to write about the Chinese immigrant experience in a *translationese*-style English. By defamiliarizing both Chinese and English, Ha Jin weaves a hybrid, mobile linguistic identity, one which transcends geographical, linguistic, and temporal anchors and reconceptualizes the quest for a utopic “home” as a perpetual journey without a destination. For decades, Jin's numerous novels, short story collections, and essays have garnered robust followings of English-speaking and Sinophone readers alike. Numerous scholarly studies have examined his self-translations from English into Chinese through case studies of *A Good Fall/Luodi* 落地. However, Jin's whopping seven volumes of English language poetry, the most recent collection of which is *A Distant Center* (2018, Copper Canyon Press), remain woefully understudied. In contrast with what he describes as a word-for-word approach to translating prose, Jin, in his Chinese–English self-translation poetry, leverages innovative metaphors, stylistic devices, and images to innovate and hybridize both the Chinese and English languages.

Jin's source and target texts form a pair of palimpsestuous mirrors that reflect and refract in-between linguistic and cultural identities. Such linguistic uprootedness echoes the dispossessing nature of language, cracks open the mystique of the “mother tongue,” and posits an “aesthetics of defamiliarization” whereby the (self-)translator embraces the foreign Other at the core of the shifting self—or is it the otherworldly Self—haunted by the all-too-familiar Other?

—Ursula Deser Friedman

Ursula Deser Friedman (UDF): In a [2017 interview](#), you told Ron Charles, “I wrote two books of poems in Chinese and then rewrote them in English.” Then Ron interrupted you, marveling, “You do your own translations!” You clarified: “Not translations. I *rewrote* them. You can't just *translate* them” [emphases added].

These remarks inspired me to compare the English language versions of your poems published in *A Distant Center* by Copper Canyon Press in 2018 with their Chinese language counterparts in 路上的家园 *Lushang de jiyuan* (*Home on the Road*, 2017). I found that you cut entire lines and added fresh new metaphors, in keeping with English language aesthetics.

Your poetry is often associated with China's twentieth-century Misty Poetry movement, which pushed back against the Cultural Revolution's prohibitions on artistic production. How do your English translations—recreations, rather—launch a poetic revolution? Do you observe aesthetic differences between Chinese and English?

Ha Jin (HJ): Many rhetorical techniques work in poetry, but not necessarily in prose. Or perhaps they work in Chinese, but they may not work in English at all [...]. Each language has its limits. I did play a free hand in rewriting the poems [published in *A Distant Center*, Copper Canyon Press, 2018]. Basically, as long as the revisions could improve the poem, I would implement them. But there are also a lot of poems that would be impossible to translate [...] so I cut them [from the Chinese version]. In Chinese, also, in fact—there’s a mainland selection of my poetry [哈金新诗选 *Ha Jin xinshi xuan/Ha Jin: New and Selected Poems*], and also two books published in Taipei. For political reasons, many poems could not be included in that book. Therefore, there is quite a bit of room for the author to exercise flexibility when translating or rewriting poetry.

UDF: Some of your poems seem to indicate that we shouldn’t romanticize the notion of exile as an exceptional condition, something that’s automatically going to make you a brilliant writer. The uncertainty exiles face is also uncomfortable, often stiflingly so. How does one, as an exile, or just someone living in a place other than the one in which they were born, deal with this uncertainty?

HJ: That’s new. We [the Chinese people] didn’t typically wander beyond our national borders. Once you enter a different culture, a lot of things are new. In a way, from the very beginning, exile always has been part of human experience. It’s a painful process. For some exiles, the process of exile is liberating, because they transverse boundaries and broaden their worldviews. But of course, exiles first have to suffer in order to improve their lives.

UDF: One of my favorite poems of yours, “The Choice of Exile”, contains these brilliant lines, “Don’t dream of taking root somewhere else. / Once you start out, you have to live like a boat, / accepting a wandering fate / drifting from port to port / to port...” And then in Chinese there’s one more line added, “流亡的选择” [*liuwang de xuanze*, lit., “the choice of exile”] to bring the poem full circle.

I particularly enjoyed the hybrid aesthetic in your novel *A Free Life* (2007), where you end with Nan Wu’s poetry. Does your identity as a poet influence your hybrid, defamiliarized aesthetic in your novels as well?

HJ: Absolutely, especially at the line level. Poetry is more difficult, because you have to be aware of all of the possibilities, the limitations of the language, all the weight of the language. It does affect my prose, of course.

UDF: In your 2017 interview with Ron Charles, you stated, “English can accept all kinds of Englishes, as a literary language, as opposed to Chinese, which might differentiate between the written literary language and a broad range of spoken languages.” This notion of plural, defamiliarized Englishes reminds me of your poem, “Missing Home” (see the interview’s epigraph for the final stanza), which is about attachments to “homes” real and imagined, past, present, and future. In the Chinese Preface to *Luodi* 落地, you state:

[...] my father was in the military, and we moved around a lot growing up, so I can’t

say definitively where “home” is for me [...] Since I couldn’t [return to] my hometown, I channeled this feeling [of nostalgia] into the Chinese translation of *A Good Fall*, in order to build a little “villa” in my mother tongue. This provided a bit of respite along my arduous journey. (Jin 2012, 3–4, translation mine)

I wonder how you would define “home” as a self-exiled writer. In the 1960s, the 1980s, and in the new millennium, have your views on “home” changed?

HJ: They have developed, to a certain extent. When I first came [to the United States], I didn’t plan to stay on; I planned to finish my degree and then go back. Home for me is the place where you’re from, which for me, is back in China. But gradually I became an exile, then an immigrant. You have to build your own home over time, you have to strike roots in a new place, so one’s sense of home is constantly evolving.

UDF: In *The Writer as Migrant* (2008) you put it eloquently, “Since most of us cannot go home again, we have to look for our own Ithakas and find ways to get there” (Jin 2008, 85) and then rearrange our personal landscapes as we go. Have you found your personal Ithaka yet, or do you think the search for a homeland is a perpetual journey without a destination?

HJ: I think it’s a lifelong journey. I don’t think there is a destination. Because home is imagined, you don’t know exactly where it is.

UDF: Almost two-thirds of your writings have been either censored or banned, at least in mainland China. Some critics have even accused you of “betraying the motherland” through the mere act of writing in your non-native English, even though there’s an entire tradition of authors writing in a language they’re not born into—Vladimir Nabokov, Samuel Beckett, Lin Yutang, Eileen Chang, and so forth. How do you respond to this idea that English can only sound one way, and that it’s supposed to be naturalized?

HJ: Well, I don’t respond, because there is always a political machine that engenders that type of criticism. At the moment, English is being condemned right and left. The Chinese government is attempting to suppress English. Automatically, writers who write in English are basically *personae non gratae*. None of my works are in print anymore in China, not even Li Bai’s biography [*The Banished Immortal: A Life of Li Bai (Li Po)*, Pantheon Books, 2019]. They have all been pulled, all except for my *New and Selected Poems*, because the poems were written in Chinese originally and I self-censored myself by omitting passages critical of contemporary Chinese politics.

UDF: One of my favorite novels of yours is *The Crazy* (2002). The book exposes the “personal interests that motivate the individual and therefore generate the dynamics of history” (Jin 2002, 410). You explain that the Tiananmen massacre occurred before you were finished with the novel and took the plot in an unexpected direction. You once served in the PLA in the early 1970s. What was that experience like, seeing the army turn on its own citizens?

HJ: In a way, the value system collapsed, because the idea had been instilled in us that the

People’s Army was “of the people, would protect the people, serve the people.” But now, everything was reversed, so that was very traumatic. For me, in fact, that book was my first book I started in English, but I couldn’t finish it—I didn’t have the skill. But after many years, the Tiananmen massacre shook the nation, so I realized the madness was not just personal, there’s also national madness. I wanted to incorporate that into the book.

UDF: In my course readings, I stumbled across a brilliant piece of yours, “Zhou Yucai Writes ‘A Madman’s Diary’ under the Pen Name Lu Xun” (Jin 2017), a dramatized account of the circumstances under which Lu Xun conceptualized “The Diary of a Madman.” Later on, I read *The Crazy*, and thought, “This is a brilliant adaptation of Lu Xun’s “Diary of a Madman” for the modern age!

HJ: —laughs

UDF: Your English-Chinese self-translations include *A Good Fall/落地Luodi* (2009/2012) and *Ocean of Words: Army Stories/Haobing 好兵*[*A Good Soldier*] (1996/2003), which you co-translated with your wife, Lisha Bian (卞丽莎). You also self-translate your own poetry from Chinese to English. In your preface to the Chinese language edition, you revealed that the only creative liberty you took in self-translating *A Good Fall* into Chinese was to add one joke for which there was no English language equivalent. You didn’t change anything else in the Chinese version?

HJ: No, the Chinese version [of *A Good Fall*] was a very faithful translation, a verbatim translation. Prose translations are often very faithful to the original. On the other hand, I don’t translate my novels, because I would have to immerse myself in the translation, and I wouldn’t have time to write anything else. I just don’t have the luxury of devoting myself to a longer translation project.

UDF: Were there any other factors motivating your self-translation—such as revisiting traumatic memories, or perhaps controlling the final production? Were you anticipating that the Chinese translation of *A Good Fall* could be published in mainland China and Taiwan? Did you hope that Sinophone readers would all encounter the book in Chinese?

HJ: Besides pragmatic reasons, there were other concerns. For prose, I always took translatability as a yardstick, so I did the translation because I wanted to be very, very faithful to the original, so the Chinese reader could see what the source text was really like. And that’s important, because they can judge by themselves whether these stories are realistic, whether they actually reflect their own existence.

UDF: So, in a sense, these stories recount Chinese immigrants’ everyday struggles to achieve the American Dream in Flushing, New York, which makes them particular to a certain subset of the American immigrant community. But at the same time, these narratives are also extremely relatable to a broad subset of readers, both in the United States and abroad, and contain universal, even existential themes.

HJ: Yes. I read some readers’ comments to the Chinese booksellers, “At first, I laughed at

these stories [because they contain dark humor and often recount implausible events]. But upon deeper reflection, I realized that beneath their humorous veneer, these stories are actually about us. Our life.” Readers’ recognition of themselves in my stories is precious to me.

UDF: At Brandeis, you wrote a doctoral dissertation comparing the aesthetics in American poetry with those in the Chinese aesthetic tradition. In this dissertation, you cite Hegel’s description of poetry as “the universal art of the mind.” (Jin 1993: 4, as cited in Hegel 1920: 120) What’s your position on the translatability of poetry and of prose? Is one mode easier to translate than another?

HJ: Prose is easier. The added dimension of sound makes poetry extremely difficult to translate. Because the languages sound different, it’s very hard to recreate that physical aspect of the original. I look for what can be used in the target language to create something that resembles poetry. But prose basically recounts the story of human experience, so as long as you make that transparent, and it is readable, that would be fine. For me, translating prose becomes almost like routine work.

UDF: In *A Free Life*, Nan Wu, the protagonist, comments that there are just certain abstract ideas in English that are hard to convey in Chinese, and vice versa. Do you see the two languages as fundamentally different?

HJ: Yes, they are very different. The Chinese language, on the one hand, is detached from reality; on the other hand, it can be very physical, close to experience. For instance, there are a lot of words about sensations and emotions, words that do not exist in English. English is a speculative language, containing a lot of abstract ideas.

UDF: Nan Wu also says that the idea of “solitude” is very difficult to convey in Chinese. Are certain words suppressed from the official Chinese lexicon to emphasize collectivity over individuality? Do you think that language determines thought to some extent?

HJ: Yes. Acquiring a new language and living in a foreign country often causes us to adapt to new mannerisms and body language, even new values and judgments. In this sense, language does affect people deeply. You mentioned the idea of solitude. For the Chinese, there’s no such concept. They translated Márquez’s *One Hundred Years of Solitude* as 百年孤独 *Bainian gudu* (lit. “One Hundred Years of Loneliness”), which carries a negative connotation. But in English, it’s a different kind of connotation, an almost positive quality.

UDF: Exactly! In English, “solitude” is the state of being alone, but rather than loneliness and absence, the term often connotes freedom and self-reflection. In Chinese, however, there is no single word for describing “solitude” in a positive light. *Ningjing* [宁静, tranquility] and *gudu* [孤独, loneliness] might be approximations, but they hardly capture the individualistic process of introspection and soul-searching conveyed by these concepts in English.

I am also fascinated by your exquisite bird descriptions: When the monk, Ganchin, in *A Good Fall* is deciding whether to commit suicide, seven plump sparrows appear, attempting to peck through fluffy popcorn kernels strewn across the street. In “A Composer

and his Parakeet,” the composer dives into the New York Harbor to rescue his beloved parakeet. In “The Bridegroom,” the narrator observes two outcast sparrows trailing their flock upon discovering that his son-in-law Baowen has been “diagnosed” with homosexuality. In *A Free Life*, Nan Wu raises doves, inspiring a poem on his dreams of freedom and self-fulfillment.

What inspired the bird descriptions in your works? What role do birds play in your life?

HJ: Both human beings and birds are tough, resilient animals. In a way, most immigrants are reduced to the animalistic level. You have to follow your instincts, sharpen your own physical and mental ability to survive.

By chance, I came across an article about a painter who had a parakeet, but the bird was killed in a traffic accident, and to process his grief, he painted many, many pieces of the bird. He viewed the bird as his child. He actually called the bird his son. I combined all these [prototypes] and recreated the cultural scene in the Flushing neighborhood, in Queens, New York. Then I created an island in “A Composer and his Parakeets” inhabited by exiles. But in the Chinese translation, they suppressed the word, “exile” [...]. The story, however, was well-received in China. It won the first prize in 人民文学 *Renmin wenxue/People’s Literature* [China’s oldest literary magazine, established in 1949]. I was invited to go back to receive the prize, but I couldn’t return to China because the consulate refused to issue me a visa.

Acknowledgments

I consider it a great honor and a privilege to have had the opportunity to converse with Ha Jin and would like to thank Professor Jin for generously sharing his insights on language, culture, and translation during this forty-minute interview. I would also like to thank the editor of the *Journal of Literary Multilingualism*, Professor Natasha Lvovich, and the anonymous reviewers, for their valuable feedback and suggestions throughout the editing process.

Works Cited (for Ha Jin Interview)

Hegel, G.W. F. *The Philosophy of Fine Art*, vol. 1., trans. E.P.B. Osmaston. London: G. Bell and Sons, 1920.

Jin, Ha (哈金). “An Interview with Ha Jin.” Conducted by Chris GoGwilt. *Guernica Magazine*. Ed. Josh Jones. November 16, 2006.

<https://www.guernicamag.com/spotlight/258/post/>. Accessed February 19, 2022.

Jin, Ha. *Universalization in Modern English and American Poetry: With Particular Reference to China*. PhD Diss.

<https://www.proquest.com/openview/f2c16c3a98e7f450a1daf0ee06d5e0d0/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>. Brandeis University, 1993.

Jin Ha. *Ocean of Words: Army Stories*. 1st ed. Zoland Books, 1996.

- Jin, Ha. *The Bridegroom: Stories*. 1st Vintage International ed. Vintage Books, 2001.
- Jin, Ha. *The Crazy*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2002.
- Jin, Ha. *A Free Life: A Novel*. 1st Vintage International ed. Vintage Books: A Division of Random House, 2007.
- Jin, Ha. *The Writer as Migrant*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press (The Rice University Campbell Lectures), 2008.
- Jin, Ha. *A Good Fall: Stories*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2010.
- Jin, Ha. 落地/*Luodi*. Nanjing: Jiangsu Wenyi Press, 2012.
- Jin, Ha. 路上的家園 *Lushang de jiyuan* [Home on the Road]. Taipei: Linking Publishing Co., 2017.
- Jin, Ha. "Zhou Yucai Writes 'A Madman's Diary' under the Pen Name Lu Xun." In *A New Literary History of Modern China*, ed. David Der-wei Wang. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2017.
- Jin, Ha. *A Distant Center*. Copper Canyon Press, 2018.
- Jin Ha. *The Banished Immortal: A Life of Li Bai (Li Po)*. Pantheon Books, 2019.
- Jin, Ha and Ron Charles. "Ha Jin: National Book Festival." Retrieved from the Library of Congress. Washington, D.C. November 22, 2017. <https://www.loc.gov/item/webcast-8094/>. Accessed November 9, 2022.

Appendix 7: Queer SinoFutures: A Conversation with Regina Kanyu Wang

March 16, 2023
Sheraton Grand Chicago Riverwalk Hotel
Chicago, Illinois

****Note:** Thank you so much to Professor Wendy Sun of Grinnell College and Professor Cara Healey of Wabash College for kindly facilitating this interview with Regina Kanyu Wang. I would also like to thank Kanyu Wang for her generosity in sharing these precious insights with me during the American Comparative Literature Association's 2023 Annual Meeting in Chicago, Illinois on the afternoon of March 16, 2023, the day after she flew in from Oslo. We chatted in the first-floor lobby of the Sheraton Grand Chicago Riverwalk hotel, overlooking the Chicago River, which had been dyed a neon green the previous weekend in honor of St. Patrick's Day.

Ursula Deser Friedman (UDF): My first question is regarding your short story "A Cyber-Cuscuta Manifesto", which is written in several different languages, including English, Chinese, Swedish, Spanish, Japanese, and so forth. The story defamiliarizes our relationship with language. Is any of the language in the story meant to be intentionally "weird", or defamiliarized, in order to shock us? It's an environmentalist story about our unnatural detachment from our natural world. What was it like writing in English?

Regina Kanyu Wang (RKW, 王侃瑜): English is not my mother tongue, so I feel like I was not confident enough to write from a female perspective in English. I didn't realize that until I had written several stories in English. Now I've already tried to write a few pieces in English, and when I looked back at them, I found that they are written from non-human perspectives. I realized that might be because I feel like an alien myself writing in English, so that's why I chose to write from a non-human perspective. When I compare my voices in English and Chinese, I can see that in Chinese, I'm more serious and write about heavy things, whereas in English my voice is more playful and experimental.

Trying to write in English from a non-human perspective gives me this other home in writing, these other voices. I still haven't tried to write from a human perspective in English because it's hard to convey sophisticated human emotions. They're hard to describe in English, so I can only write from this more-than-human perspective, and try to maintain some of the alienness through the narrator. I guess that's why I chose to write this in English through a non-human narrator. In this particular story, I inputted other languages because I think it's a global thing, and everyone in the world should participate. That's why I chose to write in different languages, to showcase that even though people may come from different places, they are voicing their opinions, just like this cyber-cuscuta.

UF: I sometimes feel that a person can be alienated even in their mother tongue. I feel more at home speaking in Spanish, which is my first "second language", and Chinese, which is my second "second language", because one gains a detached perspective on traumatic experiences. That detachment from what you thought was your inherited language can free you up to really get things off your chest.

With regards to the alienation inherent in English, I'm wondering about the aspect of distance. Now you're away from your hometown of Shanghai, earning your PhD in Oslo, Norway. It must have been hard during the pandemic, on lockdown in a foreign country while your family experienced the same trauma in Shanghai...since you're a sci-fi writer, you write about the ultimate sort of exile, because human beings are literally in exile in the universe in this earth that is just spinning around, wandering...

Your story "Pengcheng: A Story of Wanli" is a memorial for Shenzhen sometime in the future. I love the title, "Pengcheng: A Story of Wanli", a translation of the Chinese title 鵬程萬里 *Pengcheng Wanli*, literally meaning "the Peng's ten-thousand-mile flight, which contains a double entendre, since the AI is named Wanli and Pengcheng is another name for the city of Shenzhen.¹ I don't know where you were located geographically when you were writing that particular piece. Can you comment on how distance and exile shape your identity?

RKW: That's a very interesting question. Before I moved to Oslo to do my PhD, I had never left my hometown, Shanghai, for longer than two months. I had never really lived in another place for more than two months. I still feel very connected to the city. Even now, I am doing my PhD in Oslo, and maybe because I got caught right in the middle of the pandemic, I felt very isolated. I still feel I'm more attached to Shanghai, or China, than I am to Oslo in Norway. I haven't really been distant or detached enough from Shanghai. When I was in Shanghai, I didn't dare write about the city itself, because it's so large and immersive. I could only see it from a distance, I couldn't write about it while I was still immersed inside it. I didn't have that outsider's perspective while living in Shanghai. But still, now, I feel I am still in Shanghai, as though I haven't really been away, because I have been through all those traumas in Shanghai throughout the lockdown, until the opening-up. I haven't really established this distance from being exiled, of being a diasporic writing myself, because I still have many connections with Shanghai. It's like a 臍帶 *qidai*, an umbilical cord, pulling me back. It hasn't been cut off.

UDF: And even though you've been away for many years, you consider in your heart that you've never truly left, because Shanghai seems to be a spiritual identity for you.

RKW: Also, my family, and many friends, are still there. I have a very limited, small social circle in Oslo. It's really hard to make friends in Norway. I haven't really become immersed within Norwegian society.

UDF: What about your relationship with Shanghainese, which is actually a separate language from Mandarin, not a dialect, as some might call it. Does that ever factor into your writing, where you're thinking in Shanghainese, then you write it down in either Mandarin or English?

RKW: When I wrote *Yumo* 語膜 "The Language Sheath", I was comparing Shanghainese and Mandarin. Some people were asking, "How come you don't speak your mother tongue well enough?" In China, there's a nation-wide policy of promoting Mandarin throughout China, *putonghua tuiguang* 普通話推廣. In my childhood, we were not allowed to speak Shanghainese in school. All the teachers spoke in Mandarin. If you were caught speaking in

Shanghainese, you would be punished [7:57]. The way of encouraging students to speak Mandarin—I don't know whether this only happened in Shanghai, or in other places as well—Shanghai is metropolitan, attracts a lot of talents from other places.

People think that if you, as a Shanghainese person, speak Shanghainese with people from other places, you are *paiwai* 排外, not friendly to other people. Especially during those years, Shanghainese was minimalized, to showcase our friendliness to people from other cities. But when I actually traveled to other places in China, in the central, northern and southern areas, people speak their own dialects there, very confidently. They think they are speaking Mandarin, but I can't understand them. They don't even try to speak Mandarin to me, they just disregard me. I couldn't understand their dialects.

When you speak Shanghainese in Shanghai, they'll think you're discriminating against people from elsewhere, but when you're doing this in Sichuan, or in Guangdong, or in Taiyuan, they don't think they're discriminating against people from other places, they think you should challenge yourself to understand their dialect.

UDF: I personally think that Americans, when we go to China, or a different country, of course you should try to speak the local language. Starting during the May Fourth Movement, everything Western was considered sexy and glamorous. I think this is dangerous. It's important to normalize speaking other people's languages, or at least attempting to speak their languages. Why does English have to be our global language? Why can't it be Mandarin, or a different language? I can't believe you were policed in school when you weren't speaking Mandarin!

RKW: I wonder whether it's just that the Mandarin-popularization campaign was particularly hip when I was growing up. Previously, people were speaking their own dialect, and it was politically acceptable. But then in later years people had to educate their children in Mandarin. Of course, when I was smaller, I spoken Shanghainese with my family at home. When I grew up, I often started to speak Mandarin with my mom, so it came naturally. I can't do sophisticated thinking in Shanghainese because my educational language was Mandarin. I expressed complicated thoughts and ideas in Mandarin instead of Shanghainese. Sometimes I get tongue-tied, I can't express things authentically in Shanghainese. I tried to write about these things in "The Language Sheath", to show you can face this tension, this pressure, for not speaking your mother tongue, though you "should" be.

UDF: It really reminds me of the mother Ilsa in "The Language Sheath", who forces her son, Yakk, to speak his heritage language of Kemorean to help preserve his cultural heritage. Don't worry, I'm not going to psychoanalyze you, because Ilsa was not at all modeled after your own mother, but rather a teacher, right?

RKW: The original character impression comes from a Swedish teacher, who probably suffered from some psychological problems. I was working for the Nordic Center at Fudan University, which shared teachers with Shanghai Foreign Studies University. Once we had a teacher who was very nice and performed perfectly in the job interview. (I didn't do the interview myself, but I heard about it from a colleague). But then, one of the students in her

course told us that the teacher had some issues. Several times, she told a student that things had become too much for her to handle, that she was going to commit suicide. She was on the verge of a breakdown, she was suffering from a lot of pressure. Her son was in Hong Kong, but refused to come to Shanghai to meet his mom. So I was thinking, “What happened? Why did she come to China to teach Swedish? Why didn’t her son want to see her?” She faced enormous emotional pressure. This figure has been wandering in my mind for a while, and I’ve been trying to think of some explanation. This provided the inspiration for the story.

UDF: There seems to be a double alienation at work. First, the alienation between mother and son, and also one’s alienation in one’s own mother tongue. Yakk just wants to speak his chosen, adopted language, which is English. That’s the hip, “cool” language he’s chosen for himself. But his mother says, “No, you have to speak Kemorean through the Language Sheath, you have to perfect everything.” But in the end, he speaks to her directly in English, his own chosen tongue, through the crutch of the Language Sheath. That moment is so powerful.

It seems that when Yakk speaks in Kemorean, he’s often tongue-tied, but his English speech can be freer, and even impulsive. In what ways is speaking a language you chose, and your family, your educational system, didn’t impose upon you, liberating? Have you ever had the experience where it’s very liberating to express something traumatic in a different language?

RKW: I often feel tongue-tied in Shanghainese, because I can’t fully express myself [in Shanghainese]. It’s also my first language, of course, but at the same time, I feel freer to express myself in Shanghainese. Sometimes I also find that in English, I can express things that I can’t say in Mandarin. I’m more extroverted speaking in English, compared with my Chinese-speaking self. In some events, in some situations in which I have to socialize, English is easier for me.

UDF: So you put on an extroverted persona? In Chinese, are you not as outgoing? Is English more of a language of socialization for you?

RKW: I tend to socialize more freely in English. Of course, in America, people are more outgoing. In Norway, of course, it’s different. No one will engage in small-talk with you, unless you’re friends.

UDF: I didn’t know that. No small-talk at all?

RKW: Yes, people just go about their lives, take care of their own business, their own missions. Maybe there is a bit of small talk, but not like in America, where you might converse with total strangers. That wouldn’t happen in Norway.

UDF: “Nice weather we’re having today, right?” you might say waiting for the bus; or, your Barista at Starbucks or hairdresser might ask, “How’s your day going?”

I’d like to ask a specific question regarding your translation of *Yumo* 語膜, “The Language Sheath”, with Emily Xueni Jin, and also Ken Liu [the acclaimed translator of Cixin Liu’s

Three Body-Problem, and also a self-described *silkpunk* author]. What kind of advice did Ken give?

RKW: He helped us with the final round of edits. He's such an experienced author...I originally cut some parts from the Chinese story because I thought there might be too many details for English-speaking readers. In my impression, English-speaking readers don't want to get lost in words. They prefer a hook, a clear clue that can guide them through the story. But when I write in Chinese, the language itself is loose, and the story structure itself is loose. So sometimes a lot of extra details might appear in the Chinese version, which are not needed in the English story. So I took those parts out. And Ken Liu actually said, "Well, I love those small details! You can add them back in." So we added them back.

UDF: Oh, you added them back! That's powerful—the story came full-circle, so to speak.

RKW: I haven't read that many stories in English, actually, but I've experienced communication with editors who publish stories written in English. Sometimes I feel they want a clear story, instead of a bunch of loose details.

UDF: Yes, it seems those editors want very plot-driven stories. It's all about the "hook", rather than all these developed characterizations.

Something I love about the story is that when Yakk is speaking, it's not this perfect, pure, homogenized English. The English language is descended from Ingvaemonic, West German languages, all these different language families. It's such a messy language. It doesn't make sense, its grammar hardly follows any of its own "rules". It's a completely non-standardized language. There's one moment where Yakk's own words "take care" are left in English in the Chinese version, and then it got "naturalized" in the English version as "careful", instead of "take care". I thought, "that must have been very intentional!" Yakk was speaking a non-standardized language, he was going to make English his home, and even it's not perfect, it's still authentically his. I really celebrate those moments.

RKW: That's because my own English isn't so good. I thought that's what you would say when someone fell down.

UDF: I mean, why not? Why do we all have to express the same thought in the same way? What is your position on the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis? Do you express yourself differently in different languages? Do you think our language controls how we think, or our life perspectives?

RKW: Yes, I think the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis does exist, it does influence how we see the world, what we say and how we act. It's there. I remember when I was attending a summer school in Helsinki about how to express your emotions in different languages. We did interview Latin language speakers—you know, Spanish and Portuguese-speakers—in Finland, and for Finnish speakers, it's no different, either. They all have moments where they found themselves having trouble expressing or positioning themselves within Finnish society.

UDF: And emotionally speaking, it can be very satisfying to, say, curse in a certain language. And sometimes our thoughts are non-linguistic, and we have to translate them to ourselves first, in all these different languages.

I wanted to continue on the topic of the fetishization of English in China. It seems that many students around the world are obsessed with perfecting their English, but your own language doesn't become a *lingua franca* for foreigners living abroad, because everyone's just speaking in this universalized English. What do you think about the fetishization of English in China in particular? Perhaps because English is not as emphasized on the *gaokao* 高考 [college entrance examination] as it used to be, and there are no longer all these English cram schools everywhere, things have improved somewhat, but what is your take on this?

RKW: When I was writing the story, there was an ongoing discussion about whether people should continue to study English. There was a cultural conference in China. They asked, "Why should people constantly be studying English? They should speak Chinese!" And also because of Artificial Intelligence and machine translation, which can help you translate words and understand English. But still, if you don't really learn the language, it's hard to learn the culture, and really understand it. I'm one of the lucky few. I appreciate having studied English in school so I can use it to communicate.

Otherwise, even with machine translation, you can translate words literally, but you wouldn't really be able to truly build bridges...and you never know whether you really understand each other with machine translation, if you aren't studying or speaking the actual language. In the story, "The Language Sheath", technology is convenient to use and it can help you, but there's no necessity for people to learn different languages, but in a way, it [technology] skews communication, and in a way, it might still skew those languages. Because, if you don't input mutual influences into language and forget about a language's intertextual context, that language might just become defunct or die out.

UDF: Errors, mistakes, non-standard usage...that's the way a language improves, so I'm kind of worried about Ilsa's project if she's the only single, standardized speaker of this language after which all future linguistic productions will be modeled. Is she actually rescuing Kemorean from the brink of extinction, or are you manipulating language to make it a certain way, so that eventually, it becomes fossilized, because no one speaks that way anymore?

RKW: Exactly!

UDF: I wanted to ask about your favorite authors, some of the ones that influenced or inspired you. I found you were a student of Wang Anyi. I was wondering how her style, you also mentioned Octavia E. Butler, Ursula K. LeGuin, Chen Qiufan, Xia Jia, Ken Liu...In what ways did these writers influence your style?

RKW: Wang Anyi taught our "Novel-Writing Practicum Course". I wrote my first piece of fiction in her course. She emphasized the logic of a story, such as the characters' motivations. They have to come from somewhere, and have a certain motivation, and there's always a

story behind them. I can only write stories with this sort of underlying logic. I know there's a kind of writing in which you just let your imagination flow, or you just let your characters go with the wind. There is that kind of writing, but I could never do that.

UDF: Like stream-of-consciousness, where you just take an idea and “run with it”, and there's no structure.

RKW: I can't do that. I have to find a logic for the story. And the hard point is to find a balance between the logic of the character and the science and technology part. You have to find a perfect match. I think science fiction is actually very hard to write, because I don't want to just follow the logic of the science-fiction idea, or only the logic of the characters. I have to find a match for them. It's very difficult to find this match.

UDF: But you seem so well-versed in science! When I was reading your “Pengcheng: A Story of Wanli” (*Pengcheng Wanli* 鵬程萬里), the way AI was going to go about re-building and this non-linguistic communication through the pheromones, I thought, “Oh, wow! This is actually quite scientifically viable!” And this story is also critical for the environmental movement. Also, it's post-apocalyptic, taking place after the so-called “Great Calamity”. Do you think that AI is a positive force for rebuilding, or do you have reservations about Artificial Intelligence?

RKW: AI, at least the way it's depicted in those stories, [is a positive force]. I don't write about those evil AI, as many people would imagine. I guess that's just a reflection of human beings themselves—they thought AI would want to eliminate humans, because human beings want to eliminate other humans themselves. Of course, if you keep feeding Artificial Intelligence with all those evil thoughts, they might turn evil, but they don't necessarily need to. And AI doesn't necessarily need to be like human beings at all. I want to adopt a neutral stance towards AI.

UDF: Yes, it's already so anthropocentric to displace your own fears and destructive nature onto AI, saying, “Of course, human beings are evil and destructive at heart, so AI will obviously be power-hungry and want to eliminate us, because we humans are evil.” That's just so human-centric to say that. Yes, I love the critical distance achieved in your writings and I can see how you're thinking holistically.

Eileen Chang would write a draft in English, then write another draft in Chinese, and then go back later and change the original source text because she had some epiphany or “a-ha! moment” from going back and forth writing and revising in two different languages, English and Chinese. Do you do that? Is the process of self-translation ever useful for you, where you write a different story and you're influenced by that new version? Do you ever go back and forth writing in one language, then the other, and then changing the original?

RKW: In most cases, if I write in another language, and then translate myself, I want both versions to get published. Time is limited. You don't want to just write something you can't publish. If you want to have both versions published, it takes time to submit and so forth. So I don't do that on purpose—create a piece in another language and then translate it back and

forth—I have translated from English to Chinese and Chinese to English. Sometimes I would also make some changes, add some things, delete some things, because I am the writer myself. I don't need to be loyal to my own story. I can betray my own story and turn it into another story.

As I mentioned previously, I created a new voice for myself from writing in English, and I turned that voice back into writing in Chinese. It doesn't necessarily need to be the same content in both languages; rather, it's the writer tone, the writerly voice, that I translate back.

UDF: I experienced that in China, for sure. Prior to living in Beijing, I was closeted, in so many ways—I didn't want to talk to anyone at all, I had very few friends, and then I tried to train myself to bring that persona back to my first language.

You're currently doing a project called "Her Imaginations", where you interview all of these sci-fi and speculative fiction-writing women and non-binary writers. It might be dangerous to essentialize about women's sci-fi as distinct from men. I'm specifically thinking of the divide in China between so-called "hard", sciency, "masculine" sci-fi versus "soft", psychological sci-fi, which is ridiculous, because a woman could write in both the "hard" and "soft" styles, while a man could also write psychoanalytical sci-fi focusing on emotionality rather than "hard" science per se. But that being said, after doing all of these interviews, what have you found makes women's Chinese sci-fi special?

RKW: This is also a question I ask myself a lot. I compare it to the question: "What makes Chinese science fiction 'Chinese'?" That's a similar question, because you'd never ask, "What makes American science fiction 'American', or what makes men's science-fiction 'masculine'?" Because these are the default setting. When people think of science fiction, they often think, by default, of the science fiction written by white male American or Anglophone authors. So when they encounter Chinese science fiction, they think, "There's a whole new world, it must be special!" But actually, when Chinese science fiction authors are writing science fiction, they don't see themselves as "*Chinese* science fiction writers", they just think of themselves as "science fiction writers". Most of these women, throughout the history of Chinese science fiction, they always regard themselves as just "science fiction writers". They are not "*women* science fiction writers".

There are several anthologies of women's science fiction that have come out in China in previous and recent years. One of the anthologies is called, "她" (*Ta*, "she"), it's edited by Chenjin Guo. She poses a general question, "What's your take on women science-fiction authors?" to all the authors collected in the anthology, plus some other special questions for each author to answer. For the general question, "What's your take on women science-fiction authors?" most of the authors don't think of "women" is an important attachment, because they just want to be "science-fiction writers". They ask, "What do you mean by *women* science-fiction writers? You don't need that distinguisher."

In this generation, we don't experience such harsh gender inequality in their personal lives or in their personal careers. It's not like in America, where many women writers cannot publish under their real names, they have to use a male pen name. But in China, you can always

publish. Of course, some authors still have a pen name, and they feel like, “Oh, they can’t guess my gender from my name.” That’s another thing. But even if they have a feminine-sounding name, they can still publish well, and they don’t feel that sense of inequality. But at the systematic level, when you look at all those [sci-fi] awards, when we name representatives of Chinese science fiction authors, the males always come first. Especially when it comes to academia, there’s so much scholarship looking at Chinese science fiction, but very little has been done on women’s authors’ works. That’s a systematic issue. Of course, I admire Liu Cixin and Chen Qiufan, they’re great—but why are we only researching those men, or only researching those few authors? There are more out there! So that’s why I try to write about those other women authors.

It's hard to use a few descriptions to summarize their features, just like it's hard to sum up Chinese science fiction with a few descriptive words, because the authors are so diverse. I also posed this question to a lot of my interviewees, and most of them were saying that women authors achieve a better portrayal of characters because they treat their characters as real humans.

UDF: As you say, sci-fi, at its origins, is masculine by default. But just because you happen to be a woman, or non-binary, that doesn’t automatically make you a representative of any cohort as a whole. You would never ask a male writer, like Liu Cixin, “How do you think your style is representative of “masculine Chinese sci-fi writing”?”

This reminds me of what Toni Morrison once said in an interview, when she was asked for the umpteenth time, “When are you going to start writing about white people?”, “I don’t think you understand how profoundly racist that question is. Because you wouldn’t ask a white man when he was going to start writing about black women.” Morrison writes what she knows. She writes about the universal human experience, she writes from the heart, she writes from her own lived experience, which transcends rigid labels like “fiction about the Black experience” or “white experience”. Of course, her writing might be linked to her identity as Black author, but her writing is about the human experience, not the Black or white experience, per se.

RKW: Authors generally don’t want to be labeled. Once you are labeled, you are likely to be read only through that particular lens.

UDF: Oh no! I think I labeled you in my dissertation. I labeled you as a “Chinese woman speculative fiction writer”. How would you like to be labeled instead? Or should we avoid labels altogether?

RKW: As I mentioned previously, when many authors are asked about this label, they don’t want to be labeled as “women”. But in recent years, discussion has been heated. There are more authors cherishing this discussion of gender and they wanted to talk about their identities as “female” authors. So this is the elephant in the room. If you don’t name it, you don’t speak out, people just don’t realize there’s an issue. And when you finally start to speak out, you find that, “Ok, we’re everywhere!” So other people will start to say, “Oh, why are you dividing genders?” But we have to move through that stage until we can finally arrive at

the next stage in which we don't need to emphasize "women authors" or "Chinese authors". They and their works can all be judged equally. But before that, if you don't name them, they'll never be seen.

UDF: That's so powerful. People will say similar things about the history of queer movements. Nobody wants to be labeled or outed as belonging to or representing a certain sexuality. But until there's a certain visibility in society at large, Marriage Equality could never be achieved.

You have a story entitled, *yunshi* 隕時, which is a homophone for *yunshi* 隕石, literally meaning asteroid or meteorite, while the former *yunshi* 隕時 indicates "meteorite time". You had an article in which you draw upon this novel, exploring the impact of accelerated time or temporality on the human psyche, provoking this profound anxiety over time. You talked a bit about AI and technology already. Hopefully your childhood was not technology-centered. I was lucky enough to be born just before the Internet era, so I actually had a fulfilling childhood. I think if I had been born with these high-tech gadgets surrounding me, I would have suffered. Do you notice technology impacting our perception of time? How do you transform this temporal anxiety into a positive force for change? Or maybe you haven't had a negative experience with technology.

RKW: I do think technology has greatly influenced our perception of time. In the story, I write that we eventually grow accustomed to those accelerations of time. Nowadays, I watch a lot of videos, movies and TV series at 1.5X speed, you just can't stand a normal pace.

UDF: One just can't slow down!

RKW: It feels so slow. You know how impatient everyone seems to be nowadays. So you have to squeeze it. But still, technology exerts an important influence on our everyday lives. Also, when I look at new notifications, new messages, time suddenly flows. And when you look at the Chinese social media platform *Xiaohongshu* 小紅書 [similar to Instagram] or TikTok, time rushes by, without you realizing it. So technology does influence our perception of time a great deal.

Essentially, capitalism is to blame, instead of technology itself. Because technology like cars, of course, they help us to move from one place to the next in a shorter time span. That's technology. But when there's a whole system of cars and high-speed trains, you have to move at that pace. You are not allowed, or not expected to walk or take a boat. That's the influence of capitalism. These technologies are trying to catch your attention. They are trying to exploit your time. They want your attention, and they want to make money from it. That's why they will invent so many different technologies, so as to exploit you more efficiently using the unit of time as currency.

UDF: For me, on a personal level, I find that after a whole day of technology, I can't slow down, and it's hard for me to be alone, by myself, with my thoughts. When I relax, I suddenly realize, in the past I was content with a novel. But then I crave stimulation, and as you say, that's a very capitalist influence. It's truly an addiction. It's amazing that in this

capitalistic, exploitative age, you're able to write and be the author that you are. Do you turn off all of your technology when you go into "writing mode"? How are you able to restore balance to your life? When a WeChat message pops up, and you just got into the flow, what do you do?

RKW: It's hard. I can get rid of technology. I'm addicted. It's impossible to rid myself of this habit. I keep checking messages. It also depends on the kind of technology. It still helps you to connect with your friends and family. We've come to rely on technology. We can't just get rid of it. I do want to block it, and just read and write, but my mind has been changed, so I'm trying to find ways, through meditation or yoga, to regain balance, but it's a slow process. On the reverse end, it's much easier to get right back into the habit of using technology. Without it, life becomes slower and harder. These days, I read so much less, and mostly by phone. So it's very hard.

UDF: Thank you, Wang Kanyu, I'm going to treasure our conversation forever.