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Representation, Mediation, and Intervention: A Translation Anthologist's Preliminary Reflections on Three Key Issues in Cross-cultural Understanding

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Representation, Mediation, and Intervention: A Translation Anthologist's Preliminary Reflections on Three Key Issues in Cross-cultural Understanding [*]

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Abstract

To facilitate cross-cultural understanding is often considered a distinct aspect of the general purpose and function of translation, as the popular metaphor of translation as a bridge testifies. But is cross-cultural understanding as straight forward and unproblematic as this metaphor implies? In this paper, the question of the nature and limits of cross-cultural understanding will be examined from a specific perspective. It is the perspective of someone engaged in the compilation of an anthology, in English translation, of the views, statements, discussions and records about translation – as an activity and as a cultural practice – in China, from ancient times to the Revolution of 1911. Topics to be reflected on include the rationale for undertaking the anthology project, principles of selection, and the problems encountered in the process of conceptualization and implementation of the project, specifically the problems of representation, mediation and intervention. Tentative ways of dealing with these problems will also be discussed. In so doing, the author hopes to explore, with a measure of self-reflexiveness and as a tentative first step, the nature and limits of the kind of understanding she hopes to facilitate through the compilation of this anthology. Also discussed will be the more general question of what can be done if cross-cultural understanding, especially of the kind brought about by works of translation, is never an innocent matter and is always mediated in nature.

To facilitate cross-cultural understanding is often considered a distinct aspect of the general purpose and function of translation, as the popular metaphor of translation as a bridge testifies. This metaphor of the bridge, which connotes the idea of effective communication, direct and easy access, the promise of connection, and the possibility of reaching, as it were, "the other side", implies a view of cross-cultural understanding as straight forward and unproblematic, affected only by enforced closure of the bridge, unexpected disaster and deliberate self-withdrawal. In the second half of the twentieth century, however, such a view has come under close scrutiny. The advent of postmodernism, poststructuralism, postcolonialism, and the increasing influence of feminism have brought about a cultural turn (Bassnett & Lefevere 1990; Snell-Hornby 1990), and, more recently, a power turn (Bassnett & Trevedi 1999; Tymoczko & Gentzler 2002) in translation studies in many parts of the world. The focusing of critical attention on texts for signs of "manipulation" (Hermans 1985), and the systematic study of the operation of ideology, poetics, economics and patronage (Lefevere 1992) on the norms – preliminary, initial and matricial (Toury 1980) – to which translators are subjected have provided solid, large-scale and, many would say, conclusive historical and empirical proof that translating was, is, and always will be, an act of re-presentation/representation, mediation, and/or intervention. Hence cross-cultural understanding is never an innocent matter.

In what is to follow, I shall examine this question of cross-cultural understanding from a specific perspective – the perspective of someone engaged in an anthology project aimed at, among other things, promoting in the English-speaking world an understanding of Chinese thinking about translation. The working title of this project is "Translation in China: Views, Reflections, and Theoretical Thinking – From Earliest Times to the Revolution of 1911". Upon completion, it will result in an anthology, in English translation, of the views, reflections, statements, discussions, and records about translation – as an activity and as a cultural practice –

in China, from ancient times to the Revolution of 1911. The purpose of focusing discussion on a single project in this paper is not to re-legitimize personal experience or the anecdotal mode of discourse. Instead, the purpose is to locate a position from which to speak, relying on declared positionality as a discursive strategy to bring to light what might otherwise remain embedded in the project. Topics I shall reflect on include the rationale for undertaking the anthology project, principles of selection, and factors governing the delimiting of scope. In particular, I shall focus on the problems encountered in the process of conceptualization and implementation of the project – problems of representation, mediation and intervention. Tentative ways of dealing with these problems will also be discussed. In so doing, I hope to explore, with a measure of self-reflexiveness and as a tentative first step, the nature and limits of the kind of understanding I hope to facilitate through the compilation of this anthology. The problems of translation are also important, but they are complex and too numerous to be included in the space of an article.

But first, a few words on how I am going to use the word "Chinese" in this article.

Meaning of the word "Chinese"

To me, "Chinese" is a word with floating meanings; it is a levitational word, so to speak. Certainly I am not using it to refer to a single, homogeneous, monolithic entity. I am not even using it simply as an indicator of a certain ethnic origin. Rather I am allowing myself a measure of strategic flexibility when I use it, especially with reference to my translation project. In real terms, this means that although some of the texts selected for translation are excerpted from the works of ethnic Chinese, non-Chinese will not be excluded as long as (a) they had Chinese as one of their language pairs and their views are related to translation in the Chinese context; and (b) they had been centrally involved in the production of translated texts (in Chinese) and their views are related to such a process or such a mode of production. This is not an attempt to subsume non-Chinese under the label "Chinese" for the all too obvious purpose of discursive

nation-building. Neither is it an effort to invent a Chinese translation tradition richer and grander than it actually is. The notion of "Chinese" is, admittedly, stretched, but that is because I believe the notion itself is a construct – necessarily so, inevitably so – as I shall elaborate in the paragraphs to follow. I believe, moreover, that every culture is mixed, and translation, one of the constituent elements of culture, is one of the discursive sites where the myth of purity is most clearly debunked.

Why this project?

An important source of inspiration for this project can be traced back to the theoretical discussions of the last few decades about "the other", in particular, about the problematics of (mis)representation and/or (mis)understanding of "the other" in situations of unequal power relations. These discussions have awakened in me, just as they have awakened in people in many parts of the world and especially in places that had experienced colonization in their recent history, a strong awareness that one way of resisting subjugation as "the other" is to assume the right of self-representation. Even if the act of subjugation has already been carried out, one way of countering it – in the political as well as other spheres – is still to assume the right of self-representation. Such an ideological position has the appeal of an urgent imperative for me, who have lived in Hong Kong (an ex-colony of Britain) all my life. It informs many of the decisions I make as a translator and an anthologist, including, first and foremost, the decision to translate, not from a second language into my mother tongue, but from my mother tongue (Chinese) into my second language (English). The compilation of an anthology, in English translation, of Chinese thinking about translation is another of my continuous effort at self-representation.[1] So when I talk about cross-cultural understanding, it will be from this

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[1] Two earlier attempts at self-representation are "An Oxford Anthology of Contemporary Chinese Drama" (Cheung & Lai 1997) and "Hong Kong Collage: Contemporary Stories and Writing" (Cheung 1998). Both carry an

particular perspective, not the perspective of someone who is translating into her mother tongue and hence representing not the self but the other. The assumption of such a reversed perspective – a deliberate defiance of what many text books on translation would advise their prospective translators against – is important because it carries all kinds of implications – ideological, theoretical, and epistemological – that are as yet unexplored. At the very least, I hope that the perspective of "self-representation" may have a skewing effect on mainstream theorizations about translation strategies, theorizations which, no matter how politically correct, are almost exclusively grounded on the perspective of the self representing the other.

It should be stressed, however, that I am not suggesting that the self can represent herself better or more adequately. Self-representation entails problems too, not the least of which is the difficulty of seeing the self as a stable entity with clearly defined essence. The problems are especially complex when the person undertaking this act of self-representation – the writer of this article – was born and bred in Hong Kong, a British colony from 1842 to 1997. Hong Kong's colonial history and its marginality – geographical, political, and cultural – in relation to China makes me acutely conscious that I am less than Chinese, and perhaps also more Chinese than the Chinese, and hence indeterminately Chinese – floating, levitating, unsure about my legitimacy in any attempt to represent China, unsure about how self-representation, important as a strategy of resistance against subjugation, is actually to be carried out. If these doubts and uncertainties are not so strong as to be crippling, it is because I am aware that marginality has its advantage, not the least because the distance from the centre can often result in clarity of vision. Relative clarity of vision, to be precise. But in planning for the anthology, the question of legitimacy and representation is a presiding concern, as shall become clear in the discussion that

Introduction in which the issue of representation is discussed, either implicitly or explicitly. A more self-conscious exploration of the politics of representation behind the compilation of "An Oxford Anthology of Contemporary Chinese Drama" is undertaken in "The politics of representation: A translation anthologist's self-examination"" (Cheung, forthcoming [a]).

follows.

There is another reason why the anthology is worth doing as a project. Cross-cultural understanding depends greatly on what is available for intellectual processing and on how that material is carried across linguistic and cultural barriers for processing. As far as *Chinese* thinking about translation goes, the English-speaking world's understanding of this topic depends almost exclusively on what André Lefevere calls "rewritings"[2], in this case, research articles or encyclopaedia entries about the topic, or works that compare Chinese and Western notions of translation. One or two essays on translation written by famous Chinese translators have been translated into English and published.[3] But to the best of my knowledge, primary material on Chinese thinking about translation have not been translated into English or other languages in any comprehensive and systematic manner. There is, for example, nothing that comes close to a sourcebook[4]. It is true that 'rewritings' of the sort just mentioned can be of high quality and can serve as useful conduits of knowledge.[5] It is also true that primary material in translation is a type of 'rewriting' too. But the cross-cultural understanding arrived at via the study of secondary material is different from that obtained from translated primary material. Whether it matters or not and how different the understanding will be are questions that will take

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[2] According to Lefevere (1992), "rewritings" refer to writings produced by those "who do not write literature, but rewrite it" (p.1). Rewriting takes many forms. It includes "translation, editing, anthologization of texts, the compilation of literary histories and reference works, and the production of the kind of criticism that still reaches out beyond the charmed circle [educational institutions], mostly in the guise of biographies and book reviews" (p.4). Rewriters, Lefevere argues, are "responsible for the general reception and survival of works of literature among non-professional readers, who constitute the great majority of readers in our global culture, to at least the same, if not a greater extent than the writers themselves" (p.1). I see in Lefevere's notion of rewriting a forceful articulation of the heavily mediated nature of people's general understanding of literature, and by implication, of "serious" writing.

[3] They are "General Remarks on Translation" by Yan Fu (嚴復) (Yan 1973) and "Lin Ch'in-nan Revisited" (1975 [1964]) – a partial translation of Qian Zhongshu's "*Linshu de Fanyi*" (《林紓的翻譯》) [The Translations of Lin Shu].

[4] It should be noted that the situation is changing. Leo Tak-hung Chan from Hong Kong is now editing a collection of English translations of Chinese translation theory entitled "Twentieth-century Chinese Translation Theory: A Sourcebook" (Chan, forthcoming).

[5] This is not the place for listing a complete bibliography. I shall only mention the names of four scholars whose work of "rewriting" are of important pioneering significance for me – Willis Barnstone (1993), Tan Zaixi (1998, 2000, 2001), Chang Nam Fung (1998) and Eva Hung (1997, 1999a, 1999b, 2000). Their relevant publications are listed in   References.

us too far afield. It remains to be said that this anthology was motivated by a desire to remove the linguistic barrier in order, as it were, to democratize the space for discussion.

More importantly, I believe that if discourse on translation is to break free from the Euro-centric model on which it has been based for long, it is important that primary material on Chinese thinking about translation is made available in translation for the crafting of comparative knowledge.[6] Take for example, a question central to recent theorization on translation: Is the prototype theory most likely to help break new grounds in epistemological and ontological inquiries about translation?[7] I can see many different ways of approaching this question, but a simple, down-to-earth answer will suffice. If the tendency – a dangerous one, though it is carefully guarded against by the culturally sensitive scholars – to universalize Western theoretical practices at the expense of local articulations is to be avoided, then knowledge of what Chinese people (among others, of course) have thought about translation and how they have talked about translation is needed. Such knowledge has to be obtained through re-articulations (i.e., primary material in translation), unless the power-relation between English and Chinese as a language shifted and everyone could be expected to have knowledge of Chinese, including reading knowledge of classical Chinese.

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[6] In "A 'multilingual' and 'international' translation studies", Şebnem Susam-Sarajeva (2002) talks about the plight of "periphery researchers", that is, researchers whose academic base is away from the central research institutions or who work on and/or write in 'exotic' languages rather than the 'dominant' languages – English, French, German, and nowadays occasionally Spanish. She argues that in order to break the existing center-periphery relations within translation studies, periphery researchers should "concentrate on what is being done and what has been done in the peripheral languages and cultures in terms of translation theory" in order to bring about "a reconsideration on everybody's part of what 'theory' means and what it is comprised of" (Susam-Sarajeva 2002:204). The anthology project I am working on can be considered an effort in that direction.

[7] Sandra Halverson (1997, 1998, 1999, 2000) is the key proponent of this question. According to her, "prototype theory and research have shown that, instead of the uniform internal structure and clear boundaries guaranteed by necessary and sufficient conditions, virtually all natural language concepts show signs of having graded membership (not all members are equal), and fuzzy boundaries (where one concept stops and another starts is indeterminate)" (Halverson 2000:4). Her research focuses on the usefulness and theoretical significance of applying the prototype theory to the concept of translation. She says that her interest in this question is part of the overall interest shown by translation theorists since the mid 1990s in defining the concept of translation through exploring "questions of boundary drawing and category relationships" (Halverson 2000:4).

From why to how – looking for a model of representation

In seeking to compile an anthology of texts that represent Chinese thinking about translation, a few questions come to mind. What models of representation can the mind anchor itself to? Are there anthologies – in Chinese or English – that could be used for reference? Is it possible, or desirable, to choose one from the existing anthologies in Chinese and translate it into English?

As far as the politics of representation goes, the option that first presented itself was to select an existing anthology in Chinese and translate it into English. This option, however, was not taken up. Anthologies that focus on special periods of translation in Chinese history or special types of translation (scientific translation for example) are too specialized or narrow in scope to be considered at this particular point of East-West communication. They should come later. There is the more comprehensive type of anthologies. But they are limited in background and other contextual information, or they present the material in a way that a reader with little or no knowledge of Chinese culture may find hard to appreciate. Contextualization, however, is important. And it is a delicate art. One needs to avoid overloading of background information, just as much as one needs to be careful about under-determination of meaning, for both may bring a damaging result – mystification and alienation of the reader towards the source culture. Behind contextualization also lies a question which any attempt to promote cross-cultural understanding of the Chinese tradition of thinking about translation must consider – to what extent concepts of translation can be dissociated from specific traditions and modes of transmitting texts across cultural boundaries? The making of this anthology is an attempt to come to grips with this question, to find ways of determining how much contextualization is needed and how that context is to be provided.

Rather than from an existing Chinese anthology, I found in the anthology edited by Douglas Robinson – "Western Translation Theory: From Herodotus to Nietzsche" (1997, hereafter

"Western Translation Theory") – a workable solution to the problem of delimitation of scope.

Translation has a long history in China. The earliest recorded history of such a mode of interlingual communication can be traced back to the Zhou dynasty (周朝) (1066 B.C.E. – 256 B.C.E.); and all through the Chinese dynasties, there were records of such activities.[8] Moreover, translators, interpreters, writers, critics, historians, linguists, and others – including imperial emperors belonging to the various nationalities of China, Buddhist monks from Central Asia (referred to as *xiyu* [西域], literally "the Western Region", in Chinese historical documents) and the Indian subcontinent, as well as Jesuit priests and Protestant missionaries from Europe and America – have all written about translation and translating, and from an amazing array of perspectives. A brief collection would not do justice to such a kaleidoscope of views, unless, of course, one were a purist and chose to leave out the contribution of all non-Chinese who had written on the topic. Nor will a brief collection do justice to the long history of translation in China. A more comprehensive volume should be aimed at. Robinson's anthology, which begins with Herodotus and ends with Nietzsche, provides me with a sense of what can be considered a manageable time frame for the anthology I am preparing: from ancient times to the Revolution of 1911. The year 1911, rather than 1900, is chosen for two reasons. First, it marks the end of imperial China. Second, and more importantly, in the views of Chinese historians on translation and of Chinese translation theorists, there are four major waves of translation in China[9] and what came after 1911 belong to the third and fourth wave. The year 1911 would therefore be a

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[8] Records of activities of translation in China lie scatted in the "*Ershisi Shi*" (《二十四史》), but the "*Gujin Tushu Jicheng*" (《古今圖書集成》) has a piece providing a comprehensive overview of development of government translation activities and translation bureaus through the various Chinese dynasties (see Vol. 380, "Official Titles", in "Articles on Human Relationships", collected in "*Gujin Tushu Jicheng*" (〈明倫彙編・官常典・第三百八十卷〉，載《古今圖書集成》). For Buddhist sutra translation, Wang Wenyan's "*Fodian Hanyi Zhi Yanjiu*" (《佛典漢譯之研究》) provides a useful starting point for collection of bibliographical information. For translation of non-religious texts into Chinese, Li Nanqiu's "*Zhongguo Kexue Fanyi Shiliao*" (《中國科學翻譯史料》) is a collection of precious primary material.

[9] This point has been made by Ma Zuyi (馬祖毅) (1998), Li Nanqiu (黎難秋) (1996), Luo Xinzhang (羅新璋) (1984), and Chen Fukang (陳福康) (1992), among others.

convenient and academically viable break-off point.

With this time frame, the texts selected can provide the reader a historical dimension with which to understand Chinese thinking about translation. There will be a fairly comprehensive overview of what translators of the past thought about what it meant to translate, what were the essential qualities of a translator, what they considered to be a good translation, what they saw as the aims and functions of translation, and how they dealt with the practical and theoretical problems involved in the transfer between languages. In addition, the anthology will shed light on the ways in which translation happened, why certain books or authors were translated at particular periods of Chinese history, how attitudes to translation varied, why at certain moments in the history of Chinese civilization there was a great deal of translation and at other times there was little or no translation at all. In other words, the social and cultural dimensions of the Chinese tradition of translation will also be covered. The reader does not have to try to understand translation in complete isolation from the conditions of its existence in China.

A form, however, is needed for the large amount of material I wish to include in the anthology. Again Robinson's anthology is helpful. I can obtain from it a mental notion of the horizon of the target readers' expectations when they open an anthology of translation theory. I can also find in it a structural and organizing framework for the material I have gathered. This means that the entries – of about 140 texts by about 100 authors – will follow a chronological order, and each entry will be provided with a title, a headnote, and, if necessary, footnotes. The titles enable the reader to see at a glance the diversity of topics presented. The headnotes supply biographical and other information on the historical importance or significance of the texts or the translators. The footnotes provide information on the texts themselves. Together, the headnotes, footnotes, and the texts should go some way in meeting the need for contextualization. Moreover, there will be a section on "biographies of people mentioned in the text", one on "further reading",

one on bibliographical references, as well as a name index, a subject index, and a title index. But while Robinson's anthology has an Editor's Preface, this new anthology will carry an introductory essay on *Chinese* thinking about translation. There will also be an epilogue that examines the similarities and differences between *Chinese* and *Western* ideas on translation, suggests ways of relating concepts from this volume with Western concepts, and explores where further research might take off or where it may need to be especially careful.

If there are advantages in adopting Robinson's anthology as a model, there are also drawbacks. Given its very noticeable reliance upon Robinson's anthology for its format, wouldn't this anthology I am preparing become a companion piece to Robinson's volume? In which case, how much of an effort at self-representation will it be? Am I not betraying too much anxiety of pairing by structuring and presenting the material this way? What are the ideological implications of being a companion volume to a book called "Western Translation Theory"? For all I have said about the "Chinese" being a "levitational" word, and about cultures being 'mixed", would I not be setting up two huge, monolithic blocks and would I then not be re-inscribing, reinforcing and hardening the boundaries between them? And what title should I give to this anthology under preparation? Should it be entitled "An Anthology of Chinese Translation Theory – from earliest times to the Revolution of 1911"? Wouldn't that throw me into the very epistemological and ideological trap I wish to avoid – rigid dichotomies, binary oppositions?

From why to how – finding a title

I shall deal with these questions by way of answering the one that is of the greatest practical import – the question of title for the anthology. The main title, "An Anthology of Chinese Translation Theory," seems to me problematic. Not only does it accentuate and magnify the problems just listed, but it also has an exclusionary force that would hamper considerably my effort at contextualization. For the word "theory", even if interpreted loosely, as Robinson does

in his anthology, will not be able to function as an umbrella term for some of the material I wish to include for translation. The following are a few examples of the texts I wish to include in addition to the more direct statements about translation:

五方之民，言語不通，嗜欲不同。達其志，通其欲，東方曰寄，南方曰象，西方曰狄鞮，北方曰譯。

《禮記・王制》

[The people living in different regions of the country could not understand one another's languages. Their likings, needs and desires were all different. There were officers whose duties were to understand these people's minds and ideas, and communicate their likings and needs. These officers held the post of *ji* in the east, *xiang* in the south, *didi* in the west, and *yi* in the north.

From "*Wang Zhi*" in "*Li Ji*" ("The Royal Regulation" in "*Book of Rites*")
Translated by Martha Cheung (Cheung forthcoming [b])]

This passage, taken from "*Wang Zhi*" of "*Li Ji*" (《禮記・王制》) ["The Royal Regulation" in *Book of Rites*], is said to be compiled sometime between 475 B.C.E. – 8 C.E. It gives the titles of the officers who could speak the languages of the peoples inhabiting the regions of the Middle Kingdom and who were responsible for communicating with them. The passage is not directly about translation. Yet it provides fascinating sociological information on *yi* (譯) (the Chinese character *yi* makes no distinction between translation and interpretation; in fact, in the earliest times, when writing was not yet invented, *yi* was interpreting[10]). We learn about the form *yi* took in ancient times, its institutional basis, the purposes which such an activity was meant to serve, the extent of the country's need for such an activity, and so on. It should also be noted that apart from *yi*", the other characters *ji* (寄), *xiang* (象), *di* (鞮) also contain the idea of translation. *Ji* means "to send – hither or thither", hence "to transmit". *Xiang* means to imitate, or "likeness". In the context, it means "to imitate another's language", hence an imitator or a "representatist", if

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[10] Nowadays, "interpreting" is designated by the characters *kou* (口, literally, 'mouth') *yi* (口譯) and "translating" by the characters *bi* (筆), literally 'pen') *yi* (筆譯). *Yi* is still in currency, though its derivative *fan* (翻, literally "to turn over") *yi* (翻譯) is perhaps more popular. The term *fanyi* also makes no distinction between translating and interpreting.

one may be permitted to coin a word. The first *di* (狄) of *didi* (狄鞮) is, according to Chinese scholars such as Kong Yingda (孔穎達), the name of a tribe inhabiting the Northern regions of the Middle Kingdom in ancient times. As for the second *di*, it means "to know, to understand well". In the context, the term means someone who knew the languages of the tribes of *yi* (夷) and *di* (狄) so that these people could get to know the people of the Middle Kingdom.[11]

Of the three characters *ji*, *xiang* and *di*, *xiang* is particularly important. From another ancient text, "*Zhou Li*", (《周禮》) (*Rites of the Zhou*), we know that *xiang* or *xiang xu* (象胥) are the ancient names for "translator/interpreter":

> 象胥，掌蠻、夷、閩、貉、戎、狄之國使，掌傳王之言，而諭說焉，以和親之。若以時入賓，則協其禮與其言辭，言傳之。
>
> 《周禮・秋官》
>
> [The duties of *Xiang Xu* were to receive the envoys from the tribes *Man*, *Yi*, *Min*, *He*, *Rong*, and *Di*, impart and explain to them the words of the Imperial Emperor, so that a harmonious relation was maintained with these vassal states. When the ambassadors or heads of these states came for an audience with the Emperor, *Xiang Xu* would attend to diplomatic protocol and the use of diplomatic language, and would interpret for them.
>
> From "*Qiu Guan*" *in* "*Zhou Li*" ("The Ministry of Punishments" in *Rites of the Zhou*)
> Translated by Martha Cheung (Cheung forthcoming [b])]

However, from the Han dynasty onward, the tribes from the north often posed serious threats to China, and there were a lot of dealings and traffic with them. As a result, *yi*, which was the title of the officers responsible for communicating with the northern tribes, became the general term for the activity we now often refer to as *fanyi* (interpretation and translation), thus putting the other characters out of currency.[12]

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[11] The meaning of *didi* (狄鞮), explained above, is translated from the following annotation by Kong Yingda:"*Di, zhi ye, wei tongchuan yidi zhi yu, yu zhongguo xiangzhi*" (鞮，知也，謂通傳夷狄之語，與中國相知。) (*Hanyu dacidian* 1995).

[12] This point is made by Chen Fukang, a Mainland translation scholar, who draws the information from the writings of two Buddhist monks of the Song dynasty – Zan Ning (贊寧) and Fa Yun (法雲) Chen, citing Zan Ning, also notes that the use of the character *fan* (to turn over) to denote "translate" started in the period of the Eastern Han

Both these passages have little to do with what actually happened in translation as an inter-lingual transfer of meaning, but they form an integral part of the historical context. More importantly, they are crucial to our understanding of the evolution of the concept of translation in China and should be included in the anthology. They also allow us to leap across the distance of time to catch a glimpse of the relationship between 'patronage', 'economics', and translation.

One more example.

夫戎狄冒沒輕儳，貪而不讓，其血氣不治，若禽獸焉。其適來班貢，不俟馨香嘉味，故坐諸門外，而使舌人體委與之。

《國語‧周語六》

[The tribes of *Rong* and *Di* were bold, rash, reckless and brash, forthright in their demands, and did not yield or defer to others. They were untamed and uncouth, like animals. When they came to court to pay their tribute, they would not wait to be served fine and delicate food. So they were seated out of doors, and the tongue-men were sent to give them food.

From "Zhou Yu Liu" in "*Guo Yu*" ("Discourses of the Zhou [6]" in *Discourses of the States*)
Translated by Jane Lai (Cheung forthcoming [b])]

This passage is not overtly about translation either. However, it contains another name of officials serving as interpreters/translators in ancient China – *She'ren* (舌人, litereally "Tongue-man"). S*he* (舌, "tongue") is a vivid image, and says a lot about the verbal nature of *fanyi* as an activity in ancient China.[13] The passage works well with the one just discussed to add a sense of historical depth to the cross-cultural understanding of Chinese thinking about translation which this anthology aims to promote.

(C.E. 25–221). He notes, too, that it was again in the context of Buddhist sutra translation that the two characters *fan* (翻) and *yi* (譯) began to be used together as a single term, no later than the 6th century. (Chen 1992:12).

[13] The character *she* also carries the meaning "language(s)". Therefore *she'ren* can also be translated as "tongues man". Such a translation brings an echo of the English expression "speaking in tongues". The choice of "tongue-man" over "tongues man" is an indication of positioning and should throw some light on one amongst the numerous translation problems and translation decisions involved in the anthology under preparation.

From why to how – constructing a structural framework for the material

In the end, I decided that in order to avoid a debilitating uprooting of translation concepts from its natural terrain, in order to address the reservations I have about presenting the anthology as a companion volume to "Western Translation Theory", I should replace the word "theory" with the word "discourse".[14] The latter word has a multiplicity of meanings, all of which are relevant to my anthology project. At the simplest level, discourse means "the expression of ideas; *esp*: formal and orderly expression in speech or writing" (*Webster's Third New International Dictionary* 1993[1961]: 647) and thus it readily accommodates the range and variety of material that constitute my corpus – the texts I have quoted earlier, for example. And of course, the notion of "text" as being a connected series of utterances is the meaning of "discourse" in linguistics and hence it is also an appropriate label for my project. Moreover, the discourse on translation can be direct or indirect, explicit or implicit, inward-looking or outward-looking, and these different types of discourse can in turn be brought together to function as a conceptual frame, a mental filing cabinet, so to speak. The following is a diagram of their configuration:

(Chinese) Discourse on Translation			
Indirect discourse on translation		Direct discourse on translation	
Implicit mode	Explicit mode	Inward-looking ◄— Outward-looking	
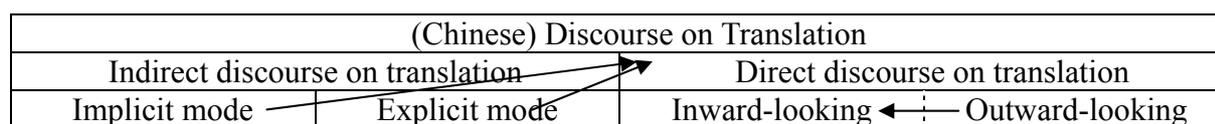
The conceptual frame set up by "discourse on translation" is made up of two broad categories – direct discourse on translation and indirect discourse on translation. The former can be divided into the inward-looking mode and the outward looking mode, while the latter consists of the implicit mode and the explicit mode. The inward-looking mode of the direct discourse on translation includes texts discoursing on topics such as the nature and being of translation

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[14] For a detailed account of the various options considered before the final decision to use "discourse" as the most appropriate umbrella term for the material included in this translation anthology, and for the ideological and epistemological considerations involved in the making of this decision, see Cheung's article, "From 'theory' to 'discourse' – the Making of a Translation Anthology" (2003)

("What is translation?", "How has it been defined?", "How should it be defined?"), the different manifestations of translation, the different forms translation takes or has been perceived to take (interlinear, interlingual, intersemiotic, direct, indirect, fake, assumed, pseudo, professional, natural, etc.), principles and strategies of translation, and criteria of translation assessment. The outward-looking mode, as the description suggests, includes texts that address the relation between translation and outside factors. For example, the importance of translation in society and in history; the relation between translation and the source culture, between translation and the target culture; and the training of translators. As for indirect discourse on translation, it is a flexible and accommodating category.[15] The explicit mode includes texts about translation rather than texts on translation. For example, historical and documentary records of the official titles of officers in charge of translating-interpreting in dynastic China (quoted above), or of the elaborate division of labour for Buddhist sutra translation, which for a few centuries took the form of institutionalized team translation, often under the patronage of the imperial emperors. The implicit mode of indirect discourse on translation includes texts which say nothing on or about translation but which serve as the philosophical underpinnings of key concepts of translation in ancient China.

This scheme – "discourse on translation" – not only helps us organize material of the past but also performs a generative function. It is dynamic, not static. As can be seen from the diagram, the inward-looking and outward-looking modes of direct discourse on translation are separated by a dotted line. This means that the boundary is not rigidly fixed, and, depending on the perspective and the point of emphasis, texts on the same topic could be grouped differently. The boundary between direct and indirect discourse on translation is indicated by an unbroken

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[15] In "Literature, Translation, and (De)colonization", José Lambert remarks, and I agree with him, that "hardly anybody so far has made the distinction between explicit and implicit discourse on translation" (Lambert 1995:116, footnote 7). Although that paper does not define or explore the theoretical significance of the distinction between explicit and implicit discourse on translation, I drew from it a touch of inspiration and developed the theoretical notion of discourse into a scheme with interconnected categories.

line, but there are two arrows linking the implicit and explicit modes of indirect discourse on translation to the direct discourse on translation. There is also an arrow linking the outward-looking mode of the direct discourse on translation with the inward-looking mode. This means that the texts belonging to the category where the end of the arrow is could serve as raw material for the production of direct discourse on translation – either of the inward-looking mode or of the outward-looking mode, or both.

These categories of "discourse on translation", which will be explained in the Introduction part of the anthology, could help the readers understand the texts not in isolation but in relation to one another, and also to treat the texts not merely as archival or historical material but rather as large formations of statements bearing the marks of rules, conventions and systems of dispersion governing the way translation was perceived and talked about through the centuries in China. What is more, the texts can also be regarded as ingredients for new theorizations about translation. In other words, the scheme set up by the various categories of discourse on translation can enable us to appreciate the production of knowledge, help us manage our knowledge, and generate new knowledge – of Chinese thinking about translation. Not necessarily just Chinese thinking about translation, it should be stressed, but other thinkings as well, for the scheme certainly has a relevance beyond the Chinese domain. And knowledge management, as well as discursive formation, are part of the complex network of concepts which Michel Foucault had woven into his theory of discourse, the others being power and ideology (Foucault 1972).[16] But there is perhaps no need to labor these points here.

With this scheme, what might otherwise be a loose, haphazard and undifferentiated

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[16] *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972) and *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1979) are the two works of Michel Foucault that launched his highly complex concept of "discourse" and its related concepts – ideology, power, knowledge, and language – into critical currency in the domains of literary theory, and cultural studies in the last few decades. For an illuminating summary of the different concepts and the intricate web of ideas encompassed in the word "discourse", see Foucault's Appendix to *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972: 215-37).

package – a baggy monster, so to speak – should be able, hopefully, to stand up to scrutiny as an organized and coherent work of reference. It can keep "Western Translation Theory" within hailing distance, but, first and foremost, it has an independent existence of its own. In addition, I would be able to open up possibilities for intervention – or perhaps I should say possibilities for further intervention, since the making of this anthology is already an act of intervention in itself –- into current discussions and theorizations about translation, both in China and in the West. The scope of this paper does not permit me to detail these possibilities. Suffice it to mention just one topic: what, in terms of consequences, are the differences between using the concept of "theory" and that of "discourse" in the disciplining, management and generation of knowledge about translation?

The notion of "discourse" throws problems into my path too. While the linguistic approach towards 'discourse' has taken root in the translation studies circle in China, the Foucaultian and other related theories of discourse (primarily postcolonial) have not, or not yet. With this editorial decision, will I not make "An Anthology of Chinese Discourse on Translation" in some ways an extension of me, that is, less than Chinese, or more than Chinese, hence indeterminately Chinese?

I do not know whether these are real problems or fashionable worries. But in the process of conceptualization, questions relating to the legitimacy of representation did return to vex me. I even tried to tackle them, as well as practical problems such as time, energy, and research resources and expertise needed for the implementation of such a project,[17] by inviting Mr Lin

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[17] The question of expertise poses a real problem. Most of the texts to be included in this anthology under preparation are excerpted from works written in classical Chinese. Proficiency in classical Chinese, or even just a reading knowledge of classical Chinese, cannot be assumed in the average intellectual in China, or different parts of the Chinese-speaking world. It would not be too much of an exaggeration to say that with the exception of a small number of scholars, classical Chinese is virtually a "foreign" language to the Chinese people. These scholars, however, may not have a command of English strong enough to undertake the work of translation. In implementing the project, therefore, great care must be taken to ensure that the translators are not only suitable for the job but also provided with the help they would need, especially where comprehension of the classical texts is concerned. The comprehension problem is compounded by the fact that a lot of subject knowledge is

Wusen, Executive Vice-President of the Chinese Translators Association, to be my co-editor. Then, through him, Mainland experts on translation history and translation theory were invited to participate in the project. These scholars contribute to the anthology by commenting on the suitability of texts I have selected for inclusion (accounting for about seventy percent of the total number), writing the headnotes, and locating the material on which further research is needed. Their involvement should go some way in producing a collective effort at self-representation, even if the notion of the self remains problematic – rightly so, it should be stressed. Their involvement is crucial in another way. Writing the headnotes means setting the context for the translated pieces. Contextualization is the deployment of interpreted historical facts for a particular purpose. The two scholars who, together, are responsible for writing over half of the headnotes have shown, in their publications, a leaning towards the construction of a Chinese translation tradition with an impressive history and distinct Chinese characteristics.[18] Their involvement, therefore, means that the mainstream view will be represented. Of course, some may cast doubt on the reliability of the context thus set, of the reading thus proffered, and, by extension, of the kind of understanding provided by the anthology for its English-speaking readers, who would have no means of checking the accuracy of the information presented. But as I do not believe that discourse can be ideologically free, I do not see this as a problem. I do think, however, that ideological positions should be made known to the readers and I will use the footnotes for such a purpose. In addition, the footnotes will function as a discursive space for

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required since the texts to be translated deal not just with literary translation but also with Buddhist sutra translation and scientific text translation. In addition, experts with a grasp of the background material needed for the provision of a context for the pieces to be translated must be found.

[18] I have written about the (re)reading of history and tradition and the issue of ideology in another paper (Cheung 2002). In a different vein and with a different argumentative thrust, Eva Hung has analyzed the (mis)reading of history and the consignment to obscurity of the contribution of the foreign translators to the Chinese translation tradition as a phenomenon in twentieth century translation studies in mainland China (Hung 1999b).

different, alternative, or oppositional reading(s)[19]. Together, the headnotes and footnotes can, I hope, alert us to the need to think ideologically about translation research.

The need to think ideologically about translation research is a call I made in another paper. (Cheung 2002) I would like to reiterate that call here. To think ideologically about translation research does not mean that we treat everything as ideological suspect. It does mean, however, that we accept ideological leanings/bias/convictions as an epistemological fact, as something that is built into our attempts to make sense of things. And this, I think, is one way of dealing with the problem of representation – both self-representation and representation of "the other". As far as this project – "An Anthology of Chinese Discourse on Translation: From Ancient Times to the Revolution of 1911" – is concerned, thinking ideologically about translation research means admitting that the kind of understanding provided by this anthology for its English-speaking reader will be mediated by all who are involved in the preparation of the project, and above all, by my own theoretical and ideological orientations. These orientations can be summed up as at once a readiness to help – in a non-innocent manner – "Western" readers understand "Chinese" thinking about translation in its context and a determination to engage with "Western" thinking about translation on its own terms. These orientations are the result of my attempt to capitalize on Hong Kong's marginal position – marginal in relation to China as well as the West – which enables me to look East and West rather than at or from a single direction. These orientations mark the limits, and perhaps also the excitement, of the kind of cross-cultural understanding I am trying to facilitate through the compilation of this anthology.

Conclusion

I shall bring this exercise in self-reflection to an end with an observation and two questions.

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[19] The question could be asked of whether this tactic raises an ethical issue, that is, whether the writers of the headnotes will be able to respond to the readings given in the footnotes. However, since the footnotes will only record oppositional views already expressed in publications in Chinese, there should be no breaching of ethics. I am, however, grateful to Theo Hermans for alerting me to this issue.

Mediation is in the order of things, especially where cross-cultural understanding is concerned. The issue is how heavy or slight one wants the mediation to be. My way of dealing with this issue is not to reduce mediation as far as possible in pursuit of objectivity or historical "truth" in my representation of Chinese thinking about translation. Instead, my strategy is to use mediation as a way of intervening in debates or matters that are of concern to me. In addition, I talk about my mediation, as I did in this paper. No one can write outside of frames, to borrow a term from Erving Goffman. No one can escape from positionality. But one can be articulate about it, whilst bearing in mind that a fully reflexive text cannot exist because any piece of writing, in order to say something, necessarily contains an element of blindness.

Donna Haraway, in her celebrated article, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective" (1988), uses the notion of "situated knowledges" to highlight the "critical and interpretive core of all knowledge" (p. 584), and specifically to query, critique, and problematize the meaning of "objectivty". She does this not to exalt relativism, which she regards as "the perfect mirror twin of totalization in the ideologies of objectivity" (p.584). Rather, she stresses that it is limited location and situated knowledge that allow us to become "answerable for what we learn how to see" (p. 583).

I share Haraway's commitment to situated knowledges and all that such a position entails. But, have I managed to talk about the mediated nature of my anthology project with a measure of self-reflexiveness that could promote a better (i.e., more nuanced and more discourse-sensitive) understanding of the complex and ideologically loaded issues involved in the making of a translation anthology? Or is this "turning-back-upon-oneself" merely a kind of navel-gazing that is academically trendy? These, I think, are questions that must be left to the readers of this article.

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