

he details his methods and results; there is an internal consistency and a certain plausibility from one step to the next. But we must still keep in mind two fundamental problems: 1) we have no access to or control over Harappan phonology, so we have no way to check whether the readings Parpola posits bear any resemblance to the later Dravidian words; 2) the first Dravidian language attested, Old Tamil, is documented only in the last centuries BCE and in substantial texts only from the common era. It further belongs to the South Dravidian branch of the family. Thus, approximately two millennia and the better part of a continent separate the Indus Valley seals from attested Dravidian, and considerable language change can have happened in that period of time and across that space. Even reconstructed Proto-Dravidian does not get us close enough. Parpola's decipherment depends crucially on the assumption that the same puns and homophonic relationships he finds in Old Tamil (etc.) obtained in the same form in the language of the Indus civilization; probing this assumption is made almost impossible by the fact that homophones depend entirely on phonology, and we have no access to the phonological realization of any of the signs of the Indus script, as was pointed out above. Thus, the decoded names of gods and astronomical bodies on the seals, which then are transferred and transformed into features of later Hinduism, all rest on a series of shaky hypotheses and assumptions. They may be right, but they fall far short of proof.

In assessing observable similarities and observable differences, Parpola seems to work with an essentially static model. On the one hand, his two sets of Indo-Aryan speakers, separated for over five hundred years and culturally very distinct, insofar as culture is reflected in religion, have maintained their language so faithfully that, once reunited, they can immediately take up the conversation where it left off nearly a millennium before. The other side of the coin is that minor linguistic differences between the two earliest Sanskrit texts must indicate that they belong to two fundamentally distinct linguistic systems; the differences cannot be the result of language change or dialect differentiation. Similarly, his decipherment of the Indus script relies on Dravidian having barely changed over two millennia. For me, at least, a dynamic model is more realistic and better captures processes seen in the histories both of Indo-Aryan and of other languages and language families—not to mention cultural evolution more generally.

In giving this brief and crude sketch of the central arguments (as I see them) of this fantastically detailed book, I am afraid that I risk caricaturing it—which is decidedly not my intention—and I wish to make especially clear that Parpola makes no claim for which he does not provide detailed evidence and argument, generally drawn from across the array of disciplines at his command, and that these claims interlock in mutually reinforcing ways. That the evidence can be taken in different ways, and different arguments made based on it, does not negate the deep consideration that the author has given to all aspects of the many problems and the extraordinary achievement the work represents. It is impossible to do justice to the imaginative richness of this book, the thousands of connections made, the curious or ignored details put into a whole new light by a striking leap across cultures and millennia. If, in my earthbound way, I cannot follow all these leaps and accept all the joins, the book has nonetheless provided me with far more intellectual stimulation and sheer scholarly pleasure than much of the scholarly work I find it easier to agree with. If only we all had the same intellectual daring as our beloved colleague Asko Parpola!

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Sinologists as Translators in the Seventeenth to Nineteenth Centuries. Edited by LAWRENCE WANG-CHI WONG and BERNHARD FUEHRER. Hong Kong: RESEARCH CENTRE FOR TRANSLATION, CHINESE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2015. Pp. xx + 440. \$52.

Anne Michaels writes in *Fugitive Pieces* that “You choose your philosophy of translation just as you choose how to live: the free adaptation that sacrifices detail to meaning, the strict crib that sacrifices

meaning to exactitude.” The pivotal choice of which translation philosophy to adopt is precisely the reason why *Sinologists as Translators in the Seventeenth to Nineteenth Centuries* is so valuable. Works on translation theory and practice are comparable to introductory studies of the art and process of translation. The virtue of this book is that it elevates students of translation to a higher level as it functions as an upper division or graduate course reader that reveals the whys and hows of translators selecting their guiding translation philosophies and attendant approaches. It facilitates reaching the ultimate goal of accurately yet artfully rendering a variety of traditional Chinese literary, religious, and philosophical works into Western languages, chiefly English, German, and French. Confucian and Daoist classics share the stage with a popular novel and a novella. And as poetic passages populate these latter works, theories concerning the translation of poetry are also treated.

This work is the result of two conferences sponsored first by the Research Centre for Translation at the Chinese University of Hong Kong in October 2011, and second by the Department of the Languages and Cultures of China and Inner Asia at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, in June 2013. Eleven original papers are included. Along with the editors, contributors to this volume include Thierry Meynard S.J. on the *Analecets*, Claudia von Collani on the *Daodejing*, Feng-Chuan Pan on the *Book of Filial Piety*, Patricia Sieber on Peter Perring Thomas and his translation of the *Huajian ji*, Roland Altenburger on Heinrich Kur’s German translation of the same text, Uganda Sze Pui Kwan on Samuel Turner Fearon’s Chinese studies, Wolfgang Behr on Thomas W. Kingsmill’s translation of the *Shijing* into Sanskrit, Thomas Zimmer on Wilhelm Grube’s translation of the *Investiture of the Gods*, and Richard J. Smith on translations of the *Yijing*. Co-editor Bernhard Fuehrer composed the introduction and an entry on August Pfizmaier and his translation of poetry, and co-editor Lawrence Wang-chi Wong treated John Francis Davis as translator of Chinese literature.

The same title provided the theme and governed the scope of both conferences, which is the title of this book. A program statement is included in the introduction: “This volume brings together selected proceedings from two conferences that aimed at merging the study of the history of sinology with translation studies through extensive archive studies and a focus on translation hermeneutics” (p. xix). I am as impressed with the range of archival materials accessed and evaluated as I am with the scope of the hermeneutical approaches explained and exemplified. A lengthy litany of translation concepts and terminology can be compiled from this work; all receive ample illustration in concrete translation settings. Witness such factors inherent within early attempts at translating Chinese texts as the following: the unavoidable bias toward Neo-Confucian orthodoxy on the part of the authoritative commentators employed by Jesuit translators contrasted with their own inherent Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophical leanings and their automatic filters based on the monotheistic world view; ritual praxis and the rites controversy within Catholicism; European political and intellectual concerns such as turning Chinese emperors into philosophizing and wise monarchs; dehistoricization and the reformatting of texts to purge them of elements of dialogue; the prioritizing of universal moral law over the particulars of Chinese beliefs and culture; internal Jesuit struggles such as the figurism of the Fathers in Canton versus the theological/historical exegetical school of the Fathers of Peking; and the intentionalism of translators of the *Daodejing* who strove to show that “the Mysteries of the Most Holy Trinity and of the incarnate God were anciently known by the Chinese nation” (p. 55). This list of competing translation priorities and guidelines is by no means exhaustive. Other relevant concepts and themes include universalizing, foreignizing, and diffusionist theories; equivalency; philological versus literary and interpretive translations; commensurability contrasted to incommensurability; retranslation; and the like. Such ancillary but mundane concerns as book binding, page formatting, footnoting, printing, illustrations, and other factors of book production also find treatment as part of the mechanical process of translating and presenting original works into foreign languages.

Each contribution adopts a leisurely pace, and broad amplitude is granted to lay the groundwork of biographical background, to review earlier translation attempts of the work at hand or the earlier treatment of the theory or approach under consideration, and to discuss issues of cultural or historical importance. I noticed no obvious grammatical errors or typos, and only occasionally did stiff phraseology surface from learned but non-native writers of English. And one cannot differentiate by the depth of research, breadth of evidence, or sophistication of argumentation the status of the various contribu-

tors, whether enthusiastic neophyte or seasoned veteran. In short, the quality of the entries is invariably high and evenly maintained across the largely lengthy offerings. And theoretical musings are admirably counterbalanced with close reportage of the mechanics of methodology, as illustrated in the case of Pfizmaier:

Pfizmaier aims to keep the word order of the translation as close as possible to that of the original. We can detect no endeavor to reflect the rhyme of the original; however, as a matter of general tendency we should note that he seems to make some effort to emulate the poetic rhythm by matching the number of stressed syllables in the translation with the number of syllables in the original—a translation strategy that is applied far from consistently, however. (p. 254)

In contrast to the above epitome of the mechanics of translation, I counterpose the following summary of the theoretical background to translations of the *Daodejing* across the span of the nineteenth century:

Whereas the Figurist interpretations of the *Daodejing* of the early eighteenth century became suspect, theological interpretations continued into the nineteenth century also caused by the fact that some of the translators were theologians. The scholars, also the linguists, often used Deist interpretations or even looked for vestiges of the monotheistic God of the Old Testament which had come from the West to China; only later the [*sic*] philosophical Daoism was treated as well, and much later Daoism was studied as Chinese popular religion. In the second half of the nineteenth century Sinological interpretations started. The early French orientalist and academician Joseph de Guignes (1721–1800) already published a treaty [*sic*] on Confucianism and Daoism in 1777. He described it in comparatively objective way [*sic*] writing that Laozi considered the Dao as only divinity, having no name but being the principle of Heaven and Earth ... The first European and non-missionary dealing with the [*sic*] philosophical Daoism was Jean-Pierre Abel-Rémusat (1788–1832). He also was the first “modern” Sinologist, and became professor of the newly founded chair of Sinology at the Collège du Roi (today Collège de France) in 1815. (pp. 67–68)

Each of the translation approaches and various stages and purposes of the translators mentioned above constitute engaging ingresses worthy of intense inquiry and discussions by students in any undergraduate course or graduate seminar in translation theory and practice. Of course, mastery of such themes and stages in the developmental history of translation from the Chinese on the part of professional sinologists of most fields or outlooks goes without saying. Similar passages of such profound interest and utility as those quoted above are found literally in each chapter of his book, which validates its value as both welcome advanced textbook and sophisticated contribution to the field.

I conclude with a continuation of the quote from Anne Michaels cited above: “The poet moves from life to language, the translator moves from language to life; both, like the immigrant, try to identify the invisible, what’s between the lines, the mysterious implications.” *Sinologists as Translators* reveals many fascinating and instructive aspects of the intellectual and cultural lives led by translators in China and Europe during the colonial period of East-West engagement. It does this much more successfully than identifying the “mysterious implications” that lie in the interstices between texts in original source and target languages, an irrelevancy since the aim of this book lies in the former endeavor—the theoretical guidelines and mechanics of translation—rather than the polished products of such work. As such, I recommend this work very highly for students and specialists alike in the fields of sinology, translation theory and practice, and East-West cultural encounter and exchange.

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