

Transforming and Translating the Form: The Examples of Daniel Defoe and Lin Shu

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ABSTRACT

In the early eighteenth century, as England stood at the threshold of the industrial revolution, Defoe's experiments with fiction and his attempts to represent the prevailing ideologies of mercantilism and monarchism had a significant impact on shaping the form and development of English prose. Similarly, in China, more than a century later, Lin Shu's translations of Western literature would change Chinese approaches to story and narrative. Thus, this paper examines Lin Shu's Chinese translation of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* in an attempt to shed light on the evolution of the form in both Western and Eastern cultural contexts.

The introduction of Western novels to China at the turn of the twentieth century (*ca.* 1890) was especially significant as it was the product of numerous heated discourses and dialectics on resisting the invasion of Western imperialist nations. This multi-faceted and wide-ranging discourse involves the short-lived Wu-Xu Reform Movement (1898), the influence of prevailing social Darwinism, and the urgent need to find a new literary vehicle capable of helping resist the foreign encroachment. Standing alone as a landmark in the history of East-West cultural exchange, Lin Shu's translations of more than 180 Western literary texts helped pave the way for the controversial establishment of the modern Chinese novel, had a tremendous impact on social life and thought in turn-of-the-century China, and finally, in 1919, helped usher in the powerfully influential May Fourth Movement.

KEY WORDS

Daniel Defoe, Lin Shu, *Robinson Crusoe*, prose fiction, form, translation, Chinese literature, Western literature, mercantilism, Enlightenment, May Fourth Movement



In *The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (1719), Daniel Defoe (1660–1731) adopted a wholly new narrative strategy to depict the quotidian life of a castaway on a deserted island. Apart from being read as a popular adventure story, this work also holds a place of special significance in the history of the English novel both in its form and in its content. Thus, Defoe has become well-known among literary scholars for having played an important role in molding the literary medium of the novel at a critical stage. Having translated many important works of Western fiction for Chinese readers including *Robinson Crusoe*, Lin Shu (1852–1924) plays a similarly important role in Chinese literary history. As a translator who did not know any foreign languages, but instead relied heavily on collaborators, he translated or paraphrased 184 Western works into Chinese. The impact of Lin's translations on the rise of modern Chinese fiction was so dramatic and tremendous that the evaluation of his literary achievements has been divergent and controversial even to the present. To be sure, one of the chief contributions of Lin's translations lies in the fact that Chinese society first came to be acquainted with the lives, customs and habits of the Westerners and their emotions, feelings and ethos through the vivid depictions of these rendered texts. Due to the limitations in Lin and his collaborators' knowledge and scope of Western literature, the quality of their joint enterprise was uneven—some translations are so beautifully phrased and structured that they are arguably better than the source texts, whereas some translations do not come close to reflecting the style and content of the original work. Nevertheless, Lin's translations give ready examples and embody the kind of “New Novel” propounded and promoted by Liang

Qi-chao, the most famous champion of a Westernized Chinese Enlightenment in the late Qing Dynasty. Therefore, the aim of the paper is to link the significance of Lin and Defoe into one transformative literary discourse. In doing so, I will begin by probing into Defoe's revolutionary writing style; then, will address Lin's translation and introduction of Western fiction (including *Robinson Crusoe*) to China and its subsequent impact on the rise of modern Chinese fiction; and finally will raise some conclusions about Defoe and Lin's contribution to the development of the novel as a major mode of narration in both China and the West.

I.

Before examining the implications of the shift of narrative mode in England in the eighteenth century, it is beneficial to have a clearer understanding of socio-economic situation of early eighteenth-century English society. After the Glorious Revolution of 1688, there was a substantial decline in violent strife in England compared to previous periods. And as a result, English society witnessed tremendous changes in many sectors of public life: Enlightenment and rationalism challenged religious traditions and doctrines; epistemic evolution in philosophy changed the way people perceived the outside world; the progress and development of technology collided with the old modes of production, ways of life, and consumption behavior (Cassirer 133–37). The rise of manufacturing guilds marked the decline of the traditional handicraft industry, and introduced a new class of professionals and merchants who would replace the feudal aristocracy as the key members of society controlling production and transportation of wealth as well as the accumulation and investment of capital. Under these circumstances, the middle class, who came to the foreground in the economic and social sectors in the English society, demanded a share in the power and privilege previously enjoyed exclusively by the clergy and aristocrats (McKeon 1987: 2–4; Fussell 74).

As one of the writers who would eventually come to help found a new form of narrative art, Defoe began his career of fiction writing

after having failed in many trades and becoming bankrupt. In order to reflect the new social realities they had personally lived, Defoe and his peers adopted a new narrative strategy that leaned heavily on an innovative literary realism. For instance, Defoe had recourse to a writing style that enumerated and itemized realistic details so as to create an illusion that what he depicted in his works really happened; Samuel Richardson (1689–1761) made use of an epistolary form to teach young ladies decorum, etiquette, and social norms; Jonathan Swift (1667–1745) and Henry Fielding (1707–1754) used satire to attack the aristocratic ideology, to ridicule the vulgarities of the parvenu, and so on.

The substantial changes in style and form wrought upon the English society in the eighteenth century raises the question of the dynamic relationship between form and content, which is intriguing but, as many previous scholars have found, not easy to fully dissect. Insofar as literary study is concerned, critics have endeavored to look into the function of form in the process of artistic creation. The dispute over whether form precedes content or vice versa is just beside the question; the critic's primary concern is to better understand the way the writer makes use of form to articulate and embody what he perceives of the world. Instead of interpreting form as a limiting literary device that the writer imposes on his subject, Marxist aesthetes regard form as a code invented by the writer to represent his conceptualization of the world. It can be argued that the tangibility of this code is clear, as it serves as an ideological context whereby different forces contest for power and dominance in society at large. In "The Institution of the English Novel: Defoe's Contribution," Homer Brown has described the novel as "a new form of cultural capital," in which conflicts of competitive forces converge, including criticism, readership, and the mechanism of production and consumption: "This institution is accomplished in spite of, or perhaps because of the somewhat frantic competition fired by the relatively new problem of obtaining rights to titles" (304). In *Soul and Form*, Georg Lukács, a Marxist aesthete, dwells upon the quintessential function of form in a letter to his friend Leo Popper. Although his subject matter is the nature and form of the essay, the

argument holds good in understanding the architectonics of artistic forms in general:

Form *is* reality in the writings of critics; it is the voice with which they address their questions to life. That is the true and most profound reason why literature and art are the typical, natural subject-matter of criticism. For here the end-point of poetry can become a starting-point and a beginning; here form appears, even in its abstract conceptuality, as something surely and concretely real. (8)

II.

In his monumental work on the emergence and development of the English novel—*The Rise of the Novel* (1957), Ian Watt explicitly deals with the relationship between socio-economic change and the emergence of the new genre. Ever since the publication of the book, the critical attention of scholars in eighteenth-century studies has been riveted upon questions regarding the formation and institution of the English novel. The convergence of critical voices on the issue will more than likely serve as a key step to better understanding of the comparatively new genre as critics are probing into every aspect of the new form so as to shed new light on it (Mayer 529). Based on the assumptions of cultural materialism that artistic and literary production is interwoven and rooted deeply in the infrastructure of a given society, Watt's theory investigates the rise of the novel in terms of eighteenth-century England's modes of production, the constituency of its readership, and the evolution of the literary paradigm in England in the early eighteenth century.

For Watt, the text that serves to illustrate the point best is *Robinson Crusoe*, which has long been regarded as an embryonic form of the first English novel. Employing the now more common literary device of "formal realism," which depicts the individual's life in the form of a day-to-day journal or accounting book, Watt argues that

"*Robinson Crusoe* is certainly the first novel in the sense that it is the first fictional narrative in which an ordinary person's daily activities are the centre of continuous literary attention" (82). As an innovator of prose fiction, Defoe took much interest in representing the secular experience in a time when romance and religious subject matters were predominant. By and large, critics studying the narrative form of the novel have emphasized the realistic tendency of Defoe's works so much that the assumptions of realistic texture and voice seem to predominate the critical discussion of *Robinson Crusoe*, the novel. While this critical stance is frequently challenged and criticized, it has also been staunchly defended and theorized.¹

Although the writers then tended to claim that what they said or depicted in the texts were nothing but truth, in most cases they only breathed out the statements or remarks tongue in cheek. Yet, like artists since the beginning of time, it must be kept in mind that vivid and circumstantial descriptions of details, characterizations, and specifications of settings did not necessarily guarantee the authenticity of the reality represented in the texts (Sherman 55–57). As our understanding of the literary art *per se* in general and the nature of the novel in particular deepens with regards to the representational function of language and the indeterminacy of signs, we know that the reality in the text is what the writer constructs to represent his own perception of the outside world; therefore, like all written realities, it is partial, incomplete, and mediated. In one way or another, the reality in the text does not necessarily correspond to a tangible "something" existing in the physical world. The readers attach meaning to the text where they find common experiences, and these aspects and features of lives clothed in the guise of truth or real life are simply replica or simulacrum at best. Given these theoretical debates about the novel, it is pertinent to point out that the narrative strategy of textual realism indicates the author's efforts to erase or blur the border between fact and fiction so as to give an illusion of reality to the narrative. In the Preface to *Robinson Crusoe*, Defoe tells the reader in the guise or voice of an editor: "The editor believes the thing to be a just history of fact; neither is there any appearance of fiction in it" (Defoe 1985: 25). For

Defoe, a realistic plot so concocted and fabricated would better serve the neo-Classical mission of art: to delight and to instruct. In the Preface to the second part of the novel, which is generally called *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (1719), Defoe reiterated the same point that the justification of the parable or fiction depended upon its usefulness to life: "The just application of every incident, the religious and useful inferences drawn from every part, are so many testimonies to the good design of making it public, and must legitimate all the part that may be called invention, or parable in the story" (Defoe 1840: 7). It should be noted that, far from being a rigid, dogmatic and matter-of-fact reproduction of reality, realism or realistic representation in Defoe's narrative is a kind of generic style, whose function simply serves to underscore realness and authenticity of the story (Novak 1964: 660). In pointing out the distinction between romance and story, Defoe condemns the former as improbable and false, whereas the latter is highly recommended as something equivalent to history. In *Serious Reflections during the Life and Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (1720), Defoe defends the realness and authenticity of his two volumes of *The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* by first refuting the charge that "the story is feigned, that the names are borrowed, and that it is all a romance" (ix). Then he insists that his story is "allegorical" in nature; that is to say, it is not a representation true to life in a strict sense of the word: "I, Robinson Crusoe . . . do affirm that the story, though allegorical, is also historical" (Defoe 1895: ix). Thus, there is no falsehood, simply because the writer himself admits the fictiveness of the story at the very beginning of the narrative.²

III.

The importation of Western literature to China at the turn of the last century (*ca.* 1890) was particularly significant in that it was the product of a variety of discourses and dialectics on the impending national crisis and the danger of genocide as a result of foreign imperialist invasion and encroachment. The aftermath of the

short-lived Wu-Xu Reform Movement (1898), the influence of prevailing social Darwinism, and the urgent desire to find a literary vehicle for political, socio-cultural, and economic enlightenment, all came together to spur on a movement for the modernization of China. It is true that “modernization” was regarded as a Westernized and instigated process of reform, progress, and development in this specific historical context. Liang Qi-chao and Yan Fu were the most active champions who, understanding that the democratic reforms, strong national defense, and economic prosperity of Western countries and Japan might be the result of universal literacy and general Western-styled enlightenment, tended to promote and propagate the writing and reading of the novel. For Liang Qi-chao, the decay and degeneration of China were at least partially attributed to the harmful contents of the traditional *zhang-hui-xiao-shuo* (or the serial novel) and *chuan-qi* (or romance), which were stories consisting of a revolving stable of high-ranking officials, beauties, robbers, and ghosts (1902: 9).³ In “The Translator’s Preface to the Translation and Publication of the Political Novel” (1898), he prescribed the political novel as a panacea to get rid of these seemingly poisonous maladies:

At the very beginning of reforms and revolutions in European countries, the leaders and scholars usually wrote novels from their own experiences to embody their ideals and political opinion. Thus, students read these novels at free time after school. Soldiers, merchants, farmers, carpenters, cabmen, grooms, women, and children, all tried to find novels to read. Therefore, the opinion of the nation changed whenever a book was published. The day-by-day progress in political affairs in countries like the United States, Britain, Germany, France, Austria, Italy, and Japan can all be attributed to the political novel. (Liang 1898: 34–35)

The question, however, of whether or not the promotion and popularity of the novel resulted in the national progress and prosperity of Western countries and Japan is still open to debate. True, the impact of literary art upon a society does lie in the change and transformation

of the individual's attitudes towards life and the world, which, unlike the statistics of GNP (Gross National Product), cannot be measured quantitatively. In "The Promoters of the New Novel: Yan Fu and Liang Qi-chao," C.T. Hsia has challenged this statement:

When was the beginning of civilization in Britain and France? Renaissance? Enlightenment? Or the Industrial Revolution? Although both countries had some specific kinds of fictive literature (including drama) during these periods, we can hardly say that the writers, being in accordance with *Geistgeschichte*, were willingly working with the government's universal education project to educate the people. (70)

Basically, Liang Qi-chao and his followers regarded modernization as a shortcut to save China. Since translating Western books would be the most efficient means of shortening the gap and difference between Western countries and China, it was naturally a corollary that the novel would become a useful medium for popular enlightenment because of its popularity. As a result, for a long time, it was content that preceded form in the discourse surrounding the novel in China, a situation that was unfavorable to the development of the genre. Leo Ou-fan Lee has argued, "Thanks to the spirit and mentality of deep concern about the age and the country, the writers all focus on content rather than form, with realism as the preminent literary style" (229).

Translators who work with words to bridge cultural gaps are, in effect, cultural mediators: "Translation thus ultimately serves the purpose of expressing the central reciprocal relation between languages" (Benjamin 72). As language is the very medium through which the hidden significance of cultural codes are communicated and mediated, thus, the task of the translator is to render the form and content of the source language into the target language without addition or deletion. As the translator mediates between the writer and the reader/audience, the original text and the translated work, his creditability lies in accomplishing "mediated communication"

successfully (Neubert 11–12). In fact, the buildup and accumulation of knowledge depends heavily on the mediated function of translation, through which audio-visual and written materials penetrate across linguistic borders to enrich and revive shared cultural heritages. Albrecht Neubert uses the metaphor of torchbearer to depict the mediated communication characteristic of the task of the translator:

Although the person of the translator and, in particular, his name very rarely stand in the limelight his mediating function is constantly called upon and his activities are modestly, yet nevertheless decisively going on in the background. Mediators are servants. They hold the torch so that both parties, who would be in the dark without them, can communicate. But they themselves remain in the dark, and their ethos demands it that they are happy about it (12).⁴

Lin Shu clearly understands this defined role of the translator, as he explains in his Preface (1905) to the Chinese translation of *Robinson Crusoe*, “Translation is quite different from creative writing. The writer can put down what he sees, pursuing the ethereal and the subtle without any restraint. But the translator is to recapitulate what has been done. How can he express his own opinion?” (2). This guideline clearly defines fiction and translation; however, it is apparent in his work that Lin Shu did not stick fast to this rule.

As Lin Shu did not know any foreign languages, the accuracy of his translation was often called into question by critics: “Although I do not know foreign languages, I have been engaged in translation with the help of some oral translators” (1907: 5). Cooperating with a great many of these oral translators, Lin Shu translated the texts not into common vernacular, but preferred instead classical and outmoded Chinese and, in doing so, restructured sentences and paragraphs, and added or deleted parts of the source text. In that way, he produced fluent, no less than elegant texts of prose fiction, for the enjoyment of millions of Chinese readers. Lin Shu and his collaborators’ translation and transposition of Western works via indirect oral recitations seems to

echo Plato's metaphor of mimesis: the painter delineates the artifact which the carpenter imitates from the ontological idea (god) (Plato 287–89).

While Lin Shu directed the translation project, his overall control was limited as he had no knowledge about Western literature, and thus had no say in the selection of the texts, which depended entirely upon the literary tastes of his collaborators.⁵ From the perspective of translation studies today, the works he chose to translate are strangely characterized by, and fluctuate wildly between, masterpieces and trash. It should be noted that the evaluation of literary works has to do with the oft-changing criteria of literary canon. Like today, some authors were popular at that time, but their repute would decline later on. Nevertheless, the popularity of these translated works had strong ties and affinity to the Reform Movement in the social context of the late Qing.

In his Prefaces, Forewords, and Epilogues to these works, Lin Shu dwells upon his career in translation, his views on literature, and expresses his concern about the fate of the nation. These discourses provide us with valuable insights into the evolution and trajectory of his thoughts on society and culture. Under the threat of imperialist expansion, aggression and widespread fears about an impending genocide, Lin Shu lamented the fact that he was too old to serve his country. His contribution to the distinctly national effort, however, was to translate books to encourage the youth to devote themselves to learning science and technology, promoting the didacticism of literature and commenting on the decay and moral degeneration of the age (Lin Shu 1901: 24). These commentaries, undertaken from the vantage point of Western literature, are dialogues between a Chinese intellectual tradition and new “modernized” Western forms:

At least he was the first one who utilized Western literature as framework of reference to examine and reflect on traditional Chinese psychology and national culture—a stance which was tinged with enlightenment. His eloquent Prefaces so sublimely combine the East and the West that the reader is able to examine the

modern and the ancient in one moment and to take a look at the four seas in one glance. (Lin Wei 373)

IV.

It should be noted that while the history of Chinese translation of Western literature is not long, the strategy and practice of translation varies heavily between time periods. In the early stage (*ca.* 1900), translators tended to appropriate foreign terms and ideas and to recast and remodel them into Chinese style of expressions, because there were few people versed in Western literature and the presence of foreign culture did not threaten the wholeness of the empire yet. In one way or another, the Qing Dynasty remained intact, while her people were living traditional lives, holding on to customs and values similar to those of their ancestors. But there was a great change a decade later as a result of the frequent communication with the Western powers. With a great number of people studying abroad and possessing some knowledge on Western literature, there arose a recognition after 1911 that Western literature, like natural science, technology, and medicine, had worth and value in its own right. Therefore, it was not entertainment only, but instead should be looked upon as a serious art saddled with the burden of leading the Chinese enlightenment. In consequence, Chinese scholars and translators began to pay much more attention to the form and style of the original works (Compton 30). By that token, faithfulness and accuracy of translation did not only lie in the rendering of the meaning of the language, but also in its form and style:

Faithfulness and accuracy becomes a concern of the translator only when he assumes that the original work has more value than his rendition of it. This implies a recognition of foreign literature as something worthy of being read in a form as close to the original as possible. It presupposes that the style, the feeling, and the exact phrasing of the original author is important and should be

preserved. (Compton 32–33)⁶

In general, the criticism of Lin Shu's translations is whether or not the high-flown, classical Chinese prose of the Tong-Cheng School (桐城派) is compatible with the style and language of the novels that were praised for their literary realism. In *Robinson Crusoe*, Daniel Defoe adopts a new narrative strategy different from that of the epic, romance, or knight-errantry to depict the quotidian experience of the rising middle class. With special attention to the details of the setting and atmosphere, Defoe also vividly describes the appearance, features, dialogues, and moods of the characters, leaving no detail unexplored so far as it had anything to do with the characterization of the protagonist and the narrative structure as a whole (Novak 1964: 655–67). Translating into the classical forms of Chinese which were remote and distinct from everyday language usage, Lin Shu's translations are often criticized as being fluent and elegant at the expense of its true novelistic form. Was the archaic, classical Chinese with simplified syntax capable of representing the quotidian and realistic details of the novel? In essence, Lin's translation of *Robinson Crusoe* deserves critical attention as shown in his sensitivity for the writer's shifting of narrative style in the story *per se*. Beginning the novel with "I was born in the year 1632, in the city of York, of a good family . . ." (Defoe 1985: 27), Defoe's narrative strategy is to set up a first-person narrator between the reader and the external world so as to authenticate what the persona is about to witness and experience in his adventures. However, Defoe is self-conscious about the redundancy of the first-person narrator as the story is going on and on:

I shall no longer trouble the story with a relation in the first person, which will put me to the expense of the thousand Said I's, and Said he's, and He told me's, and I told him's, and the like; but I shall collect the facts historically as near as I can gather them out of my memory from what they related to me, and from what I met with in my conversing with them, and with the place. (Defoe 1840: 40)⁷

With his sensitivity for literary art and prose writing, Lin Shu is obviously keen enough to discern the fact that the novelist is stranded in the predicament of shifting between the first- and third-person narrators; therefore, he coins and supplements a terminology to describe the style of Defoe's prose fiction as "a parody of historiography" (仿爲史體) (1906 [1914], Vol. I: 31).

Despite the flaws inherent in Lin's translations (such as misunderstanding, mistranslation, deletion, distortion, etc.), many readers and writers such as Lu Xun (魯迅), Guo Mo-Ruo (郭沫若), and Qian Zhong-shu (錢鍾書) still regard Lin's translations as their literary antecedents, commending these works highly for their literary influence (Zheng 16-17; A-Ying 1960:1). In his evaluation of Lin Shu's achievements, one critic has said,

His translations had positive impacts on shaking the deeply-rooted Chinese feudalism which had been existing over 3000 years. Meanwhile, they also served to promote the status of the novel, liberating the form of prose fiction and expanding the worldviews of the people. His efforts to infuse new blood into the literary community of the late Qing were commensurate with the necessity of democratic revolution. (Xue 396)

The remark epitomizes what Lin Shu achieved in his translations. However, the impact brought forth by these works unleashed an avalanche far beyond what he could imagine. "Democratic revolution" accompanied by the liberation of thought was in conflict with Lin's lifelong loyalty to the imperial Qing. Limited by his own education and background, Lin Shu was unable to catch up with the urgent needs for a clear and simple written vernacular language for the purpose of universal literacy. Although Lin Shu fiercely defended classical Chinese language and literature, he was fighting a battle which was doomed to lose: "Classical language is not so good as modern language in terms of popularity. The one is finite, whereas the other is infinite" (Chu 29; also cf. Lu 366-67 and Hu 140-46).

V.

As English society was transforming itself from feudalism to an industrial and mercantile structure, Daniel Defoe tried his hand at prose fiction by a historical contingency. By intermingling of fictionality and historicity in *Robinson Crusoe*, he consciously created a new mode of literary art to represent and embody the experience and ideology of the rising middle class. It is not an exaggeration to say that Defoe contributed his talents and imagination to the form of the novel while it was in its infancy. In “Defoe as an Innovator of Fictional Form,” Maximillian Novak has said: “It [the novel] arose out of a conscious application of Defoe’s imagination to the creation of narratives for their own sake—narratives that derived their power directly from the representation of characters experiencing a vividly realized world” (67). In contrast, Lin Shu translated the work into Chinese 186 years later with the intention to educate and enlighten his compatriots through the introduction of Western literature. What he counted on was not the form of the novel, however, but the didactic and moral content which would wake the people up. Perhaps he focused too heavily on his high purpose to pay attention to the other components of literary art—language and form. Although the presence of innovative and experimental form maybe appears inconsequential and is easily overlooked by the reader when first encountered, yet the form is present at all times: “Remember that where you can see only confusion and disorder, there may be an intention which, although it may not be clear to you, is nevertheless profound and true” (Lukács 133). What modern readers arguably value and enjoy most in Lawrence Sterne’s *Tristan Shandy* (1760) and James Joyce’s *Ulysses* (1922) is the intriguing literary forms used by the authors to represent the flow of consciousness and the free associations of the mind.

As a landmark in the history of east-west cultural encounters, Lin Shu’s translations of more than 180 western literary texts had tremendous impact on contemporary social life and thought and heralded the outbreak of the May Fourth Movement (1919). Ironically,

all of these great changes were brought forth by a traditional literatus who knew no foreign languages. It is true that Lin Shu pursued the didactic aim of the novel at the expense of the form, so much so that the modern Chinese novel would need to go beyond the May Fourth Movement in search of a narrative mode (Wang 29–32). This belated reception of the novel's form underscores the fact that translating and transposing literary texts from one cultural context to another is susceptible to a great deal of distortion, misunderstanding, and misinterpretation:

This new attention to the novel at this time did not constitute any recognition of the novel genre as a serious form of literature worthy of existence for its own sake. Such recognition was to come later. Nevertheless this development did go a long way towards breaking down the traditional antipathy towards the form. (Compton 18)

In sum, Lin Shu's contribution to the making of the modern Chinese novel was chiefly attributed to his introduction of Western customs and culture and the expansion of the worldview of the Chinese people. By exploring the social and historical contexts in which the well-known translator was living and working, we can be more objective in re-evaluating and appreciating his unique achievements in translating hundreds of fascinating works of Western fiction into Chinese.

NOTES

¹ Although Watt has tried to interpret *Robinson Crusoe* in terms of realistic conventions, there are still some episodes incompatible with this paradigm, such as the dream episodes, providence, and so on. In *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the New Caribbean, 1492–1797*, Peter Hulme has correctly pointed out the improbability of Crusoe's dreams which come true one by one: "There is no doubt that the presence of the dream, eighteen months but no more than a couple of pages before the arrival of the cannibal party, does strange things to the texture of the fictional 'realism'" (204). Besides, the

supernatural incidents and providence are incompatible with the editor's assertion that the narrative is "a just history of fact" (Defoe 1985: 25). The fact that the incongruity of the text indicates the evolutionary nature of the prose fiction with some traces of romance being left behind even down to the works of the writers later than Defoe, say, *Pamela* (1740), *Clarissa* (1747–48), and *Tom Jones* (1749). Another interesting example of the affinity between romance and the fiction is evident in an earlier work by John Bunyan—*Pilgrim's Progress* (Part I, 1678; Part II, 1684), in which a great number of miracles juxtaposed with details of Christian's secular and religious life and the reactions of his family members to his heretic behavior. Analyzing the co-existence of the seemingly heterogeneous features in the novel, Michael McKeon has put it rightly: "[T]he novel is constituted as a dialectical unity of opposed parts, an achievement that is tacitly acknowledged by the gradual stabilization of 'the novel' as a terminological and a conceptual category in eighteenth-century usage" (McKeon 1985: 180).

² As a writer with protean identities (merchant, secret agent, ghost writer for dubious pamphlets, prison inmate, publisher, and so on), Defoe's reputation and integrity were often called into question even in his own lifetime. The success of *Robinson Crusoe* immediately aroused Charles Gildon to publish a pamphlet ridiculing and exposing Defoe's masquerades. In "The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Mr. D. . . . De F . . . , of London, Hosier, Who Has Liv'd above fifty Years by himself, in the Kingdoms of *North* and *South Britain*. The various Shapes he has appear'd in, and the Discoveries he has made for the Benefit of his Country. In a Dialogue between Him, Robinson Crusoe, and his Man *Friday*. With Remarks serious and Comical upon the Life of Crusoe," Gildon facetiously remarked that the Whigs, the Tories, the Dissenters, the Papists, and the Atheists could all claim him as their follower (66). However, Defoe was so indignant about the falsehood that when seriously he fell sick he wrote an appeal to acquit himself of the charge: "I am not a great way off from, if not very near to the great Ocean of Eternity, . . . Wherefore, I think, I should *even Account* with this World before I go, that no Actions (Slanders) may lie against my Heirs, Executors, Administrators, and Assigns, to disturb them in the peaceable Possession of their Father's (Character) Inheritance" (1715 [1927]: 192). But all of his effort seems to come to no avail. William Minto, a critic in the nineteenth century even directly stigmatized

Defoe as “a great, a truly great liar, perhaps the greatest liar that ever lived” (*Defoe* [London, 1879]; qtd. in Novak 1962: 31, see also 4, 22–23). Jointly reexamining and de-attributing Defoe’s canon, W. R. Owens and P. N. Furbank have attributed about 250 works (novels, poems, tracts, and pamphlets included) to the writer with strong evidence. By getting rid of the dubious and controversial works wrongly attributed and appended to Defoe, the two critics are trying to correct the negative impressions on the writer since the eighteenth century as well as to rehabilitate and make Defoe “respectable” (Mullan 25).

³ Yan Fu’s discourse on the novel was published in “The Origin of the Fictional Supplement of *National News* (*Guo-wen Bao* 國聞報 [1897])” in which, citing materials from mythology and history, he upheld the proposition of “natural selection” to elucidate on the implications of competition and “survival of the fittest” among animal, humans, and nations in the world. The narrative strategy of mixing up history with fiction sounds something like the nature of the novel. In sum, he states his aim of publishing and translating novels as follows: “We have heard that the enlightenment of European and American countries and Japan derive much help from the novel. Therefore, we are not afraid of the hard work to comprehensively collect novels from foreign countries, to translate and publish the works in the Supplement, and to distribute them to the readers” (Yan 12). As for Liang Qi-chao’s discourses on the theory of the novel and its social function, see “On Translating Books” (1896), “Preface to Da-tong Translating Publisher” (1897), “Preface to Translating and Publishing the Political Novel” (1898), “On the Rapport between the Novel and the Community” (1902), and “To the Novelist” (1915).

⁴ The trend of globalization has strong impact on cultural and economic landscapes of the world. To be sure, the volume of cultural exchanges among nations has increased and expedited as a result of the unrestricted flow of personnel, capital, and technology. Therefore, scholars and practitioners of translation are unhappy about the anonymous roles that translators have long been assigned; they all claim their identity which has been otherwise denied: “The translator should not hide shamefaced behind the author’s coat-tails but must stand self-affirming” (Bush 115).

⁵ According to Ma Tai-lai’s study, the total of Lin Shu’s translations is “184 books, including 137 books by single authors, 23 unpublished books, and 8 manuscripts” (1981: 103). Among Lin’s translations, there are about 40

translations with accredited literary repute (Zheng 14). Due to the lack or incompleteness of the copyright law in China at that time, the translators usually left out the names of the authors and even changed the titles of the books. Ma Tai-lai has done many excellent studies to restore these bibliographical data, even to the point of indicating the specific editions that Lin Shu used for translation. See Ma's series of studies on this subject (1981: 60–103; 1982: 109–23; 1993: 114–22). In “A Supplement to the Original Works of Lin Shu's Translations,” Ma has pointed out that one of Lin's collaborators—Chen Jia-lin 陳家麟—made a great number of errors in his oral translation of *Guai Dong* (怪董; originally Thomas Bulfinch, *The Legend of Charlemagne*) and *E Gong Mi Shih* (俄宮秘史; originally William Le Queux, *The Secret Life of the Ex-Tsaritza*). “Generally speaking, Chen Jia-lin did not know the original works thoroughly, so that Lin Shu's Prefaces were not to the point, just like fumbling about trying to search for something in the dark” (Ma 1993: 117). The other critic also says: “This is one of the examples that Chen Jia-lin was ignorant and did not care much about knowledge” (Han 93).

⁶ The history of translation in China dated back to the first century when Buddhism was first introduced to China. The translation of Buddhist sutras on a large scale occurred in the sixth century under the Tang Dynasty when Buddhism was very popular in Tang Dynasty. The invasion and encroachment of Western imperialists after 1840 initiated the call for social reforms, among which translating Western books on military science, technology, and natural science was one of the major concerns. The institutions for translation were set up thereon, such as the Institute for Homogenizing Languages (*Tong-wen Kuan* 同文館), Institute for Translating Dialects (*Guang Fang-yen Kuan* 廣方言館), and the Jiang-Nan Manufacturing Bureau (*Jiang-Nan Zhe-zao Ju* 江南製造局). Yen Fu and Lin Shu, the most eminent translators in modern Chinese history, were at the peak of their career in the period from 1890 to 1910. As for the source of the texts, most of the books were translated from the English language before the Sino-Japanese War (1894–95); afterwards, Japanese books carried the day (Zhang 8–9; Yu 95–97).

⁷ Lin Shu's Chinese translation of this paragraph is as follow: 「亦弗令讀吾書者煩瀆。但見書中悉作余字。似余書纒纒均述己言者。重疊複沓。令人寡歡。今當簡括其詞。仿爲史體。取其扼要。並於余有涉者。請諸公觀之」 (1906 [1914], Vol. I: 31)。

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