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## Charting the Future of Translation History

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# "Long Time No See, Coolie"

## *Passing as Chinese through Translation*

In 1900, Ernest Bramah Smith published *The Wallet of Kai Lung*, purporting to be a collection of tales told by a Chinese storyteller, Kai Lung. Following its success, Smith published at least four additional anthologies sporadically over the next thirty years, and most of these works were reprinted one or more times up to the 1980s (see bibliography). Although it is nowhere explicitly stated, the stories purport to be "genuinely" Chinese. Such works form part of the intersection of two minor traditions in European literature, that of the Oriental tale and that of spurious translation (original works that are passed off as translations from foreign languages). If Smith could not read Chinese, why did he feel confident that he could transcreate "Chineseness" in his English works? What were the linguistic markers of this "Chineseness" in English, and how did they develop? If he is burlesquing or creating a pastiche, of what exactly is it a pastiche?

This question requires treatment from the point of view of the history of translation; the answer lies in the preceding century of Chinese-

English translation practice. Beginning with Sir George Staunton,<sup>1</sup> a style of writing was developed which was taken to be “Chinese” by the reading public. It is the style of these translations that Smith builds on to create his effects. Thus translation of Chinese works into English was responsible, to a great degree, in creating the notion of “Chineseness” in nineteenth-century England, which in turn is used by Smith. I will first outline the general characteristics used by Smith in *The Wallet of Kai Lung*, and then trace these back to various nineteenth-century translators. I will then use insights from queer theory in an attempt to understand that historical process in its contemporary context.

### Smith’s translation: Speaking “Chinese” in English

Spurning the type of pidgin English commonly ascribed to Chinese in the popular press, Smith depends mainly on vocabulary choice for his effect. First, it should be clear just from the title of the book that he uses “Chinese” names for all his characters, and indeed the title of each story contains the name of some “Chinese” person. Further, names consist of either two or three syllables, and in at least certain cases the surname could actually be a common Chinese one: Huang, Lin, or Chan. Thus his names are grammatically correct, or “paroles” in the “langue”<sup>2</sup> of Chinese nomenclature, since they conform to the rules for the formation and number of syllables of a person’s names. This holds true for place names as well; he sets certain scenes in Peking and Canton, both well-known Chinese cities, while his imaginary places are grammatically correct.<sup>3</sup> It is probably too obvious to belabour the fact that these Chinese names all derive from nineteenth-century translation practice of sinologists, who developed these transliteration conventions.

Smith also displays quite a bit of knowledge of Chinese history and culture in his work: there are the obligatory references to men wearing pigtails (“suspending the offender by the pigtail from a low tree” [11]), burning prayer paper (“making many vows concerning the amount of prayer-paper which he would assuredly burn” [7]), sitting for public exams (“presenting himself for the public examinations at Canton” [13]),

and drinking of rice spirits ("certain ceremonies connected with rice spirit" [39]). Perhaps less well-known are the name and location of the Miao people ("My followers are mostly outlawed Miaotze, who have been driven from their own tribes in Yun Nan for man-eating and disregarding the sacred laws of hospitality." [11]), familiarity with the monetary system ("six or eight cash" [11]; "taking from a concealed spot in his garments a few *taels*, he placed them before the secretary" [16]), the Four Books and Five Classics ("how could it be that one whose chief delight lies in the passive contemplation of the Four Books and the Five Classics, should be selected by destiny to fill a position calling for great personal courage and an aggressive nature?" [23]), and divination ("he consulted the Sacred Flat and Rounded Sticks, and learning that the following day would be propitious for the journey, he arranged to set out in accordance with the omen." [48]). These details provide local color which, if familiar to the reader, confirms that the story takes place in China and, if not, provides exotic details of Chinese life. Again, all of these "facts" can be found in earlier translations.

More interesting is his use of certain linguistic practices which, although not ungrammatical, are statistically unusual in English. These can be grouped into four main areas:

### 1. Maxims and proverbs (on average approximately 1 per page)

He is a wise and enlightened suppliant who seeks to discover an honourable Mandarin, but he is a fool who cries out, "I have found one." (20)

### 2. Excessively polite language

"It is a valuable privilege to have so intelligent a person as the illustrious Ling occupying this position," remarked the Mandarin, as he returned the papers; "and not less so on account of the one who preceded him proving himself to be a person of feeble attainments and an unendurable deficiency of resource."

"To one with the all-knowing Li Keen's mental acquisitions, such a person must indeed have become excessively offensive," replied Ling

delicately; "for, as it is truly said, 'Although there exist many thousand subjects for elegant conversation, there are persons who cannot meet a cripple without talking about feet.'" (28)

### 3. Figurative speech

- writing-leaves (paper) (19)
- powerful malignity (hatred) (21)
- deep feeling of no enthusiasm (29)

### 4. Adverbial and adjectival modifiers

- extortionate and many-handed persons at Peking (17)
- [H]e beheld a young and elegant maiden of incomparable beauty being carried away by two persons of most repulsive and undignified appearance whose dress and manner clearly betrayed them to be rebels of the lowest and worst-paid type. (24)

Examples could be multiplied indefinitely; almost no sentence is free from one of these four traits, and many contain two or even three. On the linguistic level, then, these four characteristics are what mark the text as being different from standard English; they must then be markers of "Chineseness." How and why did these characteristics come to be viewed as such?

### Nineteenth-century translations as precursors

Compare these sentences by six early translators of Chinese published between 1810 and 1843:

- The bow will soon be unstrung, and the war at an end. (Weston 1810, 21)
- [W]ing to the frequent repetition of the General's name, by his victorious soldiers, in uninterrupted songs of victory on every side; on the land, in the midst of the waters, and on the banks of the river, full without overflowing. (Weston 1810, 38)
- I, even I their Emperor, have never remitted my anxiety, or ceased to doubt, or reposed under the clear sky of noon-day for the shortest

moment; but have shared the taunts, the inward sadness, the unwilling reluctance to the end, equally with my troops. (Weston 1810, 53)

- My family was poor, and I was myself of a weak and sickly constitution. I never was able to attain to any very considerable proficiency . . . the emperor was graciously moved to promote me in consequence to that superior office (spoken by a high-ranking official). (Staunton 1821, 5)
- [O]ur tongue is dry and our lips parched with admonishing and reprehending him. (Staunton 1821, 290)
- If he happens not to be desirous to see you, and consequently sends no messengers to invite you to a conference, it is very immaterial. (Staunton 1821, 12)
- [A man who has been arrested] is one of the low and ignorant peasantry; — wherefore his audacity in presuming to rush into the Imperial hall, in order to state these weak and unsubstantiated assertions, is highly reprehensible and illegal. (Staunton 1821, 310)
- [E]ighteen years have elapsed, since, possessed of but inferior virtue, I looked up and received with profound veneration the throne from my Imperial Father; after which I dared not to resign myself to ease or inattention to the affairs of Government. (Morrison 1815, 4)
- [R]ebellion rose under my own arm [with a footnote: "Under my own armpit, meaning his own Family"]. (Morrison 1815, 5)
- [H]is infant Family [with a footnote: "The whole nation."]. (Morrison 1815, 29)
- They mutually diverged from each other, as the Heavens from the Abyss. How dissimilar branches spring from the same stem, will be perceived. (Davis 1815, 6)
- This may be called "taking flesh to feed an ulcer." (Davis 1815, 13)
- [H]e retreated from the crowd, retired from noise, divided himself from men, and shut out example (with a note: "This may appear like tautology, but it [is] a literal translation, of the original. A great deal of such repetition prevails in Chinese writing.") (Davis 1815, 18)
- [L]onesome ghost. (Davis 1815, 28)
- Peking the 21st year of *Kea-king*, 5 Moon, 27 day, (June 1816).

- *Tsing-chang*, of the Imperial blood, and general, in command of the city *Shing*, together with *Yung Tsoo*, holding the office of *She-lang*, kneel down and report.— Profoundly honouring the Imperial mandate to assemble and rigorously investigate, and determine on punishments proper to be inflicted, we respectfully present this document, praying that it may please His Majesty to examine it.
- We . . . [footnote: "We Noo-tsaie, i.e., slaves—all persons of the Tartar race in China, even the highest, are obliged to use this degrading epithet when speaking of themselves. Those of the Chinese race when speaking of themselves use chin, which is a more respectable epithet." (Anonymous 1817, 18)]
- [T]he golden mouth [of the emperor]. (Shen 1843, 13)
- [A]greed together as glue with varnish. (Shen 1843, 14)
- *The man who stedfastly pursues*  
*The path of honour bright*  
*Is not afraid, though knocking loud*  
*Rouse him at dark midnight* (Shen 1843, 20)
- We are not worthy to occupy our important offices, and we render our titles but empty designations; we are full of shame at not having heretofore assisted and corrected your majesty. . . . (Shen 1843, 24)

Although the language of these texts taken as a whole is not as exaggerated as Ernest Bramah Smith's, all of the translations show a tendency toward the type of language he parodies. Certain types of texts tend to contain more of one form or another. The translations of imperial edicts or memorials presented to the emperor tend to have a high concentration of polite and self-abasing language, while containing few moral maxims, and Staunton's translation contains no maxims at all. David's *San-yu-low*, on the other hand, contains a fairly large number of sayings, proverbs, or quotations from the classics to be applied to daily life, and even contains one on the title page, but relatively little polite speech. And Tkin Shen's translation contains a large number of figurative expressions but not as much exaggerated use of adjectival and adverbial modifiers. As for moral maxims, more than one translation in the nineteenth century was of moral maxims alone, or contained a group of

moral maxims as an appendix to another work (Milne 1817, Davis 1822a and 1822b, Scarborough 1875).

These and later translations of Chinese texts, then, established in the mind of British readers certain fixed characteristics of the Chinese language and the way in which the Chinese expressed themselves. This "Chineseness" included the frequent use of moral maxims, often derived from the classics; a tendency to hyperbolic flights of polite speech; the frequent use of unusual metaphors; and finally a tendency to use modifying phrases and repetitive structures.

#### Metacommentary in the translations and pseudo-translations

More than this, however, the translations also often provided direct or indirect commentary by the translators which shaped and guided the readers' understanding of the nature of Chineseness as being inferior. After translating an edict in which the emperor lashes out against abuses committed by his army while putting down a rebellion (they had kidnapped children to sell as slaves), Morrison adds a commentary: "The tenor of the Imperial Edicts, unquestionably shews [sic] the reigning Emperor to be a humane man. This is also the character which his People give him, *but they complain, that he keeps in the Government a bad set*" (Morrison 1815, 38; emphasis added). The translation shows the emperor to be a good man, but the commentary warns the reader that this one good man is surrounded by many evil ones. Slightly earlier, Morrison also warns the reader of the profound discrepancy between what the Chinese say and how they act: "there is no nation in the world in which professions and practice are more at variance than in China" (Morrison 1815, 35). Both of these examples exhibit what was perceived to be an ongoing condition of sinological translation in the nineteenth century: that there was a split between what texts say in Chinese and the reality in China. It then falls to the translator to reveal to the British reader the "truth" behind the fictive text.

This practice of metacommentary accompanying the translation, and the ideas expressed in it, is also used by Smith in his Kai Lung stories.



Unlike the translators, however, who felt the need to make comments outside the translation, Smith makes the text itself reflexively judgmental by creating an ironic distance between the narrator, the characters, and the British reader. This irony is produced mainly by the exaggerated use of the four rhetorical markers I discussed above.

On the very first page Smith gives us certain indirect and direct hints that the surface of the text we are reading glosses over a very different reality. The story begins with Kai Lung journeying through a forest famous for brigands on his way to the town of Knei Yang, having scoffed at the danger:

Nevertheless, when *within the gloomy aisles*, Kai Lung more than once wished himself back at the village, or safely behind the MUD WALLS of Knei Yang; and, making *many* vows concerning the amount of prayer-paper which he would *assuredly* burn when he was *actually* through the gates, he stepped out *more quickly*, until suddenly, at a turn in the glade, he stopped *altogether*, while the WATCHFUL EXPRESSION INTO WHICH HE HAD UNGUARDEDLY DROPPED AT ONCE CHANGED INTO A MASK OF IMPASSIVENESS AND EXTREME UNCONCERN. From behind the next tree projected a long straight rod, not unlike a slender bamboo at the distance, but, to Kai Lung's *all-seeing* eye, in reality the barrel of a matchlock, which would come into line with his breast if he took another step. Being a prudent man, MORE ACCUSTOMED TO GUILLE AND SUBSERVIENCE TO DESTINY THAN TO FORCE, he therefore waited, spreading out his hands in proof of his *peaceful* acquiescence, and smiling *cheerfully* until it should please the owner of the weapon to step forth. (7; emphasis added)

The walls for such a town, in fact, would be beaten or packed earth; but the use of "mud" suggests something much less solid or reliable. What Kai Lung thinks of as safe, then, is not the British reader's idea of safety; Chinese fortified towns are defended by nothing but mud. The narrator also tells us that Kai Lung is very concerned to control the

expression of his face: being watchful would perhaps be the attitude of someone with something to hide, or suspicious of others; instead, Kai Lung adopts a mask for the benefit of the man with the gun, because he is going to use guile in dealing with him. Finally, the narrator's definition of a prudent man, "more accustomed to guile and subservience to destiny than to force," reinforces the idea that Kai Lung and, indeed, all "prudent men" of China have very different ideas of how to act than the British: with guile and subservience to destiny. That notion of destiny echoes Kai Lung's vow to burn prayer-paper; he is, in a word, superstitious. Note also the frequent use of modifiers and metaphors; when speaking of the vows, "many" "assuredly" and "actually" all serve to make him sound extremely superstitious.

Kai Lung and Lin Yi then begin to talk and, as expected given that Kai Lung is using guile, Smith puts extremely polite speeches into their mouths. Here is one short exchange between them:

[Lin Yi: ] ". . . Doubtless, at this moment many Mandarins of the highest degree are anxiously awaiting your arrival at Knei Yang, perhaps passing the time by outdoing one another in protesting the number of taels each would give rather than permit you to be tormented by fire-brands, or even to lose a single ear." "Alas!" replied Kai Lung, "never was there a truer proverb than that which says, 'It is a mark of insincerity of purpose to spend one's time in looking for the sacred Emperor in the low-class tea-shops.' . . . Indeed, the person who is now before you is none other than the outcast Kai Lung, the story-teller, one of degraded habits and no very distinguished or reputable ancestors. His friends are few, and mostly of the criminal class. . . ." (10)

Again, note the use of modifiers and of proverbs.

Thus all of the techniques I have discussed become associated with falsehood in Smith's text. Within the tale which Kai Lung tells to the brigands in the hope of being set free, this association is maintained. His hero Ling, a good man who journeys to Canton to take the exams,

is appointed as a military commander in a rebellious province and succeeds in putting down the rebels but almost loses his life in the process. He is portrayed as being innocent at the beginning and therefore capable of understanding neither the polite speech nor the stratagems of others. Thus when the doorkeeper of the local mandarin tells him in a convoluted way that his master cannot be disturbed, Ling takes this lie at face value and turns to leave, when in fact in the "code" of polite speech it is an indirect way of asking for a bribe. Realizing that Ling is clueless, the gatekeeper fashions a complicated story that ends by asking Ling to lend his (expensive) ring to the gatekeeper "as a very powerful charm against evil, misunderstandings, and extortion" while he goes in to announce Ling (14). Ling of course never gets the ring back. This process is repeated twice more by two higher-level flunkies (Ling loses a rich cloak and several *taels* of silver), and then the mandarin extorts a substantial sum from Ling, saying that it is demanded by the "extortionate and many-handed persons at Peking who have control of the examination rites and customs" (17). Ling has a similar encounter with a man who offers to sit in for him at the examinations for a fee (19–20). Ling gradually comes to understand and use this language to his own advantage, although it is not always clear whether he penetrates the ruses of others and matches guile with guile, or whether he believes what they say and replies innocently with the proper response. Li Keen, the mandarin in charge of military affairs in the area when he arrives at his post, tells him of how his predecessor was demoted and fined heavily after refusing to pay Li Keen off: "'It was a just and enlightened conclusion of the affair,' said Ling, in spite of a deep feeling of no enthusiasm, 'and one which surprisingly bore out your own prophecy in the matter'" (29). Here we see Ling understanding the indirect threat to himself, being unhappy about it, but masking that unhappiness with a polite expression, which contains the tiny barb "surprisingly."

On more than one occasion Ling is portrayed as cutting through the web of language to the heart of the matter, and such actions by him are always portrayed in a positive light: "In spite of his very inadequate attainments regarding words of order, the Commander made it understood

by means of an exceedingly short sentence that he was desirous of the men returning without delay" (33). Amusingly, we are told about this exceedingly short sentence by an extremely long one. At such moments, the British reader identifies with Ling through the web of verbiage spun by Kai Lung.

Besides their association with a propensity to falsehood, guile, superstition, and bribery (of which there are many other examples in the text), these techniques are also used to show the British reader that the Chinese are sticklers for ceremony (26–7), they take pride in outward signs of office (51), their army is ineffective and cowardly (28, 32–43, 36–8), and they rely on received wisdom rather than thinking for themselves (36–7, 39). Moreover, the ironic distance Smith establishes ensures that the reader sees that these are all undesirable or ineffective. In the midst of a battle, Ling finds himself surrounded by the enemy and begins to quote Confucius; he is assaulted and left for dead (39). Faced with force, what is the use of rote learning?

All of these undesirable traits may be found in earlier nineteenth-century translations. In regard to being sticklers for ceremony, Staunton translates an imperial edict regarding the exact distance on foot the emperor is to walk during the funeral procession for his father (Staunton 1821, 262–3); this compares to Smith's long description of how a mandarin refuses to receive Ling because he has not arrived at the gates in a sedan chair, ending with: "the refined observances laid down by the wise and exalted Board of Rites and Ceremonies have a marked and irreproachable significance when the country is in a state of disorder, the town surrounded by rebels, and every breathing-space of time of more than ordinary value" (27). Regarding outward signs of office, again Staunton translates a passage where an official is "to hold his situation, and wear an honorary button, though nominally to be degraded and deprived of the insignia of the peacock's feather" for ineptitude in conducting a war (Staunton 1821, 265); compare this to Smith's "It has been suggested to the mandarin Li Keen that the bestowal of the Crystal Button would only be a fit and graceful reward for his indefatigable efforts to uphold the dignity of the sublime Emperor" (51). Too

long to quote here, Staunton translates several edicts and memorials from the *Peking Gazette* which show that the campaign against the Miaozu was protracted and ill-planned, and resulted in great destruction and loss of life due partly to incompetence and lack of cooperation between officers (Staunton 1821, 264–6; 267–8; 268–71; 271–5; 277–9; 279–85; 286–91; 299–302); passages in Smith's story describing the behaviour of Li Keen, soldiers, and the Chief of Bowmen all tend to the same end (30–39, 46–7, 50–2).

Smith is thus able to pass as Chinese for British readers, not only because he imitates the language used by nineteenth-century translators, but also because he repeats and reinforces the stereotypical notions of what it means to be Chinese. These two phenomena are bound together, with the means of expression indissolubly linked to the content. It is because the Chinese possess these qualities that they speak in this manner: polite speech is a mask for ruse, and hyperbolic language covers up incompetence.

### Translation as passing

Having established a historical link between nineteenth-century translation practice and Smith's pseudo-translation at the dawn of the twentieth century, I would like to draw some parallels between what both Smith and the earlier translators were doing and other contemporary practices of role-playing or performance which centre on the act of passing. The concept of passing, as it has been developed in African-American studies and queer theory, usually involves members of a minority/oppressed group in society learning to mimic the looks, speech and behaviour of the dominant majority. Smith, on the other hand, is disguising himself as a member of a foreign and, for early-twentieth-century Britain, generally despised group, an action usually described by other terms (slumming, minstrel show), and related to another form of role-playing (cross-dressing). Slumming involves a member of the dominant group traveling (often in disguise) into the space of the lower classes (Hitchcock 2001, 170). The purpose of slum-

ming varies from philanthropy to curiosity, but the product is often the same: a text written by the slummer describing the lower classes. A classic example is Richard Burton's memoirs of his pilgrimage to Mecca (Burton 1855). One important function of such literature is to assert the difference between classes (or ethnic groups/races) (Hitchcock 2001, 183). Those differences often involve language (Hitchcock 2001, 178); the slummer's desire to reproduce an authentic cockney, or the language of dock workers, may lead to a concentration and exaggeration of certain linguistic features for effect, as occurs both in the nineteenth-century translations and in Smith's text.

Another related activity is the American tradition of the minstrel show (or black-face), where white men would dress themselves up as African-Americans, black their faces, exaggerate certain features, (wide eyes, thick lips), and then perform on stage an exaggerated caricature. Along with the associated activities of burlesque and pastiche, minstrel shows again functioned as a delineation of boundaries by crossing those bounds, and language was always an important element (Itzkovitz 2001, 39–47, 51–2). Thomas Holt makes several important points in an article from 1995:

Racial selves — black as well as white — were made in the social environments of theatrical and street performances. . . . aspects of black life — even black creativity — were appropriated and used by whites to negotiate problems posed by the larger society. Thus a racist discourse and performance became media for fashioning as well as expressing white, especially white male, identity... What was America? Who was an American? Who was "white"? . . . . In the minstrel theater, such issues were deflected or settled symbolically; there, perhaps, white men at least reassured themselves who they were not — not black, not slave. Minstrelsy soothed white anxieties, however, at the cost of reinforcing black stereotypes and institutionalizing racist ideas and images for generations to come. (Holt 1995, 15–16)

Much of what he says about minstrel shows might profitably be applied both to the early nineteenth-century translations quoted above and to the character of Kai Lung, that whimsical man from a never-never land whom the British can laugh at safely. Reading such texts, the British can point and say, "we are not Chinese."

Cross-dressing, as Judith Butler pointed out many years ago, may show the constructed nature of gender roles (Butler 1990, 137–8). That such roles are constructed, however, does not mean that they are any less real or powerful, and recently Sharon Ullman has argued that male impersonators in the late nineteenth/early twentieth century were used by men "as a powerful tool for containing the subversive quality of feminist political critiques" (Ullman 2001, 188). The activity may in fact serve to sharpen and refine the differences between gender roles. Other critics have argued that, in a similar fashion, racial passing narratives are inevitably complicit with racial ideologies (Smith 1994, 43–44; Harper 1996, 126): it is only when you can imagine "white," "black," and "Chinese" as stable categories that you can mimic them and thus pass. Again, it seems clear that all of the texts I have examined are also interested in maintaining the separateness and stability of racial categories.

Unlike racial passing, the success of cross-dressing often relies on the audience being able to discern the disguise. This is also true of the minstrel show, where the disguise is meant to be penetrated; in both cases, being black, being female or, in the case of Smith, being Chinese, is a disguise that functions through its being seen through. People go to the show knowing that they are going to see a disguise.

Finally, another contemporary British concern with borders and definitions of self and other involved the Anglican and the Catholic Church. Here again, to simplify other people's arguments, the language of the Catholic Church was seen as duplicitous, effeminate, and seductive (O'Malley 2001, 239–41). In an attack on a former Anglican turned Roman Catholic, Charles Kingsley complained: "The whole sermon is written in so tentative a style, that it would be rash and wrong to say that Dr. Newman intends to convey any lesson by it, save that the discovery of truth is an impossibility."<sup>4</sup> This description could

almost be used to characterize the speech of Chinese in Smith's text. Such a comparison may not be as far-fetched as it seems at first sight if we remember that one of the defining elements of British sinology was that it was different from French (Catholic) sinology, and that parallels between Buddhism and Catholicism were often drawn in the interest of debasing both.<sup>5</sup>

### Conclusion

First and foremost, Smith's text must be understood in the context of the history of nineteenth-century translation from Chinese into English. It is that history which establishes and defines "Chineseness" for the British. Smith exploits both the more exaggerated linguistic markers of this discourse and the underlying fears that it plays upon. It should also be remembered in this context that the term "Yellow Peril" was coined in the 1890s. British anxieties about this yellow peril are negotiated and diffused through Smith's passing as a Chinese, who reveals the Chinese to be paper tigers. Second, both Smith's fiction and the earlier translations need to be understood in the larger historical context of the nineteenth century, including a nexus of inter-related practices related to passing; these practices all reflect anxieties relating to borders between the self and the other, and they all involve the use and control of language as a marker of authentic and inauthentic discourse. Seen in this light, Smith's decision to use certain types of exaggerated language to establish the "Chineseness" of his discourse is completely understandable.

Finally, this connection opens up two avenues for further research. First, the history of sinological translation needs to be carefully re-examined in terms of passing. Once the connection is made, there are too many similarities for us to dismiss them as chance or arbitrary. Such a re-examination of the history of sinological translation would have to go further back in time to the early missionary translators and to the vogue for the oriental tale in the eighteenth century. Second, the question of when and under what circumstances translation can be



understood as a form of passing deserves more thought. Is translation always a type of passing? Can all translation activities be mapped onto the various models of passing (passing, blackface, cross-dressing, slumming)? Certainly if translation is seen as a form of performance, the potential is always there. Whether or not this is a fruitful avenue for understanding other translation activities will depend on further careful case studies.

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### Notes

1. While still a child, Sir George Thomas Staunton (1781–1859) travelled to China along with his father as part of the Macartney embassy of 1793. His father hired a Chinese tutor for him, and later he returned to Canton to work for the East India Company. See Staunton (1810, 1821, and 1822) for the titles of works he translated from Chinese.
2. The distinction between *langue* and *parole* is taken from Saussure 1916.
3. A small number of names are not phonetically correct according to any dialect of Chinese I am aware of: Fel and Knei are the two examples I found in this book. Their ungrammatical nature, however, would not be obvious to anyone without a knowledge of Chinese.
4. Kingsley (1968, 334), as quoted in O'Malley (2001, 143).
5. For a recent work discussing the link between Catholicism and decadence, see Hanson (1997). On the Catholic–Protestant rivalry in translation from Chinese, see St. André (2003).

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