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DECEPTIVE EQUIVALENCE OR EXPRESSIVE IDENTITY? -- THE CHINESE TRANSLATION OF *LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER*

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Translating D.H.Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (hereafter *Lady C*) has always presented problems on two levels -- linguistic as well as cultural. The novel's use of the Anglo-Saxon terms and the Derbyshire dialect are linguistically untranslatable, in that the source text's 'sense of place' is irretrievably lost when rendered into another language, or when the target language offers no exact correspondents to the terms and dialect. The cultural hurdles are that crucial authorial meanings are intended by Lawrence in the use of the terms and dialect, the former attacking human hypocrisy in language and extolling the love-healing function of the terms, the latter manifesting the gamekeeper's defiance against middle-class snobbery; these meanings, with their authenticity and potency kept intact, are difficult to transfer to a readership in a different cultural context. Because of the problems stated above, the translation of *Lady C* offers significant interest to translators of Lawrence worldwide.

This study proposes to examine the Chinese translation of *Lady C* first published in 1936 and re-issued in 1986. It seeks to establish whether the translation has achieved expressive identity or functional equivalence, --when the inevitable loss of meaning is limited to the smallest possible degree and the target reader is given an experience as near as possible to what the reader would get --, or merely deceptive identity -- when linguistic identity is achieved at the cost of cultural. As no other Chinese translation of the novel has yet been published inside China, this version's impact on the Chinese response to *Lady C* and Lawrence will also be examined.

Background Notes

There are two periods of time when Lawrence and his *Lady C* were actively received in China -- the nineteen thirties and the eighties. The first stage was quiet and limited in terms of impact, though it produced some fine, and for their time and place, unusually warm and perceptive critical assessments from an esoteric group of Chinese critics, writing mostly from the foreign concessions of the semi-colonial Chinese port cities. Popular response to Lawrence was negligent, as translations of Lawrence were limited to a few short stories and poems. *Lady C* was the first Lawrence novel to be published in late 1936, by Shi-yi Rao, but it was largely neglected by both the popular and literary readers as war with Japan soon broke out several months later.

Research on Lawrence was not picked up for half a century afterwards, during which time the Communists came to power, and the normative literary criterion was a combination of Marxist critique and moralistic puritanism. Since the early eighties, with the start of the reform and 'open door' policy, Lawrence was again introduced along with other Western writers. He was seen as a 'progressive' socially critical bourgeois writer, though with a weakness for 'decadent obscene' portrayals of 'carnal desires'. Again, translations were limited to his short stories. In 1986, amidst increasing signs of deregulation in Chinese society, the 1936 Rao translation of *Lady C* was republished by a provincial publisher. It became a landmark for Chinese publishing in the later years and a turning point in both the popular and literary responses to Lawrence. Though soon banned by the state, *Lady C* became a bestseller on the black market. Conservatives blamed it for the unleashing of licentious publications in the later years of the decade, while liberals credited it for helping to bring more vitality and freedom to the book market. To the popular reader, Lawrence became a champion for freedom; their enthusiasm was responsible for the multi-translations and phenomenal sales of Lawrence's other novels, and for the literary community's changed attitude to one of passionate admiration.⁸³ With the backlash of post-Tiananmen-Square state censorship in mid 1989, however, publication of *Lady C* and other Lawrence novels, as well as Lawrence research itself, was severely affected. Things are only starting to pick up again now.⁸⁴

Criteria of Examination

Translators play a role, however, limited, in influencing the perceptions by the reading public of the original text, for instance, in their choice of translation matters and the way they transmit the images. As *Lady C* made little impact in China in the thirties, this study will focus on the eighties. A large part of the Chinese readers of that decade, both popular and literary, possibly never read *Lady C* in the original. Rao's competence in handling the novel's linguistic as well as cultural sides must thus have an impact on their response.

The translations of the *Lady C* from English into Chinese is an inter-lingual literary transfer, as two languages from two different language families are

⁸³. The decade produced some fifty-eight Chinese criticisms on Lawrence. Essays passionately endorsing Lawrence started to appear since early 1987; of the 38 published between early 1987 and April 1989, 14 were devoted to *Lady C*.

⁸⁴. For a detailed study of the turbulent events surrounding the publication of *Lady C* in China in the eighties, see Yi Chen, 'Chinese Publishing in the Post-Mao Era: The Case of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*', in *Asian Survey*, University of California Press, June 1992, pp.568-582.

involved. Generous allowances must therefore be made for the complicated variables which arise from their innate disparities, from the different cultures at issue, and from the diachronic and spatial differences involved when the translation is not contemporary with the original. A word must also be said about the totally different structure of Chinese (as from English), which denotes, for instance, the grammatical functions of the various participles not by grammatical or logical tenses or structures, but primarily by semantic structures. In Chinese, semantics and functions reach near identity.

The following discussion selects passages in *Lady C* that depict the love encounters between Connie and Mellors, as they contain ample samples of the Anglo-Saxon terms and the dialect. Penguin's post-trial paperback is used for the English text; for the Chinese translation, I use the 1986 text re-issued by the Hunan People's Press which changed nothing of the 1936 Rao version, except half a dozen minor expressions no longer in usage. Romanised Chinese *pin-yin* is used for the Chinese words, with my word-for-word literal English translation appearing underneath. 'O' stands for original text and 'T' for target (Chinese) text. Pages numbers from both texts are listed.

Discussion One

Lawrence's own distinctive style conveys to a significant extent his personality and his particular way of perceiving experience. This, reflected in the novel, is his characteristic linguistic preferences.⁸⁵ Lawrence's style is also thematically motivated and closely tied up with the subject matter. The tone and style of *Lady C*, particularly its consistent use of formerly unprintable words and a certain type of speech, underlie Lawrence's intentional deviation from conventional expectations and give rise to stylistic effects of shock, intensity and suspense. To capture fully these stylistic subtleties in another language would be well nigh impossible, but to achieve a maximum functional equivalence is the aim of any capable translator, and that requires both the translator's linguistic and cultural competence.

⁸⁵. Contemporary Critics of Lawrence's time often lamented his 'perfidious futuristic style' with its 'crazy iterations and benumbing violence', its 'curiously vicious rhythm', and 'yelling' style. See R.P. Draper, ed., *D.H. Lawrence: The Critical Heritage*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970, pp.10, 98, 101, 258. Since the Lawrence revival in the fifties, positive attention has been paid to his distinctive style. Proper stylistic and linguistic approach to his language began in the mid-seventies, notable attempts so far being John Russell's *Style In Modern British Fiction: Studies in Joyce, Lawrence, Forster, Lewis and Green*, Baltimore, Ed.: John Hopkins University Press, 1978, and Michael Bell, *D.H. Lawrence: Language and Being*, Cambridge University Press, 1992.

The opening of *Lady C* has often been compared with that of *A Tale of Two Cities*, for Lawrence employs a Dickensian style of repetition and declamation.

(O.) Ours is essentially a tragic age, so we refuse to take it tragically. The cataclysm has happened, we are among the ruins, we start to build up new little habitats, to have new little hopes. It is rather hard work: there is now no smooth road into the future: but we go round, or scramble over the obstacles. We've got to live, no matter how may skies have fallen. (p.5)

In *The Art of D.H. Lawrence*, Keith Sagar pointed out the deliberate contrast between Lawrence's biblically grave manner in describing the cataclysm of the post-war age, and his use of international moderation and light mood when depicting the cataclysm befalling Connie.⁸⁶ Key images like cataclysm, ruins, obstacles, fallen skies are repeated to emphasise the tragedy of the era, but the narration then suddenly transfers to Connie's life with Clifford's slow recovery and their return to the family house in the smoky Midlands. The dream-like unreality and ephemerality of what has been contrasted starkly with the long hard reality of what now confronts Connie's marital life. The sudden silence befalling her life, coupled with the author's deliberate reticence about Connie's reaction, throws into greater relief what has not been said and lies underneath.

The Chinese translation of the opening paragraph well conveys the graveness of the post-war scenes by using several 'four-character set-phrases', phrases that have almost passed into idioms in Chinese and usually add occasion and formality to the context.

(T.) Wuo men gen ben shen huo zai yi ge bei ju de shi dai.
We basically live in one tragic time./and
yin ci wuo men bu yuan jin huang zi rao/Da zai nan yi jin
thus we wouldn't self-inflict loss./ Big disaster has
lai lin,wuo men chu yu fei xu zhi hong/wuo men kai shi
come,/we stand in midst of ruin,/ we begin to
jian li yi xie xinde xiao xiao de qi xi di,huai bao yixie
set up some new and small nesting-places,/embrace some
xinde wei xiao de xi wang/ Zhe shi yi hong po wei jian nan
new little hope./ This is a kind of task, of mounting
de gong zuo/xian zai mei you yi tuo tong xiang wei lai
difficulty./Now there isn't a, leading to future,

⁸⁶ See Keith Sagar, *The Art of D.H. Lawrence*, Cambridge University Press, 1966, p.185.

kang zhuang da dao./dan shi wuo men que yu hui qian jing/huo
broad prosperous road./ but we sidestep forward,/ or
pan yuan zhang ai erguo./ Bu guan tian fan di fu,/ wuo men
climb over obstacles and march./No matter if sky falls,
duo dei shen huo./
ground heaves,/we anyhow live on./
(p.1)

Another look at a later more complicated passage depicting Connie's second encounter with Mellors, in which even Lawrence in the original is stretching the possibilities of language by trying to convey the climactic rhythms of human sexual experience, would suffice to attest to Rao's linguistic as well as cultural competence translator:

(O.) And it seemed she was like the sea, nothing but dark waves rising and heaving, heaving with a great swell, so that slowly her whole darkness was in motion, and she was ocean rolling its dark, dumb mass. Oh, and far down inside her the deeps parted and rolled asunder, in long, far-travelling billows, and ever, at the quick of her, the depths parted and rolled asunder, from the centre of soft plunging, as the plunger went deeper and deeper, touching lower, and she was deeper and deeper away to some shore, uncovering her, and closer and closer plunged the palpable unknown, and further and further rolled the waves of herself away from herself, leaving her, till suddenly, in a soft, shuddering convulsion, the quick of all her plasm was touched, she knew herself touched, the consummation was upon her, and she was gone. She was gone, she was not, and she was born: a woman. (p.181)

(T.) Ta fan fu xiang ge ta hai,/ man shi xie you an de bo
She as if was like an ocean,/full of many dark waves,
tao,/shang shen zhe,/peng zhang zhe,/peng zhang cheng yige
rising,/ expanding,/ expanded into one
ju lang,/yu shi man man de,/zhen ge de you an de ta,/dou
huge wave,/then slowly,/the whole dark she,/all
zai dongzuo qi lai,/ta chen le yi ge muo muo de,/meng mei
moving on,/she became one soundless,/unconscious,
de,xin bo zuo lang de hai yang./zai ta de li mian,/ zai
wave-rolling ocean./ In her inside,/ in her
ta de di xia,/di feng kai/,zuo you yao yang,/you you de
depth/sea bottom split,/rolled left & right,/long echo-
yi bo yi lang de dang dao yuan chu qu./Bu zhu de,/zai ta
ing,/one wave after other swinging to afar./For ever,
de zui shen dong de di fang,/hai di feng kai,/zuo you dang
in her most sensitive inside/sea bottom parted,/rolled

yang./zhong yang bian shi tan hai zhe zai wen rou de sheng
 left and right,/at the centre was the explorer tenderly
an zhe./yu tan yu sheng./yu lai yu chu zhe ta de di xia:/
 exploring,/deeper and deeper,/more & more touching her
ta yu sheng yu yuan de bao lu zhe./ta de bo tao yue dang
 depth;/she was deeper and deeper uncovered,/her waves
yue xiong yong de dang dao she me an bian qu./shi ta bao lu
 ever more heavily rolled to unknown shore,/leaving her
zhe./Wu min zhe de sheng tan./yu ru yu sheng./ta zi ji de
 naked./The unintelligible probing forth,/ever deeper,
bo tao yue dang yue yuan de li kai ta./pao qi ta/zhi zhi
 her own waves further and further left her,/forsook her
tu ran de./zai yi zhong wen rou de./chang zhang de jing
 till all of a sudden,/in a tender,/shuddering convul-
ruan zhong./ta de zheng ge sheng min de zui mei miao chu
 sion,/her whole life's most wonderful point was
bei chu zhe le./ta zhi dao zi ji bei chu zhe le./yi qie
 touched,/she knew herself touched,/all was achieved./
dou wan chen le./ta yi jin mei you le./ta yi jin mei you le.
 she already was no more,/she already was no more./
ta zai ye bu cun zai le./ta chu shi le./yi ge hu ren./
 she no longer existed,/she was born:/a woman./
 (p.250)

This is one of the most beautiful passages in the novel. Rao's translation ably conveys the heavy, almost palpitating pace of Lawrence's prose by rendering the sentences in fragments which connect the whole paragraph without breaking the rhythm. Lawrence's sentences are normally quite long, but in this passage he uses repetitions of key words like 'waves', 'rolling oceans', 'deeper and deeper' and sometimes portions of the preceding sentences to form short fragments, and to create a rhythmic effect for Connie's emotional experience.⁸⁷ Rao also keeps all the punctuation of the original --mostly commas as though symbolising waves of feeling. But evidently for purposes of strengthening the palpitating effect, Rao employs more commas than the original, especially after adjectives and participles like 'slowly', 'rising' and 'heaving'. Although this somehow varies the original length of Lawrence's sentences of six or seven words, and changes in some degree the original rhythm, in the shorter-sentenced Chinese this gives a better effect of excitement. Other devices of the passage, like the use of religious terminology in the

⁸⁷. See John Russell, *Style in Modern British Fiction: Studies in Joyce, Lawrence, Forster, Lewis and Green*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1978, pp.43-88.

last image of birth and resurrection for effects of intensity, are, as a whole, well captured and rendered.

In *Style in Modern British Fiction*, John Russell wrote that Lawrence's later style was characterised by the use of repetitive key images to create rhythm, and of inverted structures for effects of intensity.⁸⁸ We have demonstrated in the passage quoted above that Rao ably rendered the first stylistic device. The following passage contains Lawrence's use of the second device--his predilection for employing inverted structures. This includes the early positioning of adverbial elements or the inversion of direct objects or complements. Sometimes Lawrence follows up echoes in the preceding sentences with inverted repetitions as well:

(O.) And **softly**, he laid his hand over her mound of Venus, on the soft brown maiden-hair, and himself sat still and naked on the bed, his face **motionless** in physical abstraction, almost, like the face of Buddha. Motionless, and **in the invisible flame of another consciousness**, he sat with his hand on her, and waited for the turn. (p.221)

The word 'motionless' in the second sentence is a repetition of the same word in the first, and it, along with the prepositional phrase 'in...', is placed ahead of the subject and main verb of the second sentence, constituting, as did the word 'softly' in the first, the key trait of inversion in this paragraph. The effect of inversion is that of emphasis. We now turn to Rao's translation to see if it rendered this stylistic device:

(T.) Wen rou de./ ta ba shou fang zai ta de ai shen de shan
Tenderly, he placed hand on her Venus mount -top./
shang./fan zai na wen ran de he se de mao cong shang. /Ta jin
 on that soft brown mane of hair./ He motion-
jin de, chi luo de zuo zai chuang shang./ ta de ru chan si
 lessly, naked, sat on bed./His in Zen-like abstraction,
zheng ding de lian kong./ cha bu duo xiang ge fuo xiang./
tranquil face,/ almost like a Bhuddha./
Jing jing de/ zai ling yi zhong yi shi de bu ke jian de huo
tranquilly,/ in an unconscious invisible flame,/
yan zhong/ ta dai mu de zuo zhe./ ta de shou fan zai ta de
 he sat motionless, / his hand on her body./
sheng shang./ deng dai zhe zhuan ji/
 waiting for change./
 (p.307)

⁸⁸. *Ibid*

In this passage Rao has retained the inversions and fully rendered the effects of emphasis that Lawrence intended. Meanwhile Lawrence's use of other stylistic effects in the original is also in general well transferred into Chinese. For instance, thematically-motivated devices like the intentional contrasting shades of tone between the first half of the book and the second are adequately conveyed in the Rao translation. The drawing-room conversations among Clifford's friends, the likes of Tommy Dukes, centre on sex as does Mellors' preaching to Connie; but there is a marked difference in the tone in which the two types of dialogues are carried, the former clearly lacking respect and feeling, with an intentional nonchalance and contempt toward their subject, while the latter is full of reverence and intensity. This contrast is well retained in Rao's version as he employs clinical terms for human anatomy in the first half and colloquial references in the second. All the exclamation marks and the frequent punctuation recurring in Mellors' preaching in the original is also retained, giving an effect of intensity and passion. For instance,

(O.) (Dukes) 'Well, Charlie and I believe that sex is a sort of communication like speech. Let any woman start a sex conversation with me, and it's natural for me to go to bed with her to finish it, all in due season.' (p.36)

(Dukes) 'Me? Oh, intellectually I believe in having a good heart, a chirpy penis, a lively intelligence, and the courage to say 'shit' in front of a lady.' (p.41)

By contrast, Mellors is all reverence and passion:

(O.) (Mellors) 'For me it is. For me it's the core of my life: if I have a right relation with a woman.' (p.213)

(Mellors) 'I like it! An' if I only lived ten minutes, an 'stroked thy arse an' got to know it, I should reckon I'd lived *one* life, see ter!' (p.233)

Rao's translation, except for the dialect part in Mellors' speech (more on this later), well renders the differing shades of tone:

(T.) (Dukes) 'Hao, Chali he wuo dou xiang xin xin jiao shi
'Well Charlie and me both believe **intercourse** is a
yi-zhong hu tong sheng qi de fang fa, xiang shuo hua yi yang
kind of communication method, like conversation.

shi yi ge nu zi kai shi tong wuo zuo xin de tan hua, zi ran
If ever a woman starts, with me, to make sex talk, natu-
shi ji yi tao, wuo bian yao ba zhe zhong tan hua tong ta da
rally as the moment comes, I would have this conversa-
chuang shang qu wang jie.
tion finish on bed.'
(p.44)

-(Dukes) 'Wuo? Ah, li zhi de shuo lai, wuo xiang xin yao you
'Me? Oh, speaking by reason, I believe man should have
yi ge hao xin, yi tiao shen dong de yang ju, yi ge rui li
a good heart, a lively **male organ**, a sharp mind,
de li zhi, he zai yi wei gao shang fu nu mian qian shuo 'ma
and, in front of a noble woman, the courage to say
de bi' yong qi.
'cunt'.
(p.50)

-(Mellors) 'Zai wuo, na shi zhong yao de, zai wuo, ru guo wuo
'To me, that is important. To me, if I am able
neng gou he yi ge nu zi fa sheng shi dang de guan xi, na
to, with a woman, have a proper relation/ that is my
shi wuo sheng ming zhong zui zhong yao de shi.
life's most important thing.
(p.296)

-(Mellors) 'Wuo ai ta! Jia shi Wuo zhi you shi fen zhong de
'I love it! If I only have ten minutes's life,
min, ke yi qu ai fu nin zhi ge tun er, qu ren shi ta, wuo
could lovingly touch thy this **little bum**, know it, I must
din yao chen ren wuo huo le yi shi le! Nin min bai bu?'
admit I have lived a whole life! You see?/
(p.233)

Note that interestingly in Dukes' first speech, Rao translates the word 'shit' in the original as 'cunt'. He makes a special note at the bottom of the same page, quoting the word 'shit', and explains that it was a derogatory dirty word, implying at the same time that he thought 'cunt' in Chinese better represented the meaning of 'shit'. It is interesting that this was the only place in the Chinese version where 'cunt' appears, and Rao's deliberate withholding of the word in the latter part of the novel when it is used emphatically in the Lawrence original will be the focus of analysis in Discussion Two.

From what has been examined so far, it could be tentatively concluded that Rao is a competent translator both in linguistic and cultural terms. His Chinese version reproduces most of Lawrence's linguistic preferences in *Lady C*, keeping intact the distinctive style of the original. Rao does not simply convey approximately the same fictional facts but demonstrates a fine awareness of the aesthetic effects in the original generated by Lawrence's stylistic devices, his verbal artistry. Another point of perhaps greater significance is that he does not seek to alleviate the sexual explicitness of Lawrence's last novel and fully understands its thematic significance. Rao's fidelity to the original, and his profound sympathy with the socially redemptive effect of the Lawrentian relationship, was fully set forth in his own 'Translator's Note' to the Chinese translation.

Discussion Two:

The use of the so-called 'four-letter-words' and the Derbyshire dialect in the novel are closely linked, as most of these words appear in Mellors' speech when he switches to the dialect. For reasons of convenience, the two will be discussed separately.

Lawrence tirelessly rallied to the defence of the 'four-letter-words' as the only honest language worthy of the powerful intimacy between man and woman, totally devoid of their usual lascivious connotations. In the daily conversations of today's world, these words are still used in their usual context and with their usual associations, contrary to what Lawrence would have wished. In the particular context of *Lady C*, however, a consensus is more or less arrived at by which the reader is persuaded to view the words in the Lawrentian light. Although the wisdom or success of the Lawrentian practice concerning the words leaves room for differences of judgement, his honesty in intention is quite established.

Of the dozen or so Chinese criticisms of *Lady C* that appeared before Rao's 1936 translation, no more than two mentioned the use of the 'four-letter-words' and described them as 'wonderfully capturing the intimacy in love-making'.⁸⁹ The majority centred on the honesty and social dimensions of the Lawrentian relationship without mentioning the intentional use of the words. To find out how Rao feels about these words we need to examine the Chinese version of the representative passages where they appear:

⁸⁹ See Ta-fu Yu, 'On Lawrence's Novels' (*Lun Lao Lun Si Xiao Shuo*), *This Human World* (*Ren Shi Jian*), Shanghai, no. 14, 1934, pp. 14-7.

(O.) (Mellors) 'Th'art good **cunt**, though, aren't ter? Best bit o'**cunt** left on earth. When ter likes! When tha'art willin'!

'What is **cunt**?' she said.

'An doesn't ter know? **Cunt**! It's thee down thee; an' what I get when I'm i'side thee, and what tha gets when I'm i'side thee; it's a' as it is, all on't.'

'All on't,' she teased. '**Cunt**! It's like **fuck** then.'

'Nay nay! **Fuck**'s only what you do. Animals **fuck**. But **cunt**'s a lot more than that. It's thee, dost see: an' tha'rt a lot besides an animal, aren't ter? - even ter **fuck**? **Cunt**! Eh, that's the beauty o' thee, lass!' (p.185)

(T) *Nin zhen shi ge hao "kong"!/ Nin shi zhe da di shang*
'You indeed are a good "hole"!/ You are, on this earth,
shen xia de zui hao de xiao "kong" er/ Dang nin xi huang de
remaining best little "hole"!/ When You like it,
shi hou/ Dang nin yuan yi de shi hou!'
When you are willing!

'She mo shi "kong"?' Ta wen dao.

'What is "hole"?' She asked.

'Ze mo, nin bu zhi dao she mo shi "kong"!/ Na shi nin xia
'What, You do not know what is "hole"!/ That is you down
mian de na ge; na shi wuo jing nin li mian shi wuo shuo de
there;/ That is when I enter you inside/ I get
de na ge/ye shi wuo jing nin li mian shi nin shuo de de na ge
that one,/also is when I enter you inside/you get that one.

Na mo/ "kong" shi xiang jia he le?'

'Then,/ "hole" is like intercourse?'

'Bu, bu!/ Jiao he zhi shi zuo de shi qin/ qin shou ye
'No, no,/Intercourse is only the thing you do,/animals also
neng jiao he./ Dan shi "kong" que shi qiang de duo le./ Na
can intercourse./But "hole" is a lot better./ That

shi nin zi ji, min bai bu/ nin shi yi yu qin lei de/ ke
 is you yourself, see?/ You are different from animals,
bu shi?/ shen zhi dang nin zai jiao he de shi hou/ "kong"
 are you not?/ even when you are **intercourse**ing/ "Hole!"
Ai, na shi shi nin mei li de dong xi/ xiao ren er!'
 Eh, that makes you beautiful, the thing, little darling!
 (p.256)

In the above passage, there are two 'four-letter-words' - 'cunt' and 'fuck'. It is also one of the two scenes where the two words occur most frequently. In Rao's Chinese version he uses the word 'hole' for 'cunt' and 'intercourse' for 'fuck'. He makes a special note at the end of the page explaining that 'cunt' is a dialect word, that it has a similar sound to the Chinese word for 'hole' which, in his view, almost expresses the same meaning. Rao seems to have intentionally chosen 'hole' for 'cunt'. There is no lack of Chinese equivalent, since in the earlier context of Dukes' conversation Rao did use the direct Chinese word for 'cunt', as the translation of the English word 'shit' (see Discussion One). It is most likely that Rao thinks 'hole' more appropriate than 'cunt'. Two reasons could perhaps be attributed to Rao's opting for euphemistic terms rather than direct references. One is that he disapproves of Lawrence's way of using these words. The other could be that he approves, but feels that the Chinese equivalents could not convey the same honest intimacy and therefore chooses genteeler terms. The first reason is perhaps better grounded, as Rao fails to mention anything about the 'four-letter-words' in his 'Translator's Note', which apologises profusely for the lack of a convincing Chinese equivalent of the dialect. A look at another passage where the other 'four-letter-words' are translated, would perhaps shed more light on Rao's intentions.

(O.) 'Well, I married her, and she wasn't bad. Those other "pure" women had nearly taken all the balls out of me, but she was all right that way... That was what I wanted: a woman who wanted me to **fuck** her. So I **fucked** her like a good un.' (p.210)

(T.) *Hao, wuo qu ta le/ Qi chu, ta hai bu huai/ Qi ta de*
 'Well, I married her./ At first she was O.K./ Other
"chung jie" de fu ren men cha bu duo ba wuo de gao wan dou
 "chaste" and "pure" women almost made my **balls**
chi duo le/dan shi Baitai zai zhe yi dian shang que hai hao/
 torn out/ but Bertha on that point was not yet bad./
Na zhen shi wuo suo zu yao de/ yi ge xi huan gan de nu ren/
 That was really what I wanted:/ a woman who wanted **fucking**./

Yu shi wuo bian pin ming de gan ta/
 So I then went all out to **fuck** her/

In this passage where Mellors is relating his unhappy marriage to Bertha, the word 'fuck' in the original is fully translated as 'gan' in the Chinese version. Mellors is full of annihilating bitterness in the context of this passage ('I could kill them'); in the above mentioned Dukes' conversation where his 'four-letter-word' is fully rendered, the context is also contemptuous. We could perhaps tentatively suggest that Rao feels able to translate the words only when they are used in a negative sense; it is possible that he still sees these words more or less in their usual light, and that his fidelity to the original wavers when he decides to use genteeler expressions in a positive context.

To further support this claim, we can also look at another term which is not a 'four-letter-word' by the number of its letters but is similarly avoided in polite conversation. In the same passage quoted above, Rao uses the formal/euphemistic term 'gao wuan' (testicles) for the word 'balls'. In an earlier passage of the same chapter, however, when Mellors is vehemently attacking the boneless aristocracy, Rao uses the full Chinese equivalent:

(O.) 'Nay, you know better than I do. The sort of youngish gentleman a bit like a lady, and no **balls**.'
 'What **balls**?'
 'Ball! A man's **balls**!' (p.204)

(T.) *He, ni bi wuo gen zhi dao/ Ta shi na zhong ban nian*
 'No, you know more than me./ He is that kind of man, rather
qin de you dian dai nu xin de mei you dan de ren.'
 young, a bit lady-like, without **balls**.
'Wei you she mo?'
 'Without what?'
'Wei you dan!'/ Nan ren de dan!'
 'Without **balls**!'/ Man's **balls**!'

In this passage the word 'balls' carries the weight of Mellors' invective whereas the one in the earlier context did not, when he was referring to his own anatomy. It therefore seems very probable that Rao's fidelity to Lawrence stops at a passionate defence of the author's sincerity and honesty in his overall message, but

that Rao does not agree, or at least does not think his Chinese reader would agree, with Lawrence's assertion that those words are the only great language worthy of the tender intimacy between man and woman in love. It is possible that Rao thinks that Lawrence is going a bit too far this time and that bringing out the full Chinese equivalents would jeopardise the book's place in the category of serious literature. Whatever his reasons for doing so, Rao is passing his own judgement on Lawrence's choice of words. In other words, he has intentionally mistranslated the original in his efforts to 'normalise' or 'bowdlerise' Lawrence.

Discussion Three

The second instance where Rao fails to achieve the greatest possible fidelity to the original is in the translation of the Derbyshire dialect. In the English original, Mellors' use of the dialect is an assertion of his independence and a gesture of defiance against aristocratic arrogance and middle-class snobbery. The dialect is a significant part of Lawrence's style in *Lady C*. His earlier and mid-stage works also contain bits of the dialect, but nowhere else is its use so thematically motivated. The dialect is spoken largely in the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire colliery villages and is sometimes even unintelligible to someone brought up on the 'King's English' like Connie. To translate this dialect into another language without losing its authenticity and thematic significance would involve not only the competence of the translator, but also the linguistic possibilities of the two languages. Rao's solution or lack of solution to this problem is that he has not rendered the dialect any different from the overall speech mode of the book, but simply translated into standard Mandarin, adding a sentence like 'he said in dialect', before each of Mellors's dialect speech. For instance, the dialect in the above quoted passages with the 'four-letter-words' is not rendered. The only perceptible difference is that he does try to add a colloquial flavour to the conversation. The following passages are also translated in standard Mandarin:

(O.) 'Ay!' he said at last, in a little voice. 'Ay ma lad! tha're theer right enough. Yi, tha mun rear thy head! Theer on thy own, eh? an'ta'es no count o'nob'dy! Tha ma'es nowt o'me, John Thomas. Art boss? of me? Eh well, tha're more cocky than me, an'tha says less. John Thomas! Dost want *her*? Dost want my lady Jane? Tha's dipped me in again, tha hast. Ay, an'tha comes up smilin'. Ax'er then. Ax lady Jane! Say: Lift up your heads o'ye gates, that the king of glory may come in. Ay, th'cheek in thee! *Cunt*, that's what tha're after. Tell lady Jane tha' wants *cunt*. John Thomas, an'th' *cunt* o'Lady Jane!—'(p.219)

(T.) *Shi de', ta zuo hou xi shen de yong zhe tu hua shuo,*

'Yes', he at last, gently, **in dialect** said./
'shi de, wuo de er yao! Nin zai na er hai bu cuo ne./Nin ke
'yes my son **oh**! You are there smart enough. You must lift
yi ang shou er wu wei! Nin zai na er you you zi de, hao bu
head and be fearless! You are there happy with yourself./
qiu ren! Nin shi bu shi wuo de zu ren, yue han duo ma shi?/
heeding none! You are my master, John Thomas or not?/
Nin shi wuo de zu ren mo?

Are You my master?/

Wei, Yue han duo ma shi, nin bi wuo geng shen dong, nin bi
Hi, John Thomas, You are more proud and lively than me, You
wuo gua yan! Nin xiang ta mo? Nin xiang wuo de zhen nu fu
speak less than me/ You want her or not/ **Do You** want
ren mo? Nin you shi wuo chen lun le, hao jia huo! Shi de
my Lady Jane? You again make me lose myself, **By Jove**!/
nin xiao mi mi de gao ju qi lai. Na mo qu wen ta ba! Qu wen
You smilingly rise high./ Then go ask her **oh**! Go ask
zhen nu fu ren ba! Nin shuo, He, men yao, ba ni de men mei
Lady Jane **oh**! You say, 'Hi, you door, make your gates
kai le ba, guang rong de jun zhu yao jin lai le! He, nin bu
open **oh please**, glorious emperor wants to enter **oh**! Hi, you
hai xiu de dong xi! Nin suo yao de bian shi yi ge "kong".
cheeky chap! What you want is none other than a 'cunt'!/
Gao shu zhen ni fu ren shuo nin yao yi ge "kong". Yue han
Tell Lady Jane, say you want a 'cunt'./
duo ma shi, he zhen nu fu ren de "kong"!
—John Thomas, and Lady Jane's 'cunt'!/
(p.304)

Note that in the above passage, as elsewhere in the text, the word 'thou' is always translated as 'nin', a reverent form of 'you' in Chinese. In the Pekinese dialect on which Mandarin is based, this word has conversely a colloquial flavour, especially if it is followed by tonal words like 'well'. By adding tonal words like the Chinese 'mo', 'le', 'ba', Rao also manages to make the whole speech very colloquial without, however, retaining the distinct Derbyshire colour of the original. Except for the colloquial flavour of the translation, Mellors' speech is rendered no differently from Connie's and the effect of sharp contrast and shock is therefore lost. Rao's reason for standardising the dialect is not a failure in realising the authorial intentions indicated by the usage, but rather a realisation of the inadequacy of any other conceivable solution. As he explains in his 'Translator's Note', the idea of using an actual Chinese dialect, possibly of the same colliery background, does cross his mind; only he feels that the Derbyshire dialect is simply 'irreplaceable'

with any Chinese dialect. Rao laments in the end that a significant part of the original style is therefore lost.

Rao's lack of solution clearly does not provide any useful suggestions for the difficult issue of translating dialect. Other more recent Chinese translators of Lawrence, especially of his earlier works, do try to render the dialect in a Shang-dong dialect, one of the local languages of North China which is simple and direct, and, to use one of Lawrence's terms, 'uncitified'. The reaction among Chinese critics has been varied: some have appreciated the note of spontaneity preserved in the use of the Shang-dong dialect, others have objected to the loss of the 'spirit of the place' and the distinct 'Englishness' of the original dialect. To render a dialect inherent in the source language is, so it seems, one of the greatest trials for the translator. Lawrence himself had much to say on the matter when translating Verga's Sicilian peasant dialect. To get a full view of Lawrence's solution, the following passage deserves to be quoted in full:

'Roughly, Lawrence said that the major problem in handling dialect is how to avoid the two over-simple and absolutely wrong solutions: the first, to translate the dialect of the original into another dialect which is spoken in a geographically existent region or in a particular locality. For example, one must never have Sicilian fisherman talk like fishermen of the North or the Baltic Sea, or have Sicilian peasants express themselves in the equivalent German or Austrian country idiom. Every dialect has inevitable overtones of the landscape, the character of the people and their native customs, inherent to their special locality and radically different from another and foreign region...On the other hand, it would be just as wrong to transplant the real Sicilian, together with his native peculiarities, into the German-speaking ambience and simply verbally reproduce his dialect. It would not ring true at all. Lawrence's advice, was therefore to *invent* a new dialect, coined in German (or any other target language)⁹⁰ words but free from any reference, from any flavour of a special region, yet preserving the flavour of some sort of uncitified, untutored mode of speaking.⁹¹

Yet Lawrence's own 'coined' dialect in translating Verga was not totally free from any flavour of a special region, as it was very much based on the

⁹⁰. My note; as this passage was written by Wlizaabeth Mayer, a German translator, the particular target language that Lawrence was referring to was German.

⁹¹. See Elizabeth Mayer, 'An Afternoon with D.H.Lawrence', in Harry T. Moore, ed., *A D.H.Lawrence Miscellany*, London: Heinemann, 1961, pp. 140-2.

Nottinghamshire dialect that he could ably manipulate.⁹² In trying to make the dialect not exactly like that of Nottingham, Lawrence also drew the attacks from other critics who claimed that Lawrence's translations of Verga's images were not only aesthetically new and uncommon, which Verga's original was, but also linguistically uncommon, which Verga's was not.⁹³ It is therefore fairly difficult to agree on an ideal solution to the problem of translating dialects, except that Rao's method of non-differentiation is far from satisfactory. The limitations of intra-lingual language transfer again present themselves, and only a compromise could be sought.

A tentative suggestion, which is also very much what Lawrence actually accomplished, would be that the translator adopt with some variations a dialect in the target language which has roughly the same characteristics and would respond to the dialect in the original. The result would be that some of the distinct colour of the original is retained while at the same time the translation is also free from the hint of translatoresque, which a transplanting of the original dialect into the ambience of the target language would usually entail. Rao's translation does avoid the second mistake, creating a general air of improvisation and naturalness by the use of colloquialism, but irons out the distinct colour of the Derbyshire dialect, resulting in a regrettable loss of the original style.

Critical Evaluation:

As the above discussions have demonstrated, Rao's Chinese translation is in many senses a competent rendition of Lawrence's last novel. Based on his profound sympathy with Lawrence's social message, Rao conveys truthfully the thematic concerns of the original. He achieves both linguistic and cultural competency by retaining the poetic style of the original and fully capturing most of Lawrence's stylistic devices. At the time of its publication, Rao's late 1936 version did not bear on the Chinese reception in the thirties of Lawrence's works. In this sense Rao's version is more a reflection of the general status of the Chinese assessments of Lawrence in the first stage: it shares the predominantly defending and laudatory tone of the essays, and like the critical assessments, its contemporary influence did not go beyond the concerns of serious literature.

Rao's scholarly approach to the process of translating also reflects the seriousness of his version. The actual work of translation started early in China in

⁹². See G.M.Hyde, *D.H.Lawrence and the Art of Translation*, London: Macmillan, 1981.

⁹³. See Giovanni Cecchetti, 'Verga and D.H.Lawrence's Translations', *Comparative Literature*, Vol.IX, No.4, 1957, pp.333-44.

the West Han Dynasty (206 BC--224 AD). In the early decades of the 20th century translation of Western literature and ideas reached a great momentum. During Rao's time research on translation techniques also began to increase, and the canon for almost any theory on translation were the three basic principles of 'fidelity', 'expressiveness' and 'elegance' first propounded by Yen Fu (1853-1921), which aimed to capture the ideas of the original, produce a similar effect on the audience as the original, and retain its artistic style. Though systematic research in the style of modern Western studies on translation, with its ample application of linguistics, was still to come, studies in the traditional style were abundant,⁹⁴ drawing on personal experiences as the translator. Rao himself is not known to be a theorist, but it could be assumed that he was at least unconsciously influenced by contemporary principles of translation. If he gave any attention to the formulation of a method of work, he was naturally guided by the prevailing theories. Rao's 'Translator's Note' gives every indication that he adopted a scholarly approach to the translation, always 'referring to the French translation by Roger Cornaz for confirmation of uncertain points'. Rao also expressed deep dismay at an earlier mistake-ridden translation published in serial form in a Shanghai weekly. Judging by the three basic principles of his time, the standards that Rao himself achieved are indeed high.

Even by the standards of the late eighties, with the increasing introduction in China of modern Western theories on translation, Rao's version remains eminent. Compared with the later mushrooming translations of Lawrence's other works, Rao's work ranks among those that ably capture Lawrence's poetic style. *Lady C's* problems with censorship in China partly explain the singular lack of interest (or opportunity) by present Chinese translators in producing an eighties' translation of the novel. Fortunately for the millions of Chinese readers of the eighties, and perhaps also for Lawrence himself, the only Chinese translation of *Lady C* that reached their hands is of a high standard and shows full sympathy with his social message. Rao's version must also have been instrumental in boosting the enthusiastic defence of Lawrence by literary critics after the mid-eighties, his elegant passages often quoted in their essays. Probably one of the manifold reasons that deters another Chinese translator from attempting a retranslation is the artistic distinction of Rao's version, which is not easily paralleled.

⁹⁴ The first recorded book on translation in the early decades was Wu Shu-tian's *On Translation* (*Lun Fan Yi*), ed., Shanghai, 1923. The representative work then was Lin Yu-tang's 'On Translation', collected in Luo Xin-zhang's *Collected Essays On Translation* (*Fan Yi Lun Ji*), ed., Beijing, 1988, in which Lin claimed that the translator should aim for functional rather than literal equivalence. Another influential work in the eighties was Xu yuan-chong's *The Art of Translation* (*Fan Yi De Yi Shu*), Beijing, 1984, which also introduced modern Western theories on translation.

But Rao's version leaves room for improvement in two significant instances. He has not translated all the 'four-letter-words' in all the contexts that Lawrence intended, and he also fails to render the Derbyshire dialect into its equivalent in Chinese. The above examination of representative passages in the chapter has demonstrated that Rao's failure to fully translate the Anglo-Saxon terms is not a result of his incompetence but of his own deliberate choice. Rao is actually normalising Lawrence because of the discrepancy between his own and Lawrence's concepts of words. It is possible that Rao did not consider himself to be breaking the rules of translation. By genteelising the words in their intimate contexts according to his conventional conception, Rao was perhaps assuming that his version was what Lawrence ought to have said and was therefore a reasonable form of correspondence to the original. Considering the different social/cultural circumstances involving a Chinese readership, Rao was perhaps reasonably motivated; but this does not lessen the fact that he has committed in linguistic terms an act of deceptive equivalence, which conveys approximately the same cognitive meanings of the words but fails to correspond to the particular type or form chosen in the original, leading therefore to a loss of their thematic significance.

As Rao's translation is re-published before the appearance of the eighties' criticism of *Lady C*, this attitude also has significant consequences on the eighties' response to Lawrence. It is chiefly to account for the conspicuous lack of critical attention on the Anglo-Saxon words in *Lady C*, despite the enormous number of essays the book has received. The book's famous words have always been a significant bone of contention among British Lawrentians, resulting in a rich body of literature that is of great scholarly interest. Many critics question the merits of the book's use of the words, some applaud their crucial importance to the thematic plot, but few commentators on *Lady C* could ignore the issue of the Anglo-Saxon terms. The use of the words and the book's later open release are often argued to be instrumental in the shaping of the more permissive social standards in post-war Britain and the increasingly free use of the words in literature.⁹⁵ But Rao's bowdlerisation has deleted an important part of Lawrence's rich though controversial vocabulary which is of great research interest; the result on the Chinese critical response is a lack of dissenting criticism of Lawrence, which might have added range to the otherwise unanimously adulatory tone of the critics after the mid-eighties.

With the benefit of hindsight, and bearing in mind the whole process of *Lady C's* Chinese reception throughout the eighties, Rao's bowdlerisation might have

⁹⁵ See John Sutherland, *Offensive Literature: Decensorship in Britain 1960-1982*, London: Junction Books, 1982, 'introduction'.

actually helped with the book's already difficult relation with the authorities. Had the 'four-letter-words' been fully rendered into their Chinese equivalents, it would not be hard to imagine the reactions of the state censorship. On the other hand, the words might also antagonise a significant number of Chinese readers accustomed to decades of moralistic community standards which still associate the use of these words with prurience. To defend an author for his purity, honesty and sincerity is one thing, but it requires an unusually-motivated reader, or those expert witnesses at the 1960 Old Bailey trial with their eagerness to secure an acquittal, to actually agree that a whole group of 'dirty' words could take on sacred, tender meanings merely at the stroke of even Lawrence's pen. It might be tentatively suggested, therefore, that for a public who sees Lawrence primarily as the author of *Lady C*, and who desperately needs him to assist their own aspirations toward freedom, Rao's first ever Chinese translation of *Lady C* might have assisted Lawrence popular but politically fragile name in China of the eighties. Other renditions, demonstrating a higher degree of fidelity to the original and therefore more valid purely as translation, might later follow when Lawrence's stature in China is more secure.⁹⁶

FASHION, ART AND THE LEISURE CLASS IN D.H. LAWRENCE'S *THE WHITE PEACOCK*

Barbara Langell Miliaras

1906 marked a watershed year in British social, economic, and political history. The Tories were voted out of office in sweeping numbers; the Education Act was passed, setting in place the intellectually-elitist system that prevailed in the United Kingdom until the 1960s. Free Trade, Home Rule, Trade Unionism and Woman's Suffrage were the burning issues of the political year and the Prince and Princess of Wales continued on the arduous land and sea trek to the far reaches of the British Empire. It was the final gesture of the Age of Imperialism to shore up, with the full magnificence of a royal progress, the foundations of the tottering realm. It was the year that also marked D.H. Lawrence's legal coming of age and his matriculation as a King's Scholar at the University of London (University College, Nottingham).⁹⁷ From 1906-1909, these historical and political phenomena had a revolutionary impact on the world of fashion and ideas. This essay examines how these phenomena affected Lawrence when he gained access to London's literary establishment and how they are reflected in *The White Peacock*.

Much of Lawrence's manipulation of fashion as a device for character development depends upon concepts current in some seminal works of early sociological and economic theory, particularly Thorstein Veblen's *Theory of the Leisure Class* and Oskar Fischel and Max von Boehn's *Modes & Manners of the Nineteenth Century*, the English edition of which contained a long introduction of the history of fashion in Great Britain by one of Lawrence's early mentors, Grace Thompson Rhys.

Art, fashion and the decadence of the leisure class, particularly, as they subvert the taste and education of the young artist, Cyril Beardsall, and his friend, George Saxton, function as dominant thematic motifs in the novel and are reflected in their impact on the lives of the young people growing up in Nethermere. Their importance in the novel reflects their importance in Lawrence's personal life, as well.

Lawrence entered the fashionable world of London's literary circles in 1910, but his ideas about fashion and politics had already been very much formed by his mother and their mutual Eastwood-Nottingham religious and political connections, as well as by his formal education at University College, Nottingham, as early as 1906. He was, at heart, as he describes himself, in an early letter to Rachel Annand Taylor, a non-conformist and a socialist by religious, educational and political

⁹⁶ Of the three versions of *Lady C* that I have examined which were translated by Taiwanese scholars after the book's open publication there since the late sixties, only one (translated by Yu Zhang and published in 1991 by Lin Yu Cultural Enterprise Co.) uses the Chinese equivalents for the 'four-letter-words', the other two still adopting Rao's genteelising terms.

⁹⁷ *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence*, James T. Boulton, ed., 1979: Cambridge University Press, xxvi. Referred to hereafter in the text by page number immediately following quoted material as *DHLL*.