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Marginalizing Lin Shu in the Republican Era: Language styles, *Henry VI*, and translation

ABSTRACT

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Lin Shu quickly appeared but vanished in Chinese literary history at the turn of the twentieth century. Following a sociohistorical path, this essay identifies three roles he played in a particular context: an ancient-style prose defender, a loyal servant to the Qing Court, and a once popular translator. Each discussion sheds light on a different aspect of Lin's marginalization. Merged together they may clarify the complexity and the contradictions of the considerations taken by him when translating. My basic claim is that Lin was not simply entangled in the debates on language styles or blindly obedient to the Qing Court, but truly worried about the root of Chinese culture. Through responding to some of his supposed faults, I want to allow him to reclaim his well-deserved place in the pantheon of Chinese literature.

Keywords: marginalization, Lin Shu, language styles, *Henry VI*, translation.

We have already aged and cannot right the wrong of their claims. However, there will be someone who can distinguish the truth from falsehood over the next hundred years. Please wait and see

(Lin 2002: 96).

Once a central force in Chinese literary culture of the late Qing dynasty and the Republic (roughly 1895–1911), Lin Shu 林紓 quickly appeared but vanished at the turn of the twentieth century. The success of his early translations, particularly before 1910s, placed him in a position to become a leading figure for the

introduction of Western literature to China. However, after the establishment of the Republic fewer new works by him were published. His translations became marginalized in his own time and since, with critiques giving way to virtual oblivion.

Following a sociohistorical path, this article aims to throw light on what social, ideological, and literary considerations led Lin to translate as he did, what he hoped to achieve through his translations, and what they actually brought him. My basic claim is that Lin's success and lack of it can be traced back to the role his works played in the debates in the New Culture Movement. His marginalization was a product of anachronism that, as Leo Lee (1973: 57) states "he attempted to dramatize his Confucian leanings in an age of increasing anti-Confucianism." As a result, Lin, a "foremost classical stylist and indefatigable translator of Western fiction of his time" (Hsia 2016: 4), was unfortunately not accepted in his own society, which was eager to rush into the new world through a radical upheaval of the old system.

1. Lin Qinnan, An Enemy of the Vernacular?

It is significant to bear in mind that the key argument in China's New Culture Movement centered on the struggle between the old and the new (*xin jiu zhi zheng* 新舊之爭). The crux of the matter lays in the confrontation between two writing styles: the vernacular (*baihua* 白話) and the ancient style prose (*wenyan* 文言). The latter, "a language which was never actually spoken" identified by André Lefevere (2004: 33), is a composition of texts independent of the tradition of speaking. The new generation of intellectuals believed that the use of the ancient style prose was limited to the well-educated class and was unsuited for writing about modern forms of knowledge. The vernacular, on the other hand, was easier for the illiterate mass to learn and was also well adapted to the new. The reformers therefore called to regenerate the old writing system and demanded that the ancient style prose should be completely replaced with the vernacular.

1.1 Seeking a balance between the old and the new

Holding a position to protect the old writing tradition, Lin has been easily stereotyped as an attacker to the vernacular and, by extension, as an enemy to the cultural reforms. In 1932, Zhou Zuoren (1982: 190) commented on Lin as a main figure against the cultural revolutions. A half century later, Zheng Chaozong (2007: 10), who claimed that Lin's character is beyond reproach, still referred to his confrontation against the vernacular movement as the biggest blemish on his life. After that, Wang Furen (2007: 8), though came to ask forgiveness for Lin's resistance against the cultural reforms, required us to regard his behavior as an old man's muddled action. However, I cannot bring myself to accept this conclusion.

I will argue that Lin's attitude towards the vernacular and the reforms was not simply hostile or opposed, but rather complicated. Lin was one of the Chinese literati who first wrote in the vernacular. His vernacular poems published in the *Hangzhou Vernacular Journal* (*Hangzhou baihua bao* 杭州白話報)¹ appeared way ahead of the reformers' vernacular works. Besides, Lin advocated establishing a new vernacular newspaper to teach innovative methods for raising silkworms and refining raw silk. As can be seen, Lin was aware of and participated in the approaching new world even before the breakout of cultural revolutions. This is partly the reason why Leo Lee (1973: 52) states, "if in the context of the May Fourth iconoclasm Lin appeared as an arch-conservative, he was at least a progressive in the context of his own time." One reason for Lin's progressive support for the vernacular is that he recognized its function in improving public education and developing national industries. Another concern is that Lin did not view the vernacular as opposite to the ancient style prose. He believed that there must be a harmonious relationship, which was, as César Guardé-Paz (2015: 183) comments, "between the old and the new, for the former is the foundation of the later." To find a peaceful coexistence, Lin (1982c: 85) first addressed the innocence of the ancient style prose, stressing that it was not the obstacle to revolutions, stating: "We should know that the ancient style prose does no harm to science, [...], they do not interfere with each other." In this essay, he outlined the educational importance in preserving ancient style prose, arguing:

You have to be educated (the ancient style prose) before learning to write in the vernacular. Only then can you speak reasonably and movingly. If you are taught by virtue of the vernacular texts, you do not know how to trace the origin of the principle (*li* 理) (Lin 1982c: 84).

Lin did not reject the vernacular writing, but underscored the necessity to learn ancient style prose as the fundamental step before studying the vernacular. Lin's pursuit for the coexistence indicated a general trend among the late Qing vernacular advocators, whose main difference from the later ones was that they discouraged from improving the new by abolishing the old. They obviously had a preference for the ancient style prose that they utilized the vernacular, as Chen Pingyuan (1989: 192) analyzes, only as an auxiliary means to inspire the masses. Conversely, when they wanted to express their own feelings or to write something literally or formally, they still chose to write in ancient style.

1.2 The endangered old and a recalcitrant old man

However, with the radical developments of the New Culture Movement, the continued existence of the ancient style prose was in peril after the Republic. Hu

1| *Hangzhou Vernacular Journal* had been operated for ten years from 1901 to 1910.

Shi 胡適 and Chen Duxiu 陳獨秀 successively published essays, in which the vernacular and the ancient style prose were placed in sharp opposition to each other, and the latter was treated as no more than a dead one. They claimed that, as an outdated remnant of the old system, the ancient style prose should be completely abolished to pave the way for the new. At that moment, as the one who “had shown from the beginning some alarm” (Hsia 2016: 4) among the conservative literati, Lin stood up to protect the ancient style prose by giving responses in a series of essays. He did his utmost to defend the *raison d'être* of Chinese ancient style prose, such as comparing its role with what Latin and Greek performed in Western cultures. His resolution to preserve the ancient style prose was approved with his translations written in it. He intended to prove that, as Alexander Huang (2009: 64) observes, “ancient Chinese culture had a value of its own in a time of transition and of much uncritical acceptance of foreign ideas.”

Yet his insistence on translating in ancient style prose naturally set him as the target of the opposition party, the cultural reformers. Specifically, his genre choice of rendering Shakespeare's historical plays into *Tang Chuanqi* 唐傳奇² brought him into a longstanding but still very heated debate. Zheng Zhenduo (1981: 12) commented: “Mr. Lin transformed many great scripts into novels – largely adding narrative, omitting dialogues, and almost changing them into totally different books,” citing Lin's translations of Shakespeare's *Henry IV*, *Richard II*, and *Henry VI* to corroborate. Similar criticisms appeared in Ge Baoquan in 1964, and then can be found in Ren Fangqiu in 1978, after that it was still repeated in Han Hongju even in the twenty first century. However, following the development of further research on Lin's works, a remarkable fact was finally revealed by Tarumoto Teruo, who acclaims that Lin translated from Sir Arthur Thomas Quiller-Couch's *Historical Tales from Shakespeare*, which is itself a prose adaptation from Shakespeare's historical dramas. In this light, Guarde-Paz (2015: 176), offering an overview on Lin's translations from the Bard, concludes that Shakespeare's works “were all translated from prose or from abridged editions, and were faithful both in size and speech to the original that was used by Lin Shu.” Lin, whose “language of the translation adheres to the original wherever possible,” was thus claimed to have “a strong tendency toward preservation in comparison with the previous translators” by Patrick Hanan (2004: 120). Furthermore, according to Lefevere's remarks on the genre choice made in translations, *Tang Chuanqi*, a popular storytelling genre, was definitely a good choice for Lin to adapt. It was familiar to the members of the target culture and could provide them an easy reading experience, making efforts in popularizing Shakespeare among Chinese readers.

2| *Tang Chuanqi* is a general term for stories written in classical Chinese during the Tang and Song dynasties.

1.3 To defend the ancient style prose, to guard the Confucius culture

Besides protecting the ancient style prose, Lin's struggle to fight against the reformers paralleled his opposition to the abolishment of Confucian culture. He worried that the suppression of the ancient style prose became merely a tool to erode the Confucian ethics, as he argued: "if people cannot read, they would use those (revolutionary) arguments to assume their liberty to rebel against the Confucius ethics" (Lin 1982c: 85). It can also be seen in his poem "Waiting to listen to the philosophers (*liubie tingjiang zhuzi* 留別聽講諸子)", from which a few verses are extracted:

Let controversy on the writing style stir ongoing,
 Have I ever be caught up in the coil of classics!
 The useless me could never be abreast of those philosophers,
 However I felt sorry to disappoint them for many times.
 The studies outside Confucius and Mencius are all heresies,
 Words only close to the style of Han and Ou can be defined as Chinese literature
 (cf. Zhang 1982: 59).

In this poem, Lin declared that he was not enmeshed within the debates on language styles, but determined to guard his orthodox faith in Chinese culture. As a passionate believer in the moral teachings of Confucianism, Lin could not stand idle as attacks upon the ancient style prose were also made to overthrow Confucian ethics. His attitude towards the reformers inevitably went to extremes. Lin wrote an aggressive letter to Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培, the chancellor of Beijing University, who, as Elizabeth Kaske (2008: 395) accounts, "proclaimed new educational goals and categorically repudiated any calls for a reverence for Confucius in the schools." Lin later insulted Cai publicly in another published essay "To continue arguing how to distinguish a treacherous person," abusing him as the vile protagonist. Since then Lin went even further. He constantly wrote fables and essays to confront against the cultural reformers, who meant to "fundamentally extinguish the Confucius ethics" (Lin 1982c: 83) in his view.

Deeply involved in the debates with the reformers, Lin appeared to be, as Michael Gibbs Hill (2013: 23) points out, "an unwilling and often unwitting icon of reactionary cultural politics." His appearance satisfied the necessity to build a literary and cultural enemy of the reformers to fight against. He came to be the person, as Zhou Qiming (1982: 253) claims, "standing on the opposed side of the history." On the other hand, suspicion arose about Lin's political position because of his resistance to the reformers, specifically to Cai, who represented Beijing University. It was at the frontline of the battle against Yuan Shikai's 袁世凱 government. Because of his attack on Cai, Lin was grouped with the rest of the supporters of Yuan in the Anhui Clique (*Wanxijunfa* 皖系軍閥). Tan Zhengbi 譚正璧 and Wang Zhefu 王哲甫 reinforced this idea in 1930s. Even up until

1970s, Ren (1982: 371) still believed that Lin had the intention of using the warlord Xu Shuzheng's 徐樹錚 power to suppress reformers.³ However, the truth of the matter was completely opposite to what critics were accusing him of. Lin was definitely not a supporter of Yuan, but in fact, an objector to him. He twice declined the offers of official posts from Yuan's government, vehemently refusing with these remarks: "Take my head away, or I would never step into the door of your 'Chinese (Republic)' Door" (cf. Zhang 1982: 44).⁴ After the death of Yuan, he even wrote poems with satire, mocking his supporters in the fiction, *Heroine Yangqiu* published in 1917. Along this line, more injustices of Lin on political grounds would be righted in the next section.

2. The Provincial Graduate Lin, An "Old fashioned"?

The tight association between translation and politics was a prominent feature of Chinese literature at the turn of the twentieth century. The idea to employ translation as a tool to influence the masses, which had been spreading in Europe for centuries, was championed by Liang Qichao 梁啟超 in China. Echoing this advocate wittingly or unwittingly, Lin and his contemporaries had done their translations, as Lefevere (1992: 6) argues, "with some goal in mind, other than that of 'making the original available' in a neutral, objective way."

2.1 The England of Henry VI and China of the time

Hengli diliu yi shi (亨利第六遺事; hereafter *Hengli*), a translation of the tale from Shakespeare's *Henry VI*, was one of the historical rewritings that Lin was keen on.⁵ He wished to draw lessons from the history of the faraway country, England, in order to illuminate and deal with China's current situation. The context of the story in *Henry VI* which is set in a period of decline in English history, coincidentally had several similarities with China at the time.

First, the England in *Henry VI* and the contemporary China Lin and his readers lived in were both facing a number of threats from outside. In *Henry VI*, England, after losing her "king of so much worth" (Shakespeare 2016: 1.1, 7), Henry V, was deeply affected by the slaughter and discomfiture in France. China at the turn of the twentieth century was also seriously threatened by outside invasion both militarily and commercially. Lin, who was always keeping a close eye on the current issues, was quite worried about the destiny of his ravaged nation. In an

3| Lin personally knew Xu and once expressed appreciation for Xu's talent in poetry.

4| Even when Duan Qirui 段祺瑞, the Premier from 1916 to 1918, went to Lin's house to invite him to be a government consultant, Lin still refused the invitation.

5| The series includes *Leichadeji* (雷差得紀, translated from the tale of *Richard II*), *Hengli disiji* (亨利第四紀, translated from the tale of *Henry IV*), *Kaisa Yishi* (凱撒遺事, translated from the tale of *Julius Caesar*).

essay published in 1910, he lamented that “Alas! How many tragedies happened in the world! The guests fill my home, coming to ask biting my flesh” (Lin 1982b: 75–6). Comparing the external powers to uninvited guests, Lin used the metaphor, “biting flesh”, to refer to their partition of China.

Secondly, the England of *Henry VI* and China of that time both had to deal with internal division. In *Henry VI*, dissensions were grown betwixt the peers. There was base and envious discord bred between Gloucester and the Bishop of Winchester, while factious emulation arose between York and Somerset. The internal strife, due to the vulture of sedition, was about to slay the sovereign and destroy the realm. Similarly, China was also in a state of chaos. Lin was scathing in his remarks about the damage brought by the constant strife among the warlords, as he wrote that “the flood does not endanger people ultimately, the true harm comes from those warlords” (cf. Zhang 1982: 57) after meeting hundreds of the famine victims in Cangzhou. Obviously, what he saw in contemporary China greatly influenced his description of the internal strife in *Hengli*. This fact is most apparent in the words Lin inserted in the translation, words that are emphatically not in the original. For example, in the speech Henry VI gave to York and Somerset, Lin added a sentence into the original text, reading “If you are who really cared about this country, you should never struggle for your party” (Lin/Chen 1916: 49). Then, when reminding readers of the death of Talbot and his son, he once again seized an opportunity to comment by inserting a sentence, “if Somerset sent his army here in time, Talbot may not die” (Lin/Chen 1916: 55) said by an outside voice called Waishishi 外史氏. By emphasizing the huge damage caused by the infighting (they lost the greatest hero Talbot of England), Lin attempted to warn and urge his readers to pay more attention to the same tragedy that was unfolding in China at the time. The message of *Henry VI*, no more civil wars, is highly in line with Lin’s demanding desire under the historical circumstance in China.

In addition, the emperors’ continued rule in *Henry VI*’s England and in contemporary China were both at risk. Henry VI was so young when his father died that he was described as “an effeminate prince” (Shakespeare 2016: 1.1 35) in Shakespeare. He had to face not only the disobedience and rebellion of the French people, but also the treachery of Richard Plantagenet. In his translation of the tale, Lin explicitly drew the audience’s attention to the fact that Henry VI was “so young when his father died that the power was totally assumed by the close nobilities” (Lin/Chen 1916: 2). He laid stress on the young emperor’s age (*youchong* 幼冲, *chongling* 冲龄 Lin/Chen 1916: 4, 24, 36) and his incompetence (*wuneng* 無能 Lin/Chen 1916: 57, 75). His Henry VI was a weak monarch (*nuojun* 懦君 Lin/Chen 1916: 96), always being subjected to the control of others and unable to wrestle power from those around him. Notably, the above point that Lin had outlined was not particularly emphasized in the original, but in fact presented the reality of the late Qing Dynasty. Likewise, the last two emperors of the Qing

Dynasty, Guangxu 光緒 and Puyi 溥儀 were both very young when they ascended the throne, just like Henry VI. Their power was largely seized by their close family members, as was the case with Empress Dowager Cixi 慈禧太后 during Emperor Guangxu's rule. As a staunch supporter of the Hundred Day Reform (*bairi weixin* 百日維新) of 1898⁶, Lin clearly knew the danger of a young emperor losing his grip on power.

2.2 A bond but not blind servant

Lin's particular concern on the image of young emperor in his translation is closely connected with his individual affection for the Qing Court. After the death of Emperor Guangxu, he made eleven pilgrimages to his cemetery, and nine out of ten, he prostrated on the ground, long whimpering. He never avoided admitting his patriotic fervor for the Qing Court.⁷ To prove it, I quote an extract from his letter to a friend, Zheng Xiaoxu 鄭孝胥. In what follows, Lin responded to some public censure, saying:

I am, from the beginning to the end, a provincial graduate (*juren* 舉人) of the Qing Dynasty. They blame me for taking fancy for fame, let it be so. They condemn me as a hypocrite, let it be so. They say I am a bond servant of a declining family, never forgetting my former master. That is where my heart lies (cf. Zhang 1982: 57–58).

For his inclination to the Qing Court, Lin was automatically placed in a position of direct opposition to the new world and became a representative of the group of “Old fashioned” (*yilao* 遺老).

However, at issue here is that Lin's loyalty to the Qing Court was not one of blind allegiance. In 1898, when Emperor Guangxu was still on the throne, Lin and his friends, Gao Fengqi 高鳳岐 and Shoufu 壽富, went to the Censorate three times to submit their statement commenting on current affairs and protesting Germany's forcible occupation of Jiaozhou Bay 膠州灣 (Lin 1982a). In this statement, they asked the emperor to publicly proclaim himself guilty of faults, in order to boost domestic morale. Then in 1910, Lin sent his painting, “The graph of a hermit in Meiyang (*meiyang guiyin tu* 梅陽歸隱圖)” to Jiang Chunlin 江春霖, an investigating censor who was dismissed by the Qing Court because of his seven times impeachment to Prince Qing Yikuang 奕劻 for his hindering the country, to express his support. It is confirmed that rather than blindly obeying the Qing Court, Lin placed much more importance on his country.

6] The Hundred Day Reform is a constitutional reform and a modernization attempt undertaken by Emperor Guangxu but undermined by his mother and also a powerful conservative opponent, Empress Dowager Cixi.

7] Lin even prepared to erect a stone tablet, writing down “A Reclusive Scholar (*chushi* 處士) of the Qing Dynasty, Lin Shu's tomb” to present his loyalty to the Qing dynasty.

Furthermore, as one of the first Chinese literati to open eyes to the outside world, Lin was fully aware of the significance of innovation and the detriment of the lack of it. For instance, in 1903, when Lin was informed that the Qing Court had declined the Provincial Consultation Bureaus' petition to open Congress and to organize a responsible cabinet, he was cruelly disappointed and argued that the Qing Court was going to lose public support soon. Lin always felt the urgency to arouse his peers to accept the new. He once cried out: "if we are still stale, deeply addicted to ancient things, could we ever know there exist new principles, throughout our lives" (cf. Chen 1982: 173–174)? In this respect, Lin held ideas similar to the values espoused by *La Jeunesse* (*xinqingnian* 新青年). As Han Guang 寒光 (1982: 25–9) addresses, Lin did in fact advocate ideas familiar to the May Fourth devotees. Gao Wanlong 高萬隆 even claims that Lin's ideas, as contained in the prologue of his translations, were revolutionary and inspired the May Fourth Movement, which in turn influenced the New Culture Movement (cf. Guarde-Paz 2015: 182). However, these voices received surprisingly little attention. To investigate the reason to it, we should remind ourselves of Zhang Shitao's (1996: 21) observation, in which it accounts: "Lin Shu is famous not only for his translations, but also for his identity as a provincial graduate of the Qing Dynasty and a royalist, who objected to the New Culture Movement." In this light, Lin has ineluctably been seen as a conservative royalist, who attacked the New Culture Movement, and continued to live in the old world. Due to the forced ideological identity, Lin, a stubborn "Old fashioned," has been marginalized on political grounds until now.

3. Lin's Mint, A Well Paid Writing Factory of Little Literary Value?

Lin's confrontation with the mainstream group of the New Culture Movement led to "bankruptcy of his intellectual and cultural positions," as Hill (2013: 3) observes. His translation works were disdained and publicly rejected by critics. Both the popularity and the declining popularity of his works contributed to his marginalization in the translation field.

3.1 Being criticized for being popular and for not popular any more

In the first decade of the twentieth century, Lin's translations reached the height of the commercial success, which forced his works to be categorized as salable texts for the mass market. In the essay "On Lin Shu's Translations" published in 1963, Qian Zhongshu (1983: 307) sarcastically called Lin's house a "mint" (*zaobichang* 造幣廠), referring to the joke of his friend, Chen Yan.⁸ In *Lin Shu*,

8| Chen Pingyuan comments on Chen's joke that it was too mean to call Lin's room in this way (a mint). However, it represents contemporary literati's disdain for the commercialization of fiction.

INC. Translation and the Making of Modern Chinese Culture, Hill (2013: 2) proceeds to identify him as a “factory of writing” (*wenzi zhizaochang* 文字製造廠). Then, what was Lin’s contemporary critics’ attitude towards him, who made a considerable fortune in the translation market. The following extract serves to understand the situation. It is quoted from Kai Ming’s “Again on Lin Qinnan” first published in 1925.

We shall remind ourselves that Lin Qinnan’s translations are worth five times the money of other translators’. [...] If others can benefit from translation as Lin does, I guess, it is not impossible for them to translate two hundreds books in half of their life, even all by their own (Kai 1982: 168).

With a touch of vinegar, Kai revealed a truth that Lin’s high income appeared enviable to his contemporary translators and even critics. It is no surprise that Lin was charged with ‘money worship’ (*baijin zhuyi* 拜金主義), which was one of the most concerted and serious criticism at that age, regardless of his refusal to be directly related to the publishing market. Even Chen Yan (2013: 167), who first called Lin’s house a “mint”, acknowledged that Lin never truly cared about the money, and was always helpful to his friends and relatives who were in financial emergencies.

The popularity of Lin’s translations has been waning since the 1910s, and shows few signs of reviving. Whereas, the declining popularity of Lin’s translations also brought criticism. From 1924 to 1935 most contemporary scholarship with few exceptions echoed Zheng Zhenduo’s argument that Lin’s translations of Western works were of little literary value. They supported the notion that the quality of Lin’s translations gradually deteriorated, becoming dull and boring after the May Fourth Movement. Kong Li (1981: 35), for one, argued:

though he translated nearly one hundred novels after 1913, even some of the original texts were outstanding; his works were still far less moving than those in his earlier period.⁹

Some of the critics chose to validate their claim with the evidence of his declining popularity. However, they failed to see a detail that Lin’s translations had fewer opportunities to be published after 1910. For instance, Lin was one of the major contributor to *Xiaoshuo Yuebao* (*Fiction Monthly* 小說月報), which clearly bore a stamp of ‘new literature’ after being taken over by the cultural reformers. Accordingly, the translations of Lin, who was regarded as a representative opponent to the ‘new literature’, were then forbidden from being published there, and as a result *Hengli* could not be published until 1916.

9| Until the twenty first century, this critic opinion was still echoed by present scholars, see Han Hongju (2005).

3.2 Reassessing Lin from a sociohistorical perspective

Of even greater significance, those contemporary assessments on Lin's translations had been deeply rooted in a linguistically based point of view, which governed the translation assessment system in China, and established a literary history marginalizing Lin. The following example can be used as evidence.

We should know that translation is different from writing. Writing is determined by the author, while translation should take the original as the principal. Consequently, rather than changing the original to conform to the target culture, the translator should transform his own language to meet the foreign language (Liu 1982: 146).

This linguistically based point of view emphasizes the originality of works and correspondingly lays foundation on the accuracy of the translation and on the faithfulness of the translator. At the mercy of this assessment system, Lin's translations, rewriting the Western texts in the target culture, were seen as a failure "to produce an objectively demonstrable 'accurate' correspondence between original and translation" (Lefevere 1992a: 136). For example, C. T. Hsia (2016: 5) comments on Lin's "popular translations," arguing that they "maintain the integrity of classical prose only by an almost complete disregard for accuracy." In the footnote of this commentary, Hsia (2016: 489) once again emphasizes the importance of accuracy, asking: "shouldn't a translator's primary duty be fidelity to the spirit and style of the original?"

However, faithfulness, as Lefevere (2004: 51) argues, "is just one translational strategy," and "to exalt it as the only strategy possible, or even allowable, is as utopia as it is futile." On the other side, as Jacques Delille had always maintained, "extreme faithfulness in translation results in extreme unfaithfulness" (cf. Lefevere 1992b: 38). Rather than only counting on faithfulness as the only gauge, more measurements should be included in the consideration. Invoking Walter Benjamin who perceives the life enhancing role of translation as a transformative process, Susan Bassnett (1993: 151) suggests us to consider translation as "a particularly special activity," which "enables a text to continue life in another context," and claims that the translated text thus "becomes an original by virtue of its continued existence in that new context." Along this line, translation is rather a matter of literature, not only of language. Therefore, the study of translation should be expanded into a more extensive research project. As Lefevere (1992b: 164) argues in his *Translation/ History/ Culture*, "a productive study of the translation of literature can, for the most part, be only sociohistorical in nature." Thought of in this way, we cannot assess Lin's translations only by their accuracy or faithfulness to the original text, without considering their particular historical conditions under which they were produced and read. It is only by looking at these broader issues and taking into consideration political, cultural, and historical concerns that we can better understand and assess Lin's translations.

Conclusion

The complicated relationship between Lin and the May Fourth Movement became the essential factor for influencing positive and negative assessment of him. As a result, Lin lost favor with the new administration, resigned from his post in 1912, and from then on he was firmly identified as someone who was objected to the cultural movements. Since then, Lin remained outside the mainstream of Chinese culture. Similarly, his translations, which were written in ancient style prose, were easily grouped in direct opposition to the new literature, and thus were also marginalized since the New Culture Movement. Both his works and his person faced near total disavowal among critics in China.

As Guarde-Paz (2015: 173) concludes, “modern and contemporary scholars have been usually caught between the Scylla of redeeming Lin Shu’s position in Chinese literature, and the Charybdis of preserving the literary reputation of those who once slandered him.” However, I was sure enough of my position to stand. Echoing Leo Lee’s (1973: 78) call to “regard Lin Shu as both among the last confucianists and the first real westernizers,” I determine to correct the incorrect images of Lin portrayed by previous critics, which have long acquired a central position in modern discourse. Through responding to some of his supposed faults, I want to lead to a reassessment of Lin and of his works in a larger scope. What I hope is that in today’s much more favorable intellectual climate, Lin’s position in Chinese literary history could be elevated by critics of this generation.

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