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ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF SHEN CONGWEN'S STORIES

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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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Department of Chinese and Bilingual Studies

English Translations of Shen Congwen's Stories

by

Minhui XU

A thesis

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

June, 2010

CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it produces no material previously published or written, nor material that has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

Minhui XU

ABSTRACT

Shen Congwen is one of the most acclaimed writers in modern Chinese literature. His works have been translated into more than ten languages. The English translations cover his stories, essays, poems, and dramas. Of the stories alone, of the 44 that have been translated, there have been 70 translations. Given that these translations have come out at different times, through different channels and by different translators, the following questions present themselves: what differences exist among the translations, what has caused these differences, and what different effects do they produce?

Despite the number of translations, studies of these translations are very limited. There are sporadic papers and a few MA theses on Gladys Yang's translation of 'Biancheng'. Few studies of the translations of Shen's other stories have been found.

The present project is a comprehensive study of the translations based on a survey of all the English translations of Shen's stories. Adopting a case study method, I have selected those stories with three or more translations, resulting in fifteen TTs from four STs. Shen has long been acclaimed a stylist and his unique style has gained him world-renown, but it has also created translation problematics. This study focuses on his narrative style – his narrative commentaries and his lyrical narrative mode – to see how his style is represented in translation. Also, as this project is a study of translation problematics, the translators' overt narrative intrusions – their added notes

– constitute another aspect of the study focus – the paratexts in narration of the translations.

The present study has discovered that the biggest difference in translations is that between translations by the scholar and the non-scholar translators, rather than between the L1 and the L2 translators, or between the translators of the 1930s and 40s and those of the 1980s onwards. The scholar translators exert visible efforts to produce more adequate translations. These include keeping the original commentary functions, retaining the original lyrical narrative mode, and adding notes to explicate or supplement what is implied in the original texts. The non-scholar L1 translators are inclined to render translations that are more acceptable to the target readers' tastes. The L2 translators closely follow original narrative structures. Finally, the earlier translators more often resort to deletion or radical changes.

It is believed that the significance of a translation in the literary field is determined by the positions of the SL/TL, of the original author, and of the translator. When the first two factors are the same, the position of the translator becomes decisive. Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, trajectory, capital, and field prove to have explanatory power. The various tendencies and choices betray the translators' dispositions, which are products of their structured habituses, and that these latter contribute to their translation strategies in a subconscious way.

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CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preliminaries

He who stands the test of time stands in history.

Shen Congwen (1902-1988), widely acclaimed as “one of the half-dozen great authors of modern Chinese literature” (Kinkley¹, 1987: 1), experienced an eclipse of his reputation for a period of about thirty years, but today his works finally enjoy the world-renown that they deserve. His works have been translated into more than ten different languages, including English, French, Russian, German, Japanese, and Swedish. With a focus on the English translations of Shen Congwen’s stories, this project is a study of the different translations by different translators that have been brought out at different times by different publishers. Given the three most obvious problematics to be expected in the translations – namely, the radical differences between Chinese and English languages and cultures; the distinct “Chineseness” of Shen Congwen’s writings; and the huge differences among translators at different times – the question of how “Shen Congwen” is interpreted and represented in the English world, compared to “Shen Congwen” in the original Chinese world, presents itself. From a historical perspective, this study explores the following questions: the

¹ Jeffrey Kinkley, author of Shen Congwen’s biography –*The Odyssey of Shen Congwen*, and of *Shen Ts’ung-wen’s Vision of Republican China*, and also a major translator of Shen Congwen’s works.

mode in which the translations exist, the differences or changes that occur in the translations, the translation tendencies of different translators, traces of different periods appearing in the translations, the effect of such tendencies or traces on translations, and the reasons for causing these differences. With these questions in mind, this study details textual comparisons and descriptions of selected stories and their translations.

1.2 A Brief Introduction to Shen Congwen's Life and Works

Shen Congwen's life and works have been a study focus for many scholars and students of modern Chinese literature. This study, however, will focus on translations of Shen's stories, and will present Shen's life and works briefly.

1.2.1 His life

Shen Congwen's life experience is like a legend. Born to a military gentry family in Fenghuang County, a small town in West Hunan, he experienced both the enjoyable tranquility of country life and the dramatic changes and turmoil of his hometown.

As a small boy, he was sent to a private school for formal education. He was clever, good at memorizing and quick in learning. However, the rigidity and dullness of the school curriculum at that time failed to capture his heart. He played truant frequently, ran away from school, and read the "big book" of the outside world. He wandered about the small town, watching the work of blacksmiths, shoemakers, and

umbrella repairers; he went to the river to swim or catch fish, or to the mountain slopes to pick up melons and other fruits and to search for crickets. He observed nature closely and noticed minute features of various objects and activities. He could identify insect sounds without difficulty (Shen, 2002: Vol. 13, 250-263). This rich exposure to the natural world has accumulated first-hand materials for him and has remained an abundant resource for the pastoral and idyllic writings of his later years.

At the age of 13 he was sent to join a military regiment, first as a reservist and then as a clerk. This military life became another rich resource for his later writings. The military in West Hunan at the time was mainly controlled by the warlords who governed the local area. The soldiers' routine jobs included, among other things, collecting taxes and cleansing the surrounding areas of bandit. They spent more time in waiting than in fighting, though executions were common, and were often regarded as entertainment by the soldiers (Kinkley, 1987: 37-55).

However, Shen Congwen was involved with people of knowledge and thought and had ample time and opportunities to read. It was during this period that Shen Congwen began to read Chinese history and Western literature, such as the *Historical Records* by Sima Qian, *The History of the Han Dynasty* by Ban Gu, Lin Shu's translations of Dickens' novels, and other works. He also began to learn writing and calligraphy (Kinkley, 1987: 58-60). The knowledge and experience accumulated

during this period paved the way for his future career as a writer, providing both food for thought and materials for writing. To this period of his life belong the stories “The Staff Advisor”, “New and Old”, “Three Men and One Girl”, “Night”, “The Sentry”, and “Huiming”, to mention but a few.

In the early 1920s², Shen Congwen went to Beijing, determined to devote himself to literature. Thanks to the open-mindedness of Cai Yuanpei, President of Peking University at that time, Shen Congwen was able to sit in on classes at Peking University, though he was not a registered student. He experienced great hardships during this period. Sometimes he didn’t have enough money for food (Kinkley, 1987: 80).

Later, with the help of Yu Dafu, a famous writer in Beijing, he began to publish. He was the most diligent and prolific of his contemporaries and wrote voluminously, both out of passion and out of need. In the eight years from 1924 to 1932 he produced forty books, and established himself in the literary circle, which prepared him to begin his career as a teacher. From the late 1920s to 1949 he taught at Wu Song Institute in Shanghai, Qingdao University³, Peking University, Southwestern Associated

² Exactly in which year Shen arrived in Beijing is open to question. For details, see Kinkley, 1987: 308-309, note 1 to Chapter Three.

³ Qingdao University was renamed Shandong University in 1932. In the 1950s many of its departments moved to Jinan (capital city of Shandong Province). The departments remaining in Qingdao have developed into today’s Ocean University of China. For the detailed history, see the webpage of Shandong University. (The “Qingdao University” today is a newly established university different from the “Qingdao University” of the 1920s and 1930s.)

University, and then, after the Anti-Japanese War, at Peking University again. The 1930s and 1940s witnessed most of his influential works. Then, by 1948, however, he realized that “his kind of literature was not having even the remotest effect on the swift flow of events” (Kinkley, 1987: 266)⁴. Perhaps, as Kinkley points out, this realization moved him out of literature. He was assigned to the National Historical Museum in 1950, and ended up as a prolific researcher of material culture. Consequently, 5 of the 32 volumes of *The Complete Works of Shen Congwen* (Zhang Zhaohe, et al, 2002) concern material culture, ranging from Chinese ancient textiles and costumes to bronze mirrors, ceramics, and lacquer-ware.

1.2.2 His literary works

As the most prolific author among modern Chinese writers, Shen Congwen contributed diversely and pervasively. During the period of twenty years or so when he devoted himself to creative writing, he wrote so abundantly that 27 of the 32 volumes of his complete works⁵ consist of literary writings of a variety of genres ranging from novels and stories to essays, dramas, poems, folk tales, travelogues, letters, and literary criticism. Of all these, some 200 are stories (Liu, 2005: 5).

To the vast majority of people who know of him, Shen Congwen is remembered

⁴ At the start of 1948, he had already written his last piece of fiction. Kinkley mentions that “it is not exactly clear what killed the author in him”, but the social changes and the fact that he was “out” certainly played a role. For details, see Kinkley, 1987: 265-268.

⁵ *The Complete Works of Shen Congwen*, 32 volumes, edited by Zhang Zhaohe (Shen’s wife) et al, and published by Beiyue wenyi chubanshe (北岳文艺出版社) in 2002.

as a literary author rather than as a research scholar. He has long been regarded as one of the most important “native soil” writers of modern Chinese literature. His first story was published in 1925, but the 1930s witnessed him at the height of his creative powers. He continued writing prolifically until 1948, when he almost ceased literary creation.

It goes without saying that an author is judged by his best works. Shen Congwen’s most widely acclaimed literary works are his stories, especially those concerning his native West Hunan. Thanks to his rich experiences along the rivers in his homeland and in the garrison-towns as well as in big cities like Beijing and Shanghai, he witnessed different lives in all their “intertwined ugliness and beauty” (Hsia, 1999: 193). And thanks to his great imagination, he was able to depict the people and their lives he knew so well, especially the common country folk – the humble farmers, soldiers, boatmen, prostitutes, small traders, and the like – in such depth as to cover the universal concerns of mankind: life and death, desire and vitality, love and sexuality, dignity and humility, permanence and change, etc. He is considered to have been one of the last authors among his contemporaries to stick to the May Fourth spirit, vigorously inquiring into the May Fourth tenet of Self and its emancipation.

Shen Congwen’s works employ West Hunanese particulars to reveal human

universals. He interpreted the rural life not only of his own native West Hunan, but also “in modern China as a whole”, and, through it, “even the existential plight of twentieth-century man” (Kinkley, 1987: 4), as succinctly pointed out by Jeffrey Kinkley. C. T. Hsia, an American Chinese professor who has been called “the leading authority of Chinese literature in the United States” (Lee, 1980: xi), also mentions, in his seminal book *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction*, that Shen Congwen’s work is “on the same moral plane and speaks with the same urgency to modern man as that of Wordsworth, Yeats, and Faulkner” (Hsia, 1971: 191). Through the world he creates in his works, Shen Congwen presents a panorama of society and “provide[s] the basis for the only possible social criticism” (Ching & Payne, 1982: 8) in his glimpses of the momentary sorrows and joys of his fellow men, and by the breadth and depth of his understanding of the common people.

Besides the breadth and depth of the themes and contents, Shen Congwen is recognized as one of the finest Chinese prose stylists, and is very much acclaimed for his pastoral and idyllic lyricism. Jeffrey Kinkley points out that Shen Congwen contributes much to the vocabulary of modern vernacular Chinese when he (and other New Intellectuals) began using it as a language of literary expression, which could be compared to the contributions the Elizabethans made to English (Kinkley, 1987: 2). Hua-ling Nieh mentions, in her influential monograph *Shen Ts’ung-wen*, that Shen

gives his language “a density and the texture of poetry”, and that his language is “expansive, unvarnished, sensuous, and appeals to all the senses at once” (Nieh, 1972: 93). In addition to this characteristic nature of free, lively, very expressive language, his stories, especially those in the 1930s, are also rich in mood and finely wrought in symbolism. C. T. Hsia declares that Shen Congwen is “the greatest impressionist in modern Chinese literature: no one equals him in his effortless capturing of the essence of a landscape, much in the manners of the best Chinese poets and painters, or in his rich evocation of the subtle nuances of feeling” (Hsia, 1971: 208).

Shen Congwen’s distinct achievements also lie in his narrative style. He never yells, but his language has a piercing force. His manner of narration is calm and placid, understated and unhurried. He is a master of subduing his passions and pathos, even when he depicts grotesque or inhumane events, such as decapitation or necrophilia. His style, in this regard, resembles those of Zhou Zuoren and Fei Ming, predecessors whom he highly appreciated. David Wang quotes Shen’s comments about Zhou Zuoren and Fei Ming:

Zhou Zuoren can use a “peaceful mind to feel all activities in nature, to see beauty otherwise ignored by ordinary eyes, and to approach all this with a slightly reserved attitude”. As for Fei Ming, his works are a “miracle” when

describing “movements in quietness and in the beauty of placid humanity”

(Wang, 1992: 205; Shen, 2002: Vol. 16, 145-146).

Shen Congwen himself pursued the same peacefulness and reservedness. He stated in a letter to a poet that a writer

... should try hard to avoid the superficial enthusiasm of words ... sacred and great sadness is not necessarily embodied by blood and tears, and a wise writer embodies the suffering of human beings with a smile (Shen, 2002: Vol. 17, 185-186; my translation).

However, Wang points out that “beneath his seemingly soft, smooth writing about West Hunan, one finds a radical melancholy” (Wang, 1993: 113). It is not surprising that Shen Congwen’s works demand a great deal of reading before one can arrive at a real understanding of him. It is said of Faulkner’s works – “... each long or short story, seems to reveal more than it states explicitly and to have a subject bigger than itself” (Cowley, 1977: xv) – this comment suits Shen Congwen well, for his West Hunan fiction concerns the whole of human concerns.

Perhaps this is why Shen Congwen is remembered in the world today, despite the

fact that he was once ignored and nearly erased from literary history, both in Mainland China and in Taiwan, due to political and ideological factors, though Shen Congwen never took any political position, shunned politically revolutionary literature and was never a member of either left-wing or right-wing writers' organizations. Nevertheless, he influenced many of China's most important later fiction writers and poets, among whom are Gu Hua, Han Shaogong, Wang Zengqi, Mo Yan, He Liwei, and A Cheng, to name but a few. Many of his attackers' works faded into yesterday's bestsellers, but Shen Congwen's works live. His pervasive contributions to Chinese literature, and to world literature, will last.

There is of course a great deal more to say about Shen Congwen, which is not the focus of this study. The most quoted studies of Shen Congwen include those of Su Xuelin (1934/2004), C. T. Hsia (1961/1999), Hua-ling Nieh (1972), Wang Zengqi (1981), Ling Yu (1985/2006), Jeffrey Kinkley (1987), Wang Der-wei (1992, 1993), Peng Hsiao-yen (1994), Wong Yoon-wah (1998), Liu Hongtao (2005, 2009), to mention but a few. For further readings of the English works on Shen Congwen and his writings, one must include Jeffrey Kinkley's *The Odyssey of Shen Congwen* (1987), which was widely acknowledged as "the best English study on Shen Congwen's life and works to date" (Wang, 1992: 335). There is good reason to believe that Wang's statement still holds true today, more than twenty years after the

publication of Kinkley's book.

1.3 A Brief Introduction to This Dissertation

As is mentioned above, many of Shen Congwen's works have been translated into English, including his stories and essays and some of his poems and local dramas. Of his stories alone, 44 have been translated into English, with some of them being translated more than once. Altogether there are 70 English translations out of the 44 stories. These translations have mainly appeared through three channels: English-language journals, English translation anthologies of Shen's stories, and general English translation anthologies of Chinese literature including Shen's stories. This dissertation attempts to present the differences that exist among these different translations, the causes of these differences, and the effects resulted from them.

Given the number of the translations, studies of them are far from sufficient. Only sporadic papers and a few MA theses have been made on the English translations of Shen Congwen's stories, most of which have focused on Gladys Yang's translation of the story "Biancheng", with two of them focusing on the comparison between that by Yang and that by Ching and Payne. Two MA theses have discussed the translations of "Zhangfu". No study has been conducted of other translations.⁶

⁶ It is hard to say why there exist few studies of the translations of Shen's works. In the case of mainland China, one thing is certain, that is, there are very limited resources that can be used, and it is very difficult to find all the existing translations.

The present study thus aims to give a comprehensive survey of all the English translations of Shen Congwen's stories and to present a more comprehensive study of them. Adopting a case study method, the most translated of all Shen's stories in English translations – those with three or more translations – have been selected. There are altogether fifteen such target texts (TT), out of four source texts (ST).

Shen Congwen has long been acclaimed as a stylist, and his unique style has gained him world-renown, but this unique style has created translation problematics, and it is in our interest to see how his style is represented in the English translations, as few previous studies have discussed Shen's style in the translated texts. This study thus concerns narrative style in Shen Congwen's stories, focusing on Shen's narrative commentaries and lyrical mode of narration by comparing the source and target texts and analyzing how these narrative features are represented in the translations. It also has another focus, the translators' intrusions, that is, the footnotes or endnotes added by the translators – which form the paratext of narration.

The present study reveals that the biggest differences among translations occur between scholar and non-scholar translators, rather than between L1 and L2 translators or those between translators of the 1930s and 1940s and those from the 1980s onwards. It would be very difficult to have a clear-cut demarcation line between the scholar and non-scholar translators. The working definition employed in

the present study is that those translators who have conducted academic research and published books or papers related to other academic disciplines besides translation will be categorized as scholar translators, otherwise they are non-scholar translators. The difference between a scholar translator and a non-scholar translator is not a box-like compartment, but a cline, with some translators tending to be more prototypical of a scholar translator. For instance, in our case, Jeffrey Kinkley is the prototype of a scholar translator, and Edgar Snow is the prototype of a non-scholar translator. As for the categorization of the L1 and L2 translators, the working definition is based on their first languages. It generally works, except for the case of Eugene Chen Eoyang, whose life experience and bilingual competence make it hard to tell whether he belongs to the L1 or the L2 group. I regard him as an L2 translator in the present study, for basically he is a Chinese.

The translations by each group of translators show similarities among themselves. The scholar translators have exerted visible efforts to attempt more adequate translations, mostly keeping to the original narrative commentary functions, and trying hard to retain the original lyrical narrative mode, while adding notes to explicate or supplement what is implied by culture- or history- or locality- related items in the original texts. They demonstrate more respect for the original, and attempt to transfer, as much as possible, what the original author intended to convey.

In contrast, the L1 non-scholar translators are more at ease resorting to domesticated translation, catering to the tastes of target readers; while the L2 translators mostly try to preserve the specific original elements, and follow more closely the original narrative structures.

The translators of the earlier period tend more to delete or make radical changes in the original text.

The various tendencies and choices outlined above betray the translator's structured habitus, a concept based on Bourdieusian framework and will be developed in later chapters. It is hypothesized that a translator's habitus determines his/her translation strategies in a subconscious way.

CHAPTER TWO SCOPE AND APPROACH OF THIS STUDY

This chapter will review the literature of previous studies and present the methodology employed in the present study.

2.1 Existing English Translations of Shen Congwen's Stories

It is indisputable that Shen Congwen's best works are his stories. Broadly speaking, his stories can be classified into two categories. Stories of the first category depict scenes and people of his home region, West Hunan. His vision of the pastoral scene, the robust people, and the primitive humanistic spirit embodied in his characters all reveal his "imaginary nostalgia" (Wang, 1992: 247). Stories of the second category depict the life of the city, which is filled with emptiness, corruption, and hypocrisy. Most of Shen Congwen's most-acclaimed stories belong to the first category, and it is little wonder that it is stories of this first category, about the common country folk, that have been mostly translated.

Of all the stories written by Shen Congwen, 44 have been translated into English. The total number of the target texts is 70. Among these, 17 are rendered more than once (for details, see the Appendix). Among the 17 multi-translated stories, 16 belong to the first category mentioned above. (The other one belongs to Shen Congwen's later writing, which reveals Joyce's influential stream-of-consciousness writing.)

It is impossible to present all these multiple translations in detail in this study.

Therefore, the four stories with three or more full-text English translations will be presented for detailed textual analysis. These stories are: “Xiaoxiao”, with five translations; “Biancheng” (“The Border Town”), with four; “Baizi”, with three; and “Zhangfu” (“The Husband”), with three full translations and two partial translations. These four STs thus have a total of 15 TTs (full texts). All of these most-translated STs concern the life of common country folk, and are hailed as best representative of Shen Congwen’s idiosyncratic style.

The fifteen selected English translations were published at different times. The 1930s - 1940s, when Shen Congwen was still an active author, saw the appearance of seven of them – two of “Baizi”, two of “Xiaoxiao”, two of ‘Biancheng”, and one of “Zhangfu”. In the 1980s, a “Shen Congwen Craze” caused a flourish of publications of his works, both at home and abroad, and six (reprints not included) of the selected translations came out during this “craze” period – one of “Baizi”, three of “Xiaoxiao”, one of ‘Biancheng”, and one of “Zhangfu”. The 1990s witnessed the most comprehensive English anthology of Shen Congwen’s works to date, *Imperfect Paradise*, and one translation (reprints not considered) of “Zhangfu” came from this anthology. If it had not been the intention of the editors of the anthology to give privilege to those works which had not been rendered into English before (as stated clearly by Jeffrey Kinkley, the editor and the main translator of the anthology), there

might be more re-translations than what exists. The most recent translation is of Shen Congwen's novella "Biancheng", which came out in 2009.

All of the selected STs have thus been granted a second, a third, even a fifth translation – evidence enough of their distinctiveness.

All together, twelve translators have been involved in the fifteen translations – eight independent translators and two pairs of co-translators. Among the independent translators, four are native English speakers (hereinafter L1 translators): Edgar Snow, Gladys Yang, Lewis S. Robinson, and Jeffrey C. Kinkley. Another four are native Chinese speakers (hereinafter L2 translators): Lee Yi-hsieh, Li Ru-mien, Kai-yu Hsu, and Eugene Chen Eoyang. The two pairs of co-translators each consists of L1 and L2 translators, with either the L1 or the L2 translator as the first translator: Emily Hahn and Shing Mo-lei, and Ching Ti and Robert Payne. As it is almost impossible to say clearly which part of the translation was contributed by which co-translator, and because the translations of the pairs suggest features resembling those of both the independent L1 and independent L2 translators, the two pairs of translators will be called the L1+L2 translators in this study. Of the fifteen full-text translations, the four L1 translators contributed seven translations, the four L2 translators contributed four, and the L1+L2 translators contributed four.

Some of the translators are regarded as scholar translators, including Jeffrey

Kinkley, Kai-yu Hsu, Eugene Eoyang, and Lewis Robinson, and others are non-scholar translators, including Edgar Snow, Li Ru-mien, Lee Yi-hsieh, and the two pairs of co-translators. Gladys Yang is a professional translator, who distinguishes herself from both groups.

2.2 Three Major Channels of Publication

As mentioned, there have been three main publishing channels for the translations of Shen Congwen's stories: English translation anthologies of his stories, English-language journals, and general English translation anthologies of Chinese literature including his stories. A possible fourth channel might be that of the monograph, although the single monograph publication will, for the sake of convenience, be considered together with the English translation anthologies of Shen Congwen's works.

2.2.1 English translation anthologies, and the monograph

There are five (two of which are derivative) English translation anthologies of Shen Congwen's stories. The first was *The Chinese Earth – Stories by Shen Ts'ung-wen*, edited and translated by Ching Ti and Robert Payne, and published by George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. in Great Britain in 1947 and reprinted by Columbia University Press in 1982. The fourteen stories included in this anthology were selected by Shen Congwen himself. However, as the anthology was translated during

the anti-Japanese war time in Kunming, the available choices of the original texts were very limited (Shen, 2002: Vol.16, 410). There is an introduction at the beginning by the editors and translators, Ching Ti and Robert Payne, but it mainly introduces the author, Shen Congwen, to the reader. As to translation-related matters, the introduction only thanks Yuan Chia-hua for allowing them to include his translation of “The Lamp” in their anthology, and nothing is mentioned about their own translations. For the reprinted version of 1982, Shen Congwen wrote a Preface, in which he mentioned briefly that the translator was Mr. Jin Di (Ching Ti), and that Mr. Payne did much to improve the style and diction of the translation, and that he arranged for its publication by Allen and Unwin in London (Shen, 1982: 3).

The second anthology to appear is *The Border Town and Other Stories*, edited and translated by Gladys Yang, and published by Chinese Literature Press in Beijing in 1981 as part of the series of Panda Books. This anthology includes four of Shen Congwen’s stories, namely, “Biancheng”, “Xiaoxiao”, “Zhangfu”, and “Guisheng”, and also includes “My Uncle Shen Congwen”, an essay by Huang Yongyu, Shen Congwen’s relative and a famous artist. The four stories included had all been published previously in the Beijing-based English-language journal *Chinese Literature*. At the beginning of the anthology, there is a very brief, two-short-paragraph introduction to Shen Congwen, but with nothing about the

translations themselves.

The third anthology is *Selected Stories by Shen Congwen*, which is a re-anthologizing of “Biancheng”, “Xiaoxiao”, and “Guisheng” from *The Border Town and Other Stories*. It was published by Chinese Literature Press and Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press in 1999. This anthology belongs to the University Reader series, which has as its aim the promotion of Chinese culture and classic literature among university students. The general editors of the series were Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang, the renowned husband-and-wife team who have devoted their whole lives to the translation of Chinese literature into English (more details will be given later). In their introduction, they state the importance of reading Chinese literature and appeal to the university students to cherish Chinese culture and literature, but they don’t mention much about the translations except a passing remark: “... high-quality English translations go with these gems of Chinese literature” (Yang & Yang, 1999: iii, my translation).

The fourth anthology is *Imperfect Paradise*, edited by Jeffrey Kinkley and translated by Kinkley and others. It was published by The University of Hawai’i Press in 1995. It is so far

the most comprehensive and authoritative representation in English of the

remarkable Shen Congwen canon, ranging from the polished stories that made him a serious contender for the Nobel literary prize in the 1980s to lesser known, extravagant experimental pieces (back cover of *Imperfect Paradise*).

Altogether this volume includes twenty-six items, among which twenty-four are stories.⁷ The twenty-four stories span the two decades from 1927 to 1947, Shen Congwen's best years of fiction writing. The twenty-six items are divided into seven sections with different themes. Each section, and also each story, is provided with a brief introduction that gives the background of the historical context, to facilitate the readers' understanding of the story. In the Introduction to this anthology, besides introducing the author Shen Congwen, Kinkley makes quite a few remarks about the translations, including the translation strategies, the selection of texts, and the target readership. He justifies some of the strategies employed in the translating process by pointing out that they are "translations of record for scholars and students as well as the general public" (Kinkley, 1995: 8).

The appearance of this anthology aroused some interest in America, and there were comments on the book. For example:

⁷ As Shen Congwen's prose style of writing sometimes makes it difficult to tell whether an item is a story or an essay, this study will take a certain item as a story if the translator classifies it and treats it as a story. Otherwise, classification goes according to that of *The Complete Works of Shen Congwen*, 2002.

Imperfect Paradise is a potent collection: you could read it for a richly textured portrait of China in the first half of the twentieth century or you could read it for some of the finest short stories you will find anywhere ... Kinkley and his collaborators have produced accessible translations which preserve much of the variety of the originals (Yee, 1996).

Another response was from Jonathan Spence from Yale University, who wrote a book review of *Imperfect Paradise* for the *New York Times*. Spence comments more on the original texts than on the translations, though there are passing remarks such as “what absorbs him (Shen Congwen), as can be seen so well in this collection of translations, is human dignity and genuine emotion ...with the skill and sensitivity shown throughout the collection” (Spence, 1995).

The fifth anthology is *Selected Short Stories of Shen Congwen*, edited and translated by Jeffrey Kinkley and published by The Chinese University Press in Hong Kong in 2004. The six stories included in this anthology are all Kinkley’s own translations selected from *Imperfect Paradise*. In this anthology, Kinkley writes an Introduction, which explains Shen’s life and works and social status, and gives interpretations for all the six stories included in the book. With regard to translation,

Kinkley remarks:

The foremost explanation is his (Shen's) power as a stylist. He could make the Chinese language beautiful. This, I am afraid, can be seen only in the Chinese texts, for stylistic invention cannot survive in its original form in translation (Kinkley, 2004: xiv).

For *The International Fiction Review* (2006), Xiao Jiwei wrote a review of this fifth anthology, which gave considerable information about the translator, Jeffery

Kinkley:

It should also be counted as another accomplishment of the translator and scholar Jeffrey Kinkley, whose decade-long devotion to a close study of Shen has produced the landmark literary biography *The Odyssey of Shen Congwen*. Kinkley is also the editor and major translator of *Imperfect Paradise*, a book featuring twenty-four translated stories of Shen and so far the best and the most extensive collection of Shen's works in English. Compared to *Imperfect Paradise*, *Selected Stories of Shen Congwen* has a less ambitious scale and a more coherent theme—in Kinkley's words, “the contradiction and reversals in

Shen Congwen's portraits of 'paradise,' even in his depiction of 'corruption'" (xxii). ... Kinkley also shows his superb knowledge and understanding of Shen Congwen's "critical lyricism" by placing "The New and the Old," a story that has invited little attention from other critics so far, on top as the first story of the collection (Xiao, 2006: 98-99).

Finally, the monograph of the English translation of Shen Congwen's novella, his masterpiece "Biancheng", newly translated by Jeffrey Kinkley into *Border Town*, was published by HarperCollins in 2009. The book is part of the publisher's series of classics of Modern Chinese Literature, which was initiated by Howard Goldblatt but was unfortunately terminated due to financial problems. In the Foreword to this monograph, Kinkley provides historical background information about Shen Congwen and about "Biancheng". As for his translation of "Biancheng", he does not write as much as he did in *Imperfect Paradise*, although he mentions once again the issue of the translation of style: "...international critics typically see *Border Town* as a conservative work full of idyllic and nostalgic visions and devoted to an exquisite painterly style, an element this translation could not duplicate" (Kinkley, 2009: ix). At the end of the book, he produces a list of thirty-two endnotes (details will be presented in Chapter Five), which demonstrates strong evidence of the translator's visibility.

2.2.2 Journals

The second channel for the publication of Shen Congwen's stories consists of the English-language journals, both at home and abroad. They are mainly the following:

T'ien Hsia Monthly, an English-language journal based in Shanghai. It played an important role in the 1930s and 40s in publishing the translations of Shen Congwen's stories. In 1936, it published "Green Jade and Green Jade" ("Biancheng"), in four consecutive issues (Vol. 2, issues 1-4), translated by Emily Hahn and Shing Mo-lei (penname for Shao Xunmei). In 1938 (vol. 7, issue 3), it published "Hsiao-hsiao"⁸, translated by Lee Yi-hsieh. And in 1940 (vol. 11, issue 3), it published "Old Mrs. Wang's Chicken" ("Xiangcheng"), translated by Shih Ming (Yang Gang).

Asia, an English journal based in the United States. It published the "Prologue of The Husband" in 1937. This is the beginning part of the story "Zhangfu", translated by Shih Ming.

The East-West Review, an English journal based in the United States. It published "After Rain" ("Yuhou") in 1967, translated by David Kidd.

Life and Letters, an English journal based in England. It published "Little Flute" ("Xiaoxiao") in 1949, translated by Li Ru-mien.

TriQuarterly, an English journal based in the United States. It published "Quiet"

⁸ The old Wade-Giles spelling of "Xiaoxiao".

“Jing”) in 1974, translated by William MacDonald. This translation was later included in *Imperfect Paradise*.

Chinese Literature, an English-language journal based in Beijing. It published “The Border Town” (“Biancheng”) in two consecutive issues (issues 10 and 11) in 1962. Then in the 1980s, after the beginning of the “Shen Congwen Craze”, it published quite a few of Shen Congwen’s stories, including “Guisheng”, “Xiaoxiao”, and “The Husband” (“Zhangfu”) in 1980 (issue 8); “Truth is Stranger than Fiction” (“Chuanqi buqi”) and “After Snow” (“Xueqing”) in 1982 (issue 2); and “The Vegetable Garden” (“Caiyuan”) and “Knowledge” (“Zhishi”) in 1989 (summer). All these stories are translated by Gladys Yang.

Tamkang Review, an English-language journal based in Taiwan. It published “Propitious” (“Fusheng”) in 1997 (issue 2). The translator is Wei Lun.

2.2.3 General Chinese literature anthologies with Shen Congwen’s stories

The third channel for the publication of the translations of Shen Congwen’s stories has been the many English anthologies of Chinese literature. A detailed chronological list of these anthologies is as follows:

Living China: Modern Chinese Short Stories. This is the first anthology of English translations of modern Chinese literature, which was edited and translated by Edgar Snow. It was published by George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd. in England in 1936, with a

reprint by Reynal & Hitchcock in the United States in 1937. This anthology includes Shen Congwen's "Pai Tzu"⁹, which was later included in *A Treasury of Modern Asian Stories*, edited by Milton and Clifford and published by The New American Library, Inc. in 1971, in which it is titled "A Sailor in Port", with a note at the end: "Translated from Chinese by Edgar Snow and Hsiao Chien (Xiao Qian)" (in Snow's anthology there is no mention of Xiao Qian as co-translator).

Contemporary Chinese Stories. This anthology was edited and translated by Chi-chen Wang and published by Columbia University Press in 1944. It includes Shen Congwen's "Night March" ("Ye").

Contemporary Chinese Short Stories, edited and translated by Yuan Chia-hua and Robert Payne and published by Noel Carrington Transatlantic Arts Co. Ltd in 1946. It includes Shen Congwen's "The Lamp" ("Deng") and "Under Cover of Darkness" ("Heiye"). "The Lamp" is also included in Ching and Payne's *The Chinese Earth*, mentioned above.

A Treasury of Chinese Literature: A New Prose Anthology, including Fiction and Drama, edited and translated by the father-and-son team Ch'u Chai and Winberg Chai. It was published by Thomas Y. Crowell Company in 1965, and it includes Shen Congwen's "Lung Chu"¹⁰.

⁹ The old Wade-Giles spelling of "Baizi".

¹⁰ The old Wade-Giles spelling of "Longzhu".

Twentieth Century Chinese Stories, edited by C. T. Hsia and translated by Hsia and others, and published by Columbia University Press in 1971. Shen Congwen's "Quiet" and "Daytime" ("Bairi") are included, both of which are co-translated by Wai-lim Yip and C. T. Hsia.

Anthology of Chinese Literature V. II. This anthology, edited by Cyril Birch, was published by Grove Press in 1972. It includes an extract from *Congwen's Autobiography*¹¹, "A Bandit Chief" ("Dawang"), translated by William MacDonald.

Genesis of a Revolution: An Anthology of Modern Chinese Short Stories, edited and translated by S. R. Munro and published in Singapore in 1979 by Heinemann Educational Books (Asia) Ltd. It includes Shen Congwen's "Seven Barbarians and the Last Spring Festival" ("Qige yeren yu zuihou yige yingchunjie").

A Posthumous Son and Other Stories, edited and translated by Bonnie McDougall and Lewis S. Robinson and published in Hong Kong by Commercial Press in 1979 and reprinted in 1987 by Asiapac Books & Educational Aids (S) Pte Ltd, in Singapore. It includes Shen Congwen's "Xiaoxiao", translated by Lewis. S. Robinson.

Modern Chinese Stories and Novellas 1919-1949, edited by Joseph Lau, C. T. Hsia, and Leo Ou-fan Lee, and designated as a textbook for American universities. It was published by Columbia University Press in 1981. Five of Shen Congwen's stories

¹¹ *Congwen's Autobiography*, first published in 1934, and revised in 1943. See *The Complete Works of Shen Congwen*, Vol. 13, 2002.

are included: three of them, “Baizi”, “The Lamp” and “Three Men and One Woman” (“Sange nanren he yige nüren”) are translated by Kai-yu Hsu; another, “Xiaoxiao”, is translated by Eugene Chen Eoyang; and the fifth, “Quiet”, is translated by Wai-lim Yip and C. T. Hsia, and is also included in Hsia’s anthology mentioned above.

Chinese Civilization and Society, edited by P. B. Ebrey, was published by Free Press in 1981. It includes a partial translation (chapter 3) of Shen’s novel “The Long River” (“Changhe”), by Nancy Gibbs.

Some other anthologies include previously-published Shen Congwen stories. One of these is *Contemporary Chinese Short Stories*, compiled by Jorgensen (Zhao Jingshen), published by Shanghai Beixin Shuju (北新书局) in 1946. Both of Shen’s stories included in this anthology had been published previously: “Pai Tzu” is the translation by Edgar Snow from the above-mentioned anthology, and “Hsiao-hsiao” is the translation by Lee Yi-hsieh published in *T’ien Hsia Monthly*, mentioned above.

Jorgensen has only added some footnotes. Another anthology is the *Columbia Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature*, edited by Joseph Lau and Howard Goldblatt, and published by Columbia University Press in 1995, with a second edition in 2007.

This anthology includes Shen Congwen’s “Xiaoxiao”, the translation by Eugene Eoyang mentioned above. Finally, another anthology, published in China, is the *Masterpieces by Modern Chinese Fiction Writers* (《中国现代名家短篇小说选》),

edited by Sidney Shapiro and published in 2002 by Foreign Languages Press in Beijing. It includes the translation of “Zhangfu” by Gladys Yang, mentioned above.

2.3 The Four Stories Selected and Brief Introductions to Their Translations

As mentioned earlier, Shen Congwen’s stories can be broadly classified according to two categories, the first being those set in his home region in West Hunan. These include most of his best stories, in which his much-acclaimed merits can be identified. It is no coincidence that the four most-translated stories all belong to this first category, and are widely acknowledged to represent his best.

2.3.1 “Baizi” and its three translations

“Baizi” was published in 1928. It is one of the most acclaimed short stories by Shen Congwen, and it marks the demarcation line from which Shen Congwen’s writings move to his mature period.

“Baizi” tells a story about a sailor, Baizi, and an unnamed prostitute, who does her business in a brothel along the river. Ordinary as they are, they demonstrate strength, energy, vitality, and true love. The story is very simple, almost plotless. What can be seen are fragments of scenes, such as the anchoring of the junks, the sailors working and singing, the muddy road along which Baizi struggles, the flirtatious talks, bodily contacts, bawdy jokes, and reflections by an all-embracing narrator.

At the beginning of the story, the narrator describes the busy scene of a port of Chenzhou River, Shen Congwen's home area. Junks pull at the port, cargoes are unloaded by sailors and laborers, masts and shrouds are tidied up by sailors, who demonstrate their skill and courage in performing these routines. After all is done, a red wind lamp is put up on the mast, just as, in some stilt houses facing the river, other red lamps are also put up, heralding the coming of the evening. Baizi, among other sailors, hurries ashore to keep a rendezvous with his lover, a prostitute living in one of the stilt houses.

The fragments of scenes of the story show Shen Congwen at his descriptive best. Very often he uses "cinematic close-ups" (Nieh, 1972: 99), such as the several mentions of muddy legs. He employs images to advance the story – for instance, the shift from the wind lamp on the boat to the brothel lamp in the stilt house. Shen Congwen pieces these fragments together in such a way as to create a vivacious and touching romance, to demonstrate animal energy and desire, and to achieve a desired effect (Nieh, 1972: 99-101). The story has lyrical quality, as it "captures in a trivial moment of life a brief but intense expression of happy or sad feelings" (Wang, 1992: 238). Shen Congwen "cherishes the power of love and sexuality, which symbolize a healthy and beautiful form of life" (Wang, 1992: 235). Shen's techniques evoke a worldly feeling that the relationship between the sailor and the prostitute is not normal,

as is the love between ordinary people. They are deprived of the right of marriage, so that they may not be as carefree as they seem to be. However, the characters within the story – the sailors and the prostitutes – enjoy the moment, no matter how brief, and are oblivious to social injustice and the cruelty of reality. This attitude of the characters suggests the pastoral quality, which is an important constituting element of Shen's lyrical narration.

The three translations of “Baizi” all appear in anthologies. The earliest, which appeared in Edgar Snow's 1936 anthology, *Living China*, is one of the two earliest published English translations of a Shen Congwen story (the other one is Hahn and Shing's translation of “Biancheng”, also appearing in 1936). The translator and editor, Edgar Snow, was an American journalist, who lived in China for eleven years, with a mission to report on China. His experience in China, and his meeting Lu Xun (the most outstanding writer in modern Chinese literature) and Lin Yutang (also a famous writer, who wrote both in Chinese and English), prompted his decision to translate Chinese literature, as he wanted to bring into English the hidden talent (which he saw in Lu Xun and Lin Yutang) in recent writing in the Chinese language (Snow, 1937: 14). The stories in the anthology were selected with the help of some of the original authors and some young Chinese scholars, including Xiao Qian, who was a student of Snow, and of Shen Congwen as well.

Snow allowed himself much freedom in rewriting the story, deleting many paragraphs which he thought as unimportant and making some radical changes including changing the ending of the original story. He admits this kind of change in his Preface to the anthology, emphasizing his concern for the target readership. Details will be given in later chapters.

The second translation of “Baizi” was made by Ching Ti and Robert Payne. It was published in 1947 in their anthology, *The Chinese Earth*. This was the first anthology of Shen Congwen’s stories in English. It was translated during the anti-Japanese war time in Kunming, when both Shen Congwen and Robert Payne were teaching at the Southwestern Associated University. The stories included in the book were selected by Shen Congwen himself, from a source of published original texts limited by the war, and its publication was very much due to Payne’s efforts.

Ching and Payne, in many cases, only rendered the general sense, rather than the specific details, of the original, giving a generalized idea of, or a brief introduction to, the original text, and leaving some details untranslated. They frequently resort to the strategy of summarizing the events in the story, with occasional deletions. The sentence patterns in their translation demonstrate an obvious closeness to those of the original Chinese text. Details will be given in the following chapters.

The third translation was made by Kai-yu Hsu, an American-Chinese scholar. Hsu

is a professor of Chinese literature at San Francisco State University. He was Shen Congwen's student at the Southwestern Associated University, later getting his PhD degree at Stanford University. Hsu's translation appeared in 1981 in an anthology on modern Chinese literature, *Modern Chinese Stories and Novellas 1919-1949*, to be used as a textbook in American universities. The most obvious feature of Hsu's translation is his efforts to explain the details of the original and to re-present them, and to add details to explicate what is implied in the original text, as will be shown below.

2.3.2 “Zhangfu” and its three translations

“Zhangfu” is believed to have been one of Shen Congwen's own favorites. The story is about a local practice in the remote area of West Hunan. The country people in the area were so poor that a young wife was very often sent to the brothel along the river bank to do “business”, to help the family out. In the story, this is so common a practice that the local people take it for granted. When a husband wants to see his wife, he changes into clean and starched clothes and goes to the boat, as if he were visiting a relative. The story describes a visit of such a husband. During his short visit, the husband learns what the wife's business is like. He meets the river warden and witnesses how the warden rules over the boat together with the people on the boat – the warden is so arrogant that he shows no regard at all for the husband's feelings. He

sees how the drunken soldiers bully around in the boat, and how the police officer exercises his power over the people on the river. The husband feels this humiliation as a man, as a husband. His dignity is gradually awakened at the end, and he takes his wife back home.

The story was written in 1930, at the start of Shen Congwen's mature period, and it is "a finely crafted story" (Kinkley, 1995: 29). Shen resorts to a very placid and calm mode of narration, telling the story in a seemingly indifferent manner, in which even the flesh trade is "described with surprising moral neutrality" (Kinkley, 1995: 29). People living in the circumstances of the story are used to them, and repeat their lives day in and day out without inquiring into their fates. Thus "the strange becomes familiar; prostitution itself becomes a natural way of life" (Kinkley, 1995: 29). However, through many details Shen Congwen presents "one of the most probing portraits in Chinese literature of the private world of a peasant man" (Kinkley, 1995: 29).

There exist three full-text English translations of "Zhangfu" (and two partial ones, which are not included in the present analysis), all with the title translated as "The Husband". The earliest translation of "Zhangfu" appears in Ching and Payne's anthology *The Chinese Earth*. The co-translators adopt similar translation strategies as those used for "Baizi", which appears in the same anthology, and resort frequently to

a generalized rendering of the activities, leaving out some details.

The second translation was made by Gladys Yang. In 1980, Gladys Yang translated “Zhangfu” and other stories and published them in *Chinese Literature*, and these stories are later included in the anthology *The Border Town and Other Stories*. In this anthology there is a very brief (less than one page) introduction to Shen Congwen’s life and works, both as an author of literature and as a material culture researcher, but nothing related to Yang’s translations is mentioned.

It is noticeable that Gladys Yang is more inclined to use idiomatic English expressions wherever possible, both for representing meaning and as a narrative style. She frequently renders brief and concise versions in the target text and ignores “minute” or “unimportant” details of the original. However, for items loaded with cultural or historical importance, she adds footnotes to supplement the background knowledge.

The third translation was made by Jeffrey Kinkley, the leading expert of Shen Congwen studies in the English-speaking world. As mentioned previously, Jeffrey Kinkley is the author of two monographs on Shen Congwen and has published dozens of articles on related topics. In English-language works on Chinese literature which have appeared in recent years, Kinkley is almost always the one invited to write about

Shen Congwen.¹² In his 1995 anthology *Imperfect Paradise*, Kinkley makes it clear that the works in the volume are “chosen for their literary merit, with occasional consideration also of thematic and historical interest and emphasis on pieces that have never before appeared in English” (Kinkley, 1995: 8). In the “Introduction” to this anthology, besides briefly introducing Shen Congwen’s life and works, Kinkley talks about some of the translation strategies used, declaring that translators have favored a freer translation, and that they have broken Shen’s long sentences into idiomatic English, and that they have attempted to render “a hint of his lexical and tonal, if not his syntactic, range” (Kinkley, 1995: 5). Kinkley exerted special efforts to check the original Chinese versions (for Shen Congwen has a habit of revising his works), and to consult local western Hunanese for dialects and local customs. In Kinkley’s translation of “Zhangfu”, obvious efforts to introduce local color and to re-present the pronounced Chineseness of Shen Congwen’s style can be detected. Kinkley translates exuberantly in many cases, and includes local names and titles and practices and customs, attempting to make explicit the meanings in the original text. He pays great attention to details and the manner of narration that suggest the development of the characters and events, noticing minute factors ranging from the air and appearance of characters to their manner and movements. He adds footnotes to clarify the

¹² For example, the “Shen Congwen” items in *The Columbia Companion to Modern East Asian Literature* (2003) and *Dictionary of Literary Biography--Chinese Fiction Writers, 1900-1949* (2007) .

background of the culture-specific items, and endeavors to keep the original images in the English version. Detailed text analysis will be given in later chapters.

2.3.3 “Xiaoxiao” and its five translations

“Xiaoxiao” is a story with the theme of a child bride. At the age of twelve, Xiaoxiao was married to an infant husband, who was nine years younger than her. She acts as a babysitter at first, when she is a child herself, taking care of her husband day and night. As she grows up, besides looking after her husband, she does much around the household, including washing, spinning, weaving, cutting grass for pigs, pushing the mill and what-not. Although her life is hard, she flourishes like a sturdy and vigorous plant. Then she is seduced by a farmhand of her husband’s family and becomes pregnant, which is such a serious offense that she has either to be drowned or to be sold. As her uncle, her only relative, does not have the heart to drown her, she is to be sold. However, nobody comes to buy her, so she stays and waits, and gives birth to a boy in due time. As the baby is a boy, she does not have to be sold. She survives.

“Xiaoxiao” deals with “the innocence of nature in contrast to Shen’s conception of Confucian society” (Nieh, 1972: 106). As a powerless child bride, Xiaoxiao is “situated in a primitive society in which a kind of corrupted Confucian ethic still governs... but leaves no marks of injury on her being” (Hsia, 1971: 203). She grows

up in this “natural” environment and does whatever she is expected to do without inquiring into her fate. Time and nature thus have the decisive power on her life, while she repeats the same life year in and year out. This kind of life extends to the next generation when, at the end of the story, Xiaoxiao’s son also marries a child bride who is older than him – another Xiaoxiao. As mentioned, life for people like Xiaoxiao is cyclical. It repeats day after day, generation after generation, and people in this situation remain in a totally impassive state. What Xiaoxiao and people like her go through is “not only harmless, but perfectly normal from the countryfolk’s point of view, as long as no civilized moral standard is imposed on them” (Peng, 1994: 198). Shen Congwen here again resorts to his habitual tacit and restrained manner of narration, leaving his characters in a state of innocence concerning harsh reality, free from outside-world intervention. This idealization of primitive country life is “what distinguishes Shen’s country stories from the realistic works of his contemporaries” (Peng, 1994: 198), and forms part of his pastoral and lyrical narration.

“Xiaoxiao” is the most translated of Shen’s stories, with five full-text translations. Except Li Ru-mien, all the translators have resorted to transliteration and have rendered the title as “Xiaoxiao” or “Hsiao-hsiao” (old Wade-Giles spelling of Xiaoxiao). The first translation was made by Lee Yi-hsieh, and was published in *T’ien Hsia Monthly* in 1938. Except for the appearance of the translator’s name at the very

beginning after the author's name, there is no discussion of the translation in the text. Lee's translation shows closeness to the original sentence pattern and narrative order. It is largely faithful to the original text. To some locality-specific items, he adds some footnotes to explain them.

The second translation was made by Li Ru-mien. It was published in *Life and Letters* in 1949. At the very end of the story, there is only the phrase in brackets "(Translated by Li Ru-mien)", with no other mention of the translation. Li translates the title as "Little Flute", which might be a misunderstanding of the original meaning of the title (see detailed discussion in Chapter Five). The translation strategies he frequently resorts to are deleting and summarizing. Li deletes quite a few paragraphs, summarizes many passages, and produces a version that is more or less abridged.

The third translation was that of Lewis S. Robinson, and was published in Hong Kong in 1979, and then in Singapore in 1987 in the anthology *A Posthumous Son and other Stories*, of which Robinson was a co-editor. There is a very short introduction at the beginning of the anthology, but it only concerns the content of the stories. Nothing is mentioned about the translation except for the translator's name in the anthology. Robinson has adopted a somewhat literal translation strategy. He has almost always followed the original manner of narration, though occasionally he resorts to idiomatic English expressions.

The fourth translation was that of Gladys Yang. It was first published in *Chinese Literature* in 1980, and later included in the anthologies *The Border Town and other Stories* (1981) and *Selected Stories by Shen Congwen* (1999). In *Chinese Literature*, the translator's name appears at the end of the story. In the first anthology, it appears on the title page; there is no mention of the translator in the second anthology. It is clear that Gladys Yang has resorted to rendering the text in concise English, catering more to its acceptability than to the original style of narration. However, she has added notes to explain those items which are closely related to Chinese culture or history.

The fifth translation was that of Eugene Chen Eoyang. It was published in the anthology *Modern Chinese Stories and Novellas 1919-1949* in 1981, and is included in *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature* (1995, second edition 2007). The first anthology was designated to be a text book for American universities, and most of the translations "were especially commissioned for this anthology" to embody the editors' main emphases, which were "readability and fidelity to the original" (Lau, 1981: ix). The translators' names appear both on the contents page and on the first page of the story. In the second anthology, the translators' names only appear on the first page of the story, and there is not much mention of the translations themselves. Eoyang's translation of "Xiaoxiao" is mostly an adequate one. He follows

the original manner of narration, and adds footnotes to explain some implied meanings. However, he sometimes resorts to ostentatious words as translations for what in the original are simple, plain expressions.

2.3.4 “Biancheng” and its four translations

Shen Congwen’s novella “Biancheng” is widely acclaimed as his masterpiece – a modern pastoral that depicts “China’s common folk sympathetically” (Kinkley, 2009: vii). The characters in the story are honest, simple, straightforward, practical, and hardworking. The heroine, Cuicui, is an orphan. She is brought up by her grandfather, lives with him, and works with him on his ferry boat. She is kind and clever and sentimental, and experiences a vague feeling of love for Nuo Song, the second son of the local influential Shunshun. Nuo Song and his elder brother Tian Bao are both outstanding young men in the local community, and both fall in love with Cuicui. They decide to settle the matter by singing serenades to Cuicui in accordance with the local custom – whoever gets a response from the girl wins her. However, the elder brother quits after the younger one’s first bout of singing, because he knows that he is no competitor with his younger brother. He goes downriver with a boat and gets drowned when the boat crosses a rapid. The younger brother then leaves home after arguing with his father as to whether he should marry poor Cuicui or a girl from a rich family. In the end, after all these happenings and the misunderstandings, and with her

grandfather dead and her loved one far away, Cuicui is left alone to face the unknowable future.

There are altogether four translations of “Biancheng”. The first one was that of Emily Hahn and Shing Mo-lei, published in *T'ien Hsia Monthly* in four consecutive issues in 1936, with the title translated as “Green Jade and Green Jade”. This translation is the first translated Shen’s story. For the first issue with the translation Emily Hahn has written a Preface, in which she explains why the title is rendered in this way:

We have taken a great liberty with the title, which should be “The Border Town” or “The Outlying Village”. We changed it because we feel that these titles sound much more Wild West or North of England than Szechuen¹³. Mr. Shen... will not mind. (Hahn, 1936: 90)

Thus it seems that the translators have tried to make the translation more “Chinese” by giving it this title. Hahn also explains why she and Shing chose the book to translate: “[w]e find the book charming, so charming that we wish to share it even though we must lose the original prose cadence” (Hahn, 1936: 92). She states that

¹³ The old Wade-Giles spelling of “Sichuan”.

“[a]s for the style, I cannot claim to have reproduced it” (Hahn, 1936: 87). Despite these claims, Hahn and Shing’s translation is a fairly literal translation, which tries to follow the original order of narration and to represent the original meaning.

The second translation, that of Ching Ti and Robert Payne, was published in their anthology *The Chinese Earth* in 1947, and demonstrates similar features as those of their translations of “Zhangfu” and “Baizi”, discussed above. Their translation was obviously inspired by Hahn and Shing’s, as there are quite a few places where similarities to Hahn and Shing’s translation can be detected.

The third translation, Gladys Yang’s, was first published in two consecutive issues of *Chinese Literature* in 1962, and was then anthologized in *The Border Town and Other Stories* in 1981, with minor revisions. It exemplifies Yang’s frequently adopted strategy, as discussed above concerning her translations of “Zhangfu” and “Xiaoxiao”.

The fourth translation, by Jeffrey Kinkley, was published by HarperCollins in 2009, and was the first monograph publication of an English translation of Shen’s story. The translator’s name appears on the title page, and there are brief introductions to both the author and the translator on the back cover of the book. Kinkley’s foreword gives a brief introduction to both Shen Congwen and *Border Town*, with an occasional discussion of his translation. In his translation, Kinkley has exerted great

effort to explain and supplement what lies behind the story. He resorts to both in-text inserted explications and out-text endnotes (he gives thirty-two endnotes) to provide background knowledge of culture, history, literature, locality, and even ST editions, far more information than that made explicit in the original text. He thus uses every means to transfer to the target readers as much as possible what was intended by the original author. Detailed discussions will be presented later.

2.4 Existing Studies of the English Translations of Shen Congwen's Works

Studies of the English translations of Shen Congwen's stories are surprisingly insufficient. Given the facts that, since the 1980s, the "Shen Congwen Craze" has aroused enormous interest among scholars and students of modern Chinese literature, and that numerous studies of Shen's works have been conducted, very few studies of the English translations of Shen's works have been made so far. A search with "Shen Congwen" as the subject in the China Doctoral Dissertation Full-text Database produces 65 dissertations, but none of them is of translations. Similar searches in the ProQuest Database and in Digital Dissertation Consortium Database produce 20 and 8 dissertations respectively, none on translations either. From the China Master Thesis Full-text Database, with the search word "Shen Congwen" as subject, 378 theses appear, and 11 of them related to translation, most of which include discussions of Gladys Yang's translation of "Biancheng", among which two compare the translations

of “Biancheng” made by Gladys Yang and Ching and Payne, another two discuss the English translations of “Zhangfu”. These studies are conducted from different perspectives and with different foci, such as those of a functional approach, relevance theory, cultural identity, translation strategy, literary stylistics, etc. The authors apply these different theories to the analyses of examples of translation. One of them focuses on Gladys Yang’s cultural identity: after discussing Yang’s Chinese-English translation strategies, giving some examples, the writer concludes that “her identification with Chinese culture surpasses that with western culture, that is, Chinese cultural identity is her major identity, while western cultural identity is her minor identity” (Yang, 2007: 45) – which, it seems to me, is too simplistic and hasty a conclusion, as examples and analyses in this present study do not seem to agree with the above claim.

Another previous study with a focus on Gladys Yang’s translation strategies in *The Border Town* (“Biancheng”), from the perspective of foreignization and domestication, claims that “foreignization is widely used in the cultural aspects and holds a prior position over domestication” (Hu, 2009: 45). However, this study finds, on the contrary, that, generally speaking, Yang’s strategies are more domesticated than foreignized, if these two terms are to be employed.

There are also a few theses which do not even give the translator’s name

correctly, such as Hu's (2006) and Gao's (2007), which makes their research seem untrustworthy.

As for the English translations of Shen's other stories, no study of them has been found.

However, a search in the DTC (Dissertations and Theses Collections)¹⁴ with "Shen Congwen" as the subject produces seven theses, two of them related to translation. One is "Anthology Rewriting and Translation Rewriting – A Study on the English Translation Anthologies of Shen Congwen's works", from Lingnan University of Hong Kong, submitted by Leung Kit-ching in 2005. This thesis discusses six English translation anthologies, five of Shen's stories, and one of his essays. This thesis focuses on anthologizing, but the writer also discusses translation strategies employed by different translators, and some of the comments on the translations of Jeffrey Kinkley, Gladys Yang, and Ching and Payne agree with the observations of the present study. However, the thesis only touches upon the narrative mode of Shen's stories, without detailed discussion, and it only briefly mentions one feature of Shen's narrative language – the directional commentary of the narrator – which is far from enough for a consideration of Shen's narrative style (which is, of course, not the author's study focus).

¹⁴ An online union collection of Hong Kong postgraduate students' doctoral and master dissertations and theses indexed in the online catalogues of seven university libraries in Hong Kong.

The other item from the DTC is “Commented Translation: *Little Scene in Guizhou* (1931) by Shen Congwen”, an MA thesis from City University of Hong Kong, submitted by Miranda Lan-ying Cheung in 1999. The thesis consists of the writer’s own translation of “Little Scene in Guizhou”(Qian Xiaojing 黔小景) and her commentaries on it. At times, when elements from “Qian Xiaojing” resemble something similar in other stories, she refers to others’ translations of these “other stories”. As the related items are limited and random, the strategies of other translators she discusses are also limited and random.

Individual articles on the English translations of Shen’s stories are limited too. A search in the China Journals Full-text Database, with “Shen Congwen” as the subject, reveals 5,695 articles, and only 5 pieces are really about English translations of Shen’s works. Three of them are about the translation of Shen’s stories, among which two are about Yang’s translation of “Biancheng”, and the other is about Yang’s translation of “Xiaoxiao”.¹⁵

Taking into account all the searches in various databases mentioned above, and from the materials that have been collected during the research process, it seems safe to say that the present study is the first comprehensive study of the English translations of Shen Congwen’s stories.

¹⁵ All the figures mentioned in this section are renewed on Jan 6, 2011.

2.5 Research Methodology Employed in This Study

This research project falls within the broad scope of descriptive translation studies (DTS), a methodology developed by Toury (Toury, 1995) and others, and has been conducted accordingly.

DTS dates from early 1970s. The term “descriptive” is the opposite of “prescriptive”, signalling “the rejection of the idea that the study of translation should be geared primarily to formulating rules, norms or guidelines for the practice or evaluation of translation or to developing didactic instruments for translator training” (Hermans, 1999: 7). Seen in this light the concern of descriptive translation studies is not “to determine appropriate translation method” (Toury, 1995: 17), which is the focus of prescriptive approach. Rather, DTS moves translation studies from prescribing “good” or “correct” translation to describing and explaining actual translation behaviour, and it is only “through studies into actual behaviour that hypotheses can be put to a real test” (Toury, 1995: 16-17). Because DTS focuses on “observable aspects of translation, it has also been called ‘empirical’” (Hermans, 1999: 7). As is pointed out by Toury, DTS “aspires to offer a framework for individual studies” (Toury, 1995: 11), it can be understood as a model that sets guidelines for research on actual translation problems.

Located within the framework of DTS, this study is an empirical work, which

conducts a descriptive research into the English translations of Shen Congwen's stories. The first stage of the study involves various types of comparative work. According to Toury, there are three types of comparison in translation studies: first, to compare the parallel translations into one language, which came into being in different periods of time; second, to compare different phases of the emergence of a single translation; third, to compare translations into different languages (Toury, 1995: 73-74). The present study focuses on the first type of comparison, with the second type touched upon.

The original author, Shen Congwen, is widely acclaimed as a stylist and a skillful story-teller, and his narrative characteristics are the most prominent features of his idiosyncratic style. The narrator in his stories employs various methods to tell or show the events of the story. He is sometimes an omniscient, sometimes a first-person narrator, and his narration may be from an internal or an external point of view. These characteristics, however, are not the focus of this study. Considering the fact that the four selected original texts all have the traditional way of narration, with an omniscient narrator recounting everything, and considering the factors that cause translation problems, this study mainly gets involved two specific features of Shen's narration – namely, his narrative commentaries and his lyrical narrative style. As any translation always has the translators' traces embedded in it, this study also includes

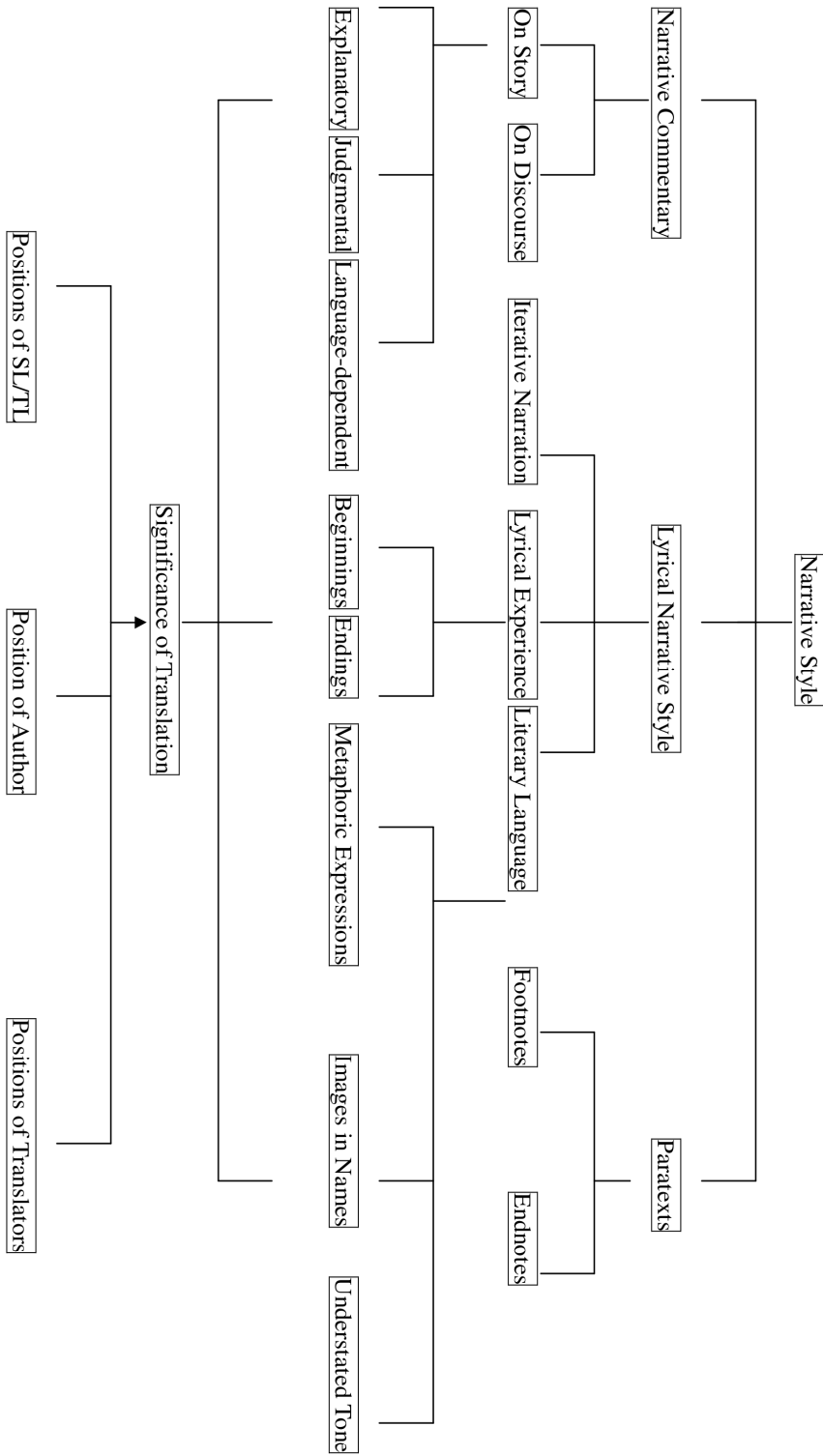
some space for the translators' overt intrusions – the paratexts in narration in the translations, which appear as added footnotes or endnotes by the translators.

The main body of this study consists of two parts. The first part, chapters three to five, is the comparative and descriptive part, in which detailed comparisons and descriptions of texts are presented. The comparison and description are carried out from the perspective of narrative features of the texts. The second part, Chapter Six, presents the findings, accounting for the translation tendencies of different translators discovered in the previous chapters and analyzing possible causes for the different strategies employed by different translators.

There are seven chapters in this dissertation. Chapter One is the introduction chapter, and Chapter Two deals with the scope and approach of the dissertation, which have been presented. Chapters Three to Five present detailed descriptions and comparisons of the four selected original stories together with their fifteen translations. Chapter Three concerns narrative commentaries, which is divided into two groups – commentaries on story and commentaries on discourse – with the former being subdivided into language-dependent commentaries, explanatory commentaries and judgmental commentaries. Chapter Four deals with the lyrical narrative style of Shen's stories, discussing three parts – iterative narration, episodes of lyrical experience, and literary language. Chapter Five pays attention to the paratexts in

narration, which are the translators' overt intrusions in the translated texts – the added footnotes and endnotes. Chapter Six presents findings and discussions, recounting the tendencies of the translation strategies employed by different translators on the basis of the previous comparisons and descriptions, and probing into the causes of these differences. The theoretical framework for explaining different translators' choices is based on Bourdieu's sociological framework, drawing on concepts such as habitus, capital, position, and field. Employing Bourdieu's theory as a conceptual tool, Chapter Six attempts to answer the research questions given at the beginning of Chapter One, and to make possible hypotheses. Finally, Chapter Seven summarizes the findings and contributions of the study, and points out limitations and possible future perspectives for further research. The scope and approach can be seen in a more visualized way in the framework provided below:

Framework of scope and approach:



CHAPTER THREE NARRATIVE COMMENTARIES

Having discussed the materials chosen and the methodology employed, we will start the actual text analysis part from this chapter. The first issue to be dealt with concerns narrative commentaries and their representations in translation.

In a narrative discourse, a narrator is involved in more than just telling a story or recounting the events. When a narrator is “commenting in his or her own voice on the situations and events presented, their presentation, or its context” (Prince, 2003: 47), he or she is an intrusive narrator, who “explains the meaning or significance of a narrative element, makes value judgments, refers to worlds transcending the characters’ world, and/or comments on his or her own narration” (Prince, 2003: 14).

The most obvious intrusion or intervention of a narrator (author)¹⁶ to convey his/her own opinions throughout a story is through narrative commentaries. These commentaries help provide background information, explain meanings or significance of actions or events, give evaluative comments, etc.

Many scholars have contributed to the study of commentary as a narrative feature. One of the most detailed and influential analyses of commentaries is done by Wayne Booth in *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (1961/1983). Booth mentions that commentaries can

¹⁶ No efforts will be made to distinguish between narrator and author, as it is of little weight for the issues probed in this study. The narrator’s interventions will therefore be regarded as the author’s, and the narrative commentaries as revealing the author’s, as well as the narrator’s, opinions and attitudes.

be either implicit or explicit, and are employed to serve the following purposes:

- a) to provide the facts, “picture”, or summary for the reader;
- b) to work on the beliefs of the reader;
- c) to relate particulars to the established norms;
- d) to heighten the significance of events;
- e) to generalize the significance of the whole work;
- f) to manipulate the mood of the reader;
- g) to comment directly on the work itself (Booth, 1983: 169-209).

Booth’s discussion is broad and comprehensive. In his discussion, the mediating activities of a commentator cover everything from stage setting, explanation, summary and description, to evaluative comparison and value judgments, guidance of the reader’s response and direction of the narrative movement. Almost all the “telling”¹⁷ in the narrative of a story belongs to Booth’s category of commentary, and he presents a panorama for appreciation of a novel from the viewpoint of narrative features. His ideas and description of the scope of commentaries are acknowledged in this study. However, his manner of categorization is designed for the appreciation of a novel, and this sometimes is not directly related to translation problematics, and it is not quite applicable in the present discussion, which focuses more on translation

¹⁷ The distinction between “telling” and “showing” corresponds to the classical distinction between “diegesis” and “mimesis”, as discussed in Chatman (1978) , Booth (1961/1983), and others.

problematics than on literary appreciation through commentaries.

Seymour Chatman contributes a classification of four types of commentaries in his influential *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (1978), and his categories are more concrete than Booth's. Like Booth, Chatman points out that commentary is either implicit or explicit. Implicit commentary is more often related to an ironic tone in a story, which may "stretch globally through an entire narrative" (Chatman, 1978: 229). In the present study, where focus is given to translation problematics with concrete texts that are being compared and analyzed, it is not practical to have a text-based "global narrative" comparison, as it is impossible to compare two entire texts at every discussion point. Therefore, this chapter will focus only on explicit commentary. According to Chatman, explicit commentaries may be divided into four categories (Chatman, 1978: 228):

- a) interpretation: the open explanation of the gist, relevance, or significance of a story element;
- b) judgment: the expression of moral or other value opinions;
- c) generalization: the reference outward from the fictional to the real world, either to "universal truths" or actual historical facts;
- d) self-conscious narration: comments on the discourse rather than the story, whether serious or facetious.

Given the broader sense of the word “interpretation”, Chatman limits his “interpretation” category to “any relatively value-free attempt to account for something in terms of the story itself, without going outside it” (Chatman, 1978: 238). This covers events explanation and character depiction, or predictions of events and characters. The other two categories, commentaries of judgment and of generalization, focus on elements outside the story. And the category of “self-conscious narration” focuses on the discourse, or the form.

Generally speaking, Chatman’s commentary categorization is clear, and identifies different perspectives for discussion.

Quite a few scholars have studied commentaries in Chinese literature, such as the contributors to *Chinese Narrative*, edited by Andrew H. Plaks (Plaks, 1977). The majority of such scholars, however, focus mainly on the Chinese classic works written before the Qing Dynasty. In regard to Chinese vernacular stories, Patrick Hanan and Henry Zhao have conducted influential studies. In “The Early Chinese Short Story”, Hanan mentions that three modes of narrative in the vernacular Chinese fiction can be discerned, and one of them, the mode of commentary, “includes the introductory remarks or prologue, explanation given during the course of the narrative, comments both in verse and prose, the summaries” (Hanan, 1974: 305). This statement indicates cases of the explicit mode of commentary, which is sometimes referred to as

“story-teller phrases” in early vernacular Chinese story. Like that of Booth, Hanan’s analysis focuses on literary appreciation.

Henry Zhao, when accounting for the narrative intrusions in Chinese fiction in the transitional period from the traditional to the modern, mentions that the intrusions can be placed in two categories, namely, directions and commentaries. The directional intrusions “explain how the story is being told” (Zhao, 1995: 65), and this corresponds to Chatman’s “self-conscious narration”. The commentary intrusions “supply information or explain an attitude to the narrated events” (Zhao, 1995: 65), which more or less corresponds to Chatman’s categories of interpretation and judgment.

Li Dechao applies mainly Chatman and Henry Zhao’s concepts of narrative commentaries to his analysis of Zhou Shoujuan’s translations, and discusses narrative commentaries in two categories, that is, directional commentaries and substantive commentaries, with the latter subdivided into explanatory and evaluative commentaries (Li, 2006). His substantive commentary focuses on the content of the story, and his directional commentary focuses on the form of the story. It seems that the expressions “content” and “form” are more direct and clearer, and will be employed by the present study.

On the basis of all the aforementioned studies, and drawing on their descriptions

of categories and the functions of commentaries, we will set our discussion within two broad categories: commentaries on story (content), and commentaries on discourse (form), whose names suggest the very scope of the discussion. In regard to the first category, commentaries on story, we will take into account the characteristics of Shen Congwen's narrative style, and the problematics related to the translations of his stories, and seek to understand how Shen Congwen formulated the narrative commentaries and how the translations have rendered them. Through a detailed analysis of the data concerning our four selected stories, we discover three main types of commentaries on story, namely:

- 1) Commentaries on a story element that offer explanations. In this case, certain remarks are employed to explain a story element – either an event or a character. These explanatory commentaries either provide background settings, or heighten actions, or help with the understanding of characters or events.
- 2) Commentaries on a story element that present evaluative judgments or correlations with universal truths. In these judgmental commentaries, the narrator comments on a story element to reveal his feelings or opinions or to make value judgments; or a comparison is made between a story element and an outside-world fact or a universal truth, which is presented to embody the

narrator's emotions or attitudes towards certain story elements.

- 3) Commentaries on a story element using special language patterns, of which no discussion has been found in previous studies. In this case, special words or expressions are employed to create language-dependent commentaries, where a close relationship exists between the language pattern and the narrative commentary. In other words, specific language features are essential to the formation of a commentary. If these language features are removed, the statements are no longer commentaries but simple narrations.

In the second category, that of commentaries on discourse, one thing needs to be pointed out. Historically, Chinese fiction experienced radical changes both in form and in content, especially in the late Qing period and during the early twentieth century. Narrative mode of fiction is no exception. Chen Pingyuan has investigated in depth the changes in Chinese fiction in terms of narrative time, point of view and narrative structure (Chen, 2003), and makes a passing remark that, Shen Congwen, together with other disciples of the May Fourth spirit, tried to “seek the aesthetic effects of the new narrative modes” (Chen, 2003: 241, my translation), which suggests a break-away of these May Fourth writers from the narrative mode of “old” literature, including using less commentaries on discourse. Henry Zhao has made it clear that the narrator, in the works of May Fourth fiction, “tries his best to refrain

from intrusions, especially from directions, reducing them to virtual non-existence”

(Zhao, 1995: 72).

As a skillful story-teller, Shen Congwen tried many different ways to present his characters and events, with the narrator either taking an omniscient or a restricted point of view, though, in his later stories, he presented more omniscient narrative discourses. In his earlier stories, he tried many different kinds of narrative modes, and sometimes also resorted to directions – commentaries on discourse. But this phenomenon is rare in his later works, and this corresponds with the observations of Chen and Zhao. Our discussion of the second category of commentaries on discourse will, therefore, be shorter than that of the first category of commentaries on story.

3.1 Commentaries on Story

Commentaries on story help the reader understand what is happening to the characters or events, with a focus on the real ground or point of an action; or they focus on the essence or meaning of a story element. They either explain the gist, relevance, or significance of a story element, as is succinctly pointed out by Chatman (Chatman, 1978), or show the narrator’s belief and attitude by commenting on certain characters or events, which often involves moral or ethical or other value judgments. The shared ground of these commentaries is that they are not part of the story proper and do not directly affect the development of the story.

We will discuss the above-mentioned three ways in which Shen's commentaries in the selected stories are presented, and how the translations have rendered them.

3.1.1 Language-dependent commentaries

Shen Congwen is accredited as a language genius. He “contribute[s] much to the vocabulary of modern vernacular Chinese” (Kinkley, 1987: 2), with his words “always fresh and lively, always demonstrating his uniqueness” (Su, 1934/2004: 191, my translation). Kinkley believes that his “linguistic contributions may be his most obvious distinguishing mark of greatness” (Kinkley, 1987: 2). This distinguishing mark is also demonstrated in the way Shen has created his commentary remarks. From our four selected stories, we have discovered that one of the characteristics of the narrative commentaries is that Shen Congwen resorts to specific language patterns to achieve a commentary effect. These specific language patterns frequently employ specific Chinese grammatical particles, or function words¹⁸. Kinkley notices this language feature of Shen's narrative style, and observes that the predominant style of Shen Congwen's narration is “chatty, subjective narration ... with its sentence fragments and nuanced exclamatory particles” (Kinkley, 1987: 87). It is precisely these distinctive features of Shen's language that create translation problems, as there is little chance to re-produce Shen's language-dependent commentaries in English, a

¹⁸ According to Oxford English Dictionary, a function word refers to a word that has little or no meaning apart from the grammatical idea it expresses.

language radically different from Chinese. So it is of our interest to see how the translators have translated the language-dependent commentaries.

Generally speaking, there are four ways of translating commentaries. First, both the form and the function of the original commentary may be retained in the TT. Second, the commentary function in the TT may be fulfilled in a different manner, that is, the function of the original commentary may be reserved, but the form changed. Third, the original commentary function is changed into a non-commentary narration in the TT. And fourth, the original commentary may simply be deleted.

In the translations of the language-dependent commentaries, the first way is less common than the other three ways of handling them. Some commentaries have had their language features changed in the TT, but the commentary function remains. Some commentaries have been changed in both form and function so that they are no longer commentaries. They are turned into simple narrations, and no commentary effect is reserved. And some commentaries are completely deleted.

The short story “Zhangfu” will serve to provide an example of language-dependent commentaries. As mentioned earlier, “Zhangfu” is believed to be Shen Congwen’s own favorite short story, which tells a common practice – prostitution – in the remote poverty-stricken countryside in West Hunan. As the young wives often leave for the town to “do business” on the brothel boat to help the family

out, the husbands go to town to visit the wives on the boat on some occasions such as during festivals. After making a detailed description of a visit of a husband of this type, the narrator bursts out: “这样丈夫在黄庄多着! [Such husbands in Huang village are numerous!]”. The last character “着” is a grammatical particle, a function word, in the original Chinese sentence. Together with the exclamation mark, it functions as a commentary, which reveals the narrator’s emotions. Besides telling the reader that this kind of phenomenon is not an individual case but a common one, the statement also betrays traces of the narrator’s sympathy for the local people and his condemnation of this social sin, though his narration does not carry an angry tone. If this last function word and the exclamation mark are removed, the story-related information contained in the sentence would still be there, but the emotional element of the commentary would disappear, so would the language-dependent commentary.

There exist three full-text translations of this story, and all of them have rendered the semantic meaning and transferred the related information in the narration. However, the three translators have adopted different translation strategies to render this commentary effect. Jeffrey Kinkley, and Ching and Payne, resort to the function of English grammar to render the commentary effect of the original, while Yang resorts to a repetition of words to express feelings:

There are many such husbands in Huang village (Kinkley, 1995: 34).

There are many such husbands in the villages (Ching & Payne, 1947: 44).

There were many, many husbands like this in Huang-zhuang (Yang, 1981: 123).

Both Kinkley, and Ching and Payne, employ the English simple present tense, taking advantage of its specific grammatical function in English to suggest the commonness and frequency and repetitiveness of this phenomenon – this is the iterative mode of action in narration (this point will be dealt with in detail in Chapter Four), which is key to what the original narrator intended. By resorting to the simple present tense, the narrator in the translated texts steps out of the story – as did Shen – and informs the reader that this is no single event, at the same time revealing the narrator’s own voice. Although the language-dependent feature of the commentary disappears, and the translations do not convey an emotion as obviously as does the commentary in the original, they partially keep the commentary effect.

Unlike Kinkley, and Ching and Payne, Gladys Yang intensifies the tone of narration by repeating the adjective “many” to give weight to the statement, and thereby conveys the emotions of the narrator. With the repetition of “many”, Yang’s version suggests that the narrative event in the story was a common one. However, the simple past tense suggests a singulative narrative event, which could have been easily

regarded as part of the story itself, and does not fulfill the original function of the commentary.

Another example of language-dependent commentary is from the short story “Baizi”. At the very beginning of the story, Shen Congwen describes the sailors’ appearances and their routines, including the unloading of the junk and the handling of the ropes up at the tops of the masts, when their skills and energy and vigor are all displayed through this seemingly mundane job. In the ST, the first comment is made following a description of the appearances of the sailors, who have hairy hands and legs and resemble legendary heroic figures. After this description, the narrator comments: “**可不是**, 这些人**正是**!” [Yes, these people are exactly so!] In this commentary, “可不是”(yes, right) in the first part, “正”(exactly) in the second part, and the exclamation mark, are all function words. They jointly achieve the effect of a narrative commentary, with the narrator addressing the reader and having his appreciation of those sailors revealed. Without these function words or expressions, the statement is no commentary at all.

Among the three existing translations, Kai-yu Hsu retains the narrative function with a straightforward commentary remark; Snow changes the original narrative commentary; and Ching and Payne delete the commentary:

And one could be right, for these characters could very well be just those heroes
(Hsu, 1981: 222).

(... “Flying Hairy Feet”,) that fabulous hero of our youth (Snow, 1936: 182)

Hsu’s translation gets the readers involved to a greater degree than in the ST, by addressing the readers directly. The first half of the sentence “one could be right” is apparently the narrator’s commentary remark. It aims directly at the reader, rather than at any character in the story. The second half explicates what is implied in the original by directly using the word “heroes”, and the tone achieved by the expression “could very well be just...” reassures the reader’s assumed judgment in the previous part, thus intensifying the commentary effect. By inviting the reader to get involved in the comment on these characters, Hsu’s translation closely follows the original train of thought in making the comment. Although his translation does not render the original commentary literally, and does not reserve the form of the language-specific commentary of the original, the narrative commentary nature of the narrator’s inserted remarks in the ST is retained.

Edgar Snow changes the original narrative commentary and resorts to an explanation to render this commentary. He employs a value-loaded adjective,

“fabulous”, and the expression “of our youth” to compare the sailors to some heroes “we” know, which achieves a commentary effect. However, he changes the language-dependent commentary into an explanatory commentary. Snow’s translation thus does not re-produce the tone of the narrator, nor his attitude and emotion, and fails to reproduce the specific language-dependent feature – the function words in the original – of the commentary. Moreover, the translation slightly changes the original semantic meaning, although it does suggest the narrative function of the commentary, though through a different kind of commentary.

There are also examples of language-dependent commentaries in Shen Congwen’s short story “Xiaoxiao”, which deals with the theme of a child bride in the countryside in old China. The story begins with a description of the wedding scene in the countryside. According to the local custom, a young bride is locked in a sedan-chair carried by two bearers. Although wearing decent clothes which she has never worn before, she should cry, afraid of the unknown future awaiting her. Such crying is a practice demanded by local custom. However, there are exceptional brides who do not cry, and Xiaoxiao is one of them. A motherless child, she is being married to a young husband as a child bride, at the age of twelve. She has no idea what will happen to her when she is married. Therefore the narrator sighs: “她~~是~~什么事也~~不~~知

道，就做了人家的新媳妇了。[She really does not know anything before she becomes somebody's bride.]” The character “是” here is not the predicate verb “to be”, but a grammatical particle. Together with the other two particles “也” and “就”，it performs as a function word that suggests the unfortunate manner of Xiaoxiao’s marriage and reveals the voice of the narrator. This commentary reveals the pitying tone of the narrator and betrays his sympathy for the character, the little child bride Xiaoxiao. If the function words were removed, the information contained in the statement would be the same, but the statement would become simple narration, and no longer a commentary.

Of all the five translators of “Xiaoxiao”, one deletes the commentary. Of the other four, one changes the commentary form but keeps the commentary function, and the others change the commentary into mere narration.

She was an ignoramus, this new bride (Yang, 1981: 102).

Almost without being aware of it, she became a daughter-in-law (Lee, 1938: 295).

She was scarcely aware of what she was getting into: all she knew was that she was to become someone’s new daughter-in-law (Eoyang, 1981: 83).

... she became somebody’s bride without knowing what had happened

(Robinson: 1987: 64).

Gladys Yang fulfills the commentary function by resorting to a special noun “ignoramus”, meaning “an ignorant person”, which contains a sense of evaluation and judgment. By employing this value-loaded word at the beginning, and by pointing out the character’s status in the second part (“this new bride”) for emphasis, Yang arranges the sentence in a way that conveys the narrator’s attitude and emotion and achieves a commentary effect of the statement, though the word “ignoramus” has a more critical tone in English than the Chinese expressions (which emphasize Xiaoxiao’s innocence), and the translation changed the emotional tone of Shen’s commentary and undermined the commentary effect. However, the original commentary effect is at least partially achieved, though the original language-specific feature of the commentary is not reserved and the commentary function is fulfilled in a different way.

Li Ru-mien simply deletes the commentary, while the other three translations all fail to convey the narrative commentary function. Lee tries to express the original meaning by adding the adverb “almost” in his translation, which modifies the certainty of the statement but does not achieve the same commentary effect. Eoyang tries to explain the comment. He adds the expression “all she knew was that”, which

supplies extra information to the state of mind of the character (whether this addition of information is implied by the original is not at issue here), but it remains simple narration and does not fulfill the narrative function of commentary. As for Robinson, he simply states the fact, without any trace of the function word. As a result, his translation, like the other two, also changes the commentary into simple narration.

Presented below in Tables 3-1(A) & (B) are all the translators' different choices in translating the language-dependent commentaries in this present study, with Table A demonstrating the strategies taken by the different translators for each story, and Table B totaling the different strategies taken by each translator. In Table A, the figure in brackets behind each story is the total number of the commentaries in the ST, and that behind each translator refers to the time when his/her translation was first published. In Table B, the figure in brackets behind each translator suggests the total number of the commentaries he/she has come across in all his/her translations, and the percentage figure ignores the decimal fraction part.

Table 3-1(A): Synopsis of language-dependent commentaries:

STs / Translators	commentary retained	commentary function fulfilled by different means	commentary changed	commentary deleted
“Baizi”(3)				
Edgar Snow(1936)		1	2	
Ching & Payne(1947)			2	1

Kai-yu Hsu(1981)		1	2	
“Xiaoxiao”(5)				
Lee Yi-hsieh(1938)		1	4	
Li Ru-mien(1949)		2	1	2
L. S. Robinson(1979)		2	3	
Gladys Yang(1980)		2	3	
E. C. Eoyang(1981)		3	2	
“Zhangfu” (3)				
Ching & Payne(1947)		2	1	
Gladys Yang(1980)			3	
Jeffrey Kinkley(1995)		3		
“Biancheng”(0)				

Table 3-1(B): Synopsis of language-dependent commentaries:

Translators	Commentary retained	commentary function fulfilled by different means	commentary changed	commentary deleted
Edgar Snow (3)		1	2 (67%)	
Ching & Payne (6)		2	3 (50%)	1
Li Ru-mien (5)		2 (40%)	1	2 (40%)
Lee Yi-hsieh (5)		1	4 (80%)	
Hahn & Shing (0)				
Gladys Yang (8)		2	6 (75%)	
Kai-yu Hsu (3)		1	2 (67%)	
E. C. Eoyang (5)		3 (60%)	2	
L. S. Robinson (5)		2	3 (60%)	
Jeffrey Kinkley (3)		3 (100%)		

These tables show that the form of no language-dependent commentary is retained in the translated texts. Many commentaries are changed into non-commentary narrations, as can be found in the cases of Snow, Lee, Yang, Robinson, and Hsu. Another situation is that the narrative functions of some of these language-dependent commentaries are fulfilled with different means, such as in the

cases of Kinkley and Eoyang. Among all the translators, it seems that the scholar translators try harder to fulfill the narrative function, as is shown in the translations by Kinkley and Eoyang, while deletion of commentaries is only detected in the earlier translations made by Li Ru-mien, and Ching and Payne.

On the basis of the analyses of the language-dependent commentaries shown in the examples discussed above, it is safe to say that it is almost impossible for the translators to re-produce the language-dependent commentaries in the TT. If something is language-dependent, it is language specific and only exists in the specific language, so that no exact equivalent can be found to re-present it in another language, and especially not in such a radically different language as English is from Chinese. In the four selected stories for this study, there are altogether 11 cases of language-dependent commentaries (3 in “Baizi”, 3 in “Zhangfu”, 5 in “Xiaoxiao”, and 0 in “Biancheng”). None of the language specific features of the commentaries is re-presented in the TT. If the commentary is retained, the commentary function is fulfilled in a different way, and may be accompanied by a change in meaning. The commentaries are sometimes turned into other types of commentaries, such as explanatory commentaries, or are sometimes simply deleted.

Deletion of commentaries, however, is a phenomenon only found in the earlier translations of the 1930s and 1940s, such as the examples of omission in the

translation of “Baizi” made by Ching and Payne and the one in the translation of “Xiaoxiao” made by Li Ru-mien. However, there seems to be a tendency of the scholar translators to exert visible efforts to reserve the commentary function, as demonstrated in the translation of “Zhangfu” by Jeffrey Kinkley, who is the prototypical scholar translator within the realm of this present study. In addition, most L1 translators demonstrate more freedom and ease in resorting to different means for the commentary effect. They show less concern for the original narrative order, and their translations are closer to the target language than to the source language. They are more inclined to change the original commentary into a different kind of commentary, or into simple narration. Such are the cases of Edgar Snow in his translation of “Baizi” and of Gladys Yang in her translations of “Zhangfu” and “Xiaoxiao”, as discussed above.

Earlier translations, those of the 1930s and 1940s, tend either to delete the commentary or to give it another narrative function. The reason for this is probably that, at that time, Chinese literature occupied a very marginal position in the English literature “polysystem” (Even-Zohar, 1990/2000), and translations tended to cater to the taste of the target audience. This can also be shown by the fact that the stories proper are more highlighted than the commentaries in the translations of earlier times, of which Edgar Snow’s translation of “Baizi” is a good example (this point will be

illustrated in the next chapter). Later translations, especially those by the scholar translators, demonstrate obvious efforts to show respect for the original text and pursue translations more adequately representing the original narrative style. They sometimes have resorted to different ways of making commentaries, which might lead to slight changes of the original semantic meaning, but nevertheless they have attempted to retain the narrative commentary function.

3.1.2 Explanatory commentaries

Explanatory commentaries are employed to provide background information, to present character depiction, or to interpret a certain event. Compared with the other two types of story-related commentaries, such commentaries are usually translated. Explanatory commentaries are frequently found in Shen Congwen's stories, and he may have seen these as the most convenient and direct way to offer his own interpretations of the events or characters involved, and to convey his feelings and attitudes towards them.

Shen Congwen sometimes employs explanatory commentaries to make comments concerning time. Liu Hongtao points out that, among modern Chinese writers, Shen is most sensitive to time and comments most on time (Liu, 2003: 23). In many of Shen's works, time plays a decisive role in what happens to his characters. A typical example is his short story "Xiaoxiao". The fate of Xiaoxiao, and also of other

characters in the story, such as the new child-bride who is married to Xiaoxiao's son at the end of the story, is not in the hands of the characters themselves. They live the same kind of lives day after day, and their lives just repeat, in a cyclical way, generation after generation. Time changes everything, but time seems simple and calm, as in Shen's comment on it:

Example 3.1-1:

世界上人把日子糟蹋，和萧萧一类人家把日子吝惜是同样的，各有所得，各属分定。 [People in the world waste their days, just as families like Xiaoxiao's cherish them. Each gets his share, and each belongs to his fate.]

This is a general comment on different people's attitudes towards time, and it consists of two parts: the first half, the comparison of Xiaoxiao's family members to other people, is the explanatory part, which leads to the second half, the conclusion, or the commentary part.

This commentary is deleted in Li Ru-mien's version. The other four translations all have it, with Eoyang and Lee's versions following the original closely, Yang's version changing some details but reserving the commentary, and Robinson's version turning the commentary into a simple narration.

The man of the world wastes time in the same way as a Hsiao-hsiao will save it.

Each has his gains, and each is controlled by Fate (Lee, 1938: 300).

People waste each day as it comes, in the same way that Xiaoxiao and her kind hang on to each day; each gets his share, everything is as it should be (Eoyang, 1981: 87).

In the first part of the ST sentence, the use of the analogy “和...是同样的(the same as)” and the repetition of “日子(days)” compare the different attitudes of people like Xiaoxiao with those of other people in the world. Eoyang keeps both the original analogy, rendering it with the phrase “in the same way that”, and twice mentions of “each day”, in an attempt to retain the form and the meaning of the original commentary. In the second part of the ST, the parallel structure, with the character “各(each)” repeated, highlights the narrator’s attitude and interpretation. Eoyang’s version employs the synonyms “each” and “everything” to keep the sense of repetition of the concept. He resorts to simple present tense, which helps suggest a universal truth of time, as in the commentary in the original. However, the omission of the first phrase in the sentence – “世界上(in the world)”, which modifies “人(person)”, slightly changes the original scope of the compared pair of statements, and the closeness to the original narrative order sometimes makes the translated text read less smoothly and less naturally, although these factors do not alter the commentary

effect. Like Eoyang's translation, Lee Yi-hsieh's version also basically follows the original narrative order, except that the explanatory commentary in the TT is broken into two sentences. In the first part, Lee keeps the analogy that exists in the ST, but omits the repetition. His second sentence retains the parallel structure, and he adds "by Fate" to explicate the meaning of the original. Together with Lee's recourse to the simple present tense, this added explication enforces the original commentary effect.

The two translations by Yang and Robinson exhibit different translation strategies from those of Eoyang and Lee, as is shown below:

Some waste their time; others like Xiaoxiao are sparing of it. Each gets his due deserts (Yang, 1981: 108-109).

Some people tended to waste their lives, while people like Xiao Xiao stingily held on to it. Each attitude would certainly bring different result (Robinson, 1987: 75).

Both Robinson and Yang change the structure of analogy in the first part of the ST. They break this first part into two coordinate clauses, which changes the original narrative rhythm. The second part of the ST is rendered as a complete sentence in both translations, with the original repetitive part missing. Robinson's addition of

“Each attitude” and his recourse to the adverb “certainly” provides his TT with a stronger voice than that of the ST, but the past tense employed in his translated text suggests more that he is telling a story than that he is making comments, and this leads to a loss of the original commentary effect. Gladys Yang’s recourse to the English idiomatic expression “gets his due deserts” presents the implied original meaning, though the translated text presents a dissimilarity, and this differs from the ST which presents a similarity, and misses the analogy in the original. The conciseness and brevity of the narration in her TT speed up the narrative tempo. At the same time, compared with the original narrator, who is telling a universal truth with a somewhat distant attitude, the narrator in her translation is more determined to announce the relationship between the universal truth and the subsequent consequences, therefore giving the explanatory commentary a stronger tone in the TT.

Besides contributing to commenting on time and making comparisons, explanatory commentaries may also give witness to most of Shen Congwen’s emotional feelings and expressions, as they mostly do in his novella “Biancheng”. Shen once mentioned (in his “Preface to ‘Biancheng’”¹⁹), that he had always had a warm love for the farmers, the sailors, the soldiers, and all his country fellows who

¹⁹ Tiji (Preface), first published in 1934 in *Dagongbao* in Tianjin.

lived along the Youshui (You River), his home region in West Hunan. His tenderness and affection for his country folk can be sensed in all of his works, and he never tried to hide these emotions (Shen, 1934/2007: 6).

This kind of emotion is frequently detected in his novella “Biancheng”, his representative work and masterpiece. He finished “Biancheng” in 1934, at a time when he had lived in the city for more than ten years and, had witnessed all the urban sins such as corruption, hypocrisy, and degradation. This was, however, also a time when he went back home to see his sick mother after being away from home for more than ten years. What he saw on the way made him realize that his hometown was no longer what it had been. The changes that had taken place there (changes for the worse in his eyes, due to commercialization, modernization, urbanization, etc) made him miss all the more “*his* home” in his memory. These emotions, mixed with a nostalgic imagination, pour onto the characters and events he depicts in “Biancheng”, resulting in a pastoral, idyllic, and lyrical masterpiece.

In the explanatory commentaries in “Biancheng”, where he gives direct explanations or interpretations to story elements, his emotions are easily recognized. The story opens with a long introduction to the settings and the people involved. When discussing the ordinary local fellows living along the river who, after a flood, will wait at the lower reach of the river to get whatever is useful as it floats down, yet

are also always ready to offer help to anyone who suffers from the river flood, the narrator explains:

Example 3.1-2:

这些诚实勇敢的人，也爱利，也仗义，同一般当地人相似。 [These honest and brave people, they love money, they also dare wrongs, in the same manner as other locals.]

The first part of the sentence comments on the fundamental characteristics of the local people who wait at the lower reaches of the river: they are honest and brave. Then their two specific qualities (they love money; they dare wrongs) serve as a further explanation, which moves on to the conclusion that these are general qualities of the local people. This commentary as a whole is explanatory, revealing the narrator's admiration and appreciation for these local people, and conveys the idea that the qualities mentioned belong to the whole local community, not to a single individual.

In the four translations of “Biancheng”, the original narrator's emotions, as presented in their renderings of this explanatory commentary, vary from one translation to another. Hahn and Shing's version, which was published in 1938, changes the narrative commentary:

(...if they heard the cry of a woman or child then they rowed out to meet them

and towed the boat back,) for those people were fond of money, but they also liked to be called brave (Hahn & Shing, 1938: 97).

Hahn and Shing combine this explanatory commentary with the previous part of the sentence, with this second part serving as an explanation of the characters' actions as described in the previous part, and of their characteristic quality. This combination forms a simple narrative statement which functions as an explanation only and does not contain any comment revealing Shen's emotion. It thus changes the original explanatory commentary into a simple narration in the TT, and removes the narrator's emotional voice. Besides changing the narrative function, Hahn and Shing also reduce the original information to half, leaving no trace of the admiration and appreciation implied in the original, and this weakens the effect of the original commentary. In addition, they fail to mention that the characteristic qualities are common among the local people. In fact, the quality of a "type", not of an individual, is something Shen Congwen always intends to show in his works (this will be dealt with in detail in the next chapter). Failing to represent this "type" quality fails to convey a typical feature of Shen's narrative style.

Another translation, made by Kinkley, demonstrates some differences from the original, but it keeps the commentary function:

These daring souls typified the local people: they had an eye for their own gain, but also for helping other folks (Kinkley, 2009: 10).

Kinkley opens his TT with a combination of the first part and the last part of the original sentence, which indicates both the individual qualities and the shared “type” quality of the local community, though his version misses the quality of “being honest” included in the original. The second part of his TT gives further explanation of the two specific qualities of the local people, thereby re-producing the original narrative order. The combination and the omission, however, have changed the overall original narrative order, but his version retains the original function of the commentary.

Shen Congwen’s emotions can also be detected in the explanatory commentaries in which he makes comparisons between his fellow folks and people living in the city. In chapter twelve of “Biancheng”, for instance, when the two brothers realize that they have fallen in love with the same girl, they talk with each other and decide that they will have their fate settled by singing serenades in turn to the girl in accordance with the local custom. Whoever wins in the singing should win the girl. Upon this the

narrator makes the following comment:

Example 3.1-3:

兄弟两人在这方面是不至于动刀的，但也不作兴有‘情人奉让’，如大都市懦弱男子爱与仇对面时作出的可笑行为。[The two brothers would not go so far as to wave knives at each other in this respect, but they were not in the habit of ‘giving up their lovers’ either, a laughable thing, as was done by weak city men when facing love and hate.]

The commenting voice is stronger in the second half of this sentence, when the narrator implies that city men are weak and their behavior is stupid; whereas in the first part the description of two opposite possibilities reveal features of local custom and dialect.

In the four existing translations of “Biancheng”, this explanatory commentary is retained in the three versions made by Hahn and Shing, Kinkley, and Yang, respectively, though slight changes have been made for these translations. Ching and Payne’s version changes the original commentary into a mere narration, but they add one commentary of their own. Below are the two translated texts by Gladys Yang and by Ching and Payne:

The brothers neither come to blows nor step aside for each other in the ridiculous

way that city weaklings cede to rivals in love (Yang, 1981: 124).

And though it was inconceivable that the brothers would fight over her, it was equally inconceivable that they would “surrender the beloved” according to the traditions of the cowardly dwellers in cities, who are only too often deserving of a better fate (Ching & Payne, 1947: 251).

Yang summarizes the whole sentence, and her summary translation misses quite a few elements of the original text. The key phrases “不至于动刀(would not wave knives at each other)” and “不作兴有‘情人奉让’(they were not in the habit of ‘giving up their lovers’)” identify features of local mentality and local dialect and contribute to the particularity of Shen Congwen’s style; yet they are both omitted in her translation. The value-loaded words “ridiculous” and “weaklings” in her version produce commentary effect and her translation retains the original function of the commentary, though it fulfills this function through very different means. As a whole, the translation conveys weaker emotions towards the brothers as well as supplying less information than the original text. The summarized version moves the TT somewhat away from the narrative style of Shen Congwen.

Ching and Payne employ a parallel structure – “it was inconceivable..., it was equally inconceivable...” – to suggest the two possibilities, but they do not keep the

original features of the particular locality either, which the original narrator intends to present. Their employing of the prepositional phrase “according to ...” not only changes the original semantic meaning but also turns the original explanatory commentary into a simple narration. However, they add their own comment on the city dwellers in their translation, which appears as the attributive clause – “who are only too often deserving of a better fate”. This clause has a stronger commentary effect, making evaluative judgment on the unfairness the society imposes on the countrymen compared with the city dwellers. The added commentary somewhat changes Shen’s consistent style, which often resorts to understatements or ironies when the dark sides of the society are to be revealed.

The translators of explanatory commentaries vary from retaining the commentaries to deleting them. The details of these strategies are presented below in

Tables 3-2:

Table 3-2(A): Synopsis of explanatory commentaries:

STs / translators	commentary retained	commentary function fulfilled by different means	commentary changed	commentary deleted
“Baizi”(3)				
Edgar Snow(1936)				3
Ching & Payne(1947)			3	
Kai-yu Hsu(1981)	2		1	
“Xiaoxiao”(5)				

Lee Yi-hsieh(3)(1938)	2			1
Li Ru-mien(3)(1949)	1		1	1
Gladys Yang(1980)	3	1	1	
E. C. Eoyang(1981)	3	2		
L. S. Robinson(1979)	2	2	1	
“Zhangfu” (1)				
Ching & Payne(1947)		1		
Gladys Yang(1980)	1			
Jeffrey Kinkley(1995)	1			
“Biancheng”(6)				
Hahn & Shing(1936)	2	2	2	
Ching & Payne(1947)	1	2	3	
Gladys Yang(1962)	1	5		
Jeffrey Kinkley(2009)	4	2		

Table 3-2 (B): Synopsis of explanatory commentaries:

Translators	commentary retained	commentary function fulfilled by different means	commentary changed	commentary deleted
Edgar Snow (3)				3 (100%)
Ching & Payne (10)	1	3	6 (60%)	
Li Ru-mien (3)	1 (33%)		1 (33%)	1 (33%)
Lee Yi-hsieh (3)	2 (67%)			1
Hahn & Shing (6)	2 (33%)	2 (33%)	2 (33%)	
Gladys Yang (12)	5	6 (50%)	1	
Kai-yu Hsu (3)	2 (67%)		1	
E. C. Eoyang (5)	3 (60%)	2		
L. S. Robinson (5)	2 (40%)	2 (40%)	1	
Jeffrey Kinkley (7)	5 (71%)	2		

It is clearly seen from the tables that, in the translations of explanatory commentaries, the original function of the narrative commentary is largely fulfilled. Many of the commentaries are re-presented and retained exactly; some of the commentary functions are fulfilled through recourse to different means; and some

others are rendered differently, with the original commentary function changed. A few deletions also appear in the earlier versions.

It has been found that in many cases the scholar translators (also the later translators), including Kinkley, Hsu and Eoyang, make visible efforts to ensure that the original explanatory commentaries are re-presented in the translation, in terms of both the original semantic meaning and the original narrative function. Although occasionally they resort to the strategy of fulfilling the function with different means, they retain the commentary, as exemplified in Eoyang's translation of "Xiaoxiao" and Kinkley's translation of "Biancheng". The translators of the 1930s and 40s tended either to delete the commentary or to change its function, a phenomenon also found in their translations of language-dependent commentaries, as discussed in the previous section. This can be easily detected in Hahn and Shing's translation of "Biancheng" and Li's translation of "Xiaoxiao".

Another tendency is that the L1 translators seem to be more inclined to fulfill the narrative function through different means to ensure a more acceptable target text, which may result in a change of the effect of the commentary. In the cases when the uniqueness of the locality is obvious in the original text, an acceptable translation might lead to a version with the local particularity wiped out. This is obvious in Yang's and Robinson's translations of the explanatory commentaries in "Xiaoxiao".

Moreover, Yang frequently resorts to summary, a strategy that can be discovered in all of her translations, which leads to a faster tempo of narration in her translated text. The L2 translators, on the other hand, have the tendency of closely following the original narrative order in making explanatory commentaries, and mostly retain them. This is demonstrated in Lee's and Eoyang's translations of "Xiaoxiao", where their translations of explanatory commentaries are more adequately rendered than those of the L1 translators.

3.1.3 Judgmental commentaries:

In Shen Congwen's stories, one feature that can be detected in his narration is the mixing of commenting and narrating, revealing the tradition of commenting while narrating (jiayu jiaoyi 夹叙夹议) often found in Chinese literature. This "commenting (yi 议)" is usually associated with moral, ethical, or value judgment, in addition to explaining certain story elements, as discussed in the previous two sections, and often presents the narrator's opinions about and attitudes towards a certain character. In "Xiaoxiao", for instance, after the child bride is seduced by the hired farmhand, she finds herself pregnant, so she goes to the farmhand and asks him what to do next, but the farmhand has no idea of what to do. Here the narrator comments:

Example 3.1-4:

原来这家伙个子大，胆量小。个子大容易做错事，胆量小做了错事就想不出

办法。 [It turns out that this fellow is big in build but small in courage. Big build makes it easy for a man to make a mistake, but small courage makes it hard for him to work a way out.]

The judgmental commentary resides in the second sentence, which is a comment not on the individual farmhand, but on a type of his kind.

The five translations of the story demonstrate different ways to render this commentary. Eoyang and Robinson keep the original commentary effect:

He was, after all, big in physique but small in courage. A big physique gets you into trouble easily, but small courage puts you at a loss as to how to work your way out (Eoyang, 1981: 91).

As it turned out, this oaf was big and strong, but a coward. When such is the case, it's easy for a man to make a mistake and then not know what to do about it (Robinson, 1987: 89).

Both Eoyang and Robinson achieve the effect that the commentary is about a type of person, not about a particular individual. In the ST, the repetition of the two phrases in the second sentence “个子大(large build)” and “胆量小(small courage)” assure a natural movement in narration from an individual person to people of his type, and to

achieve cohesion and coherence. Eoyang keeps this repetition and follows the original narrative order. By adding the subject element “you” in the translation, Eoyang ensures that this comment applies to a general type of person and not to a particular individual, thus fulfilling the original function of the commentary. Robinson, in his version, explicitly explains what is implied in the original text by adding details. In his first sentence of the ST, in which “家伙(fellow)” suggests a slightly negative implication of the man, Robinson translates it as “oaf”, a word with the implication of “stupid, large, clumsy” etc, thereby explicitly characterizing the person in a manner only partially implied in the original. (The other translators all simply use “he”, without spelling out the implication.) However, Robinson does not follow the original narrative order. In the second sentence, which is the core of the commentary, instead of repeating the two phrases, Robinson resorts to the expression “when such is the case” to serve the purpose and to ensure the smooth movement of the narration. Together with another added expression “it’s easy for a man”, Robinson’s translation of this judgmental commentary is also directed at a generalized target rather than at a specific one, which reproduces the commentary effect as that in the ST.

The other three translations, by Lee, Li, and Yang, respectively, all have changed the original narrative commentary effect:

Though his frame was large his character was timid. His big body easily led him astray, and afterwards his timidity prevented him from finding a proper solution (Lee, 1938: 305).

He had a stout body and very little courage, puzzling to find some way of avoiding the consequences of his deed (Li, 1949: 26).

He was both burly and timid, making it easy for him to do wrong but hard to set matters right (Yang, 1981: 114).

Like Eoyang, Lee also basically follows the original narrative order. However, he explicitly uses the third-person masculine singular pronouns in both sentences, which changes the original narrative function from a judgmental commentary into an explanatory commentary, with the effect that the commentary is about the specific individual farmhand. Li Ru-mien combines the two original sentences into one in his TT. His combination is a paraphrase, which transfers the basic information about the farmhand of the original sentence but fails to convey the sense of “type” and does not re-produce the original commentary effect. His translation changes the original judgmental commentary into a simple explanation, thus failing to retain the original narrative function. Finally, in Yang’s case, by employing the two value-loaded adjectives “burly and timid” to describe the character, Yang’s version keeps the

meaning but misses the vividness of the figurative language of the original. The participial phrase introduced by “making ...” combines the original two sentences into one in the translated text and summarizes the original idea. The judgmental element in her commentary is also more concerned with the individual than with a type of person, and thus fails to convey the intention of the original narrator. And the “making ...” phrase also makes Yang’s translation more like an explanatory commentary than a judgmental one.

Another example of a judgmental commentary appears in “Zhangfu”. The commentary is made about an old procuress. The context in which the commentary occurs is that two drunken soldiers pass by the brothel boat and hear singing and the playing of a *huqin*²⁰ on the boat. They curse loudly and throw stones at the boat and order the player (the husband, who has come from the countryside to visit his wife, a prostitute on board) to play for them. Everyone on the boat is scared. The procuress attempts to talk to them, in the hope of preventing them from going to the stern where the husband is hiding, but she is addressed as “老婊子, 你不中吃[you old whore, you are no good to eat]”. Upon this the narrator comments:

Example 3.1-5:

²⁰ A two-stringed Chinese musical instrument.

一个老鸨虽说一切丑事做成习惯，什么也不至于红脸，但被人说到“不中吃”时，是多少感到一种羞辱的。[Although an old procuress is accustomed to doing all indecent things, and would not blush at anything, when she is addressed as “no good to eat”, she more or less feels humiliated.]

The first half of the sentence – the concessive clause – reveals the narrator’s judgment and attitude towards a type of people, a procuress in this case; the second half reveals the consistent way Shen Congwen narrates his stories: the narrator never yells, and often expresses strong feelings in an understated way. Commonsense knowledge would lead to the assumption that a procuress under this circumstance must be very much offended, but the narrator only mentions casually that a procuress under such circumstance would “more or less feel humiliated”.

The three existing translations of this story resort to different strategies to render this judgmental commentary. As mentioned previously, judgmental commentaries are more often deleted than are other commentaries, which is, perhaps, because they are the most outspoken means to express the narrator’s, and thereby, the translator’s opinions, and this judgmental commentary has experienced the same fate. It is deleted by Ching and Payne in their translation published in 1947, therefore the narrator’s voice was totally removed. Gladys Yang makes quite a few changes in translating this judgmental commentary:

Although an old procuress is so used to scandalous goings-on of every kind that nothing can make her blush, being called all those dirty names had wounded her pride (Yang, 1981: 138).

It can be seen that some of the details of the original text have been changed. In the first part of her translation, Yang's employment of the expression "so... that..." suggests an obvious explanation and conveys little of the subtlety of the understated narration, which is a key element in forming the calm and placid manner typical of Shen Congwen's narrative style. In the clause that follows, Yang avoids mentioning the specific "dirty expressions" used by the two drunken soldiers in the ST, instead rendering them as "call those dirty names". This phrase expresses the general idea of cursing but misses the particularity of the implicit meaning related to the business of prostitution. The fact that Yang does not stick to the original metaphor, "吃"(eat), which is context-specific in this case, blurs the language particularity, which is characteristically unique in Shen Congwen's writings. In the last part of the commentary, the original "多少感到一种羞辱" ([she] more or less feels humiliated) suggests an active reaction. In the translation, "[being called this] wounded her pride" indicates a passive one. This replacement of an active reaction with a passive one

weakens the understated tone. However, in spite of all these changes, Yang's sentence as a whole functions as a narrative commentary.

Jeffrey Kinkley pays more attention to the details and attempts to explicate the implied meanings of the sentence, besides trying to retain the function of this particular commentary:

Although an old procuress was accustomed to dirty things of every description, and nothing could make her blush any longer, being told that she was “no good any more” had really shamed her (Kinkley, 1995: 49).

In the first part of his translation, Kinkley retains the original calm manner of narration and reveals the habitual mindset of a procuress, which shows the narrator's attitude as does the original text. He attempts to render specific details, such as in his translation of the original “不中吃” as “no good any more”, though his omission of the metaphorical expression “eat” makes it less particularly related to the special business on the boat, and to the local dialect as well. Like Gladys Yang's, his rendering of the second part, replacing the procuress' active reaction with a passive one, suggests a close adherence to the target language, English, and the added adverb “really” changes the understated tone of the original. All in all, in Kinkley's

translation, the changes of details have led to a slight change in meaning and tone, but his version follows the narrative order and fulfills the same commentary function as the original.

In addition, both Yang's and Kinkley's translation have retained the general sense of the original character in the first part of the commentary, that is, the narrator means to comment on a type of procuress, not on this specific one.

There are some judgmental commentaries in Shen's stories which correlate with historical fact or universal truth. In "Biancheng", for instance, near the end of the story, many things have happened: Cuicui's grandfather, the old boatman, has died in a storm; Shunshun's elder son, Tianbao, has drowned in the river, while his younger son, Nuosong, has left home after quarrelling with his father; and the heroine, Cuicui, is now left alone and has no other choice but to wait for the unknown future. The story ends with the following antithesis: "That man (Nuosong) might never return, or he might return tomorrow!"

Before the very end of the story, the narrator makes some comments on the goings-on:

Example 3.1-6:

时候变了，一切也自然不同了，皇帝已不再坐江山，平常人还消说！ [Times

had changed, and everything was of course different. The emperor was no longer reigning over rivers and mountains, let alone the changes for the common people!]

This is once more a comment on the power of time: time decides everything. The original sentence actually contains four pieces of information: times had changed; everything had changed; no emperor was reigning the country; and the common people had unavoidably experienced many changes. All the four pieces of information are included in one sentence in Chinese. The translators have resorted to different strategies to render this judgmental commentary.

Ching and Payne summarize the original commentary, which consequently changes the original narrative style:

Now times had changed. There was no longer an Emperor on the throne (Ching & Payne, 1947: 287).

It is clear that Ching and Payne's translation only keeps half of the information included in the original. The two short and simple sentences immensely speed up the narration, and the two full stops create an impression that the narrator is hurrying to move on to something else. As a result, the translated text fails to reproduce the ease

and calm of the original narrative manner. The two sentences simply present facts, leaving nothing of commentary. The translated text is no longer a judgmental commentary, but has become a simple narration presenting some, but not all, of the information of the original.

Gladys Yang also summarizes the commentary and does not follow the original narrative order either. However, her translation is more target-oriented, and focuses less on the specific original details:

Times change and everything with them. If even the emperor has been dragged off his golden throne, what vicissitudes must be the fate of lesser mortals! (Yang, 1981: 202)

Yang thus combines the first two pieces of information in the original into one simple sentence, which concisely conveys the meaning and at the same time speeds up the narrative tempo. The second sentence of her translation, with the metaphorical expression “the emperor had been dragged off his golden throne” and the word “vicissitudes”, which implies a natural process or tendency in things, and with an exclamation mark, exerts a much strengthened judgmental commentary than does the original text. Besides, her resorting to a present tense also suggests that this is not part

of the story, but a commentary.

Both Ching and Payne, and Gladys Yang, have summarized the commentaries, but their summaries demonstrate visible differences. Ching and Payne have summarized through generalization, omitting specific details and reducing greatly the amount of information in the TT. Gladys Yang, however, has summarized concisely by using brief domesticated expressions. This has produced a succinct and concise text which keeps most of the key information, though without some of the supporting elements of the original text.

Unlike Yang, and Ching and Payne, Kinkley follows closely the original narrative order and present all the four pieces of information:

But times had changed, and with them, all the local customs. If the emperor no longer ruled over the hills and valleys, how tumultuous had it been for ordinary folk! (Kinkley, 2009: 159)

Kinkley's translation gives the four pieces of information in the same order of narration as that of the source text. His rendering of the metaphorical expression “坐江山” (sit over rivers and mountains) into “ruled over the hills and valleys” suggests an effort to retain the original details, although he has altered some pieces of the

information slightly. The last sentence, in a subjunctive mood, together with the exclamation mark, both reproduces the original tone and retains the original effect of the commentary.

Below in Tables 3-3 are the strategies employed by the translators in dealing with judgmental commentaries:

Table 3-3 (A): Synopsis of judgmental commentaries:

STs / translators	commentary retained	Commentary function fulfilled by different means	commentary changed	commentary deleted
“Baizi”(2)				
Edgar Snow(1936)				2
Ching & Payne(1947)				2
Kai-yu Hsu(1981)	2			
“Xiaoxiao”(3)				
Lee Yi-hsieh(1938)	1		2	
Li Ru-mien(1949)	1		1	1
Gladys Yang(1980)	1		2	
E. C. Eoyang(1981)	2		1	
L. S. Robinson(1979)	2	1		
“Zhangfu” (2)				
Ching & Payne(1947)	1			1
Gladys Yang(1980)		1	1	
Jeffrey Kinkley(1995)	2			
“Biancheng”(8)				
Hahn & Shing(1936)	4	1	3	
Ching & Payne(1947)	1	1	4	2
Gladys Yang(1962)	4	4		
Jeffrey Kinkley(2009)	8			

Table 3-3 (B): Synopsis of judgmental commentaries:

Translators	commentary retained	commentary function fulfilled by different means	commentary changed	commentary deleted
Edgar Snow (2)				2 (100%)
Ching & Payne (12)	2	1	4	5 (42%)
Li Ru-mien (3)	1 (33%)		1 (33%)	1 (33%)
Lee Yi-hsieh (3)	1		2 (67%)	
Hahn & Shing (8)	4 (50%)	1	3	
Gladys Yang (13)	5 (38%)	5 (38%)	3	
Kai-yu Hsu (2)	2 (100%)			
E. C. Eoyang (3)	2 (67%)		1	
L. S. Robinson (3)	2 (67%)	1		
Jeffrey Kinkley (10)	10 (100%)			

From these tables, we can see clearly that there are more cases of “change” and “deletion” in the translations of judgmental commentaries than in the translations of explanatory commentaries. Again, scholar translators make more efforts to retain the original commentaries, as is shown in the tables for Kinkley, Hsu, Eoyang, and Robinson. Only early translators, such as Snow, Ching and Payne, and Li, are found to have resorted to deletion, and Gladys Yang is more inclined to resort to different means to fulfill the commentary function.

The judgmental commentaries are more often deleted in the translations than are the explanatory commentaries, thereby totally removing the narrator’s voice. This phenomenon occurred only in the earlier period, and can be detected in all the translations of the 1930s and 40s except that of Hahn and Shing. The scholar translators demonstrate more efforts to retain the original specific details, and attempt

to explicate implied meanings in translation. Another obvious feature of scholar translators is that they try harder to retain the original function of the commentary, which can be easily detected from the examples discussed in the translations of “Xiaoxiao” by Eoyang and Robinson, and those of “Zhangfu” and Biancheng” by Kinkley.

For the L2 translators, they are more likely to follow the original narrative order, as is demonstrated in the translations of “Xiaoxiao” by Eoyang and Lee, which leads to a translated text close to the ST. This strategy is also detected in the translations by the co-translators, Ching and Payne, and Hahn and Shing, which is perhaps a contribution by the L2 translators in the pairs, a trace of their cooperation. However, the L1 scholar translator, Jeffrey Kinkley, also follows the original narrative order in his translations of “Biancheng” and “Zhangfu”, and his translations are closer to the STs than are those of other L1 translators. Generally speaking, the non-scholar L1 translators show more freedom in rendering the narrative functions through different means and often change the function of the commentary, resulting in domesticated translations. This strategy is demonstrated especially clearly in the translations of “Zhangfu” and “Biancheng” by Gladys Yang, who neither follows the original narrative order nor sticks to the original expressions, especially when they are concerned with locality-specific issues, and this usually weakens the particularity of

Shen Congwen's unique narrative style. The strategies she frequently resorts to distinguish her not only from the L2 translators but also from the scholar L1 translators.

To sum up, the translations of commentaries present good evidence of the specific characteristics of the different translators, which this study hopes to work out. The synopses of the translation strategies of the three types of commentaries lead to the following hypotheses. First, as generally assumed, the different periods in which the translations were produced have left obvious traces in the translation products. In the present study, the translations published in the 1930s and 1940s demonstrate similar characteristics. For instance, the translators more freely deleted the commentaries (besides having a tendency to delete some other elements), while translations published in the 1980s onwards seldom reveal deletions. This suggests a sign of the position of translation as well as the translation norm prevailing in the respective periods. Second, obvious differences can be detected between the scholar translators and other translators, with the former more frequently resorting to explication of the original message and exerting more efforts to retain the original commentary function; and the latter more often resorting to summary and generalization, and more freely changing the original function of the commentary. Third, the difference between L1 translators and L2 translators is mainly

demonstrated in how closely they stick to the original narrative order, with the latter following it more closely than the former. In terms of fulfilling the original function of the commentary, no obvious differences between L1 and L2 groups are detected.

3.2 Commentaries on Discourse

Commentaries on discourse refer to those remarks which direct the narrative discourse itself. They are outside the story and do not belong to the recounting of events or the depiction of characters. Instead, they explain how the story is being told. The function of the commentaries on discourse is to direct the smooth movement of the story, or to hold a plot in suspense. Sometimes the narrator might insert his own remarks and address the reader directly, suggesting a direction of the narrative movement from the point of view of an “onlooker”. These are very much the same as what Henry Zhao called directional commentaries, or self-conscious narrations (Chatman’s term).

As has been pointed out, in Chinese literature since the May Fourth fiction, commentaries on discourse are much fewer than in earlier vernacular novels. Although Shen Congwen sometimes resorted to commentaries on discourse, this was mainly in his earlier stories, with fewer in his later works. In the four selected stories there are far fewer commentaries on discourse than on story.

Take his novella “Biancheng” as an example. There are two commentaries on

discourse. One of them resembles the traditional operation of the narrative mechanism in old Chinese vernacular stories to deal with two events happening at the same time. While recounting one of them, the narrator has to inform the reader that another event is simultaneously happening somewhere else. This is referred to as “huakai liangduo, gebiao yizhi(花开两朵, 各表一枝)”²¹. This commentary in “Biancheng” is situated in the context of events that happen on the fifth day of the fifth month of the lunar calendar, an important traditional Chinese festival known as Dragon-boat Festival, when dragon boat competition is the major event for the local community. Cuicui, the heroine of the story, goes to town with her grandfather to see the dragon boat competition. It has been arranged for her to watch the competition from the stilt-house of Shunshun, a local influential who is in charge of the wharf. Her grandfather, however, meets an acquaintance and goes with him to see a new watermill. After describing what happens with the old man, the narrator turns to tell what is going on with Cuicui, with the following directional commentary:

Example 3.2-1:

这里两人把话说妥后, 就过另一处看一只顺顺新近买来的三舱船去了。河街上顺顺吊脚楼方面, 却有了如下事情。 [Here the two men had their talking settled, and went to another place to see a three-cabin junk Shunshun had newly

²¹ An expression frequently used by story tellers in early Chinese vernacular stories, which means, literally, that while two flowers blossom at the same time, the narrator is able to tell about one only at a time.

bought. While in Shunshun's stilt house on the river street, the following things happened.]

This commentary on discourse is typical of the traditional way a story was told in early Chinese vernacular fiction, with the narrator suggesting the simultaneous events by indicating different places, "here..., and there..."

In the translations of this commentary on discourse, though changes of detail are discovered and ways of rendering the commentary vary from one another, all the four translators have chosen to retain the original function of the commentary. Hahn and Shing have included the narrator's inserted remarks to address the reader directly:

When the two men had had their talk they went along to another place to examine the three new cabined boats which Shun Shun had lately bought. *Now we may tell* what was going on meanwhile in Shun Shun's room overhanging the river (Hahn & Shing, 1938: 280).

In their translation, Hahn and Shing closely follow the original narrative order, though they mistranslate “三舱船”, which is “a three-cabin boat”, not “three cabined boats”. Nevertheless, they retain the original function of the commentary. Between the two original sentences they add something which does not exist in the ST – the expression

“Now we may tell”. The narrator thus jumps out to talk to the reader directly. The commentary functions to guide the smooth movement of the narration and helps transfer naturally from the story about Grandpa to that about Cuicui. In the ST, the original narrator does not jump out to speak directly to the reader, but his doing so in the translated version leads to a stronger directional-commentary effect.

Gladys Yang’s translation of the directional commentary is more concise and brief:

This discussion over, the two of them go off to see a big new junk Shun Shun has bought. Meanwhile there have been developments in the wharf-master’s house on stilts (Yang, 1981:104).

Yang employs the word “meanwhile” to suggest that two events happen at the same time. The phrase at the beginning of the sentence, “this discussion over”, leads to a faster narrative tempo, as does the summarized rendering of the second sentence, which omit some of the information in the original, such as “三舱船”(the three-cabin boat). Nevertheless, the two sentences together achieve the commentary effect. Like that in the ST, the narrator in her TT also directs the movement of the narration without jumping out to address the reader directly. The TT keeps the original function

of the commentary.

Another translator, Jeffrey Kinkley, also demonstrates brevity and conciseness.

However, he pays more attention to the retention of every bit of information.

With that settled, the two went to see a new, three-cabin boat that Shunshun had just purchased. Meanwhile, things had been going on in Shunshun's stilt house along River Street (Kinkley, 2009: 81).

Kinkley's version follows the original narrative order, but with more concise expressions than Hahn and Shing's version. Unlike Yang, Kinkley retains all the details in the original text and transfers every information point to his TT. Moreover, Kinkley is the only translator who reproduces the exact meaning of the character “妥”, which indeed means “settled”. Like Yang, Kinkley employs the word “meanwhile”, and his translation delivers the message that two events are happening at the same time, retaining the original directional-commentary function.

The biggest number of directional commentaries among all the four selected stories is in Shen's short story “Baizi”, which was first published in 1928. Although it marks the beginning of the mature period of Shen Congwen's writings, “Baizi”

showcases features of early Chinese writings and exhibits the most traces of the traditional vernacular stories of all the four selected works. Commentaries on discourse are evident signs of this. Altogether, there are seven commentaries on discourse in this story. Given the short length of the story – seven pages – this is not a small number. The predominating translation strategy for these commentaries on discourse adopted by all the three translators is deletion. Only occasionally are some of these commentaries translated. Presented below are the cases where the narrator's inserted remarks, the commentaries on discourse (in bold-types), are detected.

1. 桅上用红灯，**不消说** (not to mention) 是夜里了。
2. 这个水码头夜里世界不是平常的，**你们看** (look)。
3. **不必问** (no need to ask)，牛肉比酸菜更为符合这类“飞毛腿”胃口，
4. **如今是说** (now let's say) 夜里又正落小雨，
5. **这是船夫中之一个** (this is one of the boatmen)，名叫柏子。
6. **我们全明白** (we all understand)，这些只是吃酸菜南瓜臭牛肉以及说下流话的口，
7. **一点不差** (yes, that's right)，这柏子就是日里爬桅子唱歌的柏子

Of the three translators, Edgar Snow deletes six of the seven commentaries. He also has a tendency of deleting many paragraphs which supply either background information or the narrator's comments, so that five of the directional commentaries –

numbers 1, 2, 4, 6, and 7 – disappear with the deleted paragraphs. The sentence containing number 3 is translated, but the directional commentary is deleted. The only exception is number 5, which, actually, has the weakest effect in terms of its directional commentary function, for it almost merges into the narration and can be hardly regarded as a commentary. Snow translates it as “Let it be told of one of these sailors”. The structure “let it be told” suggests the narrator’s inserted voice, and makes the vague commentary of the ST a very strong one in his TT, his translated sentence clearly functioning as a directional commentary.

However, Snow adds a directional commentary of his own. In the original text, after a brief introduction to the meeting between Baizi and his lover, the narration goes like this:

Example 3.2-2:

柏子...便擒了妇人的腰倒向床边去。

房中那盏满堂红油灯是亮堂堂的，照了一堆泥足迹在黄色楼板上。

[Baizi ... grabbed the woman at her waist and fell down towards the bed.

The red lantern lighting all the room was bright, shining on a group of muddy footprints on the yellow wooden floor.]

There is no commentary here, but Snow inserts his own remark, as is shown below:

Pai Tzu ... taking her round the waist, lifted her to the bed. *You could not see them in the room at all*, but under the dim circle of light beneath the red lantern were the prints of muddy feet (Snow, 1937: 185).

The expression in italics is obviously the translator's addition, which is a direct address to the reader. The omniscient narrator in the translated text jumps out to direct the reader to follow what is going on so as to understand the story, and this added remark functions as a commentary on discourse.

Ching Ti and Robert Payne delete all the seven directional commentaries of the ST, one of which, number 6, disappears with the whole sentence in which it appears. For the other six cases, the sentences containing the commentaries are all translated, but with the directional commentaries deleted. However, Ching and Payne also add a directional commentary of their own. When the boatmen go ashore and reach their destination – the brothel houses – the original text begins the description of the river street with “灯光多无数(Lights were innumerable)”. Ching and Payne render this as “From the beach *you can see* innumerable lamps like these”, the phrase “you can see” being the translator's inserted remark, which addresses the reader directly and functions as a directional commentary.

In his translation, Kai-yu Hsu deletes six of the seven commentaries on discourse,

which is surprising, as deletion is almost undetectable in his translation of any other elements. The only commentary on discourse reserved in his translation is number 7, which Hsu renders as “Yes, this was exactly the same Pai-tzu who had sung his songs on top of the mast” (Hsu, 1981: 224). The expression “yes” suggests the narrator’s compliance with the reader, and serves as a directional commentary.

As Hsu does not mention anything of his translation in the introductory part of the 1981 anthology in which his translation appears, we can only guess that he has deleted almost all commentaries on discourse because they are purely technical matters in writing which are no longer popular in modern fiction, either in China or in the English-speaking world. They must have occupied the lowest level of Kai-yu Hsu’s “hierarchy of values to be preserved in the translation” (Koller, 1989: 104) and are not treated as important, so that he feels more at ease to delete them than he does with other elements.

In the other two stories “Xiaoxiao” and “Zhangfu”, there exist one or two commentaries on discourse, but the commentary effect is not as strong as those in “Baizi”, and they are almost immersed in the narration, so that the way they are treated in translation demonstrates little difference.

From the examples discussed above, we see there is a seeming tendency in the

translations of the earlier period to have the narrator jump out to address the reader directly, and to retain or add the narrator's inserted remarks, to strengthen commentary on discourse. Such cases have been detected in the translation of "Biancheng" by Hahn and Shing, as well as in the translations of "Baizi" by Snow and by Ching and Payne, as shown above.

It might be the case that when commentaries on discourse are concerned, the prevailing literary norm for literary form has a stronger binding power than for other types of commentary. Therefore, there are no big differences among translators in the manner of translating commentaries on discourse, regardless of their different backgrounds.

CHAPTER FOUR LYRICAL NARRATIVE STYLE

The second narrative feature to be discussed in this dissertation is Shen Congwen's long-acclaimed lyrical narration, which contributes greatly to his fame as a master of style.

Lyrical narration is a distinctive feature of Shen Congwen's narrative style, and is well-recognized among literary critics. His pastoral descriptions of the story circumstances, restrained affectionate depictions of characters and events, iterative narrative mode, and his inventive uses of figurative language all contribute to his unique characteristics of lyrical narrative discourse.

David Der-wei Wang believes that Shen Congwen establishes himself as, among other roles, a "lyrical stylist". Wang explains that "lyricism is often described as a narrative mode that presents an atemporal effect, 'spatializing' the linear sequence of time in pursuit of an epiphanic look into the depth of life" (Wang, 1992: 224). He regards Shen Congwen's lyrical discourse as "critical lyricism", through which Shen reveals "the immensity of perception, letting the darkest realities situate themselves in the music of human memory" (Wang, 1992: 20). Wang's observation is insightful, as Shen Congwen is indeed capable of treating various kinds of themes and subjects in a lyrical manner, even such pathetic subjects as war, death, prostitution and child brides.

The lyrical narrative makes it possible for Shen Congwen to present his home region and its people, with subdued passion and pathos. “In a lyrical style, Shen Congwen explores West Hunan both as a geographical territory and as a tropological locus” (Wang, 1992: 19).

It is precisely Shen’s lyrical style that creates problems for translation, as it is well-understood that to re-present a writer’s style in another language is very difficult, if not totally impossible. C. T. Hsia mentions that “Shen Ts’ung-wen defies translation” (Hsia, 1971: 207), which suggests that it is the style of Shen Congwen that is almost untranslatable. (This might be true for all great writers with their own unique styles.) It goes without saying that the fifteen translations of the four selected stories of this present study vary greatly from one to another in terms of the translation of Shen’s lyrical style, and it is in our interest here to see what different strategies the different translators have resorted to in rendering Shen’s lyrical narrative style.

There are apparent narrative features of Shen Congwen’s works which contribute to creating the lyrical narrative effect. The most outstanding of these is his iterative narration, as is defined by Genette (Genette, 1980), through which Shen Congwen weaves together places and people, allowing “the one” to reflect “the other”, and achieving the effect of embodying a “type” of people through stories of individuals –

that is, creating a oneness out of the many, within an atemporal framework and through repetitive events. Among these iterative narrations, the main function of many episodes is to provide an informative frame or background to prepare for the opening of the story, or to express lyrical experience rather than to advance the story's plot, resembling the "symbolic function" episodes discussed by Yu-kung Kao (Kao, 1977). These episodes recount the environment in which the characters live and move, and serve as the backdrop for the story. They also serve to demonstrate Shen Congwen's best descriptive abilities. His painter-like depiction of the idyllic beauty of the landscapes, together with his nostalgic imaginary visions, is exuberantly manifested in these episodes. As Kinkley points out, "[t]he inventiveness of Shen's fiction would always lie in expression and observation, rather than in events or characters" (Kinkley, 1987: 94), which is a keen observation that supports this descriptive feature of these symbolic function episodes, a key element of Shen's lyrical style.

Another feature of his lyrical narrative style is his literary language. He is one of the pioneers of modern Chinese vernacular in literary writing, and absorbs his native West Hunan dialect into his works. Evidence of this is his inventiveness in employing metaphoric language – the images that appear in his metaphoric expressions are fresh and unique, drawn from real life experience and regional objects, and full of vivid local specificity. Another aspect of his literary language is his fondness of resorting to

understatement, with the narrator telling his story in an understated and casual tone. Shen reveals the “absurdities of the real world by understating rather than exaggerating them” (Wang, 1992: 213), and he either creates an understated tone at the overall textual level or employs specific understatements in his narration, both of which strategies, as he employs them, suggest a lyrical quality, often with a subdued tone.

These characteristics of lyricism contribute to the distinctive freshness and uniqueness of Shen’s writings. They interact with each other and are indispensable for each other, and jointly constitute Shen Congwen’s lyrical narrative style.

We will move to the first characteristic of Shen’s lyrical narrative features – the iterative narration.

4.1 Iterative Narration

Iterative mode is a narrative mode that refers to the type of narrative which recounts one time in the discourse something that happens many times in the story. In this type of narration, as is pointed out by Genette, “a single narrative utterance takes upon itself several occurrences together of the same event” (Genette, 1980: 116). Der-wei Wang mentions that iterative narrative “condenses recurrent events over a period of time into a single narrative and thus renders a synchronic overlay of the diachronicity of events” (Wang, 1992: 230).

Gerard Genette is “the first narratologist to have analyzed iterative discourse in literary narrative” (Chatelain, 1998: 20). In his *Narrative Discourse*, Genette discusses in detail three areas – order, duration, and frequency, with the third area “frequency” focusing on how often an event occurs, where iterative narrative mode occupies a large portion of his analysis (Genette, 1980: 113-160). Bridgeman considers that Genette’s discussion of the three areas demonstrates that “temporal relationships between story and discourse can produce interesting effects” (Bridgeman, 2007: 54). Daniele Chatelain, in his *Perceiving and Telling*, argues that narrative presents a space-time continuum, and that iterative discourse should be seen “not only as the expression of repetition of actions but of objects as well” (Chatelain, 1998: 188). It is not only temporal, as fully discussed by Genette, but also spatial, as juxtaposed objects form part of the scene together with events, so that “plural is the fundamental form of iterative discourse” (Chatelain, 1998: 12). Another narratologist, J. Hillis Miller, also points out that “events or scenes may be duplicated within the text” (Miller, 1982: 2). On the basis of this conception, Chatelain accounts for the functions of iterative discourse within a space-time continuum narrative, going beyond Genette’s analysis which focuses only on temporal structure features of iterative narration.

Taking into account both Genette’s and Chatelain’s points of view, this study

finds that the iterative mode is in most of Shen Congwen's writings. It is one of the most distinctive features in Shen's narration, and plays an indispensable role in forming the unique specificity of Shen Congwen's style. In the four selected stories, Shen's iterative mode involves both temporal and spatial discourse, with a heterodiegetic narrator presenting both his perceiving and his telling of both events and environments. As Liu Hongtao points out, "iterative narration could reveal the stylistic features of Shen Congwen's stories ... and iterative narration has contributed immensely in the formation of the so-called 'regional fiction', 'native soil fiction', or 'prose-style fiction'" (Liu, 2005: 169; my translation), conceptions frequently held by the critics of Shen Congwen's works.

The iterative literary effect in Shen Congwen's stories is achieved through several means. First of all there are the verbal devices which suggest iterative narrative, such as adverbs or adverbial phrases implying a habitual action or conventional practice, and the generalized signifiers: the personal nouns or pronouns indicating a type of person rather than a single individual. Second, the prevailing atemporal sense of the circumstances in his stories also plays a part. Sometimes temporal space spans a period of time, or designates no definite time, enabling the repetition of actions within a certain spatio-temporal scope. Third, the frequent descriptions of landscape scenery as well as the environments juxtaposed with the

events – “the repetitions of objects”, in Chatelain’s term – also designate a quality of being replicable and repeatable.

These aspects of the iterative narrative are well fused in every part of the narration and contribute to the lyrical narrative style of Shen Congwen’s writings.

4.1.1 Verbal devices suggesting iterative narrative

Shen Congwen employs many adverbs or adverbial phrases whose meanings indicate habitual and frequent occurrence, including “常常(often)”, “通常(generally)”, “照例(in accordance with convention, or as custom required)”, “必(must be)”, etc., to create a sense of repeated activity. In “Zhangfu”, for instance, when he depicts the type of husbands who send their wives out to do business on the brothel boats, and when they need to pay a visit to their wives, Shen Congwen uses adverbial phrases, accompanied by easily recognizable customary practices, to suggest the iterative event:

Example 4.1-1:

这种丈夫，到什么时候，想及那在船上做生意的年青的媳妇，或逢年过节，照规矩要见见媳妇的面了，媳妇不能回来，自己便换了一身浆洗干净的衣服，腰带上挂了那个工作时常不离口的短烟袋，背了整箩整篓的红薯、糍粑之类，赶到市上来...[This kind of husband, when they think of their young wives doing business on the boats, or during Lunar New Year or on other festival

occasions when they should meet their wives as local customs demand, while their wives are not able to come back, will themselves change into newly starched clean clothes, hang on their waistbands the short pipes which they always hold in their mouths while working, carry whole baskets of sweet potatoes and baked rice cakes and the like, and hurry to the city...]

At the very beginning of this narration, the narrator specifies “这种丈夫” (this kind of husband), which determines the basic tone for this narrative discourse. As it is about a type of husband and not a particular one, the actions described will undoubtedly not be single ones but repeated actions taken by the husbands under similar circumstances. The adverbial expressions “到什么时候” (sometimes when), “逢年过节” (on Lunar New Year’s Day or on festival occasions), and “照规矩”(according to conventions or local customs) all indicate different occasions or habitual practices. They express the meaning that the activities are repeated and do not occur only one time. The descriptions that follow – that is, the general appearances of the men, the starched clothes, the pipes on their waists, and the baskets they carry – can all always be found in the local community, and reveal some typical scenes of the daily life there, repeated time and again by different individuals. The similar or like traits of a series of events are considered in a synthetic manner, and no accidental or specific occurrence is indicated. By employing this iterative mode of narration, Shen Congwen reveals to

the reader the way his poor country folks live. The sad part of this is that the local people accept this way of life as it is, and consider it perfectly normal. Shen does not blame the prostitutes, “who are victims of society, symbolic of the fallen state of women in bourgeois society” (Kinkley, 1987: 101), nor does he have his narrator stand out to blame the society and its false values, and this is different from the critical realism that was practiced by his contemporaries. The calm and detached manner the narrator employs to recount the story arouses all the more the compassionate human responses of the readers.

A comparison of the different translations brings to us the different choices the translators have made and the different narrative effects resulting in their translations. Presented below are the two translations made by Kinkley and by Yang (italics mine).

When a husband in this situation misses the young wife out on her boat doing her business, or if it is New Year's or another holiday when he ought to arrange to see her, he'll put on his freshly washed and newly starched clothes, hang from his waistband the short-stemmed pipe that never leaves his mouth when he's working, shoulder a whole basket full of sweet potatoes, baked corn-and-rice biscuits, or the like, and set off for the city ... (Kinkley, 1995: 31)

If a husband missed his wife doing business on a boat, or wanted to see her during a festival, since she could not go home, he would change into freshly laundered clothes, hang at his waist the tobacco pouch he always wore at work and make his way to town with, on his back, a whole crate of sweet potatoes, cakes of sticky rice and the like (Yang, 1981: 121).

Kinkley translates the passage in great detail. At the very beginning, “a husband in this situation” tells that the character concerned is not a specific individual who can be easily spotted, but a type, and this corresponds to the intention of the original narrator. The adverbial expressions “when...”, “if it is New Year’s or another holiday when...”, and “when he ought to arrange...” all suggest a non-specific occasion, which implies several possible occasions or a habitual practice. These verbal choices express the repetitions of events that the original narrator intends to convey, and the use of simple present tense in the English text suggests a repetitive and habitual action too. His choices of adverbial expressions help guarantee that the TT has a similar iterative narrative function as that of the ST. The descriptions that follow, like those in the ST, also express the repetition of objects by providing the general appearances shared by the local fellows, including the starched clothes, the short pipes hanging at their waists which never leave their mouths during working, and the baskets full of local

produce. Through an almost literal rendering of these details, Kinkley manages to transfer to the TT all the key information points in the ST which constitute the building blocks for the local particularity and present an iterative narration similar to that of the original. The seemingly indifferent manner of the narrator's telling everything in the TT resembles the subdued and disengaged narrative style in the ST. It is clear that Kinkley exerts obvious efforts to re-produce the verbal iterative expressions and tries to convey as much as possible the original narrative features in his translation.

In Gladys Yang's rendering, at the very beginning, the phrase "if a husband..." suggests a type of husband; the expression "during a festival" implies times during different festival occasions; and the phrase "he would change..." is more often connected with a series of events than with an accidental or specific event. All these guarantee a narration of repeated events. However, the narrative information in her translation is less than that of the original, for she omits quite a few information points, such as the starched clothes. The omission removes the local specificity that the local fellows tend to starch their clothes, besides washing them. She resorts to brief expressions which result in a summary of the narration. Together with her omissions, her translated text obviously accelerates the narrative, so that the narrative rhythm in her TT is faster than that of the ST. However, her translation, on the whole, expresses

the sense of repetition and conveys the iterative narrative mode of the original.

Summarizing translation can also be detected in other translators' works. In translating "Xiaoxiao", for instance, Li Ru-mien frequently deletes or summarizes the original text. Shen Congwen opens "Xiaoxiao" with an iterative discourse to give background knowledge for the story, such as the habitual practices of the wedding ceremonies in the countryside in the lunar twelfth month; Xiaoxiao's case as an example of a motherless child; what she does in her tiny husband's family during days and at nights; and how she grows, in spite of the harshness of life. There are six paragraphs, some of them rather long, that provide detailed background information. In his translation, Li Ru-mien deletes the last of these, and summarizes each of the other five paragraphs with one or two sentences. Presented below is the beginning of the fifth paragraph, an almost page-long paragraph in the ST:

Example 4.1-2:

天晴落雨日子混下去，每日抱抱丈夫，也帮同家中做点杂事，能动手的就动手。又时常到溪沟里去洗衣，搓尿片，一面还捡拾有花纹的田螺给坐在身边的小丈夫玩。到了夜里睡觉，便常常做这种年龄人所做过的梦，梦到...

[With fine and rainy weather, days go by. Every day she carries her husband, helps with family chores, and does whatever she can. Very often she goes to the stream to wash clothes or nappies, while picking up patterned snails to give to

her tiny husband sitting beside her to play with. When she sleeps at nights, she often dreams whatever can be dreamed of at her age. She dreams that...]

The adverbial expressions in this paragraph suggest either a period of time or repetitions of time which decide the iterative mode of the discourse. The very beginning phrase “天晴落雨(fine weather and rainy days)” determines a temporal space of many different days, even years, so that the activities taking place within these days or years are repetitions. “每日(everyday)”, “时常(often)”, “常常(frequently)”, and “到了夜里(when nights come)” all suggest repetition. Through these expressions the discourse achieves the effect of iteration, as it focuses on the repetition of events. In the part that follows, the narrator tells what kind of dreams Xiaoxiao has and how she has to get up to comfort her crying husband in the small hours. All these activities are routine and repeated, one day after another, and “Xiaoxiao”, like anyone else, performs whatever she is expected to do. The narration suggests the idea that the characters in “Xiaoxiao” simply repeat their lives day after day, generation after generation. They never question their fate. For them, whatever will be will be. This is the practice of “impassive acceptance by country people of their harsh fate” (Kinkley, 1987: 182). In their lives, time and nature play decisive roles in everything. The sense of repetition therefore becomes a fundamental element for understanding the characters and their attitudes towards life.

In his translation, Li Ru-mien simply summarizes the original, almost page-long, iterative section and renders the whole paragraph in two sentences, as shown below.

She was with her husband everyday. Often she went to the stream to wash linen and would pick striped shells for her husband to play with as he sat by her side (Li, 1949: 20).

Li translates the original long paragraph into these two sentences, with most of the narrative information in the ST missing. He deletes all the aforementioned verbal devices in the ST, destroying the building blocks of the original iterative narration. His first sentence is a mere summary, with all details removed. His second one retains the iterative narration of the original, but still omits some information points, such as “washing the nappies”. The two sentences in his translation suggest a sense of repetition, but they contain too few details to represent the original language features and to reproduce the original iterative narrative style. The original narrator’s tone and the narrated events are reduced to almost non-existence, and the narrative rhythm is greatly sped up. Li Ru-mien’s translation of “Xiaoxiao” suggests the repetition of activities in the part he translates, but he does not keep much of the iteratively narrated passages, and therefore his translated text does not reproduce the original

narrative style. As a result, his translation gives a very partial and incomplete impression of Shen Congwen's stories, and might be misleading to TT readers who have not read Shen Congwen's works previously.

Generalized nouns or pronouns are another type of verbal device Shen Congwen employs to create an iterative effect in narrative discourse. Belonging to this group are expressions such as “不拘是谁(no matter who)”, “妇人(woman)”, “水手(sailor)”, “凡是...的(all those who)”, “大哥(Elder Brother)”, “这些人(these people)”, to mention but a few, which all denote groups or types of people. By referring to people without specific individual identities, the narrator indicates a repetition of activities, so that the events involving these people are series of events rather than single ones.

In “Baizi” we find examples of these types of nouns and pronouns. Almost half of the story presents the activities of the sailors as types, not as individual ones. Junks arrive at and depart from the port, and sailors load and unload the goods, climb masts to handle tangled ropes, and go ashore to meet their lovers – the prostitutes. All these events are part of the sailors' daily lives. They might take place among different junks and sailors, but they demonstrate common activities of the local area. When the narrator tells about the relationship between the sailors and the prostitutes in the stilt houses, there is a paragraph of general introduction, which is full of generalized nouns

or pronouns. These generalized expressions are highlighted in bold-types in the following passage.

Example 4.1-3:

女人帮助**这些无家水上人**，把一切劳苦一切期望从**这些人**心上取去，放进的是类乎烟酒的兴奋与醉痴。在**每一个妇人**身上，**一群水手**这样那样做着那顶切实的梦，预备将这一月储蓄的铜钱和精力，全部倾倒在**这妇人**身上，**他们**却从不曾预备要人怜悯，也不知道可怜自己。 [Women help these homeless people who live on the water, taking away all hardship and hope from the hearts of these people and putting into them tobacco- and liquor-like excitement and intoxication. On every woman, a group of sailors in this way or that dream the most realistic dreams, ready to pour onto the woman all the copper coins and energy they have saved up for the whole month. But these people never ask for sympathy from others, and they don't know to pity themselves either.]

This short paragraph includes seven generalized nouns or pronouns which are used to designate two types of people: women and sailors. The very first noun phrase “女人 (woman or women)” can be understood as singular or plural. It thus designates a type of person, the “woman” type. The following two expressions of this type, “每一个妇人 (every woman)” and “这妇人 (the woman)” are both singular in form, but they do not refer to any specific woman. She can be anyone of her kind. Thus the conceptual

meanings here are not concrete, as the terms used are generalized signifiers. They designate a repetition of events involving different participants. The other group of expressions, the expressions designating the “sailor type”, are all plural: “这些无家水上人(these homeless living-on-the-water people)”, “这些人(these people)”, “一群水手(a group of sailors)”, and “他们(they)”. It is obvious that the story of a sailor and a prostitute is not an event which happens only once, but a story which repeats time and again with different protagonists of similar kinds, and is a very common one along the river. This oneness-out-of-the-many is the key to the understanding of the iterative narrative mode, which produces a quality of a type drawn from a demonstration of an individual.

The deletion or omission of these verbal devices leads to a change of the iterative narrative style, as well as a change of information transfer and of semantic meaning. In the three existing translations of “Baizi”, Edgar Snow deletes this whole paragraph, leaving no trace of repetition, and therefore no trace of the iterative narrative style. Ching and Payne partially translate the iterative narration, but delete the first sentence. Hsu makes some changes of the verbal devices, but keeps the original iterative narration:

And each woman was the centre of their real and daring dreams, and they were

prepared to pour on her person all the money and all the energy they had stored up in a month. They did not demand sympathy and they did not think of pitying themselves (Ching & Payne, 1947: 17).

The women helped them, replacing their poverty, hard life, and expectations with excited intoxication, like wine, like tobacco. Over each of these women a crowd of boatmen dreamed their dreams, most realistic and courageous dreams, ready to shower on her all the money and all the energy they had saved up for a month.

They asked for nobody's sympathy; they were not at all sorry for themselves (Hsu, 1981: 223-224).

Ching and Payne delete the first sentence of the original, leaving out the introductory part together with the plural nouns for the women and the sailors, which undermines the fundamental thematic conception. Of the second original sentence, their expression "each woman" for "每一个妇人(every woman)" suggests the repetition of events by different protagonists, though the phrase focuses on the individual. As to the sailors type, all the generalized expressions are rendered as "they" or its derivative forms, which keeps the plural sense, though it reduces the variety in the original language style. Their translation as a whole keeps the basic sense of the iterative

narrative mode. Ching and Payne do not keep all of the original information points, which reduces the local particularity, so that the omissions present only a partial representation of the ST.

Hsu basically reserves the iterative mode of narration. For the generalized nouns or pronouns designating the “woman type”, he employs the phrases “the women” and “each of these women” to suggest more than one occasion, though these nouns indicate a narrower scope than those of the original. The word “her” in his second sentence indicates one member of the group, but does not suggest a recognizable identity. Therefore, Hsu’s translation reproduces the original iterative narration.

4.1.2 Iterative descriptions of circumstances

Some passages in Shen’s stories do not directly tell the story proper, but present the backdrops that lead to the advancement of the story or frame the circumstances in which the main characters act and move, with an omniscient narrator explicitly accounting for what he or she knows. The function these passages serve is what Warhol calls the “testimonial function” (Warhol, 1989: 5), which in our case suggests that these passages are supportive and testimonial to the story proper. To render these testimonial passages, translators have resorted to various strategies, from complete deletion, to summarization, to detailed explanation.

One paragraph in the beginning section of “Baizi” can serve as an illustration:

Example 4.1-4

可是在这情形中，有些船，却有无数黑汉子，用他的毛手毛脚，盘着大的圆的黑铁桶从舱中滚出，也是那么摇摇荡荡跌到岸边泥滩上了。还有方形用铁皮束腰的洋布，有海带，有鱿鱼，有药箱……这些东西同搭客一样，在船舱中紧挤着卧了二十天或十二天，如今全应当登岸了。登岸的人各自还家，各自找客栈，各自吃喝。这些货物则各自为一些大脚婆子来抱之负之，送到沿河各个堆栈里去。

[But under this circumstance, on some junks, there are numerous dark men, who, with their hairy hands and hairy feet, drive huge round black iron casks rolling out of the cabin, swaying and swinging in a similar way [as the passengers], and tumbling to the dirt beach along the bank. There are also square bundles of foreign cloth tied in the middle with iron bands, and seaweeds, squids, medicine boxes... All these things, like the passengers, have been lying packed in the cabin for twenty or twelve days, and are ready to go ashore now. Of those who go ashore, each finds his own home, each looks for his own inn, and each has his own food and drinks. Of these cargoes, however, each is carried by some women with big feet [unbound feet] to the warehouses along the river.]

This paragraph presents a common scene at the river port: how the unloading of the junk is performed, what cargo the junk carries and who are responsible for the

unloading. The sailors here are similar to their hero-like fellow crewmen, who are busy with the ropes on the masts, as depicted earlier in the story. Also sun-burned and hairy, these sailors are unloading the cargoes from the junk: the black iron containers and the bundles of dried squids, seaweeds, herbs and foreign cotton cloth, all of which are staple of trade along the river and suggest the distinctive regional specificity. After the sailors have moved all the goods to the bank, some local women carry them to the warehouses along the bank. These women have not had their feet bound (a practice prevailing in many areas in China in the old days), and are doing the sort of work which is usually expected of men in other places. The sailors and women and cargoes and activities are all common in this area and the passage suggests a repetition of events and people.

The three translators demonstrate different translation strategies to cope with this paragraph. Edgar Snow deletes the whole paragraph (and also most of the other testimonial passages – he deletes several entire paragraphs, and this will be discussed later). Ching Ti and Robert Payne summarize it. Kai-yu Hsu is the only one who demonstrates visible efforts to provide details to render this kind of testimonial passages into English. Below is his translation (numbers are inserted for the convenience of analysis):

①*Some other boats were hard at work.* ②There, many *suntanned faces and suntanned bodies* were busy, with *the same* hairy hands and legs, rolling black metal drums off the boats. ③The drums rolled *along the gangplanks* and, wobbling a bit, tumbled to rest on the muddy shore. ④*More freight crates came pouring forth:* square bundles of textiles tied with metal strips, *round bundles of dried kelp and dried squid and herb medicines.*⑤Like the passengers, these bundles had stayed packed together on board for a couple of weeks, and now were due to be liberated ashore. ⑥The passengers got off the boat, each seeking his own way home, or his own inn, and managing his own room and board; the freight bundles one after another *tumbled into the arms of a troop of big-footed village women* who carried them to the warehouses (Hsu, 1981: 222-223, italics mine).

In this paragraph, the narrator explains the mundane job which is one part of life along the Chenzhou River. Kai-yu Hsu makes effort to explain in detail, or adds details to explicate the meanings, so that in his translation, “黑汉子” [dark men] are “suntanned faces and suntanned bodies”, “海带” and “鱿鱼”[seaweed and squid] are “round bundles of dried kelp/dried squid”, and “药材”[herbs] are “round bundles of herb medicines”. All the italics suggest the added details or detailed explanations,

which demonstrate his attempts to rationalize the text, or to make the meaning more explicit and intelligible. The first sentence of the TT is an added transitional sentence, to make the passage more cohesive with the former one. The expression “the same” is added in the second sentence to refer to the sailors mentioned earlier in the story, and the phrase “along the gangplanks” in the third sentence is added to achieve an intra-textual correspondence with the earlier description that the passengers sway and swing along the gangplanks to the shore. These added explanations provide a more vivid picture and a more logical narration. The very beginning of the fourth sentence is another element added for coherence, which aims to make the description more logical.

However, the added details in Hsu’s translation somewhat change the original iterative narrative. The first added sentence (sentence one of the TT) indicates a single activity rather than a repeated one. The same function is performed by the added beginning part of sentence four of the TT, which also suggests a singular event. The detailed explanations of the activities in sentences two, three and six (the italics) all give a sense of specific events. Hsu makes sure that all the details of the story are rendered, but he does not focus on the form of the narration, or on how the original narrator narrates the story. The original iterative narrative function is not much heeded in this translated text.

Unlike Kai-yu Hsu's translation and the original text, Ching Ti and Robert Payne simply summarize the event:

Meanwhile, too, innumerable dark-skinned men were using their hairy hands to roll large iron casks from the deck on to the beach. There had been all kinds of things stored on the deck during the last twelve or twenty days, and now they were carried ashore and from there hauled up to the warehouses by women laborers (Ching & Payne, 1947: 16).

In Ching Ti and Robert Payne's translation, the four ST sentences are reduced to two in the TT. From the space occupied by the two translations, we see that Hsu's translation (142 words) is more than two times longer than that of Ching and Payne (57 words). The most typical feature of Ching and Payne's TT is their resort to general expressions. For instance, in the first sentence, the ST depicts a process employing different verbs, such as “盘(to drive)”, “滚(to roll)”, “摇摇荡荡(to sway and swing)”, and “跌(to tumble down)”, which presents not only a vivid picture of the port scene but also the hard labour carried out by the sailors; while the TT resorts to the simple phrase “to roll large iron casks from the deck on to the beach” for all these actions, which removes the details and fails to convey the hardness of the labor of unloading

created by the original literary language. Another wording is that of “all kinds of things” for the various cargoes, which omits the details of the cargoes listed by the original narrator. Their rendering of “women laborers” for “大脚婆子” removes the special characteristics of the women and eliminates the local specificity. The summarizing strategy employed here provides the translated text with a generalization of the activities and happenings, leaving little trace of the original local color. The translation provides less narrative information about the background of the event and characters, though it produces a sense of the original iterative narration.

As mentioned earlier, the iterative descriptions are not at the centre of the story, but give illustrations to help induce a proper understanding of the life in West Hunan in which the events and characters are involved. They are more frequently found deleted in some translations. An extreme case of the deletion of these testimonial passages can be found in Edgar Snow’s translation of “Baizi”. Besides deleting this paragraph, he deletes five other entire paragraphs which are testimonial episodes (he also deletes commentary paragraphs) that supply indispensable information for understanding the kind of life Shen Congwen intends to describe. We present all the deleted testimonial paragraphs below to give a clearer idea about exactly what has been deleted in Snow’s translation:

Paragraph 1:

在各样匆忙情形中，便正有闲之又闲的一类人在。这些人耳朵能超然于一切嘈杂声音以上，听出桅子上人的歌声；可是心也正忙着，歌声一停止，在唱歌地方代替了一盏小红风灯以后，那唱歌的人，便已到这听歌人的身边了。桅上用红灯，不消说是夜里了，这个水码头夜里世界不是平常的，你们看。 [Besides various busy scenes, there exist a type of people who are leisurely among the leisurely. These people's hearing can surpass all the noises and distinguish the songs of those people on the masts; and their hearts are busy. Once the songs stop, and small red wind lamps replace the singers where they have sung, the singers are beside the listeners. Red lamps rise on the masts, and, needless to say, it is night. Night in the wharf is not ordinary. Look.]

.....

Paragraph 2:

灯光多无数，每一小点灯光便有一个或一群水手在那里谈天取乐。灯光还不及塞满此小房，快乐却将水手们胸中塞紧，——居然是欢喜在胸中涌，一定得打嗝，所以沙喉咙的歌声笑声从楼中溢出，与灯光同样，溢进上岸无钱的水手耳中眼中，便如其他世界一样，反映着欢喜的是诅咒。他们尽管诅咒着，然而一颗心也依然摇摇荡荡上了岸，且不必冒滑滚的危险，全各以经验为标准；把心飞到所熟悉的吊脚楼上去了。 [Lights are countless, and around

every bit of light there is a sailor, or a group of sailors, chatting and enjoying themselves. The light does not fill the small house, but happiness fills the sailors' hearts, -- happiness even surges in their chests, and they have to burp. Songs and hoarse laughs from their throats spill over the building and, the same as the lights, into the eyes and ears of those sailors who can not afford to go ashore. Like in any other world, what echoes happiness is cursing. Although they curse, their hearts also fly all the way to shore, and they don't have the risk of slipping and tumbling. All have their hearts fly into the stilt houses they are familiar with according to their experiences.]

Paragraph 3:

酒与烟与女人，一个浪漫派的文人非此不能夸耀于世人三样事，这些喽罗却很平常的享受着，虽然酒是酩酊之酒，烟是平常的烟，人则更是..... 然而各个心是同样的跳，头脑是同样的发迷——我们全明白，这些只是吃酸菜南瓜臭牛肉以及说下流话的口，可是于这时也必然粘粘糯糯，也能找出所蓄于心各样对女人的谄谀言语献给面前的妇人。也能粗粗卤卤的把脚放到妇人的身上去，脚上去，以及.....他们把自己沉浸在这空气中，忘了世界也忘了自己的过去和未来。女人帮助这些无家水上人，把一切劳苦一切期望从这些人心中取去，放进的是类乎烟酒的兴奋与醉痴。在每一个妇人身上，一群水

手这样那样做着那顶切实的梦，预备将这一月储蓄的铜钱和精力，全部倾倒在
到这妇人身上，他们却从不曾预备要人怜悯，也不知道可怜自己。 [Wine,
tobacco, and women, the three things without which the romantic literati cannot
show off in front of the world, are enjoyed ordinarily by these common fellows,
although the wine is strongly alcoholic, the tobacco is ordinary tobacco, and the
women are even ... every heart beats so, and every head dizzies – we all know
that these mouths are only for sour cabbage and smelly beef and dirty language,
but at this moment they are also honey-like and are able to find various
sweet-nothings in their hearts to offer to the women in front. They also clumsily
lay their feet on the women's body, their feet, and their ... They immerse
themselves in this circumstances, forgetting the world as well as their own past
and future. Women help these homeless people who live on the water, taking
away all hardship and hope from the hearts of these people, and putting into
them tobacco- and liquor-like excitement and intoxication. On every woman, a
group of sailors in this way or that dream the most realistic dreams, ready to pour
onto the woman all the copper coins and energy they have saved up for the
whole month. But these people never ask for sympathy from others, and they
don't know to pity themselves either.]

... ..

Paragraph 4:

他的板带钱是完了，这种花费是很好的一种花费。并且他也并不是全无计算，他预先留下了一小部分钱，作为在船上玩牌用的。花了钱，得到些什么，他是不去追究的。钱是在什么情形下得来，又在什么情形下失去，柏子不能拿这个来比较，总之比较有时像也比较过了，但结果不消说还是“合算”。[His belt money is gone, and this kind of spending is a good spending. And he is not totally uncalculating. He reserves a small amount of money for playing cards on boats. What does he get from spending the money, he does not inquire about. How he gets the money, and how the money goes, Baizi cannot compare in this way. Sometimes it seems that he does compare, but the result is, needless to say, that it is still “worth doing”.]

.....

Paragraph 5:

辰州河岸的船各归各帮，泊船原有一定地方，不相混杂。可是每一只船，把货一起就得到另一处去装货。因此柏子从跳板上摇摇荡荡上过两次岸，船就开了。[The junks along Chenzhou River all belong to their own different guilds, and are anchored at certain places without being mixed up. But every

junk, once unloaded, has to go to another place to be loaded. Therefore, after

Baizi has swayed and swung to the shore two times, the junk departs.]

The first paragraph contains the first remarks about the prostitutes, introducing them onto the scene. The “facts” presented in this iterative section serve as basis for the understanding of the relationship between the sailors and the prostitutes. The deletion of it undermines the very ground on which this understanding stands, and it also undermines the iterative narrative mode.

The second and third paragraphs describe the usual practice of the sailors on the bank, when they forget their hardship and experience their momentary happiness in life. The omniscient narrator tells everything that he sees as an onlooker, in an iterative narrative manner which shows that these activities repeat every time the junk arrives at the port. The sailors live on their energy and strength when young and strong, but what will happen to them when they no longer have any strength to sell?

The characters themselves, however, are oblivious to their situation and feel natural about this way of life. They immerse themselves in this seemingly happy atmosphere.

The fourth paragraph suggests the mindset of Baizi, who experiences happiness and contentment after spending his money and energy on a prostitute. The detached attitude of the narrator suggests Shen’s habitual subdued tone of narration, which is characteristic of his lyrical mode of narration. The deletion of these paragraphs

removes the implicit sympathetic tone and impoverishes the lyrical narrative style.

The last paragraph gives a description of the departure of the junk, which Hua-ling Nieh regards as “extraneous ...create[s] an imbalance in the structure of the story” (Nieh, 1972: 102). However, with this observation she fails to see that the paragraph is not “added” gratuitously: it corresponds to the very beginning of the story, where the arrival of the junk at the port is described. The regular practice of the junk’s coming-and-going implies the repeated cycle of the sailors’ life, and contributes to Shen Congwen’s prose style. The deletion of this paragraph impoverishes the cyclical sense of life presented in the original, which is intended by the author and is a conspicuous feature of the lyrical characteristics typical of Shen Congwen’s writings.

The translation strategies employed by the three different translators of “Baizi” create big differences in the rendering of the iterative descriptions of circumstances, the “secondary” or “supporting” elements of the story. Kai-yu Hsu exerts great efforts to explicate everything involved, and his translated text tends to have a more logical and explicit mode of narration than that of the original, but his translation sometimes changes the original iterative sections into descriptions of specific events. The translated text thus reveals more about what the translator sees than what the author intends. The translator’s efforts are exerted to reveal all details explicitly. Ching and

Payne resort to generalized expressions to summarize the same episodes. Their generalization removes the local specificity but reserves partially the original iterative narration, thereby telling the story briefly. Edgar Snow focuses on “eye-catching” elements, and changes or deletes freely the non-dramatic factors. His deletion of many passages eliminates the original local particularities, the background information, and the author’s attitudes, and practically removes the original author’s voice. As Kinkley points out that Shen’s inventiveness always lies in expression and observation rather than in events or characters (Kinkley, 1987: 94), Snow’s translation put emphasis on just the opposite, and leads to a radical change of the original narrative style. He rewrites to a great extent the original text, and his translation tells the story in his own way of telling a story, not in Shen Congwen’s way.

In our four selected stories, Shen Congwen begins every story with iterative narrative passages, which continue either for a few paragraphs or for a few pages. Generally speaking, except for the paragraphs that are deleted, the repetitive sense of the narration in most of the translations is retained if these iterative narrative parts are translated, though the narrative information may be greatly reduced in some of the translations. Occasional changes of the iterative mode, however, are indeed detectable. The tables below show how many iterative narrative paragraphs the STs have and

how they are rendered in different translations. Table A shows the strategies in different STs, while Table B collectively shows the strategies of each translator.

Table 4-1(A): Translation strategies for iterative narrative passages:

STs & translators	Iterative narration retained	Iterative narration summarized	Iterative narration changed	Iterative narration deleted
“Baizi”(8)				
Edgar Snow	2		1	5
Ching & Payne	4	2	1	1
Kai-yu Hsu	6		2	
“Xiaoxiao”(7)				
Lee Yi-hsieh	7			
Li Ru-mien	3	2	1	1
Gladys Yang	7			
E. C. Eoyang	6		1	
L. S. Robinson	6		1	
“Zhangfu”(6)				
Ching & Payne	4	1	1	
Gladys Yang	5	1		
Jeffrey Kinkley	6			
“Biancheng”(17)				
Emily Hahn & Shing	16		1	
Ching & Payne	17			
Gladys Yang	17			
Jeffrey Kinkley	17			

Table 4-1(B): Translation strategies for iterative narrative passages:

Translators	Iterative narration retained	Iterative narration summarized	Iterative narration changed	Iterative narration deleted
Edgar Snow (8)	2		1	5 (63%)
Ching & Payne (31)	25 (81%)	3	2	1
Li Ru-mien (7)	3 (43%)	2	1	1
Lee Yi-hsieh (7)	7 (100%)			
Hahn & Shing (17)	16 (94%)		1	
Gladys Yang (30)	29 (97%)	1		

Kai-yu Hsu (8)	6 (75%)		2	
E. C. Eoyang (7)	6 (86%)		1	
L. S. Robinson (7)	6 (86%)		1	
Jeffrey Kinkley (23)	23 (100%)			

The statistics from the tables show that the iterative narrative passages are mostly retained. Except Edgar Snow and Li Ru-min, all the other translators have kept more than 75% of the iterative narration.

The examples discussed above show that the scholar translators Kinkley, Hsu, Eoyang, and Robinson attempt to reproduce the verbal devices which form the basis for understanding the iterative narration, and mostly keep the iterative narrative style, as is shown in the translation of “Zhangfu” (Example 4.1-1) by Kinkley. Similar cases can be detected in the translations by other scholar translators, such as Eoyang and Robinson, in their translations of “Xiaoxiao”. They may differ from each other in detail renderings, but they all manage to represent the iterative narrative mode. Unlike the scholar translators, Gladys Yang, a professional translator, does not reproduce all the verbal devices, and omits some pieces of narrative information. Her translations tend to change the original narrative rhythm, but they convey the original iterative narrative mode. She gives more heed to the acceptability of her translations, and sometimes changes Shen Congwen’s specific features. The earlier translations tend to produce summarized versions, as in examples 4.1-2 by Li and 4.1-3 and 4.1-4 by Ching and Payne. Li’s translation of “Xiaoxiao” only presents the gist of the story, not

the full version, to the readers. Ching and Payne's translations often resort to summaries but they basically keep the original iterative narration. Another feature is that deletion of iterative narration only occurs in the earlier translations, as is clearly shown in Table B, in regard to the translations made by Snow, Li, and Ching and Payne. The changed or deleted iterative narration leads to a different way of telling the story, which might not be Shen's story any more.

4.2 Episodes of Lyrical Experience

In discussing the function of certain episodes in Hongloumeng (*A Dream of Red Mansions*) and Rulin waishi (*The Scholars*), Yu-Kung Kao points out that many of the episodes in these two works "have no direct function in relation to the advancement of narrative plot or the description of character, but are primarily used to present a certain lyrical experience" (Kao, 1977: 236). We borrow from Kao this concept to designate the episodes in Shen Congwen's stories which accompany the narration that advances the plot movement but which do not dramatize the story. Instead, they are the building blocks for descriptions of the settings or locales and to introduce local customs, in preparation for introducing the protagonists and the events. They do not occupy the centre of the story, but they are indispensable for creating the specific lyric style.

These episodes are not simply scenery or background descriptions. They

simultaneously reveal the author's emotions and attitudes and form part of Shen's lyrical narration. As Freedman points out, the lyrical tradition is "neither didactic nor dramatic ... but poetic" (Freedman, 1963: 2). In the Chinese context, it is well-understood that Chinese narrative has a strong tradition of never having a pure depiction of scenery. Description always involves lyrical narration through which the narrator presents the scenery, as according to the renowned concept of "景中情 (lyrical messages within sceneries)" elaborated by Wang Fuzhi in his "Jiangzhai shihua 姜斋诗话 (Jiangzhai's Remarks on Poetics)"²². Shen Congwen's writing style is influenced by Chinese literary tradition – by writers such as Tao Yuanming and Sima Qian (for details, see Kinkley 1987 and other critics' works). His lyrical style of narration is the continuance of the Chinese tradition, which can be illustrated by two parts: the beginning sections, or the settings, and the ending sections, of his stories.

4.2.1 The beginning settings

The beginning settings of Shen's stories vary in length from one story to another. Some consist of a few paragraphs, such as those in "Xiaoxiao" and "Baizi"; some are longer, of a few pages, such as that in "Zhangfu". In the novella "Biancheng", the setting section lasts even longer, with more than ten pages, and the story proper does not really get started until chapter four.

²² Wang Fuzhi (1619-1692), style Jiangzhai, famous Chinese philosopher and scholar of the Qing Dynasty.

In the *Dictionary of Narratology*, “setting” is defined as “the spatiotemporal circumstances in which the events of a narrative occur” (Prince, 2003: 88). Shen Congwen often sets the settings at the beginning of the story to frame the temporal or spatial or even social or psychological backdrop against which the story takes place, which makes a convenient starting point at which to introduce onto the scene the characters and events, and paves the way for further development of the story. Of all the four selected stories, every one opens with a description of the locale serving as the backdrop. These backdrop introductions, or the settings, prepare the reader for the opening of the narration.

Take the beginning of “Baizi” as an example. The story opens with the arrival of junks and ends with the departure of junks. This arrangement of the content of the narrative leads to a strong sense of a cyclical repetition of life. Junks arrive and depart, sailors come and go, the future repeats the past, and life goes as time goes. Everything repeats and is cyclical within the cosmic mechanism of time. With this basic tone, the whole story weaves iterative narrative and singulative narrative together, with “type” activities and individual ones alternating in the narration. Thus the narration (“the telling of the protagonists’ actions”) goes hand in hand with the description (“the telling of the environment in which they live and move”) (Chatelain, 1998: 13)²³, and

²³ Chatelain argues that “the narrator’s activity is continuous, whether it speaks of the actions of characters or of the environment in which they live and act. Within such a spacetime continuum, the

lyrical experience is juxtaposed with the narrative movement. From this viewpoint, the very beginning of “Baizi” both is and is not part of the story: it gives the setting of the story, but it is more of an independent episode which exerts lyrical impact:

Example 4.2-1:

把船停到岸边，岸是辰州的河岸。

于是客人可以上岸了，从一块跳板走过去。跳板是一端固定在码头石级上，一端在船舷。一个人从跳板走过时，摇摇晃晃不可免。凡是要上岸的，全是那么摇摇晃晃上岸了。

[Pull a junk to the bank – the bank is the bank of the Chenzhou River.

So passengers can go ashore, walking across a plank. One end of the plank is fixed to the stone steps on the quay, the other end to the side of the junk. When one walks across the plank, he can't help swaying and swinging. All those who are to go ashore have swayed and swung their way to the shore.]

The very first sentence, a one-sentence paragraph, gives the spatial setting of the story, with the word “岸(bank)” being repeated three times for rhetorical effect. Except for the fact that a boat is pulled to the bank of Chenzhou River, there is no mention of the subject of the story, and no time element is mentioned – that is, there is no telling who does the action or when the action takes place. It is a scenery depiction, and it is an

canonical opposition of narration to description no longer holds”(Chatelain, 1998: 156).

event too. However, “the main character does not appear, and the story has not started yet” (Ge, 2005: 22; my translation).

The second paragraph tells of passengers who are to go ashore and how they go ashore. All the nouns denoting the passengers are generalized, without indicating any specific identity. They refer either to a group or to a type of people and suggest a typical iterative narrative mode. This iterative narration indicates firstly that the event is not a one-time activity, but one which repeats time and again; and secondly that it is so common a scene in the local area that the particular junk or passenger involved does not make much difference. The junk plus the passengers are inserted into the setting, where movement and stillness harmoniously coexist. The characters and events are not specific characters and events, but form part of the scene. They are out of the story, and create an effect of lyrical narration of a piece of prose rather than of a story.

The three existing translations all turn the lyrically presented beginning into a part of the story. One of them, the one made by Edgar Snow, adds quite a few factors, to make it more dramatic as part of the story:

The anchor slid into the water at Chengchow and a junk settled to rest beside the quay.

A shore plank *about fifteen feet long* was lowered to the stone steps, and passengers began *to file down* it. They *lined up, one after another, loading their baggage on their shoulders*, and then moved across the space, *rhythmically swinging from left to right like a pendulum*. They all managed to balance themselves safely ashore (Snow, 1936: 182).

The very first sentence of Snow's translation heralds the beginning of a story. His recourse to simple past tense indicates that the story starts with the anchoring of a specific junk. The passengers described in the second paragraph are also specific. The nouns designating them are not generalized. The characters are the ones who had performed specific activities: they "lined up one after another, loading their baggage on their shoulders... rhythmically swinging from left to right like a pendulum". They are those very passengers who had gotten off the very junk at the very moment. The added elements (the italics in the TT) dramatize the scene of the event, which makes the event a one-time specific activity rather than a repetition of events with like traits. The original iterative narrative is thus replaced by a singulative narrative in the translated text, and the repeated events are turned into a single activity. Consequently, this translated text is a part of the story and no longer a separate piece of lyrical prose, and the lyrical experience embedded in the original narration is weakened. Snow's

translation focuses on what the story is about, and not on how the original narrator tells the story. In other words, he is telling the story in his own way.

The other two translations of “Baizi” both contain changes in the setting of the story, and also change a piece of lyrical prose into a part of the story. Ching and Payne’s version combines the first one-sentence paragraph with the second paragraph, a strategy also resorted to in their translation of “Zhangfu”. This concise way of opening the story with a short one-sentence paragraph is found in three of the four selected stories and is one of Shen’s stylistic features, the changing of which unavoidably leads to a change away from Shen’s original narrative style.

The beginning of “Zhangfu” also serves as the backdrop of the story. The story opens with a brief description of the locale: the river with the swollen water after days of rain, the opium boats and brothel boats anchored along the river, and the stilt houses along the bank.

Example 4.2-2:

落了春雨，一共有七天，河水涨大了。

河中涨了水，平常时节泊在河滩的烟船、妓船，离岸极近，全系在吊脚楼下的支柱上。

[Spring rain has been falling for seven days, and the river is swollen.

The river is swollen with water, so the opium boats and the brothel boats, which are usually anchored on the beach, are very close to the bank, and are tied to the supporting poles of the stilt houses.]

This opening of the story provides both the temporal and the spatial environment, introducing the background to the reader, before the appearance of the protagonists.

The narrative mode of the first one-sentence paragraph is as a whole singulative, suggesting a time, after a specific seven-days in spring, when the rain has been falling continuously. It is not the beginning of the story proper but is only a prelude to it, a preliminary play serving to introduce the main part of the activities. The second paragraph is a further introduction to the circumstances, telling the spatial circumstance that the swollen river has pushed the brothel boats closer to where the story proper will take place. Thus this static description of the boats and houses presents us with part of the spatial setting.

The three existing translations show different ways of rendering the beginning setting of the story. First let's look at Gladys Yang's version.

That spring, after a whole week's rain, the river rose.

Whenever this happened, the opium boats and boat brothels moored by the bank came so close to the shore that they were tied to the pillars of the stilt

buildings (Yang, 1981:121).

The very first phrase, “that spring”, presents the time element of the story. By putting “that spring” at the very beginning, the narrative order of the TT is changed from that of the ST and makes the time of the story more prominent. The main clause, “the river rose”, describes an action rather than a static situation. In the second sentence, the first phrase “whenever this happened” suggests a repetition of events, but it also suggests times for actual activities rather than presenting a setting description, as the original text does. The simple past tense employed in the narration implies the actual activities in the story. The translated text thus turns the introduction of the setting into part of the story proper. Moreover, the combination of the three meaning groups in the original (separated by commas) into one complex sentence creates a faster tempo of narration.

Kinkley pays more attention than Yang to what is intended in the original narration and to how the setting is described in it:

Seven days of spring rains have left the river swollen.

Rising waters *submerge the sandbanks* where floating opium dens and brothel boats are used to mooring. They are close in to shore now, lashed to the

support piers of houses *hanging over the water on stilts, the “balconies with hanging feet”* (Kinkley, 1995: 30).

In Kinkley’s translation, the beginning one-sentence paragraph is a statement of fact – that of the condition of the river, as a result of the continuous rain. It is a static description, as is that of the original text. The second paragraph adds a few details (in italics) to explicate the situation and to explain the specific local buildings – the stilt houses along the river. It contains more information than does the original narration. However, the details are static, not active, so that, together with the employment of the simple present tense, Kinkley’s translation retains the original static description of the setting. It prepares for the opening of the narration of the story and does not make itself part of the story. Kinkley thus tries to tell the story in the same way as the original narrator does.

Ching and Payne do not retain the first one-sentence paragraph, as both Kinkley and Yang do, but combine the two paragraphs into one:

The spring rain has been falling for seven days. The river is swollen; and since the river is swollen the opium-boats and the flower-boats anchored near the beach are now very close to the bank, and are moored to the posts of “the houses

with hanging feet”. (Ching & Payne, 1947:41)

They arrange all the narrated events in the same order as that of the original, and their version is mostly a literal translation, except the combination of the two paragraphs, which changes the rhythm and the manner of the original narration. This very literal translation makes the TT seem somewhat awkward. Following the original order of narration, their version employs simple present tense and remains a description of the scene. They thus retain the opening of the story as a setting and do not turn it into part of the story proper.

4.2.2 The endings

One of the acclaimed features of Shen Congwen’s writings is that he is able to create for his stories endings of surprise, coincidence, suggestion, suspension, and/or anticlimax, which reveal his attitudes and emotions and form one of the distinctive characteristics of his lyrical narrative style. Wang Zengqi points out that Shen “pays great attention to the beginning, and he pays special attention to the ending ... all the endings of his stories are very good” (Wang, 1981: 233; my translation). Quite a few other scholars have also commented on this feature of Shen’s stories, including Ling Yu (1985/2006), David Der-wei Wang (1988), Wang Xiaoming (2003), and Shao Yifei (2005), to mention but a few. The endings of our four selected stories all suggest

lyrical narration. The novella “Biancheng” ends with the much-discussed antithesis:

“这个人也许永远不回来了，也许‘明天’回来!” [This man may never come back, or he may come back tomorrow!] The seventy-thousand-word story closes with this one sentence, so that “the story ends, but the reader will continue to think ... and will go with the character and miss the man far away, waiting for him with passion and in earnest” (Wang, 1981: 233; my translation). This ending suggests the uncertainty of life, one of the themes frequently touched upon by Shen Congwen. The short story “Zhangfu” ends with the scene of both the wife and the husband leaving the brothel boat and going back to their countryside home, after the husband’s experience of humiliation and indignity during his short visit on the boat – a surprise ending. However, given the reality of life in the poverty-stricken countryside, as described at the beginning of the story, what is waiting for them ahead? The story ends, but this question lingers. Both of the endings are what Wang referred to as “shawei (a turn-around ending)”²⁴, leaving the reader room for thinking.

The other two short stories end differently. In “Xiaoxiao”, the story ends with the wedding ceremony of Xiaoxiao’s son, who also marries a child-bride several years older than himself. Xiaoxiao, holding her newly born baby, watches all the excitement

²⁴ In his “Shen Congwen and his *Border Town*”, Wang Zengqi borrowed two concepts from Tang Xianzu’s (汤显祖) commentaries on *Xixiang ji* (*Romance of the West Chamber*) – “duwei(度尾)”(an ending of continuance) and “shawei(煞尾)”(a turn-around ending), to comment on the endings of Shen’s stories.

of the wedding without consciously knowing that her daughter-in-law is just another Xiaoxiao, who will simply repeat the kind of life of the last generation. As previously pointed out, people like Xiaoxiao don't question their fates, and their life cycles repeat generation after generation. In "Baizi", the story ends with a scene in which Baizi goes back to his junk after his meeting with his lover, a prostitute, and the junk departs, together with the sailors, and this also suggests a cyclical sense of life. These two endings are "duwei" (endings of continuance). Both show the obliviousness of the characters to the cruel reality and their impassiveness in the face of circumstances of the suffering, which are characteristic elements of the idyllic and lyrical style of Shen's narrative mode. The endings concern "the whole arrangement of the structure and layout of the story, and show Shen's great talent in the organization of styles" (Ling, 2006: 309; my translation). If these are changed, Shen's style is doomed to experience a loss or a change.

Some of the translations of these endings are, in fact, changed. Take Snow's translation of the ending of "Baizi" as an example. The original text ends as follows:

Example 4.2-3:

……花了钱，得到些什么，他是不去追究的。钱是在什么情形下得来，又在什么情形下失去，柏子不能拿这个来比较，总之比较有时像也比较过了，但结果不消说还是“合算”。

轻轻的唱着《孟姜女》、唱着《打牙牌》，到得跳板边时，柏子小心翼翼地走过去，所以预定的《十八摸》便不敢唱了——因为老板娘还在喂小船老板的奶。

辰州河岸的船各归各帮，泊船原有一定地方，不相混杂。可是每一只船，把货一起就得到另一处去装货。因此柏子从跳板上摇摇荡荡上过两次岸，船就开了。

[What he gets from spending the money, he does not ask. How he gets the money, and how the money goes, Baizi cannot consider in this way. Sometimes it seems that he does consider, but the result is, needless to say, it is still “worth doing”.

Humming the tunes of “Lady Mengjiang” and “Dayapai”²⁵, Baizi, when reaching the plank, walked over it very carefully, not daring to go on to hum “The Eighteen Caresses” – as the boss’s wife is breast-feeding the young boss.

The junks along Chenzhou River all belong to their own different guilds, and anchor at certain places without being mixed up. But every junk, once unloaded, has to go to another place to be loaded. Therefore, after Baizi sways and swings to the shore two times, the junk departs.]

Snow deletes these ending paragraphs, but adds his own ending paragraphs:

²⁵ A tune of folk songs sung between lovers.

Pai Tzu stood staring at the painted empty hulk of the junk, and it seemed to him for a moment good to be back. New passengers and cargo had already moved into it, seeking temporary haven between its mothering flanks. Like most sailors he instinctively resented the strangers who intruded periodically into this curving shape of wood that for him breathed with life.

Suddenly, he did not know why, he thought of his woman, lying naked, and waiting, like this great dark-sailed ship. Dimly he perceived that there was something wrong with the world, and then he became conscious for the first time that his arms and legs were very tired. He went to his quarters and fell asleep (Snow, 1937: 187).

The deletion of the original ending paragraphs removes the author's intention to depict the characters' obliviousness to their harsh fate and the cyclical sense of life they are confronted with. In the added ending of Snow's translation, the most obvious difference from that of the original is the depiction of the protagonist, Baizi. As Ling Yu (one of the most influential scholars of Shen Congwen studies in China) points out, the prototype countryman in Shen's stories has certain characteristics. From the viewpoint of morality, he is a “自然人” (natural man), who is passionate, brave,

honest, kind-hearted, and simple. From the viewpoint of rationality, he is a “蒙昧人” (barbaric man), who is primitive, ignorant, and unrestrained. And from the viewpoint of his relationship with the real world, he is a “陌生人”(stranger), whose simplicity and ignorance do not harmonize with reality (Ling, 2006: 272-273). In the original text, Baizi and his fellow men live sad and abnormal lives under circumstances of extreme poverty, but they are not aware of this. They enjoy momentary happiness and satisfaction, and this is where the pastoral and idyllic narration is based on: the characters inside the scene are totally oblivious to the sad environment. However, in Snow’s translation, Baizi “perceived something wrong with the world” and “became conscious” of the reality. He is turned from a “barbaric man” into someone who is awakened and realizes the injustice of the world. In this way, Snow’s translation has changed the attitude of the original author, as well as the original pastoral idea, and fails to convey the lyrical mode of the original narration. Snow’s Baizi sounds more like the protagonists in the stories of critical realism.

“Xiaoxiao” ends similarly to “Baizi” in terms of the style of narration:

Example 4.2-4:

这一天，萧萧刚坐月子不久，孩子才满三月，抱了自己新生的毛毛，在屋前蜡榆树篱笆间看热闹，同十年前抱丈夫一个样子。 [That day, Xiaoxiao had not long been released from the confinement of birth, and the baby was only

three months old. Carrying her new-born Maomao, she watched the excitement from behind the elm-wood fence, just as she had carried her husband ten years before.]

The narrator is objectively recounting what Xiaoxiao does, without revealing any feelings or emotions. But from this seemingly indifferent narration, through the very ending part “同十年前抱丈夫一个样子” (as she had carried her husband ten years before), we hear his sigh and feel his sympathy towards the Xiaoxiaos. The effect created by this ending is not reproduced in any of the translations:

Hsiao-hsiao, clasping her Yueh-mao-mao, her new born babe, stood watching the hustle by the fence under the elm tree, and she felt as if it were ten year ago when her husband was in her arms. (Lee, 1938: 309)

Little Flute holding her newly-born son as she had held her husband ten years before and watched the simple wedding ceremony of her first child (Li, 1949: 29).

She stood holding her newborn infant under the elms in front of her house and watched the excitement through the bamboo fence. She cradled the baby in much

the same way she had held her husband some ten years before (Robinson, 1987: 99).

Nursing him as years before she had nursed her husband, she watched the excitement through the ashwood fence in front of the house (Yang, 1981: 119).

...watching the commotion and the festivities by the fence under the elm, she was taken back ten years, when she was carrying her husband (Eoyang, 2007: 94).

In Lee's and Eoyang's versions, the position of the ending is kept unchanged, but Xiaoxiao is no longer oblivious to the situation; she is consciously thinking and feeling. Li and Yang have both rendered the ending with an accompanying clause, which changes the tone of the original narration and weakens the lyrical effect. Robinson's version is more of a statement of fact than it is a lyrical demonstration. Thus, each of the translations has only partially transferred the original lyrical mode.

For the "turn-around endings" in "Zhangfu" and "Biancheng", all translations convey the original narrative style except for Ching and Payne's version of "Biancheng". The ending of the original text is as follows:

Example 4.2-5:

“这个人也许永远不回来了，也许‘明天’回来!” [This man may never return, or he may come back tomorrow!]

Ching and Payne provide an explanation for the antithesis in their translation:

Some thought he would never return and others that he might come on the morrow. Where he was, or what he was doing, no one knew (Ching & Payne: 1947: 289).

The literary turn-around ending creates the effect that the story only seems to have ended, but that it actually continues. However, Ching and Payne's translation damages the artistic beauty and the rhetorical effect of this ending, and weakens the thematic effect of the uncertainty of life. The second sentence added by the translators is feet on a snake, which contributes nothing but impoverish the lyricism of the original.

The lyrical narrations in the beginnings and endings constitute an important part of the overall lyrical style of Shen's stories. It seems that the non-scholar L1 translators more often change the original lyrical narration into part of the story elements, sometimes resulting in a change of the author's attitude, such as in the

translation of “Baizi” by Snow and in that of “Zhangfu” by Yang. The scholar translators exert more effort to keep the original manner of narration and therefore the narrative mode, as is shown in Kinkley’s translation of “Zhangfu”, which demonstrates strong evidence of his efforts to retain the intention apparent in the original narrative. Dramatic changes of structure from that of the original text only exist in the earlier translations, such as the translations of “Baizi” and “Zhangfu” by Ching and Payne, who combine the first one-sentence paragraph with the second paragraph and change the layout of the beginning of the stories. A similar case is found in Li’s translation of “Xiaoxiao”, as Li also combines the first one-sentence paragraph with the second paragraph. Other evidence of dramatic changes are the changes of the endings in Snow’s version of “Baizi” and in Ching and Payne’s version of “Biancheng”, as is discussed in examples 4.2-3 and 4.2-5, which leave no trace of Shen’s lyrical narrative style.

4.3 Literary Language

Shen Congwen is well noted for the distinctiveness of his literary language. Many critics have noticed and commented on this, including Su Xuelin (1934), C. T. Hsia (1971), Hua-ling Nieh (1972), Jeffrey Kinkley (1987, 1995), David Wang (1992), and Ling Yu (2006), to mention but a few. Shen is one of the pioneers who begin to use modern vernacular in literary writings, and Shen combines this with his West

Hunan regional dialect to create a totally unique Shen Congwen literary style.

Ling Yu points out that the language Shen uses for depicting life in the countryside is most representative of his language generally, as it is full of a sense of real life and is rooted in his rich native soil. He takes over the West Hunan tradition of picking up “live” images and metaphoric language from real life, and his metaphoric expressions in his stories are fresh and different, and are natural and appropriate for what he intends to express (Ling, 2006: 302-305).

4.3.1 Metaphoric use of language

Shen Congwen’s ability as a language genius is fully demonstrated in his creation of the unique metaphors and images, which he draws from his people and their activities as well as from the objects in his native homeland. He introduces “the language of his region” into “this international vocabulary of images and metaphors”, and gives it “equal poetic status” as in traditional poetry (Kinkley, 1987: 120). The local color items woven into his metaphors and images make his figurative language surprisingly fresh and vivid, and form a distinctively unique feature.

“Xiaoxiao” can serve as a good example of Shen’s figurative language. As one of Shen’s most acclaimed short stories, “Xiaoxiao” deals with those people who live in natural innocence, although Confucian concepts prevail in society. To parallel this theme, the story has a “straightforward narrative rich in natural image and metaphor”

(Nieh, 1972: 106). Many of the metaphors used to depict characters express natural or fundamental qualities. Below are two of these metaphors, employed to portray the heroine Xiaoxiao and her husband:

Example 4.3-1

萧萧嫁过了门，做了拳头大的丈夫小媳妇，一切并不比先前受苦，这只看她一年来身体发育就可明白。风里雨里过日子，像一株长在园角落不为人注意的蓖麻，大叶大枝，日增茂盛。[Xiaoxiao is married and becomes a little wife of a fist-sized husband. Nothing is harder for her than before, which can be seen from her body development during the year. She lives under the wind and the rain, like an unnoticed castor-oil plant growing at a corner of the garden, with big leaves and branches growing luxuriantly every day.]

The two metaphors in this short paragraph are “拳头大的(fist-sized)”, to describe the little husband of Xiaoxiao, and “蓖麻(castor-oil plant)”, to describe the growth of Xiaoxiao. The first one is drawn from the local dialect, the regional language, which here enters into Shen Congwen’s writing and makes a surprisingly fresh image, creating a comprehensible picture with the intended meaning perfectly conveyed. The second one takes advantage of an ordinary plant commonly seen in the local community, a fast-growing plant which is widespread in tropical areas but also grows elsewhere. It volunteers, and it demands no special care or maintenance. The

connotative meaning of the plant applies well to Xiaoxiao, who grows as everything does in nature, and the metaphor transfers what the author intends to express in a visually perceptive way. The two images are both neutral, designating the natural environment without making any value judgment, and both have been picked up from real local language, showcasing the idyllic nature of Shen Congwen's narration.

In the existing five translations, for the first metaphor, none of the translators keeps the original image. One of the translators, Li Ru-mien, deletes the whole paragraph which includes both images. Two of them, Lee Yi-hsieh and Lewis S. Robinson, translate the sentence but remove the image. The other two, Eugene Chen Eoyang and Gladys Yang, use another image (as shown below) to convey the meaning. For the second metaphor, however, Eoyang uses another image, but the other three translators choose to keep it.

Here are the translations by Yang and Eoyang:

Xiaoxiao's marriage to this manikin of a husband did not make things harder for her in any way. This was clear from her growth that year. She flourished like a castor-oil plant growing unnoticed in wind and rain in a corner of the yard (Yang, 1981: 104).

When Xiaoxiao was married off to become the “little wife” of a pint-sized little child, she wasn’t any the worse for wear; one look at her figure was proof enough of that. She was like an unnoticed sapling at a corner of the garden, sprouting forth big leaves and branches after days of wind and rain (Eoyang, 1981/2007: 85).

Gladys Yang renders the first image as “this manikin of a husband”, an expression that implies a depreciative meaning of a dwarf or a little man, which goes beyond the original “neutral” (maybe even a little affectionate) sense of the metaphor. The employment of “manikin” as a replacement for the “fist-sized” not only removes the freshness of Shen’s original metaphor, but also adds a value judgment to the original value-free metaphoric expression, thus missing the lyrical feature of the original narration. Also, in her translation, the first sentence combines the original three information points, and the last sentence has the original four meaning groups all integrated into it. The condensed narration results in a narrative mode which is of a much faster tempo, and thus fails to convey the easy and unhurried manner of narration of the original author.

Eoyang’s rendering, “the pint-sized little husband”, keeps the original neutral sense of the metaphor in a comprehensible way, but his translation, like Yang’s, also

lacks the freshness of Shen's original metaphor. Similarly, in his rendering of the second image, he resorts to the more general word "sapling" to replace the more particular "castor-oil plant". These replacements lack the uniqueness of the images and the closeness to local specificity which is typical of Shen Congwen's style. The removal of Shen's features obstructs the narration from expressing fully Shen's regional lyricism. Eoyang follows the original narrative order and keeps the original narrative speed, except that he translates "风里雨里过日子([she] live[s] under the wind and the rain)" as "after days of wind and rain" and puts it at the very end of the text. This replacement of an adverbial phrase for a sentence changes the original meaning, which focuses on a manner of life, while the translation tells when something happens. Together with the change of the order of narration, it has, like Yang's translation, slightly changed the effect of the original calm and unhurried manner of narration.

There are other metaphors used to indicate the disposition of some characters in "Xiaoxiao". One of them refers to Xiaoxiao's mother-in-law, an important character in the story who might well have had much power in deciding Xiaoxiao's fate, but there are very few sketches of her. The following metaphor-carrying sentence precisely presents her image and serves to indicate the essential nature or quality of this character.

Example 4.3-2:

婆婆虽生来像一把剪子，把凡是给萧萧暴长的机会都剪去了，但乡下的日头同空气都帮助人长大，却不是折磨可以阻拦得住。[Although the mother-in-law was born a pair of scissors, who cuts off every opportunity for Xiaoxiao's quick growth, the sun and the air in the countryside both help a person to grow up, and this cannot be prevented by torture.]

The metaphor of a “pair of scissors” for the mother-in-law is a surprising and vivid image. The narrator does not mention anything of the harshness or even cruelty of the mother-in-law, but through the metaphor her characteristic feature is revealed. This image also has an intra-textual correlation which corresponds with the former metaphor for Xiaoxiao, who grows like a fast-growing castor-oil plant. The torture by the mother-in-law may prevent Xiaoxiao from growing fast, just as a pair of scissors may cut off leaves and branches, but Xiaoxiao nevertheless flourishes under nature in spite of the harshness and torture.

Not all the translators keep this vivid image. Gladys Yang and Eugene Eoyang change it, employing dynamically equivalent English words which have similar implications.

Her mother-in-law, a shrew, tried to slow down the girl's growth, but

ill-treatment was powerless to do this in the sun and the country air (Yang, 1981: 112).

Although Grandmama became something of a nemesis, and tried to keep her from growing up too fast, Xiaoxiao flourished in the clean country air, undaunted by any trial or ordeal (Eoyang, 1981/2007: 89).

Yang describes the mother-in-law as “a shrew” [a malignant or scolding woman], while Eoyang calls her “a nemesis” [an expression originating in Greek mythology: a persistent tormentor, a long-standing rival] – both fail to exhibit the originality and unique freshness of Shen’s image in this metaphoric expression. Both Yang and Eoyang thus resort to a strategy of dynamic equivalence here, conveying the sense but not the form, and in doing so wipe out the literary specificity typical of Shen Congwen. Their omissions of the “scissors” metaphor automatically deprive the text of the “cutting off” image, therefore leaving no trace of the intra-textual coherent effect. Kinkley points out that “[a] fresh and unrelated image is linked to the entire literary work when endowed with new meaning by another image in apposition” (Kinkley, 1987: 91). To apply his observation in this context, when one of the metaphors, the pair of scissors, together with its function, “to cut off”, is removed, the

other corresponding one, “like a castor-oil plant...growing luxuriantly”, loses its echoing counterpart. The intra-textual correlation is thus impoverished, and the endowed new meaning to the entire story is lost. In addition, both Yang and Eoyang choose to render “乡下的日头同空气都帮助人长大[the sun and the air in the countryside both help people to grow up]” as an adverbial phrase – “in the sun and the country air” in Yang’s version, and “in the clean country air” in Eoyang’s version. On the one hand the replacement of a sentence with a phrase results in a faster tempo of narration, and on the other hand the removal of the action verb impoverishes the effect of nature having a decisive power over the lives of the country folk – an often-mentioned theme in Shen Congwen’s stories. Then, too, in Yang’s case, the change of narrative order and the resulting summary in the latter part of her translation makes the narration feel more hurried; while Eoyang’s text contains a mixture of linguistic registers, with one word “grandmamma” especially colloquial (not to mention that it is a wrong translation for the mother-in-law here) and another one, “nemesis” very formal, eliminating the consistent simplicity, a key feature of Shen’s lyrical narrative style.

There are cases when the images in the original text are retained, which occur especially when they are common and widespread ones. In “Biancheng”, Shen

Congwen employs luxuriantly beautiful language to describe the border town, employing many metaphors. Here is an example of a night scene of the mountains near which Cuicui and her grandfather live:

Example 4.3-3:

月光如银子，无处不可照及，山上篁竹在月光下皆成为黑色，身边草丛中虫声繁密如落雨。 [Moonlight is like silver, and shines everywhere. The bamboos in the mountains all become black under the moonlight, and the sounds of the insects in the nearby grassy grove are as thick as the falling rain.]

In this sentence there are two metaphoric expressions. One is “月光如银子(moonlight is like silver)”, and the other is “虫声繁密如落雨(the sounds of the insects are as thick as the falling rain)”. The first one is an established metaphor – a stock metaphor, to use Peter Newmark’s term (Newmark, 1988: 108) – which seems to be shared by many different cultures and languages, and can be very often found in describing a peaceful night scene. It embodies a similarity of human cognition, and it is no surprise that all the four existing translations retain this image, though with slight differences of details. The second metaphor is Shen’s original metaphor, which comes from the author’s rich imagination as well as his life experience from the years he spent on the mountains and along the rivers in his adolescence, of which a detailed account can be found in *Congwen’s Autobiography* (Shen, 2002, Vol. 13). It showcases Shen’s

creative talent as a language genius and enriches the poetic quality of his language, which contributes to his lyrical style. If these poetic qualities are conveyed in the translations, Shen's lyrical style of narration is retained. Otherwise, the lyrical narrative style gets lost. Of the four existing translations, this second metaphor is retained in three, and only Hahn and Shing's version omits it.

Here are the two translations by Kinkley and by Hahn and Shing respectively:

The moonlight was silvery and it shone everywhere. The bamboo stands in the mountains appeared black under the moon. From the thickets of grass came the chirping of insects, thick as rain (Kinkley, 2009: 107).

The moonlight was pure silver. It was everywhere, and the young bamboos on the hill all turned black in it. The songs of insects sounded rapidly, crowding together (Hahn & Shing, 1938: 296).

Kinkley's translation follows the original narration closely, telling the events in the same narrative order as that of the ST, and keeping all pieces of information. His employment of the adjective "silvery" precisely conveys the sense of the metaphor – the color of the moonlight; while he employs "thick as rain" to modify "the chirping

of insects” is a showcase of poetic license – his intention to reproduce the original metaphor. Kinkley tries to tell the story the same way as the original narrator and tries to have every quality of the poetic language of the original text transferred to his translation, which helps convey the lyrical narrative style of the original text.

Hahn and Shing’s version keeps the first metaphor, but omits the second one. Instead of employing a metaphoric expression, it resorts to an expression which directly conveys the sound effect “... sounded rapidly”. Maybe the translators do not think that the sound of insects is like that of rain, or maybe they misunderstand the original expression “繁密(many and thick)”, for they add “[the insects] crowding together” at the end of their version. Whatever the case, the translated text reduces Shen’s original metaphor to a sense and does not retain the poetic quality of the original literary language, which leads to a weakening of the lyrical effect of Shen’s narration.

The tables below show the different strategies employed by different translators when rendering metaphoric expressions. There are three ways of dealing with the original images in the translations: retention of the image, change of the image, and deletion of the image.

Table 4-2 (A): Translation strategies for images:

STs / translators	Retention of the image	Change of the image	Deletion of the image
“Baizi”(6)			

Edgar Snow	1		5
Ching & Payne	6		
Kai-yu Hsu	5	1	
“Xiaoxiao”(8)			
Lee Yi-hsieh(6)	5		1
Li Ru-mien(6)	2		4
Gladys Yang	4	2	2
E. C. Eoyang	3	4	1
L. S. Robinson	7	1	
“Zhangfu” (4)			
Ching & Payne	4		
Gladys Yang	1	1	2
Jeffrey Kinkley	3	1	
“Biancheng”(18)			
Hahn & Shing	15	1	2
Ching & Payne	15	1	2
Gladys Yang	13		5
Jeffrey Kinkley	17		1(add a note with image)

Table 4-2 (B): Translation strategies for images:

Translators	Retention of the image	Change of the image	Deletion of the image
Edgar Snow (6)	1		5 (83%)
Ching & Payne (28)	25 (89%)	1	2
Li Ru-mien (6)	2		4 (67%)
Lee Yi-hsieh (6)	5 (83%)		1
Hahn & Shing (18)	15 (83%)	1	2
Gladys Yang (30)	18 (60%)	3	9 (30%)
Kai-yu Hsu (6)	5 (83%)	1	
E. C. Eoyang (8)	3	4 (50%)	1
L. S. Robinson (8)	7 (88%)	1	
Jeffrey Kinkley (22)	20 (91%)	1	1

The statistics show that most of the translators, such as the scholar translators Kinkley, Hsu, and Robinson, the co-translators Ching and Payne, and Hahn and Shing, and the L2 translator Lee, choose to retain most of the images. The L1 non-scholar

translators, such as Snow, choose to delete many of the images. Yang also deletes 30% of the images. Deletion occurs in another early translation, that of Li Ru-mien, who deletes 67% of the images in his translation done in 1949.

For Shen Congwen, the stories are representations of his homeland with his country folk living on the land. The metaphoric language in his works, which is inspired by the local life, is an indispensable part of his regional lyricism. In the translations, the scholar translators attempt to transfer everything in the original texts, and demonstrate efforts to retain the original images. For the L2 translators, these images are also valuable, and so they retain them and introduce to their readers. The translations of the non-scholar L1 translators, however, are usually more TT-oriented, and they care more to provide a comprehensible and acceptable story without sticking word-for-word to the original texts, and so tend to change or delete the images which they believe might seem “strange” to the target readers.

4.3.2 Images in characters' names

A relevant issue needs to be discussed here. In most of Shen Congwen's stories, the names of many protagonists have images embedded in them which contain certain semantic meanings. In the field of translation, it is a common practice for proper names to be rendered by transliteration so as to keep the names intact. However, transliterations may leave out the implied connotations of the names. How they keep a

balance here reveals a translator's choice and strategy. These names are found to be differently rendered by different translators.

In "Biancheng", the heroine's name is Cuicui (翠翠), which has been given by her grandfather, who picked this name because their living place is surrounded by green bamboos. The Chinese character "翠" means "green", and also "green jade" and "emerald". The doubling of the Chinese character suggests affectionate feelings and is a very common way of naming young children.

In the four existing translations of "Biancheng", 翠翠 is translated differently. Hahn and Shing transliterate the name, explaining it at the first mentioning: "'Ts'ui Ts'ui'²⁶, which means 'Green Jade and Green Jade'". Jeffrey Kinkley employs a similar strategy, also using transliteration plus explanation when the name first appears: "Cuicui, or 'Jade Green'". These choices not only retain the form of the name, but also translate the literal meaning clearly. Ching and Payne, however, translate the semantic meaning of the name only, and come up with "Green Jade". Gladys Yang does the same, calling the protagonist "Emerald". Both of these simple translations only convey the semantic meaning of the name, omitting the form.

The names of the two brothers who both fall in love with Cuicui also have special connotations. The elder brother is named Tianbao (天保), meaning "Heaven

²⁶ The old Wade-Giles spelling of Cuicui.

-protected”, while the younger one is called Nuosong(雉送), meaning “Nuo god-sent” (Nuo gods are very influential gods worshipped by the local people). In the original text, the narrator explains that the Heaven-protected one might still come across difficulties in worldly affairs, while the one sent by the Nuo gods is not to be underestimated. The father is more affectionate towards the younger son, and this unconscious preference is shown in the two names.

Of the four translators, Yang simply transliterates “Tianbao” and “Nuosong” without explanation, thus losing the literal meanings of the names and their implications. Yang also omits the narrator’s explanation of the father’s preference for the second son, which undermines the ground for understanding the further development of the story, in which Tianbao drowns and Nuosong leaves home after quarrelling with his father. Kinkley resorts to the strategy of “transliteration plus explanation” at the first mention of the names: “Tianbao (Heaven-protected); “Nuosong (Sent by the Nuo Gods)”. He employs brackets to provide the explanations, thus reserving both the forms and the implied meanings. The two co-translators – Hahn and Shing, and Ching and Payne – also employ the strategy of “transliteration plus explanation”. However, there are misunderstandings in both translations. In Hahn and Shing’s translation, the names are rendered as “the elder one T’ien Pao, which means Ward of God, and the younger one Tan Sung, the Devil’s Gift” (Hahn & Shing,

1936: 104). The translator might have mistaken the Chinese character “雩(nuo)” for “滩(tan)” which is similar, except that the two characters have different left radicals; so that Hahn and Shing give incorrect pronunciations of the name. Besides, “the Devil’s Gift” has suggested a different implication than the original. In Ching and Payne’s case, their version is “the elder T’ien Pao, which means ‘Protected by Heaven’, and the younger Nu-sung, which means ‘Sent by the Plague-god’” (Ching & Payne, 1947: 202). Wherever the pronunciation “Nu” (for “Nuo”) comes from, the explanation “Plague-god” implies something negative and deprecating, which does harm to the image of Nuosong, who is highly praised in the original text.

In “Xiaoxiao”, the story’s title is the heroine’s name. The Chinese character “萧(xiao)” means “lonely, not having much life”, and it might carry some implication, but not much, for the story. “萧萧(Xiaoxiao)”, like “翠翠(Cuicui)”, suggests the common practice of calling a child by doubling a Chinese character. Four of the five existing translations resort to transliteration to render this name, while Li Ru-mien renders it as “Little Flute”. A possible explanation for this is that the translator might have mistaken the character “萧” for another Chinese character, “箫(xiao)”. The two Chinese characters are similar, and have exactly the same pronunciation and the same tone, but the latter is the name of “a kind of musical wind instrument”. This misconception and the resulting mistranslation change the meaning of the original,

and it is somewhat misleading to have “Little Flute” as the title of the story.²⁷

Another name in “Xiaoxiao” is the one for the young man who seduces Xiaoxiao. His name is Huagou (花狗), literally, “Flower Dog” or “Spotted Dog”, which surely has implications, as the original narrator suggests in the story, “那花狗，面如其心，生长得不很正气” [That Huagou, his face is like his heart, and it does not look very decent]. This inappreciative narration perhaps is based on the fact that the two Chinese characters each have certain connotations when combined: “花(hua)”, if used to modify a dog, may mean “spotted or with different colors”; if used to modify a man, it may indicate “sexually loose or immoral”; while “狗(dog)” very often has a negative association meaning in Chinese culture²⁸. These two Chinese characters together suggest disrespect or disparagement.

All the five translations try, sometimes in vain, to render the implied meaning of the name. Lee renders it as “Spotted Dog”, which keeps one possible literal meaning and the trace of negative meaning, for in English it is also an insult to call someone a “dog”. Li’s translation has the same effect. His version, “Flower Dog”, renders a literal meaning with negative implication. Yang simply transliterates – “Huagou” is

²⁷ Or is this not a misunderstanding, but a purposive translation, with the translator trying to convey the sense of “melody”? But the whole translated text does not seem to suggest that the translator has paid much attention to the “melody” of the story, as he does not retain much of the original lyrical mode of narration.

²⁸ The image “dog” also appears in other stories by Shen Congwen, where it seems to suggest natural animal power and desire, not necessarily with negative associated meanings.

just a name and nothing else, therefore no implication remains in her translation. Robinson translates the name as “Spot”, a word which might have a slightly negative implication (though it might also be neutral) but loses the animal feature. Eoyang’s version is more complicated compared with all the other four. He renders the name as “Motley Mutt”, with the first word meaning “particoloured” and the second one a derogative term for a dog. He employs the two words together at the beginning of his translation, later simply using “Motley”. His version has a stronger disrespectful tone than that of the original text.

In “Baizi”, no other character except Baizi has a name, and Baizi as a name does not seem to have much connotative meaning. The same is true in “Zhangfu”, in which only two characters’ names are mentioned. One is that of the prostitute, the wife doing business on the brothel boats. She is called “Lao Qi (老七)”, which means Number Seven. Both Kinkley, and Ching and Payne, add the word “maid” in their translations, so that the wife is called “Maid Number Seven” or “Seventh Maid” in Kinkley’s version, and “Maid the Seventh” in Ching and Payne’s version. The word “maid” helps explicate the wife’s status, which is implied in the original story. Another character with a name is the small girl who does chores on the boat. She is called “Wuduo (五多)”, the first word being the number “five” and the second one meaning “many”. Both “five” and “many” do not seem to be suggested in the name. Therefore,

the best choice for rendering this name is transliteration, and no difference can be detected among the existing translations.

From the above discussions we have discovered that the scholar translators, such as Kinkley, Eoyang, and Robinson, exert more effort to reproduce both the forms and the implied meanings of the names. They explicate implicit meanings, as is demonstrated in the translation of “Biancheng” by Jeffrey Kinkley and the translation of “Xiaoxiao” by Eugene Eoyang. They thus try to convey what the original intends to express. The L1 translator, Gladys Yang, tends to employ transliteration to render the names and to let it go at that, without any attempt to explain the implied meanings. Her purpose is to tell a story comprehensible to the target readers and does not exert much effort to explicate the original implications.

Like the images in the metaphoric expressions discussed in the previous section, the images embedded in the characters’ names also have cultural implications and/or suggest local particularities, and form part of the regional lyricism in Shen’s writings. Failure to transfer the implicated meanings of the images fails to convey fully Shen Congwen’s style.

4.3.3 Understated narration

Understatement is the opposite of overstatement or exaggeration, and through it

the speaker (the narrator in our case) shows his unwillingness to express his feelings and emotions. In literature studies, understatement is often likened to a similar concept, meiosis, which refers to a figure of speech by which something is intentionally presented smaller or less important than it really is. Understatement, “or saying less than one means, may exist in what one says or merely in how one says it ... one can emphasize a truth either by overstating it or by understating it” (Arp & Johnson, 2006: 758). In this present study, understatement is demonstrated both in what the narrator says and in how he says it, and it is employed by Shen Congwen to express his feelings in a subdued and restrained manner. Understatements contribute greatly to his lyrical mode of narration.

The narrator in Shen Congwen’s stories often takes a restrained position when telling the story. He never yells, even if he is recounting the most inhumane events, such as those of child marriage, prostitution, decapitation, and war and death. He narrates in an understated manner, which demonstrates his calm and subdued style of lyrical narration and his habitual reticence – which, however, make his recounting all the more emphatic. As David Wang points out, “Shen Congwen’s deceptively clear and noncommittal style can thus be understood as a lyrical strategy with which to utter the unspeakable” (Wang, 1992: 238).

Understatement, in Shen’s stories, operates at two levels: first at the whole text

level, where the general tone of a story is understated; and second at the level of specific textual elements in which understatement is employed. The understated style at the text level can be detected in all the selected stories – in the concurrent helplessness and ignorance of the child bride in “Xiaoxiao”; in the unconscious indignity and humiliation of the prostitute, as well as of the husband, in “Zhangfu”; in the momentary happiness and in the obliviousness to cruel reality of the sailors in “Baizi”; and even in the misunderstandings among the characters in “Biancheng”.

Take “Zhangfu” as an example. When the nameless husband visits his wife on the brothel boat, he himself goes through unutterable experiences. On the boat he meets the arrogant river warden, who shows his control over the prostitute in front of the legal husband, with no regard at all for the feelings of the husband. He witnesses the bullying of the drunken soldiers, and the tyranny of the police officer, not to mention the common visits of his wife’s everyday guests, the different rich merchants. The narrator takes a very detached and seemingly indifferent position, telling all these things in a restrained and uninvolved manner. The husband seems to take all this for granted at the very beginning, a sign indicating that these are common events in that poverty-stricken area and people are used to them and accept the situation as normal. He flees to the stern whenever some guest comes onto the boat, and he takes great care not to annoy the guests when he has to pass through the cabin. The ending of the

story is a turn-around, however, as it ends with the surprise that the husband takes his wife back to their countryside home. The general understated tone of the whole story makes this sadder and more emotion-provoking.

In the present study, to deal with the translation problematics through textual comparison, we will focus on the second level – that is, on the specific textual elements – with the aim to see how the individual understatements are rendered in different translated texts.

Shen's short story "Xiaoxiao" deals with one of the most inhumane of events, the practice of child-bride marriage in the poor countryside of West Hunan. Unlike some of his contemporaries, who produced writings with similar themes, Shen Congwen does not expose, with rage, the guilt of the "man-eating-man" society. Instead, he describes the occurrences in the story in a style of rural lyricism, with his characters acting and moving in accordance with nature and accepting impassively whatever happens to them. They have a life repeated over days and generations, without inquiring into their fate. Thus when Xiaoxiao is married to her tiny husband she is expected to work and help with the family, as is clearly stated at the end of the story, when her son is married to an older bride: "Only when the bride is older can she be of real help around the house". Thus she takes on the responsibility of a baby-sitter at the

beginning of her marriage, while she herself is still a child, and looks after her husband day and night. As she is growing up, she is expected to do more of the housework. And the narrator tells us that

Example 4.3-4:

人大了一点，家中做的事也多了一点。绩麻、纺车、洗衣、照料丈夫以外，打猪草推磨一些事情也要做，还有浆纱织布。凡事都学，学学就会了。[As she grows a little older, she does a little more of the housework. Besides twisting hemp, spinning thread, washing clothes, and looking after her husband, she also cuts grass for pigs and turns the mill, and starches yarns and weaves cloth. She learns to do everything by doing it.]

From the listed chores it is not difficult to imagine how much work Xiaoxiao has to do. However, the narrator calmly and casually recounts all these tasks as if they are nothing. In the beginning sentence he employs the expression “家中做的事也多了一点 (she does a little more of the housework)”, which does not suggest a workload as heavy as it actually is, as can be seen from the list of things she has to do. And in the ending sentence, “凡事都学，学学就会了 [she learns to do everything by doing it]”, the tone suggests the easiness of learning to do all these things, which is obviously not the case according to common sense knowledge. The narrated deceptive easiness is the narrator’s purposeful understatement, leaving a sympathetic picture of the lack of

consciousness that is Xiaoxiao's state of mind.

In each of the five translations of "Xiaoxiao", this understatement is rendered differently. Li Ru-mien deletes the last sentence together with the whole paragraph and two adjacent paragraphs. Eoyang tries to retain the understated tone, while Lee, Yang, and Robinson all explicate the understatement this way or that.

As she became bigger, her household labours multiplied. Besides twisting hemp, spinning, washing, and looking after her husband, she also had to do such work as cutting grass for the pigs and grinding at the mill. Starching yarn and weaving cloth were also among her duties (Lee, 1938: 303).

By now she had more to do. Apart from twisting thread, spinning, washing and minding her husband, she had to cut grass for the pigs, turn the mil, starch clothes and weave. She learned to do all these things (Yang, 1981: 112).

As she grew up, her household duties increased. Besides spinning hemp, weaving cotton, washing clothes and looking after her husband, Xiao Xiao also had to turn the mill, pick pitcher-plants, and weave and starch cloth. She learned each chore and learned it well (Robinson, 1987: 83).

Lee employs the word “multiplied” at the very beginning of his translation, which clearly tells that Xiaoxiao has a lot more to do, not just “a little more”, as stated in the original. Together with the phrase “had to” in the following sentence, the translated text is explicit rather than understated. The ending sentence was added later, in the revised edition of the original, so that Lee’s version does not include it. Yang opens her text with the short sentence “By now she had more to do”, which is a factual statement rather than an understatement, and “more” here means more than “a little more”. It is also followed by “had to” in the next sentence, indicating that Xiaoxiao has no other choice but to take on the heavy workload. Yang’s finishing sentence is a brief factual statement which, like the beginning one, also changes the understated tone of the original narration. Similarly, Robinson’s use of “increased” and “had to” indicate the heavy workload and explicitly explains the situation Xiaoxiao is in. His finishing sentence is a factual statement too, which does not convey the original meaning, let alone the understated tone of narration. Consequently, all of the three translations reproduce little of the original understated tone, and so they do not convey the original lyrical narrative mode.

Eoyang’s translation is slightly different. He makes attempts to retain the original understated tone:

When one is bigger, one gets a heavier burden of household chores. Besides twisting hemp, spinning thread, washing, looking after her husband, she had odd jobs like getting feed for the pigs or working at the mill, flossing silk, and weaving. She was expected to learn everything (Eoyang, 2007: 89-90).

The first sentence in Eoyang's text is a general idea, which does not refer to Xiaoxiao's situation specifically and does not serve as an explication, though the original text is specifically about Xiaoxiao. His employment of "she had odd jobs like..." understates the amount of work Xiaoxiao has to do, and he lists all the chores, which reproduces the original tone. His last sentence only renders part of the original, and this part unfortunately changes the understated tone, for the passive voice employed suggests a sort of complaint, which is not found in Shen Congwen's "Xiaoxiao".

Another short story, "Zhangfu", as a whole is understated, as has been mentioned previously. First of all, the title is "Zhangfu" (The Husband), but the husband is not even given a name! This technique alone is one of high understatement. The humiliation the husband experiences during his short visit to his wife is beyond

description. He does not yell or fight, as most husbands would be expected to do in his situation, and he does not even behave like a man, in worldly eyes. He tolerates everything, until, at the very end, when things become unbearable to him, he takes his wife back to their countryside home. The understated tone makes the reader feel like yelling or urging him to fight back, but the characters accept all these things impassively, and the narrator speaks in a calm and placid manner, which produces the lyrical quality of this short story. As mentioned previously, Shen Congwen once gave some suggestions to a young writer, saying that a great writer may write about the sufferings of human beings with a smile, and “Zhangfu” showcases this. Years ago “Zhangfu” was adapted as a film with the title changed to “村妓(Village Prostitute)”. The film preserves very little, if any, of the original merits. Both the adaptation of the title and the way of dealing with the husband’s reactions during his short visit on the boat demonstrate little understanding of the original. The film does not grasp at all the understated tone of the original story.

The translations of the story vary from one another in conveying the understated narrative style. Take part of the introductory passage about the river warden as an example. In the story, the river warden once made a living on the water. He was a tough guy, as he killed someone during a fight but at the same time had one of his eyes gouged out. He ended up as a headman who assisted the government in

governing the people living on the river, and he had absolute power over the boats along the whole river. When describing the river warden's situation, the narrator speaks in a very casual manner:

Example 4.3-5:

但人一上了年纪，世界成天变，变去变来这人有了钱，成过家，喝点酒，生儿育女，生活安舒，慢慢的转成一个和平正直的人了。[But when one is getting on, and the world is changing everyday, it changes this way or that way, and then he has money. He is married, drinks a little alcohol, has children, and his life is comfortable. Gradually he becomes a peaceable and honest man.]

The understatement in this section exists in the way of presenting the situation. Instead of describing the turmoil in the world and how a man accumulates his wealth, which is not hard to imagine, the narrator simply mentions that the world is changing everyday and with the changing, he somehow becomes rich. His life experiences, presented by the four short phrases “成过家，喝点酒，生儿育女，生活安舒[married, drinks a little alcohol, has children, his life is comfortable]” is narrated in a way as if they were simple sporadic moments in his life. Given the early description in the story of the river warden's experience, it is clear that he does not get his wealth in an easy and peaceful way. This is surely understatement.

Of the three translations, both Ching and Payne's version and Yang's version

have changed the whole narrative tone from understatement to factual statement:

When he grows old and rich in the vicissitudes of the world which is every day changing, having brought up a family and drunk much wine, having attained a life of comfort and ease, he at last achieves the dignity of an honourable and peaceful man (Ching & Payne, 1947: 45).

But he was older now, and times were changing – changing to his advantage. He was well-off, had married and liked a drink now and then. He had children, lived in comfort and little by little had become a peaceable, honest man (Yang, 1981: 125).

Ching and Payne remove the understated tone by rendering all the information points of the original text as factual statements. The sentence declares that, after the river warden has done this and that, he becomes a certain kind of man. All the seemingly sporadic life experiences are changed into his concrete achievements, and the understated narrative mode disappears. In Yang's case, the translation is not a statement of cause and effect, as is that of Ching and Payne, but her rendering "changing to his advantage" turns the understatement into direct explanation. The life

experiences are also recounted clearly as statements of fact, which also leads to a removal of the original understated tone.

The other translator, Jeffrey Kinkley, attempts to retain the understated narration of the story:

But he was getting on now, and he found himself wealthy, what with all the turmoil that had come to the world. Married, with a family, and fond of a drink or two, he enjoyed the good life. He had gradually become a peaceable and respected man (Kinkley, 1995: 35).

In the first part of his version, Kinkley resorts to the expression “he found himself wealthy”, which reproduces the casualness and ease of his accumulation of wealth, as is suggested by the original understated tone. The way of presenting the life experiences in his translation also resembles the original manner of narration, in which the seemingly sporadic moments are casually listed. Though his employment of the expression that clearly points out the turmoil of the world somewhat weakens the understatement effect, Kinkley’s translation basically retains the understated tone of the original.

Generally speaking, the understated narrative style is not much retained in the

translations, which proves the difficulty of translating a writer's style. The scholar translators demonstrate visible efforts to keep the understatement, and this can be especially seen in Jeffrey Kinkley's translation of "Zhangfu". Traces of understatement can also be detected in Eugene Eoyang's translation of "Xiaoxiao". Almost all of the other translators change the understated tone, although to different degrees, leading to explications of the understatements in the translated texts. Leo Chan points out that "apparently innocuous changes on a micro-structural level involving individual words and phrases can effect changes on the macro-structural level of the narration" (Chan, 1998: 51). The changes of the concrete textual elements in the translations lead to a change away from the understated tone at the whole textual level.

Shen Congwen always has his feelings and attitudes controlled and restrained in his stories, especially when dealing with the dark side of the society, and the understated tone shows his habitual reticence in narration. Given the much-shared cultural and historical and language background knowledge, the tacit consensus between the ST author and the ST readers guarantees an understanding of what is understated in the original stories. However, the shared chemicals of the "affinity group" of original readers may not exist for the target readers, and understatement in one language may be very difficult to convey in another language due to different

ways of thought and expression. Therefore translators are more likely to explicate the original understated narration so as to ensure comprehensible versions.

To sum up: to represent the original narrative style in a translation proves to be no easy job, and different translators adopt various strategies to do so. The general tendencies are that the scholar translators exert more effort to reproduce the verbal devices to keep the iterative narrative mode, to add details to explicate the implied meanings and to keep local particularities, to follow the original narrative order, to represent all information points, to retain the original images and to try (at least some of them) to keep the understated tone of the original narration. They showcase obvious attempts to reproduce Shen Congwen's narrative style. The non-scholar L1 translators demonstrate more freedom to adapt the original narration to the target text norm, to speed up the narrative rhythm by summaries, to change the original images, to retain few local particularities, to change the understated tone, and care more about the acceptability of the TT. Their translations frequently change Shen's narrative style. The earlier translators, both the L1 and the L2 translators, are more inclined to delete some of the original content, especially the episodes of simple lyrical experience. They also summarize a lot of the events and even change the original structures. And they often remove the traces of Shen's narrative style.

CHAPTER FIVE PARATEXTS IN NARRATION – TRANSLATORS’ NOTES

To cope with translation problematics in a narrative work, translators’ overt intrusions, in addition to the original author’s intrusions, demand due attention. The present study finds that the translators have demonstrated two tendencies in their overt intrusions, which especially appear when they render specific culture-loaded or locality-related items: one is in-text explication, to explicate the original texts by inserting detailed explanations inside the texts; the other is out-text interpretation, to supply background information by adding footnotes or endnotes, which corresponds to what Appiah calls “thick-translation”, that is, “the ‘academic’ translation, translation that seeks with its annotations and its accompanying glosses to locate the text in a rich cultural and linguistic context” (Appiah, 1993: 817). As some of the explications, the inserted details, have been discussed together with other strategies in the previous sections, this section focuses on the “thick translations”, the added translators’ footnotes and endnotes.

In the selected stories, the translators’ notes are mostly concerned with items full of cultural or historical meanings, special local particularities, or the local dialect, which relate to features in the ST. In order to explicitly clarify the meanings involved in these items, translators employ footnotes or endnotes. According to Genette, the

functions of notes are to “serve as a supplement, sometimes a digression, very rarely a commentary” (Genette, 1997: 327). Within this present study, almost all the added notes serve as supplements.

5.1 A General Overview

Within the scope of the fifteen translations of our four selected stories, all except Kinkley’s translation of “Biancheng”, which employs endnotes, contain added footnotes, if any notes are added.

Among the three translations of “Baizi”, Kai-yu Hsu’s version is the only one with footnotes. The original text does not have any footnotes, but Hsu has added three in his translation. Two are related to local dialect, explaining the implicit meanings of the flirtatious conversation between Baizi and his woman, and the third is a culture-loaded item about Chinese mythology.

As for “Zhangfu”, the original text does not have any notes either. Four added footnotes appear in Jeffrey Kinkley’s translation. The first one concerns the old Chinese administrative system. The second one explains the implicit meanings of a folk song. The third one is about a Chinese musical instrument, and the fourth one is about a local fruit. Gladys Yang has added one footnote, about the same folk song as Kinkley has. These footnotes all explain the implicit meanings of specific culture- or history-related features or local particularities in the ST.

“Xiaoxiao” is the most translated text among Shen Congwen’s stories, with five translations. Three have added footnotes. Eugene Chen Eoyang adds three. The first one is about the Chinese lunar calendar, and the other two are both about the semantic meanings of the names of two characters in the story. Gladys Yang also adds three footnotes. One explains the Chinese system for addressing individual in the story, another concerns Chinese literature, about the famous figure Sun Wukong (Monkey Sun) (The “Sun” of “Monkey Sun” is not the “Sun” in the sky, but is a common Chinese surname) in *Journey to the West*. The third concerns history, about a ruler of the Zhou Dynasty. Another translator, Lee Yi-hsieh, adds two footnotes – the first about a specific Chinese musical instrument, and the second about the dialect of calling an insect – both are thus locality-related elements.

Interestingly, in the case of the translations of “Xiaoxiao”, the footnote by the original author, “花狗大的‘大’字，即大哥简称。” [‘da’ in ‘Huagou da’ is the abbreviated form of ‘big brother’], appears in none of the five translations.

To “Biancheng”, Gladys Yang has added five footnotes. The first one is about the historical hero Yue Fei and his son Yue Yun of the Song Dynasty. Two others are related to local activities, one about a game played while drinking and another about a special local food, “Zongzi”²⁹. The remaining two are culture-loaded items, one about

²⁹ “Zongzi 粽子”, a special food for Dragon Boat Festival (the fifth day of the fifth lunar month) season, is now popular in many parts of China.

a Taoist symbol, and the other about Guan Yin, the Goddess of Mercy.

Jeffrey Kinkley has added thirty-two detailed endnotes, which cover a wide range and occupy almost seven pages. Among these thirty-two endnotes, twelve are about locality, seven about history, six about culture, four about Chinese literature, and three about the source text editions. Some of these will serve as examples and be discussed later.

The following table presents the number of the notes by all the translators with respect to different categories:

Table 5-1: Synopsis of translators' notes:

	history	locality	literature	culture	ST edition
“Baizi”					
Hsu (3)		2		1	
“Zhangfu”					
Kinkley(4)	1	3			
Yang (1)		1			
“Xiaoxiao”					
Eoyang(3)				3	
Lee (2)		2			
Yang (3)	1		1	1	
“Biancheng”					
Kinkley (32)	7	12	4	6	3
Yang (5)	1	2		2	

It seems that, in the category “locality”, local specificities and local dialect get the largest number of notes, followed by the category history and then that of culture.

Kinkley is the only translator in this present study who has given notes related to

justifications for choosing source text editions.

5.2 Discussions of the Notes

The notes added by the translators are distributed to various categories. All the footnotes will be discussed together in the respective categories, and Kinkley's endnotes will be discussed separately in the last section of this part.

5.2.1 Footnotes for locally specific items

In Table 5-1 we can see that almost all the translators who have added notes pay attention to elements related to local specificity. These locally-specific notes concern local customs and activities, folk songs, dialects, and local specific objects. The translators' notes mainly serve to explicate what is implied by the expressions concerning these elements.

In "Zhangfu", there is a folk song which includes a pun that is associated with something far from the literal meaning of the text. Both Jeffrey Kinkley and Gladys Yang add a footnote to explicate the rich implications of the pun.

山坳里团总烧炭，山脚里地保爬灰；爬灰红薯才肥，烧炭脸庞发黑。

The militia chief burns charcoal in the hollow,

The town head crawls o'er his ashes down below!

It's them ashes makes a yam begin to swell, oh!

While charcoal burning only leaves you yellow.*

*[Footnote:] “Crawling over ashes” is associated with “getting one’s knees dirty” (wu xi), which is a pun “defiling the daughter-in-law” (getting her dirty, wu xi).³⁰ Hence, line 2 alludes to the town head (*di bao*, as in the *baojia* system) having an affair with the militia captain’s daughter-in-law. If the figure of a yam inflating while roasting in hot ashes needs further explanation, see the “Songs of the Zhen’gan Folk” below.³¹ (Kinkley, 1995: 42)

In the hills the bailiff burns charcoal,

The constable scrabbles about in the ashes below;*

Ashes fatten the sweet potatoes,

Charcoal-burning makes your face black as a sloe.

*[Footnote:] Meaning that he has an affair with his daughter-in-law. (Yang, 1981: 132)

The exact meaning of the folk song would not be fully understood without the explanations in the footnotes. Kinkley explains in great detail the associated meanings of each line, and supplies far more detailed information than do the other translators.

³⁰ In Chinese, “knee” and “daughter-in-law” have the same pronunciation “xi”, though with different tones, and “wu” means “get dirty”.

³¹ “Songs of the Zhen’gan Folk” is a section at the end of *Imperfect Paradise*, in which Kinkley’s translation of “Zhangfu” was published.

He explicitly points out the pun “wu xi”, which is the key to the understanding of the implications. He also refers to inter-textual references to ensure that the culture-specific information and the implied meanings of the original text are conveyed completely to the TT readers. He thus attempts to transfer to the target readers everything intended in the original text. Gladys Yang’s footnote mentions the meaning associated with the folk song but does not explain how the lines embody it. Her effort is to guarantee a better understanding of the story by the target readers, but she does not explain how the song permits this understanding. Ching Ti and Robert Payne simply delete this folk song in their translation, removing its rich regional distinctiveness.

Another locality-related item is a particular Chinese musical instrument, the “唢呐”(suona), which appears in three of the four selected stories: “Xiaoxiao”, “Zhangfu”, and “Biancheng”. The translators resort to different strategies to render this instrument in English, with quite a few adding footnotes to describe it.

In his translation of “Zhangfu”, Kinkley uses pinyin to render it in the TT, and provides a footnote: “Brass-belled Chinese oboes” (Kinkley, 1995: 50), which both keeps the original form and describes its meaning. Gladys Yang gives the pinyin form in italics (*suona*), and does not offer any description. Ching and Payne replace it with “trumpet” and miss the original Chinese particularity.

In his translation of “Xiaoxiao”, Lee Yi-hsieh uses transliteration, rendering it as “so-na”, and then provides the following footnote:

So-na, or Chinese clarinet, is a conical wooden pipe with brass mouth piece to which a copper disc is attached. It has seven finger holes on the upper side and one on the lower. It is widely used at funerals, weddings and on the stage (Lee, 1938: 295).

This footnote gives great detail about the shape, material, structure, and function of the instrument, which reveals the translator’s considerable effort to introduce this particular Chinese object into the TT.

The other translators of “Xiaoxiao” resort to either transliteration or replacement to render this musical instrument without any explanation or footnote. Yang and Robinson both use the pinyin transliteration “suona”, while Eoyang translates it as “bamboo pipe” and Li as “reed pipe”, but these replacements fail to represent the original specificity.

For one locality-related item, Kinkley adds a footnote in “Zhangfu”, explaining the name of a local fruit.

五多还睡意迷蒙，只想到梦里在乡下摘三月莓。

Wuduo was half asleep, still preoccupied with thoughts of the spring country berries she'd been picking in her dream.*

*[Footnote:] “Third-month-berries”, yellow and sour, and smaller than strawberries (Kinkley, 1995: 51).

The local fruit “三月莓(third-month-berries)” seems to be trivial in terms of understanding the whole story, but it designates a local specificity. Kinkley’s footnote describes the color, taste and size of this local fruit, which helps enrich readers’ imagination of the local country life, and also serves as a hint of the mindset of the little girl, Wuduo, who lives on the boat in town but is haunted by the life at her home in the countryside. The other two translations both contain the substitute “strawberries” but no footnote, removing the local color, together with the imagination it might incur.

Local dialect is another type of local particularity which is provided with footnote. In “Xiaoxiao”, for instance, there is a local name for an insect, the “纺织娘子” [weaving maid], which is a kind of cricket and is metaphorically described in the dialect according to its sound. One of the translators, Lee Yi-hsieh, provides a footnote about this insect, translating it as “Weaving Maids”.

The Weaving Maid is a kind of cricket, so called because its notes have some resemblance to the sound of weaving (Lee, 1938: 297).

The footnote provides information about the family to which the insect belongs and why it is given this metaphorical name.

Among the translations without footnotes for this item, Eoyang calls it “the ‘Weaver Maid’ crickets”, a combination which both keeps the metaphorical expression and explains what kind of insect it is; while Robinson and Li translate it as “cicadas”, which might be a result of a misunderstanding of the original; and Gladys Yang simply calls it “crickets”, missing the figurative feature of the local dialect.

There are some local custom-related items for which Gladys Yang offers footnotes. Examples can be found in her translation of “Biancheng”. One defines the local food item, zongzi (粽子), a traditional food for the Dragon Boat Festival season.

Gladys Yang uses transliteration in italics, *zongzi*, and then offers the footnote:

Glutinous rice wrapped in palm leaves, often stuffed with sweetmeats, always eaten during the Dragon Boat Festival (Yang, 1981: 52).

Another example of a footnote in Yang’s translations concerns a local game

played during drinking. The context is that of business beginning in the stilt houses along the river as dusk falls. Different houses have different activities, and this is one of the scenes:

另外一些人家，又有划拳行酒的吵嚷声音。

From other houses came shouts of men in their cups playing a finger-game.*

*[Footnote:] A traditional Chinese game played at drinking feasts. The two contestants stretch out a hand each indicating any number between zero and five and call out a number up to ten supposed to be the sum total of the two hands. The one who calls the correct total wins and the loser must drink a cup as forfeit (Yang, 1981: 40).

Both of the above footnotes explain elements of local community life that appear in the source text. The detailed explanations in the footnotes introduce local customs³² to the target readers and serve to give a better understanding of the story.

5.2.2 Footnotes for items of historical significance

History-related notes mainly appear in the translations of Kinkley and Yang. In “Zhangfu”, when the river warden is introduced for the first time, the original narrator only mentions his title “水保” (River Warden), but Kinkley provides a footnote in his

³² These two customs are not West Hunan-specific. They are common in many places in China.

translation, which not only explains the title, but also supplies detailed background for the administrative system within which this official appears.

明白这数目，而且明白那秩序，记忆得出每一个船和摇船人样子，是五区一个老“水保”。

He who knew their number and the order in which they docked – who remembered every boat and every sailor of them – was the old river warden, *baojia* head* of the Fifth District, out on the wharves.

*[Footnote:] Local governments organized citizens into mutual responsibility groups, called *bao* and *jia*, for self-policing. Influential private citizens were named as heads of these units (Kinkley, 1995: 34; italics original).

The original text provides no extra information to explain the term “水保”, as for Chinese readers with relevant historical background knowledge, it would need none. However, for English-language readers, the case might be different. In his translation, Kinkley supplies the historical background information and introduces into the TT the “baojia” system, a kind of administrative system unique to old China. He explicitly explains the meaning and function of “bao” and “jia” and designates the form of this system. With this added footnote the translator situates the character within China’s

social system, which helps the TT readers to better understand the character and the story. This footnote is typically one of academic interest, and only a scholar translator would be inclined to provide such a footnote.

Another history-related footnote appears in Yang's translation of "Xiaoxiao". When Xiaoxiao's pregnant status is discovered by the family, it is believed that she should be punished – either drowned or sold – though nobody is clear about why this should be done. Then comes the narrator's comment, and Yang's translation provides a footnote for it:

究竟是谁定的规矩，是周公还是周婆，也没有人说得清楚。

Whether this rule had been made by the Duke of Zhou* or by his wife, no one could say.

*[Footnote:] Son of the first ruler of Western Zhou (c. 11th century BC), who is believed to be the inventor of rites and institutions (Yang, 1981: 118).

In the original sentence, the meaning of “周公周婆” [King and Queen of the Zhou Dynasty] is historically determined, and Gladys Yang's footnote explains who they are and what significant positions they occupy in Chinese history.

Yang also offers a footnote for a history-related item in “Biancheng”, concerning

the historic figure Yue Yun (岳云). When the protagonist Nuosong is depicted in the story, the author compares him to Yue Yun to praise his handsomeness, and mentions that the local people have an impression of Yue Yun from the stage character in local opera. Yang gives a footnote to explain who Yue Yun is:

Son of Yue Fei, a brave patriotic general of the Song Dynasty, who fought against invaders. Yue Yun is presented on the stage as a handsome and courageous young fighter (Yang, 1981: 28).

This footnote not only gives the historical background of Yue Yun, but also provides his characteristic features, which serves as a good supplement for the understanding of the protagonist Nuosong.

5.2.3 Footnotes for culture-loaded items

There are a few footnotes for culture-loaded items. Gladys Yang contributes one in “Xiaoxiao”. The item appears in a dialogue between Xiaoxiao and her Grandpa when they talk about the female students from the city. In the eyes of the country people, these female students are so weird and different that they do not behave like ordinary people:

“她们读洋书念经你也不怕?”

“念观音菩萨消灾经，念紧箍咒，我都不怕。”

“Not afraid? They read foreign books and recite sutras.”

“I don’t care if they recite Guanyin’s incantations, or the one to tighten the band on Monkey’s head.” *

*[Footnote:] In the classical novel *Journey to the West* the monk Tripitaka used a magic spell to tighten a band on the head of his disciple Monkey, to make him behave himself (Yang, 1981: 108).

In this dialogue, the two items “观音菩萨” (Guanyin, a bodhisattva) and “紧箍咒” (the spell to tighten the band on the head of Monkey Sun) are both rooted deeply in the minds of the Chinese people, along with their specific associated meanings. Gladys Yang’s footnote explains the associated meaning of the second item explicitly by introducing the classical Chinese literary work in which it appears, and this facilitates understanding of the dialogue. As for the first item, she renders it in transliteration. The word “incantations” suggests the quality of Guanyin’s religious nature. In “Biancheng”, “Guanyin” also appears, and Yang renders the expression as “Guan Yin” and then adds a footnote: *The Goddess of Mercy* (Yang, 1981: 70), which explicates the implied meaning.

Like Guan Yin, Yin Yang (阴阳) is also a typical symbol of Chinese culture. In

“Biancheng”, when describing the racing boats and the accompanying equipment and activities, there is a drum painted with the taijitu (太极图)³³, a symbolic picture representing the concept of yin and yang. The text goes like this:

.....绘有朱红太极图的高脚鼓

... drum painted with a red diagram of the yin and yang*

*[Footnote:] A Taoist symbol (Yang, 1981: 34).

As the concepts yin and yang are probably well known in western cultures, Yang’s footnote does not provide many details; however, it does give some hint to those who are not familiar with the terms.

Another footnote concerning culture-loaded items is added by Kai-yu Hsu in his translation of “Baizi”, in a dialogue between Baizi and his lover, in which he swears that he behaves well during the period of their separation. The woman says:

“你赌咒你干净得可以进天王庙!”

³³ “Ancient Chinese diagram on the universe, coming in two kinds. One, represented with a circular pattern surrounded by the Eight Diagrams, indicates the unity of *yin* and *yang*, and serves as the logo of Taoism. The other, drawn by Zhou Dunyi of the Song Dynasty, embodies the opinion of Confucian school of idealist philosophy of his times that the Supreme Ultimate is the origin of the multitude of things in the universe, and consists of *yin* and *yang* that give rise to metal, wood, water, fire and earth – the Five Elements that condensed to give rise to humankind and combined to produce the multitude of things.” – The Contemporary Chinese Dictionary (2002)

“I dare you to swear you’re pure enough to enter the temple of the Heavenly Ruler!” *

*[Footnote:] T’ien Huang (“Heavenly Ruler”) is the head of the family of fabulous sovereigns who succeeded P’an Ku, the creator of universe in Chinese mythology (Hsu, 1981: 224).

The expression “天王庙(Tian Wang Temple)” is a local temple in which people worship their local gods. The sacrifices for worship need to be cleanly dressed to do so, thus coming the expression. In Hsu’s translation, he introduces into the target text both T’ien Huang (Tian Huang) and P’an Ku³⁴ (Pan Gu), which are both specific culture-loaded figures of Chinese mythology, and the footnote meant to help with a better understanding of the culture loaded elements. (However, “Tian Wang” in the original does not mean “T’ien Huang” as rendered in the translated text. This rendering is perhaps a misunderstanding of the expression in the ST.)

It is well known that many cultures have different calendars. The Chinese lunar calendar contains typical Chinese features and implies their associated meanings, which decide the life activities of the Chinese people, especially of those living in the countryside. “Xiaoxiao” opens with an introduction of a typical wedding procession in the countryside, with the date designated as “十二月(the Twelfth month)”. Eoyang

³⁴ Both “T’ien Huang” and “P’an Ku” are old Wade-Giles spellings.

renders this as “the twelfth month” in his translation, and supplies the following footnote:

References to “months” in this story allude to the lunar calendar, when the term is converted into months in the solar calendar, the name of the month – December, January, etc. – will be given. The twelfth month is roughly February (Eoyang, 2007: 82).

This added footnote explains clearly the difference between the lunar calendar and the solar calendar, and the relationship between them. It emphasizes the importance of the lunar calendar for the local people and introduces the special temporal setting of the story. It also indicates how the translator renders the months mentioned in the original text in his translation.

In the original texts, some names of the protagonists suggest certain cultural implications, and there are also footnotes in the translations to explain what the names mean and imply. Eoyang adds two footnotes of this kind in his translation of “Xiaoxiao”. In the original text, there are two farmhands, called Huagou [Spotted Dog], whom we have already mentioned, and Yaba [Dumb], respectively. Eoyang adds footnotes to explain the meanings of the two names:

Huagou, literally “piebald dog.” The phrase is both appellation and description (Eoyang, 2007:87).

Yaba, literally “mute”; a derisive appellation, referring to his customary inarticulateness (Eoyang, 2007: 89).

Here in the footnotes Eoyang offers his own interpretation and aesthetic judgment of the meanings of the two names. This added information plays a guiding role in producing the reader’s attitude towards the designated characters.

Yang adds a footnote related to the familial term for the family relationship of a character in her translation of “Xiaoxiao”. The choice is related to the Chinese system of address which is far different from that of English. The two common Chinese terms of address “弟弟(younger brother)” and “姐姐(elder sister)” are rendered in her version as the transliterations “Didi” and “Jiejie”, respectively, with the inserted explanation “— younger brother” following the former, and the footnote “Elder sister” for the latter. By offering both the pinyin in the text and a footnote out of the text, Gladys Yang retains the original forms and conveys the meanings in the TT.

In the translation of “Baizi”, Kai-yu Hsu offers two footnotes to explain the dialogue between Baizi and his woman:

“老子摇橹摇厌了，要推车。”

“推你妈！”

“I’m sick of rowing. I want to push a wheelbarrow”.*

*[Footnote:] A pun that suggests a sexual intercourse position.

“Push your mother’s!” *

*[Footnote:] “Your mother’s”: common swearword. (Hsu, 1981: 224)

The two footnotes serve as explanations of the dialogue, which help the reader understand the precise meaning of the conversation. Hsu translates the expressions used by sailors and prostitutes literally, and also clarifies the implications of the terms. The intention of the translator is to lead to a better understanding of the characters and their activities.

The added footnotes no doubt facilitate the meanings with supplementary background knowledge. However, when the narrative mode of the story is concerned, they may intervene in the reading experience and slow down the narrative tempo.

5.2.4 Kinkley’s endnotes in “Biancheng”

Endnotes, just like the footnotes, are usually employed to add background knowledge, which corresponds to what Appiah calls “thick translation”, as mentioned.

Such “thick translation” is a typical characteristic of the scholar translators. In his

translation of “Biancheng”, Kinkley gives a list of 32 endnotes covering seven pages. These endnotes provide information of historical background, cultural elements, legend, literature figures, local particularities, and editions of the source text.

Quite a number of Kinkley’s endnotes concern local particularity, including local geographical environments, local dialect, specific local objects, and local customs. Kinkley provides greatly detailed endnotes, some of which may be regarded as “irrelevant” to the story proper, such as his explanation of “茶峒”. In the original, this is the name of the place where the story takes place, and the author does not give any explanation or make any comment – it is simply a place name. Kinkley writes a paragraph to explain this place name in his endnote:

p. 1: *Chadong*. In real life, there is a town called Chadong (“Tea Cave”) at this location. Shen Congwen writes the name’s second syllable with a similar but rarer and more picturesque Chinese character containing the ideogram for “mountain” and pronounced *tong* or *dong*. With the *dong* reading, the town name likewise literally means “Tea Cave” (Kinkley, 2009: 164; italics original).

This note relates the place in the story to a real place, explaining its semantic meaning and that the author has written it in a particular way. These explications place the text

within a rich linguistic and cultural context (they suggest the characteristic feature of the Chinese radicals which contain certain meanings) and show Kinkley's efforts to introduce the implied meanings intended by Shen Congwen into the target text.

Some of the endnotes are employed for items which have historical significance.

A typical example is one about an army regiment. In the original text, when Shunshun, the man who is in charge of the wharf, is introduced, the original narrator says:

掌水码头的名叫顺顺，一个前清时便在营伍中混过日子来的人物，革命时在著名的陆军四十九标做个什长。 [The man who is in charge of the wharf is called Shunshun, who spent some days in a battalion during the Qing Dynasty, and was a small officer in the famous forty-ninth regiment during the revolution.]

In the original story, the "Forty-ninth Regiment" is simply mentioned as part of the background of the protagonist. In Kinkley's translated text, he offers an endnote about this regiment:

p. 18: *Forty-ninth army regiment*. A New Army regiment of Hunanese in the late Qing that joined the 1911 revolution to overthrow the monarchy. Following the revolution, most of China was beset by warlord depredations, large-scale banditry, and civil war (Kinkley, 2009: 165; italics original).

What is explained in the endnote are the historical facts concerning the Forty-ninth Regiment, such as when it was established, what it has done, what happened after its military actions in history, etc. These facts – the background of the character – would influence the understanding of the significance of the story and the character’s actions within it. Shen Congwen would not have thrown this fact into the story without reason – the background of the character is part of the intended background of the story itself. The endnote goes deeply into what is hidden, and it is of academic research interest as well as of a better understanding of the story itself.

Kinkley also provides endnotes to explain culture-loaded items. A typical example is one about the way Chinese country people calculate their ages. There is always one year older than what the number actually says, and Kinkley offers an endnote to explain this:

p. 4: *she had grown to be thirteen*. The Chinese says fourteen *sui*. In the old way of counting, a person was one *sui* at birth (acknowledging the time in-utero) and gained one more *sui* (“year old”) every New Year. Hence ages in *sui* were a year or more older than years elapsed since birth (Kinkley, 2009: 164; italics original).

This endnote explains clearly how Chinese people counted their age in the past and what exactly the Chinese character *sui* (岁) means. Actually, there are some other translators within the province of the present study who also notice the difference between the number and the actual age it designates, but they simply “correct” the age without offering any explanation.

These endnotes are comparatively “irrelevant” to the story per se, and are not inserted in the text. However, the translator wishes to reveal these to the readers. The table below indicates the numbers of different categories among which all the 32 endnotes are distributed.

Category	culture	history	literature	locality	source text editions
Number	6	7	4	12	3

It is clear that Kinkley places most weight on those items with rich local, historical or cultural implications. He is also one of the few, if not the only, of the 29 translators of Shen Congwen’s stories who provide notes for different editions of the original texts. From these endnotes and the footnotes discussed above, it is obvious that Kinkley’s translation strategies betray his professional training as a historian, and his ethnographic approach in dealing with specific details showcases typical features of a scholar translator.

All the endnotes Kinkley provides in his translation of “Biancheng” share the same quality: they are not provided to explain elements which directly effect the

story's development, but to reveal what is behind the textual elements. He attempts to explore Shen Congwen's intentions and to reveal to the target readers as much background knowledge as possible. These endnotes are of academic interest and should be of great value to researchers and to readers who want to probe into the depths of the story.

From the above analysis, we see that all the footnotes function to supplement or clarify implied original meanings. Different translators have exhibited different principles of importance and have chosen different elements to explain, but the added notes all relate to cultural or historical or literary elements or to local specificities, and are included in attempts to translate the original texts adequately. All the scholar translators have added footnotes, and Gladys Yang, a professional translator and not a scholar one, also adds some footnotes.

In the present study of the English translations of Shen Congwen's stories, most of the scholar translators are found to have resorted both to strategies of in-text explications and out-text notes. They try more to retain or introduce the specificity of the original text more than other translators. It would not be too much an exaggeration to use the presence of these strategies as a yardstick to judge whether a translator is more prototypical of a scholar translator or not.

CHAPTER SIX FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Translators always leave traces in their translations, consciously or unconsciously. That's why we say that one thousand translators will produce one thousand Hamlets. There is no translation without a translator. Within the scope of this present study, we have come across different kinds of translators and their various choices in translating the texts. In this chapter, we will summarize the choice tendencies of different groups of translators and try to figure out what lies behind their various choices.

6.1 Tendencies of Translation Strategies Employed by Different Translators

Translators involved in this study include the L1 translators who translate into their native language, the L2 translators who translate out of their native language, the scholar translators who publish academic works in other research areas in addition to publishing translations, and the non-scholar translators who do not publish in other academic disciplines. In dealing with the English translations of Shen Congwen's stories with a focus on his style of narration, these different translators have showcased various strategies in rendering original narrative commentaries, in presenting lyrical style, and in adding their own notes as paratext of narration.

6.1.1 Scholar translators vs. non-scholar translators

The present study has found that the biggest differences in translation style are those between the scholar translator group and the non-scholar translator group, rather than those between the L1 translators and the L2 translators, or the translators of the 1930s and 40s and those of the 1980s onwards.

Obvious differences between the scholar translators and other translators have been detected in the translation of commentaries. Generally speaking, the scholar translators have clearly made efforts to ascertain that the original narrative commentaries are re-presented in translation, in terms both of the original semantic meaning and of original narrative function. They have mostly adopted strategies to retain the original function of the commentaries, though occasionally they have also resorted to the strategy of fulfilling the function through different means when retaining the same form has proved difficult, such as in the case of language-dependent commentaries. The strategy of retention is evident in almost all the scholar translators' works, including Hsu's translation of "Baizi", Kinkley's translations of "Zhangfu" and "Biancheng", and Eoyang's and Robinson's translations of "Xiaoxiao". As shown in Tables 3-2 and 3-3, Hsu retains two of the three explanatory commentaries and both of the two judgmental commentaries in "Baizi", Kinkley retains four of the six explanatory commentaries, all the eight judgmental

commentaries in “Biancheng”, and both of the two judgmental commentaries in “Zhangfu”, Eoyang retains three of the five explanatory commentaries and two of the three judgmental commentaries in “Xiaoxiao”, and Robinson retains two of both explanatory and judgmental commentaries respectively in “Xiaoxiao”.

The non-scholar translators within the scope of this study, except for Gladys Yang, all made their translations in the 1930s or 1940s, and their translations embody the features of non-scholar translators, which suggest that these are features of this period. They are more frequently found to have deleted or changed the original narrative commentaries, as in Snow’s translation of “Baizi”, Ching and Payne’s translations of “Baizi” and “Biancheng”, and Li’s translation of “Xiaoxiao”. Tables 3-2 and 3-3 show that, in “Baizi”, Snow deletes all the three explanatory commentaries and both of those judgmental commentaries. Ching and Payne change all three explanatory commentaries into non-commentary statements in “Baizi”, and change three of the six explanatory commentaries into non-commentary statements in “Biancheng”. As for the judgmental commentaries, Ching and Payne delete both of those in “Baizi”, and, of the eight in “Biancheng” they change four into non-commentary narration and delete two. As for Li Ru-mien, of the three explanatory commentaries, he deletes one and changes one into non-commentary narration, and of the three judgmental commentaries, he too deletes one and changes

one into a non-commentary statement.

Gladys Yang, however, presents translations lying somewhere between those of the scholar translators and the other non-scholar translators. As is shown in tables 3-2 and 3-3, she doesn't retain as much as the scholar translators in rendering the explanatory and judgmental commentaries, but she doesn't delete them either, as some of the non-scholar translators do. She very often fulfills the commentary function by different means, such as in five out of the six explanatory commentaries, and four out of the eight judgmental commentaries, in her translation of "Biancheng".

As for transferring the lyrical narrative style, the scholar translators distinguish themselves from the non-scholar translators in the following ways. Firstly, in rendering the original iterative narration, the scholar translators exert obvious efforts to re-produce the verbal iterative devices and to reserve the original iterative manner of narration, as is shown in the translation of "Zhangfu" (Example 4.1-1) by Jeffrey Kinkley. Table 4-1 shows that similar strategies also are used in the translations of "Xiaoxiao" by Eoyang and by Robinson. These scholar translators differ from each other in details renderings, but most of them manage to present the iterative narrative mode. Kinkley's translation represents that of a typical scholar translator. He tries every means to retain the intentions of the original text in terms both of the story and

of the way the story is told. He retains the original static description of the setting, as discussed in example 4.2-2, and does not have it turned into part of the story proper (as Gladys Yang does). He means to tell Shen Congwen's story, not that of anybody else. Compared with Kinkley, the scholar translator Hsu focuses more on the content of the story. He attempts to explicate every detail, as discussed in example 4.1-4, and produces a more logical and explicit mode of narration than that of the original. However, he does not pay great attention to how the original narrator has narrated the story, and the original iterative narrative function is not much heeded in his translation of "Baizi". As a result, his translation sometimes exhibits changes of original iterative sections into more specific activities. This reveals more about what the translator sees than what the original author intended.

Secondly, in rendering the images that appear in the original texts, the scholar translators choose to retain most of the images in the metaphoric expressions, as is shown in the translations of "Biancheng" and of "Zhangfu" by Jeffrey Kinkley, in the translations of "Xiaoxiao" by Lewis Robinson and Eugene Chen Eoyang, and in the translation of "Baizi" by Kai-yu Hsu. Table 4-2 shows that Kinkley retains three of the four images in "Zhangfu" and seventeen of the eighteen images in "Biancheng", Hsu retains five of the six images in "Baizi", and Robinson retains seven of the eight images in "Xiaoxiao". In rendering the names of characters, the scholar translators

attempt to reproduce both the forms of the images and the implied meanings of the names. For instance, Kinkley always resorts to the strategy of transliteration, adding explication of the implied meanings at the first appearances of the names, and Eoyang resorts to footnotes to explain the implicit meanings of the names. All these efforts by the scholar translators show that they have exerted efforts to transfer what the original author intends to convey in the story.

Thirdly, the understatement in the original text is not generally retained in the translations, except in the translation of “Zhangfu” by Jeffrey Kinkley as shown by example 4.3-5, and in the translation of “Xiaoxiao” by Eugene Eoyang as shown by example 4.3-4. These two scholar translators, at least, partially retain the understated tone. The other translators have all made some changes in rendering the understated tone, although to different degrees, resulting frequently in explications of the understatements in the translated texts, as shown in examples 4.3-4 and 4.3-5.

The non-scholar translators, in rendering the lyrical narrative style, tended not to keep all of the information points, as they frequently resort to strategies of deletion or adaptation or summarization, but they retain, at least partially, the original iterative narrative mode, as has been discussed concerning Ching and Payne’s translation of “Baizi” (examples 4.1-3 and 4.1-4), which provides basic information about what the story was like. Usually the summarizing strategy employed by non-scholar translators

only gives a brief introduction to the story, as is the case with Li's translation of "Xiaoxiao" (example 4.1-2). Li's version suggests the original sense of repetition in the part he translates, but he does not keep many of the iteratively narrated passages, and his translated text does not reproduce much of the original narrative style, but only presents the gist, not the full version, of the story to the readers. (Leo Ou-fan Lee points out that "a severely abridged translation gives a partial and often erroneous impression of the original work" (Lee, 1985: 565)). Edgar Snow exercises more freedom to delete and change the original text, and his translation very often leaves no trace of the repetitive sense of the original, and therefore no trace of iterative narrative style, as is clearly shown by examples 4.1-4, 4.2-1, and 4.2-3. He concentrates on "eye-catching" elements and pays scant attention to non-dramatic factors, which results in a change of the original narrative style. His deletion of many passages practically removes the author's voice, as he has largely rewritten the original text. The original iterative narrative in the beginning of "Baizi" is replaced by a singulative narrative in his translated text, which is a part of the story and no longer a piece of lyrical prose as in the original text, while in the ending section his added ending paragraphs have Baizi become awakened and conscious, and no longer oblivious to the injustice of the world. With this change, not only the pastoral element embedded in the original narration disappears and the calm and placid manner of narration is

disturbed, but also Shen's "lyrical mode of realism" (Wang, 1992: 203) is turned into a mode of critical realism. Snow's translation focuses on what the story is about, and not on how the story is told. His translation tells a story, but not necessarily the one that Shen Congwen tells.

Gladys Yang does not strictly stick to the iterative verbal devices, and omits some pieces of the original information, as shown in example 4.1-1. She turns the beginning setting into part of the story proper, as is shown in example 4.2-2, which also changes the manner of the original narration. Her translations tend to be brief and concise, and to speed up the original narrative rhythm, but they basically convey the original iterative narrative mode. She caters more to the target readers' tastes and strives to guarantee comprehensible target texts, which sometimes involve ignoring or changing Shen Congwen's specific stylistic features.

As concerns the original images, the non-scholar translators tend to delete or change many of them. As shown in Table 4-2, Snow deletes five of the six images in "Baizi", and Li deletes four of the six images in "Xiaoxiao". Yang deletes three, and changes one, of the eight images in "Xiaoxiao", and deletes two and changes one of the four images in "Zhangfu". However, of the eighteen images in "Biancheng" she only deletes five, retaining thirteen. As to the images appear in the characters' names, Gladys Yang tends to employ transliterations to render names, without any attempt to

explain their implied meanings (although she offers semantic explanations for some place names in her translation of “Biancheng”). Some translators try to transfer the implicit meanings of names, such as Hahn and Shing’s renderings in “Biancheng”, Ching and Payne’s renderings in “Biancheng”, and Li’s renderings in “Xiaoxiao”, but occasional misunderstandings are apparent in their translations, as discussed in section 4.3.2. In a word, the deletion or change of the images greatly reduces the specific language features of Shen Congwen’s writing and fails to reproduce the characteristics of his literary language.

As for the translation of understatement, as mentioned earlier, almost all the non-scholar translators fail to convey the original subdued tone embodied in them, as shown in example 4.3-4 of Lee’s and Yang’s translations of “Xiaoxiao”, and in example 4.3-5 of Yang’s, and Ching and Payne’s, translations of “Zhangfu”. The non-scholar translators tend to resort to explications to render the understatements in the translated texts.

6.1.2 L1 vs. L2 translators

The differences between the L1 translators and the L2 translators are sometimes complicated, as among the L1 translators themselves, for instance, there are obvious differences between the scholars and the non-scholars, as shown in the previous section. In rendering the narrative commentaries, the non-scholar L1 translators

demonstrate more freedom, by rendering them in a target-oriented manner with less regard for the original narrative structure, and sometimes change the original narrative function. Table 3-1 shows that, in his translation of “Baizi”, Snow does not retain many of the original commentaries, and among those he does retain, he changes some of the commentary functions. For instance, of the three language-dependent commentaries, he changes two into non-commentary narration. In her translations of “Xiaoxiao” and “Zhangfu”, Gladys Yang changes three of the five language-dependent commentaries (two into non-commentary narration and one into explanatory commentary) in the former, and all the three in the latter (all into non-commentary narration).

Another tendency is that the non-scholar L1 translators seem to be more at ease to translate culture- or locality- specific items into English idiomatic expressions rather than sticking to the specific expressions in the ST, which very often leads to a change in the manner of the original narration – though, the narrative functions of these items are basically retained. However, this is not an absolute case only found among the non-scholar L1 translators. Similar cases occur in some scholars’ translations. An example is found in the strategies adopted by another scholar L1 translator, Robinson. The strategies he employs in his translation of “Xiaoxiao” demonstrate similarity to those of Kinkley in terms of representing the original

narrative functions, though he also shows some similarity to Gladys Yang in terms of rendering certain elements in more target-oriented ways.

The L2 translators, both scholar and non-scholar ones, tend to follow more closely the original narrative structure, and their translated texts are closer to the ST. This tendency is found in both Eoyang's and Lee's translations of "Xiaoxiao" as shown in examples 3.1-1 and 3.1-4, and a similar tendency can also be detected in Hsu's translation of "Baizi". In rendering the narrative commentaries, the L2 translators more often retain the original narrative commentary function, though sometimes the function is fulfilled through different means. For instance, Kai-yu Hsu retains two of the three explanatory commentaries in his translation of "Baizi", Lee retains two of the three in his translation of "Xiaoxiao", and Eoyang retains three of the five in his translation of "Xiaoxiao". As for the translations of judgmental commentaries, Hsu retains both of the two in "Baizi", and Eoyang retains two of the three in "Xiaoxiao", as shown in Tables 3-2 and 3-3.

Another point is that most of the scholar L2 translators are overseas Chinese. Their translations demonstrate some similarities – that is, they show respect for the original texts and follow the original manner of narration as closely as possible. A few of them expressed the idea that a translator, no matter how well he renders his translation, has difficulty in reproducing all the merits of the original, especially in

terms of its style. Eugene Chen Eoyang, a member of this group, believed that “a translation can only bring the reader to the threshold of a new experience, but one must acquire the original language if one is to avail oneself fully of that experience” (Eoyang, 1993: 72). Most of these L2 translators were university teachers in the United States, as well as published translators. Their translations have been used as textbook materials to introduce to the students of Chinese literature both Chinese literary works and Chinese culture. The readers of their translations are generally knowledgeable of both languages and cultures of English and Chinese. These translators exert more efforts to explicate what is implied in the original text, with the purpose of transferring all the related information to the readers.

In rendering the lyric narrative style, it seems that the non-scholar L1 translators focus more on the story to be told to the target readers. They more often change, in their translations, the original narrative mode. They do not stick closely to the verbal iterative devices, and they either delete or summarize the iterative narrative sections or turn them into singulative ones. These changes sometimes lead to a change of the author’s intention and attitude, and often fail to convey the lyrical effect of the original narration. The L2 translators, on the other hand, follow more closely the original narrative order, and most of them are more likely to produce more-literal

translations, which help retain the original narrative mode. In translating the images in the original texts, the non-scholar L1 translators tend to change or delete them, while the L2 translators are more likely to retain them, as is clearly shown in Table 4-2. Detailed examples demonstrating these tendencies have been discussed in the previous section, in which the differences between the scholar translators and the non-scholar translators are analyzed.

6.1.3 Translators of the 1930s and 1940s vs. those of the 1980s onwards

Translations published in the 1930s and 1940s demonstrate similar characteristics, the most obvious of which is that the translators are freer to delete the commentaries (in addition to the tendency to delete some other elements), while translations published from the 1980s onwards seldom exhibit deletion.

The translators of the 1930s and 40s tend either to delete the commentaries or to change the commentary function, a phenomenon easily detected in the translations of Snow and Li Ru-mien and in the co-translators Ching and Payne, as discussed in the previous sections. Another pair of co-translators, Hahn and Shing, makes some changes in their translations, but they seldom resort to deleting the commentaries. Tables 3-2 and 3-3 show that Hahn and Shing change three of the eight judgmental commentaries, and two of the six explanatory commentaries, in 'Biancheng'. In the translation of the judgmental commentaries, there are more cases of deletion than is

the case with the explanatory commentaries. This phenomenon is detected in all of the earlier translations of the 1930s and 40s except that of Hahn and Shing. Snow is most free in deleting entire paragraphs, including commentaries of all categories, as is clearly shown in Tables 3-1, 3-2, and 3-3. His translation seems to focus on the “story” per se, and he deletes all those elements which are “irrelevant”, or in his own words, which “contribute nothing to the development of the story” (Snow, 1937: 210). These deletions make his translation fail to convey the important functions of these elements at the discourse level of the story.

The translators of the 1930s and 1940s, both the L1 and the L2 translators, are more inclined to delete many of the original passages, especially those episodes of symbolic function, as discussed in section 4.1.2 concerning the extreme case of Edgar Snow’s deletions. They also tend to summarize a lot of the events, as is shown in example 4.1-2 of Li’s translation of “Xiaoxiao” and in example 4.1-3 of Ching and Payne’s translation of “Baizi”. Some of the translations are virtually rewritings, with Snow’s translation of “Baizi” and Li’s translation of “Xiaoxiao” as extreme examples. This kind of translation affects the projection of the qualities of the original text into the target system, as the rewritings are “of crucial social and cultural relevance because they determine the ‘image’ of a literary work when direct access to that work is limited or nonexistent” (Hermans, 1999: 128). In an extreme case, a translation, in

the eyes of the target readers, might represent the whole culture of its source.

As has been mentioned previously, all the translators of the 1930s and 40s were non-scholar translators. The differences of their strategies and choices from those of the 1980s onwards overlap the differences between scholar translators and non-scholar translators, as has been discussed in detail in section 6.1.1.

Actually it is impossible to make a clear-cut demarcation line between the strategies adopted by any pair of the categories of translators, and what we can talk about are only tendencies which are closer to, or farther away from, this or that direction. Of all the translators analyzed in this present study, if we draw a line in accordance with their translation strategies and choices, we will have Edgar Snow at one end – the end of rewriting / acceptable translation / telling a story, and Jeffrey Kinkley at the other end – that of representing / adequate translation / showing a story by Shen Congwen, with Gladys Yang approximately in the middle. Presented below are three congruent lines, with the line of translation corresponding with the lines of translators, from a translation of telling a story to a translation of showing a story by Shen Congwen, from a translator with a more TT-oriented translation strategy to a translator with a more ST-oriented strategy, and with the translators' respective specific positions:

Rewriting / TT-oriented -----Representing /ST-oriented

Edgar Snow-----Gladys Yang-----Jeffrey Kinkley

Non-scholar/earlier translator-----Scholar/late translator

All the other translators can be placed somewhere along the line, with the scholar translators (Hsu, Eoyang, and Robinson) closer to Kinkley's end and the non-scholar translators (Li, Lee, Ching and Payne, and Hahn and Shing) closer to Snow's end. It seems that all the translators of the 1980s onwards are closer to Kinkley's end, and all those of the earlier 1930s and 1940s are closer to Snow's end. This trend might suggest a change of norms in the field of literary translation – that is, literary translations are moving from a more acceptable rendering to a more adequate rendering, which corresponds with what Venuti calls an ethics of difference (Venuti, 1998), and more and more translators of literature nowadays tend to be scholar translators. In the “gray ground” between the two ends of the continuum, some translators need to be given more attention because of the numbers of the translations of Shen's stories they have contributed. One of these is Kai-yu Hsu, who has published three translations of Shen's stories, and he should be placed closer to Kinkley's end of the continuum; the others are the co-translators Ching and Payne, who produced the first English-translation anthology of Shen's works, containing fourteen stories, who should be placed closer to Snow's end.

Taking into account all the factors mentioned above, we will take Kinkley, Yang, Snow, and Hsu, and Ching and Payne as representative of all the translators concerned. The parts that follow will concentrate on the factors that have led to the different choices made by different translators, drawing on concepts such as habitus, field, trajectory, and capital, as defined by Bourdieu in his theory of sociology.

6.2 Significance of the Translations

Translations usually involve two languages and two literary systems, with translators as the mediators. The positions of the original author, of the translator, and of the two languages, as well as the interrelationship between the two languages and literary systems, work together to determine the significance of a translation in the target system.

6.2.1 Casanova's framework

In discussing the structure of the world literary field, Casanova, drawing on Bourdieu's concept of "capital", makes a contrast between the opposition of the dominating languages and the dominated languages. She points out that there exists a structural inequality in the world literary field: some languages are dominating, while others are dominated. The dominating languages, to which English belongs, are "endowed with a relatively large volume of literary capital due to their specific

prestige, their age, and the number of texts which are considered universal and which are written in these languages” (Casanova, 2010: 289). The dominated languages are divided into four sub-groups. The first group are those “oral languages, or languages whose writing system has only recently been established”; the second one refers to the languages “which have been created or ‘recreated’ recently, and which have become national languages following political independence”; the third group are “languages of ancient cultures and traditions used in ‘small’ countries”; and the fourth group are “languages of broad diffusion”, which have “great literary traditions and a large number of speakers, [but are] little known or recognized in the international literary market”, and are therefore endowed with a very small volume of literary capital (Casanova, 2010: 289-290). Chinese belongs to the fourth sub-group of dominated languages. The structural inequality between the dominating and the dominated languages “prevents assigning translation a single significance”, and determines that the significance of a translation “depends on the respective position[s] of the three poles which found it: language, or more specifically the source language and the target language; the author of the source text; and the translator” (Casanova, 2010: 290).

Drawing on this framework of Casanova’s, we will discuss the significance of the translations of Shen Congwen’s stories from three perspectives: the positions of

the SL and the TL (Chinese and English in our case); the position of the author – Shen Congwen; and the positions of the translators involved in these translations.

6.2.2 Positions of Chinese and English

It is evident that, both in the 1930s (when Shen Congwen's stories began to be translated into English) and today, Chinese and English occupy considerably different positions in the world literary field. Chinese literary works, especially those of modern Chinese literature, have occupied a very marginal position in the world literary field, while English has accumulated overwhelming power among all the languages in the world. As a dominating language, English has gained a far larger volume of capital. It enjoys such a high prestige that it is hegemonic in the globalized world today.

English is the language in the world that has been most translated from. The UNESCO Index Translationum statistics (2010)³⁵ show that among the top 50 source languages of the translated books in the world, English ranks first, with 1,032,456 books translated from English. On the same list, Chinese ranks twenty-first, with 7,658 books translated from Chinese, a number about 135 times smaller. Although the figures show a narrowing of the gap from that in 1987, when there were 32,000 books translated from English and 216 from Chinese (Venuti, 1998: 160) – a difference of

³⁵ <http://databases.unesco.org/xtrans/stat/xTransList.a?!g=0>, accessed on April 25, 2010.

more than 148 times – the gap is still huge. We have no figures for the situation in the 1930s, but the difference was probably even greater, as modern Chinese literary works occupied an even more marginal position in the world literary field at that time. Edgar Snow mentions in the Preface to his *Living China* that very little modern Chinese literature was ever translated into English because many westerners believed that it had nothing worth mentioning (Snow, 1936: 12-13). Shen Congwen also mentioned in the 1930s in a letter to his friend Wang Chi-chen, who was a teacher of Chinese literature at Columbia University in the United States, that few people wanted Wang's translation of Shen's stories (Shen, 1931/2002: 130). These statements are both evidence of the very peripheral position occupied by modern Chinese literature in the English world.

Today, the relative status of the two languages is more or less the same. The same UNESCO statistical index mentioned above shows that the top 10 languages translated into English do not include Chinese, nor do the top 10 languages translated in the United States. However, English ranks first among the languages translated into Chinese, and also first among the languages translated in China. Chen Lan points out that the import and export of books to and from China produce an overall trade deficit of 10 to 1, while the deficit reaches 100 to 1 with Europe and America (Chen, 2008: 161). These figures are proof enough of the dominating status of English and of the

dominated one of Chinese. The circumstance has lasted for a long time and implies that translation from Chinese into English is likely to happen within the norms that govern the translation from dominated languages into dominating ones.

6.2.3 Position of the author

The position of the author, according to Casanova's idea, "must be located in the world literary field in two ways: firstly, according to the place the author occupies in his or her national literary field, and secondly, according to the place this field occupies in the international literary field" (Casanova, 2010: 290).

The author considered in this present study, Shen Congwen, as noted before, is one of the greatest writers in modern Chinese literature. He began his literary writings in the 1920s, and actively devoted himself to literary creation till the late 1940s. He gradually established himself in the literary circle with his unique style and his prolificacy, and he enjoyed great fame in the 1930s and 1940s. His success as a writer paved the way for his career as a university teacher. The two professions both brought him prestige and he therefore accumulated symbolic capital in the field of modern Chinese literature.

Despite the fact that he was ignored in mainland China (as well as in Taiwan) for about thirty years, from the 1950s to the 1970s, for political and ideological reasons, (although he had never been a member of any political organization), the "Shen

Congwen Craze” in the 1980s brought back the long lost prestige he deserved. His fame was resumed partly by the prestige and capital accumulated in the international literary field. In the United States, since the 1960s, C. T. Hsia, “the leading authority of Chinese literature in the United States” (Lee, 1980: xi), and other scholars such as Hua-ling Nieh, have studied Shen’s works, commented on his achievements, and strengthened his position as a great writer. Also during this period of time, several PhD candidates in the English-language world have written dissertations on Shen Congwen, among whom the most notable is Jeffrey Kinkley (1977) at Harvard, and this has been a sign of Shen’s growing international reputation. In China, since the implementation of the economic reform and opening-up policies beginning in the late 1970s, the environment of the intellectual world has changed for the better. Many writers whose fames were blemished in the past have been raised up and re-evaluated, and this prompted the so-called “Shen Congwen Craze”.

Shen Congwen’s resurrection in China in early 1980s influenced a “new” literary trend, the “root-searching literature”, among writers of the younger generation, including the most influential writers of the 1980s such as Han Shaogong, Yu Hua and Mo Yan. Shen Congwen was “chosen to receive the Nobel Prize for literature in 1988” (Kinkley, 2009: xi), but unfortunately he passed away in May that year, before the announcement in October. Nevertheless, his works occupy “a unique place in

Chinese and world literature” (Kinkley, 2009: xi), and he is one of the most translated of modern Chinese writers. When Shen Congwen is translated into English, the translation process is also a process of increasing the literary capital of his work.

6.2.4 Positions of the translators

Once a text to be translated is selected, the most decisive factor is perhaps the position of the translator. A translator may occupy different positions in different states, and these constitute his trajectory over time. In *The Field of Cultural Production*, when talking about “Principles for a Sociology of Cultural Works”, Bourdieu points out that the trajectory describes “the series of positions successively occupied by the same writer in the successive states of the literary field, it being understood that it is only in the structure of a field that the meaning of these successive positions can be defined” (Bourdieu, 1993: 189). This statement about writers also applies to translators, the field being translation. A translator’s trajectory refers to the series of positions successively occupied by the same translator in the successive states of the translation field, with these positions relevant to the structure of the field of translation and influenced by, among other things, the translator’s family and living environment, his education and training experience, and his professional background. The orientation of translation practice involves struggles between positions of different agents, and the translator’s strategies employed are a

function of the “convergence of position and position-taking mediated by habitus” (Johnson, 1993: 17). Habitus, one of the key concepts of Bourdieu’s theory of sociology, is defined by Bourdieu as

systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations which can be ... objectively adapted to their goals without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary to attain them (Bourdieu, 1977: 72)

Put simply, habitus is the set of dispositions acquired through involvement in social conditions and personal trajectories, long inculcated in the mind of an agent – the translator in our case, for whom these dispositions gradually become the internalized competence, which grows into a second nature, and influences the translator’s choices in a subconscious way. The dispositions represented by the habitus are “durable” and “transposable”, because they last throughout the lifetime of the agent and may generate practices in multiple and diverse fields of activity (Johnson, 1993: 5). They are “structured structures” because they “inevitably incorporate the objective social conditions of their inculcation. This accounts for the similarity in the habitus of agents

from the same social class and authorizes speaking of a class habitus” (Johnson, 1993: 5). And they are “structuring structures” because they are able “to generate practices adjusted to specific situations” (Johnson, 1993: 5). A translator’s habitus inscribed into him through his trajectory, and translators’ actual strategies account for their trajectories in the field. As specific orientations of the translation practice, strategies are “not based on conscious calculations, [but] result from unconscious dispositions towards practice” (Johnson, 1993: 17-18) – that is, they are influenced by habitus in an unconscious way. A strategy depends both on the position the translator occupies in the field of translation and on the specific translation problematic for which it searches for a solution. Strategy is thus a product of the habitus.

In talking about habitus, based on Bourdieu’s mentioning of personal habitus in the sense of a “class person” or “the habitus of a field” (Bourdieu, 1993), different scholars have resorted to different terminologies to clarify the sometimes ambiguous definition. Simeoni suggests a distinction between a “social/generalized” habitus and a “special/restricted (professional) habitus” (Simeoni, 1998). However, the word “social” seems to raise more ambiguity when it actually refers to “personal” habitus. Sela-Sheffy defines personal habitus as “a unifying set of mentally and physically incorporated schemes that coordinate the individual’s behavior in all areas of life” (Sela-Sheffy, 2005: 14), which, Reine Meylaerts believes, “may give rise to a more

deterministic interpretation” (Meylaerts, 2010: 16). Meylaerts employs the term “initial habitus”, which is “a dynamic and plural set of mental and physical repertoires for social behavior in life at large” (Meylaerts, 2010: 2). He further explains that the initial habitus refers to “the individual’s mental and physical structures as shaped by early socialization within structures of family, class, and education” (Meylaerts, 2010: 2). The present study will adopt his term “initial habitus” in referring to a translator’s personal habitus. As to “the habitus of a field”, Sela-Sheffy mentions that it is composed of “the shared tendencies, beliefs and skills, all of which precondition the natural operation of a specific field” (Sela-Sheffy, 2005: 14), or of a specific subfield, to apply it further. This “collective” quality, structured in a translator’s habitus, accounts for the fact that translators with similar backgrounds will, in one way or another, demonstrate certain shared common grounds in their work – for instance, the similar strategies adopted by the scholar translator group, or by those translators from the same historical period. On the other hand, the individual specific dispositions are structured and accumulated through unique personal trajectories (which are also influenced by the habitus of the field itself) and internalized as structuring dispositions, forming the initial habitus. Different translators have different life experiences – their backgrounds of upbringing, education, training, profession, etc. – all structured by the social conditions and trajectories but at the same time structuring

their individual habitus. This explains why every translator has his own specialized idiosyncratic way of doing a translation, even among those with similar background. For example, within the L1 translator group, every translator has his own individual characteristics.

6.2.4.1 Jeffrey Kinkley

Jeffrey Kinkley, as the most representative scholar translator within the scope of this present study, showcases significant differences from those of the other translators involved in the translations of Shen Congwen's stories, as has been discussed in previous sections. As a Harvard graduate and then a university professor, Jeffrey Kinkley enjoys a high degree of consecration himself. His publications in the academic world have won him high renown, and by authoring Shen Congwen's biography (*The Odyssey of Shen Congwen*) and dozens of other related publications, as well as a large number of published translations of Shen's works, Kinkley has established himself as an authority in the field of Shen Congwen studies in the English-language world. He was invited by Howard Goldblatt (who himself is a renowned translator of Chinese literature) and HarperCollins Publishers to translate "Biancheng" for one of the publisher's series of modern Chinese classics. His first translation anthology of Shen Congwen's stories, *Imperfect Paradise*, was published in 1995, and the monograph of his translation of "Biancheng" was published in 2009,

both after Shen Congwen had regained his fame as a result of the “Shen Congwen Craze” of the 1980s and at a time when communication among different cultures was increasing more rapidly than ever before. In the world literary field, the dominating English literary system had begun to take a new stance, showing more tolerance for foreign cultures. At the same time, the dominated Chinese literary system was becoming stronger, though still not strong, within the world “literary polysystem” (Even-Zohar, 1990/2000: 192). In certain target reader circles in the United States – in academia, in our case – translated Chinese literature was gaining capital due to both the critical comments and analyses of influential scholars and the increasing number of translations. These developments contribute to structuring the habitus of the field, and helped raise interest in translated Chinese literature generally and prepared for a more tolerant and patient readership (however small it may be), which enabled the possibility of more adequate translations of original texts.

Kinkley’s professional background has played an important role in structuring his initial habitus, which has affected his translation strategies in an unconscious way. As author of Shen Congwen’s biography, he went to West Hunan seven times to conduct field work and interviewed Shen Congwen more than ten times during his work on the *Odyssey*, and this not only provided him with rich first-hand materials and authoritative interpretations for his research questions but also developed in him a

strong sense of understanding and appreciation. These experiences were absorbed, inculcated into him, and helped to structure his personal habitus.

As a historian and sinologist, Kinkley has paid great attention to the elements loaded with cultural, historical and local connotations and has placed weight on what is implied by these rich resources, and this is clearly demonstrated in his detailed explications and his notes added in his translated texts. The strategies he employs in translating Shen Congwen's works very much resemble those of the sinologists in the past – for instance, those adopted by James Legge, who translated Chinese classics in the 19th century.

The adjacent academic discipline, history in his case, has surely played a role in structuring his personal habitus, and he has deciphered the culture- and locality- and history- related elements in the texts in a way resembling that of a historian, a way in which he was trained.

Kinkley is not a translator by profession, which somewhat frees him from the established norms of translational behavior. As Simeoni points out, “to become a translator in the West today is to agree to becoming nearly fully subservient” (Simeoni, 1998: 12), and this nearly-full subservience “originates in the very training institutions and professional practices within which translators’ normative behavior – that which constitutes the ‘translatorial habitus’ – is derived and reproduced” (Inghilleri, 2003:

261). This structured translatorial habitus, “the habitus of the field”, was not a direct structuring power for Kinkley’s initial habitus, which may partly account for the fact that, in his oriented translating activities, he has been able to step a bit farther away from the established translation norms practiced by professional translators.

On the basis of the textual analysis in the previous sections, we have discovered that Kinkley has exerted much effort in rendering the items with their Chinese uniqueness. He inserts in-text explications to explain, among other things, the Chinese measurement units, the implied meanings of the protagonists’ names, culture- or history- loaded items, and some locally-specific objects such as some local plants. He also adds out-text footnotes or endnotes to supplement background knowledge – for instance, his footnotes to explain a folk song and an element in the administrative system of old China described in “Zhangfu”, discussed in sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.2. He also adds endnotes to supply background information about a certain local place, Chadong, and for the historically important Forty-ninth Army Regiment, as discussed in section 5.2.4. His aim is to explain what is behind these items of historical, cultural and specific local significance, and he tries every means to reveal to the target readers as much as possible of what he sees as important elements in the source text. These strategies betray traces of his structured habitus as a historian and sinologist who, during the translating process, probes not only the what, but also the how and the why.

His choice of items for endnotes is obviously the choice of a scholar and not simply of a translator, so that his notes – especially the endnotes to his translation of “Biancheng” – are more of academic interest than a matter of interest in the story itself (It certainly also facilitates the understanding of the story). In this way, he makes himself more visible than do other translators, with his conspicuous translator’s intrusions in the translated text. In addition to these translation strategies for dealing with textual elements, which produce his visibility, he always includes an introduction or a foreword at the beginning of his published translations, which provide background information for the original work(s) or the author, or provide additional information concerning the translation process and choices. These are features of the structured personal habitus of a scholar who means to probe into the what and the how and the why of everything concerned.

In short, his translations demonstrate discernable traces of a scholarly work, in addition to the narration of the story. Perhaps because of his own high prestige and his renowned position as a scholar and as a translator, he is allowed to translate as he likes.

However, in his translation of “Biancheng”, a compromise *is* made to guarantee a more agreeable translation for mass readership, which was HarperCollins’ target readership: there are no indicators for notes in the text proper, as they were believed

to be interruptive of the reader's reading experience. The endnotes simply appear at the end of the book, with page numbers indicating which part of the story they are for. In addition, the coming out of the translation itself demonstrates the power of the publisher: Kinkley was invited by HarperCollins to do the translation. Otherwise, it might not be published, as "it is very difficult to get translations of modern Chinese literature published", and "[i]f you present them with a ready-made translation, a major publisher may or may not take the trouble to even read it" (Kinkley's email to the author, Dec 27, 2009). Therefore, the compromise arrangement, besides testifying that the endnotes are more for researchers and scholars, also betrays the power of other agents involved, including the publisher and the target readership, whose tastes can not be totally ignored.

6.2.4.2 Edgar Snow

Edgar Snow is on the other end of the continuum from that of Jeffrey Kinkley. Snow's translation of Shen Congwen's short story "Baizi" was published in 1936 in *Living China* (reprinted in 1937), an anthology of translated Chinese literary works which Snow edited and translated (with assistance from others). The preparation processes "behind the work range over a period of five years" (Snow, 1937: 11), which means that Snow started working on the anthology from 1931. This was a time when "no important modern Chinese novels had been translated, and only a few short

stories had appeared obscurely in short-lived or little-read sectarian papers” (Snow, 1937: 12-13). Modern Chinese literature was practically a *terra incognita* to the Western world. In his Preface to the anthology, when talking about the reason why few modern Chinese literary works were rendered into English, Snow mentioned that most Westerners believed that there was “nothing of much value” in modern Chinese literature, but he argued that, although “contemporary China has produced no great literature, there must be much of scientific and sociological interest, and for utilitarian purposes alone it ought to be made available to us” (Snow, 1937: 13). These remarks show that at that time translated Chinese literature occupied a very marginal position in the target English-language literary system. In other words, modern Chinese literary works were not valued much in the English-language literary field and had acquired very little symbolic capital, if any, in the world literary field. Translation from the dominated Chinese language into the dominating English language was dependent on the capital of the translator and other agents involved in the process. It is not surprising that, in the translations of the time, a more TT-oriented position was taken, and Snow’s translation of “Baizi” was no exception. Snow shared similar opinions as his fellow English-language readers about modern Chinese literary works, and he believed that in modern Chinese stories

[t]here is often padding with essentially meaningless though usually pretty enough dialogue and narrative, which contributes nothing to the development of the story, thus sacrificing interest, coherence, and compactness of style and form in order to pay the rice-vendor (Snow, 1937: 16).

He further remarked that Chinese did not seem to mind such “purposeless rambling”, but Western readers were sure to find it “irritating” (Snow, 1937: 16). All these comments betray his attitude towards modern Chinese literature, and can serve to explain why Snow deleted so many passages or rewrote so freely in his translated text of “Baizi”, despite the fact that he had started this translation project because he was so impressed by certain modern Chinese writers such as Lu Xun and Lin Yutang. Thus, in the field, very low prestige was given to modern Chinese literature, and in his structured personal habitus, the long-inculcated dispositions led to a somewhat condescending attitude towards modern Chinese literature at that time, which contributed subconsciously to the strategies Snow adopted in his translation.

On the other hand, his professional training and practices as a journalist left visible traces in his translation. His personal habitus thus contributed to the making of his translation.

Edgar Snow was a journalist who reported the state of affairs in China during the

1930s, when China was torn by wars. He had lived in China for eleven years and had witnessed the hardships and sufferings experienced by the Chinese people at that time, which gave him first-hand materials for his writings as a journalist. During this period, he came to know Lu Xun and Lin Yutang, who prompted him to make up his mind to introduce modern Chinese literary works into the western world. Lu Xun's "breadth of humanity, warmth of sympathy, and keen perceptivity of life" and Lin Yutang's "wit, skilful and mature and penetrating satire" (Snow, 1937: 13-14) made him believe that "equally important talent must lie hidden in recent writing in the Chinese language, and be worth bringing into English" (Snow, 1937: 14), so he began to look for literature of this kind. The choices of texts to be translated for his anthology were made with the help of the original authors and some young Chinese scholars, and through the medium of Xiao Qian (a student of Snow, and also of Shen Congwen), Snow came to know Shen Congwen and Ba Jin, "both of whom have powerfully influenced the growth of modern Chinese literature" (Snow, 1937: 14). Therefore, Shen Congwen's story "Baizi" was selected into Snow's anthology.

Snow insisted on his own way of doing the translation and did not always accept the advice from the original authors, and the actual translation strategies are the product of his unconscious dispositions that constitute his structured habitus. From the examples discussed in the previous chapters, we have discovered his very free

translation strategy in interpreting the story. His translation reveals very much the influence of the adjacent discipline, that is, journalism, so that he concentrates on the “story” per se and attempts to produce “eye-catching” effects so as to attract the readers. He himself admits this in the Preface: “I have made so bold as to omit certain passages and episodes” (Snow, 1937: 16-17). These passages and episodes must be what he regarded as “purposeless ramblings” which had no value but to “pay the rice-vendor”. His special trajectory gives him a sort of superior feeling in translating “Baizi”, and his initial habitus unconsciously leads to his translation strategies. He deletes all the “irrelevant” elements, such as most of the narrative commentaries and almost all the symbolic-function episodes, which, Snow believes, “contributes nothing to the development of the story” (Snow, 1937: 16). In his rewriting, he changed many details so as to give a more dramatic presentation of the events and characters, and this constituted his efforts to improve the story so that it would not sacrifice “interest and coherence”. He even deleted the ending of the original story and provided his own ending instead, in an attempt to achieve “compactness of style and form” in his TT.

Snow also stated in his Preface to the anthology that he sometimes refused to translate some elements “that would require a half-page footnote to make it comprehensible, and thereby contribute further to the legend that the Chinese are

‘queer’ people” (Snow, 1937: 15). With this claim the TT-oriented strategy shows up. Thus Snow catered more to the taste of target readers. He meant well – to keep the Chinese from being considered “queer” people or “strangers”, but this kind of de-strangeness virtually removed the particular Chineseness which had actually impressed him and prompted him to translate and publish the anthology of modern Chinese literature.

Snow’s translation clearly raises the ethical question which Berman and Venuti and others discussed in the second half of the twentieth century, who presuppose an ethics that “recognizes and seeks to remedy the asymmetries in translating” (Venuti, 1998: 6), leading to Berman’s appeal for “the necessity for reflection on the properly ethical aim of the translating act (receiving the Foreign as Foreign)” (Berman, 1985/2000: 285-286), as well as Venuti’s advocacy of an ethical stance that “translations be written, read, and evaluated with greater respect for linguistic and cultural differences” (Venuti, 1998: 6).

6.2.4.3 Gladys Yang

Gladys Yang occupies a more or less middle position along the linear continuum. She was one of the very few professional translators (Chinese-English translation) in China. Born in Beijing of a British missionary father, she was brought up in China during her early years. She went to England for education, and became Oxford’s first

graduate in Chinese, in 1940. At Oxford, she met Yang Xianyi, returned to China with him, married him, and continued to live in China for the rest of her life (Yang, 2002). Her life trajectory – her missionary family background, her early years in China, her majoring in Chinese at Oxford, and her marriage to a Chinese, had developed in her a disposition of love for Chinese culture since her childhood, and undoubtedly structured her individual habitus, which contributed to the position-taking in her later orientation in her translation.

During the latter half of the twentieth century, Gladys Yang and her husband Yang Xianyi were a world-renowned husband-and-wife team of translators and the most prominent translators in China, dedicated to the cause of translating Chinese literature into English. They produced numerous books of English translations out of modern and classic Chinese literature, among which are *The Dream of Red Mansions*, *The Scholars*, and *Selected Works of Lu Hsun*, to name but a few. Their translations were clearly made to introduce Chinese classics to the English-speaking world, and they demonstrated considerable efforts to explaining the specific Chinese culture-loaded items in the translated texts. Although as a co-translator, Gladys Yang's name was always second to that of her husband, Yang Xianyi duly acknowledged her contribution by saying that “[w]ithout her, I could not have rendered them [translations of classical Chinese literature] into good English” (Yang, 2002: 202). As

expert translators for the Foreign Languages Press, they were in charge of different assignments: Yang Xianyi translated classical Chinese literature, and Gladys Yang translated “modern and contemporary Chinese literature by herself, especially modern Chinese novels and short stories” (Yang, 2002: 202), including Shen Congwen’s stories.

Gladys Yang’s translations of Shen Congwen’s works were all done by herself alone. The first platform for her translations of Shen Congwen’s stories was *Chinese Literature*, an official journal published in Beijing, the aim of which was to introduce Chinese literary works to the world. She translated nine of Shen’s stories, including the novella “Biancheng”, in 1962, and eight short stories, namely: “Zhangfu”, “Xiaoxiao” and “Guisheng” in 1980; and “Chuanqi buqi” (Truth is Stranger than Fiction), “Qiaoxiu he Dongsheng” (Qiaoxiu and Dongsheng), and “Xueqing” (After Snow) in 1982; and “Caiyuan” (The Vegetable Garden) and “Zhishi” (Knowledge) in 1989. These all first appeared in *Chinese Literature*.

In the field of translation, the choice of texts is usually “connected with the translator’s tastes based on [his/her] acquired habitus” (Gouanvic, 2002: 98). However, in the Yangs’ case, as pointed out by Yang Xianyi,

the selections were made by young Chinese editors whose knowledge of Chinese literature was rather limited or because selections had to suit the political tastes of the period, ... we often argued with the editors about their choices, reaching a compromise only after lengthy discussion (Yang, 202: 203).

This conflict between different position-takings concerning the choice of texts demonstrates the dynamic of struggle between the different positions occupied by different agents in the field of translation. The more prestigious the position of a translator, the more say he/she is likely to have. A translator's disposition also mediates the position and the position-taking leading to his/her translation strategies.

The translation of "Biancheng" was published in 1962, when Shen Congwen's writings had been ignored for some time in Chinese literary field. The policy of "let a hundred flowers blossom" appeared in 1957, with a direct result of the publication of *Selected Works of Shen Congwen* (1957). The Hundred Flowers Campaign soon disappeared, and Shen Congwen and his writings had remained unnoticed till the "Shen Congwen Craze" of the 1980s. But the whole literary field was not as bleak as it later became during the Cultural Revolution period – at any rate, Shen Congwen and his works were no longer on the priority list at that time. Thus the choice of

Shen's "Biancheng" for translation was most probably a result of Gladys Yang's structured personal habitus, and it might be evidence that a translation is at least partially dependent on the translator's position.

In 1981, Gladys Yang anthologized "Biancheng", "Xiaoxiao", "Zhangfu" and "Guisheng" in *The Border Town and Other Stories*, one of the Panda Books series published by the Chinese Literature Press, the chief editors of which were Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang. Also belonging to this series is her translation anthology of Shen Congwen's essays, "Xiangxing sanji" (*Recollections of West Hunan*), which was published in 1982, with the second edition coming out in 1992.

A translator's habitus shapes his/her inclination to adopt certain translation strategies. Gladys Yang's life trajectory was a mixture of conflicting positions in the field of translation. Born British, with English cultural and historical and linguistic roots; married to a Chinese and living in China for most of her life, with Chinese culture and history and language etc. inculcated in her as second nature. These successive positions along her trajectory constituted in her mixed dispositions which influenced her orientations of translation unconsciously.

One of the most obvious features of her translations, revealed in the present study, is that she has frequently resorted to a strategy of rendering the original text into brief

and concise English, although she manages to retain original narrative functions, for the most part, as discussed in Chapter Three and Chapter Four. She does not stick strictly to the original narrative structure, and replaces some ST-specific elements, such as the original images, with authentic English expressions. Such strategy of free translation tends to be products of the habitus of non-scholar L1 translators, who are inclined to translate in favor of the target text and the target reader. In an interview with an Australian correspondent, when commenting on the translation of “Hongloumeng” (*The Dream of Red Mansions*) by herself and her husband, Gladys Yang felt that they hadn’t given themselves much liberty, and that they were “rather literal and pedestrian translators” (Henderson, 1980: 34). She believed that David Hawks, another influential translator of “Hongloumeng”, is more “creative” (Henderson, 1980: 33). This betrayed Gladys Yang’s opinion of translation that a translator should have freedom and imagination, which was believed to be evidence that she had been affected by the culture of her native land (Chang, 2004: 224-225). However, compared with other non-scholar L1 translators, Gladys Yang exerts more effort to explain Chinese specific culture- or history- related items, as can be seen in the footnotes she adds to the stories she translates. In her three translations considered here – namely, “Zhangfu”, “Xiaoxiao”, and “Biancheng” – she has added footnotes to all of them, as has been discussed in detail in Chapter Five. Her footnotes cover items

loaded with Chinese specific cultural or historical elements or local particularities, and her efforts to explicate them betray her appreciation for Chinese culture, which has long been inscribed into her dispositions through her life trajectory. Her structured personal habitus thus contributes to her difference both from other L1 translators and from the L2 translators, which results in her particular orientations in her translation. Her case is perhaps an evidence of traces of habitus clash, which corresponds to what Sela-Sheffy calls “not naturally belonging” (Sela-Sheffy, 2005: 14).

6.2.4.4 Other translators

The other translators are located in the “gray ground” of the continuum, either closer to Kinkley’s end or closer to Snow’s end.

Among these translators, Kai-yu Hsu is a scholar L2 translator. He has published three of Shen Congwen’s stories, one of which, “Baizi”, is within this present study. His translation of “Baizi” was published in 1981, a time when globalization began to develop in the world and China began to implement the opening-up policy. Chinese literature at that time still occupied a very marginal position in the world literary field, while English-language literature had long begun to occupy the hegemonic position which it continues to occupy today. However, as mentioned previously, people involved in the English-language literary system had begun to have more open minds towards the “Other” and were becoming more tolerant of the different and the foreign.

In the literary field in the United States, since C. T. Hsia published his seminal work *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction* in 1961, which posited Shen Congwen as one of the most important and talented modern Chinese writers, many students of modern Chinese literature have taken Shen Congwen as the object of their study and research. As mentioned, Hsu's translation was intended as textbook material for US universities and his major target readership was university students of Chinese literature. The anthology itself in which his translation of "Baizi" appeared has been used as a text book. Joseph S. M. Lau, one of the editors of the book, points out in the Preface that the book should "contain all the stories essential to our understanding of the development of modern Chinese fiction" (Lau, 1981: ix).

In China, with the policy change after the Cultural Revolution, Shen Congwen's works were resurrected, and the so-called "Shen Congwen Craze" appeared in the early 1980s. Shen then regained his long-lost fame.

These developments concerning the acceptability of Shen and his works in China and the United States helped to increase their popularity both at home and abroad, and both Shen and his works accumulated symbolic capital as a result. The social trajectories ensured that a translation strategy of detailed explanation and explication would be possible and acceptable in the target system, and Hsu's translation of "Baizi", together with the translations by other scholar translators as discussed

previously, demonstrate this tendency. The symbolic capital gained on the part of the author and his works virtually equipped the translators with a different degree of empathy towards deciphering the original texts.

Kai-yu Hsu had once been a student of Shen Congwen, in Southwestern Associated University, during the Anti-Japanese War period. He then went to the United States, got his PhD in Modern Chinese Literature from Stanford University, and became a professor of comparative literature at San Francisco State University. The successive positions he occupied in the academic field through his life trajectory, first as a student of Shen and of modern Chinese literature and then as a scholar of literature, constitute his structured personal habitus. He wrote, and had published, quite a few books on Chinese literature and art, including *The Chinese Literary Scene* (1975), *Literature of the People's Republic of China* (1980), and *The Intellectual Biography of a Modern Chinese Poet: Wen I-to* (1985). He also published translations of Chinese literature, including the often-quoted *Twentieth Century Chinese Poetry: an Anthology* (1963). These academic achievements gained him symbolic capital and guaranteed him a prestigious position in the literary field.

In the 1970s, Hsu, then as a university teacher in the United States, visited Shen Congwen, who then worked in the Museum of History in Beijing. After returning to America, Hsu wrote an article based on this meeting with his former teacher, and

published it in *The Chinese Literary Scene*, in which he remarked that Shen Congwen was “once China’s most distinguished novelist” (Hsu, 1975: 131), and expressed his heartfelt respect for Shen Congwen.

These dispositions paved the ground where he stood, and formed his structured habitus, which unconsciously led him to his stance as a translator of Shen Congwen’s stories. He demonstrates full respect for the original texts and makes evident efforts to render them as adequately as possible. His explications of the details offer more explanations and interpretations and sometimes result in a more coherent and logical story than the original, which are evidence of his training as a Chinese literature professor – the product of his structured habitus.

Ching Ti and Robert Payne’s book *The Chinese Earth* was the first English translation anthology of Shen’s stories. It was published in 1947, eleven years after the publication of Snow’s anthology. During those years, the status of modern Chinese literature had not been much enhanced, and it had accumulated little symbolic capital in the world literary field, still occupying a very peripheral position compared with that of English literature. Ching and Payne did not discuss in their book anything of the position of modern Chinese literature or of the translations of Shen’s stories in the English-speaking world. However, in an anthology of English translations of Chinese

literature, *Contemporary Chinese Short Stories* (in which two of Shen's stories were included), published one year earlier, of which Robert Payne was one of the editors, there is a remark in the introduction that "modern Chinese literature is still in its youth" (Yuan & Payne, 1946: 13), but that the editors believed that "the nation which can produce Lu Hsun, Shen Ts'ung-wen, Chang T'ien-yi, Tuan-mu Hung-liang and Hsiao Chun should have no fear for the future" (Yuan & Payne, 1946: 13).

Ching and Payne's introduction to *The Chinese Earth* (which was probably written by Robert Payne, judging from the tone employed) mentions neither the translation strategy nor anything of the cooperation in the actual translation, but for the most part merely introduces the author, Shen Congwen. However, in the reprint of the book by Columbia University Press in 1982, a Preface by Shen Congwen includes the following:

The translator was Mr. Jin Di (Ching Ti) ... Mr. Payne did much to improve the style and diction of the translation, and after it was finished, he arranged to have it published by Allen and Unwin in London in 1947. (Shen, 1982: 3)

Even with these remarks at hand, it is still difficult to judge exactly who contributed what to the final product of the translated texts between the co-translators. The

translation strategies are most probably the product of the habituses of both translators. In Bourdieu's model, the strategies of the agents engaged in literary struggles, that is, their position-takings, depend on the positions they occupy in the structure of the field. The struggle "does not take place on a conscious, deliberate level; rather, it is 'as if' agents were struggling to impose their vision and division on the reality of the field" (Gouanvic, 2002: 99). In the sub-field of co-translation, the struggle between position and position-taking can be seen as a smaller replica of that in the whole literary field. The habituses of both translators operate as unconscious driving forces moving the translation in a certain direction. In Ching and Payne's translations, we have discovered that sometimes the translation follows closely the original narrative structure, which is a feature more often detected among L2 translators. At other times the translation is very free, with changes catering to the target readers, which is a strategy more often adopted by L1 translators. Thus Ching and Payne's translations show mixed characteristics, suggestive both of the L2 translators and of the L1 translators – of the L2+L1 translators, as shown in the examples in the previous chapters.

The other pair of co-translators, Emily Hahn and Shing Mo-lei, in their translation of "Biancheng", also demonstrates a mixture of strategies of L1 and L2 translators. Although the first translator Emily Hahn is an L1 translator, their

translation demonstrates many features typical of L2 translators in many cases, such as their dealing with the images, most of which they preserve, as shown in Table 4-2, unlike their contemporary, Edgar Snow, whose translation was published at the same year and who deletes most of the original images. Hahn and Shing's translation is a product of the mixed habitus of the L1+L2 translators.

6.3 Hypotheses

As is stated in Chapter Two, this study aims to figure out, from the perspective of the narrative features of Shen Congwen's stories, what differences exist among the different translations made by different translators, and what the reasons are that have caused these differences. After the detailed textual comparisons and discussions, we have basically reached our goal, as shown in the discussion and analysis in chapters three, four and five, and in sections 6.1 and 6.2. On the basis of these discussions and analyses, we present the following hypotheses:

Firstly, the differences between a scholar translator and a non-scholar translator are more conspicuous than those between an L1 translator and an L2 translator, or those between translators of different periods. Demonstrating this is the fact that the translations of two scholar translators, the L1 translator Jeffrey Kinkley and the L2 translator Kai-yu Hsu, present more similarities than differences; and that the translations of the two L1 translators, the scholar translator Jeffrey Kinkley and the

professional translator Gladys Yang, are clearly different; and that Kinkley's translations are dramatically different from that of the journalist translator Edgar Snow. With their translations published both in the earlier period, the L1 translator Edgar Snow's translation and that of the L2 translator Li Ru-mien show more similarities than differences in terms of their translation strategies. Both as L2 translators, Lee Yi-hsieh of the 1930s and Eugene Chen Eoyang of the 1980s, adopted many similar translation strategies in their translations.

It seems that a scholar translator has more to say, and says more, thus making himself more visible in the translated text, with conspicuous translator's intrusions. The strategies a scholar translator tends to resort to, including explication and "thick translation", very often result in more explicit and more logical target texts than the original texts. Most of the scholar translators pay more attention to the author's intentions, and they also add their own explanations, so that their translations present features of Shen Congwen plus features of the translators, presenting more than does the original texts. With the translations of a scholar translator, if the readers are not very familiar with the original work, they reach the threshold of the original treasure chamber equipped with a treasure map. On the contrary, a non-scholar translator tends to focus more on the story per se, and often ignores the non-dramatic narrations of the original text. The strategies a non-scholar translator frequently resorts to may include

summarization, adaptation and deletion, which result in an incomplete and partial, if not erroneous, representation of the source text. The translation of a non-scholar translator tells a story of the source culture, but not necessarily the story told by the original author.

In any case, the translations create a new life for the original text, which Walter Benjamin called the “after life” (Benjamin, 1923/2000: 16) of the original text.

Secondly, in the circle of translation studies, it is believed that L1 translators are more inclined to adopt a strategy of free translation, while L2 translators are more inclined to adopt literal translation. This does not always hold water, as it has been challenged by this present study. In this study, the scholar L1 translators, such as Jeffrey Kinkley and Lewis Robinson, also demonstrate a tendency of literal translation in rendering many details. It seems that the scholar translators, no matter whether they are L1 or L2 translators, resort to the strategy of literal translation, provided that the original semantic meaning can thereby be retained.

Thirdly, the data in the present study seem to suggest that a translation made by a scholar translator tends to speak more than the original text, while a translation made by a non-scholar translator very often speaks less, as is shown in the discussions in the previous sections. It is similar for specification and generalization in a translation. Theo Hermans, when commenting on Leuven-Zwart’s finding (Leuven-Zwart, 1989,

1990) that “the frequency of specification was noticeably higher than that of generalization” (Hermans, 1999: 62), mentions that this finding “runs counter to the widely held belief that generalization rather than specification is a common feature of translation” (Hermans, 1999: 62). However, on the basis of this study, it might be more accurate to hypothesize that generalization is a common feature of translations made by non-scholar translators, while specification is a common feature of translations made by scholar translators.

Fourthly, based on this study, we hypothesize that once a text is selected for translation, the translator’s position and habitus may have more decisive power than the positions of the source language and the author. Given the fact that translations published during the same historical period would confront the same relative positions of the languages and the original author, yet they showcase conspicuous differences, which are probably the result of different positions taken by the translators. It seems that the more prestigious the position of a translator, or the more symbolic capital he/she has accumulated in the field of literary translation, the more freedom he/she enjoys in rendering the translated text according to his/her will, though there is always a struggle between positions and position-takings, and the power of other agents, such as that of the publishers, or that of the readership, also play a role in determining the significance of a translation.

Fifthly, this study also seems to suggest that, on the condition that there exists a relatively tolerant literary environment, the stronger the academic background of a translator, the more ST-oriented the translated text. This hypothesis is supported by the translation strategies of the scholar translators covered by the present study.

Sixthly, there seems to be a (new) tendency that in the field of literary translation, contemporary translators seem to be mostly scholar translators – they certainly have taken the lion’s share in the field of the translations of Shen Congwen’s stories.³⁶ Actually, except Gladys Yang, who was not (strictly speaking) a scholar translator, all the translators in the present study from the 1980s onwards are scholar translators. This should be a welcome sign and really a blessing for the translation of Shen Congwen and of all literary works, because the structured habitus of a scholar is highly desirable for more complete translations of the original literary works.

Bourdieu’s sociological model proves to be an applicable tool to analyze the translation phenomena. The concepts within his model, including habitus, field, capital, and trajectory, are heuristic. These concepts “do not aim strictly speaking at attaining the real but at providing a vantage point from which to view the real” (Gouanvic, 2002: 99). From the vantage point provided by Bourdieu’s theory of

³⁶ This view is supported by the study of the English translators of Lu Xun’s works, done by Mr Wang Baorong from Hong Kong University (Wang, 2010).

sociology, we hope we have been able to view clearly the scene and to draw clearly a picture, with all these translations and translators situated in their proper positions.

CHAPTER SEVEN CONCLUSION

This study has attempted to investigate the many English translations of Shen Congwen's stories by various translators from the perspective of the style of narration. Before this present study was carried out, few studies of the English translations of Shen's stories had been conducted. Of the very few studies that existed, except one of "Xiaoxiao" and one of "Zhangfu", most touched on Gladys Yang's translation of "Biancheng", including two or three studies which compared her version of "Biancheng" with that of Ching Ti and Robert Payne. The comparison focused on the content rather than the form of the story. No previous study has ever been conducted on a larger scale to include the English translations of Shen's other stories. Given the fact that Shen Congwen is one of the greatest writers in the history of modern Chinese literature, whose works have been widely translated, and given the unsatisfactory status quo of the study of his translations, this present study has aimed to tread the relatively unexplored field and to begin to fill the gap between the number of translations of Shen's stories and the limited number of studies of them. As the English translations of Shen's stories have been made by dozens of translators, this study has set out to investigate the differences demonstrated in their various translations, the tendencies of translation strategies adopted by different types of

translators, and the reasons that might account for these differences. Considering that Shen has long been acclaimed as a stylist, the focus of the study has been on his style – on the style of his narration, to be exact.

The results of the present study show that there exist a great many differences among the different types of translators – scholar translators, non-scholar translators, L1 translators, L2 translators, translators of the 1930s and 40s, translators of the 1980s onwards, and L1+L2 translators – discussed in the previous chapters. The biggest difference is, somewhat surprisingly, that between the scholar translators and the non-scholar translators, not, as would have been suspected, between the L1 and L2 translators. In terms of concrete translation strategies, the scholar translators have made obvious efforts to ascertain that the original narrative commentaries are re-presented in the translation, while the non-scholar translators have more frequently deleted or changed the original narrative commentaries. The scholar translators have exerted obvious efforts to re-produce the verbal iterative devices and to retain the original iterative way of narration, while the non-scholar translators have tended to resort to deletion or summarization. As for the images in the metaphoric expressions and in the names of the characters, the scholar translators have chosen to keep most of them, while the non-scholar translators have tended to delete or change many of them. As for understatement, it has not been strongly retained in the translations, except in

those of Jeffrey Kinkley and of Eugene Eoyang, both of whom belong to the scholar translator group, who have at least partially retained the understated tone. And almost all the scholar translators have added footnotes or endnotes to supplement background knowledge for better understanding of the original texts.

The findings also indicate that the differences between L1 translators and L2 translators sometimes overlap with those between scholar and non-scholar translators, as, within both L1 and L2 translator groups, there are both scholar and non-scholar translators. However, the L2 translators tend to follow more closely the original narrative structure, and their translated texts are closer to the ST. Gladys Yang distinguishes herself from both L1 and L2 translators by tending to render brief and concise texts which speed up the original narrative rhythm, but basically convey the original narrative mode. The data also provide evidence that translators of the 1930s and 40s are more inclined to delete or to make radical changes, which are not discernible phenomena in the later translations.

The results obtained suggest a cline of the translators involved, with Edgar Snow at one end, the end of rewriting / acceptable translation / telling a story / earlier translation / non-scholar translator, and Jeffrey Kinkley at the other end, the end of representing / adequate translation / showing a story by Shen Congwen / later translation / scholar translator, and with Gladys Yang situated approximately in the

middle of the range. This cline itself suggests the tendencies found in the English translations of Shen's stories, and might offer implications for the tendencies found in literary translations generally.

This study presents the most comprehensive study to date of the English translations of Shen Congwen's stories. The findings suggest some disagreements with previous beliefs in the field of translation studies. The commonly believed idea that L1 translators are more inclined to a strategy of free translation, while L2 translators are more inclined to literal translation, does not always hold water. Another common belief – that a translation tends to explicate and speak more than the original – needs to be restricted and rephrased as: a translation *made by a scholar translator* tends to explicate and speak more. Yet another idea – that generalization rather than specification is a common feature of translation – should be changed to: generalization is a common feature of *translations made by non-scholar translators*, while specification is a common feature of translations made by scholar translators.

Several hypotheses which have been presented from this study deserve consideration. The translator's position and habitus may have more decisive power than the positions of the source language and the original author, once the text is selected. In a tolerant literary environment, it seems that the stronger the academic background of a translator, the more ST-oriented the translated text. Finally, there

seems to be a (new) tendency in the field of literary translation for contemporary translators to be scholar translators.

Another significant finding relates to the role played by a scholar translator, who not only acts as a translator, but also performs like a director, instructor, editor, etc., all rolled into one. The data provide evidence that the strategies of the scholar translators of Shen Congwen's stories very much resemble those of the sinologists, trying every means to explicate what is implied in the original text.

As is pointed out by Short, empirical work tends to be "so careful about saying something that is true that it says very little indeed" (Short, 2001: 342). This present study has explored only fifteen translations of four selected stories by Shen Congwen, numbers which are very limited compared with the total of seventy translations of his forty-four works. Since the selection of stories was made on the basis of the numbers of their translations, and since it happens that all the most translated stories share the same traditional way of narration, this study has been unable to cover all sorts of narrative modes that Shen Congwen employs in different stories. Consequently, a limitation of this study is that it only reflects one corner of the whole picture of Shen's narrative style.

Another limitation is that, despite much effort, some data remain inaccessible (such as the readers' response of the translations in the English world), and it has not

been possible for this study to give an objective evaluation of the reception of Shen's works in the target system through these translations. The conclusions here are based on the data covered, but there exists a vast untrod field of English translations of Shen Congwen's stories waiting for further exploration.

Additional research is thus recommended to consider the findings of this present study. Further studies might be conducted on a larger scale, with more selected texts, especially of stories exhibiting Shen's various narrative modes, to see whether the translations retain or change them. A priority in future research would be to explore the reception of Shen's stories in the target system, to see how the target readers receive Shen Congwen and the images of the original culture projected by the translations, and whether the translations have effected any change in the target system.

Finally, it is hoped that the present research has made a contribution to translation studies, to Shen Congwen studies, and to studies of the spread and reception of modern Chinese literature in the English-speaking world.

Appendix: Published English Translations of Shen Congwen's Stories

Published English Translations of Shen Congwen's Stories:

	ST Publish time	ST title	TT title	Translator	Anthology /Journal title	Publisher/ Publishing place	TT Publish time
1	1925	福生	The Propitious	Wei Lun	Tamkang Review	Taiwan	1997
2	1927	连长	The Company commander	David Pollard	Imperfect Paradise	University of Hawai'i Press	1995
3	1927	十四夜间	The Fourteenth Moon	Ching Ti & Robert Payne	The Chinese Earth (Reprint in 1982)	George Allen & Unwin, Ltd	1947
4	1928	柏子	Pai Tzu	Ching Ti & Robert Payne	The Chinese Earth	George Allen & Unwin, Ltd	1947
	1928	柏子	Pai Tzu	Kai-yu Hsu	Modern Chinese Stories and Novellas: 1919-1949	Columbia University Press	1981
	1928	柏子	Pai Tzu	Edgar Snow	Living China: Modern Chinese Short Stories	Hyperion Press, Inc	1937
5	1928	雨后	After Rain	David Kidd	East-West Review 3.2: 183-189	The United States	1967 summ er
6	1929	阿金	Ah Jin	William L. MacDonald	Imperfect Paradise	University of Hawai'i Press	1995
7	1929	龙朱	Lung Chu	Ching Ti & Robert Payne	The Chinese Earth	George Allen & Unwin, Ltd	1947
	1929	龙朱	Lung Chu	Chai and	A Treasury of	Thomas Y.	1965

				Chai	Chinese Literature	Crowell Company	
8	1929	我的教育	My Education	Jeffrey Kinkley	Imperfect Paradise	University of Hawai'i Press	1995
9	1929	牛	Ox	Caroline Mason	Imperfect Paradise	University of Hawai'i Press	1995
10	1929	七个野人与最后一个迎春节	Seven Barbarians and the Last Spring Festival	Stanley R. Munro	Genesis of a Revolution: An Anthology of Modern Chinese Short Stories	Heinemann Educational Books (Asia) Ltd	1979
11	1929	旅店	The Inn	William L. MacDonald	Imperfect Paradise	University of Hawai'i Press	1995
12	1929	夫妇	The Lovers	Jeffrey Kinkley	Imperfect Paradise	University of Hawai'i Press	1995
	1929	夫妇	The Lovers	Ching Ti & Robert Payne	The Chinese Earth	George Allen & Unwin, Ltd	1947
13	1929	菜园	The Vegetable Garden	Gladys Yang	Chinese Literature	Beijing, China	1989 summer
	1929	菜园	The Vegetable Garden	Peter Li.	Imperfect Paradise	University of Hawai'i Press	1995
14	1929	媚金，豹子，与那羊	Meijin, Baozi, and the White Kid	Caroline Mason	Imperfect Paradise	University of Hawai'i Press	1995
	1929	媚金，豹子，与那羊	The White Kid	Ching Ti & Robert Payne	The Chinese Earth	George Allen & Unwin, Ltd	1947
15	1929	会明	The Yellow Chickens	Ching Ti & Robert	The Chinese Earth	George Allen &	1947

				Payne		Unwin, Ltd	
16	1930	夜	Night March	Chi-Chen Wang	Contemporary Chinese Stories	Columbia University Press	1944
17	1930	丈夫	The Husband	Jeffrey Kinkley	Imperfect Paradise	University of Hawai'i Press	1995
	1930	丈夫	The Husband	Ching Ti & Robert Payne	The Chinese Earth	George Allen & Unwin, Ltd	1947
	1930	丈夫	The Husband	Gladys Yang	Chinese Literature	Beijing, China	1980
	1930	丈夫 (partial)	The Husband	Shih Ming	Asia, 37: 524-25	The United States	July, 1937
	1930	丈夫 (partial)	The Husband	Lai Ming	A History of Chinese Literature	London: Cassell	1964
18	1930	灯	The Lamp	Kai-yu Hsu	Modern Chinese Stories and Novellas: 1919-1949	Columbia University Press	1981
	1930	灯	The Lamp (Reprinted in Ching Ti & Payne, 1947)	Yuan and Payne	Contemporary Chinese Stories	London: Noel Carrington Transatlantic Arts Co. Ltd	1946
19	1930	三个男人 和一个女人	Three Men and a Girl	Ching Ti & Robert Payne	The Chinese Earth	George Allen & Unwin, Ltd	1947
	1930	三个男人 和一个女人	Three Men and One Woman	Kai-yu Hsu	Modern Chinese Stories and Novellas: 1919-1949	Columbia University Press	1981
20	1930	萧萧	Xiaoxiao	Gladys Yang	The Border Town and Other Stories	Beijing Panda Books	1981

	1930	蕭蕭	Xiaoxiao	Eugene Chen Eoyang	The Columbia Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature(2 nd edition)	Columbia University Press	1981/2007
	1930	蕭蕭	Xiaoxiao	Lewis S. Robinson	A Posthumous Son and Other Stories	Asiapac Books & Educational Aids Pte Ltd	1979/1987
	1930	蕭蕭	Hsiao-hsiao	Lee Yi-hsieh	T'ien Hsia Monthly7.3(Oct 1938: 295-309)	Shanghai, China	1938
	1930	蕭蕭	Little Flute	Li Ru-mien	Life and Letters 60.137:20-29	London : Brendin Pub. Co.	1949
21	1931	三三	Sansan	Jeffrey Kinkley	Imperfect Paradise	University of Hawai'i Press	1995
	1931	三三	San-san	Ching Ti & Robert Payne	The Chinese Earth	George Allen & Unwin, Ltd	1947
22	1932	黑夜	Black Night	William L. MacDonald	Imperfect Paradise	University of Hawai'i Press	1995
	1932	黑夜	Under Cover of Darkness	Yuan and Payne	Contemporary Chinese Stories	London: Noel Carrington Transatlantic Arts Co. Ltd	1946
23	1932	白日	Daytime	Wai-Lim Yip & C.T.Hsia	Twentieth Century Chinese Stories	Columbia University Press	1971
24	1932	静	Quiet	William MacDonald	Triquarterly 31(fall 1974): 14-24	University of Hawai'i Press	1974/1995

					Imperfect Paradise		
	1932	静	Quiet	Wai-Lim Yip & C.T.Hsia	Twentieth Century Chinese Stories	Columbia University Press	1971
25	1933	生	Life	Peter Li	Imperfect Paradise	University of Hawai'i Press	1995
26	1933	月下小景	Under Moonlight	Ching Ti & Robert Payne	The Chinese Earth	George Allen & Unwin, Ltd	1947
27	1934	一个大王 (partial)	A Bandit Chief (extracts)	William L. MacDonald	Anthology of Chinese Literature (V. 2)	Grove Press, Inc.	1 9 8 2
	1934	一个大王	Ta Wang	Ching Ti & Robert Payne	The Chinese Earth	George Allen & Unwin, Ltd	1982
28	1934	边城	Green Jade and Green Jade	Emily Hahn & Shing Mo-lei	Ti'en Hsia Monthly 2.1-4(Jan.-April 1936)	Shanghai, China	1936
	1934	边城	The Frontier City	Ching Ti & Robert Payne	The Chinese Earth	George Allen & Unwin, Ltd	1947
	1934	边城	The Border Town	Gladys Yang	Chinese Literature	Beijing, China	1962 10/11
	1934	边城	Border Town	Jeffrey Kinkley	New York	HarperCollins Publishers	2009
29	1934	知识	Knowledge	Gladys Yang	Chinese Literature	Beijing, China	1989 sum.
30	1935	八骏图	Eight Steeds	William L. MacDonald	Imperfect Paradise	University of Hawai'i Press	1995
31	1935	顾问官	Staff Adviser	Jeffrey Kinkley	Imperfect Paradise	University of Hawai'i Press	1995

32	1935	自杀	Suicide	Jeffrey Kinkley	Imperfect Paradise	University of Hawai'i Press	1995
33	1935	新与旧	The New and the Old	Jeffrey Kinkley	Imperfect Paradise	University of Hawai'i Press	1995
34	1937	大小阮	Big Ruan and Little Ruan	William L. MacDonald	Imperfect Paradise	University of Hawai'i Press	1995
35	1937	贵生	Guisheng	Jeffrey Kinkley	Imperfect Paradise	University of Hawai'i Press	1995
	1937	贵生	Guisheng	Gladys Yang	Chinese Literature	Beijing, China	1980
36	1939	主妇	The Housewife	William MacDonald	Imperfect Paradise	University of Hawai'i Press	1995
37	1939	昆明冬景	Winter Scenes in Kunming	Wong Kam-ming & J.Kinkley	Haineiwai	New York	1981
38	1940	王嫂	Amah Wang	Peter Li	Imperfect Paradise	University of Hawai'i Press	1995
39	1940	乡城	Old Mrs. Wang's Chicken	Shih Ming	Ti'en Hsia Monthly 11.3	Shanghai	Dec. 1940
40	1941	看虹录	Gazing at Rainbows	Jeffrey Kinkley	Imperfect Paradise	University of Hawai'i Press	1995
	1941	看虹录	The Rainbow	Ching Ti & Robert Payne	The Chinese Earth	George Allen & Unwin, Ltd	1947
41	1943	长河 (partial)	Long River (ch.3)	Nancy Gibbs	Chinese Civilization and Society	Free Press	1981
42	1946	雪晴	After Snow	Gladys Yang	Chinese Literature	Beijing, China	Feb. 1982
43	1947	巧秀和冬	Qiaoxiu and	Gladys	Chinese	Beijing,	Feb.

		生	Dongsheng	Yang	Literature	China	1982
	1947	巧秀和冬 生	Qiaoxiu and Dongsheng	Jeffrey Kinkley	Imperfect Paradise	University of Hawai'i Press	1995
44	1947	传奇不奇	Truth is Stranger than Fiction	Gladys Yang	Chinese Literature	Beijing, China	Feb. 1982

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