

## The Connection of Lin Yutang's Cultural Identity with His Source Text Selection and Translation Strategy

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### Abstract

Mr. Lin Yutang (1895-1976) introduced the traditional Chinese culture to the English speaking world in English that is "at once their envy, admiration and despair". His works had a far-reaching significance as to be considered as authoritative writings on the oriental culture. His translation of the classical Chinese literature, infiltrates in his English writings, such as *My Country and My People*, *The Importance of Living*, *The Wisdom of Confucius*, to such an extent that his translations become inseparable parts of his writings.

This paper expounds Lin's translating and the underlying reasons for his success in translation. As a great literary figure, Lin Yutang had his explicit purpose for his translation, that is, to disseminate the essences of traditional Chinese culture, especially the simple and idyllic way of life enjoying the beauty of nature and art, to the West. His translation is successful from the angle of cultural exchange for he has succeeded in communicating the cream of traditional Chinese culture to his target audiences with his trenchant English. Two elements led to his success, the meticulous selection of the source texts and applying domestication as translation strategy. This paper discusses Lin Yutang's translation purpose and its constraints on Lin's source text selection and translation strategy application.

**Keywords:** Cultural identity, Translation Purpose, ST Selection, Translation Strategy

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## ความเชื่อมโยงระหว่างเอกลักษณ์ทางวัฒนธรรมและการเลือกสรรภาษาต้นทางกับ กลวิธีการแปลในผลงานของหลิน ฝูถิง

จาง เจียนผิง

### บทคัดย่อ

หลิน ฝูถิง (ค.ศ.1895-1976) ได้เผยแพร่อัตลักษณ์ของวัฒนธรรมจีนสู่โลกตะวันตกผ่านผลงาน ประพันธ์ภาษาอังกฤษ งานเขียนซึ่งเน้นการถ่ายทอดอารมณ์ความรู้สึกทั้งความวิหยา ความเคารพ ชื่นชม และความสิ้นหวัง ทำให้ผลงานของเธอได้รับการยอมรับอย่างกว้างขวางเนื่องจากสามารถ ตีแผ่สภาพความเป็นจริงในสังคมตะวันออก นอกเหนือไปจากงานประพันธ์แล้ว หลิน ฝูถิง ยังได้สร้างสรรค์ผลงานการแปลวรรณกรรมคลาสสิกของจีนเป็นจำนวนมาก จนกล่าวได้ว่างานด้าน การแปลเป็นหนึ่งในผลงานสำคัญทั้งหมดของนักประพันธ์ผู้นี้

บทความเรื่องนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่ออธิบายกลวิธีการแปล และสาเหตุที่ทำให้ผลงานของหลิน ฝูถิง ประสบความสำเร็จ นักเขียนคนสำคัญผู้นี้มีวัตถุประสงค์ในการสร้างผลงานแปลเพื่อถ่ายทอด วัฒนธรรมสำคัญของจีนให้เป็นที่ประจักษ์แก่สังคมตะวันตก โดยเฉพาะอย่างยิ่งในแง่ที่เกี่ยวกับวิถีชีวิต อันเรียบง่ายแต่แฝงอุดมคติของชาวจีนซึ่งชื่นชมความงามของธรรมชาติและศิลปะ ดังนั้น หลิน ฝูถิง จึงประสบความสำเร็จอย่างสูงในเชิงการเผยแพร่วัฒนธรรม เพราะสามารถถ่ายทอดเอกลักษณ์สำคัญ ของวัฒนธรรมจีนไปยังกลุ่มผู้อ่านผ่านทักษะการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษที่ชัดเจนและตรงไปตรงมา โดยปัจจัยแห่งความสำเร็จของนักประพันธ์ผู้นี้มีอยู่ด้วยกันสองประการ คือการเลือกใช้ภาษาต้นทาง และกลวิธีการแปลอย่างเหมาะสม ด้วยเหตุดังกล่าวบทความเรื่องนี้จึงมุ่งเน้นอธิบายจุดประสงค์ ในการแปลและข้อจำกัดในการเลือกสรรภาษาต้นทางและการใช้กลวิธีการแปลของหลิน ฝูถิง

**คำสำคัญ:** เอกลักษณ์ทางวัฒนธรรม วัตถุประสงค์ของการแปล การเลือกสรรภาษาต้นทาง กลวิธีการแปล

## Introduction

Lin Yutang's blend of wisdom and humor, on subjects as varied as love, literature, education, culture, death, and power, endeared him over the years to numerous readers. *My Country and My People*, *the Importance of Living* are humorous and serious attempts to introduce his country to the West. They all made great hits in the West and were translated into many other languages. His other works like *Leaf in the Storm*, *The Vermillion Gate*, *The Gay Genius*, *The Wisdom of Laotse*, *The Wisdom of Confucius* all exerted great influence on the western readers. Lin was twice nominated as a candidate for Nobel Prize in literature with his novel *Moments in Peking*. Fully aware of the merits and defects of the Eastern and Western civilizations, he relentlessly and incessantly labored to bridge these two civilizations.

Lin Yutang's contribution to the cultural exchange between Chinese and Western cultures has won him appraisal among the western readers. In 1989, when the former American president George Bush was discussing the preparations he needed to make before he visited China, he mentioned that he was deeply impressed by Lin's work. "Although what Lin said in his books was the situation in China decades ago, today his words are still beneficial and helpful for all Americans." In communicating Chinese culture to the West, Lin Yutang would naturally resort to translation. As a matter of fact, he successfully translated a great number of Chinese classics into English. And his series of works in English also contain a lot of translations from Chinese classics, which are so closely related to his English writings as the affinity of twin, and failed under circumstances the attempts of making distinction.

Although what is tangible to the reader is the end product of translation, what can be more helpful is the translation process that the translator has undergone. In fact, contemporary trends in translation studies have already been directed to emphasizing the translation process. The translator plays the central role in the translation process. He is both the source text receiver and target text producer. The translation process is complex and involves various selections. Each translating action and the selections involved are regulated or directed by purposes at different levels. The selections made in the process of translation and the underlying translation purpose are both influenced and constrained by a variety of extra-textual factors.

The translator-centered mode focuses on the multi-leveled selections of the translator and the underlying reasons. These selections of the translator can be mainly categorized into two types: the selection of source texts and the selection of translation strategy. These two selections are not done blindly, but determined by the specific translation purpose. Thus, it has widened the horizon of translation studies and given some enlightenment to

the understanding of some puzzling phenomena in translation studies.

The translator's cultural identity has an intrinsic connection with his translation purpose, which manipulates his selection of the source texts and application of translation strategy. As a result, distinctive translation styles are formed, which in turn affects the popularity of their translations.

## **Lin's Unique Cultural Identity: Integration of Western Culture and Chinese Culture**

Lin called himself "spiritually a child of the East and the West". And he said jokingly, "I believe world civilization can be built only upon the common basis of international living, a combination of all that is best and finest in each civilization. The ideal life would be, I think, to live in an English cottage, with American heating, and have a Japanese wife, a French mistress and a Chinese cook. "

Lin critically assimilated the essences of traditional Chinese culture and presented the thoughts of Chinese philosophers on a design for living. He distilled realism, reasonableness, humor and the Doctrine of Golden Mean from Confucianism. And he absorbed cynicism, folly and camouflage from Taoism. With the proper merging of the positive outlooks on life of Confucianists and the negative outlooks on life of Laoists, Lin achieved a harmonious philosophy of the "half-and -half", lying somewhere between action and inaction, between being led by the nose into a world of futile busyness and complete flight from a life of responsibilities. The conflict between action and inaction ends in a compromise or contentment with a very imperfect heaven on earth. This gave rise to Lin's wise and merry philosophy of living, which is the sanest and happiest ideal for man's life on earth. In his assessment of traditional Chinese culture, he made no efforts to promote all of it. He only chose those parts agreeing with his ideas to advocate. As for those contradicting his ideas, he adopted a critical attitude towards them.

As to the western culture, he gradually noticed its negative sides. He pointed out the drawbacks of American culture, "for if there is anything unnatural in American life, it is this perpetual straining of the nervous fiber, this inability to accept quiet, the unwillingness to let the world alone for a while, the failure to insist on the right to unemployment for certain hours of the day. What is natural in nature has become unnatural in man, and what is unnatural has become natural."

By comparing the two cultures, Lin aimed to find out their distinctions. Lin was inclined to seek the similarities rather than differences in the two cultures with a view to creating a world culture. To Lin, common characteristics did exist in the human nature



both at home and abroad, he said, "if only one has courage and his own ideas, will he find that there is something identical in the Western and Chinese cultures."

## Translation Purpose and Source Text Selection

The specific cultural identity of a translator has a close connection with his translation purpose, which manipulates the translator's selections of source texts and application of translation strategy. What and how the translator is going to translate are largely subject to his translation purpose and attitude towards the source text. And the target text produced by the translator features his subjective cultural identity. The finished text can be seen as the result of purposed choice: translators have their own communicative aims and select lexical items and grammatical arrangement to serve these aims. Lin translated volumes of Chinese classic literature with trenchant English, which contributed much to the Sino-foreign cultural exchange. He can be said as an exporter of traditional Chinese culture.

### 1. Lin Yutang's Translation Purpose

When most literary figures strongly depreciated traditional Chinese culture and competed in introducing foreign literature in the early 20th century, Lin Yutang, on the contrary, exerted himself to spread the traditional Chinese culture to the West. He stated clearly his purpose of translation in the preface of *A Nun of Taishan and Other Translations*, "I am intended only in presenting the view of life and of things as the best and wisest Chinese minds have seen it and expressed it."

He suggested the best way to thank God for the gift of living is to appreciate the present hour, to sit quietly and hear your own breathing and look out on the universe and be content. To him, Chinese culture is more appealing than western culture. Chinese ancient scholars seem to have evolved a technique for the enjoyment of nature, art and literature. They loved life heartily but loved it with restraint, and stood somewhat aloof and detached, without being hostile to the world.

Tao Yuan-ming (365-427), also known as Tao Chien, represents both the old and new in an era of China that saw years of war and chaos. Tao's career as a "scholar-gentleman" or government official, clashed with his propensity for solitude, and he became a recluse in the Chinese manner, in a rural area with his family. As a poet he projects warmth, humanity, and personal vulnerability. Unlike most of his contemporaries and predecessors, Tao Chien neither wrote in a lofty manner nor exaggerated the virtues of reclusion. He is at once loyal to friends and family, skeptical philosophically, a realist about daily life and its hardships, but also rueful and wistfully romantic in his struggle to be worthy of the hermits and sages

of the past. Lin Yutang argues that Tao Yuanming represented that characteristic of Chinese culture, a curious combination of devotion to the flesh and arrogance of the spirit, of spirituality without asceticism and materialism without sensuality, in which the senses and the spirit have come to live together in harmony. Lin Yutang made incessant efforts to introduce to western readership the traditional Chinese culture like a missionary.

## **2. Lin Yutang's Source Text Selections**

Lin was greatly indulged in introducing to the West Chinese calligraphy, painting, architecture, food and other things related to the art of living. And he thought the only Chinese literature that is readable is literature in the Western sense, including the novels, dramas and poetry, i.e., literature of the imagination rather than literature of ideas. In the literature of ideas, the writers could not discuss benevolence and righteousness for two thousand and five hundred years without repeating themselves. An essay winning the first place in the imperial examinations, when rendered into English, would stagger English readers by its childishness. Therefore, Lin thought a writer could be original only in the sphere of novels, poems, prose and dramas, where one could be comfortably oneself, and where imagination could be creative. Thus, Lin deliberately chose to translate the works that were in conformity with his personal preferences, such as the works of Laotse, Chuangtse, Tao Yuanming, Su Tungpo and Shen Fu, etc. He believed their works could represent fairly the essence of Chinese culture. Judging from the purpose of his translation, he was subjectively aspired to "find a panacea to treat the prevailing pessimistic in the Western culture."

The Chinese ancient classics translated into English by Lin can be categorized into the following two groups.

### **1). Philosophical works on Taoism and Confucianism**

As mentioned earlier, Lin was a loyal advocate of Taoism. There is a romantic side in Taoism, which shows itself in its love of freedom and its happy-go-lucky view of life, which often mystifies Westerners. A small group of Western scholars have been strong admirers of Laotse.

In the preface of *The Wisdom of Laotse*, Lin saved no efforts to sing high praise of Taoism. "The first reaction of anyone scanning the *Book of Tao* is laughter; the second reaction, laughter at one's own laughter; and the third, a feeling that this sort of teaching is very much needed today." One of the reasons for the popularity of Taoism literature among the scholars was the charm of Chuangtse's prose. Lin stated that Chuangtse was the greatest prose master in the classical period by all standards of charm of style and depth of thought. For his language was crisp and firm, but his style was fluid, often personal; his thoughts

were profound, but his presentation was light. His imaginations and metaphors came sometimes like lightning strikes.

With great delight in Taoism, he translated *Taotehking* and *Chuangtse* into English, so that the Westerners could have an access to this ideal way of life. He also edited *The wisdom of Laotse* and *The wisdom of Chinese* to further illustrate these original and unique Chinese philosophers.

As to Confucianism, Lin was fond of its preaching of earthbound quality, humor, reasonableness and the Doctrine of the Golden Mean. Confucius stated the true end of life lay not in life after death but in the enjoyment of present, and in harmonious social relationships. Mencius enumerated the three "mature virtues" of "great man" as "wisdom, compassion and courage".

In Lin's opinion, there existed three views of mankind, the traditional Christian theological view, the Greek pagan view, and the Chinese Taoist-Confucianist view. Confucianism and Taoism are the two components for Chinese humanism. And fundamental distinctions are present in these two Chinese philosophies. Confucianism, through its doctrine of propriety and social status, stands for human culture and restraint, while Taoism, with its emphasis on going back to nature, disbelieves in human restraint and culture. But how do the two seemingly contradictory philosophies exist harmoniously in the traditional Chinese culture side by side? This question often mystifies Westerners. To illustrate this point, Lin translated *Aphorisms of Confucius*, *Mencius*, and compiled *The Wisdom of Confucius*.

## 2). Chinese classical literature which is lyrical in origin

Lin had his unconventional understanding on the distinction of literature. He stated that the Chinese literature could be classified into two categories: literature that instructs people and literature that pleases people, or literature that is "the vehicle of truth" and literature that is "the expression of emotion." The distinction is easy to see: the former is objective and expository, while the latter is subjective and lyrical. Lin said: The first category is on the whole of such low, second-rate quality, so full of moral platitudes and naive reasoning, and the scope of ideas is so hemmed in by the fear of heresy, that the only Chinese literature that is readable is literature in the Western sense, including the novels, dramas and poetry, that is, literature of the imagination rather than literature of ideas. Lin preferred works in classical literature that expressed man's soul. According to him, all literature that was worthwhile was the expression of man's soul, was lyrical in origin. The lyrical origin of literature made it possible for us to regard literature as a reflection of man's soul, and to regard a nation's literature as the reflection of man's spirit in that nation. In reviewing a nation's literature we are therefore but trying to get a glimpse of life as the best minds of that nation see it and as they express it through their peculiar literary medium.

Chasing for spiritual freedom, Lin appealed to classical literary works of those original scholars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These unconventional scholars had too much independent judgment and too much sentiment for things to be likend by the orthodox critics. Their creation was determined by a true creative impulse rather than by love of money or fame. Lin regarded these non-orthodox authors as his spiritual friends. He had such a strong admiration for them, and he translated their works into English to recommend them to the Westerners. And most of these works translated from classical Chinese literature were included in Lin's series of works in English.

### 3). *Six Chapters of a Floating Life*

More words need to be supplemented about his deliberated purpose of choosing to translate Shen Fu's *Six Chapters of a Floating Life*, which was his most satisfactory translation. Long revered as a classic work of Chinese literature, *Six Chapters of a Floating Life* is the autobiographical narrative of Shen Fu, a young poet and painter whose passion for life and devotion to his beloved wife Yün have won him a place in the hearts of his readers for more than a hundred years. In form, it is unique, an autobiographical story mixed observations and comments on the art of living, the little pleasures of life, some vivid sketches of scenery and literary and art criticism.

Regarded primarily by scholars as an excellent portrait of daily life during the Ch'ing Dynasty, *Six Chapters of a Floating Life* is much more than that. The book begins with the self-deprecating statement, "Unfortunately I never completed my studies, and so my writing is not very skilful." Yet Shen Fu manages to weave a complex tale of romance, camaraderie, family obligation, social inequity, and human tragedy, imbued throughout with buoyant humor, profound pathos, and transcendent mysticism. While adhering to the constraints of classical Chinese literary composition, within the confines of social correctness befitting the times, the craft and depth of this early work by a self-professed amateur are unparalleled. As evidenced by the chapter titles, *Wedded Bliss*, *The Little Pleasures of Life*, *Sorrow*, and *The Joys of Travel*, the book is a multi-faceted chronicle of the author's life, with each chapter framed within a thematic context. As the story unfolds, significant events are told in consecutive chapters. The result is a layered effect that sometimes keeps the reader at arm's length, and at others, intimates some of Shen Fu's most private moments.

To the Western reader, *Six Chapters of a Floating Life* may seem both exotic and obfuscating. Woven throughout the text is the romance between Shen Fu and his beloved Chen Yün, a woman who was both his cousin and his wife by arranged marriage. The first chapter, *Wedded Bliss*, is devoted entirely to the wife. In a chapter titled *Sorrow*, when at last Shen Fu arrives at the moment of Yün's passing, he does so deftly and with great tenderness. The transcendence of Yün's ephemeral essence is breathtaking, and Shen Fu's

grief, palpable. In that moment, Shen Fu speaks with a stark emotion and candor that leaves the reader with the feeling of having trespassed upon a diary meant for his eyes only. Shen Fu's chronicle ends mysteriously with the completion of only four of the six records. The existence and whereabouts of the other two has been the subject of much speculation and debate since its original publication in the 1870's.

Lin was akin to the book so much that he acclaimed the heroine Yün as "one of the loveliest women in Chinese literature". Lin stated that, Shen Fu, a commonplace scholar, has portrayed us "one of the sweetest accounts of wedded love we have come across in literature." The life of this couple is one of the saddest and yet at the same time "gayest", the type of gaiety that bears sorrow so well. In the author, Shen Fu, lived the spirit of truth and beauty and the genius for resignation and contentment so characteristic of Chinese culture.

Lin Yutang translated it into English after "reading and reading and going over this booklet", which was published in bilingual format in Shanghai in 1935. He had such a deep affection for the book that he polished the translated version for at least ten times. He said in the preface of the translation, "it's a story that should be told the world; on one hand, to propagate her name, and on the other, to let westerners know something about the idyllic and love life of a Chinese couple." His daughter Lin Taiyi later recalled that the story and the translation received enormous attention in the English speaking countries.

## **Selection of Translation Strategy**

### **1. Foreignization and Domestication**

On the different strategies applied in translation, the German translator Schleier Marcher argued, "There're only two alternatives. Either the translator leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, and moves the readers toward him; or he leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the reader toward him". The concepts of domestication and foreignization, formulated by Lawrence Venuti in 1990's, and based on long traditions of dichotomizing ways of discussing and evaluating translations, have been widely used in translation studies. Domestication is a term used to describe the translation strategy in which a transparent, fluent style is adopted in order to minimize the strangeness of the foreign text for TL readers. Foreignization is a term to designate the type of translation in which a TT is produced which deliberately breaks target conventions by retaining something of the foreignness of the original.

In general, domestication has been compared with fluency or normality of the translated text among other texts of the target culture, whereas foreignization underlines

its foreign origin and may require special efforts from the part of the receptor of the translation. These general descriptions seem to require precision and evidence of their usefulness in research.

## 2. Lin Yutang: Domestication-oriented Strategy

Domestication is usually defined as a translation method in which translators strive to substitute the culture-specific images in the source language with their corresponding images in the target language. It stresses heavily the smoothness and fluency of the target text. The reading of Lin's translation impresses us deeply with his smooth, fluent and idiomatic English. As previously mentioned, his translation purpose was to spread Chinese culture to the western world. But at that time Westerners knew little or even had lots of misconceptions of Chinese culture. In order to change their inherent bias against Chinese culture and arouse their interest, Lin consciously chose the works appealing to western readers. In order to be better accepted, Lin "invisibly inscribe Chinese texts with western values and provide western readers with narcissistic experience of recognizing their culture in another culture" in his translations. Lin's approaches based on domestication includes: the selection of texts which lend themselves to being translated in this manner ; the conscious adoption of a fluent, natural style; the adaptation of TT to conform to target discourse types ; the interpolation of explanatory material?the removal of source language realia; the general harmonization of TT with TL preconceptions and preferences.

Problems in translating a Chinese text into English generally include how much of what is implicit in the original text should be made explicit in the English version; how to render the predominant paratactic structures of the Chinese text into equivalent hypotactic structures in English, and how to deal with figures of speech, culture-specific words, etc. Domestication strategy is mainly demonstrated in the dealing of cultural-specific words. They may be names of things and ideas that are particular to the SL. They usually have a very strong national flavor.

A typical example is the way of numbering years by the Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches. For example, Shen Fu's *Six Chapters of a Floating Life* begins with: 余生乾隆癸未冬十一月二十有二日，正值太平盛世。“癸未” embodies a very strong Chinese cultural flavor. Lin rendered the sentence as "I was born in 1763, under the reign of Ch'ienlung, on the twenty-second day of the eleventh moon. The country was then in the heyday of peace." The rendition of the Christian Era "in 1763" to replace “癸未” removes the cultural barrier and the strangeness of the source text.

More examples are cited below to testify Lin's application of domestication strategy in dealing with culture-specific expressions.

Ex. 1. 与芸联句以谴闷怀，而两韵之后逾联逾纵，想入非夷，随口乱道。  
(沈复《浮生六记》)

And then we began to **compose a poem together, each saying two lines at a time, the first completing the couplet which the other had begun, and the second beginning another couplet for the other to finish**, and after a few rhymes, the longer we kept on, the more nonsensical it became, until it was a jumble of slapdash doggerel. (*Six Chapters of a Floating life*, Tr. by Lin Yutang)

In the original sentence, the phrase “联句” was a literary game among Chinese ancient scholars. Its implicit cultural denotation is beyond average western readers' understanding if further explanation is not provided. Thus, Lin skillfully inserted some explanatory words to achieve transparency in order to be better received.

Ex. 2. 芸曰：“格律谨严，词旨老当，诚杜所独擅；但李诗宛如姑射仙子，有一种落花流水之趣，令人可爱。非杜亚于李，不过妾之私心宗杜心浅爱李心深。”  
(沈复《浮生六记》)

"Of course," said she, "as for perfection of form and maturity of thought, Tu is the undisputed master, but Li Po's poems have the wayward charm of **nymph**. His lines come naturally like dropping petals and flowing waters, and are so much livelier for their spontaneity. I am not saying that Tu is second to Li; only personally I feel, not that I love Tu less, but that I love Li more.

(*Six Chapters of a Floating life*, Tr. by Lin Yutang)

In the quoted passage, the heroine Yün expresses her unique understanding of the literary distinction between the great Tang poets Li Po and Tu Fu. “姑射仙子” is a goddess in a Chinese fairy tale. Lin replaced it with “nymph”---goddess in Roman mythology dwelling in the mountains, forests, trees and waters. Such rendition keeps the romantic and mysterious nature of the original image; in the mean time, it overcomes the barrier of the two cultures. Here we can say Lin invisibly inscribed the Chinese text with western values and provided readers with an experience of recognizing their own culture.

Domestication strategy used by Lin Yutang is also reflected at the syntactic level. Eugene Nida mentioned to the point that “the most distinguishable difference between Chinese and English at the syntactic level is the contrast between parataxis and hypotaxis.”

Parataxis is "the arranging of clauses one after the other without connectives showing the relation between them. Hypotaxis is "the dependent or subordinate construction or relationship of clauses with connectives. Consequently, Chinese syntax prefers covert coherence and stresses the conveying of meanings, while English prefers overt coherence and emphasizes the completeness of structure. In order to solve these problems, Lin used the translation skills of addition, reduction, and alteration flexibly and skillfully, making his versions readable and endeared by his English readers. We can use some examples to demonstrate how Lin managed to achieve the fluent and idiomatic style in his translations.

Ex.3. 话说山东登州府东门外有一座大山,名叫蓬莱山,山上有一个阁子,名叫蓬莱阁,这阁造的画栋飞云,珠帘卷雨,十分壮丽。(刘铁云《老残游记》第一回)

Beyond the eastern Gate of Teng-Chow city in Shantung province there was a large hill called Penglai, on the peak of this hill, and bearing the same name was a pavilion. **This pavilion was so beautifully and skillfully constructed that its decorative pillars seemed to reach the clouds and its finely knitted curtains looked like a raining scene.** (From *Tramp Doctor's Travelogue*, Tr. by Lin Yutang)

In the Chinese version, the last part “这阁造的画栋飞云,珠帘卷雨,十分壮丽” is extremely difficult to translate. The four-character phrases “画栋飞云”, “珠帘卷雨” are typical utterances in Chinese literary works, applying the rhetoric device of hyperbole. And structurally the phrase “十分壮丽” parallels with “画栋飞云, 珠帘卷雨”. Lin arranged them in one main clause: "This pavilion was so beautifully and skillfully constructed...", and then used the pattern "so.. that" to connect the two parts, reproducing the original terse style. And he used the idiomatic English expressions "seemed to" and "looked like" to render the four-character phrases “画栋飞云” and “珠帘卷雨” in the original in order to lighten the exaggerated color and reduce the rich implications. Lin consciously adopted a fluent, natural style, making the English version clear in meaning and natural in form.

Ex.4. 绩溪城处于万山之中,弹丸小邑,民情淳朴。近城有石镜山。由山湾中曲折一里许,悬崖急湍,湿翠欲滴;渐高,至山腰,有一方石亭,四面皆陡壁。(沈复《浮生六记》)

The town of Chick'i is **a very small one**, being situated in a mountainous region and inhabited by a people of very simple ways. There is a hill near the town called the Stone



Mirror Hill. *One goes up by a zigzag mountain path* for over a Li, after which one sees jagged rocks and flying waterfalls, with the place so moist and green that *it seems* literary to ooze a kind of verdant radiance. Going higher halfway up the hillside, one sees a square stone pavilion, with perpendicular rocks on all sides as its walls. (Tr. by Lin Yutang)

Short as the source text is, it demonstrates Lin's flexible rendition skill. “弹丸小邑” is translated as "a very small town" rather than "as small as a bullet"; the verb phrase “曲折” in Chinese is rendered as a noun phrase "a zigzag mountain path"; These adaptations are based on the distinctions of the SL and TL so as to meet Westerners' mentality. The paratactic structure of Chinese language and the hypotactic structure of English lead to their distinctive discourse types. As a way of sentence making, parataxis makes the grammatical relationship covert in Chinese sentences and lays more emphasis on the content rather than on the form. The sentence is acceptable as long as its meaning is successfully conveyed. Accordingly, sentences without subject and connectives are explainable. Moreover, verbs are not the center of sentences in Chinese. Many verbs can be used together without causing any confusion in meaning. However, hypotaxis requires the completeness of English sentences. Generally speaking, the framework of English sentences is SV structure, with predicate verbs serving as the center. The Chinese language frequently leaves out subjects, or even predicate, providing merely some images, while the omission of subject and predicate in English sentence will inevitably cause ambiguity or confusion in understanding. So Lin adds "*one goes*", "*one sees*", "*it seems*" to the target text, which is in conformity with target discourse type of English.

The American scholar Sol Adler maintains that the main problem in translation is that the language from which you're translating (SL) imposes itself on the language into which you're translating(TL). Lin Yutang broke the bondage of language forms and tried to convey the spirit of the original. He aimed at making his version "similar in spirit" rather than "similar in form".

## Conclusion

As a translator that has made an immense contribution to the world literature, Lin Yutang was a man dedicated to making the West better understands Chinese culture. His drive subsisted on his belief in the inherent oneness of mankind, and the importance of eradicating ignorance and synthesizing the greatest things that East and West offer to each other.

Lin gradually formed his unique cultural identity: a global culture integrating the cream of Chinese and Western cultures. Based on this cultural identity, Lin deliberately chose those classical Chinese literatures expressing the writer's personal nature, vital spirit and the philosophical works about Taoism and Confucianism as his source texts. The purpose of this endeavor is to disseminate traditional Chinese culture to the West so that English speakers can better understand and then appreciate it. And his selections of the source texts and application of domestication are determined by his translation purpose. Lin adopted a transparent and fluent style in his translations in order to minimize the strangeness of the Chinese text for his target readers. His translations read like production in English, enjoying the features of precision and simplicity in diction, smoothness and clarity in expression, reconstruction of the original style and artistic conception. They obliterate all traces of "axe and chisel marks", with complete seeming artlessness and absence of effort.

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