

“Literary Mind” in Translation

A Comparative Study on Strategies Regarding the Translation of Cultural Terms in

Wenxin Diaolong

Qiushi Wang

Supervisor: Dr. M.J.A. Kasten

Media Studies

Comparative Literature and Literary Theory

Leiden University

August, 2014

Abstract

This thesis analyzes Stephen Owen's and Yang Guobin's different English translations of *Wenxin Diaolong*, a Chinese classic literary theoretical work, mainly focusing on the complexity of its text-types and the different strategies used by two translators in translating Chinese cultural terms. The complex text-type of this work together with the polysemantic and never clearly defined characters of Chinese cultural terms cause the difficulties of its English translation. Owen and Yang have different focuses in translating *Wenxin Diaolong*. Owen focuses on retaining nuance of the original meaning and Yang on preserving the original literary elegance. In this thesis, Newmark's and Wang's translation theories are used as theoretical background to analyze the complexity of *Wenxin Diaolong* and the different focuses of two translators. Moreover, the complexity of this case at the same time reveals the limitations of their theories.

Key Words: *Wenxin Diaolong*, Translation of cultural terms, Peter Newmark, Wang Zuolaing

Content

Chapter I Introduction.....	4
Chapter II <i>Wenxin Diaolong</i> and Its English Translations.....	6
2.1. An Introduction to <i>Wenxin Diaolong</i>	6
2.2. The Influence of <i>Wenxin Diaolong</i> at Home and Abroad.....	10
2.3. The History of English Translations of <i>Wenxin Diaolong</i>	11
Chapter III A Review of Peter Newmark’s Translation Theory.....	15
3.1. Newmark’s Text-types Theory.....	15
3.2. Newmark’s Translation Methods.....	18
3.3. Newmark’s Translation Theory and <i>Wenxin Diaolong</i>	21
Chapter IV A Review of Wang Zuoliang’s Approaches to Translation and the Tradition of Chinese Translation Theory.....	24
4.1. The Dispute over <i>Wen</i> and <i>Zhi</i> in the History of Chinese Translation Theory.....	25
4.2. Wang Zuoliang’s Approaches to Translation.....	27
4.3 Wang Zuoliang’s Translation Theory and <i>Wenxin Diaolong</i>	29
Chapter V Case Study: A Comparative Analysis of Owen and Yang’s Strategies Regarding the Translation of Cultural Terms in <i>Wenxin Diaolong</i>	32
5.1. Interpretation of “Wen” and Its English Translations.....	33
5.2. Interpretation of “Shen Si” and Its English Translations.....	40
5.3. Conclusions after the Comparison.....	48
Chapter VI Conclusion.....	54
Works Cited.....	56
Bibliography.....	58

Chapter I Introduction

Wenxin Diaolong (文心雕龙), which was completed around A.D.501, is the most famous text of Chinese classic literary theory. The author Liu Xie tried to make it both profound and aesthetic. *Wenxin Diaolong* is thus written all in parallel sentences with extravagant and gorgeous dictions and has been considered exemplary of beautiful writings both in and after his own time. Because of its aesthetic merit this work has been seen both as a theoretical and a literary text in Chinese academia, a double status which distinguishes it from works written in the western tradition of literary theory. For this reason, to translate *Wenxin Diaolong* is always a very hard and problematic issue. In this thesis, I will focus on one specific difficulty: the translation of cultural terms. Nearly all the terms of Chinese classic literary theory can be found in *Wenxin Diaolong*. These terms are characteristically vague and polysemantic, and thus totally different from the more clearly defined western terms. The literary elegance and the vagueness of Chinese terms make the translation of *Wenxin Diaolong* extremely difficult.

So far, there exist three complete English translations and several partial ones. In this thesis I will focus on two of them and do a comparative research between Yang Guobin's complete translation and Stephen Owen's partial translation. Yang is a Chinese scholar in the field of literary translation while Owen is an American sinological scholar. Both differ with regard to style and focus in their translations of *Wenxin Diaolong*. Generally speaking, Owen's translation tends to be SL-oriented, awkward and complex. By contrast, Yang's translation tends to be TL-oriented, fluent and pithy.

I will try to chart the results of these different approaches by analyzing their strategies for translating cultural terms.

In my thesis, I will provide discussions of Peter Newmark's and Wang Zuoliang's translation theories, which together constitute the theoretical background for my analysis of Yang's and Owen's translations. Newmark was an influential British translator and translation theorist. His best-known theories, text-types theory and a system for the classification of different translation methods, are helpful to analyze the complexity of

Wenxin Diaolong's text-type. Meanwhile, as I will argue, this same complexity may also reveal the limitations of Newmark's text-types theory. Wang Zuoliang was a Chinese poet and famous translator. He was also the teacher of Yang, who used his translation theory as a frame of reference. Wang's principles of translation follow the Chinese tradition of translation theory, especially with regard to its key concepts *wen* (文) and *zhi* (质), which represent the two different focuses in translation practice. In my opinion, the conflict between these two focuses is the biggest puzzle in translating *Wenxin Diaolong*. As with Newmark, the complexity of *Wenxin Diaolong* challenges Wang's theory and reveals its limitations.

This thesis is made up of six chapters. In Chapter Two, I will offer an introduction to *Wenxin Diaolong* by discussing its intention, main idea, structure, literary features and the history of its English translations. In Chapter Three, I will provide a brief review of Newmark's translation theory, mainly focusing on his best-known contributions to translation studies: his theories regarding text-types and translation methods. These two theories will be used and evaluated in analyzing the translations of *Wenxin Diaolong*. Chapter Four offers a review of Wang Zuoliang's approaches to translation and the tradition of Chinese translation theory. I will introduce the concepts of *wen* and *zhi*, and provide a brief review of the important dispute over *wen* and *zhi* in the history of Chinese translation theory. Chapter Five contains the concrete case study in which I present my main arguments. I will analyze Owen's and Yang's different translations of two important Chinese cultural terms: "wen" and "shen si". These two examples will be evaluated through Newmark and Wang's theories, at the same time questioning their theories and uncovering their limitations.

Chapter II *Wenxin Diaolong* and Its English Translations

2.1. An Introduction to *Wenxin Diaolong*

Wenxin Diaolong is the most famous work of Chinese classic literary theory, which was completed in the Southern Dynasty (around A.D.501). In Chinese history, only a few literary theoretical works were written before the composition of *Wenxin Diaolong*, such as Cao Pi (曹丕)'s *A Discourse on Literature* (论文学) (A.D.217-220) and Lu Ji (陆机)'s *The Poetic Exposition on Literature* (文赋)(around A.D.301). But *Wenxin Diaolong* is the longest work up to its time. Besides, it is also the first systematic literary theory, which is very anomalous compared with other desultory works in the history of Chinese literary thought.

Liu Xie (刘勰), the author of *Wenxin Diaolong*, was in fact a scholar in Buddhism and a Confucian. As recorded in “The Biography of Liu Xie (刘勰)” in *The History of Liang Dynasty* (梁书), he came from a declined noble family and lost his father at a young age. At the age of twenty-three or twenty-four, he began to follow his teacher, a monk called Seng You (僧祐), and then lived in the Dinglin Temple (定林寺) for more than ten years. He helped Seng You edit Buddhist Sutras and read plenty of Buddhist classics during those years. His job as an assistant editor was to classify all the texts and write a preface for each category, a fact which helps to explain why his *Wenxin Diaolong* is so systematic compared with other Chinese literary theoretical works. In writing *Wenxin Diaolong*, Liu Xie followed the same procedure as when he edited Buddhist Sutras. Before he began to write, he had to read a great deal of Confucian classics, history, philosophy and literature. Then he spent five years to do the research and finish his writing of *Wenxin Diaolong*. He tried to use this work to attract the attention of Shen Yue (沈约), who was a very famous poet and also a noble, so he stood in front of Shen's door waiting for his opportunity. Finally, he succeeded and got a recommendation from Shen Yue. After that, Liu Xie embarked his government career. He took up several minor official positions and participated in the compilation of the *Zhao Ming Literary*

philosopher Feng Youlan (馮友蘭) as “the whole of the spontaneity or naturalness of the world” (qtd. Yang 48). Liu Xie does not define what the Way exactly is, thereby following the tradition of Chinese terms that are vague, never defined but that are understood by everyone. Liu Xie considers the Way as the origin of nature and literature. The *wen* (pattern) is basically the pattern/appearance/shape of all natural things. For example, sun and moon are heavenly bodies. In the Chinese cultural context, together they produce the image of Heaven, which Heaven manifests to those below. Therefore, the sun and moon are considered *wen* of Heaven. Consequently, “astronomy” is literally translated as “*wen* of Heaven (天文)” in Chinese. In the same way, the river and mountain are considered “*wen* of Earth (地文)”. And literature, which is also called *wen* in Chinese, is the *wen* (pattern) of human beings.¹ This is how Liu Xie includes literature into his polysemantic usage of *wen*. In this sense, *wen* is the manifestation of “the naturalness of the world” which is called the Way. Finally, Liu Xie argues that the Sage is the agent between *wen* and the Way. The Sages could understand and interpret the Way perfectly and write down their understanding of the Way as literature. Since the origin of literature is considered to be the Way, the literary works written by the Sages are the most perfect and ideal works.

Thus the relationship among these three concepts could be illustrated by the following diagram:

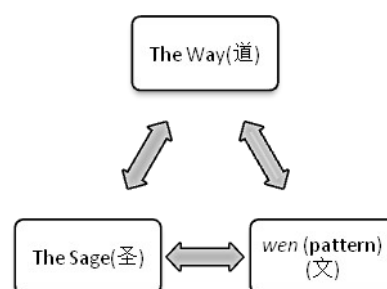


Figure 1. The relationship between the Way, the Sage and *wen*

¹ In Chinese culture, the heaven, the earth and human beings have special statuses compared with other natural things. They are together called Triad (三才). The heaven and the earth are the first natural phenomena that appear in the Chinese genesis mythology and thus are considered the most important natural and also cultural elements in Chinese culture. They respectively represent *yin*(阴) and *yang*(阳), the two opposing natural principles. And human beings with consciousness rank as a third with the pair of the heaven and the earth. This is the reason why the sun and the moon are considered to be *wen* of the heaven, the river and the mountain of the earth, and literature of humans, not the other way around. Since *Wenxin Diaolong* is a work of literary theory, other forms of human expression, such as visual art and music, are not the issues that involved in this work. They are not called *wen* in Chinese either.

The spontaneity or naturalness of the world (the Way) is transmitted to literature (*wen*) by the talented author (the Sage). And the talented author can only express the spontaneity and naturalness of the world through literature. This, in short, is the circular and dynamic relationship between these three concepts and also the main idea of Liu Xie's *Wenxin Diaolong*.

Liu Xie structures his work in accordance with this main idea. In the fiftieth chapter, he also explains his design of structure itself. Generally speaking, the book is composed of fifty chapters and can be divided into four parts: General Statement (Chapter 1-5), Genre (Chapter 6-25), Creation Theory (Chapter 26-45) and Others (Chapter 46-49), with an afterword (Chapter 50) at the end of the book. The first part, the General Statement, concerns the pivotal point of literature, which aims to describe the relationship between the Way, *wen* and the Sage. Besides, in his General Statement Liu Xie also analyzes those Classics which are written by the Sages and explains why they are considered perfect and ideal works. The second part, Genre, consists of twenty chapters. The first ten chapters cover the analysis of rhymed writings while the last ten chapters deal with unrhymed writings. Liu Xie explains the origin, development, meaning, form and the writing method of each genre. He also analyzes some typical works of each genre as examples. In the third part, Creation Theory, Liu Xie undertakes to discuss some basic elements of literary creation, like imagination, style, structural planning, rhythm and tone, and rhetoric. The last part, Others, has four chapters, focusing on literary history, authorship, readership and the morality of the author respectively. The number of chapters, fifty, corresponds to the special significance of the *Book of Changes* (☰☷).

In the fiftieth chapter, Liu Xie also explains his design in choosing *Wenxin Diaolong* for his title. The title *Wenxin Diaolong* can be divided into two parts. The first part is *Wenxin*, which means “the literary mind” or, if we translate Liu Xie's original literally, “the use of mind in literature (☰☷☰☷)”. The latter part is *Diaolong*, which could be literally translated as “carving dragon”—a metaphor for the literary craft: before Liu Xie, the metaphor of “carving insects” was usually applied to the literary craft in a derogatory sense. But Liu Xie transforms

this derogatory phrase into a positive sense by replacing the insect by a dragon. The dragon is a much respected creature in Chinese culture. In this way, Liu Xie expresses the greatness of literature and its craft, by claiming that a literary mind carves dragons.

Since this work was completed in the Southern Dynasty when the skilled and beautifully-written parallel and rhyming verse¹ was in fashion, Liu Xie tried to make it both profound and beautiful. *Wenxin Diaolong* is thus written all in parallel lines with extravagant and gorgeous dictions which have been considered exemplary of beautiful writings in the history of Chinese literature. Additionally, nearly all the terms of Chinese classic literary theory can be found in *Wenxin Diaolong*. In each chapter, Liu Xie focuses on one or two terms as his central point(s). So it is considered very significant to do research on the terms of *Wenxin Diaolong*, which therefore is a type of research very prevalent in Chinese academia. Chinese classic literary terms are usually vague and polysemantic, and thus totally different from the more clearly defined western terms. Thus, the beautiful parallel lines and the vagueness of terms make the translation of *Wenxin Diaolong* extremely difficult.

2.2. *The Influence of Wenxin Diaolong at Home and Abroad*

In China, upon its completion, *Wenxin Diaolong* was not immediately widely distributed. According to “The Biography of Liu Xie”, we know that Shen Yue spoke highly of this work, but actually he said nothing about *Wenxin Diaolong* in the works that he left behind, nor do we have other contemporary sources that make mention of the text. Therefore, there is no way to prove that *Wenxin Diaolong* was influential at that time. But after the Qing Dynasty, critics began to increasingly show their interest for this work. Plenty of collated and commented versions appeared during this time. *Wenxin Diaolong* also received high praise in *the Si Ku Quan Shu; Complete Library in the Four Branches of Literature* (四库全书) which is the largest compilation of all books in the history of China. Moreover, since the beginning of the republican period, *Wenxin Diaolong* has drawn

¹ Parallel and rhyming verse (对偶) has two main features in general. Firstly, in verse, two half lines make up a line. In each line, the number of characters and the structure of the two half lines should be the same. Secondly, two half lines should rhyme.

unprecedented attention within Chinese academia and got widely valued. In 1983 the Chinese Wenxin Diaolong Institute (Wenxin Diaolong Institute) was established. The research of *Wenxin Diaolong* even acquired its own name, Dragonology (Dragonology).

Outside China, thanks to the relatedness between their languages and Chinese, researchers from some Asian countries such as Japan and Korea have already done a lot of research on *Wenxin Diaolong*. There also exist several translated versions in those countries. However, in the western world, even in the academia of sinology, researchers' interest focuses more on Chinese poetry than on Chinese literary theory. In 1897, Alexander Wylie published his *Notes on Chinese Literature*. When referring to the Chinese critique of poetry and literature, he considers Liu Xie's *Wenxin Diaolong* to be the "earliest production of the kind (Chinese critique on poetry and literature)" (Wylie, 243) and "a work of considerable merit" (ibid). Wylie's comment is usually considered to mark the beginning of *Wenxin Diaolong* research in western academia. After that, *Wenxin Diaolong* began to attract western attention, which is perhaps partly explained by the fact that its systematic character corresponds to western traditions of literary theory. In fact, researchers from the western world always pay more attention to the theoretical aspects of *Wenxin Diaolong* than to its literary features, while in Chinese academia, *Wenxin Diaolong* is considered both a theoretical and a literary text. In my opinion, the difficulty in producing a literary translation of *Wenxin Diaolong* is largely responsible for this difference.

2.3. The History of English Translations of *Wenxin Diaolong*

So far, there exist three complete translations and several partial translations. The earliest complete translation was by Vincent Yu-chung Shih (Vincent Yu-chung Shih). The title *Wenxin Diaolong* was literally translated as *The Literary Mind and The Carving of Dragons*. When Shih was studying philosophy in China, he loved this work very much. During the time he taught Chinese literature in the University of Washington, he began to realize the lack of translated Chinese literary classics. Then he decided to translate the most important work of

Chinese literary theory—*Wenxin Diaolong*. In 1959, his translation was published by Columbia University Press. He wrote a forty-page preface to introduce the tradition of Chinese literary criticism and Liu Xie's theoretical framework. After his translation came out, it gave rise to a lot of comments and further research on *Wenxin Diaolong*. These comments generally focus on the problematic translation of the title, terms, and specific names, and meanwhile praise his practice and its value.

The next translation by Siu-kit Wong (王方) was published in 1999 by Hong Kong University Press. In 1983, Wong's *Early Chinese Criticism* had already been published, in which he translated thirteen pieces of Chinese classic literary theory, including two chapters of *Wenxin Diaolong*. Sixteen years later, he translated the complete version of *Wenxin Diaolong* with two other scholars, Allan Chung-hang Lo and Kwong-tai Lam. His translation of the title is *The Book of Literary Design*, which is a kind of domesticating translation. In fact, Wong uses a domesticizing approach when translating *Wenxin Diaolong* itself. In order to produce a fluent and readable text for English readers, he tends to rewrite the source text in his own language, which strays too far from the original. This domesticizing approach also constitutes the focus of criticism on Wong's version.

In 2003, Yang Guobin (杨国斌) had his translation published by the Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press. This is one of the versions that will be discussed in my thesis. Actually, the translation of *Wenxin Diaolong* was the topic of Yang's PhD thesis, *An Annotated English Translation of 30 Chapters of Wenxin Diaolong with a Critical Introduction* (《〈文心雕龙〉30章英文注释与批判性导论》). During his research, he compared the two existing versions and several partial translations. After that, he revised his thesis and translated the remaining chapters. His complete translation was published in 2003, titled *Dragon-Carving and Literary Mind*. Yang has an academic background in English literature, so he always uses terms from western literary theory to explain key concepts of Chinese literary theory. Shih's translation has become outdated and Wong's translation seems too liberal to capture Liu Xie's ideas faithfully. So the complete translation by Yang came at the right moment. Eugene Chen Eoyang from Indiana University speaks highly of Yang's translation: "It is readable, clear, poetic where necessary, analytical where appropriate, and

accessible to any attentive and intelligent lay reader” (Eoyang).

The three versions mentioned above are complete translations. Besides, there are also several partial translations that are influential. Before Shih’s complete translation, in 1945, Erwin Esiah Gordon translated the first chapter of *Wenxin Diaolong* in his Master’s thesis *Some Early Ideals in Chinese Literary Criticism*. Afterwards, E. R. Hughes also translated the first chapter of *Wenxin Diaolong* for comparison in his *The Art of Letters: Lu Chi's "Wen fu", A.D.302* which is a work on another Chinese literary theoretical work entitled *Wen Fu* (文賦). In 1962, the famous Chinese translators Yang Hsien-yi and Galdys Yang translated five chapters from the part of *Wenxin Diaolong* on Creation Theory, which got published in the *Chinese Literature Journal*. Their diction is very elegant and corresponds to the diction of Liu Xie’s source text, for which reason their work is highly valued in Chinese academia. Besides, there are still some partial translations created as part of the research on Chinese literary theory, like James Liu’s *Chinese Theories of Literature*, Cai Zongqi’s *Configurations of Comparative Poetics: Three Perspectives on Western and Chinese Literary Criticism* and Wang Zuoliang’s *Translation: Experiments and Reflections*.

Apart from these, I will discuss Stephen Owen’s partial translation in this thesis. Owen is a famous sinological scholar in Harvard University. In 1992, his *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, which includes eighteen chapters of *Wenxin Diaolong*, was published by Harvard University Press. He chose the first and the second chapters from the part on General Statement and sixteen chapters from the part on Creation Theory. He explains why he selected these chapters and gave up the part on Genre:

Although there are moments of great interest in these generic chapters, I have left them untranslated since they make continual reference to works and authors with which the Western reader will not be familiar and, in many cases, in which he would have no interest even if he were...Beginning with Chapter 26 (the part on Creation Theory), there follows a remarkable series of chapters on basic concepts of literary thought. Here we should offer a caution: some of these topics were burning issues of the day; some are the oldest concerns of Chinese literary thought (Owen 185-6).

From his explanation it is clear that Owen pays much attention to the concepts of literary creation in *Wenxin Diaolong*. As regards the title, Owen didn't translate. He just rendered the Chinese spelling in accordance with Wade-Giles romanization as *Wen-hsin tiao-lung*.

Owen has a western background, yet he is also an expert on Chinese literature. Thus he knows the differences regarding terminology and arguments between Chinese and western literary theories. He knows where western readers may be confused and takes great trouble to explain Liu Xie's design. Therefore, his translation seems special compared with others' translations. He starts with a general introduction to *Wenxin Diaolong* as a preface to his translation. Then, at the beginning of each chapter, he also briefly introduces the main idea and design of this chapter. Each paragraph of translation follows a paragraph of the source text. And after each paragraph of translation he writes a short interpretation of some specific lines, Chinese literary conventions that are brought into play, and other elements that western readers may not be familiar with. As Owen puts it, he "tells a story of literary thought through texts" (Owen, 13). Readers also find a Glossary of asterisked Chinese terms at the end of the whole book.

This chapter contains a brief introduction to *Wenxin Diaolong* and its English translations. I have introduced the intention, main idea, structure and literary features of this work, which, I think, are the elements that its translation should take account of. Before embarking on my discussion regarding the translation of *Wenxin Diaolong*'s cultural terms, in Chapter Three and Chapter Four, I will provide brief reviews of Newmark's and Wang Zuoliang's translation theories, which together constitute the theoretical background for my analysis of Yang's and Owen's translations.

Chapter III A Review of Peter Newmark's Translation Theory

Peter Newmark (1916-2011) was an influential British translator and translation theorist. Except for English, he spoke several other languages, such as French, German, and Italian, which made it possible for him to translate between different European languages. He also taught translation. Upon his return from Italy in World War II, he began to do translation studies and teach several languages at the same time. His continual practice and teaching experience of translation made him very sensitive to translation problems. His experiences offered guidance to his translation practice and helped him improve his translation theory. In 1974, he became English professor of translation at the University of Surrey, where he began to publish his academic works in the field of translation. In 1981, his first work, *Approaches to Translation*, was published. Here he proposed his most famous concepts “semantic translation” and “communicative translation”, which are also core concepts in this thesis. This work received much acclaim within academia. Then he resigned his job as a fulltime professor and devoted himself to the research of translation theory. In 1988, *A Textbook of Translation* was published, which was prized by the British Association for Applied Linguistics. In 1991, he published his study *About Translation*. These two influential works have been translated into many languages and widely distributed.

Newmark applied modern linguistics and theory of cross-cultural communications to his translation theory, which inform his best-known contributions to translation studies: his theories regarding text-types and translation methods. In my thesis, these two theories will be used and evaluated in analyzing the translations of *Wenxin Diaolong*. Here I will give a short review of these two theories.

3.1. Newmark's Text-types Theory

Text-types theory is one of Newmark's key theories. He divides text-types into three categories: the expressive text, the informative text and the vocative text. For these different

types, translators should use different translation methods.

Newmark proposes that “in some respects (only) any translation is an exercise in applied linguistics” (*A Textbook of Translation* 39). Before describing his different text-types, it is pre-requisite to explain his theory of language functions, which forms the base and also the starting point of his text- types theory.

Taking his cue from Bühler’s and Jakobson’s theory of the functions of language, Newmark introduces his own classification of linguistic functions. He distinguishes the following six functions: the expressive function, the informative function, the vocative function, the aesthetic function, the phatic function and the metalingual function. Among these, he considers the first three to be main functions while the others are minor ones.¹ Thus in the light of those three main functions, he divides text-types into three categories: the expressive text, the informative text and the vocative text.

He also includes a figure to illustrate the relationship between linguistic functions, textual-categories and text-types.



Figure 2. Language function, textual-categories and text-types (*A Textbook of Translation* 40)

In this figure, Newmark presents the core of each linguistic function. The “sacred”

¹ In the following analysis, I will show the impossibility to classify *Wenxin Diaolong* according to Newmark’s classification. Based on this fact, I will try to reveal the limitations of his text-types theory and question his hierarchy of linguistic functions.

writer's mind is the core of the expressive function: "He uses the utterance to express his feelings irrespective of any response" (39). Thus it is the translator's task to pay attention to those "expressive" personal components, such as unusual collocations, original metaphors, "untranslatable" words, particularly adjectives, unconventional syntax, neologisms and strange words (40). For Newmark, literature is the typical expressive text, the four principal genres being "lyrical poetry, short stories, novels, plays" (39).

The core of the informative function, according to Newmark, is the external "situation¹" outside language, like facts, reported ideas or theories. Informative texts are typically about topics of knowledge, except for the topic concerning the literary subject: "Texts about literary subjects, as they often express value-judgments, are apt to lean towards 'expressiveness'" (40). In terms of quantity, the informative text is the major type among these three textual-categories. Newmark signals that these texts are usually poorly written and sometimes inaccurate (*ibid*).

Similar to the informative function, the vocative function also corresponds to an anonymous author's status. Its core is the readership or the addressee. Newmark says that he "use(s) the term 'vocative' in the sense of 'calling upon' the readership to act, think or feel, in fact to 'react' in the way intended by the text" (41). Texts whose main purpose is to attract or entertain the reader are vocative texts. Nowadays, with the rise of new media, the scale of the audience is enlarging. Vocative texts thus tend to call upon a readership rather than a reader.

Newmark's purpose in classifying the textual-categories and text-types is to find a proper translation method for each text-type. He suggests that expressive texts should be translated by the semantic translation method while the communicative translation is more suitable for informative and vocative texts.²

3.2. Newmark's Translation Methods

¹ The "external situation", or "truth" as shown in above Figure Two, according to Newmark, is not something shaped by language, as has been elsewhere acknowledged since the eighteenth century (see, for instance, Friedrich Schleiermacher's famous essay "On the Different Methods of Translation"), but something that can exist outside language. This point is underlies his classification of textual-categories. I think it is one limitation of his theory that will be further discussed in my following analysis.

² This point will also be questioned and discussed in my following analysis.

Traditionally, the central issue with regard to translation methods is whether a text should be translated literally or freely. As Newmark puts it, “the argument has been going on since at least the first century BC”(45). For his part, he does not really agree with this dichotomy between different translation methods. He argues that in this distinction between freedom versus literalness, “the purpose of the translation, the nature of the readership, the type of text, was not discussed. Too often, writer, translator and reader were implicitly identified with each other” (*ibid*). With each text that is to be translated, he claims, there are ten factors that control the translation: SL¹ writer, SL norms, SL culture, SL setting and tradition, TL relationship, TL norms, TL culture, TL setting and tradition, the truth (the facts of the matter), and the translator (4). Thus it is evident that the most important concern in translation should be to what extent the translation emphasizes SL or TL.

Following up on this thought, Newmark proposes a V diagram to illustrate his own classification of translation methods:



Figure 3. Translation Methods (*A Textbook of Translation* 45)

In this figure, the extent of emphasis on the source language is increasing, ranging from semantic translation to word-to-word translation. In an SL-oriented approach, semantic translation is the freest method while word-to-word translation is the strictest one. Conversely, from communicative translation to adaptation, the extent of emphasis on the target language is increasing. Communicative translation is the strictest method while adaptation is the freest one in a TL-oriented approach.

Among these eight translation methods, the main methods are semantic translation and communicative translation. They are most influential and enjoy the highest reputation. As Eugene A. Nida says in his foreword to *Approaches to Translation*,

¹ SL is the abbreviation of “source language”. TL is the abbreviation of “target language”.

Professor Newmark's major contribution is in a detailed treatment of semantic vs. communicative translating in which semantic translation focuses primarily upon the semantic content of the source text and communicative translation focuses essentially upon the comprehension and response of receptors. This distinction becomes especially relevant for the wide diversity of text types which Professor Newmark considers (*Approaches to Translation* vii).

Newmark also refers to the importance of semantic translation and communicative translation. He considers these two methods to be the only methods to "fulfil the two main aims of translating, which are first, accuracy, and second, economy" (*A Textbook of Translation* 47). He also observes that "a semantic translation is written at the author's linguistic level, a communicative at the readership's" (*ibid*). Thus generally speaking, semantic translation is mainly used for expressive texts and communicative translation for informative and vocative texts.

The semantic translation method, as defined in *Approaches to Translation*: "attempts to render, as closely as the semantic and syntactic structures of the second language allow, the exact contextual meaning of the original" (39). This type of translation has three features in general. Firstly, semantic translation is author-centered, form-centered and SL-oriented, always tending to translate expressive texts literally, to follow the process of the author's thought, to retain the original form and to pursue nuances of original meaning. Secondly, semantic translation usually reduces the units of translation, for example, from sentences to words. Words or word-groups are always connected to the thought while sentences correspond to the speech or the communication, which is also the main purpose of communicative translation. In Newmark's own words: "In expressive texts, the units of translation are likely to be small, since words rather than sentences contain the finest nuances of meaning" (*A Textbook of Translation* 50). Thirdly, for Newmark, "a semantic translation tends to be more complex, more awkward, more detailed, more concentrated, and pursues the thought-processes rather than the intention of the transmitter. It tends to overtranslate"

(*Approaches to Translation* 39). However, in terms of meaning, a translation cannot achieve equivalence with the source text. Thus semantic translation always goes hand in hand with a loss of meaning and will always be inferior to the source text. (*A Textbook of Translation* 48)

Communicative translation, on the other hand, is defined as a translation method that “attempts to produce on its readers an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the readers of the original” (*ibid*). Like semantic translation, it has three corresponding features. Firstly, communicative translation is reader-centered, communication-centered and TL-oriented, apt to give priority to the response of receptors, to “emphasize the ‘force’ rather than the content of the message” (*ibid*). Communicative translation aims to achieve an effect equivalent to that of the source text, an effect which is thus very similar to Nida’s “dynamic equivalence” (*ibid*). Secondly, communicative translation tends to extend the units of translation, since the speech or the communication is the main aim of communicative translation, which is involved with sentences. Thus, the proper units of communicative translation are sentences and paragraphs. Thirdly, a communicative translation generally “is likely to be smoother, simpler, clearer, more direct, more conventional, conforming to a particular register of language, tending to undertranslate” (*Approaches to Translation* 39). Thus a communicative translation always results in a “natural” and readable kind of writing. Informative texts, which communicative translation should mainly be used for, are usually written poorly or inaccurately. Thus in a communicative translation, the translator has the right and the obligation to “correct” the facts and the style of the source text. Therefore, “a communicative translation is often better than its original” (*A Textbook of Translation* 48).

In his *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications*, translation theorist Jeremy Munday compares Newmark’s semantic and communicative translation methods. He summarizes Newmark’s distinctions in the following table, which is extremely clear and helpful for the understanding of these two concepts:

Parameter	Semantic translation	Communicative translation
Transmitter/addressee focus	Focus on the thought	Subjective, TT reader

	processes of the transmitter as an individual; should only help TT reader with connotations if they are a crucial part of message	focused, oriented towards a specific language and culture
Culture	Remains within the SL culture	Transfers foreign elements into the TL culture
Time and origin	Not fixed in any time or local space; translation needs to be done anew with every generation	Ephemeral and rooted in its own contemporary context
Relation to ST	Always 'inferior' to ST; 'loss' of meaning	May be 'better' than the ST; 'gain' of force and clarity even if loss of semantic content
Use of form of SL	If ST language norms deviate, then this must be replicated in TT; 'loyalty' to ST author	Respect for the form of the SL, but overriding 'loyalty' to TL norms
Form of TL	More complex, awkward, detailed, concentrated; tendency to overtranslate	Smoother, simpler, clearer, more direct, more conventional; tendency to undertranslate
Appropriateness	For serious literature, autobiography, 'personal effusion', any important political (or other) statement	For the vast majority of texts, e.g. non-literary writing, technical and informative texts, publicity, standardized types, popular fiction
Criterion for evaluation	Accuracy of reproduction of the significance of ST	Accuracy of communication of ST message in TT

Figure 4. Comparison of Newmark's semantic and communicative translation (Munday 45)

3.3. Newmark's Translation Theory and *Wenxin Diaolong*

To analyze the different translations of *Wenxin Diaolong* from the perspective of Newmark's theory, the first question must be to which text type does *Wenxin Diaolong* belong?

As the most distinguished literary theoretical work in ancient China, *Wenxin Diaolong*

methods, semantic translation would be more suitable for the translation of this work.⁴ I will present my analysis of concrete translation cases only in Chapter Five. But here I will already anticipate my overall conclusion. I think Stephen Owen's translation is indeed a case of semantic translation, which is extremely ST-oriented and gives highest priority to the original meaning or Liu Xie's design. Yang Guobin's translation on the contrary represents an example of communicative translation, which is TT-oriented. If we look at Newmark's theory, Owen's translation aims to transmit the "significance" or "expressive components" rather than the "message" of the source text. On the contrary, Yang's translation aims to transmit the "message" rather than the exact "significance". However, does Owen really succeed in transmitting the "significance", and does Yang, for his part, really aim to transmit the "message" of *Wenxin Diaolong*? I do not think so. In order to support my view, in the next chapter, I will introduce a Chinese theory of translation developed by translator Wang Zuoliang. Wang was Yang's teacher of translation studies and English literature. In my opinion, Wang's and Newmark's theory complement each other. Together these two theories are helpful in analyzing the complexity of *Wenxin Diaolong*.

⁴ This is also a point that remains to be discussed in my following analysis.

Chapter IV A Review of Wang Zuoliang's Approaches to Translation and the Tradition of Chinese Translation Theory

Wang Zuoliang (王佐良) (1916-1995) was a Chinese poet and famous translator. In 1939, he graduated with a degree in English Literature from the Tsinghua University. After eight years of teaching, in 1947, he went to the University of Oxford to pursue a Master's degree in English Literature and graduated in 1949. Then he became a professor of English Literature in the Beijing Foreign Studies University. He published many poems when he was still a student, some of them in English. In 1958, he began to practice translation. His main works in this last field are *Thunderstorm* (雷雨) by Cao Yu (曹禺) (translation of a Chinese play into English), *Rural Rides* by William Cobbett (translation of an English travel book into Chinese), and *The Essays* by Francis Bacon (translation from English into Chinese). Except for these works, his translations are all in the genre of poetry, such as *Robert Burns: Selected Poems* (English into Chinese), *The Translation of Selected English Poems* (English into Chinese), and *On Poetry* (Chinese classic and modern poems into English), etc. The experience of translation practice made him think a lot about the problems in literary translation. He continually summarized his translation experience as well as his reflections. In 1989 and in 1991, he published his *Translation: Thought and Practice* (翻译: 思想与实践) and *A Sense of Beginning: Studies in Literature and Translation* (翻译的起点: 文学与翻译研究) as a summary of his thirty-year experience. He also wrote several theoretical works regarding specific aspects of translation, such as *On Verse Translation* (论诗体翻译) in 1992 and *Sense, Style and Translation* (意义、风格与翻译) in 1980.

Wang Zuoliang's translation theory follows the tradition of Chinese translation theory, especially focusing on the key concepts: *wen* (文) and *zhi* (质). These two concepts demonstrate the two different focuses in translation practice: literary elegance and nuance of meaning. In my opinion, the conflict between these two focuses is the biggest puzzle in translating *Wenxin Diaolong*. However, in Newmark's theory, there is little illustration about

this conflict¹. Therefore, I will introduce the concepts of *wen* and *zhi* and provide a brief review of the important dispute over *wen* and *zhi* in the history of Chinese translation theory.

4.1. *The Dispute over Wen and Zhi in the History of Chinese Translation Theory*

Wen and *zhi*² are key concepts not only in Chinese traditional translation theory but also in Chinese classic literature. They originate from the Confucian classic *The Analects* (《论语》). *Wen* refers to literary elegance, the form and ornamentation of literature. *Zhi*, in contrast, refers to substance or content and a plain style of literature. Thus, the dispute over *wen* and *zhi* in translation concerns the question where the translation's focus should lie, on the literary elegance or on the substance of the source text. Should the translation be elegant even if this should entail that the translator rewrites the source text to a certain extent, or should it be plain in order to retain the nuance of the original meaning?

The dispute over *wen* and *zhi* is somewhat similar to the general dispute over (awkward) literal translation and (beautiful) free translation. Both involve some basic distinctions in translation: for example, the distinction between content and form, and the style of the source text and that of the target text. They also differ. The criterion in classifying a translation as “literal” or “free” is whether or not it is faithful to the form of the source text and the nuance of the original meaning, while of the criterion in classifying a translation as *wen*-oriented or *zhi*-oriented translation is whether or not the style of the target text is elegant.

The first debate took place in the Three Kingdoms Dynasty (A.D.220-A.D.280). In fact, the golden age for the translation of Buddhist scripture was from the Eastern Han Dynasty (A.D.25-A.D.220) to the Northern Song Dynasty (A.D.960-A.D.1127). In the Three Kingdoms Dynasty, a monk translator, Zhi Qian (支谦), wrote *The Preface to Fa Ju Jing* (《法句经序》), in which he first introduced *wen* and *zhi* into the field of translation. This article is also the first to refer to translation theory in Chinese history. Zhi himself was a supporter of

¹ In my opinion, this is one limitation of Newmark's theory. I will discuss this point further in my following analysis.

² *Wen* and *zhi*: these two Chinese concepts have several English translations. Stephen Owen translates them as “pattern and substance”. Yang Guobin translates as “art and substance”. The most prevalent translation in Chinese academia is “elegance and simplicity”.

wen-oriented translation, while Zhu Jiangyan (竺江彦), an Indian translator, took the opposite side. Finally, Zhi failed in this first debate. In *The Preface to Fa Ju Jing*, he recorded the debate. Zhi said that he had tended to translate Buddhist scripture in an elegant way instead of making it plain like Zhu did: “Although Jiangyan was good at the language of India, he was not necessarily versed in Chinese. So in his translations there were either Sanskrit expressions literally rendered or simply transliterations, too literal (*zhi*) I would say¹”(qtd. Luo 22). However, Zhu’s friend Weidinan, an Indian Buddhist scholar, tried to convince Zhi that “The translation of Buddha’s words should be adherent to the meaning, disregarding rhetoric...Those who translate should stress transparency without losing the original meaning, hence good translations²”(ibid).

Weidinan went to the Chinese classics for support as well. He quoted Lao Zi (老子) as saying that “beautiful words are not faithful and faithful words are not beautiful³”(ibid), and also Confucius’s words, “language always fails to convey senses perfectly⁴”(ibid). Therefore, Zhi began to appreciate Zhu’s plain translation and summarized his guiding principle when translating Buddhist scriptures as “follow the original import (*zhi*) without using ornate words (*wen*)⁵” (ibid).

The first debate thus ended with the failure of Zhi and *wen*-oriented translation. But the dispute over *wen* and *zhi* lasted until the end of the Northern Song Dynasty. Some translators also assumed a neutral attitude, trying to find a balance between *wen* and *zhi*, such as the monk Hui Yuan (慧圆) and Liu Xie’s teacher, the monk Seng You. In the first volume of his *Collection of Chu San Zang* (出三藏记), Seng You argues that “if the style of translation is too elegant, the target text will be ostentatious. If the style is too plain, the target text will be rough and rigid. Both extremes fail to convey the original idea of the Buddhist scripture”(qtd. Chen 32)⁶

However, those translators who took up a neutral attitude usually did not have a criterion for the extent to which the style of translation should be elegant or plain. Wang

¹ Chinese original: 竺江彦之翻經，其法雖善，然其詞多直譯，或音譯，其詞多不達意。

² Chinese original: 夫翻譯者，務在顯其本意，而不失其原旨。

³ Chinese original: 信言不美，美言不信。

⁴ Chinese original: 言之不文，行之不遠。

⁵ Chinese original: 隨其本意，不加潤飾。

⁶ Since this text lacks an authorized English translation, the translation is my own. Chinese original: 若其辭太雅，則其文必浮；若其辭太質，則其文必澁。二者皆失其本意。

Zuoliang assumes a neutral attitude as well, but, unlike others, he explicitly defines this criterion.

4.2. Wang Zuoliang's Approaches to Translation

To what extent shall the style of translation be elegant (*wen*)? Wang's answer to this question is that the style of the target text should correspond to that of the source text. In other words, if the style of the source text is elegant, that of the translation should be elegant, and vice versa. Wang proposes that "the translation should come as close to the source text as possible, in the writing style, elegant or plain, in the depth of content, profound or superficial, in the tone and in the genre" (*Translation: Thought and Practice* 3)¹. Wang himself is a poet, which makes him sensitive to the writing and the style of the source text. He does not see the writing/form and the content/meaning as separate things. He argues that the style and the writing are personal ways of expressing the specific content and meaning. They belong to the content, not to the appearance or ornamentation (15)². It is the reason why he argues that the translation should be as elegant as the source text. To be the equally elegant in form as the source text is to be faithful to the content of the source text as well.

To what extent shall the style of translation be plain (*zhi*)? Wang argues that the target text must be accessible to its readers. In the past, Chinese translators always concentrated on the intention of the author. He thinks that translators should focus more on the readers' response, because, in some cases, what puzzles the translator is something about which the reader does not care at all. He says that "a work is finally completed by a reader" (35)³. Thus, even if the translation of a literary work is performed in a literal way, it must at least be fluent

¹ Since this work lacks an English translation, the translated quotes from this book are my own. Chinese original: 王佐良《翻译：思想与实践》3

² Regarding the relationship between writing and meaning, form and content, Wang's perspective is different from Newmark's. Newmark puts the core of the informative text as "situation/truth" outside language. He does believe that content can be isolated from language. His textual-categories are classified based on this point. Wang, on the contrary, argues that language shapes meaning. According to him, the writing or form closely connects with the content or meaning. This difference will be further discussed in my follow analysis.

³ Chinese original: 王佐良《翻译：思想与实践》35 This argument seems similar to Roland Barthes's argument regarding the existence of writing: "a text's unity lies not in its origin (author) but in its destination (reader)" (Barthes 1325). However, Barthes claims that "the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author", from which Wang's argument is different. Wang considers the reader only one of steps in a work's accomplishment and does not take the author out of account. His aim is to call for more focuses on reader's response in translation practice rather than to kill the author.

and readable. He argues that “all good translations are a combination of literal and free translation” (3)¹. In accordance with his criteria, a good target text should be faithful, readable, and pithy.

So much for Wang’s neutral attitude and criteria² in the dispute over *wen* and *zhi*, since Chinese classical works are always written as the form of literature, literary elegance is often considered one of the most important elements in translation. Therefore, it is often taken seriously in Chinese translation theory and practice. Conversely, literary elegance and the aesthetic function of language are hardly taken into account in Newmark’s theory. I think Wang’s thought about *wen* and *zhi* helps to analyze the biggest difficulty in translating *Wenxin Diaolong*: the perceived conflict between writing/form and meaning/content. Besides, he also has some other important thoughts, for example, with regard to “resemblance in spirit (神似)”³ in literary translation.

Even though Wang does think that the translation should be faithful to the source text, his conception of “faithfulness” is different from the conventional faithfulness in western theory. “Even the point about faithfulness to the original has been disputed. Faithful to what, it has been asked, to the letter or spirit of the original?” (*A Sense of Beginning* 118) Wang argues that the translation of the literary work should be faithful to the source text in spirit. His faithfulness thus represents “resemblance in spirit”. This term can date back to the Northern Song Dynasty, where it was used in Chinese painting theory, and was first introduced into the field of translation by Mao Dun (茅盾) in 1921. Then it became a very prevalent concept in Chinese translation theory.

Both the script and the grammatical form of Chinese are highly different from that of western languages. So even if the translation of a literary work is literal, there can be considerable and inevitable loss. What is worse, the literally-translated target text is always awkward and unreadable. Thus, translators from Chinese tend to make their translations faithful to the spirit of the source text. In other words, translators focus more on transmitting

¹ Chinese original: 信、达、雅

² In my opinion, his criteria are a little subjective and ideal. This point will be further discussed in my following analysis.

³ The term “*shen* (spirit)” is considered a very important cultural term in the field of Chinese literary and art theory, whose translation has been a big puzzle for long within Chinese academia. It is never defined and explained, but its subtle core can be captured by each Chinese. The vagueness, subtleness and cultural specialty of its usage cause the extreme difficulty of its translation together with its exact interpretation. “Spirit” is the most acceptable translation so far, but it is not an equivalent translation either. The distinction between “*shen*” and “spirit” will be analyzed in Chapter Five.

even though *Wenxin Diaolong* is a theoretical work, it is very elegant in its literary writing. If the target text is plain, it will not match the elegant source text. So when translating this work, we must take much account of its style (Yang)¹

Therefore, I believe the purpose of Yang's TL-oriented, "communicative translation" is not to transmit the 'message' of *Wenxin Diaolong* as is stated in Newmark's theory, but to attempt to retain the original pithy, vigorous and gorgeous writing style. In the next chapter, I will provide two concrete examples to compare Owen and Yang's versions and analyze their designs and focuses respectively. Moreover, I will evaluate Newmark's and Wang's theory, to discover their pros and cons as tested against my case analysis.

¹ Since this article lacks English translation, this quote is my own translation. Chinese original: 文心雕龙文辞之美，不可不察。译文之美，不可不学。译文之美，不可不学。

Chapter V Case Study: A Comparative Analysis of Owen and Yang's Strategies

Regarding the Translation of Cultural Terms in *Wenxin Diaolong*

As mentioned in previous chapters, Stephen Owen and Yang Guobin have different focuses in translating *Wenxin Diaolong*. In this chapter, I will chart the results of these different approaches by analyzing their strategies for translating cultural terms.

Keeping in mind Newmark's and Wang's perspectives, I think Owen's and Yang's translation strategies correspond respectively to Newmark's and Wang's suggested translation methods.

According to Newmark's taxonomy as discussed in Chapter Three, *Wenxin Diaolong* is an expressive text, and therefore should be translated by means of the semantic translation method. In my opinion, Owen's translation is indeed a semantic translation. I will use the following examples to illustrate the extent to which he retains the nuance of original meaning. If we examine Yang's translation from a Newmark's perspective as well, Yang's translation should be classified as communicative, focusing on transmitting the "message" of the source text. However, in the following analysis, I will endeavour to explain Yang's choice in translation: he does not aim to transmit the "message", but to retain the literary elegance of the source text. *Wenxin Diaolong* is both a theoretical and a literary text. The complexity of its text-type reveals the limitations of Newmark's text-type theory, which I will discuss at the end of the comparison.

Wang's translation theory focuses on the issue of literary elegance. As stated in Chapter Four, Wang tends to consider *Wenxin Diaolong* a literary text, whose translation should strive to resemble the source text in spirit and elegance. In my opinion, Yang follows the guiding principles of Wang, his teacher. In the following case studies, I will explore how Yang retains the spirit and literary elegance of *Wenxin Diaolong* as well as the extent to which he loses the original meaning. Yang intends to retain both the literary elegance and the nuance of meaning, but he fails. His failure exposes the limitations of Wang's theory, which will be illustrated at the end of this chapter as well.

primal powers of heaven and earth are born. Yet, only when humans join in does the Great Triad form. Endowed with the divine spark of consciousness, humans are the essence of the five elements, the mind of heaven and earth. When mind is born, speech appears. When speech appears, **writing** comes forth. This is the way of Dao (Yang 3).

This paragraph describes the origin of literature. As Owen says, “the project of ‘Its Source in the Way’ is nothing less than to show how literature is generated from the basic workings of the universe” (Owen 186). In Chinese, “literature” is one of the meanings of *wen*. Liu Xie tries to use the term *wen* as broadly as he can, and includes literature in its semantic field. In this paragraph, the term *wen* appears three times. Each of its appearances is marked in bold type in both the source text and the target texts.

In Liu Xie’s description, we can see a particular order in the system of *wen*. At the very beginning, he presents a general *wen* as the pattern/appearance/shape of all natural things, which is as great as their inner power. Then he begins to concretize this term *wen* step by step. According to Chinese tradition, Heaven and Earth are the first natural phenomena that appear in the genesis mythology and they are thus considered the most important natural as well as cultural elements. Later, Liu Xie presents the *wen* of Heaven and of Earth. He believes the sun and moon are the *wen* of Heaven, because they together produce the images of Heaven, which make Heaven manifest to those below. In the same way, the river and mountain are considered “*wen* of Earth”. In fact, “astronomy” and “topography” are translated into Chinese as “*wen* of Heaven (天文)” and “*wen* of Earth (地理)” respectively, for the same reason. The last step is the *wen* of human beings. Heaven, Earth and human beings, in Chinese culture, are combined and called “Triad (三才)”. Human beings rank third because they have “the divine spark of consciousness (灵明)”, thus they are considered the “mind (心)” of Heaven and Earth. Here Liu Xie proposes that language is the unique way for human beings to express this “mind”; thus literature, which is called *wen* as well, becomes the *wen* of human beings. Therefore, literature is included in the system of *wen*. This particular order is Liu Xie’s design in this paragraph. He aims to convince his readers that *wen* is derived from nature and comes into being at the same time with Heaven and Earth. In this way, he

puts forth his own view of literature: the source of literature is in the Way, thus a good literary work should be a manifestation of the Way instead of a simple artificial ornamentation.

Bearing in mind the author's design, I will examine Owen's and Yang's translations one by one.

In Owen's translation, all three *wens* in the source text are translated as one English word: pattern; and the first "pattern" is shown with the romanized Chinese original in parentheses. His practice aims to retain the original use of the Chinese term *wen*: to present that order by staying as close to the source text as possible in order to make Liu Xie's conclusion more convincing. In his introduction to this chapter, Owen shows his awareness of Liu Xie's design regarding the particular order in the system of *wen*:

First, he uses the term *wen* in the broadest sense possible, freely mixing its many frames of reference in order to enforce the point that *wen*, as used in terms such as "astronomy" and "topography", is the same as *wen* when used by Confucius to refer to cultivation and traditional forms of polite behavior, which in turn is the same as *wen* as "the written word" and *wen* as "literature." For Liu Hsieh¹ the historical provenance of a word is a single semantic center; and all modern usages are extensions, elaborations, limitations, or, at worst, deviations. Thus the shifting frames of reference of *wen* serve to reveal the secret and primordial unity that lies behind the apparent diversity in its usage (Owen 186).

In translating Chinese terms Owen may be seen to follow the same general strategy: he always uses one fixed English word to translate a Chinese term. By repeatedly using this word, he tries to make his readers aware that this is a Chinese term². It is indeed important to retain the author's mind, the original expression and the cultural differences. But there is a problem that cannot be ignored: can the word "pattern" fully convey the idea of "*wen*"? This seems unlikely. As discussed previously, the Chinese character *wen* has eight meanings, which guarantees the possibility of its broadest usage with an underlying semantic core. However, there are not so many meanings to be discerned in the word "pattern". Thus the

¹ Owen uses Wade-Giles romanization to romanize Chinese. This Liu Hsieh is Liu Xie, the author of *Wenxin Diaolong*.

² This point will be further explained and evaluated from Newmark's perspective in my following analysis.

repeated usage of “pattern” can be confusing. Here I will analyze Owen’s three renderings of “*wen*” as “pattern” in the passage quoted above one by one.

The first *wen* is a general one to show the basic idea of the term *wen*, which is a pattern/appearance/shape of all natural things. Relative to the inner power (*te*), *wen* refers to the outside of natural things, including shapes and the way to arrange those shapes. However, the English word “pattern” denotes an arrangement of lines or shapes, especially in a repeated and regular way. Thus in two aspects, the word “pattern” does not conform to this first “*wen*” in the original text. Firstly, Chinese “*wen*” does not carry the connotations of regularity and repetition conveyed by English “pattern”. Secondly, the word “pattern” tends to be the way to arrange the shapes or appearances of the natural things, which can only partially cover the meaning of the original “*wen*”. I believe Owen selects “pattern” to translate this “*wen*” because the first meaning of Chinese “*wen*” in dictionary, “文”, is generally translated into English as “pattern”. However, Liu Xie tries to combine several meanings together to reveal its semantic core, thus making its English translation very difficult.

The second is the *wen* of the Way. Before this “*wen*” appears, there is the description about *wen* of Heaven and of Earth. Heaven and Earth represent the spontaneity or naturalness of the word, that is, the Way. Thus, from Liu Xie’s perspective, the *wen* of Heaven and of Earth (“astronomy” and “topography”) manifest the Way. This explanation corresponds with the relationship between the Way and *wen* as stated in Chapter Two: the Way manifests itself by its *wen*. Therefore, this usage of “*wen*” even goes beyond its eight standard meanings. If translated simply as “pattern”, it will confuse the readers, leaving them wondering what is meant by the pattern of the Way.

The third *wen* refers to literature. This constitutes the destination of Liu Xie’s semantic exploration of *wen*. He wants to show that literature is derived from nature. In Chinese, literature is called *wen* as well, so in this context, Chinese readers can immediately recognize that Liu Xie’s “*wen*” here is the *wen* as literature. However, since the word “pattern” cannot mean “literature”, Owen’s “pattern” here cannot readily remind readers of the field of literature. He tries to provide a detailed commentary after his translation, which is very helpful, but this commentary is no integral part of the target text.

In short, I think Owen's practice of using one fixed word "pattern" to translate "wen" is a good and meaningful practice, which is relatively successful in retaining Liu Xie's original with regard to meaning and nuances of the term "wen". Even though the English word "pattern" lacks many of the meanings of Chinese "wen", his practice at least tells western readers that this is an important Chinese term. He takes the original into account as the most important element when translating. Moreover, he tries to keep the form of the target text as close to the source text as possible. To achieve this, he reduces the translation units from sentences to words, in order to preserve the Chinese original form, which is constituted by characters. Owen's translation can thus be seen as a semantic translation from Newmark's perspective: he focuses on Liu Xie's thought process and the cultural differences. His target text is relatively complex, awkward and over-translated: in order to explain cultural differences, he provides too many extra commentaries, both inside and outside the target text. This choice inevitably makes his target text lengthier and less attractive to readers.

From Newmark's perspective, if we consider *Wenxin Diaolong* as simply a theoretical text, Owen's translation is faithful. Even though there are some losses in the meaning, it is inevitable. As Newmark states in his theory, a semantic translation always goes hand in hand with a loss of meaning and will always be inferior to the source text. However, *Wenxin Diaolong* is not only a theoretical text, but also a literary text. Its literary elegance is a very important feature. If we evaluate Owen's translation from this aspect, his translation appears less faithful to the source text.

Taking the above paragraph as an example, we see that Liu Xie uses very short lines with four or five characters to express the spontaneity of *wen*. By using these short and regular lines to express his meaning one by one and concretizing "wen" gradually, he tries to make his statement run smoothly: the relationships between different *wens* are very close, and they are presented step by step, without pause. Liu Xie thus seeks to convince the readers that *wen* as literature is born naturally and spontaneously. It just runs its course.

In this regard, Owen fails to preserve the original writing style. He adds too many explanations in his translation, such as the explanation of the Triad, which makes his lines long and irregular. Moreover, his repeated use of the term "pattern" may make readers ponder

its meaning in each specific context. The smoothness and spontaneity of Liu Xie's statement and of the *wens* being born are thus interrupted in Owen's translation. In this sense, Owen's semantic translation fails to convey the original's expressive components. His failure directly points to limitations of Newmark's theory: the excessive emphasis on meanings and the ignorance of aesthetic elements. This point will be further discussed at the end of this chapter.

In terms of retaining the literary elegance and the spirit of the source text, Yang is superior to Owen. In Yang's translation, the three *wens* are translated differently in accordance with their meanings in different contexts, which have been discussed above. Respectively, they are "pattern", "manifestation" and "writing". His strategy in translating *wen* is relatively TL-oriented. Thus, in his translation, readers can follow Liu Xie's arguments as smoothly as in the source text, without stopping and thinking of its different meanings in different contexts. Moreover, Yang attempts to retain the original writing style, the smoothness and the spontaneity, by making the length of lines almost the same. He also tries to make his target text as pithy as the original text. Obviously, Yang's target text is much shorter than Owen's. Even though it is still much longer than the source text, we can see his attempt to shorten his translation. In brief, Yang tries his best to keep the original spirit and literary elegance. In his target text, he tries to let the coming forth of literature occur as naturally and spontaneously as in the original.

If we were to assess Yang's translation through Newmark's theory, it would be considered a communicative translation. Yang tends to expand the units of translation by abandoning the original Chinese form. For instance, the following two lines "□□□□□□□□", if translated literally, read "we look up and see them (sun, moon and stars) emitting radiance, then we look down and see the inherent beauty/pattern (exist within the mountain and river)". Here Liu Xie makes use of images to refer to the heavenly bodies and the earthly pattern. Yang gives up the original images. He breaks the original line structures and combines these two lines into one, as "when earthly patterns and heavenly images take shape". Besides, his target text seems to be TL-oriented and communication-centered, as is shown by his practice of translating three *wens* differently in accordance with their contextual meanings, and thus is considered to be smoother, simpler, clearer, more direct and more conventional. Yang's

translation corresponds closely to the characteristics of Newmark's communicative translation method, which aims to transmit the "message" of the source text. However, as discussed above, the real "message" of this paragraph should be the particular order of different *wens*. In Yang's translation, though he makes each *wen*'s contextual meaning clear for readers, he fails to remind readers that this is an important Chinese term; much less does he convey the particular order of *wen*'s system. In this sense, his "communicative translation" fails to transmit the "message" of this paragraph, a failure which also reveals the limitations of Newmark's theory¹.

As I have stated before, Yang's practice follows his teacher Wang's theoretical guidance. Wang proposes that the translation should be as elegant as the style of the source text, faithful to the original spirit and simultaneously attractive to readers. Therefore Yang translates the three *wens* differently in order to make them accessible to readers and keep the original spontaneity of *wen*. However, here we should raise the question: does he really succeed in retaining this spontaneity when he fails to make the readers realize the existence of the term "*wen*"? I do not think so. Readers may be confused with regard to the relationship between the heavenly images, earthly pattern and literature. In my opinion, Yang's failure also reveals the limitations of Wang's theory. In translation, Wang always wants to find a perfect way to balance the focus on the meaning and literary elegance, but in most cases, a translation cannot be faithful to them both. His theory focuses so much on the aesthetic aspect that it neglects the nuance of the original meanings. This limitation will be further discussed at the end of this chapter, together with that of Newmark's theory.

To make my arguments more convincing I will first provide a second example: Owen's Yang's translations of term "*shen si*".

5.2. Interpretation of "Shen Si" and Its English Translations

In *Wenxin Diaolong*, the term *shen si* (□□) first appears in the eponymous Chapter Twenty-Six. This term is a compound word, which is made up of two single characters, *shen*

¹ This point will be further explained at the end of this chapter.

(*t'ung**) ten thousand leagues. The sounds of pearls and jade are given forth while chanting and singing; right before our eyelashes, the color (*se**) of windblown clouds unfurls. This is accomplished by the basic principle of **thought** (*ssu*-li**). When the basic principle of **thought** is at its most subtle, the **spirit** wanders with things.

Yang's translation:

An ancient said, "My physical form is on the sea; my heart lingers in the court." This is *shensi*, or **imagination**, at work. A writer's **imagination** travels far. When he is absorbed in silent thought, his mind ranges across a thousand years; without opening his eyes, his vision penetrates a distance of ten thousand *li*. He produces pearl-like sounds in recitation and conjures up whirling winds and rolling clouds before his eyes. Is this not due to the magical power of **imagination**! The mystery of **imagination** lies in the merging of the **spirit** with the physical world.

At the very beginning, instead of defining the concept, Liu Xie uses the words of Zhuang Zi (庄子)¹ to provide a metaphorical image to describe the term *shen si*. This is a metaphor of the magical power of human's mind: a man can think of something that is very far away from him. Human minds can travel freely in time and space. After that, Liu Xie applies this term to the field of literature: "spirit (*shen*) goes far indeed in the thought (*si*) that occurs in writing (*wen**)"². We can see that Liu Xie separates *shen* and *si* in his statement.

According to the *Classic Chinese Dictionary*, the character *shen* has four meanings: divinity, spirit (non-physical part of human beings), magical, expression or face look, portrait (1387)³. Here Liu Xie combines the meanings of "spirit" and "magical" to create such an effect: he tries to describe a subtle, free and magical mental experience by stating that *shen* (the non-physical part of human beings) is wandering. Thus *shen* refers to a magical non-physical part of human beings, and *shen*'s wandering/travelling can be seen as a metaphor of free and magical mental activity.

Compared to *shen*, Liu Xie's usage of *si* is simple and conventional. Here *si* refers to

¹ Zhuang Zi is an important sage in Chinese cultural history, as famous as Confucius.

² Here I select Owen's translation to discuss the example because Yang does not separate *shen* and *si* in his translation.

³ The translations of these meanings are my own. I tried to keep them as close to the source text as possible, but cannot achieve absolute equivalence. The Chinese original: 1, 精神2神气3神妙4神像5神像

its basic meaning: thought. *Si* of literature is “the thought that occurs in writing”, namely, literary thought. Even though both *shen* and *si* belong to the mental activities of human beings, they have different features: *shen* is relatively more spiritual, magical, free and subtle. It refers to the mysterious part of human minds. On the other side, *si* is more explicable, precise, and understandable. It refers to the logical part of human minds. Based on these different features, it appears that Liu Xie aims to create his desired effect by separately using *shen* and *si*: he tries to describe the different steps in the process of literary creation.

The first step is letting *shen* begin its wandering. When the author concentrates on his subject and enters a silent condition, this wandering can break the limits of time and space and become completely free. Then *shen* can “wander with things”. After the free and mysterious wandering of *shen*, plenty of magical ideas arise. The author then needs to control them through use of the logical mental activity, *si* or literary thought. Only by his doing so can those magical ideas that derived from *shen*’s wandering become elements of literary design. Finally, they will be expressed in language and then become literary works. This description of the different steps is Liu Xie’s goal for the Chapter *Shen si*. This first paragraph hints at the distinction between *shen* and *si*, and thus is the foundation of this illustration.

In addition, regarding the writing style of this paragraph, Liu Xie aims to create a magical, dynamic and indistinct effect by continually presenting images to travel through time and space swiftly. Such an effect corresponds to the semantic features of *shen si*. Liu Xie particularly tries to emphasize its magical power. In the Chinese original, the character *shen* itself has one meaning as “magical”, so Chinese readers can conceive this magical power easily. However, translators are challenged as to how to successfully recreate the “magical” feeling-tone.

Owen and Yang’s different translations will be evaluated according to Liu Xie’s original text.

As an expert of Chinese literary theory, Owen shows his realization of Liu Xie’s focus in this paragraph, which is “the archaic model of the spirit journey to describe the operations of mind in planning a composition” (Owen 201). Here he uses “spirit journey” and

“operations of mind”, which suggest that he realizes there is a distinction between *shen* and *si*. Even though he does not explain this distinction in detail outside his target text, he translates *shen* and *si* separately as “spirit” and “thought”. The compound “*shen si*” is accordingly translated as “spirit thought”. In addition, following his general strategy in translating Chinese terms, he makes “spirit” and “thought” the fixed translations of the Chinese terms “*shen*” and “*si*”.

As has been discussed in the first part of this chapter, Owen’s strategy is indeed to retain the original design of the Chinese term. As usual, Owen tries to reduce the units of translation in order to keep his target text close to the original Chinese version which is constituted by Chinese characters. Through his translation, western readers may realize that “*shen si*” is a specific Chinese term which is different from the corresponding western concept “imagination”¹. Moreover, they can also be made aware that *shen* and *si* are different, which is helpful to catch the nuances of Liu Xie’s original text.

However, again, Owen’s translation is very long and relatively awkward. “Spirit thought” is not conventional English. The phrase may block the thinking process of western readers. The confusing odd terms and hampered reading experience may cause western readers hardly to grasp the “dynamic and magical” feeling-tone of the source text. If evaluated from Wang Zuoliang’s perspective, Owen thus loses the original “spirit” of this paragraph.

Owen himself mentions this loss in his explanations outside his target text. He says that “in using terms that are laden with implications from past usage (implications that are not at all obvious in English translation), he is, in fact, making statements that provide interesting insights” (203). For example, the “magical” feature of the character “*shen*” is one of these insights.

Beyond that, I think the word “spirit” cannot fully convey the idea of “*shen*”. Both “spirit” and “*shen*” have a meaning belonging to the field of religion, but in Chinese culture, the term “*shen*” has been used in the theory of literature and art history for quite a long time. Thus, Chinese readers will not be reminded of the religious aspect when they see “*shen*” in a source text of literary theory. Conversely, the word “spirit” rarely appears in western literary

¹ This point will be discussed later in the analysis of Yang’s translation.

theory and is easily connected with religion by western readers. In short, “spirit” is not an equivalent translation of “*shen*”. Qian Zhongshu (钱锺书), one of the most famous scholars in the field of Chinese literary theory, also proposes that “the western expression ‘spirit’ does not equal the Chinese literary term ‘*shen*’” (Qian 43)¹.

In my opinion, Owen’s practice in translating “*shen si*” also corresponds to Newmark’s semantic translation method. He focuses on Liu Xie’s thought process and reduces the units of translation: he translates *shen* and *si* separately to preserve the form, which is in the original constituted by Chinese characters. This practice shows his attempt to retain SL cultural elements, but meanwhile it makes his translation, which loses the “dynamic and magical” feeling-tone of *shen si*, more awkward and complex.

Compared to Owen’s translation, Yang focuses more on retaining the original writing style. In fact, before he started to translate this chapter, he compared several existing English versions, including the one by Vincent Yu-chung Shih. Shih’s translation of “*shen si*”, which he renders as “spirit thought or imagination”, is similar to Owen’s. Yang thinks this translation as “spirit thought” is not satisfactory, because “the word ‘spirit’ has a religious meaning and thus is not equivalent to what ‘*shen*’ means in Chinese literary theory, and the word ‘thought’ is a noun, which cannot express the dynamic feeling conveyed by ‘his mind ranges across a thousand years’” (Yang)². Therefore he chooses “imagination” as his translation of “*shen si*”.

Imagination is a western literary term. In many aspects, it is indeed similar to Chinese “*shen si*”. In Yang’s article, “The Comparison of Three Translations of ‘*shen si*’ (《神思》的三种英译对比)”, he quotes Coleridge’s words with regard to the concept “imagination”.

Regarding “imagination”, Coleridge says in his *Biographia Literaria* that:

The *Imagination* then I consider either as primary, or secondary. The primary *Imagination* I hold to be the living Power and prime Agent of all human Perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite *I am*. The secondary I consider as an echo of the former, coexisting with the conscious will,

¹ Since this work lacks English translation, this translation is my own. Chinese original: “‘spirit’ 与 ‘神’ 并不相等”。

² Since this article lacks English translation, this translation is my own. Chinese original: “‘thought’ 与 ‘神思’ 并不相等，因为 ‘spiritual’ 具有宗教意义，与 ‘神’ 在中文文学理论中的含义并不相等，而 ‘thought’ 是一个名词，无法表达 ‘他的思想跨越千年’ 所传达的动态感受”。

difference is caused by the distinction between *shen* and *si*. Coleridge’s “imagination” has “the shaping and modifying power” (Coleridge 293), which “dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to re-create” (304). According to my interpretation of the term “*shen si*” above, “imagination” refers to the process of “*si*” or literary thought, not the process of “*shen si*”: *si* represents the second step of “*shen si*”, which is relatively logical and constitutes the controlling power. Compared with “imagination”, “*shen si*” involves a specific step—the wandering of “*shen*”, which is the first step of “*shen si*”. When the author focuses on his subject, his *shen* can wander “with” things. The “with” here means a fusion between the author and things. The relationship between self and other is an important topic in Chinese philosophy. Here, things are not simply seen as objects. In the wandering of “*shen*”, the author “participates with them (things)” (Owen 203). In this sense, “imagination” differs from “*shen si*”: in the imaginative process, the author is more like the subject, who “dissolves, diffuses, dissipates” things as objects, in order to re-create them.

Yang’s translation loses this important underlying Chinese philosophical topic together with the existence of the Chinese term “*shen si*”. In fact, “The Comparison of Three Translations of ‘*shen si*’” shows that he does not realize the difference between *shen* and *si*. He analyzes three translations of the lines “□□□□□□□□□□ (And spirit goes far indeed in the thought that occurs in writing (*wen**))”, and says that “in terms of meaning, *si* and *shen* complement each other. Both meanings equal that of *shen si*” (Yang)¹. Based on this understanding of the term “*shen si*”, Yang uses the more well-known western concept “imagination” as his translation, in order to retain the original dynamic feeling-tone and the original writing style as “pithy and vigorous” (Yang). For example, he translates this line as “A writer’s imagination travels far”, which is simpler and clearer, more appealing to the reader, and more like a rewriting than a translation.

Yang’s translation of “*shen si*” follows his teacher Wang Zuoliang’s guiding principles as well. Again, he pays more attention to the writing style and literary elegance of Liu Xie, than to the nuances of original meanings (he rewrites some lines as he understands them). Or, he tries to balance both *wen* and *zhi* (he thinks the western “imagination” is the most equivalent to the Chinese “*shen si*”), but he fails in the end. This failure reveals the

¹ Since this article lacks English translation, this translation is my own. Chinese original: “‘□’□‘□’□□□□□□□□□□”

limitations of Wang's theory. In the next part, I will use these two cases to illustrate the features of Owen and Yang's translations, and evaluate Newmark and Wang's theories respectively.

5.3. *Conclusions after the Comparison*

Based on the two cases that I have discussed, the different strategies of Owen and Yang's translations are easily summarized.

Owen's translation tends to be ST-oriented. He focuses more on Liu Xie's thinking process and the nuance of original meaning than on the literary elegance of the source text. His main strategy in translating *Wenxin Diaolong* is making the form of his target text close to that of the source text. In other words, he reduces the units of translation to retain the original form of the Chinese characters. Particularly when translating polysemantic Chinese terms, he tends to analyze them character by character, using one or two fixed English words to translate each Chinese character in the term. What's more, he also adds romanized Chinese in the parentheses after his translation of each term, with an asterisk, which means this term can be found in the Glossary at the end of the book. In my opinion, his translation strategy works well to preserve the Chinese terms and to retain Chinese cultural elements at the same time, making the translated text, as Venuti puts it, "a place where a cultural other is manifested" (Venuti 20). Moreover, I think Owen's strategy helps western readers to understand the conventions of Chinese literary theory; for example, the polysemantic and vague usage of Chinese terms. However, by reducing the units of translation, Owen produces a target text that is relatively awkward, complex and not faithful to the elegant writing style of the source text. In fact, this is Owen's intended result as well. In his introduction to *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, he says:

In most cases I have decided in favor of a literal awkwardness in translation that will permit the English reader to see something of how the original Chinese text works. This

relative literalness is not attractive, but in texts of thought, especially from the Chinese, grace in translation is usually a mark of vast concessions to the conceptual habits of the translation's audience (Owen 15-16).

In fact, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought* was written for a course at the Yale University, "a course in which I innocently hoped to present Chinese literary theory to students of Western literatures" (vii). Thus this work is considered more of a textbook of Chinese literary theory, than a work of literary translation. This is why Owen focuses much more on the nuance of the original meanings than on literary elegance. In this sense, the awkwardness of his target text serves as a reminder of cultural difference. His aim is "to give an English reader insight into the Chinese argument rather than graceful English" (17).

By contrast, Yang's translation is relatively TT-oriented. In his "The Comparison of Three Translations of 'shen si'", he claims his stress is on the literary elegance of *Wenxin Diaolong*. "When translating this work, we must take serious account of its writing style" (Yang). Thus he pays much more attention than Owen to preserving the original literary elegance and the "pithy, vigorous and gorgeous" style. He makes his target text fluent and attractive to western readers. By providing them an unhindered reading experience, he tries to retain the original feeling-tone or spirit of the source text, such as the spontaneity of "wen" and the dynamic and magical feeling of "shen si". In order to make his translation fluent and attractive, he expands the units of translation. In most cases, he translates the source text by sentences rather than by characters. When translating cultural terms, he likes to use a "most equivalent"¹ western concept to replace the Chinese term. For example, as we have seen, he uses western "imagination" to translate "shen si". Regarding the conventional polysemantic usage of Chinese terms, he always presents their varying contextual meanings by means of different translations, instead of using one fixed word as in the original.

Like his teacher and others in Chinese academia, Yang, too, considers *Wenxin Diaolong* to be more of a literary than a theoretical text, which may explain his focus in his translation. As has been discussed above, he is indeed superior to Owen in retaining the literary elegance and the spirit of the original. However, in Yang's translation, there are indeed much more

¹ As analyzed above, those "most equivalent" western concepts are always selected according to his subjective understanding of Chinese terms. In fact, those concepts are not equivalent with the original in most cases.

losses in the nuance of meanings than in Owen's. Yang consistently ignores the existence of the Chinese term, which is not helpful in presenting the characteristics of Chinese literary theory. "In many ways a tradition of literary thought is constituted by a set of words, of 'terms' which have their own long histories, complex resonances, and force" (Owen 4). In Yang's translation, especially in his translations of Chinese terms, *Wenxin Diaolong* seems more like a Chinese interpretation of western literary theory, than a Chinese work in its own right.

As has been discussed at the beginning of this chapter, Owen and Yang's translation strategies correspond to Newmark's and Wang's suggested translation methods respectively. In Chapter Three, I already demonstrated that according to Newmark's theory, *Wenxin Diaolong* can be classified as an expressive text, which should accordingly be translated by the method of semantic translation. In my analyses of two examples, I have shown how Owen's translation is in accordance with Newmark's suggested semantic translation. In my opinion, if *Wenxin Diaolong* is simply a theoretical text whose language aims at expressing Liu Xie's thoughts, then semantic translation is indeed a preferred method to achieve it, as Owen performs better than Yang in retaining the nuances of original meanings. In the case of a general philosophical text, the form of translation should be as close to that of the source text as possible, because "everyone's wisdom must be realized in the system of language" (Schleiermacher 51).

However, as has been discussed in former chapters, *Wenxin Diaolong* is not a general philosophical text. Liu Xie attempts to express his thoughts by using his superb rhetorical training. This work is a philosophical text written in literary language. It is philosophy and at the same time literature. In fact, its literary elegance and writing style are very important elements when evaluating this work, which cannot be ignored in translation. They are what Yang focuses on in his translation. However, if we assess Yang's translation method from Newmark's perspective, it belongs to the method of "communicative translation", which aims at transmitting the "message" of the source text. For *Wenxin Diaolong*, this would imply that the "message" resides in Liu Xie's thoughts rather than in his writing style.

I also explored the inconsistency between Newmark's theory and the case of *Wenxin*

Diaolong. Yang's "communicative translation" fails to transmit this "message" where Owen's "semantic translation" paradoxically succeeds. I think this discrepancy reveals the limitations of Newmark's theory.

In my opinion, Newmark's classification of textual-categories is open to criticism. Newmark combines both literature and philosophy into one category: expressive text. I think this is not quite reasonable. Translators have different motivations in translating literature and philosophical works. In the case of literature, they pay more attention to the literary form, such as the line structure of a poem. For philosophical works, they focus more on the nuance of meanings, like the definition of a specific term. According to western convention, literature is mostly literature and philosophy is philosophy. They do not often fuse with each other. It is uncommon to see a theoretical text written completely in beautiful literary language. So in translation, translators' focuses seldom conflict. However, in Chinese culture, nearly all classical philosophical works (even historical records) are written like literature, because a superb rhetorical skill is the basic requirement for all Chinese scholars. Thus, in translating Chinese classics like *Wenxin Diaolong*, both the literary elegance and multiple nuances of meaning conveyed by one and the same term should be taken into account. Translators may face this hard choice and be confused about their focus. In any case, as I have shown, within the Chinese tradition literature and philosophy cannot be included into one category as "expressive text" and translated by the "more suitable" semantic translation method.

The problem of Newmark's classification of textual-categories originates in questionable hierarchy of linguistic functions. Among six linguistic functions, he considers the expressive, the informative and the vocative functions to be the main ones while the other three, the aesthetic, the phatic and the metalingual functions, are minor ones. In the light of those three "main functions", Newmark divides text-types into three categories: the expressive text, the informative text and the vocative text. This hierarchy is indicative of his excessive emphasis on meanings and the neglect of aesthetic elements.

For Newmark, the aim of both the expressive and the informative functions is the same: to convey meaning. As has been shown in Chapter Three, the core of the expressive function is the author's mind, whose meaning lies in the utterance itself. The core of the informative

function is the “external situation” or “truth”, a kind of meaning that is not shaped by language but can exist outside the language. Newmark pays far less attention to the aesthetic function of language. For him, to retain the literary form of literary works is to retain the author’s mind. Regarding the conflict between the expressive and aesthetic functions, he says: “In nonsense poetry, the sound-effect is more important than the sense...In other expressive texts, the expressive precedes the aesthetic function” (*A Textbook of Translation* 42-3). Thus we can see that, from Newmark’s perspective, the expressive function is far more important than the aesthetic one. This may explain why he puts literature into the category of the expressive text and why there is no “aesthetic” textual-category in his theory. In fact, Newmark says little about the conflict between literary elegance and the nuance of original meanings in translation. By contrast, this conflict is discussed in detail in Wang’s theory, as is witnessed by the dispute over *wen* and *zhi*.

In Chapter Four, I summarized Wang’s theory and mentioned his attempt to balance *wen* and *zhi*. As can be seen from my analysis, I think Yang’s translation does show this attempt. Following his teacher’s theory, Yang tries to preserve the “pithy and vigorous” writing style and the literary elegance of the original *Wenxin Diaolong*. He also tries to recreate its underlying spirit. His target text is attractive for readers. Most of the features of Yang’s translation correspond to the suggested translation method in Wang’s theory. However, as mentioned in the case analysis, he fails to achieve the balance in the end.

His failure reveals the limitations of Wang’s theory. In fact, there is always a conflict between the literary elegance (*wen*) and the nuance of original meanings (*zhi*) in the practice of translation. When translating complex texts, such as *Wenxin Diaolong*, translators have to choose one of them (*wen* and *zhi*) as their main focus. Yang aims to focus on both, but in actuality, he focuses more on *wen*. For example, he translates the term “*wen*” according to its contextual meaning each time in order to make his target text fluent and clear. In addition, Wang also proposes the theory of “resemblance in spirit”, which requires the translation be faithful to the underlying feeling-tone rather than to the letter. In other words, translators should recreate in the target text this feeling-tone in their own language. This view leads translation to become a rewriting to some extent. For complex texts that belong to both

philosophy and literature, like *Wenxin Diaolong*, language shapes the nuance of meanings, as noted by Schleiermacher. For such texts, any rewriting entails considerable losses in the nuance of meanings. The practice of rewriting also proves the existence of the conflict between *wen* and *zhi*, together with the difficulty of the balance in Wang's theory.

Wenxin Diaolong proves a complex source text in translation. As analyzed in the case studies, Owen and Yang have their respective focuses, and both attempt to retain what they hold to be important. Furthermore, their different practices and the complexity of *Wenxin Diaolong* also reveal the limitations of Newmark and Wang's theory as discussed above.

Chapter VI Conclusion

This thesis has analyzed Stephen Owen's and Yang Guobin's different translations of *Wenxin Diaolong*, mainly focusing on the complexity of its text-types and the different strategies used by two translators in translating Chinese cultural terms. *Wenxin Diaolong* has been considered both a theoretical and a literary text. This dual status, together with the polysemantic and never clearly defined characters of Chinese cultural terms make the translation of this work an extremely hard issue.

Facing these difficulties, Owen and Yang adopt different approaches in translating *Wenxin Diaolong*. Both attempt to retain what they hold to be important. I have charted the results of these different approaches by analyzing their strategies for translating cultural terms. Generally speaking, Owen's translation tends to be SL-oriented. He pays more attention to the nuance of original meaning than to the literary elegance of the target text. His main strategy in translating *Wenxin Diaolong* is to keep the form of his target text as close to that of the source text as possible. In other words, he reduces the units of translation to retain the original form constituted by the Chinese characters, a policy which makes his translation much more complex and awkward than Yang's. By contrast, Yang's translation is relatively TL-oriented. He pays much more attention than Owen to preserving the original literary elegance and the original "pithy, vigorous and gorgeous" style. He expands the units of translation in order to make his target text fluent and attractive to western readers. However, he focuses so much on retaining the original literary elegance that he loses the original meanings to a considerable degree.

In this thesis, I have used Newmark's and Wang's translation theories as my theoretical background to analyze the complexity of *Wenxin Diaolong*. Meanwhile, as I have argued, the work's complexity at the same time reveals the limitations of these theories. Newmark's theory fails to account for the specific text type of *Wenxin Diaolong*. This becomes evident when we apply his scheme to the two translations which I have examined: Yang's "communicative translation" fails to transmit the "message" of this work where Owen's

“semantic translation” paradoxically succeeds. This inconsistency reveals the cultural situatedness of Newmark’s classifications of text-types and translation methods, which is more suitable for the analysis of conventional western texts than for Chinese classics. On the other hand, the inevitable conflict between literary elegance (*wen*) and the nuance of original meanings (*zhi*) in the practice of translation is manifest in the case of translating *Wenxin Diaolong*, calling into question Wang’s attempt to balance *wen* and *zhi* as well.

The English translation of Chinese classical texts has always been a hot but difficult issue, which has elicited much debate and will still need to be explored in the future. In this thesis, I have used both western and Chinese translation theories for my analysis of the two translations of *Wenxin Diaolong*. I would like to see what new insights a combination of these theories might yield for the analysis of texts from different culture.

Works Cited

- Barthes, Roland. "The Death of the Author." *The Norton Anthology of Theory & Criticism*. 2nd ed. Vincent B. Leitch. New York and London: Norton & Company, 2010. 1322-1326. Print.
- Chen, Fukang (陈福康). *The History of Chinese Translation Theory* (中国翻译理论史). Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press (上海外语教育出版社), 1992. Print.
- Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. *Biographia Literaria*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985. Print.
- Eoyang, Eugene Chen (陈欧阳). "Dragon-Carving and the Literary Mind (review)." *China Review International* 12.2 (2005): 587-589. Print.
- Luo, Xinzhang (罗新璋). *The Anthology of Chinese Translation Theory* (中国翻译理论选). Beijing: The Commercial Press (商务印书馆), 1984. Print.
- Munday, Jeremy. *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications*. 2nd ed. London and New York: Routledge, 2008. Print.
- Newmark, Peter. *A Textbook of Translation*. London: Prentice Hall, 1987. Print.
- Newmark, Peter. *Approaches to Translation*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press (上海外语教育出版社), 2001. Print.
- Owen, Stephen. *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*. Cambridge Massachusetts and London: Harvard University Press, 1992. Print.
- Qian, Zhongshu (钱锺书). *On the Art of Poetry* (谈艺录). Beijing: Zhonghua Publishing House (中华书局), 1998. Print.
- Schleiermacher, Friedrich. "On the Different Methods of Translating". *Theories of Translation: An Anthology of Essays from Dryden to Derrida*, eds. Rainer Schulte and John Biguenet. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1992, 36-54. Print.
- Venuti, Lawrence. *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*. London & New York: Routledge, 1995. Print.
- Wylie, Alexander. *Notes on Chinese Literature*. Shanghai: American Presbyterian Mission Press (美华书局), 1867. Print.

- Wang, Zuoliang (王佐良). *Translation: Experiments and Reflections* (《翻译实验与反思》). Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press (外语教学与研究出版社), 1989. Print.
- Wang, Zuoliang (王佐良). *A Sense of Beginning: Studies in Literature and Translation* (《文学与翻译的开端》). Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press (外语教学与研究出版社), 1991. Print.
- Yang, Guobin (杨国斌). *Dragon-Carving and Literary Mind*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press (外语教学与研究出版社), 2003. Print.
- Yang, Guobin (杨国斌). “The comparison of Three Translations of ‘shen si’ (《沉思》·《沉思》·《沉思》)” *Chinese Translators Journal* (《中国翻译》) Jul. 1991:43-48. Print.
- Zhang, Shaokang (张绍刚). *The History of Chinese Literary Theory* (《中国文学理论史》). Beijing: Peking University Press (北京大学出版社), 2011. Print.
- “Wen.” *Classic Chinese Dictionary* (《经典汉语词典》). 1st ed. 2003. Print.
- “Shen.” *Classic Chinese Dictionary* (《经典汉语词典》). 1st ed. 2003. Print.

Bibliography

- Barthes, Roland. "The Death of the Author." *The Norton Anthology of Theory & Criticism*. 2nd ed. Vincent B. Leitch. New York and London: Norton & Company, 2010. 1322-1326. Print.
- Chen, Fukang (陈福康). *The History of Chinese Translation Theory* (中国翻译理论史). Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press (上海外语教育出版社), 1992. Print.
- Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. *Biographia Literaria*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985. Print.
- Eoyang, Eugene Chen (陈欧阳). "Dragon-Carving and the Literary Mind (review)." *China Review International* 12.2 (2005): 587-589. Print.
- Fan, Wenlan (樊文澜). *Notes on Wenxin Diaolong* (《文心雕龙》). Beijing: Zhonghua Publishing House (中华书局), 1958. Print.
- Gu, Feng (顾丰). "Discusses Regarding the Export of Chinese Literary Theory (《文心雕龙》的对外传播)". *Journal of Yangzhou University (Humanities & Social Sciences)* (扬州大学学报·人文社会科学版) Mar. 2010:56-68. Print.
- Liu, Ying (刘颖). *Wenxin Diaolong in English World* (《文心雕龙》的英语世界). Chengdu: Ba Shu Press (巴蜀书社), 2012. Print.
- Luo, Xinzhang (罗新璋). *The Anthology of Chinese Translation Theory* (《中国翻译理论选读》). Beijing: The Commercial Press (商务印书馆), 1984. Print.
- Munday, Jeremy. *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications*. 2nd ed. London and New York: Routledge, 2008. Print.
- Newmark, Peter. *A Textbook of Translation*. London: Prentice Hall, 1987. Print.
- Newmark, Peter. *Approaches to Translation*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press (上海外语教育出版社), 2001. Print.
- Owen, Stephen. *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*. Cambridge Massachusetts and London: Harvard University Press, 1992. Print.
- Qian, Zhongshu (钱锺书). *On the Art of Poetry* (《谈艺录》). Beijing: Zhonghua Publishing House (中华书局), 1998. Print.

- Schleiermacher, Friedrich. "On the Different Methods of Translating". *Theories of Translation: An Anthology of Essays from Dryden to Derrida*, eds. Rainer Schulte and John Biguenet. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1992, 36-54. Print.
- Venuti, Lawrence. *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*. London & New York: Routledge, 1995. Print.
- Wylie, Alexander. *Notes on Chinese Literature*. Shanghai: American Presbyterian Mission Press (商务印书馆), 1867. Print.
- Wang, Zuoliang (王佐良). *Translation: Experiments and Reflections* (翻译实验与反思). Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press (外语教学与研究出版社), 1989. Print.
- Wang, Zuoliang (王佐良). *A Sense of Beginning: Studies in Literature and Translation* (文学与翻译的开端). Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press (外语教学与研究出版社), 1991. Print.
- Wang, Chunhong (王春洪). *The Communication and Effect of Wenxin Diaolong* (《文心雕龙》的沟通与效果). Beijing: Xueyuan Press (学苑出版社), 2002. Print.
- Wang, Dongping (王冬平). "Interpretation on the Arguments about Wen and Zhi Raised in the Preface of the Chinese Version of Dharmapade (《法华经》的《序》)" Academic Research (学术探索) Jul. 2012:141-146. Print.
- Xie, Tianzhen (谢天振). *A Brief History of Translation in China and the West* (中国翻译史). Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press (外语教学与研究出版社), 2009. Print.
- Yang, Guobin (杨国斌). *Dragon-Carving and Literary Mind*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press (外语教学与研究出版社), 2003. Print.
- Yang, Guobin (杨国斌). "The comparison of Three Translations of 'shen si' (《神思》的三种译法)" *Chinese Translators Journal* (中国翻译) Jul. 1991:43-48. Print.
- Zhang, Shaokang (张绍刚). *The History of Chinese Literary Theory* (中国文学理论史). Beijing: Peking University Press (北京大学出版社), 2011. Print.
- Zhou, Zhenfu (周振甫). *Modern Chinese Translation of Wenxin Diaolong* (《文心雕龙》的现代汉语翻译). Beijing: Zhonghua Publishing House (中华书局), 2013. Print.
- "Wen." *Classic Chinese Dictionary* (《中华大辞典》). 1st ed. 2003. Print.
- "Shen." *Classic Chinese Dictionary* (《中华大辞典》). 1st ed. 2003. Print.