

How to Become a Recognized Translator: Refining a Social Habitus Into a Special Habitus

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Abstract

When arguing for a pivotal status of the translator's habitus in translating activities, Simeoni (1998) suggests a distinction between a social habitus and a special habitus and asserts 'becoming a translator is a matter of refining a social habitus into a special habitus'. Picking up his distinction, researchers in habitus-oriented translation studies utilize this useful dichotomy. This paper attempts to explore how to 'become a translator', i.e. the 'matter of refining a social habitus into a special habitus'. With Dong Leshan, a famous contemporary translator in China, as an illustrative case, it elaborates on four important aspects of a translator's social habitus: socialized trajectories, bilingual competence, work ethic and influence of patronage and three key aspects of a translator's special habitus: translation strategies, professional reputation and working conditions. Through an analysis of the underlying relationships between those aspects, I demonstrate that the process of becoming a recognized translator can be adequately described as a result of refining the social habitus of a translator into his/her special habitus, thus presenting an empirical study of Simeoni's viewpoint.

Key words: Translator; Social habitus; Special habitus; Dong Leshan

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1. TRANSLATORS' HABITUS

Over the past two decades, research on applying the Bourdieusian concepts of field and habitus into the field of Translation Studies has explored possibilities to conceptualize interactions between structure and agency through individual and collective translators' experiences (e.g. Gouanvic, 2005; Inghilleri, 2003, 2005; Sela-Sheffy, 2005; Meylaerts, 2008, 2010, Xu & Chu, 2015). Habitus, as a system of 'durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures...generating and structuring practices and representations' (Bourdieu, 1977, p.72), suggests that performances carried out by individuals are regulated through shared schemes, which are internalized under shared historical conditions.

On the basis of an understanding of Bourdieu's habitus, Simeoni (1998) believes that 'while we-as-social-agents are all endowed with a social habitus, fewer of us are endowed with a specialized professional habitus, and there are still fewer whose habitus mobilizes their energies so as to make them active in a field constructed as an autonomous entity' (p.18). This conceptualization of translator habitus naturally leads to his assertion that 'becoming a translator is a matter of refining a social habitus into a special habitus' (p.19), suggesting a distinction between social habitus and specialized professional habitus of translators. Taking this as the point of departure, this paper attempts to explore how to 'become a translator', i.e. the 'matter of refining a social habitus into a special habitus', with a famous translator in China, Dong Leshan (1924-1999), as an illustrative case.

In pointing out that Simeoni (1998) is right in underlining that the habitus is not merely about professional expertise, but also accounts for a whole model of a person, Sela-Sheffy (2005) maintains that Simeoni's distinction is inspired by Bourdieu's discussion

of two types of habitus: the personal habitus and field habitus. It is reasonably safe to assume that she interprets Simeoni's social habitus as the personal habitus and his special habitus as field habitus, though she is concerned about the potential risk of such an interpretation. Meylaerts (2010) picks up the idea of the two types of translator habitus, taking them as initial and professional respectively. For her, initial habitus covers the 'individual's mental and physical structures as shaped by early socialization within structures of family, class and education' and is 'of primary importance for developing a sense of what is perceived as appropriate behaviour.' (p.2)

Inspired by them, I propose that a translator's social habitus, being 'a unifying set of mentally and physically incorporated schemes that coordinated the individual's behaviour in all areas of life' (Sela-Sheffy, 2005, p.14), can be probed into from four important aspects of social experiences: a translator's socialized trajectories, bilingual competence, work ethic and the influence of patronage a translator is subjected to. Meanwhile, this paper proposes that a translator's special habitus, being 'composed of the shared tendencies, beliefs and skills, all of which precondition the natural operation of a specific field' (p. 14), is reflected in three key aspects: a translator's strategies of translation, professional reputation and working conditions. Through an analysis of the underlying relationships between those aspects, I demonstrate that the process of becoming a recognized translator can be adequately described as a result of refining the social habitus of a translator into his/her special habitus, thus presenting an empirical study of Simeoni's viewpoint.

2. TRANSLATORS' SOCIALIZED TRAJECTORIES AND STRATEGIES OF TRANSLATION

Consciously or subconsciously, translators adopt certain strategies in translating. These strategies of translation involve the basic tasks of choosing the foreign texts to be translated and developing a method to translate it (Venuti, 2001, p.240). As such, there are two important aspects of a translator's special habitus. A translator's choice of materials for translation, the first aspect of a translator's special habitus, as will be illustrated below, can be adequately explained by his/her socialized trajectories related to family, education and experiences, which is an indispensable aspect of one's social habitus.

2.1 Dong's Socialized Trajectories

Born into a well-off family in Ningbo China in 1924, a place with rich cultural heritage, Dong Leshan received his primary school education locally. He was a quick learner and enjoyed reading Chinese novels of martial arts and romance. In high school he read avariciously modern Chinese literature and tried his hand at literary

writing. Japan's invasion of China in the 1930s and 1940s aroused his patriotism and he began to develop an interest in World War II (WWII). After graduating from St. John's University, China (1887-1952), he worked briefly as an assistant editor in *Dongnan Daily*, an influential newspaper at that time, and later as an employee in the Shanghai branch of American Information Service, the official news agency of the United States in China in the 1940s. After the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC), Dong was recruited by the official newspaper of the country, Xinhua News Agency, and began his professional career as a news translator.

In 'the Anti-Rightist Campaign' Dong was labelled as a 'Rightist' and endured inhumane 'ideological reformation through forced physical labour'. This political campaign, lasted from roughly 1957 to 1959, purged alleged 'Rightists' in the Communist Party of China, most of whom were outstanding intellectuals. In the Cultural Revolution period (1966-1976), which was 'responsible for the most severe setback and the heaviest losses suffered by the Party, the country, and the people since the founding of the People's Republic' (Chinese Communism Subject Archive, 1981, p.32), Dong once again suffered and was forcibly displaced to "Chinese labour camps established during the Cultural Revolution that combined hard agricultural work with the study of Chairman Mao Zedong's writings in order to 're-educate' cadres and intellectuals in proper socialist thought" (Spence, 1999, p.582). In 1971 he was able to leave the camps thanks to a broken arm. Working as a teacher of English, first in the foreign language training classes in Xinhua News Agency and then in the English department of Beijing International Studies University, was unchallenging for him and he was reluctant to remain idle. Dong started to write book reviews for the Commercial Press, a prestigious publishing house, introducing foreign books to Chinese readers. When China began its reform and opening-up in 1978, he was able to settle in a researcher position in the Institute of American Studies in the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, tutoring postgraduates, doing research, writing essays and translating.

2.2 Dong's Choice of Materials for Translation

Throughout his life Dong translated many literary works, which were Han Suyin's *The Crippled Tree: Story of War and Revolution in China* (1965), Capote's *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1958), O'Hara's *Ninety Minutes Away* (1963), Vonnegut's *Breakfast of Champions* (1973) and *Jailbird* (1979), le Carré's *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* (1974) and Ballard's *Empire of the Sun* (1984). Excellent translations as they are, it was his translation of the categories of non-fiction, dystopian literature and academic works that earned him great respect and reputation in the circle of translators and scholars in China.

2.2.1 Non-fiction

As previously mentioned, Dong Leshan was in his late adolescence when China was involved in WWII. Wartime life experiences influenced his choice of materials for translation: he loved translating non-fiction war books. Also, being cruelly treated in the political campaigns in the 1960s and 1970s, Dong was traumatized and longed to introduce into China those foreign books which might help shape people's understanding of the real world and help people understand the importance of what is real and authentic.

In the idle days when he was a 'Rightist', Dong came across *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany* (1960), a best-seller in both the United States and Europe. He was thrilled by this lengthy book and felt a strong impulse to translate it as he believed 'it would be a great pity if this comprehensive historical interpretation of the Nazi state was not accessible to the Chinese people, who might be ignorant of history' (Dong, 2001a, p.222). He, therefore, recommended to a publisher translating the book. It was because of his recommendation and participation in the translation that the Chinese version finally came out in 1963, though in limited copies due to political reasons.

American journalist Edgar Snow's masterpiece *Red Star over China* (1937) was the most influential book on Western understanding of China in the 1930s (Isaacs, 1958, p. 162). Its first translation in Chinese in 1938, reputed as one of the '100 translated books that influenced modern China' (Zou, 1996, p.402), enlightened thousands of Chinese politically and Dong was one of them (Dong, 2001a, p.221). Yet this version became rare in PRC, even a forbidden and 'dangerous' book in the Cultural Revolution period. Therefore, when the Revolution ended and a famous publishing house invited him to re-translate it in 1978, Dong gladly accepted it because 'the distortion of history and slander of high-ranking Party leaders during the Cultural Revolution, which misled thousands of youths, were contrary to history and to the accounts in Snow's book. So, my purpose in translating it is to present a true account of history.' (p.221)

Much like *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, another nonfictional account of WWII, *Is Paris Burning?* By Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre also appealed to Dong, who regarded it as 'a classical piece of non-fiction' (Dong, 2001b, p. 47), as it is a meticulously researched account of how Paris escaped Hitler's death-sentence in bone-chilling detail. Translating *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* and *Red Star over China* established Dong's status as a famous translator. Translating *Is Paris Burning?* Added to his professional fame and once again manifested his preference for non-fiction, which was influenced by his socialized trajectories.

2.2.2. Dystopian Literature

Deep in the collective memory of those generations of

Chinese intellectuals in the second half of the twentieth century, they were acquainted with the history of WWII and political totalitarianism. It is therefore only natural that Dong Leshan loathed the evils of the totalitarian regimes and chose to translate *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) and *Darkness at Noon* (1940), two representative works of dystopian literature. In his essay 'Delayed Effects of Wartime Years', Dong explained his admiration for Orwell as follows.

My experiences in the 1940s and enduring interest in books on Nazi brutalities nurtured in me a deep aversion to totalitarianism. When I first read *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell's nightmare vision of a totalitarian world in which the protagonist remains incarcerated mentally and physically by the omniscient controls of Big Brother, I was stunned by it and felt as if I had been living in that world before. I made up my mind to translate it so that Chinese people have a chance of appreciating this classic. (Dong, 2001a, p.223, my translation)

Darkness at Noon, the best-known work by Hungarian novelist Arthur Koestler, is the tale of Rubashov, who is imprisoned and tried for treason against the government that he had helped to create. This novel echoed Dong's reflection on what happened in the recent history of PRC: the overwhelming influence of dominant ideology on the destiny of the masses, as he said in the preface to his translation of the book.

The spectre of purge haunted the 20th century. Now it threatens our country where people are promised "openness" and "transparency". This is because the conflict between the ends and means is not resolved and political expediency is still the norm. (Dong, 2001b, p. 30, my translation)

Wu Ningkun (1920-), a famous translator and scholar in China, pointed out that 'translating Snow and Orwell was not some accidental act of Dong; it was the tough pilgrimage of a wise man who was preoccupied with the ultimate fate of the Chinese nation and of the human race' (Wu, 1999).

2.2.3 Academic Works

As mentioned earlier, Dong's last employment was a researcher position in the Institute of American Studies in the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. During this period, he had access to many English academic works and he chose to translate several ones. His preference for them was attributable to his preoccupation with learning about western tradition and enlightening Chinese readers.

Alan Bullock in *The Humanist Tradition in the West* (1985) talks about the broad humanist thread through Western literary, artistic, philosophic, political and cultural history. As a reader, Dong found it informative and decided to translate it so that interested Chinese readers might be enlightened. For similar reasons, he translated *Classics: A Very Short Introduction* (1995) by Mary Beard & John Henderson, who illustrate how Classic includes not just a study of the ancient world, but also of its traditions of scholarship and its influence on the culture of the western world, and *The Trial of Socrates* (1988), an

intellectual thriller by I.F. Stone, who ranges over Roman and Greek history to present an appealing introduction to classical antiquity and its relevance to society today. Dong also edited and translated an essay collection, the original being interviews with American writers by *the Paris Review* and *Saturday Review*, two literary journals. His motivation was as follows.

I have always wanted to edit a book about American writers' views on writing, because there are often cases when some Chinese writers and readers fail to understand and even misunderstand American literary works. I think the best way is for them to read articles in which American writers talk about their own writings, attitudes, methods and intentions. (Dong, 2001b, p.72, my translation)

Dong's particular choice of materials for translation was widely acknowledged among translators. For example, Li Wenjun (1930-), who is most famous for his translation of William Faulkner, said that 'Dong's purpose in translating was quite explicit: to enlighten and inspire the general public so that people may see unfamiliar things more clearly' (Dong, 2001a, p.392).

3. TRANSLATORS' BILINGUAL COMPETENCE AND STRATEGIES OF TRANSLATION

The second aspect of a translator's special habitus is his/her method to translate, which is also a strategy of translation. As is the case with Dong, this aspect of the special habitus of a translator has something to do with the person's bilingual competence, which, like the socialized trajectories, is an important element of a translator's social habitus.

3.1 Dong's Bilingual Competence

Dong Leshan is one of the best and most prolific translators in twentieth-century China. Throughout his life, he translated twenty-one books (including co-translations) and revised four voluminous works, spanning the disciplines of journalism, literature and history. His translations are well-received among thousands of Chinese readers.

Dong's bilingual competence is a natural result of years of unremitting efforts in reading and writing in Chinese and English. Enrolled at St. John's University, one of the oldest and most prestigious universities in China, Dong majored in English literature. In the 1940s when theatrical plays flourished in Shanghai, Dong was led to the backstage of theatres during his spare time, developing a keen interest and great capacity for writing theatre reviews. From 1942 to 1944, he wrote regularly for a newspaper; his critical opinions were acute and insightful despite his age (twenty at that time) and were frequently quoted in an American scholar's research published in 1980¹. Dong published his first poem in the

supplement of an influential English language newspaper, *Shanghai Evening Post and Mercury*. His literary achievements were recognized outside China; one of his short stories, 'The Topsy-Turvy World of Professor Fu', was translated into English and appeared in *the Paris Review* in 1982. In the 1950s Dong worked for eight years as a translator in Xinhua News Agency. His erudition and efficiency in news translating was well known among his colleagues (see Dong, 2001a, p. 385, p.396).

Besides having exceptional competence in Chinese, excellent command of English and abundant experience in translating, Dong also wrote articles about some fundamental problems in translating. 'Requirements for Translators' (Dong, 2001b, pp.81-84), 'Translation and Knowledge' (pp.85-89), 'The Key Is Understanding the Original' (pp.92-95), 'Conceptual Equivalence and Literal Equivalence' (pp.96-97), 'Hypotaxis and Parataxis'(pp.98-99), 'Unity and Diversity' (pp.100-102) and 'The So-called Advantages of Chinese Language' (pp.137-139), these theoretical reflections not only revealed his translational competence but also manifested his concept of translation standards and method of translation.

3.2 Dong's Method of Translation

3.2.1 Dong's Concept of Translation Standards

To appreciate fully the method of translation that Dong adopted, it is necessary to understand the rationale behind his method in the process of translation. In other words, what standards he established for a good translator? In the above-mentioned articles, Dong maintained that the main concern of a translator should be a faithful rendering of the original, the prerequisite of which was a thorough understanding of the original. To ensure that, extensive societal and cultural knowledge was indispensable.

Second, Dong stressed the necessity for Chinese translators to improve their writing ability in the target language. Chinese translators should endeavour to express exactly the meaning of the original in natural and fluent Chinese. For instance, according to him (Dong, 2001b, p.82), '希特勒是德国人民的命运' was a mediocre translation of 'Hitler was the fate of the German people', a sentence from *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, while '希特勒是德国人民的劫数' was a brilliant translation in that although both '命运' and '劫数' were acceptable and correct translations of 'fate', the latter was generally believed to be accurate as it expressed fully the inevitable and predetermined nature of the meaning of 'fate'. Meanwhile, Dong rightly pointed out that the prerequisite of improving one's writing ability in Chinese was a strict adherence to the original; otherwise, the translation was nothing but a '*belle infedele*'.

3.2.2 Sinicization

Dong Leshan was regarded as a master of translation not only because of the sheer volume of his translations

but also of his expertise in translation. With exceptional bilingual competence and rich experience in translating, Dong formed his method of translation, sinicization.

Besides having immense social significance, Dong's version of *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* was widely studied as a model of English-Chinese translation for its 'exemplary role in the transition from europeanization to sinicization in China' (Yibo, 2001, p.7). In the context of Chinese language, europeanization is a negative evaluation for it denotes to extreme cases of literal translation and even to the extent of word-for-word translation; in their efforts to keep the foreign cultural and linguistic features, translators adopting europeanization strategy render the language of the target text awkward. On the contrary, sinicization is a positive appraisal, a term with rich connotations. On one hand, sinicization is similar to foreignization in Venuti's sense in that they both foreignize new ideas and genres so that cultural values are imported and significant features of the original text are retained. On the other hand, unlike foreignization, which 'challenges the target-language culture' (Venuti, 1995, p.24), sinicization conforms to dominant aesthetics in its aim to produce a translation that is faithful, fluent and idiomatic in Chinese, thus resembling domestication in a certain way. In addition, sinicization differs from extreme domestication, in which strange but meaningful source-text expressions are replaced by unique Chinese cultural images in the translation, losing the much-desired foreignness.

Several examples from his translation of *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* are chosen for analytical and discussion purposes.

Example 1

ST: A stone's throw down the Wilhelmstrasse Adolf Hitler stood at an open window of the Chancellery, beside himself with excitement and joy, dancing up and down, jerking his arm up continually in the Nazi salute, smiling and laughing until his eyes were again full of tears.

TT: 在威廉街另一头只有一箭之遥的地方, 阿道夫·希特勒站在总理府一扇打开的窗户前, 乐极忘形, 手舞足蹈, 不断地举起手臂致纳粹党的敬礼, 他时而微笑, 时而大笑, 高兴得眼睛里又充满了泪水。

Back-translation:

Near the end of the Wilhelmstrasse street, Adolf Hitler stood at an open window of the Chancellery, mad with excitement and joy. He danced up and down while jerking his arm up continually in the Nazi salute. He was smiling and laughing until his eyes were again full of tears.

Here, 'a stone's throw' is a common English expression, which literally means the distance that a stone can be thrown and its dictionary definition is 'a short distance'. As this measurement of distance by stone does not exist in Chinese, a literal translation would be very awkward. Dong used a common Chinese

expression '一箭之遥' (the distance that an arrow can be shot), which is not only faithful but also idiomatic. The whole sentence is a complex one with 46 words, a hypotactic structure in which cohesion between sentence components, such as phrases and clauses, is formally indicated with prepositions and participles. While in Chinese, this characteristic is missing; paratactic run-on sentence structures are a more natural way of expression. So, the difficulty lies in how to express the juxtaposed four present participle phrases of 'dancing, jerking, smiling and laughing' and to avoid an awkward literal translation of the indicator of adverbial clause of time: 'until'. Using concise Chinese four-character idioms '乐极忘形' (extremely happy) and '手舞足蹈' (dancing), phrases of conjunction '时而...时而' (at one time and at the other) and adding '高兴得' (so happy that) to make up for the cohesion slot due to the necessary omission of the word 'until', Dong presented a translation that faithfully communicated the meaning in the original and read fluently and idiomatically in Chinese.

Example 2

ST: (The Third Reich) It lasted twelve years and four months, but in that flicker of time, as history goes, it caused an eruption on this earth more violent and shattering than any previously experienced, raising the German people to heights of power they had not known in more than a millennium, making them at one time the masters of Europe from the Atlantic to the Volga, from the North Cape to the Mediterranean, and then plunging them to the depths of destruction and desolation at the end of a world war which their nation had cold-bloodedly provoked and during which it instituted a reign of terror over the conquered peoples which, in its calculated butchery of human life and the human spirit, out-did all the savage oppressions of the previous ages.

TT: (第三帝国)它一共存在了十二年零四个月, 但是在这历史的一瞬之中, 它在地球上造成了震撼一切的火山爆发, 其强烈程度为前所未有; 把德国人民送上权力的顶峰, 那是他们一千多年以来从来没有达到过的; 使他们一度成为从大西洋到伏尔加河, 从北角到地中海的欧洲的主人; 接着又在世界大战结束的时候, 把他们投入毁灭和破坏的深渊。这场世界大战是他们国家残酷无情地挑起来的, 在这场世界大战期间, 他们国家对被征服的各国人民实行了一种恐怖统治, 蓄意屠杀生命和摧残心灵, 其程度超过了以前历代所有的野蛮压迫。

Back-translation:

(The Third Reich) It lasted twelve years and four months, a brief moment in history, but it caused a most violent and shattering eruption on this earth, raising the German people to heights of power they had not known in more than a millennium. It made them at one time the masters of Europe from the Atlantic to the Volga, from the North Cape to the Mediterranean, and then plunged them to the depths of destruction and desolation at the end of this world war. It is a war that Germany had cold-bloodedly provoked and it instituted a reign of terror over the conquered peoples. This calculated butchery of human life and the human spirit out-did all the savage oppressions of the previous ages.

The source-text sentence is paragraph-long with coordination and subordination. Dong's method of

sinicization is manifested in several places. First, the conjoined 'in that flicker of time, as history goes' was translated into one adverbial phrase in Chinese as '在这历史的一瞬之间' (a very brief moment in history), for prepositions and conjunctions are much less frequently used in Chinese than in English. Second, in translating the comparative structure in 'it caused an eruption on this earth more violent and shattering than any previously experienced', Dong broke one English clause into two run-on short Chinese clauses, which is the common usage of comparative structures in Chinese. Readers of the translation '它在地球上造成了震撼一切的火山爆发, 其强烈程度为前所未有' are sure to find it more natural and fluent than a literal translation of the English sentence structure, which would be '它所引起的火山爆发强度和震撼力比以往任何时候都大'. Similarly, in translating 'raising the German people to heights of power they had not known in more than a millennium', a present participle phrase embedded with an attributive clause, Dong, by adding an anaphoric cohesive tie '那是' (which is) in the translation, broke the hypotactic English structure into two paratactic Chinese clauses, a more natural way of expressing attributive clauses in Chinese. Thus, the translation '把德国人民送上权力的顶峰, 那是他们一千多年以来从来没有达到过' is faithful and fluent.

Example 3

ST: The man who founded the Third Reich, who ruled it ruthlessly and often with uncommon shrewdness, who led it to such dizzy heights and to such a sorry end, was a person of undoubted, if evil, genius. It is true that he found in the German people, as a mysterious Providence and centuries of experience had molded them up to that time, a natural instrument which he was able to shape to his own sinister ends.

TT: 创建第三帝国的那个人、无情地而且有时常常是以一种异乎寻常的精明狡猾手段统治第三帝国的那个人、把它送上这样令人目眩的高度后又把它投入这样可悲的下场的那个人, 肯定是个有天才的人, 哪怕这种天才是邪恶的天才。不错, 他在德国人民——神秘的天意和千年的经历把他们陶冶成当时那个样子——身上找到了一种自然的工具, 他能够把它用来实现自己的邪恶目的。

Back-translation:

The man who founded the Third Reich, ruled it ruthlessly and often with uncommon shrewdness and led it to such dizzy heights and to such a sorry end was a person of undoubted, if evil, genius. It is true that he found in the German people a natural instrument which he was able to shape to his own sinister ends. A mysterious Providence and centuries of experience had molded the German people up to that time.

In the first sentence of this example, there is a typical English structure: one antecedent followed by three coordinated attributive clauses, in which the relative pronoun 'who' is repeatedly used, creating a rhetorically special effect. As aforementioned, Dong's method of sinicization entails using faithful and natural Chinese

expressions in translation, while at the same time keeping the foreignness as much as possible as long as it does not produce awkward or poor Chinese. Here Dong kept this deliberate repetition of 'who' and the parallel structure in Chinese, retaining the stylistic feature brought about by repetition. Likewise, in the second sentence of this example, the meaning of the parenthetical clause introduced by 'as' is faithfully kept by a parenthetical Chinese structure, indicated by two dashes, which is a natural way of expressing parenthesis in Chinese.

4. TRANSLATORS' WORK ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL REPUTATION

As social agents, we all possess work ethics, which is a necessary part of our social habitus. Work ethic is the belief that work has a moral benefit and an inherent ability to strengthen character². People with a strong work ethic are concerned with ensuring that they fulfil their responsibilities and also feel inclined to try their utmost to get the best results. Work ethic is important in defining part of a person's professional identity. A considerable part of how people view and know a person when he/she works comes from what they perceive to be his/her work ethic. Therefore, one's professional reputation is an inevitable and refined result of one's work ethic. It may well be argued that famous translators, being recognized figures in their field, enjoy a great professional reputation. People who possess a strong work ethic embody certain principles that guide their work behaviours, leading them to produce high-quality work consistently. The principles that guide Dong's work ethic are dedication to the job and sense of responsibility.

In the 1970s Dong Leshan started to note down novel English expressions he encountered while reading. In 1984 he, almost on his own, compiled *An English-Chinese Dictionary of American Trivia*³. This dictionary, with over 4,000 entries, proved to be of great value in China for it provided translations as well as explanations of English allusions, proper names and allusive phrases, all being common expressions in American newspapers and books and whose exact meaning were unlikely to be found in existing general English-Chinese dictionaries, even encyclopaedias. In 1995, Dong added 2,000 entries to the revised edition of the dictionary.

Dong's dedication and responsibility is well acknowledged in academia in China. For example, renowned publisher Shen Changwen (1931-) remarked that 'Dong is very serious and responsible in translating and his translation manuscripts are always impeccable. So, when I was assigned to publish a re-translation of *Red Star over China*, I thought Dong was the sole candidate.' (Dong, 2001a, p.393). As a matter of fact, his translation became a classic in the 80-year history of translating *Red Star over China* in China (see Yang, 2015). After Dong

finished the translation manuscript of *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, a bulky volume that he had invested in much time and energy in translating and revising, the manuscript was screened by experts as required by the publishing house and three ‘mistakes’ were located. Later on, it turned out that the experts were wrong about the ‘mistakes’ and that Dong’s version was almost flawless (Yang, 2010, p. 79). Fu Weici (1923-2014), a learned Chinese scholar, admired Dong for ‘his erudition and his tenacity in doing research and translating even in times of great difficulty.’ (Fu, 2008, p.107).

When translating the numerous quotations from Marx in S.S.Prawer’s *Karl Marx and World Literature* (1976), Dong and the other three translators could have an easier way of doing the job, i.e. copying the corresponding quotations from the existing authoritative Chinese version of *The Complete Works of Marx and Engels*. Instead, Dong, who was to translate the most difficult part of the book, insisted on translating in accordance with the original English text. This was because after reading the Chinese version and English version of *The Complete Works*, Dong found out that there were many discrepancies and even mistakes in the Chinese version. Therefore, they followed closely the original, checked against corresponding German texts, pointed out all the inconsistencies between their translations and the Chinese version of *The Complete Works*, and discussed them with the government bureau in charge of the Chinese translation of *The Complete Works*. Such a strong work ethic ensured the quality of the translation, which was later awarded a book prize in China (Fu, 2013, p.110).

In translating *The Last Temptation of Christ* (1960)⁴ Dong exhibited the same responsibility. As quotations from the Bible abound in the original, a shortcut for Dong and Fu would be copying corresponding quotations from the existing Bible translation in Chinese. But they did otherwise. Dong had the following to say about their concern.

The quotations in Kazantzakis’s book are from a Greek version of the Bible, while the existing Bible translation in Chinese is based on the King James English version, so there are many differences between the two versions. After deliberation, we chose not to copy but to follow closely the original English text and the Bible translations in Chinese were put in footnotes for readers’ reference. (Dong, 2001a, p. 39, my translation).

Due to their scrupulous attention to detail the Chinese version of this historical novel is very faithful to the original.

5. THE INFLUENCE OF PATRONAGE AND WORKING CONDITIONS FOR TRANSLATORS

Besides strategies of translation and professional reputation, translators’ special habitus is also embodied

in their working conditions, which are at the core of paid work and employment relationships and cover a broad range of issues. In the context of the latter half of twentieth-century China, working conditions for translators encompass translator co-authorship, remuneration and translation revision and editing by others, all of which are part of translators’ daily lives (Mossop, 2001/2014; Bisiada, 2018), therefore a key aspect of their special habitus. As patronage in the target culture plays a decisive role in the working conditions for translators, the latter can be understood as a refined result of the influence of patronage, which is the fourth aspect of translators’ social habitus.

Lefevere, who consciously theorized patronage in the literary system in the field of translation studies, sees ‘patronage’ as ‘something like powers (persons, institutions) that can further or hinder the reading, writing, and rewriting of literature’ (1992, pp.14-15). Both persons and institutions with power can act as patrons, who can either support or hinder a translation activity. He further clarified three elements of patronage: the ideological constraint, economic provision and social status. If the three components were all dependent on one patron, this type was called undifferentiated patronage; otherwise it was differentiated (pp.16-17). In the case of Dong, the ideological constraint and economic provision were dependent on one patron, i.e. the publishers and patronage took the form of full sponsorship, which meant that he had relatively little freedom in dealing with patrons, at least if he wanted to have his translations published.

Throughout history, translator co-authorship is often subject to ideological manipulation. In the newly-founded PRC, where ideological constraint was pervasive, translator co-authorship was a major aspect of the working conditions for translators. When Dong’s translation of a Czech novel *Red Glow over Kladno* was published in 1958, a pseudonym for Dong was used on the book cover. This was because in that year ‘the Anti-Rightist Campaign’ began and Dong was labelled as a ‘Rightist’, a ‘politically incorrect’ scholar, whose real name was not allowed to appear in any book, among many other punishments.

In the 1960s when ‘the Anti-Rightist Campaign’ was put to an end, the practice of translator co-authorship was still not started. When the Chinese version of *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, translated by nine translators including Dong, was published for the first time in 1965, the publisher adopted three aliases for the names of the nine translators. When it was re-published in 1974, Dong’s real name was printed on the translated book cover, while the other eight translators were not granted the same privilege because it was the publisher’s way of rewarding Dong for his revising the edition, which lasted one year (Dong, 2001a, p. 271). It was only after the Cultural Revolution ended that all the real names of the translators appeared in the 1979 version.

Translation revision and editing is another typical ideological constraint imposed on translators as instances of such manipulation abound in the history of translation. Dong's translation of *Red Star over China* came out in 1979, when many taboos existed in the publishing industry in China. For instance, anything that was related to the private lives of PRC leaders was too sensitive to appear in translations. For another, as PRC was in a different diplomatic relationship with neighbouring countries in 1979 from it was in 1937, when Snow's book appeared, some diplomatically questionable statements in Snow's account could not be faithfully rendered. Therefore, a careful comparison between the original and the translation revealed eight mismatches in contents (see Yang, 2015), which was undoubtedly the result of editing as the editor in chief Shen himself admitted (2011, p.173).

Besides ideological constraint manifested in the form of co-authorship, economic provision in the form of actual payment is another important aspect of the influence of patronage. According to Wang (2007, p.44), the vicissitudes of translator payment in the first three decades of PRC were in conformity with the 'Left' trend of political thought. When Dong and the eight translators were invited to translate *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, they were not paid at all because there was no such a practice nor policy of paying translators at that time (Dong, 2001a, p.271). Yet patronage can also support and encourage a person, institution, work and art (see Bai, 2009). After Dong finished the translation of *Red Star over China*, the publishing house managed to pay him some extra money in addition to the stipulated amount of payment for a translator because the version was very successful in the market and 1.65 million copies were sold (see Zhang, 2006), while the standard payment for translators at that time was as meagre as four *yuan* (the monetary unit in PRC) for every 1,000 English words. The total money Dong received for translating was just enough for him to buy a one-way airplane ticket from Beijing to New York (Dong, 2001b, pp.118-119).

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study has been to investigate possible relationships between a translator's social habitus and specialized professional habitus in an attempt to answer the question of 'how to become a recognized translator', a question not only interests translation studies scholars theoretically (it is the article title of Sela-Sheffy (2005)) but also stimulates practical considerations (e.g. Robinson (2012)). For this purpose, I have analysed Dong's social habitus from four aspects and his special habitus from three aspects, with the aim of revealing the underlying relationships between them. In this way I demonstrate that the process of becoming a recognized translator can be adequately described as a result of refining the social

habitus of a translator into his/her special habitus.

The analysis of social habitus suggests that individual activities are regulated through shared schemes, which are internalized under similar and shared historical conditions, while the analysis of special habitus suggests professionals in a certain field mobilize their energies to become active in this field and if they act successfully, they may become famous in this autonomous entity and acquire much cultural capital in the Bourdieusian sense. This paper, through a case study of Dong Leshan, a famous translator in China, reaches the conclusion that the special habitus of the translator is a refined result of his/her social habitus. It is hoped that this study can shed light on an overall understanding of interaction between translators' behaviours and their personalized professional and social history and on a general understanding of how translators shape and are shaped by their everyday practice, background or trajectory, and work context or field.

Notes

(a) This research is Edward Gunn's book *Unwelcome Muse: Chinese Literature in Shanghai and Peking, 1937-45*, published by Columbia University Press in 1980.

(b) This definition is quoted from BusinessDictionary.Com, retrieved from <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/work-ethic.html>.

(c) The compilation of the dictionary was aided by Liu Bingzhang, who said that Dong did most of the work (Dong, 2001a, p.397).

(d) *The Last Temptation of Christ*, by Nikos Kazantzakis, was first published in Greek in 1955. It was first published in English in 1960.

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