



A Space for Translation: Thresholds of Interpretation

Presentation Details	
Title of Paper:	The Third Textual Space: Hypotyposis in Translations of Chinese Texts
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Abstract:	<p>When dealing with folk and classical literature, texts with culturally specific beliefs and elaborate imaginary landscapes, translators of Chinese texts into English and other European languages must negotiate insurmountable differences. To designate changes that have occurred and persist in the transmission of folktales across time and space, in 1927 the ethnologist Carl Wilhelm von Sydow coined the term “oikotype” or ecotype, a localization of motifs in tales of the same type into a different social context of production (143-145). David Hopkin in “The Ecotype, or a Modest Proposal to Reconnect Cultural and Social History” indicates that “ecotypes have the potential to make us look again at our accepted spatial and chronological divisions” because “ecotypes seldom coincide with national boundaries, which should perhaps make us reflect whether the nation-state provides the appropriate cadre of analysis in cultural history” (53). For such variations in different versions of oral/literary medieval texts, Paul Zumthor uses the word <i>mouvance</i> (73). To study this phenomenon in translated Chinese texts, we focus on examples of semiotic hypotyposis or virtual representations of imaginary landscapes and figures as conceptualized by Umberto Eco in <i>Experiences in Translation</i>. That is, “The text ‘stages’ something the reader is virtually led to see” (51) so the translator must negotiate multiple ethnographic perspectives of evidence from several kinds of human signs in macro and micro-cultures. This paper will first theorize on the liminality of semiotic hypotyposis in translation and then use it to examine how hypotyposis in selected Chinese classics is rendered into English, French and German translations, more specifically how</p>

cultural motifs in the works are transferred into other languages as world spaces: domesticated, foreignized, Orientalized, hybridized, and overdetermined.

References

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Authors' Biography

Patricia HASELTINE is a folklorist and a literature scholar holding a PhD in Folklore from Indiana University, where she also studied Chinese language and literature. She has taught English Literature at Tamkang University and Providence University in Taiwan for over 30 years and, having retired, is now working in translation studies.

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