



内容摘要

《圣经》是西方最重要的典籍，是基督教信仰的基础。它是世界上拥有最多译本的著作，已有 2000 多种语言和方言的译本。公元 635 年，基督教的聂斯脱略派传入中国，开始了《圣经》在中国的翻译历程。

本文比较全面地勾勒了《圣经》汉译 1300 多年的历程，展示了《圣经》汉译实践的巨大成就。同时，作者在文中还澄清了一些关于《圣经》汉译的误解，纠正了一些常识性的错误，并特别讨论了历史上有关“二马译本”的争论。作者首创性地将《圣经》在中国的翻译划分为以下四个时期：肇始期（唐元两朝）；发展期（1581—1842）；鼎盛期（1843—1919）和繁荣期（1919—）。肇始期指唐代和元朝的《圣经》翻译。发展期从 1581 年（明朝末期）罗明坚携利玛窦等踏足中国起，来华传教士用中文翻译出各个《圣经》版本，其中巴设译本是第一个正式的《圣经》中文译本；贺清泰译本是第二个正式的《圣经》中文译本，也是第一个《新旧约全书》的中文译本，尽管不够完整；马士曼译本和马礼逊译本是最早出版的完整的中文译本。这一时期的翻译活动为以后的翻译打下了基础。从 1842 年起，《中英南京条约》等一系列不平等条约签订之后，外国传教士享有在华传教和译经的自由，这在客观上促使《圣经》中译进入鼎盛期。至 1919 年，77 年之间，有影响的译本多达 20 多个，许多方言译本和少数民族语言译本也是在这一时期翻译出版的。1919 年出版的《和合本圣经》更是标志着中文《圣经》翻译的颠峰。1919 年以后，《圣经》在中国的翻译步入一个新的历史时期，以前主要由外国传教士承担的汉译活动变为主要由中国人自己承担。近年，华人所译的各种中文译本层出不穷，《圣经》汉译呈现出百花齐放的繁荣局面。

本文从宗教、政治、语言、文学、印刷术、社会习俗和道德风尚等各个方面论述了汉译《圣经》在中国产生的影响。在宗教方面，随着汉语《圣经》的传播，基督教教义也得到广泛的宣传，基督教在中国的影响也日益增加，基督教及其教义逐渐为国人所熟悉，基督教在中国得以迅速发展。在政治上，《圣经》译成汉语以后，给予中国社会的政治生活以较大的影响。中国近现代史上从洪秀全到孙中山，以及许多曾与基督教接触过的革命家、教育家，都不同程度地汲取了《圣经》中有关民主、平等和人道主义的思想，提出和从事推动中国现代化进程的主张和活动。在文学方面，汉译《圣经》的影响更是十分明显。现当代许多作家、诗人常常从《圣经》中汲取题材，进行创作，或引用圣经典故、经句，耶稣基督形象以及圣经的语汇与典故大量进入现当代文学作品之中。此外，1919 年官话和合译本的出版，与当时中



国知识界倡导的白话文运动不谋而合，更加促进了白话文的推广。外国传教士用罗马字母拼音为各地少数民族翻译《圣经》，在客观上促进了中国扫盲运动和文化教育事业的发展。教会组织为了印刷汉译的《圣经》和教会读物，开设印刷厂，引进新式印刷机器，训练中国印刷工人，也在客观上促进了中国印刷业的发展。

通过论述《圣经》汉译实践的巨大成就和对中国社会的重大影响，作者试图论证《圣经》汉译研究的重要性，并在一定程度上揭示《圣经》汉译的规律，预测其趋势。通过对比中国翻译史上佛经翻译研究的成就与西方《圣经》翻译研究的巨大成就，作者指出，《圣经》汉译研究尚未得到应有的重视，《圣经》汉译在翻译史上尚未取得应有的地位，汉译《圣经》的文学价值也未得到确定，其作为翻译文学的地位也远未确立，这与《圣经》汉译悠久的历史和实践上巨大的成就不相符。作者呼吁，中国学者能够重新认识《圣经》汉译的历史，确立其在翻译史和翻译文学史上的地位，重视和加强对《圣经》汉译的研究，力争建立中国自己的“圣经翻译学”，在实践中再出汉译《圣经》精品，在理论上形成有影响的译论，从而对中国翻译理论甚至世界翻译理论作出贡献。

关键词：圣经汉译；传教士；成就；影响



ABSTRACT

The Bible is the most important classic in the west. It is a collection of sacred writings of the Christian faiths. It has been translated into more languages than any other books in the world. By now, it has been translated into more than 2000 different languages and dialects. In China, the Chinese translation of *the Bible* began in A.D.635 when Nestorianism, a branch of Christianity, was introduced to China.

First, this thesis introduces the 1300-year history of the Chinese translation of *the Bible* in China, as well as its great achievements. At the same time, some mistakes about the Chinese translation of *the Bible* are corrected, and the disputes over *Marshman's Version* and *Morrison's Version* are specially touched upon. The author initially divides the history into the following four periods: the Beginning Period (the Tang and Yuan dynasties), the Pioneering Period (1581—1842), the Prosperous Period (1843—1919), and the Flourishing Period (1919—). The Beginning Period refers to the Tang and Yuan dynasties when *the Bible* was first translated into Chinese language(s). The Pioneering Period refers to the one during which foreign missionaries in China translated *the Bible* into Chinese since 1581 when Michal Ruggieri and Matteo Ricci came to China. *J.Basset's Version* is the first formal Chinese version, *Louis de Poirot S.J.'s Version* is the second formal one and the first that contains both *the Old Testament* and *the New Testament*, although it is not a complete one. *Marshman's Version* and *Morrison's Version* are the first complete Chinese versions. The pioneering work of those missionaries in this period set a solid base for the latter versions. The signing of *Treaty of Nanking* in 1842 and a series of other unequal treaties later objectively facilitated the prosperity of the Chinese translation of *the Bible*. By 1919, within 77 years, more than 20 new influential Chinese versions appeared, and many versions in dialects and minority languages were also published in this period. *The United Version* which was published in 1919 marked the summit of the Chinese translation of *the Bible*. Since 1919, the Chinese translation of *the Bible* has witnessed a new period as the translation work has been mainly taken by Chinese scholars instead of by foreign missionaries. In recent years, there are many different versions in China, and *the Bible* translation is flourishing in China.

Then the great influence of *the Bible* translation upon China is explored from the aspects such as religion, politics, language, literature, printing technology and social



customs. In the aspect of religion, Bible translation has spread Christian doctrines and encouraged the development of Christianity in China. In politics, the political life was influenced by the Chinese Bible. Hong Xiuquan, Sun Yat-sen, Feng Yuxiang, Tao Xingzhi and many famous figures were influenced by *the Bible*. The revolutionary careers led by Hong and Sun respectively changed the history of China. In language, the Chinese translation has enriched our language. Many words and phrases are borrowed from *the Bible* and have become very popular in China. And *the Union Version* played an important role in the language transition. Moreover, the Chinese Bible encouraged the development of anti-illiteracy campaign and education in China. The impact of the Chinese translation of *the Bible* on Chinese literature is also great and obvious. *The Bible* has been a source of creation for many poets and writers, especially after the May 4th Movement. Words and phrases from *the Bible* have entered many literary works. In order to print the translated Bible, foreign missionaries opened many printing houses in China, imported new equipments, and trained Chinese printers. As a result, Chinese modern printing developed.

Based on its remarkable achievements and great influence on China, the author attempts to prove the importance of the study on the Chinese translation of *the Bible*, reveal its law, and predict its tendency. By comparing with the achievements of the study on Buddhist scriptures translation in China and those of the study on the translation of *the Bible* in the west, the author points out that by now little importance has been attached to the study of the Chinese translation of *the Bible*, nor has its position been established in the history of translation in China, not to speak of the establishment of its position as translated literature, which does not match its great achievements in practice. So it is strongly suggested in the thesis that Chinese scholars, especially those in the mainland of China, should see the history of the Chinese translation of *the Bible* in a new light, emphasize and strengthen the study about it, struggle to establish "Bible Translatology" in China so that there would be not only new excellent Chinese versions in practice but also important Chinese biblical translation theories, as well as world-known Bible translators. Only then can the Chinese translation of *the Bible* make its contributions to translation studies at home and abroad.

Key Words: the Chinese translation of *the Bible*;
missionaries; achievements; influence



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作者签名：陈述军
日期：2006年5月21日

导师签名：陈彦薇
日期：2006年5月21日



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1. Introduction

1.1 A Brief Introduction to *the Bible*

The Bible is a collection of sacred, or holy, writings of the Christian faiths. This collection is divided into two major sections: *the Old Testament*, which consists of thirty-nine books, and *the New Testament*, which consists of twenty-seven books. (The Catholic Bible includes additional twelve books known as *the Apocrypha*.) *The Old Testament* is concerned with the Hebrew God, Yahweh, and purports to be a history of the early Israelites. *The New Testament* is the work of early Christians and reflects their beliefs about Jesus; it purports to be a history of what Jesus taught and did.

The Bible was originally written in the Hebrew and Greek languages. It is the most important work in the west. Most Christians believe that God speaks to men through His actions and words as they are written down in *the Bible*. Most Christian beliefs and customs are based on it.

The Bible is the most widely read book in history. It is regarded by scholars not only as an important religious classic but also as a great literary work, because the sacred writings are written in many forms of literature, such as letters, stories, history, laws, prophecies, prayers, songs, love poems and epics. It can give its readers both moral teachings and entertainments.

1.2 A Brief Introduction to Bible Translation in the World

The Bible has been translated for more times, and into more languages, than any other books in the world. The Jewish Bible was originally written in Hebrew, so the Jews who lived where Greek was spoken needed a Greek version. In the mid-3rd century B.C., a group of 70 or 72 scholars in Alexandria of Egypt translated *the Old Testament* into Greek. This translation is called *the Septuagint* (a Latin word meaning seventy). About A. D. 383, Saint Jerome began to translate both *the Old Testament* and *the New Testament* into Latin. He completed the project in A. D. 405. His version was known as *the Vulgate* (a Latin word meaning popular). For about one thousand years, it was the only version of *the Bible* authorized by the Roman Catholic Church.

The first complete English translation appeared in the 1380's. John Wycliffe, an



English religious reformer, and his followers made the translation, in order that *the Bible* could be understood by the common people. During the Reformation, Martin Luther, the German Protestant reformer and the greatest Bible translator during the Renaissance, worked on a German translation and finished it in 1534. This version is the first "People's Bible" and played a critical role in the union of the German language and the emergence of modern German. (骆乐, 2002: 58) About the same time, William Tyndale, an English reformer, translated *the Bible* into English while living in Germany. His work became the foundation of several later English versions.

In 1604, King James I of England authorized a committee of about 50 scholars to prepare a revision of earlier English translations of *the Bible*. The new version appeared in 1611 and became known as *the King James Version* or *Authorized Version*. This version, with its simple, beautiful, dignified and powerful language, has been praised as "the noblest monument of English prose" and regarded as one of the best works in the history of the English literature. It had great influence upon the Standard English. For more than 200 years after it was published, *the King James Version* remained the most widely used translation in the English-speaking world. Its revised version did not appear until the 1880's, but the new version was not very popular and most individuals and churches still preferred *the King James Version*.

In the 20th century, several modern English translations of *the Bible* appeared. These translations are easy and close to everyday speech. Among them, the most notable are *the American Standard Version* (1901), *the Revised Standard Version* (1946-1970), *the Good News Bible* (1966-1976), *the New International Version* (1973-1976) and *the New King James Bible* (1982).

The Revised Standard Version has become highly popular since it was published. Its edition of 1973 is the first English translation of *the Bible* that has won unanimously approval from Protestant, Roman Catholic, and the Greek orthodox religious leaders. *The New Revised Standard Version*, published in 1989, made further improvement of the text. It eliminated many archaic and ambiguous words and replaced many masculine words with words applying to both sexes. (郝澎, 2005)

All these versions have great contribution to the spread of Christianity and the development of western languages. And there are many world-famous Bible translators and translation theorists, such as Philo Judaeus, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, Desiderius



Erasmus, Martin Luther, Nicholas Udall, William Tyndale, William Fulke, George Campbell, Eugene A. Nida and so on. (谭载喜, 2004)

By now, *the Bible* has been translated into more than 2000 different languages and dialects.

1.3 Importance of the Study on the Chinese Translation of *the Bible*

In the Preface to *The Ocean in a Seashell—An Introduction to the Bible*(*圣经蠡测*), Wen Yong said that if one studies the western culture without any knowledge of *the Bible*, they may go astray, like a blind person riding on a blind horse. (文庸, 1992)

Wang Bingqin pointed out, "*The Bible* has greatly influenced on the whole western culture. Some people say that the western world would collapse without *the Bible*. Some say that *the Bible* is the guide of the soul of the western people. ...In a word, we can never understand the western culture and civilization without understanding *the Bible*." (王秉钦, 1994: 44-45)

The Bible is so important that the study on its Chinese translation cannot be ignored. Its Chinese translation has enriched Chinese culture. Ji Xianlin once said, "If a culture is a river, the river of the Chinese culture is sometimes full and sometimes low, but never dries up, because water of fresh sources has poured into it. There are many times of such flow, great or small, among which water flowing from India and the west is the greatest. It is through translation that water from those two sources joins the river of the Chinese culture. Therefore, we can say that translation is as useful as an elixir to keep the Chinese culture evergreen."^① (王秉钦, 2004: 3) The Chinese translation of *the Bible* is just like digging a channel through which water from the west can flow into China. Just as Gu Weixing praised Morrison and his Chinese version: "*Morrison's Version* introduced the western culture to China. Thus the multicultural progress in China began. Though the progress is manifested by the conflict between and the integration of the western culture and the traditional Chinese culture, the Confucian culture is no longer dominant in China, and the Chinese culture begins to show a modern multiple tendency." (毛发生, 2004: 51) Many important Chinese versions of *the Bible*, like *Marshman's Version*, *the Delegates' Version*, *the Union Version* and some other contemporary versions, have played or are

^① 倘若拿河流来作比, 中华文化这一条长河, 有水满的时候, 也有水少的时候; 但却从未枯竭。原因就是有新水注入。注入的次数大大小小是颇多的。最大的有两次, 一次是从印度来的水, 一次是从西方来的水。而这两次的大注入依靠的都是翻译。中华文化之所以能长葆青春, 万应灵药就是翻译。翻译之为用大矣哉!



playing the same role in the cultural exchange between China and the west.

In China, however, *the Bible* was once a forbidden book for political reasons. As a result, little research has been done in this field, and people know very little about the Chinese translation of *the Bible* and its influence in China. Only after his hard work on some early Chinese versions of *the Bible* in several libraries in Britain did Ma Min, a historian and the president of Central China Normal University, know that “the history of the Chinese translation of *the Bible* is far more complex than what has been imagined”. (马敏, 1999: 364) The Chinese translation of *the Bible* has exerted great influence on politics, language, literature, printing technology, social ethics and customs in China, which is known to very few people.

In the history of translation in China, the translation of Buddhist scriptures is very important. At the same time, there were once many great translators of Buddhist sutras, and their translation theories were influential. Compared with the translation of Buddhist scriptures, the Chinese translation of *the Bible* has been ignored. In Ma Zhuyi's *A History of Translation in China*, the Chinese translation of *the Bible* is just a small part in the Chapter of “*Translation of Christian Documents*”. Some others doubt or even deny the importance of the study on the Chinese translation of *the Bible*. Wang Dongfeng once said, “In China, the readers of *the Bible* are but very few whose interest cannot represent that of the main stream. Hence, the study on Bible translation is not the main issue that the Chinese translators should concern.”^① (王东风, 2000: 317)

In fact, *the Bible* has been translated into Chinese since A. D. 635, which is a long time span of more than 1300 years, 300 years longer than the history of Buddhist scriptures translation in China.^② What's more, the Chinese translation of *the Bible* is still going on and will continue. Many a foreign missionary and Bible scholar at home and abroad have been working hard and have produced numerous Chinese versions, some of which are excellent and influential. Their accomplishments should not be ignored. With the development of the times, besides Christians, more and more people would read and study *the Bible* in order to appreciate it as great literary work, to get moral inspirations,

^① 在中国,《圣经》读者只是一个极小的非主流读者群体,因此,《圣经》翻译不是中国翻译工作者所关心的主要问题。见王东风“评 Nida 的读者同等反映论”,杨自俭编《英汉语比较与翻译》,上海外语教育出版社,2000年版第317页。

^② 史学界和佛学界公认,我国佛经翻译始于公元67年。唐代以后,我国佛经翻译事业从鼎盛走向衰落,到宋仁宗景祐年间(即1034年,本文作者注),完全沉寂下来。见王秉钦《20世纪中国翻译思想史》,南开大学出版社,2004年版第5-6页。



or just to acquaint themselves with the western culture, and the like. Thus, the readers of *the Bible* are no longer “very few whose interest cannot represent that of the main stream”. At present, the number of Chinese Christians alone has already amounted to about 80 million. The study on the translation of *the Bible*, the religious book they read every day, should be important enough.

1.4 The Literature Review of the Research on the Chinese Translation of *the Bible*

The history of the Chinese translation of *the Bible* is about 1400 years, and there are hundreds of Chinese versions. They have influenced Chinese culture, politics, religion and other aspects, and have played a very important role in the cultural exchange between China and the western world. However, little research has been done about their translation and influence in China. In the CNKI database from 1994 to October, 2005, the author of this thesis has only found nine articles with “the Chinese translation of *the Bible*” as key words, nine ones with “Bible translation” as key words. Two of them are written by the same author, with the same title and almost the same content, different only in the publishing journal. From 1979 to 1993, no such articles can be found. There might be fewer studies in foreign countries, as the author could hardly find any articles on the internet with “*the Bible* translation in China” and “the Chinese translation of *the Bible*” as key words respectively. Among the above mentioned eighteen articles, one was published in 1994, two in 1995, two in 2000, four in 2004, three in 2003, three in 2004 and three in 2005. It seems that more attention has been paid to this topic recently. And twelve of these articles are about the Chinese translation of *the Bible*. Six of them study the Chinese translation of *the Bible* or its influence in China, but they are only about one version (e.g., *Marrison's Version* or *Bishop Scherchewsky's Version*), or about the influence on one aspect (e.g., on the Chinese language or the Chinese literature during a concrete historical period). Books on this subject are much fewer. The author have found but *A Study of the Phenomenon of Authoritativeness in the Chinese translations of the Protestant Bible*(基督教圣经中文译本权威现象研究) by Zhuang Rouyu, *Tracing Bible Translation—A History of the Translation of Five Modern Chinese Versions of the Bible*(译经溯源：现代五大中文圣经翻译史)by Zhao Weiben, and a few other books, altogether about ten, all published in Hong Kong. The writers of the books are all



overseas scholars. By now, the author has not found one book written by a Chinese scholar in the mainland of China. Ma Zuyi's *The History of Translation in China* and some Christian books have just mentioned the Chinese translation of *the Bible*.

1.5 Introduction to the Present Thesis

This thesis aims to introduce the history of the Chinese translation of *the Bible*, and to sum up the influence of *the Bible*'s Chinese translation in China. The tendency of the Chinese translation of *the Bible* will also be predicted. Some misunderstandings and commonsense mistakes such as "the Chinese Bible versions are all translated from English" and "it is Morrison who first introduced to China the complete Christian doctrine" will be corrected with evidence. The disputes over *Marshman's Version* and *Morrison's Version* will be discussed.

Considering that the position of the Chinese translation of *the Bible* itself and its position as translated literature have not been established, the author of the present thesis also suggests that due attention be paid to the study on the Chinese translation of *the Bible*. In the west, the translation of *the Bible* has exerted great influence on both translation practice and theory, which has bred not a few world-famous translators and translation theorists in the translation history, such as Philo Judaeus, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, Desiderius Erasmus, Martin Luther, Nicholas Udall, William Tyndale, William Fulke, George Campbell, Eugene A. Nida and so on. In China, the translation of the Buddhist scriptures has brought about a group of eminent translators and translation theorists. Although there have been remarkable achievements in the translation of *the Bible* into Chinese, *the Bible* translators have almost all fallen into oblivion, not to speak of their translation thought. This oblivion of *the Bible* translators and translation practice, in the opinion of the author of this thesis, does not match the long history of the translation of *the Bible* or the wide scope of China's translation studies today. That is why the author of the thesis would conduct the present research. It is his hope that Chinese scholars, especially those in the mainland of China, could emphasize and strengthen the research on the Chinese translation of *the Bible*, and could struggle for the establishment of "Bible Translatology" in China, so that there might be not only new excellent Chinese versions but also Chinese Bible translation theories, and world-known translators as well.



The thesis consists of the following chapters. Chapter One is a brief introduction to *the Bible*, its translation in the world, and the importance of the study on its Chinese translation. In Chapter Two, the history of the Chinese biblical translation is introduced in detail according to the author's own division of four specific periods. The disputes over *Marshman's Version* and *Morrison's Version* are given special attention. In Chapter Three, the great influence of the Chinese translation of *the Bible* upon China is explored from the aspects such as religion, politics, language, literature, printing technology and social customs. In the last chapter, the author sums up the research in the previous chapters and airs his own opinions and expectations about Chinese Bible translation and its study.



2. The History of the Chinese Translation of the Bible

In *A Study of the Phenomenon of Authoritativeness in the Chinese translations of the Protestant Bible*, Zhuang Rouyu divides the history of the Chinese translation of the Bible into the following four periods: “the Initial Period (草创期) (the Tang Dynasty----1807), the Developing Period (拓展期) (1807----1854), the Disseminating Period (普及化期) (1854----1919), and the Domesticating Period (本色化期) (1919----the present).” (庄柔玉, 2000: 16-17) This is the only division the author has seen. Doctor Zhuang’s book does not give his reason of this division. In the opinion of this thesis’ author, the Disseminating Period begins in 1807 when Morrison first came to China, but it excludes the fact that Marshman and Lassar began to translate *the Bible* into Chinese in India in 1804 or 1806. In the history of the Chinese translation of *the Bible*, *Marshman’s Version* and *Morrison’s Version* are usually mentioned together. What’s more, the author of this thesis does not agree with Dr. Zhuang on the beginning time of the Disseminating Period. Before the signing of *Treaty of Nanking* in 1842, translation of *the Bible* was severely forbidden in China. Only after the signing of a series of unequal treaties since 1842 did the Chinese translation of *the Bible* enter a period of prosperity. And before *the Delegates’ Version* was out in 1854, *Delegates’ Four Gospels* was published in 1850, *Delegates’ New Testament* was published in 1852, and *the New Testament* edified by Goddard was published in 1853. It seems unreasonable to exclude those three versions in the same period as *the Delegates’ Version*.

The author of this thesis would divide the Chinese translation of *the Bible* in the following way: the Beginning Period (the Tang and Yuan dynasties), the Pioneering Period (1581—1842), the Prosperous Period (1843—1919), and the Flourishing Period (1919—). The Beginning Period refers to the Tang and Yuan dynasties when *the Bible* was first translated into the Chinese language(s). According to historical documents, *the Bible* was translated during the two dynasties. But no versions have been left behind. The Pioneering Period refers to the one during which foreign missionaries in China translated *the Bible* into Chinese since 1581 when Michal Ruggieri (罗明坚) and Matteo Ricci (利玛窦) came to China. *J.Basset’s Version* (巴设译本) is the first formal Chinese version, *Louis de Poirot S.J.’s Version* (贺清泰译本) is the second formal version and the first



version containing both *the Old Testament* and *the New Testament*, although it is not a complete one. *Marshman's Version* (马士曼译本) and *Morrison's Version* (马礼逊译本) are the first complete Chinese versions. The translation activities in this period set a solid base for the later versions.

After the signing of *Treaty of Nanking* in 1842 and a series of other unequal treaties later, the government of the Qing Dynasty was forced to lift the ban on Bible translating and missionary work. The foreign missionaries could do missionary work and translate *the Bible* rather freely in China. The Chinese translation of *the Bible* became prosperous. By 1919, within seventy-seven years, more than twenty new influential Chinese versions appeared, and many versions in dialects and minority languages were also published in this period. *The United Version* which was published in 1919 marked the summit of the Chinese translation of *the Bible*. Since 1919, the Chinese translation of *the Bible* has witnessed a new period as the translation work is mainly done by Chinese scholars instead of by foreign missionaries. In recent years, there are many different versions in China, and *the Bible* translation is flourishing in China.

2.1 The Beginning Period (the Tang Dynasty and the Yuan Dynasty)

2.1.1 Translation of the Nestorian Manuscripts in the Tang Dynasty

Translation of *the Bible* in the world began in B.C. 300. But only in the eighth century did the first document appear. That is *the Nestorian Monument (Da Qin Jing Jiao Liu Xing Zhong Guo Bei 大秦景教流行中国碑)*, recording the Chinese translation of *the Bible*. *Da Qin* refers to the Roman Empire. *Jing Jiao*, the Illustrious Religion, is Nestorianism, a heretic branch of Christianity (林悟殊, 2003). It was founded in Syria. Its founder, Nostoria, was declared as heresy in 432. But Nestorianists were active in missionary activities. In 635, i.e. the ninth years of the Zhenguan Reign of Daizong Emperor in the Tang Dynasty, Nestorianism was introduced to China.

In 635, Rabban Alopen (阿罗本) came from the Roman Empire to Xi'an, the capital of the Tang Dynasty, with *the Bible* and Icons (Sacred Images), and presented them to Emperor Taizong. Taizong asked Fang Xianling, then the Prime Minister of the Tang Dynasty, to meet him outside in the west suburbs to do him honor. Taizong accorded Alopen a very courteous reception. (翁绍军, 1996) Later, in 638, Taizong issued an edict and permitted Alopen to preach his religion. In Zhou Xiefan's *Christianity in China*(中



国的基督教), it was after Taizong had read the translated Bible and had known the Christian doctrines that he issued that special edict.(周燮藩, 1997) The followers of the Nestorianism addressed their religion “*Jing Jiao*”(the Illustrious Religion) . In 781(the second year of Jianzhong Reign of the Tang Dynasty), the well-known Nestorian Monument was erected^① On the monument was told the Fall of man, the birth of Mishike (弥施诃, i.e., Messiah<弥赛亚>, a name of Jesus in *the Old Testament*) , the miracles of Jesus, and the introduction of Nestorianism’s coming to China and its prosperity. Besides, the monument records the fact that Nestorian scriptures were translated into Chinese, as there are such words on the monument as “translating scriptures in the Emperor’s library, and discussing the doctrines with the Emperor in his inner chamber(翻经书殿, 问道禁闱)”, “leaving twenty-seven scriptures (经留二十七部——指新约)” and “translating scriptures and building churches (翻经建寺)”.

In the late Qing Dynasty, eight kinds of the Chinese Nestorian Manuscripts were found in Dunhuang Grottoes. In the manuscripts were introduced the names of some books in *the Bible*, main creeds and canons. Among the eight manuscripts, “*Yi Shen Lun, Shi Zun Bu Shi Lun 3* (一神论·世尊布施论第三)” quotes most from *the Bible*. It retells part of *Book of Matthew in the New Testament*, e. g., *Concerning Almsgiving, Concerning Prayer, Judging Others, Do not Worry, Treasures, Love for Enemies, and The Narrow Gate*. It also tells about Jesus’ Crucifixion after he had preached for three years, his Resurrection three days later, his Ascension, and the coming of the Holy Spirit at the Pentecost (五旬节). (刘阳, 1995) It is said that what was quoted in this scripture is very close to the present translation of *the Bible*, e.g.,

若左手布施, 勿令右觉。(similar to *Book of Matthew* 6:3: 你施舍的时候, 不要叫左手知道右手所做的。②)

有财物不须放置地上...有盗贼将去。财物皆须向天堂, 必竟不坏不失。(similar to *Book of Matthew* 6:19-20: 不要为自己积攒财宝在地上; 地上有虫子咬, 能锈坏, 也有贼挖窟窿来偷。只要积攒财宝在天上; 天上没有虫子咬, 不能锈坏, 也没有贼挖窟窿来偷。)

唯看飞鸟, 亦不种不刈, 亦无仓窖可守。(similar to *Book of Matthew* 6:26: 你们看那天上的飞鸟, 也不种, 也不收, 也不积蓄在仓里。)

^① 明朝天启年间, 该碑在西安出土。

^② 括号中汉语为本文作者所加新标点和合本译文。下同。



梁柱着自家眼里，倒向余人说言，汝眼里有物除却。(similar to *Book of Matthew 7:4*: 你自己眼中有梁木，怎能对你弟兄说：“容我去掉你眼中的刺”呢?) 汝等于父边索饼，即得。若从索石头，恐是自害，即不得。若索鱼亦可。若索蛇，恐螫汝，为此不与。(similar to *Book of Matthew 7:9-10*:你们中间谁有儿子求饼，反给他石头呢? 求鱼，反给他蛇呢?) (马祖毅, 1999: 225-226)

Now we can conclude that *the Bible* had indeed been at least partly translated by the Nestorians into Chinese. According to historical documents, by Jianzhong Reign of the Tang Dynasty, thirty Chinese Nestorian manuscripts spread in China. A few of them were translated from special Nestorian manuscripts in Central and Western Asia, while most of them were from *the Bible*, for example, *Tian Bao Chang Jing* (天宝藏经) (i.e., *Psalms* <旧约·诗篇>), 《阿思瞿利容经》(i.e., *Prophetic Writings*<福音书>), *Hun Yuan Jing* (浑元经) (i.e., *Genesis*<创世纪>), *Chuan Hua Jing* (传化经) (i.e., *Acts*<使徒行传>), *Mou Shi Fa Wang Jing* (牟世法王经) (i.e., *Exodus*<出埃及记>), *E Fu Lin Jing* (遏拂林经) (i.e., *Ephesians*<以弗所书>), *Qi Zhen Jing* (启真经) (i.e., *Revelation* <启示录>), etc. (邹振环, 1996) It is a pity that all the translated manuscripts are lost. Further research could only be done after new archaeological discoveries. However, from the eight published manuscripts, some features of *the Bible* translation at that time can still be seen. The obvious one is that there are many Buddhist and Taoist words, for example, Jesus is called “Shizun”(世尊, i.e., Sakyamuni<释迦牟尼> in Buddhism), Moses is called “Moushi”(牟世), “luocha”(罗刹, Rakshasa in Buddhism) is used to refer to devils, “feixian”(飞仙) is used to refer to angels, and there are many other words such as “miaoyou”(妙有), “wuwei”(无为), and “fajie”(法界). This indicates that efforts had been made in the translation to cater to Buddhism and Taoism, which were more influential then in China.

According to textual research, the Illustrious Religion once influenced Taoism in the Tang Dynasty. Lü Dongbin, one of the Eight Immortals in Taoism, was on intimate terms with the Nestorians. In *the Complete Works of Lu Dongbin* (吕祖全书), the miracles performed by Lü Dongbin, such as “changing water into wine”(水化成酒), “healing blind eyes in Jiangling”(江陵医眼), “healing the cripple in Zhaozhou”(赵州医跛), were similar to those Jesus had done in *the Bible* (in *the Bible*, there are stories about Jesus changing six stone jars of water into good wine at a wedding, healing blind men and a paralytic). And the story of Lü Dongbin’s “Da Yun Hui Si(大云会食)” is almost the



same as Jesus' feeding the five thousand people with five loaves and two fish. Two characters "Tianzhu"(天主) are written in both Section Tianwei(《天微》章) and Section Tidao(《体道》章) of Chapter 22 in *the Complete Works of Lü Dongbin*(吕祖全书). (马祖毅, 1999) What is stated above proves that *the Bible* was not only translated in the Tang Dynasty, but also exerted some influence.

In 845 (the fifth year of the Huichang Reign in the Tang Dynasty), Wuzong, an emperor who believed in Taoism and disliked Buddhism, issued an edict that Buddhism be prohibited. And this also brought calamity to the Illustrious Religion and put an end to its 200-year history of development in China. It is not until the Yuan Dynasty that the Chinese translation of *the Bible* appeared in history once again.

2.1.2 Translation of *the Bible* by Catholics in the Yuan Dynasty

Though the Illustrious Religion came back to China and boomed once again in the Yuan Dynasty, there are no recordings of Bible translation in China until the Roman Catholic came to China in the thirteenth century in the Yuan Dynasty. In 1289, the Roman Pope Nicolas IV sent John de Monte Corvino(孟高濂诺) to do missionary work in the east. In 1293, John de Monte Corvino stepped onto China at Quanzhou, and arrived in Dadu (then the capital of Yuan and Beijing at present) the next year. He was warmly welcomed by Emperor Shizu of the Yuan Dynasty and got the allowance to preach in Dadu. John de Monte Corvino had translated *Book of Psalms of the Old Testament* and all *the New Testament* into the Mongolian language^①. This is the earliest translation of *the Bible* by Catholics in China. (邹振环, 1996)

In his *The Travels of Marco Polo*, Marco Polo mentioned that he had seen a Bible of four gospels in Khan's palace, without saying clearly whether it was in Chinese or the Mongolian language. In 1245, an Italian friar, who was sent by the Pope Innocent IV (因诺森四世) to Yuan, not only saw the complete Bible of *the New Testament* and *the Old Testament*, but also saw churches and the Service. (陈恒, 2002)

In one of his letters sent from Dadu to Europe, John de Monte Corvino mentioned his translation of *the Bible*. He wrote,

I've translated the 150-chapter Prayer(一百五十章之祈祷文), the thirty Canticles(《圣歌》三十首) and two Divine Office(Shen Wu Ri Ke 圣务日课) into

^①有人猜测是被译成了汉语。见陈恒《早期翻译<圣经>的诸种说法》，宗教知识 2002 年第 4 期第 40 页。



the Tartar language. (马祖毅, 1999: 236)

In another letter, he said,

I have already had a good command of the Tartar language and have translated *the New Testament* and the 150-chapter Prayer into this language, and have had them written in the best calligraphy.When Prince Zuozhi was born, I held a Latin ceremony in their church and read aloud *the Bible* and *Book of Genesis* in the local language. (ibid)

There is no doubt that *the Bible* was translated and applied to practice in the Yuan Dynasty. However, the version(s) can not be found now and the concrete influence at that time can't be known, either. With the collapse of the Yuan Dynasty in 1368, the Catholics also withdrew from China. In the following over 200 years, there was no record about the translation of *the Bible*.

2.2 The Pioneering Period (1581—1842)

The Chinese translation of *the Bible* revived in the year of 1581 when Michal Ruggieri(罗明坚) came to China. For about one hundred years before 1842, the foreign missionaries were not permitted to work in China until *Treaty of Nanking* was signed. Translation of *the Bible* in this period set a solid base for the versions that followed. As this period covers more than 200 years, it can be subdivided into three stages.

2.2.1 The First Stage (1581—1804)

At the end of the Ming Dynasty and the beginning of the Qing Dynasty, some foreign missionaries in China translated parts of *the Bible*.

In 1581, Michal Ruggieri came to China together with Matthaues Ricci(利玛窦) and some other missionaries. In 1584, Michal Ruggieri's abridged translation of *the Bible*, *Tian Zhu Sheng Jiao Shi Lu* (天主圣教实录) was published in Guangzhou. He is "the first person who propagated Jesus' doctrines in China in the Chinese language"(王治心, 2004: 61) Due to Michal Ruggieri's limited Chinese, many nouns were literally translated. Thus, this version was very hard for the Chinese to understand and could not achieve the expected goal.

About 1700, J. Basset (巴设), a member of Paris Foreign Mission, translated the Latin Bible into vernacular Chinese. This is the first formal Chinese version. It includes



four gospels and some of Paul's letters. It is a manuscript and now kept in British Museum in London, usually called "*Sloan Manuscript*". Basset's version later served as important reference for Marshman and Morrison, and played a very important role in their translation.

At the end of the 18th century, Louis de Poirot S.J. (贺清泰), a member of Society of Jesus, also translated the Latin Bible into Chinese. This version is called *Gu Xin Sheng Jing* (古新圣经). It is the second formal Chinese version but the first relatively systematical and complete translation of both *the Old Testament* and *the New Testament*. Louis de Poirot added explanations to this version after referring to Cornelius a Lapide S.J.'s *Commentary*. Although its arrangements of chapters and section are not completely the same as those in the Latin version, *Song of Solomon* and most *Prophetic Writings* were not translated or missing, what he did has made the Chinese translation of *the Bible* take shape. His translation is simple and easy, with some northern slang in it. But *Psalms*, *Prophetic Writings* are a bit difficult to understand. Moreover, the translation of some proper nouns, the names of some animals and plants, and some Bible norms are not consistent. This version was not printed, either. The manuscript was kept in Beitang Library of Xishiku Catholic Church in Beijing before 1949. (邹振环, 1996)

Emmanuel Diaz (阳玛珥) finished *Sheng Jing Zhi Jie* (圣经直解) in 1636 in Beijing and published it in 1642. In this book there is index, and Ma Zuyi called it "the first Chinese book published with index". (马祖毅, 1999: 239) Other translations in this period are listed in the following:

Version	Translator	Time
<i>Tian Zhu Shi Yi</i> (天主实义)	Matthaeus Ricci (利玛窦)	1595
<i>Zhu Chuan Tian Zhu Shi Jie</i> (祖传天主十诫)	Matthaeus Ricci	1595
<i>Shou Nan Shi Mo</i> (受难始末)	Didace de Pantoja (庞迪我)	unknown
<i>Tian Zhu Jiang Sheng Yan Xing Ji Lue</i> (天主降生言行记略)	Julius Aleni (艾儒略)	1635—1637

2.2.2 The Second Stage (1804—1823)

The time between 1804 and 1823 could be regarded as the second stage of the Pioneering Period. *Marshman's Version* and *Morrison's Version* are the most



representative at this time.

2.2.2.1 Marshman's Version

Marshman's Version is the first complete Chinese translation of *the Bible*. It was translated in India by Protestant missionary Joshua Marshman and Joannes Lassar from Latin. Marshman was a British. He had zealous religious spirit of selfless devotion and innate language gift. Lassar, an Armenian born in Macao, was so good at Chinese that he was a fluent Chinese speaker and could write in Chinese. He might begin to translate *the Bible* into Chinese in 1804 or at the beginning of 1805. He probably met with some difficulties he himself could not overcome and then he worked under Marshman's instruction. Thus began their 16-year cooperation in the Chinese translation of *the Bible*. They worked very hard with more than three hundred Chinese reference books including *the Kangxi Dictionary* and a few other dictionaries. Marshman was mainly responsible for the understanding and interpretation of *the Bible*, and Lassar, for expressing it in Chinese. A Chinese and J. C Marshman, Marshman's son, also took part in the project. Marshman was also in charge of connecting the Church and collecting money. Their work was very complicated, full of difficulties and hardships. But they both took a very serious attitude toward it. This could be proved by what they did when translating *the New Testament*.

After Lassar had finished a chapter, Marshman checked it sentence by sentence, comparing it with Griesback's Greek Testament. Then Marshman read Griesback's Bible in English slowly and clearly, while Lassar listened, checking his Chinese translation and making some corrections if necessary. Sometimes this process of checking might be repeated two or more times before the translation was printed. After the typesetting, Marshman read the translation and revised it, together with a Chinese who did not know English, to make it smooth and easy to understand. Next, a few copies of the foundry proof were printed for reading and checking. After that, Marshman compared it with the Greek original again before his son checked it, as his son was well-versed in Chinese. Proofreading would be done for another two times before it was sent to the printing house. Before printing, the final proof was sent back, and after the Chinese assistant translator and Lassar went over it, Marshman would check it for the last time. Marshman said, "I hope we can get the most faithful Chinese version in the end through the strict examination." (谭树林, 2004: 128) In 1810, *Book of Matthew* was published in



Serampore, India. In 1811, *Book of Mark* was translated and printed. Being far away in India, they didn't have any Chinese translation of *the Bible* as reference and had to make a fresh start all by themselves. It is easy to imagine what difficulties and hardships they had overcome. Many names of the people and places in *the Bible* were treated in a very unnatural way, and the translation was unreadable and unintelligible. In 1813, *Book of John of the New Testament* was published. It has to be mentioned here that this book was in fact the first Chinese book printed with modern type typography. In fact, by the year of 1811, *the New Testament* had been translated, needing to be revised and printed. And by 1820, the whole Bible was translated. In 1821, *the Old Testament* was all published, and in the following year, 1822, *the New Testament* was also out. Now, after 18 years, Marshman and Lassar brought their translation to a successful conclusion in the end. A copy of the first complete Chinese Bible in the world was sent to London and placed on the table of the meeting held on May 7, 1823. Because of the decisive role Marshman played in its translation, it is usually called *Marshman's Version* (some people also call it *Marshman & Lassar's Version*).

The work of Marshman and Lassar was superior in three aspects over the other translations completed by their contemporaries. Firstly, they were the first who translated *Book of Matthew* and *Book of Mark* into Chinese and printed them. Secondly, they first used modern type typography to print the Chinese Bible. Thirdly, they first published the complete Chinese Bible. Alexander Wylie(伟烈亚力), a foreign missionary in China, pointed out, "To the best of my knowledge, this version (referring to Marshman's----the author) is the first complete Chinese Bible. It is a monument in the history of Bible translation." (马敏, 1999: 376) Though *Marshman's Version* was not so popular or influential in China as *Morrison's Version* that appeared almost at the same time, it was welcomed by the Chinese beyond the South China Sea, and also laid a solid foundation for the Chinese translation of *the Bible*. Some copies of this version arrived in China through different channels and influenced the churches in China. The Baptists used *Marshman's Version* for a long time. In Hong Kong in 1843, when the delegates from different sects of the American and British Protestant were discussing the translation of *Delegates Version* at a meeting, both *Marshman's Version* and *Morrison's Version* were listed as important reference versions. Later, Goddard and another foreign missionary revised this version and their revised edition was called *Goddard's Version*, and its *New*



Testament was used by the Baptist. Another British Baptist preacher T. H. Hudson also revised *the New Testament of Marshamn's Version*. His revised edition was called *Hudson's Version* and was published in 1866. The famous *Delegates' Version* and *Wenli United Version* (文理和合本) can be traced back to *Marshamn's Version* and *Morrison's Version*. The weakness of *Marahman's Version* lies in its unnaturalness, obscurity and unintelligibility. So it is unpopular outside the Baptist and was often criticized. However, as the first formally published complete Chinese Bible, *Marshman's Version* is very important in the history of cultural exchange between China and the west. This should not be neglected and forgotten. (马敏, 1999)

2.2.2.2 Morrison's Version

Morrison is the first foreign Protestant missionary coming to the mainland of China, and the founder of China London Missionary Society. He learned some elementary Chinese with the help of a Chinese when he was studying theology in London. At the same time, he went to British Museum and copied the remnant Chinese manuscript of *the New Testament* translated by Basset. This fragmentary manuscript later became the base for his translation. In 1807, he was sent to do missionary work in China. In September of that year, he arrived in Guangzhou and stayed secretly in an American's warehouse. He learned Chinese and at the same time began to translate *the Bible*. In 1810, Morrison translated *Book of Acts of the New Testament*. It had to be printed secretly, since missionary work was severely forbidden by the Qing government. After repeated setbacks, Morrison found Liang Fa, a worker in a printing house then and the first native Chinese missionary later, who promised to cut stencils and print his translation, which was very dangerous at that time as the Qing government stipulated that whoever cut stencils and printed books for foreigners in privacy would be beheaded. Under these circumstances, Morrison's translation work could not go on smoothly and his life was in danger at any time. In 1813, *the New Testament* was finished and 2000 copies were secretly printed in Guangzhou by Liang Fa and Millian, Morrison's assistant. Then Morrison began to translate *the Old Testament*. But soon after *Book of Genesis* was translated and printed, the local government knew something about Morrison's activities and began to search them and wanted to arrest them. Morrison's lawful capacity was the interpreter in East India Company. As Morrison's activities might do harm to its commercial interest in China, East India Company was not satisfied with him and



threatened to fire him. (王继武, 1991) For this reason, though Morrison and Millian had finished the translation of *the Old Testament* (twenty-six books were translated by Morrison, and the other thirteen by Millian) in November 25, 1819, it was not printed. In 1823, *the Old testament* and *the New Testament* were printed together in twenty-one columns, in the name of *Shen Tian Sheng Shu* (神天圣书). It is called *Morrison's Version*. This is a remarkable event in the history of Bible translation in China. Chinese printers Cai Gao, his two brothers Cai Xin and Cai San, and Liang Fa contributed a lot to it. After that for a long time, *Morrison's Version* was the most important reference for the Protestant Bible translation in China. Morrison and his Chinese Bible is highly praised as Morrison's translation introduced the western culture to China and initiated the multicultural progress in China. Though the progress is manifested by the conflict between the western culture and the traditional Chinese culture and their integration, the Confusion culture is no longer dominant in China, and the Chinese culture began to develop towards a modern multiple tendency. (顾长声, 2004)

British Overseas Bible Society asked Morrison to produce a version faithful to the original meaning when he translated *the Bible* so that the Chinese could understand and respect it. For Morrison, to use simple and easy words should be the paramount principle in Bible translation. So he would rather use the common words easy to understand instead of classic ones that are difficult and seldom seen. In a letter to London Mission, he wrote that he had taken into consideration accuracy, cleanness and simplicity in his translation. (毛发生, 2004) The influence and popularity of *Morrison's Version* has proved that Morrison's translation is a great success.

2.2.2.3 Disputes about *Marshman's Version* and *Morrison's Version*

There exist a lot of disputes over the above two versions, e.g., which of them was first translated? Which one on earth is the first complete Chinese Bible in the world? Did Marshman copy Morrison's translation? Some people even make commonsense mistakes about the two versions.

Whether Marshman copied Morrison's translation will be first discussed here. Even a most superficial comparison can show that between the two versions there is a surprising identity in the treatment of names of places and people. No wonder that this dispute arises. The answer can be found in a letter by Marshman in April of 1817. Marshman argued in it that he had not received from Morrison any copies of his own



translation but a copy of Basset's manuscript in about 1810. It suffices to say that both Marshman and Morrison referred to *Basset's Version* when translating *the Bible* after 1810. This is the very reason why both versions are similar in some treatments and why the style of Marshman's translation before 1810 was quite different from the style of his translation after 1810. (马敏, 1999) Tan Shulin has also proved that Marshman did not copy Morrison from three aspects: time and places of the two versions' translation and printing, Marshman's language capability and Chinese knowledge, and Marshman's Bible translation experience, methods and attitude. (谭树林, 2000) Tan's conclusion is convincing.

Because Morrison is the first Protestant missionary coming to China, and he is much more influential and famous than Marshman, many scholars take for granted that it is Morrison who translated and printed the first complete Chinese Bible. For example, Zou Zhenhuan said that Morrison's Version "is regarded as the first complete Chinese version that has been published"; (邹振环, 1996: 39) Zhuo Xinping believes that Morrison's translating *the Bible* in 1807 in Guangzhou is the beginning of complete Chinese translation of *the Bible*; (卓新平, 2000: 39) Ma Zuyi maintains that Morrison is the first to have introduced to China the complete Bible. (马祖毅, 1999: 244) The fact is, as is stated above, that Morrison began to translate *the Bible* into Chinese in 1807 while Marshman and Lassar started their Chinese translation in 1806, one year earlier than Morrison, not to speak of the contradictory saying by Zhuo Xinping in the same book: "After Morrison came to China, he started to translate *the New Testament* into Chinese in 1808." (卓新平, 2000: 66) Morrison finished his translation in 1819, but printed it in 1823. Marshman and Lassar finished their work in 1820, one year later than Morrison and Milian, but published it in 1822, one year earlier than Morrison did. Now we can conclude that it is Marshman and Lassar who first began the complete Chinese translation of *the Bible* in the world, and it is Morrison and Milian who first began the complete Chinese translation of *the Bible* in China; it is Morrison and Milian who first finished the translation of the complete Chinese Bible in the world, and Marshman's Version is the first complete Chinese Bible in the world that has been published. So it is wrong for Chen Zhong to say "two people, i.e., British Baptist missionaries Lassar and Marshman, first translated the Bible into Chinese completely". (陈忠, 2004: 282-283) There are two mistakes in Tan Shulin's opinion that "*Morrison's Version* is the first



complete translation of *the Bible* in China, and has opened up a path for the Chinese translation of *the Bible* in modern history”^①. (谭树林, 2004: 120) On the one hand, it is Marshman and Lassar who first began the complete Chinese translation of *the Bible* in the world. On the other hand, in the opinion of the author of this thesis, neither *Morrison's Version* nor *Marshman's Version* is the first complete Chinese Bible in China, because neither of them was translated by Chinese, or was published in China. Mao Fasheng makes a commonsense mistake when he says that *Marshman's Version* was finished in 1823. (毛发生, 2004: 48) Jiang Xiaohua makes commonsense mistakes again when he writes in his article that the printing of Morrison's *Shen Tian Sheng Shu* in 1823 should be regarded as “the first complete Chinese version of *the Bible* that was published in China”, and he also writes: “In the same year, the abridgement translation of *the Bible* by another missionary Marshman was published.” (蒋骁华, 2003: 303) Jiang's article was published in *Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, and Mao's, *Chinese Translators Journal*, both being authoritative. Jiang is somehow famous in the field of translation in China. Their mistakes show the serious insufficiency of research on this topic among Chinese scholars.

Who, Morrison or Marshman, first introduced all the Christian original doctrine to China is still an open question. *Marshman's Version* appeared one year earlier than Morrison's, but the former was printed in Serampore in India while the latter one was published in Malacca, relatively closer to China.^② Which of the two versions entered China first is not decided. *Marshman's Version* arrived in London in May of 1823, then it might reach China at about the same time since the very purpose of translating and publishing *the Bible* is to do missionary work in China. *Morrison's Version* might be sent to China very soon after it was printed as Malacca is close to China. Morrison's *New Testament* was published earlier, and it was published in Guangzhou in China. His *Book of Genesis of the Old Testament* was also published in Guangzhou. His *Shen Tian Shen Shu* might reach China earlier than *Marshman's Version* did as it was printed in a place very close to China, Malacca. What's more, Morrison was much more famous, and his

^① 原文为：马礼逊《圣经》中译本，是中国第一部全译本，开近代《圣经》中译之嚆矢。

^② 顾长声、马敏、马祖毅等均认为是在马六甲，只有谭树林在书中称在广州。据马敏《马希曼、拉沙与早期的〈圣经〉中译》文中注释：“马礼逊，米怜译：《神天圣书》〈载旧遗诏书兼新遗诏书〉，马六甲英华书院，1823年出版。牛津大学波德林图书馆 Bodleian Library 收藏本”，加上马敏本人在波德林图书馆亲自阅读过该译本，基本上可以认定是在马六甲出版。分别见：马敏，1999: 376；顾长声，2004: 402；马祖毅，1999: 244；谭树林，2004: 120。



version was better in quality and much more influential and popular in China. Considering the above factors, it seems that the opinion of Ma Zuyi may be reasonable. However, this opinion needs reliable evidences. It is a little indiscreet for Ma Min to conclude that "It suffices to correct the vague view that it is Morrison who first introduced to China the complete Christian doctrine" only because *Marshamn's Version* was first published. (马敏, 1999: 376)

Marshman and Morrison translated *the Bible* into Chinese independently in different places, and there was some competition between them. Such competition was good for their work. They admitted that both of them had to be more careful in their translation because of the competition. (谭树林, 2004) The history of the Chinese translation of *the Bible* has proved that the competition is indeed positive. Both versions are important monuments in the history of the Chinese translation of *the Bible*, and both Marshman and Morrison had laid solid foundation for their successors.

2.2.3 The Third Stage (1824—1842)

In 1827, Watter Henry Medhurst(麦都思), Karl Friedrich Gutzlaff(郭实腊), Elijah Coleman Bridgman(裨治文) and Morrison's son, John Robert Morrison(马儒汉) made up a group of four to revise *Morrison's Version*. The revised *New Testament* was published in 1837, named *the Newly Bequeathed Oracles* (新遗诏书). The revised *Old Testament*, renamed *the Sacred Book of the Old Bequeathed Oracles*(旧遗诏书), was published in 1838—1840. In 1840, Gutzlaff revised *the Newly Bequeathed Oracles* and his revision is called *Gutzlaff's Version*. This version is very important in the history of the Chinese translation of *the Bible*. With this version (and its revision in 1855), Gutzlaff did very successful missionary work in inland areas, and his missionary scope was the largest among the western missionaries in China. Later, Hong Xiuquan printed it and *the Sacred Book of the Old Bequeathed Oracles* together with some changes and named it *the Sacred Book of the Old and Newly Bequeathed Oracles* (新旧遗诏圣书). It was used by Hong Xiuquan's Taiping Heavenly Kingdom from the very beginning until the failure of their revolution.

2.3 The Prospering Period (1843—1919)

Because of the quarrel over the Chinese rites, Emperor Kangxi got angry and issued an edict forbidding Christian (Catholic at that time) missionary work in China. Emperor



Yongzheng and Emperor Qianlong were hostile to Catholicism and issued edicts repeatedly prohibiting Catholicism in China. In the reign of Qianlong Emperor, there were three large-scale movements of persecuting Catholics, and the Catholic missionary work almost disappeared in China. Emperor Jiaqing also issued forbidding edicts. In 1814, Macao government promulgated a decree, banning the Chinese from believing in foreign religions. Thus, both foreign priests' missionary work and Chinese people's converting to Christianity were prohibited. So, for more than one hundred years before 1842, it is very hard for Christians to do missionary work in China. Few missionaries came to China and there were only a few Chinese translations of *the Bible*. This is why Marshman went to India to translate *the Bible* and why Morrison had to do his Bible translation in the capacity as the interpreter of East India Company and print his *Shen Tian Shen Shu* in Malacca. Since 1842, after the signing of *Treaty of Nanking* and a series of other unequal treaties, the Qing government was forced to lift the ban, and the foreign missionaries could do missionary work freely and Christianity spread from the coast to the inland areas of China. The strong missionary stream activated the Chinese translation of *the Bible* objectively. Then a lot of Chinese versions appeared and their quality was greatly improved. This ushered in a new period of the Chinese translation of *the Bible*. By 1919, within seventy-seven years, influential versions added up to more than twenty ones, and many dialect versions and versions in minority languages were translated and published during this period. *The Union Version* published in 1919 signified the acme of the Chinese translation of *the Bible*.

2.3.1 *Goddard's Version* (高德译本), *Bridgman's Version* (裨治文译本) and *the Delegates' Version* (委办译本/代表译本)

On August 22, 1843, fifteen missionaries, representatives from the London Missionary Society, the American Baptist and the like, met together in Hong Kong to inaugurate a new Chinese version which was known as *the Delegates' Version* later. Eleven decisions were made for the translation. But there was no agreement as to the best name for God. The Catholics had already settled the controversy, and the Catholic missionaries had all agreed to use Chinese *Tian Zhu* (天主) for God in the 16th century, which got the Pope's approval in 1704.

The Baptists first withdrew. The Baptist missionary J. Goddard revised *Marshman's*



Version, and published *the New Testament* in 1853. Goddard and E. C. Lord finished *the Old Testament* in 1867 and published the complete Bible in 1868. This Baptist revision was called *Goddard's Version*.

Missionaries from American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Society(美国公理会)also withdrew. Under the sponsorship of American Bible Society(美国圣经公会), Bridgman, M.S. Culberston and some other missionaries translated independently, and published in 1863 a complete version, in which God was rendered as *Shen* (神). This version was called *Bridgman's Version*. (文庸, 1992)

W. H. Medhurst, W. C. Mmilne, John Stronach, James Legge and some other missionary delegates decided to go on with their translation. They rendered God into *Shang Di*(上帝). Since Medhurst organized and took part in the work from the very beginning, this translation was regarded as his accomplishment in a certain degree. A few Chinese were invited to join him in this job, and among them was the famous scholar Wang Tao. Their main task was to polish the translation done by the foreign missionaries and make it smooth, idiomatic and elegant. The work lasted for about six years. *The New Testament* was finished in 1850 and published in 1852. In 1854, *the Old Testament* was done and printed together with *the New Testament*. This is *the Delegates' Version* in the history of the Chinese translation of *the Bible*. Its quality is much better than that of *Bridgman's Version* and *Medhurst's Version*. By 1859, *the Delegates' Version* had been printed for eleven times. Until the 1920s, it was still used in China. It was one of the most popular versions in China. (王立群, 2004)

2.3.2 Bishop Scherchewsky's Version (施约瑟译本), Griffith John's Version (杨格非译本) and Some Other Versions

The above versions were translated in classical Chinese, i.e., *High Wenli* (深文理), in order to win favor from scholar-officials and the literati in China. But they worked very little, because with the language developing and the traditional thoughts shaken up in the 19th century, *High Wenli* that was only mastered by men of letters could no longer meet the need of the times. *Easy Wenli* (浅文理) then arose. The Chinese translations of *the Bibles* in *Easy Wenli* were published to meet ordinary people's need. There were *Griffith John's Version*, *John Shaw Burdon's Version*, *Bishop Scherchewsky's Version* and so on. *Bishop Scherchewsky's Version* is worth mentioning here.



In the 19th century, there existed *High Wenli*, *Easy Wenli* and northern Mandarin in China. Scherchewsky maintained that *the Bible* should be translated into the language used by ordinary people so that it could be read by most people in China. In 1864, when he explained to American Foreign Committee of the Board of Missions (美国国外布道团委员会) the importance of the Chinese translation of *the Bible*, he suggested that *the Bible* be translated into Mandarin, which was in fact popular in three fourths of China. Scherchewsky was the first one who advocated translating *the Bible* in Mandarin. In 1863, he was entrusted the responsibility of translating *the Bible* into Mandarin because of his good command of Hebrew and his Jewish education background. His translation of *Book of Genesis* was completed in 1866, but the whole *Old Testament* was published in 1875. In 1878, his *Old Testament* was printed together with *the New Testament* translated by Peking Committee. This version was welcomed as soon as it was published. Almost most areas in China began to use this version instead of former *High Wenli* versions. It was concise in language, vigorous in style and standard in diction. For about forty years, it had no rival. Before *the Mandarin Union Version* was published in 1919, this version was the standard one in China. Realizing the limits of *High Wenli*, Scherchewsky began to translate *the Bible* into *Easy Wenli* in 1880 after the revision of his *Old Testament*. His *book of Psalms* was the earliest version in *Easy Wenli*. In 1881, however, when he was working in Wuchang, he was stricken with paralysis as the result of sunstroke. After that, although he was unable to hold a pen, and could only use one finger of each hand, he continued his task of translating in an undaunted spirit by means of a typewriter for twenty-five years. He first typed Roman letters and then his Chinese assistant changed them into Chinese characters. Lifted into his chair in the morning for work, he was lifted out at night for rest. He once humorously called his version "a Two-finger Edition". Scherchewsky made the first attempt to translate *the Bible* in *Easy Wenli* and Mandarin. His versions, which were printed twenty-six times before 1919, brought *the Bible* to numerous common people, and laid a solid foundation for later Bible translation in Mandarin, especially for the translation of *the Union Version*. Scherchewsky's work was among the great romances of Bible translation history. His versions were obviously better than those of his contemporaries, which mainly benefited from his early Jewish Christian education. This shows that a translator's background is an important factor for the quality of the translation. (张利伟, 1994)



Griffith John followed Scherchewsky's suit and published *Book of Mark* (马可福音) in *Easy Wenli* in 1883 and later *the Old Testament*, *Book of Psalms*, *Book of Proverbs*, *Book of Genesis*, *Book of Exodus* and so on. John S. Burdon and Henry Blodget published *Book of Matthew* (马太福音) in 1886 and *the New Testament* in 1889.

Among other Mandarin versions are *the Peking Mandarin New Testament* by John S. Burdon, Scherchewsky, Edkins, Blodget and W. A. P. Martin, and *Griffith John's Mandarin Version*.

2.3.3 The Mandarin Union Version

The Mandarin Union Version is an epoch-making milestone in the history of the Chinese translation of *the Bible*. At that time, there were scores of Chinese versions, which were not good for the young Christian world in China. Both the churches and Christian followers were in need of a united standard Bible.

In 1890, the great Missionary Conference was held in Shanghai. At the Conference, the three representative committees brought in unanimous reports in favor of Union versions in *High Wenli*, *Easy Wenli* and Mandarin. The Conference adopted these reports. It was the most outstanding decision of that meeting, and a landmark in the history of the Church in China. The Conference decided that all existing material was to be at the disposal of the translators of the Union versions; that the text underlying the English Revised version in 1885, which itself was based on *the King James Bible*, was to be the basis of their work, and that in order to secure One Bible in Three Versions, the three companies of translators were to co-operate in all matters concerning the settlement of the text and its interpretation. (Broomhall, 1934)

Ten years later, *the Union Version of the New Testament* in *Easy Wenli* was completed, but work on *the Old Testament* did not begin. Work on *the High Wenli Version* was much more troublesome. Some members preferred a literal rendering while some strongly favored style. One member retired and another died. Then the third had all his work destroyed by the Boxers. After all obstacles, the manuscript of *the New Testament* was finished shortly before the General Conference of 1907, the centenary of Robert Morrison's arrival in China. Seventeen years had elapsed since the two Union *Wenli* versions had been approved, and there had been radical changes in China, especially in the Chinese language. Three versions were now unnecessary. *High* and



Easy Wenli were tending towards a common ground, and Mandarin was being dignified for literary use. The Centenary Conference therefore decided that there should be but one Classical version instead of two. They adopted a resolution that what had been completed should be published and sold for a period of three years, and that meantime the revisers should unite to prepare one classical version in which the best of each rendering should be incorporated.

The story of the Mandarin Union Version was a record of extraordinary difficulty. This was to be a version to meet the needs of most people in China. So the translators should be representative of the leading denominations of Europe and America, and the different Mandarin-speaking areas as well. No fewer than twenty-eight men were nominated. At first, the seven members of the Executive Committee of *the Mandarin Version* included Chauncey Goodrich (富善), Calvin W. Mateer (狄考文), J. R. Hykes, John Livingston Nevis, George S. Owen, Thomas Bramfit and Henry Blodget (白汉理), with Calvin W. Mateer as the chairman. But the members were never fixed. When a member retired, resigned or died, a new member would fill the vacancy. For example, John Livingston Nevis died at the desk when he was doing his translation work, and Norris took his place. By 1907, sixteen years after the 1890 meeting, *the New Testament* was completed. But Calvin W. Mateer soon died and Chauncey Goodrich became chairman. Altogether sixteen foreign missionaries took part in the great work. All of them were all outstanding figures, proficient in both the original Bible and Chinese. They tried to achieve four criteria: (1) use everyday spoken language instead of classical or vernacular Chinese; (2) use simple language so that laymen could understand while listening in the church; (3) be faithful to the original Hebrew and Greek, yet take Chinese elegance into consideration; (4) translate puns and wordplay literally, instead of giving out literary translations of the hidden meanings.

Thirteen years later, *the Old Testament* was finished. In February, 1919, after twenty-nine years' hard work, the first edition of *the Mandarin Union Version* was published, and it was officially named *Mandarin Union Version* (often referred to as *the Union Version* in short). Only one member of the first committee members, Chauncey Goodrich, who was then 82 years old, witnessed its appearance. Many Chinese assistants also made contribution to this version.

The success of *the Mandarin Union Version* was immediate and obvious.



Coincidentally and fortunately, in the same year of its publication, the May Fourth Movement broke out. A new era of the Chinese literature began and Mandarin (later called Baihua) was dignified and used in literature. Millions of copies of *the Mandarin Union Version* were sold. Many people said that this version acted as the catalytic agent and played a facilitating role in the May Fourth New Literature Movement.

Zhou Zuoren(周作人) thus wrote in his *The Holy Bible and the Chinese Literature*(圣书与中国文学):

This version is translated for the religious purpose with little attention to the literary effect. However, because of its prudent and faithful translation, so much of its original literariness remains that it has great literary value. ...It is really difficult to translate *the Bible* so faithfully and expressively. ...Once some people objected to the new literature by saying, as I can remember, that the articles of the new literature were not new, for they were all imitating *Book of Matthew*. At that time, I felt their remarks funny. But now, I can't help admiring their foresight. *Book of Matthew* is indeed the first Europeanized literary Mandarin. I predict that it would greatly influence the future of the Chinese new literature.^①(止庵, 2004: 60-61)

The Bible referred to in this article is *the Mandarin Union Version*.

By now, nearly one hundred years have passed by, but *the Mandarin Union Version* has always been the most authoritative and popular one in China. After its publication, there appeared some other versions translated in modern and contemporary Chinese, but none of them is the rival of this version. The authority of *the Mandarin Union Version* is also recognized in foreign countries. In 1978, when *the Authorized Version* was published in the United States, the Chinese quotation on the flyleaf is from *the Union Version*.^②(任东升, 2000: 59)

At present, in the mainland of China, *the Bible* available is mainly *the Union Version* in different editions. The influence of the Chinese Bible in the following also

^① 这译本的目的在宗教的一面, 文学上未必有意的注重; 然而因了他的慎重诚实的译法, 原作的文学趣味保存的很多, 所以也使译文的文字价值增高了。...现在能够译成这样信达的文章, 实在已经很难了。...我记得从前有人反对新文学, 说这些文章并不能算新, 因为都是从《马太福音》出来的; 当时觉得这话很是可笑, 现在想起反要佩服他的先觉: 《马太福音》的确是中国最早欧化的文学的国语, 我又预计它与中国新文学的前途有极深的关系。见止庵编, 河北人民出版社 2004 年版《周作人讲演集》, 第 60-61 页。

^② 神爱世人, 甚至将他的独生子赐给他们, 叫一切信他的, 不至灭亡, 反得永生。见“和合本”《约翰福音》第 3 章第 16 节。



mainly belongs to that of *the Union Version*.

2.3.4 Dialect Versions and Versions for Ethnic Minorities

For wider spread of Christian doctrine, the foreign missionaries in China translated and published many versions in Chinese dialects. There are scores of different versions in different dialects, e.g., *Book of John* in Shanghai dialect, *the New Testament* in Fuzhou dialect, *the Bible* in Ningbo dialect, and so on.

The foreign missionaries also translated and published some versions for ethnic minorities in China, e.g., *the Mongolian New Testament* published in Shanghai in 1896, *the Korean New Testament* published in Fengtian (i.e., Shenyang) in 1897, and *the Huamiaowen Bible* published in Shanghai in 1917, to list just some of them. From the 1860s to the beginning of the 20th century, foreign missionaries published *the Bible* in more than 30 different ethnic minority languages, such as Manchu, Mongolian, Korean, Russian, Tibetan, Miaohuawen, Miaoheiwun, Lisuwen, Huamiaowen and the like. And some of them were published in Latin or Roman letter *pinyin* invented by the foreign missionaries themselves. In some ethnic minorities without their own written language, the Latin or Roman letter *pinyin* is still being used for cultural study and publication. (顾长声, 2004)

2.4 The Flourishing Period (1919—)

The Mandarin Union Version is the best product of the foreign missionaries in China. It is also the end of their large-scale biblical translation activity in China. After that, Chinese scholars began to study and translate *the Bible*, and the responsibility of the Chinese translation was shifted from the shoulders of foreign missionaries to those of Chinese scholars. Many versions have appeared and the Chinese translation of *the Bible* has flourished.

2.4.1 Early Versions

Soon after *the Mandarin Union Version*'s publication, some Chinese versions appeared, like *Wang Xuanchen's Version* (王宣忱译本) and *Zhu Baohui's Version* (朱宝惠译本). They are the early attempts made by Chinese scholars and are not influential.

Wang Xuanchen's Version

The first independent native Chinese translator is Wang Xuanchen, a professor in



Qilu University. He was once the assistant of C. W. Mateer, and helped Mateer translate *the Mandarin Union Version*. The literary grace in this version somewhat benefited from Wang. In 1930, on the base of Latin text in London and the English text in New York, he began to translate *the New Testament*. In 1933 his translation was published. This is the first version done by a Chinese translator. (任东升, 2002)

Zhu Baohui's Version

Zhu Baohui's Version was translated by Zhu Baohui and a foreign missionary A. Sydenstriker (赛兆祥), who was proficient of old Hebrew and Greek. *The New Testament* was published in 1929. After Sydenstriker died in 1930, Zhu Baohui had to revise *the New Testament* and translate *the Old Testament* alone. In 1939, the whole Bible was printed entitled *the Retranslated Bible* (重译新旧约全书 in Chinese).

Some other Versions are listed in the following form:

Version	Translator(s)	Time
<i>Book of Psalms</i> (圣咏译义)	Wu Jingxiong (吴经熊)	1946
<i>the New Testament</i> (新经全集)	Wu Jingxiong	1949
<i>the New Testament</i>	Li Sanfu (李山甫) & Shen Zitian (申自天)	1949
<i>Bible Treasury New Testament</i> (国语新旧库译本: 新约全书)	Zhen Shoulin (郑寿麟) & Heinrich Ruck (路亨理)	1939
<i>Bible Treasury New Testament & Psalms</i> (国语新旧库译本: 新约和诗篇)	Zhen Shoulin & Heinrich Ruck	1958
<i>the New Testament</i> (吕译新约初稿)	Lü Zhenzhong (吕振中)	1946
<i>New Revised Version of the New Testament</i> (新约新译修稿)	Lü Zhenzhong	1952

2.4.2 New Versions

The Chinese language has experienced radical changes after 1919 when *the Mandarin Union Version* was published. At the same time, Bible scholars have a deeper understanding about the original text of *the Bible* and its background with new archaeological discoveries. Thus arises the necessity of revising the old versions and translating new ones. In recent years, many efforts have been made. The 1950s witnessed the publication of *Newly Translated Gospels*(新译福音), Di Shouren's *Simple Reading*



of the Bible (简易圣经读本), *the New Testament* by Xiao Tiedi(Theodore E. Hsiao) , and *Xin Jing Quan Ji*(新经全集) by Xiao Jingsan. In the 1960s, there is *de Portiuncula's Version*(思高译本). Among other important new versions are *Lü Zhenzhong's Version*(吕振中译本) (1970), *Today's Gospel* (当代福音) (1974), *Living Bible* (当代圣经) (1979), *Today's Chinese Bible* (现代中文译本) (1979) and *Today's Chinese Version Revised Edition* (现代中文译本修订本) (1995), *Bible New Translation* (圣经新译本) (1993) and *Chinese Union Version with New Punctuation* (新标点和合本) (1988). In the following a few important versions will be touched upon.

***De Portiuncula's Version* 思高圣经**

De Portiuncula's Version is the first and only complete Catholic Bible in China. It is the fruit of group work as it was finished by Studium Biblicum Franciscanum (Sigao Bible Society 思高圣经学会), which was founded by Italian priest Lei Yongming(i.e., Gabriele Allegra) in Beijing in August 2, 1945. Lei came to China in July of 1931. From about 1935, he began to translate *the Bible* into Chinese by himself. He worked day and night and did not stop even under the heavy bombardment of Japanese planes. In November, 1944, *the Old Testament* was completed. From the first day of its founding, Studium Biblicum Franciscanum began to revise and translate *the Bible* under the leadership of Lei. Their translation was published in eleven books one after another. The first product, *Book of Psalms*, was published in June, 1961 in Hong Kong (after 1949, Studium Biblicum Franciscanum moved there), and the last one was out in April, 1961. It took Studium Biblicum Franciscanum fifteen and a half years to accomplish the translation and add annotations to it. Only after a seven-year thorough revision was the whole Bible published in December, 1968. If Lei's hard work of about six years (from 1935 to 1944, with three years excluded because of his illness) is counted, *de Portiuncula's Version* had cost altogether about twenty-nine years. In the process, translators referred to *Septuagint*, *Greek New Testament* and many other materials. As most translators were Chinese priests, this version is often regarded as Chinese scholars' achievement. After its publication, it is not only the master version for all the Catholic ceremony books, but also the starting point of Bible interpretation for Bible courses in theological seminaries or other theological teaching centers. The feature of this version is characterized firstly by faithfulness, secondly by expressiveness, and thirdly by elegance. But some people criticize that it is not elegant and smooth, and some complain it to be a



bit difficult to understand. (赵维本, 1993)

Today's Chinese Bible (现代中文译本)

In 1968, the Protestants and Catholics in Taiwan attempted to publish a version that could be used by both schools. In October, 1971, the translation work was initiated. Xu Mushi was in charge of translating *Today's English Version* into Chinese (it is wrong for Zuo Xinping to say that this version was translated directly from Hebrew and Greek original. 卓新平, 1992: 31; Fu Jingmin is not right to call *Today's Chinese Version* the revision of *the Union Version*. 傅敬民, 2005: 100-101), and a group of eight Bible scholars were in charge of checking the translation with the original Bible. As no agreement was reached on the union of some proper names, the expected united version that could be adopted by both the Protestants and the Catholics failed to be completed. In 1975, the Protestant edition of *the New Testament of Today's Chinese Version* saw the world. Four years later, translation of *the Old Testament* finished and was printed at the end of 1979. (Later, the Catholic edition of *the New Testament of Today's Chinese Version* was also published.) (赵维本, 1993:)

Dr. Eugene A. Nida had made instructions to the translation of *Today's Chinese Version*.^① His principle of 'dynamic equivalence' is adopted throughout the translation process. As this version is mainly translated for secondary-level readers and non-Christian people, importance is attached to colloquialism and smoothness, and translators tried to avoid the use of religious terms, theological nouns and transliterations. In 1995, its revised version was published. Now *Today's Chinese Bible* has become the second most popular one.

New Chinese Bible and Bible New Translation

In January of 1972, Chinese Bible New Translation Symposium was held in Hong Kong. On the last day, the Executive Committee of Chinese Bible New Translation was elected. In May of that year, the translation work started. Two basic principles guided the work: to be faithful to the original and to use idiomatic contemporary Chinese (既忠于原文, 又合乎现代语体文). Its *New Testament* was based upon the second edition of Greek

^① 1970年1月5日,“汉文圣经统一译本筹备委员会”在台湾举行第二次会议,主要内容是听取联合圣经公会翻译研究部主任奈达博士报告未来的工作计划。奈达希望中文的现代译本能在五年内完成。他还就具体翻译提出几点建议,还建议同年暑期举办研讨会。当年7月4日至31日,研讨会举行。在《现代中文译本》新约翻译工作开始之前,以奈达为首的一群译经专家拟定了一份“国语新约翻译指导原则”,作为工作人员的指引。见赵维本,1993:102-104。



New Testament compiled by the United Bible Society in 1966, and *the Old Testament* was based upon *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* published by German Bible Society in 1977. The translators were meticulous and precise in work. When the translation graft was out, it was checked and revised by a special group. Then it was copied and sent to some experts to be examined, and the feedback was collected. Then the translators and the revising group would check it once again before it was sent for printing. (中文圣经新译会, 1986) After four years' hard work, *the New Testament* was published in 1976, in the name of *New Chinese Bible* (新约全书新译本或中文圣经新译本). The whole Bible was accomplished in 1992 and printed in the following year. This version is called *Bible New Translation* (圣经新译本). So many years after its publication, it is still rather strange even to many Christians, especially the young.

Living Bible (当代圣经 / 活泼真道)

Chinese *Living Bible* is a literal translation of Dr. Kenneth Taylor's *Living Bible* in English. Dr. Taylor rewrote *the Bible* to make his children understand the truth in it. His version was a great success and more than 20 million copies were sold in ten years. Later, Dr. Taylor founded the Living Bible International and a fund for translating *Living Bible* in the world. In 1972, the Representative Office of the Living Bible International in Hong Kong was founded, and the Chinese translation of *Living Bible* began. Guided by the principle of neither adding nor deducting any meaning, and trying to be smooth and simple, *the New Testament* was finished in 1974 and the whole version was out in 1979. Its edition in simplified characters was published in 1981. It is said that this version is very useful for the spread of Christian doctrines. (中文圣经新译会, 1986)

Revision of *the Union Version*

The greatest and most authoritative version as it is, *the Union Version* is far from perfect. After all, it was translated by a group of foreign missionaries at the turn of last century when Vernacular Chinese (*baihuawen*) was still at its infant stage. There is some room for improvement in some aspects, such as grammar, diction, and its punctuation. In 1984, the representatives from the United Bible Societies and church leaders from Hong Kong and Taiwan attended a meeting in Taiwan to discuss the principles for revising *the Union Version*. The revision covered thirteen aspects like punctuation, some names, diction, characters, measure units and so on. Then a Revision Committee was organized and the work started in Taiwan in 1985. In 1988, the revised version, *Chinese Union*



Version with New Punctuation by name, was published. It was highly praised by its users.

It is said that the Catholics and the Protestants have been making joint efforts to translate a united Chinese Bible since the 1980s.



3. Influence of the Chinese Translation of *the Bible* in China

It is estimated that 300 million copies of Chinese Bible had been published by 1996 since *Morrison's Version* was printed in 1823. (顾长声, 2004: 413) After that, *the Bible* has been exerting great influence upon China. Zou Zhenhuan regards it as one of the one hundred foreign books that have influenced modern China.

3.1 Influence upon Religion

The direct purpose to translate *the Bible* into Chinese is to propagate the Christian doctrines. Just as Dr. Peng Guowei said, without suitable Bible versions, no church could be founded; Bible translation is absolutely the front of missionary work. (彭国玮, 2001:22) With the wide spread of Chinese Bible, Christianity and its doctrines gradually strike root in the hearts of some Chinese people, and many Chinese convert to Christianity. The first Chinese priest, Liang Fa, became a Christian after he read Morrison's Chinese translation of *the Bible*. Since the 1980s, Christianity has developed rapidly in China. In some areas, the increase of Christians has exceeded that of population. (杨慧林, 2002) At present, the number of Christians in China is very large. According to David Aikman's *Jesus in Beijing: How Christianity Is Transforming China and Changing the Global Balance of Power*, there were 70 million Protestants and 12 million Catholics in China in 2003. Some overseas scholars estimated in 2004 that there might be 90 million Protestants in China. Morrison once said that a foreigner's imperfect translation of *the Bible* could make a local person understand the thought and meaning of *the Bible* and would be better than oral sermons. (谭树林, 2004: 132) It is reasonable to say that the Chinese Bible has played a critical role in the development of Christianity in China.

3.2 Influence upon Politics

The Bible embodies democracy, equality and humanitarian. For example, in *the Bible*, Jesus says that God is the Father of man, and everyone is His child, so people are all equal no matter they are rich or poor. After its translation into Chinese, *the Bible* has exerted great positive influence on the political fields in China. Not a few Chinese



statesmen, thinkers and public figures admire Jesus' words and deeds, though not all of them believe in God. They derive the thought of democracy, equality and humanitarian from *the Bible*, and fought to turn them into realities.

3.2.1 Inspiration of *the Bible* to Hong Xiuquan and Taiping Revolution

In 1836, when taking part in the imperial examinations in Gunagzhou, Hong Xiuquan got *Good Word to Admonish the Age* (劝世良言), a Christian missionary pamphlet edited by Liang Fa. Twenty-six articles in it were directly drawn from *Morrison's Version*. After his third failure in the examinations, Hong began to study the book and converted to Christianity. Later, he established God Worshipping Society together with Feng Yunsan and other followers. In the spring of 1847, Hong went to Guangzhou and stayed for two months there, learning Christian creeds from a foreign missionary Issachat Jacox Roberts (i.e. 罗孝全). He studied and got *Gutzlaff's Version*. In 1851, under Hong's leadership, the Taiping Rebellion broke out. This is the largest peasant uprising in Chinese history. Hong named his state Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, according to *Sermon on the Mount in the New Testament*, meaning to establish a heavenly kingdom on the earth. (卓新平, 1999)

Between 1844 and 1847, on the base of Christian creeds, Hong Xiuquan wrote three articles.^① Their main idea was that God was the Father of man, and all human beings were brothers and sisters who were equal. They were later the guiding principles and theoretical basis for the revolutionary movement.

Besides being used as theoretical instruction, *the Bible* was used by Hong to run his army. It was regarded as the supreme authoritative and was called "*The Sacred Book* (天书)" and "*the Bequeathed Oracles*(遗诏)". Hong himself often read it and could recite most of it. (顾长声, 2004) After he had established himself at Nanjing, Hong published numerous copies of *the Bible*, adopting *Gutzlaff's Version*. *The New Testament* was called *The Sacred Book of the Newly Bequeathed Oracles* (新遗诏圣书) and *the Old Testament* was called *The Sacred Book of the Old Bequeathed Oracles*(旧遗诏圣书). Four men were specially appointed to handle this matter. *Ten Heavenly Commandments* set by

^① 《原道救世歌》,《原道醒世训》和《原道觉世训》,“道”即耶稣在《圣经》上所宣讲之道。



Hong were almost the same as *Commandments in the Old Testament*.^① The pamphlet of *Ten Heavenly Commandments* was handed out to each officer and soldier. Whoever could not recite them after their joining the army for three weeks would be beheaded. (陈忠, 2004) The content of *the Bible* was edited into the textbooks in the elementary schools founded by Taiping Revolutionaries. When the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom wanted to select cadres, the candidates were examined on the doctrines in *the Bible*. Taiping revolutionaries were very combat-worthy. At the early period, they were extremely irresistible. The reason lied in the fact that they were filled with religious sacrifice and believed that they could enter Heaven after their glory death. (王治心, 2004)

Without the thought of democracy, equality and sacrifice, *the Bible* could not have become the spiritual nourishment for the Taiping revolutionaries. Without its Chinese translation, all this is impossible.

3.2.2 Inspiration of *the Bible* to Sun Yat-sen and National Revolution

Dr. Sun Yat-sen, the great pioneer for China's democratic revolution, once studied in a Christian school when he was a child. In 1883, at the age of 18, he was baptized in Hong Kong. After his conversion, Sun had a better understanding of Jesus' spirit of sacrifice. *The Bible* became his guide in his life. One day, when he was asked by his angry father to leave after he had destructed the idol that was worshipped by people in his birthplace, he was just holding *the Bible* in his hands, reading attentively by a small oil lamp. (王治心, 2004)

In 1896, Sun got involved in a danger. One Sunday, on his way to the church, Sun was cajoled by two Chinese and then was secretly imprisoned in the embassy by the envoy of the Qing government in Great Britain. After the incident, he described his experience in a letter to Ou Fengchi, a Christian leader in Hong Kong:

At that time I could do nothing but confess and pray keenly. I prayed for seven days, more and more keenly. On the 7th day, suddenly, I became full of comfort, without a bit sorrow, which was completely out of my expectation. I said to myself that my prayer was answered and I was favored by God. ...since God

^①天条十款：(一)崇拜皇上帝；(二)不好拜邪神；(三)不好妄提皇上帝之名；(四)七日礼拜，颂赞皇上帝；(五)孝顺父母；(六)不好杀人害人；(七)不好奸邪淫乱；(八)不好偷窃抢劫；(九)不好讲谎话；(十)不好起贪心。《旧约》中摩西颁发的上帝十诫的内容是：(一)除上帝外不可敬别的神；(二)不可敬拜偶像；(三)不可妄称上帝的名；(四)当守安息圣日；(五)当孝顺父母；(六)不可杀人；(七)不可奸淫；(八)不可偷盗；(九)不可作假见证陷害人；(十)不可贪婪人的财物。



answered my prayer, bestowed me favors, and comforted me, that man would be moved and agree to send the message for me. ... I suffered but was saved from the great misfortune, just like the prodigal son reformed, and the lost sheep regained. All of this should be attributed to the grace of God, our Father in Heaven. ^① (转引自王治心, 2004: 220—221)

This letter shows Sun's piety. "The prodigal son" and "the lost sheep" are quoted directly from *the Bible*.

Cui Canghai thus wrote:

The late Premier was a pious Christian all through his life. ...when he was still a child, he converted to Christianity and was an ardent believer. When he read *Book of Genesis* in which Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt to Canaan, he was enraptured and could not help slapping the table in delight, crying: "Can't I get Han people out of Manchu rule and found a new country?!"^② (转引自王治心, 2004: 223)

After the Republic of China was founded, Sun compared the overthrowing of Manchu government to the Israelites' getting rid of slavery in Egypt and Moses' liberating the Israelites from Egypt. The separatist warlord regime and people's extreme misery after the establishment of the Republic was compared by Sun to Israelites' suffering in the wilderness for forty years. (陈忠, 2004)

Some people think that Dr. Sun's Three People's Principles (Nationalism, Democracy and the People's Livelihood) embody Jesus' spirit of universal fraternity. Dr Sun once claimed that his revolutionary desire came from Jesus, and he even attributed the success of revolution to Christianity. (孙尚扬, 刘宗坤, 2002: 59) It is said that the success of the revolution led by Sun has something to do with Christianity and the spirit of patriotism, democracy and sacrifice for the masses in *the Bible*. Among the revolutionaries that followed Sun, some were Christians and even priests, like Lu Haodong and Liu Jing'an. Six martyrs of Huanghuagang Uprising were Christians. In the English journal *Chinese Recorder* published in January of 1912, there was a short story

^①弟此时惟有痛心忏悔，恳切祈祷而已。一连六七日之夜，不绝祈祷，愈祈愈切，至第七日，心中忽然安慰，全无忧色，不期然而然，自云此祈祷有应，蒙神恩矣。...今既蒙上帝施恩，接我祈祷，使我安慰，当必能感动其人，使肯为我传书。...弟遭大故，如荡子还家，亡羊复获，此皆天父大恩。

^②先总理是一个平生忠实之基督教信徒……总理少年信仰宗教，非常热烈；读《旧约》至摩西导引以色列人出埃及到迦南乐土记，眉飞色舞，拍案大叫，我孙逸仙岂不能令我汉族脱离鞑虏而建新国乎？



written by a foreign missionary. It told a small incident during Revolution of 1911. A church collected some money for the revolutionary army. A foreign missionary suggested that they remain neutral, the collected money be handed to the Red Cross to benefit both sides, and they pray for both sides. Then a Chinese believer stood up and said: "This war is arranged by God. It will free us from Manchu rule that has caused all our sufferings. When Moses saved the Israelites from Egypt, he never asked his people to pray for Pharaoh. There is no such record in *the Bible*." (陈忠, 2004: 289-290) The influence of *the Bible* on the Chinese revolution can be seen here.

3.2.3 Inspiration of the Bible to Other Public Figures

Feng Yuxiang is a patriotic strategist. Once he listened to a sermon in a church and then began to read *the Bible*. Jesus' spirit of self-sacrifice and the thought of equality and universal fraternity in it appealed him so much that he converted to Christianity. Then he ran his army with the doctrines in *the Bible*. In all kinds of military activities in his army, the spirit of sacrifice and fraternity was advocated. Before fighting, the army was taught: "Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul".^① In 1924, half of the soldiers in Feng's army were baptized and about 80 percent of the officers, including some high officers like Tong Lingge, were Christians. Feng was therefore called "Christ General (基督将军)". People thought highly of Feng's army as it was quite different from those of warlords. (陈忠, 2004)

Chen Duxiu declared that, in many articles published in *New Youth*, he did not believe in God. In *Christianity and the Chinese*, however, Chen sang high praise for Jesus' personality and emotion. In that article, Chen praised Jesus' lofty spirit of sacrifice by citing "whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me"^②, and the like. Sixteen sentences said by Jesus in *the Bible*, such as "You have heard that it was said, 'you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you"^③, were quoted to prove Jesus' spirit of clemency. At the same time,

^① 那杀身体不能杀灵魂的不要怕他。马太福音十章 28 节。

^② 凡爱父母胜过爱我的人，不配作我的门徒；爱子女胜过爱我的人，不配作我的门徒；不背起十字架跟随我的人，不配作我的门徒。马太福音十章 37-38 节。

^③ 别人告诉你们，爱你们的邻人，恨你们的敌人，只是我告诉你们，爱你们的敌人，为迫害你们的敌人祈祷。路加福音五章 43 节。



he cited seven examples (e. g., “sell your possessions, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven”^①) in *the Bible* to explain Jesus’ spirit of equality and universal fraternity. Chen praised Jesus’ populace complex by saying that Jesus contacted a group of fishers and patients instead of rich people. Chen maintained that Jesus’ great lofty personality and emotion should be cultivated in our blood in order to save us from the dark, cruel and nasty pit. (陈独秀, 1987)

Tao Xingzhi, the great people’s educationist, knew *the New Testament* very well. Though he had but a faint belief in God, he admired Jesus Christ’s words, deeds, and personality, and he appreciated the positive doctrines in *the Bible*. Tao held in esteem equality, democracy and fraternity advocated by Jesus and practiced them earnestly. In the early 1920s, Tao compiled one of his articles *Jesus Christ* into the textbook *Populace Ten-Thousand-Character Texts* (平民千字课), propagating Jesus openly. Tao gave up the post of president in universities and acted as headmaster of teachers’ schools and elementary schools. His selfless and dauntless work for people’s educational cause represented Jesus’ spirit. (陈忠, 2004)

Zhang Wentian, a proletarian revolutionary, was also once influenced by *the Bible* when he was young. During a period, Zhang Wentian read very widely, from Tolstoy to Tagore, from Russell to *A Dream of the Red Mansions*, from *the Bible* to Buddhist scriptures. The influence from *the Bible* was reflected in some of his articles at that time. (张培森, 2004)

What’s more, the anti-slavery and anti-invasion history of Hebrew nation is recorded in *the Bible*. It struck a sympathetic chord with the Chinese readers as the Chinese shared a similar fate since the 1840s. In this sense, *the Bible* encouraged the Chinese in their fight against imperialism and feudalism. During the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, the stories about some Israel heroes in *the Old Testament* were adapted into dramas to propagate patriotic thought. The performances were effective. (陈忠, 2004)

3.3 Influence upon Language

The Chinese Bible played an important role in the language transition. When *the Union Version* was published in 1919, the Vernacular Chinese Movement advocated by

^① 变卖你所有的东西，送给穷人，如此你就得着天国的赏赐。马太福音十九章 21 节。



the Chinese intellectual was in full swing, *The Union Version* acted as the catalytic agent and facilitated the establishment of the Vernacular Chinese. It is counted that more than 1,000 new expressions were invented in the translation of *the Union Version. Baptism* (洗礼), *angel* (天使), *paradise*(乐园), *hell*(地狱), *revelation*(启示), (复活), *heaven*(天国), *gospel*(福音), *original sin*(原罪), *trinity* (三位一体), and many words and phrases are borrowed from the Chinese Bible and have become very popular in China. (梁工, 2001) Just as Zhu Ziqing pointed out, “Modern Mandarin translation of the Christian Bible has enriched our language.” (朱自清, 1989: 45)

The Chinese Bible encouraged the development of anti-illiteracy campaign and education in China. Some Christians became literate only after they were taught to read and study *the Bible*. In the early 20th century, there was a slogan in the Christian world: each Christian should be able to read *the Bible*, and each Christian should be the teacher of the illiterate.” The Churches tried every means to teach people to read. 60 percent of the men fellows and 40 percent of the women fellows could read *the Bible*. (王治心, 2004: 287) As is stated above, in the latter half of the 19th century, foreign missionaries invented written languages for some ethnic minorities with *pinyin* in Roman or Latin letters. In this way, *the Bible* spread and common people in those areas learned to use those languages in everyday life. This promoted the *zhuyin* or *pinyin* campaign started by a group of educationists in the late Qing Dynasty, and accelerated the transition of the Chinese language. (郜元宝, 2002) In some areas, the languages are still being used for cultural study and publication.

3.4 Influence upon Literature

3.4.1 Influence upon Modern Literature

With its wide dissemination, *the Bible* has greatly influenced Chinese literature, especially after the May 4th Movement.

Literary creation worshipping Jesus Christ appeared as early as the beginning of the Qing Dynasty, when only portions of *the Bible* were translated into Chinese. *Ode to the Cross*, written by Emperor Kangxi in the middle of the 17th century, can serve as an example.^① (陈忠, 2004: 294)

^①康熙皇帝的《十字架赞》。诗云：功成十架血成溪，百丈恩流分自西。身列四衢半夜路，徒方三背两番鸡。五千鞭挞寸肤裂，六尺悬垂二盗齐。惨动八埃惊九品，七言一毕万灵啼。



After the May 4th Movement, many poets and writers turned to *the Bible* for inspiration of their creation. As a result, many works were flooded with Jesus' image and words and allusions from *the Bible*.

Bing Xin(冰心) is among the writers who first wrote poems according to *the Bible*. She was baptized and studied *the Bible* systematically when she was a middle school student. *The Bible* was one of the two main sources for her poems (the other was Tagore). In March, 1921, she published sixteen religious poems on *Life*, a Christian journal. On March 8, the journal carried Bing Xin's short explanation about her religious poems: "I feel its language is extremely beautiful whenever I read *the Bible*, no matter in the early morning or at midnight. One or two parts are really like pictures, as they are full of sacred, solemn, bright and profound images. I've selected some of my favorite parts, and rewritten them..."^①(梁工, 2001: 417) Her representative works are permeated with the spirit of Jesus' universal fraternity.

Mao Dun (茅盾) wrote the novel *The Death of Jesus* (耶稣之死) in 1942 to lay bare the crimes of Kuomintang government. Besides, he translated a novel *Jesus and Bandits* (耶稣和强盗) to criticize the reactionary government. (陈忠, 2004)

The influence of *the Bible* on Xu Zhimo (徐志摩) is quite obvious. *Ren Zhong You Lai* (人种由来), one of his early works, presents the love and happiness between Adam and Eve. *Ka Er Fo Li* (卡尔佛里) describes the scene of Jesus' crucifixion. Both poems prove the poet's profound understanding of *the Bible*. (梁工, 2004)

Ai Qing's(艾青) poems and personality are both deeply influenced by *the Bible*. His spirit of self-sacrifice and Jesus-like personality are represented in his poems. The content of *the Bible* and the image of Jesus can be found in *The Death of a Nazarene*(一个拿撒勒人的死), *Manger*(马槽), *Sower* (播种者), *Torch*(火把), and his many other poems. (梁工, 2004)

The crucifixion of Jesus impressed Lu Xun (鲁迅) deeply. He pointed out, "*Book of Matthew* is very good and well worth reading." His *Revenge II* (复仇<其二>) drew material directly from the chapters about Jesus' death in *the Bible*. Lu Xun thought the future world belonged to children. In *Diary of a Madman*(狂人日记) Lu Xun appealed

^① 《圣经》这部书，我觉得每逢念它的时候，——无论在清晨在深夜——总在那词句里不断的含有超绝的美。其中尤有一两节，俨然是幅图画，因为它充满了神圣、庄严、光明奥妙的意象，我摘了最爱的几节，演绎出来。自然原文的意思，及其宽广高深，我只就着我个人的、片段的、当时的感想，就写了下来，得一失百，是不能免的了。



to the world to save children. This kind of thought could date back to *the Bible*, as in *the Bible*, children are the greatest in the kingdom of the heaven. (杨剑龙, 1996)

Lu Yin (庐隐) was also deeply influenced by *the Bible*. Her novels are abundant with Christian words, such as God, lamb, heaven, confession, cross, trinity, and conversion. The epistolary style in *the Bible* is adopted in some of her novels, like *Sorrow of Huoren* (或人的悲哀), *After Victory* (胜利以后). (杨剑龙, 1997)

In Cao Yu's (曹禺) *Thunderstorm* (雷雨), Zhou Puyuan, the hero, stepped into the church at the beginning, and at the end, he was listening attentively to people reading *the Bible* after he had converted to Christianity. In the foreword of his *Sunrise* (日出), seven of the eight sentences were quoted from *the Bible*. In its preface, Cao Yu thus wrote:

...I read *Laozi*, read Buddhist scriptures, read *the Bible*, and I read many books that are regarded as fierce floods and savage beasts. With tears in my eyes, I praise those lonely souls. With sorrow, they bear the misery of the world and blaze a rail for their unworthy posterity. ...I can't see much brightness before me. Just as Jeremiah cried in *the Old Testament*, "I look on the earth, and lo, it was waste and void; and to the heavens, and they had no light....So I decided to write *Sunrise*." ^① (转引自王列耀, 1999: 55)

Sen Congwen (沈从文) admitted that *the Bible* was his teacher and he had been influenced by it. Almost every modern writer quoted, commented or introduced *the Bible* in their works. (梁工, 2004)

3.4.2 Influence upon Contemporary Literature

The influence of *the Bible* upon contemporary literature is represented by the works of some writers and poets after "Cultural Revolution". The intellectuals had experienced hardships and bitterness during "Cultural Revolution". When they reflected the calamity, Jesus' spirit of equality and universal fraternity got a ready response among them and their works are the outlet. Thus, the content of *the Bible* could be found repeatedly in their writings.

Some writers of Scar Literature often quote stories in *the Bible* or talk about Heaven

^① ...我读《老子》，读《佛经》，读《圣经》，我读多少那被认为洪水猛兽的书籍。我流着眼泪，赞美着这些孤独的心灵，他们怀着悲哀驮负着人间的酸辛，为这些不肖的子孙开辟大路。……我看不出眼前有多少光明。诚如《旧约》那热情的杰里迈亚所呼号的：“我观看地，地是空虚混沌；我观看天，天也无光。”……于是我决定写《日出》。



and God in their works. In *Who Am I*(我是谁), Zong Pu (宗璞) quotes the story in *Book of Genesis* and groups intellectuals together with the snake (incarnation of Satan). Zhang Jie (张洁) favors Heaven and God. In her *Love Can't Be Forgotten*(爱,是不能忘记的), the main character thus wrote in the diary: "I believe in materialism, but I now look forward to Heaven. If there is Heaven, you, I know, must be right there waiting for me."^① One of her novels is entitled *Ark* (方舟), which reveals three women's spiritual state of hungering for shelter and redemption. In her autobiographical reminiscences, *The One Who Loved Me Best Is Gone*(世界上最疼我的那个人去了), Zhang Jie regarded God as her comfort in her utmost sadness after her mother's death.

Zhang Xianliang (张贤亮) is a "Rightist" writer. In many of his writings is the content of *the Bible* concerned. In *Flesh and Soul*(灵与肉), Xu Lingjun crawled into the manger on a cold night; *Revelation of Materialists* (唯物论者启示录) gets its title from *the Bible*; in *Half of Man Is Woman* (男人的一半是女人), "when I looked around at the prisoners that were weeding, with their waists bent, my heart was filled with compassion out of my sense of superiority in spirit, just like Jesus' thought of 'I'm the son of God' on the cross at Golgotha when looking at the two bandits on both of his sides. In *Accustomed to Death* (习惯死亡), Zhang Xianliang described Jesus in a very absurd way.

Some novels of Wang Meng (王蒙), former Minister of Culture, were also influenced by *the Bible*. The end of *Mr. Bai's Dream* (白先生的梦) is an imitation of the scene in *Book of Genesis* to show his calm mind: There are stars in the sky. They are not bright, but serene, just as what they were in the beginning. God said, "Let there be light."^② In *White Clothes and Black Clothes* (白衣服与黑衣服), there are such sentences as "I felt that Lord has punished him"; "This is God's revelation. This is God's anger. This is the punishment God has given to our nation." At the end of the novel, God's voice is imitated as a warning: "Man, I love you. Keep alert!" These works express the writer's intention of criticizing the reality and warning people with *the Bible* and, especially, God. This intention finds its finest expression in his *On the Cross*(十字架上). (叶蓉, 2003)

Bei Cun's (北村) *The Baptizing River* (施洗的河) is another example. The hero of

^①我是一个信仰唯物主义的人, 现在我却希冀着天国。倘若真有所谓天国, 我知道, 你一定在那里等待着我。

^②天上有一片星星。星光虽然并不灿烂, 然而安详如初起, 帝曰: 应有光!



this novel went to a place dominated by the underworld. After several blood incidents, he himself stepped into the underworld and later became a chieftain. However, he suffered from a breakdown. In the end, he converted to Christianity and found his spiritual sustenance. On the flyleaf is written: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.—*Book of Matthew* 4:17."^① This is a sentence in *Book of Matthew*. Repeatedly, "Lord" and "God" are mentioned, and many sentences are quoted from *the Bible*. The hero was reading *the Bible* all the way back in the boat after he had saved his former foe. He said to his foe, "Why are you always sleeping? Can't you stay awake for a while?" It reminds the reader of what Jesus said to his disciples when he prayed at Gethsemane. At the end of the novel, more than 400 characters are drawn directly from *Book of Ezekiel* of *the Old Testament*. The story ends with "You could get baptized there". (北村, 1996)

The impacts of *the Bible* could be traced in some misty poetry after "the Cultural Revolution". Shu Ting (舒婷) yearns for the redemption of her soul in *The Last Elegy* (最后的挽歌). Hai Zi (海子) imitated *the Bible* in his creation and even his young life. (叶蓉, 2004)

3.5 Influence upon Printing Technology

Papermaking and printing are invented by the Chinese, but later their printing technology lagged behind. The western advanced technology was not introduced into China until the middle of the 19th century when foreign missionaries began to publish *the Bible* in Chinese. *Marshman's Version* was the first Chinese book printed with modern type typography, and it ushered in a new era in the Chinese printing history. (王治心, 2004) American Presbyterian Mission Press founded in Shanghai in 1844 was the largest Christian printing house. It made great contribution to introducing western printing technology to China. It is the main support of technology for the Commercial Press, one of the modern publishing houses in China, at its initial stage. Foreign missionaries opened many printing houses in China to publish *the Bible* and other religious readings. New printing machines were brought into China. At the same time, the first generation of printers in China got trained. Thus Chinese modern printing developed. By 1935, there were sixty-nine Christian publication organizations. They published 4,000 types of Christian books, and laid solid foundation for the founding and development of modern

^① 天国近了，你们应当悔改。——马太福音四章十七节。(新标点和合本原文。——作者注)



Chinese printing. (卓新平, 1999) In the 1980s, Aide Printing House (a Christian one in charge of Bible publication----the author) was founded in Jiangning, Nanjing. It imported the newest printing equipment from the United States, and introduced an advanced management system. Moreover, it helped in training a new generation of printing workers in China. (顾长声, 2004)

3.6 Influence in Other Aspects

The translation and spread of *the Bible* also exert influence on other aspects in China such as social customs and morals. In the past, there was no measurement unit of week. After the spread of *the Bible* in China, with the promotion from the foreign missionaries, 'week' was introduced into China and was gradually practiced. There was an old custom of taking concubines and raising maidservants, which is opposed in *the Bible*. Then monogamy was gradually popularized and women's position was raised. (for example, a man named Yang Tingjun got himself baptized only after he had sent away his concubine. 杨慧林, 2002: 294) Some important Christian festivals such as Christmas that are rooted in *the Bible* are now celebrated by many Chinese. It is reported that the spread of Christian doctrines has facilitated the improvement of local social order and the lift of moral level. (杨慧林, 2002: 331)



4. Conclusion

In the past more than 1,300 years, the Chinese translation of *the Bible* has experienced vicissitudes. It was initiated at the beginning of the Tang Dynasty, declined at Huichang Reign, revived in the Yuan Dynasty, and stopped with the collapse of the Yuan Dynasty. At the turning period of the Ming and the Qing dynasties, it resumed once again with the pioneering work of some foreign missionaries. After the hard time of prohibition, it became prosperous after 1842, with *the Union Version* standing for its pinnacle. After that, especially in recent years, it has been flourishing. Its influence has been engraved on many aspects in China, such as politics, religion, language, literature, printing technology, social customs and morals. With the deepening of cultural exchange between the west and China, with the wider spread of the Chinese Bible, the influence will be greater and cover more aspects.

Someone once said that the Chinese versions of the Bible were translated from authoritative English versions instead of from Hebrew and Greek texts. (刘冬萌, 2002) This opinion can't hold water as not all Chinese versions are translated from English according to the history of the Chinese Bible translation. From the history, we can also see that biblical translation could go on with the support from the government. Otherwise, it couldn't or had to be done with difficulties and hardships. Obviously, the cultural policy of government can manipulate translation activity. For a long time in the Mainland of China since 1949, no Bible translation was carried on. This proves that ideology can also control translation activity.

Morrison risked his life to translate and publish *the Bible*. Scherchewsky showed an undaunted spirit after he had paralyzed by continuing his translation task, typing on a typewriter with one finger of each hand for twenty-five years. Nevis died at the desk when translating. Twenty-six translators worked twenty-nine years for *the Union Version*. Gabriele Allegra did not stop even under the heavy bombardment of Japanese planes. Their names should not be ignored. Their efforts should not be forgotten. Their spirit of devotion to the Chinese translation of *the Bible* is admirable.

Since the Qing Dynasty, Bible translation has never stopped in China. Numerous Chinese versions have been translated by foreign missionaries and Chinese scholars.



Even after the appearance of *the Union Version*, the most authoritative one, new versions have been emerging one after another. Some old versions have been, are being or will be revised. Xie Tianzhen said that there is no definite edition in literary translation. (谢天振, 2003) It is the same with the Chinese translation of *the Bible*. The Chinese translation of *the Bible* is a process of translating, retranslating and revising. It will never end so long as there are Chinese Christian believers, so long as there are Chinese who read, appreciate and study *the Bible*, so long as differences between languages exist, and so long as Chinese develops.

Since 1949, no scholars in the mainland of China have taken part in the Chinese translation of *the Bible*, not to speak of independent translating. This condition is not suitable for the large number of Christian believers and ordinary Bible lovers. After all, differences, though slight, exist between the Chinese used in the mainland of China and that used in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macao.

Nowadays, for most Chinese, *the Bible* is no longer a mysterious religious document but a great cultural and literary classic. The Chinese translation of *the Bible* will not be confined to its formal religious purpose. As a branch of Bible translation in the world, the Chinese translation of *the Bible* will definitely become an important part of translated literature of China. *King James Version* has been praised as “the noblest monument of English prose” and regarded as one of the best works in the history of the English literature for its simple, beautiful, dignified and powerful language. The author of this thesis hopes that in the future there will be such a Chinese version, mainly translated by scholars in the mainland of China and featured by simple, beautiful and dignified Chinese.

In the west, several sets of *the Bible* texts have been re-translated as a result of feminist pressure. Maybe there will be feminist Chinese versions of *the Bible* in China in the future with the development of the times.

As early as March 15, 1951, Zhou Zuoren expressed his opinion about compiling the history of Chinese translation. He said, “In my opinion, the first step is to collect materials. The first part may be about the translation of Buddhist Scriptures from the Six Dynasties to the Tang Dynasty. ...The second part may be about *the Bible* translation and the work of Shen Bao Office, Guangxuehui, and the like. ...” (转引自陈福康, 2000: 401) Before long, he pointed out in another article that both translation of Buddhist



Scriptures from the Six Dynasties to the Tang Dynasty and translation of *the Bible* were two great periods of translation in China; both made great achievements, and both were national or social causes. (ibid, 402) For Zhou, the Chinese translation of *the Bible* was of great importance. It is pitiful that Zhou's ideal book about the history of translation in China has not yet appeared. In Ma Zuyi's *A History of Translation in China*, there is no independent chapter for Bible translation. Bible translation is only interlarded in Section 2, Chapter 2. It is not regarded as an important part in the translation history.

The Chinese Bible, especially *the Union Version*, is itself an excellent literary work. Lu Xun once said that *Book of Matthew* is very good and well worth reading. His praise could also be applied to most other books in it, like *Psalms* and *Song of Solomon*. Zhou Zuoren also admitted the great literary value of *the Union Version*. But in Guo Yanli's *The Modern Translated Literature of China: An Introduction* (中国近代翻译文学概论), only one comment can be found about it: "The western books translated at the end of the Ming Dynasty and the beginning of the Qing Dynasty focus on natural science instead of on literature. In the translated missionary books were mixed up some literary fragments, such as some stories from *Aesop's Fables* and *the Bible*, but they had no independent literary quality." (郭延礼, 1998: 6) *The Bible* translation was not mentioned at all, not to speak of its literary worth and position. It is the same with *A History of Translated Literature in Modern China* (中国现代翻译文学史) and *A History of Translated Literature in China* (中国翻译文学史). In addition, almost no theoretical study has been made about the Chinese translation of *the Bible*.

The position of the Chinese translation of the Bible and its lack of research do not match its great achievements in practice and its long history. Nor does it rival the achievements in Bible translation study in the west or those in the ancient Buddhist scriptures translation, since there are many famous translators and translation theorists in the history of Bible translation in the west and Buddhist scripture translation in China. It is strongly suggested by the author of this thesis that Chinese scholars, especially those in Mainland China, should see the history of the Chinese Bible in a new light, attach importance to its study, and strive for its right positions in both the history of translation in China and that of translated literature in China. Chen Heng once proposed establishing "Bible studies" in China. (陈恒, 2002: 24) The author of this paper would like to further advocate establishing "Bible Translatology" in China. Chinese scholars, especially those



in the mainland of China, should struggle for this aim, so that there could be not only new excellent Chinese versions but also important Chinese biblical translation theories, as well as world-known translators. Only then could the Chinese translation of *the Bible* make its contributions to translation studies at home and abroad.

Our government is open-minded, and its opening-up policy is deepening with each passing day. It is predictable that the Chinese translation of *the Bible* and its study will have a bright future in China.



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