




# HG8011

Detecting Meaning with Sherlock Holmes

Holmes in Translation

12 April 2016


- 
- Did Sir Arthur Conan Doyle place great emphasis on translation ?
  - How can/do we know?



“The Adventure of the Greek Interpreter”

# Mycroft

*Mr. Melas is a Greek by extraction, as I understand, and he is a remarkable linguist. He earns his living partly as interpreter in the law courts and partly by acting as guide to any wealthy Orientals who may visit the Northumberland Avenue hotels. I think I will leave him to tell his very remarkable experience in his own fashion."*

- 
- *"It seemed to me to be obvious that this Greek girl had been carried off by the young Englishman named Harold Latimer."*

# The Daily News,

*"Anybody supplying any information to the whereabouts of a Greek gentleman named Paul Kratides, from Athens, who is unable to speak English, will be rewarded. A similar reward paid to any one giving information about a Greek lady whose first name is Sophy. X 2473."*

Large fortune: Sophy

Kratides visited her,

Kratides disappeared; kidnapped by 2 Villains



English speaker

Greek speaker

Melas the interpreter


2 Villains


Kratides

# Melas the interpreter

- ""You can do no good by this obstinacy. *Who are you?*""
- ""I care not. *I am a stranger in London.*""
- ""Your fate will be upon your own head. *How long have you been here?*""
- ""Let it be so. *Three weeks.*""
- ""The property can never be yours. *What ails you?*""
- ""It shall not go to villains. *They are starving me.*""
- ""You shall go free if you sign. *What house is this?*""
- ""I will never sign. *I do not know.*""
- ""You are not doing her any service. *What is your name?*""
- ""Let me hear her say so. *Kratides.*""
- ""You shall see her if you sign. *Where are you from?*""
- ""Then I shall never see her. *Athens.*""



- 
- Presence of translation
  - Presence of translator/ interpreter
  - Highlight the importance of translating

- 
- This story was translated into China
  - 希腊舌人
  - “Greek tongue-man”
  - What does it mean?

- Early Western Han Period, after 206 BCE
- shérén (舌人, tongue-men) was the common name for the government officials in charge of communicating with the neighbouring tribes of the Zhou Dynasty.
- Ref: **“Martha P.Y. Cheung, “Early Discourse on Yi”**
  
- Imagination : roll tongue or flip tongue
- In Chinese idiom, bad connotation

- 
- 长舌妇 a loquacious woman.
  - 七嘴八舌 confusing opinion
  - 油腔滑舌 a flippant talker
  
  - low social status
  - Untrustworthy

# Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

- Manipulative power of translation
- Translation and power
  - It can be an violent act
  - It can also save life
- Practical meaning

# Chinese modernization

- “Why Should We Learn from the Barbarians?”
- China resisting foreign knowledge 1840-1860
- Partial absorption 1860-1890 (self strengthening movement)
- Conscious learning 1895-
- Wholesale westernization 1911-1917

# Facts

- SH introduced into China in 1896 (光緒二十二年)
- *Shiwu Bao* 《時務報》 *Chinese Progress*
- Serialized magazine

1. 《英包探勘盜密约案》 1896.9.27- 10.27 (Vol 6-9)  
《The Adventure of the Naval Treaty》
2. 《记佻者复仇事》， 1896.11.5-25 (Vol 10-12) ，  
《The Adventure of the Crooked Man》
3. 《继父诬女破案》， 1897.4.22—5.12 (Vol 24-26) ，  
《A Case of Identity》 1891.9
4. 《呵尔唔斯缉案被戕》， 1897.5.22-6.20 Vol27-30)  
《The Adventure of the Final Problem》




# Nature:

- Real story
- Real crime case
- The note or The note of translating Sherlock Holmes
  - 《继父诬女破案》
  - 《英包探勘盗密约案》
  - 《阿尔唔斯缉案被戕》

# revision

- Structure: first person to third person narrative
- common in late Imperial China
  - Readers' taste
  - Social convention
  - No first personal narrative

- 
- Watson- 1<sup>st</sup> person narrative
  - “I” account the story, someone approached me about the lost of a document
  - “He” narrated

# keyword

- 《英包探勘盜密约案》
- 英 *Ying England*
- 包探 *Bao detective*
- 包大人 *magistrate Bao*
- *An 案 gongan-type; Chinese court case*

# Genre transformed!

- Detective stories, crime novels
- Chinese “court case” / kung-an (gong 'an) 公案
- Chinese judicial system
- judge serves multiple capacities: investigator, interrogator, prosecutor, judge and overseer of executions
- Western detective : solves the mystery independently of the state and often conceiving justice as lying outside the state's command

# Judge Pao or Pao Kung (999-1062)



# Reception ground

- Rejuvenating China
- 2 into 1
- Crime fiction
- Vehicle of transmitting Practical knowledge

- Sherlock Holmes 福尔摩斯
- “歇洛克.呵尔唔斯” 1895-6
- 休洛克福而摩司 1902
- 福尔摩斯 1904 - 5
- *Hokkien dialect*
  
- “Watson” “滑震” (slippery shaken!”)



# Holmes in Translation

- Hung, Eva (1998) Giving Texts a Context: Chinese Translations of Classical English Detective Stories 1896-1916 in David E. Pollard (ed.) Translation and Creation: Readings of Western Literature in Early Modern China John Benjamin's
- Seago, Karen and Lei, Victoria (2014) 'Looking East and Looking West': Crime Genre Conventions and Tropes in Comparative Critical Studies, 11(2-3) 315-335
- Şehnaz Tahir-Gürçağlar (2008) Sherlock Holmes in the interculture: Pseudotranslation and anonymity in Turkish literature. In Anthony Pym, Miriam Shlesinger, and Daniel Simeoni, editors, Beyond descriptive translation studies : investigations in homage to Gideon Toury, chapter 10, pages 133–151. John Benjamins.
- Ping, Zhang (2005) SHERLOCK HOLMES IN CHINA Perspectives 13(2), 106-114 (full text available through the proxy)
- 钟文苓 (1934) 《关于福尔摩斯二三事》 万象(1934年) 1942年第2年第4期
- 程小情 [Cheng Xiaoqing] (1946) 论探偵小說
- 范伯群 [Fan Boqun] (1985) 论程小青的 《霍桑探案》