On the Chinese Cultural “Genes” in Eco-Translatology*

HU Gengshen
(City University of Macao / Tsinghua University, Beijing, CHINA)

Abstract: Eco-Translatology, an ecological paradigm of Translation Studies initiated in China, is naturally related to traditional Chinese philosophy which adopts holistic approaches and is ecologically-oriented. This ancient Chinese eco-wisdom of profound philosophy is characterized by such theories of the doctrine of Nature and Man as One, the principle of Golden Mean, and the principle of Person-Orientation. The classical ecological concepts of nature, wholeness, co-existence, balance and harmony, etc. advocated by Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism are taken as one of the important philosophical bases for the eco-paradigm of translation studies. The reflections, manifestations, connotations and interrelationships between the traditional Chinese ecoculture and the present eco-paradigm of translation studies are here discussed to interpret Eco-translatology as the “Chinese discourse”.

Key words: Eco-Translatology; genes of the classical Chinese culture; eco-wisdom; Chinese discourse

I. Preliminaries

Eco-Translatology is an emerging eco-translation paradigm of Translation Studies from ecological perspectives. With metaphorical analogies between the translational ecosystem and the Natural ecosystem, and conceptual borrowings as its methodology, Eco-Translatology probes into translational eco-environments, textual ecologies, and “translation community” ecologies, as well as their interrelationships and interplays. Regarding the scene of translation as a holistic ecosystem, it describes and interprets translation activities in terms of ecological principles of Eco-holism, oriental eco-wisdom, and Translation as Adaptation and Selection. Within the eco-translation paradigm, “Translation as Eco-balance”, “Translation as Textual Transplants”, and “Translation as Adaptation and Selection” are taken as its core concepts.

In Eco-Translatology: A Primer, I stated that “China possesses a wealth of ancient eco-wisdom from which many valuable lessons can be drawn… and all these classical eco-ideas, such as “nature”, “life”, “existence”, “Golden Mean” (zhong yong), “Person-Orientation”(ren ben), “unified integrity” and “harmony”, etc., can serve as valuable inspiration for the development of Eco-Translatology.” (Hu Gengshen, 2008: 11-15) Further discussion will be needed on various topics, such as the cause-effect relationships between the eco-wisdom in the traditional Chinese culture, and the interpretation of Eco-Translatology from the perspective of the “Chinese discourse”.

As Mu Zongsan (1997: 43), a noted Chinese philosopher, puts it, “Chinese culture originates in the focus on life.” The “inspiration of life”, which naturally includes the sense of “life”, “survival”, “eco-environment”, or “eco-reason”, can be regarded as mainstream Chinese culture. Therefore, the classical eco-wisdom in Chinese culture has become one of the important theoretical bases and the philosophical mainstay for Eco-Translatology. Chinese eco-wisdom, illustrated in ideas such as “the Unity of Heaven and Man”, “the Doctrine of the Mean”, the principle of “Person-orientation” and “Unified integrity”, is of great philosophical profundity. All this has mirrored the Chinese wisdom of life, survival and ecology. This article, therefore, addresses and illustrates the manifestations,
II. The “Unity of Nature and Man as One” in Eco-Translatology

“The unity of Heaven and Man” is one of the fundamental ideas in classical Chinese philosophy. It can be traced back to The Book of History (shang shu), one of the ancient Chinese classics, in which it is said that “The work of Heaven can be fulfilled by Man.” This notion, regarded as the inspiration of the “unity of Nature and Man as One”, has gradually been developed and improved by means of other philosophical notions in Chinese history, such as Lao Zi’s “the human obedience to Heaven”, Zhuang Zi’s “co-existence of Heaven and Man”, Meng Zi (Mencius)’s “the association of Heaven and Man in nature”, Dong Zhongshu’s “the Heavenly Law followed by Man”, Zhang Za’s “the opposite unity of Heaven and Man” and Cheng Yi “the same Way of Heaven and Man”. Both Zhang and Cheng were Master Confucian scholars in the Song Dynasty. All this has established theoretical standards which have created and formed mainstream Chinese philosophy as well as the traditional Chinese culture.

Generally speaking, the idea of “unity of Heaven and Man” includes the following four propositions. First, Man is part of Nature. As Zhuang Zi phrased it “The Heaven and the earth co-exist with Man, and everything in the world, together with Man, forms a unity.” And as Zhang Zai puts it in Xi Ming, “Heaven can be regarded as Father, and the Earth as Mother; and Man lives harmoniously between the two.” Man is thus brought forth by Heaven and Earth, a product of Nature. Second, Nature has its own general laws, to which Man can be subject. Lao Zi phrases it as follows “Man keeps to the Law of Earth, Earth to that of Heaven, Heaven to that of Tao [here: ‘civic belief’], and Tao to that of Nature.” Zhang Zai, too, holds that the Law of humanity is the very same as that of Heaven. In other words, both Nature and Man should abide by the same Law. Third, humanity is the very same as the naturality, i.e., the moral law of Man is identical to that of Heaven. Zhang Zai says that humanity goes along with naturality and that the common law of both lies in changes. There are also other notions, such as that of “the function of Heaven fulfilled by Man” in The Book of History, that of “the unity of Heaven’s law and humanity”, and that of “the identity of Heaven Law and humanity” by Cheng Yi, a master Confucian scholar in the Song Dynasty. All this reveals the unity of Heaven Law and humanity. Fourth, the ideal humanity lies in the great harmony between Heaven and Man. As mentioned in The Book of Changes, “The Law of I-Ching can cover that of both Nature and Man.”

In modern terms, the traditional Chinese notion of “the unity of Heaven and Man” can be phrased “the emphasis on the identity of Man and Nature, the coordination of human activity and Nature, and the unity of the moral and natural reason.” This illustrates the dialectical considerations of ancient Chinese thinkers on the interrelationships between subject and object, and between subjective initiative and objective laws. The notion of “unity of Heaven and Man” is centered on harmony, which reveals the combination of “Heavenly harmony”, “human harmony” and “heart harmony”, in other words, the perfect harmony of the relationship of subjectivity and objectivity.

In the context of Eco-Translatology, the idea of “the unity of Heaven and Man” refers to the view that one should consider the harmonious unity between the translator and the translational eco-environment of great importance.

In the process of translation, there must be a harmony between the translator and the translational eco-environment in order that the translator can adapt to the eco-environment of translation, and that his/her selection for translating is in accordance with the dynamically-altered law of the translational eco-environment.
eco-environment. In this way it is possible to obtain “harmony” and “balance” between the source and the target text, between the translator, the author, the reader, and between the linguistic and cultural contexts. In order to obtain harmony and coordination between the translator and the eco-environment of translation, the translator applies various translation theories, strategies and skills, all of which are available to creative Man, the paragon of animals, to make optimal adaptations and superb selections, and to blend the translator harmoniously into the specific translational eco-environment.

Regardless of the “original centeredness (an ben) and faithfulness-disposition (qiu xin)” or “spiritual resemblance (shen si) and perfect natural translation” (hua jing), or “beauties in meaning, form and sound”, or “accuracy, fluency and quickness” (for interpreting), the translator/interpreter will, in translation, strive for a unified harmony among the various factors in the eco-system of translation, which are inter-coordinated and inter-inspired up to the stage of Grand Harmony, namely, the total realization of “the unity of Heaven and Man”.

The traditional Chinese philosophical idea of “the unity of Heaven and Man” reveals the conformity of the moral doctrine of Man and the basic principle of Nature. Zhang Zai holds that “the unity of Heaven and Man” is illustrated in the saying that “the Loyalty comes from the Wisdom, and vice versa”. “The Loyalty” (cheng) refers to the supreme moral cultivation, and “the Wisdom” (ming) to the supreme intelligence. In the field of translatology, “the Loyalty” (cheng) is expressed as the translator’s/interpreter’s virtue, and “the Wisdom” (ming) as his/her adequate translating strategies and skills. The perfect combination of “the Loyalty” and “the Wisdom” is the very reason why, from ancient times till today, translators have been admired both for their human virtue and for their skill in translating. This harmonious combination of human virtue and translating skill can, for example, be found in work as a translator, in studies of translation and, in particular, in the translating criteria of Fu Lei, one of the most famous literary translators in the 20th century in China. (Hu Gengshen, 2009a: 47-53)

III. The “Doctrine of the Mean” in Eco-Translatology

“The Doctrine of the Mean” is the top moral doctrine of Confucianism; as Confucius says, “The virtue of the Doctrine of the Mean is the supreme doctrine for human beings” (from The Analects). However, it is necessary to define “the Doctrine of Mean” before one can interpret the Tao [here: ‘rationale’] of “the Doctrine of the Mean” in the context of Eco-Translatology.

Throughout Chinese history, Chinese sages have proferred several definitions of “the Doctrine of the Mean” (zhong yong). Zhong, on the one hand, means the middle. As Zi Si puts it, “Zhong is the very middle, without any deficiency or excess.” And he adds, “Zhong is the great Way in the human world.” Cheng Yi stresses that “Zhong means no deficiency” (from The Doctrine of Mean), and he states that “Zhong is the righteous Way in the human world.” (ibid.) But Yong also has another, different meaning. Zi Si says that “Yong is something usual” (from The Doctrine of Mean). Cheng Yi says that “Yong is something immobile, which is the definite law in the world.” (ibid.) Thus, the Doctrine of the Mean can be summarized into the following four terms: “to keep in the middle”, “excess as deficiency”, “harmony in diversity”, and “the priority of balance”.

In modern Chinese contexts, the Doctrine of the Mean (zhong yong) can similarly be interpreted from different perspectives. On the one hand, zhong means 1) rightness (which originally refers to “the rightness of an arrow aiming at the target; 2) the moderate degree of things without excess or deficiency; 3) the appropriate attitude toward things without bias or indifference”. And on the other hand, yong means the average disposition of things. In short, the Doctrine of the Mean (zhong yong) serves as the fundamental doctrine of Confucianism, namely the Middle Way without extremes. Thus
the Doctrine of the Mean, which is a scientific methodology for attaining the best effect, and which is fundamentally in opposition to extremes, advocates the harmonious unity in diversities, and in the embodiment of the Golden Mean. All this, with vast tolerance and widespread content, shows a best-decision policy featuring harmonious reasoning, steady development, minimum loss, maximum achievement and realization of coordination.

It is proper to apply the Doctrine of the Mean as a balanced method for the best decision strategy, both to the translating process and to translation studies. According to this doctrine, some notions in translation, such as the over-emphasis of “literal translation and free translation”, “foreignization and domestication”, “over-representation and under-representation”, etc., are unacceptable. Even studies of pure translation theory should follow the Middle Way, too.

According to “source-text-centered” translation theories as we know them, the source text is regarded as the sacred authority, in that it has a unified definite meaning, and that the linguistic form can be transferred in translation without any change of the original content. In other words, the original meaning should be faithfully conveyed in the target text. In the last thirty or forty years, a new translation theory, named the “target-text-centered” translation theory has been developed by Itamar Even-Zohar and Gideon Toury in Israel. The theories, called Target Text Theory by Toury and “Polysystem Theory” by Zohar, respectively, challenge the “source-text-centered” theories and mark the beginning of target-text-oriented translation studies.

When, in the “source text – translator – target text” translating process, translating activity is studied merely with the source text and the target text as the two poles, “the ‘polarization’ of translation studies will inevitably arise, and there will even appear two extremes of translation studies.” (Lu Jun, 2001: 10) However, if we examine this issue from another perspective, i.e., from the perspective of the translator as the central link of the translating process, we can spot the balancing point between the two “poles”. We can also avoid some weaknesses in translation and establish a new norm for translation studies that is characterised by ‘harmony’ and ‘mean’. The concept of ‘harmony’ and ‘mean’, as the traditional aesthetic concept in China, is the very Law that everything abides. This balanced perception in translation studies will for sure deconstruct the extreme rigidness of previous norms of translation studies.

Eco-Translatology has been developed on the basis of the theory of “Translation as Adaptation and Selection”, in which “Translator-centredness” serves as one of the core notions in the translation process. As is pointed out in a book-review published in The Journal of Foreign Language Teaching, “translator-centeredness has been highlighted in the theory of ‘Translation as Adaptation and Selection’, which, together with the ideas of ‘author-centeredness’ and ‘reader-centeredness’, has led to a perfect triangle norms in translation studies, and which has balanced the layout of translation studies by including the latter two.” (Hu Gengshen, 2004: 96; Li Yashu, Huang Zhonglian, 2005: 95-96)

IV. The “Person-Oriented Principle” in Eco-Translatology

The idea of “person-orientation” is central to Chinese political culture. In The Book of History, Emperor Shun puts it as follows “If I have made up my mind, even gods and ghosts should obey me.” This seems to be the first manifestation of “person-orientation”. This idea is also found in one of Confucius’ sayings in The Analects. It goes “It is Man that upholds the Tao [general orientation, or meta-principle], and no Tao can uphold Man.”

The term “person-orientation” originates in The Historical Records of the Three Kingdoms (san guo zhi). At the critical moment when Liu Bei is chased by Cao Cao, his mortal enemy, one of his followers suggests to Liu that “We should run quickly to escape from Cao’s army regardless of the
people supporting and following us.” Liu Bei said, “Person-orientation is vital for our success, so how could we possibly desert our followers!”

From the perspective of “Person-orientation”, Man is the center of everything in the world, including gods. According to traditional Chinese culture, Man is of prime importance in the universe. In other words, Man is the paragon of everything both in heaven and on the earth.

Living in a natural environment, Man is an indispensable part of the material world. In other words, Man and the natural environment belong to the same unity: when there are changes in the natural environment, corresponding changes will take place to Man. That is why Confucianism highlights mental as well as physical harmony between Nature and Man. (Ji Xianlin, 2008)

The translator is an eternal issue in translation studies, since the description and interpretation of the role of the translator in the process of translation is one of the basic issues of translation theory. Naturally the relationship between the translator and the eco-environment of translation is also studied in Eco-Translatology.

In eco-translatological studies, “Person-orientation” is termed “translator-centeredness”, which deals not only with the statement that the translator is the subject of translation, but also with a response to the question of “who is translating”, and also with the assertion that the process of translation is dominated by the translator. In short, the translator serves as the fundamental element for a successful translation:

The universally acknowledged fact that the translator is at the center of the “source text – translator – target text” or/and “author – translator – reader” triangular structure, illustrates that the translator stands at the very center in the adaptation of the source text and the selection of the components of the target text.

The translator can also actively adjust, position and adapt a text to the related right of discourse of the author and the reader in the same triangular structure. In terms of semiotics, that is, “the translator dominates the semiotic process of producing the target version”. Thus, each act in the process of translation, from the original to the translated version, is conducted solely by the translator, who, in the central position of linking the original and the translation, is not only the recipient of the original, but also the creator of the translation, and also the decision-maker and executor of the translating strategy. The translator is, as it were, superbly responsible, by means of his or her “thinking” and “feeling” (Robinson, 1991: xii-xiii) for the quality of translation, good or bad, for success or failure. In this sense, the idea of “person-orientation” is fully illustrated by the role played by the translator.

In Eco-Translatology, the notion of “translator-centeredness” is therefore related to one of the principal doctrines, namely that translation studies should exert efforts to care about, pay respects to, and emancipate the translator as well as to develop his or her competence.

From the Eco-translatological perspective of “translator-centeredness”, three relationships should be clear, namely, 1) the one between the translator and the translational eco-environment; 2) the one between the translator and other profit-related “translation participants”; and 3) the one between the translator’s selective adaptation and his/her adaptive selection in the translating process. All these topics are of focal interest in eco-translatological studies and must be the object of further studies and discussions. (Hu Gengshen, 2009b: 1-6)

In fact, “faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance” (xin, da and ya), the traditional translating criteria for over one hundred years in China, focus on the “text” rather than “the translator”. This also goes for other translating criteria, such as “spiritual resemblance” (shen si), “formal resemblance” (xing si), and “natural, perfect equivalence” (hua jing). In such perceptions and definitions of translation, and for that matter in translation studies in general, it is evident that the translator has been ignored. According to the development of “source text-centeredness” and “target text-centeredness”, it can be concluded that “translator-centeredness” is an improvement of “source text-
centeredness” as well as a useful balance for the extremes of previous translation studies. In the long run, the focus on the “text” rather than the translator, has resulted in the degradation of the translator, so much so that the translator has certainly become nothing but a “servant” or a “fettered dancer”.

Previous translation studies have covered the development from the “original/version extreme” to “translator-centeredness”, from “stationary” text to “active” translator, and from “how to translate” to “who is translating”. Fundamentally speaking, “translator-centeredness” refers to the Chinese epistemological tradition which makes it possible to perceive the translator as one component in a unified eco-system of translation in which the original, the translated version, and the cultural contexts of the source language and the target language are harmoniously symbiotic. The traditional doctrines of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism discussed above thus allow for a precise identification of traditional Chinese culture in Eco-Translatology.

V. The Philosophy of “Unified Integrity” in Eco-Translatology

In traditional Chinese culture there are some innate views of integrity, unity, organicity and harmony. It is held that each person and each living being, including animals and plants, can serve as a link in the great chain of being. Similarly, each person, each ethnic group, and even behavior in the whole human world, too, can serve as links in the material or moral chain of cause and effect. All our actions will lead to corresponding consequences, which will affect not only ourselves but everything around us. These effects may be direct or indirect, temporary or permanent, and be felt at once or sometime in the future.

The ancient Chinese held that “the four-dimensioned space is called yu, and the passing time is called zhoun.” The notions on the Universe are as follows: 1) the Universe is vast and without boundaries; 2) the Universe is a grand river of life (The Book of Changes states that the universal Tao is related to the evolution of life); 3) the Universe is not a closed system, but an open, intermingling, inter-acting and organic unity; 4) the Universe is not a solitary, stationary mechanism, but a developing existence.

In the Chinese history of culture, ideology and art, we can hardly see any pure and independent works in philosophy, ethics, literature and history; rather they are all fully integrated into a vast, exquisite cultural unity. That is why The Book of Poetry, one of the Chinese literary classics, is an ethic scripture; this is why Zuo Zhuan, one of the traditional historical works in ancient China, is also regarded as a literary classic; and this is why Lu Xun labeled The Record of History, one of the greatest historical works in ancient China, “the masterpiece of historical works and the rhymeless poem of winder”. These examples illustrate the inter-connected unity of Chinese eco-culture.

The spirit of traditional Chinese culture lies in the unified thinking, which shows the emphasis on changes and the law of changes. As far as the dynamic eco-system of translation is concerned, this is explicitly instructive and enlightening.

On the one hand, the meaningful “Sequential Chain of Relevance” can be obtained from the common sense that “translation is the transfer of languages, while language is a part of culture; and culture is the deposit of human activity, and the human being, too, is a part of Nature.” The Sequential Chain of Relevance can be illustrated as follows:

translation $\leftrightarrow$ language $\leftrightarrow$ culture $\leftrightarrow$ human beings $\leftrightarrow$ nature

(Hu Gengshen, 2003: 298)
The above Sequential Chain of Relevance is in line with the factual law that P. C. Laplace, a famous French scientist, referred to: “Everything in the world is relevant, and the general law of the natural world is like a chain which connects all the seemingly unassociated phenomena.” (Laplace, 1978: 305) In other words, “various phenomena in Nature are connected with each other in a unity where various laws are interwoven.” (Li Guang, Ren Dingcheng, 1989: 19) It can be added that the view of eco-unity can also be found in the West. In ancient Greece, for example, there were the doctrines of “all the things are but one” and of “everything exists in continuation”, etc. (Wang Nuo, 2005: 88)

On the other hand, in the research field of Eco-Translatology, the term “ecology” refers to natural health, balance-keeping and harmonious coexistence, etc. and the term “the translational eco-environment”, to the “world” illustrated with the original and the translated version, the source language and the target language, namely, a relevant, inter-acting unity composed of languages, communication, cultures, societies as well as the author, the translator, the commissioner, et al.

From the unified perspective of traditional Chinese culture, and in view of the progress and domination of ecology in other academic fields, Eco-Translatology is clearly oriented in terms of future studies, including the integrative study of the eco-system of translation and the inner structure of Eco-Translatology, the coordinated study of the inter-relationship between and among translation/language/culture/human beings/Nature, the co-structured study of the translational eco-system and the natural eco-system, as well as the advancement in the study of the analogy between them.

In short, the notion of “unified integrity” is helpful not only for the formation of mutual-benefit relationships in the unified eco-system of translation, in which it gives rise to the unified, harmonious eco-beauty, but also for its effect on translation studies. In other words, various translation theories will be formed and developed in mutual exchanges, mutual adaptation, mutual conflict, and mutual evolution, before moving on to the “diversified unity” and “comprehensive integrity”.

VI. The “Chinese Discourse” in Eco-Translatology

Although the term “Chinese discourse” is widely used in academic circles in China nowadays, it still lacks definition. As far as eco-translatological studies are concerned, the “Chinese discourse” discussed in this article includes the following: in research and in descriptions of Eco-Translatology, all the efforts exerted to employ the Chinese “lingual habit”, to adopt Chinese thinking and narrative methods, to accept the Chinese view of values, to strive for the rights of “the Chinese discourse”, etc., should be regarded as manifestations of the “Chinese discourse”.

We have strong reasons for emphasising this remark. On the one hand, China and the East have long been denied the right of independent discourse. It has been said “the translation studies conducted in Asia are always developing under the domination of the western norms.” (Kong Huiyi, Yang Chengshu, 2000: 5) And “in most cases, the Asian scholars on translation studies tend to act as the slow followers of their western colleagues.” (Meng Fanjun, 2007) In recent years, the academic exchanges between China and the West have become more and more frequent, which makes it possible for Chinese scholars of translation studies to make humble appearances on the international academic stage. Shamefully, however, translation studies in China and the achievements of Chinese translation scholars are hardly known and acknowledged by foreign colleagues, so Chinese scholars of translation studies have wearily sensed the fact that their voices are not heard. It is sure evidence of the western ignorance of the translation studies in China that, in the comprehensive statement on “international translation studies”, some western scholars of translation studies have mentioned very few or even none of the achievements of translation studies in China.
On the other hand, in the last two or three decades, and along with the strengthening of China’s national power and China’s improved international status, traditional Chinese culture has been taken more and more seriously by scholars from all over the world, so that many famous western scholars now pay attention to traditional Chinese culture as well as its wisdom. This has made it possible for Chinese scholars to regain the “Chinese discourse” and even to feel the arrival of an era of the “Chinese discourse”.

It is natural for some Chinese scholars to uphold the norm of Eco-Translatology, to employ the Chinese “lingual habit”, to use Chinese modes of thinking and narrative approaches, and to adopt the orientation of Chinese values and the motives and endeavors which are produced according to the “Chinese discourse”.

Eco-Translatology is undertaken according to international practices. As far as eco-translatological research is concerned, it is not only a privilege and opportunity, but also a responsibility and inspiration to possess the “Chinese discourse.”

VII. Conclusion

It will readily be appreciated from my discussion that ——

Firstly, the eco-wisdom in the traditional Chinese culture serves as one of the fundamental theoretical bases and sources of thinking in Eco-Translatology. The eco-wisdom, which is a living and ecological wisdom in ancient China characterised by ideas such as the “unity of Nature and Man as One”, the “Doctrine of the Mean”, the “Person-oriented Principle” and the philosophy of “unified integrity”, etc., comprises a rich philosophical profundity. The Chinese cultural gene of Eco-Translatology discussed in this article illustrates the cause-effect relationships between the eco-wisdom in traditional Chinese culture and the basic viewpoints of Eco-Translatology. This means that Eco-Translatology is deeply rooted in traditional Chinese culture which provides it with a solid philosophical foundation.

Secondly, as far as the prospect of mutual complement of cultures, east and west, is concerned, the influence and power of eastern culture is becoming stronger; in other words, traditional Chinese culture is becoming increasingly popular in the West (Deng Jianqu, 2000: 18). At the First International Conference for Nobel Prize Laureates titled “Towards the 21st Century” held in Paris in 1988, H. Alwin, a Nobel Prize Winner and scholar from Sweden, said that “The human beings must go back to an era 2500 years ago for Confucius’ wisdom if they want to live on in the 21st century.” (Marnha, 1988) G. Sarton, a historian of science from the United States, also points out: “I fully believe that the West nowadays is still in need of the East as the East in need of the West ... Don’t forget that our inspirations have come from the East several times. Why does it not happen again?” (Sarton, 1987) Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), in particular, has elaborated on the same attitude towards Chinese culture in one of his theories called “Non-objective Thought”, according to which “what is involved is not only the abolishment of the so-called ‘scientific’ epistemology, but also the inference of a turn towards the East.” Thus, this can not only “reveal the privilege of the Chinese culture,” but rather, can “provide a reliable epistemological foundation for the Chination of the translation studies.” (Cai Xinle, 2005: 97) [My italics!]. This development will undoubtedly encourage new endeavours and great advances among Chinese scholars of translation studies.

Thirdly, the fact that I have given preference to eco-translatological research in this article does not imply ignorance or rejection of western translation thinking and theories. In fact, Eco-Translatology has been developed by means of ideas and methods in translation studies in the West, and what is more, the two important theoretical bases — the principle of “Natural Selection” and the principle of ecology — are actually scientific notions that originated in the West. In this sense Eco-Translatology
features a combination of eastern as well as western research norms. Hence, we hope that, in the field of Translation Studies, eco-translatological research will offer an opportunity for a really equal
dialogue between “Chinese” and “western discourse”.

Lastly, I must stress that there is a need for further exploration in the interpretation of the
“Chinese cultural gene” in Eco-Translatology. According to the Doctrine of the Mean, however, we
should avoid extremes in such research. Individual eco-translatological researchers should not go too
far in emphasising the influence of traditional Chinese culture, for any extremism in academic
research is a deficiency. There can be no theoretical development and innovation if traditional notions
and thinking are rejected and betrayed unless they are proved wrong.

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[About the author]

HU Gengshen, Ph. D. in Translation Studies, Professor at City University of Macao, Professor Emeritus at Macao Polytechnic Institute, and Professor Emeritus at Tsinghua University, Beijing, China.

Academic area: Eco-translatology, Cross-Cultural/International Communication Pragmatics, Teaching of the English Language and Culture

E-mail: hugengshen@cityu.edu.mo; hugs@tsinghua.edu.cn