3.4 Chinese Philosophy

In *The Dao of Translation: An East-West Dialogue* (Robinson 2015a) I returned to the model I had developed in *Becoming a Translator* in response to an interesting challenge to it from Ritva Hartama-Heinonen (2008, 256), who, citing my approach and a few others, exclaimed in disapproving mock-astonishment:

> What is surprising about these descriptions and what also characterizes the various theoretical orientations to professional translating in general, is that action and secondness somehow become highlighted. Instead of translators being “in as passive and receptive a state” (*CP* 7.45) as possible, they adopt the role of active searchers and, in this agency, seem to forget Peirce’s own experience “that those things … done spontaneously were the best done” (ibid.; cf. Peirce’s view in fn11, above). Abduction is, nevertheless, action without effort, and requires *letting* the sign address the mind (*CP* 2.228), or as earlier stated concerning the translator’s part of the contrast, *not* intervening (Gorlée 1994: 222). Abductive thought therefore entails “a surrender to the Insistence of an Idea” (*CP* 4.581), in translating, an “unconditional surrender” to the sign (Gorlée 1994: 194). Characteristic of the descriptions above is also the aspect of finding single solutions to problems. But abduction is an attitude that covers all action and every step, and it is inseparable: a feeling that integrates and permeates, and flows into a habit, that of abductive thought. In this light, translating is not about my thinking and finding and solving; it is about letting thoughts I have create wider alliances.

As I argued in Robinson (2015a), this sounds very Daoist—though specifically “Daoist” in the mystical sense, with Laozi’s concept of 無為 *wuwei* (lit. “without acting” or “non-action”) interpreted mystically as involving no action at all. Mengzi (or Mencius) too, the greatest Confucian thinker after Confucius, has his own version of 無為 *wuwei*, namely 勿助長 *wu zhu zhang* “don’t help grow”: rather than trying to stretch plants to help them grow, the gardener should just get out of their way and *let* them grow. The Daoists and Confucians were supposedly great opposites and opponents in Warring States China, and certainly they did take different paths politically, the Confucians advising emperors and the Daoists refusing political appointments; but on many philosophical points they shared a foundational belief in the ecological emergence of everything out of everything. Hartama-Heinonen never ties her theory of “abductive translation” specifically to Daoist or more generally to early Chinese thinking, but it does seem to be quite close to this assumption about action: the translator does not need to *translate* the text, because the text knows how to translate itself. The translator’s task is to get out of the text’s way, not intervene in the text’s self-translation process.
This is extreme, obviously; and as I show in Robinson (2015a, ch. 4), late in her book Hartama-Heinonen backs off the extremism that informs the rest of her argument. But note three things about that extremism while it lasts:

**Thing 1.** While she attacks my Peircean model in *Becoming a Translator* as a habit-based “straitjacket” (245)—“Robinson is, in other words, interested most in the actual process of hardening habits—habit-forming through experience in translation” (246)—I take the focus on habits from Peirce, to whom she too declares fealty. I show in Robinson (2015a, 30-34) that Hartama-Heinonen actually deviates quite strikingly from Peirce, ending up with a “Peircean” theory of translation that is surprisingly anti-Peircean; but at least in principle she and I are on the same page in our admiration for the semeiotic of Charles Sanders Peirce.

**Thing 2.** In their “philosophical translation” of Laozi, Roger T. Ames and David L. Hall (2003) argue persuasively that Laozi’s 無為 wuwei is not about *not* acting: it’s about *habitualized* acting. Because right action has become so habitualized that it has come to feel like second nature, the Daoist sage acts without bending himself to a purpose: action flows out of him, without conscious deliberation or determination. Translated to Hartama-Heinonen’s “abductive” semiosis of translation, this would mean that it’s not that the “Daoist” translator refuses to translate, but that s/he is such a consummate professional that s/he is able to rely on habitual or subliminal processes to accomplish most of the work—and, in so doing, is freed from much of the drudgery that plagues novice translators.

**Thing 3.** Hartama-Heinonen invented the part about me insisting on the “hardening” of habits: for both Peirce and me, as for Viktor Shklovsky, habits are an automatization of action that *can* harden, which is why it is so important to have access to cognitive strategies that will keep loosening them up. For Hartama-Heinonen what is dangerous about my model is that it not only recognizes the existence of habits but allows that habits may even sometimes be useful.

In fact, note that “automaticity”—specifically the homeostatic management of automaticity—has become something of a scarlet thread running through this Essay. On the one hand, as we saw Hervais-Adelman et al. (2015) noting, “We expect that the acquisition of expertise in simultaneous interpretation training requires the active development and automatization of extreme language control, a skill which overlaps considerably with other domains of executive control. This form of expertise can be expected to be at least partly driven by an increase in automaticity in performing the task, possibly driven by superior management of its multiple component skills” (265). This habitualization or automatization of language control certainly makes simultaneous interpreting possible; without intensive training and the resulting automatization, most bilinguals find simultaneous interpreting too difficult even to imagine. My argument in *Becoming a Translator* is that the same “increase in automaticity in performing the task, possibly driven by superior management of its multiple component skills,” makes it faster and more enjoyable to translate written texts accurately as well. And indeed we saw that an unexpected hitch in that “translation automatism,” like the unexpected failure of Otto Friedrich’s “automatic pilot” on his walk to work, can create those disturbing Feelings of the Alien, and shut us down completely for a few moments.

On the other hand, however, too much automatization can be numbing. Viktor
Shklovsky, quoting a passage from Leo Tolstoy’s journal, where the Count is wiping dust off the furniture in his room at the home of his friends the Olsuf’evs and can’t remember whether he wiped one chair, notes that habit can devour our whole lives, so that it seems to us that we aren’t living at all. It is precisely to counteract that numbing that Shklovsky theorizes estrangement, the Feeling of the Strange that shakes us awake, rouses us from our numbed, habitualized stupor, and makes us feel completely alive again—“makes the stone stony,” in his memorable phrase. There is, I would argue, a strong kinship between Shklovsky’s theory of остранинение/ostranenie—the Feeling of the Strange—and Hartama-Heinonen’s theory of abductive translation: both bubble up out of the pleasure principle/life drive, laying waste to deathly repetition. Unlike Hartama-Heinonen, however, who explicitly chastises translation scholars who even admit the existence of habitualized drudgery in the translator’s professional work, because she prefers to believe that “abduction captures the essence of translational activity, involving novelty, creativity, and playfulness” (273)—that there is nothing but novelty, creativity, and playfulness—Peirce, Shklovsky, and I all theorize a shuttle movement back and forth between habitualization and dehabitualization. Habit is a useful shortcut past the boring stuff, but would quickly pall if life were nothing else. Abduction is exciting, but would also quickly pall if life were nothing else.

Compare also my description in Robinson (2017a) of Sakai’s theory of the regime of homolingual address, which is “a regime in which each language is ideally isolated from every other, with the speakers of each able to communicate easily and freely, and indeed automatically, with each other, and utterly unable to communicate with the ‘foreigners’ that have been relegated in advance to other isolated languages” (CT 1.10). Sakai theorizes this as an illusory automatization of communication—actually people who speak our language are more foreign to us than we like to think, and our own speech often thwarts our automatized intentions—but it is certainly true that conversing in our first language with other native speakers of that language tends to feel automatic, precisely because, as Peirce would insist, it has become habitualized through life-long repetition. That automatization can come to feel numbing—endless small talk without surprise or other intensity—and what Peirce calls abduction, what Shklovsky calls estrangement, and what Sakai calls heterolinguality would all be welcome disruptions of that numbness.

The interesting question to ask about Hartama-Heinonen’s “Daoist” theory of translation, though, is: how can it possibly be Daoist, if she gives no indication of drawing explicitly on Daoist thought, indeed no sign that she even knows anything about it? She identifies her approach as Peircean, and, like Peirce himself, situates herself sympathetically in the history of Romanticism and Idealism as well—so where do such transparently Daoist notions as “Abduction is, nevertheless, action without effort” (256) come from?

In the two sections that follow, I offer two answers to that question. In the first (3.4.1) I show not only that the Romantics and Idealists in early-nineteenth-century Germany, England, and America were avid readers of the Chinese philosophical classics, but also that the Romantic/Idealist opposition to mainstream Enlightenment thinking was itself preconditioned by two centuries of European translations of the Daoist and Confucian classics and the powerful influence those translations had on esoteric thought. In the second (3.4.2) I explore the congruences between Romantic/Idealist/hermeneutic thought about Gefühl/feeling and Daoist/Confucian thought about 心/xin/feeling.
3.4.1 The Influence of Chinese Thought on the Peripheralized (anti-)West

The story of the impact ancient Chinese thought had on Western esoterics beginning in around the beginning of the seventeenth century is not widely known. The story begins with the Jesuit mission to China in the late 1570s and early 1580s, especially with Michele Ruggieri (1543-1607), sent to Macao from Portuguese India in 1579, and Matteo Ricci (1552-1610), who joined Ruggieri in Macao three years later, in 1582. Ruggieri and Ricci tried their hands at translating Laozi and the Confucian “four books” early on, but did not manage to produce publishable texts; part of the trouble was that Ruggieri embraced Daoism and Ricci embraced Confucianism, each man believing that his preference was closer to Christianity. Ricci published De Christiana Expeditione apud Sinas Suscepta ab Societate Jesu (“About Christian Expeditions to China Undertaken by the Society of Jesus”) in 1615; a later German Jesuit Sinologist named Athanasius Kircher (ca. 1601-1680) published China monumentis, qua sacris qua profanis, nec non variis naturae et artis spectaculis, aliarumque rerum memorabilium argumentis illustrata (usually known simply as China Illustrata, 1667). The Confucian classic “four books” were first published in Latin translation in 1687, under the title Confucius Sinarum Philosophus (“Kongzi, Philosopher of the Chinese”), translated by Jesuit Fathers Philippe Couplet (1623-1693), Prospero Intorcetta (1626-1696), and others.

The story of the influence of Chinese thought on oppositional Western thought begins to get interesting around the turn of the eighteenth century, when G.W. Leibniz (1646-1716) began synthesizing all that was then known in the West about the Daoist and Confucian classics. Leibniz was an advocate of Agostino Steuco’s (1497-1548) theory of a “perennial philosophy” (see Schmitt 1966), the supposed universal source from which all religious traditions draw; what he was ultimately looking for in Chinese thought was confirmation of his mystical assumptions. To that end he read everything published about China in Europe and all existing European translations of Chinese works, and also corresponded extensively with the Jesuit missionary Joachim Bouvet (1656-1730), an eminent mathematician and member of the Paris Academy of Science who had traveled to China to undertake his mission in 1687—one of six Jesuits sent to China on the first French mission. Bouvet’s version of the philosophia perennis was the then quite widespread notion that the Hebrew Bible was the universal source of all religions and all knowledge. Leibniz’s late Idealist metaphysical treatise La Monadologie (1714) in particular reflects this mystical view: the monads are eternal and indecomposable centers of force, each of which mirrors the entire harmonious panpsychic universe in a ceaseless unfolding. As Perkins (2004: 108) writes:

Leibniz showed an interest in China and other cultures from an early age, and, of Europeans who never left Europe, he became one of the most knowledgeable about China, particularly in the breadth of his knowledge. His interpretation of Confucian thought has serious flaws, but stands well above those of his contemporaries, and even some of the missionaries. From his research into Leibniz’s sources, David Mungello [1982] concluded that Leibniz had probably read or was familiar with every
significant book that had been written on China. Leibniz mentions almost all of them at some point in his correspondence.

In his study of Leibniz and Confucianism, Mungello (1977) reports that his research met with considerable surprise among colleagues; Perkins (2004, 9) reports the same more than a quarter century later. Somehow it seems counterintuitive that Leibniz could have been so respectfully attentive to the Chinese philosophical classics. Surely such an influential European thinker should have been primarily influenced by European thought—and his own genius? What Leibniz was doing was in fact channeling the European esoteric work he was reading—by the Neoplatonists (Plotinus, Porphyry, Iamblichus, etc.), by “Hermes Trismegistus” as translated by Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499) and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494), by the Christian theosophists and early-seventeenth-century Rosicrucians, by the Huguenot philosopher Phillippe du Plessis-Mornay (1549-1623)—into and through his reading in ancient Chinese thought, and transmitting it into the oppositional eighteenth century and beyond. (For studies of Leibniz and Chinese philosophy, see also Lach 1957; Zempliner 1970, 1971; Mungello 1982; Ahn 1990; Ching and Oxtoby 1992; and Lai 1998.)

Another influential protagonist in this story is Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772), who drew heavily in his esoteric work both on ancient philosophical texts from China and on the reports of Moravian missionaries. It would be difficult to overemphasize Swedenborg’s influence on nineteenth-century thought: Catherine the Great, Kant, Goethe, Lavater, Coleridge, Carlyle, Balzac, Baudelaire, and many other influential thinkers and writers were reading Swedenborg carefully. In Kant’s Critical Religion, Stephen R. Palmquist (2000: chs. II and X) argues persuasively that Kant developed his “Copernican Hypothesis”—his realization that space and time are a subjective projection, not stable properties of an objective world—while reading and responding to Swedenborg. If Palmquist is right, the driving philosophical force behind all influential Idealisms and most (post-)Romanticisms over the past two-plus centuries is indebted to Kant’s critical reading of Swedenborgian mysticism, which was steeped in Freemasonry, Rosicrucianism, the Kabbalah, and ancient Chinese thought. Henry James Sr. (1811-1882), father to William (the psychologist and philosopher) and Henry (the novelist), was a devoted Swedenborgian. Indeed all of the Transcendentalists, including Emerson, Thoreau, and Bronson Alcott, read Swedenborg avidly (and Emerson wrote a chapter of Representative Men on him), as did Transcendentalist-influenced writers like Whitman and Melville.

Emerson (1803-1882) and Thoreau (1817-1862) were in fact strongly drawn to Daoism and Confucianism through direct translations into French and English (see Christy 1963; Cheng 2000: 219n1): when Thoreau first stayed in Emerson’s house in 1841, he found French translations of the Daoist classics by the French Orientalist Guillaume Pauthier (1801-1873), The Works of Confucius (1809) by the Baptist missionary to Calcutta Joshua Marshman (1768-1837), and The Chinese Classical Work Commonly Called the Four Books (1828) by David Collie (d. 1828), the third headmaster of the Ying Wa College (英華書院), the world’s first Anglo-Chinese college. Both men pored over these books avidly, and discussed them frequently; Emerson published a selection (translated by Thoreau from
Pauthier’s French) of “Sayings of Confucius” in the 1843 *Dial*, and Thoreau quoted extensively from Mengzi in *Walden*. (Charles Sanders Peirce, by the way, was born in 1839 in Cambridge, Massachusetts; his father was a preeminent Harvard professor of mathematics and a close friend of Emerson, and Emerson’s thought was profoundly influential for Peirce’s later philosophical development.)

By the early nineteenth century, in other words, various forms of ancient Chinese and Western esoteric thought were circulating through the intellectual bloodstream of Europe, especially the Romantic and Idealist dissidents and utopians of the age. The German Romantics and Idealists at first looked upon Chinese thought with disdain, possibly in reaction against the superficiality of Enlightenment chinoiserie. Over the first two or three decades of the nineteenth century all of the major German Romantics, including Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803) and Friedrich von Schlegel (1772-1829), and all of the major Idealists, including G.W.F. Hegel (1770-1831) and Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835), seem to have undergone a gradual “conversion” vis-à-vis the value of Chinese writing: Chinese philosophy and literature, they began to realize, were not after all “mummified, reactionary, and unimaginative” (Linder 2003, 254) but a sinuous and tenacious ally against the forces of conservatism that surrounded them. Arguably the German Romantics and Idealists found in the Chinese thinkers kindred spirits because they had been prepared for that kinship by two centuries of “peripheral” Western thinkers incorporating Chinese thought into the esoteric tradition. As they read and responded to Leibniz and Swedenborg and the others, in other words, they were at some level responding to lingering traces and echoes of Chinese thought already stockpiled into the counterhegemonic power source from which they drew. As Yan (n.d.) argues, German post-Romantics and post-Idealists like Richard Wagner (1813-1883), Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), Hermann Hesse (1877-1962), Alfred Döblin (1878-1957), and Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956) continued to draw heavily on Chinese thought either directly or indirectly for their transformative engagements with the mainstream Western thought of their eras.

3.4.2 The 心 of the Foreign

My title for this section is a bilingual translation of Schleiermacher’s catchphrase “das Gefühl des fremden”/“the Feeling of the Foreign”: if 心/xin is the Chinese character for the heart, and is used to mean the verb “to feel” and the noun “feeling,” the counterhegemonic influence of Chinese thought on the Romantics (and their esoteric precursors and pragmatic and phenomenological successors) suggests that Schleiermacher’s definitive insight into the different methods of translating might yield to a superimposition of Daoist/Confucian 心/xin on Romantic/hermeneutic Gefühl/feeling. Let us consider, then, the consequences for -fremdung approaches to translation of three ancient Chinese ways of thinking about 心/xin: (section 3.4.2.1) Mengzi’s insistence that the heart thinks, (section 3.4.2.2) the use of feeling as an energy in the dispositional training of the body, and (section 3.4.2.3) the notion of a group heart-becoming-mind or feeling-becoming-thinking as a utopian model of society.
3.4.2.1 Feeling-becoming-Thinking

心/xin is a pictographic representation of the cardiac muscle, but Chinese people also use it to refer to something like “mind,” and some Sinologists have taken to translating it “heart-mind.” Indeed Mengzi famously writes that the organs of the eyes and ears cannot think, and so are easily deceived, but 心之官則思, 思則得之, 不思則不得/xin zhi guan ze si, si ze de zhi, bu si ze bu de (6A15), literally “The heart’s office/function is to think, thinks and engages, doesn’t think doesn’t engage.” Shun (1997, 150) notes that in contemporary (Warring States) Confucian texts, 思/si means not thinking in general, and certainly not logical, propositional thought, but rather something like “directing the attention to,” especially to something one feels inclined to do. If心/xin is feeling or affect, then, and affect channels inclinations (conations) into guidance for thinking (cognition), the character might be translated expansively as affect-becoming-conation-becoming-cognition. 官/guan originally meant a government office, later a government officer, someone in charge of making decisions; in that etymological light, we might think of 心之官則思/xin zhi guan ze si/“the heart’s office is to think” as something like “the heart is the officer that manages thought.” The affective directing/guiding/managing/commanding of thought/attention/perception/focus in effect saturates cognitive/conscious apperception of the world with managerial or “officious” (conative) affect. This is in fact almost exactly Damasio’s (1994) somatic-marker hypothesis. So far from being some strange “Eastern” conception of the heart at a thinking organ, in other words, 心/xin is very close to Western understandings of affect and conation as guides to cognition—as in common English phrases like “the heart knows better than the head,” which we take to imply that the cold cognitive logic that we trope as “the head” is weak and ultimately powerless without the guiding force of the affects and conations that we trope as “the heart.”

If accordingly we modify the emerging “heart-mind” translation of 心/xin as “heart-becoming-mind” or “feeling-becoming-thinking,” then, the 心/xin des fremden might be the Feeling-becoming-Thinking of the Foreign, the Feeling-becoming-Thinking of the Strange, or the Feeling-becoming-Thinking of the Alien. What effect does this slight shift have on our explorations of the foreignization, alienation, and estrangement of translation in section 3.3 above?

Our answer to that question would depend, obviously, on who is doing the Feeling-becoming-Thinking about those things: (1) the translator, (2) the target reader, or (3) the stereoscopic reader (comparing the translation with the original) who becomes the translation scholar. Let us consider each of those in turn.

1. The translator. As Schleiermacher sets up his model, of course, the translator is not expected to feel the foreignness of the current source text: s/he is supposed to simulate the Feeling of the Foreign felt by an imaginary person, a source reader who is neither a native nor a particularly fluent reader of the source language, for the target reader. For the purposes of that simulation it is, obviously, advantageous for the translator to retain a strong embodied memory of the Feeling of the Foreign, either in an earlier stage of his or her engagement with the source language or in her or his current engagement with some other language. There is,
to be sure, no need for that Feeling to become Thinking in the full-on propositional sense—the translator does not need to think consciously, logically, coherently about the Feeling of the Foreign—but if we follow Shun Kwong-Loi in reading 思/si as guidance for thought rather than conscious propositional thought in its own right, that’s not really a problem: the main thing for Schleiermacher is that the translator be able to channel a remembered Feeling of the Foreign into guidance for the translating process, so that the target reader will feel the Feeling of the Foreign while reading the translation. From the translator’s point of view, nothing in that model changes significantly when we move from the Feeling-becoming-Thinking of the Foreign to the Feeling-becoming-Thinking of the Strange or the Feeling-becoming-Thinking of the Alien: each specific channeling of that Feeling-becoming-Thinking is a translation strategy. It is a way of guiding translatorial choices. The examples I gave of translating Aleksis Kivi estrangingly in section 3.3.2 and заумь/zaum’ alienatingly in section 3.3.3 fit this model exactly.

2. The target reader. Things become more complicated, and therefore considerably more interesting, when we move to what the target reader Feels-becoming-Thinks in reading the translation. The complication stems, as I began to suggest in section 3.3, from my sense that the target reader reading an awkward translation is highly unlikely to convert that awkwardness into a Feeling-becoming-Thinking of the Foreign. Certainly, if the foreignizing translator has done her or his job well enough, the target reader will feel some sort of Feeling of the Awkward; but what aspect of an awkward text will guide the target reader to convert the Feeling of the Awkward into a Feeling-becoming-Thinking of the Foreign? In order to experience the Feeling-Becoming-Thinking of the Foreign, to be sure, the target reader does not have to Think, consciously, words like “this is a foreign text”; s/he only has to have an inchoate affective certainty of the text’s foreignness. But there does, it seems to me, have to be some kind of Felt-becoming-Thought difference between domestic awkwardness and foreign awkwardness. There are, after all, so many different subgenres of domestic awkwardness—bureaucratese, legalese, textbookese, freshman-compese, and so on, produced through a shifting collection of convergences between weak writing and genre restraints—and it is so much likelier that target readers will have extensive experience with those domestic forms of awkwardness than with foreign awkwardness, that it will almost certainly require an extra push to get target readers to Feel-becoming-Think the Foreignness of the awkward.

And then, one step further: the target reader is also likely to have some experience with unintentionally awkward foreign texts: lists of ingredients on foreign-made food products, instruction manuals translated by non-native speakers of the various target languages, and so on. This is the subgenre of foreign awkwardness called “translationese,” which is, obviously, the default label slapped onto a Schleiermacherian foreignized translation by the unwary. The target reader properly primed to dismiss that default label as inappropriate would obviously need to Feel (and perhaps even to Think) a heightening of the difference between translationese and (stylized)/foreignized translation, so that the latter is at least feelingly distinguished from the former. (And of course “distinguishing” is a becoming-Thinking kind of Feeling.)
Those complications become even more interesting when we move to the Feeling-becoming-Thinking of the Strange or the Feeling-becoming-Thinking of the Alien. The first question concerns whether the Feeling-becoming-Thinking of the Strange and the Feeling-becoming-Thinking of the Alien must also be Feelings-etc. of the Foreign. How we answer that question will depend on what we take the purpose of titrating Feelings-etc. of the Familiar and the Unfamiliar to be:

**Purpose 1: nationalism.** If, following Schleiermacher, the purpose of this congeries of approaches is the patriotic one of reminding the target reader that s/he is not reading a work originally written in the target language—that there is a qualitative difference between “local” writing and “foreign” writing—then our answer must be yes: das Gefühl des fremden must be at least in part a Feeling-becoming-Thinking of the Foreign, Feelingly guiding the target reader to a Thinking of national pride, domestic prowess. P1 would thus tend to reinforce what Sakai Naoki calls the regime of homolingual address: if original domestic literature creates in the reader a high dosage of the Feeling-(becoming-Thinking) of the Familiar and a low dosage of the Feeling-(becoming-Thinking) of the Unfamiliar, it may become possible to suppress all Thinking of the latter, and even eventually the Feeling of the latter, and thus to idealize the Feeling-becoming-Thinking of the Familiar as “automatic” communication among native speakers, or what Sakai calls homolinguality. Presumably P1 would be served equally well by the Feeling of the Strange or the Alien—anything that makes the target reader shake his or her head at “them weird (goddamned) foreigners”—except that in each case the Feeling of the Weird would need to become a Thinking of the Foreign alone. Nationalism is not served by a generalized Feeling of the Weird that does not culminate in a conscious tracking of that Feeling to the Foreign.

**Purpose 2: denaturalization.** If, following Berman and Venuti, the purpose of these approaches is the anti-illusionistic one of reminding the target reader that s/he is reading a translation, and thus also, by extension, of disrupting the (P1) “homolingualization” or automatization of the local culture, then the answer must again be yes: das Gefühl des fremden must be at least in part a Feeling-becoming-Thinking of the Foreign, Feelingly guiding the target reader to a transformative Thinking of what Sakai calls heterolinguality, the attitude that we are all foreigners to each other, and even to ourselves, and therefore that we are always translating, that all communication is translation.

**Purpose 3: ostranenie/estrangement.** If, following Shklovsky, the purpose of these approaches is the estranging/defamiliarizing one of shaking the target reader out of a habitualized numbness to embodied experience, the answer is not necessarily: das Gefühl des fremden could be a Feeling-becoming-Thinking of the Foreign, but all it really has to be is a Feeling-becoming-Thinking of the Strange or a Feeling-becoming-Thinking of the Alien. Reading a translation produced using one of those latter two strategies would only need to make the target reader feel more alive.

**Purpose 4: Verfremdung/estrangement.** If, following Brecht, the purpose of these approaches is the politicized estranging one of shaking the target reader out of a habitualized numbness to oppression, to the ways s/he is being both exploited and numbed to that exploitation, then the answer is again not necessarily: the important thing would be guiding the Feeling of the Foreign/Alien/Strange into the Thinking of political resistance to power. Ideally, of course, for Brecht that would mean a Marxist Thinking, but Brecht never
explicitly theorizes how Verfremdung channels the Feeling of the Strange into a Thinking (and ultimately an activist Pursuing) of Marxist revolution. One should also note that this ethos is also very close to the Marxist Thinking promoted by Lawrence Venuti, who, however, never invokes Brecht or Brechtian Verfremdung, never raises the possibility of a Feeling-becoming-Thinking of the Strange that does not involve a Feeling-becoming-Thinking of the Foreign. (Not that he ever thematizes foreignization as involving Feeling anyway, let alone Feeling-becoming-Thinking.)

3. The stereoscopic reader as critic/scholar/theorist. Factually, the stereoscopic reader—who reads both the original and the translation and compares them with each other—is also a target reader, and as such is covered in (2); historically, the stereoscopic reader who becomes a translation critic, a translation scholar, or a translation theorist has almost always been a translator as well, and so is also covered in (1). The stereoscopic activity of comparing the translation with the original, however, transforms both (1) and (2); and the professional activity of writing about translation by default also intensifies the becoming-Thinking part of 心/xin—to the point even, especially in the West, of driving some scholars to deny the entire relevance of Feeling to Thinking. I began writing out “Feeling-becoming-Thinking” at some point in the 1990s in reaction against a fairly widespread simplistic reading of The Translator’s Turn that took me to be saying something like “the translator doesn’t need to think, s/he can just translate any way s/he feels.” Any talk of Feeling, in this binary oversimplification, cancels out Thinking. I also began grounding talk of Feeling-becoming-Thinking in the neo-Jamesian neurological tradition, and specifically in Damasio’s somatic-marker hypothesis, because in Damasio’s neo-Jamesian approach to neuroscience emotion is a mapping of body states, feeling is a mapping of emotion, and thinking is a mapping of feeling: each emerges out of the lower bodily level by mapping it as emergent mind. But also the great liberation I felt living in Greater China for most of the second decade of the new millennium stemmed in part from the fact that Chinese people never binarize Feeling and Thinking in this way, because 心/xin in Chinese covers the entire range of heart-becoming-mind.

It also seems to me, however, that simply grounding the emergence of Thinking out of Feeling does not exhaust the complexity of the 心/xin des fremdes. I have already hinted at the additional complications in noting that in theorizing the foreignization of translation Schleiermacher, Berman, and Venuti do not Think the emergence of the Thinking of the Foreign out of the Feeling of the Foreign in any of the three potential constituencies: (1) translators, (2) target readers, and (3) stereoscopic readers like themselves. They all tend to mystify that whole process, leading me to suspect a break in the flow of Feeling into the Thinking of the Foreign not just in their Underthinking (under-theorizing or non-theorizing) but in the social organization of the reading of translations. It seems likely to me that target readers are “taught” or “conditioned” icotically to read textual awkwardness and the Feeling of the Awkward it provokes in them primarily as domestic rather than foreign subgenres of textual awkwardness, like bureaucratese and textbookese, and, secondarily, to the extent that they recognize the text they’re reading as a translation, as translationese rather than as foreignization. Foreignized translation, therefore, would seem to me extremely unlikely to have any of the desired effects projected onto it by Schleiermacher, Berman, and Venuti. I
infer therefrom that the only reason that they are able to promote it so enthusiastically is that they are not asking the important theoretical questions about it—they are, in other words, massively Underthinking it, and so rendering it incapable of performing or facilitating any worthwhile scholarly work. (Which is not to say, of course, that it is incapable of facilitating any scholarly work at all: witness the hundreds of MA theses that have been written around the world showing that Translation X is domesticated and Translation Y is foreignized. While one could argue that such scholarly work is “worthwhile” in the sense that it allows otherwise unpromising MA students to obtain their degree, I’m not convinced that is a particularly convincing argument.)

The relative extremism of the Feeling-becoming-Thinking of the Strange and the Feeling-becoming-Thinking of the Alien, by contrast, combined with the relative clarity and coherence of the Romantic/modernist Thinking of estrangement devices and alienation effects in literature, combined further with the freedom to incite and explore Verfremdungseffekten without a mandatory Feeling-becoming-Thinking of the Foreign, would seem conducive to a more productive medical humanities of translation—and other kinds of literary production.

3.4.2.2 The Dispositional Training of the Body

As I mentioned earlier, Ames and Hall (2003) argue that the Daoist 無為 wuwei “without-acting” is actually not at all an instruction not to act, as it seems to be in Ritva Hartama-Heinonen’s putatively “Daoist” theory of abductive translation, but a kind of noncoercive action emerging “naturally” (unconsciously) out of habitualized dispositions. Ames and Hall identify several other constructions in Laozi based on the 無/wu/“without” character as well: 無知/wuzhi/“without knowing,” 無欲/wuyu/“without desiring,” and 無心/wuxin/“without feeling.” These constructions, which they call the wu-forms, become the basis for their reading of Laozi as promoting the dispositional development of good habits:

What the Daodejing has to offer, on the other hand, is much simpler. It encourages the cultivation of a disposition that is captured in what we have chosen to call its wu-forms. The wu-forms free up the energy required to sustain the abstract cognitive and moral sensibilities of technical philosophy, allowing this energy, now unmediated by concepts, theories, and contrived moral precepts, to be expressed as those concrete feelings that inspire the ordinary business of the day. It is through these concrete feelings that one is able to know the world and to optimize the human experience. (36)

Thus for example 無為/wuwei becomes “noncoercive actions in accordance with the de (‘particular focus’) of things”; 無知/wuzhi becomes “a sort of knowing without resort to rules or principles”; and 無欲/wuyu becomes “desiring which does not seek to possess or control its ‘object’” (38). Their sensible understanding of how Daoists are to cultivate these “withouts”—these apparent renunciations of acting, knowing, and desiring—is that the way to the withouts leads through habitualization:
The developed customs and habits of mind of the Daoist are a resource that conditions, influences, and attempts to optimize the range of creative possibilities without in fact causally determining the crafting of novel experiences. Such aggregated habits are irreducibly social, and are the unannounced social propensity out of which individual hearts-and-minds express themselves as overt actions.

For example, the insistent particularity associated with the uniqueness of a particular person must be understood both relationally and as a dynamic process within the context of a given natural, social, and cultural world. Particular character is an interpenetration of habits that has organized and made meaningful the more primary but not more important natural impulses. Considered synchronically, persons are irreducibly relational, entailing what they do for this specific community as well as the personal enrichment they derive from participating in its communal life-forms and culture. Viewed diachronically, each particular personality must also be understood as an ongoing and unrelenting awareness that attends every gesture and thought, and that is expressed as a refined disposition in all of its activities. (48-49)

The notion that this dispositional habitualization works through the training of the body, however, comes from Mengzi:

中天下而立，定四海之民，君子樂之，所性不存焉。君子所性，雖大行不加焉，雖窮居不損焉，分定故也。君子所性，仁義禮智根於心，其生色也，睟然見於面，盎於背，施於四體，四體不言而喻。 (7A21)

To stand in the center of the Empire, to bring an orderly life to the people within the four seas: this gives the exemplary person pleasure, but s/he does not embody that pleasure as a propensity toward virtue. The exemplary person embodies virtue so robustly that, no matter how great or straitened the conditions in which s/he lives, s/he is not buffeted by external circumstance. S/he embodies fellow-feeling, rightness, ritual propriety, and wisdom by rooting them deeply in feeling-becoming-thinking, so that they put out new growth as a clarity in the face and a fullness in the back and shoulders, and on into the four limbs, so that they communicate clearly even though they cannot speak. (translation Robinson 2015, 57-60)

Shun (1997: 159) notes that Chinese commentators have tended to take the four limbs there as signifying conduct, but surely what Mencius is referring to here is not conduct in general but specifically posture as a corporeal (and so 不言/buyan/“unspeaking”) display of the virtue or vice that has shaped or trained it.
One less obviously embodied disposition resulting from this sort of training would be the “language control” that makes simultaneous interpreting possible—less obvious because the embodiment of language control is neural, and so not visible to the naked eye. Such “dispositions” are only detectable through functional and other brain-imaging research; but they can certainly be Felt (and even Thought) by simultaneous interpreters, who settle into their embodied dispositions as they set up in the booth. A more obviously embodied disposition resulting from professional training or long professional experience would be the professional translator’s Feeling—which also occasionally becomes a Thinking, and in my case generated \textit{Becoming a Translator}—that translating is mostly performed by the body: kinesthetic reenactments of past experiences do the remembering; the fingers do the translating; and man, look at those fingers go! The fact that “the fingers” can only do the translating as long as no problems arise—no unfamiliar words or phrases requiring research, no garbled syntax or bad spellings—serves as a reminder that translation is also an intelligent activity; and Thinking the Feeling that the body does the translating, Thinking that Feeling as the product of the automatization of long training or experience, serves as a reminder further that translation is \textit{always} an intelligent activity. \textit{Pace} Hartama-Heinonen, it just doesn’t always seem that way.

3.4.2.3 The Utopian Group Heart-Becoming-Mind

In the previous section I mentioned what Ames and Hall called the \textit{wu}-forms, and listed 無心 /\textit{wuxin}/ “without heart” as one of them—but then did not give Ames and Hall’s (re)definition of that form. Let us now look at an interesting example of that form, in Chapter 49 of the \textit{Laozi}:

聖人恆無心, 以百姓心為心。

\textit{shengren heng wuxin, yi baixing xin wei xin.}

Sage constant without heart/feeling, takes hundred surnames’ heart as heart. (literal translation DR)

The sage has no invariable mind of his own; he makes the mind of the people his mind. (Legge)

The sage lacks a heart? The sage feels nothing? The heart that the sage has is not the constant heart—or as Legge has it, “invariable mind”—but the people’s heart? What is going on there?

Ames and Hall give us:

Sages really think and feel immediately.
They take the thoughts and feelings of the common people as their own. (153)
The significant retranslation there is their rendering of 無/wu/“without” as “immediate(ly)”—the implication being that the negation in 無/wu is a negation not of heart/feeling but of mediation. The sage feels what the “hundred surnames” (a common euphemism for “the masses”) feel without a protective “membrane” that filters out whatever might be unpleasant. In a modern Western rationalist/individualist purview, 無心/wuxin might be translated negatively as “codependency”; to get back to the social neurology of hermeneutics, another translation might be German Einfühlung or English “empathy.” A Herderian translation might go:

Die Weisen fühlen sich in alles hinein.
Sie nehmen die Gefühle und die Gedanken der Massen als ihre eigenen an.

Sages feel their way into everything.
They take the feelings and the thoughts of the masses as their own.

I have elsewhere called this transmission of feeling through bodies “transfeeling”: we “transfeel” other people’s feelings in the sense that we not only receive them but transmit them onward to yet others. Feelings circulate through a group: what I call the somatic exchange. Every member of a group of friends present at a conversational event transfeels the affective orientations of every other present member. Another term often used for it is “identification,” but it is not simply a matter of mapping of our identities cognitively onto someone else’s, or theirs onto ours; it is an empathic projection, or what Ickes (1997; Ickes and Aronson 2003) calls “mind-reading.” I would call it an affective, or affective-becoming-cognitive, projection; and, since affect is generally taken to be more fully embodied than cognition, and is typically displayed in “legible” form on the stage of the body, it might more accurately called not mind-reading but “body-becoming-mind-reading.” We feel other people’s body states, from inside our own bodies. This is what makes the socioaffective phenomenon we call “face” possible: it is a collective evaluation of any given participant’s contribution to the conversation, and the various individual members of the group participate in that collective evaluation affectively, without necessarily becoming aware of doing so.

If 無心/wuxin is an “empathic projection,” then, would we be justified in translating it as “the Golden Rule”—the rule that you should feel your way into another person’s being? Given that Ames and Hall translates無知/wuzhi as “a sort of knowing without resort to rules or principles” (38), perhaps we should add that 無心/wuxin would be the Golden Rule-without-Rule, the habitualized Golden Rule, or perhaps the Golden Disposition?

Interestingly, when Kongzi (Confucius) wanted to formulate that Rule, he borrowed the ancient Chinese concept of 仁/ren, which up to that point had meant something like “benevolence”; and “benevolence” was the translation chosen for the character in the Confucian Four Books by David Collie in 1828 and James Legge in 1861. And, while a countertradition began to emerge in the middle of the twentieth century, with Chan (1963), Dobson (1963), Hinton (1998), Bloom (2009) and others translating it “humanity” or “humaneness,” it continues to be rendered “benevolence” by many English translators and Sinologists even today (most recently by Bryan W. Van Norden in 2008).
Mengzi, however, a century after Kongzi, added a new twist to the concept, renaming the *outward* projection of transfeeling (what Kongzi means by 仁/ren)恕/shu, and transforming 仁/ren either into its opposite, an *inward* transfeeling, an introjection of other people’s feelings, or, more likely, into a larger umbrella concept that includes both the outward projection and the inward introjection of transfeeling, and thus the circulation of feeling through the members of a group.

In other words, 仁/ren is neither “benevolence” nor “humanness.” As I argued at some length in Robinson (2015a, 71-75, and 2016a, 67-76, 91-102), what Mengzi means by the expanded Kongzian concept is specifically an interactive phenomenology of shared feeling, a socioaffective ecology. This construction of 仁/ren obviously brings us remarkably close to Laozi’s 無心/wuxin and 心為心/xin wei xin: if as I suggested above the negation in 無/wu “without” signals the removal of the regulatory membrane through which most people *transfeel a little* (not too much to be unsettling) of other people’s feelings, the sage’s goal is not only to let the common people’s feelings circulate through him or her, but to let 無心/wuxin become a “sedimented habit of engagement” (Ames and Hall 2003, 153). For it is only when 無心/wuxin is “second nature”—not something one constantly strives to attain but what feels like the most natural thing in the world—that the sage becomes what Mengzi calls 仁人/ren ren, a fellow-feeling fellow, someone who allows other people’s feelings, the feelings of the whole group, to flow through his or her actions, thoughts, words, and relationships.

But this all seems very vague: “one big happy family”-type thinking. “One is all and all are one.” How exactly does the circulation of people’s feelings through a group work in translation?

Consider the kinds of texts nonliterary freelance translators translate: technical, legal, commercial, medical, governmental. In any given week a translator may translate an instruction manual for a diesel engine, a series of depositions for a court case, an advertisement and two pharmaceutical inserts (one intended for doctors, the other for patients) of a new drug, and a toxic-waste environmental-impact statement for a proposed new pulp mill. These documents are not just words and phrases that can be translated as “pure language” (whatever that might be): they are human communications created for specific purposes, charged with agency, designed to bring about change in the world. They are interpersonal exchanges—not usually one-to-one exchanges, but exchanges nonetheless. In them people are trying to do things to other people with words. And all of the people involved are very different—people who have been shaped by their jobs in very different ways. They not only talk about their experience of the world differently; they actually Feel and Think about it differently. In an important sense they live in different worlds: their Feelling-becoming-Thinking “worlds” different “realities” forth.

The instruction manual may have been written by a technical writer with input from an engineer, or a technician, or a whole team of technicians, who may not all have agreed on specific points; the tech writer may not have internalized the input as fully or complexly as the technicians might have hoped. Or it may have been written by a technician who understood the diesel engine extremely well but had no idea how to write about it, who even
hated writing, and was assigned the job by a supervisor who knew nothing about writing either, and didn’t really care. Some members of the team who contributed to the creation of the instruction manual probably cared a great deal about the engine—more even, perhaps, than about his or her coworkers. Others might have cared more about the words than the machine; others still more about the money, or the boss’s praise. In principle they should all care most about the end-user, the reader, and his or her interactions with the diesel engine—but to expect the whole team to assign top priority to that reader would be utopian.

The depositions would be word-for-word transcripts of oral testimony by a series of witnesses, conducted out of court by a lawyer or a group of lawyers and transcribed by a court reporter, either from a recording or through shorthand. The transcripts would reflect not only a variety of personalities—the lawyers, the witnesses—but the complexities of human conversation (misunderstandings, imprecise memories, sloppy descriptions, etc.) as refracted across the gap between legal experts and lay people. Again, the work of taking and transcribing these depositions should ideally be organized toward the end of making a case in court; but people’s motivations vary.

The advertisement and the two pharmaceutical inserts would provide roughly the same information about the new drug, but for different purposes and to different target audiences—mainly doctors and patients, obviously. The advertising copy would obviously be designed to sell the drug; the inserts, how and when to prescribe it (doctors) or take it (patients). Pharmaceutical companies spend huge amounts of money developing new drugs, and obviously want to sell as many units as they can, to recuperate their investment; but the people who create the ad copy and pharmaceutical inserts may not care at all about the company’s investment, which the texts they write are intended to protect.

The toxic-waste environmental-impact statement for the new pulp mill is a governmental document, required before the new mill can open; one would think such things would be routine, purely and indeed facelessly factual, without the kind of “agency” (or spin) that we expect from say advertising texts. But of course there’s always room for spin; and even if the mill truly does meet all governmental requirements, there is the chance that environmentalists will use the document to protest the laxity of governmental standards.

In each job, in other words, all within the space of a single hypothetical week, this one translator must feel his or her way into a dozen or more different hermeneutical encounters, each of which is organized verbally and cognitively, obviously, but also affectively, and conatively, around real or imagined human relationships. In Mengzi’s terms, each is its own separate 仁/ren/“fellow-feeling” or regulatory group 心/xin/“Feeling-becoming-Thinking.” S/he must, like the Daoist sage as imagined by Laozi, take that 心為心/xin wei xin/“group heart as heart”—must be enough of a 仁人/ren ren/“fellow-feeling fellow” to be 無心/wuxin, which is to say, not to insist on retaining the personal agency of a separate individualistic Feeling-becoming-Thinking.

This means not only identifying with the various social actors involved in each group interaction—commissioners, supervisors, project managers, researchers, writers, speakers, readers, users—but entering imaginatively into the interaction itself, feeling one’s way into the transaction. How does one do that? How is that even possible? This is not a mystical model of human communication; one does not “divine” these things. Rather, one guesses,
imagines, projects—but does so in an “educated” way, through educated guesses that are affectively guided by research. Without that ability to enter into the regulatory affect of a group, it is in fact impossible to write to or for that group. Most adult humans have been sufficiently socialized to be 仁者/ren zhe/“fellow-feelingists” (Mengzi 4A8, 7A24, 7B1) in face-to-face encounters. It is quite common, however, for people to hate to write: why? We might use Mengzi’s “social neuroscience of hermeneutics” model to suggest that across the spatiotemporal gaps that open between writers and readers, they are不仁者/buren zhe/“non-fellow-feelingists”: they don’t feel the guidance of the group when they read, and so are unable to feel or wield that guidance when they write. Written texts thus become abstractions to them, strings of words that they cannot Feel as group guidance, and so cannot use to channel Feeling-becoming-Thinking back through the group either.

1 Of course, the philosophical transformation of 仁 ren by Kongzi into something like the Golden Rule—the expansion of self to encompass the other, or at least to prefeel the other powerfully enough to anticipate the other’s preferences and feel inclined to honor them—does not exactly render the “benevolence” translation tradition incorrect or obsolete: a person who is inclined to do unto others as s/he would have others do unto her or him is likely to behave in benevolent ways. But it does tend to render the core “niceness” sense of benevolence in English a secondary byproduct of transfeeling projected outwards.