

## Article

# Anthropological Terms in Chinese Biblical Translations: The Interplay between Catholic and Protestant Versions in Response to Chinese Traditional Cultures

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**Abstract:** Notwithstanding the considerable attention that Chinese Bible translations have attracted, some important theological issues have been ignored for a long time, one of which is anthropology. The present article focuses on the Chinese rendering of terms in this category. From the attempts in the first three Catholic versions, the Western theory of soul introduced by Matteo Ricci began to influence the connotation of *ling* 靈 in Chinese biblical texts, though *anima* and *spiritus* had not been distinguished or the translations were still obscure in these renditions. Robert Morrison's version, though heavily dependent on Jean Basset's translation, was also indebted to Emmanuel Diaz and Louis A. de Poirot in its dichotomous anthropology, developing a *ling-rou* 靈-肉 (lit. spirit-flesh) dichotomous discourse with his conceptualization of *ling* 靈. Initiated by the "second generation" of Protestant Bible translators, the renderings of *pneuma/ruach* and *sarx/basar* took the indigenized approach that culminated in the Delegates' Version of the Bible. With the assistance of some Chinese scholars in completing this version, Medhurst launched a dialogue between Christian anthropology and Chinese traditional outlooks of human beings by emphasizing the concepts of *shen* 身 and *xin* 心, which had long-lasting popularity in later versions of the Chinese Bible.

**Keywords:** Chinese biblical translation; Chinese Christianity; theological anthropology; dichotomy; trichotomy



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In mid-nineteenth century China, Bible translation, which was crucial to missionary work in the country, had begun to establish many of the paradigms that would have a lasting influence on succeeding generations of translators. These paradigms encompassed the mechanisms of translation, translation strategies, selection of terms and linguistic styles. Paradoxically, although the Protestant missionaries in China diverged from their Catholic counterparts in theology and competed with them in missionary affairs, they were indebted to their Catholic predecessors in Bible translation. Chinese Bible versions completed by the mid-nineteenth century reflect the relationship between these two factions. For example, the accommodation policy of the Jesuit Society was upheld by their missionaries in China, playing an essential role in their biblical texts and thus influencing the later Protestant translators.

The majority of the existing research highlights the linguistic issues in Chinese Bible translation, including the comparison between versions in different styles, discussion of different renderings of key terms and understanding some versions in light of specific social linguistic backgrounds (for example, see X. Zhao 2019; Y. Liu 2015; Mak 2017; Foley 2009). However, the research often overlooks the theological questions that were implied by these various translation strategies. Chao-Chun Liu distinctively traces the influence of Protestant theology on Chinese Christianity through the Chinese Union Version of the Bible, with a case study examining the varied renderings of the anthropological concept of *pneuma*: some translators were dichotomists and thus ignored the difference between *psyche* and *pneuma*, while some others were trichotomists, believing that human beings consist of three parts—body, soul and spirit—and therefore distinguish the Chinese renditions of *psyche* and *pneuma*. The topic of human constitution belongs to the category

of theological anthropology that has been randomly observed by scholars in the field of Chinese Bible translation, and in fact, Liu's insight does not cover the origin of the two theories of human constitution, let alone evaluate them in the context of Chinese theology (C.-C. Liu 2021). Historically, the anthropological concepts in Chinese biblical texts originated from the Western theory of the soul introduced by the Jesuits active in late Ming China; accordingly, implying a dialogue between the Bible and Chinese philosophy and relating to translation thoughts in different ages and various other theological topics, such as pneumatology and soteriology. Given this research status, the present article starts by comparing the renderings of anthropological terms (mainly *anima*, *spiritus*, *caro* and *corpus*) in three early Catholic Chinese biblical translations and discusses how the Protestant pioneers, Robert Morrison (1782–1834) and Joshua Marshman (1768–1837), received this Catholic heritage. In the third section, we focus on the indigenized practices of the second generation of Protestant Chinese Bible translators and their development in the Delegates' Version, analyzing how they rendered *pneuma/ruach* and *sarx/basar* from the perspective of the Chinese language and traditional cultures, through which the dialogue between Christian and Chinese classics is carried out. In conclusion, we point out that some popular versions of the Bible in the late nineteenth century adopted some of these indigenized renderings of anthropological terms, demonstrating the profound influence of these initial terminological frameworks.

### 1. The Attempts in the Three Early Biblical Texts Completed by Catholic Missionaries

Due to the Vatican's prohibition on translating the Bible from Latin, Catholic missionaries who came to China in the early stages were insufficiently accomplished in a strict sense and so were only able to incorporate some biblical pericopes in their Chinese writings. Most of them are adaptations and differ from the original to a large extent.<sup>1</sup> The first representative work that transfers a large amount of the original (the Latin Vulgate) is the *Shengjing Zhijie* 聖經直解 (*A Direct Explanation of the Holy Scripture*, SZ for short) authored by a Portuguese Jesuit named Emmanuel Diaz (1574–1659). This is a biblical compilation that contains about one-third of the content of the four canonical gospels and can thus be regarded as a groundbreaking work of the Catholic missionaries in rendering this scripture. It had a significant impact on Jean Basset's New Testament version and Louis Antoine de Poirot's (1735–1814) *Guxin Shengjing* 古新聖經 (*The Old and New Testaments*), which were completed in the early and middle Qing dynasty, respectively. The main content of the SZ is designated as *jing* 經 (scripture), containing passages of gospel readings organized in line with the yearly lectionary of Sundays and the Feast days, with *zhen* 箴 (explication), *daiyi* 代疑 (raising questions) and interlinear notes (in smaller type) to explain complex issues in the scripture.<sup>2</sup> In the author's preface, Diaz exclaims, "how is it that all other creatures, either those with feelings but no soul (i.e., animals), or those that have lives but no feelings (i.e., plants), or those with neither (i.e., the universe and the four basic elements), follow their own ways and comply with their destinies, while human beings have souls, feeling and lives but do with their selfish purposes, establish other schools, unacquainted with the true religion, and betray the truth and lose their consciences?" (Diaz 2014, vol. 17, p. 297). This resonates with Aristotle's theory of three kinds of souls that was introduced to China by the Italian Jesuits Michele Ruggieri (1543–1607) and Matteo Ricci (1552–1610). In Ruggieri's *Tianzhu Shilu* 天主實錄 (*The True Record of the Lord of Heaven*) and Ricci's *Tianzhu Shiyi* 天主實義 (*The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven*, TS for short), the Latin concept *anima* is rendered as *hunling* 魂靈 (lit. spirit with soul) and *linghun* 靈魂 (lit. soul with spirit), respectively, which are appropriated from Chinese Buddhism and Daoism.<sup>3</sup> In TS, Ricci borrows Ruggieri's statement, pointing out that there are three kinds of souls, namely, *shenghun* 生魂 (soul with life), *juehun* 覺魂 (soul with feeling) and *linghun*: *shenghun* refers to "the soul of plants", *juehun* refers to "the soul of animals" and *linghun* refers to "the soul of human beings". *Linghun* is unique to humans, which is "compatible with *shenghun* and *juehun*, can nurture human beings and make them aware of foreign objects and emotion; and enable them to deduct, differentiate and analyze". Among these three kinds of

souls, it is only *linghun* that is immortal (Ricci 2015, pp. 109–10). Based on this classification, Diaz’s adoption of the concept of *ling* occurs mainly in the commentaries of SZ. For example (summarized in the *Zashi Mulu* 雜事目錄 (a catalog of miscellaneous matters)):

- (1) “*renling ji gui, yi qin yi jiu* 人靈極貴，宜勤以救” (“human souls are extremely valuable and should be saved urgently”).
- (2) “*ren gai qin yu shen, er huan yu ling* 人槩勤於身，而緩於靈” (“people are always enthusiastic about their bodies and neglect their souls”).
- (3) “*shanren zhi ling, heng xiang taiping; e’ren zhi ling, heng luan buning* 善人之靈，恆享太平；惡人之靈，恆亂不寧” (“a good man’s soul can enjoy peace forever while a wicked man’s soul is caught in unrest”) (Diaz 2014, vol. 17, p. 339).<sup>4</sup>

In these sentences, *ling* is used as a noun referring to the human soul. Additionally, *ling* can be used as an adjective in terms such as “*lingxing* 靈性” (“spirituality”), “*lingbing* 靈病” (“illness in the soul”), “*lingmen* 靈門” (“the gate of the soul”), “*lingwu* 靈務” (“affairs about the soul”) and “*lingxin* 靈心” (lit. “spiritual heart”), denoting a diversity of concepts concerning the human soul. The adjective usage can also be found in the scriptural translation (i.e., “*jing* 經” (“scripture”)), for instance, “*wu ling shen you zhi si* 吾靈甚憂至死” (“my soul is worried to death” Matt 26:38) (Diaz 2014, vol. 18, p. 250). It is worth noting that Diaz occasionally uses *ling* to denote the third person of the Trinity. For example:

- (1) “*wu zhu Shengling, ji li sheng shi, rudi he jiao* 吾主聖靈，既離聖屍，入地何窮” (“since the Holy Spirit of our Lord has left the holy corpse, where will it enter beneath the earth?”) (Diaz 2014, vol. 17, pp. 440–41).
- (2) “*ren zhi ling, sheng ye, yinren zhi Tianzhu zhi ling, zhao touda yi wuxian* 人之靈，聲也，引人知天主之靈，照透達亦無限” (“human spirit is like a sound, leading human beings to know the Spirit of God that is illuminating and unlimited”) (Diaz 2014, vol. 17, p. 513).

Here, both “*Shengling* 聖靈” and “*Tianzhu zhi ling* 天主之靈” refer to the third person of the Trinity, that is, Spiritus Sanctus in Latin, which was rendered elsewhere as “*Shengshen* 聖神” (lit. “the holy god”) by Diaz. For instance, “*tang yu fu wang, Shengshen fu jiang* 倘予弗往，聖神弗降” (“the Holy Spirit won’t descend if I don’t leave” Jn 16:7) (Diaz 2014, vol. 18, p. 393). In summary, though Diaz enriches the theological meaning of the word *ling* in his scriptural translation and commentaries, he does not clarify its denotation.

In a strict sense, the first Chinese biblical translation is the New Testament version accomplished by Jean Basset (1662–1707), a French missionary dispatched by Missions Étrangères de Paris (MEP for short), in collaboration with his Chinese literary assistant, Johan Xu (d. 1734).<sup>5</sup> This version (BX-NT for short) contains most books of the New Testament, in line with the canonical order, and stops at the first chapter of the *Epistle to the Hebrews*. The uniqueness of the BX-NT lies in its coining of numerous proper names, especially in some significant theological terms: it is Basset and Xu who made the first attempt to render God as *shen* 神 (God) in the history of Chinese Bible translation, staying away from the dispute on whether the proper name of God should be *Shangdi* 上帝 (the supreme emperor) or *Tianzhu* 天主 (the lord of the heaven), and who rendered Spiritus Sanctus as (*Sheng*) *feng* 聖 (風) (lit. (holy) wind). Starting from the Nestorian literature composed in the Tang dynasty, the third person was translated as *feng* 風 (wind)<sup>6</sup>, and Basset was the first to adopt this concept in biblical translation. From his point of view, the Greek word *pneuma* and the Latin word *spiritus* coincide with the Chinese word *feng* in multiple contexts.<sup>7</sup> Upon close reading, we can observe that Basset emphasizes the uniformity of terminology and maintains a rather tight correspondence between the Latin original and the Chinese renditions<sup>8</sup>: he renders most occurrences of *spiritus* as *feng* whether they refer to the Holy Spirit or to the human spirit. See the following examples:

- (1) “*weishi, feng yin yesu wang kuangye, yi pi mogui zhi you* 維時，風引耶穌往曠野，以被魔鬼之誘” (“Then Jesus was led up by the Wind (Spiritus) into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil” Matt 4:1).

- (2) “*qie wu feng yong xi yu jiuwo zhi shen* 且吾風踴喜于救我之神” (“and my wind (spiritus) rejoices in God my Savior” Lk 1:47).

As we can perceive, *feng* in the first sentence refers to the Holy Spirit and in the second sentence refers to the human spirit (Mary’s spirit); however, these two usages are rarely seen in the context of Chinese literature. Therefore, these literal translations are absurd or even misleading for local readers. In the BX-NT, *anima* is rendered as *hun* 魂 (soul) or *linghun* 靈魂 in most cases (with few exceptions such as in Jn 12:27 (*xin* 心) and Acts 27:22 (*ming* 命, life)), while the single character *ling* 靈 is adopted to render the Latin word *mentem* (mind), echoing the implications with which Ricci endows this concept in *Tianzhu Shiyi*, that is, intelligence unique to human beings. For instance, “*yesu da zhi yue, ru quanxin, quanhun, quanling, ai er zhu shen zhe* 耶穌答之曰，汝全心，全魂，全靈，愛爾主神者” (“Jesus said to him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind” Matt 22:37). Compared with Diaz, Basset clearly distinguishes between the Chinese rendering of *anima* and that of *spiritus*, and roughly differentiates between *ling* 靈 and *hun* 魂 in Chinese.

After the BX-NT, the French Jesuit Louis A. de Poirot translated the New Testament and some books of the Old Testament into the colloquial language popular in Beijing and its nearby area, entitling it *Guxin Shengjing* (GS for short). It was the first colloquial version in the history of Chinese biblical translation, with an unprecedented amount of translated text and abundant endnotes, transplanting Western exegetical tradition and interpreting biblical texts with the synthesis of Chinese contexts and Jesuit traditions. This indigenized strategy can also be detected in the main body of de Poirot’s rendition.<sup>9</sup> Since the Rites Controversy taking place during the reign of Kangxi (1661–1722) resulted in the Vatican’s decree that only *Tianzhu* and *Shengshen* could be used by Catholics in China to render *Deus* and *Spiritus Sanctus*, respectively, de Poirot, living in the reign of Qianlong (1736–1795), accepted these two sanctioned terms.<sup>10</sup> The linguistic style of de Poirot’s translation, as Shershiueh Li 李爽學 argues, is Europeanized colloquial Chinese (de Poirot 2014, pp. 23–58), facilitating the work of the translator in rendering the Latin original. However, his rendition is not entirely equivalent to the original: some translated texts contain the word *linghun* (or *ling* 靈), but this is an insertion or modification made by the translator; that is, a paraphrase. For example, “*zhizhong bu biangeng, cai de jiuling* 至終不變更，才得救靈” (“But the soul of whom endures to the end will be saved” Matt 24:13). The original “*hic salvus erit*” only denotes “be saved”. However, de Poirot renders it as “*jiuling* 救靈” (“save the soul”), which implies his soteriology—salvation is only about saving the soul (similar cases in Rom 10:10, Ps 24:5, etc.). For another example, “*gai pa na shashen hou pao ling yu yu de* 該怕那殺身後拋靈於獄的” (“fear he who, after he has killed, has soul (potestatem) to cast into hell” Lk 12:5). The original “*potestatem*” means power, while de Poirot’s paraphrase implies that having a *linghun* is the privilege of human beings, echoing what Ricci says, “*renshen sui si, er hun fei si, gai yongcun bumie zhe yan* 人身雖死，而魂非死，蓋永存不滅者焉” (“though the human body is dead, the soul is alive and immortal”) (Ricci 2015, p. 109). As for “*spiritus*” without the adjective “*sanctus*”, de Poirot usually renders it as *linghun* 靈魂/*ling* 靈 or *Shengshen* 聖神/*shen* 神 according to the immediate context, referring to the human soul or the Holy Spirit, respectively. See Romans 8:4–5 as an example:

“*Tayi shi: women de jiu fadu xu de yi, en, shengchong, bu’an roushen siyu xing, zhi an Shengshen zhiyin. An shenyu xing de, zhuanwu roushen de shi; an linghun de shi, dan xiang li shangong, xiude.* 他意是：我們得舊法度許的義、恩、聖寵，不按肉身私慾行，只按聖神指引。按身慾行的，專務肉身的事；按靈魂的事，單想立善功、修德”。 (“He meant that the justification and grace of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Holy Spirit (spiritum). For they that are according to the flesh, mind the things that are of the flesh; but they that are according to the soul (spiritum), mind the things that are of good deeds and merits”).<sup>11</sup>



Occasionally, in the contexts of referring to human mental activity or human nature, it is rendered as “*yi* 意 (mind; 1 Cor 14:14–15)”, “*xin* 心 (heart; 2 Tim 4:22)”, “*benxing* 本性 (spirituality; Rom 2:29)” and so on. Regarding the Latin word *anima*, it is basically translated as *ling* 靈 or *linghun* 靈魂. For instance:

- (1) “*Benlai ruo ren dele tianxia, que shangsun le ziji de linghun, youhe yi ne?* 本來若人得了天下，卻傷損了自己的靈魂，有何益呢?” (“For what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his soul (animae)?” Mk 8:36).
- (2) “*Maliya shuo: wo ling gansong zhu* 瑪利亞說：我靈感頌主...” (“And Mary said: My soul (anima) doth magnify the Lord...” Lk 1:46).

Judging from these renditions, de Poirot is probably a dichotomist in the similar way as Diaz, who views the soul as the antithesis of the body and does not distinguish between *anima* and *spiritus* as two parts of human constitution. As we observe, de Poirot might notice the subtle difference between these two biblical terms, but integrated them in his translated texts.

All of the above three early Catholic Chinese translations of biblical texts are based on the Latin Vulgate, in which the words “*caro* (flesh)” and “*corpus* (body)” are also terms for the human constitution, in contrast with *anima* and *spiritus*. It is the rendition of Basset and Xu that stays closest to the basic meaning of the original: “*rou* 肉” (meat, flesh) and “*shen* 身” (body) (or “*ti* 體” (body)) are adopted as equivalents of *caro* and *corpus*, respectively. In his *Guxin Shengjing*, de Poirot makes adjustments according to the immediate context. For example, “*roushen* 肉身” (corporeal body) is mainly the equivalent of *caro* in GS, but de Poirot renders “*mortalia corpora*” in Romans 8:11 as “*gaisi de roushen* 該死的肉身” (damned corporeal body), using the word “*roushen*” that is better than “*shenti* 身體” (body) in belittling those “indulging in fleshly affairs” who were criticized in the preceding sentences. With respect to Diaz’s *Shengjing Zhijie*, which was a compilation of the Four Gospels not aiming at rendering the original accurately, more paraphrases can be discovered in this version, and two cases concerning the use of “*roushen*” are worth our discussion here:

- (1) “*Wu’erpeng yi jiang wei ren, yi ju wu nei* 物爾朋已降為人，已居吾內”. (“The Word has descended to be human (*caro*) and dwelt among us”). (Diaz 2014, vol. 18, p. 55).
- (2) “*Weishi yesu wei zhong yue, yu ti zhen shi, yu xue zhen yin. ling yu ti, yin yu xie, yi huai yu, yu huai yi* 維時耶穌謂眾曰，予體真食，予血真飲。領予體，飲予血，伊懷予，予懷伊”. (“Then Jesus said to the crowd, ‘my body (*caro*) is the true food and my blood the true drink. Take my body (*carnem*) and drink my blood, in this way you will be in me and I will be in you.’”) (Diaz 2014, vol. 18, p. 125).

The original of the first sentence is “*et Verbum caro factum est, et habitavit in nobis*”. In his rendition, Diaz abandons the basic meaning of *caro* and renders it as *ren* 人 (human), with an interlinear note to explain the paradox of “how a humble man can ascend to the high place of the adopted son of God” (“*ren zhi bei, yanneng teng zhi Tianzhu yizi zhi gaowei* 人之卑，焉能騰陟天主教子之高位”) (Diaz 2014, vol. 18, p. 55), suggesting his theology is that the core of incarnation is to bridge the gap between God and human beings. As for the second sentence, its literal meaning is that Jesus persuades his disciples to eat his flesh and drink his blood, while Diaz renders the word *caro* in this sentence as “*ti* 體” and explains in the following exposition, “*Shengti, lingxing zhi shiyin ye. Bi zhi rouqu, yinshi duo gu* 聖體，靈性之食飲也。比之肉軀，飲食多故” (“The sacrament as the spiritual food is better than the corporeal body as food”). (Diaz 2014, vol. 18, p. 127). From this exposition, we can see that the word “*ti* 體” in the main body of the rendition refers to the *Shengti* 聖體 (the holy body) in the Eucharist, the theology of which is interpreted, as Diaz understands, in this pericope, as underlining the difference between the spiritual body of Christ and the mortal body of human beings. It reveals Diaz’s motivation for adapting *caro* to “*ti* 體”.

According to some of the previous research, the three Catholic biblical translations discussed above are intertextually related: a large amount of the content in the BX-NT is highly similar to that in the *Shengjing Zhijie*, while the *Guxin Shengjing* is a somewhat revised version of the SZ.<sup>12</sup> Nonetheless, from the above exploration of the anthropological

terms in these versions, we can discover another correlation between them: paying attention to integrating the previous writings of Jesuits in China, the SZ and the GS are influenced by the theory of the soul in Ricci's *Tianzhu Shiyi* and attach importance to conveying the theology implied in the biblical texts, tending, as a result, to translate the anthropological terms from the perspective of dichotomy. By contrast, the BX-NT prefers literal translation and subdivides the anthropological terms, laying the foundation for the later Protestant Chinese Bible translations.

## 2. Robert Morrison's and Joshua Marshman's Reception of the Catholic Heritage

Among Protestant missionaries, the earliest Chinese Bible translators were Joshua Marshman from the London Baptist Church with his helper Johannes Lassar (?–1835), an Armenian born in Macau, and Robert Morrison with his collaborator William Milne (1785–1822) from the London Missionary Society (LMS for short). These two groups of translators competed with each other to gain sponsorship from the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS for short) and finally published their full Bible versions in 1822 and 1823, respectively, but only Morrison and Milne's version (entitled *Shentian Shengshu* 神天聖書 (*The Sacred Book of the Holy Heaven*)) was circulated in China. It is regarded as the pioneering work in Protestant Chinese Bible translation. The New Testament portions (NT for short) of these two versions are highly indebted to the BX-NT, and both the translated names for the Supreme Being (*shen* 神) and the third person of the Trinity (*feng* 風) also follow this base text. Moreover, Marshman consulted Morrison's revisions of BX-NT, resulting in two remarkably similar Protestant versions.<sup>13</sup> Morrison's contribution to the history of Bible translation was widely appreciated by his contemporaries as well as by reviewers of later generations. However, the quality and originality of his rendition have not been acknowledged as was expected.<sup>14</sup> Actually, Morrison departed from Basset and Johan Xu's work and innovated in his word selection, which can be exemplified by his usage of the character “*ling* 靈” as the equivalent of various concepts, as classified in the following:

- a. In the context of *pneuma* referring to the human spirit rather than the Holy Spirit, this is Morrison's revision of the BX-NT, based on the immediate context. For example, 2 Timothy 4:22a is rendered by Basset as “*zhu yesu jidu yu er feng xie yan* 主耶穌基督與爾風偕焉” (“The Lord Jesus Christ be with your wind (*pneumatos*)”)<sup>15</sup>; however, Morrison revises the character “*feng* 風” to “*ling* 靈”, differentiating between the human spirit and the Holy Spirit. When rendering the adjective form of *pneuma* (i.e., *pneumatikos*), Morrison also prefers “*ling*” rather than “*feng*”. For example, he changes Basset's renditions of “*fengwu* 風物 (lit. windy good; 1 Cor 9:11)” and “*fengshen* 風身 (lit. windy body; 1 Cor 15:44)” to “*lingwu* 靈物 (spiritual good)” and “*lingshen* 靈身 (spiritual body)” respectively. Additionally, *ruach* in the Old Testament (OT for short) is also occasionally rendered as “*ling*” by Morrison.
- b. In returning to Diaz's tradition and rendering the word *psyche* (and *nephesh* in the OT) as “*ling* 靈” when they are referring to the human soul. This is different from Basset's translation of *psyche* as “*hun* 魂”. For example, “*you wu pa yideng shashen, er wuneng shaling zhe* 又勿怕伊等殺身，而無能殺靈者” (“And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul (*psychē*);” Matt 10:28a), with only the word “*ling*” different from Basset's rendition. In some cases, the translator uses *lingxin* 靈心 (Ps 51:10), *linghun* 靈魂 (Jud 16:16) or *lingshen* 靈神 (Jn 12:27) instead.
- c. In the context of *nephesh* referring to human beings as a kind of living creature, Morrison adopts the word “*ling* 靈”, meaning “*shingling* 生靈” (lit. “living soul”). For example, “*you lian jue nv taina juezi juenv gongji nai sanshisan ling* 又連厥女太拿厥子厥女共計乃三十三靈” (“together with his daughter Dinah; in all, the souls (*nephesh*) of his daughters and sons numbered thirty-three” Gen 46:15). This probably stems from Ricci's theory that owning an imperishable soul is the feature of human beings. In the translation of other OT books (e.g. *Leviticus*, *Numbers*, *Psalms*, *Songs*), Morrison uses the word “*renling* 人靈” (“human soul”) or “*lingming* 靈命” (“spiritual life”) to

convey this meaning. Since Basset's translation does not contain the OT, this usage came from Morrison's own conception.

Intriguingly, although the NT portion of Morrison's version and that of Marshman's version show significant similarities in the rendition of some key terms, Marshman is closer to the BX-NT than Morrison, which can be exemplified by their translation of *pneuma*. Some instances taken from 1 Corinthians are summarized in Table 1 (with their renditions of *pneuma*/spiritus in bold).

**Table 1.** Comparing Renditions of *Pneuma* (or Spiritus) in the BX-NT, Morrison's and Marshman's Versions.

BX-NT	Morrison's Version	Marshman's Version
2:11蓋屬人之情。使非人之 <b>風</b> 在己者。而孰識之耶。屬神之情亦然。使非神之 <b>風</b> 。而孰識之哉。	2:11蓋屬人之情若非人之 <b>靈</b> 在己者、而誰識之耶、屬神之情亦然、若非神之 <b>聖神</b> 、而孰識之哉。	2:11蓋屬人之情。非在人之 <b>風</b> 者而孰識之耶。屬神之情亦然。非神之 <b>風</b> 而弗識之也。
3:1且弟兄乎。吾初不能語尔如 <b>風</b> 輩。乃如肉輩也。以尔等如小嬰于基督。	3:1且弟兄乎、吾初不能語爾如 <b>靈</b> 輩、乃如肉輩也、以爾等如小嬰于基督。	3:1諸弟兄乎。吾初不能語爾如 <b>風</b> 輩。乃如肉輩。以汝如赤子於基督。
5:3我也。身固遠。然以 <b>風</b> 在。即如在。己審行此者。	5:3我也身固遠、然以 <b>靈</b> 在、即如在己審行此者、	5:3吾身固遠。然以 <b>風</b> 在。即如在是嘗審行此者。
9:11吾輩既種以 <b>風</b> 物。若収以肉物。豈為大乎。	9:11吾輩既種以 <b>靈</b> 物、若収以肉物、豈為大乎。	9:11吾輩既種以 <b>風</b> 物。若収以肉物。豈為大故乎。
14:15且何哉。余將祈以 <b>風</b> 。又以靈。將咏以 <b>風</b> 。又以靈。	14:15且何哉、余祈以 <b>靈</b> 、又以意見。將咏以 <b>靈</b> 、又以意見、	14:15然則何如。予願祈以 <b>風</b> 又以知識。願咏以 <b>風</b> 亦以知識。
16:18伊等慰余 <b>風</b> 。及汝 <b>風</b> 。若者汝宜識之。	16:18伊等慰余 <b>靈</b> 、及汝 <b>靈</b> 、故汝宜認識如是。	16:18伊等慰予 <b>靈</b> 。及汝 <b>靈</b> 。故汝宜知其如是。

The above translations reveal the similarity of the three versions and the differences in their rendition of the word *pneuma* (or spiritus). By comparison with Marshman's version, we can observe that Morrison makes more modifications to Basset's terminology, tending to use "ling 靈" rather than "feng 風" to render *pneuma* that refers to the human constitution in the NT. His innovations did influence Marshman in some particular sentences (e.g., 16:18 in the above chart) but did not change the latter's terminological system on the whole.

With respect to those concepts opposite to "spirit" and "soul", mainly including *sarx* and *soma* in the NT original, which is mostly rendered according to their literal meanings by Morrison and Marshman—*sarx* is rendered as "rou 肉" and *soma* as "shen 身" or "ti 體" (or "zhiti 肢體" (lit. limbs))—and thus are basically the same as those in the BX-NT. Nevertheless, this type of literal translation sometimes cannot fit within the context and ignores the polysemy of the original. For instance, Morrison translates "kai ho logos sarx egeneto kai eskēnōsen en hemin" (Jn 1:14a) as "qi yan bianwei rou er ju wubei zhizhong 其言變為肉而居吾輩之中" ("And the Word became meat and dwelt among us") and Marshman only changes "wubei 吾輩" ("we") to "wodeng 我等" ("we"), both neglecting that the descendent Logos is personified and cannot be a piece of "meat" (as we may understand directly from Chinese). These two renditions stay close to the literal meaning but are too literal, unable to convey the disdain implied in the Greek text for the corporeal body, humanity and the secular world. Nonetheless, in a few cases, Morrison and Marshman do render *sarx* as "roushen 肉身" or "rouyu 肉慾" ("carnal desire"), while the former also adopts these two Chinese words to render *basar* in Hebrew. See the following examples in Table 2:

**Table 2.** Comparing the Renditions of *Sarx* in Morrison’s and Marshman’s Versions.

	Morrison’s Version	Marshman’s Version
Matt 14:38	心果然情願、惟 <b>肉身</b> 軟弱。	心果然願惟 <b>肉身</b> 軟弱。
Jude 19	斯等乃伊自離別輩屬 <b>肉慾</b> 輩、無聖風者。	斯輩乃伊自離別輩。屬 <b>肉慾</b> 輩。無聖風者。
Ps 16:9	我 <b>肉身</b> 又將懷望而安居也。	故心悅榮喜 <b>肉</b> 安於望矣。

Both *sarx* in the NT and *basar* in the OT denote “flesh” as part of the human body and also connote the corporeal body as a whole (e.g., Rom 1:3; Prob 4:22), desire or relationship of flesh and blood (e.g., Gal 5:19; Lev 18:6), the weakness and evil of humanity (e.g., Rom 7:18; Job 34:15) and men in the secular world (e.g., Jn 17:2; Isa 40:5). However, the character “*rou* 肉” in the Chinese context lacks such rich connotations that are therefore shadowed by Morrison’s and Marshman’s adherence to the literal translation in the BX-NT, using “*rou*” to render *sarx* extensively.

According to some previous research, it was probable that Morrison had also consulted some NT books of the *Guxin Shengjing* (Zheng 2014, pp. 287–88). Historically, the writings of Catholic missionaries in Ming and Qing China had spread to Europe, from which European Sinology originated.<sup>16</sup> The founders of the LMS and their early missionaries dispatched to China had noticed this body of work in the literature, and Morrison might have accessed them before his arrival in China.<sup>17</sup> More importantly, he learnt Chinese from local Catholics after arriving on China’s mainland and exchanged books with Catholics in Macao, obtaining a treatise entitled *Tianzhu jiaoyi wenda* 天主教義問答 (*A Catholicism*). He acknowledged the assistance of Catholic missionaries to a great extent.<sup>18</sup> The primary task of Morrison’s China mission was to translate the Bible into Chinese, and his early activities as a missionary served this purpose<sup>19</sup>; however, while there is insufficient evidence to confirm the influence of Catholic writings on Morrison, we can at least deduce that his selection of terms was probably inspired by the Catholic heritage in China. The analysis above also suggests such a link: Morrison inherited and enriched the theological meanings of *ling* 靈 endowed by Catholic missionaries in the Ming and Qing dynasties, making it fit for a number of biblical contexts. By contrast, his Chinese renderings of *sarx*, *soma* and *basar* are relatively simple, which might result from rare mentions of this aspect in the material he read. Compared with his Catholic predecessors and his contemporary competitor Marshman, Morrison’s translation established a dichotomous discourse of *ling* 靈 and *rou* 肉 to a remarkable extent. It was an initiation into the history of Chinese Bible translation, with an interpretative effect of “foreignization” on the threshold of Protestantism coming into China in the 1820s, hence attracting Chinese readers to notice the different anthropology of a foreign religion.

### 3. The Indigenized Practices of the Second Generation of Protestant Translators and Their Development in the Delegates’ Version

As early as during Morrison’s lifetime, a revision of his *Shentian Shengshu* had been fermented within the LMS, the main advocate of which was Walter Henry Medhurst (1796–1857), who virtually attempted to retranslate the Bible into Chinese with the use of a brand-new concept. That is, to correct the ambiguity of Morrison’s version caused by literal translation, Medhurst aimed at an idiomatic style. After translating and publishing some books of the NT on his own account, Medhurst addressed the BFBS on his approach to and experience of translating a new Chinese Bible; however, in the end, he was rejected.<sup>20</sup> Meanwhile, Robert Morrison’s son John Robert Morrison (1814–1843), a Prussian independent missionary named Karl F. A. Gützlaff (1803–1851) and a missionary from the Congregational Church of America named Elijah Coleman Bridgman (1801–1861) were also revising Morrison’s version. Medhurst later collaborated with them, comprising a so-called “version of a group of four” (or the Medhurst–Gützlaff Version, MGV for short).<sup>21</sup> Leading the translation of the NT and the OT respectively, Medhurst and Gützlaff belonged to the



second generation of Protestant translators, succeeding Morrison, Milne, Marshman and Lassar. With their Chinese cultural sensitivity and flexible evangelical thoughts, they laid a significant foundation of indigenized Bible translation highlighted by their renditions of important theological terminology. Rather than maintain Morrison's practice of rendering the name of the Supreme Being as *shen* 神 (God), *Shentian* 神天 (lit. God–Heaven) or *Shenzhu* 神主 (lit. God–Lord), the MGV readopted the name *Shangdi* 上帝 which originated in Chinese antiquity and had been proposed in the *Tianzhu Shiyi*. In addition, this translation appropriated the most crucial concept, “Dao 道” (lit. “way”) in Chinese philosophy to render the concept of logos in the Gospel of John, leaving behind the widespread biblical phrase “*dao cheng roushen* 道成肉身” (“the Word became flesh”).

The indigenized practices of the second generation began with the MGV and were further intensified in the Delegates' Version (DV for short) to a greater extent than ever before. As the first “union version” in the history of Chinese Bible translation, the DV was the outcome of international and interdenominational collaborations between Protestant missionaries in China, which took place in the period of five free trading ports (五口通商 *wukou tongshang*). Nevertheless, the British and American missionaries had diverging ideas about translation strategies, the selection of terms and matters of cooperation, resulting in the termination of the Committee of the Delegates. After that, the British missionaries led by Medhurst and the American missionaries led by Bridgman and Michael S. Culbertson (1819–1861) accomplished separate full Bible versions, the former's version of which is usually termed “the Delegates' Version”.<sup>22</sup> In spite of the fact that the MGV shares its idea of translation with the DV, these two versions are remarkably different from each other. This version, at least partially, resulted from the participation of Medhurst's Chinese literary assistant Wang Tao 王韜 (1828–1897) (L. Liu 2013, pp. 132–34). Following his father, Wang joined the task of translating the DV, inserting numerous terms from Chinese traditional cultures and interpreting Christian belief from the perspective of Chinese philosophy. Through his outstanding literary talent, Wang realized Medhurst's idea of shaping the DV as “the Bible as Chinese literature” (Hanan 2003). Their collaborative work highlights the cross-cultural effect, which can be glimpsed in the anthropological terms adopted in this version. The following discussion will focus on these terms in the NT.

The anthropological terms in the NT referring to human institutions include *soma*, *sarx*, *pneuma* and *psyche*, etc. Among them, the most challenging for translators and interpreters are *sarx* and *pneuma*. The polysemy of these two concepts has been displayed in the cases discussed in the first section; meanwhile, in the DV, their multilevel connotations are more intricate due to the translators' strategy of indigenization, the discussion of which will start with the rendering of *sarx* in the following. The Chinese word that corresponds to its literal meaning is “*rou* 肉”, but the word is seldom used in this way in the DV. More occurrences of *sarx* in this version are rendered according to its extended meanings, for example, “*qingyu* 情欲” (“affection and desire”; e.g., Rom 8:3a) and “(*wan*) *min* (萬)民” (“(all the) people”; e.g., Jn 17:2a). Some are rendered as “*shen* 身”, diverging from the original meaning but infused with the translator's interpretation. In the rendition of John 1:14, the translator does not adopt “*dao cheng rou shen* 道成肉身” (lit. “the Word became a corporeal body”) in the MGV but renders it as “*dao cheng renshen* 道成人身” (lit. “the Word became a human body”). Similar expressions can be discovered in the following examples:

- (1) “*shangdi jia renshen er xianzhu* 上帝假人身而顯著” (“God was manifested in the human body (*sarki*)” 1 Tim 3:16).
- (2) “*jidu yesu cheng renshen er jiangdan zhe* 基督耶穌成人身而降誕者” (“Jesus Christ has come in the human body (*sarki*) is of God” 1 Jn 4:2).

Coincidentally, John 3:6 is rendered as “由身生者，身也。由神生者，神也 *you shen sheng zhe, shen ye. you shen sheng zhe, shen ye*” (“that which is born of the body is body, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit”), seeming to avoid the literal translation “*rou* 肉”. More examples can be found in the following:

- (1) “交彼與撒但，以苦其身，俾於吾主耶穌基督臨日，救其靈魂 *jiao bi yu sadan, yi ku qi shen, bi yu wuzhu yesu jidu linri, jiu qi linghun*” (“to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the body (*sarkos*), that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus” 1 Cor. 5:5).
- (2) “生我身之父責我，而我敬之 *sheng wo shen zhi fu ze wo, er wo jing zhi*” (“lit. The Father who gave birth to my body (*sarkos*) discipline me but I respect him” Heb 12:9).

The character “*shen* 身” in these two sentences corresponds to the cognates of *sarx* rather than those of *soma*. This paraphrastic strategy of replacing “*rou* 肉” with “*shen* 身” can be explained only when appealing to the Chinese traditions of language and culture. In the terminology of Confucianism, Daoism and Chinese Buddhism, “*shen* 身” is a key concept with rich connotations. Confucians emphasize its implications for moral practice, having idioms such as “*shenti li xing* 身體力行” (“To practice one preaches”), “*shashen chengren* 殺身成仁” (“Die for a just cause”) and “*shenjiao shengyu yanjiao* 身教勝於言教” (“Action speaks louder than words”), whilst regarding the body as the place of demonstrating political power and social norms (Huang 2006). Daoism values the human body, arguing that it has priority in the process of achieving the Dao, and proposes to cultivate the body and the mind together (Chen 2005; F. Zhao 2012). Chinese Buddhism upholds the faith of “*ji shen cheng fo* 即身成佛” (“become a Buddha with a secular body”), believing that the body of flesh and blood can become the incarnated body of the Buddha (Li and Ye 2020). On the contrary, “*rou* 肉” is not a philosophical concept and is insignificant in the context of Chinese traditional cultures; therefore, when it is used in rendering those sentences with important theological meaning in the Bible, it struggles to attract Chinese readers.

Next, we address the rendition of *pneuma*. It involves “the Term Question”, which has aroused heated debate and controversy in the translation of the DV. In this process, the British missionaries Medhurst, William Charles Milne (1815–1863) and John Stronach (1810–?) proposed to render *theos* as “*Shangdi* 上帝” and *pneuma/ruach* as “*shen* 神”; meanwhile, the American missionaries William Jones Boone (1811–1864), Bridgman and Culbertson insisted that “*shen*” should be the equivalent of *theos*, and *pneuma/ruach* should be rendered as “*ling* 靈”. Medhurst and Boone even launched written polemics for this issue, publishing serial articles in the newspaper entitled “Chinese Repository” to elaborate their own opinions (Medhurst 1848a, 1848b; Boone 1848). However, the polemics gradually became a deadlock and the vote held by the Committee of the Delegates ended at a flat ballot. As a result, the Committee had no alternative but to permit all publishers to make their own decisions on this issue. Later, Medhurst’s articles were collected and published as treatises, one of which is entitled “A Dissertation on the Theology of the Chinese”. In this treatise, Medhurst appeals to some Chinese classics, such as *Shangshu* 尚書 (the Classic Documents), *Liji* 禮記 (the Record of Rites) and *Shijing* 詩經 (the Classic of Poetry), to argue why *pneuma/ruach* should be translated as “*shen* 神”, along with the usage of “*di* 帝” and “*ling* 靈” in these classics (Medhurst 1847). In Medhurst’s understanding, “*ling*” is basically an adjective describing some attributes (e.g., subtle, good, marvelous, intelligent, invisible) rather than a noun referring to any substance; meanwhile, “*shen* 神” is one of two basic powers in the universe—the principle of *yang* 陽 (positive, masculine), and the opposite is “*gui* 鬼” (ghost)—the principle of *yin* 陰 (negative, feminine). Both represent *Shangdi*’s power, having an influence on the secular world, and are compatible with some human constitutive parts, such as *hun* 魂, *po* 魄 (vigor) and *qi* 氣 (lit. air): animals, including human beings, are constituted of “*xing* 形 (lit. shape)” and “*hun* 魂”—“*xing* 形” refers to the corporeal body, and “*hun* 魂” refers to the human spiritual component—while “*qi* 氣” represents the “finer” part of “*hun* 魂”, and “*po* 魄” represents the “coarse” part. The most intelligent part of “*qi* 氣” becomes “*shen* 神” after a man’s death, while the most subtle part of “*po* 魄” becomes “*gui* 鬼” (Medhurst 1847, pp. 94–95).

Judging from the above reasoning, Medhurst’s understanding of “*shen* 神” originates more from ancient Chinese cosmology than from some theory of anthropology. However, a fair number of occurrences of *pneuma* in the NT denote the human spirit, which sug-

gests that the translators of the DV cannot use “*shen* 神” to translate all the sentences with the word *pneuma*. Upon reading these sentences closely, we observe that the translator frequently uses “*xin* 心” (lit. “heart”) instead. For example:

- (1) “*xin yuan er shen pi er* 心願而身疲耳” (“the heart (*pneuma*) indeed is willing, but the body is weak” Matt 26:41).
- (2) “*Jin er hou, er fei nu zhi caoxin wei, suo cao zhe nai zi zhi xin* 今而後、爾非奴之操心危、所操者乃子之心” (“For you did not received the heart (*pneuma*) of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the heart (*pneuma*) of sonship.” Rom 8:15a).
- (3) “*he ze, yi xin qidao, yi bi shiren ming wuyi, yi xin songshi, yi bi shiren da wu yi* 何則，以心祈禱，亦必使人明吾意，以心頌詩，亦必使人達吾意” (“What am I to do? I will pray with the heart (*pneumati*) and I will pray with the mind also; I will sing with the heart (*pneumati*) and I will sing with the mind also” 1 Cor 14:15).
- (4) “*jian er xin zhi* 堅爾心志” (“be with your heart (*pneumatos*)” Gal 6:18).

In the original of these phrases or sentences, *pneuma* is related to some deep mental activities that are somewhat connected to divinity. In the history of the Western church, there were two theories of human constitution—trichotomy and dichotomy—the former concept suggests that human beings are constituted of spirit, soul and body, while the latter only suggests two parts—soul and body. The opinion that the spirit is imbued with “the most inner rationality and intelligence”, which distinguishes human beings from other animals, was accepted by theologians from both camps.<sup>23</sup> Regarded by the translators of the DV as the subject of this kind of mental activity, “*xin* 心” finds wider recognition and appreciation among Chinese readers who are deeply affected by Confucian thoughts. Since Mencius, Confucians have progressively established a tradition of focusing on the relationship between mind and human nature (*xinxing* 心性) and the process of self-cultivation (*xiushen* 修身), which culminated in Neo-Confucianism in the Song and Ming dynasties (Yao and Li 2021). As discussed above, the concept “*ling* 靈”, under the elucidation put forward by Catholics, subsequently obtained connotations different from those within Chinese traditional cultural contexts. Its new connotations are related to the Christian imagination concerning the afterlife, and are also relevant to eschatology and soteriology that might be mysterious and obscure for Chinese people.<sup>24</sup> Diverging from the practice of Morrison and replacing “*ling* 靈” with “*xin* 心”, the DV downplays the memory of the fascination of the primary Christian church that is documented in the NT and to inject the rational spirit of Confucianism that emphasizes moral cultivation in the secular world. This translational practice passes down from the MGCV to the DV. For instance, “*xuxin zhe fu yi* 虛心者福矣” (“Blessed are the poor in heart (*pneumati*)” Matt 5:3a) appears in both versions. “*Ou to auto Pneumati periepatēsamen*” (2 Cor 12:18c) demonstrates another instance: it is rendered as “*wu zhong qifei yi xin* 吾眾豈非一心” (Did we not act in the same heart (*pneumati*)?) in both versions. Nonetheless, it is worth mentioning that even though the MGCV attempted an indigenized Bible translation, some key terms are not unified in this version, and the rendition of *pneuma* is one instance. When it refers to a part of the human constitution, the translator of the MGCV temporizes between “*xin* 心”, “*ling* 靈” and “*hun* 魂”, exemplified by “*you xinnei zhoug zhi li, zeshi zhen li, zai ling buzai shen* 又心內周割之禮，則是真禮，在靈不在身” (“and real circumcision is a matter of the heart, spiritual (*pneumati*) and not literal” Rom 2:29), “*wu jiang yi hun chang* 吾將以魂唱” (“I will sing with the soul (*pneumati*)” 1 Cor 14:15) and “*qie ruo ru yi xin zhuxie* 且若汝以心祝謝” (“if you bless with the heart (*pneumati*)” 1 Cor 14:16). By contrast, the uniformity of terms is improved in the DV, which can be demonstrated by using “*xin*” to render all the occurrences of *pneuma* in these verses.

Furthermore, the translators of the DV also prefer to use the word “*xin* 心” to render some occurrences of the Greek preposition ἐν. It was a case made by Boone to criticize the “unfaithful translations” and “unwarrantable liberties” of the DV (Boone 1852, pp. 51, 55). He points out that ἐν in Romans 8:1 was rendered as “*xin zai* 心在” (“with the heart in”), with the character “*xin* 心” inserted by the translator, and ἐν in 1 John 4:15-16 is rendered as “*xin jiao* 心交” (“in heart commune with”) but it was not a true translation of St. John

(Boone 1852, pp. 38, 41–42). All these problematic renditions listed by Boone are the language of mutual indwelling, expressed by the preposition *èv*, elaborating the spiritual relationship between God, Jesus and believers. Responding to Boone, Medhurst clarified that Chinese readers did not have sufficient theological education that could equip them to understand the implication of the preposition *èv*. In his judgment, the literal translation proposed by Boone would definitely fail (Medhurst et al. 1852, p. 36). In fact, what Medhurst said is to acknowledge the practice of paraphrasing. The renditions “*xin zai yesu jidu* 心在耶穌基督” (“the heart in Jesus Christ” Rom 8:1), “*gong jiao yi xin* 共交以心” (“commune by heart”) and “*yi xin jiao fu* 以心交父” (“commune with the Father by heart” 1 Jn 1:3) help to clarify the life connotation of “mutual indwelling” with the concept of *xin*. Though not loyal enough to the original text, these renditions meet the expectation of Chinese intellectuals that reading classics can benefit self-cultivation. Through the mutual interpretation between Chinese cultural traditions and biblical traditions, the translators of DV connect two kinds of anthropological discourse.

#### 4. Conclusions

From the three early Chinese biblical texts authored by Catholic missionaries to the first and second generations of the Protestant Chinese Bible versions, along with the first Chinese “union version” — the Delegates’ Version, we can see various schemes for translating the anthropological concepts in the Bible, including literal translation, rendition within the immediate contexts, translation implemented with theological speculation or a synthesis of Chinese linguistic and cultural traditions. The Jesuit translators Emmanuel Diaz and Louis A. de Poirot, probably influenced by Matteo Ricci’s introduction of the Western theory of the soul, emphasized the dichotomy between soul and body, while Jean Basset from MEP demonstrated a trichotomist stance in differentiating spirit, soul and body. With respect to the first generation of Protestant Bible translators, both Marshman and Morrison accepted the heritage of Basset in rendering various terms of the human constitution, but Morrison enriched the connotation of *ling* 靈 and adopted it to modify Basset’s terminology. Regarding the second generation of Protestant translators and their influence on the Delegates’ Version, the intertextual dialogues between the biblical original and the Chinese linguistic and cultural traditions are highlighted, with *sarx* rendered as *shen* 身 and *pneuma* as *xin* 心 to accommodate thereby the Chinese readers’ expectation of self-cultivation.

Though all these translational approaches reveal different religious backgrounds, translation thoughts and historical contexts of the translators, they are all of an initial significance: providing terminological frameworks for the Bible versions after the mid-nineteenth century. As for the history of Protestant Chinese Bible translation, though there was a lot of criticism of the DV (Y. Liu 2019), with the addition of some suggestions to revise this version (Douglas 1876), its “incorrect” renditions were transferred into some influential versions from later generations. For example, the character “*xin* 心” equivalent to *pneuma* can be found in the Peking Mandarin Version, Griffith John’s simple classical version and the Chinese Union Versions (in Mandarin and traditional Chinese). The renditions of *sarx* conducted by the “second generation” is another example: it is flexible and the words “*roushen* 肉身” (“corporeal body”) and “*qingyu* 情慾” (“affection and desire”) are adopted based on the immediate contexts and were accepted by virtually all the later versions. It was not only a process of conflict between the source language and target language carried out across generations of Bible translators but also a dialogue and negotiation between Christian anthropology and the Chinese traditional outlooks of human beings. Additionally, whether these terms stay in the Bible versions or are abandoned depends on reader reception. Therefore, some popular Chinese biblical verses such as “*dao cheng roushen* 道成肉身” (“the Word became flesh”) and “*xuxin zhe fu yi* 虛心者福矣” (“Blessed are the modest”) can appear in successive versions, which await our further investigation.

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## Notes

- 1 A summary can be found in (Choi 2018; Standaert 1999). Nicolas Standaert also analyzes the reasons why Catholic Chinese Bible versions were not completely translated or widely circulated in this period.
- 2 Yanrong Chen provides a comprehensive survey of the *Shengjing Zhijie* (hereafter SZ), including its formal traits, authorship, readership and creative integration of European tradition and Chinese tradition in the scriptures and commentaries. In particular, Chen searches for the possible European origins of the extensive commentaries contained in the SZ and lists several candidates for further investigation. See (Chen 2014).
- 3 Concerning the source of *Tianzhu Shiyi* and its writing process, see the introduction provided by Thierry Meynard in (Ricci 2015, pp. 3–34). For the etymology of *linghun* 靈魂 (soul) and the Catholic appropriations, see (X. Liu 2018). Ricci criticizes the Daoist and Buddhist doctrines of *linghun*, which can be found in (Ricci 2017, pp. 65, 72–73).
- 4 All the English translations of biblical passages and commentaries quoted from the SZ are made by the author of the present article. The Latin originals of some key terms (including some cognates) are added in brackets.
- 5 For the history of Johan Xu as a literary assistant to Jean Basset and their biblical translation, see (Song 2017). In this article, Gang Song 宋剛 introduces Basset’s disagreement with the Jesuits’ strategy of accommodation, his literary style of the New Testament and Xu’s loyalty to him. To some extent, it explains why Xu’s participation in Basset’s biblical translation did not result in an indigenized version like the Delegates’ Version completed by the Protestant translators, which will be discussed in Section 3 of the present article. In the following discussion, we occasionally use “Basset” alone to refer to the authorship of the New Testament translated by him and Johan Xu.
- 6 This opinion has become widely accepted, but the scholar Wushu Lin 林悟殊 does not agree with it and considers arguments and evidence on both sides. See (W. Lin 2014).
- 7 Basset uses “*fong*” to transliterate “*feng* 風 (wind)” in his correspondence, from which we can understand his consideration about how to render spiritus into Chinese. See (Basset 2012, pp. 467–75).
- 8 Gang Song designates the translation principle of this version as “truthfulness”. See (Song 2021, pp. 83–84, 86–87).
- 9 For a comprehensive introduction to the *Guxin Shengjing* (hereafter GS), see (Song 2015). For de Poirot’s exegetical strategy, see (Li 2016) and (Zheng 2014).
- 10 For the background of the Rites Controversy in the early Qing dynasty and its influence on “the Term Question”, see (Standaert 2001, p. 683).
- 11 In the present article, the English renditions of passages quoted from the New Testament translated by Jean Basset and Johan Xu (hereafter BX-NT) and the GS are my modifications to translations cited from the Douay-Rheims Bible, which was rendered directly from the Latin Vulgate in 1610. My purpose in making modifications is to convey the literal meaning of the Chinese translated texts, especially some specific terms (including the cognates) discussed in this article (e.g., anima, spiritus, caro) that are underlined and with the originals in brackets.
- 12 Haijuan Zheng 鄭海娟 uses the term “intralingual translation”, referring to de Poirot’s revising the SZ from classical Chinese to colloquial Chinese. See (Zheng 2015, pp. 264–72).
- 13 For the textual relationship between the BX-NT and these two earliest Protestant Bible versions, see (X. Zhao 2009). It is worth noting that Morrison and Marshman translated the OT independently. Therefore, more dissimilarities of these two versions can be detected in their OT translations.
- 14 For example, Jost O. Zetzsche evaluates these two versions as “rather hasty productions”. See (Zetzsche 1999, pp. 56–57). In the present article, we occasionally use “Morrison” and “Marshman” to represent the authorship of these two versions, omitting their cooperators Milne and Lassar.
- 15 In this article, all the English renditions of citations from the Protestant Chinese biblical versions are based on the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), with minor modifications made by the present author to emphasize the literal meaning of some key terms (*pneuma*, *sarx*, *soma*, etc., including the cognates; underlined and with the original in bracket) in the discussion.
- 16 For a survey of the Sinology started up by Western missionaries, see (Zhang 2020, pp. 193–214).
- 17 Milne mentions the European knowledge about China acquired through Catholic missionaries’ writings while he points out their limitations in language and content that urged the LMS to send their own missionary to China. See (Milne 2008, pp. 43–49).
- 18 A narrative of Morrison’s indebtedness to Catholic missionaries can be found in (Tian 2018, pp. 54–65).

- <sup>19</sup> Morrison's widow compiled his diaries and correspondences into the memoirs of this missionary, from which we can understand the background of his China mission, especially the task of translating the Bible. See (Morrison 1842, pp. 67–69).
- <sup>20</sup> Medhurst elucidated his idea of translating a new version of the Chinese Bible in a memorial addressed to the BFBS, see (Medhurst 1836).
- <sup>21</sup> For the process of cooperation between these four translators, see (Su 2012).
- <sup>22</sup> For an overview of the development and change of the Committee of the Delegates, see (Douglas 1870).
- <sup>23</sup> For the disagreements between trichotomists and dichotomists in this field, see (Xu 2018).
- <sup>24</sup> Ricci narrates a dialogue between a Chinese scholar and a Western scholar, proposing that judgment after death is possible only when human beings have immortal souls (i.e., *linghun*). See (Ricci 2015, pp. 159–80).

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