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Three Ends of the World: Intertextuality
among Camille Flammarion's OMEGA

: *The Last Days of the World*, Liang Qichao's *Shijie mori ji*
《世界末日記》, and Bao Tianxiao's "Shijie mori ji" 〈世界末日記〉

Yiting Ethan Zheng(鄭怡庭)

中國語文學研究會

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中文摘要

Although contemporary studies on late Qing fiction have increased drastically, scholarship on late Qing science fiction, both from translation and from creation, remains very limited. By analyzing three science fiction stories, Camille Flammarion's (1842-1925) *OMEGA: The Last Days of the World* (1893), its Chinese rendition *The End of the World* (*Shijie mori ji* 《世界末日記》) translated by Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873-1929) in

* 國立臺灣師範大學東亞學系助理教授

1902, and another Chinese science fiction story with exactly the same title “The End of the World” (“Shijie mori ji” 〈世界末日記〉) written by Bao Tianxiao 包天笑(1876-1973) in 1908, this paper tries to fill the gap of late Qing science fiction study.

1. Origins and Definitions of Chinese Science Fiction

Science fiction was a foreign literary genre which was introduced to China for the first time when Xue Shaohui 薛紹徽(1866-1911) translated Jules Verne’s *Around the World in Eighty Days*(1873)(*Bashi ri huanyou ji* 〈八十日環遊記〉) in 1900.¹⁾ Xue did not know any foreign language and her translation was made possible by the assistance of her husband Chen Shoupeng 陳壽彭(1855?-1912) who had the experience of studying in France. Thereafter, science fiction became one of the most popular literary genres among late Qing readers, and Jules Verne became the most popular Western science fiction writer among late Qing readers.²⁾ Of course, allegorical novels employing imaginative or

1) There are at least eleven Chinese names for Jules Verne in late Qing China. Xue Shaohui translated it into Fang Zhulishi 房朱力士, Liang Qichao translated it into Jiaoshi Weiernu 焦士威爾奴, Lu Jidong 盧籍東 and Hongxisheng 紅溪生 translated it into Xiao Lushi 蕭魯士, Lu Xun translated it into Weinan 威男 and Peilun 培倫, Bao Tianxiao translated it into Jiaer Weini 迦爾威尼 and Fang Zhulishi 房朱力士, Xiruo 奚若 translated it into Jiaoshi Weinu 焦士威奴, the publisher Shangwu yinshuguan 商務印書館 translated it into Jiaonushi Weiershi 焦奴士威爾士, Shuzi 叔子 translated it into Qier Beinu 裘爾卑奴, and Xie Xin 謝忻 translated it into Xiaorsi Bonei 蕭爾斯勃內.

2) For a general introduction of the development of Chinese science fiction since the late Qing period, see Dingbo Wu, “Looking Backward: An Introduction to Chinese Science Fiction,” in Dingbo Wu and Patrick D. eds., *Science Fiction from China*(New York: Praeger, 1989), pp.xi-xli and Kongqingdong 孔慶東, “Zhongguo kehuan xiaoshuo gaishuo.” 〈中國科幻小說概說〉 *Fuling shifan xueyuan xuebao* 《涪陵師範學院學報》 no.3(2003): 38-46. For detailed introduction of late Qing science fiction, see Wang Yan 王燕, “Jindai kexue xiaoshuo lunlue” 〈近代科學小說論略〉 *Mingqing xiaoshuo yanjiu* 《明清小說研究》 no.4(1999): 216-224. For study of translations of Jules Verne’s works in late Qing China, see David Pollard, “Jules Verne,

fantastic concepts and utopian archetypes had been written throughout the Chinese narrative tradition. However, late Qing science fiction stories characteristically derived from Western models in their references to social Darwinism, scientific inventions, and science fantasy. These stories, both from translation and from creation, provided imaginative interpretations of science and technology, communicating to late Qing readers ideas that might guide the future of Chinese civilization. Late Qing science fiction stories also criticized bureaucrats and ordinary Chinese citizens for selfishness, ignorance, lack of vision, and even the entire political system. This means that late Qing writers and translators of science fiction not only eagerly embraced new scientific discoveries and fantasies but also radically reexamined old modes of Chinese political and economic thought and practice.

Chinese definitions of science fiction have been loose and ambiguous since the late Qing period. There are currently two major translations of the term “science fiction” in Chinese. While the old term “science fiction”(kexue xiaoshuo 科學小說) pays its major attention to science, the new term “science fantasy”(kehuan xiaoshuo 科幻小說) emphasizes fantasy. The prevalent confounding of science fiction and fantasy makes the definition of the term further complicated. The imprecision can run both ways. Fantasy is often implied in the use of the term science fiction, while at the same time science fiction can be effectively argued as a subset of fantasy fiction. There is a growing tendency to acknowledge the concatenation of science fiction and fantasy. To judge from definitions in *New Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* and *Critical Terms for Science Fiction and Fantasy*, science fiction is generally considered to be set in a future world or in one that differs from how the real world was or is in some respects, particularly elements of the natural and physical sciences.³⁾ Various forms of science fiction require differing degrees of scientific verisimilitude. “Hard” science fiction rests on speculations in the natural sciences, physical sciences or technology, while “soft” science fiction rests

Science Fiction and Related Matters,” in *Translation and Creation*, pp.177-207.

3) For detailed definitions of science fiction and science fantasy, see Peter Nicholls and John Clute, *New Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*(New York: Orbit, 1999) and Gary Wolfe, *Critical Terms for Science Fiction and Fantasy*(New York: Greenwood Press, 1986).

on speculation in the social sciences, including the impact of technology. Science fantasy disregards scientific reality, or contradicts it. Science fantasy is a hybrid in which elements of science fiction and popular fantasy overlap or work together.

Similar to the overlapping definition of science fiction and science fantasy in recent decades, definitions of the genre science fiction were even more ambiguous and inconsistent in the late Qing period. In 1902, Liang Qichao mentioned the genre of “fiction of philosophy and science” (*zheli kexue xiaoshuo* 哲理科學小說) in his advertising article that promoted the literary journal *New Fiction* (*Xin xiaoshuo* 新小說) in the newspaper *New People News papers* (*Xinmin congbao* 新民叢報). He indicated that the function of this genre was to “use the advantage of fiction to invent philosophy and to promote science.”⁴⁾ In the first issue of *New Fiction*, the term science fiction was used independently for the first time when Lu Jidong 盧籍東 and Hongxisheng 紅溪生 translated Jules Verne’s *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea* (1869) (*Haidi lüxing* 海底旅行) and put “the latest Western science fiction” (*taixi zuixin kexue xiaoshuo* 泰西最新科學小說) before its title.

Late Qing writers not only translated Western science fiction but also published “theoretical” articles promoting this foreign literary genre. While many focused on the lack of science fiction genre in Chinese literary tradition, others emphasized the educational functions of science fiction. For example, in “On the Origins of *Fiction Forest*” (“*Xiaoshuo lin yuanqi*” <《小說林緣起》), Xu Nianci 徐念慈 (1874-1908) used the penname Juewo 覺我 to affirm that although there were different topics in science fiction, they promoted one common theme: evolution.

月球之環遊，世界之末日，地心海底之旅行，日新不已，皆本科學之理想，超越自然而促其進化者也。⁵⁾

4) “專借小說以發明哲學及格致學” Liang Qichao, “Zhongguo weiyi zhi wenxue bao *Xin xiaoshuo*” <中國唯一之文學報《新小說》> in *Xinmin congbao* no.14(1902), quoted in Chen Pingyuan 陳平原 and Xia Xiaohong 夏曉虹 eds., *Ershi shiji Zhongguo xiaoshuo lilun ziliao: Diyi juan (1897-1916)* 《二十世紀中國小說理論資料：第一卷(1897-1916)》(Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1997) vol.1, p.45.

5) Juewo 覺我, “*Xiaoshuo lin yuanqi*” <《小說林緣起》> in *Xiaoshuo lin* No.1(1907), quoted in

Up-to-date topics in science fiction such as traveling in the moon, the last days of the world, traveling in the core of the earth and on the bottom of ocean are essentially scientific ideals. Their purpose is to exceed nature’s ability and promote its evolutionary progress.

Lu Xun showed the urgency and advantages of introducing science fiction to late Qing readers in the preface of his translation of Verne’s *From the Earth to the Moon* (*Yuejie lüxin* 月界旅行). He pointed out that reading science fiction could help readers destroy deeply-rooted superstitious beliefs, correct wrongful thought, and improve their civilization.

故採取學理，去莊而諧，使讀者觸目會心，不勞思索，則必能於不知不覺間，獲一斑之智識，破遺傳之迷信，改良思想，補助文明，勢力之偉，有如此者我國說部，若言情談故刺時志怪者，架棟汗牛，而獨於科學小說，乃如麟角。智識荒隘，此實一端。故苟欲彌今日譯界之缺點，導中國人群以進行，必自科學小說始。⁶⁾

Science fiction abandons hard-to-understand scientific jargon and uses humorous tones to explain complicated scientific theories so that its readers can easily and unconsciously learn common knowledge. Science fiction has tremendous power that helps destroy long-lasting superstition, reform thought, and support civilization. Although we can find numerous expose stories and strange stories in Chinese fiction tradition, novels that qualify as science fiction are as scarce as unicorn horns. The lack of science fiction is surely one factor in Chinese people’s ignorance and lack of knowledge. Therefore, if we want to correct shortcomings in the field of translation nowadays and to help Chinese people make progress, we must begin with introducing science fiction.

At the same time, the increasing popularity of translated science fiction also resulted in late Qing writers’ defense for China’s long existence of science fiction narrative tradition. Xiaren 俠人 argued that although China was backward in science and technology in

Chen Pingyuan and Xia Xiaohong eds., vol.1, p.236.

6) Lu Xun 魯迅, “*Yuejie lüxing bianyan*” <《月界旅行》辯言> in *Lu Xun quanji* 《魯迅全集》(Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1973) vol.11, pp.10-11.

comparison to Western countries, Chinese novelists' scientific imagination were not inferior to their Western counterparts. He said:

若以中國之大小說家之筆敘科學，吾知其必佳必遠過于西洋。且小說者，一種文學也。文學之性，宜于凌虛，不宜于徵實，故科學小說終不得在小說界中佔第一席。且中國如《鏡花緣》·《蕩寇志》之備載異聞，《西遊記》之暗證醫理，亦不可謂非科學小說也。特惜《鏡花緣》·《蕩寇志》去實用太遠，而《西遊記》又太蒙頭蓋面而已。然謂我先民之無此思想，因重誣也。⁷⁾

I know that great Chinese novelists' descriptions of scientific imaginations are definitely far better than those of their Western novelists. Fiction is a kind of literature. The deposition of literature should be more imaginary and less realistic. That's why science fiction does not play an important role in Chinese fiction tradition. We can not agree that *Flowers in the Mirror and Quelling the Bandits* which included many descriptions of strange events and *Journey to the West* which has sufficient proof of medical theory are not science fiction novels. It is an especial pity that *Flowers in the Mirror and Quelling the Bandits* are far from practical and *Journey to the West* is too ambiguous. But, claiming that our ancestors' lacked this[scientific fiction] tradition is a serious and false accusation.

2. Three Science Fiction Stories

Camille Flammarion was a French astronomer and prolific writer who published more than fifty books including popular science books about astronomy and science fiction novels. His *La Fin du Monde* was serialized in the French magazine *La Science Illustrée* in 1893 and it was translated into English entitled *OMEGA: The Last Days of the World* by J.B. Walker in the following year. Its Chinese rendition *Shijie mori ji* was

7) Xia Ren 俠人, "Xiaoshuo conghua" 小說叢話 in *Xin Xiaoshuo*, no.13, (1905), quoted in Chen Pingyuan and Xia Xiaohong eds., vol.1, pp.76-77.

translated by Liang Qichao and the story was published in the inaugural issue of *New Fiction* in 1902. Calling for a "revolution in fiction" (*xiaoshuo jie geming* 小說界革命), Liang was the first to recognize the importance of fiction as a means of changing the psychology of the people, and to urge the necessity of creating a new fiction as one of the prerequisites of China's regeneration.⁸⁾ In the postscript of *Shijie mori ji* Liang Qichao praised Flammarion's work as "a unique masterpiece in the contemporary" (*jinsi yida qizhu* 近世一大奇著). Liang added:

此法國著名文家兼天文學者佛林瑪利安君所著之《地球末日記》也。以科學上最精確之學理與哲學上最高尚之思想組織以成此文，實為近世一大奇著也。

This novel, *The Last Days of the World*, is the work of the famous French writer and astronomer Folinmalian [Flammarion]. [He] used the most accurate theories in science and the noblest ideas in philosophy to create this story. It is truly a unique masterpiece in our contemporary.

Ironically, the two most important characteristics of the novel— the most accurate scientific theories and the highest thought in philosophy— as Liang Qichao emphasized, are largely omitted in his translation. These elements are replaced by Liang's own political and religious thoughts. Coincidentally, six years after the publication of Liang's translation, Bao Tianxiao, a regular contributor to *All-Story Monthly* (*Yueyue xiaoshuo* 《月月小說》), wrote a Chinese science fiction short story with exactly the same title "Shijie mori ji" 《世界末日記》.⁹⁾ The story was published under his penname Xiao 笑 in

8) For analysis of Liang's idea of fiction, see C.T. Hsia, "Yen Fu and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao as Advocates of New Fiction" in *CT. Hsia on Chinese Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), pp.223-46, Shu-Ying Tsau, "The Rise of 'New Fiction'" in Milena Dolezelová-Velingerová ed., *The Chinese Novel at the Turn of the Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), pp.18-37, Yan Tingliang 顏廷亮, *Wanqing xiaoshuo lilun* 《晚清小說理論》 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1996), pp.57-80, and Chen Junqi 陳俊啓, "Chonggu Liang Qichao xiaoshuoguan ji qi zai xiaoshuoshi sha de yiyi." 《重估梁啟超小說觀及其在小說史上的意義》 *Hanxueyanjiu* 《漢學研究》 20.1 (June 2002): 309-338.

9) There are currently three different reprinted editions of *All-Story Monthly*. The earliest reprint was published by a Japanese publishing company Ryūkei shosha 龍溪書社 in Tokyo in 1977. The second one was published by the Shanghai Bookstore (Shanghai shudian 上海書

the nineteenth issue of *All-Story Monthly* in 1908. Is Liang Qichao's translation faithful to Flammarion's *OMEGA*? (The answer is no as I have pointed out.) Why and how did Liang freely translate his source text into Chinese? What messages did Liang try to send to his late Qing readers? Is there any textual connection between Liang's *Shijie mori ji* and Bao's "Shijie mori ji"? How did Liang and Bao introduce the concept of apocalypse, a completely new and foreign idea to their late Qing readers? The rest of this paper will try to answer the above questions.

3. Camille Flammarion's End of the World

Camille Flammarion's *OMEGA: The Last Days of the World* is divided into two separate parts plus an epilogue. The first half of the novel takes place in the twenty-fifth century and the second in the thirtieth and the one hundredth centuries. The story begins with the announcement of the press that an approaching comet with a high velocity, an estimate of 41,000 meters per second, will collide with the earth. The collision is projected to take place in Rome at midnight on Friday, July 13th in the twenty-fifth century. The bulk of the first half consists of long arguments by scientists from various fields in the session of the Academy of Science of the United States of Europe on whether the comet will collide with the earth or not, on the chemical constituent of the comet, and especially on how the world will eventually end. The amphitheater where the discussion takes place is filled with representatives of politics, commerce, industry, literature and every sphere of human activity. The director of Paris observatory speaks first and optimistically

店) in 1980. Both editions include photographs published in the beginning of each issue. In 2006, a reprint with a larger font but no photographs was published by National Library of China, see *Yueyue Xiaoshuo* (Beijing: Quanguo tushuguan wenxian suowei fuzhi zhongxin, 2006). Reference pages of Bao's "Shijie mori ji" in this paper are Shanghai shudian's reprint edition.

predicts that there will be only partial disasters such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions or cyclones. Disagreed with the Parisian astronomer, the president of the academy of medicine sees no chance of escape and explains to the audience that absorption of carbonic oxide, the chief constituent of the comet, is inevitable and absolutely fatal when colliding. The president of the astronomical society of France argues that the immediate consequence of the collision will be the production of enormous quantity of heat which will result in a considerable rise in the temperature of the heat. According to him, it is heat not the poisonous gas carbonic oxide that will eradicate all humans. He suggests that people take refuge on the side of the globe opposed to that which is to experience the direct hit of the comet. After listening to the president's speech, two scientists, an orator and the secretary of the academy of meteorology take turns ascending the tribune and express their opinions. The former thinks that the destruction of the world will result from the combustion of the atmosphere which will be filled with hydrogen while the latter claims that all lives will perish because of lack of water.

One characteristic of the first half of *OMEGA* is its abundance of scientific knowledge, mathematics, and astronomical theories Flammarion introduces. Flammarion had the experience working at the Paris Observatory for several years. He had no difficulty offering accurate and reliable accounts of contemporary astronomical knowledge. He introduces Kepler's third law by the narrator's voice:

In fact the velocity of the comet is simply the velocity of a planet multiplied by the square root of two. Now the velocity of a planet, whatever its distance, is determined by Kepler's third law, according to which the squares of the times of revolution are to each other as the cubes of the distances……A comet at this distance moves, therefore, with the above-mentioned velocity, multiplied by the square root of two, that is to say by the number 1.4142. This velocity is consequently 18,380 meters per second.¹⁰⁾

10) Camille Flammarion, *OMEGA: The Last Days of the World* (Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), pp.31-32. This edition is reprinted from the original 1894 edition by Cosmopolitan Publishing Company, New York.

The speech by the president of the academy of medicine gives readers scientific knowledge. He says:

Its most notable property is its tendency to absorb oxygen. (The orator dwelt upon these two words with great emphasis.) In the great iron furnaces, for example, carbon, in the presence of an insufficient quantity of air, becomes transformed into carbonic-oxide, and it is subsequently this oxide which reduces the iron to a metallic state, by depriving it of the oxygen with which it was combined.¹¹⁾

The message above is more like a chemistry textbook than a novel. Moreover, detailed numbers in measuring distance and time frequently appear. For examples:

According to observations taken on the preceding evening, July 8th, its exact position was: right ascension, 23h., 10m., 32s.; declination north, 7°, 36' 4".¹²⁾

[T]he passage of the earth through the head of a comet of 1,800,000 kilometers in diameter, would require at least 25,000 seconds— that is, 417 minutes, or six hours, fifty-seven minutes— in round numbers, seven hours— the velocity being 120 times greater than that of a cannon-ball...¹³⁾

Admitting that its total area is 145,000,000 square kilometers, it follows that its volume is about 101,500,000, or in round numbers, 100,000,000 cubic kilometers.¹⁴⁾

[T]his height is 6.64 times the equatorial radius of the earth, the latter being 6,378,310 meters. The maximum height of the atmosphere, therefore, is 35,973 kilometers.¹⁵⁾

11) Ibid., p.50.

12) Ibid., p.35.

13) Ibid., p.61.

14) Ibid., p.84.

15) Ibid., p.57.

The speaker traced upon the black-board the following figures:

Perihelion passage August 11, at oh., 42m., 44s.

Longitude of perihelion, 52°, 43' 25".

Perihelion distance, 0.7607.

Inclination, 103°, 18', 35".

Longitude of ascending node, 112°, 54', 40".¹⁶⁾

All quotations from *OMEGA* in the above paragraph are not printed in Liang's translation.

The earth and the comet finally collide in the last chapter of the first part of *OMEGA*.

Flammarion describes the collision in great detail:

Never before had the earth been bathed in such a light, which at first seemed to be colorless, emitting lightning flashes from its pale and wan depths. The dryness of the air, hot as the breath of a furnace, became intolerable, and a horrible odor of sulphur, probably due to the super-electrified ozone, poisoned the atmosphere. Everyone believed his last hour was at hand. A terrible cry dominated every other sound. The earth is on fire! The earth is on fire! Indeed, the entire horizon was now illuminated by a ring of bluish flame, surrounding the earth like the flames of a funeral pile. This, as had been predicted, was the carbonic-oxide, whose combustion in the air produced carbonic-anhydride..... Nearly forty minutes after the first instant of contact, the heat of this incandescent furnace, and the horrible odor of sulphur, became so suffocating that a few moments more of such torture would have sufficed to destroy every vestige of life..... Everyone, without thinking for an instant of flight, had abandoned all hope, expecting every moment to be buried in the ruins of the world, and those who still clung to each other, and whose only consolation was that of dying together, clung closer in a last embrace.¹⁷⁾

16) Ibid., p.56.

17) Ibid., pp.174-177.

To readers' greatest surprise, the damage is regional and people on earth are largely unharmed. The damages include casualties of the Pope and all bishops and cardinals gathering in Rome, Paris in flame, and new volcano in Italy. Fortunately, the comet only skimmed the earth and "the earth continued to revolve in the light of the sun, and humanity to advance toward a still higher destiny."¹⁸⁾

The second part of *OMEGA* mainly describes what the world is like in the thirtieth century and how the last two humans on earth, Eva and Omegar, meet, fall in love with each other, and die together as the world finally comes to its end in the one hundredth century. After the collision, the earth continues to rotate and the sun to shine. Humanity undergoes series of physical and mental transformations and reaches its apogee. For example, a seventh sense, the electric sense is created. This sense enables everyone to possess the power of attracting and repelling both living and inert matter. The creation of the eighth sense, the psychic sense makes communication at a distance possible. Additionally, science and technology also improves drastically. Flammarion describes the advance of technology in the future:

Electricity had taken the place of steam. Railroads and pneumatic tubes were still in use, but only for the transportation of freight. Voyages were made preferably by dirigible balloons, aeroplanes and air-ships, especially in the daytime.....The telephonoscope disseminated immediately the most important and interesting news. A comedy played at Chicago or Paris could be heard and seen in every city of the world.¹⁹⁾

Unlike the prediction of the end of the world which turns out to be a false alarm in the first half of *OMEGA*, the last day of the world in the second half is real. The world comes to its end in the one hundredth century because the internal heat of the globe finally has diminished and the earth has become entirely cold. Only two groups of a few hundred human beings are left between the tropics and the equator. One of which

18) Ibid, p.185.

19) Ibid, p.197.

is near the bottom of the Pacific Ocean and the other is in the south of the island Ceylon. Eva, the sole human being left in Ceylon transports herself to meet Omegar, the sole human being left in the bottom of the Pacific Ocean in a dream and they fall in love with each other. The two last survivors take the electric airship to look for signs for life but fail to find anything. They land in an Egyptian pyramid in the end and die in each other's arms. Knowing that their death is inevitable, Eva and Omegar die together. As Flammarion describes the very touching moment right before they die:

"Let us rest here," said Eva, "since we are doomed to die. Who indeed, has escaped death? Let me die in peace in your arms."

They sought a corner of the ruins and sat down beside each other, face to face with the silent desert. The young girl cowered upon the ground, pressing her husband in her arms, still striving with all her might against the penetrating cold. He drew her to his heart and warmed her with his kisses.

"I love you, and I am dying," she said. "But, no, we will not die. See that star, which calls us!"²⁰⁾

Moments after Eva is dead, Omegar kisses her and dies as well.

Eva pressed Omegar in her arms. "I love you," she repeated. Her voice was only a breath. He touched his lips to her already cold mouth, and heard them murmur: "How I could have loved!"

Jupiter was shining majestically above them, and in the glorious light of his rays their sight grew dim and their eyes gentled closed.²¹⁾

4. Liang Qichao's End of the World

20) Ibid, p.265.

21) Ibid, p.268.

Although Liang Qichao claims that his *Shijie mori ji* is a translation of Camille Flammarion's *OMEGA*, the Chinese translation is fundamentally an expression of Liang's own thoughts. The plot of the whole first half of *OMEGA* summarized above is completely omitted in Liang's *Shijie mori ji*. There is no collision of a comet and the earth. His translation begins with a very popular idea, the concept of evolution, which Liang Qichao and other literati deeply believed in during the late Qing period. It was Yan Fu 嚴復(1854-1921) who first introduced the idea of evolution to late Qing people through his translation of Thomas Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics*(1893)in1898.²²⁾ Yan Fu was particularly attracted by Social Darwinism and believed in the idea of history as an evolutionary process leading to a better future. Bearing the imported idea of evolution in mind, Liang divides the history of the earth since the existence of life into six phases in the opening paragraph. He writes:

地球之有生物，凡二千二百萬年。其間分六期：太初期一千萬年；生物原始期六百萬年；生物發生期二百三十萬年；高等生物發生期五十萬年；原人期三十萬年；入智開發期二百萬年。

It has been 22 million years since the first life appeared on earth; and its history can be divided into six stages: 10 million years of the initial stage; 6 million years of primitive creature stages; 2.3 million years of creatures' development stage; 500,000 years of advanced creatures' development stage; 300,000 years of hominid stage and 2 million years of intellectual development stage.

The tone and rhetoric of the opening paragraph quoted above makes *Shijie mori ji* more like an echo to Yan Fu's evolutionary thought than a translation of a foreign science fiction novel. Social Darwinism, as Hao Chang points out, "was to play a role in the

22) Han Jianghong gives a useful literature review of Chinese scholarship on Yan Fu and his translation of *Evolution and Ethics* between 1994 and 2003, see Han Jianghong 韓江洪, *Yan Fu huayu xitong yu jindai Zhongguo wenhua zhuanxing* 《嚴復話語系統與近代中國文化轉型》(Shanghai: Shanghai yiwu chubanshe, 2006), pp.15-17. For detailed studies of Yan Fu's translation of *Evolution and Ethics*, see Benjamin Schwartz, *In Search of Wealth and Power: Yan Fu and the West*(Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1964), pp.91-112.

development of his[Liang's] own thinking."²³⁾ He deliberately did so in the opening sentence in *Shijie mori ji* because he tried to introduce the image of a dynamic cosmos to his readers.

This dynamic cosmos reflected some of the most troubling anxieties and ideological paradigms of late Qing literati's attitude toward the concept of time. Traditional Chinese concepts of time and history are cyclical as opposed to linear.²⁴⁾ This understanding of time has the advantage of corresponding to the experience of natural processes, like the cycles of the seasons and vegetation, or to the cyclical motions of heavenly bodies. The best example of cyclical idea of time is the opening declaration of historical truth in *Three Kingdoms*(*Sanguo yanyi* 《三國演義》): "The empire long divided, must unite, long united, and must divide" that predicts the momentum of Chinese history. In traditional Chinese thought, the awareness of historical change was combined with the conviction of an unchanging world order. The idea of the end of the world, as Liang's title clearly indicates, is a shock to late Qing readers. Unlike the cause of the end of the world in the first half of Flammarion's *OMEGA*, the collision of a comet with the earth, the end of the World in Liang's *Shijie mori ji* results from the aging of the sun that leads to its inability to produce heat which is the same as that of in the second part of Flammarion's *OMEGA*.

Apocalyptic imagination in late Qing fiction was an unprecedented topic in Chinese literature. The largest natural disasters available to Chinese literary imagination before the introduction of science fiction in the late Qing period were limited to regional/national calamities. Although there are descriptions of floods, famines, earthquakes, plagues, and various kinds of catastrophes including warfare in the Chinese literary tradition, all endings turn out to have a promising future that Chinese civilization would continue to enjoy an absolute guarantee of its survival. Except Buddhist sutras, the Chinese had

23) Hao Chang, *Liang Chi-ch'ao and Intellectual Transition in China, 1890-1907*(Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), p.64.

24) For study of the rise of linear time in late Qing China, see Luke S.K. Kwong, "The Rise of the Linear Perspective on History and Time in Late Qing China c. 1860-1911." *PastandPresent* 173(Nov., 2001):157-190.

never encountered the idea of a definitive end of the universe until it appeared in Liang Qichao's translation. After introducing the six stages of earth history, Liang describes that "the earth grows old day after day and the sun cools day after day." "All creatures with feelings become absolutely extinct."²⁵⁾ But Liang is not eager to tell his readers when the world would end. He describes changing colors of the sun's radiance to create an atmosphere of the approaching of the world's end.

太陽者地上一切光熱之原力也。太陽本體既日冷卻，其發光漸失。前此如電如焰之青白色烈光漸變為金色，漸變為黃色為赤色。其發光之變化由日面斑點之增加噴火之減少來也。

The sun is the source of all light and heat on earth. As the sun cools everyday, its radiance gradually diminishes. The lightening-like and flame-like blue white color of the radiant sun slowly turns into golden, yellow, and red colors. The change of the sun's color corresponds to the increase of the sun's macular.

Liang Qichao adds some Western knowledge which he thinks worthy introducing to late Qing readers and the knowledge is totally different from Flammarion's work that is centered on his research on novae and supernovas. Immediately after the opening paragraph, Liang introduces another Western/new knowledge to late Qing readers, the geological history of the earth. He explains the origin, history, and structure of the earth that are completely new to late Qing readers and incompatible with the Chinese creation myth of Pangu 盤古. Liang Qichao tells his readers that the earth was completely covered with water in its early formation and three-fourths of earth's surface was still covered with water when first hominids appeared.

He creates a character of "unique and old" (*qigu* 奇古) man to educate late Qing readers about world geography and politics. This character is purely Liang's fabrication and does not appear in any chapter of Flammarion's *OMEGA*. A member of the group of people who traveled by "electric airship" (*dianqi feichuan* 電氣飛船) sees the old man's group from the sky.²⁶⁾ They land and identify the location as the mouth of the Amazon

25) "地球日以老，太陽日以冷，而一切有情遂皆盡滅。"

River. Immediately after narrator mentions the Amazon River, Liang Qichao adds a note explaining that "the Amazon River is located in Brazil and it is one of the five longest rivers in the world."²⁷⁾ Adding notes in the translation text with a smaller font size was popular in the late Qing period. By doing so, translators brought explanations, education, and entertainment together to their readers. Wearing deer skin, the wise old man says:

然，聞諸上古之口碑，此亞瑪遜河之水，其大如海。今也全不然。昔者巴西，亞爾然丁，哥倫比亞諸國之盛於南美也。北美洲分爲聯邦，紐以合衆國政府。其在歐洲有法蘭西英吉利俄羅斯諸國，互握霸權，爭相雄長。。。。彼歐洲者由北極而西伯利亞而拉布蘭而亞爾布士而高加索而比利尼士，先後次第埋沒於冰塊之下。

Yes, I heard from some ancient records that the water in the Amazon River was as large as an ocean. Nowadays, it's completely different. In the past, Brazil, Argentine, and Colombia were prosperous states in South America. There were federal states joining together to establish the United States of America in North America. In Europe, France, England, and Russia were powerful states and competed each other.....In Europe, from the North Pole to Siberia, to Lapland, to Elbrus, and to Caucasus, everywhere was covered with ice.

Liang Qichao uses the old man's "unnecessary mention" of states in South America, North America and Europe to give late Qing readers a picture of world map. This world map helped late Qing readers break the fixed ideals of Chinese civilization. As Joseph Levenson rightly points out:

Their China was a world, a *t'ien-hsia* [tianxia 天下], in which traditional values claimed authority. But in the early twentieth century, anti-Confucian critics of, the Chinese *status quo* traced disaster not to the flourishing of fixed ideals but to blind and slavish respect for them, to the fixity itself; their China was a nation,

26) Flying machines (*feichuan* 飛船) are popular inventions in late Qing science fiction stories. For study of flying machines in late Qing fiction, see Chen Pingyuan, "From Popular Science to Science Fiction: An Investigation of 'Flying Machine,'" in *Translation and Creation*, pp.209-240.

27) "按亞馬遜大河在今巴西國，世界五大河之一也。"

a *kuo*[*guo*國], in which traditional values were impugned as tyranny.²⁸⁾

In addition to using the old man's talk as a vehicle to introduce new knowledge, Liang Qichao also uses the old man's talk to criticize European powers and to project a powerful China in the future. The old man mentions European countries' defeat by Chinese people. He describes:

當前此紀元十九世紀二十世紀之頃，彼中號為文明之極軌者。曾不數百年遂以滅亡而一無所存。彼歐洲諸國，因其人群組織之方法離奇妖怪，卒自漸滅於其本身之血海裏。當時之宗教家，政治家，經濟家侈然以為永久宏大之榮華幸福集於彼等。囂然以天之驕子自命。豈意曾不旋踵遭支那人復仇之襲擊。遂狼狽散亂而無一足以自保也。These[European countries] were the most civilized states in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. However, these civilizations gradually ended and completely vanished within several hundred years. These Europeans were responsible for their own destruction because of their odd and demonic population composition. Their religious leaders, politicians, and economists arrogantly thought that their countries would enjoy permanent glory and happiness and they pompously called themselves God's favored ones. In a short period of time, they were attacked by the Chinese by surprise. They were put to routed and none of them were capable of defending themselves.

This is not the only place where Liang projects a strong China. A wealthy and powerful China can also found in Liang's incomplete novel *The Future of New China*(*Xin Zhongguo weilai ji* 《新中國未來記》) in which Liang describes how China has become a superpower because of constitutional monarchy in 2062 in great details.²⁹⁾ Liang Qichao adds his commentary using a smaller font size immediately after the above words. He says:

28) Joseph R. Levenson, *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate: A Trilogy*(Berkeley: University of California Press), p.99.

29) For studies of Liang's *The Future of New China*, see Xiaobing Tang, *Global Space and the Nationalist Discourse of Modernity: The Historical Thinking of Liang Qichao*(Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), pp.117-164 and Xia Xiaohong, *Jueshi yu chuanshi—Liang Qichao de wenzue daolu*, 《覺世與傳世—梁啟超的文學道路》(Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2006), pp.39-73.

壯哉！我支那人。譯至此不禁浮一大白。但不知我國民果能應此豫言否耳

Great, we Chinese people! I couldn't help drink a full glass of wine when translating this part. But I don't know if our citizens can really make this prediction happen.

The wise old man continues to severely criticize Europeans' militarism and compares them to animals. History records have shown, as the old man points out:

昔嘗有探險遠征者入冰中以探古代巴黎，倫敦，柏林，維也納，聖彼德堡之舊跡。所至往往見其所用種種兵器。竊計當時之人類實與禽獸相去不遠。蓋為一種野蠻之族類，無可疑也。

Some expeditions entered the ice and explored the ruins of Paris, London, Berlin, Vienna, and St. Petersburg in the past. Wherever they went, they always saw various kinds of weapons on their ways. It is assumed that human beings were not quite different from animals during that time. There is no doubt that they belonged to a kind of savage species.

He further reveals Europeans' barbaric behaviors. He says:

彼其野蠻情狀，徵諸今日圖書館所存古書，亦可見其一斑。彼時有犯罪者，以刀劍毒藥種種殘忍之方法以殺之。而號稱文明中心點之大都會往往有大革命之起。墳屍如陵，流血成河，或懸人於壁而銃殺之。有所謂斷頭機者，殺人如草，不聞聲云。

We can see examples of their barbarism in collections of ancient books in our contemporary libraries. In that time, they killed criminals in all kinds of cruel ways including using knives, swords, and poisons. And big revolutionaries happened in metropolitans, the so-called center of civilizations. Dead bodies piled up like hills, blood ran like river floats, or they nailed people on walls and killed them with guns. There was something called guillotine which was capable of killing men like mowing the dawn without making any sound.

While we can find sexist against women in the second part of Flammarion's *OMEGA*, these sexist lines completely disappear in Liang's *Shijie mori ji*. These sexist

words appear in the beginning of the second part of story after the narrator describes how progress in technology and human body has become in the thirtieth century. The narrator says:

About the thirtieth century, especially, the nervous system began to grow more delicate, and developed in unexpected ways. Woman was still somewhat more narrow-minded than man, and her mental operations different from his as before (her exquisite sensibility responding to sentimental considerations before reason could act in the lower cells), and her head had remained smaller, her forehead narrower……³⁰⁾

In Liang's translation, men have been extinct for a long time and twelve women living are the only humans left in Ceylon. The narrator describes how women outsmart men and survive in the last days of the world. He writes:

此地男性之人類早已消滅。先是此地女權極盛，一切政治事業皆全歸巾幗社會。其結果也，少女之數遠加男兒之上。自數世紀以前，凡代議士法律家醫家種種高尚之職業，皆以健強之女子代柔弱之男子。漫假而商業技藝文學等人群中所有事業，皆壟斷於女子之手。男子之教育日以荒落，馴至求一適當之園丁農夫亦不可得見。

Men have been extinct for a long time here. In the past, woman's right was at its peak here. All political business was handled by females. As a result, the number of females outnumbered their male counterparts. Healthy and strong women replaced weak men in various noble professions including political representatives, lawyers, and medical doctors. Gradually, business, artistry, literature, and all kinds of enterprises were monopolized by women. Men's education was so wasted that it was impossible to find a competent male gardener or farmer.

The extinction of men on earth, according to Liang Qichao, is a result of evolution. Baby boys hardly survive through infancy. Those males who live to their adulthood are always sterile. This is a result of "genetic elimination and evolutionary progress."³¹⁾ By making

30) Flammarion, pp.198-199.

men extinct Liang pushes the late Qing popular idea of evolution to the extreme and sends a clear message to his readers: If men do not work harder, sooner or later, not only the social privileges that they enjoy now but also their existence in the world will be in great jeopardy in the future.

After knowing that there is no woman in the Amazon River, the crew on the flying machine goes to Ceylon to look for the only women on earth. Down from twelve to five, these women undergo tremendous changes after meeting these men. The narrator describes:

彼一群之女子於絕望之餘獲此奇遇，朱顏頓開，心目據豁，相會不及半日而此憔悴五尼忽變為媚秀之五美人。

After having such an unexpected encounter, this group of despaired women smiled at once and opened their hearts and eyes. These five wan and weak nun-looking women suddenly transformed into five attractive and beautiful women.

In the original story, the last two humans on earth live separately in two valleys near the equator. One is Omegar who lives in an unknown equatorial city and the other is Eva who lives in southern Ceylon. With transcendent power that she inherits, Eva meets Omegar in his dream. The narrator describes:

[Eva] concentrated all her will and psychic power upon the object of her thoughts, she acted at a distance as effectively, though in a different way, as in former days men had done when communicating with each other by electricity. She called, and felt that another heard and understood. The preceding night she had transported herself to the ancient city in which Omegar lived, and had appeared to him for an instant in a dream.³²⁾

Liang's description of how the last humans meet each other is completely different that

31) "遺傳淘汰天演之作用"

32) Flammarion, p.254.

of the original.

The only plot that is comparatively close to Flammarion's original work in Liang's translation is the short-lived love story in the end. In this episode Aiba 愛巴(Eva) falls in love with Ameijia 阿美加(Omegar) when she meets him and his expenditure company. They stay in Ceylon for half of a month and return to Sanda City(桑達市) in central Africa where Omegar is from. Months later Aiba and Ameijia become the last two persons on earth and Liang Qichao compares them to Adam and Eve.³³⁾ One day they travel in the sky by airship and see a pyramid in Egypt. Flammarion's work only mentions that

It was still possible to recognize one of the ancient Egyptian pyramids which, in the middle of the desert, survived the civilization which it represented. With all Egypt, Nubia and Abyssinia, it had sunk below the level of the sea, and had afterwards emerged into light and been restored in the heart of a new capital by a new civilization, more brilliant than that of Thebes and of Memphis, and finally had been again abandoned to the desert. It was the only remaining monument of the earlier life of humanity, and owed its stability to its geometric form.³⁴⁾

The description in Flammarion's *OMEGA* does not involve with philosophical thought or meanings of life. However, Liang Qichao adds a Buddhist concept of emptiness(*kong*空) to explain the last day of the world in his translation. The pyramid is personified and it has been coldly observing ups and downs of all civilizations in entire human history. The narrator describes:

但見布拉密之大金字塔，莊嚴如故，偉大如故。屹然立于千里一白之間。於戲，此人類第一之華表而太初文明之紀念碑也。彼其幾何學的碩大之建築與天地相終始。彼以其脩然物外之冷眼，觀盡此世界無量家、無量族、無量部落、無量邦國、無量聖賢、無量豪傑、無量鄙夫、無量癡人、無量政治、無量學術、無量文章、無量技藝、乃至無量歡喜、無量愛戀、無量恐怖、無量殘酷、無量悲愁。

33) “與數千萬年前亞當夏娃相對峙。”

34) Flammarion, p.265.

[Eva and Omega] see a great pyramid in Nubia. It is as sublime and magnificent as it used to be. The pyramid is erected out of a white horizon. This pyramid is the monument of humans' first greatness and the beginning of all civilizations. The large geometric form of the architecture will last as long as the earth exists. Using its cold eyes, the pyramid has witnessed innumerable families, innumerable clans, innumerable tribes, innumerable countries, innumerable sages and the virtuous, innumerable courageous heroes, innumerable ordinary people, innumerable silly men, innumerable politics, innumerable academics, innumerable writings, innumerable artistry, even innumerable joy, innumerable love and obsession, innumerable fear, innumerable cruelty, and innumerable sorrow and worry.

Served as tombs for the pharaohs, the function of pyramids, as William Stevenson Smith points out, “on the basis of its architecture, wall reliefs, statuary, and relevant inscriptions, is the promotion of the corporeal afterlife of the dead king through the funerary cult, his continued victories over his enemies in the hereafter, the continuance of his kingship, and his deification, all achieved through the building and decoration program of the pyramid complex.”³⁵⁾ But in Liang's translation, in the personified pyramid's view, all glories, success, fame, and emotions are destined to an end of emptiness of inherent existence. The term *wuliang* 無量, *aparimāna*, is used seventeen times in the above narration. *Wuliang* is a common Buddhist term meaning innumerable or immeasurable in emotion, space, time, and quantity:

六情不能量，故名無量；又不墮三世，名為無量；又言無空、有之量，故稱無量。³⁶⁾

It is impossible to measure six emotions, so it's called immeasurable. Not falling into the three-life cycle is called immeasurable. It is also called immeasurable because it distinguish being from not being.

To introduce the Christian idea of apocalypse which most late Qing readers had no

35) William Stevenson Smith, *The Art and Architecture of Ancient Egypt* (New Haven : Yale University Press, 1999), p.440.

36) *Fahua yishu* 《法華義疏》 in *Taishō shinshū Daizōkyō* 《大正新脩大藏經》 (Tokyo: Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō Kankōkai, 1961-1978), vol.34 no.1721, p.596(b) 21-22.

idea what it was, Liang Liang used a religious analogy, the Buddhist concept of emptiness that his readers were familiar with to explain the last days of the world. He makes up conversations between Aiba and Ameijia that does not take place in the original work at all to reinforce the idea of emptiness. In Flammarion's story, Omegar does not speak a word when dying. He just listens to what Eva says to him including the following sentences:

"Let us rest here," said Eva, "since we are doomed to die. Who, indeed, has escaped death? Let me die in peace in your arms."³⁷⁾

Laing's translation is quite close to the original as he writes:

愛巴曰：“我等終不可不死，今行何之乎？願請少留，妾惟願憑郎君之腕，以死于平和。”
Aiba said, "There is no way that we won't die in the end. What's the point going somewhere else? Please stay with me for a while and my only wish is to die in peace in your arms."

The following conversations between Omegar and Eva are totally Liang's creation. Omegar says to Eva:

“愛卿阿，我等實世界最後之人也。君看此世界中國土何在？政治何在？學術何在？技藝何在？榮華何在？威力何在？今日全地球只贏得雪中一大荒塚而已。”
“My dear, we are truly the last humans on earth. Take a look at this world! Where is territory? Where is politics? Where is scholarship? Where is artistry? Where is prosperity? Where is power? The only thing we have won on earth is a huge desolate tomb in the snow.”

Omegar's words echo to what Liang Qichao has emphasized: the inevitable emptiness in life. Liang Qichao does not stop here and he continues to emphasize the idea of emptiness through Eva's voice. She says:

37) Flammarion, p.265.

吾觀歷史上無數量之美人，顛倒幾多英雄豪傑，纏綿歌泣彼數十寒暑。雖然愛根終當斷絕，愛根終不得不斷絕。妾愛君也，而今既不得不死。君愛妾也，而今既不得不死。

In history, I see that there are countless beautiful women who make heroes and courageous men infatuate with them, linger with them, and sing for them for several decades. Love will eventually come to an end. Indeed, love cannot but come to an end. I love you, and I have to die now. You love me, and you have no choice but to die.

He compares what Omegar sees for the last moment in his life to certain Buddhist analogy. The dictions Liang chooses are definitely Buddhist explanation. Liang describes what Omegar sees:

於時放最後之眼界，一瞥太空，萬有之形，一切既死。萬有之相，一切既死。萬有之色，一切既死。萬有之聲，一切既死。
He looked at the sky for the last sight in his life. All forms are dead, all looks are dead, all colors are dead, and all sounds are dead.

The above analysis of Liang Qichao's *Shijie mori ji* shows that Liang's story is hardly a translation of Flammarion's *OMEGA* although Liang claims it *really* is. Liang's rendition is basically a combination of promotion of evolution, introduction of knowledge of world geography and geology, criticism of European militarism, prediction of a powerful China in the future, and appropriation of Buddhist concept of emptiness to interpret the apocalypse. That is, Liang only writes what he thinks is useful and comprehensible for his late Qing readers. His translation is what Vladimir Nabokov calls free translation. "Free translation," as Nabokov argues, "smacks of knavery and tyranny. It is when the translator sets out to render the 'spirit'— not the textual sense— that he begins to traduce his author."³⁸⁾ Six years after the publication of Liang Qichao's *Shijie mori ji*, another version of the end of the world appeared in Bao Tianxiao's short story "Shijie mori ji."

38) Vladimir Nabokov, "Problems of Translations: 'Onegin' in English" in Lawrence Venuti ed., *The Translation Studies Reader* (London: Routledge, 2000), pp.71-83.

5. Bao Tianxiao's End of the World

Bao Tianxiao was a popular writer and translator in late Qing China. With the assistance of his friend Yang Zilin 楊紫麟 who knew English, Bao translated Henry Rider Haggard's (1856-1925) *Joan Haste* (1895) (*Jiayin xiaozhuan* 《迦茵小傳》) in 1901, four years prior to Lin Shu's much more popular rendition of *Joan Haste* (*Jiayin xiaozhuan* 《迦茵小傳》) in 1905.³⁹⁾ He had translated several science fiction novels including Verne's *The Begum's Million* (1879) (*Tie shijie* 《鐵世界》) in 1903 and *Michael Strogoff* (1876) (*Mimi shizhe* 《秘密使者》) in 1904 before the publication of "The End of the World" in 1908. He also translated two other science fiction novels of Verne's into Chinese, *Wumig zhi yingxiong* 《無名之英雄》 (1904-5) and *Yinian hong* 《一捻紅》 (1906) of which both source titles remain unidentified.⁴⁰⁾ Bao Tianxiao regarded science fiction as the forerunner of world progress. After having read Verne's science fiction, he felt that the pace of progress in his contemporary was too slow. Bao states:

科學小說者，文明世界之先導也……則其輸入文明思想最為敏捷，且其種因獲果。凡爾納所著之《海底二萬里》，而今日英國學士有海底潛行船之制矣……凡此種種，不勝枚舉。嗚呼，我讀迦爾威尼之科學小說，我覺九萬里之大園小，我恨二十世紀之進步遲。⁴¹⁾

Science fiction is the forerunner of world civilization……Civilized thoughts[from

39) It was published under Bao's penname Panxizi 潘溪子. Unlike Lin Shu who translated the whole novel, Bao translated only the second half of *Joan Haste*. For Bao's own account for translating *Joan Haste*, see Bao Tianxiao *Chuangyinglou huiyilu* 《鈞影樓回憶錄》 3 vols. (Taipei: Longwen chubanshe, 1990), vol.1, pp.202-208.

40) For introduction of Bao Tianxiao's translation, see Guo Yanli 郭延禮, *Zhongguo jindai wexue fazhan shi* 《中國近代文學發展史》 3 vols. (Beijing: Gaodeng jiaoyu chubanshe, 2001), vol.3, pp.427-429 and Jiao Fumin 焦福民, "Bao Tianxiao yu wanqing xiaoshuo fanyi." 《包天笑與晚清小說翻譯》 *Dongyue luncong* 《東嶽論叢》 no.10(2009): 78-81.

41) Bao Tianxiao, "Tie shijie yiyu zhuiyan" 《鐵世界譯餘贅言》 quoted in Chen Pingyuan and Xia Xiaohong eds., vol.1, p.236.

science fiction] are the smartest and the nimblest. Ideas expressed in science fiction will become reality in the future. For example, the manufacture of submarine in contemporary England is because of Verne's *20,000 Leagues under the Sea*……And this kind of examples are too numerous to enumerate. Alas! After I read Verne's science fiction, I feel 90,000 *li* is a short distance. I hate that the progress is so slow in the twentieth century.

Bao's translation of science fiction has an important mission. That is, to introduce scientific inventions and thought that help China progress. Does his science fiction creation "Shijie mori ji" carry the same mission? How does he introduce the unprecedented idea of apocalypse to late Qing readers? Is Bao's version of the last days of the world different from Liang's? The following part will answer these questions.

Bao Tianxiao's "The End of the World", written in classical Chinese and published in the nineteenth issue of *All-Story Monthly*, was one of the earliest attempts to envisage the total destruction of the world and to offer solutions to this destruction in Chinese literature. The story begins with the spreading news of the approaching collision between the moon and the earth in the one-trillion-year future. The cause of the end of the world in Bao's story is quite similar to that of Flammarion's *OMEGA*. But it is a comet not the moon that collides with the earth in *OMEGA*. European and American scholars establish an organization called the Alliance for Constructing a New World, (*Xin shijie jianshe tongmenghui* 新世界建設同盟會), to discuss how to save the earth from collision. Coincidentally, representatives of all professions gather in an enormous amphitheater to discuss how to deal with the coming calamity held by the Academy of Science of the United States of Europe in Flammarion's *OMEGA*. In Bao's story, a gigantic observatory and a huge convention center whose capacity is ten trillion people are built by the alliance. The alliance summons an assembly and its members debate rescue strategies, use religious explanations to interpret this coming catastrophe, but ultimately fail to find a way to save the earth. Like the long debate in the first half of *OMEGA*, conversations in the assembly comprise the bulk of the story. Many scientists offer their scientific and fantastic solutions to prevent the disaster. A young physicist suggests that he design an

advanced aircraft and take every human being to other planets. He says:

諸君乎！余有一事，必獲諸君所贊成者，蓋我將利用天空中之乙太力，以造新式飛行之器，藉此足以飛渡他星，其快捷如何，良以他法咸不能施行於今日，而我可以諸君貴重之身體，安穩移之他星球。⁴²⁾

Gentlemen! I have a proposition that you will all agree. I will use the power of ether in the sky to make a new flying machine to travel to other planets. Assembling this flying machine is quick; besides, any other plan will never be ready to launch today. I can smoothly move your precious bodies to other planets.

A scientist says that he would calculate and use trajectory forces released by comets to change the earth's orbit. Another scientist offers a crazier idea that he would lever the earth over the solar system to prevent the collision between the moon and the earth from happening. He says:

故僕有一策，能集地球之力，使之飛逸太陽系統之外，先哲有言，不云地之旋轉，大類槓杆之力，今我輩浴我文明之惠，科學發明，則出此八行星之軌道，諒亦非至難之事。⁴³⁾

I have one plan, which is to gather the power of the earth to fly beyond the solar system. Isn't it true that philosophers in the past claimed the rotation of the earth is like levering. Benefited from civilization and scientific inventions, I guess it's not difficult to be off the orbit of these eight planets.

Unlike the debate in the first half of *OMEGA* that the participants are mostly scientists from various fields, most of the speakers involving in the debate in Bao's "Shijie mori ji" are representatives of religions and philosophy. This is probably due to the fact that Bao Tianxiao's knowledge of science and astronomy was limited. After one member of the Alliance for Constructing a New World explained a simple theory of astronomy,

42) YYXS, no.19(1908), p.7.

43) Ibid., p.8.

a representative presumably a Christian, rises and retorts. He argues:

君言有未當者，我意世界者，乃造物主所創造者也。君言瓦斯球之旋轉天空，夫誰見之？洵如君言，則所以成瓦斯體者，以何理由？曷為有此燦燦群星，麗於大圓之內也？故論其原理，不得不歸諸造物之功。蓋上帝之高深，非凡下所能想像，而又永永萬劫不變者也。⁴⁴⁾

What you just said is inappropriate. In my opinion, the world is created by the Almighty Creator. You mentioned a gas ball rotating in the sky. Who has seen it before? If it is a gas entity like what you said, how come there are numerous stars shining in the big ball? Therefore, in theory, we have no choice but to attribute to the Creator. It is impossible for common people to imagine how great and powerful God is. In all calamities, God remains unchanged.

A representative challenges the speaker immediately after he finished talking. He asks an interesting question:

如君所言，乃歸造物主之功，則我正有一言問君，上帝者，必至仁極慈悲也，今日我輩際此恐怖時代，甯以至仁極慈之上帝，不一垂憫衆生，而坐視此地球之滅絕者耶？⁴⁵⁾

Like you said, everything is Almighty God's creation. I have a question for you. God must be very benevolent and merciful. How come extremely benevolent God does not have mercy on human beings but sit aside and watch the destruction of the earth when we encounter such a horrifying situation nowadays?

Besides a Christian interpretation, Buddhist ideas are also heard in the assembly. While the Christian attributes to the coming of the end of the world to God's will, a Buddhist interprets it as reincarnation. Believed in Buddhism, this representative says:

諸君勿憂，我蓋篤信釋氏輪迴之說，即宇宙之萬物，亦何能逃此流轉生死之一關？故我念太陽統系，今雖滅亡，或遇時機，必且復活，我之為說是也，人將調頭勿信，願

44) Ibid., p.2-3.

45) Ibid., p.3.

以我思之，確有是理，循是以思，我今世界之滅絕，悠久過去之天，安知不生幾度之輪迴耶？⁴⁶⁾

Gentlemen, don't you worry. I deeply believe in the Buddhist idea of reincarnation. How can every creature in the universe escape from reincarnation after death? So, I think that although the solar system is coming to an end, when the opportune moment comes, it must be revived. People might turn their heads and disbelieve in what I've just said. But as far as I am concerned, it really makes sense. How can we know that the destruction of the world today is not one of the reincarnation processes?

The belief in evolution, which had become very popular in late Qing China after Yan Fu's introduction of social Darwinism, is an important theme in "Shijie mori ji." The protagonist of the story, an anonymous character who is simply called the "old doctor," (*lao boshi* 老博士), first appears in the middle of a heated debate, walks to the podium, and gives a speech that astonishes the whole audience. Bao Tianxiao uses the old doctor's speech to express evolutionary ideas. Instead of offering any solution to save the earth, he talks about the immortality of the human soul and urges people to take the destruction of the earth as a chapter of the universe's evolutionary process. With his firm belief in science and evolution, he does not see this end of the earth as the ultimate end of the earth's life. On the contrary, it is a part of the earth's evolutionary process. He says:

宇宙萬物雖微塵纖芥，無一秒中不含其進化之點者。今吾人所處之世界雖雲滅亡。然不過進化之一現象，蛻舊易新而已。矧以物體不滅則言之，即吾人內體亦不滅亡，遑論精神。渺渺天空甯無寄我精靈之地。一念及此，又何用增其悲懷耶？⁴⁷⁾

There is not a single second during which every creature— even the tiniest— in the universe does not evolve. Although the world we are living in now is close to destruction, this is just one of evolutionary phenomena. It's just like shredding the old to take on the new. As far as conservation is concerned, our inner bodies will not perish, not to mention our spirits. The sky is so spacious that there must

46) Ibid., pp.4-5.

47) Ibid., p.12.

be places for our spirits to reside in. Why should I feel sad when I think of this?

Believing that the cataclysm would be followed by new creation and by new life, the old doctor dies with a smile on his face. His attitude takes its inspiration from the Darwinian theory of evolution, and in particular from the notion of "the survival of the fittest" in "the struggle for existence."

Detailed descriptions of the earth's destruction and people's struggle for survival near the end of the world are devastating and macabre in the story. The grand conference room for the Alliance for Constructing a New World is swallowed up by turbulent and giant waves. The narrator describes the flood over the convention center:

此時月之軌道，愈行愈近，而以其吸力之作用，則大風潮大海嘯直奪此地球上大多數之生命，付諸洪流。即此閱幾麗煥之大同盟會議所，亦為激浪所吞，相將逐此波臣而去。⁴⁸⁾

The moon's orbit is getting closer and closer. As a result of its attraction, super wind and tsunamis took the majority of human lives on earth and their bodies were washed away. Even a magnificent and grand architecture like the convention center for the Alliance was swallowed by turbulent waves, and it was washed away with the tides.

Additionally, images of the moon are like grim devils making ferocious faces to scare the earth as the narrator personifies the moon:

時則此朦朧之月影，宛如魔神之面，百怪千獠，以向我地球，作種種恐怖之相，顧其光亮，雖不減於前，而氣象大是愁慘，蓋以彼生命亦無多日，而遂為此而死。物之狂，其勢力之猛厲，直欲以一卵抵吾巨彈也。⁴⁹⁾

The dim shadow of the moon is like a demon's grotesque and fierce appearance approaching to the earth. It makes various kinds of horrifying faces. Although it is as bright as usual, the atmosphere is extremely sad and miserable. That's

48) Ibid., p.10.

49) Ibid.

because it knows that it doesn't have much time left and will die soon. The force is crazy and powerful and it's like using a egg to resist a huge cannon.

The heat and light of the sun dim, most of the seas and lands on earth freeze, plants wither, animals starve to death, and their remains are ubiquitous on the surface of the earth. The narrator describes humans' last struggles at the end of the world:

嗟夫，此地球一半之生民苟有可以暫免片響之慘禍者，無不極力營救而趨避之。蠕蠕然如旋磨之蟻，皇皇然如破巢之鳥。或登高山之嶺以避風潮而海水掀騰至數百丈之高，往往紛拏人物樓閣而去。萬雷齊落而喧嚷之聲又不絕於四方。凡入於耳者，無非慘厲之音，令人悲咽。⁵⁰

Oh! Half of the populations on earth who are temporarily safe from destruction are busy saving other people and finding safe places to stay. Their movements are like marching ants, and their anxieties are like birds with broken nests. Some climb to tops of mountains, but sea waves are so ferocious that they reach up to the height of a thousand meters. People, animals, and buildings are wiped out. The sound of thunder comes from all directions. People choke with anguish when they heard this terrible sound.

These harrowing descriptions of the end of the world exceed in detail and in thoroughness any description of natural disasters in native Chinese narrative literature. As far as the official Confucian interpretation of history is concerned, disturbances from natural disasters to social turmoil and political chaos were seen as *only* temporal deviations from the preordained cosmic and social order. According to the cyclical concept of time, order will be restored once chaos has reached its climax. Clearly this view of history does not incorporate a final destruction of the cosmic order or conception of a future end of the world. The idea that time is limited and human life is destined to total destruction, therefore, brought not only shock but also fear to late Qing readers.

In Liang's story, the last days of the world are quiet and peaceful; however, in Bao's story the last days of the world are full of chaos, disorder, and endless casualties. Why

⁵⁰ Ibid.

do Liang and Bao focus on different matters, one on love and the other on violence, in the last days of their fictional worlds? Liang's profession as a fiction writer and translator had a noble goal: to rejuvenate the Chinese mentality. In his most famous article "On the Relationship Between Fiction and the Government of the People" ("Lun xiaoshuo yu qunzhi zhi guanxi" 論小說與群治之關係), Liang attributes to fiction monumental power and emphasizes fiction's multiple grand functions. He states:

欲新一國之民，不可不先新一國之小說。故欲新道德，必新小說；欲新宗教，必新小說；欲新政治，必新小說；欲新風俗，必新小說；欲新學藝，必新小說；乃至欲新人心，欲新人格，必新小說。何以故？小說有不可思議之力支配人道故。⁵¹

If one intends to renovate the people of a nation, one must first renovate its fiction. Therefore, to renovate morality, one must renovate fiction; to renovate religion, one must renovate fiction; to renovate politics, one must renovate fiction; to renovate social customs, one must renovate fiction; to renovate learning and arts, one must renovate fiction; and to renovate even the human mind and remold its character, one must renovate fiction. Why is this so? This is because fiction has a profound power over the way of man.

In addition to promoting the idea of evolution, one of the main purposes of his translation of *OMEGA* is to promote the idea of love to late Qing readers. It is love that lasts forever as he puts it in the last two sentences of *Shijie mori ji*:

無限之空中依然含有無量數之太陽，無量數之地球。其地球中，有有生物者，有無生物者。其有生物之諸世界，以全智全能之慧眼，微笑以瞥見之「愛」之花尚開。

There are still innumerable suns and earths in the innumerable skies. In these earths, there are living and non living matters. In living-matter worlds, the blossom of "love" can be seen by all-knowing insight eyes with smiles.

⁵¹ Liang Qichao, "Lun xiaoshuo yu qunzhi zhi guanxi" 論小說與群治之關係 *Xin Xiaoshuo* No.1(1902), the Chinese is quoted in Chen Pingyuan and Xia Xiaohong eds., vol.1, pp.76-77. The English translation is quoted from Gek Nai Cheng trans., "On the Relationship Between Fiction and the Government of the People" in Kirk A. Denton ed., *Modern Chinese Literary Thought: Writings on Literature 1893-1945* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), p.74.

Unlike Liang Qichao's *New Fiction*, the literary magazine *All-Story Monthly* that published Bao's "Shijie mori ji" was a commercial journal. Stories published in *All-Story Monthly* had one thing in common: entertainment. These stories must be interesting and entertaining enough so that late Qing readers would be willing to take money out of their pockets to subscribe or buy the magazine. Bao's story was never intended to be a moral lesson. What he tries to demonstrate to readers in "Shijie mori ji" is visualization of the strangeness (*qi* 奇): the end of the world which is completely new and incomprehensible for late Qing readers. The concept of strangeness, as Judith Zeitlin points out, is not static. On the contrary, it is "a cultural construct created and constantly renewed through writing and reading; moreover, it is a psychological effect produced through literary or artistic means."⁵² The scale of *qi* was not limited to 500-year-old hermits living in the mountains without any food and water, beautiful women transformed from fox ghosts, and walking ginsengs. It had extended to a global context in the late Qing. Bao's detailed description of the total destruction of the world could be regarded as a presentation of *qi* which would definitely draw late Qing readers' attention.

The collision of the earth and the moon in the end of Bao's "Shijie mori ji" does not show the *permanent* end, on the contrary, its ending is similar to that of Liang's *Shijie mori ji*. In both stories, based on the evolutionary theory, sooner or later, there will be another earth in the future. The end of Liang's story is like:

無限之空中依然含有無量數之太陽，無量數之地球。其地球中，有有生物者，有無生物者。

There are still innumerable suns and earths in the innumerable skies. In these earths, there are living and non living matters.

The end of Bao's story is like:

自此以後，記者亦無從下管，是必經未來數億萬年之後，新世界人之智識靈明，突過前塵，乃能推測而知。而今則此偌大地球，永永封諸神秘之中，以經無重之劫。⁵³

52) Judith Zeitlin, *Historian of the Strange: Pu Songling and the Chinese Classical Tale* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), p.6.

After the collision, I don't know how to write. Only when human intelligence exceeds its ancestors in the several-trillion-years future, can we know what really has happened. But the earth is sealed in mystery for now and undergoes countless inexorable dooms.

Both Liang and Bao use Buddhist ideas, for example, Liang uses the idea of *kongas* I have pointed out previously and Bao uses the idea of inexorable dooms *jie* 劫 that the earth has to go through in the process of reincarnation to explain the apocalypse to late Qing readers. Apocalyptic traditions in the West disappear in both Chinese texts. The best way for Liang and Bao to explain apocalypse, a Christian idea that was foreign and relatively new to most Chinese, to their readers was to use a rhetoric language that late Qing readers were familiar with. Since most of their readers were not Christians, both Liang and Bao used the same strategy. They adopted and adapted Buddhist ideas to rewrite apocalyptic stories.

6. Conclusion

There is a strange relationship among Flammarion's *OMEGA: The Last Days of the World*, Liang Qichao's *Shijie mori ji* and Bao Tianxiao's "Shijie mori ji." The above analysis of three ends of the world shows that Liang's translation of Flammarion's *OMEGA* is more like a literary creation of his own than a translation of Flammarion's *OMEGA* while Bao Tianxiao's "Shijie mori ji" is more like a translation of Flammarion's *OMEGA* than a literary creation. Liang Qichao completely skips the first half of the source text and translates only the last part of the second half. Preoccupied with the function of education in fiction, Liang is eager to introduce new ideas, geography and geology of the world; and most important of all, the idea of evolution, in his translation.

53) YYXS, p.13.

What he brings to late Qing readers is hardly the knowledge that Flammarion offers in *OMEGA*. Interestingly, the first half of *OMEGA* missing in Liang's translation can be found in Bao's story even though Bao's "Shijie mori ji" is not supposed to be a translation of the first half of *OMEGA*. An intertextual comparison between the two stories shows that Bao's story seems to imitate the first half of *OMEGA*.

Both *The End of the World* and "The End of the World" offered Buddhist interpretations of the last days of the world because it is hard for late Qing readers to accept the Western idea of apocalypse using Christian language. Localizing the Western idea in Chinese context, Liang uses the idea of *kong* and Bao uses the ideas of *lunhui* and *jie* to explain apocalypse to late Qing readers. Beyond the Buddhist interpretation of Christian apocalypse, the two stories offer new secular interpretations of the relationship between humans and the universe. These new interpretations are very different from traditional Chinese understandings of men's relationship with nature. Readers may have seen this as a metaphor for an anticipated social apocalypse, a radical change in the public order of things. Additionally, these stories refer to a belief in the underlying harmony of man and nature that no longer exists in the secularized consciousness of modern man. This can definitely add one characteristic of what David Wang calls "repressed modernities" of the late Qing fiction.

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〈 中文摘要 〉

科学小说自晚清传入中国, 备受推崇, 并於当时掀起一股翻译及创作的热潮。《新小说》创刊号与《月月小说》第十九号分别刊登了梁启超《世界末日记》与包天笑的同名短篇小说〈世界末日记〉。梁之《世界末日记》为法国作家佛林玛利安所著《地球末日记》之中译本。本文探讨这三篇科学小说的互文性尤其著重「末世观念」的描写。梁的译介与包的创作与晚清当时的政治, 社会, 文化关系密切。梁启超《世界末日记》虽为佛林玛利安《地球末日记》之译本, 但与源本相差甚巨。包天笑创作之〈世界末日记〉较梁之译本近似源本。梁启超与包天笑皆利用中国人熟悉的佛教观念解释基督教的末世: 梁以无量与空的观念, 包以轮回与劫的观念。两人之《世

界末日记》皆传达当时受欢迎的社会达尔文主义学说, 透过科学小说来传递新知。

主題語(Key words): 梁啟超, 包天笑, 佛林瑪利安, 《世界末日記》, 末世觀念

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