

Workshop report

On 16-17 June 2022 a workshop entitled 'Interpreting China: Engendering Transnational Dialogues' was held at University College Dublin Humanities Institute and online. The workshop was organised by Dr. Yanli Xie (UCD) and Dr. Jennifer Bond (UCL) in collaboration with the China Academic Network on Gender (CHANGE), UCD Asia Pacific Research Network and UCD Center for Gender, Feminisms and Sexualities. The workshop was made possible by Seed Funding grants from UCD Faculty of Arts and Humanities, UCD Humanities Institute (Transnationalising the Humanities Research Strand) and the UCD School of History.

The workshop brought together scholars from across Ireland, UK and Europe working in Chinese History, Gender Studies and Translation Studies. It aimed to shed light on the lives of Chinese interpreters who conveyed to non-Chinese knowledge of Chinese culture, language, politics, and society across Chinese history. We were conceptualising 'interpreting' in its broadest conception, including translators, interpreters, western-educated intellectuals, and elite and non-elite cultural brokers. Crucially, the workshop explored the gendered power dynamics at play in the process of transfer. Methodological questions we asked workshop participants to consider include: How can we understand the powerful role of translators and interpreters who are often hidden within the historical record? How is the act of translation itself gendered? What mediums (art, literature, film) did Chinese actors living in the west use to introduce western audiences to Chinese concepts of gender and how did they reimagine their own understanding of China in the process? What were the forums for exchange (schools, business meetings, international conferences) and how did gendered power dynamics operate in these spaces?

The workshop was held in person and online, with Mike Mir providing technical support. Twenty-three in-person participants from eleven universities across Ireland, the UK and Europe attended the workshop with an online audience of seventy-six registrants for the keynote webinar.

On the first day of the workshop Professor Henrietta Harrison, Stanley Ho Tutorial Fellow at Pembroke College, Oxford, delivered an engaging keynote talk. Her talk, entitled 'Interpreting and Masculinity in early British interactions with China', drew on reflections from her recent monograph *The Perils of Interpreting: The Extraordinary Lives of Two Translators between Qing China and the British Empire* (Princeton University Press, 2021). The talk engendered a lively Q and A discussion, which was followed by a wine reception and conference dinner.

On day two we had three panels of eight papers which explored questions of gender and translation in the process of 'interpreting' China to foreign audiences. Papers were given by Dr Isabella Jackson (Trinity College Dublin), Dr. Jennifer Bond (University College London), Dr. Yushu Geng (Trinity College Dublin) Dr. Kailing Xie (University of Birmingham), Dr. Ting Guo (University of Exeter), Dr. Yanli Xie (University College Dublin), Dr. Coraline Jortay (University of Oxford) and Prof. Nicoletta Pesaro (Università Ca' Foscari Venezia). Dr. Julia Schneider (University College Cork), Dr. Aglaia De Angeli, (Queen's University, Belfast) and Prof. Gregory Lee (University of St. Andrews) acted as the panel discussants. Scholars from across

UCD Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Prof. Mary Gallagher, Dr. Ann Mulhall, and Dr. Qiu Fanghe, chaired the panels and the discussions that followed.

The workshop closed with a round-table discussion Chaired by Prof. Gregory Lee. The discussion centred on the global power dynamics and intersections of Gender, Race and Class in the process of interpreting China.

On Saturday 18th June some participants joined a visit to the Book of Kells in Dublin city centre before departing.

Thanks to all our participants for making the workshop a success. We are particularly grateful to Ricki Schoen of the UCD Humanities Institute and Mike Mir of Real Smart Media for their administrative and technical support for the event.

Jennifer Bond and Yanli Xie