Memories of the Gate: On the Rhetoric in *The Pilgrim's Progress* and Its Chinese Versions

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Abstract: *The Pilgrim's Progress* was one of the most popular translated novels in China from the late 19th until the 20th century. In this paper, I argue that one of the main reasons for the book's success in China lies in an intricate rhetoric of the original version, which focuses on the memories of the Gate, and in the skillful transformation of this rhetoric into the Chinese versions. By analyzing this rhetoric and its transformation, this paper shows how *The Pilgrim's Progress* marked the cultural memories of the Gate in China's modern period and provides a theoretical foundation on which studies on contemporary Chinese translations of this book can build.

Keywords: *The Pilgrim's Progress*; the Gate; rhetoric transformation; rhetoric of ethnography; rhetoric of individuality

1. Introduction

Down to the present day, John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress: from This World to That Which Is to Come* (1678) is one of the most important books of English Christian literature. It is, therefore, not surprising that we find translations of the work into nearly all of the world's major languages, including Chinese (Brown 1886, pp. 489–92; Hofmeyr 2004, pp. 240–43). In fact, the Chinese translations made the book one of the most popular translated novels in China between the late 19th and the early 20th century. First published in Classical Chinese in 1851 and then in Mandarin and different Chinese dialects after 1865 and 1871, respectively, missionary societies throughout China valued this book and considered it a particularly worthwhile source in their preaching (Tarumoto 2002, p. 697). It was also a missionary that provided the first Chinese translation, namely Reverend William Chalmers Burns (1815–1868), a Scottish missionary sent to China by the English Presbyterian Mission. His first translation saw no less than three editions, the first appearing in Hong Kong in 1856, the second in Fuzhou in 1857, and the third by the American Presbyterian Mission Press in Shanghai in 1869. Notwithstanding its success, the readership of this first translation was still quite limited as it was in Classical Chinese. In 1865 Revd. Burns therefore started working on his second translation, into the official Mandarin language. This Mandarin version also appeared in several editions, among which are those by the Chinese Printing Bureau (Hong Kong) in 1873, the *Xiaoshuhui Zhentang* in 1883, and the North China Publishing House in 1892. Besides the Mandarin version, dialect versions of the book were another significant step forward. An early dialect version appeared in the Xiamen dialect in 1853, followed by a Cantonese dialect version in 1871, and a Shanghai dialect version in 1895.

In Bunyan scholarship, research on *The Pilgrim's Progress* has been one of the major strands. As far as its translation is concerned, recent years have seen an increasing scholarly interest in translations published in the Third World. Focusing on Africa, where we count 80 translations, Isabel Hofmeyr showed how *The Pilgrim's Progress* was adapted and reworked according to the social and cultural context into which it traveled (Hofmeyr 2004). An international Bunyan conference, held in Bedford in 2004, included a number of papers discussing "Bunyan in Translation" and "Bunyan in the Third

World" (Hofmeyr 2007, p. 120). In addition, for the Chinese translations, we can draw on previous work. In a series of publications, culminating in the monograph *The Afterlife of a Classic: A Critical Study of the Late-Qing Chinese Translations of The Pilgrim's Progress*, Chinese scholar John Lai has provided a detailed historical account and some textual analysis of the major Chinese versions of *The Pilgrim's Progress* (Lai 2012). Most recently, Xie Jiapeng & Su Yuxiao published an article in the Journal *Bunyan Studies* entitled 'Chinese Translations of Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*'. This article offers a historical overview on the Chinese translations and also reflects on the contemporary impact of *The Pilgrim's Progress* in China (Xie and Su 2018).

According to Lai, *The Pilgrim's Progress* was the first long Western novel to be translated into Chinese. For the period between the middle of the 19th and the early 20th century, he counts at least ten different Chinese translations. Both aspects lend some support to Lai's conclusion that *The Pilgrim's Progress* is one of the most influential Western books in China, especially among Chinese Christian readers (Lai 2012, pp. 4–5, 263–77). Nonetheless, the question why it was *this* book that reached such a vast dissemination in China is not fully answered. In this article, I argue that one of the main reasons for the book's success in China lies, on the one hand, in an intricate rhetoric that we find in the original version and, on the other hand, in the sophisticated methods that were applied in the Chinese translations to make the original rhetoric accessible to the Chinese readers. The article will thus focus on two things, as follows: The rhetoric in *The Pilgrim's Progress* and the rhetoric transformation that marks its Chinese versions. I will show that the original text consists of two particular rhetorical layers, the rhetoric of ethnography and the rhetoric of individuality. This article defines and analyzes those two rhetorical forms and explains where and for what reasons they were altered in the Chinese versions.

Drawing on and extending previous scholarship, this article aims to show three things, as follows: First, that the missionaries who translated *The Pilgrim's Progress* succeeded to adapt the text to the Chinese cultural context without losing its Christian spirit; second, that because of these careful and skillful translations, the Chinese versions allowed for a remarkable spiritual rencontre between two radically different cultures; and third, that the rhetorical forms of ethnography and individuality do not conflict or exclude each other but are mutually intertwined. *The Pilgrim's Progress* is the story about a community, the community of those who believe in God. Yet it is at the same time the story of individuals, the individuals who believe in God, and the individuals together form the community of the "people of Heaven". The story they share among each other is not only one that transcends worldly life, but is also one that transcends cultures. Additionally, we can observe this if we inquire into the cultural memories of the Gate in Chinese society. My approach to achieve these aims is to explicate the means and concepts, which carry the book's rhetoric and its transformation. Thus, on the main, this will be a conceptual study, while still grounded on an intimate knowledge of the book's original and Chinese versions.

The paper is organized in two main parts. The first describes the rhetoric of ethnography (Section 2) and the second elaborates on the rhetoric of individuality (Section 3). The last part summarizes the argument and provides some signposts for future research (Section 4). As regards the textual basis for the Chinese versions, the analysis will draw on the texts and illustrations of the Mandarin version of the American Presbyterian Mission Press (Shanghai, 1906) and the Cantonese version of the Wesleyan Missionary Society (Canton, 1871). The 1906 Shanghai version follows Revd. Burn's translation as well as the 1853 Xiamen dialect version. I use this Shanghai version here because it includes illustrations. The 1871 Cantonese version (Bunyan 1871), on the other hand, was prepared by Revd. George Piercy (1829–1913), a British missionary with the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society. Revd. Piercy translated both of the book's two parts. They were both published by the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Guangzhou, yet in reversed order; the first part appeared in 1871 and the second one year earlier.

2. The Rhetoric of Ethnography in *The Pilgrim's Progress*

Ethnography means the description of peoples and cultures with their different customs and habits. In this article, ethnography more specifically refers to two communities, the Chinese Christian communities of late Qing China and the community of Christian believers throughout world history. The rhetoric of ethnography thus denotes the rhetorical forms in which the Christian beliefs of these two communities are expressed.

The *Pilgrim's Progress* may usually not be read in this way, but underneath its story of the pilgrim Christian we find a particular ethnography, the ethnography of "the people of Heaven". The character of a "pilgrim" represents those people who are just temporarily staying in this world and are on their way, on their pilgrimage, to "progress from this world to that which is to come", viz. to the Heavenly Kingdom. This particular ethnography underpinning the main story comes with clear implications for the Christian life. As Christians are people on their way to the Heavenly Kingdom, they understand themselves as only sojourners on earth; they neither ground their identity in a worldly nation based on lineage or race relations, nor do they belong to any country or city. Rather, they produce and reaffirm their Christian identity in a self-narrative that comes under the title "the people of Heaven". Telling the story of the pilgrimage thus produces and reaffirms their own stories as pilgrims. John Bunyan, of course, did not invent this kind of ethnography and its religious and cultural implications. He derived this self-narrative from the Biblical tradition, even if casting it in a distinctively Puritan form. In this sense, Bunyan expressed the ethnography of a universal Christian community in the particular terms of his own time, which he meant to address to a seventeenth century Puritan community in England. This article shifts the focus from the particular Christian community of Bunyan's time and space to another particular, the Chinese Christian community in the late 19th century. It analyzes how this particular community was invited to become one part of the universal Christian community of "the people of Heaven".

If we focus on the two Christian communities this article has in mind, the essential rhetoric device *The Pilgrim's Progress* provides to convey its particular ethnography is the Gate. Both the English original and the Chinese versions focus on the image of the Gate to express the identity of the "people of Heaven". In the original version, Bunyan speaks of the "Wicket-gate" by which he means a narrow gate or door. As the character Evangelist explains to Christian, the Wicket-gate is the "strait gate" that "leadeth unto life" (Bunyan 1856, p. 54). In *The Pilgrim's Progress* the Gate therefore represents the beginning of the process of conversion. When Christian reaches the Gate, he is pulled through it by a character called Good-Will, who is usually understood to represent the free grace of God, by which sinners are saved (Bunyan 1856, pp. 56–58). However, the process of Christian's salvation is thereby not completed. Only as he reaches the Cross, we are told, "his burden loosed from off his shoulders, and fell from off his back" (Bunyan 1856, p. 68). Bunyan's references to the Biblical text leave no doubt that he uses the image of the Gate in its Biblical sense. In the passage quoted above, he refers the reader to Luke 13:24 and Matthew 7:13–14, which speak of "the narrow door" and "the narrow gate", respectively. In Matthew 7:7–8, the search for truth and salvation is, moreover, described as "knocking on the door". John 10:9 then famously symbolizes Jesus as the Gate one must pass through to attain redemption, as follows: "I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture."[1] When Jesus portrays himself as the Gate, he suggests that only he himself is the passage through which people can access a different way of life. This "path of virtue" has already existed in the world, yet it is Jesus' words that unlock the door and allow entering it.

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[1]   In the KJV Bible, this sentence is translated as: "I am the door, by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." Yet more modern translations, for instance, NIV, NRSV, NIVUK, NIRV, and ISV all use the word "gate" instead of "door". That seems unfortunate because the Greek word in this passage refers to door, not gate. Still, whether translated as gate or door, the suggestion remains that there exists only one right entrance that "leadeth unto life".

In the Chinese versions, on the other hand, the metaphor of the gate may seem out of place. Yet it is not so. Quite similarly to the Biblical tradition, Chinese culture connects the image of the gate with "way" and "truth". Confucius says, "Who expects to be able to go out of a house except by the gate? How is it then that men do not walk according to these ways?" (Jin 1995, p. 61) As the Chinese character for "way" is the same as for Tao (truth), Confucius' second question can therefore be read together with the first one as, "Why do men not choose to pass through the gate, if this is the only way leading to truth?" This Confucius' saying is no unique case. In Chinese cultural history, the gate or door[2] has always been instilled with great symbolic meaning. The belief that it marks a very essential space reflects in numerous cultural practices throughout Chinese history. For instance, it has been said that Chinese classical architecture is an art of the door (Li 2006, p. 14). Whether it is a royal palace or a common person's house, Chinese architecture traditionally pays special attention to the design, construction, and meaning of the gate, the entrance gate in particular. So the Tiananmen (lit. Gate of Heavenly Peace) at the entrance to the Forbidden City in Beijing is not only the grand opening to the imperial city, but it is a symbol of the whole nation's peace. The importance of the gate is also emphasized by ordinary people. Beyond the crucial aspect that the door allows for controlling the entrance to the heart of Chinese social life, viz. the family household, it also relates to the good or bad fortune of a family. To date, one of the most famous gods in China is the "door-god" (门神), whose image is regularly affixed to the door to exorcise evil spirits. People also paste gatepost couplets (门联). A pair of scrolls on either side of the gatepost form a couplet that should attract good luck and fend off woe. There also exists a great number of words and idioms in Chinese language using the character *men* ("门") for gate and door. Most of them relate to the meaning that people should choose the right way. For instance, *Mendao* (门道) and *Menjing* (门径) both literally mean doorway, while they figuratively stand for the gateway to success. Importantly, then, the character *men* also carries religious connotations. The word *Jiaomen* (教门), for instance, combines the characters for teaching and door to express, in its original Buddhist meaning, the teachings that provide access to the truth. *Mentu* (门徒), for another one, literally means the follower of the gate and denotes the follower of a particular religion in general. The same word is also used to refer to Christian disciples. The list of examples could be continued, yet for present purposes this should suffice to explain the deep significance of the image of a gate or door in Chinese cultural memory, especially as regards its link to truth, success, good and bad fortune, and the right way to lead one's life.

So, we can understand that choosing the Gate as a rhetoric device in the Chinese versions of *The Pilgrim's Progress* is rather ideal. The Chinese versions of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, thus, do not build on sand when they reach out to the image of the Gate. Their rhetorical structure rests on two strong pillars, the Christian tradition and the cultural memory of Chinese people during the last two thousand years. The rhetoric overlap between the two cultural traditions produces two effects. On the one hand, the fact that the gate marks a similar space in *The Pilgrim's Progress* and Chinese culture suggests this image as an ideal entry point for rhetoric transformation. On the other hand, there remain sharp differences in the images of the gate within the two traditions, especially as regards their religious connotation. In the following, I will explain that it is precisely this tension of cultural similarities and dissimilarities that drives the transformation of the rhetoric of ethnography from the English original to the Chinese translations. More specifically, the rhetoric transformation includes a particular textual structure and illustration of the Chinese versions (Section 2.1), which reveal, on a deeper level, a shift from the concept of time to the concept of space (Section 2.2). I will argue that this rhetorical shift, as well as the overall process of transformation, is not arbitrary, yet guided by a particular normativity (Section 2.3).

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[2]   In Chinese, "gate" and "door" share the same character "门", which is pronounced as "men".

2.1. Structure and Illustrations

Missionaries in China face the challenge of how to unlock the Christian way of life for Chinese society. One basic method to cope with this challenge is to translate Christian books. A good translation will endeavor both to preserve the original's spirit and to localize the latter according to its potential readership. Simply put, the meaning of the text should remain and only its presentation should change. An artful translation, in other words, consists in a skillful shift of the text's rhetoric; its presentation is subject to the meaning of the original text and, at the same time, must respond to the particular mentality of future readers. For the story of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, the rhetoric task and potential, thus, is to effectively associate *different* reader groups in their understanding of the Gate. It is this rhetorical potential that the translations of *The Pilgrim's Progress* from English into Classical Chinese, Mandarin, and the Chinese dialects activate.

Why a translation should transform the rhetoric of the original into the rhetoric forms of the new readership deserves some more explanation. Paul Ricoeur provides a starting point in explaining that the metaphor should rest on deviation (Ricoeur 1978, p. 16). A metaphor—like the Gate—cannot stick to its original form. People have different understandings of metaphors; the same symbolic information can provoke different associations. To produce a sustainable memory of a metaphor, it is therefore crucial that the presentation of the metaphor corresponds to one's personal and cultural memory, to one's way of "seeing as". If there is such correspondence, the metaphor will become part of memory, otherwise it will be rejected. Without a rhetoric transformation, stories of the Gate may still be read but they are unlikely to bear on the memories of readers. Reading may take place, yet to open up the metaphor of the Gate, this metaphor must connect to the reader's life experiences and not contradict with them. In sum, the rhetoric transformation of a metaphor must therefore build on a deviation from the original and a correlation with the cultural memory of where the metaphor wishes to be effective.

The rhetoric transformation of *The Pilgrim's Progress* includes a structural and an illustrative element. The structural element concerns the way in which the text is rearranged for the Chinese readership. It is quite obvious that all of the Chinese versions adopt the structural format of the *Zhanghui* novel. The *Zhanghui* novel is the main format for long Chinese novels from the 15th century onwards. A particular feature of this format is the enticing summary couplets heading each of the chapters. This textual structure is then underpinned by an illustrative element. Just below the couplets, we usually find an illustration that pictures the core message of the chapter, while the illustrations bear titles referring them back to the couplets (Liu 2011, pp. 68–72). Thus, the literary form of the illustrated *Zhanghui* novel serves as one particular rhetoric device in the Chinese translations, which responds to the people's way of memorizing texts at the time of late Qing dynasty. In this rhetoric form events, metaphors and stories take root in the local; grounded in the old narrative style their new content spreads out and thereby eventually creates its own particular shape.

Within the basic setting of the illustrated *Zhanghui* novel, we observe several variations that each specify this rhetorical device according to the potential Chinese readership. One specific group of potential readers were grass-roots people. In the late 19th century only a few people in China actually read and understood Classical Chinese. Some of the ordinary people were able to understand Mandarin, but the more grass-roots population could only communicate in their local dialects. The translations, therefore, used an easy to read and simple language. Yet, considering people's illiteracy, pictures were even more important than texts in the dialect versions. Even on a more general level, it is usually not only Bunyan's text that is remembered vividly; the accompanying illustrations are also of particular memorability (Collé-Bak 2007, p. 91). However, to use pictures instead of written text as the primary means of communication was not a straightforward remedy. Western pictures, in general, would have had a similar effect as "unfitting" metaphors. In other words, if the rhetoric of the pictures did not match the one of the grass-roots population, the latter would see Western paintings as alien to their cultural memory and hence reject them. The illustrations in the Chinese versions therefore underwent

a rhetoric transformation.[3] So, in the Cantonese dialect version, all illustrations followed the *Xiuxiang* model, a traditional Chinese style of line drawing portraits.[4] Moreover, the illustrations were printed on *Xuan* paper, a high-quality paper used for traditional Chinese drawing and painting. All in all, the images and scene design were consistent in style with the pictures in popular Ming and Qing Dynasty novels, which also contained fine-lined portraits of the main characters. It should further be noted that the dialect versions adopted the traditional style in Chinese painting, which had been the most popular one throughout five centuries, until the early 20th century. Thus, in combining a simple text with exquisitely painted illustrations, the dialect versions used a rhetorical form that perfectly matched the "seeing as" of ordinary Chinese people at that time.

Another example that shows how the basic model of the illustrated *Zhanghui* novel was varied in the Chinese translations, according to the local readership, is the Mandarin version published by the American Presbyterian Mission Press in 1906. Its figures are dressed in Qing costumes and wear the typical long plaits of the time. Yet the painting technique obviously differs from the Cantonese dialect version. The Mandarin version uses the so-called copperplate painting, a usual technique of drawing in Western illustration relying on light and shade as well as perspective effect. This marks a striking difference to authentic Chinese *Xiuxiang* illustration, which builds on line drawing with traditional ink and brush, while ignoring light, shade, and perspective effect altogether. So why do these two versions use a different style for their illustrations? The answer is that readers of the Cantonese dialect version were ordinary people from Canton Province in the last three decades of the 19th century, whereas the readers of the Mandarin version were people living in Shanghai and its nearby area in the beginning of the 20th century. Most of the former readers were illiterates who could enjoy the book only by listening to the dialect story and looking at the pictures. The latter, however, might not only have been able to read, but even to appreciate Western style paintings. Around the turn of the century, Western paintings flooded Chinese port cities, such as Shanghai, and quite a few Chinese painters had already begun to use Western painting techniques. Residents of urban areas, especially in coastal port cities like Shanghai, were, therefore, not only familiar with the Western painting style, but also started to consider it as something fashionable. Thus, it made good sense to illustrate the 1906 Mandarin version not completely according to Chinese conventions, but with integrated Western elements. Such an approach would not have worked with the grass-roots people in rural areas. Even in the 1930s, most peasants were still opposed to Western paintings and photographs and complained about "the different colors on two sides of one person's face"[5] (Lu 1995, p. 27).

All the Chinese versions used a carefully selected variation of an illustrated *Zhanghui* novel to produce a metaphor of the Gate that corresponded to the specific rhetoric, the way of "seeing as" of the different Chinese readerships. As a result of this rhetoric transformation, the "seeing as" experience of the readers could overcome the cultural gap and the Gate could become a sustained part of local memory. This visual localization of narrative details, especially the details of portraits and spaces like Hill Difficulty or the Valley of the Shadow of Death, does not only occur in Chinese translations. One commentator discusses and describes sets of Japanese and Chinese illustrations as follows:

> These are very characteristic, especially the portraiture of Mr. Worldly Wiseman, who appears before us in the very ideal of a smug, self-satisfied Pharisee; the picture of the three Shining

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[3] We find similar examples in the African editions, see (Hofmeyr 2004, pp. 76–109; Collé-Bak 2007, pp. 81–97).

[4] According to the studies of John Lai and Xiaobai Chu, translations of Christian books in the late Qing were almost completely accomplished through the cooperation of missionaries and their Chinese assistants. As to the illustrations, they were produced by Chinese painters who were employed by the missionaries. The painter of the *Xiuxiang* illustrations in the Cantonese dialect version remains unknown, but, in line with the standard practices at the time, he should have been a Chinese painter who was invited by the translator, Revd. George Piercy. It was therefore the translator's and publisher's intentional arrangement to thoroughly prepare this dialect version in a popular style of its time and location. See (Lai 2012, pp. 178–84; Chu 2011, pp. 60–65).

[5] The expression tries to describe the Western painting style that captures a particular person in a portrait, using light, shade, and perspective and the effect of different coloring.

> ones coming to Christian with wonderful Japanese head dresses; and the scenes of Vanity
> Fair crowded with incident, and depicting the reveals and delights dear to the Japanese Heart.
> [. . .] Christian appears as a native Chinaman, and the Palace Beautiful as a Chinese pagoda.
> (John Brown, cited in Hofmeyr 2007, p. 138)

Isabel Hofmeyr also provides several African examples to show how different editions overwrite
passages of vague topographical descriptions of Bunyan's scenes by filling the gaps with profuse and
intense local details. She concludes, "the translation was inviting the reader to imagine the text as
unfolding in a familiar world." (Hofmeyr 2007, pp. 127, 135) This translation strategy definitely works
very well in the transnational circulation of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. One should, however, not assume
that such a strategy was a small operation. In Chinese translations, the different versions actually
more or less *rewrote* the original book, and the rhetoric transformation did not stop there, it went much
deeper, as we will see now.

2.2. From Time to Space

　　The Pilgrim's Progress is an allegorical novel; it puts together a series of similes. In this combination
of similes, telling the story is not the final aim. The final aim is the discourse that the story implies.
The Pilgrim's Progress thus operates on two rhetorical levels, a rhetoric of first order (story) and a
rhetoric of second order (discourse). The first-order rhetoric is simply the space where events make up
the plot, whereas the second-order rhetoric links the plot to the implied meanings of the discourse.
In *The Pilgrim's Progress* the emphasis obviously lies not on the plot, but on the implied meaning of the
discourse. On a higher level, the story seeks to invoke the association of an "I" (the reader) with "Thou"
(God). Needless to say, the emphasis on second-order rhetoric in *The Pilgrim's Progress* stems from the
Biblical tradition. The Bible deploys a narrative style that is full of second-order rhetoric. Its narration
is not mainly about particular events, it is a constant link between the reader and the Judeo-Christian
discourse. The problem for the Chinese translations was that most traditional Chinese fictions merely
use a first-order rhetoric without linking it to a higher level. It is evidently quite a challenge to express
the implied meaning of a discourse by means of a first-order rhetoric that, as a rule, does not go beyond
the first level. Nevertheless, the Chinese versions of *The Pilgrim's Progress* succeed in this difficult task.
They preserved the original's character of a discursive narrative and, at the same time, they expressed
its distinctive discourse in the first-order rhetoric of traditional Chinese fiction. Additionally, this part
of the rhetoric transformation played an essential role in opening the Gate for Chinese memories.

　　So how does it work? How does some particular rhetoric of traditional Chinese fiction convey a
rhetoric devised to tell the story of Jesus Christ as the Gate to the Heavenly Kingdom? My overall
argument will be that the typical *spatial* rhetoric in the *Zhanghui* novel, with its *Xiuxiang* illustrations,
was the main rhetorical device to take the first-order rhetoric of the Chinese tradition to the
second-order rhetoric of the Christian tradition. More specifically, I suggest that a deeper level
of rhetoric transformation underpins the one we have observed so far; a transformation from time to
space. This part of the rhetoric transformation is far more complex than a first glance at the differing
text structure and style of illustration in the Chinese versions can tell.

　　Zhanghui fiction arranges the story's plots and suspense to pave the way for the climax. All the
development and arrangement of the story is aimed to reach the climax, thereby demonstrating a
rather spatial structure. The story's main focus usually lies on the relationship of several people or
an event that makes the relationship among some persons vitally important. This, however, is not
the case for the authentic European novel of Bunyan's time. Such a novel would generally center
on an individual with its development and reasoning, attaching more attention to the individual's
psychological struggles, maturity, and achievements and highlighting, in this way, the relationship
between the concept of time and individual psychology. *Zhanghui* novels almost never take such a
perspective. From the beginning to the end, they rather follow a spatial pattern; they emphasize a
certain topic by arranging the plot with particular spatial methods and changing illustrations with
their specific scenic title is one of the most important devices to achieve this. More specifically, this

particular method increases the spatial changes as the plot unfolds. Every scene in the novel is put into a new location and the dislocation is accompanied by a new picture with its title referring to both the scene and the topic under consideration. So, the spatial concept of the narration is deliberately produced and intensified by the rhetorical device of pictures. Translating *The Pilgrim's Progress* into a *Zhanghui* novel with pictures therefore shows a rhetoric transformation that substitutes the rhetoric of time by a rhetoric of space. By rearranging the first-order rhetoric, the translations transfer the eschatological theme of the original version, its Christian discourse, into a spatial account of this discourse. Space replaces time to express time, viz. to express the following sequence of historical events of Jesus in Christian faith: His birth, life, death, and Resurrection.

Why is spatial rhetoric so popular in Chinese fiction? The answer is twofold. First, the traditional Chinese way to memorize things emphasizes the place where an event happened. Space is preeminent to Chinese people for memorizing things; it is their most essential mnemonic device. Second, space represents a significant sign of power in Chinese culture. Chinese cultural memory strongly attends to the relationship between the location of an event and some subject. If a subject can dominate a certain space, this subject must be regarded as a supernatural being. A general, king, or monk who was able to dominate a certain space was considered a god (Duara 1988, pp. 780–82; Watson 1985, pp. 298–99). Thus, space (not time) was and is the traditional Chinese concept for narrating and memorizing the stories of gods. For this reason, it was crucial to transform *The Pilgrim's Progress* into a spatial rhetoric. Only within spatial concepts could the story of Character Christian, and the story of Jesus as a historical person and as God, be meaningfully conveyed to Chinese people. In all the Chinese translations, especially in the dialect versions, a spatial approach therefore prevails. Now, I would like to use the Cantonese version as a typical example to explain this in more detail.

The Cantonese version exhibits all the stylistic features of the *Zhanghui* novel, particularly by recomposing the story through *Xiuxiang* illustrations to integrate a spatial rhetoric. Since the *Xiuxiang* illustrations and the *Zhanghui* novel-style mutually enhance their spatial connotation, their unique narrative approach, with portraits as the main structure of the plot, turns the image of Jesus Christ into the center of the whole narrative space. This rhetoric transformation takes the memory of the Gate on a spatial level and, in this way, transforms the individual Jesus Christ as a historical being into a spatial and hence supernatural being. The Western Christian tradition, which sees Jesus Christ as a person who changes from a temporal human being to his eternity as God, is thus converted into Jesus Christ's stories occurring in different scenes (spaces) on the pilgrimage. This arrangement allows for not only highlighting Jesus' power to dominate a space, but also makes him a person that can be memorized and so become a part of Chinese culture.

Besides the spatial character *Zhanghui* novels with *Xiuxiang* illustrations already possess, the Cantonese version strengthens its spatiality by a further rhetoric transformation that now affects not *how* the story presents itself, but *what* the story presents. In outline, this transformation is about replacing the dream-structure of the original version. It will be recalled that the original version of *The Pilgrim's Progress* begins its narration not with "Pointing to the Narrow Gate"—as an illustration in one of the Chinese versions has it—but with a dream, as follows:

> As I walked through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place where was a Den, and I laid me down in that place to sleep; and as I slept, I dreamed a dream. I dreamed, and behold ... (Bunyan 1856, p. 39)

So it is not surprising that in three illustrated English editions,[6] we find the image of a man in his dream. Actually, the central parts of the first illustration in the London versions of 1845 and 1853 show the narrator who lies on his back sleeping and the Christian, who is on his pilgrimage to Heaven, only appears in the lower or upper part of the picture. The Chicago version of 1891 even contains a picture

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6   These versions are: *The Pilgrim's Progress* (London: George Virtue, 1845); *The Pilgrim's Progress* (London: Ingram Cooke, 1853); *The Pilgrim's Progress* (Chicago: R. S. Peale, 1891).

in which the narrator, at the very end of the story, rubs his eyes and straightens his back to suggest the end of the dream. For English readers, the whole story in *The Pilgrim's Progress* thus truly happens in a dream, which is a traditional form in which allegory is presented. Using dreams to explain profound ideas in religion and theology was quite popular in the European Middle Ages. Western readers were, therefore, quite familiar with the approach of panoramically presenting heaven, earth, and man in a dream and from the angle of a dreamer who narrates in the novel. On a deeper level, this narrative approach constructs the inner structure of a story. In this structure, the meaning of a story can be shuttled between different logical spaces. In the Christian tradition, those logical spaces are the eternal space where God stays in himself and the narrative space where God is but one part of the story. The story must thus achieve transcendence of the narrative space to the eternal one. This transcendence is the deeper meaning, the religious significance of the story. In the original version of *The Pilgrim's Progress* it is the metaphor of the dream which takes up this moment of transcendence, which somewhat paradoxically reveals the worldly life as the illusion and the eternal life in the Heavenly Kingdom as the reality. In the Chinese cultural context, however, such an approach would have been doomed to fail. In this literary tradition, dreams carry very different implications; they indicate false and misleading information or even the vanity of the world. This forced the translators of the dialect versions to deviate from the original. The symbolic dream is omitted and replaced by an event. Christian, as the main character of the story, leaves his hometown to look for the Gate. What is more, the title of the very first chapter in the Cantonese *Zhanghui* version reads "Pointing to the Narrow Gate" and the first picture among the 30 illustrations also shares this title and content. The eternity of the Heavenly Kingdom, thus, is not conveyed by the logical structure of a dream. It is marked in the narrative space by the Gate and followed by a series of further spatial events that are all captured in pictures. As a result, the temporal dream-structure of the original book is totally substituted by a spatial structure that points to the eternal space behind the space of the Gate.

Thus, it is the spatial structure in the Chinese versions of *The Pilgrim's Progress* which connects their narration (first-order rhetoric) to the discourse about the eternal and one God (second-order rhetoric). While the original relies on a *temporal* first-order rhetoric to convey its deeper meaning, the Chinese versions operate through an intricate *spatial* first-order rhetoric. The translators' keen cultural observation was the following: Eternity may be associated with temporality, yet it can also be associated with spatiality. In fact, the rhetoric device of the dream hints at this middle ground as follows: In its beginning and ending it is temporal, and in its capacity to connect different logical spaces, as we have seen, it is spatial. Yet again, in the Chinese cultural context, the dream was not an option and it was essential to focus the whole story on the spatial elements. Spatiality shows the power of Jesus Christ's person and allows that the memory of the Gate can become part of Chinese culture. Only within the spatial concepts, as embodied by the *Zhanghui* novel style and its *Xiuxiang* illustrations, could Jesus Christ's story as a historical person and as God be sensibly conveyed to the Chinese readers of *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

2.3. Process and Normativity

The previous two sections have shown that the rhetoric transformation of *The Pilgrim's Progress* was no small thing; it meant rewriting the book. An important question therefore is the following: Are there any limits to such a transformation and, if so, were they observed? In other words, is there any normativity underpinning the process of translation? A glance at the translations suggests that there is such a normativity at work. Of course, it is true that local readers would start to assimilate the 'exotic' messages conveyed in the translations only *after* the narrative pattern of *The Pilgrim's Progress* was adapted and lost its strange and foreign character. The rhetoric in the translations thus reflects a *Chinese* way of memorizing the Gate in late Qing society, which deviates from the Western original. Still, the methodology of producing the memory of the Gate did not lose focus; the Chinese versions still focus on the Gate. This shows that the rhetoric transformations were not arbitrary or unprincipled. Although localized and reshaped in their narrative method, the Chinese versions stick to the central

idea that links the *Christian* message of *The Pilgrim's Progress* with the Chinese culture; the Wicket-gate is the *only* way that leads to the Heavenly Kingdom.

So, we can see that there was normativity in the process of rhetoric transformation. The missionaries who were responsible for the Chinese translations did not choose to subject the time-space structure of the original simply to the local reader's free association. Their (Protestant) Christian view was still the norm they adhered to in their translations. In an allegory like *The Pilgrim's Progress*, such a normative guideline is particularly important because, here, figures and features always transmit both figurative and literal meaning. Thus, if the restatement of the literal meaning comes too close to the readers' mind-set, the story's allegorical characters and objects provide too much room for the readers' association and so they may distort the figurative meaning of the original text. In this respect, it is relevant that figurative meaning not only suggests what lies beyond literal meaning, it also specifies that readers or listeners must consider an allegory from a particular viewpoint. For *The Pilgrim's Progress* that viewpoint consists in the missionaries' interpretation of the Bible.

Normativity creates tension. The tension in the process of rhetoric transformation arises between the missionaries' viewpoint and the necessity to account for the local context. As the translators aimed at embedding the symbol of Jesus Christ in local culture, those two forces were constantly interacting; faithfulness to what the symbol originally signifies (viz. God, especially the core spirit of the gospel) and flexibility of the symbol to be again and again iterated depending on different cultural contexts. That is to say and to show that the normativity underlying the process of rhetoric transformation is not essentialist. The process does not transplant an essence of Christian faith into a foreign culture. Rather, it rests on an ideal type of Christianity, which constantly stays in tension with the local culture and thereby evolves in its own meaning. As a result, the tension in the process of rhetoric transformation can also be understood as follows: The normativity informing the rhetoric transformation is not simply the essence of a Christian worldview that we find readily available at the beginning of the process, viz. a norm in the form, "this is how you ought to translate . . . ", but is rather the guiding norm established as the process occurs. So, while normativity protects the process from ending in an arbitrary "anything goes", its non-essentialist character still allows the discourse about God to be culturally open and to evolve.

To illustrate the process and its evolving normativity, I wish to draw on and differentiate it from "the principle of adoption" in the Biblical tradition (Jeffrey 1996, p. 7). The gist of this principle is to instill the Bible's spiritual essence into the texts of non-Christian cultures. "Adoption" means absorbing a different cultural context into the "true" Christian faith. The process and normativity, which I have described here, do not work in this way; they are neither essentialist nor an adoption of another culture by Christianity. The process does not draw on a spiritual essence, yet relies on a principle that understands God's Spirit as an emerging process. Moreover, it would not be appropriate to call the process an adoption because this imagines the process to be a one-way road. In fact, the process of and following the rhetoric transformations shows that Chinese local cultures and readers shared in the story of the Gate. To put it generally, the Christian ethnography underpinning *The Pilgrim's Progress* also consists of an ethnography of its *readers*; it makes the ethnography of "the people of Heaven" an ever evolving process that has been going on for centuries. Beginning with a Jewish ethnography, it stretches to a new ethnography made up of non-Jews, Greco-Romans, and more and more ethnic groups. Andrew Walls puts it this way, "Translation resembles conversion; indeed, it is a working model of conversion, a turning of the processes of language (with the thought of which that language is the vehicle and the traditions of which it is the deposit) towards Christ." (Walls 1996, p. 40) Within this bigger picture, the Chinese versions of *The Pilgrim's Progress* stand for an allegory that is at the same time flexible and robust enough to keep the Gate continuously open. This is why one commentator, quoted by John Brown, remarked that *The Pilgrim's Progress* "follows the Bible from land to land as the singing of the birds follows the dawn" (Brown 1886, p. 299).

3. The Rhetoric of Individuality in *The Pilgrim's Progress*

In the first part of the article, I discussed the rhetoric of ethnography in *The Pilgrim's Progress* and focused particularly on how its translators transformed this rhetoric to fit the Chinese cultural context of the late Qing dynasty. In short, so far, the article has dealt with rhetoric and community. This second part now investigates how rhetoric and individuality interact in *The Pilgrim's Progress*. The focus of this part will hence be different. Whereas the first part concerned itself with the details of the Chinese translations, the second part focuses on the original version. The rhetoric of individuality, then, means the rhetorical forms that express life experiences and identity issues of the Christian self. More specifically, I will discuss the rhetoric of individuality in *The Pilgrim's Progress* from three perspectives. First, by enquiring into the story's dialectics of time and space (Section 3.1); second, by describing the Christian way of the self against the background of Chinese travel literature (Section 3.2); and finally, the article will characterize the story as a collective memory of individuals about the Gate, which again brings us back to the particular Chinese perspective on the book (Section 3.3).

3.1. Dialectics of Space and Time

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus puts the narrow way to eternal life and the wide road to destruction in sharp contrast (Matthew 7:13). Both similes, the narrow way and the wide road, are very important to Christian doctrine and to many long-lasting allegories in the Christian literary tradition. They are also the key contrast in *The Pilgrim's Progress*. A gate is a symbol of entry into a space and the Bible frequently uses this symbol to denote the eternity of space. The Gate is the way through which one enters the space of the Heavenly Kingdom. Remarkably, although the Bible mentions the symbolic meaning of the Gate in a straightforward manner, to understand its spatiality still requires the association of time; you *need* to *pass* through the narrow Gate to enter the Kingdom.

The metaphor of the narrow Gate involves a perplexing contrast, viz. to use the narrow way as the metaphor for the Kingdom of Heaven (one space) and the wide road for the earthly world (another space). What is the point of using this metaphor? Why is the path of vice wider than the path of virtue? A simple answer suggests that this is because the temptations in life are more and more readily available than its virtues. Yet, we achieve a much deeper insight into this spatial metaphor if we understand it against the concept of time because the eternal space (the Heavenly Kingdom) one reaches through the straight path of virtue (the narrow Gate) lies beyond time. To reach this space of timelessness one must proceed according to the pace of time; one must *pass* through the Gate. This implication of time in the spatial concept of the Gate allows for the following insight: If one grasps life *only* by the concept of time, as time pure and simple, individuality remains an unfinished project constantly pursuing self-fulfillment. The individual exists in the form of a purely temporal self without eternal space. This is the restless search on the wide road of time, pure and simple. In contrast to this, the narrow way connects ordinary time and eternal space in one true spatial form. An individual passing through the Gate transforms its lifetime into a new path of his or her life, which still continues after the Gate lies behind. The Gate marks not a mere resting place and an island of time within the incessant stream of time pure and simple, it transforms time into a lifetime of space in which endless chasing and self-seeking cease. In a similar vein, the Cross conveys the salvation of the individual in the eternal space through the concept of time. The Cross means death, the termination of time. Yet at the same time, the Cross symbolizes the forgiveness of sins and the salvation of the individual's life. It leads to the space of the Heavenly Kingdom. In the same way, the metaphor of *passing through* the Gate, *taking up* the Cross is a temporal symbol that implies a dialectical shift to space.

Bunyan puts the Gate and the Cross at the very beginning of the book and with this rhetoric emphasizes their significance for the individual reader. There still remains, however, a long worldly way to go for Christian and his friend Faithful to reach the Celestial City (Heaven). So how does this go together with the fact that the Gate and the Cross already opened up the Heavenly Kingdom? Why should Christian and Faithful continue their journey to Heaven if they already reached it by passing through the Gate? At this point, the story relies obviously on the idea that the Gate and the

Cross anticipate the Kingdom of God, but do not yet fully express it. Thus, we note another dialectical shift, now from space to time. The space of the Heavenly Kingdom—reached by crossing the Gate and taking up the Cross—splits into a sequence of spaces. There is the Celestial City (Heaven) and the path (of virtue) that leads there. As a result, the way between those spaces is again a temporal structure. Space turns into time. These dialectics of space and time, which are at work in *The Pilgrim's Progress* and express a particular interpretation of Christian faith, follow a long tradition of Christian literature. Already, St. Augustine wrote about a pilgrim's journey in his book *City of God*, in which a man blessed with the grace of God leaves the exceedingly seductive land for the land of real happiness. So we find here the same dialectical shift from space to time as in *The Pilgrim's Progress*; the man is already blessed and, hence, enjoys a share in the Kingdom of Heaven (space) and yet does he leave for another place, the land of real happiness, leaving behind the wide road, the seductive land, to choose instead the path of virtue (time). Later writers such as Chaucer, Spenser, and Bunyan all carried forward this pattern, based on the metaphors in the Bible and their interpretations by St. Augustine.

I suggested understanding the first dialectical shift from *time to space* as the transformation of the self-seeking, restless individual into an individual that is at peace with its life and its lifetime. Similarly, the second dialectical move from *space to time* is a rhetorical element in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, which has profound significance for the individual. Once the individual has passed through the Gate and reached the Cross, its Christian way of life begins. This is a new path, different from the old one. The difference is not merely spatial—the narrow way as opposed the wide road—, it is also temporal, as the direction of the dialectical shift from space to time suggests. Christian is now on his way to the world 'which is to come'. This brings the eschatological perspective into the story. Since there is more to come, the Celestial City, Christian has something he can hold onto on his long and difficult way, wherein he is constantly in danger of falling back into the old track. Thus, the promise of the Heavenly Kingdom takes the dimension of hope. The individual shall know that although there will be difficulties on the way—which in the book carry names such as the Hill Difficulty, Error Hill, and Doubting Castle—there is another; a better world to come. What provides the Christian individual with the confidence that this is not an empty promise and, hence, not an empty hope are the two symbols standing at the beginning of the way, the Gate and the Cross.

3.2. The Way of the Self

For Christians, the Cross is not only a symbol of hope, but also a symbol for the people of Heaven. It has ethnographical significance. Wearing and taking up the Cross shows that one belongs to the people of Heaven. So, the Cross expresses the community of Christian believers and, at the same time, is a symbol for the individuals who belong to this community. The Cross, therefore, has significance for the self-identity of the individual Christian. The pilgrim who crosses the Gate and takes up the Cross confirms his Christian identity by keeping his steps on the right way, no matter what hardships and difficulties come to pass. As a citizen of Heaven, he should invariably honor and have faith in this identity. His reward will be that under the encouragement and guidance of his Christian faith, he can develop an identity and character that is truly human. This is the way of the self, which the Gate and the Cross outline.

The way to develop a truly human nature, for which Jesus himself provides the example, is not an easy way though. As the devil tempts Jesus in the desert (Luke 4:1–13), every human self is a battlefield of fighting between good and evil (Starr 1965, p. 31). So, in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, we find a series of antagonists—surrounding the protagonists Christian and Faithful—like Mr. Worldly Wiseman, Lord Hate-Good, Talkative, and Apollyon the Lord of the City of Destruction, who all are obvious allegoric expressions for evil's temptation on the way and of the battle between good and evil. A believer who identifies himself with the two protagonists must be as persistent as Christian while he makes his way to the Celestial City and as fearless as Faithful who willingly faces persecution and dies for his faith as a martyr on the journey. In the individual stories of the two protagonists, the plot thus

reveals a layer of individual rhetoric that brings out the way of the Christian self. By their model, the reader shall be inspired to follow this way of the self.

The ways of the protagonists, however, do not only connect to the present reader. On a more fundamental level, they serve as transmission points that also link the reader to the author and to the past and future readers of the book. In short, *The Pilgrim's Progress* is a pilgrimage of an infinite number of pilgrims. This is because the book contains a story that has been told and retold, and read and reread, in different times and places and has thereby created a cultural memory of the Gate. As Isabel Hofmeyr has rightly pointed out, the original Bunyan text can be seen as "an expansible stage into which new textual communities are incorporated" ([Hofmeyr 2004](#), p. 233). Since the text accommodates different times and spaces, the memory of the Gate transcends the empirical self and, at the same time, lives from those individual experiences. *The Pilgrim's Progress*, thus, is not simply an allegory for some impersonal "he" or "she", it is about many "he" and "she" who were, are, and will be on their way. Last but not least, the book is also about the way of the author himself. Bunyan was persecuted and then imprisoned for his Puritan faith during the reign of Charles II for more than ten years. He wrote *The Pilgrim's Progress* while imprisoned and it is his peculiar voice that adds to the book's rhetoric of individuality, one of the most significant voices testifying to the difficulties of a God-centered life and the hope that comes with it.

The way of the self in *The Pilgrim's Progress* takes a linear form. As I have pointed out, it takes the reader from one space (the Gate) to another (the Heavenly Kingdom). I have also mentioned the eschatological perspective that connects to this linearity and the profound significance it has for the way of the Christian self, viz. hope. As this linearity forms the eschatological core of the book, it has not been subject to a rhetoric transformation in the Chinese translations, despite the fact that the traditional Chinese travel literature does not match with this linear form. Journeys in Chinese literature use a circular form to unfold the story. The traveler leaves home and returns home, and all the scenes and plots tend to connect to the memory of the traveler's home-town. *The Pilgrim's Progress*, on the other hand, does not develop in a cycle. In its storyline, the book clearly follows the biblical time-space structure and sticks to the latter's eschatological mark. Thus, we arrive at the story's *linear* structure. This structure unfolds, as we have seen, from the threshold of the Gate and is indicated by the Cross, both of which promise *another* world to come. In short, the pilgrim is *not* to return home; rather, he leaves his previous world.

A linear structure of time and space implies that the individual's self-identity is not fulfilled by time-cycles. The Christian self in *The Pilgrim's Progress* is the individual who already came into being, even if not yet the individual who will come into being through and after its journey. Passing through the Gate is the first mark left on the individual. It makes it already an individual that relates to the other individuals who passed through the Gate before and to the individual it will be when reaching the end of its journey. In the Christian literature of Bunyan's time, the way fulfilling the individual self must therefore be a linearity; it cannot be the endless cycle of self-repetition, which the rhetoric of the Chinese travel literature deploys. The same point can be made with the symbol of the Cross. With Christ's death on the Cross, time has already reached its end; the new Kingdom has arrived and is anticipated in the Resurrection. The Resurrection, thus, is not the repetition of an earlier time, but the transformation of time into the space of the Heavenly Kingdom. This, as well, cannot be grasped in a cyclical understanding of time.

Therefore, the Chinese versions of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, its texts and illustrations, are not adapted to the cyclic space-time structure of Chinese travel literature. Instead, they keep the linear structure of the original and all the plots implied in the story refer to the world which is to come, rather than Christian's hometown. So for every important scene that marks a further step in the linear storyline (viz. sin, belief, atonement, salvation, grace), the Chinese versions provide a special illustration and most of these illustrations also hint at the Heavenly Gate to emphatically stress the distinct eschatological pattern of the story. It appears that only by this linear and eschatological pattern can Christian literature deliver the significance of the victory on the Cross and its implications for the way of the Christian self

and its way of life. So, whereas the translators devised a sophisticated rhetoric transformation to fit the image of the Gate and its time-space structure into the Chinese cultural context, they left the original's rhetoric of individuality expressing the way of the Gate unchanged.

3.3. The Gate as Collective Memory of Individuals

The Pilgrim's Progress is an ethnography recording Christians' faith. In its account of Christianity, the book focuses particularly on the individual's struggle against evil. Yet, it also tells the story of human suffering and hope, representing the collective memory of individuals suffering as part of a marginalized cultural group. The book decodes and re-encodes the consciousness of suffering in its reader's life experience, thus making the reader's experiences a part of the collective memory of the Gate. This interplay between the individual reader's experiences and the collective memory clearly comes to light in the Chinese society of the late Qing dynasty.

During the mid-Qing dynasty, viz. for about 120 years, Christianity was officially denounced and banned as heretic. As with other sects of the time, officials considered Christianity to threaten imperial stability. So, even after the ban on Christian missionaries was lifted in the mid-19th century, most Chinese people still took a disdainful and repelling attitude towards Christianity and its followers. They "regarded Christianity as a foreign religion and felt ashamed to make contact with [Christians]" (Kong 1997, p. 117). Due to the radical differences in the cultural systems involved, especially when it comes to rituals and ethics, the choice of a "foreign religion" such as Christianity drove a wedge between the individual and the society of the late Qing:

> In the specific circumstance of late Qing, strong social implications were involved in the choice of religion, which required individuals to pay great price for it. Chinese Christians were severely despised in the society, consequently becoming a group isolating themselves from society. Therefore, to choose such a foreign religion meant abandoning more rights and enduring various subsequent negative consequences. (Liang 1998, p. 23)

Responsibility for the cultural split between Christianity and Chinese society was shared, however. Not all Christian groups that were active in China at the time took the flexible stand towards their tradition, which we observe in the rhetoric transformation of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Some forbade, for instance, any rituals relating to ancestral worship; and because worshipping the ancestors marks a corner stone of Confucian family ethics, choosing a religion that forbids ancestral worship could mean nothing else than *breaking* with one's society. The ban on ancestral worship is, however, but the clearest example. On a general level, Chinese Christians were asked to abandon other activities relating to their former faith and cultural customs. They could not participate in folk festivals, Chinese operas, work on Sundays, or take a concubine. To a great extent, they therefore became a secluded and isolated group within Chinese society. In the late Qing dynasty, more specifically starting from 1860, anti-Christian assaults were countless and turned into fierce violence when the Boxer Rebellion broke out in 1890 (Wang 1984). In such a hostile environment, quite a few Chinese who had converted to Christianity quickly apostatized from their new faith.

Those Chinese Christians who held on to their Christian identity in the late Qing thus followed closely the way of the self that we find outlined in *The Pilgrim's Progress*. They joined the many others who had walked and suffered on the same path before them. Their individual suffering shared the suffering of the people of Heaven from other times and places and their ethnography related them to the Jews, the Christians of the early Roman Empire, and the Puritans persecuted in Britain. As already mentioned, Bunyan himself had been persecuted for his faith. His individual life story provided the ground for the ethnography of *The Pilgrim's Progress* and made him a significant cultural link in the collective memory of the Gate, allowing Chinese Christians of the late 19th century to be a part of God's spirit. If the Cross means nothing more than what comes over one's lips, it can easily be idealized, even romanticized. However, the naivety of such views is quickly lost when the Cross turns into cruel reality and one must actually take it up, as during the time of the Boxer Rebellion, for instance. In such

situations, the Cross can be endured only by those who have real trust and faith in the Gate. As Faithful shows in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, this needs unlimited courage; the Gate is a *narrow* Gate indeed and, in this respect, today's China may not be much different from late Qing dynasty. Even so, the Gate is not only a narrow Gate, it also is the Gate spurring hope and leading to God's grace. In the Mandarin version of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, one finds a poem entitled "The Narrow Gate" (Bunyan 1906, p. 11):

> *To be welcomed into Heaven through the narrow Gate,*
>
> *You need to confess your sins before it.*
>
> *Only by knocking piously can you be allowed in,*
>
> *And the mercy of the Heavenly Father will forgive your sin.*

4. Looking Back and Forward

This article has focused on the rhetoric of ethnography and individuality in *The Pilgrim's Progress* and its Chinese versions. I discussed the challenges Western missionaries faced and the solutions they devised for their Chinese translations to embed Bunyan's text in the Chinese society of the late Qing dynasty. Moreover, we glimpsed the significance and the trials of the Gate for Chinese people during this time. We saw how the memories of the Gate opened up to Chinese people and how those memories, on the other hand, assimilated contributions of Chinese believers, connecting the latter to followers of Jesus Christ from the past and future. Indeed, the success story of *The Pilgrim's Progress* in China did not end with the Qing dynasty. To date, more than forty translations have appeared. Especially since the 1990s, translation of *The Pilgrim's Progress* into Chinese has flourished. For mainland China, we count more than thirty versions and many of them have been revised and republished, as the originals sold out. In addition, Bunyan study has received increasing attention in Chinese scholarship.[7]

Unsurprisingly, the radical changes in China's socio-political context in the last hundred years realigned almost all the parameters for Chinese translations of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Identity and motivations of translators, publishers, and readers shifted and so did the rhetorical forms for rendering Bunyan into Chinese. As the strategies of rhetoric transformation are fundamentally different from 150 years before, there remains a rich and challenging field for future research. It is hoped that this article may inspire similar deep-level analysis that seeks to explain the book's popularity in today's China. The sociological starting point for this research will be that, since the church doors opened again in the 1980s, the number of new Christian converts soared to unprecedented levels and with it the number of Chinese readers of the Bible and Bible-related literature, such as *The Pilgrim's Progress*. A recent article rightly observes, "The last thirty years have witnessed an unprecedented growth of the Christian Church in China, and an unparalleled rise of interest in Christianity among the Chinese intelligentsia. Accordingly, translation, publishing and academic research on Bunyan's oeuvre have taken on an entirely new appearance and new momentum." (Xie and Su 2018, p. 137).

The revival of *The Pilgrim's Progress* over the last three decades follows a period of anti-religious movement in China between 1950–1980. However, even during this time the book did not fade into oblivion. Its rhetoric of individuality, which transcends any empirical self, provided fertile ground on which the new religious consciousness of Chinese Christians could grow. This article argued that the Gate and its image are the central tenet that organizes and explains the rhetoric potential of *The Pilgrim's Progress* for Chinese readers. All the translations considered, therefore, follow a clear normative baseline as follows: Jesus Christ is the Gate that allows entrance into the Heavenly Kingdom. While the translators carefully adjusted the text's rhetoric to the local context of potential Chinese readers of late Qing, they did not alter this normative principle. Future research directing its attention to contemporary translations can build on this insight. It will be necessary to investigate whether the

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[7] The China National Knowledge Infrastructure, which is the largest and most widely used academic online library in China, lists seventy-three papers on Bunyan and *The Pilgrim's Progress* since 1988.

normative guideline of the Gate still holds and, if so, how it interacts with the new rhetorical forms and strategies recent Chinese versions deploy. In the same vein, the means and concepts uncovered in this article (illustrations, textual structure, time, space, etc.), which coordinated earlier rhetoric transformations, provide a yardstick against which to measure the means and concepts employed in later translations; where do we find continuity and where new rhetoric strategies? Finally, as the experiences of Chinese grass-roots people from the 19th century feed back into the memories of the Gate, we can ask what contribution the current Chinese reception of *The Pilgrim's Progress* makes to those memories and how this contribution links to reading experiences in China and other parts of the world.

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