

METAPHORS AND SIMILES IN VAN GULIK'S SELF-TRANSLATION OF *THE CHINESE MAZE MURDER*

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Abstract

A prolific and versatile Dutch writer, translator and orientalist Robert Hans van Gulik (1910-1967), aka 高罗佩 Gao Luopei, has composed a series of historical detective novels 大唐狄公案 *Datang Digong An* 'Celebrated Cases of Judge Dee', which concerns an illustrious district magistrate and statesman 狄仁杰 Di Renjie (630-704 AD), who competently investigates murder and corruption in Tang (618-907 AD) China. Upon publishing the debut work *The Chinese Maze Murder* (1951) in English, van Gulik renders it into a Chinese version entitled 狄仁杰奇案 *Di Renjie Qian*, which is the only self-translation by the author-cum-translator. In the Chinese version of *The Chinese Maze Murder*, the vast majority of metaphors and similes are translated by means of conversion and deletion, so they can be regarded as covert translations in the sense of House (1977, 2014).

Keywords: *Celebrated Cases of Judge Dee*; covert translation; conversion; deletion

INTRODUCTION

Robert Hans van Gulik (1910-1967), whose Chinese name was 高罗佩 Gao Luopei, was a prolific and versatile Dutch writer, translator, orientalist, diplomat, calligrapher, musician and linguist speaking fifteen languages (Hulsewé, 1968; Li, 2010; Zhao, 2012; Yang, 2017; Chen, 2018; Niu, 2019). Intrigued by Chinese literature and a traditional genre dubbed as 公案小说 *gongan xiaoshuo* 'court case fiction' that encompasses detective stories regarding criminal court cases, van Gulik rendered a novel entitled 武则天四大奇案 *Wu Zetian Sida Qian* 'Fine-Lined Portrait of Four Strange Cases Solved during the Period of Wu Zetian's Reign; Four Great and Strange Cases from the Era of Empress Wu Zetian', which was composed by an anonymous author during the Qing (1644-1912) dynasty (Zhao, 2012; Doran, 2016; Benedetti, 2017) as an exemplary vernacular narrative under the category of 章回小说 *zhanghui xiaoshuo* 'fiction in chapters' (Hegel 1994, Guo 2015: 11). *Four Great and Strange Cases from the Era of Empress Wu Zetian* (henceforward *Four Cases*) has its setting in Tang (618-907 AD) China under the eventful reign of 武则天 Wu Zetian (624-705 AD), the only woman sat on China's throne as emperor (Buswell and Lopez, 2013; FitzGerald, 2021). Although van Gulik merely rendered the first thirty chapters of the sixty-four-chapter narrative, the English version entitled 'Dee Goong An: Three Murder Cases Solved by Judge Dee' attained prodigious commercial success and critical accolades upon its publication in Japan in 1949 (He, 2017; Chen, 2018; Huang, 2020).

Inspired by his translation of *Four Cases* (Zuo and Hu, 2015a, 2015b), between 1950s and 1960s, van Gulik composed his chef-d'oeuvre, viz. a series of historical detective novels and novellas collectively entitled 大唐狄公案 *Datang Digong An* 'Celebrated Cases of Judge Dee;

Judge Dee Mysteries’, or 狄公案 *Digong An* for short (Li, 2010; Chen, 2012). By virtue of its literary prowess and artistic value, this series has not only attained popularity in English-speaking countries (Zhao, 2003; Chen, 2020), but also been rendered into twenty-nine languages (Zhao, 2012; Liu, 2013; Yang, 2017) and had visual adaptations (Kidd, 2018; Xu, 2018).

In this research, I explore the first published novel in the series of *Celebrated Cases of Judge Dee* (henceforward *Judge Dee*), viz. *The Chinese Maze Murder* (1951), which was rendered into a Chinese version 狄仁杰奇案 *Di Renjie Qian* (aka 迷宫案 *Migong An*) by the author-cum-translator and released in Singapore in 1953. Given the fact that *The Chinese Maze Murders* (henceforward *Maze*) is the only self-translation by van Gulik (Chen, 2012; Zhang, 2019a; Huang, 2020), it deserves hermeneutic scrutiny.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The intent of van Gulik’s creation of Judge Dee is ‘to show modern Chinese and Japanese writers that their own ancient crime-literature has plenty of source material for detective and mystery-stories’ (van Gulik, 1977; Liu, 2013; Wang and Mo, 2017). Judge Dee encompasses a veritable cornucopia of cases occurring in myriads of venues, which are mutually independent while constitute a coherent chronicle over a span of eighteen years (Roggendorf, 1968; Chen, 2012). Judge Dee celebrates valiant and intelligent attainments of an illustrious district magistrate and statesman 狄仁杰 *Di Renjie* (630-704 AD), who proficiently investigates murder and corruption in the Tang dynasty (Huang 2015, Benedetti 2018) and hence is exalted as 梁文惠公 *Liang Wenhui Gong* ‘Duke Wenhui of Liang’ (Liu, 2013; Chen, 2018) and extolled as a meritorious 清官 *qingguan* ‘pure official’ parallel to the legendary Judge Bao (包拯 *Bao Zheng*, 998-1062) (Benedetti, 2017; Zhuang, 2018).

As a writer, van Gulik complies with the narrative mode of Western detective fiction, and he simultaneously enriches the ancient, Chinese narratives with modern, foreign elements (Chen and Hu, 2013; Zuo and Hu, 2015a, 2015b; Chen, 2020). Van Gulik has depicted an appealing protagonist (Hulsewé, 1968), devoted deuteragonists and legions of multi-faceted supporting and cameo roles in the intriguing and thought-provoking narratives; he has also created a seamless integration of punctilious inductive reasoning and fascinating traditional Chinese culture embodied by festivals, customs and daily activities (Qu, 2017; Zhang, 2019a; Huang, 2020). Judge Dee is characterised by precepts and liturgies of the indigenous, preeminent Confucianism and Taoism as well as the Sinicised Buddhism of alien provenance (Wang, 2017, 2018a, 2019a), which is enriched by elaborate representation of ethnic minorities and their religious beliefs (Wang, 2018b, 2020). Significantly, van Gulik manifests profound, humanistic comprehension of complex human nature, as well as humanitarian care for female characters, exemplified by sympathetic portrayals of prostitutes from a feminist perspective (Luo, 2012; Wang, 2018b, 2019b).

As a translator, van Gulik is cognisant of the fact that Chinese crime and horror thrillers diverge sharply from their Western equivalents (Wei, 2006; Guo, 2014; Zuo and Hu, 2015a, 2015b), so his Chinese-to-English translation of *Four Cases* is marked by salient adaptations: 1) preserving elements of suspense by means of not unravelling murderers or plots in chapter titles (Li 2009); 2) deleting depictions pertaining to supernatural and sexism, so as to accord with Western ideology (Zuo and Hu, 2015a, 2015b); 3) refraining from expatiating upon trivialities, as well as omitting irrelevant lyrical poetry and philosophical illumination; 4) reducing legions of inordinate characters, thereby simplifying familial and interpersonal relationships (He, 2017); and 5) downplaying ethical norms, feudal loyalty and political disputes advocated in Chinese literature, while highlighting legal aspects of criminal cases in a meticulous fashion (Huang, 2015; Chen, 2018).

The Chinese version of *Maze* falls under the category of self-translation (formerly ‘auto-translation’), by virtue of van Gulik’s identity as the author-cum-translator. As defined in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, ‘[t]he term “self-translation” can refer both to the

act of translating one's own writings into another language and the result of such an undertaking' (Grutman, 2009). Self-translation can be 'a type of cross-linguistic creation, where the act of translation allows the bilingual writer to revisit and improve on earlier drafts in the other language, thereby creating a dynamic link between both versions that effectively bridges the linguistic divide' (Grutman, 2009). In the self-translation of *Maze*, van Gulik manifests subjectivity and liberal adaptation (Li, 2009; Zhang, 2019b), which is encapsulated by shifts of perspective, enrichment of storylines as well as back-translation of cultural elements (Yuwen, et al., 2020).

House's model of translation quality assessment contrasts source text and target text in terms of linguistic-discoursal and situational-cultural dyads (House, 1977), and it regards equivalence, in a sense of preserving meaning across source and target languages in semantic, pragmatic and textual levels, as the quintessential criterion of translation quality (House, 1997). Under this model, target text is divided into two empirically-derived categories of translation, viz. overt translation and covert translation. Overt translation is not a 'second original', so in the process of overt translation, target readers are not directly addressed and the 'source text is tied in a specific manner to the source linguaculture' (House, 2014). Covert translation, by contrast, demonstrates 'the status of an original source text in the target culture' and is 'not firmly tied to the source linguaculture', in that it is 'created in its own right as an independent text' and thus is not translation from a pragmatic perspective (House, 2014).

METHOD

In terms of translation of metaphors and similes, Newmark (1981) propounds seven strategies: 1) reproduction of images in the target language; 2) substitution of images in the source language with standard target language images; 3) translation of metaphors via similes; 4) translation of metaphors/similes via similes plus senses; 5) conversion of metaphors to senses; 6) deletion; and 7) retention of metaphors in combination with senses.

In this research, I postulate that in van Gulik's self-translation of *Maze*, metaphors and similes are predominantly rendered by means of conversion and deletion, so they can be regarded as covert translations in the sense of House (1977, 2014).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In the self-translation of *Maze*, van Gulik adopts a strategy of converting metaphors and similes into senses, which is consistent with Newmark's theory that images' senses are equipped with emotive and factual components (1981).

In Example (1), divine justice in the source text is compared to labyrinthine mazes that unfailingly trap delinquents, whereas in the target text, the metaphor is paraphrased into 善恶报应 *shan e baoying* that literally means 'benevolence, abhorrence and retribution' (Trans. Mine). I posit that the revision in the target text accords with Taoist credence advocating moral deeds and ethical norms (Kirkland, 2004, Waley, 2005): as prescribed by a canonical masterpiece 道德经 *Dao De Jing* 'Tao Te Ching; Book of the Way and Virtue', one should comply with spiritual discipline (Puett 2004, 2010) and accumulate personal merits, thereby circumnavigating cataclysms (Bokenkamp 1993, Chan 2000, 2018). Moreover, according to a treatise on divination and philosophy in the 11th century BC, which is acclaimed as the wellspring of Tao (Gu 2005, Zheng 2008, Chang 2009, Lu 2013), viz. 周易 *Zhou Yi* (aka 易经 *Yi Jing* 'I Ching; Book of Changes'), individuals' comportment begets auspicious or ominous fates, and divine blessings and punishments can extend to households as integrated units (Redmond and Hon 2014, Hon 2019). (1) Nowhere can be found more eloquent proof of how closely the net of Heavenly justice is woven, and of how no evil-doer in the long run ever succeeds in slipping through its mazes. 而且人世间善恶报应的分明, 没有比那判案故事来得更清楚。 *Èr qiě rén shì jiān shàn è bào yīng*

de fēn míng, méi yǒu bǐ nà pàn àn gù shì lái dé gèng qīng chǔ.

(Chapter 1)

It is notable that in the Chinese language, there is a well-established metaphor comparing divine retribution or legal punishment to a net, viz. an idiom (成语 *chengyu*) 天网恢恢 *tianwang huihui* ‘Heaven’s net is wide’ (Trans. Waley 1997) that is derived from a statement of a legendary Taoist thinker and philosopher 老子 Laozi (aka Lao Tzu, circa 6thc BC) (Xinhua Idiom Dictionary, 2002), as in Example (2). Although the idiom is in line with the original metaphor in Example (1), I propound that van Gulik’s employment of ‘benevolence, abhorrence and retribution’ in the target text conveys the construal of retributive justice more saliently.

(2) 天之道，不爭而善勝，不言而善應，不召而自來，緜然而善謀。天網恢恢，疏而不失。
Tiān zhī dào, bù zhēng ér shàn shèng, bù yán ér shàn yìng, bù zhào ér zì lái, chán rán ér shàn móu. Tiān wǎng huī huī, shū ér bù shī.

For it is the way of Heaven not to strive but none the less to conquer,
Not to speak, but none the less to get an answer,
Not to beckon; yet things come to it of themselves.
Heaven is like one who says little, yet none the less has laid his plans.
Heaven’s net is wide;
Coarse are the meshes, yet nothing slips through.

(*Tao Te Ching*. Chapter 73. Trans. Waley, 1997)

Analogously, in Example (3), the writer draws a comparison between apprehension and an act of perpetually wearing an iron helmet for self-protection from fallen sky. The anecdote in Example (3) is adapted from a parable in 列子 *Liezi*, aka *Lieh-tzu* (冲虚至德真经 *Chongxu Zhide Zhenjing* ‘True Classic of the Perfect Virtue of Simplicity and Emptiness’), a Taoist anthology composed by an iconic philosopher 列御寇 *Lie Yukou* during the Warring States (5thc-3rdc BC) period (Ames 2011, 2021; Li 2015); an idiom describing immoderate, injudicious agitation is consequently derived from the parable, namely, 杞人忧天 *qiren youtian* that literally means ‘a Qi person worries about the sky’ (Trans. Mine) (Xinhua Idiom Dictionary 2002: 534). As can be seen from the original narrative extracted from *Liezi* (Example (4)), van Gulik has enriched the depiction in Example (3) with a detail concerning an iron helmet, which renders *Maze* more vividly-presented and imagery-evoking. In the target text, the translator deploys an idiom 庸人自扰 *yongren zirao* (Lit. ‘vacuous self-produced anxiety’) (Trans. Mine) that is interchangeable with 杞人忧天 *qiren youtian* (Xinhua Idiom Dictionary, 2002). The translator’s conversion of the comparison into an established idiom indicates that he is intent on accommodating target readers: Chinese readers are familiar with the parable, so summarising the narrative with the idiom, instead of recounting, renders the translation concise.

(3) “That young fellow,” Ma Joong observed, “reminds me of the man who insisted on wearing an iron helmet day and night because he was in constant fear that the vault of Heaven would crash down on his head!”

马荣方说道：“老爷认为丁府的事，是不是他庸人自扰呢？”

Mǎ róng fāng shuō dào: “Lǎo yé rèn wéi dīng fǔ de shì, shì bú shì tā yōng rén zì rǎo ne?”

(Chapter 3)

(4) 杞国有人忧天地崩坠，身亡所寄，废寝食者。又有忧彼之所忧者，因往晓之...其人曰：天果积气，日月星宿，不当坠耶？

Qǐ guó yǒu rén yǒu tiān dì bēng zhuì, shēn wú suǒ jì, fèi qǐn shí zhě. Yòu yǒu yōu bǐ zhī suǒ yōu zhě, yīn wǎng xiǎo zhī... Qí rén yuē: Tiān guǒ jī qì, rì yuè xīng xiù, bù dāng zhuì yé?

In the kingdom of Ch'i there lived an old man who was afraid the sky would fall and the earth would break up. He reasoned that if that happened, he would have nowhere to hide, and he would surely die. He was so worked up about it that he could neither eat nor sleep. A friend tried to reason with him that there was nothing to worry about... The old man was still uneasy. "What about the sun and moon? Even if the sky is made of vapor and will not fall down, the moon and the sun can still fall down and crush us."

(Lieh-tzu. *Worry That the Sky Will Fall*. Trans. Wong 1995)

In another paradigm, the source text contains a simile that a character's astonishment upon discovering Di Renjie's identity is compared to a reaction to seeing a ghost, yet the simile has been omitted in the target text (Example (5)). I attribute van Gulik's deletion of such a derogatory simile to his endeavour to express reverence for his protagonist, so as to accommodate Chinese readers who venerate Di Renjie as a commendable judge and 'pure official'. Notwithstanding comprehensive embracement of religious canons and practices, China in essence is a moral society of atheists, impinged upon by palpable Confucian precepts and credos (Tang, 1990; Yan, 2000; Wu, 2016).

To be more specific, as prescribed by Confucius in 论语 *Lun Yu* 'The Analects', the pivotal sacred scripture of Confucian zeitgeist and thinking, discourses upon anomalies, monstrosities, chaos and deities are proscribed (Morton, 1971; Francis, 2002; Loudon, 2002), namely, 子不语怪力乱神 *zi bu yu guai li luan shen* 'The Master never talked of prodigies, feats of strength, disorders or spirits' (Waley, 2008). As a consequence, the original simile in the English version may trigger Chinese readers' animus. Additionally, as can be seen from the target text in the posterior context, van Gulik has complemented a depiction 'bowed deeply saying respectfully' with an additional adverb 连忙 *lian mang* 'promptly', which further exhibits his intention to show veneration for Di Renjie via the character's act.

(5) The young man's face turned ashen, he looked as if he had seen a ghost. The young man's face turned ashen, he looked as if he had seen a ghost. Then he passed his hand over his forehead and mastered his emotion. He heaved a deep sigh and his face lit up in a broad smile. He bowed deeply saying respectfully...

少年听罢，脸上变色。乍惊乍喜，连忙行礼不迭，恭恭敬敬地向狄公说道...

Shào nián tīng bà, liǎn shàng biàn sè. Zhà jīng zhà xǐ, lián máng xíng lǐ bù dié, gōng gōng jìng jìng de xiàng dí gōng shuō dào...

(Chapter 3)

Furthermore, in Example (6), a female character is besmirched as a fox-spirit in the source text, yet in the target text, the metaphor is transformed into 施展狐媚 *shizhan humei* (Lit. 'to display foxes' charm') (Trans. Mine). The underlying meaning of *humei* is 'to bewitch by cajolery; to entice by flattery', originated from traditional folklore that foxes possess prowess to seduce human beings (Xinhua Dictionary, 2004; Zdic.net, 2021a). Apart the Chinese version of *Maze*, the expression *humei* is frequently attested in other literary works, exemplified by a celebrated play 长生殿 *Changsheng Dian* 'Palace of Everlasting Life; The Palace of Eternal Life' composed by a Qing poet and dramatist 洪昇 Hong Sheng (1645-1704) (Example (7)), which concerns emotional and erotic entanglements between Emperor Xuanzong of Tang (r. 712-756 AD) and his royal consort 杨玉环 Yang Yuhuan (719-756 AD) (Sun, 2009; Wang, 2009; Stuckey, 2010; Wang, 2010).

(6) “The ingrate!” Yoo Kee cried, “the unspeakable woman! She must be an evil fox-spirit, Your Honour! No human being could sink so low!”

这忘恩负义的贱人，到处施展狐媚，老父台休听她一面之辞。

Zhè wàng ēn fù yì de jiàn rén, dào chù shī zhǎn hú mèi, lǎo fù tái xiū tīng tā yí miàn zhī cí.

(Chapter 13)

(7) 有一个牝鸡野雉把刘宗爨，有一个蛾眉狐媚把唐宗变。

Yǒu yí gè pìn jī yě zhì bǎ liú zōng shān, yǒu yí gè é méi hú mèi bǎ táng zōng biàn.

There was Empress Lü who harnessed Emperor Gaozu of Han liked a hen; there was Empress Wu who lured Emperor Gaozong of Tang liked a fox.

(*Palace of Everlasting Life*. Trans. Mine)

Analogously, in the source text in Example (8), exemplary calligraphy is compared to ‘the tension of a crouching panther, and the wild force of dragons sporting among rain and thunder’. Nonetheless, in the target text, the image of a panther has been replaced by a tiger, as in 龙腾虎踞 *long teng hu ju* ‘dragons scudding and tigers crouching’ (Trans. Mine). Given the fact that dragons and tigers are interwoven and quintessential constructs in Chinese cosmologies and fengshui (Coggins, 2002; Jalais, 2018), the substitution of a panther with a tiger in Example (8) is more consistent with readers’ construal in a Chinese context. It is notable that the idiom 龙腾虎踞 *long teng hu ju* is employed to describe invincible forced occupancy, as in a Taoist classic 抱朴子 *Baopuzi* ‘Master Who Embraces Simplicity’ by 葛洪 Ge Hong (283-363 AD) (Zdic.net 2021b), so its occurrence in Example (8) to adulate calligraphy might induce readers’ puzzlement.

(8) The judge thought for a moment. Then he continued: “I cannot remember ever having heard of a person of that name. But whoever he be, that man is a superb calligrapher! Seeing such writing, my friends, one understands why the ancients praised great calligraphy by comparing it to ‘the tension of a crouching panther, and the wild force of dragons sporting among rain and thunder’.”

近世书法中，并无此人。姑无论这人是谁，由区区数行之中，足证古人论书有龙腾虎踞、惊蛇入草之势，言之不虚了！

Jìn shì shū jiā zhōng, bìng wú cǐ rén. Gū wú lùn zhè rén shì shuí, yóu qū qū shù háng zhī zhōng, zú zhèng gǔ rén lùn shū yǒu lóng téng hǔ jù, jīng shé rù cǎo zhī shì, yán zhī bù xū le!

(Chapter 17)

The narrative of *Maze* entails a risqué poem, which serves as a preponderant clue as to the case (Example (9)). In the source text, there is a simile ‘her breasts like fresh-fallen snow’; in the target text, however, the simile is simply rendered into 酥胸 *suxiong* ‘white and soft breasts’ (Zdic.net 2021c), with the image being omitted. Additionally, the metaphor pertaining to ‘the full moon marred by its spots’ in the source text is rendered into 广寒 *guanghan* and 桂影 *guiying* in the target text, which embodies substitution of images in the source culture with those in the target culture. To be more specific, in traditional Chinese mythology, 广寒宫 *guanghan gong* ‘Guanghan Palace’ is the name of the celestial palace on the moon (Zdic.net, 2021d), while 桂影 *guiying* (Lit. ‘cassia tree shadow’) denotes moonlight or moon shadow (Zdic.net, 2021e). That is to say, the plain metaphor in the English version is substituted by its refined counterpart comprising culturally-enriched images, so as to accommodate Chinese readers who possess more comprehension of traditional Chinese mythology and literature.

(9) The studded door is locked, the bed curtains drawn close,
 Embroidered coverlets are a soft home of love;
 Who thinks of Rites and Proper Conduct in this trance?
 Empassioned lovers care not what the Codes impose.
 Her feet like lotus buds, her lips like pomegranate,
 Her rounded thighs, her breasts like fresh-fallen snow
 Who ever deems the full moon marred by its spots?
 It's the blemish that completes the beauty of agate.
 Who praises perfumes rare of the far-distant West?
 The fragrance of her limbs bemuses the enraptured mind
 He is a fool who with such beauty right before his eyes,
 Still travels far and wide, a useless quest...

垂莲宝帐九华开，旖旎春光拢玉材；
 任是纲常浑未省，卷衣留枕梦荆台。
 凌波点点卧云身，粉臂酥胸态自新；
 谁向广寒嗔桂影，一徽翻见玉精神。
 银床冰簟散芳菲，不恃西来有异馐；
 惯事轻离怀荡子，坐教秦女怨空帷。

Chuí lián bǎo zhàng jiǔ huá kāi, yǐ nǐ chūn guāng lǒng yù cái;
Rèn shì gāng cháng hún wèi xǐng, juǎn yī liú zhěn mèng jīng tái.
Líng bō diǎn diǎn wò yún shēn, fěn bì sū xiōng tài zì xīn;
Shuí xiàng guǎng hán chēn guì yǐng, yì huī fān jiàn yù jīng shén.
Yín chuáng bīng diàn sàn fāng fēi, bú shì xī lái yǒu yì fēi;
Guàn shì qīng lí huái dàng zǐ, zuò jiāo qín nǚ yuàn kōng wéi.

(Chapter 15)

Apart from conversion, van Gulik also resorts to a strategy of deletion, under a circumstance that metaphors and similes are otiose and their functions have been fulfilled elsewhere in the target text (Newmark, 1981).

The source text in Example (9) above involves a metaphor comparing embroidered coverlets to ‘a soft home of love’, whereas it has been omitted in the target text: the verse 旖旎春光拢玉材 *yini chunguang long yuca* literally means ‘splendid scenery in the spring approaches jade’. Moreover, the source text contains two similes of sexual innuendoes, namely, ‘her feet like lotus buds’ and ‘her lips like pomegranate’, yet both similes are absent from the target text. I postulate that the deletion is owing to van Gulik’s intention to accommodate Chinese readers, who are regarded to possess more conservative sexual values than their Western counterparts (Fan et al., 1995; Jeffreys, 2006; Pan, 2006; Huang, 2017).

Moreover, in the source text of *Maze* in Example (10), the quoted proverb ‘A dangerous dog bites without first baring its teeth’ bears a similitude to an English axiom ‘Barking dogs seldom bite’. Chinese culture, however, is void of an equivalent, so van Gulik omits the proverb in the target text.

(10) Fang’s story offers a plausible explanation for the strange situation here. If all he said is true we must act quickly before Chien has found out that I am going to turn against him and steals the first move. We must attack before he knows what is happening. As our old proverb says: ‘A dangerous dog bites without first baring its teeth’!

因为冯大所供足证此地怪诞的情形，而且果如他所说，应当先下手为强的了。

Yīn wèi féng dà suǒ gòng zú zhèng cǐ dì guài dàn de qíng xíng, ér qiě guǒ rú tā suǒ shuō, yīng dāng xiān xià shǒu wéi qiáng de le.

(Chapter 3)

Analogously, in Example (11), the source text contains a metaphor that ‘his eyes shone with a green light’, yet it is omitted in the target text. As for Example (12), it contains a simile in the source text, which compares a character’s unfulfilled schemes and plans to furious wasps buzzing around him, whereas in the target text, the simile has been left out.

(11) Apparently he had broken a leg, and blood gushed from a nasty gash on his shaven head. But his eyes shone with a green light and he held his knife in a firm grip.
马荣跟踪下来, 看那贼人躺在楼梯下边, 腿骨着伤, 不能起来, 但一手握刀, 狠命向马荣掷来。
Mǎ róng gēn zōng xià lái, kàn nà zéi rén tǎng zài lóu tī xià biān, tuǐ gǔ zháo shāng, bù néng qǐ lái, dàn yì shǒu wò dāo, hěn mìng xiàng mǎ róng zhì lái.

(Chapter 18)

(12) Even when he had settled down here he could not stop. Some of his plans for righting old wrongs were not even meant to bear fruit until years later, when he himself would be dead! Wanting to be alone, he built that astonishing maze. As if he could ever be alone, with all his schemes and plans buzzing around him like angry wasps!
虽归田之后, 依然不肯息心, 举凡有所施为, 虽生时不足观成, 亦不以为意。由于离群索居之故, 特意建造迷宫一处, 似欲幽闭自身, 以便在内摆布胸中万千策划一般。
Suī guī tián zhī hòu, yī rán bù kěn xī xīn, jǔ fán yǒu suǒ shī wéi, suī shēng shí bù zú guān chéng, yì bù yǐ wéi yì. Yóu yú lí qún suǒ jū zhī gù, tè yì jiàn zào mí gōng yí chù, sì yù yōu bì zì shēn, yì biàn zài nèi bǎi bù xiōng zhōng wàn qiān cè huá yì bān.

(Chapter 19)

CONCLUSIONS

The source text of *Maze* abounds with metaphors and similes, the vast majority of which have been rendered via conversion or deletion in van Gulik’s self-translation. In the target text of *Maze*, van Gulik adopts the strategy of converting metaphors and similes into senses, thereby accommodating target readers’ familiarity with idioms as well as cultural, religious and methodological allusions. Moreover, under circumstances that metaphors and similes are otiose or their functions have been manifested, van Gulik adopts the strategy of deletion, so as to render the target text concise. Therefore, I propound that van Gulik’s self-translation of metaphors and similes should be regarded as covert translation.

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