

To Anglicize and Angelize the Rape of Nanking

Over half a century later, the trauma of World War II remains seared in human consciousness, albeit in varying contours in West and East. The two hemispheres wrestle with and try to make sense of wartime atrocities in accordance with their past traditions and current circumstances. Whereas such Holocaust survivors as Elie Wiesel and Primo Levi have traditionally cast their narratives in the Jewish elegiac or European rationalist, even existentialist, traditions, Chinese tales of the Rape of Nanking (1937–1938) gravitate to a secular, nationalist mode of martyrdom bordering on ethnocentrism. With the millennial rise of tension between China and its neighbors, Japan in particular, the PRC is being viewed, increasingly, as East Asia’s bully. In response, the PRC has mobilized its cultural industry and its propaganda apparatus to, ironically, first restore the erstwhile image of the Qing dynasty’s and the early republic’s “Sick Man of East Asia” and to subsequently demonstrate how the PRC has stood up from ashes and ruination. Morphing from aggressive bully to victim on the defensive hinges on what the PRC has dubbed the century of humiliation (百年国耻), from the mid-nineteenth century Opium Wars to the mid-twentieth century liberation of China by the PRC. This century was punctuated by the horror of foreign invaders, among which the Rape of Nanking looms large. The shame and hate associated with this atrocity focuses the Chinese populace’s mind, rallying support for nationalist consolidation, which ironically means international expansion.

Accordingly, a slew of fiction and films revisit the Japanese atrocity for domestic psychic needs and in the global context. The domestic and global thrusts intersect in that the fiction is often translated into or written in English, and the films feature Westerners, mostly missionaries, speaking in English. Along with their use of the world's lingua franca, these Nanjing narratives fuse a Chinese, martyr-centric perspective with a hybrid, Christian perspective befitting the global market. This argument parses not so much the history of the Rape as its representational drift toward anglicization and angelization. The title's alliteration of the English translation and the Christian framework weds together, rhythmically, a nation's pain and its global designs, a marriage of convenience that frays in storytelling and filmmaking. English and Christian epistemology come to bracket any representation of the Rape of Nanking in consumerist global literature and cinema. Both the tongue and the God of whites are ways of meaning-making to sublimate a historical trauma of unfathomable horror. That both white filmmakers and "off-white" (yellow) artists of Chinese descent elect to formulate their stories in an English imbued with angelic spirituality points to a lingering asymmetry of power between East and West, some seventy years after Christian saviors did God's work in Nanjing.

The Rape of Nanking has come to occupy the center stage of, in Alexander Dor's words, "China's WW2 Remembrance." Dor notes that "while Mao's nationalism glorified the victorious revolution against the KMT [Kuomintang or Nationalists] and the Taiping Rebellion, new Chinese nationalism focuses on the century of humiliation at the hand of foreigners and the joint CCP-KMT's (versus exclusively the CCP's) role in ending it." This "new Chinese nationalism," such as President Xi Jinping's 2012 "China Dream" and millennial Chinese culture's self-designated "peaceful ascendance" (和平崛起), stresses the sovereignty of China against Western and Japanese colonialism, thus tapping into the historical animosity between the two neighbors. In *Exhibiting the Past* (2014), Kirk A. Denton illustrates how PRC's political agenda shapes the mushrooming of museums throughout China. Perhaps the weightiest part, Chap. 6, centers on three museums on Japanese atrocities during World War II, evincing China's conceptual move from a "victor narrative" to a "victim narrative." From museums to films, Vivian Lee in "The Chinese War Film" sees similar "reframing" of "national history" (101). Such a concerted national tactic manages to divert attention from China's internal schism of the coastal rich and the interior poor as well

as the perceived threat of “the evil dragon” to the South China Sea and elsewhere.¹

From within Chinese culture, the pain of the War of Resistance, as World War II is called in China, runs deep. This ethos informs all Nanjing narratives, blending with a “global consumerism” that Jing Yang sees in two recent films on the Nanjing Massacre.² Historical trauma meets the global market in the tendency of subsequent works to anglicize, angelize, problematize, and even eroticize the Rape of Nanking. The sadistic violence of the Rape displays itself in indiscriminate killings, mutilations, and mass rapes. Although estimates vary, the Tokyo War Crimes Trials of 1946 believed that “during the first six weeks of Japanese occupation [since December 13, 1937],” approximately “200,000 Chinese were slaughtered, and in the first month at least 20,000 women were raped.”³ Other estimates run considerably higher. Such unimaginable cruelty is somehow to be imagined through writers’ words and filmmakers’ rushes, a creative process that counteracts destruction by transubstantiating trauma. Since transubstantiation from red wine to Christ’s blood is a matter of religious belief, artistic representations of the Rape also dangle between ingenious conceits for some and exploitation for others—a second rape of the memory of the victims. Whereas Christians believe that they re-enact the sacrifice of Christ through the ritual of sacrament, non-Christians see veiled cannibalism. By the same token, to anglicize and angelize the Rape for internal solidarity and for access to international discourse strikes some observers as a sacrilege to the Rape victims.

The Nanjing narratives are myriad. The Chinese expatriate, National Book Award-winning Ha Jin wrote *Nanjing Requiem* (2011) in English. He deploys an objective narrator, the Chinese assistant to “the Goddess of Mercy” Minnie Vautrin in her indefatigable attempt to save lives. The Chinese writer Yan Geling originally published *The Flowers of War* in Chinese in 2011. The novel was translated into English in 2012 as a movie tie-in to Zhang Yimou’s film of the same name with Christian Bale, a mortician disguised as a Catholic priest to rescue refugees. Lu Chuan’s *City of Life and Death* (2009) mixes Chinese viewpoints with that of a Japanese Christian soldier, complemented by perspectives from Vautrin, Rabe, and other Western characters. German-made multilingual film *John Rabe* (2009) highlights the Nazi industrialist’s wartime career similar to that of Oskar Schindler. *Nanking* (2007) blends historical footage, Chinese survivor testimonies, and American actors’ readings of Rabe’s, Vautrin’s, and other foreigners’ letters and documents. Note

that even *Nanking's* Chinese-language testimonies, despite the universal body language of tears and grief, still communicate by way of English subtitles. A decade and more before this flood of narratives, Ye Zhaoyan published *Nanjing 1937: A Love Story* (1996), a picaresque love story of a Westernized playboy Ding Wenyu, but the novel stops abruptly on the eve of the fall of Nanjing.

Admittedly, translations of books from a minor to a major language are part of the life of any book worth its salt. Books on mass destruction, especially the Holocaust, are no exception. Wiesel wrote *Night* in Yiddish in 1954; Levi wrote *Survival in Auschwitz* in Italian in 1947. Both were not translated into English until years later. Their international fame, and Wiesel's 1986 Nobel Prize for Peace for that matter, are founded on the English versions of their memoirs and the ensuing fictions. This seems to justify the anglicization of Nanjing narratives; however, one key factor distinguishes Holocaust survivor-writers from their Chinese counterparts. Not one of the Chinese artists is a survivor; not one has any firsthand experience of the Rape. Rather than those of Wiesel and Levi, these Chinese texts resemble Holocaust fictions by such Jewish and Christian non-survivor writers as Saul Bellow's *Mr. Sammler's Planet* (1970), Philip Roth's *The Ghost Writer* (1979), George Steiner's *The Portage to San Cristóbal of A.H.* (1981), William Styron's *Sophie's Choice* (1979), D.M. Thomas's *The White Hotel* (1981), and Jerzy Kosinski's *The Painted Bird* (1965). Granted, the Chinese artists tend to rely on actual testimonies, just as the second-generation Chinese-American Iris Chang did for her *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II* (1997), which likened the Chinese trauma to the Jewish one. Ha Jin's "Author's Note" in *Nanjing Requiem*, for instance, credits *Minnie Vautrin's Diary*, among other sources, for his work of fiction. Various episodes in Ha Jin draw heavily not only on Vautrin's writings⁴ but also on those of her Jinling College assistant, Tsen Shui-fang.

HA JIN

Ha Jin belongs to the growing community of expatriate writers in the USA writing in English. Born in China in 1956 he arrived at Brandeis University for graduate studies in 1985, Ha Jin has published poetry, novels, short stories, and essays, most of which paint a somewhat unflattering picture of his fatherland.⁵ *Nanjing Requiem* is told from the

perspective of an Anling modeled precisely on Tsen Shui-fang. Anling is a middle-aged teacher and college administrator, calm and collected, whose self-possession grows out of Ha Jin detached style. In chronicling mass murder and rape in *Nanjing Requiem*, a restrained narrative voice serves to distance the narrative and the reader from the violence, lessening the danger of compassion fatigue over the relentless episodes of atrocity, rendering the Rape somewhat bearable. As the Rape constitutes horror itself, rarely does Ha Jin give full vent to his signature eruption of violence, exemplified by the anal rape in *Waiting* (1999), the disembowelment in *War Trash* (2004), or the body mutilation in his early poem “Humasn Pig.” The only exception is the graphic, pornographic depiction of a rapist “nicknamed Obstetrician” (78): “a young woman lying naked on a piece of green tarp, crying and twisting, while a soldier with a full beard was thrusting his hand between her legs and making happy noises. A bayonet stood beside her head ... the man’s entire hand buried in the woman’s vagina, beneath which was a puddle of blood and urine” (77). A typical Ha Jin moment of inhumanity narrated in a matter-of-fact monotone, the affectlessness of the narrative voice sharpens the sadism, rendering it all the more repulsive and shocking.

Anling’s point of view offers a distinctly Chinese angle, so much so that Ha Jin, at first blush, appears to sinologize rather than anglicize his story. Increasingly suspicious of the reticence of women returned from Japanese hands and of her Chinese colleagues’ seething rage, Anling refrains from enlightening her boss—the interim college president Vautrin—of the violation of women, until Vautrin herself witnesses the crimes. While they are both dedicated to the upkeep of refugees at the College, Anling is far more seasoned, sophisticated, and repressed than the naïve Vautrin. Ha Jin resorts to racial stereotypes of, relatively speaking, Chinese cunning and repression versus American innocence and frankness. The temperamental difference between the protagonists foreshadows Vautrin’s depression and eventual suicide, in contrast to Anling’s soldiering on, despite national and personal tragedies after the war. The Christian belief embodied by Vautrin appears to crack, whereas China is made to persevere through the characterization of Anling.

Ha Jin, however, offers an alternative interpretation of the two protagonists’ responses and, by implication, the West’s and the East’s collective responses. Stumbling upon a mass execution ground, Vautrin urges Anling to take a precise count of the bodies. Anling demurs: “There are execution sites everywhere. This one is nothing by comparison” (96).

Vautrin insists that “History should be recorded as it happened so it can be remembered with little room for doubt and controversy.” Anling perceives that Vautrin “resented the Chinese fashion of forgetfulness based on the understanding that nothing mattered eventually, since everything would turn into dust or smoke” (97). This Chinese resignation to fatalism echoes the biblical “ashes to ashes, dust to dust.” The two cultures are not fundamentally opposite in their outlooks on life. The West’s scientific, fact-finding quest in Nanjing owes as much to its Christian faith as to the privileged position of Westerners, armed with their technical know-how and equipment to document the atrocity. Nonetheless, Ha Jin suggests that Vautrin’s depression stems from her inability to forget, as opposed to her Chinese assistant, who must repress her emotions in order to survive not just the war but also postwar China.

Ha Jin’s seemingly sino-centric perspective is channeled, ironically, through the medium—pun intended—of English. A story of atrocity on Chinese soil, allegedly told by a Chinese character, unfolds in English for the English-speaking readership. This duality manifests itself in Ha Jin’s fictional device of Vautrin’s doppelganger and his emplotment of Anling’s Japanese connection. China comes to be imbricated in Anglo and Japanese influences. In preparation for Vautrin’s collapse, Ha Jin creates Vautrin’s dark shadow, Yulan. Yulan is turned over by a gullible Vautrin to the Japanese and returns mad, physically and psychologically damaged. Despite Vautrin’s subsequent intervention, Yulan is subjected to prolonged sexual slavery, like hundreds of thousands of “comfort women,” a Japanese euphemism and historical misnomer. Yulan’s surplus value lies in being sent as a guinea pig to the Japanese biological and chemical warfare laboratory in Harbin, Manchuria. Yulan becomes Vautrin’s guilty conscience, haunting Vautrin in the latter half of the novel. That Vautrin fantasizes that she could journey 1337 miles from Nanjing to Harbin in the midst of a savage war to rescue Yulan from the infamous Unit 731 is symptomatic of Vautrin’s frail hold on reality. Yulan serves to crystallize Japanese brutality and to rationalize Vautrin’s suicide. Shortly before gassing herself in an Indiana sanatorium, Vautrin muses that “Who could imagine I too [like Yulan] would end up unbalanced?” (292).

Ha Jin pointedly shows how Americans, Chinese, and Japanese are inextricably embroiled in this war. Whereas Chinese public sentiment on World War II is staunchly anti-Japanese, Ha Jin entwines hatred with bonding and love. This ambivalence characterizes the Chinese imaginary

of the Rape. Anling's son Haowen is a Japan-trained medical doctor, drafted by the Imperial Army and murdered by his fellow Chinese as a traitor. He leaves behind a son, Shin, and a Japanese wife, Mitsuko. Ha Jin's joining of Japan and China in the mixed-race Shin finds good company in Ye Zhaoyan's female protagonist Yuyuan, whose mother is Lady Miyako in *Nanjing 1937*, and in Lu Chuan's partial perspective of a Japanese soldier in *City of Life and Death*. Whereas testimonies and witness accounts of the Rape emphasize categorically the divide between Japanese perpetrators and Chinese victims, Chinese fiction and film present the pair as unalienable.

Ha Jin does that by juxtaposing the collective Anti-Japanese War with Anling's family involvement with Mitsuko and Shin. As Anling travels to Tokyo to testify in the War Crimes Trials in 1947, she has two brief encounters outside the courtroom with her Japanese daughter-in-law and grandson. They exchange few words for fear of public exposure of their relationship, most inappropriate given Anling's role at the Trials. Waiting for and bowing in the distance to her mother-in-law, Mitsuko is "in a white kimono" the first time and in "an apple-green cheong-sam" the second (297, 299). Her traditional Japanese and Chinese wardrobe speaks volumes about her and her son's dual identity and affinity. In addition, the interlocking of cultures manifests itself in a single object. Totally unprepared for Mitsuko and Shin's appearance, Anling, "on the spur of the moment ... took off the gold bangle and handed it to Mitsuko. 'Haowen wanted you to have this,' I said, clasping her hand with both of mine. 'Please don't come to this place again. It's not safe.'" (298). Having obtained leave from the Imperial Army for a rare visit after five years, Haowen had brought the bracelet for his mother, a token of love in a war-torn China. A heart-wrenching climax, Haowen's gift to Anling comes to epitomize Anling's attachment to Mitsuko, the son's love passing through the mother back to the wife. But this family union is also a farewell; the first touch of Anling's and Mitsuko's hands is also their last.

The complex relationship between China and Japan is inscribed on the gold bangle itself. Unbeknownst to Haowen, the bangle is engraved on the inner side with a tiny Chinese character, Diao (刁), presumably the surname of the family to whom this ornament used to belong. Anling is so troubled by the possibility that this bracelet might have been part of war spoils that she almost refuses it. Anling feels unsettled by this gesture of love, made so much more sincere by the difficulties during a

war, because of the ominous surname Diao. While it is a perfectly legitimate surname, Diao (刁) also means cunning, crafty, tricky. Moreover, its homophones encompass a wide range of words, including hung or hanged (吊), lost (掉), switch or transfer (調), even penis (屌), and more. This one piece of jewelry is laden with the full gamut of the negative connotations of the Rape of Nanking, which explains Anling's misgivings. That her love is passed on to Mitsuko along with all the troubling implications augurs the future contestations between China and Japan.

YAN GELING, NICKY HARMAN, ZHANG YIMOU

To the extent that Ha Jin reimagines the Anling character based on Tsen, the novelist attempts to gain a purchase in his approach to a historical trauma of immense proportions. One cannot accuse Ha Jin of taking undue liberties in representing the Rape. If anything, he may have leaned toward documentary and testimonial genres rather than artistic reinvention, leading to a dry, monotonous narrative. This is not the case with Yan Geling, a prolific contemporary Chinese writer, with many novels and film scripts to her name. Yan's *The Flowers of War* imagines Nanjing women, during the Rape, in hiding at the church of a Father Engelmann. Yan's story is then translated into English by Nicky Harman and adapted into a film by Zhang Yimou. This unholy trinity of Yan, Harman, and Zhang takes great liberties in rewriting history and one another. Unlike Ha Jin's adherence to documentary sources, the writer, translator, and director have had no qualms in finessing, even concocting, events for their stories. Although the Rape of Nanking is at the core of these narratives, Yan's novel already deviates from the history of the Rape itself, followed by Zhang's and Harman's further detraction from Yan.

Granted, Yan's story contains deep flaws and cries out for a rigorous revision. Yan's plot is messy: two Chinese soldiers are said to be hiding in the tunnel in Chap. 2, without any previous reference to either tunnel or soldiers. These soldiers drop out of the narrative, emerging only when the Japanese execute an unidentified group beyond the three main Chinese soldiers in hiding at the church-cum-missionary school. The other two groups seeking sanctuary are Chinese female students and prostitutes. Where they are secreted keeps morphing in Yan's narrative. Students are put initially in a separate dormitory building, but in Chap. 11 they are hiding upstairs in the attic and are appalled when a

Japanese slashes open Father Engelmann's robe with a bayonet. One is not sure when the students' living quarters were relocated. The prostitutes, on the other hand, are reluctantly put in the warehouse by the Father, yet they materialize in the cellar later in the story. Yan's characters play hide-and-seek with her readers. Zhang, on the other hand, utilizes the attic and the cellar of the church itself as a clear-cut spatial distinction between innocent schoolgirls up in heaven, so to speak, and sing-song girls down in hell. Consistent with Zhang, Harman aims for immediacy, streamlining Yan's confusing, jumbled plot into an action unfolding in real time, as it were. As in Chap. 11, the students are living in the attic and the prostitutes in the cellar, a mere ceiling or floorboard away from the Japanese soldiers searching for women.

It is not only the plot but also Yan's language that is unwieldy, fraught with awkward, heavy-handed phrases with pretensions to profoundness that are, in fact, residues of communist propaganda. Such declarative, descriptive passages intersect with often clipped, animated dialogue. Vivid voices and characterizations are bogged down by the ball and chain of stilted storytelling techniques. These slightly hackneyed techniques strive to suggest to English readers the omnipresence of platitudes in Yan's Chinese original. Does an author's failing justify a translator's rearranging, deleting, and adding materials? Harman does pen new passages, which goes against the whole notion of translation.⁶ The most flagrant example is Harman's 30-page-long Chap. 8 of Sergeant Major Li's testimony of the mass execution of Chinese prisoners of war by the Yangtze River (88–116). Harman must have taken it from the short ending paragraph of Yan's Chap. 5 on the atrocity in general terms and in which she mentions one of her main Chinese characters, Wang Pusheng, in the concluding sentence, not Li. Eyewitness testimonies are fabricated in an abstract, non-specific manner by Yan, although abstract testimony is an oxymoron. Such testaments are further extrapolated and elaborated by Harman, presumably to bulk up credibility to meet Western evidential standards of verified, corroborated facts and eyewitness accounts.

This means Harman could have called her translation an "adaptation" or a "makeover," in the sense of Zhang Yimou's fabulistic filmic adaptation or aesthetic (commercialized rather) makeover. It is conceivable that Harman's changes were necessitated by a movie tie-in that accompanied the release of Zhang's film and a lifelong aspiration for an Oscar.⁷ Does selling copyright mean works can be truncated and repackaged at will, under the aegis of translation? Not being privy to the business

transactions between Zhang and the film industries in China and Hollywood on the one hand, and Harman and the US publishing industry on the other, one wonders if the parties involved were working in cahoots, apparently with Yan Geling's blessing as Yan joined Liu Heng in writing Zhang's screenplay. One thing is certain: if Harman is ever translated back into Chinese, even Yan would be hard pressed to recognize her own novel.

Harman's rewriting of Yan starts from generalizing the Chinese-specific title *Jinling Shisancai* (金陵十三钗 Nanking Thirteen Hairpins), which Zhang retains for his film in the Chinese market. Zhang switches to Harman's *The Flowers of War* for the film's international release, including in the US (or is it Harman who adopts Zhang's English title?) The concerted dual naming confirms the hypothesis that Harman worked closely with the movie version. Jinling is the ancient name for Nanjing; hairpins are metonymic for women in classical Chinese, similar to the crown for the king in English. Both Harman and Zhang in global cinema elect to shed Chinese characteristics that are unlikely to resonate worldwide.

Yan's opening, "My aunt Shujuan was awoken by the rush of her first menstrual period, and not by the cannons firing outside Nanjing's city gate on December 12, 1937," marks the matrilineage of the narrator and her protagonist aunt, as well as the fall of Nanjing on that date. This is followed by an unwieldy, cumbersome description of the momentous turning point in history: "She follows the dark corridor, running toward the toilet, thinking all that thick stench of blood has emanated from her 14-year-old body ... A long time will pass before she learns from history books ... [that] hundreds of thousands of vanquished soldiers are ferrying across the river in retreat, steel cannons sinking underwater one after another" (my translation of Yan's original Chinese, which is available online). Apologies are due if the preceding translation read smoothly, for Yan's Chinese is wooden, deadened, fraught with long adjectival descriptions. The vitality of her lively dialogue dissipates itself in such a narrative framing. The merits or demerits of Yan's language aside, Harman creatively translates the opening as "Shujuan woke with a start. The next thing she knew, she was standing beside her bed" (1). The matrilineage and the niece narrator are excised; Shujuan becomes the controlling consciousness in Harman's trimming of characters and focusing on action. More significantly, the fusing of Shujuan's menstruation and Nanjing's bloodbath is purged. Zhang's opening varies yet again from Yan's and Harman's.

Structurally, Harman has 17 chapters plus an epilogue, a sea change from Yan's 14 chapters. Harman's paragraphing and scene changes by way of three horizontal dots radically diverge from Yan's, whose spatial setting, cast of characters, and plot twists unfold gradually, self-contradictorily on occasion, while Harman presents the story with maximum lucidity. The upstairs, downstairs arrangement of the two groups of refugees is settled the first time they appear in Harman's translation. Whereas Yan vaguely refers to "this American Catholic church" at first and names it St. Mary in Chap. 8, halfway through her story, Harman sets the stage at the church of "the St Mary Magdelene Mission" (*sic* 2) from the outset. Harman's choice of the biblical Mary Magdelene draws together the fate of both students and prostitutes, paving the way for the latter's self-sacrifice in substituting for the students as "comfort women."

This act of martyrdom is where the story pivots. Hastily laying out the switch, Yan concludes the story when the leader of the prostitutes, Yumo, in her student-style double pigtails, "smiles shyly" at the Japanese Colonel by the truck taking them to their fate. Yumo demonstrates her chameleon instinct in pretending to be a bashful teenage student, while masking the intent of "an assassin." This heroic ending seeks to reverse Chinese shame and hurt in one stroke, literally. With "scissors ... steak knives, fruit knives, hairpins" hidden on their persons, Yumo and the others are not to be gangbanged, pardon the expression; they plan to go out with a bang. In comparison, Harman dwells more extensively on the prostitutes' transformation in "twenty minutes for us to put on their clothes" (233) and the priest's murder, owing to his insistence on chaperoning the transport. Harman adds an epilogue, in which a witness testifying at the Tokyo War Crimes Trials is, muses Shujuan, possibly Yumo after four long years at comfort stations. Another prostitute, Cardamon, is not so lucky: Cardamon is believed to be the victim "bound to an old-fashioned wooden chair, her legs forced apart and her private parts exposed to the camera lens" (246). Harman's bound victim is unequivocally "inspired" by the infamous photograph included in Iris Chang's *The Rape of Nanking*, with her genitalia mercifully blanked out by the publishers. In the same vein as Sergeant Major Li's testament in Chap. 8, Harman seeks authenticity by means of pseudo-witness accounts and archival images. But it gives one pause as to whether Harman is appropriating memories and pain for a good story and brisk sales in an English-language market.

In his film, Zhang eroticizes and sentimentalizes the disrobing scene with the prostitutes fondling in jest one full-bosomed member, and the student leader calling Yumo “elder sister” in gratitude. The camera leisurely tracks from one nude to the next, accompanied by the vibrato of traditional Chinese strings, echoing the plucking of heartstrings. After a prolonged teary farewell between the two halves of this wartime sisterhood, Zhang even has the sing-song girls put on a melodramatic last performance, “The Qin Huai View,” for the students, complete with slow-motion dream sequences of the performers in glamorous cheongsams catwalking on stage. Whereas Yan’s “assassin” ending is absent in Harman’s translation, Zhang chooses to revive that triumphant gesture as the prostitutes conceal scissors and the church’s stained glass shards under their student uniform. Indeed, Harman’s internal logic forbids her to follow in Yan’s footsteps. Had the assassination attempt taken place, the prostitutes and more would have been executed in retaliation. To feature a Yumo returned from the dead in Harman’s epilogue would have been far-fetched, nor could Harman have singled out the priest’s martyrdom.

This priest is Father Engelmann, Harman’s anglicizing of Yan’s “Yinggeman” (英格曼). In the labyrinthine trafficking of English and Chinese transliteration, the term Englishman is first sinologized as Yinggeman, literally “England man,” which Harman restores to proper English. Proper or not, the point is the prevailing Anglo-centric, English-rooted imaginary, a Chinese story notwithstanding, akin to the overall anglicizing of the Rape. Harman’s cast includes a Deacon Fabio Adornato, who is morphed from a younger Catholic Father in Yan’s Chinese story. Harman demotes Adornato to a deacon, one rung below a Catholic priest. Deacons can also mean laymen selected to serve in worship and pastoral care. The subordination of Adornato elevates the saintly Father Engelmann once again. It further explains away Adornato’s vices of taking to drink and falling in love with Yumo. Harman’s English spelling of Fabio Adornato renders it Italian-sounding, so the church of “the St Mary Magdelene Mission” encompasses Anglo-European, even biblical, inferences. Father Engelmann and Deacon Adornato are collapsed into Christian Bale and Zhang’s “40% English dialogue.”⁸

One major plot overhaul deserves close scrutiny. In her oblique, off-the-cuff manner bordering on muddle-headedness, Yan alludes to Yumo’s unnamed client as a “Double PhDs” in Chaps. 6 and 7, while

Harman identifies him as Zhang Shitiao (129), with nothing to do with Shujuan, whose family name is Meng. In Yan, however, Shujuan's antagonism against Yumo is traced back to the fact that Yumo used to be the mistress of Shujuan's father and nearly wrecked the family; Shujuan's father stopped short of a divorce in order to marry Yumo. Yan presents the narrator's maternal grandmother, or Shujuan's mother, as having been barred from joining her husband and Yumo's date because, as family friends quipped at the end of Chap. 6, it was "a bachelor party." Yan's narrator remarks that "my grandmother has been abroad and knows the foreign custom." For the sake of argument, let us accept the contradiction of a bachelor night-out for a married man, although it is perhaps more customary for a married man to take a courtesan out openly, with the wife's acquiescence, in ancient China rather than in 1940s Europe. At any rate, is this outlandish ritual attributed to a Western stag party prior to the wedding, the last fling before tying the knot? In which case, the bride-to-be would not be in on it, certainly not raring to accompany the groom. Here and elsewhere, Yan Occidentalizes a sexually liberated, even licentious West, which only validates her Chinese readers' preconceptions. The other example of Yan's blatantly anachronistic transposition comes in Chap. 10, when the narrator notes that "Japanese men are pedophilic, with an unspeakable obsession with those girls between childhood and adolescence." This accounts for the Japanese military's summoning of students from the mission, but the sweeping accusation of cultural neurosis stems as much from Japanese wartime behavior as from the contemporary Japanese "industry" of pornography. If Harman anglicizes Yan with impunity, Yan does exactly the same with Western cultures, not to mention the history of the Rape itself.

Rather than a bridge to cross-cultural understanding, Harman's translation purges much cultural specificity. In Yan's Chap. 6, Yumo casts herself at the dance hall in the image of a lady, holding a *New Moon* (or *Crescent Moon*) journal, which is generalized by Harman as "The Modern Magazine" with "articles on just about anything current: politics, economics, lifestyle and health, and the scandalous things which film stars were getting up to" (131). Yumo disguises herself as a college student with exquisite taste, evidenced by the then premier intellectual magazine, most distinguished through its publication of the new, vernacular poetry of Hu Shih, among other features. This disguise lapses in Harman into a glossy supermarket-style magazine on current affairs and celebrities. In Harman's made-up contents of the "Modern Magazine,"

literature is glaringly missing. Likewise, Harman scraps the prostitutes' "Tea-Picking Tune" and other regional *Jiangnan* (South of Yangtze) songs in Yan's Chap. 8, nor does Harman translate Deacon Adornato's nightly binge drinking of the common Chinese liquors, *Daqu* and *Nu'erhong*. Harman takes great care to neither ruffle nor disorient, even for a moment, English-speaking readers, but initial, even protracted, defamiliarizing ought to undergird any true global communication.

At one point, Harman simply mistranslates. To everyone's surprise, the prostitute Hongling recites Du Mu's classical Tang dynasty poem: "singing girls heedless that national calamity looms ... As, on the far bank, they sing the lament *Courtyard Blooms*" (140 or in Yan's Chap. 7). Hongling explains that these are the only two lines she knows for "When our clients abuse us," Harman translates, "we quote poetry at them. It's the best way to deal with a scolding." Alas, this is a total mistranslation of Hongling's words: "Poetry that people use to put us down, we ought to memorize, otherwise we don't even know we're being put down." Nor do monolingual readers know that they are reading Harman's version of the Rape of Nanking, not Yan's—neither being the Rape itself. Yan's fiction and Harman's translation drift further and further away from the Rape.

In Chinese the atrocities that transpired from late 1937 to early 1938 are called The Nanjing Massacre. Rendered in English, the Rape of Nanking stresses both the rapacious violence and the literal mass rapes. Ha Jin's *Nanjing Requiem* does not shy away from scenes of sexual crimes. By contrast, Ye Zhaoyan over a decade ago and Yan Geling and her collaborators spare the public from gazing into the searing heat of the Rape itself. Their narratives come to a halt either on the eve of the fall of Nanjing or with the rounding up of victims.⁹ In fact, Michael Berry, the translator of Ye Zhaoyan's *Love in 1937* (its original Chinese title), sees fit to bring in more of the Rape of Nanking and to retitle it *Nanjing 1937: A Love Story*. Berry's English title implicates romance with the Rape. In his translator's Afterword, Berry begins and ends with the question: "As the city falls, how can we reconcile this 'love story' born of the ashes of war?" Instead of confronting the question, Berry deflects it: "Then again, perhaps we would be better off asking whether Ding Wenyu's driving passion is love at all—or merely a twisted obsession" (375). One is still faced with the moral dilemma of reconciling obsession and rape, if no longer love and rape. But love *is* obsessive passion, which aptly sums up not only Ding's emotional state but Father

Adornato's in Yan's original, Deacon Adornato's in Harman's translation, and Christian Bale's in Zhang's film.

Deviating from the previous works, the sixth-generation Chinese filmmaker Lu Chuan's *City of Life and Death* does not look away from sex crimes. The first half of the film features a figurative rape of the Chinese populace in terms of the massacre. It centers on the Chinese soldier played by Liu Ye. Liu's character not only offers, in keeping with the genre of war films, a good fight against the overwhelming Japanese military might, but he also exhibits agency in walking unflinchingly toward his own death, consoling along the way both his young companion and a modern-day Chinese audience. Liu's heroism spurs Chinese nationalism, trying to balance out what comes after. The second half of the film shifts to the perspective of the Japanese soldier Kadokawa, relatively conscientious, full of fear and apprehension, who speaks accented English. Jing Yang in "Rewriting the Chinese National Epic" sees Kadokawa as "literally inspired by ... Vautrin's diary accounts ... about a young Japanese soldier with Christian background" (248–249). What Lu attempts is a high-wire act. On the Chinese side, the soldiers fleeing en masse is counterpointed by a handful of soldiers led by Liu making a last stand. On the Japanese side, one "good" Japanese Christian silhouettes his murderous and bestial fellow soldiers, a directorial decision that has stirred much controversy in China. Overall, Lu tries to keep the two halves of the film in equilibrium.

Lu shot his film in black and white, oftentimes with a hand-held camera, making it as jolting and chaotic as *Saving Private Ryan's* opening scene, to simulate war. The documentary look veils a narrative structure, moving from the figurative rape to the second half's literal rapes. The audience sees for the first time actual scenes of comfort women suffering and the disposal of "used-up" bodies, piles of nudes as sensuous as ever on the cart to their final destination. In the name of dramatizing the Rape, Lu eroticizes female sexuality. The Goddess of Mercy Vautrin is most prescient in her reflection: "From a military point of view, the taking of Nanking may be considered a victory ... but judging from the moral law it is a defeat and a national disgrace—which will hinder cooperation and friendship with China for years to come" (qtd. in Hu and Zhang 41). Japan's atrocities have indeed rankled in postwar memory in Asia and, of course, in China. As globalization shrinks the world and yokes the past and the future at an unprecedented rate, it has become an

ethical imperative for cross-cultural and multilingual writers and artists to be mindful of fantastical overreach in others as well as in themselves. Exploitation and misappropriation of the Rape of Nanking have regrettably shadowed its anglicization and angelicization in this “New Age of English.”¹⁰ Even this argument is not immune to the master narrative that is the lingua franca of the English language: written in English, this argument not only anchors itself at the outset in the Holocaust but also continues with an eye towards the West-centric global marketplace of ideas to which Ha Jin, Zhang Yimou, and others aspire. How do global artists of color imagine an alternate universe beyond Anglophone angels, or demons for that matter?



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