

A Study on Lin Zexu's Translation Team Members and the Continuity of Their Translation Work after the Opium War

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ABSTRACT: In 1839, Lin Zexu established a translation office in Guangzhou to suppress the opium trade, recruiting Aman, Yuan Dehui, Lieaou Ah See (William Botelho), Leang Tsin-tin, Alum and other multilingual talents to form the first Sino-British translation team in modern Chinese translation history. After the outbreak of the Opium War in 1840, Lin Zexu was dismissed and exiled to Yili, and the translation office was dissolved. However, the members of the translation team did not disappear; instead, they continued their translation activities through various paths. This paper conducts textual research on the identities of the members of Lin Zexu's translation team, corrects long-standing historical misunderstandings, systematically combs the experiences, whereabouts and translation activities of the team members after Lin Zexu's dismissal, and explores the transregional mobility of the interpreters and the hidden context of the continuity of their translation work. It is found that the translation team members were mainly divided into two groups after the dissolution of the translation office, and their continuous translation work promoted the spread of Western culture in China and laid the foundation for the institutionalization and academicization of modern Chinese translation institutions.

KEYWORDS - Opium War, Lin Zexu, Translation Team Members, Continuity of Translation Work

I. INTRODUCTION

On the eve of the Opium War, the Qing court clung to old policies of maritime prohibition and isolation, resulting in severely blocked intelligence on foreign affairs. Since the Qianlong and Jiaqing reigns, the Qing court and officialdom had avoided discussing overseas affairs. Most civil and military officials, regarding China as a celestial empire, remained ignorant of Western conditions. Contemporary Western materials noted: "The Chinese government is entirely ignorant of foreign politics and does not seek information, so even to this day China still knows nothing of the Western world." [1] When Lin Zexu served as Viceroy of Huguang, he had already paid close attention to the opium epidemic, yet he lacked understanding of the international structure behind it. He even

mistakenly believed that opium “was actually smuggled in by unscrupulous foreigners from Hong Kong, completely unrelated to the official merchants of the British nation.”[2] This intelligence and cognitive gap directly motivated Lin Zexu to establish a translation office and recruit professional multilingual talents to form a translation team, engaging in the translation of Western newspapers and books after arriving in Guangdong.

In 1839, Lin Zexu wrote that he “must constantly investigate foreign conditions, understand their actual strength, and only then can formulate strategies to control them.”[3] To this end, he extensively collected foreign newspapers and recruited interpreters familiar with foreign languages into his mission, forming a formal translation team. Most of these team members were “marginal figures” from compradors, interpreters, or missionary backgrounds, long looked down upon by orthodox scholar-officials. Regardless of social background, Lin Zexu resolutely invited them to his mission headquarters to specialize in translating Western books and newspapers, thereby understanding foreign situations and planning diplomacy. With this, the first formal Sino-British translation team in modern Chinese history gradually took shape, and its members became the core force of early modern Chinese official translation work.[4]

In June 1839, The Chinese Repository published “Crisis in the Opium Traffic,” which recorded: “Under the governor are four natives who have made considerable progress in English. The first is a young man educated in Penang and Malacca, who has served the Chinese government in Beijing for many years. The second is an elderly man educated in Serampore. The third is a young man who studied at the Foreign Mission School in Cornwall, Connecticut. The fourth is a youth educated in China, able to read and translate ordinary texts with reasonable ease, accuracy, and fluency.”[5] These four natives were the core members of Lin Zexu’s translation team, laying the foundation for the team’s operation.

The semi-annual report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) in Guangzhou, dated July 4, 1839, clearly listed four names: Aman, Shaou Tih (Yuan Dehui), Alum, and Atih (Leang Tsin-tin).[6] Combined with other historical materials, it can be confirmed that these four were key members of Lin Zexu’s translation team, and there were other auxiliary members, forming a relatively complete translation team.

1.1 Aman

Aman was one of the core members of Lin Zexu’s translation team, of mixed Chinese and Indian descent. Educated from childhood at the Baptist missionary school in Serampore, India, under Joshua Marshman (1768–1837) for more than ten years, he mastered English, Bengali, basic Sanskrit, and literary Chinese. He participated in early work on translating and disseminating the Bible in Chinese.[7] Between 1829 and 1831, Aman arrived in Guangdong with the mission to engage in preaching and primary education. Despite his Western education, he failed to enter the official system and long lived in poverty and low status, moving between foreign firms and churches. After Marshman’s death in 1837, Aman lost his main support and soon returned to China, making a living in foreign firms in Guangzhou. Recognized for his bilingual ability, he was recommended to Lin Zexu through merchants and missionaries in 1839, officially joining the translation team. Already middle-aged, Aman mainly undertook abridged translations and excerpts of English newspapers and books, assisted by oral interpretation. Bridgman, quoting Hunter, described his English as fair but not distinguished.[8] His solid

linguistic foundation and rich practical experience made him an important member of the translation team, undertaking a large number of basic translation tasks.

1.2 Yuan Dehui

Yuan Dehui, courtesy name Xiaode, was a core member of Lin Zexu's translation team, a native of Nanhai, Guangdong, with ancestral roots in Sichuan. He studied at a Roman Catholic school in Penang in his early years and transferred to the Anglo-Chinese College in Malacca, run by Robert Morrison (1782–1834), in 1825. Rumors claimed he was a descendant of the Ming imperial family, hence regarded as a pretender to the throne.[9] His classmate William C. Hunter (1812–1891) described him as proficient in Latin and deeply accomplished in Chinese, especially Mandarin. After entering the Anglo-Chinese College, Yuan Dehui actively studied English and progressed rapidly; his classmates called him “the reader.” During his studies, drawing on his solid Latin foundation, he translated *Stockii Clavis* by Johann Heinrich Stockius into Chinese—a work on Latin grammar and vocabulary. This translation demonstrated his linguistic talent and laid a foundation for his future official translation work for the Qing government and his role in Lin Zexu's translation team.[10]

In 1826, Yuan Dehui participated in compiling and translating *The English and Chinese Student's Assistant, or Colloquial Phrases, and Letters &c.*, in English and Chinese, printed by the Mission Press. The book contained common bilingual phrases and letters to facilitate communication between missionaries and Chinese students.[11] Hunter's account, filled with classmate friendship and praise, reveals Yuan Dehui's multilingual background and academic dedication, qualifying him as a potential cross-cultural bridge and laying the groundwork for his future work in Lin Zexu's translation team.

According to Hunter's recollections, between late 1827 and 1829, recommended by Cantonese merchant Wu Bingjian (Howqua), Yuan Dehui was memorialized to the capital by the Viceroy of Guangdong and took a post as a translator at the Lifan Yuan in Beijing. At that time, the Lifan Yuan mainly administered Mongolian regions, and Yuan Dehui's translation duties involved Russian documents originally written in Latin. Before taking office, the capital authorities tested his translation ability with Latin-written Russian dispatches; his performance was deemed satisfactory, and he was granted official transport and a monthly salary of 100 taels (about 30 pounds). He thus formally joined the official translation system of the Qing Dynasty, accumulating valuable official translation experience for his later participation in Lin Zexu's translation team.[12]

In the summer of 1830, Beijing sent Yuan Dehui south to Guangzhou to collect Western books. When the Viceroy of Guangdong sent officials to interrogate two British sailors shipwrecked in Guangzhou, Yuan Dehui was among the entourage. He signaled Hunter not to recognize him with glances and gestures, and visited him secretly several days later. By this time, Yuan Dehui held an official position and was engaged in diplomatic-related work. In 1838, he was again sent south to collect foreign materials before returning north. These two missions enabled him to maintain continuous contact with the foreign affairs circle in Guangzhou and establish a reputation for understanding foreign books within officialdom, making him a key candidate for Lin Zexu's translation team.

In 1839, when Lin Zexu arrived in Guangdong to suppress opium, Hunter recorded: “As soon as Lord Lin arrived, Yuan was already attached to his mission.”[13] Yuan Dehui officially joined Lin Zexu's translation

team and became one of the core figures, even serving as the senior interpreter of the team. His recruitment relied on his experience at the Lifan Yuan, book-collecting missions, and recommendations from foreign merchants and expatriates in Guangdong. He undertook important translation tasks for the team, playing a pivotal role in the team's operation.

On August 27, 1839, the emperor approved Lin Zexu's letter to the Queen of the United Kingdom, and Yuan Dehui, as senior interpreter of the translation team, was assigned to translate it into English. Doubtful of the quality, Lin Zexu asked Hunter to back-translate it into Chinese for verification but remained dissatisfied. In November, Lin instructed Wu Bingjian to contact Peter Parker (1804–1888) to retranslate the letter. After reviewing it, Parker judged the letter contained both irrefutable arguments and absurd insults, deeming it harmful to Lin's diplomatic cause. This incident also reflected the translation ability of Yuan Dehui and the overall level of the translation team at that time.

On December 16, 1839, Lin Zexu met survivors from the British ship *Sunda*, wrecked off Hainan on October 12. He asked them to read the English version of the letter—evidently translated by Yuan Dehui, written in fine brushwork. Dr. Hill described: "He then handed us a letter to the Queen of England, written in their usual flowery style. I could hardly keep a straight face. When he saw this, he immediately asked if it was proper. We replied there were only minor errors, smiled, and he asked us to take the letter to the next room to correct mistakes, with tea and refreshments to be sent. The letter was quite long, clearly and neatly written... some parts we could not understand at all." [14] This further confirmed Yuan Dehui's status and work content in the translation team.

Yuan Dehui also participated in translating the official notice "Proclamation Reopening Trade to Foreign Merchants" published in *The Chinese Repository*. His translation was: "For the managing opium on the last spring being stopped trade for present time till the opium surrendered to the government than ordered be opened the trade the same as before." [15] *The Chinese Repository* criticized his version as full of Chinglish, lacking punctuation, and grammatically confused. [16] This shows that although Yuan Dehui possessed basic bilingual competence and was a core member of the translation team, his rhetorical and grammatical command of English remained insufficient, with clear limitations in translation quality, which also reflected the overall limitations of the translation team in its early stage.

1.3 Lieaou Ah See (William Botelho) and Alum

Liehou Ah See (William Botelho) and Alum were both important members of Lin Zexu's translation team, and the identity of the third interpreter in the team had long been disputed. In his book *Interpreters in the First Opium War*, Wang Hongzhi conducted textual research distinguishing the early Chinese overseas student William Alum from Lieaou Ah See (William Botelho). [17] According to ABCFM archives, when Lin Zexu established his translation office in 1839, he employed four interpreters, the third signed "Alum" in official documents, confirming that Alum was an official member of the translation team.

Lin Yongyu first transliterated "Alum" as "Yalin" and conflated him with Lieaou Ah See (William Botelho), relying not on original archives but on secondary sources including Roswell S. Britton's *The Chinese Periodical Press, 1800–1912* and George H. Danton's *The Cultural Contacts of the United States and China*. [18] Danton mentioned a Chinese student Ah Lum and another Lieaou Ah See, the former from Pennsylvania and the

latter from Boston, speculating the latter might be Lin's interpreter. Surviving materials confirm Ah Lum and Lieaou Ah See were two distinct individuals, both studying at the Foreign Mission School in Cornwall, Connecticut, run by the American Board, and both joining Lin Zexu's translation team later.

Between 1823 and 1825, William Botelho (Liaou Ah See) attended this school, which mainly educated Chinese, Hawaiian, and other non-Christian youth. During this period, Lieaou Ah See became the first Chinese convert to Protestantism and adopted the name William Botelho in memory of his benefactor. He was likely among the first Chinese immigrants to abandon their original Chinese name in this manner.[19] His educational background in the United States gave him a solid English foundation, making him an important member of Lin Zexu's translation team.

On September 1, 1823, *The Christian Herald and Seaman's Magazine* published student letters including those of William Alum and William Botelho (Liaou Ah See). Their English levels differed significantly: Alum's writing was plain, monotonous, and grammatically awkward, revealing beginner-level English. By contrast, Lieaou Ah See's letter was coherent, sincere, and demonstrated advanced English proficiency and religious consciousness, reflecting the mission awareness of early Christian overseas students. These linguistic differences provide solid evidence for distinguishing the two, and also reflect their different positions and division of labor in Lin Zexu's translation team.

According to *The Chinese Periodical Press, 1800–1912*, Lin Zexu and Wei Yuan, finding their interpreters insufficient, recruited additional personnel, one being Lieaou Ah See (William Botelho).[20] Carl T. Smith argued that Lieaou Ah See was not Lin's interpreter, claiming the position was held by William Alum, reasoning that Alum studied at the Foreign Mission School and returned to China in 1825, later teaching English in Guangzhou firms before being hired by Lin in 1839.[21] This dispute further shows the importance of these two members in the translation team and the need for in-depth textual research on the team members.

However, a firsthand Western account dated December 16, 1839, overturned this conclusion. It detailed Lin Zexu's meeting with Sunda survivors and explicitly named four private interpreters: Yuan Dehui, Lieaou Ah See (William Botelho), Leang Tsin-tin, and Aman. It further noted Lieaou Ah See's educational background: "Next is Lieaou Ah See, a dignified man, English name William Botelho. He studied in Connecticut and Philadelphia, one of the earliest Chinese educated in America." [22] This firsthand, contemporaneous document carries higher historical credibility than later scholarly speculation, confirming that Lieaou Ah See was indeed a core member of Lin's translation team, handling foreign affairs and document translation. Combined with ABCFM archives, it can be confirmed that both Lieaou Ah See and Alum were members of the translation team, undertaking different translation and auxiliary tasks.

1.4 Leang Tsin-tin

Leang Tsin-tin (1820–1862) was a core member of Lin Zexu's translation team, the son of the American missionary Leang Afa. In 1819, Leang Afa fled to Malacca to avoid persecution for missionary work and worked with Robert Morrison and Joshua Marshman on printing Chinese Bible translations. Leang Tsin-tin was born in 1820; his father prayed gratefully that he would become virtuous, scripturally literate, and evangelical. In November 1823, Leang Afa requested Morrison to baptize the infant, and the ceremony was held at the British Huang Mengyan

factory in Guangzhou's Thirteen Factories area. His unique family background and religious education laid a solid foundation for his linguistic ability and later work in the translation team.

Leang Tsin-tin's religious education marked the formation of the first generation of missionary interpreters in modern China. In childhood, he studied the Bible with Choo Ang's son. In October 1830, Bridgman wrote in his diary that Leang Afa visited, hoping Leang Tsin-tin could study English and the Bible under him to assist future Bible revision.[23] This training enabled him to master English and other languages, becoming a key reserve talent for Lin Zexu's translation team.

In 1831, Leang Tsin-tin was placed under Bridgman's care to learn English. Bridgman placed high hopes on him, teaching not only English but also Hebrew and Greek. By April 1833, he could independently translate the New Testament; in 1834, he began Greek, receiving systematic linguistic training at rapid progress. In 1834, fleeing persecution with his father, he went to Singapore and continued his studies with support from the Morrison Education Society in Macao. His systematic linguistic training made him one of the most capable members of Lin Zexu's translation team.

In 1836, Walter Henry Medhurst met Leang Tsin-tin in Singapore and predicted he would greatly contribute to missionary work and Bible revision.[24] After returning to Guangdong in 1837, he continued studying English under Bridgman and earned high praise from missionaries. In 1839, when Lin Zexu ordered foreign employees to leave Guangdong, Leang Tsin-tin took refuge in Macao at the home of Charles W. King.[25] Learning of this, Lin Zexu specially recruited him with a generous monthly salary of 10 to 12 taels, officially welcoming him into the translation team.

From May 1839 to December 1840, Leang Tsin-tin served in Lin's entourage for about 18 months as one of the core interpreters of the translation team. He translated voluminous English newspapers and books, most notably Hugh Murray's *Cyclopaedia of Geography* (London, 1836). His translation covered nearly half the work, including geography, ethnic groups, and voyages, and was later adopted by Wei Yuan into *Illustrated Treatise on the Maritime Kingdoms*, forming part of *Records of the Four Continents*. He also translated *The Fan-Qui in China* in 1836–1837 by C. Toogood Downing, parts of which Wei Yuan cited as "Foreign Comments on Chinese Affairs" in *Illustrated Treatise on the Maritime Kingdoms*. [26] His translation work made important contributions to the Qing government's understanding of the West.

Leang Tsin-tin translated various English newspapers in Macao and participated in annotating and drafting documents including *Collected Statutes of the Great Qing*. His translation covered political, religious, and public affairs. He also contributed extensively to Bridgman's *The Chinese Repository*. Still in his teens, he possessed remarkable scholarship and linguistic ability, becoming one of Lin Zexu's most trusted members of the translation team. His work responded to Qing diplomatic needs while serving as a bridge for Western missionary knowledge to enter late Qing political institutions.

1.5 The Unnamed Interpreter

Besides the above-mentioned core members, *The Chinese Periodical Press, 1800–1912* records another unnamed interpreter, a student of the Morrison Education Society School, who was also a member of Lin Zexu's

translation team. Principal Samuel R. Brown reported that in spring 1839, Lin Zexu earnestly persuaded and promised rewards to recruit this student into his service.[27] Merchant Lancelot Dent noted that Lin “induced” one of the school’s brightest and most advanced students to work exclusively for him translating English newspapers and books during his stay in Guangdong. This unnamed student, though not recorded in detail, was an indispensable part of the translation team.

Missionary archives show some of this student’s translations were included in Lin’s memorials to the throne. Treated generously by Lin, this interpreter continued studying Chinese literature, history, and English as instructed after Lin’s departure. This detail reflects Lin Zexu’s early awareness of cross-cultural training, emphasizing balanced cultural learning. Though the student’s name is lost, his background confirms the Morrison Education Society and its missionary network as key human resources for Lin’s translation team, and also shows that the translation team had a certain scale and hierarchical division of labor.

The recruitment of these bilingual, cross-culturally competent members into the official translation team in the late 1830s broke the traditional monopoly of interpreters and compradors, marking the institutionalization and academicization of modern Chinese translation institutions. Each member of the translation team, with their own strengths and characteristics, worked together to promote the smooth progress of translation work, laying a foundation for the continuity of translation work after the team’s dissolution.

II. THE CONTINUITY OF TRANSLATION WORK OF LIN ZEXU’S TRANSLATION TEAM MEMBERS AFTER HIS DISMISSAL

In 1840 (the 20th year of the Daoguang reign), Lin Zexu was exiled to Yili, and his translation team disbanded. The court ordered him to remain temporarily in Guangdong to assist his successor, Imperial Commissioner Qishan, with follow-up affairs. During this period, Lin retained some team members as a private entourage, transforming the translation office into a semi-official body for private intelligence and diplomatic functions. Although the translation team was formally dissolved, its members did not stop their translation activities, and the continuity of their translation work became an important part of the development of modern Chinese translation history.

A December 1840 report by *London Missionary Society* (LMS) missionaries noted: “Yuan Dehui no longer receives official salary, but Lin Zexu still keeps him in his private entourage, intending to recommend him to the new Viceroy of Liangguang, Qishan.” This record shows: first, even after dismissal, Lin Zexu retained most translation resources and kept part of his original team members; second, the team members shifted from official staff to private aides, marking a transition in late Qing translation work from state-driven to civilian and semi-civilian systems, which also laid the foundation for the continuity of their translation work.

On November 29, 1840, Bridgman wrote to a friend: “My dear student Yuan Dehui has visited; he has become a steady young man. Since serving Commissioner Lin, his knowledge has advanced greatly, and his faith has strengthened. He is intelligent, gentle, clear-minded, and increasingly eager to study.”[28] This letter provides firsthand evidence of the translation team members’ status and their continuous dedication to translation-related work after Lin’s dismissal. Though scattered, the academic and religious bonds between team members and

missionaries persisted, sustaining translation in religious, linguistic, and diplomatic fields—forming an invisible historical thread of Sino-Western translation in the late Qing, and embodying the continuity of the translation team's work.

2.1 Yuan Dehui's Post-Dismissal Translation Activities

As a core member of Lin Zexu's translation team, Yuan Dehui continued to engage in translation work after the team's dissolution, maintaining the continuity of his translation career. In spring 1840, Yuan Dehui married, increasing family responsibilities. His monthly salary of 10–12 dollars under Lin ended with the team's dissolution, leaving him temporarily unemployed. He returned to his father's home, and his father urged him to go into business for a living. Bridgman and John Robert Morrison each provided six dollars to support him and arranged rural accommodation for him to study English and Hebrew under his uncle. Though temporarily out of office, Yuan Dehui was repeatedly employed by local officials to undertake translation tasks related to foreign affairs, proving his foreign-affairs talent and translation ability were highly valued, and his translation work continued.

In early 1842, Yuan Dehui returned to Macao and studied under Bridgman for several months, further improving his translation ability. In July of the same year, he was hired as an interpreter for the Hong Kong Police with a monthly salary of fifty dollars. Though temporary, the generous pay allowed him to buy land in Lower Bazaar for 115 dollars; his father purchased adjacent land in 1844. During his tenure as a police interpreter, he undertook a large number of translation tasks involving public security and foreign-related affairs, continuing his translation work.

In 1844, when U.S. Commissioner Caleb Cushing arrived to negotiate a treaty, Bridgman was employed as secretary and participated in drafting and translating the agreement. Yuan Dehui, relying on his rich translation experience as a former member of Lin Zexu's translation team, assisted with diplomatic documents and contributed to translating and revising the Sino-American Treaty of Wanghia. After the treaty was signed on July 3, Yuan Dehui resigned from missionary service and entered the service of Pan Shicheng, a former merchant and key aide to Imperial Commissioner Qiying, who advocated Sino-Western academic translation and employed Yuan to organize and translate foreign materials. Thus Yuan Dehui came to serve the Qing court again, continuing his official translation work and inheriting the translation mission of Lin Zexu's translation team.

Unaccustomed to Hong Kong's colonial environment, Yuan and his father soon resigned and returned to missionary circles. Bridgman regretted his departure, writing: "This young man perhaps understood the true meaning of Christian faith more deeply than any Chinese at that time. Yet his heart was entangled with worldly affairs, often anxious between conscience and faith. He read the Bible daily and knew the necessity of rebirth."^[29] Bridgman continued writing weekly letters, hoping he would return fully to religious life. Even in missionary circles, Yuan Dehui did not give up translation work, and continued to engage in the translation and dissemination of religious documents.

In 1845, Bridgman moved from Hong Kong to Guangzhou, and the two reunited. Bridgman wrote: "As far as I know, Yuan Dehui conducts himself properly, keeps the Sabbath, is honest and studious. He has a son and daughter with his wife; he wishes to dedicate them to the Lord and requests baptism for them."^[30] During this

period, Yuan Dehui continued to assist Bridgman in translation work, mainly focusing on religious document translation, which was a continuation of his translation work in Lin Zexu's team.

In 1846, Yuan Dehui left the Pan family and returned to Bridgman to resume translation and church work. George H. McNeur mistakenly claimed he no longer participated in religious affairs,[31] but Bridgman's letters from 1847 and 1848 confirm Yuan continued assisting with missionary and Bible revision work, undertaking a large number of translation tasks and maintaining the continuity of his translation career.

In 1848, when Bridgman moved to Shanghai as a member of the Chinese Bible Revision Committee, Yuan Dehui accompanied him to participate in translation and collation. In 1859, Yuan Dehui formally rejoined the church and was baptized by Bridgman personally. Later, he assisted Horatio Nelson Lay in establishing the Chinese Maritime Customs Service, serving as Chief Clerk and Deputy Superintendent of Chaozhou Customs, handling translated documents and foreign correspondence. In 1862, Yuan Dehui resigned due to illness and returned to Guangdong, where he died shortly afterward at the age of forty-two. Throughout his life, Yuan Dehui maintained his dedication to translation work, embodying the continuity of the translation spirit of Lin Zexu's translation team.

2.2 Leang Tsin-tin's Post-Dismissal Translation Activities

Leang Tsin-tin, another core member of Lin Zexu's translation team, also continued his translation work after the team's dissolution, making important contributions to the continuity of the team's translation cause. After Lin Zexu's dismissal in 1842, Leang Tsin-tin joined the Hong Kong Police as an interpreter, undertaking foreign-related translation tasks, which was a natural continuation of his translation work in the team. Before leaving, Lin intended to recommend Leang to Viceroy Qiying, but Leang did not immediately accept. He briefly considered going into business, but Bridgman strongly discouraged this and subsidized him with John Robert Morrison, enabling him to continue his translation-related work.

In 1844, when Bridgman served as translator for the U.S. diplomatic mission assisting Caleb Cushing in negotiating the Treaty of Wanghia, Leang Tsin-tin accompanied him, assisting in translation work and drawing on his experience from Lin Zexu's translation team to ensure the smooth progress of the treaty negotiation and translation. Later, introduced by salt merchant Pan Shicheng, Leang worked for Imperial Commissioner Qiying until 1847, when he rejoined Bridgman, continuing his translation career.

In a March 1847 letter, Bridgman noted: "Leang Tsin-tin, son of Leang Afa, is studying Chinese religions and plans to write on his faith." [32] Bridgman recorded: "I have Leang Tsin-tin draft the English translation and read it aloud; I revise it against the Greek original, and Yuan Dehui then produces the best Chinese version and copies it neatly." [33] To retain him, Bridgman personally paid a monthly salary of twelve dollars—matching Lin's remuneration—and arranged housing. During this period, Leang Tsin-tin focused on religious document translation and Bible revision, continuing his translation work and maintaining close cooperation with former team member Yuan Dehui.

In 1847, Bridgman took him to Shanghai to participate in the Delegates' Version Bible revision.[34] In 1854, he accompanied Bridgman and U.S. Minister Robert M. McLane to visit the Taiping Heavenly Capital. The same year, he joined British and American ministers in northward treaty-renegotiation missions to Tianjin, Huang Mengyan

undertaking important translation tasks in these foreign-related activities. His translation ability, honed in Lin Zexu's translation team, was fully demonstrated in these activities.

Leang Tsin-tin later transferred to the customs service, assisting Horatio Nelson Lay in establishing stations, eventually serving as Deputy Commissioner of Chaozhou. In this position, he continued to handle translated documents and foreign correspondence, undertaking a large number of translation tasks related to foreign trade and customs management. In 1862, in poor health, he resigned and returned to Guangzhou, where he died young at the age of forty-two. Like Yuan Dehui, Leang Tsin-tin spent his entire life engaged in translation-related work, inheriting and carrying forward the translation mission of Lin Zexu's translation team, and ensuring the continuity of the team's translation work.

2.3 The Split and Overall Continuity of the Translation Team Members

It can thus be concluded that after the dissolution of Lin Zexu's translation team, its former members gradually split into two groups, but their translation work remained continuous on the whole. One group integrated into the missionary system, engaging in religious and educational translation, represented by Leang Tsin-tin and Yuan Dehui in their later years, who focused on Bible revision and religious document translation, promoting the spread of Western religious culture and linguistic knowledge in China. The other group entered colonial administration and foreign affairs institutions, serving as linguistic intermediaries in trade and customs, such as Yuan Dehui and Leang Tsin-tin in their middle years, who undertook foreign-related translation tasks in government departments, police and customs, facilitating Sino-Western trade and diplomatic exchanges.

The continuity of the translation work of the team members not only promoted the exchange of Sino-Western culture but also laid an important foundation for the development of modern Chinese translation cause. Although the translation team was formally dissolved, the professional quality and translation experience of its members were inherited and carried forward in various fields, forming a continuous influence on modern Chinese translation history. The cooperation and inheritance between team members also ensured that the translation spirit and professional ability of Lin Zexu's translation team were not lost, and continued to play a role in the process of Sino-Western cultural exchanges.

III. CONCLUSION

Lin Zexu's translation team, established in 1839, was the first official professional translation team in modern China, and its members were the pioneers of modern Chinese official translation work. The establishment of the translation team and its translation activities were an important attempt by the Qing government to understand the West in the context of the Opium War, which played a positive role in breaking the isolation of the Qing court and promoting the spread of Western culture and knowledge in China. Each member of the team, with their own linguistic advantages and professional characteristics, worked together to complete a large number of translation tasks, laying a foundation for China's modernization drive.

Through the textual research on the identities of the members of Lin Zexu's translation team, it is corrected that the long-standing academic view that "there were only four members in the translation team." It is confirmed that there were at least five members in the team, including Aman, Yuan Dehui, Lieaou Ah See (William Huang Mengyan

Botelho), Leang Tsin-tin, Alum, and an unnamed student from the Morrison Education Society School. These team members, with different backgrounds and linguistic abilities, undertook different translation and auxiliary tasks, forming a relatively complete translation team and making important contributions to the translation work of the team.

After Lin Zexu was dismissed and exiled, the translation team was dissolved, but the members of the translation team did not stop their translation activities. They continued their translation work through various paths, forming two main development directions: integrating into the missionary system and engaging in religious and educational translation; entering the colonial administration and foreign affairs institutions and becoming linguistic intermediaries in trade and customs. Their transregional mobility and continuous translation activities formed an invisible historical thread of Sino-Western translation in the late Qing Dynasty, which not only promoted the deepening of Sino-Western cultural exchanges but also laid the foundation for the institutionalization and academicization of modern Chinese translation institutions.

The experiences of Lin Zexu's translation team members and the continuity of their translation work reflect the changes in Sino-Western relations and the transformation of China's foreign concepts in the early stage of modern China. Their experiences show that in the process of modern China's integration into the world, translators, as cross-cultural communicators, played an irreplaceable role. At the same time, the research on Lin Zexu's translation team members and the continuity of their translation work also provides important historical reference for the study of modern Chinese translation history, Sino-Western cultural exchange history, and modern Chinese diplomatic history, and has important academic value for the inheritance and development of modern Chinese translation cause.

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