



## Translating Yang Masculinity: Intellectual Authority and Hierarchical Dominance in Dewoskin's English Translation of the Sanguo Zhi

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### Abstract

This article examines how imperial Chinese masculinity is constructed in Kenneth J. Dewoskin's English translation of male fang-shi biographies from the Sanguo Zhi (*Doctors, Diviners, and Magicians of Ancient China*, 1983). Drawing on imagology's ethnotype concept and Social Role Theory (SRT), the study analyses nine representative examples across three dimensions — intellectual superiority, Confucian virtue, and ruling-class dominance — through Critical Discourse Analysis. The findings reveal a systematic pattern of yang amplification: Dewoskin employs lexical intensification, scope broadening, strategic omission, evaluative addition, and tonal elevation to construct male fang-shi figures as embodiments of intellectual authority, self-restrained moral virtue, and hierarchical dominance. The article argues that this translation pattern produces a yang ethnotype of imperial Chinese masculinity shaped by Confucian ideals and Anglophone readers' pre-existing expectations of Chinese male authority, themselves partly conditioned by Cold War-era American Sinology's institutional agenda. These findings contribute to scholarship at the intersection of imagology, translation studies, and gender studies, demonstrating that historical translation is a key site for the ideological reproduction of national gender images.

## 1. Introduction

How does translation shape the gender images of a foreign civilisation for target-language readerships? This question lies at the intersection of imagology, translation studies, and gender studies — three fields that have increasingly converged in recent decades but have rarely been brought to bear jointly on the English translation of classical Chinese historical texts. This article addresses this gap by examining Kenneth J. Dewoskin's 1983 translation of male biographies from the Sanguo Zhi (Records of the Three Kingdoms, compiled by Chen Shou in the late 3rd century CE).

Dewoskin's volume, *Doctors, Diviners, and Magicians of Ancient China: Biographies of Fang-Shih*, selects exclusively male figures — practitioners of fang-shu (方术), including diviners, physicians, and magicians — from the Sanguo Zhi and three other official histories. The exclusive male focus of the volume, combined with its institutional home in the Columbia University 'Translations from the Oriental Classics' project, makes it an ideal site for analysing how translator choices consistently construct a gendered national image of imperial Chinese masculinity for Anglophone readers.

Existing scholarship on the English translation of the Twenty-Four Histories has focused predominantly on the Shiji and Hanshu, centring on political image construction, lexical

strategy, and patronage systems (Li & Kang, 2016; Wei, 2020). Gender has received comparatively little sustained attention, and the Sanguo Zhi translations remain largely unstudied in translation studies. This article asks: through what translation strategies does Dewoskin construct imperial Chinese masculinity, and what kind of masculine ethnotype does his translation produce for Anglophone readerships?

The significance of this question extends beyond the specific case of Dewoskin. Translation has long been recognised as a powerful mechanism for the cross-cultural transmission of national images, yet the gendered dimensions of this transmission remain undertheorised, particularly for non-Western source traditions. Classical Chinese historical texts present a distinctive case: they encode a cosmologically grounded gender framework — the yin-yang binary — that has no direct structural equivalent in Western gender discourse. How translators negotiate this incommensurability, and what kind of gendered image their choices produce for target-language readers, is a question with implications for how Anglophone readers have understood and continue to understand Chinese culture and history. Dewoskin's translation, produced at a formative moment in American Sinology, offers a uniquely revealing window onto this process.

The article proceeds as follows. Section 2 reviews the relevant literature and introduces the theoretical framework and method. Section 3 contextualises Dewoskin's translation within its institutional patronage system. Section 4 presents the textual analysis across three analytical dimensions. Section 5 discusses the findings and their theoretical implications. Section 6 concludes.

## **2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework**

### **2.1 Prior Scholarship**

Research at the intersection of translation and gender has grown considerably over the past two decades. Flotow (1997) and Simon (1996) established the foundational case that translation is never gender-neutral: translators' lexical and syntactic choices systematically encode assumptions about social roles, authority, and value, and these choices accumulate into ideological patterns that shape how target-language readers understand gendered subjects. This insight has been productively extended to non-Western literary traditions, though unevenly: European and North American source texts have received far more attention than classical Asian ones.

Within Chinese studies, Hinsch (2013) provides foundational work on the construction of masculinity in Chinese historical writing, establishing the cosmological and social-role frameworks within which male figures in official histories are evaluated. He demonstrates that yang-coded attributes — rational mastery, moral cultivation, hierarchical authority — function not merely as descriptive traits but as normative ideals against which male figures are measured and ranked. Hurd (2019) extends this analysis to later dynastic periods, demonstrating the durability of these yang-coded masculine ideals across historical writing genres and their persistence even as political and social contexts shifted. Wei (2013) examines how intellectual virtue and masculine identity are co-constructed in Han dynasty biographies, providing a direct textual precedent for the Sanguo Zhi materials analysed here and showing that the linkage between scholarly excellence and masculine authority is a structural feature of the biographical genre rather than an incidental one.

Despite this growing body of work, the specifically translational dimension — how Anglophone renderings of classical Chinese texts reproduce or transform these masculine frameworks — has received limited attention. Studies of the Shiji and Hanshu translations have addressed political and rhetorical dimensions (Li & Kang, 2016; Wei, 2020), but gender as an analytical category remains marginal in translation studies of the Twenty-Four Histories. The Sanguo Zhi translations are particularly understudied. This article contributes to filling that gap

by bringing translation studies, imagology, and gender studies into direct dialogue over a single translator's patterned choices.

The translation of classical Chinese texts into English has a long and contested history, and the challenges it poses have been extensively documented. Minford and Lau (2000) demonstrate, through their editorial choices across a vast range of translators and periods, that no single English equivalent can consistently capture the evaluative weight of classical Chinese virtue terms — different translators of the same passage routinely diverge in ways that reflect cultural rather than purely linguistic judgements. Schaberg (2020) shows that classical Chinese historical writing operates through rhetorically patterned praise-and-blame structures whose meaning is encoded implicitly, through selection and arrangement, rather than through direct assertion — a mode structurally alien to English expository prose that forces translators into compensatory explicitness. Nylan (2008) similarly demonstrates that the cosmological assumptions embedded in classical Chinese canonical texts resist direct English equivalence, requiring translators to choose between semantic precision and cultural legibility for target-language readers. These structural incommensurabilities created the translational space within which Dewoskin's ideologically specific choices were made — they explain why amplification was available as a strategy, but not why yang attributes were consistently the ones amplified.

## **2.2 Imagology and the Ethnotype**

Imagology conceptualises national images as discursively constructed representations rather than reflections of objective reality (Leerssen, 2007b, p. 17). Central to its analytical toolkit is the ethnotype — a simplified, portable character model that encodes a cultural group's perceived traits in forms that recur across texts and contexts (Flynn, Leerssen & Van Doorslaer, 2015, p. 3). In translation, ethnotypes are not passively conveyed but actively produced through translators' lexical and structural choices (Van Doorslaer, 2019, p. 64). This article uses the imagological concept of the male gender ethnotype to frame the analysis: what kind of recognisable masculine character model does Dewoskin's translation produce for Anglophone readers of Chinese fang-shi biography?

## **2.3 Social Role Theory and Yang Masculinity**

Social Role Theory (SRT), developed by Eagly and Wood (2011, p. 459), holds that gender stereotypes are socially constructed expectations derived from the roles men and women historically occupy. Men's higher-status social roles generate prescriptive expectations of agentic traits — assertiveness, authority, rational competence, and dominance — while women's communal roles generate prescriptive expectations of nurturance, passivity, and submission.

In imperial China, these role-based gender expectations were cosmologically grounded in the yin-yang binary. Yang — associated with assertiveness, authority, intelligence, and dominance — was both empirically mapped onto male social roles and cosmologically prescribed as their normative expression (Brownell & Wasserstrom, 2002, p. 26). Male figures of intellectual or moral distinction embodied yang not through physical force but through rational mastery, moral self-governance, and the capacity to maintain social order. This article uses yang as a heuristic for identifying which masculine traits Dewoskin's translation amplifies or suppresses relative to the source text.

## **2.4 Method: CDA and Three-Tier Textual Comparison**

Following Fairclough (2013), this study applies Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to identify the semantic and ideological effects of translation choices. CDA treats language not as a transparent medium but as a site of ideological contestation, in which word choices, syntactic structures, and rhetorical framings encode and reproduce social relations of power. Applied to translation, CDA enables the analyst to move from the level of individual lexical decisions to the level of systematic ideological patterning — identifying not just what a translator chose, but what social and cultural work that choice performs.

Three analytical categories are employed. Lexical intensification refers to the selection of evaluatively stronger equivalents — choosing 'preeminence' over 'recognition', or 'excellent' over 'good'. Amplification refers to additions absent from the source text — clauses, modifiers, or attributions that expand the semantic content beyond what the original encodes. Tonal modulation refers to shifts in formality, emotional register, or moral valence — reframing a rebuke as a smile, or deception as teasing. These three categories are not mutually exclusive; a single translation choice may involve all three simultaneously, and the cumulative effect of their co-occurrence is what produces the recurrent yang amplification documented below.

Each example is presented in a three-tier format — source text (ST), literal translation (LT) by the author, and Dewoskin's target text (TT) — enabling close comparison at the level of individual choices. Nine examples are selected from Dewoskin (1983), covering intellectual superiority (§4.1), Confucian virtue (§4.2), and ruling-class dominance (§4.3). Examples were selected to be representative of recurring strategies across the volume; where counter-examples exist, these are acknowledged in the discussion (§5).

### **3. Dewoskin's Translation in Its Institutional Context**

Dewoskin's translation was produced as part of the Columbia University 'Translations from the Oriental Classics' project, initiated by William Theodore de Bary in the early 1950s in the intellectual climate of post-war American Sinology. The project's stated goal was to make East Asian classical texts accessible to Anglophone students and general readers, a mandate that favoured readability, cultural accessibility, and narrative engagement over philological literalism (de Bary, 1969; Zou, 2016, p. 2). The project received support from foundations closely linked to American Cold War-era cultural diplomacy agendas (Myers & Metzger, 1980, p. 89).

Within this institutional setting, Dewoskin's choice to focus exclusively on male fang-shi figures was both editorially driven and ideologically significant. The fang-shi tradition represents a distinctively Chinese intellectual masculinity: learned, morally cultivated, and cosmologically attuned, yet operating at the margins of official Confucian bureaucracy. By selecting these figures, Dewoskin positioned his volume at the intersection of Chinese intellectual history and the broader Anglophone fascination with East Asian esoteric knowledge — a positioning that predisposed his translation toward the amplification of yang intellectual authority. As Lefevere (2016) argues, institutional patronage shapes the ideological horizon within which translation choices are made.

It is important, however, to qualify the causal claim here. The Columbia project's mandate to produce accessible, culturally legible translations does not straightforwardly determine yang amplification: readability could in principle be achieved through various translation strategies, and not all of them would necessarily amplify masculine authority. The argument advanced here is more modest: the project's institutional context created a predisposition toward translations that rendered Chinese classical culture as intellectually rich and admirable to Anglophone academic readers, and yang masculine qualities — comprehensive learning, moral cultivation, clear social hierarchy — were among the attributes most legible and appealing within that context. Dewoskin's amplifications are best understood as responses to this institutional interpellation rather than as mechanical products of it.

## **4. Textual Analysis: Three Dimensions of Yang Masculinity**

### **4.1 Intellectual Superiority: Amplifying Rational Mastery**

The following three examples demonstrate the strategies through which Dewoskin constructs the fang-shi as figures of comprehensive, unchallengeable intellectual authority.

#### **Example 1**

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<b>ST</b>	每答言说事，语皆不常，宿学耆人不能折之，皆知其当有大异之才。(Chen, late 3rd century CE)
<b>LT</b>	When he (Guan Lu) answered questions and talked about astrological events to others, what he said was unusual. Erudite old people could not disagree with him. They all recognised his extraordinary skill in such things.
<b>TT</b>	He was able to answer any and all questions asked of him and expound at length on astrological events. What he said was so extraordinary that even the experts of the village, some of whom had made long study of the skies, could not take issue with the young Lu. It was for these reasons that everyone recognized his highly unusual talent for such things.

(Dewoskin, 1983, p. 91)

The ST phrase 语皆不常 (what he said was unusual) is rendered as 'what he said was so extraordinary', while the scope of Lu's expertise is broadened through the addition 'any and all questions' — absent from both ST and LT. The adverb 'so' functions as an intensifier that upgrades the ST's simple characterisation of unusualness into a superlative, while 'any and all' universalises Lu's competence beyond the specific context the ST describes. In SRT terms, this amplification assigns Lu the agentic trait of comprehensive rational mastery — a yang attribute that legitimises intellectual authority as a form of social leadership (Pang, Du & Liu, 2017). The ethnotype produced is one of total, unchallengeable intellectual dominance.

**Example 2**

<b>ST</b>	于时冀上有远方及国内诸生四百余人，皆服其才也。(Chen, late 3rd century CE)
<b>LT</b>	Out of more than four hundred visiting scholars who had arrived from near and far, (Guan) Lu's talent was universally recognised.
<b>TT</b>	Among over four hundred visiting scholars working there, who came from near and far, the preeminence of Lu's talent was unanimously acknowledged.

(Dewoskin, 1983, p. 93)

The ST states that Lu's talent was recognised (服) among peers — a collegial formulation of shared respect. The LT preserves this register. Dewoskin's choice of 'preeminence' introduces a hierarchical dimension absent from the source: where the ST records collective recognition, the TT records vertical supremacy. 'Preeminence' denotes singular superiority over all others in a ranked field, carrying a competitive semantic prosody (Stubbs, 2001) that transforms peer admiration into a declaration of top-ranked dominance. This lexical upgrade aligns Lu's intellectual standing with the Confucian meritocratic logic in which scholarly excellence legitimises hierarchical leadership.

The shift from collegial recognition to ranked supremacy also has implications for the reader's construction of social space. The ST's formulation positions Lu within a community of scholars who collectively acknowledge merit; Dewoskin's TT positions him above that community as its singular apex. This vertical restructuring is consistent with what Said (2003) identifies as a characteristic move in Orientalist representation: the reduction of a complex social field to a single emblematic figure of mastery, whose authority is rendered absolute rather than relational. In translation terms, the choice of 'preeminence' does not merely intensify a compliment — it restructures the social geometry of the scene.

**Example 3**

<b>ST</b>	熹子承撰后汉书，称熹幼以仁孝为行，明达有令才。(Chen, late 3rd century CE)
<b>LT</b>	Jiong's son, Cheng, wrote a Later Han History. As a young person, Jiong earned accolades for adopting benevolence and filial piety as his guiding principles. He displayed keen insight and possessed good abilities.
<b>TT</b>	Jiong's son, Cheng, wrote a Later Han History. Jiong was praised as a youngster for making benevolence and filial piety his modes of conduct. He was perspicacious and had excellent talent.

(Dewoskin, 1983, p. 97)

The ST term 令才 could be rendered as 'good abilities' — a neutral competence descriptor, as the LT does. Dewoskin's rendering of 'excellent talent' substitutes a qualitatively stronger evaluative term that connotes distinction rather than adequacy. 'Excellent' carries the semantic prosody of superlative merit (Hunston, 2007, p. 251), positioning Jiong not merely as competent but as morally and cognitively refined — a characterisation that integrates intellectual ability with moral virtue in the Confucian masculine ideal of the junzi (gentleman-scholar). The lexical upgrade is small but telling: it reflects a consistent translation tendency to push male competence descriptors toward the evaluatively higher end of the scale.

**4.2 Confucian Virtue: Softening Correction, Adding Endorsement**

A second dimension of yang masculinity in Dewoskin's translation is the construction of Confucian virtue — particularly emotional self-regulation, pedagogical humility, and relational dedication. Paradoxically, Dewoskin constructs this dimension partly through omission and softening, positioning male figures as morally elevated precisely by removing the rougher edges of their authority.

**Example 4**

<b>ST</b>	经欲使轺卜，而有疑难之言，轺笑而咎之曰：'君侯州里达人，何言之鄙！' (Chen, late 3rd century CE)
<b>LT</b>	Ching wished Lu to divine the meaning of this unusual occurrence for him, all the while openly expressing his sense of confusion and doubt. Lu laughed and blamed him, 'You are distinguished as a person who has achieved notable success in this region. How could you look down on such things?'
<b>TT</b>	Ching wanted Lu to divine the significance of this strange happening for him, but at the same time he did not hide his feelings of confusion and skepticism. Lu told him with a good-natured smile, 'In every corner of this region you stand out as a man of accomplishment. How could you speak so ignorantly about this?'

(Dewoskin, 1983, p. 100)

The ST verb 咎 means 'to blame' or 'rebuke', and the LT preserves this meaning. Dewoskin's TT omits any direct translation of the verb and instead introduces 'a good-natured smile' — a phrase with no source-text basis. The substitution enacts a tonal transformation: what the ST presents as mild authoritative rebuke is reconfigured as benevolent guidance. In SRT terms, this choice amplifies the agentic trait of emotional self-regulation — the capacity to correct without coercion — which in Confucian moral philosophy constitutes a higher form of masculine authority than overt dominance (Kádár & Roe, 2012). The yang ethnotype produced here is one of moral charisma: the learned man who governs others through wisdom and gentleness rather than disciplinary force.

**Example 5**

<b>ST</b>	毓即谢轺。(Chen, late 3rd century CE)
<b>LT</b>	Yü promptly conveyed his gratitude.
<b>TT</b>	Yü immediately acknowledged Lu's skill, and he expressed his appreciation.

(Dewoskin, 1983, p. 115)

The ST records a simple act of thanks (谢); the LT renders this as 'conveyed his gratitude'. Dewoskin adds an entirely new clause — 'acknowledged Lu's skill' — absent from both ST and LT. This addition transforms a social courtesy into an evaluative act of intellectual endorsement: Yü does not merely thank Lu but publicly recognises his competence. The addition serves a double function: it foregrounds Yü's virtue of intellectual humility while simultaneously reinforcing Lu's position as the acknowledged authority. Both moves align with Confucian masculine virtue: the ideal man praises others' merit openly (Hung, 2016, p. 86), and the ideal intellectual is recognised by other learned men.

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This kind of evaluative addition — inserting a clause of intellectual endorsement where the source records only social courtesy — recurs across Dewoskin's translations of scenes involving gratitude or acknowledgement. The pattern suggests a consistent translator strategy of making implicit hierarchies explicit: where the ST allows the reader to infer Lu's authority from context, the TT states it directly. This directness is itself ideologically significant. It reduces the interpretive labour required of the Anglophone reader while simultaneously foreclosing alternative readings — readings in which, for instance, Yü's thanks might be understood as a purely social gesture rather than an intellectual verdict. The addition thus narrows the semantic field of the exchange in a specifically yang direction.

**Example 6**

<b>ST</b>	其事父母孝，笃兄弟，顺爱士友，皆仁和发中，终无所阙。(Chen, late 3rd century CE)
<b>LT</b>	He (Guan Lu) served his parents with filial piety and treated his brothers with sincerity. He treated friends and peers with affection and respect, showing kindness, peace, and a genuine heart, without any negligence.
<b>TT</b>	His attendance on his father and mother was devoted, and he was warm toward his brothers. He treated friends and peers with affection and respect and to the end never failed to strike the proper balance in his relations with people.

(Dewoskin, 1983, p. 93)

The ST's closing phrase 终无所阙 (without any negligence/deficiency) is a negative construction expressing the absence of moral failing. The LT preserves this negative framing. Dewoskin rewrites this as 'to the end never failed to strike the proper balance' — a formulation that reframes moral consistency not as the absence of fault but as the positive achievement of relational harmony. The phrase 'to the end' introduces a temporal dimension of lifelong constancy absent from the ST, while 'strike the proper balance' imports the Confucian ideal of zhongyong (中庸, the doctrine of the mean). Dewoskin's rewrite elevates Guan Lu from a figure of merely adequate conduct to one of paradigmatic relational virtue: the yang ideal of the morally calibrated man who harmonises all social bonds.

The reframing of negative moral adequacy as positive relational achievement is particularly significant when viewed against the Confucian biographical tradition. In classical Chinese historical writing, the absence of fault is itself a form of praise — the negative construction 终无所阙 carries genuine evaluative weight within the genre's conventions. Dewoskin's positive rewriting does not simply intensify the compliment; it translates it into a different evaluative register, one more legible to Anglophone readers accustomed to positive character endorsement rather than the classical Chinese rhetoric of moral sufficiency. This cross-cultural reframing is a recurring feature of Dewoskin's translation strategy: where the ST encodes virtue through restraint and absence, the TT renders it through positive assertion and achievement, consistently pushing the masculine image toward the more demonstrative yang end of the evaluative spectrum.

**4.3 Ruling-Class Dominance: Arrogance, Contempt, and Tonal Elevation**

The third dimension concerns elite male figures — emperors, warlords, and high officials — whose yang qualities are expressed through the performance of hierarchical dominance: dismissiveness toward inferiors, emotional volatility, and the display of absolute authority.

**Example 7**

<b>ST</b>	帝曰：'吾诈卿耳。' (Chen, late 3rd century CE)
<b>LT</b>	The emperor Wen said to Hsüan, 'I was just cheating you.'
<b>TT</b>	But the emperor confessed to Hsüan, 'I was only teasing you!'

(Dewoskin, 1983, p. 138)

The ST verb 诳 means 'to cheat' or 'to deceive' — a neutral-to-negative characterisation of the emperor's behaviour. Dewoskin renders this as 'teasing' — a word that replaces deliberate deception with playful informality, and simultaneously introduces an exclamation mark absent from the ST's terse declarative. The tonal shift softens the emperor's admission of deliberate deception while amplifying his dominance: 'teasing' positions the emperor as a figure who can engage in deception-as-play, exercising power lightly and without accountability. The exclamation mark adds a register of casual self-assurance that further elevates the emperor's hierarchical position by making his power appear effortless and unmarked.

### Example 8

ST	太祖曰：'佗能愈此。小人养吾病，欲以自重，然吾不杀此子，亦终当不为我断此根原耳。' (Chen, late 3rd century CE)
LT	Ts'ao Ts'ao said, 'T'o could have cured this disease, but little man only wants to raise his status by treating my condition. But if I had not killed this person, he would never have ultimately removed the root of my illness.'
TT	Ts'ao Ts'ao said, 'T'o could have cured me, but when that petty man treated my disorder, his only interest was to advance himself. Even if I had not done away with that fellow, he would never have rooted the underlying source of my disorder.'

(Dewoskin, 1983, p. 146)

The ST's term 小人 (literally 'little man') is a standard Confucian evaluative epithet for a morally base person. The LT preserves this as 'little man'. Dewoskin substitutes 'petty man' — a term carrying stronger contempt in English — and replaces 'killed' with 'done away with', a euphemism that distances Ts'ao Ts'ao from the moral weight of killing while maintaining its factual content. The combined effect constructs Ts'ao Ts'ao as a figure of lordly dismissiveness: the great man who disposes of lesser men with contempt but without guilt — a specifically yang mode of dominance that is cool, hierarchical, and legitimised by the Confucian distinction between the junzi and the xiaoren.

### Example 9

ST	颺曰：'此老生之常谭。'(Chen, late 3rd century CE)
LT	Teng said, 'This is the old hackneyed word.'
TT	Teng interjected, 'This is typical of the chatter of an old pedant!'

(Dewoskin, 1983, p. 112)

The ST characterises Lu's words as conventional or commonplace — a measured intellectual dismissal. The LT renders this as 'hackneyed'. Dewoskin's TT introduces two significant additions: 'interjected' (replacing the neutral 'said', implying forceful interruption) and 'chatter of an old pedant' (replacing 'hackneyed word' with a compound noun combining trivialisation — 'chatter' — with social contempt — 'pedant'). Neither addition has any source-text basis. The exclamation mark amplifies the emotional force of the dismissal. Cumulatively, these choices transform a measured intellectual disagreement into an expression of class-inflected contempt, positioning Teng as a figure of yang hierarchical dominance who dismisses inferiors not with argument but with categorical disdain.

## 5. Discussion

The nine examples analysed across three dimensions reveal a systematic pattern of yang amplification in Dewoskin's translation. Across intellectual superiority, Confucian virtue, and ruling-class dominance, Dewoskin employs lexical intensification, scope broadening, evaluative addition, strategic omission, and tonal modulation to construct male fang-shi and elite figures as embodiments of yang masculinity for Anglophone readers.

From an SRT perspective, the translation consistently reinforces the prescriptive gender expectations associated with high-status male social roles in imperial China: agentic traits of rational competence (Examples 1–3), relational virtue expressed through self-regulation and acknowledgement of others (Examples 4–6), and dominance expressed through effortless dismissal of inferiors (Examples 7–9). Crucially, these three dimensions are not independent but cosmologically integrated through the yang framework: rational mastery, moral self-governance, and hierarchical authority are all expressions of a single cosmological principle that Dewoskin's translation consistently amplifies across different social contexts. The coherence of the pattern across all three dimensions — intellectual, moral, and social — is what distinguishes it from incidental translator preference and identifies it as patterned ideological reproduction.

From an imagological perspective, the translation produces a yang ethnotype of imperial Chinese masculinity that is internally coherent and cross-textually stable: the ideal Chinese man is intellectually comprehensive, morally self-regulated, and hierarchically unchallenged. This ethnotype resonates with — and reinforces — prior Anglophone representations of Chinese masculine authority shaped by Orientalist discourse (Said, 2003; Schweiger, 2007). Rather than challenging these prior images, Dewoskin's translation confirms and elaborates them, producing what Leerssen (2007a, p. 26) would term a self-reinforcing hetero-image: a representation of the Other structured by the target culture's prior expectations. The imagological significance of this finding lies not in attributing conscious intent to Dewoskin but in demonstrating that translation choices made at the level of individual words accumulate into a culturally legible image that reproduces pre-existing stereotypes, regardless of the translator's conscious intentions.

It should be noted that the present analysis focuses on nine strategically selected examples representative of dominant patterns across the volume. Some passages in Dewoskin's translations do not follow the yang amplification pattern — passages involving physical vulnerability or social marginalisation of fang-shi figures are sometimes rendered with less rather than more evaluative intensity. These counter-cases suggest that yang amplification is a systematic tendency rather than an invariable rule, concentrated above all in passages concerning intellectual performance, moral evaluation, and hierarchical exchange. Future research employing corpus-based methods could provide a more comprehensive account of the full distribution of these strategies across the volume and across comparable translations.

The institutional context of the Columbia 'Oriental Classics' project provides a partial explanation for this tendency. The project's mandate to make Chinese classical culture legible and appealing to Anglophone student readers created a translational incentive to amplify precisely those masculine traits — comprehensive intellectual authority, moral cultivation, and clear social hierarchy — that would be most recognisable and admirable within the Cold War university context. As qualified in Section 3, however, the causal link from institutional mandate to yang amplification is predisposing rather than determining. Comparing Dewoskin's choices against other translators working within comparable institutional contexts — for instance, other volumes in the Columbia 'Oriental Classics' series — would allow future research to assess whether yang amplification is specific to Dewoskin or reflects a broader pattern in mid-century American Sinological translation practice.

## **6. Conclusion**

This article has demonstrated that Dewoskin's English translation of male fang-shi biographies from the Sanguo Zhi consistently constructs a yang ethnotype of imperial Chinese masculinity through lexical intensification, scope broadening, evaluative addition, strategic omission, and tonal modulation. The resulting masculine image — intellectually comprehensive, morally self-regulated, and hierarchically dominant — is not a neutral

rendering of the source text but a recurrent amplification of yang attributes shaped by the translator's institutional context and the target culture's prior gender discourse expectations.

The findings have implications for three areas of scholarship. For translation studies, they demonstrate that historical translation of classical texts is a key site for the production of national gender images, and that individual lexical choices accumulate into recurrent patterns of gender ethnotype construction. For imagology, they show that the translator's consistent strategy across a volume functions as a micro-site where broader cultural expectations are processed and reproduced. For gender studies, they reveal how the Confucian yang masculinity framework persists as an organising logic in modern Anglophone representations of imperial Chinese men, even in scholarly translations produced with apparently neutral academic intent.

This article focuses exclusively on male-centred translation. A companion study (in preparation) examines how Cutter and Crowell's female-centred translation of the same historical text constructs a yin femininity ethnotype through complementary but structurally inverse strategies, completing the analysis of how the Confucian yin-yang gender binary is reproduced in the Anglophone translation ecosystem of the *Sanguo Zhi*.

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