



Mathilde Kang

Francophonie and the Orient

French-Asian Transcultural
Crossings (1840-1940)

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Francophonie and the Orient

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Translated by Martin Munro

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Introduction: for a Francophonie of cohabitation¹

An apparently transcendental and inarguable idea conveyed within Francophone studies is the supposed equivalence between the Francophonie of the East and that of French Indochina or its variant, the former Vietnam. This position relates exclusively to the colonial past undergone by Indochina, which is neither a country nor a people. It is a name standardized for administrative reasons and based on where the states composing the colony are located. Consequently, several civilizations in Asia, including China, India, Japan, and many others find themselves left out from potential inclusion in the Francophonie of the East. It is not that these countries have never been subjected to a French regime in the course of their history, but they have been spared classical colonization, which is considered to be a requirement for belonging to the Francophone world.² Although these countries are de facto excluded from the French-speaking world, they are not, in spite of linguistic and cultural realities attested to by their histories, generally included within the framework of Francophonie. Stemming from a narrow and reductive perspective, this equation between ‘colonization and Francophonie’ dismisses out of hand any understanding of the Francophone reality in Asia before or after Indochina; in short, beyond the Indochinese borders.

Behind this self-evidently transcendental idea lies the stubborn conviction that colonization alone leads inevitably to Francophonie. This is because it guarantees the rise of French – the final step in the process – as one of the official languages of the country. Thus conceived, colonization is seen as a premise and a unique way to access the Francophone phenomenon outside of France. Moreover, several Francophone areas, such as Sub-Saharan Africa or the Maghreb, where the Francophone element comes directly from colonization, would seem to support such an argument.³ Such is therefore also the case for the Eastern Francophone world, where Vietnam, Cambodia, and

1 On the issues surrounding Francophonie in the East and in Asia, see *The Australian Journal of French Studies*, Special Issue: Francophonie and Its Futures, XLVIII (1), Jan-April 2011; also, *French Review*, Special Issue: Francophonie(s), May 2015.

2 In the sense of having been a colony of France.

3 Different cases produce different phenomena. If Francophonie in Switzerland or in Belgium has been able to benefit from a geographical proximity to the metropolis allowing them to share a geo-cultural osmosis, Quebec is an exception. For it was subject to classic colonization during

Laos remain the only proven protectorates or colonies in France. From this point of view, Indochina would undoubtedly be the only French-speaking cultural area in Asia. Does this thesis, which was largely held throughout the twentieth century, generating numerous essays in Francophone studies, still hold true? The question is all the more important if we consider the phenomenon of globalization and the generation of a transcultural world that broadens the horizons of the Francophone universe.

In the current state of thought on the French-speaking world in relation to Asia, the idea of a plural Asiatic Francophonie is not popular. Cultural phenomena or the realities arising from the French heritage in Asia, other than in Indochina, are still not seen from a Francophone-studies perspective. These facts do not give rise to the following questions: a) Is there a Francophone reality outside Indochina in Asia? b) Is classical colonization the only way for such a reality to come into being? c) Its variants or by-products, such as the 'concession', the 'trading post' or the 'lease territory', do they contribute to the cultural francization of a specific place in the same way as the classic colonization of a country? In other words, should the Francophone realities of cultural spaces outside Indochina in Asia be included or excluded from Francophonie? These questions, as essential as they are for the understanding of the French-speaking world in Asia, remain unanswered and do not find any response in the present state of Francophone studies.

Taking account of Asia's own historiography, this book seeks to examine the phenomenon of Francophone presence in Asian countries classified as non-Francophone. It will try to shed light on the ways and means of acquiring Francophone characteristics other than through classical colonization, by highlighting the cohabitation that results from migration and the transfer of French culture to Asia. Thus, my study will attempt to pave a new path towards understanding Francophone Asian reality, whose heterogeneous nature is likely to provoke debates. Several arguments support my hypothesis. Firstly, confining the French-speaking world to the colonial bosom, is to erase the Francophone life of cultures that were formerly unofficially or partially in contact with the French. There are plenty of examples. Think of the French misadventures in India, the Westernization of the Meiji era, the French regime of the colonial concession in Shanghai, or the semi-colonial situation of the Qing. Thus, this Francophone phenomenon that interests me survives in a different way, is unconventional compared to established

the expeditions to America, but with the migration of the French during the construction of French-speaking cities in Canada, since the first Quebecers were French colonists.

colonies, and requires a methodology of identification liberated from the *a priori*.

Some historical reminders

The relevance of this reconsideration of Francophone life in Asia is underscored by the continent's history. What is undeniable is that before the Indochinese Union, the numerous expeditions to the continent had created French connections and strongholds in several cultural spaces. The history of France in Asia does not therefore begin and end with the history of French Indochina. Indeed, since the fifteenth century, the developments in sailing ships on the high seas had enabled the European countries to engage extensively in maritime voyages. As the famous Silk Road of Marco Polo became impracticable, the multiple presence of Europeans was effected by sea, the Portuguese being the first to appear, along the coasts of Macau in the sixteenth century. Chinese historiography still records Macau's trading posts as the first breach that announced the influx of 'barbarian' sailboats, including those of the French, as they set their eyes on distant empires (Li Wenhai & al. 481). Motivated by both Christian proselytism and trade missions, the number of expeditions increased in the sixteenth century and reached its peak in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As a result, the Indies and the Empire of Cathay are undoubtedly implicated.

Today, if certain Asian countries produce French-language literature without having undergone official colonization, it is because French presence and contact with French culture, which have been hidden, survive otherwise. This is founded on a truism. The following description maps the original distribution of the European and French presence in Asia:

the cantonment of Europeans on the periphery of closed empires (China, Japan); a diffuse presence on the coast of the Indian continent [...]; the colonial settlements for the cultivation of spices (Indonesia), supplying ships on the Indian route (Cape Town, Mascareignes) or the Christianization of indigenous peoples (Philippines). (Favier 7-8)

These positions indicate the arrival of European countries (including France) in various cultural zones before Indochina, notably in China, India, and Japan. The recognition of this first impression highlights my methodology of identification, which is based on historiography. There is no denying that expeditions to Asia are in no way lesser than those to Africa or North America. The Francophonie of the countries of Asia must therefore reflect

the historical presence of France in all those empires that embraced French civilization throughout history.

Would it be to put the cat among the pigeons to label as 'Francophone' those sovereign countries whose cultures are historically autarchic and to apply the Francophone label to those cultures classified as non-Francophone? Are these cultures an integral component of a more broadly conceived Francophonie? My research on the French presence in several regions and zones in Asia should dispel any doubt, and support such a point of view. Far from being a circumstantial or random critical turn, the question of the relevance of Francophonie in these (non-French-speaking) countries is reinforced by the preservation of French language and culture within these host cultures. Historically obscured, this part of the Francophone world deserves to be brought to light by means of a methodological approach that first recognizes its existence. Reconsidering the Asian zone cannot be done by ignoring other established Francophone areas and, moreover, several guiding questions used to articulate the problematic are drawn from current developments in Francophone studies (Mackey 117).⁴ Thus, as a prelude to my reflections, I will gauge the pulse of recent research on the dynamics of the French-speaking world by reviewing the current state of Francophone studies.

The Direction of Francophone Studies

Basing itself on the relations interwoven with France in the winding course of colonization, Francophone studies has been split into geographical areas, and flourished for half a century. The 21st century will however upset these old definitions by emphasizing the fact that the French-speaking world is no longer a closed space, gathered around a colonial history with France, but rather a sphere of influence that is called into question by the present dynamics that characterize the contemporary world.⁵ In other words, not only would Francophonie be open to multiple horizons, it would also reflect the concerns related to the transnational phenomena of cultures on the threshold of globalization. That said, the idea that colonization of the

4 To objectively understand Francophonie we must recognize its evolution.

5 Since the origin of the word in 1539 by the ordinance of Villers-Cotterêts, the notion of Francophonie has undergone major changes in relation to the practice in the world today. At the time, it stood for the establishment of French as an official language in metropolitan France. For a history of the evolution of this notion and that of the French-speaking world, see also the study by William F. Mackey (107-122).

entire country is the only criterion for the Francophone label is inevitably questioned in the transcultural era.

This direction around which Francophone studies is converging reflects the new stakes that mark the post-postcolonial state of the discipline. For some researchers, the Francophone field refers to French-related facts and realities that are in constant movement and are no longer circumscribed in advance, for example by the stipulation of being a former French colony or having French as one of the national languages...⁶ These reflections highlight the need to reconfigure the idea of Francophonie to take account of the cultural zones formerly excluded from the classical Francophone areas; thus there have been many essays since the 1990s in various Francophone journals that question the notion of 'modern Francophonie'. These studies, which have been constantly remodeled and renewed over the decades, show for their part the elusive nature of a field that is reconstructing and renewing itself and thus renders obsolete the concept of colonization as the sole means of spreading French influence in the world.

The difficulty of a standard definition

Another impasse highlighted by recent research is the difficulty of setting a standard definition of Francophonie that can be uniformly applied to each French-speaking area. In reality, this rigid standardization creates a problem from the very start. Thus, even before the question of Asia's entry into the sphere of Francophonie is raised, the attempt to redefine the latter has been a permanent preoccupation of scholars.⁷ After relentlessly questioning what constitutes Francophonie, Francois Torrel draws a conclusion:

It is impossible for us to define Francophonie in ideological terms, because the very diversity [...] of the Francophone situation of the principal actors, founders or financial donors who do not share the same history and the same practices of Francophonie, does not allow the definition of a motive, a common reason for belonging that would justify the cohesion of the whole. (Torrel 10)

6 I refer here to the section 'Francophonie in Asia' of my bibliography, in particular to the studies of William F. Mackey, Michel Beniamino and Isabelle Violette.

7 Is the trilogic approach that was the starting point of Francophone studies still valid in the era of globalization? How can we grasp the heterogeneous and contradictory characteristics of a changing Francophonie? See particularly the study of Isabelle Violette (13-30).

In addition to the inconceivability of a standard definition of Francophonie, encompassing Francophone cultural zones that are heterogeneous in origin and nature, there is another basic difficulty. This is that Francophonie does not refer to the same thing in the eyes of French people in metropolitan France as it does in the rest of the Francophone world. For the latter, Francophonie encompasses in itself the various linguistic, geographical, identitarian, and institutional dimensions (Violette 15-16), without being exclusively linked to the colonial past. And recent attempts at a 'globalizing definition' (Torrel 15) of the French-speaking world only accentuate the complexity of its heterogeneous components, which cannot be reduced to those dimensions rooted in the colonial past. In this vein, others go even further, dividing the Francophone world into the French-speaking aspect and French-language literature to relate the former to the ex-French colonies, and the second to a literary space where works are written in French.⁸ This second subcategory leads inevitably to literatures that go beyond the framework of the former colonies. From this, the idea of the evolution of the Francophone corpus continues, in that there are literatures (considered non-Francophone) of French expression, for example, Chinese literature of French expression. To conclude, the difficulty of redefining Francophonie, if one arrives at such, must still take account of the Asian area (outside of Indochina) – a hidden player – integrating itself into a broader notion of Francophonie.

The transcultural as a methodology

But there is more. The impasse of the claim that 'colonization made Francophonie' is accentuated all the more in the context of the 21st century, where the digital era and the age of globalization bring down geographical and linguistic boundaries, so much so that attributing the acquisition of French language or its continued use to the sole cause of colonization can no longer hold. From this other difficulties arise. If colonization in its classical sense is no longer the only way towards Francophonie, what would be the other means of accessing the Francophone sphere? In other words, what methodological approach would be suited to identifying the heterogeneity and multiple genesis of this form of Francophonie, as well as its corpus?

One thing is certain: the rethinking or the overthrow of the principles once considered to be foundational to the Francophone world opens up

8 For the difference between Francophonie and literary Francophonie, see Lise Gauvin et al. (Gauvin & al. 2005, 82).

new horizons and leads us beyond the trilogy (colonialism/anticolonialism/postcolonialism). Whatever the approach one favors, several ancient civilizations from which was born the Eastern world cannot be treated in a homogeneous way, if only given the vicissitudes of their contact with French civilization. Moreover, these cultural spaces have known, in terms of their French presence, other forms than colonization, hence the following reflection. Do the French concessions or territories granted to France contribute to the understanding of oriental Francophonie in the same way as the former Indochinese colony? Before answering this question hastily, let us delineate the subject of our research.

For the purposes of this book, I trace the history of oriental Francophonie to the commercial trading posts and exchanges in the Indies,⁹ to the origin of the concessions in China, to the French penetration into Japan and Korea, but exclude the Indochinese Union,¹⁰ whose Francophone realities are proven and widely discussed. Clearly, these territories or countries that have not undergone official colonization have a Francophone nature distinct from other Francophone areas, which makes the trilogy theory applied to other Francophone areas inapplicable. In these cases, it is not a question of a classical change of regime in a conquered country that could be regarded as Francophone, but there is instead cohabitation or linguistic/cultural crossing within a sovereign country. This dynamism calls for the full force of the notion of cultural/literary transfer as a methodology of approach to the phenomenon of Francophonie that interests me here.

It would be naive to believe that the notion of the transcultural remains unexplored in the field of Francophone studies, when in 2001 it was called into play by the impasse in which the trilogic approach found itself, creating a theoretical vacuum at the turn of the century. The phenomenon of Francophone literature at the time was envisaged in terms of the 'transnational situation' (Bessière & Moura 8), thus connecting already to transnationalism, which emphasizes the transgression of the 'established delimitations' (Kang

9 The team of researchers at the University of Liverpool should be credited for setting the stage for a reflection on the subject, with their work on Francophonie in India. A few sporadic efforts also point to the tentative forays and interests that have emerged in the United States, such as the seminar entitled 'Francophonie & Orient' at Stony Brook University, and the one offered at Macalester College under the title 'From the Far East to Antipodes: Francophone representation of Asia and the Pacific'.

10 In 1887, with the pacification of Annam and Tonkin, France created the Indochinese Union, composed of Annam, Tonkin, Cochin China, and Cambodia. Six and twelve years later, Laos (1893) and the Chinese estuary, the Kwang-tcheou-wan (1899), were ceded to France for a 99-year lease.

2009, 5), principally, national borders.¹¹ However, this first attempt at a new post-trillogic theory applies only to established colonies by faithfully referring to the Francophone literature of the colonies. Thus, this first transliterary marker refers to the common Francophone attributes shared by this literature based on an invariant related to language and colonial background. It is important to note that French is used here as a sociolinguistic medium (as an official language). French-language literatures that had not gone through classical colonization (where French is not one of the official languages) are therefore excluded or left out. This is the case for India, China, or Japan of the Meiji era, in short, all the sites referred to in this study.

The fundamental element of transnationalism, which refers to the migration of a literature from its culture of origin to one or several other cultures (Espagne; Werner presentation page), has not been elaborated in an overall methodology capable of grasping the heterogeneity of the corpuses that define the plurality of the French-speaking literatures of today.¹² The first theoretical model has thus failed, in that researchers have not been interested in pursuing and developing it by applying it to concrete literary situations. Five years later, in 2006, when the trillogic approach stirred the theoretical vacuum again, the transnational concept reappeared. Literary Francophonie is understood in terms of 'transborder and transgeneric' (Chikhi & Quaghebeur 11), a direct consequence of the sphere of influence of the Francophone world, which denies the old colonial divisions as a paradigm in Francophone literature. This renewal of interest could have led to a new understanding of the plurality of French-speaking literatures in the world, and in its progress prepared the ground for a new conception of oriental Francophonie; but this did not happen. It went unnoticed, generating neither debate nor substantive study within Francophone studies.

These notions are the precursors to my hypothesis that Francophone phenomena, in the case of the identifying oriental Francophonie, originate in cultural/literary transfer and not in colonization. In other words, transnationalism serves as a vehicle and guarantor for the manifestation of Francophone life in Asia, since the old civilizations, such as China, Japan, and India, are each nourished by a singular past with French culture whose Francophone effect demands to be treated with discernment. Already, Indochina does not embody the ultimate goal or the influence of France in

11 The expression belongs to Danielle Risterucci-Roudnick, cited by Mathilde Kang (2009).

12 French-Canadian literature, such as that from Quebec or Acadia, is not equivalent to French-speaking Chinese literature because of its different Francophone nature. They are nevertheless part of the corpus of French-speaking literature today.

Asia, far from it. In other words, this cause-and-effect relationship between upstream colonization and, downstream Francophonie, tends to overshadow Francophone elements in the countries/regions where the vestiges of the French empire come from the former French fief, indeed from an ephemeral form of colonization. The colonial concession in the case of Shanghai, and the leased territory ceded to France in that of Guangzhouwan, remain examples of emblematic antithesis.

So far, reflections in the conventional Francophone world have had the advantage of shedding light on the distinct Francophone phenomena in Asia. In the first place, the identified Asian contribution to the fold of Francophonie brings with it unexpected challenges that call for the vitality of a modern idea of Francophonie (Torrel 334).¹³ It follows that the trilogic postulate that has been used in the identification of classical Francophone areas within traditional notions of Francophonie does not apply to the Eastern Francophonie. The latter calls for an unprecedented look, a dynamism hitherto unseen in the French-speaking world, hence the need to reconfigure the notion (of Francophonie) itself, as well as its new delimitation. The sphere of Francophonie must be expanded, the notion renewed, its method of identification overturned. In French-speaking spheres or zones, whatever the dominant delimitations, the standardization of a uniform French-speaking world sharing a common colonial linguistic background is definitively surpassed. There is every reason to believe that Indochina is not the only place where Francophonie lives in the East; it lives also in other cultural spheres in a dynamism that has hitherto been unexplored. The distinctive feature of Eastern Francophonie is that these are sovereign countries in which France is not the dominant reference point in culture or in local literature; hence, cultural coexistence appears. In short, a form of Francophonie survives in a multilingual context within cultures where French is a language of culture.

Francophonie in the East or in Asia?

Faced with the Asian element and with the impasse created by the artificial criteria of the past, other questions arise. How can we aggregate the countries within a multifaceted Francophonie with a heterogeneous

13 The expression is borrowed from François Torrel: 'Francophonie in its modern peaceful and international version is a primarily African and Quebecois initiative'. In the question that interests me, the modernity of today's Francophonie relates to a multidimensional form of Francophonie.

history and disparate origins? Especially since the Eastern sphere has to take into account certain contradictions of its own. Indeed, the ambiguity of the notions of oriental or Asian Francophonie (in the sense of African Francophone, Maghrebi, among others) underlines an initial inconsistency.¹⁴ The Orient, the Far East, or Asia, these words, which are often used randomly and sometimes interchangeably, have divergent meanings that merit attention. The term Asia refers first of all to a geographical continent with its geopolitical-historical referent as a background, while that of the Orient or the Far East connotes civilizing and cultural entities, the ramifications of which refer to the ritual, the customs, the myth, and the imagination of the countries that make up Asia.¹⁵ Unfortunately, that is not all. The East, or the Orient, is also used to denote the opposite of the West, as Yves Clavaron affirms: 'The perspective through which we shall approach the Orient and Asia seeks to emphasize that the Orient is considered, mistakenly, as one of the surest markers of otherness in the West' (Clavaron 2005, 467).¹⁶

For all these reasons, in this book, any mention of the term 'Asia' refers to the geographical concept of the countries of the Levant, while the term 'the Orient' or 'the East', refers to the civilizations and cultures of those countries. In other words, Asia is a space, and the East (the Orient) is a notion, an idea. And the expression 'Francophonie in the East' refers to the Francophone cultural aspects of the Asian countries. Thus the term 'Orient' prevails in the case that concerns us here, since this idea of Francophonie does not designate a geopolitical referent but refers to the cultural/literary realities and phenomena of civilizations in Asia in contact with France. Alas, which Orient? As surprising as it is strange, the metamorphosis of the meaning of the term 'the East/the Orient' over the centuries is such that French literary history does not lack examples and evidence. Encompassing the time of Galland and Voltaire 'the Arabs, Turks, Persia, India (the Mongol), China, Japan and Siam' (Dufrenoy 271), the Orient lost its geographical attributes with Chateaubriand and Nerval, for whom it represented a romanticism filled with sublime landscapes and characters. From this chimerical and literary Orient, it then became a metonymy of exoticism and of the 'elsewhere' with Flaubert and Baudelaire, or even of France's displacement to the left (the East); finally, it is but an expansion of the West (Przychodzen 117). From

14 Francophonie in the East or the Orient signifies, within the framework of this book, the Francophone phenomenon within civilizations in the Far East. It is synonymous with Francophonie in Asia, which highlights the geographical space in which these civilizations are located.

15 At the risk of complicating things further, I would say that Asia is a geographical space; the Orient/the East is a geographical space in the imaginary.

16 Régis Poulet, 'De l'illusion orientale à l'altérité asiatique' (Clavaron 2005).

the beginning of postcolonial studies, the volatility of the meaning of the Orient, culminating in the definition given by the Larousse dictionary, is emphasized (Yee 2000, 11). All these references to the semantic turns of the term 'Orient' might be confusing in this study of oriental Francophonie, which refers to the Francophone cultural facets of Asian countries.

Francophone by root vs. Francophone by culture

Just as the signifier 'the Orient/East' has undergone transformations, the notion of the 'Francophone' has also seen a revolution in the course of its history (Schmitt; Günter 687). The case of Chinese Francophone authors (such as Gao Xingjian, Dai Sijie, Ying Chen) is proof of this. Their works published in France or in Quebec are precedents as to the meaning of the notion of the 'Francophone author'. Indeed, the integration into Francophone literature of a growing number of works written (in French) by Asian authors outside Indochina is breaking down the classical delimitation of the French-speaking world and within it the designation of a Francophone person.¹⁷ Today French is no longer the prerogative of the French or the 'colonized', but the language of the one who wants to use it. Within the Francophone milieu, the individual, personal character of the use of French as a vehicular language and not necessarily as a native or institutional language is emphasized by several scholars (Torrel; Violette). In the digital era, with communications that nullify geographical distance, it would be conceivable to have impeccable French without having set foot in France or in any French-speaking country. Both the stakes and the premises of being Francophone already reflect the characteristics of the multilingual 'citizen of the world', and thus negate the daily (or personal) employment of French as an exclusive marker of a Francophone person by birth.¹⁸

It follows that French, for a Francophone person today, can be his or her mother tongue or one of their acquired languages. In the second case, the individual is no doubt bicultural, even tricultural, therefore Francophone and something else, not exclusively Francophone, defying the old concept

17 See, for example, François Cheng, *Le dit de Tianyi* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1998); Dai Sijie, *Lacrobatie aérienne de Confucius* (Paris: Flammarion, 2009); Ying Chen, *L'ingratitude* (Montréal: Leméac, 1995).

18 Who or what is a Francophone person? In the eyes of the French, it is someone who speaks French without being born in France. This perspective is different from that which exists outside France where the term Francophone refers to those whose mother tongue is French. See on this subject, William F. Mackey (116).

that refers only to Francophone by birth to designate a Francophone person.¹⁹ From this point of view, it is only a small step to conceive that a Francophone person nowadays can be born and live in an English-speaking country, or be of allophone parents. This explains the distinctive character of French-speaking Asian writers in their a posteriori mastery of French, as well as in their contact with French culture. Born and living in a different cultural area, they are Francophone by choice and not by birth.²⁰

Whether it is the mutation of the French-speaking world or the transcultural approach that theorizes it, the evolution of ideas elucidates the problems specific to Asia. From now on, being designated as a 'Francophone zone' or as a member of the French-speaking world no longer necessarily refers to a state in which one of the languages is French. The example of Asia will show that Francophonie includes regions/territories steeped in French culture at a specific moment in their history in sovereign non-Francophone countries. This is a Francophonie of a different kind and degree, due to a different form of French presence. What my research sets out to do is not only to take into account the conditions of the Francophone genesis of the spaces in question, but also to discern the different forms of Francophone presences within these officially non-Francophone cultures.

Francophone literature vs. non-Francophone literature

In the wake of the classically conceived ideas, there remain the notions of Francophone literature vs. the so-called non-Francophone. Such cleavages based on colonization are equally fragile under the pressure of transculturalism. Many French fiefdoms are excluded from traditional Francophonie because they are grafted onto spaces that do not belong to the classical colonies. However, French heritage plays a preparatory role in these cases upstream from Asian Francophone life, which crystallizes more fully downstream from the Indochinese colony. This highlights several aspects. First, classical colonization, considered as a tangible sign of the French-speaking world, is clearly obsolete and eliminatory. Also, the entry into the corpus of French-language literature of works of French expression coming from literatures not designated as Francophone renders the a priori concepts inapplicable, since these works do not come from the fruits of colonization.

19 Each person whose native language is French.

20 Anyone whose mother tongue is not French but who adopts that language as a language of culture, in other words, an acquired language.

However, their growing presence calls for a reconfiguration of the French-language corpus that could integrate the emerging voices formerly excluded from the French-speaking zone. Who would have suspected, even a few years ago, that the idea of a form of Francophonie in China or in Japan could appear? And yet the recent expression of Chinese Francophonie (Symington & Bonhomme 141) points in full force to the movement of the Francophone world and consequently the changing nature of its corpus. Already, to designate Francophonie in the East by referring exclusively to Vietnam is an outdated concept, especially since the Francophone realities in other Asian cultural zones are indisputable. This is proven in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean literature written in French, which has never been recognized as an integrated French-speaking phenomenon of the East.²¹ Moreover, the movement in kind is reflected by that in form: the result is that French-language works no longer come only from the member countries of Francophonie, but from open and extended horizons. And Francophone literature no longer has its origins only in former colonies, but also in cultures that have not undergone French domination. The names of Gao Xingjian, Ying Chen, and many others mentioned above, the stars of Chinese Francophonie, shatter the initial and conventional conditions designated a priori to be classified as a Francophone author.

Born in China, Gao Xingjian is a naturalized Frenchman who writes in both languages. He was, as was to be expected, identified as a Chinese writer until the day he obtained the Nobel Prize for Literature in Paris. Immediately, he became a French writer of Chinese origin and his works became part of the patrimony of French literature. This change of register will establish a precedent for other cases of Asian authors whose works follow a similar cross-cultural path, underscoring the mutation of the French-speaking world. Works whose cultural belonging was previously beyond question, are no longer immune to any ambiguity. Does the novel *Montagne de l'âme* (written by a Chinese citizen) belong to French literature (after Gao's naturalization) or Chinese literature?

As legitimate as it may seem, this question is in fact inoperative so long as the debate is based on faulty foundations. For the borders or cleavages that delimit a national literature entrenched in the territory or the language of a specific country cannot hold today. Such delimitations are absent in the transnational concept on which, I believe, today's French-speaking literature is based, privileging transliterary relations and not colonial relations. A fortiori, the biographical/cultural journey of the writers mentioned above

21 See on this subject, chapter IV of this book.

imperatively calls for a reinterpretation of the field of Francophonie and renders invalid the classic concept according to which the country of a former French colony is point of reference for defining Francophone literary production. The old school that plots the French-speaking world on a 'Francophone map' by tracing geopolitical-linguistic delimitations as the only criteria to circumscribe the French-speaking world seems inevitably obsolete. The same applies to other artificial divisions such as socio-historical, identity, institutional (Violette 16-17) – delimitations that were once symbolic of belonging to the French-speaking world.

And there's more. These works of French expression (by authors originating from Asia) from the literatures designated non-Francophone should not be considered as marginal. They intersect the works (of traditional Francophone literatures) of the postcolonial generation in their liberation from the colonial yoke, in particular the binary subjugation between France and the Other. Once regarded as the founding theme and driving force of literary Francophonie, this binary relation collapses, bringing in its wake the fall of the understanding of 'Francophone literature' based solely on colonization. As a result, French-speaking (classical) literature sees the emergence of previously excluded voices seeking to assert their right to be part of Francophone literature. These voices thus hope to bring to the Francophone corpus their long past, their evolution, and more particularly the capacity to traverse new and wider borders. Yet do these voices, which aim to establish new landmarks in the French-speaking world, call for a shift towards Asia?

Delimitations of the corpus

One of the factual elements could modify the current configuration of Francophonie would be the addition of other works to its corpus, and also the fact that I must treat certain French works here for purposes of illustration. This is because the France-Asia influence is reciprocal, and Asian works inevitably encompass works of French heritage. Obviously, not every book on Asia interests me, only those whose inspiration, content, and substance draw from the Levant. These works include the blatant representations of the East found in pseudo-Oriental works. For obvious reasons, the Europeans, especially the French, have been writing for a long time on the Levant. This is evidenced by Marco Polo, who, long before the French translation of Antoine Galland's *Thousand and One Nights* (1704-1717), announced what would become a kind of unquestioned intoxication faced with a fashionably mysterious and seductive Orient. Thus in the spirit of many others, the *Book*

of *Marvels of Marco Polo* (1298) would lay the first foundation of this gigantic corpus. In fact, the catalog compiled by Ternaux-Compans of books on Asia in European languages since the discovery of printing until 1700, provides a clear sense of the early writings on Asia. It is not important to determine who was the first, but it is good to emphasize their increasing number as the expeditions progressed.

On the brink of the expansionist era, the advance of the French presence in Asia as part of the expeditions of the 'civilized' powers was based on a widely shared socio-historical background of a metropolis already initiated into and in love with an idealized East. The first expeditions resulted in the introduction of the Far East into metropolitan France, and from there appeared the first manifestations of an unbridled literature on Asia, thanks to the journeys made to those places, which to that point had been made only in the imagination. In the wake of this, China, Japan, and other previously unknown countries were introduced into France (Joubert 6-7). From then on, the French literary world hastened to capture the sublimated oriental ideal to which imperial France succumbed with novels that featured Chinese, Persian, or Turkish protagonists, embracing those remote cultures under the same oriental label held dear by the literature of the time (Martino 28-29). Due to the lack of first-hand material, the works of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries merely dissimulate the Oriental world, alongside those of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries conceived in the Levant, which contrast with this pseudo-Oriental literature. The three works dealt with in Chapter V will illustrate this.

Alongside the vitality of fictional works, there is a personal literature, written by actors and witnesses of France in the Far East, which cannot be confused with the school of European orientalism. These first-person narratives by the actors themselves became more popular with the growth of more systematic and organized journeys, which took explorers, missionaries, and officials to Asia. The Jesuit *Relations*, which set a model for this kind of narrative, have great value as 'testimonies from the field'. In this sense, their voluminous narratives recounting their travels in the lands of the Middle Empire, the Indian Empire, or Cochin China, created a sensation in the eyes of an initiated European readership. The immense contribution of their correspondence to the stigmatization of the European imagination, turned towards the Far East, goes far beyond orientalism. This writing of the intimate, which records the first traces of France in Asia and which testifies to the expansionist doxology of Europe interests us for these very reasons. As eyewitness accounts of the time, these stories appear in various nineteenth-century journals, notably the *Revue des Deux Mondes* and the

Mercur de France, which I have analyzed closely for the years 1829-1929 and 1890-1935, respectively. The value of this intimate literature lies in its status as first-hand accounts.²²

Alas, these two kinds of writings on the East – the literature of the intimate and fictional writing – have not been examined so far in the perspective of cultural crossings, but only from the point of view of Orientalism. Incorporated into works of all kinds devoted to Asia that crop up in the twentieth century, these texts are constantly the subject of anthologies that have crowned, since Pascal, Montesquieu, Voltaire, Loti and Claudel, a prodigious corpus of France's literary heritage.²³ Up to this point, their virtue was their belonging to French literature, not to narratives of cultural crossing. As the twentieth century saw an increase in the number of books on France in Asia, a question arises: within this flowering of writings as varied as they are abundant about the societies, histories, and peoples of Asia, which ones belong to France-Asia crossings and which do not? It is not that any work written in French on Asia will be part of my corpus; choices and categories are determined according to a scientific selection, determined by methodology.

The overall plan

Consisting of five chapters, this book aims to reconsider the Francophone phenomenon in Asia (outside of Indochina), from various approaches, the first of which is the historiography of the continent. In search of the origin of the French fiefdoms, Chapter I retraces the footprints of French civilization by going back to Macau – the original connecting point of the Europeans – then to Pondicherry and Canton. Following the first Catholic missions that paved the way for economic expeditions, I consider the anchoring of French interests in those places hitherto excluded from the Francophone sphere. Then I will emphasize the French strategic readjustment following the decline of the trading posts in India to explain the transfer to the Chinese market of the rebutted French ambition. Thus, the intrinsic relations between China and Indochina, which have been little studied so far, will be highlighted to show how Indochina (the vassal states of China) was built to

22 An emblematic example of personal literature is the ship's logbook. For example, Bouet-Willlaumez, 'Les colonies françaises en 1852', *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 14 (April 1852), 929-951.

23 Examples include, Tristan d'Huriel, *La Chine vue par les écrivains français* (Paris: Bartillat, 2004); Jean-Claude Berchet, *Le voyage en Orient: anthologie des voyageurs français dans le Levant au XIX^e siècle* (Paris: R. Laffont, 1985).

compensate for the French imperialist plan that initially targeted the Indies and Cathay. The salient point of the chapter is the origin of the concessions that set up a French Empire in the Middle Kingdom. The overview of the French presence in Japan and Korea will close the chapter by leading our reflections to a fundamental question: is there a Francophonie in the East?

Chapter II examines the consolidation of the French presence in Asia, beginning with Shanghai, which became the 'Paris of the East' in the middle of the nineteenth century. The French presence in this Chinese city, which was written about since the arrival of the Jesuits, will be analyzed through a series of events contributing to the emergence of the Francophone milieu. The chapter will discuss the infiltration of French culture thanks to the French establishments that flourished alongside the maritime lines set up between Shanghai and Europe. We shall see that this 'city of whites' culminates in the creation and success of the only French university in Asia, the *Aurore*, in short the emblems and symbols of a transferred culture. Then comes the case of Guangzhouwan, a French colony omitted by Western historiography. The 43 years of French rule during which France behaved as the new Master of the place will be analyzed in order to understand the management of the place and the particular conditions in which Francophonie was established. The analysis of the modes of colonization in Asia will close the chapter. The case of Macau, which evolved from trading post to a classical colony, gives a strong example of the changing modalities of practices on the ground.

Chapter III details the French cultural products transferred to Asia, taking the Chinese case as an example. First, there is the appearance in the ports and concessions of the French establishments, which became important meeting places, and altered the homogeneous local culture. Then I analyze the conditions in which the first Francophones in China/Asia emerged, who came from the language schools, seminaries, and other Christian charitable organizations. I will also address the spread of the Francophone space that grew with the fashion to travel to France. The study of the appearance of French books in Asia will close the analysis of the conditions in which the Francophone presence emerged. Next comes the part on the translation industry, which brought the era of French literature in translation. The remarkable success achieved by many translated French novels established a readership of cohabitation. Several pre-eminent figures of French-speaking Chinese literature will be presented, those who set benchmarks for this form of Francophonie.

The end of the chapter raises a literary phenomenon particular to Asia: the literature of cohabitation. This phenomenon, common among several

Asian literatures, is explained first of all by the migratory journey of French works in their transfer towards Asia, and by the role of stepping stone and intermediary played by Japan. I will highlight the similar conjuncture of local literature, having encountered French literature. The common attributes of this literature of cohabitation based on French literature as a new reference point will also be highlighted. Finally, I analyze the ways in which the translated works modify the local literary paradigm by introducing a new poetics of Asian literature.

Chapter IV attempts to identify this literature of cohabitation with examples of local works. Thus *Fleur sur l'océan des péchés* (1903-1936) will serve as a prototype to illustrate the innate elements of coexistence of this literature, the heir to French fictional poetics. The work of Zeng Pu will show how this literature, born from the encounter with French literature and having a Francophone author, a reader and translator of the Masters, crosses the national and homogeneous spheres. The pastiches of *Madame Bovary* (*Rides sur les eaux dormantes*) and of *Jean-Christophe* (*Rejetons d'Houbereau*) are also part of this literature of cohabitation.²⁴ First, I will set out the migration of *Madame Bovary*, in particular its conditions of transfer and triangular journey (Paris-Tokyo-Shanghai). Then the pastiche involved in *Rides*, which also forms the basis of Chinese Realism, will be analyzed. *Rides* serves as an index value (an invariant) to a whole literature of cohabitation in other countries in Asia where its presence can be identified according to the same model of analysis. Like Li, the authors of pastiches (Francophones and translators) did not work only in their native languages, but also in French, hence the existence of a whole corpus of French expression by these same authors. The end of the chapter will explore possible avenues to trace such a corpus, including the close reading of newspapers/journals, as well as the collections of publishing houses. These trails provide valuable insights in tracing the corpus of French-speaking works of Asian authors.

Chapter V examines France-Asia crossings, in reverse, drawing on works of French literary heritage. First, there is a literature of the intimate conceived from the East, which expresses itself in the form of diaries, memoirs, and travel narratives, and these are eyewitness works of France in the East, and not of French Orientalism. Alongside this abundance of testimonial writings, there is a fictional literature of Oriental inspiration, which includes *Madame Chrysanthème*, *Le Soulier de Satin*, and *Comment Wang-Fô fut sauvé* as emblematic examples. First, the transfer of *Madame Chrysanthème* to Asia,

24 The works concerned are Li Jieren (*Si shui wei lan*. Shanghai: Zhonghua shu ju, 1936) and Lu Ling (*Cai zhu di er nü men*). First published in the journal *L'Espoir*, 1948.

in particular its triangular route (Paris-Tokyo-Shanghai) will be discussed; then the history of the reception of this work will be analyzed, from the apology of *japonisme* by its first readership to the worst denigration of its detractors. Finally, the paradigm of the Oriental woman that Loti erected under the guise of 'transcultural marriage' will be analyzed.

Le Soulier de satin will be immediately explained with reference to the story of the 'forgotten slipper' which depicts the myth of Cinderella. We show the unknown origin of this myth, whose first version dates from ninth-century China. Yang Kwei-fei's embroidered shoe, of which we succeed to retrace the first appearance in France, adds much to the meaning of the *Soulier de satin*. Finally, I discuss how the legend of *Bouvier et Tisserande* explains the meaning of the sacrifice to which the work refers. The end of the chapter deals with the short story by Yourcenar, *Comment Wang-Fô fut sauvé*, which remains an underrated text for lack of first-hand data that can attest the origin of its Taoist sources. In fact, limited to the artifices that touch the surface of the words she uses, studies of Yourcenar are confined to a superficial understanding of the text without being able to go beyond. My research succeeds however in exhuming the hitherto unknown Oriental background of the work, thanks to a thousand-year-old legend that provides the explanation of the 'Fô'.

The general conclusion sets Francophonie in the East at the crossroads between France and Asia in order to underline the common modes of acquisition of French language and culture in these non-French-speaking countries. This refers to all the cultural spaces that have not been integrated into the classical Francophone sphere despite their sinuous encounters with French civilization. Considering Asia in a broader idea of Francophonie will signal strongly the need to redefine the French-speaking world today; not through traditional colonization but by the transcultural element.

Indeed, since the beginning of the concessions/lease territories through which the French-speaking zones established a foothold in different parts of Asia, Francophonie in the East survived in ways other than by the colonization of the whole country, which raised French as 'language of the country'. In ways different than in North America or in Africa, the acquisition of the French language/culture took place in these Asian sites in the form of cultural crossings. Although the French-speaking Asian authors (outside of Indochina) of the first generation were able to pastiche French works, not one of them was subject to official colonization. They were Francophone by their choice of culture and language. Because of the way French is acquired, the French-speaking community in Asia is not equivalent to the classical Francophone world, and consequently Francophonie in the East differs from

other Francophone areas in its expression, manifestation, and character. Finally, without studying all the Asian countries, nor claiming to have the final say on the question, my study hopes to offer some preliminary findings on the origins of this form of Francophonie, its existence, and its recognition.

I France at the gates of Cathay

Macau and Canton: the first European fringes

The search for the first French people in Asia undoubtedly leads back to the establishment of the Portuguese trading posts in Canton and Macau around 1514 (He Yu & Li Hua 8)¹ or 1517 (Meng Hua 2004, 160). According to Chinese historiography, these two posts are the original entry points of Europeans post-Marco Polo. Certainly, from the first approaching European sailing ships to the appearance of oriental Francophonie, several centuries passed. But our return to the origins of European institutions will highlight the initial positioning of France in cultures classified as non-Francophone. Thus, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, after two years of sea voyage, the Europeans finally reached the coast of Macau and left the first traces of white people in Asia, since the Marco Polo era:

During the year of Dingchou under the reign of Zhengde [1517], while I was an official in the Guangtong Marine Affairs Department, two large ships appeared and entered directly into Huaiyuan port in Guangtong (Meng Hua 2004, 160).

It was a time when the countries endowed with significant maritime resources successively made an appearance in these distant countries, from which the European civilizations were once banished. Their sailboats appeared, trying to outdo each other, in the waters bordering Canton and Macau and attempting to dock near their shores. Anchored in the mythical imagination of the West, Cathay and the Indies were the leitmotif of the legendary expeditions to Asia: 'It is to seek a new access to the empire of Cathay that Christopher Columbus took to the sea' (Homberg 687). Far from concerning the future Indochinese colony, the first traces of French culture in Asia were the expeditions to these two countries, Cathay and the Indies, which embodied the ultimate objective of the French maritime voyages.

On the ground the situation progressed. Since the appearance of the first Portuguese ship, multiple attempts had been made to establish a permanent trading post. During these first attempts at establishment, Canton, alongside Macau, found itself at the forefront of encounters with white civilizations.

¹ In *La Chine en France au XVIII^e siècle*, Henri Cordier (1910, 5) also considers the year 1514 as the arrival date of the Portuguese in Macau.

These encounters were marked by ingenuous reports: 'The Portuguese arrived in Canton [1517], were fairly welcomed there and managed to send an Embassy to the Court' (Courant 125). From 1535, thanks to the bribes offered to the mandarins of Canton, the Portuguese presented the Court of Ming with their request to dock at Macau in order to trade there. The situation evolved afterwards against a background of recurring incidents, due to the countless pretexts put forward by the Portuguese to take control: stranding their ships, disembarking their wet goods in order to dry them, etc. In other words, the Portuguese continued to take a foothold in Macau and ultimately managed to reside there illegally (He Yu; Li Hua 8). The outcome of their landing in Macau was to have opened a breach so that other European powers could take advantage. As early as 1550 their trading post was used as a support and stepping-stone for any European country to advance in Asia (He Yu; Li Hua 9). France sent its first sailing ships, preparing the ground to make its own advances on the continent.

But France quickly learned, like any other European country, that this infiltration was not a matter of course. Since the feudal era until the Opium War (1840-1842), the empires of Asia (China, Japan, or Korea) were inward-looking and fiercely closed to all external influences. Such a xenophobic policy hurt the expansionist plan of the Europeans for whom these distant empires, however mythical they may have been, represented a promising outlet for commerce and Christian proselytizing; hence the readjustment strategies by France in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. At this point of the Portuguese establishment in Macau, the sea route now supplanted the old Silk Road of the Marco Polo era, which had become impracticable because of the wars then emergent in Central Asia. On the eve of the French settlement in Asia, Macau, the ancient port overlooking the Yellow Sea and bordering on Hong Kong, had become one of the first landmarks and the hub of any journey from Europe. It is right to assert that this Portuguese outpost created a breach that cleared the way for the influx of ships, including those of the French. From then on, the evangelical missions were to increase, alongside the trade missions and together multiply the expeditions to Asia.

Catholic missions as a touchstone

Indeed, this period of gestation for the French presence in Asia saw two categories of foreigners arrive: 'merchants and missionaries' (Broc 40). Historically, it was the Catholic missions that paved the way for the advancement of trade; both contributed to the dissemination of French civilization in the heart of indigenous civilizations. In the case of China, the arrival

and penetration of French culture took place at various times in favorable circumstances. During the 268 years of the Qing (1644-1912) reign of incessant emperors, the Manchu dynasty bequeathed to posterity the legendary reign of Kang-Xi (1662-1722), whose penchant for art and science opened up a breach for the spread of the Jesuits in China. Historically, we can already see that Francophonie in the East goes beyond the borders of French Indochina.

At the dawn of the French settlements in Asia, the religious body played the role of pivot and vector. Six Jesuits were sent to China in 1663 and in 1685 for the purpose of dialogue (1990 Qian 4).² Christianity penetrated and from the sixteenth century sought to establish itself with the dispatch, by Louis XIV, of the first embassy to sail towards China (Dufrenoy 272). Similar dispatches were also made to other kingdoms: 'In January 1791, the French Congregation for Foreign missions, that had not yet been too rigorously persecuted [...] succeeded in sending six of its members to India and Cochinchina' (Veullot 992). The famous 'Quarrel of the Rites' gives an account of the state of the religious communities in their evangelizing missions in Asia, especially across China, from which appeared the first French and Portuguese Jesuits, then in competition with the Society of Foreign Missions, which was founded by the Comptroller General Colbert. Then, there was the messy situation in the three dioceses of Macau, Nanking, and Beijing, following the Pope's decree (Shun-Ching Song 263). Other communities followed the example of the Jesuits, such as the Sisters of Saint Paul de Chartres, an order founded in Beauce in 1696, whose first foundations in China date back to 1848 (Claudel 1995, 210-211). This significant step, carried out by these founding missions of various Christian communities on the ground, paints a favorable first picture of white people within the indigenous societies. These good works thus promoted the encounter between Europeans and local peoples in the spread of French civilization in Asia.

The first Europe-Asia maritime line

In this first period of European presence in Asia, the English immediately took the lead. As early as 1637, their sailboats reached Canton and penetrated the Pearl River (Zhujiang) with great force, heading for the main town of Guangzhou (He Yu & Li Hua 9), thus laying the groundwork for the first European-Asian maritime routes: Lisbon-Liverpool-Macau-Canton. This line inevitably created a relay situation in Canton where the Qing ordered all European ships to carry out their transactions on site. Thus slowly began

2 Henri Cordier confirms for his part that five Jesuits were sent (Cordier 1910, 29).

a history of openness and cohabitation with the Europeans in Canton and the neighboring seaports. However, given the intransigence of the Ming and the Qing with regard to all foreigners, this breakthrough was nonetheless modest in scale and scope. In fact, the trading posts in Macau and Canton were restricted to sporadic exchanges with Europe; the same went for the silk trade in Japan. These few commercial trades in no way altered the enclosing of the Europeans in Canton, the only port assigned before the Opium War: 'up to 1715, there were only six boats a year arriving in Canton' (Favier 8). This says a lot about the marginality at the time of the commerce maintained with the outside by this single port open to Europe. The exclusion of every European from the interior of China remained fierce; very few people accessed Beijing. Even the tea made in Fujian, a neighboring province of Macau, the Chinese preferred to transport to Japan, the Philippines, and India, rather than letting the Europeans come to get it directly from them (Favier 9).

Canton, Pondicherry's replacement

Another issue that determined the advancement of French expansion in Asia was the fate of their adventures in India, which were dictated by the desire for economic gain. 'It is still the commercial interest that we find prioritized in our establishments in India' (Bouet-Willaumez 944). In fact, the expedition led by François Caron in 1667 reached Surate, and succeeded in establishing a first French trading post in India (Blerzy 140-141). Appointed General Director by letters patent of Louis XIV in February 1701 (Blerzy 144), François Martin took over and acquired from a Hindu leader a rather large area by the sea. About sixty men settled there and succeeded, against all odds, in founding 'a factory in the village of Ponditcherri' (Camille 2). This new acquisition, called Pondichéry (Blerzy 142), supplanted the post set up in Surate and marked an advancement in the French settlement in India. Alas, this was only short-lived. Despite its promising beginnings under the reigns of Henri IV and Louis XIII, growing into a privileged company, the French East India Company, which had written the first pages of French colonial history in Asia, fell into bankruptcy. The vicissitudes of France in the Indies are connected to the fortune or misfortune of decisions taken in the metropolis. And the company, which was badly run in Europe, was ruined thirty years after its creation in 1708. When the war broke out again with the Dutch, François Martin had to capitulate. The whole failure of the French settlement in India was that it went against the original French ambition by redrawing the maps and orienting the colonial plan towards

two movements. On the one hand the French stronghold was to move to Canton; on the other hand, the loss of interest in India would create a need for compensation that would dictate the French strategy later on.

Moreover, such a failure in this important site of the French Eastern Empire had serious ramifications for the French presence elsewhere in Asia. Pondicherry, the capital of the French settlements in India, and even the whole of Asia at the time, would from that moment on evoke only glorious memories of yester so that its fading glory gave way to Canton, which took over as the main target for French expansionism in Asia. Officially it was in 1698³ with the ship the *Amphitrite* leaving for Canton that Franco-Chinese commercial relations were inaugurated. These relations grew following the creation of the great Company in 1719. In fact, since the high point of the Company of the East Indies, the Chinese city has resonated along with Pondicherry in the collective European memory. The reputation of Canton is synonymous with the magical places from which originate the products that the Company resold in its premises in France (Dodille 33). It is unquestionably the first Chinese city where traces of the French presence were established:

Canton, the first city in this country where the French mission of which I was a part was established, brought together the history of a great Chinese city with the energy of one of the most considerable commercial centers on the globe (Hausmann 298).

From the time of Colbert, the French ventured there through the migration of settlers from India:

The Portuguese and Spaniards first appeared in the sixteenth century on the soil of Asia. [...] From the beginning, however, in the wake of the Portuguese, who had set foot in Macau, the colonists of India had ventured into the waters of China, and had obtained permission to create factories in Canton, where silk and tea were sold. (Lavollée 1883, 189)

From the outset, the growing French presence in India was paralleled by Cathay, so that after the defeat, the posts in Pondicherry would make way for those in Canton. In the history of French colonization, it is fair to say that Pondicherry is twinned with Canton and that the two cities, side by side, lay the foundations for the French presence in the Far East. Having contact with

3 Note that Broc (41) and Favier (9) confirm the same source, while Cordier (1910, 28) says that it was in 1697.

the Europeans as early as the sixteenth century, Canton, where the French presence was intimately linked to the fate of Pondicherry, would really take off after the Opium Wars. It would become one of the first cosmopolitan cities in Asia and a favored site for the post-Pondicherry French trade. We shall see later that this tradition of exchanges with the Europeans is so anchored in Canton that the opening of the five ports after 1842 would not slow it down: business continued to be carried out there. What is more, the Qing, in order to slow down the forced opening after the defeat, played with internal fiscal policy maneuvers to reduce the effects of opening up to the French. To conclude, the influence of the French Eastern Empire in Canton attests to the French presence outside the Indochinese borders, and the withdrawal of French interests in the Indies is a sign of France's strategy to reposition itself.

Drawing up the concessions

Among the trials and tribulations of the French adventure in Asia, one event stands out in its importance: the Treaty of Paris (1763), which marks a turning point, an irreversible decline. The reduction of the French presence, affected moreover by the suppression of the *Compagnie des Jésuites* since 1773 (Veillot 992), ultimately weakened French interests in the Indies. And the coup de grace experienced by the interests in Pondicherry required a change of survival strategy. Moreover, the nineteenth century sees the rise of the English East India Company. This new situation gave the English a regular presence in Asia. Faced with such covetousness, Japan and China put the brakes on the Europeans. The shock felt by the English was widely shared by the French, who also cast their post-Pondicherry eyes on the Chinese market. If Cathay and the Indies were the original objects of the French expeditions, the loss or withdrawal of the Indies would render all the more evident the necessity of compensating by growing their interests in China. But the Middle Kingdom does not share the language, culture, or mentality of the Indies. The French and the English were required to adapt themselves to the modes of acting and thinking of the land of the Son of Heaven. This was not obvious to them.

For on the ground the situation was glaring. In spite of the breach opened up since the Macau era and until the setting up of the trading posts in Canton, the relations between the Europeans and the Chinese could still be summed up in terms of 'constant vexations, administrative harassment, tyranny, and the greed of mandarins and interpreters' (Favier 81). Foreigners were still forbidden to have any relationship with the city of Canton itself.

Without free movement, without rights, without status, every European was subject to the humiliation and contempt of the Mandarins. This abominable fate reserved for foreigners was to be blown apart from 1840 by the English and French canons conjoined at the gates of Cathay. The iron grip of the non-negotiable peripheral constraints and the oppression that the Herculean Qing Empire visited on the whites had loosened forever.

On 25 January 1841, at 8.15 in the morning, the English invaded the port of Hong Kong.⁴ This seizure came to symbolize the reversal of the balance of power between the Chinese and the Europeans and, by the same token, propelled the advancement of the French presence in China and the neighboring countries. The meaning of this unprecedented victory was that it put an end to the confinement of the Chinese Empire, which until 1715 received only six boats a year in the Canton enclosure, by means of exchange with the outside.⁵ With the British wind in their sails, French expeditions sped into the slipstream left by the British guns, which reduced to dust the ramparts of the Qing dynasty, leading to the opening of the five post-Macau ports. The two Franco-Chinese treaties of 1842 and 1844 drove the nail further in, thus marking the rise of post-Pondicherry France, and sounded the beginning of the ruthless disintegration of the Middle Kingdom.

One of the historical repercussions of these wars was the successful realization of the concessions, establishing European sovereignty within the Chinese Empire itself. Non-negotiable distributions drew the first outlines of the segmented territories. The territorial division began with England, which was the first to gain access to the strategic sites: the seaports (Lavollée 1851, 741). The first designated ports were places such as Shanghai, Hong Kong, Ning-bo, and Amoy (Xiamen), which were then able to receive English ships. And the French followed suit. History would prove correct the choice of Hong Kong, which was only a rock in 1842, but with access to the sea – an observation post – offering an ideal place to stop off for any European fleet passing by Canton.

The beginning of the French Eastern Empire

Thanks to the victorious canons of the English and their having terrified the Beijing Court, the French obtained their share of the cake without spilling a drop of blood, and succeeded in negotiating the same advantages

4 Memoirs of an English sailor called Edward on board the warship *Soufre* on a round-the-world trip, cited in Li Wenhai (33).

5 See note 8. The extreme confinement of the Westerners at the time is also confirmed by other researchers (Cordier 1910, 29).

as England. Thus France accomplished a giant step that would strengthen its post-Pondicherry presence in Asia. The 36 articles of the Huangpu Treaty (Whampou) signed on 24 October 1844, gave the green light to the massive penetration of French interests in China. Giving advantages to trade and Catholic proselytism, this treaty somewhat counterbalances the later loss of French interests in their expeditions to the Indies and elsewhere in Asia. On the one hand, France was granted the Colonial Concession in Shanghai and, on the other, the title of Favored Trading Country. This facilitated the start-up of a series of hospitals, churches, schools, and cemeteries, in strategic areas throughout imperial China.⁶ For example, the first seminars in Beijing and Shanghai (Charles Maybon 15, 54),⁷ the orphanages (the orphanage of the Holy Childhood), the numerous schools, the works of the missions (Piolet 65-131)⁸ are all proof of the penetration, diffusion, and anchoring of France in the heart of the Chinese imperial landscape.

In addition to emancipation by Catholic works, the commercial mission was also under way. The establishment and infiltration of French investments began with the Treaty of Tianjin (1858), the first navigation treaty, which aimed to transfer maritime technology to the Chinese. Presenting itself as an ally and a benevolent power, France committed itself to training Chinese workers, which meant that the French language, culture, and know-how were passed on at the same time. Among the works of cooperation, we can cite the construction of the famous arsenal at Fuzhou, which was made possible thanks to the 1866 agreement. With the subcontractors who worked on it, the arsenal made this city a true melting pot and 'the experimental colony' (Weber 1997, 93),⁹ which soon became 'one of the most important French overseas colonies' (Weber 1997, 93). Thus the first sites of the French-speaking zone in China were born. If the port of Fuzhou is described as a 'colony' or even 'one of the most important French colonies', it says a lot about the role of this dynamism in South-East Asia during the birth of Indochina.

On the ground, other cooperation agreements were signed, including bilateral exchanges and shipments, as well as a series of arsenal-building projects in several ports. In connection with the arsenal in Fuzhou, a maritime

6 The various French plans may be found in *Documents des Qing*, cited in He Yu; Li Hua Li (48).

7 Given in Beijing, 19 January 1924, the speech by Charles Maybon (1872-1926), tracing the accomplishment of Benoît Edan, mentions the Seminary of Tsang-ka-leu in 1853.

8 Such as the House of the Immaculate Conception or the House of the Sacred Heart founded by the Lazarists, who had taken over from the Jesuits after the eighteenth century.

9 Christophe Dubois, 'L'arsenal de Fuzhou et la présence militaire française au Fujian (1869-1911)', (Weber 1997).

school was created to train the Chinese elites, starting with learning the French language (Claudel 161). In the history of Francophonie in Asia, this school has a mythical reputation, both for its pioneering role as one of the first French schools in Asia and the eminence of its graduates who became the first generation of Chinese Francophones. Think of Yen Fu (1854-1921), reformer and instigator of the opening up of China at the end of the Qing period, or General Chen Jitong, the first French-speaking diplomat. We shall see later that the first manifestation of Chinese literature of French expression emanates from this cradle of Francophonie.

The Macau trading post opened up a permanent breach for the European presence in Asia, from which came the fortune and the misfortune of the French adventures and resulted from their losses in India. The withdrawal from the Indies redrew the contours of French presence in the Far East, and marked the beginning of the affirmation of French presence in China following the Opium Wars. This new positioning entailed numerous agreements with the Qing, including the establishment of a first arsenal in Fuzhou, neighboring the future Indochina. The arsenal would become one of the first French strongholds in Asia. The movement of the French axis from India to the South of China is also in line with the wish of the Herculean Qing dynasty to build a modern fleet capable of symbolizing Chinese sovereignty in the face of European encroachment. This conjuncture gave rise to the flourishing of French interests on Chinese soil. For contemporary Chinese historiography, this period of early French expansion in the heart of broader European expansion that established its interests in trading posts, concessions, lease territories, arsenals, and French schools, is commonly referred to as semicolonization. These irrefutable historical landmarks continue to demonstrate that Indochina was not at the origin of the French exploits in Asia, nor did it constitute their focus, but that it came later and developed as compensation for the future losses of their interests: 'that our Indochinese Empire has, to a certain extent, compensated for the losses of the last century' (Camille 1). Close to the future Indochina, French interests in Fujian and later in Guangzhouwan would serve as a cornerstone, and finance the advancement of French strongholds throughout Asia.

The intrinsic links between China and Indochina

The French did not operate only in China, they also ventured into its vassal states. Although the Jesuits, as well as the East India Company, had explored the regions of the future Indochina, these regions were not, a priori, foremost

in the sights of the French. The origin of the first Frenchmen penetrating the Empire of the Annam dates back to 1585, the time when the Jesuits set foot in the kingdoms of Cambodia and Annam. As early as 1610, their famous *Relations* presented these kingdoms to European readers, preparing the general public for those unknown countries that would be part of the expansionist plan. In these early stages of trial and error in the Far East, the Society of the Jesuits assumed the role of figurehead; its missionaries were the pioneers. Father Alexander of Rhodes traveled through Cochin China in 1624 and Tonkin in 1626 (Cultru 1). However, we must wait for the Opium Wars to see a decisive turning point in the advancement of France, which was beginning to encroach on these kingdoms, and before the French stronghold in Asia really took shape.

Indochina as a springboard

In the eyes of Chinese historians, even if the French advances in these places are to be compared with those in India and Cathay, the vassal states of China became the future Indochinese colony, and served as compensation to repay France's losses in the Indies without constituting a goal in itself (Li Wenhai 429). Thus, in spite of an undeniable advance into these places, for Chinese historiography, the future French Indochina plays only a secondary role in the French expedition:

the ultimate goal for France in invading Indochina, is obviously not to take little Vietnam, but rather China, in its intention to take Yunnan, in order to penetrate Sichuan, following the Yangzijiang River, bringing together Chinese maritime cities as a net to dismember China along with other European powers. (Li Wenhai 451)¹⁰

And that is not all. The Chinese still quote the threat uttered by the Consul of the time: 'France must occupy Tonkin as an ideal staging post; because on the day when the European powers begin to dismember China, we will be the first to be in the heart of China' (Li Wenhai 232). In other words, French Indochina serves as a stepping-stone and a means of preparing for further penetration into the Chinese southwest (Lei 2000, 193). Thus, with the aim of clearing a river route to China and under the pretext of the assassination of a Jesuit, the French fleet conquered Tonkin in 1856 and then seized the Mekong Peninsula (called Lan Changjiang in its Chinese part). After the

10 All future translations of this work are mine.

Treaty of Saigon in 1862, France thus settled in Tonkin and Annam. But it was still far from envisaging an Indochinese Union, and the new French stance in these places was directly linked to their advance in China.

Indeed, wherever they were in Asia, whatever the apparent wars they were fighting, the European nations all had their eyes on the Chinese Empire. And France was no exception. Its war on the ground in Indochina was conditioned by the state of the French Empire in China:

But it is a fact that can be observed: the conflicts that agitate the Far East, whatever the apparent motives or the immediate causes, are in reality only episodes in the struggle for the control of China. [...] It was around China that the European colonies settled; clinging to its flanks, they hold on to it with their ravenous appetites. (Pinon 1904, 628)

If Chinese historiography interprets 'French penetration in Indochina as a springboard and gateway to the Middle Empire, which remains the ultimate goal of the whole project of the French Eastern Empire' (Li Wenhai 438), it is not alone in its thinking. This view is widely shared among Western scholars. In 1680, when the first ships of the Eastern Company were anchored in the China Sea, the company set its sights not on the future Indochina, but on 'the Chinese provinces bordering on Tonkin, which it would take some time to appropriate for itself in order to access to the basins of Central China' (Wasserman 22). This means that from the start the experiments in Tonkin and Annam were carried out with the aim of reaching China, which is the ultimate ambition of the French presence in the region. Thus the intention of France in Annam as in Tonkin is to 'use the new possession as a springboard for penetration into China, which was the main objective' (Fourniau 6).

The France-China-Indochina maritime line

Moreover, the very first project after the conquest of Tonkin revealed the real French ambition: 'We are instructed to seek a passage from Indochina to China', recalls De Carné (6). Meanwhile, the exploration of the Mekong (1866-1868) by the mission of Doudart de Lagrée surprised everyone: it did not reach China (Fourniau 6). In turn, François Garnier surprised people by venturing into the Red River to reach the southern provinces of China. For France this was a turning point. Operating simultaneously on several fronts at political and economic levels, France traded with China, Cochin China, Cambodia, and Annam, even if these countries were not prioritized by the French. The lists of trade and commerce between France and China and

between France and Cochin China from 1841 to 1849 (Lavollée 1851, 746)¹¹ offer an incontestable example of the colossal economic importance that the Chinese market represented compared to the future Indochinese markets, and consequently shows how these empires were not a priority for France.

Similarly, the list of imported goods from Europe received by Chinese cities, such as Shanghai, Hong Kong, Canton, Tianjin, and Fuzhou (Gadoffre 71),¹² pending reshipment elsewhere in Asia, gives an idea of the significant quantity of exchanges between France and China that took place on a daily basis. In the light of these exchanges one can measure the importance of Chinese cities in the coming of the French presence to Asia. The primacy of the Chinese market was maintained throughout the second half of the nineteenth century:

France had become the leading importer of Chinese raw silk. Given the immensity of the country and the interest in penetrating the interior, the Third Republic ended up in those years with fifteen consulates in China (Wasserman 23).

In addition to the colossal size of the Chinese market, the potential promise of China's economic power over that of the Indochinese kingdoms can be further explained by other causes. From the outset, a factual element as important as it is revealing is that there is no direct line between France and Indochina; everything goes through Shanghai, Hong Kong, or Fuzhou. The role of indispensable hub and relay point that these Chinese cities play in the founding of the French Empire in Indochina stands as a historical fact.

The reverse is also true. The hostilities between France and England also implicated the Indochinese ports that were on the front line in the transactions between France and China, which were often difficult to reach because of the disruptive tactics of the English. This explains the advice given by Claudel to Doyère (Claudel 1995, 104),¹³ then director of the arsenal of Mamoi, to divert the itinerary of embargoed French cannons (destined for the Fuzhou arsenal, but detained in Hong Kong), to have them pass instead by the arsenal of Saigon. The detour of these cannons via Saigon is evidence of the intertwined links of these places in the routing of transactions between France and China. In other words, the presence of French interests in China also required the contribution of the Indochinese cities.

11 See the list by Charles Lavollée of the goods and the statistics of their commerce.

12 See the figures mentioned by Gilbert Gadoffre.

13 See the letter from Claudel to Doyère dated 10 May 1902 at Fuzhou.

China as the rear base of Indochina

Towards the 1880s when, following its definitive retreat from the Indies, France was forced to choose a permanent, strategic site in Asia, the use of Indochina became imperative. Faced with the influence of English institutions, especially in Hong Kong, the importance of French interests in China in the destiny of Indochina cannot be underestimated:

If Indochina is a market which will benefit our industrialists and our traders, if it is a land where our nationals will be able to colonize and traffic safely in the present and the future, if it is the starting point, the 'operational base' of French commercial penetration into the Middle Empire – these are the real issues in the present debate. (Pinon 1903, 573)

China became an essential player in the future of Indochina, not only at the level of commercial and material transitions, but also at the human level. The province of Fujian became the hinterland of Indochina, Claudel stated in his letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs: 'All I could do in the last year: the signing of a contract opening the Foukien as a site of recruitment of workers for the French colonies' (Claudel 2005, 179).

The development of French interests in Indochina was hampered from the start by an irresolvable manpower shortage on the ground. Fujian and its two neighboring ports, Amoy and Swatow, were then mobilized to serve as recruiting posts for workers hired from deepest China to Annam and Cambodia:

In this country, especially in Annam and Cambodia, the State has immense national reserves available. [...] There is a lack of manpower for the exploitation of these immense regions. [...] It is therefore necessary to call on the Chinese labor force. [...] This movement of emigration is currently limited to the two ports of Amoy and Swatow, which each year dispatch nearly 80,000 coolies to the destinations mentioned above.¹⁴ (Claudel 2005, 179)

As limited as it was insignificant, Indochina proved incapable of offering an abundance of raw materials and of absorbing in exchange the consumption of products manufactured in France. It was far from capable of supplying and sustaining a market conceived by French colonial ambition. Thus, in

14 The Chinese translation of coolies is: poor manual laborer.

all phases of the French conquest in the Far East, Indochina was not able to assume a role of its own, but functioned as a complement and a 'plan B' for France in Asia. To remedy this, 'it will be a matter of making French capital grow by linking the economic development of Tonkin with that of China' (Gadoffre 18).

During the various periods of colonial France in Asia, it is undeniable that China's involvement in Indochina operated on several levels, such as politics, economics, and geography. After all, there is no a priori country or nation bearing the name of Indochina; Indochina is only an artificial administrative name coined by the Franco-Danish geographer Malta-Brun, founder of the Geographical Society of Paris:

But as these countries have sometimes been subjected to the empire of China, and as most of the people who inhabit them are very similar to the Chinese [...], we proposed, several years ago, to designate this great region of the world the new, but clear, expressive and sonorous name of Indochina.¹⁵ (Ajalbert 219)

Thus Indochina is a 'geographical' construction! The official birth of the Indochinese Union in 1887, joined by Laos in 1893, and the leased territory of Guangzhouwan in 1898, merely consolidated and intensified its links with China.

Moreover, the installation of a telegraph cable linking the Chinese provinces of Guang-Xi and Yunnan to the Mekong gave an invaluable boost to the communications and exchanges existing between Indochina and its neighboring Chinese regions:

It had taken not less than nine years, from 1885 to 1894, to complete the work of installing the cables between Mon-Kay and the boundaries of Kouang-si and Yun-nan. The infinitely more extensive section between the common border of the Kouang-si and Yun-nan and the Mekong, was completed in less than eighteen months. (Claudé 1991, 321)

True 'factories' of human resources and staging posts for multiple commercial transactions, the ports in southern China, whose economic life was intimately linked to the fate of Indochina, were endowed with state-of-the-art

¹⁵ Quoted by Jean Ajalbert in 1909, this name was widely quoted throughout the twentieth century. However, no researcher deigns to indicate the origin of this designation. See for example, Yves Clavaron (23).

means of communication. These devices could further stimulate their commercial links with the French colony, as Yves Bachelier writes:

The arrival of Bernard in the port of Amoy, in February 1902, follows France's decision to open a telegraphic office in Kulangsu [now Gulangyu, southern China] intended for the exploitation of the recently installed Tourane-Amoy cable. This cable, which brought China closer to the South of Indochina, must have indicated to the French ships anchored at Tourane the possibilities offered for maritime commerce by the Amoy region.¹⁶ (Weber 1997, 181)

Although the South of China was not integrated into the Indochinese Empire, on the ground everything was intimately linked: Guangzhouwan, Fujian, and Amoy (Xiamen) function as essential agents in the coming to be of French Indochina.

It would, however, be naive to believe that their close relationship was down to France, which, in its colonial fever, tried to link the South of China to Indochina. As vassal states, these regions subordinated themselves to the Middle Empire with which they held secular relations on many levels. Such relations were maintained after their annexation by the French protectorate. An example of this was the use of the Annamite code, which was 'borrowed from the Chinese laws of the Ming dynasty. [And what is more,] Chinese writing and literature alone were adopted, at least by the upper classes. The Annamese language existed only as a spoken language' (Bellecourt 440).¹⁷ In these kingdoms there are only two genres in literature, either the direct and coarse countertype of Chinese literature, and local literature. It is therefore not surprising that the Annamite elites recognized only Chinese literature (Levi 1931, 157).

Certainly, the panorama of France in Asia extended over several kingdoms of the Levant, the full extent of which will not be described in this chapter. In any case, the historical relations established between China and its vassal states (the future Indochina) testify to the deep ties that continued after their annexation as a French colony or protectorate. Such intimate links, woven by history, emphasize all the more the preeminence of the French

16 Yves Bachelier, 'Les Français à Amoy et Kulangsu du milieu du XIXe siècle à 1937', (Weber 1997).

17 In addition, Bailly's work, *Cochinchine française. Dictionnaire chinois-français* (Saigon: Rey & Curial Commercial Printing, 1889) affirms the anchoring of the Chinese language in Cochin China.

Empire in China. If India and Cathay initially were the focus of the French expeditions, Indochina was but the culmination of the future misadventures suffered by France in these places.

The ramifications of the French presence

On its way to the conquest of India and Cathay, the French expedition spotted other kingdoms that were in line with its ambitions, such as Korea and Japan. The presence of European cultures in Japan would seem to date from the same period as that in China, with the arrival of the Jesuits in the sixteenth century and then the Franciscans (Hideichi 1). The French influence in the neighboring countries of China remained very limited, until the eve of the Opium Wars. In fact, 'France will play no role in Japan before the reopening of the country in the mid-nineteenth century' (Furansugo vii). My hypothesis is that the survival of French heritage in Japan occurs in the same way as in China, so that Francophone manifestations in several Asian kingdoms could be identified using the same analytical model used in the Chinese case. Certainly, to give a sense of Japanese or Korean Francophonie depends on long-term background studies on all aspects of this branch of Francophonie. I will limit myself here to a succinct overview in line with the example of that for Chinese Francophonie. This glimpse, however panoramic, of the French influence in these strategic Asian countries, will further highlight the Francophone connections on the continent and the crucibles of today's Asian Francophonie.

The French presence in Japan

Located on the maritime route of the European expeditions, Japan was part of the colonial design and of the Far-Eastern ambition of France, which had just got its hands on some of the Chinese ports. If Canton was the only place in China reserved for trade with the Europeans, in Japan, it was forbidden for any foreigner to circulate inside without requesting a passport. The free movement of foreigners became possible only from 1899 onwards (Blanchon 153).¹⁸ Recalling the restrictions in the Middle Kingdom, this fiercely defended barrier set up by the Japanese has an air of *déjà vu*. But the posture that Japan would adopt is proof of a well-informed country (based on the Chinese precedent). China's obscurantism, caused by its millennial

18 Gérard Siary, 'La présence française au Japon depuis l'ère Meiji (1868-1912)', (Blanchon).

isolation, and especially its vain resistance against the attempts of the Europeans, shook and enraged the Japanese. Between resisting the West or bowing down to it, after many twists and turns, the spirit of openness prevailed. This opening up to foreign countries by Japan, was due first to one of its influential ministers at the Court: Midzouno Etkisennokami, who 'had the boldness to propose to his colleagues to open up Japan to the men of the West' (Lavollée 1863, 880). This way of thinking was subsequently shared among the Japanese elites of the time, including several Kanga princes who wrote many pamphlets to exhort Japan to open its ports to the West before the latter came to claim them by force (Lindau 1863, 76).

History soon proved them right. In 1853, the Japanese were amazed at the arrival of the American fleet under Commodore Perry (Lindau 1863, 77). The invincible commodore had the Japanese sign the first treaty with the West allowing trade exchanges and the appointment of a consul general of the United States in Japan. The ease and rapidity with which the West set foot on Japanese soil brought to mind the Chinese precedent. The fate of the Qing Empire resulting from its stinging defeat continued to enrage the most resistant minds:

China, Perry told the Japanese court, was completely defeated; it had sufficed for England and France to send a small part of their powerful fleet and their considerable armies to subjugate the Middle Empire, which was ten times larger and more populous than Japan. (Lindau 1863, 79)

The irreversible defeat of the neighboring giant in the face of 'civilized' powers – which led to the dismemberment of the Middle Empire – provided a terrible lesson for Japan, which drew its own conclusion. Everything led one to believe that by avoiding the role of the defeated party that China was then playing, the Japanese would escape from putting their country under colonial control by offering compensation through concessions and leases.

This amicable infiltration by the Europeans – without colony or concession – into Japanese territory meant that French acculturation remained limited, in comparison with the Chinese case. It goes without saying that, although French investments were found to be lower in several regions in Japan, the Francophone element seems also to have been significant. On the other hand, even if the opening up of Japan was different to that of China, what traditional Japan needed was similar to what China wanted, namely the knowledge of maritime techniques and modern ways. Thus, the modalities of Franco-Japanese exchanges were more or less modeled on those of the French presence in China. Think of the arsenal in Yokosuka and the

foundry in Yokohama set up by the French professionals recruited by the Meiji government between 1854 and 1868 to teach the Japanese how to build and repair their boats (Blanchon 155).¹⁹ These two maritime sites built by French engineers attest to the same mode of French involvement in Japan as in China. In other words, the French contribution was distinguished above all in the military and shipbuilding: 'The Meiji era saw the realization, in many areas, of major governmental projects led by the French' (Blanchon 157).

Inevitably, the introduction of French interests in Japan brought in its wake the infiltration of French culture even if compared to China, where France possessed a colony, concession, and trading post, but where French cultural presence was limited. Still, the anchoring and the manifestation of French life in Japan roughly followed the Chinese model on a relatively smaller scale.²⁰ There is every reason to believe that the genesis and emancipation of the French-speaking sphere in China would provide a model that can be applied to other Asian countries that have experienced the same phenomenon, with some exceptions. For during the same period, several countries of the Levant faced the same dilemma regarding the West, and what is more, the needs of these countries were also similar.

The French presence in Korea

Like Japan, another kingdom of the East was in the path of the French fleet. Korea was also on the frontline of the encounter with French civilization. The fact that the first appearances of the French ships *La Boussole* and *L'Astrolabe* anchored near the coast of Korea as early as 1787 (Jong 66-67) suggests that, after China, Korea was in the firing line of the French colonizers. Nevertheless, the dilemma remained the same. Resisting the West or yielding to its penetration; the kingdom had to decide. Korea, which had maintained a 'sporadic exchange with Westerners since the 17th century' (Jong 11), was also concerned about external intrusion. It is through its giant neighbor that the hermitic Kingdom, whose constitution dates back to the year 669, tentatively felt its way about the West. Books of Western philosophy, mathematics, astronomy and Christian religion, composed in Chinese by European missionaries, made their way into Korea from Beijing:

Every Korean ambassadors went to Beijing to pay tribute to the Emperor [...] to meet the Jesuits in residence at the Court. The Jesuits gave them

19 See also, Beato; Loti; Stillfried; (Edel 20).

20 This subject will be expanded on in Chapter IV.

Chinese books, written by them, which dealt with the natural sciences and Catholicism' (Destombes 18).

Between openness and isolation, the Korean kingdom, like its neighbors, thought carefully about this unprecedented dilemma. As the Court vacillated, the presence of Western fleets increased, especially after the Opium Wars. When Korea finally emerged from its isolation, the first trade treaty it signed was not with the West but with Japan in 1876. Nevertheless, this outward breach enabled the European countries to also wrest treaties, including that with France in 1886 (Jong 11).²¹

Even more isolated and closed off than China and Japan because of the limited extent of its writing, Korea until the eighteenth century had no means of communication with the French. Everything passed by the detour of Chinese writing, with which it shares the same characters, with a different oral pronunciation. It is thanks to this linguistic medium that the Jesuits of China were able to settle in Korea (Jong 41). As a result, the first trace of the French presence in Korea is tinged strongly with Christian proselytism, just as in the Chinese case. If Yi Sûng-hun was the first Korean Christian to be baptized in 1784 and Korean historiography holds Chông Ha-sang as the first Korean to have learned French, it should be noted that French was not diffused there before the opening up of Korea to foreign countries. Thus the first French school in Seoul dates only from 1896 (Jong 192-193), when France already had been working in Shanghai and other Asian cities for almost half a century. On the other hand, if the French influence (or Francophonie in Korea) has been slowed down or its growth has lagged in the contemporary history of Korea, this is due to the interruption of Franco-Korean diplomatic relations for 41 years (1906-1947), due to the annexation of the kingdom by the Japanese Empire (Thiébaud 2005, 81).

As succinct as it is, this panoramic overview of the French presence in the countries and kingdoms bordering on China gives an idea of the whole of the French advance across the Far East. The willingness of Japan and Korea to amiably allow French penetration into their lands would undoubtedly have an impact on Francophone life in these two cultures, which had not experienced a colonial concession. Without going into it any further, our brief overview will have the merit of having shown that there is a different degree of Francophonie in the countries of the Levant, which is due to the extent of the French presence in these places.

21 See also Kim Hwa-Young, 'Introduction et réception de la littérature française en Corée: autour d'Albert Camus', (Pei 134).

Is there a Francophonie in the East?

This quick overview of the history of the French presence, its origin, penetration, and distribution in China, India, and to a relatively lesser degree, Japan and Korea, leads us to ask an essential question: does there exist a Francophonie in the East beyond the French establishment in Indochina? Whatever the conclusion, given the current state of thought in this field, the answer to this question must take into account the French strongholds in all places once influenced by French culture. As the Middle Kingdom was coveted by the eight 'civilized' countries at the time, France had every interest in carving out its own place. In fact, the tearing up of China by the European powers and in particular the cessation of Hong Kong to England led France to consolidate its position and to devise an equivalent strategy in the South of China. Hence the French interest in Indochina. Already, the phenomenon of Francophone elements in Asia, and the issue over whether there is indeed a Francophonie in the East beyond Indochina, appear beyond question.

On the other hand, the misfortunes of France in India served as a catalyst for its breakthrough elsewhere in Asia as a counterbalance and compensation. Thus the fate of the French adventure in India and China influenced the future fortunes and misfortunes of the French in Indochina. As a reaction to and consequence of the losses incurred upstream, the importance of Indochina resides in its role as the last outpost of France in Asia. If the first pages of the French Empire in the Far East were written in India, Cathay served as a relay point and Indochina marked its loss, embodying the last surge of post-Cathay French interests, a kind of 'swan song' of French Eastern colonization. As the ultimate hope and despair of France in Asia, Indochina is not in itself the apotheosis of the French colonial period in the East; this was Shanghai, the crucible and the highlight of post-Pondicherry French colonial life. My conviction is that the neglected Francophone phenomenon in these Asian regions/territories, generally classified as non-Francophone, deserves to be re-examined according to a transcultural approach. Historically excluded from the Francophone sphere and omitted from the Francophone field of study, Asia apparently has no place in the French-speaking world. As a result, there is an urgent need for substantive studies on the Francophone Asian area, and within it, the distinctive character of this form of Francophonie. Moreover, this overview will have highlighted the position and the attitude of France in these regions/cultures, former hosts of French civilization.

Thus, from the establishment of posts/relays in Macau or Canton, to the opening of the ports/concessions in Shanghai or Fuzhou, passing by the high

point of the East India Company in India, the map of 'the French incursion' indicates spaces that were formerly ignored. However, these landmarks represent the presence of the French Eastern Empire before Indochina. From Pondicherry to Shanghai via Guangzhouwan, the back roads of conquest testify to the hardships suffered by the peoples of these ancient strongholds in non-Francophone spaces. The trials and tribulations of these places in their encounter with French culture led to the subsequent establishment of Indochina. A fortiori, these places with their sonorous names testify above all to the accomplishment of a transnational Francophonie where the French culture and the local cultures made contact.

The history of the above-mentioned places only reinforces the relevance of my hypothesis on the existence of an enlarged and protean Eastern Francophonie. Already, the omnipresent equivalence made between Indochina and Francophonie in the East is shattered and leads the debate to a horizon hitherto unexplored. As a result, we require a new approach, because the Francophone elements in Asia will need to be brought to light according to a methodology that reflects the multifaceted nature of the Francophone manifestation in these cultures classified, a priori, as non-Francophones. In other words, the recognition of Francophone zones with heterogeneous shapes and forms in India, China, Japan, and Korea requires studies that depart from the old methodology, such as the trilogical approach. Because the French elements in these cultural spaces are not found in the whole country but in ports, trading posts, and territories in contact with French culture. In other words, French does not serve as a linguistic medium or as an official language, but it is a language among other cultural languages. In short, in a country that escaped colonization and whose local regional culture weaves a relationship of cohabitation with the new masters in diverse ways, the French elements require a form of recognition other than the uniform application of the trilogical method.

These distant cities, which have left their imprint on the collective Francophone memory, whether it be Canton, Pondicherry, Shanghai, or Guangzhouwan, each bear the vestiges of the French presence across their contemporary history. Even if the degree and nature of their Francophone acquisition vary because of the vicissitudes which these places underwent in their cohabitation with French civilization, this in no way detracts from their belonging to the French-speaking world of the East.

The literary aspect further reinforces this historical observation. The twentieth century witnessed the emancipation of Chinese/Japanese literature of French expression, which will be the subject of Chapters IV and V. At the end of these analyses we will be able to affirm that neither the concept

of Indochina as a reference for Eastern Francophonie, nor that colonization was the only means of access to the French-speaking world, remain tenable. Many works published in France, Quebec and elsewhere, originating from literatures labeled non-Francophone, authored by Francophone writers of Asian origin, strongly attest that French-speaking literature is not confined to Francophone countries. These French-speaking (Chinese/Japanese/Korean) literatures, originating from the places that once bore the traditions of French culture in Asia, deserve to be looked at closely in the hope of reconfiguring contemporary Francophone literature.

II The affirmation of the French presence in Asia

'Paris of the East'

Traces of the first French to set foot in the port of Shanghai¹ date back to January 1849. They arrived on board *La Bayonnaise* from Macau (Grave 1104). At the mouth of the Yangtze Delta and at the intersection of the Wu Song River, which serves as its outer harbor, this hamlet of fishermen and common people is distinguished from any other French colony in Asia by its prime location. Not only is Shanghai at the crossroads of the North-South axis of the Middle Kingdom but, overlooking the sea, it is a maritime relay point between France and Asia, so that immediately after the signing of the treaties, it transformed quickly into a site of coexistence, creating an early model of mixed cultures. The prodigious nature of Shanghai lies in its transformation. A dilapidated port since the sixteenth century, it had nothing but junk and a few miserable sailboats before the Europeans and French arrived. The port then rapidly became the 'Paris of the East', embracing French culture and agreeing to cohabitate with European civilization. Located at the confluence of the crossroads of rivers that flow from the center of the Middle Kingdom, Shanghai thus had all the assets to become a foremost relay point between Europe and Asia.

The France-Shanghai line

'De facto we are already masters of China' (Lindau 1861, 772). This bold statement, made in 1861 by one of the agents of the French Eastern Empire says a lot about the free nature of the French presence in Asia. If Macau and Canton, alongside Pondicherry, were the first markers of French presence in the Levant countries, other magical places, such as Fuzhou and Shanghai, embody the soul of French life in these places. Rodolphe Lindau's chart for the year 1860, detailing exports of silk and tea from China to England,

¹ The proper names of Chinese people as well as place names are sometimes spelled according to French phonetics, sometimes in Chinese diction, sometimes again in pinyin, such as Tcheng Ki-Tong vs. Chen Jitong, Peking vs. Beijing, Kouang-theou-ouan vs. Guangzhouwan, Fuzhou vs. Fou-Tchéou. Other names evolve over the course of history, such as Changhai vs. Shanghai, Formosa vs. Taiwan, Thibet vs. Tibet. Others carry multiple spellings, such as Zikawei vs. Zicawei.

France, and the United States, is a reflection of the European influence in the Empire of the Son of Heaven (Lindau 1861, 772). In such a favorable economic climate for the European countries and as the oldest French concession in Asia, Shanghai woke up to the possibilities of foreign trade just as it opened its ports and gave itself over as a vast commercial site for the profit of the colonial projects. Because of its geography at the confluence of the rivers, it would play a prominent role in the history of France in Asia, enjoying privileges in terms of communication and exchange.

Thanks to the Peninsular & Oriental Steamship Navigation Company, China was connected to Europe by regular shipping lines from the 1840s (Lévy 49). Another historical fact: preceding the Messageries Maritimes company, the Compagnie des Messageries Impériales (Maybon 43)² played a part in communications by linking France to Shanghai in 1861 (Siegfried n.p.).³ This was a giant step in setting up Shanghai as the first Asian city to be in direct communication with France, a step that would propel it to the forefront in all future communication across France's activities in Asia. It is fair to say that the 1860s remain Europe's golden age on the continent. Huge progress was made, such as the passage of the Suez Canal in 1869, which brought an invaluable aid to the Europe-Asia route, ensuring unprecedented security and speed. To reach France, travelers in Asia would travel with the Messageries Maritimes, which inaugurated the Marseille-Hong Kong line in 1862 (Lévy 49). Then came the installation in 1880 of the wireless telegraph station, which made possible direct communication between the French Concession and the General Government of Indochina (Brizay 350). The effervescence created by the coming of all these developments propelled, it goes without saying, the growth of Shanghai:

Shanghai was opened to European trade by the treaty of 1842. Traffickers soon arrived to set themselves up. Apart from the Chinese city, they were given vast lands that were divided among the different nationalities, and which became what were called the French, English, and American concessions. [...] In 1860, when we arrived, we could say that there was in Shanghai, the European city and the Chinese city. (Hérisson 69-70)

2 It should be mentioned that the price of the land necessary for the installation of the company in Shanghai in 1861 is mentioned in Edan's letter dated 1 June 1862 to Mr Girette (Inspector General of the Imperial Messengers' Services).

3 In the appendix entitled 'During a century...', it reads: 'On April 22, 1861 signature of the convention setting up the French postal service in India, Indochina, China and the Mascareignes Islands'. This maritime link is also confirmed by Jean-Marie Thiébaud (Thiébaud 2008, 69).

The very names of ‘the European city and the Chinese city’ sum up the cohabitation that distinguished Shanghai from any traditional colony. In the collective memory of this city, which began with imbalanced treaties, it has the reputation of being the ‘Paris of the East’:

When, in the 1860s, the “royal one” set her sights on this location, which was well located on the sea route that connects Singapore to Hong Kong, Shanghai was already the largest “French” city in Asia.⁴ (Blanchon 169)

Located in the middle of China, Shanghai served as a relay point for all transport to the hinterland. This geographical advantage enjoyed by the city was reinforced all the more by the stabilization of the English colonies in Singapore and Hong Kong. In fact, the establishment of the Liverpool-Hong Kong-Shanghai shipping line would affect the fate of the French Empire in the region, and, above all, shape the destiny of the future Indochina that was to emerge a few decades later.

Christian proselytism in Shanghai

The rise of Shanghai as a European city took place on several levels, particularly with the spread of Christianity in this Chinese city. As was the case in many other Asian cities, the origins of the French presence in Shanghai bear the classic imprint of Christian proselytism. Settled in their Zicawei⁵ stronghold at the end of the sixteenth century, the Jesuits were able to proliferate when Emperor Qian Long (1711-1799) bowed down to Christianity. Without any doubt, proselytizing is the first step marking the French presence in Shanghai. Called Paul Xuy (or Paul Siu), the conversion in 1603 of a Ming minister, Xu Guang-xi (1562-1633), whose statue still stands in the city (Zhu Zhao-ning 19), indicates the extent of Jesuit influence. Guy Brossollet confirms this influence, spelling the name of the minister according to the Shanghai dictation:

Members of his family imitated him and founded a Christian community near Shanghai. [...] after the death of Paul Zi (1633), the province of Shanghai had about 40,000 Christians under the leadership of Jesuits; there were two churches and seventy chapels. (Brossollet 12)

4 Hugues Tertrais, ‘La présence française en Asie du Sud-Est, d’hier à aujourd’hui’, (Blanchon).

5 In Chinese this means the confluence of the Zi family. The backwater is now a gigantic agglomeration called Xiu Jiahuei, one of Shanghai’s commercial crucibles.

The thousands of Christian faithful with their two churches and seventy chapels were huge numbers for the year 1633 in a country a priori Chinese and situated a hundred thousand leagues from France. It says a lot about the deep anchoring of the French Catholic presence in China and to a large extent in Asia.

The whole significance of the magisterial work of the Jesuits on the ground is that it set a precedent for the subjects of the Celestial Empire, which had been closed off for millennia – a civilization, a belief, a race, and a language, other than those of the Han. Jesuits worked on many fronts in social activities, particularly with their involvement in founding colleges and seminaries in Shanghai. Think of the hospitals and orphanages that accompanied French commercial development, the establishment and spread of French culture in Asia. Such proselytism resumed in Shanghai after 1844 on the eve of the creation of the concession. Thus a cathedral and a college were built there in 1851 named St Ignace, just as seminaries, orphanages, libraries, and observatories were born under the guidance of the Jesuits (Shieh 22).

The French Empire in the Middle Kingdom

Another element that served as a catalyst for French progress in Shanghai was the strategic advancement of the English in the city. They were the first to set their sights on this island of fishermen and its abundant waterways: 'In designating Shanghai, Sir Henry Pottinger was onto a winner. The English trade in this port reached, as early as 1847, the value of 61 million' (Lavollée 1851, 741), writes Charles Lavollée. It was also the English who took the first step towards colonial partition by obtaining about 830 mo⁶ of land in 1845, which would be subject exclusively to English law. This territorial segment would forever set a precedent for colonial rule within Chinese sovereignty. The administration and management were all English, with all the levers necessary for the operation of this agglomeration. Falling under the English banner, this colonial space was the envy of the French, who were quick to follow suit with the English. Like the English, the first Consul-General Montigny obtained an islet of 940 mo in March 1849, intended for the creation of the French Concession (He Yu & Li Hua 58),⁷ thus inaugurating the French Empire in the Middle Kingdom.

6 One mo is equivalent to 666.6666 square meters.

7 Christine Cornet, 'Système concessionnaire et police française: un exemple original de la politique coloniale de la France à Shanghai'.

There were no illusions about the nature or the proportion that these concessions were going to take on: they were about to become a territory of the French Republic. Before the timorous Qing dynasty, which was weak and easily persuaded, the territories that were only conceded initially to the French community, made up of a handful of French, quickly took on the shape of an autonomous State, endowed with an integral sovereignty:

the European powers were tacitly authorized by the Qing government to organize an independent police force and then a municipal administration, so that the foreign colony progressively passed from the stage of “foreign habitation zone” to that of “concession”. (Shieh 51).

For some Western researchers, the French Concession in Shanghai ‘worked like a French municipality transplanted into Chinese territory [...]. That is why it is acceptable to speak of a Chinese semi-colony under the tutelage of the West’ (Blanchon 57). Thus the way was prepared for the installation of a French municipality, a police force, shops, schools, media (newspapers/magazines), which resulted in a change in the makeup of Shanghai, which now cohabited with Europeans. In the nineteenth century, French concessions such as those of Shanghai (1849), Tianjin (1861), Canton (1861), and Hankou (1886) were not on the same wavelength. It is the one in Shanghai that soon metamorphosed by taking on the characteristics of a colony. For example, a Business Secretariat (Gongbujū) was created in 1854 to represent the Shanghai City Concession Authority (Mei 109). In truth, this imperial authority of the Qing remained a way of promoting French life in Shanghai. The creation under its banner of a Cabinet of Education, which was allocated a library, an orchestra (Mei 109)⁸ and other parallel organizations, is obvious proof of the promotion of French life.

The French presence in Shanghai was therefore multifaceted, and generated a sense of French sovereignty, particularly the Concession with its administration endowed with all the necessary levers. Evidence of this is found in the extraterritorial laws, which crystallize in themselves the emblem of an integral sovereignty with colonial characteristics. The rights enjoyed by Europeans were without appeal, repeated the Consul Eden in his letter of 24 November 1861: ‘the Chinese authorities are bound, by the stipulations of the same treaty, to protect said citizens in the peaceful

⁸ Founded in 1879, this Western-style symphony orchestra remains the leading orchestra in China.

enjoyment of their rights'⁹ (Maybon 53). The administrative machinery of the Concession was under the responsibility of 'three directors [who] share municipal responsibilities: the administrative director, the technical director, the general director of services' (Blanchon 58). As for the police in the Concession, whose detachment was composed of Tonkinese *tirailleurs*, European contingents, even a section of light tanks and artillery, it went well beyond the framework of a municipal police force, as Brossollet points out: 'In total, two battalions, one with a European majority, the other Tonkinese, were part of the French Detachment of Shanghai' (Brossollet 124).

The French Concession was a space of the French Republic: it coexisted with the rest of the city, which worked in the Chinese way. In short, this Shanghai where people cohabitated was deeply imbued with French influences whose presence easily can be seen in the four corners of the city: 'the street names are the [very] symbol of this French identity' wrote Christine Cornet (Blanchon 57-58). With its streets named Lafayette, Colbert, Molière that map out the main arteries (Brossollet 311-312),¹⁰ it was difficult to safeguard the integrity and authenticity of the Chinese in the face of such an ostentatious French influence. Even if the beginning of the French infiltration proved to be modest, Shanghai did not take long to adopt the mantle of 'Paris of the East':

It [Shanghai] is the oldest of the national concessions: the English were there since 1845, the French since 1849 [...]. Foreign presence and foreign money have made [Shanghai] the most important trading center of Far East Asia (Gadoffre 71).

The emblems of a culture of cohabitation

Historically, European or French acculturation is part of Shanghai's collective memory, so that European life rivaled French life. Think of St Francis Xavier College in the Hong Kew District run by the English; think also of the St Ignace College, one of the three pilot schools under the direction of the French, which alone taught nearly 100,000 students (Shieh 25). These colleges established a climate of cultural coexistence. Under the authority of the English, the International Concession, which grouped together eight countries, had a hundred other secondary schools including pilot schools,

9 Letter from Benoît Edan to W.L.G. Smith, U.S. Consul in Shanghai, 24 November 1861.

10 Guy Brossollet gives a list of the streets in Shanghai with their original name in French and their Chinese name today. See Appendix III, 'Rues d'hier et d'aujourd'hui'.

such as the *École Polytechnique*, which taught hundreds of thousands of English-speaking Chinese. On a smaller scale, two French secondary schools served nearly 840,000 inhabitants (Shieh 26) in the French Concession. However, such apparently moderate data on the French side should be taken with caution, for other educational institutions worked in parallel outside the French Concession under the aegis of Christian charity. One example is the Sacred Heart School in Songjiang District, not far from Shanghai (Shieh 31).

In this context of implanting European culture, the circulation of Chinese, English, or French magazines and newspapers is emblematic of a time of cohabitation. Joseph Shieh remembers several of these publications in his autobiographical work (Shieh 35), such as *Le Nouvelliste* (1870-1872), *Progrès* (1871-1872), the *Courrier de Chine* (1896), and *L'Echo de Chine* (1900-1919).¹¹ The history of foreign journals and newspapers in Shanghai, which affirm the cohabitation of cultures is thus described by the diplomat and colleague of Claudel, Soulié de Morant:

In fact, there was no newspaper in China before the appearance in Shanghai in 1872 of *Chen-pao* (*Shanghai Newspaper*, with the subtitle *Chinese Daily News*). [...] In 1880, the Japanese founded the *T'ong-wen-wou-pao* (Shanghai newspaper for combined learning). The manager was Japanese. The Americans founded the *Sin wen pao* (*Le Nouvelliste*) in 1892. It was in 1897 that a purely Chinese newspaper appeared under the title *T'chong wai Je pao* (China and Overseas Daily News). I will not give the details of the twenty to thirty newspapers that appeared since that date in Shanghai, Taiwan, and Peking, but always in foreign concessions, where Chinese justice could not reach the editors or seize the editions. (Morant 1912, 368)

It goes without saying that French newspapers were trying to penetrate the local market. Their diffusion attests to the French cultural presence in the place.¹² Without doubt, a systematic analysis of their content, the scale of their distribution, and the makeup of their readership would provide first-hand data that can indicate the degree of Francophonie in this Chinese city. Alas, most archives today are untraceable on the Chinese side, because of the events that passed through popular China, a victim of Maoist cleansing, especially the Red Guards who fiercely purged the collective memory. The few preserved archives that remain available come

11 See its Chinese title, *Fa wen Shanghai ri bao*: the French daily of Shanghai.

12 It is tempting to draw a parallel with the situation in Japan where the first foreign newspaper appeared in Nagasaki in 1861 under the title *Nagasaki Shipping List and Advertiser* (Séguy 12).

only from the French side. And their analysis leaves no doubt as to the freedom of French cultural life in the Chinese city. For example, *L'Écho de la Chine*. A weekly newspaper published every Wednesday, *L'Echo* was a major newspaper with correspondents from around the world who wrote exclusive columns on the news of the countries to which they were sent. On China alone, the newspaper dedicated many columns, such as 'China News', 'Shanghai and China News', 'Press Review', 'Specials in Shanghai'. That is to say that *L'Echo* and its emulators painted a faithful picture in real time of the news of the French presence in Shanghai, in China, indeed in all Asia.

French commerce in Shanghai

Behind any rising culture, there lies the strength of the economy. The years 1860-1880 saw the culmination of the golden age of French investment in China (Hérisson 66)¹³ with the presence of nine companies (Brizay 72). The installation of the Comptoir d'Escompte de Paris, the French Post Office, the Messageries Impériales (Maybon 38)¹⁴, joined by the companies Olivier (1875-1955), Racine et Cie (1895-1950), and Rondon (1898-1949) (Brizay 72) – these are all activities that attest to the development of the French economy on the ground. A look at the list of buildings designed by French architects including Paul Veyseyre, such as the hospital, the school, the customs building, the post office, the town hall (Brossollet 316),¹⁵ located in the four corners of Shanghai, only confirms it. The import figures also give an indication of the scope of the transactions taking place in Shanghai. Thus, for the year 1896, Shanghai outranked all Asian cities such as Hong Kong, Canton, Tianjin, and Fuzhou, as a receiving port for European goods (Gadoffre 71).¹⁶ This is its role as 'the most important trading center of Far Eastern Asia. This is where the ships of the West arrive, stuffed with goods redirected by waterways to the center of China [...]' (Gadoffre 71). It goes

13 The first French business is in the name of a certain Remy, led by his nephew Édouard Schmidt.

14 See also the appointment of the five notable French traders to the French Municipal Council in Shanghai in a letter from Benoît Edan dated 1853. (Maybon 44).

15 The sixteen major buildings in Shanghai built by the French group Léonard & Veyseyre bring the French landscape into the Chinese city. Moreover, Claudel's enumeration of French businesses in Shanghai further confirms the French economic influence in Shanghai life, as the Mondon grocery store is mentioned as the biggest French house of its kind in Shanghai (Claudel 2005, 229).

16 The table drawn up by Gadoffre gives the details of the numbers of transactions that took place for the year 1896.

without saying that large-scale French companies as well as individual retailers were seeking to penetrate the local economic market. This is particularly the case of the French Electricity and Tramway Company, whose power is undeniable (Blanchon 62).

Such a flowering of the French economy combined with French cultural events in Shanghai was nonetheless only possible thanks to the favorable situation created by the English. Indeed, the supremacy that Shanghai would take on at the heart of the French Empire in Asia depended closely on the rise of the English colony, which was connected to the 'Paris of the East' by sea:

The Hong Kong islet is [...] the center of Far East business operations. It is the end of the line for steamship liners and postal services, the departure port for ships that sail between Asia and Europe or America (Blerzy 1871, 55).

Later, with the imminence of French Indochina, the dynamics created by the line between Shanghai-Hong Kong-Indochina would play the pivotal role. This is because Shanghai's central importance is related to this particularity: there is no binary circuit between France and Indochina; it is triangular France-Shanghai (or Hong Kong)-Indochina. Everything goes through Shanghai to be unloaded, sorted, and reshipped, merchandise or personnel, including cultural products (books/newspapers) and others:

There is no line of direct navigation between France and Indochina on the one hand [...]. French imports pass through Hong Kong or Shanghai. The goods are unloaded for re-embarkation on foreign vessels, most of them British, which serve Amoy (Weber 1997, 186).

As a hub, Shanghai is not only the distribution center for Asia, of all that flows from Europe, but above all it is a key relay point in the Europe-Asia maritime route. The figures speak volumes: 'In 1900, three thousand steamers pass through the port, with a total cargo of four million tons' (Brizay 343).

Europe's hangar, receiving port, and hub for all transactions, Shanghai stored everything that arrived by sea waiting for a re-embarkation elsewhere. It goes without saying that the European investments poured in, making it the rear base of European interests in Asia. Long before the Bank of Indochina, created in 1875, whose branch in Shanghai opened only on 1 July 1898, multiple international banks (American, Russian, English) opened branches in Shanghai to respond to the comings and goings of maritime traffic, which

required a suitable banking system. A crossroads of France-Asia traffic, Shanghai embraced the high point of French semi-colonization in China for nearly a century (1840-1940).¹⁷

Shanghai: a mixed city

Another revealing element of French/European life in Shanghai was the changing scenery perceptible in the landscape, even in ways of thinking. The opening of the ports brought in its wake the establishment of concessions suited to European ambitions. This climate of cohabitation forged and undoubtedly influenced the secular landscape of these places, which were once under the influence of the Qing. European life was implanted in local life and contributed to the flourishing culture. The Parisian Café, the Night Club, and the Paris Cinema¹⁸ lined the famous Park Lane (Nanjing Street today), which symbolized the effervescence of foreign businesses and a flourishing French life. These European businesses stood side by side happily with teahouses, rice cake shops, and silk shops, in short, the soul of the Chinese.

Such blending also echoed in local mentality. Inevitably, it was in Shanghai, Fujian, and Tianjin – the flagships of French colonial ambitions – established by the signature of the treaties, that Europeanized mentalities were forged:

Hong Kong, Shanghai, Tien-Tsin [...] the populations of these great centers, where we introduced the fever for business, have undergone with our contact a kind of moral crossbreeding, which destroyed to a large extent their original character (Nesles 291).

Originally a fishing port in the country of the Levant, Shanghai was transformed into a Western city where the influx of Europeans altered and permeated the local mentalities which, in turn, made it into a cultural 'cocktail'. At the turn of the 1890s, the rise of this city on the banks of the Huangpu River easily surpassed the prosperity of many cities in the metropolis:

17 Chinese and French, beyond the irreconcilable points of view held on the disappointments that the Qing suffered, all refer to this period in terms of 'semi-colonization'. See for example Daniel (297).

18 After the coming to power of the Communists, the establishment took the name of the Cinema Da Guangming (Great Clarity).

in this cosmopolitan crossroads where capital flowed from all corners of the world, Shanghai in the [18]90s [was] a colorful, hectic city, where money was earned and spent in an atmosphere of euphoria (Gadoffre 72).

Since the signing of treaties until just before the takeover by the Communists, Shanghai was, in short, a mixed city that might not at first sight have appeared to be somewhere in Asia. A coastal city, its facade – the work of the Europeans – was erected with Renaissance-, Gothic-, or Victorian-style buildings along the Huangpu River. This ‘Promenade des Anglais’ was proudly christened *The Bund*.¹⁹ Before berthing in Shanghai, the first symbol that struck new arrivals was the English flag of the International Concession, which flew alongside other foreign flags on these iconic buildings that housed European institutions: banks, post offices, customs houses, and hotels. Called the International Settlement, the International Concession placed under the control of the Shanghai Municipal Council and the Shanghai Municipal Police was led by foreign residents who reported to the Consular Corps (Shieh 52). This concession ostensibly displayed its European allegiance and thereby altered the atmosphere of the fishing town that Shanghai was originally:

Shanghai has become one of the most beautiful cities of the Far East, one of the queens of cosmopolitanism. [...] The international concession, which borders a part of the shoreline, owns the big hotels, the banks, the houses of commerce, luxury stores. It is extended by the French concession, which is more modest, less animated. (Bellessort 6)

The establishment of the Aurore University

In this context of cultural cohabitation, a historical fact stands out that shows the penetration of French culture in Asia: the establishment by the Jesuits of the Aurore University in Xujiahui in 1903. As the first French university in the Far East, Aurore was the barometer for measuring the degree of Francophone presence in Asia. French historiography raises no doubts about this institution, which was the work of the Jesuits, and this is confirmed by many French researchers (Blanchon 75-88).²⁰ However the Chinese side gives a different version. Resenting the encroachment

19 Hindi word, which means the wharf. The promenade was built by the initiative of the Consul Benoît Édan. See Shieh 51.

20 See for example the study by Alain Roux, ‘Notables chinois et autorités françaises dans la Concession française de Shanghai’, (Blanchon).

of the Europeans, which culminated at the end of the Qing dynasty, the Chinese dismissed the initiative of the Jesuits out of hand. Many biographies depicting the life and work of Ma Xiangbo (1840-1939, the first doctor of theology) deny the credit given to the Jesuits in the founding of Aurore.²¹ According to the Chinese, the setting up of this university would be the work of this one man, a Francophone converted to Christianity. Whatever the merits of either side of the debate, the wide disparity in opinions in no way lessens the Frenchness of the institution, as well as the way it anchored the Francophone presence there. A French Catholic creation, Aurore was not only the first, but probably one of the only French universities in Asia, and therefore, it stands above all other institutions of its kind, including the *l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* (French School of the Far East) that was set up in Indochina in 1890.

Directed by Ma and his Jesuit friends, the university, divided into three major divisions (law, medicine, and science), was governed by French and non-Chinese laws (Zhou 1988, 104), further accentuating the Francophone character of the institution. Producing its first graduates in 1912, Aurore made courses in Chinese and French literatures mandatory (Zhou 1988, 85) in the degree courses, which lasted seven or eight years. Doctoral candidates followed their classes in Shanghai and completed their theses in French universities, where they were welcomed with open arms.²² The numerous courses listed in the *Bulletin of the Aurore University* attest to the rich and advanced program provided by the institution. The reputation and prestige of the university are also reflected in its impressive achievements. The Faculty of Medicine had under its jurisdiction two French hospitals in Shanghai: St Anthony's Hospice and St Mary's Hospital (Zhou 1988, 93). Like any renowned university, it had its own university press. The Shanghai branch of the Printing Company of the Society of Jesus, owner of the Zicawei Press,²³ served as the Aurore University Press. This publisher produced numerous works, including doctoral dissertations and journals, such as the *Bulletin de l'Université Aurore*, which was available in several European and North American institutions.²⁴

21 See on this, Zhang Ruogu, *Ma Xiangbo xian sheng nian pu*, Changsha: Shang wu yin shu guan, 1939; Ma Liang & Fang Hao, *Ma Xiangbo xian sheng wen ji*, Beijing: Shang zhi bian yi guan chu ban, 1947; Zong Youheng & Xia Linggen, *Ma Xiangbo yu Fu dan da xue*, Taiyuan: Shanxi jiao yu chu ban she, 1996.

22 See the systematic publication of their theses by French publishers in Chapter 3.

23 This press was also called *l'Imprimerie de l'Orphelinat de T'ou-Sè-Wè*.

24 A dozen or so American universities hold copies, among them: Cornell University, State University of New York Binghamton, University of Hawaii at Monoa, Northwestern University,

The sustained rise of the Aurore University over half a century, made it possible to measure the growing scope of the Francophone presence in Shanghai at a time when a significant part of the local population remained illiterate. Having educated hundreds of thousands of Francophones throughout China, even throughout Asia, between 1903-1952,²⁵ the Aurore expressed by its mere presence the existence and manifestation of Francophone culture in Shanghai, indicating how this culture blossomed outside of Indochina. Such a success was undoubtedly due to the many colleges, seminars, French or Sino-French schools in Shanghai and elsewhere, which provided staffing not only to found but also to help flourish the first French university in Asia:

the concession housed six municipal schools, which enrolled more than three thousand students. [...] The cultural presence of France further asserted itself through the Alliance française, a radio station, and a rich library of 25,000 volumes. The Institut Pasteur was also present in Shanghai (Brizay 353).

Such success underlines the commitment of the French authorities, as is shown by the efforts made with the French high schools, which served as a means of acculturating the native population. Claudel's letter to Léon Bourgeois (1851-1925), Minister of Public Instruction, about the French books distributed as prizes to the most deserving students of the French Municipal School in Shanghai, serves as a convincing example of this acculturation (Claudel 2005, 75). We learn not only the mixed origins of the students in these French high schools, but especially the ways in which these students were subject to the dissemination and promotion of French language and culture.

The contribution of the secular elites

Being the work primarily of Jesuits and Chinese converts, Aurore and its undeniable success also highlight the involvement of many elites from secular society in such an enterprise. Their intervention contributed to the conditions of acclimatization to French culture. Some scholars mention first the contribution of Liang Qichao (1873-1929), figurehead and instigator of

University of Notre Dame, Harvard University, Ohio State University, University of Washington.
 25 In the first anti-imperialist raids undertaken by the Communist Party between 1949 and 1953, Aurore came under the governance of the State. The Communists broke in on 7 October 1949.

the Wu-Xi movement (Hundred Days Reform, 11 June-21 September 1898), and principal reformer of the social upheaval that led to the fall of the Qing:

Liang Qizhao with Yan Fu [Yen Fu] and Sheng Xuanhuai, Ma Liang (Ma Xiangbo) played a decisive role between 1903 and 1905 in founding the Aurore University he directed by entrusting most of the teaching to his French Jesuit friends (Blanchon 79).

According to Alain Roux, Liang is one of the founders of Aurore. Although we are not able at this stage to confirm this, his relationship with Ma Xiangbo is an undeniable fact (Zong & Xia 321, 323).²⁶ From his Japan-based newspapers such as *Xin min cong bao* (New Citizen's Journal, 1902) and *Xing xiao shuo* (*New Novel*, 1903), to the essays and the speeches he delivered, Liang advocated openness to the West and preached in favor of the transfer to China of Western cultures. Although his participation in the rise of Aurore does not seem tangible in these primary sources, one fact is worth noting. His translations of French works from their Japanese versions suggest that, unlike Yen Fu, Liang was a Francophile (Liang).²⁷ Moreover, in what we have been able to find out, nothing can demonstrate a close link between Liang and the French authorities. The only indication in this regard comes from Anthony Zhou, who alleges that Liang asked Mgr Garnier to allow Ma Xiangbo to take the reins of a college in Beijing, but Zhou does not support his claim with any source (Zhou 1988, 10). Even though tangible sources that can demonstrate the contribution of elites (like Liang) in the creation of Aurore are lacking, it is obvious that it could not have achieved such success without their support.

Whatever the real involvement of Liang and the laity in the success of the Aurore was, such an effervescence of French cultural life in and outside of the Concession raises the following question: was there a time when French was considered one of the official languages in Shanghai (Blanchon 94),²⁸ even as the International Settlement willingly adopted English as the business language of the city? Whether the French language was awarded

26 The collaboration between the two men occurred repeatedly throughout Ma's career, as his speech in Japan in 1907 was transcribed by Liang. On this subject, see the appendices at the end of Zong's book (Zong, Xia), including 'Les annales de Ma Xiangbo 1840-1939'.

27 This contains the translation of *Madame Roland*, without being able to know whether the work would have been translated from French or Japanese; see also Shi jie shu ju, 1930. *Shi wu xiao hao jie* [*Les voyages extraordinaires de Jules Verne, 18 chapitres dont les neuf premiers traduits à partir du japonais par Liang Qichao*], Shanghai: Shi jie shu ju, 1930.

28 This question certainly has attracted the attention of several researchers. See on this subject, Muriel Détrie, 'La Concession française de Shanghai à travers la littérature', (Blanchon).

an official status or not, one fact seems to stand out: the lack of an official colonial identity would have led the French language to manifest itself by other means. Think of the street names, signs or advertising placards in French dotted among those in Chinese or English (Blanchon 94-95). In fact, from the beginning of the Concession, along with the *daotai*²⁹ Lin Gui, the Consul Montigny gave certain avenues the names of Lafayette or Cardinal. It should be noted that such designations pale in comparison to the rapid rise of English language in the city.

Shanghai: a city of white people

Another element that would have helped give Shanghai its reputation as 'Paris of the East' was its role as a place that welcomed and sent the first Chinese intellectuals to France. Born from the opening up of the ports, movement and travel made Shanghai the most French of the Asian metropolises. The city hosted the largest contingents of expatriates and also welcomed them on their return from abroad (Brossollet 69). For it was from Shanghai that cruise ships departed for France; people from the south came together here, while waiting to embark. Marc Chadourne's portrait of those who returned from France or America in the 1920s is frequently cited by researchers:

The student returning from America is, of all, the most strongly marked by their reeducation. A strong Yankee accent, tortoiseshell glasses, gold teeth, chewing gum, "time is money", all of which is decidedly anti-Old China.³⁰

The 1930s marked the peak of foreign concessions and also recorded the last manifestations of European vitality. This high point of the French colonial doxology accompanied Shanghai's European enchantment. Foreign interests reached then their ultimate fulfillment before the Communists expelled and cleansed the whole as of 1949:

In 1927 Shanghai was an international metropolis in Asia. Some of its neighborhoods were directly under the administration of foreign concessions [...] where the Chinese authorities had no sovereignty (Liao 2004,149).

29 A *daotai* is a senior official who is responsible for the administrative management of one or more prefectures.

30 Cited in Brossollet.

Shanghai played its role of 'Paris of the East' so well that in Paris the translator of *Madame Chrysanthème* barely distinguished Paris from Shanghai: 'We walk in the street and, apart from the red cars, the commercials, the multicolored posters on the walls, the signs in French [...] everything else makes you believe that you are in Shanghai' (Xu 1931, 43-44, my translation). This remark on French acculturation in Shanghai illustrates the altered identity of the Chinese metropolis.

Other data point irrefutably in the same direction. The skyrocketing demographics of the Concession between 1910-1949 (Blanchon 64)³¹ are indicative of the existence of this 'French Republic' grafted since 1862 onto the flanks of the Qing Dynasty: 'In 1934, the Concession had more inhabitants than the city of Lyon' (Brossollet 23), the second largest French city. This telling comparison speaks volumes about the strong position of French culture in Shanghai, and its aspirations to become the dominant culture there. The disproportion between the local population and the white people living alongside them in the Concession in no way diminishes Shanghai's reputation of being a 'white city, founded by whites, administered by whites. The 100,000 Yellows [of the Concession] were tolerated and ruled over' (Gadoffre 72).³² The influence and prestige enjoyed by the Chinese city as 'Paris of the East' in the French colonial map made the post of Consul in Shanghai an attractive and coveted position. Unofficially, the Consul was the governor of the colony and had the authority to override the French police and justice system (Gadoffre 94) in and out of the Concession. The power and authority of the post alone embody in themselves French self-government at the heart of Chinese sovereignty.

What can one deduce from a century of French concessions in Shanghai? First of all, this: that the French presence in this Chinese city is an integral part of Francophonie in the East. It would even be fair to say that the establishment of various concessions in all regions of Asia, and more particularly in China, would play a significant role in the emergence of the Francophone phenomenon throughout the twentieth century in Asia. Finally, this moment of European expansion in Shanghai eclipsed the economic or political role played by the members of the future Indochinese Union. For all these reasons, France in Asia cannot be understood without knowing France in Shanghai.

31 See on this subject, 'Document démographique de la vieille Shanghai', cited by Christine Cornet (Blanchon).

32 Cited by Gilbert Gadoffre (Hauser 1945, 65).

Guangzhouwan: the colonies' colony

If the vestiges of French life in Shanghai are historically excluded from French colonial history, the silence on the French regime in Guangzhouwan indicates an even more glaring omission. This coastal port in southern China, bordering on Indochina, of which it has been a member since 1900, was ceded to France for 43 years. Yet the role of this port in the regional stability of Indochina and the history of its accession to the Indochinese Union remain obscure. These historical facts have so far not been considered from the perspective of oriental Francophonie.³³ How should one interpret the absence of attention by researchers on this region, which was for a time an example of a French colony in Asia? Needless to say, the ceding of Guangzhouwan to France remains an important historical event with regard to the consolidation of Indochina. But how does its annexation into Indochina promote the dissemination of Francophonie in the region, or even in China, especially if we compare it to the Shanghai case? Moreover, how can one fairly judge the French regime in the territory, given the diametrically opposed perspectives on the Chinese and French sides of the debate? Beyond the divergence of interpretations, one thing is undeniable: that from its discovery to its cessation, several steps were taken to anchor Guangzhouwan in the structures of the French Eastern Empire. Despite the vagaries of Guangzhouwan's destiny over the course of history, and despite its exclusion from classical French-speaking entities, the question of the French vestiges in the territory deserves to be addressed.

The discovery of the place

From Hong Kong or Macau along the southwest coast the Zhan River opens up. In the old days, the Chinese referred to the Tonghai, Xuenzhou and Nansan islands as: Guangzhouwan.³⁴ Geographically, this territory is located 'in the North-East angle formed by the Leichow peninsula with the province of Kouang-Tung' (Hoffet 4). Facing the sea and attached to the mainland, Guangzhouwan is an outpost for the surrounding prefectures and a 'safety belt' for the gateway to southwestern China. Over the centuries, the place and its surroundings grew: from the nineteenth century the inhabitants

33 Antoine Vannière's excellent thesis offers an in-depth understanding of Guangzhouwan's history without, however, tackling the Francophone phenomenon in this region.

34 'Wan' or 'ouan', the first is Chinese pinyin meaning the estuary, the other is spelled in French.

also designated the islands surrounding the Zhan River by the name of Guangzhouwan. This denomination would be preserved by the French who annexed, in addition, the ports situated between the districts of Wouchuan and Zhuxi. From 1898, this region was called 'greater Guangzhouwan'.

Its discovery by the French came from a fortuitous incident dated by some to 1701 (Lei 2000, 186),³⁵ and 1661 for others (*Zhong gong zai Guangzhouwan Huo Dong Shi Liao*, 1). It all started when the ship *The Amphitrite* of the East India Company ran aground on one of the shores of the estuary, swept away by a storm, and was forced to spend several months there. Dazzled by the peninsular microclimates, the depth of the water and the narrowness of the channel, the crew was able to survey the surroundings, and draw up maritime maps to bring them back to France (Lei 2000, 186), so that today, the old maps of the estuary preserved by the Chinese, dating from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, are in the French language.³⁶ Located about 160 kilometers southwest of Hong Kong, the territory of Guangzhouwan had an area of about 85,000 hectares, with a population of 186,000 inhabitants, including 185,000 Chinese at the beginning of the French regime (Alfonsi 120). The disparity between the local population and the white population has an air of *déjà vu*, if we refer to the French Concession in Shanghai; but there are some differences. If Shanghai freely took on the reputation of 'Paris of the East' after it was opened up, it was because it is located at the North-South crossroads of China and the port had developed trade links with Europe since the sixteenth century. However, Guangzhouwan had neither of these inherent qualities. The isolation of the place, which confined the inhabitants, added to its difficult access, did not aid its development, so that the local native population, numerous as it was, was mainly engaged in fishing, with little trade or shipping.

How could such a backwater, isolated from the big centers and without own resources, have attracted the interest of France? We should go back to the context of the 1890s to see why. The end of the nineteenth century saw the beginning of a bidding race for the leasehold territories that cut up imperial China. It was in this climate of change that the specific demand of France was presented.³⁷ Thus in 1893, the Russians claimed Port Arthur;

35 On the French side, Antoine Vannière (53) and Alfred Bonningue (9) also confirm 1701 as the date of the first appearance of the French in Guangzhouwan.

36 See the reproduction of these maps on the front pages of *Zhong gong zai Guangzhouwan huo dong shi liao 1926-1949*, and *Guang-Zhou-wan. Série des archives de la colonie française*, Zhan Jiang Shi: Wen shi zi liao yan jiu, 1990.

37 The documents of cessation for Guangzhouwan between Tsong-li-Yamen and the French Minister in Beijing are reproduced on the French side as on the Chinese side with some differences.

in March 1898, the Germans in turn demanded the territory of Jiaozhou. Then France did the same after its stabilization in South-East Asia. Because its implantation in Indochina highlighted the importance of neighboring regions, the French felt compelled to demand new territories:

When it became apparent that our dignity required us to claim the concession of a port, it was the bay of Kouang-cheou-ouan, neighbor of Tonkin, which was chosen. [...] a guard post before Tonkin; [...] By planting its flag on this position, France [...] wanted especially to mark out its space and assert that all the periphery of the Gulf of Tonkin was part of its 'sphere of activity'. (Pinon 1900, 160-161)

Like warning signs preceding this official request, on 13 March 1898, France demanded that the three provinces of south-east China, Yunnan, Guangxi, and Guangdong could not be granted to any other power, and that the Chinese Postmaster be a Frenchman (Lei 2000, 202).³⁸ These requests were partially granted by the Qing, who promised the non-alienation of these provinces and France's right of inspection over the Chinese Post Office. It would have been naïve to believe that this would satisfy the ambitions of France.

The ceding of Guangzhouwan

The next step was the official takeover of the territory as described by Rear-Admiral Gigault De la Bédollière:

today, April 22, Rear Admiral Gigault De la Bédollière aboard the Jean-Bart entered the south-east of Guangzhouwan via an old abandoned fort and hoisted the French flag. Our fleets lined up near the fort and fired 21 guns for the capture of Guangzhouwan.³⁹

See in this regard, the 'Annexe à la dépêche du Ministre de France à Pékin en date du 4 juin 1898', Ministère des affaires étrangères, *Documents diplomatiques Chine 1898-1899*, Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1900, 2-4, and the 'Annexe à la dépêche du Ministère de la République à Pékin, en date du 18 mars 1897' (Caudel 1991, 322), as well as the Annex no. II 'Convention franco-chinoise du 16 novembre 1898, relative à la Concession du territoire de Kouang-Tchéou-Wan', (Bonningue 61-64).

³⁸ This requirement on the Chinese Post has not been confirmed by other researchers.

³⁹ French Diplomatic Document translated by the Academy of Chinese History in Guangzhou, quoted in *Guangdong li shi zi liao* [*Archives of the History of Guangdong*], Guangzhou: Guangdong ren min chu ban she, 1959 vol. 1. The same document is partially reprinted in *Guang-Zhou wan Série des archives de la colonie française*, 267. The original of this document is reproduced in Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Documents diplomatiques, Chine, 1894-1898* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 52) differs little or not at all from the version translated by the Chinese authorities.

The following autumn, 16 November 1899, the 'Treaty of the Ceding of Guangzhouwan' was signed, which included seven articles ratifying a lease that ceded the said territory for 99 years to France.⁴⁰ It goes without saying that Chinese historians oppose their French counterparts on the ambitions of the French regime. The Chinese tell this story in terms of massacre, plunder, and extermination perpetrated by the French (Lei 2000, 206),⁴¹ while French historiography refers only to the benefits provided by France to this region.

Without wishing to focus on the polarization of positions, what matters is the on-the-ground reality, where France promulgated its laws, established its taxes, and controlled the customs:

France could build fortifications and maintain troops: sovereign and master of the place, France could declare any regulation and collect any tax that seemed necessary to it (Caillard 117).

At this stage, this is a classic handover of power for any place annexed by colonialism. Chinese sovereignty once rescinded, contrary to what was originally stipulated in the treaty, forced any Chinese boat to pay taxes at the entrance to the port.⁴² If the annexation of Guangzhouwan proved to be a classic case, its government was not. Due to its geography bordering Indochina, the estuary, instead of being an autonomous colonial entity, was integrated into the Indochinese entity by the decree of 7 January 1900 (Alfonsi 118). This attachment to the 'true colony' once again subjugated Chinese territory. Discovered by chance and chosen for its location vis-à-vis Indochina, Guangzhouwan remained a hybrid colonial product grafted onto a classic colonial entity. It could not be classified in any established category.

In the history of the French colonial system, Guangzhouwan illustrates the misfortune of the unfortunate, as a little piece sacrificed to the well-being of Indochina, which was itself sacrificed to the welfare of France. Its very choice unequivocally confirms the meandering links between South China and Indochina on which the latter depended:

40 *Annales diplomatiques des Qing*, vol. 142, 4-6, reproduced in *Guang-Zhou-wan. Série des archives de la colonie française*, 33-35. The retrocession document is in the United Nations archives, vol. 14, II: 101, 479-481, quoted in full in *Id.*, 36-38. The original of this treaty handed to Tsong-Li-Yamen on 27 May 1898 is reproduced in Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2, 3, and 4.

41 With the expression: 'the cruel colonial rule that France perpetrates', the French are systematically called 'Faguo qiang dao' (bandit/vulture/crooks from France).

42 See on this, article 5 in the 'Annexe à la dépêche du Ministre de France à Pékin en date du 4 juin 1898' (*Documents diplomatiques, Chine, 1894-1898*).

the development and security of Tonkin and even Indochina demanded that we avoid compromising and dangerous neighboring lands [...]. This is the reason why, instead of fixing our sights to the north of China [...] it seemed to us preferable to settle in the south, close to our Indochinese holdings. (Caillard 116)

Dubail's letter to Tsong-Li-Yamen echoes this (Claudel 322-323).⁴³ Serving as an outer port and 'cash cow' in Indochina, chosen as a colony by default, Guangzhouwan offered another advantage to France: that of being a test-case 'colonial laboratory' (Vannière 116),⁴⁴ where the effectiveness of the French administration on the Chinese could be tested. This administrative fine-tuning translated into a constant back-and-forth parade of Consuls-General over some 43 years. Indeed, everything began with Fort Duguay Trouin, who was appointed in 1898 and ended with Domec, his 56th counterpart, who closed things down in 1942 (Wei 1942, 73-74).⁴⁵ Going by the changes of Consul, sometimes two or three times, the administration of the Chinese people was not easy for France. The ultimate authority of Guangzhouwan undoubtedly rested with the Consul-General, who was in charge of the administrative machinery, such as the collection of taxes, the management of finances and the organization of the police. As a hybrid and uncategorized colonial entity, Guangzhouwan never received proper governance, which resulted in very poor management. Between a colony and a concession, this leasehold territory was unlike any precedent created by France in China:

Our position is, in short, quite unclear. We want to occupy the country without administering it. The settlement of all current affairs continues to depend on the Chinese authorities, which remain the required intermediaries between our authority and the population (Bonningue 12).

The management of the site and the conditions of Francophonie

The nonchalance of France would not only have repercussions on the emergence of the local Francophone milieu, but above all it reflects a profound malaise. Viewed from the metropolis, the virtue of Guangzhouwan was to secure the door to Indochina while contributing to its financing if required.

43 See the reproduction of the letter from Dubail (charge d'affaires of the French Republic in Beijing) to Tsong-Li-Yamen, Beijing: 4 April 1898.

44 The expression was coined by Antoine Vannière.

45 See the list of names and terms of office of all French Consuls in Guangzhouwan.

The estuary was of little interest in itself. Would such French disposition lead to favorable conditions for French acculturation? The question was thus raised. Nevertheless, the social climate in Guangzhouwan with regard to Francophonie would need other indicators, such as the education system, the health system, or the justice system to allow us to probe the degree or extent of the acculturation of the place. What emerges from the amorphous administrative strategy is the division between the local population on one side and the colonial power on the other. Between classic colony and colonial concession (such as Shanghai), the administration of the estuary, as ambiguous as it was random, was not either a copy of the Annamese or Tonkinese protectorates: 'It was under the auspices of the most liberal colonial formula, that France endowed Kouang-Tcheou-Wan with the most appropriate organization', writes Alfred Bonningue (24). Without precious resources, and not being able to build a market to sell the surplus of products made in France, Guangzhouwan meant only one thing to France: to act as a springboard to better penetrate the Middle Kingdom. At the same time, the estuary served as a rear base, as a safe place in case of withdrawal from Indochina.

Such a colonial structure would affect all levels of management, which, in turn, affected the French character of the place. First the justice system, elastic and tendentious, was biased toward the most powerful. Comprising a Court of First Instance, a Mixed Court, a Conciliation Commission, and a Review Board, Guangzhouwan had a dual judicial system with two sets of standards. Depending on the defendant (French/Chinese), the verdict was based on a double standard. This created many problems for the legislating country (France), which had the ability to use the French or Chinese laws whenever it saw fit. As for the courts of various instances, they condemned, in all cases, the Chinese subject in any possible conflict with a European (Vannière 255). Alongside such a partisan justice system, there was an administration that did not hesitate to promulgate regulations to reprimand offenders for every little offense. For example, it was forbidden to let pigs roam the streets, to quarrel with neighbors, and to accumulate rubbish in front of their homes (Wei 1942, 12).⁴⁶

Such prejudice caused by the application of the law, combined, moreover, with strict regulations, could not create the conditions conducive to French acculturation among the local population. The schisms in the society are most clearly shown in the taxation policy, which amounted to a litany of taxes: property license fee, market tax, property tax, plowed land tax, salted

46 Quiu Binquan, 'Panorama de la colonie française Guang-Zhou-wan' (Jian Wei).

land tax, etc. (Lei 2000, 206) There was no shortage of means to increase the revenue of the French State. Thus every Chinese man between the ages of 16-40 was held responsible for public works for four days a month; failing which he had to pay 0.4 dollars to the French State. It goes without saying that this excess of administrative regulations and taxes weighing heavily on the population created a climate of hostility towards the French on the ground. On the one hand, the negligence shown by the metropolitan administration, and on the other a local government eager to levy taxes of all kinds – such was the sad lot reserved for French possessions overseas. Francophone life suffered a backlash. From the defeat of New France in Canada, to the misadventures in India, and the failure in Guangzhouwan, history clearly testifies to the temerity shown by imperial France towards its colonies, and consequently, to the form of Francophonie that was possible in Guangzhouwan.

To this amorphous policy was added the underdevelopment of the estuary, and the place, despite its 'rise' to the status of colony, remained a little backwater. Nestled on a peninsula, Guangzhouwan somehow managed to turn into a free port during the French regime with some infrastructure and irregular trade mainly with France, Indochina, Hong Kong, and Macau.⁴⁷ Lagging behind Shanghai and other open ports, Guangzhouwan struggled to become a viable economic territory. Forty-three years of the French regime achieved the following: a light bulb and electricity factory, a port named Fort Bayard, a branch of the Bank of Indochina, and a civil aviation company that became the first international line in southern China. The francization of the place was first carried out at the administrative level with the fifteen French Prefects and the security forces, which were composed of various regiments: 'Red Ribbon' (the French army), 'Blue Ribbon' (the French National Guard), and Green Army (the local police).⁴⁸ In this regard, Guangzhouwan was no longer Chinese in its administrative, legislative or legal components. How would this francized social structure consolidate Francophone life on the ground, within the local population?

To answer this question, let's look at the case of the health system. If alternative medicine is in many ways the soul of Chinese culture, the practice of Western medicine in Guangzhouwan was reserved for those who had graduated in France. The advertisement, in French letters and small Chinese

47 Wu-juin, 'Les transports et circulations à Guangzhouwan', *Guang-Zhou wan. Série des archives de la colonie française* (189).

48 Cai-Jinguan, 'Les principales organisations françaises à la colonie Guangzhouwan', *Guang-Zhou wan. Série des archives de la colonie française* (42-43).

characters, of Dr Tchen Chuan-Zhang (graduated in Paris, the former medical assistant of the Hospitals of Paris) (Wei 1942, 60) for his consulting room provides a telling example of bilingual cohabitation. The same applies to advertisements published in local newspapers that were in French and had Chinese shortened versions. This testifies to Guangzhouwan's status as a territory annexed to the colony (Wei 1942, 89).⁴⁹ The fact that every major commercial enterprise was advertised in the two languages marks the local cultural landscape, where French was an official language by default. The transfer of the occupying culture to the indigenous culture took place on several levels. Thus, the 14th of July, which became by necessity a holiday, is a clear example of how francization altered local customs. On this holiday, the locals were called on to hoist the tricolor flag and to actively participate in the festivities. The prefectures organized competitive games, such as climbing a greasy pole, sack races, or catching silver coins in the mouth of an enamel vase.⁵⁰

Primary among the means of promoting French culture was the Cinema de Paris – the only cinema in Guangzhouwan – where mostly silent French films were played.⁵¹ Other aspects also indicate the regime change, the most emblematic of which is the official currency, as well as the stamps from the Indochinese Post Office on which the seal of Kouang Tcheou was affixed.⁵² Thus, the circulation of multiple currencies was the sign of a regime in chaos, for example, the Chinese currency (da-ying, hao-ying, and guo-bi, whose circulation indicates the existence of parallel markets), the Hong Kong currency, and the Indochinese currency (the dollar). By way of official currency, the dollar circulated beside the tael,⁵³ which was the unofficial currency. In other words, the dollar made it possible to discharge all monies due to the French authority, while the tael paid for daily purchases. Any payment (transaction or tax) to the French administration (stamps, transport, government fees) was paid in dollars, as well as any salary of civil servants/workers and fines.

Although they existed in relative harmony, the cohabitation of multiple currencies reflected the reality of a Chinese society administered in the French style. This management, disconnected from the population and

49 See the annex by Hong Sang Hang and that of Kouang-Hang-Thai on page 58.

50 A century later, Chinese historiography describes these games as humiliating. See on this, Cai-ting-chen, 'Le profil de la colonie française à Guangzhouwan': *Guang-Zhou wan Série des archives de la colonie française* (70).

51 Wu-Lemai, 'Aperçu de la cinématographie à Guangzhouwan', *Id.* (178).

52 Chao-Hanshen, 'La Poste à Guangzhouwan', *Id.* (199).

53 Before 1936 a dollar was equivalent to 2.6 Chinese money.

hybrid in its form, created breaches and gaps that allowed the old scourges of the place to thrive. Thus tobacco houses, brothels, and gambling dens thrived alongside the traditional scourge of Guangzhouwan: the illegal opium trade. Historically, due to its geographical location far from the Beijing Court, plus given the difficulty of access to the coast, Guangzhouwan became an area outside of imperial control and a breach that allowed traffic of any kind, the most virulent of which was opium. Having become a free port since its cessation, the estuary had been a hub of opium trafficking in Southeast Asia from Macau and Hong Kong. With 592 dan⁵⁴ opium entering the interior of China in 1900 and almost double (974 dan) a year later in 1901,⁵⁵ opium played a leading role in the underground economy.

French as an official language

Among all the transformations that Guangzhouwan underwent as a colonial entity and the consequences that followed from them, the once unitary education system was a further barometer for assessing the French influences on the place. In 1898, the colony had only one French school named 'The French School', which became 'The Sino-French School' the following year. It was a monolingual school whose primary mission was to train Chinese interpreters and officials in the service of the French Consulate. Between 1899 and 1905, French language classes were organized in order to raise it to the status of official language. The years 1905-1910 saw the creation at Fort Bayard of the first primary school called Albert Sarraut College, named after its founder, which offered a certificate of primary studies.⁵⁶ Between 1915 and 1920, a Sino-French school was founded with the aim of promoting mixed public education (French/Chinese) among the population.⁵⁷ The development of schools culminated in the 1930s when there were seven French mixed schools (Bonningue 35).

The three decades (1898-1930) of development in education suggest that Guangzhouwan was organizing itself the best it could to teach French as an official language. As was the case in the other annexed territories, particularly

54 One dan equals 50 kilograms.

55 Tan Qihao, 'Relevé historique de la contrebande à Guangzhouwan', *Guang-Zhou wan Série des archives de la colonie française* (96).

56 *Rapport sur la situation administrative, économique et financière du territoire de Kouang-Tchéou-Wan durant la période de 1935-1936*, Hanoi: 40. This report also gives a list of the main schools in the territory.

57 Chen Yonnien, 'Panorama de l'éducation à Guangzhouwan', *Guang-Zhou wan Série des archives de la colonie française* (159-160).

in Tonkin in Cambodia and Laos where the teaching of French dates from 1904, 1905, and 1906 respectively, Guangzhouwan founded its French school in 1905:

Although the public education service was founded in Cochin China in November 1877, it was not until 1904 that French-native education was formally established in Tonkin, 1905 in Cambodia, and 1906 in Laos and Annam (Vannière 299).

Certainly, it is the Albert Sarraut School that has the merit of having taught the first Francophones of the official French colony in China. It was attended by not only French and Vietnamese children, but also by those of the Chinese. From a hundred students at its beginning, the school had nearly 900 in 1930.⁵⁸ French-language instruction, which lasted four or five years, was assessed by a final exam (written and oral) at the end of each semester. As for the set French textbooks, they were written in Paris and printed in Indochina.⁵⁹ Note that this progress in the teaching of French was largely due to the idea of mixed education that promoted the establishment of Chinese classes in all schools in order to attract Chinese children. In these attempts to promote French, the fact that every school rector was French and that their deputy was Vietnamese contributed to the spread of French on the ground. In addition to these official schools, there were two orphanages – works of Christian charity – one founded in 1935, the other in 1945, also serving as a vehicle for the cause of French language. The francization role played by these French schools situated in these officially non-Francophone regions was essential. These schools were a privileged site for the propagation of the Asian Francophonie that this book seeks to uncover. Needless to say, in-depth studies of the francization processes among the local population are urgently required.

Moreover, with regard to the situation in Guangzhouwan, despite the initiatives undertaken by the State, French acculturation does not seem to have taken complete hold. This relative failure is all the more significant if we compare it to the Shanghai case. If Aurore students systematically pursued their studies in France, few students native to Guangzhouwan followed suit. The 43-year French regime registered only two naturalization applications (Vannière 561). In regard to the hypothesis that young schoolchildren would become systematically French-speaking, French life in Guangzhouwan bears little comparison to the significant French presence in the Shanghai metropolis. Because of its isolation and its forgotten history as a port, even

58 Chen Yonnien (164).

59 Chen Yonnien (163).

as an official colony, Guangzhouwan could not establish itself as a French jewel in China to sparkle alongside Shanghai, which half a century earlier hosted thousands of Westerners. With European investments, French and English universities, and several direct shipping lines connecting France and England, Shanghai enjoyed the scale and size of a large European city for almost a century, from 1840-1940. This supremacy was maintained even during the two Great Wars and the Sino-Japanese War, in which the colony had a notable population growth due to the protectorate offered to the territory by the French regime. Finally came the Treaty of Chongqing, on 18 August 1945, which ended this episode as a leasehold territory. Under the name of Zhan Jiang Shi, the estuary returned to Chinese rule.

In contemporary Chinese history and especially since the installation of communism under the Maoist regime, the French vestiges and the manifestation of the Francophone influence in these places has been ignored, for ideological reasons. The French occupation was hidden and omitted from the subjects studied by Chinese researchers, unless it was to indict France. On the French side, research has been limited to the geo-historical aspects of Guangzhouwan. The French regime in Guangzhouwan, which is subsumed into the Indochinese Union and excluded from the Francophone field of inquiry, is ignored in French colonial history. Guangzhouwan has so far not been acknowledged as a separate entity in the history of Asian Francophonie. And yet, the estuary testifies in its own way to a living chapter in the story of the French Eastern Empire by offering irrefutable proof of the existence of an Eastern Francophonie, outside the Indochinese borders. Nothing can erase the fact that this hybrid French colony did indeed exist for 43 years.

Modes of colonization in Asia

The extent of the Francophone phenomenon in various parts of Asia, particularly taking the French concession of Shanghai as a case study, testifies beyond a shadow of a doubt, to the existence of an Eastern Francophonie outside of Indochina. Excluded from the classical Francophone world, these regions, whose role in French expansion has not been approached from a Francophone-studies perspective, deserve our attention. Given the ongoing evolution of the French-speaking world, the deconstruction of the trilogy and the advent of the transcultural, there is an urgent need to re-examine French history in Asia. What emerges from the analyses in this chapter is that, on the one hand, in these regions, the borders with the classic colony are

fluid and shifting, both in the mode of implantation and in the administration, and that, on the other hand, French acculturation operated through cultural coexistence. Until now, Francophone studies have always referred primarily to former protectorates or established colonies, and there is no inquiry into the existence of forms of Francophonie in these (non-French-speaking) regions, let alone any debate about the recognition of such forms of Francophonie in a dynamism of cultural cohabitation. My conviction is that limiting the Francophonie of the East solely to the Indochinese entity, is to erase the French residues in other Asian cities, and thereby truncates or misunderstands the full extent of Francophone life in Asia. At the same time, this is to deny any other mode of expansionism that has historically existed in Asia. After all, between concession and colony, the line of demarcation remains tenuous and unclear; and the example of Shanghai embodies in itself the ambivalence of modes of colonization on the ground.

The concession: a toned-down form of colonialism

In theory the idea of the colony refers to the conquered country that turns into a French-speaking country, while the concession refers to a conceded space in the heart of a sovereign country that remains non-French-speaking. But everything is not so clear-cut on the ground. If the fundamental difference that separates the colony from the concession is the loss of sovereignty of the conquered country, the slip occurs unofficially on the ground. To cite Antoine Vannière: 'the international concession was the most complete expression of the usurpation of part of Chinese sovereignty by the foreign powers' (253). Unlike the colony, where the loss of sovereignty remained the ultimate marker, in Shanghai it was cohabitation that prevailed alongside the French culture, which itself sought to flourish in the local non-Francophone society. What resulted was the lack in formalization of the French language, even if it was used in the classes of the Aurore University as well as in a dozen Francophone *lycées*. Grafted onto a cultural space undoubtedly considered as Chinese and thus excluded from the map of conventional Francophone sites, the French concession in Shanghai nevertheless played a very colonial role: that of affirming French culture at the expense of other cultures, such as occurs in any colonized place.

It should be noted that in practice, the concession was transformed into a version of the colony that has been forgotten, jettisoned. Thus colony and concession remained interchangeable as to their modes of operation. In other words, French sovereignty (within the concession) is synonymous with 'sovereignty *tout court*'. But China suffered not only concessions; leaseholds

were also wrested from it. Guangzhouwan is a glaring example of this. Like Shanghai, its cessation to France provoked a great ambiguity:

Leasing is one of the most effective modern expedients in the indirect acquisition of territories. Although it is presented as a simple administrative transfer for a limited time, it actually leads to a transfer of sovereignty (Alfonsi vii).

What comes into play is the evolving status of the place, which begins as a concession or leasehold and ends up as a colony by default. The Guangzhouwan Treaty offers a flagrant case of ambiguity and contradiction as to the changing nature of the conceded territory. Although stipulated at the outset, the sovereignty of the host country (China) on the surrendered territory was immediately repealed: 'in order to avoid any possible rift between the two countries, the surrendered territory would be governed and administered by France alone for a lease of 99 years' (Alfonsi 117). In the end, during 43 years of French rule in the territory, China did not have the right to interfere in the destiny of Guangzhouwan.

The loss of sovereignty as a marker

Whatever the various names with which one refers to the conquered territory (colony, concession, lease territory, or even trading post), all lead to the same fate: the loss of sovereignty by the native country on its territory. With this, the treaty of the concession of Guangzhouwan offers once again a clear example of an emblematic case of a changing status and the transfer of sovereignty at the end of which the French authority supplants the Chinese authority, as Marc Alfonsi puts it so well:

the occupier who is, by fact of the consent of the occupied State, the true sovereign, not only has a right of garrison, he actually exercises all the prerogatives of sovereignty (129).

Not only does the status of colony, concession or leasehold territory change over time, but also the difference is tenuous in the on-the-ground management of these entities. Conquered by war or subjugated by diplomatic means, both the colony and the concession undergo a change of regime and of master. The major difference between them is that French has every chance to become the official language in the case of the colony, thus demonstrating a tangible and recognized form of Francophonie, while in

the case of the concession it remains a language of culture and of bilingual cohabitation.

Another clear difference is in the size of the colony and the concession, and not in the nature of its possession. In both cases, the new master has complete sovereignty over the annexed territory or country. Moreover, there is no shortage of evidence that war and diplomacy are used side by side and that one does not go without the other in the history of European colonial imperialism. In the case of China, the West first used diplomacy, the negative outcome of which serves as an excuse for the use of force. In the end, the loser is forced to return to the negotiating table to submit to war treaties. Thus diplomacy works together with war for the creation of a concession, which ends up turning into a colony in its mode of management.

Macau: from trading post to classic colony

This is also the case with Macau, whose evolving status offers another convincing example of the progress from trading post to concession, and then to colony, as soon as the territory is subjected to cessation. One hundred years sufficed for Macau to move from trading post to the full colony. Thus in the years 1515 and 1535 began the first phases of the negotiation between the Ming and Portugal for the latter's support in establishing a trading post in Macau. Twenty years later, other trading posts were set up, and thriving, which gave the overall appearance of a concession. Until then Portugal paid a sum of 500 taels a year for its commercial gains in all its settlements. Of course, things did not stop there. Many conflicts, disputes and arguments ensued that led to the appointment by force of a Governor in Macau in 1628. From Ming to the Qing, two centuries passed, and as long as Portugal did not have sovereignty, the pressure continued to rise to the point of compelling the Qing to recognize by the treaty of 1887, the sovereignty of Portugal in Macau (Alfonsi xx). From a simple trading post where Portugal was required to pay to trade, Macau was transformed in the course of history to a full colony.

It was the same for the Chinese territories used similarly by France. Of the five licensed ports (Fujian, Shanghai, Ning-po, Amoy, and Tianjin), each with their own unique situations, Fujian and Shanghai acceded to the status of colonial concessions while the other three remained trading posts. This did not affect France, which saw its possessions as colonies in which it refuted all Chinese sovereignty. In China's contemporary history, the colonizing effect of the Qing Dynasty is commonly accepted. Did not Paul Claudel speak of

the 'semi-colonization of China' (Daniel 297)⁶⁰ to describe the autonomy and sovereignty enjoyed by France? For the main players of the French Eastern Empire, several ports and cities were in effect a 'European colony' (Gravière 785-830). What must be remembered here is the loss on the ground of Chinese sovereignty in these places considered as non-Francophone sites. As for the panoply of entities referred to as trading post, concession, leasehold, and colony, these entities created during expeditions since the sixteenth century have not always maintained their original classification, and their denotation changed over time. At the time of the East India Company, a trading post was 'a set of dwellings and stores established on land owned by the Company, with the role of sheltering cargoes, pending the arrival of the vessels' (Vincent 42). Subsequently, everyone chose the appropriate denomination for the annexed territory and used it in practice, especially for the trading post and the port, which are called 'colony' by the actors themselves.

Asia, a Francophonie of cohabitation

It must be admitted that my conviction on the need for a re-examination of Asian Francophonie sounds a discordant note alongside the position held by the broader field of Francophone studies. In the current state of things, the idea of integrating China, India, Japan, Korea, and other civilizations into the map of Eastern Francophonie immediately raises suspicions, because on the one hand, these countries/spheres do not belong to former colonies, and on the other hand, Indochina is anchored in people's thinking, rightly or wrongly, as the only French-speaking area in Asia, having thus eclipsed for more than a century every other site of French presence in Asia. As long as colonization is considered the condition of acceptance into the Francophone world, Indochina will monopolize the understanding of France's place in Asia. If colonization were no longer the only criterion for measuring a Francophone presence, what would be the methodology of approach in identifying Francophone factors in these Asian regions? This fundamental question leads our thinking towards the crossover of cultures in a dynamism of cohabitation. In all cases, the rightful recognition of Asia as a Francophone area depends on an overall examination of all non-French speaking countries that have encountered French culture at some point in their history.

At this point, the provision commonly adopted in Francophone studies leads to the outright exclusion from the Francophone sphere of any place

60 Cited by Yvan Daniel.

that has not been a classical colony. Thus, France's presence in Shanghai has so far been excluded. The 'Paris of the Orient' has never had a place in the Francophone world, despite the ostentatious imprint of French culture in the Chinese metropolis. But it could be worse. The all-consuming silence surrounding the case of Guangzhouwan is the most glaring example. This colony is never mentioned in the context of Indochinese Francophonie. And yet Macau, Canton, Pondicherry, Shanghai, and Guangzhouwan, with their history of cultural cohabitation, attest to a living chapter of French Asian life outside of Indochina. This is to say how much the idea of Vietnam, Cambodia, or Laos as a geographical metonymy of the sole examples of Francophonie in the East needs to be revised. If it is true that the Indochinese colony played second fiddle in the French Empire in Asia, bowing to Shanghai, which was only a concession, it would be fair to say that this idea that binds colonization to Francophonie collapses.

In a word, to determine who or what gave birth to the French Eastern Empire, all those cultures that embraced French civilization cannot be omitted. Whatever the verdict on the recognition of Asia as a Francophone area, one thing is clear: the synonymy between Indochina and the Eastern Francophonie is outdated. Neither Tonkin, nor Annam, nor Cochin China have reached, in their colonial history, the scale of French presence in Shanghai, even if French did not attain official status. By the same token, let us restate that nothing is immutable in these spaces subjected to French rule and everything was liable to change as to the mode of administration on the ground. As evidence, wearing one of its many hats, Shanghai is referred to by several researchers as 'colonial possession' (Blanchon 75) to refer to its colonial nature:

That is why it would be apt to speak of a Chinese semi-colony placed under the guardianship of the West. But in the case of French Shanghai, the Concession assimilated into an autonomous municipality seems to have been confused with, indeed integrated into, the colonial space of the French Republic. (Blanchon 57)

In such a case, it would be impertinent to exclude the concession (and other variants) as a means of belonging to the Francophone world. After all, the French authority exercised its sovereignty within the circumscribed territory, independent of Chinese sovereignty, and the two cultures coexisted there. Modeled somewhat on the colonial structure, the French concessions in China and elsewhere in Asia operated in a context of cultural cohabitation while enjoying their own government, their own laws, and other social levers necessary within a sovereign country.

III French offshoots: the case of China

Genesis of the first Francophones in Asia

At this stage of my study and taking into account the questions examined, I would argue that the existence as well as the manifestation of a form of Francophonie peculiar to Asia is an indisputable historical fact. If colonization was a premise of Francophonie for the traditional French-speaking world, what would be the conditions for the gestation of a form of Francophonie in a country that had not experienced an official phase of colonization? To make any telling statement on the presence of French culture in Asia in the countries and territories excluded from the Francophone zone would require a study on a case-by-case basis of the manifestations of Francophone cultures across all these cultures. Although these countries escaped classical colonization, they played host to French culture at a certain point in their history, which explains the unique characteristics of their Francophone heritage. The conditions in which these cultures come into contact with French culture, the ways in which it coexists with the local culture, and finally, the processes of transfer of French cultural products – all these aspects will frame the main thrusts of my research in this chapter. Given the immensity but also the delicate nature of the subject, it would be wise to circumscribe our object of study to a specific case as a starting point. From this perspective, I will look at the Chinese case, which will be treated here as an example of what happened in other countries touched by French culture. The elements contributing to the Chinese Francophonie analyzed in this chapter will aim to demonstrate the conditions under which a country considered as non-French can have a French heritage, and the forms in which this French expression can survive. The aim of our approach is to illustrate that there is a form of Francophonie based on a process of cultural transfer and cohabitation in non-Francophone Asian countries. From there it will be possible to extend the Chinese case to other Asian countries that have experienced a similar acculturation process due to coming into contact with French culture in the same way.

The first penetrations of French culture

As strange as it may seem, the aspiration to benefit from the progress of the West occurred in China during the Opium Wars. However, the origin of the writings on this Western presence dates back much earlier, as noted in

Poxieji (Moureau 441), which records the beginning of Chinese cohabitation with the outsider. From the sixteenth century, the first European influences were felt, with the arrival of the missionaries. The Jesuit apostolates, followed by those of the Lazarists, therefore altered the homogeneous local landscape, hitherto closed to all external influence, with the installation of their various strongholds throughout China, of which Zicawei in Shanghai remains emblematic. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries saw the presence of Westerners intensify in correlation with the increasing number of sea voyages to Asia. It goes without saying that this presence increased significantly during the nineteenth century following the forced opening of the ports. Thus, the *Anthologie mensuelle de l'Occident* was one of the first French newspapers, and one of the oldest founded by clergymen in Guangzhou, in 1833 (Wang 1982, 153).¹ Its circulation makes it possible to believe there was a tangible presence of the French/Francophone readership in this city. In these ways, the local cultural landscape of several port cities would undergo a disruption that led to the loss of cultural homogeneity during the second half of the nineteenth century, under the terms of the multiple treaties concluded in favor of European countries. The implementation of concessions and leaseholds served only to consolidate this European presence. In short, the proliferation of Westerners and their cultures, made possible by the forced opening up of the ports, meant that the dismemberment of the Qing Empire by 'civilized' nations, as a result of the defeats it suffered, inevitably modified the local sociocultural landscape, and this, on a scale never seen before.

Already, cohabitation with Europeans – the new masters of the place – was a sign of a time marked by the fashionable, systematic, and sustained departure of young intellectuals excited about the idea of being educated in the West. Perceived as the home of progress, the West represented the only salvation that could save the downtrodden homeland. The historical conjuncture was conducive to change. The defeats of the Qing changed things in the Imperial Court concerning the future of the Manchu dynasty. The impending cohabitation with the West gave birth in 1861 to the Imperial Secretariat for Country Affairs (Tsong-li-ya-men), dealing exclusively with the European question. In 1862, the Secretariat established its subsidiary Tong Wenguan (Language Seminar) whose purpose was to train officers as well as French- and English-speaking assistants. The emergence of these first exchange organizations between France and Asia paved the way for

1 See the annex to Tong Er, 'Tableau de la chronologie de vie, œuvres et annales de Yen Fu' (Wang 1982).

the establishment and spread of European cultures and languages through the ports and concessions of China. From this moment were born the first Francophones educated through projects of Sino-French cooperation. These projects became a meeting place for French culture and served as engines for the propagation of French civilization.

The conditions for the emergence of the Francophone milieu

Among the first instances of cooperation was the creation in 1866 of an arsenal in the town of Mawei in the Fujian province. With Prosper Giquel and Paul d'Aiguebelle as intendants, this was one of the major French strongholds. With two schools, one Anglophone and the other Francophone, which taught Western maritime technology, the arsenal sent its staff to be trained in the United States from 1872 and in Europe from 1875 (Han 2008, 150). It goes without saying that this flurry of cooperation for the purpose of transferring knowledge from the conquering countries, also reached Shanghai where the first maritime manufacturer was founded: the famous Jiangnan shipbuilding facility (1865)² of which the Tianjin facility (1867) is a copy. In the wake of this, Jiangnan founded a translation company in 1867. Emanating from the Imperial Secretariat, these multiple seminars and law firms, from which the first Francophones emerged, were the focal point for the transfer of European languages to China. The Fuzhou Maritime School³ was a cradle of French speakers, and big names, such as Yen Fu, Wang Shouchang (1865-1926, interpreter of and collaborator on the *Dame aux camélias*), were graduates of the school (Li 2004, 13).⁴

In this first phase of emancipation of the French-speaking milieu, the paths taken by these Chinese to integrate into the Francophone world appear to be identical. First of all, they would study in France, as did Wang Shouchang, who was there for six years (Han 2008, 151). Then, they would pursue studies at Tongwen Seminary where for example, translator Wu Zongliang began his studies in 1876 (Han 2008, 132), after attending the Fuzhou Maritime School. It should also be noted that this cradle of the first French speakers emerged in a particular field: journalism. Francophone and founder of the work-study movement, Li Shizeng (1881-1973) was sent to

2 My father devoted his entire career to it, and the factory closed in the early 1990s when China began its second period of openness to the West.

3 Its full name was: l'École française des constructions navales de Fuzhou.

4 The list of the first 21 Chinese graduates of this school can be found in the *Archives de la marine de fin des Qing*, cited by Li. Wang belonged to the third graduating class (Han 2008, 149).

France by the Qing in 1903 as an attaché to the Chinese Mission. He founded the Chinese newspaper *La Nouvelle Ère* (1907-1910) in Paris (Han 2008, 58). Translator and *pasticheur* of *Madame Bovary*, Li Jieren (1891-1962) was a reporter for the *La Chine* newspaper; Dai Wangshu (1905-1950),⁵ poet and founder of *Contemporains*, was also collaborator on *Les Temps modernes*. The same is true for others who are less well known, such as Li Liewen who worked on *Shanghai* (Cheng 2005, 41).⁶ In the same vein, Xu Xiacun, known to posterity for his introduction and translation of *Madame Chrysanthème*, was a special correspondent of the *Revue mensuelle du roman* in France, whose aim was to 'set up a new column entitled Reportage of the Chinese literary milieu' (Cheng 2005, 41).

Encouraged by the Court itself, the emergence of the Francophone community created an atmosphere of enthusiasm for foreigners and their cultures. As a result, there was a surge of departures for the West, which included some key figures who, on their return from abroad, would overthrow the Qing. Thus the thinker and innovator Ronro landed in America as early as 1847. He graduated from Yale University and became the first Chinese overseas graduate (Huang 2003, 27). Through his exhortations and recommendations for openness and reform Emperor Tongzhi sent 120 children to the United States that in 1872, hoping to westernize them at the earliest point in their lives. Posterity would be grateful to those great reformers who managed to bring the country out from the archaic imperial yoke and lead it into the contemporary era. Think of Yen Fu and his peers, whose writings and translations, which showed the progress of Western democratic societies, expanded the horizons of their contemporaries (Huang 2003, 28).⁷ It should be noted that before the installation of the Legation of China in France, following the Convention of Tche-fou in 1876, very few Chinese had set foot in France.

The Work-Studies movement

The year 1909 saw a leap forward in this enthusiasm for the West, following the annulment by the United States of the war compensation due to be paid by the Qing. This sum was immediately used by Qinghua University

5 Arriving in France in 1932, he was a student at Aurore and boarder no. 345 of the Institut franco-chinois in Lyon between 1933-1934.

6 Qian Linsen, 'Entre accueil et refus: l'aventure séculaire de la littérature française en Chine', Cheng Pei (ed.).

7 Between 1877-1886, there were around 78 Chinese students sent to France and England by the Peking Court.

to send 180 students to America. The following decade saw the number of departures increase, with the crossing of the China Sea by young people, mostly descendants of wealthy families, the most famous of whom remain Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping. France was then perceived as a bearer of Enlightenment to illuminate the sociopolitical transformation underway in their native country. This key period in which was sown the spirit of openness and democracy has aroused the interest of today's researchers. Recent studies published systematically in post-Maoist China seek to establish a link between the young Mao and France. These studies take pride in having failed to count, among these first expatriates, the most eminent of contemporary leaders. Thus, one night in August 1918, twenty young people, including Mao, were said to be lodged in an inn in the North, en route to Beijing for their departure to France (Li Shi 1-3).⁸ In the modest home of the father-in-law of his future second wife (martyred by the National Party), where Mao and his companions were staying, he is said to have written the *Plan des étudiants apprentis pour la France de Hunan* (Li & Shi 49). Chinese scholars unanimously allege that Mao, who would have given his place up to a compatriot the day before leaving, was one of the leaders of the movement in favor of France (Li & Shi 1-3 and 55).⁹ Of course, we cannot take that kind of allegation seriously. For obvious reasons, the stakes involved in the growing interest of today's 'capitalist' China in the movement that propelled its contemporary history, are related to the desire to spread the propaganda of the Maoist legacy.¹⁰

If Chinese historiography circumscribes contemporary China, which begins with the Opium Wars (1842) and ends with the May 4 Movement (1919), this delimitation relies heavily on the primacy that modern Chinese language gained over Old Chinese. One of the major reasons for the decline of Old Chinese was the arrival and translation of European languages, especially English and French. In this first phase of introduction to French, several bodies acted as intermediaries, most significantly, the Lyon-Franco-Chinese Institute:

8 Candidates from the north were prepared in Peking to go to France.

9 On the occasion of the 90th anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party, in the film *Great Work of Creating the Party* (directed by Han Shanping), the role of the leader, as well as the last-minute decision not to go by Mao, were confirmed.

10 There has been a rise in interest in China recently in the relationship between the young Mao and France. Thus certain researchers seek to stress the contribution of Mao to this movement. See, for example, Zhuo Qingjun, 'Mao Zedong (1893-1976)', *Perspectives: revue trimestrielle d'éducation comparée*, vol. XXIV, 1-2, 1994, 97-110, as well as the online version of the *Quotidien du peuple*, 26 December 2001.

At the fall of the Manchu dynasty in 1912 [...] a preparatory school was opened in Beijing, where students, for a small registration fee, were trained in French and in general culture for six months with a view to continuing their studies in France, where they were received in the schools and high schools of Montargis, Paris and Fontainebleau. In two years, about a hundred and forty Chinese went to France. (Bouilly 19)

Launched and financially supported by philanthropist Li Shizeng, this work-studies movement was a huge success. The Lyon Institute, with 473 residents admitted from 1921 to 1947, served as a cultural matchmaker, being one of the major ramifications of the emergent Chinese Francophonie of the time. Well-known writers, poets, and translators have passed through this cultural relay and the numerous doctoral theses carried out under its banner attest to the lively French-speaking Chinese events.¹¹

From this movement, posterity retains more particularly the name of Deng Xiaoping who landed on French soil in 1920, after having spent months on a liner (Li & Shi 3). Similarly, one of these mornings, Notre-Dame de Paris welcomed two young Chinese men, one of whom was Zhou Enlai, the special correspondent of *Tianjin Yi-shi* (Li & Shi 4) in Europe. At that time, the Parisian boulevards were no stranger to these young dumbfounded 'hicks' landing in Paris, amazed or shocked by the radical geo-social change. With a century of hindsight, we can see that this movement of westernization, the sending of thousands of elites to the West, including two thousand to France, would have significantly changed the course and configuration of China's contemporary history. Having become Francophones or Francophiles, these young people, back home, became the source of disclosure and proliferation of French culture, vectors of the emancipation of Chinese Francophonie.

The circulation of French books in Asia

Having discussed some of the conditions in which emerged a form of Francophonie in China, one of the related further factors is the appearance and circulation of French-language books. Although the establishment of French publishing houses in Asia, their functioning, and their evolution is a subject that goes beyond the initial framework envisaged for this book, the circulation of French books shows the existence of a vibrant French-speaking culture. For these reasons, future studies will show how, through their publication ethos, their sale, and advertising, these publishing houses

11 For the theses, see page 89.

created favorable conditions for the continued development of the emerging Francophone community. For the moment, my hypothesis is that the history of French publishing in Asia will highlight the networks of French books, and within it, the unquestionable Francophone elements in cultures classified as non-French speaking. From this perspective, an overview of the history of these publishing houses as well as their French readership will highlight the correlation between their presence and the conditions for the emergence of a form of Francophonie; moreover, my preliminary research will serve as a basis for the future study of publishing networks.

The ecclesiastical world: an important seam

It is no surprise to note that the appearance of French-language books in Asia was led by apostolic works. Indeed, the close link between the religious orders and the printing industry is undeniable, given the scale of printing and dissemination of Jesuit correspondence. Historically, the *Imprimerie des Jésuites* in Paris, around the year 1625, at the time of the college of Clermont, was one of the first to bring out publications on Asia, produced by the ecclesiastical world. Today some 300 books on the Levant published between 1650-1850 and classified in the database The World Catalogue attest to the wealth of the Jesuit publishing seam. The primacy of religious communities in the world of publishing is also true in Asia. Settled in Zicawei since the seventeenth century, the Jesuits managed to proliferate and became particularly strong when the Emperor Qian Long (1711-1799) submitted to Christianity. During the nineteenth century, they established the Shanghai branch of the *Imprimerie de la Compagnie de Jésus*, the owner of the printing works of the Orphanage of T'ou-Sè-Wè. This printing press also served as the Aurore University Presses (1903-1952).¹² It is therefore relevant to be studied in the future, the influence of the Jesuits and the conditions of Francophone emergence. As for the present work, the virtue of the example of the Jesuits is that it shows that the history of French publishing in Asia is written alongside that of the Catholic missions on the continent. In this sense, the drive for Christian proselytism set the first step in the advance of French publishing in China. With its resources and good works on the ground, the ecclesiastical world played a catalytic role in beginning the spread of French civilization on the Asian continent.

12 Created by Jesuits with the help of Ma, Aurore was the first and one of the only French universities in Asia.

Like the Jesuits, the *Imprimerie de la Société des Missions-Étrangères* is also a major player, with their branches across Asia, including in Beijing, Shanghai, and Hong Kong.¹³ Also, its thematic collections, such as 'A few hours by the fire',¹⁴ collected Chinese classics translated into French. A revealing element of the involvement of these publishing houses in the emergence of French-speaking readership comes from the works authored under the baptismal names of Asian authors who had converted to Catholicism, such as Pierre Hoang or Etienne Zi.¹⁵ In the wake of French Catholic publishers, we should also mention the *Société française de librairie et d'édition*,¹⁶ founded in Tianjin in the late 1920s. Their importance as an actor in the French-speaking world increased during the second half of the nineteenth century, which saw developments in printing techniques that allowed a greater diffusion of the written press. French publishers in Asia were establishing themselves and experiencing a period of strength when several printing plants were born within the communities. In the first instance, the Lazarists who supplanted the Jesuits operated in Peking from 1864 to 1933 with the *Imprimerie des Lazaristes*,¹⁷ which became the *Imprimerie de l'Université Catholique* between 1933-1945.¹⁸ Evangelizing in Asia since the seventeenth century, the community of Lazarists also had a publishing house called *Maison Nazareth* (1884-1934) based in Hong Kong, which operated under the name of the *Imprimerie de Nazareth* and which had a wide list of Nazareth publications. The close links between the proliferation in types of publishing houses and the rise of Asian Francophonie deserve to be studied in the future.

13 See for example, *Carte du Se-tch'ouan occidental levée en 1908-1910*, Chang-Hai: Imprimerie de la Mission catholique, 1915.

14 See for example, *Shih Ching, Cheu King... ou, Le livre des vers, un des classiques chinois*, translated by Hubert Otto, Hong Kong: Imprimerie de la Société des missions-étrangères, 1907.

15 See for example, Pierre Hoang, J. Bastard, and Jérôme Tobar, *Notions techniques sur la propriété en Chine, avec un choix d'actes et de documents officiels*, Zhanghai [sic]: Imprimerie de la Mission catholique, 1897; Pierre Hoang, *Le mariage chinois au point de vue légal*, Zhanghai [sic]: Imprimerie de la Mission catholique orphelinat de T'ou-Sè-wé, 1898; Étienne Zi, Charles Bussy, and Henri Havret, *Pratique des examens littéraires en Chine*, Chang-hai: Imprimerie de la Mission catholique, 1894. This work appeared in the same year with E. Guilmoto in Paris.

16 See for example, François Théry, *Les sociétés de commerce en Chine*, Tientsin: Société française de librairie et d'édition, 1929.

17 See for example, François Noël, *Faguo hua gui=Grammaire française*, Pékin: Imprimerie des Lazaristes, 1864.

18 See for example, A. de Smedt; Antoine Mostaert, *Le dialecte monguor parlé par les mongols du Kansou occidental, 3. parti: dictionnaire monguor-français*, Pei-ping: l'imprimerie de l'Université catholique, 1933.

Some publishing houses in Shanghai

Just like the millennial city, Shanghai was also home to several French presses. First there was *La Presse Orientale* (1898-1940), which published only in French. It published dozens of books, mostly by French authors, covering travel writing, supplements to atlases of the regions of China, translations of imperial decrees, the constitution and Chinese laws, such as the translation of the writings of Zhang Zhidong – the Chinese Jules Ferry – by Jérôme Tobar (*Exhortations à l'étude*).¹⁹ But foremost among French presses working in Asia was undoubtedly the *Imprimerie de la Compagnie de Jésus* whose branch in Zicawei dates from 1870. The preeminent role of this house in the diffusion of French culture in China and Asia is reflected in its publishing lists. In the first place, there was the systematic publication of doctoral theses, since the house also served as Aurore University Press. These theses were often published jointly, for example that of Zhu Jiajing mentioned above or that of Chang Cheng-ming, defended at the University of Paris and simultaneously published in Shanghai (*Le parallélisme dans les vers du Chen King*) and in Paris (*L'écriture chinoise et le geste humain*). The house also published atlases of various regions of China, and monographs on the history of the Chinese kingdoms and the first French missions in Asia. Geography was another area of interest for the publisher, which brought out the first map of the island of Chongming (outside of Shanghai), maps of the prefectures of China, and even studies on rainfall, the temperature, and typhoons. In addition to the Chinese dictionaries for the French, books dealing with Chinese philosophy and Buddhism were also part of the publisher's list.

Several major periodicals in Shanghai were also printed by the house, such as the *Annales de l'Observatoire astronomique de Zô-sè*, *Revue mensuelle* (1900-), the *Annuaire des missions catholiques de Chine*, and especially the *Bulletin* (1909-1949) of the Aurore University, which listed all the courses, programs, and completed theses. In short, through their distribution networks, the pioneering role played by the Jesuits in the publication in China and Asia of French-language works is incontestable, as is their contribution to the conditions in which emerged the Francophone culture. No doubt the list of publishing houses from Christian communities in Asia

19 Some other titles include, A. Raquez, *Au pays des pagodes, notes de voyage : Hongkong, Macau, Shanghai, Le Houpé, Le Hounan, Le Kouei-Tcheou*, Shanghai: La Presse orientale, 1900; *La France au Tche-Kiang par un Français*, Shanghai: Imprimerie de la Presse orientale, 1901; Puyi [l'Empereur de Chine, translated by Fernand Roy], *Siuan-T'ong...Derniers décrets impériaux (1er septembre 1911-12 février 1912)*, Shanghai: Imprimerie de la Presse orientale, 1912.

is incomplete. The few examples mentioned here suffice to show that the world of French publishing was an integral part of the local French-speaking world in cultures considered non-Francophone.

The secular publishers

Alongside the printing presses of the ecclesiastical world, there were also those of the secular milieu. Branches of French publishing houses started to appear in Asia between 1880-1930, which was due mainly to the revolutionary changes in the publishing and distribution world in metropolitan France. However, the six houses that appeared in Tokyo during this period show that the phenomenon of French publishers would be less significant in Japan than in China, both for their longevity and their size.²⁰ At the technical level, two aspects need to be highlighted. First of all, the name changes made by these houses once they relocated to Asia, for example, the *Librairie de la Société du Recueil des Lois et des Arrêts*, which operated in Tokyo under the name of *Maruya et Cie* (*Code de commerce*). Also, some Parisian bookshops and publishers set up on-site sales outlets without moving their parent company to Asia; the *Librairie Sirey* bookshop operated in Beijing under the name of *Éditions Henri Vetch* (*Escarra*), while its main branch was involved in the publication of theses, especially those students of the Aurore University who chose to pursue their doctorate in a French university (Chu 1934). Note that these theses also appeared with other Parisian publishers, such as *Les Presses modernes* (Song-Kono-Tchou), the *Librairie Jouve & Cie* (Kia 1920), and the *Maison Geuthner* (Chang, *Le Parallélisme*).

The involvement of these secular houses in the formation of the French-speaking readership can be illustrated through two cases which serve as prototypes: Albert Nachbaur (1879-1933) in Beijing and Georges Bigot (1860-1927) in Tokyo. Unfortunately, there are no scholarly studies of these two Frenchmen who were known for their works in Asia. As a result, many questions about them remain unanswered. To begin with, who were they? What was their biographical or professional background? What was their network in Beijing or Tokyo that served as intermediary or social net necessary to start up their publishing house? No doubt the last question relates to the extent of the Francophone milieu of the time. At this stage of our research, we are not able to provide all the answers to these questions; let's

20 Here are the names of these houses with their founding years: Georges Bigot, 1886; École spéciale de langue française de Tokyo: 1886; Maruya et Cie, 1899; Librairie Sansaisha, 1899; Bureau central de la Presse catholique, 1900; and Maison franco-japonaise, 1900.

propose some possible responses. Publishing house Nachbaur, established in Beijing in 1917, also known as *Cercle Sino-français*, worked exclusively in French, until the death of its founder in 1933. The list of works published by the house leaves no doubt about the content of the Nachbaur works and, consequently, its contribution to the growth of local Francophonie. Apart from oriental-inspired fiction, such as a play on scenes of life in a teahouse (*Chen qi nai nai*),²¹ the translations of ancient poems, the almanacs, and annals of dynasties, not to mention the works on Chinese rituals and customs, suggest an almost encyclopedic diversity across Nachbaur's list.²² The same goes for its periodical *La Chine* (1921-). Under the direction of a Franco-Chinese editorial committee, this periodical competed with *L'Echo de Chine*, which was published in Shanghai by *La Presse Orientale*.

It would be appropriate at this point to return to the case of Zhu Jiajing, whose thesis was published in France, by Nachbaur, to point out something peculiar to French-speaking authors in Asia. His work published in Paris by Maurice de Brunoff (*Le théâtre chinois*) is a shortened version of his thesis reduced to images and annotations. Five years later, this thesis was taken on by Nachbaur and was republished in Beijing in a run of 500 copies.²³ What is confusing here is the fact that the author's name appears in three different spellings.²⁴ Such an example is rich in lessons as to the twists and turns this type of work could take. In the case of Chinese authors, the name of the same author is spelled randomly, sometimes following French phonetics, sometimes according to Mandarin diction, sometimes again it is converted to pinyin. The various spellings of names as well as the different titles that refer to the same work can escape the untrained eye, hence the rigor required in returning to the sources. Despite variations of name or title, these vagaries should not lead us to deviate from the right path and into

21 This makes one think also of the play by Léon de Rosny (*Le Couvent du Dragon Vert; comédie japonaise*. Paris: Maisonneuve et Cie, 1873), adapted for the French theater.

22 See for example, *Almanach Na-che-pao: agenda franco-chinois*, Peking: Albert Nachbaur, 1923-1924; Marco Polo, *Le livre de Marco Polo citoyen de Venise... rédigé en français sous la dictée de l'auteur en 1295 par Rusticien [Rustico] de Pise, revu et corrigé par Marco Polo lui-même en 1307, publié par G. Pauthier en 1867, traduit en français moderne et annoté d'après les sources chinoises par A.J.H. Charignon*, Peking: Albert Nachbaur, 1924; Collectifs, *La cour mixte de la Concession internationale de Shanghai*, Peking: Albert Nachbaur, 1925; Chu Chia-chien, *Ombres de fleurs: d'après l'anthologie de la poésie chinoise des mêmes auteurs*, Peking: Albert Nachbaur, 1930; Albert Nachbaur, *Les images populaires chinoises. Mîn, kiên, Tchê, T'ou, Siang*, Peking: Albert Nachbaur, 1931.

23 Tchou Kia-Kien, *Le théâtre chinois*, Peking: Albert Nachbaur, 1927.

24 Such as Zhu Jiajing (in pinyin), Chu Chia-Chien, and Tchou Kia-Kien (following French phonetics).

misinterpretations of the sources. To conclude, even though there are very few studies at this stage devoted to the Nachbaur publishing house, more particularly to its contribution to the creation of a French Asian readership, it remains, we believe, an important player in the emergence of a Francophone culture there. This is not the case for Bigot. In fact, compared to the size of Nachbaur's printing and distribution, the Bigot house is insignificant. Everything suggests that it published only six works by its founder, and had a rather ephemeral existence. Nevertheless these works are valued by posterity as some of the most precious testimonies of the Meiji era written by a European.²⁵

French publishing houses are certainly not the only influential players in the emergence of Asian Francophonie. Other bodies also played a role, such as the Alliance Française, whose libraries were a major means of propagating French culture. Thus, on 24 May 1929, Zeng Pu noted in his diary (Shi 2001, 7-8)²⁶ that works by Chen Jitong (in French) were available at the Alliance Française library in Shanghai. We should also include other similar libraries that diffused French-language works, such as the Tong Wenguan Library (a language seminar). However, retracing the history of these libraries and analyzing their inventories for their contribution to the dissemination of French works in East Asia and China goes beyond the scope of this book.

These are some of the conditions in which Chinese Francophonie was born. By way of conclusion, I would say that the Western canon created a breach in the homogeneous landscape of the Han and the collapse of the Qing led thousands of young people to cross the ocean to get to France. From this was born the first generation of Francophones. Given this historical movement, which introduced a form of cultural cohabitation, the following statement is true in many regards: 'Chinese Francophonie has not only a present reality, it has a history' (Symington & Bonhomme 141).²⁷ Therefore the following question is raised: could such a mode of acculturation to the French language be extended to other Asian countries that have experienced a similar form of cultural cohabitation? If so, the least that can be said is that the acquisition

25 Among the six works collected in *The World Catalogue*, see for example: *Croquis japonais* 1886 (the correct year is 1896) and *Albums humoristiques de la vie japonaise: la journée d'une servante*, 1889.

26 Reproduction of long passages extracted from the diary of Zeng Pu by Shi Meng. While Zeng Pu was alive, certain extracts appeared in the journal *Yu zhoufeng* [Winds of the Cosmos] in 1928, see on this subject, Shi 1982, 73.

27 Daniel-Henri Pageaux, 'Un aspect de la francophonie chinoise *La Montagne de jade* de Xiaomin Giaffferri-Huang'.

of French culture does not depend exclusively on colonization. Other avenues must also be examined to explain the Francophone cultural elements on the continent of Asia. Such an idea may seem premature and foolhardy, given the current state of research on the Asian Francophone world, which still confines itself to Vietnam. At the same time, it reaffirms the need to re-examine the question of Asian Francophonie from a perspective that goes beyond French Indochina.

Francophone manifestations

Undoubtedly, the vogue for traveling to the West aroused an unfulfilled desire to want to know the Other within the ranks of the intelligentsia of the time. In the face of the Qing's end-of-reign climate and the power of the West, the progressive camp advocated the translation of Western works as a privileged means of castigating the cowardice of the Qing and advocating reform and revolution. In this sense, the call of the West was conveyed initially through translation: 'It is fair to say that a major literary movement is usually accompanied or preceded by a vogue for translation. At the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century, as China sensed a tremendous cultural tumult, a great enthusiasm for translation arose' (Wang 1982, 22).²⁸

The surge in the translation industry, supported by the more rapid diffusion of the press in general, probably relates to the progress in industrial printing that replaced the old manual processes. But there were other factors. It is commonly accepted that the translation of foreign works, the majority of which were in French, would have accelerated the use of Modern Chinese instead of Old Chinese, thereby changing the landscape of linguistic use in society. Translation served here as a vector of Francophone culture. The phenomenon is amplified at the beginning of the twentieth century with the emergence of various translation methods embodied by Yan Fu, Lin Shu, and Lu Xun. We will see later that Lin Shu's sensational novelistic translations are of particular interest to us. Another important aspect that must be remembered in this growth in the translation industry is the 'mixing effect of translation'²⁹ (Clavaron 353), which transforms the original product (in French) into the target language (Chinese), underpinning the successful cultural and linguistic transfer.

28 Wang Zuoliang, 'L'intention de Yen Fu', (my translation).

29 Lieven D'hulst, 'Les fonctions littéraires de la traduction intratextuelle : l'exemple des littératures francophones'.

The first translations of French works

The development of translation coincided with the rise of the Qing imperial printing presses. After the bitter defeats against the Western countries, the Court invested in the equipment and the personnel to translate first the European armaments of war, like trench digging machines, which the Qing wanted to import. In the second phase, we should note the contribution of Catholic churches that, for philanthropic purposes, translated medical and scientific works into Chinese. As soon as translation was adopted as a means of transfer, books of Western philosophy were translated, especially those relating to the foundations of Western society (Han 1969, 55). The phenomenon grew following the defeat against Japan (1895), so that the idea of translating the literature of the West became a metonymy of progress and strength, creating the soothing effect that softened the blow of defeat.

In the Chinese literary world, the first attempt to translate Western writings dates back to the translation of the Bible in the 1740s, when scholars took advantage of the opportunity to rework the text by giving it a romanticized air (Aying 2009, 184). But it was the Francophone and Anglophone Chinese who made an industry through the large-scale translation of Western works. One of the pioneers was Yen Fu. Born on the eve of the Second Opium War, he was first in the entrance exam to the Fuzhou Maritime School. From then on he was considered a French-speaking scholar, and unlike most of his imitators, who were literary writers, Yen Fu distinguished himself through his education in political science. His translations of Montesquieu's texts enlightened his compatriots on Western sociopolitical structures. Begun in 1900, his translation of *L'esprit des Lois* comprises seven volumes, including three published in 1904 and four others respectively in 1905, 1906, 1907, and 1909 (Collectifs, 1982, 10).³⁰ Yen Fu's reputation transcended national borders and attracted French attention, hence Fernand Baldenne's visit to him on 6 September 1912:

At the moment he is translating into Chinese *L'esprit des Lois*; and Montesquieu's book served as the point of departure for our conversation. [...] Mr Yen Fu has tirelessly highlighted in his work the link that binds the citizen to the nation, the necessity which makes, from the accrued value of individuals, a principle of progress for the state (Baldenne 295, 297).

30 If you have a look at the whole of his translation work, you might think he was Anglophone. Between 1894 and 1908, he translated works by eight authors, including one Frenchman. See on this subject, the tables of translations drafted by Yen Fu, Wang Shi, 'Yen Fu et sa traduction des chefs-d'œuvre', *Lun Yen Fu yu yen yi ming zhu*.

The coming of a co-habiting readership

If Yen Fu's political and philosophical translations were aimed at a specialized and therefore more restricted readership, Lin Xu's (1852-1924) sensational novelistic translations were to be a real publishing phenomenon. He was able to translate more than 170 works, albeit into Old Chinese. At the time of the shift between the Qing and the Republican eras, the years 1912-1919 witnessed an enthusiasm for the translation of literary works, which brought in its wake the definitive establishment of modern Chinese. Undoubtedly, the massive presence of French works instantly made translation a popular industry, and what is more, thanks to Lin Xu the novel (by way of translation) acquired its prestige. In fact, the thundering success of translated French novels dispelled the feeling of disdain felt by classical readers towards the novel. Imperial China was reluctant to embrace modern genres, and was generally condescending to prose and the novel, which were considered vulgar. In the face of this highly negative tendency, Lin Xu was able to rely on his classical literary reputation to introduce a hundred or so Western novels into Old Chinese. In doing so, he brought unprecedented attention to the novel genre, and most famously *La Dame aux camélias*.

Translated by Wang Shouchang, annotated by Lin Xu and published in Fuzhou in 1899 (Centre Etiemble 50), this novel attained staggering popularity. It stirred the classical Chinese readership, which, for the first time, gave in to the genre of the Western novel with its previously unheard of plots and narrative form. This audience was enchanted, fell under the spell of the work, and created in turn a strong demand, which encouraged all Francophones and Anglophones to get into translation. The numbers are quite telling, attesting to the trend of the day. In his *Bibliographie des ouvrages occidentaux*, Liang Qichao indicates that in 1896 there were 353 Western works translated into Chinese (Han 1969, 58). His magazine *Xing Xiaoshuo* (New novel), founded in 1902 was the first devoted to the novel (Aying 2009, 2). If Lin Xu has the merit of having introduced and ennobled the genre by using Old Chinese, it is the advent of modern Chinese that supported the rise of translation. In particular, publishing houses in Shanghai played pioneering and promotional roles in the dissemination of Western works that reached Chinese readership through translation. The *Catalogue des livres traduits du français en chinois* provides ample proof: it lists many Shanghai publishing houses, notably Éditions Shang Wu, which around 1907 published a dozen translations of the works of Alexandre Dumas father and son (Centre Etiemble 53).

It is in this atmosphere of adulation, even apology of Western authors, that many French works made their entry into China. In the first place,

Jean-Jacques Rousseau's works hold a pre-eminent place with their many translations published from 1904 with Éditions Shang Wu,³¹ including extracts from *Confessions*. As mentioned above, the works of Montesquieu were also translated, including *L'Esprit des lois* by Yen Fu in 1908. *Lettres persanes* was also translated into Chinese, and was published in the magazine *Présentation de loi et de politique* (Han 2008, 17). In this climate, the very popular avant-garde magazine *Nouvelle jeunesse* introduced for the first time Romain Rolland in December 1919 with Zhang Gaonien's translation of *Déclaration de l'indépendance d'Esprit* (Song 2006, 25).³² This translation was based on the English version published the same year as the French text (Song 2006, 27). This suggests that in the 1920s – the high point for the translation of foreign works – there was little delay in bringing out translated works.

The 1920s and 1930s saw Romain Rolland's reputation in China culminate in nine translated works and fourteen versions of the translations (Song 2006, 38–39). These translations appeared systematically in avant-garde journals, including the *Nouvelle vogue* founded by students from Peking University. In the wake of this, other literary figures were also translated, for example Baudelaire in 1927 (Zhang 1927).³³ From another perspective, the successful translation of these authors is also verified through their popularity with contemporary readership. The numerous essays and translations by readers of Maupassant, Flaubert, Baudelaire, Rolland, and many others, published in various major newspapers and journals and listed in the *Index de la Revue mensuelle du roman* (1984),³⁴ say a lot about the receptiveness of an initiated readership.

Liang Zongdai and Shenchen: landmarks of Chinese Francophonie

On a more intimate level, the history of Chinese Francophonie is marked by friendly exchanges with French writers, who offered their personal encouragement. Liang Zongdai (1903–1983) arrived in Europe in 1925, and met

31 Note also that the publishing house brought out in 1907 the translation of *Histoire de Chevalier des Grieux et de Manon Lescaut* by l'abbé Prévost.

32 It is the final text in the collection *Les précurseurs* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1919). For its Chinese translation, see 7(1) of the journal, cited by Song Xuezhì.

33 Prose poems by Baudelaire are translated there, as well as texts by an esteemed specialist on Japan, Lafcadio Hearn. I will discuss later the arrival of Flaubert and other French writers in China.

34 See also Huang Zongsu, 'La tendance de l'école de la littérature française des derniers 50 ans' (Song 2007, 29).

Paul Valéry the following year (Liang & Rainer 2). In the preface to *Poèmes de T'ao T'sien*, Valéry reveals the beginnings of this legendary friendship: 'The first of his race I met was Mr Liang Tsong Tai. He appeared one morning at my home, very young and very elegant' (Liang 1930, 432-438).³⁵ Thus was created between a 23-year-old Chinese man and the master twice his age, a deep bond that sealed an unerring friendship. Liang was often at Valéry's side, closely following the work of the great poet. Then came the walk in the garden during the autumn of 1927 where he received the first drafts of *Narcisse* (1926) that Valéry revealed to him. Carried on a wave of enthusiasm, Liang translated this collection of more than 300 stanzas in one go, as well as the original version of the work, *Narcisse Parle* (1900), which had been published by the young Valéry. He sent them to the *Revue mensuelle du roman*, which published them the same year.³⁶ In order to raise Paul Valéry's reputation among Chinese readers, Liang wrote a study in Paris in June 1928, highlighting the pre-eminent role that Valerian art played in French literature. This study appeared the following year in the same journal (Huang 2003, 44-45).³⁷ Finally, in 1931, Éditions Zhonghua in Shanghai published the translation of *Narcisse parle*, making it available to Chinese readership for the first time (Liang 1930).³⁸

Liang was not Valéry's only Chinese acquaintance. The poet also wrote the preface to the gripping story by Shenchen entitled *Ma mère*. The popularity of this legendary story made Romain Rolland regret not having accepted Shenchen's original invitation to him to write the preface. In fact, this story, which was successful on a European scale, was translated into several languages and reissued in sixteen editions. In the history of Chinese Francophonie, Shenchen holds a pre-eminent place thanks to the phenomenal success of his story, which attests strongly to the striking appearance and success of Chinese Francophonie in these early times. Even General De Gaulle admitted to being an ardent reader and invited the author to live in France after the Second World War (Cheng 1975, 20).³⁹ Recipient of the *Légion d'honneur*, the author became friends with all the Presidents of the Fifth Republic, from General De Gaulle to Jacques Chirac. On 3 January 1997,

35 See also the complete works of Liang (Liang 2003, 135).

36 See on this, 20(1), 1927, of the journal.

37 See on this subject, 20(1), 1929, of the journal.

38 See also on this subject, Centre d'Etiemble (171).

39 This invitation is found in Cheng Tchong, *Ma mère et moi à travers la première révolution chinoise* (preface by Paul Valéry. Paris: Éditions Entente, 1975).

Chirac sent his condolences to Shenchen's wife, Li Jingyi, to say that he was 'sad at the death of a great friend of France' (Li & Shi 162).⁴⁰

These glory years illuminating the happy memories of the two nations, are still written about. Today's 'capitalist' China is seeing a profusion of books dealing with subjects formerly censored under Mao. This phenomenon reflects a desire to make up for the intellectual gap caused by the effects of the Cultural Revolution. Written quickly, these books lack credibility through using random assertions for lack of first-hand sources. A glaring case is the novelistic encounter between Shenchen and Valéry (Li & Shi 162),⁴¹ the description of which lacks the first-hand information collected by Jean Sagnes:

Cheng Tcheng tells us he was friendly with Jules Valéry, a scholar from Montpellier [...] then resident in Sète or at least went there regularly from Montpellier [...]. It is on the platform of the Sète railway station that Jules Valéry introduces to him his brother Paul (Sagnes 85).

The actual face-to-face meeting takes precedence over the railway carriage scene described 90 years later by Chinese researchers. Although moving, this colorful scene betrays a dramatic reworking on the part of the Chinese scholars.

Jing Yinyu: a faded star of Chinese Francophonie

Alas, there are not only glorious chapters in the history of Chinese Francophonie; there are also sadder moments. One of the bright lights of this first generation of Francophones, Jing Yinyu (1901-1930), the first to know Romain Rolland, died in the prime of his life. Disavowed by his colleagues, discarded by the literary milieu and put on the historical back burner, the poet and translator did not get the credit due to him. It is not that Jing had less merit than his colleagues, but his tragic episode in Lyon would cause serious damage to his reputation. Having caught syphilis, he was forced to return to Shanghai where he committed suicide in late February 1930

40 Telegram from Jacques Chirac cited in Chinese (my translation).

41 'About 90 years ago, on a rainy night, a young Chinese boy, sitting on a train, is moved by a French gentleman with a sullen face and pained expression. The boy advances and asks: "My lord, are you in torment? Can I help you?" The Frenchman speaks: "Sir, you are right, I am struck by the most terrible grief in the world, the loss of a mother", and the burning tears poured from his eyes. Deeply touched, Shenchen embraces the Frenchman with these words: "Let me share your pain" (my translation).

by throwing himself into the Huangpu River. Jing is different from other Francophones of the time, if only by the tragic fate that befell him. Beyond the personal drama, what we must remember is his talent. In fact, his prose and poems collected in *Mali* (Jing 85) reveal the exquisite talent of a rising star. Jing disappeared however from the overseas Francophone literary circle without ever being able to rehabilitate himself.

Almost a century has passed and there is still little work devoted to the man and the poet: the 'scandal' troubles his peers,⁴² to the extent that Jing's personal drama was premonitory from the very start! At the age of eleven, upon the death of his parents, he was sent by the French priest of the village to a French-speaking seminary in Chengdu, where he met Dai Wangshu. Arriving in Shanghai in 1921, he studied at the Jesuit Center of Xujiahui – the French stronghold of Zicawei – and was expected to continue his studies at Aurore University. His itinerary shows that it was the Catholic Church that immersed him in the Francophone milieu throughout his schooling before he left for the Franco-Chinese Institute of Lyon (Huang 2003, 50). Boarder No. 243 of the Institute, he attended from 1928 until January 1930 (Bouilly 66, 68). Although ephemeral, his short life left a personal imprint on Chinese Francophonie. His first paper on Romain Rolland appeared in 1923 in *Jour de création*, a newspaper affiliated with the *Nouveau journal XinHua* in Shanghai (Song & Xu 31). The following year he began to translate *Jean-Christophe* and contacted Romain Rolland in order to solicit his support. He received it immediately:

I am very happy about your project to translate *Jean-Christophe* for which I grant you all my permission. [...] If you encounter obscure parts, I would like to help you. Write out any tricky passages on a bit of paper, and I will sort them out for you to the best of my ability. (Huang 2003, 50; Findeisen 27)⁴³

And it was not long before Rolland received him at his home.

42 The reticence is palpable in the passage from the diary of Lu Xun, dated 24 February 1930, frequently cited by Chinese scholars (Song; Xu 31; Findeisen 28): 'If Jing Yinyu comes, do not see him'.

43 Letter from Romain Rolland to Jing dated 17 July 1924, quoted in Chinese by Huang Jianhua (ed.). His retranslation into French is mine. A passage in French is quoted by Raoul Findeisen: 'I am happy that you will translate my *Jean-Christophe* into Chinese. I authorize you very willingly. It is a heavy task, and it will take a lot of time. Do not undertake it unless you are determined to carry it through!' This is actually a translation of Chinese into French by Findeisen. The original has never been traced.

The publication of the facsimile of this letter (Song & Xu 1925, 30),⁴⁴ in the *Revue mensuelle du roman*, marked a turning point in Rolland's fame and image among Chinese readership. He went from being a distant master inaccessible in terms of distance as well as fame, the close friend of a Chinese man, to being seen as a friend in the eyes of Chinese readers. To this day, Jing has the merit of having been the first translator of *Jean-Christophe*, even though decades later it was Fu Lei (Jin 2009, 9)⁴⁵ who made the work popular in China. What is more, this budding friendship was strengthened through a transoceanic dimension. Thus, the *Revue mensuelle du roman* published the translation of the first volume of *Jean-Christophe* prefaced by Rolland (Song & Xu 32)⁴⁶ on the occasion of the writer's 60th birthday. With a century of hindsight, the disparity between the success of this novel in China and the silence about its first translator seems strange. There is no archive dedicated to Jing; almost no academic study has been carried out on his work. All I could find is a later reference made by a Chinese contemporary, Sung-Nien Hsu (Xu Song Nian), which unfortunately was full of inaccuracies (Findeisen 26).⁴⁷ The only two existing studies in the West are a dissertation at the University of Geneva (Pianca) and Findeisen's article, published in France.

A fortiori, this omission, which has overshadowed the merit of the translator for a century, does not appear likely to be remedied very soon. The timidity of the tone that researchers hold with regard to Jing is proof of that. With a thousand excuses, while taking care to avoid the fatal disease of which Jing was a victim, Song Xuzhi justifies the scarce drops of ink spilled about the poet: 'By staying away from what went on at the time, when we talk about Romain Rolland, we believe we can still linger a little on Jing Yinyu' (Song & Xu 31, my translation). It is the same story with Huang Jianhua, who portrays Jing's fate in these terms: 'Because of the social hazards, this Mr Jing, having brought honor at one point to Sino-French literary history, must have caught "Hua chi" [obsessive love] and was therefore sent back to the homeland' (Huang 2003, 51). The scholars' reserve is palpable here.

44 See on this subject, 16 (1), 1925, of the journal.

45 On the list of the first French-speaking Chinese the name of Fu Lei also stands out (1908-1966). Undisputed master translator, learning French at primary school in 1921, he was admitted to the Xu Huei High School, a Catholic school where French was the most important lesson. He arrived in Marseille in 1927 for a period of five years. Posterity records above all his many translations, including fourteen novels by Balzac and several volumes of *Jean-Christophe*.

46 See Rolland's Preface for the Chinese translation of his novel in 17(1) of the journal. The remainder of this translation appears in the next two issues of the journal.

47 See in particular the erroneous biographical data on Jing by Xu.

In fact, Jing not only helped introduce French writers to China, he also wanted to promote Chinese masterpieces to French readership.⁴⁸ However short his life was, it did not prevent him from starting a second big project: the translation of *L'histoire véritable de A Q*, Lu Xun's masterpiece. The first draft was read and commented on by Romain Rolland, who then sent it to the publisher of *Europe* for it to appear in May and June 1926.⁴⁹ In recognition of this kind gesture, on the occasion of Rolland's 60th birthday, Lu Xun devoted a special issue of his magazine *Mang yuan* (Sahara)⁵⁰ to Rolland, the man and the writer, much to the delight of the Chinese readership. These memorable events, testifying to the successful of transfer of French works to China, were landmarks in the history of Chinese Francophonie.

Chen Jitong: the first Francophone diplomat

In this early stream of Francophone writers and poets – pioneers of Chinese Francophonie – it would be incongruous to omit either the achievement or the false note of the Francophone diplomat Chen Jitong. The former student of the Maritime School of Fuzhou, secretary of the Chinese Mission in France (1877-1881), and Military Attaché to the Chinese Legation at the rank of general from 1881 to 1891 (Claudel 1995, 212),⁵¹ Chen remained a pre-eminent Qing political-literary figure. His efforts to open up and westernize China operated on various levels. A promoter of the cause of female emancipation, he founded the *Association de femmes intellectuelles* in Shanghai in 1897. His magazine *Qiu shi bao* (*The International Review*) appeared in the same year in Shanghai (September 1897-December 1898). Chen's personal journey corresponded to that of the first Francophones, such as Yen Fu and Zeng Pu. At the age of fifteen, he passed the entrance examination at the Maritime School of Fuzhou and was part of the first class of 21 Francophones in 1875 (Li 2004, 13).⁵² His experience in France began with his mission accompanying the young Chinese people sent there by the Qing. He returned there in 1877 for a stay of fifteen years before leaving hastily in 1891, due to financial troubles. He died in Nanjing in 1907 (Chen 2005).⁵³

48 See page 142 of Chapter IV.

49 See the May and June issues of the journal. This translation forms one of the chapters in the collection edited by Jing. See note 90 of Chapter IV on this subject.

50 A literary journal founded in Beijing in April 1925 by Lu Xun. See number 7, April 1926 of the journal.

51 See his mention by Claudel.

52 See in particular the names of these 21 graduates.

53 Chen's biography may be read in the preliminary pages of *Xue Jia Yin*.

Chen was the first Chinese person to introduce China and its literature in the French language. He is also considered by posterity to be the first Francophone diplomat. His long stays in France had given him the opportunity to publish many times in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* (Kato 39-48),⁵⁴ with Calmann-Lévy (from 1884) and G. Charpentier (from 1890) (Kato 42).⁵⁵ Translated into many languages, his work *Les Parisiens peints par un Chinois* was a Europe-wide success, and was published in London in 1890 and in Germany in 1896. This book is the mirror of *Les Chinois peints par un Français* (Antonini 1886), a replica of the tales of Pu Songling (1640-1715, *Les Chinois peints par eux-mêmes*), which were translated by Chen. Written in French, his one-act light comedy, *L'Amour héroïque* (1904), was published by one of the French publishing houses in Shanghai, *Imprimerie de la Presse Orientale*.⁵⁶ Many of his works were also translated into English, such as *The Chinese Empire, Past And Present* (Chicago, 1900), and *Bits of China* (London 1890, the English version of *Plaisirs en Chine*).⁵⁷

A diplomat and essayist, Chen also prefaced several books on China, such as *Au pays des pagodes, notes de voyage: Hongkong, Macau, Shanghai, Le Houpe, Le Hounan, Le Kouei-Tcheou* by A. Raquez.⁵⁸ One of his letters served as a preface to the book *Le fleuve des perles* (Pont-Jest). Like all Francophones of the time, Chen was also a translator. His first translation dates back to *Georges et Marguerite* by Théodore Cahu, published between October 1897 and March 1898 in his journal *Qiu shi bao* (Han 2008,12; Kato 43), which he co-founded with his brother, without forgetting his notes and observations in *La légende de Koei Tseu Mou Chen: peinture de Li-Long-Mien*.⁵⁹ Other sources seem difficult to confirm, such as the illustrated magazine *La presse chinoise*, which was said to be edited or published by him in 1910,⁶⁰ though Chen had died three years earlier.

54 In May 1884, the *Revue des Deux Mondes* published his article: 'La Chine et les Chinois', 278-305, and 596-610, 820-830. This article comes from the eighteen fragments of the tales by Pu Songling (*Les Chinois peints par eux-mêmes*) translated by Chen. Today the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris holds seven of Chen's works. Note that one of the first studies dedicated to the man is by Meng Hua: 'Cheng [sic] Jitong et son rôle d'intermédiaire bilatéral dans les échanges littéraires entre la Chine et la France' (Kato).

55 The list of his works comes from the *Catalogue général des œuvres* of the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris.

56 See the preliminary pages of *Xiu Jia Yin*.

57 Other works in English and German by Chen: *The Chinese painted by themselves* (London: Field & Tuer, 1884/1885); *China und die Chinesen*, Leipzig: C. Reissner, 1885.

58 Shanghai: La Presse Orientale, 1900. In the same vein, we should add Emile Guimet (ed.), *La légende de Koei Tseu Mou Chen. Peinture de Li-Long-Mien, etc.*, Paris: 1904. Translation by Tchong-Keng & Marcel Huber, notes and observations by Tchong Ki-Tong.

59 Paris: É. Lévy, 1900.

60 Chen Chi-t'ung, *La presse chinoise*, Paris: 1910.

From his flamboyant years spent as a general, military attaché, and man of letters, Chen also left behind litigation that might tarnish his reputation. In the first place, his translation of Pu Songling's tales, written at the turn of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, is the subject of controversy as to its authorship (Kato 42, Mondion 4-5). Yet that is not all. Researchers are also casting doubt on Pu's version, which served as the source text for the translation, but is not the original, though Chen claimed that it was (Détrie 2001, 40). Worse, the vexed question of authorship and originality also surrounds *Théâtre chinois*, another work by Chen, which is also the subject of a dispute, with Mondion (Mondion 4-5).⁶¹ Whether Mondion is right or wrong in his allegations, we cannot decide today on the complex disputes between collaborators, even if certain facts seem to corroborate Chen's side of things. Despite some attempts by several contemporaries of the two protagonists to clarify the situation (Li 2004, 29, 34),⁶² these disputes would not be resolved, due to the lack of first-hand evidence. On the other hand, they did manage to sow doubt about Chen's reputation as a man of letters, which ultimately was tarnished by the considerable debts he ran up with several French and European banks. Chen's integrity as a man and writer of integrity was forever compromised.

Despite the suspect nature of some of his affairs, Chen still seduced the French public, especially with his lectures, which were held in impeccable French before a rapt audience. Widely quoted by Chinese scholars, the following passage from Romain Rolland's diary, dated 18 February 1889, bears witness to this:

At the great amphitheater of the Sorbonne, in the Alliance Française session – spoke the Chinese general Tcheng-Ki-Tong. In a beautiful purple robe, which was nobly draped over his chair, his face was full, young and happy, and his voice very loud, grave, heavy and clear. It was an excellent speech, spiritual, very French, but even more Chinese, by a superior man coming from a superior race. (Rolland 1952, 276-277)⁶³

61 See in particular the allegations by Mondion.

62 In spite of the intervention in favor of Chen by René de Pont-Jest in *Le Figaro* (11 July 1894), and by Henri Cordier (*Histoire des relations de la Chine avec les puissances occidentales* [1860-1902]), we are not able to make a judgment on this dispute. Mondion's allegations and responses may also be read in *Journal d'un mandarin, lettres de Chine et documents diplomatiques inédits*, Paris: Librairie Plon, 1887.

63 The passage is cited by Li Huachun (53) and Meng Hua (44).

As a diplomat and Military Attaché to the China Mission, Chen also impressed the French public with his dazzling photos of an invigorated Mandarin, taken by the famous Nadar studio. And what to say about his two wives, Marie Talabot (first wife/Madame Tcheng) and Fanny Duchamp (his concubine and second wife). They made the man one of the first Chinese to have French women as partners, and this was undoubtedly one of the only mixed marriages that received the blessing of the Qing Court (Chen 2005, 12).⁶⁴ This alliance was also praised in the literary world. On 24 May 1929, Zeng Pu mentioned in his diary the dedication addressed to Marie Talabot: '*Le Théâtre des Chinois* whose first volume bears the dedication to Mrs Marie Talabot' (Shi 2001, 8).⁶⁵

The trend to leave for and be educated in the West marked the era of openness and cultural coexistence in China. This climate of westernization contributed to the growth of translation, which became the major means by which a large number of French works reached Chinese readership. The Fuzhou Maritime School, the work-study movement, and the popularity of the translations of hundreds of French works highlight the conditions in which emerged this early Chinese Francophonie. The friendship these Francophones had with French writers created memorable moments in the history of this branch of Francophonie. Liang Zongdai, Shenchen, Jing Yinyu, and Chen Jitong were important landmarks in the emergence of this form of Francophonie through their own works as well as with their translations.

The gestations of a literature of cohabitation

The advent of the first generation of Francophones changed the socio-literary landscape by bringing a sense of westernized culture. In this enthusiasm for the West, it goes without saying that Shanghai – a European fiefdom – was the initiator and crucible of the transfer of French works through translation. It was in Shanghai that the largest number of translated works published before 1910 were published. Not only were the biggest journals, such as the *Revue mensuelle du roman* and *Nouvelle jeunesse* available, but also French works translated elsewhere or into other languages. The premonitory, indeed

64 In the Court's ban, Marie Talabot is named Mme Tcheng.

65 See in particular the section 'Extraits du journal intime de Bingfu'. This dedication may be read in *Le théâtre des Chinois. Étude de mœurs comparées par le général Tcheng-Ki-Tong*, (Paris: Calmann Lévy, 1886).

catalytic role played by the English translations of French works in being chosen for translation into Chinese should be emphasized. In the same vein, the translation of French works in Japan was followed closely by several Shanghai houses, who considered these translated works to be the heralds that would influence their choice of works to be translated. This explains the fact that French works were often first translated in Japan before being retranslated by the Chinese from their Japanese or English versions, thus mapping a triangular journey (France-Japan-China) for the transmission of French works.

Japan as springboard and intermediary

Thus in this first period of transferring French works to Asia, many did not follow a linear route from France to China, but passed by the detour of a third culture. To a certain extent Tokyo was ahead of Shanghai and other Asian cities as a first stop for French works in their migration to Asia, so that many made their appearance first in Japan before continuing to the continent. There are many examples. Jules Verne's *Tour du monde en quatre-vingts jours*, the first French work to migrate to Japan, appeared in Tokyo in 1878 (Cheng 2005, 81),⁶⁶ while its partial retranslation into Chinese (from Japanese) dates to 1930.⁶⁷ The same goes for *Autour de la lune*, which appeared in Tokyo before being published in translated form by the Shang Wu house, again from the Japanese version (Centre Etienne 173).⁶⁸ The same path was taken by *Madame Chrysanthème*, which followed a Paris-Tokyo-Shanghai route to appear in Tokyo in 1895 (Loti 1895). Some three decades later, the work made its appearance in Shanghai (Loti & Xu 1929). The same route applies for the migration of *Madame Bovary*, which appeared in Tokyo in 1914 (Flaubert 1914), almost a decade before its publication in Shanghai (Flaubert 1925). This trend can also be seen with the works of Romain Rolland, which were introduced in Japan almost two decades before their publication in China.⁶⁹ Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Le*

66 Yoshikawa Yasuhisa, 'Appropriation de la littérature française et formation du champ littéraire moderne au Japon', (Cheng).

67 Jules Verne, *Shi wu xiao hao jie* [The extraordinary voyages of Jules Verne, eighteen chapters of which the first nine are translated from the Japanese by Liang Qichao], Shanghai: Shi jie shu ju, 1930.

68 Translated from the Japanese by Éditions Shang Wu in 1904.

69 Barely two years after its publication, *Les Loups* (Paris: Albin Michel 1898) appeared in Tokyo. See on this subject, Romain Rolland, *Okami*, translated into Japanese by Shigeya Hatano, Tokyo: Gekidanmingei, 1900. Apart from *Jean-Christophe* published in Hong Kong in 1900[s] (*Yuehan*

Contrat social followed the same itinerary: retranslated from the Japanese by Yang Tingtong and published in 1903 on behalf of Éditions Creation Nouvelle in Shanghai (Wang 1982, 153-161).⁷⁰

What stands out here is Japan's role as a relay point in the France-China circuit. Its role as a cultural stepping-stone and intermediary in the transfer from Europe to China is based in history. This goes back to the hasty departure of the prominent Wu-Xi coup d'état leaders who were persecuted by the Qing. Historically, Japan has been perceived as a haven for westernized Chinese elites. From this comes the image of the island neighbor as a peaceful haven. In fact, the openness and good disposition of the Meiji era vis-à-vis the proponents of reforms contrast with the hostility and repression of the Qing. In order to transmit Western Enlightenment to the native country, the first journal created by these refugee leaders in Japan was *Ye shu huei bian* (Anthology of Translated Works). The translation of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Citoyen* appeared in 1900 (Han 2008, 14). Thus this Chinese newspaper circulating in Tokyo is emblematic of the intermediary role Japan played in the introduction of the West to China. At the same time, the image of intellectual oasis embodied by Japan among Chinese elites is translated in the form of literary salons; think of the famous cenacle called the Creation Association. Led by Guo Moruo, this cenacle strove to retranslate French works into Chinese from the English translations that were circulating in Japan. In this sense, the case of *A Trip Round the World in a Flying Machine* retranslated by Lu Xun (one of the members of the Association) on behalf of *Éditions de l'éducation populaire* in Shanghai in 1903 (Han 1969, 61) is an instructive example.

The era of translated literature

However the great force behind French propagation and cohabitation was without a doubt the *Revue mensuelle du roman* whose list of translated works, including the *Index de la Revue mensuelle du roman* says much about its influence. It included, on the one hand, critical essays by Francophones on French literature, and on the other, the publication in serial form of translations of French works. In doing so, it gives an idea of the degree of appreciation of these Chinese Francophones, faithful readers of French authors. A glance at the first translated works is striking for the overwhelming amount of short stories by Maupassant and Daudet, starting with *Les Prisonniers* translated

Qilisiiduofu, Xianggang: Qun yi tu shu gong si, 1900[s]); the true introduction to Rolland's works in China began in the 1920s.

70 See the annals of Yen Fu, established by Tong Er.

by Mao Baishi in 1904 (Han 2008, 344).⁷¹ This propensity is confirmed by other researchers. For example, Liu Shan's table of a dozen works by the two novelists translated between 1910 and 1920 (Liu 2004, 164) further testifies to the pre-eminent role played by this magazine in the promotion of French works. The craze for the translation of Western works is testified by the numbers, which speak for themselves. The *Revue mensuelle du roman* published 649 translations between 1921-1925 and the *Nouvelle jeunesse* introduced 74 foreign authors and published 128 translated texts between 1915-1921 (Cheng 2005, 192).⁷² Such a quantity speaks volumes about the phenomenon of contemporary literary cohabitation and underscores the hitherto unrecognized forms of Francophone phenomena in Asia, to the extent that in the literary world of the late Qing period the slogan was: to create is less worthy than to translate. In fact, the first decades of the twentieth century recorded more than 400 translated works compared to 120 original works (Aying 2009, 1). Until 1949, before the installation of communism in China, the translation of Western works exceeded 3,000 works (Han 1969, 99).

In his masterly study titled *Histoire du roman*, the father of Chinese literary criticism Aying (Qian Xingcun, 1900-1977) claims that translation accounted for two thirds of published works; an assertion confirmed half a century later by other researchers (Liu 2004, 128). Such a large number of translations leaves no doubt about the literary coexistence of this period, and consequently about the changes these translations brought to the local literary world. Not only novels were translated, but also poetry. We should mention Baudelaire's *Fleurs du Mal*, translated by Li Jinfa and published in the journal *Weiyu* (*The Drizzle*) in 1925 (Cheng 2005, 195). The 1930s saw the culmination of the popularity of several French poets thanks, among other factors, to the efforts of Dai Wangshou. The editor-in-chief of the journal *Xiandai* (*The Contemporaries*), Dai translated, under the pseudonym of Chen Yuyue, several stanzas of Pierre Reverdy's *Épaves du ciel*, accompanied by a short biography of the poet entitled 'Words of the Editor' (Dai 1999).⁷³

The New Literature of Cohabitation

This surge of foreign works significantly changed the perspective of the readership, which in turn was to change the creative side. The influence

71 See in particular 'Appendix II'.

72 See on this subject, Jin Siyan, 'La réception de la poésie française et son influence sur la poésie chinoise contemporaine', (Pei).

73 Note in the same vein that French theater is introduced in China from 1910 (She 1999, 184).

of cultural coexistence through the penetration of French works rests in the changes the works sparked upon contact with indigenous literature. If Chinese literature began a new era in the late Qing period, its meeting with European literatures served as a catalyst. In the advent of this change, Hu She (1891-1962) is an important figure. In the aftermath of the collapse of the Qing, he was among the first to recommend The New Literature, based on the attributes of French works. The changes these works brought to the creative paradigms established over millennia are a sign of cultural coexistence.

One of the major changes was the advent of Modern Chinese language. Thus Hu She was the first to translate French poems into Modern Chinese. In other words, he was the first to use the modern idiom for poetry, a genre formerly reserved for Old Chinese. He therefore stands out as a father figure of modern poetry, forging a new horizon for poetic creation and literary translation in China (Liao 2006, 23). Hu She and the French-speaking poets and writers of the time were advocating a reconfiguration of the fundamental concepts formerly imposed on all literary creation in China. For the first time in the creative world, beauty could mean something other than the morally good; it could now be related to spleen, nothingness, negativity, or darkness. In the history of Chinese poetry, Xu Zhimo's translation of *La Charogne* by Baudelaire (Centre Etiemble 179; Cheng 2005, 38-39)⁷⁴ set a new paradigm for ideas of Beauty in poetry.

Another pioneer who contributed to the climate of literary coexistence was Lin Xu, who played a key role in the advent of French literature through translation in China. Lin's reputation is due not only to the unprecedented aspects embraced by his translation of *La Dame aux camélias*, but also to his close ties with the West. Before the dismemberment of the country and the subjugation imposed by the concessions, the indignant Chinese tried to grasp and understand the 'Other'. Reading Western novels was seen as an effective way to understand the Western invaders. *La Dame aux camélias* was surprising to the Chinese readership with its story and romance that broke with classical norms. Read enthusiastically by the classic readership of the day, this French novel opened up a hitherto unknown horizon of rebellious themes that would be fully embraced by the era of literary cohabitation. The borrowing from Western cultures served to break the two thousand years of Confucian shackles in search of a fuller expression of the 'self'.

74 Xu Zhimo also translated *Candide* (Shanghai: Beixin Shuju, 1927). The same Voltaire's work was translated for the second time by Hu She who published his translation with Bei xing shu ju (Wang 2004, 399).

What emerges from the extensive translation of French works is a readership that was both willing and able to draw parallels between the Chinese novel and the Western novel:

the Chinese novel is of grandiose structure with multiple protagonists and minor characters each possessing their own characteristics, which is different from the Western novel that has only one or two heroes, a plot, and a common thread per novel [...]. The Chinese novel begins quietly, accelerates and complicates through its narrative twists, while the Western novel starts dramatically only to calm down later. (Liu 2004, 138, my translation)⁷⁵

A new novelistic form was emerging with the omnipresent narrator and the psychological world of the protagonists, free love, and its ostentatious expression, the breakdown of narrative chronology, and stories within stories. These unprecedented formal aspects would fundamentally upset the secular foundations of the Chinese creative world. The fortune and misfortune surrounding the release of *La Dame aux camélias*, followed by the Qing's blacklisting of the novel, propelled its notoriety to new heights. It goes without saying that the first Francophones were devoted readers of Lin; figures such as Lu Xun, Guo Moro (Han 1969, 54) and probably Zeng Pu. Lin set a new paradigm for Chinese novelists who produced, to the best of their ability, a profusion of works of cohabitation, the best of which is certainly *Fleur sur l'océan des péchés*. Thus, the eminent and foundational role played by *La Dame aux camélias* leads me to say that without Lin Xu, the Chinese would not have had access to the Western novel, at that time, and thus the emergence of the Francophone milieu would have been hindered or delayed.

Based on the Chinese example our analysis of the genesis of the first Francophones and the conditions in which the French-speaking milieu emerged, as well as of the means of disseminating the French culture, suggests a state of cultural cohabitation. This unique Asian situation, which arose in several countries that encountered French literature, has not been approached from the perspective of the continent's Francophone influences. As it stands, research on Francophone phenomena in Asia still refers to Indochina as proof of the French presence. Substantive studies likely to demonstrate the existence of a surviving Francophonie in China, Japan, India, and Korea are highly desirable. Moreover, my conviction of the existence of a variety of

75 Xia Ren, 'Autour du roman', *Nouveau roman*, 13, 1905, cited by Liu.

Francophonie peculiar to Asia and transcultural in form remains intact. What is more, the challenge of reconsidering France's role in Asia is part of the story of the emerging Asian countries, which are reshaping the dynamics of the world today. As an essential partner, Asia invites itself onto the world stage and the part of its history woven together with that of France, once tinged with clichés, deserves to be reconsidered in order to free itself from the influence of received ideas. With the hope of encouraging a better understanding of the Francophone phenomenon in Asian countries hitherto classified as non-Francophone, this study could be a preliminary step in a long discussion to come.

IV The birth of a literature of cohabitation

Colonial literature vs. literature of cohabitation

In the history of Asian Francophone cultural manifestations outside of Indochina, the French-speaking authors of the first generation, readers, and translators of the masters, create a kind of paradigm. In China as in Japan, since the forced opening up of the ports that led to the first contacts with foreigners arriving at the concessions, trading posts, and lease territories, the desire to know the Other became an imperative. In this situation, thousands of young people flocked to France and became Francophones. The appearance on the Chinese and Japanese literary scenes of these French-speaking authors, whose works marked a break with the preceding forms of literature, brought into being the phenomenon of cultural cohabitation.¹ Born from the encounter with European literatures that served as a catalyst, this literature of cohabitation traversed its national and homogeneous domain by acquiring a westernized poetics of the novel. From that point, literary creation embraced many different forms, which bore the imprint of the enthusiasm that these French-speaking held for French fiction. A change then took place, in which the previously rigid models of literary creation were revised.

Following the preceding demonstration of what Asian Francophonie consists of, this chapter analyzes the phenomenon of literary cohabitation that emerged in Asia between 1880-1930, following the opening up to the West. This period encompasses not only the golden age of translation of French works, but also a blossoming of local works that, after their contact with French esthetics, broke with previous literary modes. The literary climate of the time was marked by Asia's first experience with bilingual authors (in this case with French or English). Because they were westernized and knowledgeable about European literatures, their creative works upset the homogeneous, one-dimensional literary norms that were firmly rooted in tradition. Within the New Literature prevailing in China, *Fleur sur l'océan des péchés* (1903-1936) is one of the most famous novels of this time. Its publication came at the turn of the century, and marked a turning

¹ For example, the translator of *Nana*, Nagai Kafû, published his pastiche of the novel in 1903. See Nagai Kafû, *Joyu Nana*. Tokyo: Shinseisha, 1903.

point in literature, the encounter of the traditional with the westernized. Despite its Zhanghuiti form,² the novel stood out from previous works by adopting a romantic poetics of art for art's sake.

The literature of cohabitation: a new paradigm

The last two decades of the nineteenth century saw a similar literary phenomenon appear in several Asian countries that had seen the introduction of French literature. In China, this period saw the emergence of changes indicating a situation of literary cohabitation. First of all, the works were no longer authored only by Chinese, but by Chinese people who had encountered foreigners and who advocated a literature that drew on Western esthetics. By breaking with classical works and their linear configuration of the Zhanghuiti formal straitjacket and its frame of reference anchored in the Chinese imagination with protagonists with no psychological component, the works of the Francophone authors deliberately aligned themselves with the French literary school. Within this corpus of works, many were written in French, and are doubtlessly part of the manifestation of Francophone culture (Kato 39-48)³ while others remain entrenched in the native language (in this case Chinese); hence emerges the focus of this chapter.

How to apprehend in a scientific way the literature of cohabitation that manifested itself sometimes in French and sometimes in the native language? Regardless of the boundaries we devise, one thing is obvious: we cannot make any valid statement about the literary life and the Francophone phenomenon of the time, if we exclude works (created according to French esthetics) simply because they are expressed in the native language. Even if they are classed, as they should be, in Chinese/Japanese literature without the slightest hesitation, their true literary merit is worth analyzing, especially since this period is crucial in regard to the Francophone phenomenon in Asia. The just recognition of these works created in Western modes, requires a re-examination. From the outset, it would be appropriate first of all to reconsider several concepts, such as Francophone literature, non-Francophone literature, and literature of cohabitation.

From the perspective of Francophone studies, literature is divided into Francophone and non-Francophone writing. This division is based on the

2 Classical novelistic form, where chronological order stands as the sole guiding thread determining the events of the story.

3 For example, the *Catalogue général des œuvres* in the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris lists seven works by Chen Jitong written in French.

idea that the former is the literature of the ex-colonies and the second is the literature of non-colonized countries.⁴ Such a dichotomy is not suited to the heterogeneity (of degree and nature) of Francophone writing that manifest itself in Asia. Our hypothesis is that it would be irrelevant to classify the works of this period exclusively according to the language in which they were written. On the contrary, these works by French-speaking authors, conceived according to French esthetics, radically broke with the previous works; they should not be excluded from the Francophone sphere of influence of the time. Given the obvious imprint on these works of French literature, it is appropriate to approach them as a literature of cohabitation. To demonstrate the credibility of this approach, let us situate ourselves in the literary time and place of Asia.

Whereas in classic Francophone areas, where the country conquered by France becomes Francophone and its literature becomes of French expression, the recognition of Francophone phenomena in Asia relies on multiple data beyond the simple linguistic issue. In fact, Asia, with the concessions, the trading posts, and the leasehold territories as forms of contact with the European Other, inspires a different form of Francophone life that leads its literature of French expression into unconventional forms. In other words, the French heritage survives in another form of dynamism, which is not exclusively channeled through the French language, but rather into the creative practices of the authors. This is because, without having gone through the official phase of colonization, French language and literature are not part of the canon in these countries and, consequently, the acculturation of Western and French literature is carried out at the level of the prevailing context of the time, that is, the esthetics of French writing. For example, traditional heroes – once the incarnation of Beauty – become antiheroes with defects, the narrative is no longer told in a straight linear chronology, but in an interlocking web of entangled events, driven by several separate but connected threads, in a non-linear chronology. Also, the characteristics of the protagonists are no longer displayed only through their tangible actions but are enriched with psychological components, which are unveiled under the eyes of the omnipotent and omnipresent narrator. Finally, taboos, such as female chastity, previously taken for granted, or the renunciation of the roles of mother and wife, are evoked, and supplanted by free love and its ostentatious expression. These blatant borrowings from French literature, by French-speaking authors of the time, distinguish their writings from other works produced locally. Since they cannot be classified in Francophone

4 However, Belgian and Swiss literatures of French expression will not be included.

literature because of the language in which they were conceived, these works deserve to be considered in our opinion from the perspective of a literature of cohabitation.

In this sense, *Fleur sur l'océan des péchés*, from the pen of a Francophone, Zeng Pu (1872-1935), written in Chinese, serves as a prototype. In fact, with the obvious influence of previously unused foreign elements, the structure, the narrative, and the content of this work cannot be described as typical of Chinese literature, but in terms of a literature of cohabitation. This kind of work merits closer scrutiny, especially since Zeng Pu's novel is not an isolated case. The pastiches of *Madame Bovary* and *Jean-Christophe*,⁵ which belong to this literature of cohabitation, were also written in Chinese. Although subsequent to the work of Zeng Pu, these pastiches are the fruit of the culture of cohabitation induced by the presence of French literature. Such a climate of cohabitation may be measured still by quoting a telling and revealing figure. The works of the 200 French writers listed in the *Grande encyclopédie* (She 178) for their complete or partial translation attest, without any doubt, to the contribution of French heritage to the local literary scene. It is clear that this legacy lives largely in the works written in the native language. Hence the question arises: should such a transfer of French literature be excluded from the category of Asian Francophonie? Whatever the answer we arrive at, one historical fact is indisputable: the primacy of French literature comes in this case from the devotion of French-speaking authors to French works, which they took as their paradigm.

What is literature of cohabitation?

Although this phenomenon of cohabitation was part of the Francophone presence in Asian countries that had not been subject to classical colonization, the basic questions remain unanswered. First, how to articulate in a scholarly way such an idea of literature? What are the factual and tangible elements that can be used to identify works belonging to it and others that are excluded from it? To answer these questions and to take a global look at all the literary productions of the French speakers of the time, let us go back to the origin of the genre of 'Francophone literature' as a way of framing our reflections. Let us recognize that 'colonial literature' preceded 'Francophone literature', even though it has become a kind of taboo. For it connotes historically a repugnant form of condescension. In

5 It relates to Li Jieren (*Si shui wei lan*. Shanghai: Zhonghua shu ju, 1936) and Lu Ling (*Cai zhu di er nü men*, first published in the journal *L'Espoir*, 1948).

fact, thanks to its colonizing functions (destroying the indigenous culture), colonial literature gives way to and ends up being condemned by the anti- or postcolonial writing now referred to as Francophone literature. Beyond this changing classification, which marks the evolution of the genre, we must not lose sight of the fact that the origins of Francophone literature derive from the genre of colonial literature. But the essential question remains unanswered: Is colonial literature equivalent to literature from the colonies?

It would be useful to recall at this point Robert Randau's study, which traces the origin of the genre:

Originally, that is to say during the period from 1873 to 1900, those who wrote about our colonies were the very ones who had ensured the conquest of the country. [...] At that time we had a magnificent library of travel writing, journals, and memoirs' (Randau 417).

The author refers to Roland Lebel⁶ – one of the pioneers in the field whose work is rather ignored today – to borrow his definition:

Colonial literature resides in the essence of the ideas, the feelings, the facts expressed, and not in the place, in the setting [...]. Our Algerian writers were born mostly in Algeria; some of them are Arabo-Berbers, who work in French⁷ (Randau 434).

According to Lebel, colonial literature evolves in two phases, the first of which is a literature of the private lives of the 'colonizers' on conquered land expressed through genres such as the diary, memoirs, autobiography, or letters, and the second is written by the indigenous people. In other words, this second category would grow and evolve into what is commonly known as Francophone literature. In sum, the effacement of colonial literature, due to its condescending and oppressive nature, allows anti-colonial and postcolonial literature to dominate. The exhumation of the origins of Francophone literature through the history of its evolution sheds light on its variant in Asia. Our hypothesis is that if there is colonial literature (upstream) and anti-colonial or postcolonial (downstream) in the classical colonies, its equivalence in Asia, where French was not an official language, would be a literature of

6 See on this, the works by Roland Lebel, considered to be the foundations of colonial literature: *Études de littérature coloniale*. Paris: J. Peyronnet et Cie, 1928; *Histoire de la littérature coloniale en France*. Paris: Rochefort-A. Thoyon-Thèse, 1930.

7 Thesis by Roland-Lebel cited by Randau.

cohabitation. Such literature, whether pastiches of French works or conceived according to French esthetics, is expressed first in the native language.

The attributes of this literature will be studied through the analysis of the elements of Zeng Pu's novel. Moreover, without wishing to advance further on this slippery terrain, which is controversial and fraught with difficulties, the least that can be said is that it would be as misleading to set colonial literature in a fixed genre as to designate it empirically as literature written by colonizers on the colonies. The means and conditions by which to understand it scientifically depend on the removal of the accepted signifier attached to it, which would allow a broader apprehension of the concept. First, the vector of colonial literature is the material it engages with, wherever and by whomever it is produced. Secondly, even if Francophone literature in Asia cannot be called colonial or postcolonial literature, the example of Algerian writers (mentioned above by Lebel) overlaps with the case of Asian writers in the sense that indigenous writers produce a local literature of French cohabitation. The difference is that in the first case, the works have every chance of being expressed in French, while they are retrenched in the native language in the second case.

It must be emphasized that such a local expression that reflects the socio-literary fallout of cultural cohabitation cannot be erased from the overall picture of Francophone presence in Asia, even if this literature (pastiche of French works or conceived according to French esthetics) tends to express itself in the native language. For one obvious reason, the linguistic unit (French) does not have the emblematic status of official language in the case of Asian countries. As an innate force, this literature of cohabitation exists in multiple forms and is not exclusively expressed in French. For Asia with its concessions, trading posts, and leaseholds takes on different forms of Francophone vitality, privileging cross-cultural exchanges that lead its literature (of cohabitation) to create distinct forms. In the case of China, its very first appearance comes with the notebook of Zheng Ruoeng under the Ming:

In the year of Dingchou during Zhengde's reign [1517], while I was an officer in the Guangtong Marine Affairs Service, two large ships came up and entered directly into Huaiyuan port in Guangtong; they said they were Portuguese and claimed to come and pay their tribute. The captain's name was Jiabidan and they all had big noses and hollow eyes.⁸ (Meng Hua 2004, 160-161)

8 Zheng Ruoeng, *Chouhai tubian* [*Notes sur les résistances aux envahisseurs étrangers*], cited by Meng Hua, my translation.

The literature on the figure of the outsider begins with the famous collection of essays: 'The *Poxieji* (a collection for the destruction of vicious doctrines) was compiled from 1608 to 1639 and includes sixty critical writings originating from southern China' (Moureau 441). Published during the Ming Dynasty, this collection notes the arrival of Christianity and European culture, so that it is considered as one of the first writings attesting to the penetration of and cohabitation with the West.

To conclude on the foregoing, one cannot ignore the inseparable duality of identity and otherness. In apprehending the outsider, the Chinese of the time note their otherness, in comparison with their own 'self', anchored in their own identity. And the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw this local literature on the outsider grow through works of Chinese, French, or English expression. The interest of the discourses on otherness embodied by the outsider lies in the way they reveal the effects of otherness on local literature, which in turn reinforces the validity of our approach based on a literature of cohabitation.⁹ Clearly, such literature can make use of different languages. Our belief is that literature of cohabitation cannot be defined only by the language it uses, but also by the creative paradigm. From the Ming until the end of the concessions and the suspension of cohabitation in 1949, the Middle Kingdom saw a multitude of pastiches and works of cohabitation of which *Fleur sur l'océan des péchés* remains an emblematic case.

Zeng Pu and the generation of cohabitation authors

Zeng Pu, a first-rate classical novelist, Francophone, and disciple of Chen Jitong (Cheng 2005, 40-41), who had introduced him to the great French literary world since Rabelais and Ronsard, is the principal author of the movement. A natural scholar, having passed the imperial competition in 1891 (Juren), he was also a sympathizer of the Wu-Xi Reforms. His choice to become French-speaking, marked by his entry into the Tongwen Seminary in 1895 (Shi 1982, 13), reflects the conjuncture of China cohabiting with foreign powers. Unfortunately, the years around 1895 already witnessed the beginning of the decline of Tong Wenguan, so that the acquisition of French no longer ensured him the means to access the Court, nor diplomacy, as was the case for his older colleagues. This explains his shift towards belles-lettres (Han 2008, 133). The annals of the Zeng reveal that his first writing on French

9 For example, the novella *Mademoiselle Lysing* was written in English by one of the first Chinese Anglophones Tcheng-Wi-Mô (1903-1955). See the French translation in *L'Europe* (vol. 19, 1929, 337-346).

poetry dated to the year 1901, and was followed by a collection of reading notes on French works (Shi 1982, 115), betraying in part his predilection for the French poetic school. Original translator of Molière, Dumas Senior, Zola, and Hugo, Zeng Pu, whose career is a prototype of the first generation of Francophones, corroborates our hypothesis on the existence of cohabitation literature. In Shanghai in 1904, he and his collaborators founded the publishing house Xiao Shuoling (Forest of Novels) and a monthly magazine of the same name. Some twenty years later, he created another publishing house: Zhen/Shan/Mei (truth/kindness/beauty, 1927-1931) in collaboration with his eldest son Zeng Xubai. Being also called a 'book shelf', this publishing house was a privileged site for the transfer of French works that reached the Chinese readership by means of the translations published by the house.

Fascinated by French writers whom he read with cultish devotion, Zeng Pu aligned his creative credo with French esthetics: 'Truth' for the soul of literature; 'beauty' for the manifestation of this soul; 'Kindness' for the heart of the work (Shi 2001, 10). This precept connotes his publishing house, a partisan of art for art's sake in the systematic introduction of Western works (Shi 1982, 82). Zeng Pu said: 'The goal of the house is to express my opinions, but also to create an atmosphere similar to the French salon' (Shi 1982, 46-47, my translation). This literary cenacle in the form of a publishing house gave free rein to events that would promote and further the phenomenon of cohabitation. Thus a special issue was dedicated to the centenary of French Romanticism in honor of the pre-eminent figures of this school (Shi 1982, 53). This ardor of 'the cohabitation man' is also confirmed by the richness of his private collection (Shi 1982, 118)¹⁰ including a copy of the first edition of the *Complete Works* of Hugo's Theater, out of print in France, and another of *L'Opéra de la dame aux camélias*, a special commemorative edition in 500 copies that also sold out. Even the Bibliothèque Nationale in France does not hold copies of these works. But his reputation as the leading figure in The New Literature of China goes back to his late-Qing-period cult novel.

A key novel

Banned for a long time and blacklisted by Mao, this masterpiece of the 20th century is inspired, thanks to the advent of the concessions, by the incredible life of a prostitute. Consorting with both whites and viceroys, she becomes a courtesan before becoming a concubine of an old Mandarin who

10 In the journal *Yi wen yi hua* Taichang affirms that Zeng Pu revealed his private collection on the request of a French writer.

is sent as an emissary to Europe in the 1860s. The novel's resounding success bears witness to the realistic echo and recognition it provoked within the readership of the time, which knew well the social disarray entailed by the penetration of European cultures. Instead of focusing on historical events with authentic figures as protagonists – as all Chinese classics do – the novel is about the mores of the time, hence the uniqueness of Zeng. The mosaic of manners and morals is reflected in the contextual background, which is based on events of the time. In line with the French novel, the traditional heroes (the heirs of Beauty) are replaced by antiheroes with moral defects, which was unheard of at the time. At no point does Zeng express through his narrator voice any judgment on the heroine, neither on her licentiousness nor her moral liberty. On the contrary, the emphasis is put on the way she charms the high imperial court as much as the Europeans.

Even if, at the level of the form, the work obeys the chronological strait-jacket (of the Zhanghuiti model), the novel aligns itself with the French school in its diegetic arrangement, its novelistic configuration, and its anti-heroes that it does not judge morally, however flawed they are. In the author's own words:

Like putting on pearls, *Lu ling wai shi*, whose plot is linear, puts them on vertically in one thread, one at a time from beginning to end. Whereas I put them on horizontally, on multiple threads. Sometimes I put on one, sometimes I leave them hanging. Several threads at the same time from the center, like a flower of pearls [...]. *Lu ling wai shi* is based on dialogic formula, speaking of B, dropping A, speaking of C, forgetting B; one stops or goes whenever one wants. My novel is made of twists, the beginning and end come back to each other [...].¹¹ (Zeng 1991, 2, my translation)

The fundamental elements that differentiate Zeng Pu's creation from that of classical authors are that Zeng is French-speaking, a translator, and a partisan of French literature.

The genesis of the novel

According to Shi Yin's research, the first six chapters of the work authored by Jin Songyin (1874-1947) were published in Tokyo in 1903, in issue 8 of the monthly magazine *Jiangsu*, which was founded by student apprentices from

11 Reply from Zeng Pu to Hu She, cited in the 'Foreword' to the republication in 1991 (Shanghai: Gu ji shu ban she).

the province of the same name (Zeng 1991, 23-24). In September 1904, Zeng took over from chapter seven and collaborated with Jin for the next 60 chapters of the novel. The 1905 edition was also printed in Tokyo but distributed by the *Forêt de romans* house in Shanghai (Zeng 1991, 27). Perceived as a political novel by the critics of the time, the part that was authored by Jin Songyin castigates the aggression of the European expansions in China and consequently the loss of homogeneous cultural identity. This figure of patriotism and defender of cultural integrity switches with Zeng Pu to a novel that meanders through imperial encounters. Through the actions and gestures of the protagonists who rub shoulders with Europeans, the novel focuses on the breach created in morality, which is shaken up in its contact with Western cultures. The characteristics of the protagonists whose activities lead them to intermingle with Europeans crystallize the effects of cultural and literary coexistence that takes place at the end of the Qing, at the dawn of the Republic.

Thus the fifteen editions and reissues of the novel between 1905 and 1906, sold in runs of 50,000 copies (Zeng 1991, 28), enjoyed a phenomenal success. This success was due to its sensational tagline, which urges readers to wipe out the absolute and tyrannical regime in favor of a state run by the citizen's rule of law (Aying 2009, 22). This revolutionary message for a Republican China (with no cohabitation) run by its citizens (China for the Chinese) led to its dazzling success. For such an avant-garde idea far exceeds all the propositions put forward by the novelists of the Qing era. A fortiori, the genesis of the novel is inspired by a real case. Modeled on flamboyant celebrities, who would have been identifiable by the reader, the heroes of the novel recall the emissaries of Russia, Germany, and Austria: Hong Juin and his concubine 'Golden Flower Sai'. The novel piques the impetuosity of readers by using the real identity of the concubine who featured in the daily newspapers of the time. On 25 November 1934, under the heading 'Notes and Questions with Dong-ya-bing-fu'¹² the Shanghai *Shenbao* newspaper published an interview with Zeng Pu in which the origin of his meetings with the protagonists was revealed (Shi 1982, 10).¹³ Thus the primary virtue of the work resides in the authentic look it provides on the mutations of the sociocultural conditions due to the advent of the concessions. These brought in their wake the phenomenon of the cohabitation of culture, language, and way of life with the Europeans in the Empire of the Son of Heaven, which had been closed off for millennia.

12 Pseudonym of Zeng Pu that means: sick man of the Far East.

13 See also the article: 'La vie de Fleur dorée Sai' published 17 November in the same newspaper (cited in Shi 1982, 57).

Under the guise of fiction, the novel's originality lies in its being an eyewitness to the cultural shock caused by these 'Xi-yang-ren'.¹⁴ In the prelude, Zeng Pu states:

The novel focuses on the vicissitudes of the heroine's misadventures that relate to the last 30 years of the Qing to highlight events, anecdotes, and stories as the background context, while avoiding a direct account of the history of China (Aying 2009, 21, my translation)

How these 30 years of late Qing constitute a painful epic tale in the collective memory! A lot has been written on the sociocultural mutations with which the disoriented readership could readily identify, thrown off track as they were by the massive arrival of Europeans whose presence clashed with their secular values.

Sai: a jewel of cohabitation

Discovered unexpectedly in 1933 by a Beijing journalist, the true identity of a fallen woman occupying a dilapidated dwelling at the end of an alley in Beijing caused quite a stir. Sai made the headlines of several major newspapers and was summoned by renowned scholars intrigued by the legendary life of the Zeng Pu's heroine:

One day last winter, I was talking with Bannong at Peking University about 'Golden Flower Sai'. He told me: 'There is something going on, they are preparing to devote a biography in French to her, let's write one first in Chinese' [...]. It was already in December of the previous year that Sai was summoned to meet us every two days, a dozen times in all, telling us the highlights of her life.¹⁵ (Liu 1934, ii, my translation)

This biography written by Liu Bannong, a professor at Peking University, supplements the story told in the novel with a real life experience related by this 'goddess of the populace', which created a sensation among the mandarins attending the high court. Along with the fictional work, the

14 In Mandarin this signifies man from the Western ocean, a name given by the Chinese to all Europeans between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Its French variant 'Si-yang-ien' is attested by Almerindo Lessa (61). Note that before the twentieth century, the Chinese also referred to Tibet and India as 'the West'.

15 'Prologue' by Shang Hongkui (collaborator and former pupil of Liu), written 9 October 1934 on Liu's sudden death. We refer to its republication in 2006 by the People's University Press.

biography, though based on Sai's account, serves as a benchmark for cross-referencing the events narrated in the novel.

Sai was from a family of Zhao traders in Anhui Province who moved to Souzhou, a small neighboring city in Shanghai known for its bamboo gardens and artificial ponds. Chinese researchers differ on her date of birth (either 1871 or 1874) (Wen 1989, 15)¹⁶, as they do on the origin of her family, whether they were middle-class or poor. According to her biographer, her first outings as a companion for drinks and singing were necessitated for pecuniary reasons, to support her family along with her grandmother. Other researchers say that when her father died, she was tricked into being sold on the small boats (mobile brothels that float on the artificial ponds) as a hostess, serving drinks and singing. As Souzhou did not have a brothel at the time, the prostitutes received customers on 'flower boats', many of which remain legendary because of their great luxury: covered boats, equipped with red lacquered wood furniture, their side windows trimmed with jasmine. Beyond the biographical details that are disputed by Chinese researchers, they do agree on her body, like that of a freshwater nymph, and her golden voice, which made her famous and led to her becoming a favorite 'geisha' among the mandarins, high dignitaries, and nobles.

In the spring of her thirteenth she met Hong, who succumbed to her. Having passed the imperial examination as Zhuang Yuan (equivalent of the gold medal) in 1868, Hong married Sai as a concubine in 1886 (some say 1887). The wedding took place in her fourteenth when Hong was 50 years old. Sent to Europe by the Empress as an emissary, he took Sai there in 1888. Her years abroad, during which she frequented the European high court, particularly in Germany, were told in a fairy-tale manner, and solicited the unbridled imagination of the reader. The splendor of audiences at the German imperial couple and, moreover, the grace they enjoyed with the eldest daughter of Queen Victoria are described fully in the novel:

All Berlin knew that Fu Caiyun was the most beautiful woman in China, everyone wanted to see her, she had even met several times with the wife of Chancellor Bismarck, Johanna, who had introduced her to an aristocrat of imperial blood who was called Mrs. Vicka. [...] From their first meeting, she had really liked Caiyun, and from that day she met with her many times. (Zeng 1983, 124)

16 However Li Wenhai offers other biographical data for Sai (Li 1997, 778). Note also that on the title page of the work by Liu Bannong, the years 1872-1936 are given as the biographical dates for Sai, whereas 1874-1933 are given on page 52.

The two women enjoyed greatly their incredible complicity and compatibility:

[S]he feverishly opened the box, and what she saw surprised her. It contained neither jewels nor silks but a photograph, a very lifelike image of two women [...]. One was a graceful young woman, and the other a distinguished aristocrat. It might be guessed that the young woman was Caiyun herself, dressed in the Western style, and that the noble lady was Madame Vicka [...]. Suddenly, everything became clear: Mrs. Vicka was none other than Victoria II, the wife of the Great Emperor Frederick, the eldest daughter of the Mistress of the World, Queen Victoria of England. (Zeng 1983, 132)

This fabulous photo was all the rage with the readership of the time, who were thrilled by a fairy tale come to life. The worldly life of the Chinese goddess who subjugates the European Court no doubt brought a unique cachet and exquisite flavor to Zeng Pu's story. At the same time, Hong's position as a confidant with Empress Dowager Ci-Xi also guaranteed that he remained in favor. Evidence of this may be seen in the water carriages and steamers on Lake Kuen-Ming at the Summer Palace, that were offerings brought from Europe for the Empress (Liu 1951, 258).

When Hong died, Sai cut the ties with the clan Hong to live in Shanghai where she returned, under the name of Chao Menglan, to her old job by hosting a literary salon¹⁷ that became a hotbed of pleasure frequented by the upper crust of the Paris of the East. Its subsequent removal to Tianjin, where she welcomed many dignitaries of the Forbidden City, was equally sensational. As Chen Henqing, a former guard of the Court, recalls in his memoirs of the twilight of his life:

In front of the courtyard of the 'Golden Flower Sai' are a thousand courtesans. Sai is known for welcoming to her door a whole range of people, carriages carrying the upper crust. [...] At my first meeting with her, I did not dare to look at her, lest the splendor of her beauty make me render up my flesh and my soul.¹⁸ (Li 1997, 778-779, my translation)

The authentic life of Zhao Caiyun (1871-1936), which presents the heroine's adventures through the lens of her encounters with Europeans, sowed the seeds of excitement at the release of the novel, which seduced its readers in more ways

17 The brothels of Shanghai were classified in several categories, the highest of which was called *Salon de livres*, where the prostitutes sang classical Chinese airs.

18 A passage in *Jian shu xi an biji* cited by Li Wenhai.

than one. Against a background of cultural coexistence, through marriage, the imperial mission of the protagonist, and the time spent by the couple in Europe, the novel castigates the perdition of the Qing, the corruption of the Court, the cowardice of the Empire, and the decadence of the feudal literati. Several guiding, intertwining narrative lines set out the plot, which highlights the decline, fall, and inertia of the Court, the high mandarins, and viceroys.

Elements of cohabitation

The manifestations of a culture in cohabitation are plentiful in the novel. In particular, the numerous and endless dialogues of the protagonists serve to create a theater of cohabitation throughout the chapters. Evocations or comparisons referring to the West as a means of illustrating a clash of moral values are manifold. Thus the referential world of Zeng Pu does not draw on Confucian, Taoist, or Buddhist schools; it is based on the European world. For example, there are many references to Louis XIV and Louis XVI (Zeng 1983, 2) as despots, which serve to denounce the tyranny of the Qing, and irrupt into the Chinese imagination. As for the future to which China must direct itself, there are references to Saint-Simonianism:

It is a society that has its origins in a Frenchman: Saint-Simon, at the extreme end of egalitarianism [...]. This system of thought sees the Emperor as an enemy and the State as brigands: the affairs of the country must be debated and regulated by the assembled people (Zeng 1983, 107).

And the name of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the father of republican and democratic thought, is acclaimed during the speech made by the hero on being named Zhuangyuan, the principal graduate of the Chinese imperial examination (Zeng 1983, 6). The novel's major plotlines, the household of the protagonist couple, the time overseas, as well as the lovemaking that the heroine enjoys with other characters, are favored sites for the exploration of the ways in which manners and customs have been shaken by the contact with European influences. The advent of Westernization and the invasion of European culture to the detriment of the homogeneity of the Han are palpable in the dialogues exchanged between the characters:

Shanghai is a hectic city. I have been told that since the port was opened, it has not been possible to protect the walls of the tomb of the Great Secretary of the Ming, Xu Guangxi, the forerunner of the introduction of the Western sciences. (Zeng 1983, 9)

We are at a time of exchange between nations [...] one must know a foreign language and be aware of the origin of the power and wealth of the foreigner [...]. I have also learned that in the third month of last the Language School (Tongwenguan) opened in Beijing, and it recruits by entrance examination the brightest students to teach them astronomy and foreign languages. (Zeng 1983, 13)

Along with the content of such dialogues, the West encroaches into the day-to-day lives of the protagonists: 'the French carpet was so soft that it must have been more than two inches thick' (Zeng 1983, 18). Colored spectacles made their big debut in the land of the Dragon: 'an extremely elegant Westerner [...]. She wore a black dress, a straw hat on her head and a pair of colorful eye glasses on her nose' (Zeng 1983, 99-100).

In seeking to demonstrate the Francophone presence in Asia, I have shown that French literature in Asia cannot be apprehended only in its French expression, as it exists in other forms and through unconventional means. As a result, it reveals itself in ways that have been hitherto neglected. As this remark refers to the phenomenon shared in several Asian countries, as a case study, we looked at the Chinese example, where literature at the time refers to works of French expression, French pastiches, and literary creation according to French esthetics. In other words, Francophone literature in China does not consist only of works written in French by Francophones, but has multiple dimensions. There were many imitators of *Fleur sur l'océan des péchés* in this period of cohabitation with the West. Their writings form a corpus of works testifying to the other side of the penetration of the French and Europeans and the social issues that ensued. It is clear that such a novel sets a paradigm for a whole literature called 'literature of cohabitation', which could be extended to other Asian countries that have encountered French culture in their history. In other words, the case of the Chinese masterpiece is a model for the situation of literary and cultural transfer between France and Asia in all the Asian countries where Francophone literature does not occur in a situation of classical colonization.

Pastiches of French masterpieces

If *Fleur sur l'océan des péchés* sets a paradigm for literature of cohabitation as a work conceived according to French esthetics, others are true pastiches. Given that 'the presence of pastiche as an indicator of international literary

exchanges' (Gauvin & Avenne 25)¹⁹ is underlined by many scholars, it goes without saying that genre is one of the central interests of this book. The case of *Rides sur les eaux dormantes*²⁰ remains one of the striking examples. The author's multi-layered relationship with the French masterpiece makes the Chinese novel a prototype of its kind. Thus, in the framework of eastern Francophonie, if the reading of a beloved author serves as an initiation rite for a possible pastiche creation, translation is its driving force. Those who read and translate French writers seem to be predisposed to pastiche the Masters:

[They] could not help copying the writer they were translating, whether in the reconstruction of the style or the reproduction of the characters. Thus, at the origin of many Chinese "twinned" works, French novels became part of the new Chinese literature. Thus the writers of the new Chinese literature who were also translators were baptized 'the Chinese Zola', 'the Oriental Flaubert' or 'Rousseau's pen'. (Cheng 2005, 40)

Thus the transfer of *Madame Bovary* to China and the publication of its pastiche are part of the Francophone events that were in turn part of the trend of cultural cohabitation since the end of Qing. The year *Madame Bovary* reached the Chinese readership via Li's translation, Flaubert was already a known author. The French writer was introduced four years earlier by Mao Dun²¹ (Qian 2004, 287), editor in chief of the famous *Revue mensuelle du roman*. A first generation Francophone, Mao Dun was also a supporter of The New Chinese Literature. *Madame Bovary's* esteemed reputation as a Western novel gave an impetus to the Chinese literary world, which was in search of a Westernized poetics of the novel. Several reviews and major newspapers of the time, such as the *Quotidien du Matin*, *Le Roman*, *Magazine de l'Est*, taken by the achievement of Flaubertian writing and the form of *Madame Bovary*, published a profusion of essays by great Chinese scholars. The *Quotidien du Matin* also published a portrait of Flaubert, accompanied by several facsimile pages of *Madame Bovary* (Qian 2004, 286). Alas, in none of the preserved manuscripts of Li, neither the origin of these pages

19 Paul Aron, 'Le pastiche et la parodie. Instruments de mesure des échanges littéraires internationaux', in Gauvin & Avenne (eds.)

20 Li Jieren, *Si shui wei lan* (Shanghai: Zhonghua shu ju, 1936. Henceforth *Rides*) and its French translation by Wan Chunyee (Paris: Gallimard, 1981). In the 'Foreword' the following is written: 'one feels sometimes that the traits of *Madame Bovary* may be traced in the sister in law Cai'.

21 Shen Yianbin [Mao Dun], 'Au centenaire de l'anniversaire de Flaubert', *Xiao shuo yue bao*, 10 December 1921, cited by Qian Linsen.

nor the provenance of the portrait of Flaubert are mentioned. Worse still, several sources that could attest to his adherence to Flaubertian art are now untraceable. Nevertheless, this should not deflect us from our objective.

The transfer of *Madame Bovary* to China

No doubt the legendary fortune of *Madame Bovary* in Asia would constitute an object of study in itself. Flaubert's reputation in China is undeniably the result of the efforts of Li Jieren, who introduced the masterpiece in 1925 via his translation. Journalist and student in France from 1919 to 1924, Li Jieren, whose name is a point of reference in Chinese Francophonie, was a writer of the first order in the 1930s. In his 'Notes aux corrections de *Madame Bovary*' of the 1925 edition, Li reveals that this translation completed in June 1923 comes from the edition of the novel by Eugène Fasquelle (1922). Previously, Li had begun the translation of several French works, but it was probably *Madame Bovary* that would have caught his imagination. On the one hand, the masterpiece would serve as a prototype for the conception of his own novel that has all the qualities of a pastiche; and on the other, as much as *Rides* appears as pastiche, so it is the emblematic work of the provincial school of which Li laid the foundations.

At the outset, let us underline that the events surrounding *Madame Bovary*'s penetration into Asia stand as an inexhaustible case study. From the publication of the work in France to its Chinese translation, then from its Chinese pastiche to the French translation of the pastiche, the migratory route of the French work illustrates the theory of literary transfer:

The term transfer [...] implies the physical movement of an object in space. It focuses on human movements, travel, the transport of books [...]. It implies a profound transformation linked to the changing circumstances of the host culture (Espagne; Werner introductory page)

Espagne makes explicit the reference to the notion of 'cultural transfer':

The term cultural transfer marks a concern to speak simultaneously of several national spaces, of their common elements, without juxtaposing the considerations on one or the other in order to confront, compare, or conjoin them (Espagne introductory page).

The national spaces in which the material displacement of the work is made are highlighted in the case of *Madame Bovary*. The physical and

multicultural itinerary of the work, its transfer from one national space to another – thanks to the translation and its pastiche – reaffirm Espagne's theory. The literary triangle between *Madame Bovary* (1857), its translation (1925), and its pastiche (1936), and the entry of the pastiche into France (1981) sketches the transnational path taken by a French work to reach Chinese readership. In other words, the migration of an 1857 work that begun in 1925 was completed in 1981. Clearly, translation serves as a means of transferring *Madame Bovary* to Asia. Conversely, the entry of the pastiche into France lends the transnational movement a circular quality. By the completion of its triangular journey, the case of *Madame Bovary* highlights the relationship between the reader of the French master – his translator and disciple – and the author of his pastiche. Li symbolizes an indisputable example reiterating the literary transfer itinerary as a process for Francophone acquisition for the literature of cohabitation.

The circumstances surrounding the release of *Rides*

Unlike the work of Zeng Pu, which was an instant success, *Rides* almost went unnoticed when it was released in Shanghai. Drowning in the sea of 'anti-Japanese literature', *Rides*, precursor of the Chinese realist novel, did not achieve fame until half a century later, thanks to its translation, which was published by Gallimard. But the true popularity of the novel comes from its cinematic adaptation.²² The story of *Rides* takes place in one of the most turbulent periods of contemporary Chinese history. Set against a backdrop of imperturbable peace and apparent autonomy in a Sichuan town at the end of the Qing period, the novel evades the anti-Japanese social issues that were playing out at the time of its release. The work is part of a three-part hymn to the Sichuan way of life, far from the turbulence of the Sino-Japanese war into which the entire nation had been dragged. In this sense, the non-conformist content of *Rides*, with its Sichuan way of life insulated from a China in torment, creates a distance with contemporary Chinese literature, which in turn helped to marginalize the work. Its release in 1936 seems incongruous alongside works such as the 'Alliance of Leftist Literature' with their pamphlets, cinemas, novels, and street plays that urged the repressed people to fight back against the Japanese. Consequently, there appears to have been only one reissue before the Communists came to power, while the work's imitators would be republished many times (Li

22 Produced by Ling Zifeng (1917-1999) in 1992, the film is titled *Frénésie*.

1986, 97).²³ The same fate strikes its author; Flaubert's sworn disciple and leader of Chinese realism, Li Jieren did not enjoy fame in his lifetime, neither with his own works nor with his translations.

Still, it would be foolhardy to fully attribute the fortunes or misfortune of *Rides* to political vagaries alone. Its original borrowing from Western realism, its 'scandalous' *Bovary*-style plot, and the provincial school foundations he lays, are far from contemporary literary norms, and this also contributes to its marginalization:

Li Jieren's attempt to achieve a new panoramic fiction with multiple characters and interlaced plots inevitably digressed from an ideologically driven and state-sanctioned form of narrative, which underscored the high status of typical characters and heroic plots. In Li Jieren's historical fiction, characters do not stand at the forefront of history or take any explicit political action. Their behavior is more dictated by personal desires and wishes than driven by abstract, collective ideals.²⁴ (Tao & Yang 198)

Sidelined until the 1980s, when the reformist winds that would sweep away the dictatorial empire started to blow, however faintly, *Rides* finally made it to the forefront of the literary world. Its rediscovery was driven by 'an undeniable thirst for re-appropriation of modern and ancient literary heritage' (Rabut & Pino 5). In fact, brutally reawakened after the Maoist era, China, at the end of its censorial torpor, regretted the way a constellation of works had been crushed by the 'iron fist', and began to rehabilitate them. At this stage, the merit of *Rides* does not translate into literary recognition; it is part of the era of rehabilitation. And immediately it stirs up ill feeling!

The newfound audacity of the time quickly met with resistance. Scarred by Maoist fundamentalism, criticisms arise immediately: *Rides* tells the story of an adulterous woman! In the aftermath of Mao's death, would anyone dare to honor an 'immoral' novel that was condemned throughout the red era? Especially since female chastity was considered a transcendental quality in millennial China. Then, in the midst of swirling uncertainty, Gallimard published the French translation, and moreover, *Rides* turned out to be a pastiche of *Madame Bovary*! The renewed stature of *Rides* is thanks to its

23 Today there are barely four editions of the novel. The Zhonghua edition of 1936 (Shanghai) was republished in 1940. The Édition des Auteurs edition from 1955 is a reworked version of the 1936 volume, followed by a reissue in 1980. The Peuple de Sichuan edition incorporates the novel in the *Œuvres Complètes* of Li Jieren, which is the fourth edition.

24 Kenny K.K.N.G., 'Temporality and Polyphony in Li Jieren's *The Great Wave*', in Tao Dongfeng & Yang Xiaobin (eds.)

relationship with *Madame Bovary*. The French masterpiece brings into full light the neglected Chinese masterwork, even if the acclaim is not unanimous at the beginning. Its reputation thus reinforced, and accepted as a universal masterpiece, the pastiche ostensibly tops the lists of works to be rehabilitated. The setbacks suffered by *Rides* reveal some of the vicissitudes in the fortunes of contemporary Chinese works.

Pastiche characteristics

Although the comparison between Deng (the heroine of *Rides*) and Emma Bovary remains legendary in the Chinese literary world, no study has examined the transliterary relationship of the two works. There is only one article (Kang 2006) and a single thesis written in France (Li 2012), which testifies to the almost complete lack of attention paid to this subject in China and in the West. As for the Li Jieren Study Center set up under the auspices of Chengdu City, it limits itself to Li's works in the Chinese literary tradition, without paying attention to its external influences. Thus, Chinese researchers are content to follow in the footsteps of those who see a pastiche of *Madame Bovary*²⁵ without questioning the elements of pastiche. And likewise, no Western Flaubertian has mentioned the pastiche relationship between the two novels.²⁶

Here I will discuss the elements of pastiche both in terms of diegetic configuration and character traits. Without erasing the artistic singularity, local color, or the Sichuan authenticity, I will demonstrate that the plot, punctuated by two extramarital affairs of a young, mismatched bride, follows the *Bovary*-style model. Emma's shadow hovers over Li's heroine, who is trying to fill through her lovers the emptiness that an apathetic, cowardly husband has created in her. At the end of my analysis, we will see how *Madame Bovary* generates the plot in *Rides*, how the fatal fall of a frivolous young bride unhappy in her marriage recurs in the village of 'Heaven's Return', and finally how the *Bovary* elements are collected and remodeled in a Sichuan framework at the turn of the 20th century. Before going into the details of the comparison, I will address the career of Li, the translator, to better situate the influence of *Madame Bovary* on his pastiche.

25 Think of the article by Qian Linsen (Cheng 2005, 41), which mentions the pastiche without pursuing the subject.

26 The *MLA International Bibliography* database lists 871 studies on *Madame Bovary* in European languages between 1925-2013, of which only Kang reports the pastiche relationship between the two novels.

From the outset, my goal of retracing the origins of his translations meets with the consequences of book burning, including the desecrations perpetrated during ten years of cultural purge (1966-1976). Maoist China's dismal record of fundamentalist cleansing, with flash searches of intellectuals led by Red Guards backed at the national level, leaves little hope for the conservation of records of Li's life. The safeguarded letters and diary that I have seen²⁷ do not offer any trace of his familiarity with the art of Flaubert. The only surviving document, namely the original translation dated 1925, does not satisfy all of the researcher's expectations. Such a lack of sources on the process of writing the pastiche heightens the importance of analyzing the decoding work done by the translator. Without really being able to remedy this lacuna, let us take an alternative path and look at all the works translated by Li (Sun 1997, 377).²⁸

1922	Le Petit Chose	Daudet	Éditions Zhonghua
1922, 1923	<i>Notre cœur</i>	Maupassant	Shaonian Zhongguo Xuehui
1924	<i>Tartarin de Tarascon</i>	Daudet	Shaonian Zhong guo Xuehui
1925	<i>Après le divorce</i>	Marguerite	<i>Revue mensuelle du roman</i> , vol. 16, no. 5
1925	<i>Madame Bovary</i>	Flaubert	Zhonghua Shuju
1926	<i>Pierre et Luce</i>	Romain Rolland	Revue mensuelle du roman
1931 and 1935	Salammbô	Flaubert	Éditions ShangWu

The table above immediately demonstrates a pronounced bias: these works obviously deal with the lives of women! Is this due to random circumstances or deliberate choices on behalf of the translator? One thing is certain: in Li's own writing, this concern about the feminine conditions is crystallized in the way the destiny of the French heroines is transposed onto their Chinese counterparts. The Chinese fictional women stand out from their real-life counterparts for the freedom of their actions and the singularity of their destiny. A relevant example of this transcendence is the choice of the Chinese couple whose incompatibility indicates an irreconcilable antagonism:

Xingshunhao was also known for other reasons. Formerly, it was for the honesty of his cashier Cai Xing-Shun. [...] He had studied for two years in private school and could read and write. [...] He had no vices, he was very shy and very honest. [...] he accepted all the jokes without knowing

27 Chengdu Municipality is now one of the rights holders of Li's archives.

28 See in particular the complete list of all Li Jieren's translations.

that one can take revenge in the world. He was nicknamed 'the Idiot'. (*Rides* 1981, 39)

However, the farmer's daughter did not look like a peasant girl but rather like a city dweller. But who could imagine that 'a pig gives birth to an elephant'? What astonished the whole town was, first of all, the richness of the trousseau: the hall was half filled with red lacquered wood objects; then the small, bandaged, and yet agile feet of the bride; and finally the extraordinary beauty of this woman. (*Rides* 1981, 40)

Clearly modeled on the Emma-Charles prototype, the portrait of the incompatible Chinese couple creates the breach that will lead the wife to possible extramarital escapades. Take the husband, a down-to-earth charlatan, owner of the shop but relegated to the background by his wife. His nickname 'Idiot' illustrates, quite clearly, an apathetic and nonchalant personality inherited directly from Charles. But it is in the heroine, whose reputation as 'Madame Bovary of Sichuan' made the book's fortune (Tan 83),²⁹ that the Flaubertian influence is most tangible. The Chinese woman goes through a life marked by the same events as the French woman: the uncertainty of a young girl badly adapted to her environment, a chimera of frivolous and ephemeral youth, disillusionment, and the black hole of her marriage, repeated adultery followed by periods of recovery and regret... Unable to bear the miserable everyday life of the country, Deng seeks a way out through marriage.

If the stay at the convent and the Vaubyessard ball are turning points in Emma's quest for the elsewhere, the long nostalgic chats with Mrs Han have, however more discreetly, the same function in Deng's destiny. It is from the age of fifteen that she learns to embroider with this neighbor who bedazzles her with the richness and sweetness of life in Chengdu. As with Emma, the idea of a place conducive to happiness then germinates in a heart in search of fulfillment: 'Was not it necessary for love, like Indian plants, to have prepared the ground, and a specific temperature?' (*Madame Bovary* 345).³⁰ As a favored place, Chengdu ignites the imagination of the girl confined to the Chinese countryside in the same way that Paris illuminates the dark and depressing days of the new bride of Tostes! However, the sudden death of Mrs Han spells the end of the promised happiness by taking with her any hope of realizing that happiness. Disillusioned and especially discouraged, Deng

29 For example, see Xie Wujuin, 'La place de la création de Li dans le roman historique chinois', in Tan Xingguo (ed.)

30 Éditions de la Pensée moderne, 1968.

sinks into her first melancholic crisis, like Emma does after the Vaubyessard ball, and lives in a state of inconsolable mourning:

She now let everything go in her household, and Madame Bovary, the mother, when she came to spend part of the Lenten season in Tostes, was greatly astonished at this change. She, in fact, so careful and delicate at first, now remained whole days without dressing, wore gray cotton stockings, and used candles for lighting. (*Madame Bovary* 351)

Since the death of Madame Han, [Deng] had really changed. She did not like what she used to do. She did not wash her feet more than once every two weeks. As for her bands, which were more than three meters long, she left them on the ground for two or three days without washing them, she wore an undergarment for fifteen days without changing it. She had become lazy: she did not even want to pick up a needle that had fallen to the ground. (*Rides* 1982, 52)

What depresses the women is this acute, never satisfied desire to be elsewhere. Resigned to her fate, Deng gives herself to the village grocer and immediately the boredom of married life gnaws at her daily, creating a hellish circle. The sentimental failings of the husband detach her from him as their intimacy fades, creating in her heart a veritable abyss closed to sentimental sweetness and its expression.

Here Li Jieren pastiches one of the main axes of Bovarism, around which Emma's fall is played out: the closeness of the body set against the detachment of the heart. The more her intimacy is consummated, the more the wife detaches herself emotionally from the husband. Like Emma, driven by her propensity, Deng succumbs to adultery. The following scenarios have an air of déjà vu: secret rendezvous, lovemaking, plans to escape, the final abandonment of the lover... These flagrantly mimetic sequences, drawn from the mother-work, take place in the same conjugal dynamism as *Madame Bovary*: they are under the unseeing eyes of the Idiot (her husband). A fortiori, the way the Idiot encourages the wife to participate in the lantern festival with the lover recalls irresistibly the stupidity of Charles pushing Emma into the arms of Rodolphe during their ride on horseback. Admittedly, Emma's sites of adultery, such as the forest walk, the cab, and the Rouen hotel, metamorphose into Deng's back shop, a trip to the temple, and the lantern festival, in short, places adapted to the Sichuan environment; but the plot in *Rides* ostensibly mimics that of *Madame Bovary*, punctuated as they are by adultery and convalescence, from one lover to another.

The limits of translation

Flaubertian to the core, Li echoes the French master in his impeccable descriptions portraying the daily detail of the town, a mirror on the land of Sichuan. These elements bring to life a symphony of Sichuan customs: the fair in the village called 'Return from Heaven', the succulent meat of the black pig raised in the micro-geo-conditions of the plain of Chengdu or the unique seal on the man's hat:

hair black and short, small feet, short snout, thin skin, a big size [...]. They were well fed: kitchen waste, a soup of rice and vegetables, and especially wort and rice husk [...]. Their flesh was softer, crisper, and more delicious than elsewhere. Cooked, cut into thin slices, seasoned with a little soy sauce, if you chew it well, you find a nutty taste. (*Rides* 1981, 84-85)

We sense here that the passage strives to preserve a scrap of exoticism tinged with a scent of the soil in the evocation of the pig; unfortunately that is not the only example.

The following example dramatically impoverishes the colorful original version, which promotes local exclusivity through hats, the emblematic objects worn by the locals:

Another item that also had an important place in this market were the men's hats and Su's women's headbands. At that time of the year, the woolen hats of Yan and Peking were already on sale, and it was the end of the season for summer hats. In the decoration of the stands, nothing but banal things were found; for example, winter hats with a red cord or Ru's autumn hats. (*Rides* 1981, 87)

A real banality is expressed in this passage that reduces the Sichuan hat of the original to a mark of generality. Erased under the seal of translation, the items are referred to in terms of 'woolen hats of Yan and Peking'/'Su headbands', while they are specifically Sichuan in the original.³¹ The original descriptions resonate with local details of the cap and the names given to folk material products, lending a pleasingly sonorous and rhythmic diction.

31 A more faithful translation of the original would be 'hat like a melon skin', 'Suzhou satin woven headband'. In the original, the exact term used by Li is '毡帽', which does not equate to 'bonnet' in French. Its definition according to the Chinese refers to the hats made of animal hair (or skin), for example: 'hat of otter hair'.

The invigorating Flaubertian mimesis, fully captured in the original version, could not be retransmitted in its translated version, in which it is diminished and diluted, unleashed from the exquisite flavors of Sichuan color. This means that the Western reader is left to wonder about the flavor, sonority, and luxuriance of the endless and inexhaustible descriptive art of one of the most renowned Sichuan people, Li Jieren. Copious, meticulous, and closely capturing the customs, manners, and way of life of the inhabitants of Sichuan, the descriptions Li tirelessly works into the original, highlight features of both the culinary arts and clothing style in vogue at the time of the end of the Qing or even of the Sichuan architecture itself.

However, it is in this depiction of the banal 'little life' of the borough that Li appears precisely as the incontestable heir of Flaubert (*Rides* 1981, 90-91):

She wore her clothes with grace and elegance. Her wide brown trousers were embroidered with a high green satin band adorned with a light stripe. She wore over her wadded jacket, the color of which could not be seen, a clean, white cotton garment with a broad green border on her shoulders and sleeves. She had tied around her a dark blue apron. Her thin neck, soft and smooth without being completely white, appeared in the flared neckline according to the fashion of her collar.³² (*Rides* 1981, 32)

In spite of the innate incapacity of the translation that renders prosaic the original Sichuan touches, behind the lines the reader feels somehow the richness of Li's writing. From the inlay to the ornament, the cut of the neckline to the embroidery of the shoes, the texture of the jacket to the refinement of the trousers of all colors, without neglecting the position of the staples (instead of buttons), the width of the collar as well as that of the sleeves... Li spends a lot of time on contemporary Manchu fashion through Deng's splendid outfit, with an obsessively scrupulous attention to detail.

At the same time, this Flaubertian mimicry contributes to Li's own originality. Behind the destiny of Emma, which inspired that of Deng, and the Flaubertian realism that shaped the realistic approach of *Rides*, one should not erase the 'Sichuan land', a major element in *Rides*. Scholars of Li Jieren's describe it in these terms:

The land [*terroir*] is the art of living. It is a consciousness of daily life specific to the villagers, a daily reality enriched by a local historical heritage

32 It should also be emphasized that the magnificence of Mandarin costumes described by Li can only be read in the Chinese version.

that reflects this community through a social life that is different to that of other groups or communities.³³ (Collectifs 2008, 420, my translation)

Compared to the traditional works of the 1930s, *Rides*' contribution as a pioneer of the Chinese realist novel lies in its Western-style structure. Beyond the plot and its strong flavor of Bovarism, *Rides* radically breaks with the chronological structure (the Zhanghuiti model), which the old-style novel is condemned to follow, and adopts a Western-style anachronistic narrative structure. In a similar way, Li reconfigured the Chinese hero according to literary and artistic concerns and not ideological criteria, as was the case traditionally. Thus instead of worshipping historical figures, transcended from generation to generation by hypertrophic heroism, Li's protagonists are endowed with multidimensional characteristics and enriched with psychological details. They thus remain believable, and faithfully reflect the various layers of Sichuan society of the time. A landowner from a humdrum market town, an everyday city shopkeeper, and a devout Western missionary rub shoulders with a whole range of female figures. They are the lawful wives of mandarins and their fun-loving concubines, innocent peasants in the town, prostitutes working in brothels... Beyond its undeniable resemblance to the French masterpiece, *Rides* remains Chinese by its geo-historical framework, its Chinese references and its Sichuan specificity, so that the adulterous story of Deng is not a direct copy of Emma Bovary's tale. A victim of her delusions, Emma literally rushes into a spiral of nothingness; while Deng's emancipation must be inscribed in the context of the collapse of the Qing and the advent of the republican era that created a favorable environment for changes in social and gender structures. It was a time when women dared to free themselves from feudal matrimonial subjugation and demanded access to education.

A forerunner of the Chinese realist novel, *Rides* also stands as a pioneering work of the provincial school that emerged in the 1930s. Li's provincialism is demonstrated over the course of various scenes that are reminiscent of the representation of manners in *Madame Bovary*: Tostes/Return from Heaven; agricultural shows/New Year at the temple; the ball at the Vaubyessard/the lantern fair. It is a true provincial symphony that is revealed by these depictions: the lifestyle in Chengdu, peasants' behavior and social rituals as well as the geography, the town, fauna, flora, etc. The most striking aspect of all this provincialism is the famous Sichuan patois, whose Chinese version resonates through its jargon, its turns of phrase, its accents that are so distinct from

33 Wang Ling, '*Rides sur les eaux dormantes sous l'optique villageois*'.

standard Mandarin. Also, we should mention the diction, which is the pride of local people. If *Madame Bovary*'s subtitle of 'provincial morals' (*moeurs de province*) suggests the shock provoked by Emma's adultery in a provincial milieu that is rooted in a conservative and closed-minded spirit, in *Rides*, the provincial customs manifest themselves rather through the deployment of local color, whose features will in turn inform the provincial school. In fact, the distinct way of life of the inhabitants connotes a provincialism manifested through the daily rhythm as well as the singular habits of the villagers of the Sichuan plains. Thus details such as rituals, feasts, holidays, the duties of the widower, and burial rites enrich the folklore of local culture that is dear to Li Jieren.

Since its introduction in 1925, *Madame Bovary* has had an unshakable reputation across the successive reigns of post-imperial, republican, Maoist, and post-Maoist China, despite a 'scandalous' plot that shocked the 'red' values dictated as the sole salvation of the people under Mao. Both a pastiche of *Madame Bovary* and major work of the 1930s, *Rides* would gain by being better known in both the West and China. Moreover, its true merit lies as much in its authentic portrayal of the Sichuan land and people as in its elements of pastiche. Its trajectory offers a prototypical case of literary transfer between France and Asia. In the Chinese literary world, Zeng Pu and Li Jieren are judged to belong rather to the French school of the novel with their depiction of manners and anti-heroes than to any Chinese school (Collectifs 2008, 263, 266).³⁴

The pastiche of *Jean-Christophe*

The transfer of French works to Asia, their translations, as well as their pastiches, had a profound effect on the literary scene in China and in Japan. In the wake of *Rides*, let us briefly recall the case of Lu Ling's (1923-1994) *Rejetons d'hobereau* (1945),³⁵ considered by critics as a twin novel of *Jean-Christophe* (Song 2007, 181).³⁶ The work comprises two volumes, the first of which relates the fall of the Jiang family – the richest in Souzhou – and the second, the destinies of its offspring, including Jiang Chunzu, the hero of the novel. Young, dashing, with the stature of Jean-Christophe, Jiang comes up against the same rites of passage and runs headlong into the twists and

34 Yang Lienfeng, 'De Zeng Pu à Li Jieren : l'émergence du modèle actuel du roman historique chinois'.

35 Idem.

36 Idem.

turns of life. Aspiring to social justice, but naive regarding human vices and relationships, the disillusioned and disenchanted hero suffers in a society that does not live up to his ideals:

Like Christophe, Jiang Chunzu exiles himself to the four corners of the world. Having experienced the throes of human existence and come up against all kinds of obstacles, he finds no way out for the future. The Provotarian hero refuses any compromise on the integrity of his person, aspiring to liberalism but unable to position himself in the society in which he is condemned to vegetate. (Yang & Zhang 169, my translation)

Being Francophile and having no personal connection with Romain Rolland, as was the case of Jing Yinyu (the first translator of *Jean-Christophe*), Lu Ling does not have a tangible French heritage that might influence his work. Nevertheless, this remains an exemplary pastiche of *Jean-Christophe*. Unfortunately, the work could not attain the conditions necessary for its survival.

In Chinese literary history, the literature of the 1940s is an exception. Two antithetical societies, one under the control of the National Party and the other of the Communist Party, made for a hostile duality that tore the country apart. Literary production suffered from the backlash, with works being based on two heterogeneous worlds. Even today, with half a century of hindsight, Lu Ling scholars strongly concur that the novelist, having lived through the ten-year genesis of the novel between Nanjing and Chongqing – the emblematic cities of the National Party – would have a partial or incomplete perception of the ‘revolutionary zeal’ of the people in the other part of China under Mao (Yang & Zhang 158). History shows that such a stubborn attitude towards the author and his work did not help. The condemnation of the work that led to its disappearance augurs the tragic consequences of the abominable fate that would strike the author of the pastiche. Muzzled shortly after the CCP’s coming to power, Lu was involved in June 1955 in the ‘Hu Fong Anti-Revolutionary Circle’, which resulted in a house search that was followed by a twenty-year sentence behind bars, a sentence he had to serve in its totality. The lost reputation of the *Rejetons* in the Chinese literary world over half a century, and the hellish descent of its author proved fatal to the work’s prospects. And yet the comparison of the two works persists, making *Rejetons* the finest of all Lu Ling’s creations.

Set against the background of the January 1932 massacres in Shanghai, this epic goes deep into the throes that the nation suffered during a decade of war (1932-1942) during which ‘the Chinese killed the Chinese’. The author

paints a picture of social life that focuses on the world of the intellectuals involving 70 protagonists against a backdrop of spatial displacement in the large cities. The French work plays an accompanying role (Song & Xu 2007, 238).³⁷ From the innate attributes of the protagonists to the similar paths and rites of passage that they go through, to the plot, the two works complement and intersect with each other. Lu Ling's bold and meticulous depiction of the protagonists' inner lives gives the Chinese novel the reputation as 'the encyclopedia of feeling' and as the light of the generation born from 4 May 1919 (Yang & Huai 118).³⁸ Moreover, the echoes of *Jean-Christophe* earned him the reputation of the Chinese Jean-Christophe (Yang & Huai 169).³⁹ In his article 'Saisir Romain Rolland', reprinted as the 'Foreword' of his novel, Lu Ling affirms that his 1942 reading of *Jean-Christophe* guided him throughout the writing (Song 2007, 238).⁴⁰ This is particularly true for the second volume, which is focused on the tragic events in Shanghai before the Second World War, and highlights the suffering of Chinese intellectuals (Yang & Huai 5). In a novelistic approach made famous by the great classics, such as the *Rêve au pavillon rouge* or *Famille*, the novel traces the decline of a feudal family by setting out horizontally the various social layers, beset by troubles. Drawing on the fierceness of the Sino-Japanese and civil wars as a backdrop, the author explores the inner battle that is tearing Jiang Chunzhu's soul apart. In this descent into the heart of the hero, who falls into the infernal spiral of nothingness, the reader follows the vicissitudes of the life of the protagonist, a mirror onto the sinuous history of China.

Of the same level as *Madame Bovary*, *Jean-Christophe* remains one of the most popular French works in China. Its author is equally well known to the Chinese, from *Pierre et Luce*, translated by Li Jieren and published in 1926 in the *Revue mensuelle du roman* (Song 2007, 33). Since then, the reputation of Romain Rolland has not faded. The friendships he built with several of the first-generation French-speaking writers mentioned in the previous chapter only consolidated his literary fortunes. Several journals including *Jeune Chine* and *La filiale du journal du matin* (Song 2007, 35) served to promote the work of the French writer.⁴¹ All the major newspapers and magazines,

37 Idem.

38 Lu Yu, 'La victoire de Jiang Chunzu. Lecture de *Rejetons d'hobereau*', in Yang Yi & Zhang Huai (eds.)

39 See also *Ni tu*, no. 4, September 1947.

40 See in particular the section 'Conversation with the author Lu Ling'.

41 It should also be mentioned that in 1934 the *Journal de traduction internationale* published Romain Rolland's *Vie de Beethoven* (Paris: Hachette), translated by Fu Lei.

in particular the *Revue mensuelle du roman* devoted their title pages to Romain Rolland for his 60th and 70th birthdays.⁴² On another note, if *Jean-Christophe's* pastiche was neither translated into French (or English) nor rehabilitated in China at the height of its reputation, this was largely due to the political status of Lu Ling as an anti-Maoist writer. How heavily do Chinese masterpieces carry with them the stigma or the ideological imprint of the last century!

Literatures of French expression

The manifestation of the French-speaking phenomenon in China, in the forms of literature of cohabitation, pastiche, and translation that we have just discussed, tends to show that the acquisition of the Francophone culture takes place in the case of Asia through the process of transfer. In other words, these pastiches or works of cohabitation are not products of colonization, but rather transcultural encounters at a given moment in history. And transliterature did not exist only in this period. In fact, the 21st century has seen the notion of 'national literature' weakened by the advent of globalization. In the wake of this, the concept of 'Littérature-Monde' has taken precedence over the old concept of 'Francophone literature', 'non-Francophone literature', or even 'national literature'. In the context of the French-speaking world in Asia, the existence of French-language literature in non-French-speaking countries, in this case China, shows that a national literature can be expressed in another language. Hence, a country (like China), spared by classical colonization, whose official language seems intact, also sees its literature expressing itself in French.⁴³ Nowadays the cases of Gao Xingjian and Ying Chen (not to forget François Cheng, Dai Shijie, and many others), whose works are published in France and Quebec, perfectly illustrate transliterature. Their works reaffirm the realization of a once national and homogeneous literature in other forms of expression.

In another sense, even though *Fleur sur l'océan des péchés* and *Rides* are of Chinese expression, they are the proclaimed heirs of the mother-work by the French author. As discussed at the beginning of the chapter, the French heritage does not reside only in the language used in the work, but rather in the paradigm of its creation. In the case of Asia, therefore, it is a question of a literature of cohabitation. Once again, Zeng Pu and Li Jieren, French speakers

42 See the April and July 1921 issues of the journal.

43 There is also a Chinese literature of Anglophone expression.

and translators of French writers, belong more to the French literary school than to the Chinese school. The reality of cohabitation is further verified with the works of the 200 French writers listed in the *Great Encyclopedia* (She 1999, 178) for their complete or partial translation that attest without a shadow of a doubt the successful transfer of French literature to Asia. In the case of Chinese/Japanese literature of French expression, even if such transfers are incontestable, to trace the corpus of this literature proves to be another matter entirely. Our hypothesis is that at the beginning, this literature tends to penetrate elsewhere. An examination of the texts of Asian authors published in France will confirm this.

The Chinese corpus as sample

Tracing the texts of Asian Francophones published in France is a challenge. According to our preliminary research, no Asian author's work appeared in France before 1870. This line of demarcation corresponds to the era of the forced opening up of China during which the Qing and the Meiji government began to send young people to be educated in the West. This date is further confirmed in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, the *Mercure de France*, and *L'Europe*, where articles by Asian authors go back to 1876. In the case of the French-speaking Chinese, we need to wait until the first two decades of the twentieth century to see larger numbers of their texts published in France. It goes without saying that French magazines and newspapers are a favorite site – a platform – for these French speakers. A systematic analysis of all metropolitan journals of the time will confirm our hypothesis and give a sense of all the articles published by these authors in France. Given the impressive number of journals and newspapers, I will stick to the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, the *Mercure de France*, and *L'Europe*.

Chen Jitong's article, published in 1884, would be one of the first, if not the first, from an Asian author (Tcheng 278-305). From this date until the beginning of the twentieth century we see an increasing presence of Chinese literature of French expression in multiple forms such as anthologies, collections, or theses. To stick to the Chinese corpus, let me cite the text of Shen Cheng in *L'Europe* (Shen 1927, 108-111), which deals with a topical phenomenon: the work-study movement in France. This was followed by the poems and translations of Liang Zongdai⁴⁴ published the same year. In fact, his poem 'Hazard of the Road' (Chinese title) appeared under the French title *Souvenir* and was presented to the French readership alongside

44 See *L'Europe*, vol. xv, 1927, 503.

the transcendental verses of Wang Wei (699-759) – one of the greatest poets inspired chiefly by nature – which were translated by Liang.⁴⁵ Liang's passion to promote the Chinese classics goes beyond the texts published in *L'Europe*. Thus, during the 1929 winter holidays, Liang translated the three masterpieces of Tao Yuenming (365-427) – a Taoist-inspired canonical poet – and had them read by Paul Valéry and Romain Rolland (whom he met in 1929), who offered him annotations along with their approval (Jin 59). The collection *Poèmes de T'ao T'sien* appeared in 1930 with Lemarget in Paris (Dai 176-181).⁴⁶

The same goes for the *Mercur*, which published a short story entitled 'La colère du Ma-Wang' in 1920 (W. 86-106), authored by a Chinese man named Henry-Auguste W. and written in 1912 in Yunnanfu (1920).⁴⁷ This source is not without significance; it confirms from an unexpected perspective the role of French fiefdom played by this South Chinese city, due to its location in the Indochinese periphery. This kind of fiction also appeared in *L'Europe*, with for example 'Mademoiselle Lysing' (Tcheng 1919, 337-346), authored by one of the first Chinese Anglophones Tcheng-Wi-Mô (1903-1955), translated by J.B. Kin Yu (Jing Yinyu, first translator of *Jean-Christophe*). The text reappeared the same year in the anthology edited by Jing (Jing 1929). The years 1920-1930 proved very productive for the French-speaking Chinese corpus, which increased in line with the growth in the number of young people leaving for France. Another text that deserves mention is the study by Sung-Nien Hsu (Xu Songnian 1902-1981), published in the *Mercur* and titled 'Tu Fou, poète classique chinois' (Hsu 78-95)⁴⁸, and which thereby introduced the father of Chinese classicism to the French readership. Boarder number 47 of the Franco-Chinese Institute of Lyon from 1921 to 1930, Xu worked for a long time in the field of Chinese Francophonie and was editor-in-chief of the *Revue de la littérature française* in Chongqing.⁴⁹ To conclude, essays,

45 See *L'Europe*, 'Retour aux apparences', vol. 16, 1928, 324.

46 In the wake of Chinese poems translated into French, note also those by Dai Wangshu published in March 1935 in *Les cahiers du Sud*. See also their reproduction in Dai's *Complete Works*.

47 At the end of the article we read this source: '1912 in Yunnanfu'. Which means in Chinese the Yunnan stronghold.

48 Tou Fou (712-770) was the most famous poet of the Tang. Xu is the one who wrote about Jing Yinyu with wrong data.

49 The journal would be published around 1946. Let us mention other publications by Xu in France, such as *Anthologie de la littérature chinoise: des origines à nos jours: la poésie, le roman, le théâtre, la philosophie, l'histoire*, Paris: Librairie Delagrave, 1933; as well as his thesis, *Li Thai-po*, Lyon: Bosc Frères & Riou, 1935. All the theses by the Chinese boarders are kept in the archives

works of fiction, and translations (from Chinese into French or English into French) published in the three journals that we have reviewed give an example of a corpus of Chinese literature of French expression. But this corpus is not limited to these texts; it is far broader.

Collections on the Levant

Another way to trace this corpus would be to follow the different collections available to publishing houses. For example, Rieder's 'Modern Foreign Prose' collection includes the collection edited by Jing Yinyu *L'Anthologie des conteurs chinois modernes*, which focuses on contemporary Chinese literature and the translation of ancient texts. This anthology also has English and New York translations. In fact, *The Tragedy of Ah Qui and other modern Chinese stories*⁵⁰ appeared the following year in London, followed by the New York edition. No doubt, Jing was not the only one to have assumed the direction of one of the volumes in a French collection. In fact, the number nineteen of the collection 'Études théoriques et pratiques de droit étranger, de droit comparé et de droit international' by the Rousseau publishing house, under the direction of Mr Henry Lévy-Ullmann, was directed by Chiang Ting-Chang (Chang). Thus, this vein of special collections with a Francophone of Asian origin as collaborator deserves to be explored further according. Moreover, my preliminary research on the manifestation of Asian literatures of French expression shows some of the avenues to explore, and especially the huge amount of work to accomplish in this area. Admittedly, an exhaustive list of all the texts published in France by first-generation Asian Francophones would require research across all French newspapers, magazines, and publishing houses. It is clear that these few examples mentioned here are enough to testify to the existence of a corpus of Chinese/Japanese literature of French expression.

I will not carry out a study of the reception of French-language texts by Chinese authors in France. As an initial research, the analysis of the texts of the first generation of Francophones in the three targeted newspapers has the virtue of measuring the 'echo of the literature of another country, in order to release a logic of reception' (Postel 273), especially since the

of the Franco-Chinese Institute at the Municipal Library of Lyon. The marital status as well as the duration of studies and specialization of these residents are found in the book by Jean-Louis Bouilly.

50 London: Routledge & Sons, 1930. The same version was published in New York the following year (L. MacVeagh: Dial Press, 1931).

reception of Chinese literature has been much studied in figures such as Claudel, Segalen, or Saint John Perse, to name only the best known.

Japanese literature of French expression

It would be appropriate to address, however briefly, the Japanese case to see if the history of the Francophone milieu in China, in its emergence and emancipation, is similar to that of Japan. Not only does the course of the first generation of Chinese Francophones prove to be identical to that of Japanese Francophones, but also the Meiji era (1868-1912) and its forced opening up were at the time of the Opium Wars. This means that Japan's Francophones emerged around the same time as China's. Since humanity is inevitably joined through its most long-standing archetypes, including tales and legends and other forms of oral literature, there are many parallels in the Japanese imagination with European myths and legends before any penetration by the Western world. In the transfer of French literature to Japan, translation also serves as a means of dissemination. As in China, newspapers and reviews are a privileged platform for the reception of French literature. For example, the journal *Libération* (Jiyu-shinbun) published the translations of *Joseph Balsamo*, of *Ange Pitou* by Dumas Senior, and an extract of *Quatre-vingt-treize* by Hugo in 1884, followed by a series of translations of Hugo's novels (Cheng 2005, 83).⁵¹

In Francophone Japanese history, the name of Nagai Kafû (1879-1959) stands out, with his essay *Récits de France* published in 1909 after his return from France. If the Maupassant novellas preoccupy the first Francophone readers and translators in China, Zola's novels are the most translated in Japan and he is the most rewritten novelist (Cheng 2005, 85).⁵² The most zealous and dedicated Japanese follower of Zola is undoubtedly Nagai Kafû with his numerous articles, translations, and introductions of works by the author of *Rougon-Macquart*. His translation of *Nana*, like his pastiche *L'Actrice Nana* published in 1903, assures him a privileged place in Japanese Francophonie (Cheng 2005, 57, 135).⁵³ In this vein, we should mention Gustave Boissonade, founder of the *Revue française du Japon* (1892-1897), a

51 Yoshikawa Yasuhisa, 'Appropriation de la littérature française et formation du champ littéraire moderne au Japon', in Cheng Pei (ed.)

52 See in particular the careful analysis of the adaptations of Zola's works by various Japanese authors.

53 Around the year 1906 emerged the 'Nouvelle littérature coréenne'. Twenty years after its Chinese translation, *Vingt mille lieues sous les mers* by Jules Verne was translated in 1907 by Park Yong-hee. It is the very first translation of a French work into Korean.

publication of the *Société de la langue française* founded in 1886 (Blanchon 161).⁵⁴ Also worth mentioning is the inauguration of the Maison franco-japonaise in Tokyo in 1924 (Thiébaud 2008, 148) by the patron Shibusawa Eiichi (1840-1931) and Ambassador Paul Claudel, which marks the high point of the French cultural presence in Japan.

Japanese writers also signed translations and essays in avant-garde journals and newspapers (*Cahiers de l'Association* 2001, 49).⁵⁵ In many respects, Japan followed suit with China on how to disseminate French culture. Thus Claudel's plays are played in imperial Japan to a knowledgeable audience (Yamata 295)⁵⁶ and the imperial government also sent young Japanese people to France and the United States, as did the Qing during the same period. The father of French language in Japan is Murakami Eishun, with his books *Manuel commode en trois langues* and *Précis de la langue française* (Sadao 17), which serve as a basis for the acquisition of French by the Japanese.

In the same vein, note the first French-Japanese dictionary entitled *Futsugo-meiyô* published in 1864, by the medical doctor Hidetoshi Murakami (1811-1890), who opened a French school in 1868 (Thiébaud 2008, 147). Inevitably, the manifestation of Francophone life in Japan is confirmed by the introduction of several contemporary French authors of the Meiji era. Published in 1878, Jules Verne's *Le Tour du monde en quatre-vingts jours* was the first French work translated into Japanese (Cheng 2005, 81), just four years after its release in France, a minor time delay at the time. Nakae Tchomin's translation of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Contrat social* was the second translated work, and appeared in 1882. From that point, the idea of Western democracy was introduced in Japan (Cheng 2005, 82).

As in China, it was around 1930 that the first translation of Valéry's poems was published in Japan, followed by that of the *Œuvres complètes*. Valéry's reputation soared thanks to the eminent man of letters, Hideo Kobayashi (*Cahiers de l'Association* 2001, 73),⁵⁷ one of the admirers of the French poet. From then, the influence of *Variétés* was notable (*Cahiers de l'Association* 2001, 17).⁵⁸ On a personal level, the friendships that Valéry built with French-

54 Gérard Siary, 'La présence française au Japon depuis l'ère Meiji (1868-1912)', in Flora Blanchon (ed.)

55 In 1921, Shigetoku Shisui authored an article on Proust published in the famous *Nouvelle revue française* and translated a passage from *La Prisonnière* in the journal *Myojo*. See on this subject: Jo Yoshida, 'Proust au Japon'.

56 Kikou Yamata states that Claudel's theater was played in imperial Japan and that a French convent in Japan sent Japanese girls to France, Europe and the United States. (Yamata 302)

57 Kunio Tsunekawa, 'Valéry au Japon. Intérêt pour la francophonie'.

58 Shiguehiko Hasumi, 'L'École française de critique littéraire'.

speaking Japanese authors whom he received at his home, also has an air of déjà vu. Masayuki Nakamura (Ferrier & Miura 19),⁵⁹ French speaker and a graduate of the University of Tokyo, is considered by posterity to be the father of French literary criticism in Japan. His penchant, or even his cult for Flaubert, were signaled at the age of twenty with his publications in the prestigious journal *L'Univers littéraire*. Even before his departure for France, he had already published his translation of the *Lettres de Gustave Flaubert à George Sand* (1936) and of *Bel-Ami* (1935) by Maupassant (Cahiers de l'Association 2001, 17).⁶⁰ A student at the Collège de France between 1938 and 1939, he shared his appreciation of Valéry: 'The Valéry courses are one of the few things in Paris that never disappoint' (Cahiers de l'Association 2001, 17).

Certainly, the emergence and manifestation of French-speaking people in Japan will require background studies that examine all aspects of the Francophone phenomenon in Japan. However, from a preliminary point of view, we could argue that the breadth and depth of Francophone life in Japan is not comparable to that in China. This is due, among other things, to Japan's progress in science and technology, as well as the sound management of the Meiji government compared to the Qing, which meant that the West did not embody either salvation or enlightenment for Japan, contrary to the Chinese case. Moreover, the number of young people sent to the West during the Meiji era is significantly less than those sent by the Qing (only sixteen went to France). Also, the prestigious University of Tokyo (founded in 1886) had only thirteen students in French literature (Ferrier & Miura 18) at the beginning of the twentieth century while Aurore sent dozens of students to France to pursue their PhD in French literature. These figures are eloquent in demonstrating the lesser extent of the French presence in Japan compared to the Chinese case. However, this does nothing to diminish our hypothesis on the existence of French-speaking Japanese literature.

59 See in particular the appendix, 'Répertoire des principaux écrivains d'expression japonaise' that gives an overview of the Japanese Francophone authors.

60 Masayuki Ninomiya, 'Le "sacré" complexe face à la littérature française: le cas de Kabayashi Hideo et de Mori Arimasa'.

V France-Asia crossings: the case of the French corpus

A literature of the intimate nourished by the East

The history of the Francophone phenomenon in Asia, as presented in the previous chapters, naturally leads us to texts written by French authors. For an obvious reason: crossings go both ways. To circumscribe the corpus of crossings to the works of authors of Asian origin is to reduce and limit it. For one of the components of this corpus, especially literature on the East, exists in French works, particularly those from after the eighteenth century whose inspiration, conception, or genesis draw on the Eastern world. Undeniably, there is a long history of French writers representing and being enamored by the East. The tentative move towards a vague, fluid, and ephemeral image of the Orient began in the West in the Middle Ages. This propensity was originally from a Christian perspective, given the importance of the East to the religion. This medieval imaginary distorted and falsified, due to a lack of knowledge of the sciences, and was conceived behind a veil of distant mysticism where the earth merges with the Levant:

this idea, added to the confused connection with the Eastern origins of the religion, naturally pushed the men of the Middle Ages to place the earthly paradise in some country far to the east... India, Tibet appear successively in the legends as the place (Martino 5).

Thus public opinion was shaped on the one hand by the wonder of Marco Polo's travels, which illuminate the imagination of the time, and on the other hand, by the lack of real contact with the Eastern world before the thirteenth century.

Great expeditions that made significant progress towards Asia marked the sixteenth century. From then on the Orient penetrated into the Western imagination and the phenomenon was amplified thanks to the first missions carried out in Asia, which brought back unpublished data on the East.¹ Out of this appeared a profusion of texts claiming to be products of the

¹ The ambiguity between notions of the Orient, the Far East, and Asia was raised in the Introduction. From the perspective of Francophonie in the East, the word 'Orient' means the Levant.

East; yet they only feigned knowledge of the Eastern world. The epic of this unreachable land culminated in a frenzy during the seventeenth century, when a fiery European imagination turned towards the East: 'From the middle of the seventeenth century, public attention was projected onto the "East"' (Martino 85). Alas, this unfulfilled desire for the East clashed with a complete lack of knowledge. From the outset, the magisterial corpus accumulated since the sixteenth century through a variety of writings on the East, as imposing as it may be, leaves something to be desired as to its relative value in understanding France-Asia crossings. For the cruel and patent lack of first-hand material and genuine experience of the East relegates the writings of this period to the label of 'made in Europe'. The list of 'oriental novels' established by Pierre Martino illustrates this well. The most prominent example is *Le fameux Chinois* by Du Bail in 1642 (Martino 28), which was written straight out of a Parisian salon, hence its lack of authenticity or genuine oriental flavor. This phenomenon of the Orient incubated in 'the Parisian salon' reflects the time when the Western world, at a distance of 3,000 impassable leagues, came up against its lack of imagination of an Orient that was based on languages and customs that were closed off to the West.

If we locate the arrival of the works of Confucius in France through Father Philippe Couplet in the 1680s (Cordier 1910, 113)² as the first reference point for the penetration of Asian books, this gives a concise idea of the progression of Asia into the French imagination. The volumes handed over by Father Joachim Bouvet, returned from Beijing in 1697, to Louis XIV attenuated the lack of material. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries remained difficult for any French writer wishing to acquire concrete material on China, Japan, or the Indies; because of lack of means, few books were affordable. Writers were therefore condemned to a material deficit, even if they wrote fiction. Thus, those writings of 'chivalric loves, great deeds, gallant conversations, abductions, disguises, duels, poisonings, court intrigues and revolutions' (Martino 30), were conceived and written in a sort of literary greenhouse. Even the genius of Voltaire is found lacking: tinged with European flavor, it confuses 'China and the various Eastern countries' (Song 1989, 262).³ But Voltaire's time saw a significant material improvement in that they had access to concrete objects from China such

2 In the work of Pierre Martino (159) the bibliographic details of these volumes, dating from 1672, on Confucius and the Chinese sacred figures can be found.

3 Voltaire is not the only one to mix the two. The common phenomenon of the time to confuse China and Asia as a whole is underlined by Franck Michel (73).

as 'tea services, porcelain figurines, parasols, wallpapers, screens, trinkets, and small furniture in lacquer, silk fabrics' (Song 1989, 261). It follows that the literary production resulting from this pseudo-oriental period does not hold much interest for this book.

The birth of a literature on the East

Thanks to Emperor Qian Long's decree to print 160,000 works in 1773 (Cordier 1910, 114), the Jesuits managed to send numerous volumes from Peking to France, thus marking the beginning of the systematic penetration of books from Asia. The osmosis between the Middle Kingdom and the West is further effectuated through one of the first dictionaries, written by the Jesuit Joseph Prémare (Daniel 366).⁴ The contribution of *Notitia Linguae Sinicae*, the first work of Chinese grammar (Daniel 366), allows for a real advance in the knowledge of Europeans vis-à-vis the Chinese civilization. There followed a vogue of chinoiserie that swept across Europe. A dozen plays (theater pieces, writings, pamphlets, philosophical texts) 'signed by Voltaire' and listed by Song Shun-Ching, paint a faithful portrait of the Western imagination of the time on the image of China. As proof, 'one third of travel stories were devoted to China' (Song 1989, 262).

On this long road to a better knowledge of the Orient, several works stand as markers. The famous *L'Orphelin de la Chine* by Voltaire, whose genesis had sparked exciting debates between Voltairians and Sinologists, without doubt owes its origins to *L'Orphelin des Zhou*, translated by Joseph Prémare (Halde & Ji).⁵ Edited by Jean-Baptiste du Halde⁶ in 1736, this translation is the first milestone of Chinese literature's encounter with French readership. Consequently, from the perspective of France-Asia crossings, Voltaire's play is considered 'the first in France whose subject was borrowed from the Far East' (Cordier 1910, 115). In the context of a Europe in love with an adored China, Chinese tragedy generated multiple translations into European languages. This play on the Yuan remains the cornerstone in the demystification of the Orient in the European imagination and is a landmark in literature on the East. Thus the eighteenth century saw

4 Born in Cherbourg on 17 July 1666, and arriving in Canton on 7 November 1698, he died in poverty in Macau in September 1736. His Chinese biography is consistent with the French one.

5 Chinese tragedy occupies pages 417-460 of the third volume of a collection, triage, and correction of Jesuit letters edited by Father J.-B. Du Halde and Junxiang Ji.

6 The insertion of the *Petit orphelin de la maison de Tchao* by Du Halde is also confirmed by Henri Cordier (Cordier 1910, 115).

the beginning of an era of emancipation of the knowledge of the East the increasing number of expeditions to Asia.

In this time of enlightenment, the revelation of the *Relations* by the Jesuits shone a new light on the inaccurate representation of the East since the Middle Ages. In this vein, several Jesuit Fathers (Bouvet, Gaubil, Le Comte)⁷ had prepared or influenced the readership's expectations through their scholarly work. Note in the same regard, Joseph Marie Amiot and Isidore Stanislas Helman,⁸ whose writings also form major landmarks in the advancement of European knowledge of the East. Thanks to the missionaries, travelers, and traders who brought back scraps of testimony from the East, the literary world of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries held ingenuously certain stereotypes, thus 'the tolerant Asian or the Chinese philosopher will become in the eighteenth century facile common tropes' (Martino 62). The nineteenth century made a great leap forward through sustained and systematic expeditions that allowed the dissemination of a literature authored by the players of the French Eastern Empire, eyewitnesses of the previously disembodied oriental world. In this sense, the masterful translations by Julien Stanislas (1797-1873)⁹ give another great boost to the flowering of such a literature. This contribution of the East, which contributed in turn to the enrichment of the European spirit is underlined by Ferdinand Brunetière:

the French nineteenth and eighteenth centuries would not be all they are if the things of the East and Far East, India and China in particular, had not become part of the composition of their minds (Brunetière 707).

The French 'self' from the East

If the second half of the nineteenth century remains one of the most dishonorable periods that the Empire of the Son of Heaven ever traversed, it is nevertheless an important landmark in European historiography. On

7 In particular, the work by Louis Le Comte, *Nouveaux mémoires sur l'état présent de la Chine*, is cited by scholars as a base material for French writers of the time.

8 They are authors of a dozen major works of their time. See, for example, *Abrégé historique des principaux traits de la vie de Confucius* published in Paris in 1788.

9 Let me mention as examples, Li Hsing-tao (Li Xingdao), Julien Stanislas, *Hoëi-lan-ki; ou, l'Histoire du cercle de craie, drame en prose et en vers*, London: Printed for the Oriental Translation Fund of Great Britain and Ireland, sold by J. Murry; Zhang Shao, Julien Stanislas, *Les deux jeunes filles lettrées* (Pingshang ling yan: Chinese novel), Paris: Didier, 1860; Laozi, Julien Stanislas, *Lao Tseu Tao te king; Le livre de la voie et de la vertu, composé dans le VI^e siècle avant l'ère chrétienne*, Paris: Imprimerie royale, 1842.

the one hand, the advent of the presence of Europeans, which imposed a culture of cohabitation, broke forever the homogeneity of the Han; on the other hand, Asia was entering the European mind in significant ways through historiography. Think of the geography (cartography) of Asia, its objects, its writings, its languages that seeped into the first French people who crossed the continent. This impression of the East, materialized through physical contact with indigenous peoples, gave free rein to a corpus that would flourish in the nineteenth century. It should be noted that ship owners, officers, diplomats, merchants, or sailors, all promoters of French civilization outside of France, published innumerable writings, to the best of their ability. This was a time when the challenges facing Asia were changing and the French corpus of France-Asia crossings was expressed first, we believe, in the form of the literature of the intimate.

Thus from the angle of the 'self', the East is displayed to the European public of the nineteenth century, which travels through this world via the first person. Doubtless, the popularity of writing the 'self' from the East cannot be detached from the vogue of Romanticism that had attracted a public initiated in the genre of the writing of the intimate. In fact, the disclosure to the general public of diaries, memoirs, and correspondences of writers in the metropolis makes the genre well known. The long letters of *Delphine* and the languor of *Oberman's* solitary melody solicit the public to savor the monologic or intimate 'self'. Within this huge body of work on the 'self' from the East, there are certain masters of the writing of the Levant:

And now the modern age becomes planetary. The big names come to the fore: Loti, this Hamlet of the sun, who seeks, in the countries of light, the joy that will always escape him. [...] It is Paul Claudel, who lifts the veils on the *Connaissance de l'Est*' (Hanotaux 138-139).

Considered as repositories of experiences of living in the East, the works of Loti and Claudel, among others, take the place of first-hand documents. Thus the virtue of this important personal literature written by the hand of the 'colonizers'¹⁰ is to offer the other version of the cultural crossings between France and Asia. Their contemporary publication in major nineteenth-century journals provided direct eyewitness accounts of the East to the European readership.

10 For example: Ferdinand Philippe Marie d'Orléans Alençon, *Luçon et Mindanao. Extraits d'un journal de voyage dans l'Extrême Orient*, Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1870 ; Pierre Loti, *Suprêmes visions d'Orient: fragments de journal intime*, Paris: [s.n.], 1900s ; Amédée Anatole Prosper Courbet, *L'Amiral Courbet en Extrême-Orient: notes et correspondance*, Paris: L. Chailley, 1896.

The memoirs of Auguste Haussmann, a member of the first French missions in the Far East, serve as a prototype of this eyewitness literature:

Towards the end of August 1844, all the members of the mission under the orders of M. de Lagrené, the extraordinary envoy of France to China, were assembled at Macau [...]. The imperial commissioner Ki-ing, was responsible since 1843 for all the negotiations of the Chinese Government with the foreign maritime powers [...]. It was on board the *Archimedes*, as we know, that the treaty of commerce concluded between France and China was signed on October 24, 1854, the day of the *niai-tsz*, which the Chinese regard as the most favorable phase of the moon for wedding celebrations. (Haussmann 298-299)

Straddling memoir and autobiography, this type of writing reflects the progress of French interests in Asia by tracing in the first person the details of the events experienced by the writer. The genre also has a variant called *souvenirs* or 'memories', such as 'La colonie européenne en Chin: Souvenirs d'une station dans les mers de l'Indo-Chine', published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* in 1851:

After a long journey going against the monsoon, we had anchored in front of Macau on January 4, 1848 [...]. The treaty of Nan-king had consecrated the admission of foreigners in the five maritime towns open to European commerce [...]. The government of the two provinces of Kouang-si and Kouang-tong was then entrusted to the viceroy Ki-ing, the most honest Tartar who ever wore the peacock feather and the red button [...]. Ki-ing understood the helplessness of the Chinese armies and the almost insurmountable obstacles to the introduction of the military organization and tactics of the Europeans into the heavenly Empire. [...] he inaugurated in China the policy of concessions. (Gravière 785-786)

Compared to the classical memoirs that readers were used to,¹¹ these memoirs adapted into the form of journal articles reached a wide readership. No matter the variants in style or content, this writing of the 'self' that traces the first instances of France in China and Asia invaded the *Revue des Deux Mondes* with a systematic publication in almost every issue; this undoubtedly confirms the popularity of the genre.

11 For example, *La Chine et le Japon, mission du comte d'Elgin de 1857 à 1859* de Laurence Oliphant (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1860).

In parallel, epistolary writing also brushed with the autobiographical genre and sought a wider readership. The correspondence of the famous Irish specialist of Japan (a naturalized Japanese)¹² stationed in Kyoto illustrates this well. Through his letters one reads about Japan, its people, its customs. The 'self' from the East, even of Irish origin, meets the needs of the French readership.

The following letters are taken from the correspondence of Lafcadio Hearn, one of the most beautiful, the most complete and the most varied published to date: a true autobiography whose sincerity and spontaneity form a precious literary document [...]. The few letters that we publish here were chosen with the aim of giving a succinct but as complete an idea as possible of the evolution which took place in Lafcadio Hearn's thinking toward Japan. (Hearn 1924, 319-320)

To Elisabeth Bisland

Yokohama, April 1890

Dear Elizabeth,

I have an indescribable feeling about Japan. Of course, the nature here is not the nature of the tropics, which is so splendid, so wild, so powerfully beautiful, that at the very moment when I write to you, I feel in my heart the same pain that I experienced leaving Martinique. [...] And, of course, I study Buddhism with all my heart, with all my soul. My companion is a young student from one of the temples. If I stay in Japan, we will live together. (Hearn 1924, 321)

According to the publisher, the journal discloses this type of correspondence frequently because it is a 'true autobiography' and 'a literary document'.

In the same vein, there is the diary-type genre that presents the introspective 'self' through the writer's monologues. In a fragmentary and intermittent structure, the diarist tries to preserve the experience in the East through his daily transcription. An excerpt from Loti's journal entitled 'Escales au Japon 1902' is illustrative:

Saturday, December 8, 1900 – the horror of a winter's night, by gust of wind and torment of snow, at sea, without shelter, on the disheveled sea,

12 The case of Lafcadio Hearn is reminiscent of Joseph Charignon (1872-1930), a naturalized Chinese.

in full black turmoil. A battle, a revolt of heavy and cold waters against the great worldly wind that howls as it whips them up. (Loti 1904, 721)¹³

Sunday, December 9, 1900 – Waking up late, after such a disturbed night, I open my porthole to greet Japan. And it is there, always the same, at first glance at least, but uniformly felted with snow, beneath a pale sun that confuses and is completely unknown to me. (Loti 1904, 722)

As the genre contains an intrinsic dichotomy in itself, whether the diary belongs to the real world (the intimate diary) or the fictional world (the fictional diary), ambiguity is all the more acute when it comes to Loti. Affirmed by the diarist as an authentic journal (an intransitive text closed to the intrusion of others and having *excluded any sense of fictional expectation*), Loti's text offers no indication that could betray the modes of presupposed enunciation. That is to say, it may be a matter of a diarist of the 'self' as eyewitness of the Orient or of a fictional 'self' that comes from the imagination.

But there is more. The fact that the text reaches the public sphere during the lifetime of his writer suggests that it is not the diarist Viaud, but rather the writer Loti. Loti's ostentatious recourse to the first person in his writings on the Orient points in the same direction. In a counter argument, whether it is a fictional or real diary does not alter the quality of the French 'self' to safeguard events from France in Japan, since all attempts to categorize the diaristic text may result in a false debate. After all writing in itself is a natural drift towards a 'sociolectoral universe' as advanced by Michel Butor (Butor 1960, 127). And the fictitious or real Lotian 'self' encompasses this innate propensity toward the public world contained in all writing.

The Levant in French-language journals and newspapers 1840-1940

We reiterate that this subdivision does not rest on the approach of Orientalism vs. counter-Orientalism. Far from the currents of Edward Said and his followers who had drawn up the Western typologies of the East, the texts evoked here will serve as clues to the evolution of the French readership on the Levant. First of all, the long period of existence of several periodicals is remarkable, a sign of a time preoccupied by the Levant. In Paris, we can mention as examples, *Mémoires de la Société des études japonaises, chinoises,*

13 In the same vein, see the journal by Ed. Du Hailly titled 'Souvenirs d'une campagne dans l'Extrême-Orient' published in *Revue des Deux Mondes* (juillet-août 1866, 957-983).

tartares et indo-chinoises (E. Rouveyre, 1877-1901), *Bibliothèque orientale* (Maisonneuve, 1872-), *Relations de Chine* (Compagnie de Jésus, 1903-1940). Certain journals are the fruits of Franco-Chinese collaboration, such as *Aujourd'hui la Chine: revue de l'Association des amitiés franco-chinoises*.¹⁴ Others circulating in Asia were printed locally for the local French-speaking readership. In the first place, we should mention *L'Écho de Chine* (1901-1919, l'Imprimerie de La Presse orientale) (Claudel 2005, 228-229)¹⁵ whose merit is not only as key reference point as a French newspaper in China but also in the considerable duration of its existence. Published weekly every Wednesday in Shanghai, *L'Echo* transmitted first-hand information about France to China and the Far East for every Frenchman in Asia.

Classified to date under the label of Orientalism, these journals and newspapers deserve to be considered in another way, for example, as the product of cultural cross-fertilization that created and enacted a different kind of dynamism. What, then, are the subjects addressed in this privileged forum, which provides a barometer of the interests of the readers on the Orient? Once again, the examination of the *Revue des Deux Mondes* gives a clue for the fact that this vein is composed of thematic studies, the translation of masterpieces of Asian literatures, and oriental-inspired literary creation. For example, Buddhism is a widely treated theme. Introduced in Europe in the seventeenth century, this religious philosophy attracted many followers, such as Jules de Gauthier and Leon de Rosny, whose work describes its anchoring, its practice, as well as its seizure by the French readership (Gauthier 367-394). In the opposite direction, Christian proselytism in the Levantine countries remains another point of interest. Among the many studies devoted to it, those carried out by Alexandra Myrial are essential. They trace the history of Christianity in Asia back to the origins of the Christian congregation in China.¹⁶ If the notoriety of the great naturalists and travelers (such as Dabry de Thiersant, 1826-1898) marks the conjuncture of interest of the nineteenth century, the literary specialists, sinologists, and Japanese specialists such as Henri Cordier, Leon de Rosny, and Soulié de Morant¹⁷ also assert themselves with their writings and translations on the civilizations of the Levant.

14 Paris: L'Association des amitiés franco-chinoises, 1900-.

15 The seriousness of this house that published the only French newspaper in China is emphasized in a letter from Claudel.

16 These are 'La congrégation en Chine' and 'Clergé tibétain et ses Doctrines'.

17 Journalist, diplomat, and essayist, De Morant left many studies on the Levant. Let us mention his translation of the work by Chen Yubao, *La piété filiale en Chine* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1877), as well as his work *Histoire de l'art chinois, de l'antiquité jusqu'à nos jours* (Paris: Payot, 1928, 301).

Thanks to the progress of systematic and sustained commercial missions, the second half of the nineteenth century saw a profusion of texts that examine the Levant from every angle. As a sign of the time, knowledge about the Far East made a big leap forward in the enlightened twentieth century, which charges itself with bearing witness to the Oriental works, targeting stereotypes:

For fifty years, the more and more intimate contact we have made with China and Japan has revealed to us what divergences, contrasts, and even incompatibilities separate the Indo-European families and the peoples of the Far East. (Tailhade 63)

It is really time for free spirits to be enlightened on this Chinese civilization, which has been unknown, scorned, despised by the greatest number, and who, against all proof, retains a stupid prejudice of a priori superiority. People of high culture still share the popular prejudice against China. (Nesles 290)

It is time to sound the death knell of the period of obscurity regarding the Levant. We are no longer at the stage of introducing these distant lands through the panoramic overview of the Orientalists that touch on the civilizations of Asia, but rather the time has come for profound, even erudite works. Highly specialized topics are emerging. Thus Léon Charpentier introduced in 1901 'Les transmigrations de Yo-Tchéou, comédie chinoise', which parodies the Taoist school, initiating the French readership into the various schools of classical Chinese literature:

The Tao-see comedy ridicules the ceremonies and superstitions of Taoism [...]. The comedy of which we present here the first two acts is an adaptation of two tao-see plays [...]. It should be added that no tao-see play has yet been translated into a European language (Carpenter 25).¹⁸

It is fair to say that the twentieth century has seen an informed and passionate readership of connoisseurs of the East. The bland essays in the exoticist vein disappeared. On the contrary, advanced studies capable of bringing an in-depth knowledge of scholarly subjects flourished, for example on the various poetic schools of the Tang, Song, and other dynasties. From a general

¹⁸ In 1920 the Parisian house Société Anonyme d'Éditions et de Librairie published this study in volumes.

point of view, the immortal verses in ancient Chinese cumulated from a time-immemorial form to contemporary Chinese. Few were translated. Yet Soulié de Morant was able to translate those of the Song dynasty and decided to share them with the French readership:

Chinese poetry is no longer unknown to us. However for entire periods we still have only a few works cited in some general works [...]. The too few published poems of the Song Dynasty gave rise to the curiosity to know more about this period [...]. The means of Chinese poetry are more numerous and more varied than ours. French poetry is recognized as simply syllabic. [...] Chinese poetry is not only rhythmic, that is to say formed of a series of longer and shorter sounds, but more, truly sung. (Morant 1919, 611-612)

A colleague of Claudel, the diplomat Morant carried out important work on Chinese and Japanese literatures and societies, some of which was translated into local languages, for example one of his reports, entitled *Ce qui ne s'avoue pas, même à Shanghai, ville de plaisir*.

Of course, other Asian civilizations also came to be better known in France. In fact, in this period of effervescence regarding the Levant, Japanism and studies on Japan were especially in vogue. In particular, the Japanese theater (Tailhade 63-73) including the Noh genre, eclipsed all other subjects and seduced many specialists (Seche & Bertaut 673-684). The rise of Japanism was also due to the efforts of Albert Maybon, whose studies of poetry and Japanese theater are masterful works (Maybon 1920; 1923). Georges Bonneau (director of the Maison Française in Tokyo), whose essays appear systematically in the *Mercure* (Bonneau 1931; 1932) also deserves mention. The flourishing of literature on the Levant during the twentieth century is also reflected in literary creation, particularly the genre of the novella. For example, Gilbert de Voisins and Alexandre Arnoux devote themselves to the novella, publishing theirs in the *Mercure* (Voisins; Arnoux). As for the genre of the novel, it appears in the form of excerpts, for example, that of Jean Marquet entitled 'Master Lou Po To Capitaine Marchand' published in series form in the *Mercure*. Let us also mention in this vein, Mollard's novel published in *L'Europe* (Wei-Kin-Tche 501-508) from the translation of a readapted, modified, and reconfigured Chinese text. Certainly we could continue to cite a prodigious repertoire of this literature on the Levant in nineteenth- and twentieth-century journals and newspapers; the few examples mentioned above serve as illustrations of the genre and especially the content of this literature, which is relevant to this book.

On publishing houses and their collections

The cultural crossings between France and Asia informed the policies of certain publishing houses in the metropolis. For example, Ernest Leroux, whose flamboyant career is closely related to the reputation of his publishing house. From the translation of the ancient texts of Ma Duanlin (1254-?) (*Bibliothèque orientale*) or the Neo-Confucian Zhu Xi (1130-1200) (Zhu; Kia) to Japanese classics (Dautremer), the Leroux house enriches the corpus of works on the Orient through texts based on the original documents. For example, *Un mariage impérial chinois cérémonial* (1887) comes from two documents, one of which is from the Ministry of Rites annotating the millennial protocol of marriage ceremonies in China, the other on imperial marriage, originally written by the Intendant of the Forbidden City during his service. In addition to this, there is a series of memoirs on Asia published by the house: *Mémoires concernant l'Asie orientale, Inde, Asie centrale, Extrême-Orient* (1913-1919). It goes without saying that the authenticity and rarity of these manuscripts translated and published by Leroux contribute to cultivating a readership with interests in the Levant.

Another vein from these houses that enrich the Eastern corpus is their thematic collections, such as the 'Bibliothèque d'histoire contemporaine' of the Félix Alcan house. This collection includes on the one hand ancient texts from the Levant countries translated by the famous Sinologist Henri Cordier (Cordier 1920) and on the other, stories about the oldest expeditions or voyages to Asia by the French. The virtue of this kind of collection is that Asia is its major interest. The same goes for the collection 'Bibliothèque contemporaine' of the house Calmann-Lévy with works based on historical documentations, such as travel in *Voyage en Asie: le Japon, la Chine, la Mongolie, Java, Ceylan, l'Inde* (1874). What distinguishes this collection are the works of Pierre Loti, which are its most important publications, such as *Japoneries d'Automne* and *Les dernier jours de Pékin*. Finally, there is the 'Bibliothèque orientale' of Maisonneuve & Co., which contains works of high historical value on civilizations in Asia, the Middle East, and the Far East.

By way of conclusion, I would say that from an idea of the Orient that was confused with and by religion in the Middle Ages to the deployment of the real-time French 'self' of the second half of the nineteenth century, the progression of metropolitan knowledge of the Orient, proof of which lies in the informed and aware readership, attests to the evolution of the Levant in the French imagination. Compared to works published in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, nineteenth-century texts prevail notably through

their authenticity and the transmission of a personal experience lived in the field. This personal literature comes from the perspective of European Orientalism, which is traditionally contiguous with it.

The oriental 'self' in Loti and Claudel

Another major component of this corpus of crossings is the representation of the Levant in fiction. Not that every work of fiction touching Asia will be integrated into this corpus, only those whose creative conception draws on the oriental universe. As we have just shown, the Europeans, especially the French, have been writing about the Levant for a long time, and in the minds of many, Marco Polo's *Book of Wonders* (1298) marks a first step towards the emergence of the Levant in European historiography. In fact, the catalog of Ternaux-Compans mentioned below gives a concrete sense of the first writings on Asia. It does not matter who was the first, but it is worth pointing out this intoxication with a fabulous, seductive Orient, which never faded for these Europeans. Once again, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries break the ice to see this literature free itself through the agents of the French Eastern Empire whose writings contrast with the version of the Orient 'incubated in a Parisian salon'. From then on, French historiography is enriched by a host of archives, fiction, personal literature (diary, correspondence, memoirs) on the Levant, as demonstrated above.

Within this profusion of writings on the Far East, *Madame Chrysanthème*, *Le Soulier de satin*, and *Comment Wang-Fô fut sauvé* offer emblematic examples of oriental-inspired works within the French tradition. With divergent forms, these texts, whose imaginary relies as much on the firsthand experience of an Eastern author-witness as on translated documents, cut across the flagrant versions of the Orient in texts published in the preceding centuries. What is more, Loti as much as Claudel, the indisputable orientalist with an experience marked by the ups and downs of the French Eastern Empire, undermines any previous fabrication of the Orient conceived from the metropolis. The experience in the Levant vouches for the authenticity of the Orient in their works, even if they are classified as belonging to the French tradition.

Madam Chrysanthème in Asia

A major literary figure marked by the Levant, Loti leaves to posterity a fictional writing of the public space that runs alongside that of the intimate, the private space; both converge to create the parameters of the Eastern corpus.

From the glorious pages authored by a seaman in Asia to the prototypical work of literature of the East, Loti and his followers remain a living source for French literary history in the East. Unlike Paul Claudel, who is significantly less well known in China than in Japan, Loti is equally well known in China and Japan. Thus *Mon frère Yves*, his first novel translated into Chinese, appeared in 1900 in Hong Kong (Loti 1900), five years after *Madame Chrysanthème*, his first novel published in Japan. Thanks to Lin Xu his *Pêcheur d'Islande* was translated into ancient Chinese and appeared in 1915 with Shang Wu Publishing House (Han 2008, 331). His 'Alsace!'¹⁹ (Loti 1917) translated by Liu Bannong²⁰ from the English version *Alsace Reconquered* (New York Times 1916) appeared in the *Nouvelle jeunesse* in 1917 (Han 2008, 334).²¹ This means that Loti's texts, written in French, published in mainland France and translated into English and published overseas, were quickly translated into Chinese, suggesting that Loti is from the start a targeted French writer due to the nature of his writings. Within this profusion of works by Loti, *Madame Chrysanthème* stands as a prototype, merging a real-life experience in the East with an imaginary one that bears witness to the Western imprint.

It goes without saying that to belong to the French literary tradition, the work should employ the French language, and should be written by a French author. Of all the studies written on this work since its release, from the apology of Japanism by its first metropolitan readership to the worst critiques of its detractors (Bonneau 1931, 526-543),²² no one deigns to dispute the origin of the work and, therefore, its belonging to the Eastern corpus. Hence the interest of the first Chinese and Japanese Francophone studies of the work. It is not surprising that the work's transfer to Asia passes first through Tokyo where the work made its first appearance on the continent in 1895 (Loti 1895), 34 years before its publication in Shanghai. According to Qian Linsen, it was Xu Xiacun who brought it for the first time to China on his return from Paris around 1930 (Qian 2004, 211), a claim that was partially proven in the *Catalogue des livres traduits du français en chinois*. The French work, according to the Shang Wu publishing house, was translated into Chinese from the English version (Loti 1929). If this source is correct, it would mean that the French version did not penetrate or circulate in China at the time. Yet other sources claim the opposite.

19 Dated July 1916, the French text appears in pages 83-96 of this collection.

20 Classical scholar, professor at Peking University, and biographer of the heroine of Zeng Pu's masterpiece, *Fleur sur l'océan des péchés* (1903-1936).

21 See vol. 2, no. 6 of the journal *Xin Qingnian*, cited by Han Yiyu.

22 *Madame Chrysanthème* by Loti is ridiculed in terms of a 'Japanese farce in the French contemporary novel', by Georges Bonneau, director of the Maison de France in Kyoto.

In the 'Prologue' of the 1932 edition, Xu states that his translation, published in 1929, is based on the seventeenth edition of the novel (published by Lévy Frères), together with the English translation of the Ensor house (Loti; Xu v), without specifying, however, which of the two served him as the mother-text. Such a revelation means at least from that perspective that the French work circulated alongside the English version. Unable to determine what leads Shang Wu to claim that the English translation is the mother-text, Xu's revelation about the use of two versions casts doubt on its place of re-entry (the physical path of the book) such as advanced by Qian. Was it via Paris or elsewhere? The questioning of the route taken by the French work is particularly significant if one considers the displacement of the work from the perspective of transcultural writing. Namely, that a book's journey from its original culture to its host culture is often accomplished through a third (intermediate) culture. If the transfer of *Madame Chrysanthème* followed a Paris-London-Shanghai or Paris-Tokyo-Shanghai route, the fact that its Chinese translation is based on a double version (French and English) would be self-evident. Otherwise, it would be unlikely that French-speaking Xu returned home from Paris with an English version. In spite of these plausible presumptions, any conjecture cannot solve the enigma. We need to focus on the work itself.

The displaced French 'self'

As the diary genre proves to be the favorite form for Loti's writing on the East, the novel unfolds in fragmentary style the naive 'self' of a displaced Frenchman:

At dawn we saw Japan. Just at the appointed hour, it appeared, still distant, at a precise point of this sea which, for so many days, had been an empty expanse. It was at first a series of small pink peaks (the advanced archipelago of the Fukai, at sunrise).²³ (Loti 652)

good men and women enter in a long uninterrupted line [...]. On their backs they brought small baskets, little boxes, containers of all shapes. [...] out of these came unexpected, unimaginable things, screens, slippers, soap, lanterns; cufflinks, live cicadas singing in small cages; jewelry, and tame white mice who were able to turn small paper wheels [...]. (Loti 654)

23 The excerpts come from the 1989 edition of the Presses de la Cité (*Aziyadé; Le mariage de Loti; Le roman d'un spahi; Mon frère Yves; Pêcheur d'Islande; Madame Chrysanthème; Ramuntcho; Les Désenchantées*).

The new sensation experienced by the sailor approaching the coast of Japan for the first time, as well as his astonished observations of the natives, corroborates the common experience of the French treading the Japanese soil for the first time. From this ingenuous gaze, the Fukai archipelago and Mount Fuji, wrapped in its layers of snow, take on mythical meanings. From the fascination that imperial France has with Japan at sunrise, to the theme of mixed marriage with an oriental woman, Loti poses some of the first paradigms of the genre. The work seduces through the change of scenery and the singularity of its plot of a scandalous marriage. Its publication for a readership hungry for the elsewhere was a big success. It was not until half a century later that the superficial gaze and the fresco of a fake Japan riddled with the prejudices of a European sailor were decried:

There is in world literature, and, as much as in our contemporary French literature, a Japanese farce. Poets in search of exoticism, sailors in search of love, day-trippers in need of thrills, there is no one who has not taken it to heart and added their own meanings. [...] Literature, mediocre literature, this Japanese theory of the kiss complacently imagined on page 250 of *Madame Chrysanthème*. (Bonneau 1931, 526)

Despite these harsh words from the director of the Maison Française in Tokyo, one of the finest connoisseurs of Japan, posterity must nevertheless be grateful that Loti was able to set out, under the guise of marriage, the inner heart of a displaced European.

Loti: creator of the Oriental woman

The legendary fortune of *Madame Chrysanthème* in and outside France not only provoked a renewed interest in the theme of exile, but above all it exposed fully the figure of the oriental woman. Loti is an unequaled inventor of the Oriental woman of his time. A century of studies devoted to this work and its translations converge on Loti's oriental woman, who merges animality with fugacity. From Africa to Japan, from Aziyadé to Kikou-San, Loti constantly portrayed Oriental women based on mythical or anthropological archetypes in which the woman is often compared to butterfly, fish, cat, or bird (Yee 2002, 258).²⁴ Thus the 'little made-up doll' embodies the fugacity of Loti's Oriental woman. The seemingly benevolent

²⁴ See in particular the recurrence of these animals in the cultures of the countries in the Middle East.

and graceful descriptions, such as ‘the unpardonable Gentiles, the pickets of planted flowers’ (Yee 2002, 258), at the place frequented by ‘Miss Jasmin... my fiancée’, betray, in spite of themselves, an underlying perspective tinged with a complex of superiority (Barthèlemy 1992, 36), which imperialist Europe employs to characterize the Oriental woman:

Oh! The astonishing little company that we drag in our wake, in the tea houses, in the evening! The unpardonable little ones, the flowers, which are frightfully planted on childish and comical heads! [...] Yves accompanies us when it is time to go back to our home, – Chrysanthemum lets out big sighs like a tired child, stopping at each step, leaning on our arms. (Loti 68g)

The small woman Okane-San won over the readership of the time with her exotic face, the carefree nature of a woman-child (‘sighs like a tired child’), and all against a background of a folkloric world that is foreign and strange to European customs. In spite of this, Loti’s ingenuity does not reside in revealing a common shared feeling, but in another register, in an arranged ‘transcultural’ marriage whose variant reappears in others, notably with Puccini.²⁵

Alongside Mademoiselle Jasmin, who stands as a model of the Oriental woman for a readership enamored of the theme of exile and the elsewhere, scholars also point out other common Lotian tropes (Barthèlemy and Yee) that are crystallized in particular in the tone and condescending approach of the French sailor landed in Nagasaki:

‘Where should I lead you, my bourgeois?’ To which I reply in the same language: ‘To the Garden of Flowers, my friend!’ [...] this Garden of Flowers is a tea house, an elegant meeting place. One time, I will ask a certain Kangaroo-San, who is at the same time an interpreter, a launderer, and a discreet agent for racial crossings.²⁶ (Loti 18)

In an apartment as bare as mine, there are a dozen of them sitting in a circle on the floor; long blue cotton dresses with pagoda sleeves, long greasy, flat hair topped with a European bowler-style hat; foolish, yellow, exhausted, pale figures. (Loti 25-26)

25 The famous opera *Madame Butterfly* is played not only in European languages but also in Chinese and Japanese. I attended its first post-Maoist staging in autumn 1982, at the Peking Opera.

26 The excerpts come from the Calmann-Levy edition of 1887.

Certainly, with almost a century and a half of distance, the artifices of such scenes are obvious to us. These futile and superficial statements, wordy and endowed with a naive perception of Japan are lacking, no longer able to stand before the 'worldly reader' for whom world literature has broken down the barrier of exoticism. Nevertheless, this should not erase the incredible oriental importance of the work regarding the corpus that interests us here. From the ingenuous oriental universe experienced by the first French on Japanese soil, to the evasive fugacity of *Jasmin*, completely new to the French readership, Loti widens the horizon of this French readership to a world of the elsewhere. As for the critical gap, even the polarized criticism of the work, this highlights the evolution of the Western world in its perception of the Eastern world and reaffirms the pioneering milestone that this work sets, conceived in and drawing on the East.

From the Spanish Golden Age to Chinese legends

The example of France-Asia crossings that we have chosen to focus on is *Le Soulier de satin*. This is because in terms of literature on the East, the name of Paul Claudel is unavoidable. In fact, few poets of his time can boast of having spent as much time as he did in China and Japan: 'I spent fifteen years of my life in China as consul, five years in Japan as ambassador' (Wasserman 207).²⁷ In this sense, Claudel remains of unrivaled importance. However, it would be foolhardy to rely on appearances only. Despite this long stay in China (twice as long as in Japan), Claudel seems to be better received in Japan. First, his theater was played in the Meiji era (Yamata 295)²⁸ and none of his plays, to our knowledge, were played in China at any time. Also, his works reached the Japanese readership as soon as they were published;²⁹ while it would take more than half a century to see only two of them translated into Chinese. Despite the lack of first-hand documents to elucidate these facts, one thing is certain: this substantial time lived in the East not only grants him legitimacy, but especially guarantees the authenticity of the oriental world evoked in his writings, with one exception – Claudel has no knowledge of oriental languages. Nevertheless, this trip to Asia allows him to compose a profusion of correspondence, consular notes, and plays in which the East comes alive. At the same time, this panoply

27 The period is 1895 to 1909.

28 In his article published in 1924 in the *Mercure de France*, the author evokes the performance of Claudel's plays at local theaters.

29 See the Japanese translation of the *Soulier de satin*.

of works also invites Claudel scholars to critique the blatant borrowing of Chinese and Japanese myths and legends that are involuntarily mixed together in Claudel's work.

As pointed out above, from the perspective of Claudel and the Orient, one aspect exceeds all expectations: the disparity between the immense merit of the Claudel corpus and the relative lack of translations into Chinese. The only works that have been translated are *Le Soulier de satin* in 1992 and *Connaissance de l'Est* in 1997. Too little, too late, and moreover, neither was endorsed by a renowned publishing house in Shanghai or Beijing. In other words, Claudel's works are not among the ones targeted by centuries-old and well-known publishing houses in China. Such a fact leads to much conjecture. One thing is obvious. If the Chinese have translated only two, it is certainly not because the *Partage de midi*, *Tête d'or*, and *Figures et paraboles* have less literary merit, but because from the outset it was obvious to the Chinese that the *Soulier* belonged to the Eastern corpus.

Yet at first glance, this play has nothing Chinese or Oriental about it, nothing but the common Claudel tropes: divine evocation, a Mediterranean context, a Christian protagonist, references to God everywhere. Michel Butor, with his prodigious perspicacity, identifies one of the threads of the play:

The action takes place in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century during the conquest of America. Don Rodrigue, after many adventures, becomes Viceroy of the West Indies, but the new King of Spain, Philip II, who succeeds Charles V, is wary of this character who risks becoming too important, and disgraces him. (Butor 1995, 119)

Even with Butor's groundwork, the question remains: how can such a work belong to the oriental corpus? This is not the case, since this 'Christian' staging serves as a *mise-en-scène* in the true sense. Beyond the southern sun and the route of the conquistadors, the meandering links underlying this play with the Chinese world are undeniable once the veil (the staging) is lifted.

Not only could the *Soulier* not be interpreted through its pageantry of Christianity, tinged with great military feats in its doxology of the Spanish Golden Age, but it would also be impertinent to isolate it from the whole of Claudel's corpus:

The structures of all Claudel's theatrical productions are based on the complex foundations of theology, a finalist philosophy of history, as well as human psychology and dramaturgy, whether they be gods or demi-gods

from the ancient myths, or that the author manipulates the agents of the Christian universe. (Maëstre 60)

And the *Soulier* conforms to this Claudelian paradigm. The Christian content, the divine call and theological resonances that alienate or hinder the initial action of the love protagonists are but commonplaces in Claudel's work. And this is true, even if the work belongs to the oriental corpus, in the case of *Soulier*. Two guiding threads cut across each other: on the one hand, the Christian staging in every Claudel play, on the other the sacrifice of the woman, embodied by the women's shoe on which the whole work rests. Evidently, its evocation in the play, when the protagonist leaves to join her estranged lover, does not disclose the oriental mytho-cultural background in which the work is anchored: 'Don Balthazar holds the head of the mule. Prouhèze rises, standing on the saddle and taking off her shoes, she puts her satin shoe in the hands of the Virgin' (Claudel 41).³⁰ Here the shoe serves as a relic, a depository of the female sacrifice and of the redemption of forbidden love.

Still, the question is not resolved: How does any of this relate to the Eastern world? According to Maëstre: 'The atmosphere and the theme of the original *Soulier de Satin* do not have the formal simplicity of a purely passionate drama, evoked and lived in the historical, religious and cultural context of the Spanish Golden Age' (Maëstre 44). Despite its Western and Christian framing, the Spanish context, the spiritual framework and the psychological framework are only a dramaturgical frame, typical of Claudel. Stripped of these ornaments, the play remains genuinely Chinese. For in addition to the initial sketch drafted by Claudel in China and completed in Japan, and the nourishing roots of Chinese legends, the play is further enhanced by a heartfelt memory in Fuzhou. Although at first the meanderings between the control of the Spanish conquistadors against a background of obedience to God, and the time immemorial of the Chinese dynasties from which the legends are drawn, seem fundamentally distant from each other, the two universes come together in the image of the female shoe, which crystallizes forbidden love and its redemption. Thus the *Soulier* comes out of the Christian universe despite the appeals to God by Rodrigue or Prouhèze. The Mediterranean decor, the backdrop of the century of the conquistadors, and the piety of the protagonists to God are only the most apparent elements.

30 References are to the 1962 Gallimard reissue.

Cinderella and ‘the forgotten slipper’

Such a spatial and referential straddling between the oriental, nourishing foundations of the work, and the structural configuration based on a Spanish background is the audacious uniqueness of the *Soulier*. And how eloquent is its title especially if one observes Claudel’s nod to the Chinese slipper, symbol of female sacrifice. Its recurrence with Claudel is underlined by Gilbert Gadoffre who states that ‘The Bell’ in *Connaissance de l’Est* stems from the reminiscence of a Chinese legend. In order to save her father, a young girl throws herself into a boiling gold foundry, and loses her shoes, which remain as the ultimate testimony of sacrifice (Gadoffre 350-351). From the lost shoe to the forgotten slipper, Claudel nods in the direction of the same image:

The first idea for the *Soulier de Satin* came to me from a forgotten slipper, like Cinderella’s, in the pages of a Chinese novel. [...] Formerly, out of the pages of some novel I flicked through in a club in the Far East, escaped a shoe that became, twenty years later, *The Soulier de satin*. (Hue 195)³¹

The reference by Claudel to Cinderella as the source of inspiration for the *Soulier* quickly spread among the Claudel readers who returned to this myth – considered emblematic of the Western imagination – as the starting point from which the work originates. Is this the true purpose of the *Soulier*?

If Claudel, and his followers, refer to Cinderella as a prototype of a European referent, in other words as a mother-image, a rectification is necessary. The myth of Cinderella is not part of the European imagination, but has its source in southern China at the time of the Qin (221 BC). This is a time before the Han (206 BC), to take a chronological marker known to Westerners, a time when the myth would be transmitted orally. Its first written version would date from the ninth century in *Youyang zazu* (*Varied Tables at Dusk*). We owe the revelation of this source to the Japanese folklorist Kumagusu Minakata who, in 1911, unveiled it in *Tokyo Jinruigaku Zasshi* (Journal of the Tokyo Anthropology Society) (Watanabe 151-155). From its ninth-century version to the various European adaptations, including that of Perrault, the myth undergoes major changes in its attempt to acculturate to host cultures. But the immutable and transcendental axis that runs through all versions is the image of the female shoe.

31 Cited by Bernard Hue.

From embroidered shoes to satin shoes

While Cinderella accumulated in the West a mytho-imaginary currency symbolizing innocence and the promise of princely love, the theme of the female shoe generated a repertoire of songs in the Chinese imagination. Poets write about the shoe (of a bandaged foot) – as an emblem and a depository of patriarchal values. Its tininess – requiring a deformed and damaged foot to fit it – and the vulnerability it denotes, corroborate the virtues imposed by feudal society on the Chinese woman. How many songs sung over the centuries, how much ink poured over the image of the woman's shoe, including most importantly that of Yang Kwei-fei.

Since no Claudélian can determine in which Chinese novel Claudel was touched by the 'forgotten slipper', we fall back on the embroidered shoe of Yang Kwei-fei, the imperial concubine of the Ming. From a constellation of footwear legends lost as a symbol of female sacrifice, one of the most popular of all the centuries has remained: the one that enchants the Ming. The beauty of this idolized and spoiled courtesan is proverbial.³² Yang hangs herself to save the Empire, which is threatened on all sides by rebellious troops, who demand the head of the favorite, accused of bringing about the misfortunes of the Empire:

After the death of Yang Kwei-fei, who had to hang herself to appease the rebellion, an old woman entered the temple who had been sheltering the rulers during the last hours of the tragedy, and 'on the steps of the altar she sees a small embroidered shoe, then a silk stocking fallen from the enchanting foot of the victim'. She picks them up respectfully and carries them away. (Gadoffre 351)³³

After the legend of the daughter of Master Bell, Gadoffre resorts to that of Yang Kwei-fei by quoting De Morant to shed light on the mythical terrain from which the *Soulier* draws its inspiration. Note that this moving story signed by De Morant, which seems to clarify the origins of the work, was published two years earlier as an article.³⁴ However, neither Gadoffre nor De Morant was the first to introduce this legend. It is presented to the French

32 In ancient China an empress and four imperial concubines were ranked hierarchically, the first being kwei-fei (precious concubine).

33 Georges Soulié de Morant, *La passion de Yang Kwé-feï, favorite impériale, d'après les anciens textes chinois*. Paris: L'Édition d'art, 1924, cited by Gilbert Gadoffre.

34 See the article published in the *Mercure de France* (September 1922, 439-478).

readership via its Japanese adaptation under the name of Yokiki, thanks to the esteemed Japanist Lafcadio Hearn. Despite an unfortunate typographical error on the very name of Yang Kwei-fei in the French translation, Hearn's text has the merit of having introduced the legend:

I would also like to be better informed about the Emperor Genso's butterflies; he forced them to choose his loves! [...] The Emperor had a beautiful garden where he invited all his friends to join him and refresh themselves [...] He also invited the women most famous for their beauty. [...] But when the Emperor saw Yokiki, whom the Chinese called Yang-Kwei-Tei [sic], he no longer allowed the butterflies to choose in his place, which, moreover, brought him bad luck, because the graceful Yokiki caused him very serious trouble. (Hearn 1909, 250)

The Japanese variant adds to the Chinese legend to crystallize the sublime image of the woman-object, who is to be sacrificed. Coming from Cinderella, this legend, transcended from the Chinese (and Japanese) imagination leaves its mark on the *Soulier* to signify the sacrificed woman (the missing one) and her shoe (which remains) as a witness to the disappearance.

The archetype of *Bouvier et Tisserande*

The scholars' bold recourse to the repertoires of Chinese myths and legends in search of the *Soulier's* mother image is not controversial, as Claudel more or less affirms his source. After Cinderella and the 'forgotten slipper', he revealed many years later another piece of the puzzle in an address given on 23 March 1944 during a gala in front of an audience of railway men:

The subject of the *Soulier de satin* is that of Chinese legend, the two stellar lovers who each year after long wanderings come to confront each other, without ever being able to join up, on either side of the Milky Way' (Autrand 93).

Here 'the Chinese legend of the two stellar lovers' is called *Bouvier et Tisserande*. It tells the tragedy between a cattle boy named Niu Lang and a fairy wizard called Qi xingnu. Their alliance would have transgressed the matrimonial code of Heaven; the couple is separated by divine force and condemned to see each other once a year on the seventh day of the seventh month, without ever being able to join up. If the reader sees a loaded reference to the lost female shoe drawn from the legends of Cinderella,

Yang Kwei-fei, Yokiki, what connotative enrichment does the reference to *Bouvier et Tisserande* bring?

In the various rehabilitations of this legend by modern societies over the centuries, the superhuman sacrifice shown by the Weaver (the titular *Tisserande*) in an infinite wait to see the cattle boy (*Bouvier*) is transmitted from generation to generation:

He was about to reach Shokujo, at the gates of the Kingdom, when the Empress put an end to this pursuit. She removed a gold pin from her hair and threw it between the two lovers. At the same moment, the hairpin turned into a wild river. A wide and tumultuous river that no human would think of crossing. The cattle boy placed his children on the bank and entered the water. [...] On the other side, Shokujo, helpless, was sobbing with pain [...]. Feeling deeply sad, her song rose above the rough water. (Bergeron 54-55)

Fervently revered in oral literature, this legend signifies immutable love and integrity, ennobled in the ordeal of separation. It connotes the sense of sacrifice to which the *Soulier* refers: the pain of the separation from the lover from which the woman suffers. Thus the Chinese imagination takes to its heart the separation of the lovers, which, instead of weakening or altering their love, is supposed to strengthen the couple. Between the sobs of *Tisserande* and the heartfelt cry of Fuzhou's lover, who languishes following the separation with the beloved (Claudel), there is only a small step to make. Although distant, this heartbreaking memory of Fuzhou cuts across *Tisserande's* suffering: the embodiment of the ideal of love rocked by 'the descendants of the Dragon' (the Chinese people). It is to this unattainable happiness that repels every human of the profane world that are dedicated, from ancient China to modern China, the ideals of love:

I allow you to see your children again and Kengyu the cattle boy. Once, every you can join them. The seventh day of the seventh lunar month [...]. At the dawn of the seventh day of the seventh lunar month, a fine drizzle falls on the Earth. It is the tears of the *Tisserande* who, tenderly clutching her children and her husband against her, weep for that short moment of happiness that is granted her. (Bergeron 62-64)³⁵

35 In the modern version of the legend, *Tisserande* embraces her children and the husband instead of seeing them on the other side of the Milky Way.

The longevity of a love that survives the test of the separation of lovers, dismissed by the divine force as much as by the human force, forms the basis of this legend. The borrowing from tragedy in *Bouvier et Tisserande* lies in this lifetime fidelity to see (even for a moment) the beloved, who is consumed by the ideal of love. Claudel's reference to the archetype of Tisserande for the self-denial of women takes on its full meaning here.

It is not surprising that such a languor is seen by some Claudel scholars as a reference to the stormy residence of the poet in Fuzhou: 'in the entangled imbroglio of deceptions, invented by the King of Spain, Rodrigue and the Actress to deceive each other, there may be the reflection, if not the transfer, of lived biographical episodes' (Maëstre 52). And others are quick to point out the 'fault' committed by the poet:

in relation to a real event borrowed from his lived experience and already used, fifteen years previously, in a confidential, openly autobiographical work, a transposition of the drama of love-passion lived in Fuzhou (Hue 13-14).

The passions of Fuzhou do not resurface only in the *Soulier*; this reminiscence also serves as an axis in other works such as *L'Homme et son désir* (1921), especially the agitated and feverish dark nights suffered by the man struggling with his tenacious insomnia:

it is the eternal dance of Nostalgia, Desire and Exile, that of the captives and the abandoned lovers, the one that for whole nights leads those tormented by insomnia to walk back and forth on their verandah [...]. We are close to a certain night of paroxysm in Fuzhou [...] and in *Le Soulier de satin*. (Wasserman 115)³⁶

This passion enriched with the personal episode in Fuzhou appears in several works and forms the background of the *Soulier*, which also draws on other oriental sources. Of his years spent in Japan, Claudel, the playwright in love with mysticism, ostensibly adheres to the Noh genre (Kawanabe 205-218; Mayaux 145-163)³⁷ whose form is present in the *Soulier*, especially at the end of the play where the Claudelian mysticism merges with musical singing.

³⁶ Paul Claudel, *La Danse des morts*, cited by Michel Wasserman.

³⁷ In the Noh genre, the penchant for religious mystery makes it all the more appealing to Claudel.

At first glance the *Soulier de satin* does not relate to the Eastern sphere, with its Christian protagonists in a world of Spanish conquistadors. Quite the contrary, if we look behind its screens. Its borrowing from the Western world, such as in the decor, the site, the god, and the piety of the protagonists are only part of the staging. Composed on a background of lived experience in Fuzhou, this piece is anchored in several themes that come from the Chinese imagination. In this sense, Claudel and his emulators remain essential examples in the corpus of France-Asia crossings by the transcultural character of their works, where the oriental universe serves as a conceptual foundation. For the biographical displacement of Claudel, central to the creation of the *Soulier*, offers an emblematic case from a French author. If Claudel, Loti, and Segalen, to name only the best known, proclaim themselves travelers of the East whose works inspire authenticity, others, who have never set foot there, also contribute to this corpus.

The Oriental fortune of *Comment Wang-Fô fut sauvé*

This novella by Marguerite Yourcenar is another example of the corpus of cultural crossing. Its belonging to the literature of the Levant seems indisputable both thematically and imaginatively, especially since the work is related to a Taoist tale.³⁸ Under the cover of the Taoist world, the life of an imperial painter and the veneration of his disciple in the ancient Han era are presented. As an apology for Taoist wisdom through the fate of the painter Wang-Fô, the Taoist-descended narrative is accompanied by a touch of the marvelous, where the old painter flies off into the horizon that he paints and the disciple rises from the dead. From the backdrop borrowed from the Taoist world to utterances drawn from Chinese figurative rhetoric, the content of the text ostensibly displays its belonging to the Eastern world. In fact, based on the five components of nature – emblematic of the Chinese imagination – the mimesis of the oriental universe in Yourcenar's narrative is flawless:

The old painter Wang-Fô and his disciple Ling wandered along the roads of the kingdom of Han. They were advancing slowly, for Wang-Fô stopped at night to contemplate the stars, the day to look at the dragonflies. [...]

38 Taoism has long been introduced to and translated in Europe. See on this, Léon de Rosny (*Le taoïsme*, Paris: E. Leroux, 1892).

They were poor because Wang-Fô traded his paintings for a ration of millet porridge and disdained the silver coins.³⁹ (Yourcenar 11)

The kingdom to which these evocations refer, the mentions of the 'kingdom of Han', 'the old painter Wang-Fô', 'to contemplate the stars', 'to look at the dragonflies' frees the reader from the Western imagination. Wang-Fô's harmonious fusion with nature is akin to Taoism, although one can sense that disdain for money is more akin to Confucianism, a concurrent school to the Taoists.

From the earliest evocations, throughout the story, common places of the Chinese imagination are inserted into the universe of protagonists: 'Mountain under the snow', 'rivers in spring', 'face of the moon' (Yourcenar 11). The imprint of the Taoist world is accentuated as the text goes on: 'Wang-Fô dreamed of portraying a princess of old playing the lute under a willow' (Yourcenar 14). The lute, referring to the pipa (or bipa)⁴⁰ and symbolizing traditional music, just as referring to the weeping willow⁴¹ serves to flesh out an oriental background. Yourcenar would not have mentioned them except to break with the Western imagination. Such knowingly arranged references continue:

The soldiers made Wang-Fô pass through innumerable square or circular rooms whose form symbolized the seasons, the cardinal points, the male and the female, longevity, the prerogatives of power (Yourcenar 17).

The complementary harmony composed of Yang with its opposite Yin, such as day and night, sun and moon, fire and water, one being masculine and the other feminine, refers to the cyclical alternation of the universe. Hence the complementary pairs of images, such as the square room and the circular room, the four seasons and the cardinal points, the male and the female, are part of a continual effort to drive the Western reader's imagination toward the Eastern world. Alongside this ingeniously arranged expression, other elements are lacking, suggesting gaps, and struggling to camouflage failings: 'The Heavenly Master sat on a throne of jade, and his hands were wrinkled like those of an old man, although he was barely twenty years old' (Yourcenar 18). Although jade, like emerald, represents stones prized by the

39 The extracts come from the Gallimard edition of 1999.

40 The Chinese musical instrument, dated from the 2nd century BC, which has been popular since the Tang dynasty.

41 From its original name *Salix babylonica* (originally from China).

Chinese, in the same way diamonds are in the West, Chinese historiography does not confirm that the throne of the emperors was made of jade,⁴² but rather wood in ancient times and golden for the Qing. As for the evocation of 'wrinkled hands' attached to the Son of the Dragon, it may appear crude, even if many emperors were drained in the prime of life due, among other things, to the millenarian protocol of cohabitation maintained with hundreds of courtesans, if not more.⁴³

Another imprint of Taoism is the tragic tone that permeates Yourcenar's narrative. Following the esthetics of Zhuang Zi (the father of Taoism), tragedy is the compassion for the righteous man ruined by others (Jiang 2007, 55). This inheritance lives in Wang-Fô, the tortured one at the moment of having his eyes bored out by the Emperor:

Wang began by tinting pink the tip of the wing of a cloud that rested on a mountain. [...] The jade pavement became singularly damp, but Wang-Fô, absorbed in his painting, did not notice that he was working while sitting in the water. The frail canoe swollen beneath the painter's brushstrokes now occupied the whole foreground of the silk scroll. The rhythmic noise of the oars suddenly rose in the distance, swift and lively like a flapping wing. [...] For a long time, the red iron destined for Wang's eyes had lain extinguished on the executioner's fire. (Yourcenar 24-25)

The touch of the marvelous that extinguishes the executioner's red-hot iron comes from Taoist tragedy, used here to rescue the old painter, who has been ruined by others. To the question of how Wang-Fô was saved, the answer would be: by Taoist thought. The very title of the novella gives a clear hermeneutical explanation of Taoist tragedy, which culminates in the harmonious fusion of man with nature:

The scroll completed by Wang-Fô remained on the coffee table. A boat occupied the whole foreground. It was moving away little by little, leaving behind a thin wake that closed on the still sea. Already, no one could see the faces of the two men sitting in the boat. (Yourcenar 26)

From a Taoist perspective, Wang-Fô merges with his painting and his painting fuses with nature. The duality composed of concrete/abstract, light/dark constitutes the axis of Yourcenar's story. Using the concrete as a metaphor

42 Called Long Yi (Dragon Chair).

43 During the Qing era, Emperor Courtesan competitions were held every three years.

to explain the abstract, Taoism, in its attempt to interpret the origin of the universe, signifies the truth (Cheng 2009, 4). It gives meaning to the cognitive abstract idea through the concreteness of an image. In other words, borrowing an image to capture meaning (Jiang 2007, 24-25) is the path of Taoism. In a counter-argument, Taoism advocates that meaning can be felt only through the heart; it falls apart in its transmission in language (Jiang 2007, 28): 'If the Tao (truth) could be communicated, said Chuang Tse, the husband would communicate it to his wife and the father to his child'⁴⁴ (Jing 1929, 10). Under the guise of the Meng-Long (equivocal/ambiguous) referring to the real/unreal antagonism, present/absent, covered/discovered (Jiang 2007, 66), the Taoist school advocates harmony between man and his integration into nature (Jiang 2007, 73), a harmony fully incorporated into Yourcenar's text. Thus Wang-Fô is saved thanks to the boat he paints, the boat emerges from the water he paints, and the water thus painted creates the sea.

The unknown oriental genesis of the work

Out of an important body of works published by Yourcenar, only the *Mémoires d'Hadrien*, *L'œuvre au noir*, and *Nouvelles orientales* have been translated into Chinese, another revealing sign of how this collection belongs to the corpus which interests us. It is the same story on the French side, which takes interest in the Taoist inspiration of the collection. As evidence, Yourcenar's words on the provenance of her new 'Taoist apologue from Old China'⁴⁵ (Poignault 174) were systematically relayed by Western scholars who do not deign to demonstrate its genesis (Laude 83). It would thus be a transcription of a fable, a Taoist apologue. What is it really? My research on Chinese and Japanese tales and legends of all eras, published in the original language or in translation (*Contes en peinture*)⁴⁶ cannot identify any mother-text for Yourcenar's novella, apart from little bits and pieces of reminiscences in a prototype of tales focused on the representation of the world through painting. Thus my ambitions to find the mother-text are immediately frustrated.

44 The philosophy of Zhuang Zi, cited by Jing Yinyu.

45 Sandra Beckett, 'La réécriture pour enfants de *Comment Wang-Fô fut sauvé*', Rémy Poignault & al. (eds.).

46 For example, this book contains 300 apologies, legends, and Chinese myths, but I have not found any that could serve as a source text for Yourcenar.

As an alternative, I turned to stories about painting in order to highlight some invariant features. The *Portrait of an Ugly Man* offers a beautiful illustration. It reads: 'An ugly man thinks himself beautiful. He asks a painter to make a portrait of him. The painter paints several and all these portraits, according to the man, are lacking. He blames the painter for having made him ugly in the portrait' (Ma & Zhang 1996, 90-92, my translation). The antagonism between the ugly man and the painter recalls that between Wang-Fô and the Emperor, but in the opposite direction. For the punishment that Wang-Fô merits is not to have failed to embellish but to have deceived the emperor on the bitterness or ugliness of the real world:

You made me believe that the sea was like the vast sheet of water spread over your canvases, so blue that a stone falling into it can only change into sapphire, that women would open and close like flowers [...]. You lied to me, Wang-Fô, you old impostor: the world is only a mass of confused spots, thrown onto the void by a senseless painter, ceaselessly erased by our tears. (Yourcenar 20-21)

This antagonistic duality between the beautiful and the ugly appears in most of the tales that bear on the lives of painters. Thus Yourcenar's text is more a quintessential abstraction of Taoist fundamentals than an imitation of a particular tale. The analysis of various repertoires of Chinese and Japanese legends continues to reinforce our feeling. In this sense, *Le Plus grand peintre* (Solet 77)⁴⁷ offers another example of a prototype:

His name was Ku K'ai-Chih and he was a famous painter in China; the great lords came from everywhere to have their portrait, or that of their wife. They paid him a lot, Ku did not want for anything. (Solet 80)

It was said that Wang-Fô had the power to give life to his paintings by a last touch of color that he added to their eyes. The farmers came to beg him to paint a watchdog, and the lords wanted from him pictures of soldiers. (Yourcenar 15)

It is unfortunate that our attempts to retrace the original version of this Chinese tale have been unsuccessful. Despite this, the similarities between its French translation and Yourcenar's text are palpable. Beyond the innate

47 Grouped under the heading 'Three Strange Tales', and originating from the provinces of Shandong and Fujian, these tales remind us of those of Pu Songling.

differences of any translation, the French version places the reader in a universe similar to that of the imperial painter Wang-Fô, with from the outset, the set tone, the revered status of the painter and the setting in the ancient era. Beside this similar textual background, certain statements overlap too. In the Chinese tale ‘the daughter of her neighbor [was] *frail as a reed*’ (Solet 80, my emphasis); with Yourcenar ‘Ling’s wife was “*frail like a reed*”’ (Yourcenar 12, my emphasis). As promising as they may be, such similarities are more fortuitous than signs of pastiche. Anchored in ‘a legendary soil’ (Autrand 93)⁴⁸ of the same type, the statements of the two texts draw on identical images. In any case, these tales that relate the vicissitudes of a painter come together in the transcription of the real world into painting. Moreover, Yourcenar had not gone through all the Taoist tales before creating her own; they still had to be translated into French. A fortiori, her lack of contact with Asia, and China in particular, as well as her non-familiarity with the Chinese language forced her to work from translated documents. All these aspects come together to explain that the resemblances come from the transformation of Taoist quintessence and not by copying a particular tale.

Where is the Taoist background to be found then? It culminates according to Anne-Yvonne Julien in the very title of the novella, notably the ambivalence contained in the past participle ‘saved’:

the ambivalence of the ‘saved’ participle that refers as much to the process of the ‘saving’ of a character at risk in a ‘romantic’ context as to the journey towards the ‘salvation’ of a being whose journey deserves to be thought about (Julien 121).

This statement amounts to half a truth. Admittedly, the title turns out to be a promising vein, the Taoist heritage is channeled not in the participle ‘saved’, I believe, but rather in the choice of the name Wang-Fô, which is very emblematic in the Chinese imagination. Ranked among the most popular in the Register of Family Names, that ‘Wang’ is attributed to the protagonist as a surname is not surprising; but it is the name Fô which denotes the oriental genesis of the short story.

Since time immemorial, this name, whose origin goes back to a thousand-year-old legend has enjoyed popularity among boys:

48 To borrow Michel Autrand’s expression.

According to legend, the Emperor Ming-Ti lived in a dream, a man of gigantic stature whose face had the color and brilliance of gold. When he awoke, he consulted his ministers on the meaning this dream could have. Now, among his counsel, was a character who, no doubt, had traveled or, at least, had been in contact with merchants from India: he told the emperor that in the West [India and Tibet], a genius named Fô was held in great honor, and whose statue, of considerable size, had a gold-colored face. (Myrial 1903, 291)

First published in 1903 in the *Mercure de France*, this story might possibly have escaped the attention of Yourcenar. But that is not so. The ostentatious use of this name in metropolitan literature since the eighteenth century could not have escaped her attention. For in its oriental frenzy the metropolitan literary world was already aware that the name Fô meant fortune, luck, and happiness. Francis Jacob confirms this: 'It is by the name of Fô that is designated, in the vast majority of writings relating to the Far East in the eighteenth century, Sakyamuni Buddha' (Jacob 30). The popularity of this name is further confirmed by Thomas-Simon Gueullette who, in his reproduction of the prototype from the *Arabian Nights*, created the *Aventures merveilleuses du mandarin Fum-Hoam*. No doubt Gueullette took this name from *La Chine illustrée* by Father Athanasius Kircher, which reveals a different version of the origin of the name Fô: 'we find certain birds in China that we do not see in other kingdoms [...] this royal bird that he [they] call Fum Hoam [...]. The male is called Fum and the female Hoam' (Gueullette 833). Fô and its variant Fu converge toward the standard Mandarin Fu to mean fortune/happiness, as we mentioned above. As erudite as she was, and a proven historian whose talents are clearly shown throughout the magisterial *Mémoires d'Hadrien*, Yourcenar knowingly chooses the name Fô for the mytho-cultural connotation and the sociolinguistic denotation that it contains.

I will limit myself at this stage of my study to the Eastern genesis of the short story. Although I have not been able to retrace the mother tale on which the story is modeled, I have succeeded, on the other hand, in demonstrating how it intersects with the East in terms of its conception, its references, its content, and its themes. The analysis of these three works means that even if they are the creation of French masters, consecrated canonically, addressing at first sight the French readership, they do not in any way renounce the oriental background in which they are anchored. Admittedly, such an osmosis would need to be confirmed with many other cases of

French writers and their works. Nevertheless, the three works analyzed remain prototypical examples of France-Asia trans-literary connections. For the Orient does not serve as an exotic decoration or ornament, but as an innate attribute from which the work is conceived. What is more, with Loti and Claudel, the work is enriched by a biographical experience in the Eastern land. The mimesis of the Orient realized in these three works must therefore be apprehended from the transcultural approach, which would be the keystone for the methodological approach to Francophonie in the East.

Composed of different components and different materials, the French heritage as we have just mentioned is an integral part of the corpus of France-Asia crossings. From the intimate writings of the agents of the French Eastern Empire to the French publishing houses displaced in Asia, through the fictional works of Loti, Claudel, and Yourcenar, the various parts treated in this chapter will have value as examples that illustrate the other direction of the France-Asia transfer. Finally, from the fugitive appearance of a mystified Orient in the Middle Ages, to the major expeditions carried out in the nineteenth century, not to mention the refinement shown by the readership of the metropolis of the twentieth century, the evolution of the Orient in the French imagination bears witness to the penetration of the East into the European spirit.

Conclusion: towards a Francophonie of cohabitation

The history of France in Asia

The reconsideration of an East-Asian Francophonie beyond Indochina requires an overall examination of Francophone manifestations in all Asian countries. Such an examination must respect in a chronological manner the historical events that occurred on the continent. Accordingly, the Indochinese Union no longer represents the origin of French civilization in Asia; what is more, the history of France in Asia cannot be reduced to the history of French Indochina. On the contrary, this history unfolds in each of the Asian countries that encountered French civilization. Since the journeys to Asia initiated by the Société des Missions-Étrangères of Paris in the seventeenth century, combined with the evangelization carried out by the Compagnie de Jésus, France wrote the first pages of the ups and downs of its salvation mission in the East. Commercial missions immediately followed the lead of other missions to enjoy the glory days of the East India Company. Since then French history and the history of Asia intersect through the spread of French civilization on the continent.

It was the time when France placed its bets on the Indies and the Cathay Empire by founding the first fiefdoms in places that formerly were only part of the imagination. From this emerged in Pondicherry, Shanghai, and other places, the foundations for a Francophone milieu. The Macau-Pondicherry-Canton-Shanghai-Indochina-Guangzhouwan itinerary not only encompasses the key sites for France in Asia, but above all it testifies chronologically to the cultures that opened up to France before Indochina did. France in these places is extensively discussed in the first two chapters, through the appearance of the arsenals (Fuzhou, Yokosuka, and Yokohama), French schools (Tong Wenguan, the French School of Shipbuilding at Fuzhou), the university (*L'Aurore*), and French newspapers (*L'écho de Chine*). Until now, the French heritage in these places has been generally obscured, omitted, and removed from the French-speaking world, banished from Francophonie and absent from Francophone studies. It would be naïve to believe that this study will be enough to put an end to this equivalence, which is anchored in ways of thinking, between Francophonie in Asia and Indochina. Far from it.

The limitation and also the deficiency of the present work is that, on the one hand, it is only on the brink of a reassessment of the issue of Eastern

Francophonie, spurred by the transcultural, and on the other, my research does not extend to all civilizations with a history of links to France. Paradoxically, this is also the strength of this study, for the Chinese case alone is enough to show that thinking of France's presence in Asia by reducing it to the sole example of Indochina is a position that can no longer hold. Such an observation leads the debate to an essential question: How to identify and recognize Francophone cultural elements within sovereign cultures? This foregrounds my historiography-based approach. It is again historical facts that guide the demonstration of French colonial offshoots in various ports, concessions, and territories in Asia, which have become the cradles of French anchorages or fiefdoms beyond Indochina. Through the installation of French interests in these cities, such as arsenals, foundries, hospitals, and universities, French *savoir-faire* was transmitted, and as part of that, the French language was also installed, in conditions that gave birth to the first Francophone Asians.

In addition, the Francophone reality I have noted on a linguistic and literary level in various countries explains the presence of Asian literatures of French expression. The acquisition of the French language is based on cultural transfer. Thus, the new perspective on the Francophone phenomenon must take into account the various forms in which the French-speaking Asian world survives, which has a different nature and degree of Francophone culture, hence the primacy of the transcultural approach. This methodological approach explains not only the Francophone elements that survive in these places, but also the French-language works that come from these non-Francophone literatures. The fundamental challenge of the transcultural is to denounce the concepts that previously held sway, and which were accepted unquestioningly. The deconstruction of these *a priori* concepts shatters the claim that 'colonization creates Francophonie', since the premise of the Francophone Asian phenomenon is not colonization.

Asia as a Francophone zone?

Compared to established Francophone areas, such as sub-Saharan Africa, the Maghreb, and others, Asia as a whole is typically excluded from the French-speaking world, with the exception of Indochina. So to speak about the Francophone elements on this continent always raises doubts. In this unfortunate situation, some places receive more attention than others, for example India, whose past in relation to France is now the subject of studies by a group of researchers; but for others, exchanges and contacts with France have until now remained ignored. This state of affairs highlights

the fact that Francophone studies relating to Asia are still confined to Indochina. This is particularly evident in the United States, where the field of Francophone studies is flourishing with relation to established Francophone zones; and the Asian continent is not one of them. As proof of the 4,140 existing university institutions,¹ there are barely two seminars on the phenomenon of Francophonie in Asia.² In other words, such a low, negligible percentage speaks volumes about the lack of attention by American researchers to the 'Asian' zone, and highlights the great need for work to be done in the future. The Indochinese entity alone has managed so far to eclipse several centuries of French-speaking Asian history.

The challenge of highlighting the historical past and present reality of Francophonie in Asia is to answer the following question: Should Francophonie be limited to the geographical areas of the former colonies? To this, the 'Manifesto', which is meant to be historic, provides an edifying answer faced with the movement of the Francophone world: 'the emergence of a world literature, consciously affirmed, open to the world, transnational, signs the death certificate for Francophonie'.³ Would it die (in ways of thinking), this idea of Francophonie based on the colonial past and divided into geographical areas? If so, this redraws the maps of the Francophone world that we have seen so far, which includes the continent of Asia.

Where is Asian Francophone literature going?

Even if the Francophone world of the twentieth century, grafted as it was onto metropolitan France, were to die, as the 'Manifesto' declares, some posthumous problems would remain. First, where does Francophone literature go from there? For, following the death of this form of Francophonie, the dichotomy formerly established between Francophone literature (from the colonies) and non-Francophone literature, falls out of use. This consequently raises another question: does 'Francophone literature' equate to the literature of a French-speaking country? If so, how to classify, for example, Chinese or Japanese literature of French expression, since they do not come from a French-speaking country? To see more clearly the connotations and especially the correlations between notions such as 'colonization',

1 The site www.infoplease.com lists all the public and private universities in the United States (2000-2017 Sandbox Networks, Inc., publishing as Infoplease).

2 Entitled 'De l'Extrême-Orient aux Antipodes: représentation francophone de l'Asie et du Pacifique' and 'Francophonie & Orient', the seminars are taught respectively in Macalester College and Stony Brook University.

3 Manifesto 'Pour une "Littérature-monde" en français', *Le Monde*, 16 March 2007.

'Francophonie', 'French literature', and 'French language', let us reformulate the question from another perspective. Does the official language of a country determine the language chosen by its citizen-authors? The answer is obviously in the negative. Because one can be Chinese, but writing in French, or Québécois, writing in English.⁴ Therefore we are brought to the brink of an unprecedented observation: in the trans-literary context, the country, French-speaking or not, does not impose any paradigm on its literature. A national literature can be expressed in other forms and in other languages, as has been shown in Chapters IV and V. If Francophone literature is freed from its initially circumscribed (colonial) sphere, what about the classically delineated Francophone world? A fundamental change in thinking on its conceptualization and manifestation is therefore essential. We return to the 'Manifesto', which pronounces the death certificate of this world determined by colonization.

Studies announcing renewal

It goes without saying that a single study, as incomplete as it is limited, such as this, cannot hope to shed all the light on the problematic surrounding Francophonie in Asia. Moreover, several aspects mentioned in this work, because they go beyond the initial framework envisaged by our research, have not been dealt with. Nevertheless, these elements will need to be clarified in the future in the hope of better understanding the Francophone ramifications in Asia. Let me give some examples. First, the contribution of French publishing networks in the acquisition of French heritage in several non-French-speaking regions should be considered. Who are the primary French publishing houses to have operated in Asia? How does their appearance shape, favor, and create the Francophone community? How does their mode of operation influence and organize networks of French publications, which in turn circumscribe a French-speaking readership? In other words, how do these houses, through their publishing credos, their mode of dissemination and advertising, channel and orient an emerging Francophone milieu in Asia?

The publishing world is obviously not the only player involved in examining the Francophone phenomenon in Asia. Other actors or promoters of French influence are also absent from our study for the same reasons. First of all, the Alliance Française, its contribution to the spread of French culture, particularly in the education of a French-speaking readership throughout

4 I refer here to the cases of Ying Chen and Yann Martel.

Asia, cannot be neglected. Its network of libraries covering the major cities of the continent is a rich vein. Thus the various activities undertaken by the organization leave imprints within local societies that promote French culture. Without listing any other actors and stakeholders to be considered, it is important to note that the understanding of Francophone life in Asia relies on immense studies of historical, linguistic, and literary elements that attest to the cultural reality of Francophone life in the whole continent.

Finally, I will say that the primary ambition of this study is to highlight the existence of Francophone elements in Asia outside of Indochina. The distinctiveness of the Francophone Asian phenomenon cannot be apprehended by the trilogical approach applied to the former colonies, hence the recourse to the transcultural approach. I am convinced that the case of Asia serves as a prologue to a long reflection on the concepts of 'Francophone zone', 'Francophone literature', and indeed of 'Francophone world'.

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