Third Person Pronouns in Indigenous Chinese Texts and Translated Chinese Texts: the westernization of modern written Chinese

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ABSTRACT
The main purpose of this paper is to define the pattern of development of Chinese third person pronouns in terms of gender and number markings, based on the data from indigenous Chinese texts (newspapers) and translated Chinese texts (the Bible) from three specific periods: (1) 1904-1919, (2) 1952-1953 and (3) 2002-2003. Secondly, it will evaluate the role of 'grammatical borrowing' in the Europeanization process of language change through a systematic comparison between indigenous Chinese and translated Chinese texts, the latter showing the foreign influence. This empirical study asserts that there are great discrepancies in the use of third person pronouns between the two kinds of texts, suggesting that the translated works are a much more open 'system' directly influenced by foreign languages during the translation process that allows grammatical borrowing to take place. It is a first step in the systematic analysis of the reasons behind those changes.

KEYWORDS: translation, language change, Chinese, pronouns.

1. Introduction

Research on the 'Westernization' or 'Europeanization' of Chinese grammar (Gunn 1991; Hsu 1994; Kubler 1985; Li 1962; Tse 1990; Wang 1984, 1985, 1990) widely claims that the evolution of the masculine *ta/tamen* (他 / 他們), the feminine *ta/tamen* (她 / 她們) and the neuter *ta/tamen* (它 / 它們，牠 / 牠們) (the three main forms of Chinese third person pronouns currently in use) is due to a process of Europeanization that has occurred especially through English–Chinese translation. Such studies list this gender distinction in the third person pronoun as the invention by Liu Bannong. It is regarded as one of many linguistic changes that resulted from borrowing in modern written Chinese. The latter has since the May Fourth Movement in 1919 changed its base from *wenyan* (classical literary Chinese) to *baihua* (written vernacular Chinese), and been subject to considerable influence from foreign languages (Chen 1999:82-88). Other features of the Europeanized Chinese grammar include the lengthening and complication of sentences due to the increased use of pronominal modifiers (Hsu 1994:174), embedded structures (Gunn 1991:231), passive voice (Gunn 1991:219-220; Hsu 1994:177-179; Kubler 1985:88-98), and conjunctions (Gunn 1991:275-276).

While the evolutionary development of *ta* and *tamen* remains unexplored, Peyraube (2000:1) criticises studies of the Westernization of Chinese on the ground that they simply follow Wang Li's thesis from the 1940s according to which the Europeanization of Chinese grammar had been an important event in the history of grammar. Peyraube asserts that Wang Li merely cites westernized sentences as examples without in-depth analysis of their relationship with the overall historical and linguistic contexts. Peyraube observes that:

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> In fact, former studies on the westernization of Chinese grammar have a common and crucial weakness: no systematic comparison of the language from the pre-contact period with that of the post-contact one has been made. Moreover, sentences by writers famous for their westernized style are often cited as examples of new grammatical features, without any information of how representative these sentences are, or how they are to be seen in relation to the whole range of Chinese sentence structures (2000:2).

I argue that these past studies on the Westernization of Chinese have simply pointed out the significance of the issue, and agree with Peyraube's point on the need for diachronic studies in the field. More specifically, the drastic changes to the Chinese language in the past century call for the individual investigation of new linguistic features through empirical testing of texts from various genres. There is a clear need to develop a more nuanced understanding of what, to date, is often labeled the 'Europeanization of Chinese'.

2. Aims of the study

As an attempt at filling the gap in this area, the present study embraces two aims. Firstly, it aims to chart the development of the use of Chinese third person pronouns in terms of gender and number markings. These are the two most obvious grammatical changes to the pronouns *ta* and *tamen* over the past 100 years, and are discussed in relation to three specific periods: (1) 1904-1919, (2) 1952-1953 and (3) 2002-2003. Secondly, the study tries to provide an explanation for pronominal innovations over the three selected periods through a systematic comparison between sets of indigenous Chinese texts (ICT) and translated Chinese texts (TCT). In view of the observation that the gender differentiation of *ta* and *tamen* was introduced to Chinese through translation activity, the role of 'grammatical borrowing' in the Europeanization process of language change, especially through translated works, is specifically evaluated through the development of *ta* and *tamen*.

The first period examined in this study, 1904-1919, represents the pre-change stage. This period starts in 1904 because *Jinghua Ribao*, launched in 1904, is the earliest *Baihua* newspaper available. The period ends in 1919 with the May Fourth Movement, which led to the New Culture Movement that urged a replacement of the classical language *wenyan* by the vernacular *baihua* as the base of the standard written language. The second and third periods represent post-change stages. The second period covers the significant years of 1952-1953 immediately after the founding of the People's Republic of China, during which the Korean War occurred (1950-1953). The third period covers recent times. Such a division into a pre-change and post-change period can be found in other analyses such as the study of Modern Chinese pronouns by Lü & Jiang (1985) in which the late Tang dynasty divides Ancient Chinese and Modern Chinese. Lü & Jiang state: "When a language experiences relatively significant changes within a relatively short time, that time can be divided into a pre-period and a post-period." (1985: preface)

This study establishes the 'official' year for the introduction of gender distinctions to *ta*, a major reform of the pronoun, as the year of 1920. Between 1918-1920 Chinese writers including Zhou Zuoren and Qian Xuantong tried different ways to translate the English words *he* and *she* in their translation works. On 9 August 1920, the linguist Liu Bannong published an article *Ta Zi Wenti* (她字問題) (The Issue of *Ta*) in *Shishi Xinbao* (China Times), promoting the characters of the feminine *ta* (她) and the neuter *ta* (牠) as the equivalents of

she and *it* in English. The gender differentiation of the written form of *ta*, first proposed by Liu Bannong in 1920, emerged against the backdrop of a vast demand for translations of foreign works into Chinese during the 19th and 20th centuries (Tsien 1954), and reflects the fact that many foreign languages, especially English, distinguish gender in pronouns. This innovation, motivated by convenience of English-Chinese translation, happened only one year after the start of the May Fourth Movement in 1919. After that, these two new pronouns started to gain popularity among the May Fourth Movement pioneers. Liu started using these two characters in his famous poems, including the neuter *ta* in '*Ai ta? Hai ta? Chenggong*' [Love it? Harm it? Success], published in 1920, and the feminine *ta* in '*Jiao Wo Ruhe Bu Xiang Ta*' [Tell Me How to Stop Missing Her] in the same year. Meanwhile, Zhou Zuoren used the feminine *ta* in translated works such as *Mai Huochai de Nühai* [The Little Match Girl], also published in 1920.

3. Data and methodology
In order to achieve the above-mentioned aims of establishing the pattern of changes of the pronoun, and determining any Europeanized influence through translation, the data sources for this paper include two categories: indigenous Chinese texts (ICT) and translated Chinese texts (TCT). The ICT are drawn manually from newspapers from the three selected periods:

Period 1   *Jinghua Daily,* 1904-1905 (seven editorial pieces of about 17,000 words and a serialized short novel of about 17,000 words)
Period 2   *People's Daily* and *Fujian Daily*, 1952-1953 (eight editorial pieces of about 17,000 words and a serialized short novel of about 17,000 words)
Period 3   *People's Daily* and *Guangming Daily*, 2002-2003 (11 editorial pieces of about 17,000 words and a serialized short novel of about 17,000 words)

The scope of this data is approximately 100,000 words. There are several reasons that justify the use of newspaper articles as a data source in this study. First, newspapers can be seen as a tool to disseminate news and information of concern to the general public and attract a wide readership. Thus the language of the newspaper influences how language is used in a country. On the other hand, it reflects the current use of language in a country and shows, for example, foreign influences. Newspapers consist of a range of different text genres such as editorials, commentaries, official documents, everyday news stories, features, serialized novels, and jokes. Two different newspaper genres, the editorial and the serialized novel have been selected for study. The editorial is a statement of opinion by the newspaper editor, usually written in an argumentative style using concise and powerful language. The novel is a story written in a narrative style. Both are typical formats run in Chinese newspapers on a frequent or even regular basis. These two different genres were included in order to provide a more balanced picture of the ICT in this study, due to the possibility of uneven distribution of the different gender forms of the third person pronouns across the different genres of the newspaper; it is likely that there are more third person pronouns in a novel than in a commentary editorial.

The TCT representing Europeanized influence is drawn manually from three Chinese versions of the Bible (the Book of Matthew) from the three periods:

Period 1   *Union Version*, 1919
Period 2   *Lü Zhenzhong Version*, 1952
Period 3   *Chinese Contemporary Version*, 2003 – [translation in progress]

The data scope is also approximately 100,000 words. The Bible is a religious work originally written in Hebrew and Greek and now the most translated and best-selling book in the world.

Three Chinese versions of the Book of Matthew in the New Testament represent the TCT in this study. There were two main reasons for my selection of the Chinese versions of the Bible. Firstly, after thorough searches in Australia, Hong Kong and Beijing between 2002-2003, this was the only Western literature translated into Chinese found that had been translated in each of the periods in this study. Secondly, this sacred book is closely linked to the New Culture Movement in China, as well as to the subsequent process of the importation of Western grammar into the Chinese language. Thus, and even though sacred texts are a genre in itself and their translation a complex field of study, the renditions of the Chinese versions of the Bible are a good source for studying the relationship between the Chinese and Western languages. The New Testament of all these three Chinese versions of the Bible, including the Book of Matthew selected for this study, is a translation from the original Greek text. The Book of Matthew is a plain narrative of Jesus' life written in everyday language. This is the main reason I chose the Book of Matthew for analysis.

Following these observations, the study is organised alongside six sets of data. The primary reason for the selection of these sets of data is that all of them, written in the evolving vernacular spoken Chinese *baihua*, present different stages of the overall development of modern written Chinese. More than half of the data is the result of collective work. A newspaper editorial is the product of teamwork and its linguistic features represent the editors' writing style. Two of the three Chinese versions of the Bible selected, the *Union Version* and the *Chinese Contemporary Version*, constitute collective efforts by Western churches in China. Thus they represent the translation style and ideology of groups of missionaries and Christians rather than individuals.

According to the principle that the more occurrences of *ta* and *tamen* there are in an editorial or a novel, the more the pronouns' usage patterns can be revealed, the text with most occurrences of the pronouns were selected. This method ensures that a relatively large number of pronouns is available for accurate and reliable analysis in this study. The Book of Matthew was chosen from among the 27 books of the New Testament for the reasons that it is the first book in the New Testament, and most Christian churches strongly recommend it as a beginner's reading for both Christians and non-Christians to understand the teachings of Jesus. Zhou Zouren also considers it the earliest translated literary work in *baihua*: "The Gospel of Matthew is indeed the earliest piece of 'national language' in literary form, and as affected by Western influence, and I predict that its influence upon the future of our new literary productions will be very great and deep" (Broomhall 1934:6-7). In addition, there are more than twice as many third person pronouns in the Book of Matthew in the three selected Chinese versions of the Bible than in the newspaper corpus.

To be more specific about the collection process based on this principle, except for the first period, in which only one *baihua* newspaper, the *Jinghua Daily*, could be located, I chose two newspapers from the second period (*People's Daily* and *Fujian Daily*) and two from the third period (*People's Daily* and *Guangming Daily*) for my corpus. I first selected about 50 editorial pieces in the second and third periods, manually counted the instances of the third person pronouns in each piece, and then selected those with the most instances. Similarly, I chose several novels published in the newspapers during the second and third periods, and then chose among them the one with the greatest number of pronouns.

The similarities and dissimilarities between the two sets of data in comparison will reveal the route taken by, and the extent of, innovations in the use of the pronouns after they were introduced by Liu in 1920. I believe the newspapers and the religious Biblical texts are comparable for the main reasons that the Book of Matthew is a plain narration of Jesus' life, and both of the text types target a mass readership. However, the specific characteristics of Biblical texts and Bible translation are taken into account. Due to the sacred nature and high status of the Bible, approaches to its translation traditionally emphasise formal correspondence, which produces a word-for-word translation style. This is also due to the fact that the missionary translators were non-native speakers of Chinese (Wonderly 1968:23-26). The results of this study are preliminary and indicative and it would have been desirable to analyse translated newspapers of the same content and period.

For the English translation of examples, the generic *ta* is translated as *he*, *she* and *it* according to context, and the masculine *ta* is translated into *he*, the feminine *ta* into *she*, the neuter *ta* (the inanimate form and animate form) into *it*, and the divine *Ta* into *He*. The generic, masculine, feminine, inanimate neuter *tamen,* and animate neuter *tamen* are translated into *they* (generic), *they* (masculine), *they* (feminine), *they* (inanimate neuter) and *they* (animate neuter) respectively. The translation of the Chinese newspapers is mine. For the examples from the Chinese Bibles, the translations are taken from the English Bible with modifications marked off with brackets. The English Bible I use for translation is the Holy Bible: Chinese/English, Union, New International Version (5th ed.) (2001). Since I am using only one English Bible as the translation, I will abbreviate this Bible as NIV (2001) in the in-text citation throughout this study. Those third person pronouns in the examples that do not agree with their antecedents in number are marked with an asterisk (*).

4. Analysis

The data sources were analysed as follows: firstly, pronominal innovations were traced in the ICT and the TCT, and secondly, a comparative analysis of the two kinds of texts was conducted in order to ascertain differences.

4.1 Indigenous Chinese texts

Table 1 shows the overall distribution of the different forms of *ta* and *tamen* in the Chinese texts over the three selected periods. The total number of *ta* and *tamen* increases from 227 in the first period to 532 in the second period, then drops to 325 in the third period. There are three forms of *ta* and *tamen*, masculine, feminine and neuter. In the first period, all the 227 occurrences are the masculine *ta* and *tamen*. The feminine *ta* and *tamen*, and the neuter *ta* and *tamen* appear in the second and third periods only, with relatively few occurrences.

Table 1: *Distribution of various gender forms of* **ta** *and* **tamen** *in the ICT in the three periods*

3rd person Pronouns	1st Period: 1904-1905	2nd Period: 1952-1953	3rd Period: 2002-2003
Masculine *ta*/*tamen* (他 / 他們)	227 (203/24) (100.0%)	408 (252/156) (76.7%)	276 (234/42) (85%)
Feminine *ta*/*tamen* (她 / 她們)	0	29 (23/6) (5.4%)	28 (28/0) (8.6%)
Neuter *ta* / *tamen* (它 / 它們)	0	95 (76/19) (17.9%)	21 (18/3) (6.4%)
Sub-total	227	532	325
Total	1084		

4.2 Translated Chinese texts

Table 2 shows the overall distribution of different forms of *ta* and *tamen* in the TCTs over the three selected periods. The total occurrences of *ta* and *tamen* increase from 736 in the first period to 1023 in the second period, then decrease to 855 in the third period. There are five gender forms of *ta* and *tamen*: masculine, feminine, inanimate neuter, animate neuter and divine. In the first period, all the 736 occurrences are of the masculine *ta* and *tamen*. The feminine *ta* and *tamen*, the inanimate neuter *ta* and *tamen*, animate neuter *ta* and *tamen*, and the divine *Ta* appear in the second and third periods only, with relatively few occurrences.

Table 2: *Distribution of various gender forms of* **ta** *and* **tamen** *in the TCT in the three periods*

3rd Person Pronouns	1st Period: 1919	2nd Period: 1952	3rd Period: 2003
Masculine *ta/tamen* (他 / 他們)	736 (472/264) (100%)	896 (568/328) (87.6%)	760 (444/316) (88.9%)
Feminine *ta/tamen* (她 / 她們)	0	56 (45/11) (5.5%)	42 (35/7) (4.9%)
Inanimate neuter *ta/tame* 們)	0	44 (39/5) (4.3%)	34 (25/9) (4.0%)
Animate neuter *ta/tamen* (牠 / 牠們)	0	10 (3/7) (1.0%)	7 (2/5) (0.8%)
Divine *Ta* (祂)	0	17 (1.6%)	12 (1.4%)
Sub-total	736	1023	855
Total	2614		

According to Tables 1 and 2 in both the ICT and TCT the overall number of tokens of *ta* and *tamen* rise at first and then fall, and only the masculine form of *ta* and *tamen* (227 occurrences in the ICT and 736 in the TCT) are used in the first period.

There are also some major differences between the uses of *ta* and *tamen* in the ICT and TCT. Four major differences can be summarised as follows. The first difference lies in the number of gender forms. There are five gender forms in the TCT and only three in the ICT. Two extra forms attested in the translated texts are the animate neuter *ta* and *tamen* (牠/牠們) and the divine *Ta* (祂). Gender marking, therefore, is more nuanced in the translated texts. Another reason for the discrepancy is that the two translated texts taken from the second and third periods were published in Hong Kong in which the animate neuter *ta* and divine *Ta* are used. This phenomenon indicates that translation absorbs foreign words due to the literal translation approach that retains the linguistic features of the original. Secondly, the difference lies in the number of occurrences. The number of pronoun occurrences in the TCT exceeds that in the ICT by far. The total number of *ta* and *tamen* in the TCT (2614) is 2.4 times higher than that in the ICT (1084). These disparities between the TCT and the ICT are consistent for each of

the three periods. In the first period, the 736 occurrences in the TCT is 3.2 times higher than the 227 occurrences in the ICT; in the second period, 1023 occurrences is 1.9 times higher than 532 occurrences; and in the third period, 855 occurrences is 2.6 times higher than 325 occurrences. Such observable discrepancies in the two kinds of writing suggest that the translated text may be to some extent influenced by the original text.

Thirdly, the difference lies in the division of gender forms. The gender division among the different forms of *ta* and *tamen* in the translated texts is much clearer than that in the ICT because the referential scope, i.e. the things and people referred to, of different gender forms does not overlap in the former as much as it does in the latter. In the ICT, the overlapping referential scope of different forms of *ta* and *tamen* emerges in the second period. In the newspaper editorials from the 1950s, 24 occurrences of the neuter *ta* and *tamen* refer to 17 human antecedents, despite the fact that the neuter pronoun is defined in *Hanyu Da Cidian* [The Comprehensive Chinese Dictionary of Words and Phrases] (2001:1290) and *Hanyu Da Zidian* [The Comprehensive Chinese Dictionary of Characters] (1987:910) as being used for non-human reference.

The following examples show the inconsistency. In one editorial piece that condemns the American army in the Korean War, both the masculine *tamen* (twelve occurrences) and the neuter *tamen* (six occurrences) refer to the same antecedent *Meiguo qinlüe zhe* (美國侵略者, [American invaders]). Consider some examples utilizing the masculine *tamen* first. All English translations are mine:

1)　　這使賊膽心虛的**美國侵略者**感到萬分驚恐，因而**他們**竟不惜使用各種卑鄙無恥的手段企圖抵賴，企圖把**他們**的血腥罪責推卸得一乾二淨。(*People's Daily*, 1952 May 7)

This made the **American invaders** who have a guilty conscience terribly fearful. So **they [masculine]** resorted to using all kinds of shameful means, attempting to deny and shirk **their [masculine]** responsibility for the crime completely.

2)　　**美國侵略者**愈狡猾，只能證明**他們**做賊心虛，愈加證明**他們**不但是世界安全和正義的極端殘暴的敵人，而且是令人極端憎惡和惡心的含血噴人的妖魔。(*People's Daily*, 1952 May 7)

The increasing cunningness of the **American invaders** only proves that **they [masculine]** have a guilty conscience, and further proves that **they [masculine]** are not only the atrocious enemy of world security and justice, but also demons whose slanderous accusations are nauseating and loathsome.

Now let us consider one example utilizing the neuter *tamen*:

3)　　**美國侵略者們**之所以表現得如此混亂，正足以說明**它們**的滅絕人性的殘暴罪行是如何的不能容於人類，因而**它們**就不得編造出這種前後完全

> 矛盾的胡言亂語，來把**它們**的罪責推卸給「自然原因」或者是潛藏在我國
> 內部的喪盡天良的奸商們暗害中國志願軍戰士的罪行身上。 (*People's Daily*, 1952 May 7)

> Such a confusing performance by the **American invaders** sufficiently illustrates how unacceptable **their [inanimate neuter]** inhuman and brutal crime is to humankind. Therefore **they [inanimate neuter]** cannot but fabricate this sort of conflicting nonsense, in order to shirk **their [inanimate neuter]** responsibility for the crime by attributing it to "natural causes" or a crime perpetrated on the Chinese militia by unconscionable profiteers hidden in our country.

In the following example, both the masculine *tamen* and the neuter *tamen* are used in reference to the American invaders.

> 4)   如今**美國侵略者**竟又把**他們**慣於使用的抵賴罪行、血口噴人的無恥
> 伎倆再一次耍弄出來,這除了在全世界愛好和平人民面前充分暴露出**它們**的
> 的窮兇極惡而又卑鄙齷齪的面目之外,是不會有其他的作用的。 (*People's Daily*, 1952 May 7)

> Now **American invaders** again play **their [masculine]** shameless favourite trick of denying crimes and making malicious attacks. This has no other use besides fully revealing **their [neuter]** atrocious and despicable face to peace-loving people all over the world.

The use of the neuter *ta* and *tamen* here indicates a hatred for the humans to which they refer, possibly serving as a political tool of manipulation as well. Other such references attested in the editorials from the 1950s include *diguozhuyizhe* (imperialists), *feibang* (bandits), *jianshang* (profiteers), etc.

In the TCT, this phenomenon is rare. Infrequent overlapping of different pronominal forms is evident in the second and third periods. In the *Lü Zhenzhun Version* from the second period, eight occurrences of the masculine *ta* and *tamen* are used to refer to the antecedents *mogui* [devil] (three occurrences), *Sadan* [Satan], *wu ling* [evil spirit], *ta de shizhe* [his angels] and *emo* [demons], whereas one occurrence of the neuter *ta* refers to *gui* [demon]. Similarly, in the *Chinese Contemporary Version* from the third period, there is an overlap between the divine *Ta* and the masculine *ta*. While a total of 12 occurrences of the divine *Ta* refer to nine antecedents of 'God', two occurrences of the masculine *ta* also refer to two antecedents of 'God'. These 'spiritual' referents are undefined in the dictionary so their anaphoric nature is difficult to determine. These overlapping phenomena, however, suggest that European ideological influences cannot be clearly established. The use of neuter *ta* may indicate contempt for demons, and the use of divine *Ta* may convey respect for the Christian God, a new concept to Chinese.In sum, compared with the TCT, the overlap between the masculine *ta* and *tamen* and the neuter *ta* and *tamen* in the ICT is more evident in terms of number and gender form, particularly in the second period in this study.

The fourth difference lies in the agreement of number, that is, the number agreement of *ta* and *tamen* with their antecedents. The development of the number markings is an issue of whether the singular *ta* is anaphoric of a singular antecedent, and the plural *tamen* of a plural one. Generally speaking, number marking of the third person pronouns in the TCT is more nuanced than that in the ICT. In the TCT, in relation to the pronoun-antecedent agreement in number, only a few disagreements are attested. There are seven such occurrences of the singular *ta* (six antecedents) indicating antecedents in the plural in the first period, four occurrences (three antecedents) in the second period and one occurrence (one antecedent) in the third period. The plural antecedents represented by the singular *ta* in the first period are *wenshi he Falisairen* [the teachers of the law and the Pharisees], *yedi li de baihehua* [lilies of the field], *gou* [dogs], *tian shang de feiniao* [birds of the air], *gou, zhu* [dogs, pigs] and *lü, lüju* [donkey, colt]. However, these plural antecedents are represented by the plural *tamen* in the second and third periods. Consider the following example from the *Union Version* (UV) from the first period:

5)　　你們看那**天上的飛鳥**、也不種、也不收、也不積蓄在倉裏、你們的天父尚且養活**他** . 你們不比飛鳥貴重得多麼。 (UV (1919), Matthew 6:26)

Look at the **birds of the air**; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds ***[him] [generic]**. Are you not much more valuable than they? (NIV, Matthew 6:26)

Here the 'birds of the air' are anaphorically referred to by the singular *ta*, while in the *Lü Zhenzhong Version* (LV) from the second period, the plural masculine *tamen* is used for number marking:

6)　　你們觀察那**天上底飛鳥**; **牠們**不撒播, 也不收割, 也不收集在倉裏, 你們的天父尚且供養**牠們**; 你們不比**牠們**貴重麼? (LV (1952), Matthew 6:26)

Look at the **birds of the air**; **they [animate neuter]** do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds **them [animate neuter]**. Are you not much more valuable than **they**? (NIV, Matthew 6:26)

The same plural form is used in the Chinese Contemporary Version (CCV) from the third period.

7)　　你們看**天上的飛鳥**: **牠們**不播種、不收割, 也不屯糧入倉, 你們的天父尚且養活**牠們**；你們難道不比飛鳥貴重得多嗎？ (CCV (2003), Matthew 6:26)

Look at the **birds of the air**; **they [animate neuter]** do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds **them [animate neuter]**. Are you not much more valuable than they? (NIV, Matthew 6:26)

This set of examples shows the progression of the number marking in the translated texts over the three selected periods. Similar examples can be found in the comparison of three other verses (Matthew 6:28; Matthew 7:6; and Matthew 21:2-3) in the three Bible versions under study.

I now address the number markings of the third person pronouns in the ICT. A total of 41 occurrences of *ta* in the second and third periods refer to plural antecedents. Consider this example from the first period:

10) 歷代許多的**君相**，如夏朝的桀王，商朝的紂王 [....] 當***他**做牛馬豬狗一般。(*Jinghua Daily*, 1904, Vol. 20, No. 1)

Many **kings and prime ministers** from past dynasties such as King Jie of the Xia dynasty and King Zhou of the Shang dynasty [....] (Others) treat ***him [generic]** like cows, horses, pigs or dogs.

Ta in example 10) is a pivotal object and its deletion is not habitual. Therefore the disagreement in number can be considered natural.

Now consider some examples from the second period:

11) 我對**舊社會**是恨的，我對**國民黨**是仇視的，但我沒勇氣站起來和***它**鬥爭。(*Fujian Daily*, 1952 January 13)

I hate the **old society**; I am hostile towards the **Nationalist Party**. But I don't have the courage to rise up and struggle against ***it [inanimate neuter]**.

12) 報紙上的**重要新聞和政治道理**，我都把***它**記下來，講給農民聽。(*Fujian Daily*, 1952 January 22)

As to the **important news and political principles** in the newspaper, I jotted ***it [inanimate neuter]** all down and told the peasants.

13) 所有參加這些**非法組織**的資本家,都要接受***它**的「考驗」，遵守***它**的「紀律」。***它**經常召開「業務會議」，以「總結經驗, 佈置任務」，以便使***它**所有的成員，在統一的指揮之下，向國家進攻。(*People's Daily*, 1952 February 29)

All capitalists who have joined these **illegal organizations** must accept ***its [inanimate neuter]** "assessments" and observe ***its [inanimate neuter]** "discipline". ***It [inanimate neuter]** often convenes "business meetings" for "summarizing experiences and allocating tasks", so as to gather all ***its [inanimate neuter]** members under the centralized leadership and launch attacks against the country.

In examples (11) and (12), the singular *ta* represents 'double antecedents', namely 'old society/the Nationalist Party' and 'important news/political principles' respectively. Moreover,

ta appears in more grammatical functions, such as the subject, object and possessive, in the second period. In examples (11) and (12), the neuter *ta* appears after prepositions *he* and *ba*. In example (13), among the four instances of the neuter *ta*, the first two instances are placed after verbs, and the third and fourth instances are subjects. The above examples of (10) - (13) taken from the first and second periods of the ICT are all pronoun-precedent disagreement in number. Thus, in terms of frequency, the number agreement of *ta* and *tamen* with their antecedents in the TCT can be considered more nuanced than in the ICT.

5. Discussion

The overall number of instances of *ta* and *tamen* shows an initial increase followed by a decrease in both the ICT and the TCT over the period of 100 years. This tendency in both sub-corpora demonstrates a rising trend in the use of the third person pronouns in the second period. This increased use of *ta* and *tamen* is recognized to be a major change in modern Chinese.

If this changing trend is taken to be a feature of 'Europeanized Chinese grammar', then the Chinese language of the 1950s can be considered the most Europeanized in the past century. The reversal of the tide of Europeanization in the third period is a process that can be likened to a pendulum that swings back to a state of "equilibrium", as suggested by Aitchison (1991:151) and Hoenigswald (1966:33). The term can also be interpreted as a stage of 'correction' that pauses the trend of Europeanization. The change could be due to the resistance by 'purists' in the 1960s and 1970s such as Taiwanese writer Yu Guangzhong, Hong Kong translation theorist Frederick Tsai and in the 1990s, Chinese-ethnologically-specific translation theorists such as Liu Miqing (Chan 2004:32-41).

On the other hand, considering the differences in gender and number markings of *ta* and *tamen* between the ICT and TCT as presented above, two observations can be made: qualitatively, the gender and number markings of the third person pronouns are more explicit, noticeable and regular in the TCT than in the ICT; and quantitatively, the total number of *ta* and *tamen* in the TCT is more than double that in the ICT. The reason for these differences may lie in the fact that the translated works tend to be directly influenced by foreign languages during the translation process. It is likely for the pronominal changes to be established in the TCT at a faster rate than in the ICT.

In my opinion, this state of affairs serves to increase the credibility of 'grammatical borrowing' as a powerful external cause for linguistic change. Since the 19th century, many researchers including Whitney, Meillet (1921, cited in Kubler, 1985:19-20) and Peyraube (2000) have been suspicious of 'borrowing' as a valid cause for grammatical change. Nevertheless, in recent decades, some sociolinguists have been emphasizing the importance of grammatical borrowing. They include Thomason and Kaufman (1988) and Harris and Campbell (1995), among others, who believe that social factors can break all the internal constraints to make possible a language change. 'Fashion', 'foreign influence' and 'social need' are believed to be three sociolinguistic causes of language change (Aitchison 1991:105-123), and the social landscape in China during the past 100 years undoubtedly embraced the latter two causes. In order to facilitate the transfer of knowledge from the West, more than 10,000 titles of Western books, in addition to numerous articles, were translated in the period from the 16th century to the 1950s (Tsien 1954:326). It is also estimated that the number of translated works of fiction slightly exceeded original titles during 1901-1907 (Teruo 1998:39). Even now, translation remains a booming business. This whole situation involves the issue of

'social prestige' and the question of *evaluation* (Weinreich, Herzog and Labov 1968), in that the Chinese look up to Western knowledge and languages to follow and imitate.

Indeed, such an influx of translations could bring about sudden, abrupt changes within a language, of which Liu's pioneering efforts to introduce the feminine *ta* and neuter *ta* provide an excellent example. The differences between the data from the ICT and the TCT, although taken from different genres, also suggest that the changes to *ta* and *tamen* are conspicuous and continuous.

Therefore, translation as a special mode of language contact has been playing a key role in this process of learning from the West. Danchev comments on the significant role of translation theory in explaining language change. He states:

> The introduction of translation theory into historical linguistics makes it possible to answer more adequately than most other approaches to syntactic change the five questions of "actuation", "constraints", "transition", "embedding" and "evaluation" which, as U. Weinreich, W. Labov and M. Herzog maintain, a theory of change must be able to handle. In most cases the approach briefly outlined here enables the investigator to provide a fairly adequate answer to the "actuation" problem in particular, the most difficult of all five, as it involves the question of why changes take place in a particular language at a given time, but not in other languages with the same feature, or in the same language at other times (1984: 56).[1]

The gender differentiation of the third person pronouns that arose from the need to satisfy a huge social demand for more readable English-Chinese translations in the second decade of the 20th century supports Danchev's emphasis on the explanatory power of translation theory in the 'actuation' aspect of language change.

Through an act of conscious and direct borrowing, Liu Bannong has thoroughly 'incorporated' the feminine *ta* and neuter *ta* into Modern written Chinese. Thus, the Chinese versions of the Bible have shown that the loans have not only settled in the Chinese pronominal system, but also developed independently of their source languages, to meet the need of the users of the language. The most vivid examples are the creations of the divine *Ta,* the gender division of the plural form of *tamen*, and the division of the animate and inanimate forms of the neuter *ta* and *tamen*, all of which are totally unseen in the English language. These innovations have far exceeded simple Westernization in the sense of imitation.

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[1] The constraints problem concerns the set of changes and conditions for change arising from "close study of changes in progress", for example, the shift from preference for a one-phoneme system to a two-phoneme system (Weinreich et al. 1968:183). The transition problem refers to the intervening stages between the evolution of a language, involving the problems of regularity of sound change, grammatical influence on sound change, and so forth (Labov 1978:161-162). The embedding issue calls for "the need for social realism" (Weinreich et al. 1968:176) that is the assessment of the impact of the social environment on language change. The evaluation problem encompasses both subjective and objective correlations such as social awareness of and general attitudes towards language change. Lastly, the actuation problem is the overall interplay between linguistic and social factors. If the actuation question is answered, the linguistic change is explainable.

6. Conclusion

Against a background of flourishing translation activities, Liu Bannongendeavoured to borrow the concept of feminine and neuter third person pronouns from English to enrich the Chinese language, bringing forth the gender division of the two pronouns *ta* and *tamen* into masculine, feminine and neuter, a phenomenon that can be found both in the ICT and TCT. In view of this conscious borrowing and the prevalence of differences in *ta* and *tamen* between ICT and TCT, in which the latter contains more stable features of the borrowed gender-differentiated *ta* and *tamen*, I suggest that grammatical borrowing through translation is not only a cause for the actuation but also for the later evolution of *ta* and *tamen.* These diachronic and comparative perspectives, as Peyraube (2000) proposes, have revealed a development pattern for the Chinese third person pronouns that a synchronic approach could not show. I am convinced that a study involving further stages in the history of the Chinese language would uncover even more characteristics of the changes to *ta* and *tamen* and the influence of Europeanization. It is also expected that more research will be conducted on other aspects of changes in Modern Standard Chinese that are believed to have arisen as a result of Europeanization through translation. Future research should be based on larger corpora and include different text genres in original and translation so that literary works, sacred texts and different types of non-literary works can be compared as different categories.

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