# HG8011

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Detecting Meaning with Sherlock Holmes Holmes in Translation 12 April 2016 • Did Sir Arthur Conan Doyle place great emphasis on translation ?

• How can/do we know?

#### "The Adventure of the Greek Interpreter"



# Mycroft

#### Mr. Melas is a Greek by extraction,

as I understand, and he is a remarkable linguist. He earns his living partly as interpreter in the law courts and partly by acting as guide to any wealthy Orientals who may visit the Northumberland Avenue hotels. I think I will leave him to tell his very remarkable experience in his own fashion."  "It seemed to me to be obvious that this Greek girl had been carried off by the young Englishman named Harold Latimer."



# The Daily News,

"Anybody supplying any information to the whereabouts of a Greek gentleman named Paul Kratides, from Athens, who is unable to speak English, will be rewarded. A similar reward paid to any one giving information about a Greek lady whose first name is Sophy. X 2473.'

Large fortune: Sophy Kratides visited her, Kratides disappeared; kidnapped by 2 Villains

#### English speaker Greek speaker

Melas the interpreter

2 Villains

Kratides

## Melas the interpreter

- "You can do no good by this obstinacy. Who are you?'
- "'I care not. I am a stranger in London.'
- "Your fate will be upon your own head. How long have you been here?"
- "Let it be so. Three weeks.'
- "'The property can never be yours. What ails you?'
- "'It shall not go to villains. They are starving me.'
- "You shall go free if you sign. What house is this?'
- "'I will never sign. I do not know.'
- "You are not doing her any service. What is your name?'
- "Let me hear her say so. Kratides.'
- "You shall see her if you sign. Where are you from?"
- "'Then I shall never see her. Athens.'

- Presence of translation
- Presence of translator/ interpreter
- Highlight the importance of translating

#### • This story was translated into China

•希腊舌人

• "Greek tongue-man"

• What does it mean?

#### • Early Western Han Period, after 206 BCE

- shérén (舌人, tongue-men) was the common name for the government officials in charge of communicating with the neighbouring tribes of the Zhou Dynasty.
- Ref: "Martha P.Y. Cheung, "Early Discourse on Yi"

- Imagination : roll tongue or flip tongue
- In Chinese idiom, bad connotation

#### • 长舌妇 a loquacious woman.

- 七嘴八舌 confusing opinion
- 油腔滑舌 a flippant talker
- low social status
- Untrustworthy

# Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

- Manipulative power of translation
- Translation and power
  - It can be an violent act
  - It can also save life
  - Practical meaning

## Chinese modernization

- "Why Should We Learn from the Barbarians?"
- China resisting foreign knowledge 1840-1860
- Partial absorption 1860-1890 (self strengthening movement)
- Conscious learning 1895-
- Wholesale westernization 1911-1917



#### Facts

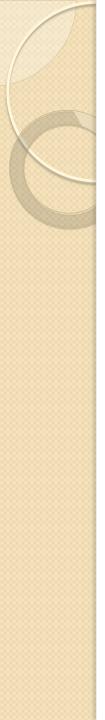
- SH introduced into China in 1896 (光緒 二十二年)
- Shiwu Bao 《時務報》 Chinese Progress
- Serialized magazine

I.《英包探勘盗密约案》I896.9.27-I0.27(Vol 6-9) 《The Adventure of the Naval Treaty》

2. 《记伛者复仇事》, 1896.11.5-25(Vol 10-12), 《The Adventure of the Crooked Man》

3.《继父诳女破案》, 1897.4.22—5.12 (Vol 24-26), 《A Case of Identity》1891.9

4. 《呵尔唔斯缉案被戕》, 1897.5.22-6.20 Vol27-30) 《The Adventure of the Final Problem》



#### Nature:

- Real story
- Real crime case
- The note or The note of translating Sherlock Holmes
- 《继父诳女破案》
- 《英包探勘盗密约案》
- 《呵尔唔斯缉案被戕》



#### revision

- Structure: first person to third person narrative
- common in late Imperial China
  - Readers' taste
  - Social convention
  - No first personal narrative

- Watson- I<sup>st</sup> person narrative
- "I" account the story, someone approached me about the lost of a document
- "He" narrated

## keyword

- 《英包探勘盗密约案》
- 英 Ying England
- 包探Bao detective
- 包大人 magistrate Bao
- An 案 gongan-type; Chinese court case

## Genre transformed!

- Detective stories, crime novels
- Chinese "court case" / kung-an (gong 'an)公案
- Chinese judicial system
- judge serves multiple capacities: investigator, interrogator, prosecutor, judge and overseer of executions
- Western detective : solves the mystery independently of the state and often conceiving justice as lying outside the state's command

### Judge Pao or Pao Kung (999-1062)



# **Reception ground**

- Rejuvenating China
- 2 into I
- Crime fiction
- Vehicle of transmitting Practical knowledge

- Sherlock Holmes 福尔摩斯
- "**歇洛克.呵**尔唔斯" 1895-6
- •休洛克福而摩司 1902
- 福尔摩斯 1904 5
- Hokkien dialect
- "Watson""滑震" (slippery shaken!")

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- Ping, Zhang (2005) SHERLOCK HOLMES IN CHINA Perspectives 13(2), 106-114 (full text available through the proxy)
- 钟文苓 (1934) 《关於福尔摩斯二三事》 万象(1934年) 1942年第2年第 4期
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