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The worlds of multiglossia in modern Chinese fiction: Lu Xun's 'A Madman's Diary' and the 'Shaky House'

Lena Rydholm

In this chapter, I discuss the significance of diglossia, translanguaging practice and multiglossia in modern Chinese fiction in the early twentieth century, based on a close reading of Lu Xun's (1918) influential short story 'A Madman's Diary', which has been regarded as the first instance of modern Chinese fiction written in the vernacular.¹ Reformists within the New Culture Movement, such as Lu Xun, advocated 'Western learning' and the abolishment of traditional culture and Confucianism to build a modern Chinese nation, able to resist foreign imperialism. Nation building also required a unified written national language in the vernacular, and a literature in this language (Hu Shi [1918] 1970). This study shows how Lu Xun 魯迅 (Zhou Shuren 周樹人 1881–1936), in his efforts to reform the 'real' world, made modern literary fiction the arena for a battle of languages and ideas.

In 'A Madman's Diary', the narrative structure is constructed as a diglossic battle between the juxtaposed Preface, written in the classical literary language *wenyan* 文言, and the Diary, written in the vernacular *baihua* 白話. Through their allegiances with competing worldviews and ideologies, *wenyan* and *baihua* are the main contestants (Zhou 2011, Rydholm 2018). This study aims to show how the binary opposition between the Preface and the Diary is undermined, ideologically and linguistically, by a third contestant – what in my view may be described in Lydia Liu's (1995) terms as Western 'translated modernity' and

¹ This is a question of both definition (see Shih 2001: 85 note 43) and impact. According to David Wang (2010: 479), Chen Hengzhe's 'One Day' (1917), a short story published in *US Student Quarterly*, could have been seen as 'the first example of modern Chinese vernacular literature' had it reached more readers in China.

‘translingual practice.’ I also aim to show that this has further implications for the reading of this literary work.

The analysis of ‘A Madman’s Diary’ is preceded by a short introduction to diglossia in pre-modern China and the New Culture Movement, to the May Fourth writers and the Shaky House (Zhou 2011), and, finally, to Lydia Liu’s translingual practice.

Diglossia in pre-modern China and the New Culture Movement’s calls for language reform

For two millennia in China the classical literary language *wenyan* was used in the bureaucracy and in high literature, philosophy and history. In the Qin dynasty (221–207 BCE) the First Emperor ordered a unification of the script, and subsequently a standardized written language developed (Chen 1999: 67). A unified written language in government administration was required to cope with dialectal diversity and keep control of the vast empire. Men of the ruling class studied the Confucian classics and the literary writing style to pass the civil service examination (a system abolished in 1905), while the population at large was illiterate. According to Norman (1988: 250), the development of *wenyan* created a sociolinguistic situation that rather fits with Ferguson’s 1964 definition of diglossia, with a High and a Low language with different functions. Ferguson (quoted by Norman: *ibid.*) depicts High language in a way that is quite compatible with *wenyan*:

a very divergent, highly codified ... superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community ... which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation.²

The Low language in the Chinese context was the written vernacular, *baihua*, with roots in folk songs, translations of Buddhist texts, oral storytelling, etc. (Børdahl 2010: 1). *Baihua* became a vehicle for popular fiction, such as the famous novels of the Ming and Qing dynasties, but fiction as a genre continued to have low status up to the late nineteenth century (Rydholm 2014). Although

² Ferguson (1964: 435), quoted by Norman (1988: 250).

the literati enjoyed reading and writing fiction in contemporary vernacular, 'wenyan was considered refined and elegant, thus ideal for high-culture functions, while *baihua* was despised as coarse and vulgar, suitable only for low-culture functions' (Chen 1999: 69). As Norman (1988: 246) notes, '[b]efore the time of the May Fourth Movement, it [*baihua*] was considered fit only to be a vehicle of popular entertainment'.

In addition, *wenyan* was a cosmopolitan language, the *scripta franca* of the elites of East Asia up to the twentieth century (Denecke and Zhang 2015: VIII). It was also the vehicle of a cosmopolitan Confucianism (Levenson 1971: 5, Hu and Elverskog 2016: 1), promoted by the rulers of the last Qing dynasty (Guy 2016: 51–2) that fell after the 1911–1912 revolt. The semi-colonization of China by Western and Japanese imperialists after its defeats in the Opium Wars of the mid-nineteenth century and the Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895) led to the rise of a 'national salvation' *jiu guo* 救國 discourse among students and intellectuals in the early twentieth century. The aim was to build a strong, modern Chinese nation, free from colonial powers. Many reformists believed that this required abandoning Confucian values and traditional culture in favour of 'Western learning'. A strong nation also required a unified national language, a written language closer to the spoken language, intelligible for the entire population and not only the educated elite. The European idea of nation-ness being connected with a specific language, as stated by J. G. von Herder (1744–1803), served as an example (Anderson 1983: 67–8, Zhou 2011: 129). So did the successful language reform of Japan's Meiji period (1868–1912) (Chen 1999: 70). The creation of a 'uniform, easily comprehensive written language' had been crucial for the development of a modern Japanese state (Twine 1983: 115).

The journal *New Youth Xin qingnian* 新青年, started by Chen Duxiu 陳獨秀 (1879–1942) in 1915, became a vehicle for the New Culture Movement, promoting the reform of language and literature. In Hu Shi's 胡適 (1891–1962) manifesto in *New Youth* in 1917, he demanded the reform of Chinese literature and criticized literature written in *wenyan* for being void of substance and full of old clichés, while he condoned the use of 'vulgar [vernacular] words and expressions' 俗字俗語 (Hu [1917] 1970: 467).³ Chen Duxiu supported Hu Shi's claims in the subsequent issue, criticizing the highly ornamented *wenyan* literature of the aristocrats, demanding a plain and 'intelligible, popular literature for society in

³ For a short introduction to the reformists' discourse on revision of language and literature in manifestos by Liang Qichao, Hu Shi and Chen Duxiu, see Rydholm (2018).

general' 明瞭的，通俗的社會文學 (Chen [1917] 1970: 563). In 1918, again in *New Youth*, Hu Shi stated:

The supreme goal of my 'On the construction of a new literature' can be summed up in just ten big characters 'a literature in our national language, a national language for literature' ... why has there been no true, no living literature written in *wenyan*? ... It is because the literature that the literati in the past two millennia have produced is all dead, because it is all made of a written language that is already dead. A dead written language can definitely not produce a living literature ... If China wants to have a living literature, we must use the vernacular, we must use our national language, we must create a literature in our national language.⁴

我的「建設新文學論」的唯一宗旨只有十個大字：「國語的文學，文學的國語」……何以沒有真有價值真有生命的「文言的文學」？……這都因為這二千年的文人所做的文學都是死的，都是用已經死了的語言文字做的。死文字決不能產出活文學……中國若能有活文學，必須用白話，必須用國語，必須做國語的文學。

(Hu [1918] 1970: 345–7)

Hu Shi's dead-versus-living rhetoric added force to his argument and words quoted above: 'a literature in our national language, a national language for literature' became a slogan among May Fourth writers.⁵ For the New Culture Movement, language reform involved new ideologies, worldviews and values: 'While *wenyan* was taken to be synonymous with traditional Chinese values, after the May 4th movement *baihua* was assumed to be the only appropriate linguistic vehicle for the whole set of new, mostly imported western concepts subsumed under democracy and science' (Chen 1999: 79).

The May Fourth writers and the 'Shaky House'

Creating a unified, national literary language for the new ideas proved to be a challenge since there was no ready-made standard vernacular, *baihua*, to adopt

⁴ Translations from Chinese quotations in this chapter are the author's own unless otherwise stated.

⁵ The date May Fourth refers to student demonstrations in Beijing in 1919 against the Versailles Peace Treaty and Japanese imperialism. The May Fourth Movement was a major intellectual, social, political, cultural and literary reform movement circa 1917 to 1921 (Chow [1960] 1967: 1–6). Writers in that period whose literary works reflected reformist ideas and who wrote in the new vernacular are often referred to as May Fourth writers.

at the time, no consensus among authors,⁶ and an abundance of new Western terms and concepts to be translated. There were several types of writing in use. The new-style *baihua* (or May Fourth-style *baihua*) favoured by the New Culture Movement was, according to Chen (ibid.: 76), 'a general name that referred to the various types of the new style that reformist writers were experimenting with at the time.' In *Placing the Modern Chinese Vernacular in Transnational Literature*, Gang Zhou discusses the Chinese vernacularization process in the context of world literature. Zhou (2011: 7), with reference to Heidegger's conception of language as the 'House of Being', introduces the concept of the 'Shaky House'. In Zhou's view, May Fourth writers belonged to a 'Shaky House' family, defined by 'the specific kind of vernacular literature produced at certain historical junctures of linguistic upheaval, whose writing begins with a revolutionary language choice, and whose literary medium manifests dramatic language change and is replete with linguistic tension and precariousness' (ibid.: 97). May Fourth writers, according to Zhou (ibid.: 7), 'were ordained to experience a dramatic language change, their *proper abode* must have been *shaky* and *precarious*. Their sense of alienation and their uncertainty about the linguistic medium they were writing in and creating distinguish them sharply from both the previous and following generations.' However, this also allowed for much experimentation with language, narrative techniques, genres, styles, etc.

The replacement of *wenyan* with *baihua* at the time was largely the work of intellectuals, cultural reformists and elite writers (Norman 1988: 255). Their *baihua* was an 'awkward mixture of styles' (Chen 1999: 78). May Fourth writers grew up with their native dialect, were educated to write in *wenyan* and then studied foreign languages abroad. They translated literary works from English, French, German, Russian and Japanese into Chinese, and many writers 'wrote in a heavily Europeanized style, producing texts that read like literal translations from a foreign language' (ibid.). Shu-mei Shih (2001: 71) stated that the May Fourth writers' 'heavily Europeanized and Japanized (i.e. translated) vernacular might in effect be as alien to the ordinary reader as *wenyan*'. May Fourth writers have faced criticism over the years for both elitism and internalizing Orientalism. Through translation, large quantities of 'Western' terms and concepts (foreign loanwords, semantic translations, phonemic transliterations, etc.) poured into the new-style *baihua*. The classical cosmopolitan literary language, *wenyan*, was

⁶ Some reformists even advocated abandoning the logographic script in favour of Romanization of the Chinese script to increase literacy. See, for example, Norman (1988: 257-65).

thus replaced by a new cosmopolitan written language, a kind of ‘cosmopolitan vernacular’ (Pollock 1998), a new-style *baihua*,⁷ characterized to a certain degree by what Lydia Liu (1995) calls translingual practice.

The new-style *baihua* and translingual practice

Stefan Helgesson and Christina Kullberg (2018: 137) claim that ‘world literature can be explored ... as uneven translingual events in which linguistic tensions are manifested’ at different levels, such as in the individual text. ‘A Madman’s Diary’ is a short story replete with such linguistic tensions, and some may be discussed in terms of translingual practice. In *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity – China, 1900–1937*, Lydia Liu (1995) highlights the importance of translation in the Chinese reformists’ imagination of a modern China. Liu uses the term ‘translated modernity’, instead of influence, to indicate that translation is not simply a history of domination and resistance, nor just a transference of ideas from West to East (ibid.: xv–xx), thus ‘granting too little to the agency of the non-western languages in these transactions’ (ibid.: 22). Liu uses the terms ‘guest’ and ‘host’ language, instead of ‘source’ and ‘target’, to highlight ‘the possibility that a non-European host language may violate, displace, and usurp the authority of the guest language in the process of translation as well as be transformed by it or be in complicity with it’ (ibid.: 27). The focus of translingual practice is to study how words and new meanings, even entire discourses, etc., are created as a result of ‘contact/collision’ between a guest and a host language (ibid.: 26). According to Liu:

Meanings ... are not so much ‘transformed’ when concepts pass from the guest language to the host language as invented within the local environment of the latter. In that sense, translation is no longer a neutral event untouched by contending interests of political and ideological struggles. Instead, it becomes the very site of such struggle.

(Ibid.)

According to Liu (ibid.: 31), ‘the site of translation or wherever languages happen to meet’ is a place for ‘confrontations’. This is ‘where the irreducible differences between the host language and the guest language are fought out, authorities invoked or challenged, and ambiguities dissolved or created’ (ibid.: 32). Liu’s

⁷ For a discussion of this new ‘cosmopolitan vernacular’ see Rydholm (forthcoming 2022).

'translingual practice' constitutes the theoretical framework for this study of 'A Madman's Diary'. I examine what I see as collisions or confrontations between guest and host languages in 'A Madman's Diary' by discussing a few specific words and expressions in the Preface and the Diary, as well as the authorities evoked by these. Liu (ibid.) discusses the complexity of the process of translating 'Western modernity' in China, as it was often mediated by translation via Japanese, a language with deep roots in Chinese script, using *kanji*, Chinese characters. This is also relevant in the case of certain Sino-Japanese-European loanwords in the Preface. In addition, I discuss a direct transliteration in the Diary from English of the word 'hyena', evoking foreign ideologies, and a new concept created by Lu Xun, 'real human being', which is more of a hybrid concept evoking both Chinese and foreign sources. Liu (ibid.: 39) also pointed out the importance of studying how 'intellectual resources from the West and from China's past are cited, translated, appropriated, or claimed in moments of perceived historical contingency so that something called *change* may be produced'. According to Liu, 'this change is always already different from China's own past and from the West, but have [*sic*] profound linkages with both' (ibid.).

The words and expressions I have selected for discussion are, in my view, examples of translingual practice which unsettle the diglossic opposition between Preface and Diary through evoking certain authorities, Chinese or foreign. This has implications for the reading of the entire story. I begin with a short discussion of 'A Madman's Diary' and its diglossic narrative structure, followed by an analysis of translingual practice and multiglossia in the Preface and then in the Diary. In my conclusions, I return to the issue of the Shaky House.

Lu Xun's 'A Madman's Diary': Diglossia or bilingualism?

In his essay 'Why I started to write fiction' (1933), Lu Xun stated his reasons:

I still hold on to 'the idea of enlightenment', and that it [fiction] must 'serve human life', even improve human life ... I draw my material from the unfortunate people of a sick society; my idea is to uncover the symptoms of the disease and draw attention to finding a cure (translation also in Rydholm 2014: 16).

我仍抱着十多年前的“啟蒙主義”，以為必須是“為人生”，而且要改良這人生 所以我的取材，多采自病態社會的不幸的人們中，意思是在揭出病苦，引起療救的注意。

(Lu Xun [1933] 2005: 526)

Lu Xun studied medicine in Japan, but changed his subject to literature. He claimed to have realized that reforms in China demanded changes in people's attitudes, and thinking that literature was most effective in this regard, he joined the literary movement promoted by Hu Shi and Chen Duxiu (Lu Xun [1922] 2005: 439). Lu Xun started to write short stories in the vernacular, and soon became one of the most influential writers and intellectuals within the New Culture Movement. Lu Xun claimed that 'A Madman's Diary' was written after repeated requests from the editor of *New Youth* (Lu Xun [1933] 2005: 526). In his manifesto on the national language, Hu Shi ([1918] 1970: 343) had claimed that the only reason why traditional forms of literature (the 'fake literature' 假文學 and 'dead literature' 死文學) still existed was that new literature ('true literature' 真文學 and 'living literature' 活文學) had not been produced yet – but when it appeared, the old forms would just naturally die out. 'A Madman's Diary' was published in a subsequent issue of *New Youth* – an example of a new, living literature in the vernacular. According to Ming Dong Gu (2001: 450), 'A Madman's Diary' is regarded as 'the first story that launched a fierce attack on the feudal system of Confucian morality and human relations', an interpretation based also on earlier statements by Lu Xun.

The narrative structure of this work has caused much debate. 'A Madman's Diary' consists mainly of the Diary, written by the madman in the first person. The madman lives in terror, thinking he is in mortal danger of being consumed by his fellow men. He suspects everyone around him, even his brother, and searches for evidence of man-eating in historical records:

In ancient times, people often ate human beings, I still remember this, but I can't recall from where. I browsed a history book to check, but this one has no chronology, and scrawled all over each page are the words '[Confucian] Virtue and Morality.' I could not sleep anyway, so I kept reading carefully until the middle of the night, and finally I could see the words between the lines, the whole book had two words written everywhere – 'Eat people!'

古來時常吃人，我也還記得，可是不甚清楚。我翻開歷史一查，這歷史沒有年代，歪歪斜斜的每葉上都寫著「仁義道德」幾個字。我橫豎睡不著，仔細看了半夜，纔從字縫裏看出字來，滿本都寫着兩個字是「吃人」！

(Lu Xun [1918] 1970: 485–6)

This often-cited passage clearly shows that 'man-eating' in the Diary is a metaphor for Confucian 'Virtue and Morality' (*ren yi dao de* 仁義道德), and that the story is to be read allegorically as a critique of Confucian morals

(Gu 2001: 446).⁸ For this reason the Diary is written in the vernacular, since the vernacular was the language promoted by the reformists and had become the vehicle of the national survival discourse of building a national language and literature and a modern Chinese nation. The reader thus realizes that the madman is a rebel against traditional culture and society.

However, the Diary is framed by a Preface written in *wenyan* by a friend of the family. He claims the madman had suffered from persecution mania, but has regained his sanity and will soon take up a job as a government official. The fictional narrator of the Preface claims to publish the Diary of the madman in the service of medical research. The Preface written in *wenyan* carries the 'voice of reason' and normalcy, and contradicts the madman's critique of society and traditional Confucian morals.

Hence the narrative structure is constructed as a diglossic battle between the juxtaposed Preface and Diary: the Preface written in *wenyan*, the vehicle of traditional culture and Confucian morals, embodying a traditional Confucian cosmopolitan worldview of the Chinese empire, versus the Diary written in *baihua*, the vehicle of modernization and the national-language nation-building discourse of Hu Shi.⁹ What Zhou calls 'a deadly language war' breaks out:

His text split into two universes linked with two languages and two ideological viewpoints ... The new set of binary oppositions – past/future, traditional/modern, dead/living, East/West – that Hu Shi and other revolutionary thinkers associated with classical Chinese and the vernacular found its brilliant artistic representation in Lu Xun's 'Diary of a Madman.'

(Zhou 2011: 85–6)

Zhou takes the argument further, claiming that there is a 'paradigm shift' in 'A Madman's Diary', a sharp divergence from diglossia, towards what, according to Zhou, resembles 'bi-lingualism':

Classical Chinese and the vernacular, two complementary language varieties in the old diglossic structure, were approached bi-lingually in Lu Xun's writing, presented as two languages, and as two ideological forces completely disconnected and in conflict.

(Ibid.: 93)

⁸ Lu Xun's ideas on traditional culture and society continue to be a subject of controversy among scholars. He has been variously regarded as a patriot trying to save his country or a traitor responsible for the destruction of traditional Chinese culture (Rydholm 2018).

⁹ For a short summary of the 'struggle' between *wenyan* and *baihua* functionally, linguistically and ideologically in 'A Madman's Diary' see Rydholm (2018: 82–3).

Lu Xun's ideological and linguistic battle line, between the normative *wenyan* Preface speaking on behalf of traditional values and the revolutionary Diary in the new-style vernacular, is sharp. We are clearly dealing with two opposite literary worlds, each with its representative language, worldviews and values, and each seemingly confined in its own textual space. However, if we take a closer look at both the *wenyan* in the Preface and the new vernacular in the Diary at word level, there is actually a certain linguistic complexity, and evidence of what I think may be read as translingual practice in Lydia Liu's sense. In this analysis of 'A Madman's Diary', I discuss a few words and expressions in the Preface and the Diary that in my view show the text is not strictly bilingual, but rather multiglossic. While clearly fighting a diglossic language war, as Zhou (ibid.) pointed out, the text is *in addition* a multiglossic hybrid of languages and ideologies, Chinese and foreign.

‘A Madman’s Diary’: Translingual practice and multiglossia in the Preface

The Preface, speaking on behalf of traditional society, gives the impression of having been written by a narrator with a traditional civil service education based on Confucian morals and classical literature, and who is well integrated into the government administration. This is evident in that the narrator writes in the language of the educated elite, *wenyan*, the vehicle for tradition and Confucian morals; he uses the classical literary term *kuangren* for ‘madman’ in the title (discussed below); he clearly refutes the madman's accusations against traditional society and Confucian morals, claiming him to be insane and suffering from *pohaikuang* (persecution mania); and, finally, he asserts as a sign of the madman's recovery that he has accepted a post in the government bureaucracy, thus when the madman gave up his critique against society and Confucian morals he regained his sanity.

However, if we take a closer look at the two words related to madness in the Preface, namely *kuangren* and *pohaikuang*, from the perspective of translingual practice, and also consider the authorities evoked by these words, the fictional narrator of the Preface may actually be contradicting the ideological and linguistic standpoint represented by this Preface. For my discussions of these two expressions in the Preface, I rely in part on two articles by Xiaolu Ma (2014, 2015) on Japanese as the intermediary in what is called the ‘transculturation of

madness', which trace these words in Japanese and how they were translated into Chinese and used by Lu Xun in this story.¹⁰ My aim goes beyond the purpose of Ma's studies, since I analyse the impact of these expressions on the overall narrative structure of the diglossic battle in this short story, and how the expressions undermine the reliability of the narrator of the Preface and thereby may affect the reading of the entire story.

Beginning with the title of the story, 'A Madman's Diary' (*Kuangren riji* 狂人日記), the narrator of the Preface claims to have edited and published the Diary with the purpose of providing material for medical research, but says the title was 'chosen by the madman himself' after his recovery (Lu Xun [1918] 1970: 883). The irony of that, as Xiaolu Ma (2014: 337) points out, is that the madman writing in the vernacular chose to be defined in *wenyan* as a *kuangren* 狂人, an expression charged with classical literary allusions. The choice of the word *kuangren* 狂人 instead of *fengren* 瘋人 for madman in the title has a symbolic value, as discussed by both Xiaolu Ma and Xiaobing Tang. Xiaolu Ma (2014, 2015) in addition claims that we need to consider the expression 'madman' in three languages and literatures, Russian, Japanese and Chinese, to comprehend the transculturation of madness and Lu Xun's choice.

Lu Xun and his brother Zhou Zuoren studied in Japan for several years. Lu Xun read European literature in Japanese and German translations, and translated several works into Chinese, some with his brother. Lu Xun knew Japanese and German very well, and also some English and Russian, but not enough to do translations in the latter two languages (Lundberg 1989: 11). Lu Xun was very fond of Russian literature, and acknowledged that 'A Madman's Diary' drew inspiration from Nikolai Gogol's *Diary of a Madman* (*Zapiski sumasshedshego*):

In 1834 the Russian N. Gogol, had written 'Diary of a Madman' ... But the later 'Diary of a Madman' [Lu Xun's own] aimed to expose the evils of the family system and the Doctrine of Propriety and was much more bitter than Gogol's.¹¹

In Russian tradition the madman could be seen as a 'poetic prophet', a 'holy fool' in possession of holy wisdom; but by the eighteenth century madness had come

¹⁰ Regarding new vocabulary in modern Chinese, just as J. A. Fogel (2015: 1) stated, 'every single newly minted term has its own story'. In this study I do not trace all foreign loanwords in Lu Xun's story back to their original sources, showing how they travelled and transformed in modern Chinese literature over time, since that would require an article for each word. The aim here is to highlight the multiglossic features of the text, and the impact of foreign loanwords and transliteration for the reading of this short story.

¹¹ Lu Xun in *Lu Xun Quanjí*, VI, Peking 1958, 190, quoted and translated by Chinnery (1960: 310). Hanan (1974: 66–8) discusses the influence of Andreev's *The Red Laugh* on 'A Madman's Diary', and others trace an influence of Akutagawa's *Kappa* or of Nietzsche's *Also sprach Zarathustra*.

to be regarded as the opposite of reason, and Gogol chose the term *sumasshedshii*, which means ‘out of mind’ (Ma 2015: 352). According to Xiaolu Ma (ibid.: 353), this shows that: ‘In his [Gogol’s] story, madness represents the opposite of reason: the absence of the cognitive abilities required to think rationally’ and ‘instead of prophetic madness, clinical madness prevails’. Gogol’s madman’s rebellion is very different from that of Lu Xun’s madman. According to Fanger: ‘Gogol’s madman is unquestionably a victim of the Petersburg bureaucracy and the Petersburg press; but he is a victim because he is a quintessential government clerk ... He rebels not against a world of rank, but against his lowly place within it, and he can find no more effective target for rebellion than his own self’ (D. Fanger, quoted in Kowallis 2001: 104–5, note 14).

Xiaolu Ma (2015: 359) claims Japanese to be the intermediary in the process of transculturation of madness from Gogol’s work to Lu Xun’s. Lu Xun read Gogol’s novel in Futabatei Shimei’s translation.¹² Futabatei had translated the title as *Kyōjin nikki*. Written in Japanese in *kanji* (Chinese characters) the title is 狂人日記, just as in Lu Xun’s title 狂人日記 (*Kuangren riji*). *Kyōjin* in modern Japanese means ‘a person who has lost mental balance’ (Ma 2014: 337, note 26), but although *kyōjin* in classical Japanese could have the same meaning, it could also refer to ‘a defiant person who would not confirm to social norms’, a meaning likely to have been derived from classical Chinese literature (ibid.: 337–8). Ma claims that *kyōjin* in Japanese could have prophetic and political connotations initially derived from classical Chinese (Ma 2015: 355). Xiaobing Tang (1992) discusses the origins of *kuang* 狂 and *feng* 瘋 and Lu Xun’s knowledge about them:

Lu Xun himself was no less aware of the semantic difference between *kuang* and *feng*. In his earlier youthful essay ‘On the Power of Mara Poets’ (1907), he postulates *kuang* as a Nietzschean self-affirmation that provides an essential regenerative energy for any thriving civilization. The word also characterizes talented individuals who contemptuously oppose themselves to a stagnant society and whose actions exceed the public’s comprehension. ... As an adjective – a usage that dates back to *The Book of Songs* (11–6 BC) – *kuang* is equivalent to ‘unrestrainedly outgoing, wildly defiant’. In Confucius’s *Analects*, it also occurs as a verb meaning to progress or aggress.

(Tang 1992: 1226)

¹² Lu Xun read it in the March and May 1907 issues of the Japanese journal *Interest* (*Kyōmi*) (Ma 2014: 337, note 25).

Lu Xun's brother, in contrast, chose 'A Lunatic's Diary' (*Fengren riji* 瘋人日記) for his Chinese translation of the title of Gogol's *Diary of a Madman* (Tang 1992: 1226). *Feng* 瘋 means mad/crazy/insane, and is a more recent term that, according to Xiaobing Tang (ibid.), 'was initially a pathological term denoting the mad, the neurotic, the insensible, or the sheerly stupid'. Zhou Zuoren's translation as *Fengren riji* is thus indicative of an interpretation of Gogol's story as depicting clinical mental illness, not prophetic madness.

The importance of distinguishing terms related to madness in Lu Xun's 'A Madman's Diary' is reinforced by the fact that using the word *feng* 瘋 for insane/crazy is actually used not in the Preface but in the Diary. In one scene the madman makes a long speech to his brother in the courtyard, trying to get him to give up 'man eating' (discussed below), and has attracted a group of curious spectators outside his doorstep. His brother loses patience and shouts to the crowd: 'Go away all of you! What's so funny about a lunatic?' 「都出去! 瘋子有什麼好看?」 (Lu Xun [1918] 1970: 491). Here the word 'lunatic' *fengzi* 瘋子 is used for madman, not *kuangren*, which reflects the perspective of the older brother, who thereby gives the impression of actually believing his younger brother to be clinically ill. The choice of terms related to madness reflects the attitude of the speaker towards the madman in the Diary. There is clearly a difference in judgement about the madman's condition between the older brother and the madman even after his recovery, since the madman chose *kuangren* for the title.

Lu Xun could thus choose between two different translations of Gogol's title, *Fengren riji* 瘋人日記 and Fubatei's *Kyōjin nikki* 狂人日記, and opted to name his own story *Kuangren riji* 狂人日記. As Xiaolu Ma (2015: 360) points out: 'Because of the long history of social and political protest associated with *kuang*, this title is an important factor in motivating the allegorical reading of the short story by many scholars.' Ma (ibid.: 362) further states:

Even if Lu Xun did not intend to refer to the Chinese *kuang* tradition but simply to connect his story with the Russian homonymic short story, readers aware of *kuang*'s rich cultural implications would likely be led by the title to consider its connotations and extract a hidden message relating to prophetic *kuangren* who target stagnant society.

Lu Xun's choice of *kuangren* in the title thus communicates to readers that the story is in fact about prophetic madness, a rebellion against society, not simply about clinical madness. This would be common knowledge for people educated in the classical literary tradition, such as the fictional narrator of the Preface, and also the madman himself (discussed below). The information that the title

was chosen by the madman after his recovery may indicate ‘a final stand against the oppressive reality’ and those who had labelled him ‘lunatic’ *fengzi* 瘋子, as his brother did (Tang 1992: 1226). It could imply that the madman did not recover from his rebellious thoughts, that he still considered himself a wild and unrestrained rebel against society, that he had not been completely insane. In that case the fictional narrator of the Preface, for his part, in keeping the title became the madman’s accomplice.

The fact that the narrator of the Preface made the effort to point out that the title was chosen by the madman, not himself, may give the impression that the narrator deemed the title inappropriate for the madman’s condition. However, if the fictional narrator of the Preface ‘really’ thought the madman clinically ill, and the book ‘really’ was published to be read by medical researchers, why did he keep that title? In that case he really should have used *Fengren riji*, or could in many other ways have reflected his stated purpose (e.g. added a subtitle: ‘A Madman’s Diary: an example of clinical mental illness for medical researchers’). But the narrator of the Preface kept the symbolic title chosen by the madman, knowing that it invites readers of literature rather than medical researchers, and that it triggers literary allusions related to rebels and prophetic madness. Thus I think we may conclude that the narrator sympathizes with the madman’s ideas, and the Diary was not published to be read by medical researchers. The narrator’s purpose in publishing the Diary is not in service of medical research, but as a critique of traditional society and Confucian morals.

A second example to support my case for the unreliability of the fictional narrator of the Preface, based on a calculated use of language related to mental illness, is the term *pohaikuang* 迫害狂 (persecution madness). The narrator states in the Preface: ‘I received the Diary and having read it through, I understood that what the brother had contracted was undoubtedly a kind of “persecution mania” 持歸閱一過, 知所患蓋「迫害狂」之類 (Lu Xun [1918] 1970: 483). The word for ‘persecution’, *pohai* 迫害, is what Lydia Liu (1995: 284) calls a Sino-Japanese-European loanword, which in her categorizations is defined as a loanword from modern Japanese ‘that consists of *kanji* terms coined by the Japanese using Chinese characters to translate European, especially English words.’ The term ‘persecution mania’ from Western works on medicine, psychology and criminology appeared in different translations into Japanese, in different contexts, at the beginning of the twentieth century (Ma 2015: 360–1). In medical books or scientific treatises the mental disease was translated more frequently as *higai mōsō*, while in modern literature or books on social criticism

it was translated more often as *hakugaikyō* (ibid.: 361). In Ma's view, Lu Xun's choice of terms is significant, especially in consideration of Lu Xun's respect for the scientific foundation of Western medicine:

His borrowing of *hakugaikyō* (a term often used in arts and humanities) instead of *higai mōsō* (a term often used in scientific studies) to designate 'persecution complex' in 'Diary of a Madman' demonstrates his stronger interest in social and literary criticism.

(Ibid.)

The fictional narrator's decision to translate the Western medical term 'persecution mania' using the *kanji* term *hakugaikyō* 迫害狂 (*pohaikuang* 迫害狂 in Chinese) in the Preface thus gives additional strength to the interpretation of the story as a social criticism, not intended for medical research. In my view, the use of *pohaikuang* also reveals something else. The Confucian scholar and bureaucrat who we thought was the fictional narrator of the Preface, who represents tradition and reason in the ideological and linguistic binary opposition between the Preface and the Diary, is not so traditional after all. He is actually a modern man educated in Western learning. He had studied Western medicine and literature, probably in Japan, as he is familiar with terms for mental illness in Japanese, translated from Western medicine and literature. However, he is also aware that few readers in contemporary China are familiar with this terminology in Japanese, hence *pohaikuang* is placed in quotation marks in the Preface, marking it as a translated word. This narrator of the Preface even feels qualified enough in modern medicine to make a diagnosis of the madman, since after reading through the Diary he comes to the conclusion that these are the symptoms of persecution mania. But had he studied only medicine in Japan, he might have used the Japanese medical term *higai mōsō*; instead he uses the *kanji* term *hakugaikyō*. This shows that in addition to medicine the fictional narrator of the Preface had studied or read works on literature and social criticism in Japanese, and therefore he chose the latter term, indicating that he intended a reading of the Diary as social criticism.

In Gang Zhou's (2011: 84) view there are clearly two narrators in Lu Xun's short story, as opposed to traditional novels in which a *wenyan* Preface and a story written in *baihua* were 'complementing each other', thus creating 'a harmonious unity':

a shift from the framing narrative in classical Chinese to the vernacular text in the old vernacular novels indicates no change in the narrator. The narrator is

always the same person, who uses two linguistic varieties for different purposes. But in Lu Xun's story, the framing narrative and the vernacular proper are totally separated, like two unconnected worlds, each having its own narrator.

(Ibid.: 85)

However, in my analysis the narrator of the Preface is quite unreliable and may not be speaking on behalf of tradition. He turns out to be a modern man, educated in Western learning, so he could very well sympathize with the madman and intend a reading of the work as social criticism. The choice of using the Sino-Japanese-European loanword, such as *hakugaikyō* in the Preface written in *wenyan*, undermines the ideological and linguistic binary opposition between the Preface and the Diary, as well as the authority of the fictional narrator of the Preface as a spokesman for tradition. In spite of the binary opposition between the Preface and the Diary based on diglossia, *wenyan* versus *baihua*, there is in the Preface a linguistic hybridity which may be read as translingual practice in Liu's sense. There are multiglossia and 'confrontations' between languages at word level, leading to an ambiguity that gives away the identity of the narrator of the Preface. Lu Xun thus gives clues, in the form of the title and diagnosis, that could lead readers to think the two worlds that appear to be separated by diglossia are in fact connected, and there is only *one* narrator of both the Preface and the Diary. This one narrator is a reformist, using diglossia for different purposes, who made up the entire story about the madman and wrote the Diary himself, with the intention of criticizing traditional society and Confucian morals (just like the author himself). To argue further my case that there is only one narrator, I present evidence of multiglossia and translingual practice in the Diary (in addition to diglossia), and analyse some examples of the ideological and linguistic tensions and confrontations within the Diary at word level and the authorities evoked by these.

'A Madman's Diary': Translingual practice and multiglossia in the Diary

Although the Diary is written in the vernacular, we still find evidence of diglossia *within* it, so it is not a completely sealed-off linguistic unity. It uses several words and expressions in *wenyan*, such as quotations from ancient sources. The madman thus, like the narrator of the Preface, had a traditional education. In the Diary he tells of being home-schooled by his older brother, who taught him

how to compose traditional prose essays and read classical historical works. His Confucian moral education is made clear in the Diary through his direct reference to 'Confucian Virtue and Morality' (cited above) and his account of his impressions of the practice of filial piety in the latter part of the Diary. He also refers to Li Shizhen's 李時珍 (1518–1593) *Taxonomy of Medicinal Herbs Bencao Gangmu* 本草綱目, and quotes some well-known statements on man-eating from *Mr Zuo's Historial Commentaries Zuo zhuan* 左傳: the expressions 'exchange children and eat them' 易子而食, and 'eat the flesh and use the skin to sleep on' 食肉寢皮 (Lu Xun [1918] 1970: 487).¹³ In addition, he retells the story of Yiya 易牙, the cook in the state of Qi in the Spring and Autumn Period who allegedly cooked his son for an evil ruler who wanted to taste human flesh (ibid.).¹⁴ With a solid traditional education in the Confucian classics, history, philosophy and Chinese medicine, along with the ability to read and write in the prestigious form of *wenyan*, why did the madman start to question Confucian 'Virtue and Morality'?

As it turns out, the madman, just like the narrator of the Preface, had a foreign education. A most striking example of 'Western learning' is the foreign loanword '*haiyina*' that pops up in the Diary within quotation marks:

I remember reading somewhere of a hideous beast, with an ugly look in its eye, called 'hyena' which often eats dead flesh. Even the largest bones it grinds into fragments and swallows: the mere thought of this is enough to terrify one. Hyenas are related to wolves, and wolves belong to the canine species. The other day the dog in the Chao house looked at me several times; obviously it is in the plot too and has become their accomplice.

(Lu Xun 1972: 13; translation by the Yangs)

什麼上說有一種東西叫，「海乙那」的，眼光和樣子都很難看；時常吃死肉、連極大的骨頭都細細嚼爛嚥下肚子去，想起來也教人害怕。「海乙那」是狼的親眷，狼是狗的本家。前天趙家的狗，看我幾眼，可見他也同謀早已接洽。

(Lu Xun [1918] 1970: 488)

¹³ According to Lyell, the first quote refers to an officer in 448 BCE urging his fellow men not to surrender to the enemy, claiming that people in the capital of Song under siege in 603 BCE exchanged their children and ate them rather than surrender to the Chu army. The second quote refers to an officer bragging before the ruler in 551 BCE, claiming that he could easily take on two of the toughest men in the ruler's service and what he could do to them (Lu Xun 1990: 34, note 6).

¹⁴ A story from the seventh century BCE philosophical work *Guanzi* 管子, although the madman mixes up the rulers' names, probably to add to the impression of his confusion (Lu Xun 2005: 455–6, note 8). Moreover, the madman can only recall half the title of Li Shizhen's work.

This is a clear case of translanguaging practice in the Diary. The word within quotation marks, pronounced *haiyina* 海乙那, is a direct phonemic transliteration of the English word hyena (Lu Xun 2005: 455, note 7; Liu 1995: 362). At the time many foreign words were translated into Chinese in different ways before standardization, but most people were not keen on phonemic translations and preferred proper semantic/loan translations (Liu 1995: 36), and the standard term for hyena became ‘mane-dog’ *liegou* 鬣狗. So why did Lu Xun, an experienced translator, use a transliteration from cosmopolitan English, the language of an imperial power threatening to colonize China?

As Lydia Liu (ibid.: 39) points out, Theodor Adorno in his *Notes on Literature* stated that: ‘Every foreign word contains the explosive material of enlightenment’. In my view, Lu Xun chose this word because it is ‘explosive’ – it immediately stands out as a foreign word in a Chinese text, confronting the host language, to use Lydia Liu’s terminology, which is the Chinese new vernacular. However, the *haiyina* is not a friendly ‘guest’ but an intruder, a foreign beast which brings the threat of foreign aggression into the Diary. It is introduced as a foreign species that is kin of wolves and dogs, as it is categorized in Darwin’s *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*. Lu Xun, like so many other reformists at the time, was influenced by Darwin’s theory of evolution, but also by Social Darwinism, the survival of the fittest among peoples and cultures. In an essay from 1908, Lu Xun described imperialists as beasts when he spoke of ‘animal-natured patriots’ 獸性愛國之士, who used the theory of evolution as a pretext for invading weaker nations, aiming to conquer all nations and subdue their peoples (Lu Xun [1908b] 2005: 34–5). Lu Xun, like so many intellectuals at the time, had read *The Theory of Cosmic Process Tianyan lun* 天演論 (1898), Yan Fu’s 嚴復 translation of Huxley’s *Evolution and Ethics*. Huxley’s work ‘actually represented an attack on Social Darwinism’, as stated by Benjamin Schwartz in *In Search for Wealth and Power* (Kowallis 1999: 245). Yan Fu, in contrast, influenced by Herbert Spencer, used Huxley’s work in support of Social Darwinism. The idea of how ‘the weak fall prey to the strong’ 弱肉強食 sparked a fear of ‘national subjugation and extinction’ 亡國滅種 by the imperialist nations among reformists in China at the time (Qian 1980: 157). However, in his commentary Yan Fu managed to fuse Huxley’s determinism with Spencer’s ideas of progress (Pusey 1998: 67), offering hope of survival for the peoples of weaker nations if they would only become stronger (Qian 1980: 157). Thus *Tianyan lun* rendered strong support for the ‘national survival discourse’ of the reformists, and the demand for radical reform and

the building of a strong, modern Chinese nation. Hence it makes perfect sense that these authorities are evoked by the rebellious madman in the Diary, since it strengthens his claim that Chinese people had to change. First the *haiyina* turns up, in the language of a foreign aggressor, bringing the threat of imperialism. Then the madman presents his own distorted view of the theory of evolution of mankind from reptile to a 'real human being', in an effort to convince his brother to change his ways:

Elder Brother, way back in the beginning, it's probably the case that primitive peoples all ate some human flesh. But later on, because their ways of thinking changed, some gave up the practice and tried their level best to improve themselves; they kept on changing until they became human beings, real human beings. But the others didn't; they just kept right on with their cannibalism and stayed at that primitive level. You have the same sort of thing with evolution in the animal world. Some reptiles for instance, changed into fish, and then they evolved into birds, then into apes, and then into human beings. But the others didn't want to improve themselves and just kept right on being reptiles down to this very day. Think how ashamed those primitive men who have remained cannibals must feel when they stand before real human beings. They must feel even more ashamed than reptiles do when confronted by their brethren who have evolved into apes.

(Lu Xun 1990: 38, translation by Lyell)

大哥，大約當初野蠻的人都吃過一點人。後來因為心思不同，有的不吃人了，一味要好，便變了人，便變了真的人。有的卻還吃——也同蟲子一樣，有的變了魚鳥猴子，一直變到人。有的不要好至今還是蟲子。這吃人的人比不吃人的人何等慚愧。怕比蟲子的慚愧猴子還差得很遠很遠。

(Lu Xun [1918] 1970: 490)

The madman had obviously read Darwin's work and Yan Fu's translation of Huxley's work, but also Nietzsche. These words echo *Also sprach Zarathustra*. Discussing 'A Madman's Diary', Lu Xun once stated: 'Fr. Nietzsche had put in Zarathustra's mouth the words "ye have trod the way from worm to man, and much in you is yet worm. Once ye were apes, and even yet man is more ape than any ape"' (Chinnery 1960: 310).

Nietzsche's influence on Lu Xun, as well as the mad diarist, is also present in the expression 'real/true human being' *zhenderen* 真的人 used in the Diary (in the passage about the evolution of mankind cited above). This was a new hybrid concept that Lu Xun developed in his early essays of 1907–1908, based on evolution theory, Nietzsche's 'superman' and Chinese philosophy

(Jiang 2014: 90). Lu Xun's view of evolution theory has been the subject of innumerable studies.¹⁵ Combining several essays from 1907 to 1908, we may sum up some of Lu Xun's main ideas, as expressed by Chinese scholars. Zhao and Tang (1986: 100) conclude that Lu Xun thought that to 'establish a nation' *li guo* 立國 one must first 'establish the human being' *li ren* 立人, and this is done through freeing one's mind and developing one's thinking. Strong independently minded individuals were the foundation of strong Western countries, and it was vital to develop spiritually advanced real human beings who could step out of slavery and oppression (Wu and Wang 2018: 52–3). Lu Xun, referring to Nietzsche's view of the inherent life force in savages, thought the potential for developing civilized thinking and becoming real human beings was already embedded in barbarians (Zhao and Tang 1986: 99). Thus Lu Xun, according to Zhao and Tang (*ibid.*), envisioned an evolution from an uncivilized state to a civilized society through liberating the individual's thinking, a kind of 'spiritual evolution' *jingshen jinhua lun* 精神進化論. In an early essay written while still in Japan, 'On the power of Mara poetry', Lu Xun shows that real human beings could turn into Nietzschean style supermen, 'warriors of the spirit' 精神界之戰士 (Lu Xun [1908a] 2005: 87). These warriors would be like the brave writers Byron, Shelley, Pushkin, Lermontov, Mickiewicz and others, who could raise the spirits of the people through literary works filled with passion and patriotism (*ibid.*: 65–103). Lu Xun yearned for such warriors of the spirit who could instil courage in their fellow countrymen and 'increase the global impact of their nation' 大其國于天下 (*ibid.*: 101).

Lu Xun's ideas of the real human being, i.e. his faith in human nature and compassion for the weak and the poor, are also rooted in Chinese philosophy. For Lu Xun, human beings are initially born with a 'pure heart' *baixin* 白心, a concept that, according to Tian Gang, is derived from the Daoist Classic *Zhuangzi* 莊子 (Jiang 2014: 90). Kindness towards one's fellow men *ren* 仁, often

¹⁵ Lu Xun discussed evolution theory in several essays in 1907–1908 prior to writing 'A Madman's Diary'. For a discussion of Lu Xun's early views on evolution theory, see e.g. J. R. Pusey's (1998) *Lu Xun and Evolution*. Many scholars in China before the 1980s aimed to trace a development in Lu Xun's thoughts on evolution, often depicting 'the "evolution" of Lu Xun from a patriot with an ill-founded faith in evolution towards a patriot with a faith in the revolutionary science of Marxism-Leninism' (Dikötter 1999: 813). The 'main thesis' in Pusey's *Lu Xun and Evolution*, according to Kowallis (1999: 246), is rather that Lu Xun's thoughts did not really change. He concludes that 'the real Lu Xun was a true Confucian' (Pusey 1998: 170, Kowallis 1999: 246). The aim of this study is not to explore Lu Xun's complex and sometimes conflicting thoughts on evolution theory and how his thoughts evolved over time, but to show that his ideas at a certain time are embedded and expressed in the fictional work 'A Madman's Diary', as a case of translanguaging practice, and to discuss the implications of this for the reading of the story.

translated as 'humane(ness)', is a central concept in Confucianism. Pusey (1998: 87) claims that the core of Lu Xun's idea of 'true human beings' is being 'humane' *ren* 仁, and thus the madman was in essence 'a Confucian prophet'. Lu Xun, as Davies (2013: 233) points out, advocated 'self-aware, other-oriented altruism' and 'attached great importance to the active cultivation of moral (or righteous) emotional guidance in life'. Education and moral self-cultivation is in line with traditional Confucian values, which may seem ironic since Lu Xun wrote 'A Madman's Diary' to fight Confucian morals. Apparently he still shared some of the ideas of this philosophy, and included these in his own kind of spiritual evolution and embedded them in his concept of the real human being. Lu Xun's view of evolution and the concept of the real human requires a much deeper study and discussion than I can provide here. However, I think I have been able to show that it is a new hybrid concept built on both Chinese and Western ideas and authorities, thus it is an example of translingual practice.

To sum up, the madman's use of the *haiyina* and the evolution of mankind from reptiles into real human beings in the Diary shows that the madman had read Darwin, Huxley (in Yan Fu's translation) and Nietzsche. The importance of changing one's thinking to become real human beings indicates that the madman believed human spiritual development could save the Chinese and China, which was facing foreign imperialists who justified conquering weaker nations through the logic of Social Darwinism. In the Diary the madman shouts to a crowd outside (before being dragged into the house and locked up by his family), in a final, desperate call (to listen to the warnings in Yan Fu's *Tianyan lun*) basically to change their ways or die:

You can change, you can truly change in your hearts! You should know that in the future man-eaters won't be allowed to live in this world. If you do not change, you will all eat and finish each other off. Even if you give birth to many children, you will all be wiped out by real human beings, just like hunters kill off wolves – and reptiles.

你們可以改了，從真心改起!要曉得將來容不得吃人的人活在世上。你們要不改，自己也會吃盡。即使生的多，也會給真的人除滅了，同獵人打完狼子一樣! —— 同蟲子一樣!

(Lu Xun [1918] 1970: 492)

This is very explicit. However, the foreign beast *haiyina*, the concept of real human beings, along with the passages alluding to Yan Fu's *Tianyan lun*, would have meant very little to the average population at the time. These expressions

and the ideological implications could only be understood by intellectuals with a foreign education, and appreciated by Lu Xun's fellow reformists within the *New Youth* camp. To grasp the concept of a real human being, one would benefit from having read Lu Xun's early essays, such as the essay on the Mara poets.

In the Diary written in the new vernacular, just as in the case of the Preface written in *wenyan*, there is multiglossia. There is diglossia – that is, *wenyan* and new-style vernacular, within the Diary itself, such as the quotes from ancient Chinese sources in *wenyan*. In addition, there is evidence of translingual practice in Liu's sense: transliteration of the English word *haiyina*, evoking foreign authorities and theories, and a new hybrid concept of the real human being, evoking both domestic and foreign authorities and ideologies. However, the multiglossia, building on translingual practice, under the surface of the diglossic binary opposition between the Preface and the Diary serves different purposes. The Sino-Japanese-European loanwords about madness in the *wenyan* Preface undermine the narrator's reliability, revealing his identity as a modern, foreign-educated man and his tacit support of the madman, even opening up the possibility that he is the narrator of both the Preface and the Diary. The 'foreign intrusions' in the Diary, linguistically and ideologically – the hyena, Social Darwinism and Lu Xun's spiritual evolution theory, which evokes both foreign sources and Chinese philosophy – do not break up its unity. Instead, these linguistic and ideological 'confrontations' support the madman's claims and add to his credibility, proving his identity as a modern man with both a classical and a foreign education, advocating reform and Western learning, vernacularization and the building of a strong, modern Chinese nation. He is a reformist with a strong agenda, and capable of being the narrator of both the Preface and the Diary.

'A Madman's Diary': Translingual practice and the Shaky House

It may appear very bold of Lu Xun to take on the task of producing the first piece of a new 'living' literature in the vernacular in *New Youth*. Lu Xun was certainly aware of the experimental quality of the May Fourth literature, and the criticism of new-style *baihua* by proponents of *wenyan* for being 'vulgar', 'childish' etc.

(Davies 2013: 252).¹⁶ As Zhou (2011: 7) pointed out, the May Fourth Shaky House family of writers lacked literary models for writing in the contemporary vernacular. However, Lu Xun had several foreign literary examples written in the vernacular from which to draw inspiration.¹⁷ He had read Fubatei's translation of Gogol's *Diary of a Madman* into Japanese. Fubatei has been recognized for his contributions to the vernacularization of Japanese, precisely through his translations of Russian works (Ma 2014: 340). Ma (ibid.: 341) claims that 'the colloquial style of Futabatei's narrative was unprecedented in Japanese literary history'. Knowing some Russian, Lu Xun may have been aware of the subversive quality of the innovative and absurd use of language in Gogol's *Diary of a Madman*. Maija Kononen has discussed 'the idiosyncratic norm-breaking style of Gogol's mad diarist':

The flawless punctuation, as well as grammatically and stylistically correct use of language are to be perceived as signs of normalcy, whereas deviation from norms would imply either stupidity or some kind of anomaly. Despite his efforts, Popriscin is not capable of holding to the norms of written language. He slips from the style of the written word to the language of his thoughts in his diary entries. This language of his inner monologue incorporates alternating styles of thought, imitating now speech manners, now written word, ranging from a sentimental literary style to the wordy phrasing of official jargon.

(Kononen 2008: 87)

Gogol's norm-breaking use of language for the madman's thoughts, which reinforces his deviation from normalcy, may have inspired Lu Xun in his decision to split his short story into a Preface written in the normative, sane, *wenyan* of the Confucian nobility while the madman uses the vernacular when expressing his thoughts in the Diary entries. However, Lu Xun's aim is not clinical madness, but prophetic madness. The Preface at first seems to be the language of reason and normalcy, but when reading the Diary one realizes that the madman is a rebel and his thought language, the vernacular, is the vehicle for reformist discourse. Lu Xun's aim is the creation of a literary language in the new-style vernacular for the national-language-creation-building discourse of Hu Shi and other reformists at the time.

¹⁶ In 1927 Lu Xun confronted the critique of *baihua* using the example of a child learning to walk: 'The childish can grow and mature. As long as they do not become decrepit and corrupt, all will be well' (translated by Davies 2013: 252).

¹⁷ Lu Xun ([1933] 2005: 526) stated that in his preparations for writing 'A Madman's Diary' he 'completely depended on earlier readings of more than a hundred foreign literary works and a little medical knowledge'.

Hanan (1974: 53) states that ‘each story of Lu Hsün’s is a venture in technique, a fresh try at the perfect matching of subject and form’. Indeed, ‘A Madman’s Diary’ is an example of Lu Xun’s mastery, staging a linguistic and ideological battle in a diglossic literary world. In addition, through translanguaging practice and multiglossia he brings in the third player in the fictional literary arena, foreign languages and ideologies, as reinforcements of the rebels’ claims. When integrating foreign, cosmopolitan languages and ideas, the new-style vernacular turned into what may be seen as a variety of what Pollock (1998) calls ‘cosmopolitan vernacular’.¹⁸ Wang Hui has pointed out that the cosmopolitanism of Lu Xun’s vernacular, writing in *baihua* with frequent references to Western writers and philosophers, created a Europeanized hybrid language, far removed from the language of the masses that Lu Xun advocated, which became the *lingua franca* of the new elite (Davies 2013: 250).

To write ‘A Madman’s Diary’ required a comprehensive education, both a traditional and a modern, foreign education, which in my view leads readers to the conclusion that both the Preface and the Diary were written by one and the same fictional narrator, a ‘modern’ man with reformist views. However, reading this short story was equally challenging. The *wenyan* part of ‘A Madman’s Diary’ posed challenges for those not schooled in classical literary language and the ancient historical, philosophical and medical sources evoked. Ma (2015: 362) points out that while *kuangren* was well known to people with traditional education, few contemporary readers in China had insight into Japanese translation and would know of the distinction between *higai mōsō* and *hakugaikyō*, thereby being able to see the connection to literary works on social criticism and reform in Russia and Japan. To appreciate fully the diglossic linguistic and ideological battle in Lu Xun’s story, readers needed to be aware of this battle going on in society at the time, and Hu Shi’s and the reformists’ discourses in *New Youth*. And to appreciate the Nietzschean implications of *kuang* (see Tang 1992: 1226) and Lu Xun’s new concept of real human beings, one would benefit from reading Lu Xun’s earlier essays on evolution theory, the Mara poets and so on. Indeed, Lu Xun’s intended readers at the time were mainly the readers of *New Youth* and reformists like himself, many of whom had studied in both China and Japan, had undergone both a traditional and a modern education, and in many ways shared his views.

¹⁸ For a discussion of this cosmopolitan vernacular and a comparison between Lu Xun’s vernacular in ‘A Madman’s Diary’ and Lao She’s vernacular in the novel *Cat Country*, see Rydholm (forthcoming 2022).

For Western readers the diglossic battle between *wenyan* and *baihua* in 'A Madman's Diary' goes completely undetected. In most English translations there is no difference in style between the Preface and the Diary and there are no footnotes concerning this stylistic difference or its significance.¹⁹ 'A Madman's Diary' is regarded as part of the world literary canon today, but its major qualities and their significance are lost in translation. Reading 'A Madman's Diary' in English translation and with a title identical to Gogol's *Diary of a Madman* Western scholars may mistake Lu Xun's story for a simple case of local content in foreign form (Moretti 2013: 57); a case of passively adopting foreign models of fiction writing in the context of a power imbalance between the imperialist nations and a semi-colonized country. This study shows the strong agency displayed in Lu Xun's work: it does not demonstrate a passive reception of Western influence and nor is it the site of straightforward resistance, just as Liu (1995: xv–xx) pointed out. In 'A Madman's Diary', multiglossia is skilfully constructed through what in my view fits Liu's description of translanguaging practice; 'translation is no longer a neutral event untouched by contending interests of political and ideological struggles. Instead, it becomes the very site of such struggles' (ibid.: 26). The Sino-Japanese-European loanwords and transliterations from English undermine the traditionalist Preface linguistically and ideologically, and instead support the claims of the rebel in the Diary. Lu Xun's new concept of the 'real human being' is not a simple adoption of foreign ideas, but part of his 'spiritual evolution' theory. It is a combination of Darwin's theory of evolution, Social Darwinism, Nietzsche's superman, Daoist ideas of human beings having a pure heart by nature and the Confucian tradition of humaneness, moral self-cultivation and the didactic purpose of literature. At the site of contact or collision or confrontation, just as Liu (ibid.: 32) describes it, 'the irreducible differences between the host language and the guest language are fought out, authorities invoked or challenged, and ambiguities dissolved or created ... until the new words and meanings emerge in the host language itself'.

Although Lu Xun certainly made 'a revolutionary language choice' in 'A Madman's Diary', he shows no evidence of 'uncertainty towards the linguistic medium', a feature of many of the May Fourth Shaky House family of writers

¹⁹ Lyell's translation is commendable in this regard. Lyell created a stylistic difference between the Preface and the Diary in his translation and added a footnote stating that the Preface was written in classical Chinese, unlike the Diary entries, which 'are all in the colloquial language' (Lu Xun 1990: 29).

(Zhou 2011: 7, 97). Lu Xun's dilemma, according to Zhou and many other scholars, is revealed in his ambivalence towards classical Chinese, denouncing it while still using it (for instance when writing classical-style poetry venting private emotions), thus he seems to be 'obsessed' with what he claims to want to eradicate (ibid.: 80–1). Gloria Davies's (2013) *Lu Xun's Revolution* depicts Lu Xun's lifelong struggle against *wenyan* and in favour of *baihua*, a language of the masses. He even came to favour Latinization, the alphabetization scheme 'latinxua' (Norman 1988: 260). Still, he continued to use *wenyan* expressions and/or classical allusions in many writings. In 'A Madman's Diary', classical Chinese is indispensable as one of the two major combatants in the diglossic and ideological battle it is destined to lose. It is evidence of Lu Xun's mastery of language and narrative technique, of uniting subject and form (Hanan 1974: 53). Lu Xun was using *wenyan* to fight *wenyan*. He thrived in the Shaky House; it provided an opportunity for developing both language and narrative technique, for conscious word play, for translingual practice and creative use of the potential 'linguistic tensions' and 'confrontations' provided by translated terms and concepts in the new-style *baihua*. The Shaky House situation, which allowed serious experimentation with language and narrative structure, was a prerequisite for the success of 'A Madman's Diary'. Lu Xun displayed confidence and strong agency through his skilful use of diglossia and translingual practice to stage the battle between languages and the Chinese and foreign ideas they embodied at the time in his fictional literary worlds of multiglossia, hoping to reform the 'real' world. His stories contributed to the development of the new-style vernacular, of a new kind of elite 'cosmopolitan vernacular' in China to replace the classical cosmopolitan literary language.

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