Interdisciplinary Literary Studies: Text, Print, Medium

Sandro Jung & Yang Xiao

Abstract: In this interview conducted by Dr. Yang Xiao in June 2021, Sandro Jung, Distinguished Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the Shanghai University of Finance and Economics, talks about his research on textuality broadly defined as well as about how the adoption of the concept of the medium can complicate and amplify our modern understanding of historical processes involving the production, reading, and reception of literary works. Complementing the literary scholar's almost exclusive focus on typographical textuality with other kinds of printed (not necessarily paper-based) media, he points out that reading (and apprehending the meaning of) literature often occurred intermedially and that frequently different kinds of literacy, including visual literacy, allowed readers and consumers to understand objects inscribed with literary meaning (or epitexts) as iterations of what Jerome McGann's terms the "textual condition." A work is shown to exist in a virtual realm of appropriation where it can be given shape and manifested as an object that—to a modern reader *unfamiliar with historical object and media cultures*—may not have any connection with the literary work itself. To the historical reader this would have been far from the truth, however, since the print economy and consumer market capitalising on the currency and popularity of literary works ensured that the literary meaning transferred to an object such as a fan or a ceramic jug was recognisable and advertised as such.

Authors: Sandro Jung is Distinguished Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the Shanghai University of Finance and Economics, where he also serves as Director of the Centre for the Study of Text and Print Culture and the Head of the Literature team. He has published more than 100 A&HCI journal articles and 9 monographs, as well as many book chapters and edited volumes/ special journal issues. For the past decade, he has been the Editor-in-Chief of the Taylor & Francis A&HCI-listed journal, *ANQ*, and, since 2015, he has served as the General Editor of the Studies in Text and Print Culture book series (Lehigh University Press). His areas of research include textual studies, book history/print culture studies, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century English, German, and French

literature, text-image studies, historical media studies, and reception studies (Email: Sandro.Jung@mail.shufe.edu.cn). **Yang Xiao** is Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the Shanghai University of Finance and Economics. His recent areas of research include the translation of English literature in China in the 18th century and the overseas communication history of Chinese folk art. (Email: yangxiaoworld@163.com).

标题：跨学科文学研究：文本、印刷、媒介

内容摘要：在 2021 年 6 月杨肖博士对上海财经大学英语和比较文学讲席教授桑德罗·荣格（Sandro Jung）进行的访谈中。桑德罗·荣格谈到他对广义文本性的研究，以及媒介概念的采用如何使我们对文学作品的生产、阅读和接受等历史过程的现代理解复杂化和扩大化。作为文学学者几乎完全专注于排版的文本性和其他印刷（不一定是纸质）媒介的补充，他指出文学阅读（和意思的理解）往往是中间过程，而常常不同类型的读写能力，包括视觉读写能力，能够使读者和消费者理解带有文学意义(或外延)的东西，就像杰罗姆·麦甘（Jerome McGann）所说的"文本条件"的新的阐释。一部作品被证明存在于一个虚拟的挪用领域，在那里它可以被赋予形状并表现为一个物体——对于一个不熟悉历史物件和媒体文化的现代读者来说——可能与文学作品本身没有任何联系。然而，对于历史读者来说这可能与事实相去甚远，因为印刷经济和消费市场利用文学作品的流通性和流行性，确保了像扇子或陶瓷壶之类的物体的文学意义是可以识别的并以此做广告。

关键词：文本性；历史媒体文化；接受；阅读史；印刷媒体；印刷 / 视觉读写能力

作者简介：桑德罗·荣格，上海财经大学英语和比较文学讲席教授，文本与印刷文化研究中心主任和文学团队负责人。过去十年，他一直担任 Taylor & Francis A&HCI 期刊 ANQ 的主编，自 2015 年以来，一直任文本与印刷文化研究丛书（理海大学出版社）的总编辑。已发表 A&HCI 收录学术论文 100 多篇，出版专著 9 部和大量书籍章节和编辑卷宗 / 特刊。他的研究领域包括文本研究、书记历史 / 印刷文化研究、十八和十九世纪英语、德语和发育文学研究、文本图像研究、历史媒体研究和接受研究。杨肖，上海财经大学英语和比较文学副教授，主要研究方向是英美文学、比较文学和艺术传播学。近年来的研究重心是十八世纪英国文学在中国的翻译与流布，以及中国民间艺术的海外传播史。

Yang: Since your arrival at SUFE, you have founded a specialist research Centre for the Study of Text and Print Culture to promote a range of new research areas in China. You also seek to establish international collaboration with Chinese

scholars. Would you be able to explain what you regard as your particular contribution to the interdisciplinary study of literature in China?

Jung: When I set up the Centre for the Study of Text and Print Culture in November 2020, I intended that this centre would build on the work that I had previously undertaken in Belgium, where—in 2011—I had founded a centre of the same name; like the SUFE centre, it tried to explore those areas that literary history has not usually examined: the material forms of meaning. I am thus not thinking about literary meaning as abstract only, but as shaped by the material conditions that produce literature, that make literature accessible to the masses, and that shape the very way in which literature is being consumed, read, and handled. So, it is a material approach to literature that embraces the media of literature as its subject. My interests are focused on the medium of print, but also other media. When I moved to Shanghai, following a visiting position in China, which I had held since 2017, I realized that these media-centred approaches are quite well established in the discipline of Chinese literary studies, especially those that examine text-image relationships in such intermedial constructs as Chinese poetry and characters on porcelain, for instance, or how images and Chinese characters operate on fans or even on screens. By contrast, foreign studies or international studies departments have not yet embraced these methodologies that already exist in China when applied to Chinese literature. So, there is huge potential in broadening the field of foreign literary studies through methodologies already used in China and those that have been developed abroad.

What I am trying to do is to bring trends in foreign literary studies from the west to China, but also to combine them with expertise that already exists in China, especially in Chinese literature departments: my interest is, fundamentally, in the recovery of literary experience across the ages. It is focused on literary history and how we can address some of the blind spots that previous historians have not studied. What do I mean by this? The blind spots that nowadays are being recovered and given central significance are those that relate to minor poets, minor authors, but also what we might call unconventional forms of textual transmission. Usually literary scholars think about textual transmission in terms of manuscripts and printed texts. My approach is to look far more broadly at how literature was being mediated and transmitted through all cultural forms of expression: as a result, I study media and textual manifestations that range from paintings to performance and that help us to understand how real readers encountered literature—not just as an abstract form of mental engagement in materialized form in the printed text, but how this text was brought to life through stage performance, for instance. These

material forms of literature and mediation also comprise literary-interpretive visual images transferred onto material culture that was used in day-to-day settings and that encouraged an active engagement with the literary text through the medium that was being contemplated.

My Centre's interdisciplinary remit in terms of the study of literature, then, concentrates on how alternative media of textual construction, such as material culture with textual inscription, can help us to understand the particular ways in which readers of the past made sense of literature. This research does not necessarily confine itself to high-end and very expensive books which the general reading public could not afford. Rather, it takes a decentred perspective and pays attention, among others, to spectacular media of literature such as waxworks. If we think about the eighteenth-century novel, *Pamela,* by Samuel Richardson, one of the most popular ways in which readers in the London of the year 1740 or 1745 would have become familiar with *Pamela* would have been to visit a waxwork museum where all the characters and stories were being embodied by moulded figures. These figures were affordable to look at and experience because the entrance fee to the exhibit was only six pence. Yet the impact of the display was pervasive: the wax-work was an attraction and talking point through which knowledge of literature could be gleaned. By contrast, the actual book edition, especially the 1742 illustrated one, was not affordable to the masses. It was exclusive and facilitated access to the work in an elite medium. Nevertheless, *Pamela* became a media phenomenon. For that reason, it is trying to negotiate how the masses read literature and how literary studies in China and in the west have usually elevated literature as a particular medium of cultural production (that is read by very few highly skilled readers) that needs to be addressed in a future, corrective literary history of reading.

Previously, highly skilled academic readers have advanced theories of reading that are detached from the reality of actual reading. My interdisciplinary work aims to offer an alternative to this traditional reading history by recovering the reality of readers' experience of texts through all kinds of textual media.

Yang: Could you talk about the definition of "text" and the relationship between text and other media? That is, how does text use other media to transform its meaning?

Jung: Not even in the west is it considered a standard conception that the text can also have different iterations. For example, my work on ceramics has demonstrated that ceramics with illustrations of literary texts can advance literary meaning to those who know how to interpret the images, and to those who know

that these images work as mnemonic devices. These images on porcelain and other ceramic wares serve as devices of memory, recording previous reading experience or capturing textual situations that are now given visual shape.

My work draws fundamentally on the critical work of Jerome McGann, who—in *The Textual Condition* (1991)—defines the spectrum of different iterations of text. He amplifies the conventional notion that texts materialize either as manuscript or typescript by adopting an inclusive position from which different media such as images, image-texts, which translate the verbal construction of the text into a spatio-temporal setting, are part of a text's life and reception. My work has focused extensively on images as mirrors of reception, but also how these images and how texts travel from medium to medium.

In the seventeenth century, it was common to see drinking glasses engraved with poems. These were special glasses for festive occasions: they could have been for a birthday or for a jubilee; the poems on the glasses could have been produced by the poet laureate in commemoration of a particular event or the monarch's birthday. You would drink out of the glass and, while drinking, you would focus your attention on the engraved writing on the glass. This reading, making sense of a literary text on a glass and linking it with a particular commemorative occasion, enabled you to consume literature in a way that is distinct from reading the planar text of the printed book. It is still very much the medium, the glass that you are holding, a brittle material, but a very expensive material nevertheless, now enriched and paratextually inscribed with additional meaning, which you have to decipher. In addition, a third element, the occasion itself, the context in which you use this glass, needs to be taken into account to gain a holistic understanding of both the mediality of the object and the intermediality of its constituent components.

What I am interested in are those media that are not usually studied—sometimes because they are very far removed from what literary scholars consider literature as such. Trained professionals of literary studies do not commonly consider objects ranging from vases to fans to reconstruct literary reception. But fan production, in the eighteenth century, catered to a mass market in both China and Europe: frequently fans contained stories that had printed and engraved text underneath them and images above them. As you unfolded the fan, you would, simultaneously, see the unfolding of a story. In terms of narrative, you begin from the left of the fan, and then you open it to the right. With the unfolding, the physical unfolding of the medium, a tactile relationship conditions the unfolding of a mental process as part of which you look at the image. You read the text, and you cognitively combine the two: you establish a connection, and this connection can

be highly personalized. At the same time, this connection brings about a particular understanding of the planar surface and the literary inscription of the fan. Again, we must not leave the medium out of the equation because while the narrative is very important, not only decorative, the very fact that you hold a fan in your hand meant that you are of sufficient cultural status to be affiliated with a certain social class. As such, your rank is being underpinned by this emblem of culture, not only this material signifier of culture itself—the fan as an object—but by what is printed on the fan. The medium possessing a background story, a history of social practices underpinning it, complicates textual understanding. In the foreground, the images and the text are the most prominent literary mechanisms affecting reader-consumers. But they are part of an intermedial condition as part of which they need to be related to one another.

Another example may be in order, especially since lower-class objects are not usually at the centre of scholarly investigation because our literary history is still very much focused on the middle and upper classes. We usually leave out considerations of the mass market and the dissemination of literary knowledge via this market. Nevertheless, in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, we find objects of use such as jugs, pitchers, or mugs, some of them quite costly, which not infrequently had text on them—at times biblical text, at others excerpts from popular works such as James Thomson's *The Seasons,* but also images accompanying and illustrating them. These images commonly originate in the high culture of visual art, but they travel across the classes and are being adapted.

Recently, I have been thinking especially about William Lawrenson's painting of Palemon and Lavinia, two lovers in Thomson's *The Seasons*, who are redacted in such a way from the upper-class painting, which was meant for display and exhibition, to then become a working-class story. The characters from the original painting are transvalued, they travel from medium to medium, and in the process, they are adapted for lower-class readers—reducing their upper-class habitus—so as not to cause offence to their new target audience. The new readers or reader-viewers, as I call them, of a lower social class would of course have objected if they had been instructed—via the visually mediated story—to regard upper-class individuals as a role model for themselves. What is now being advanced is a notion that they can identify themselves with.

We clearly see Lavinia as a working-class individual who has not got the aspirations of the upper classes that were part of the original painting. It is the fundamentally same design but changed in such a way that it becomes palatable and consumable without any ideological friction by the lower classes. In the process,

there is a different reading experience, of course. The upper classes saw the same image, supported by the Thomsonian text as a confirmation of their high-class status. The lower classes, similarly, with a redaction of the original image, had the image appropriated and revised in such a way that it cohered with their social and their status identities: so, a different reading experience altogether, class-specifically oriented towards generating a nuanced understanding of texts for different reading groups. And this kind of differentiated reading experience has not been studied at all previously. My argument, then, is that if we look at these objects themselves, we see not only how particular texts or images travel across objects, but how these images can be changed in such a way as to appeal to specific social groupings in particular. We must not leave out, either, the actual objects themselves, which have cultural meanings, for these meanings again affect the way in which we understand literature.

We should also bear in mind that these materialised forms of literature reflecting and inscribed with textual knowledge are the products of translation processes—transforming mental endeavour into morphologically meaningful entities that convey literary signification. To use Zhenzhao Nie's concept of the "brain text," they are the materially manifested interpretive concretisations of a "brain text [which] consists of brain terms stored in memories"[1] and are contained by a brain-external medium. This brain text originates in a "mother text" that needs to be communicated through expression. Once reader-viewers encounter objects such as a jug featuring Palemon and Lavinia, however, this text object triggers reflections and associations that, in turn, generate new versions of the original brain text. These versions of the brain text—depending on the level of literacy on the part of the individual contemplating the image-text construct in the form of the physical object—need not be identical with or even close to the original brain text, knowledge of which is communicated verbally or through other cognate forms such as material culture. Signifying through a range of complex mechanisms, including symbolism and the medial materiality and modality of objects, literary material culture is not only evocative and generative in that it inspires further reflection but it potentially also breaks the feedback loop of reinforcing the meaning of the original work by giving rise to new and distinct brain texts.

Yang: I have noticed two characteristics of your research. One of them relates to the role of illustrations as mediations of literary works, and the other is

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1   Zhenzhao Nie, "Literature and the Formation Mechanism of Brain Text." *Foreign Literature Studies* 5 (2017): 26-34. p.30.

that you attach great importance to the relationship between literary works and publishing. Your research thus not only focuses on the work itself, but also on the chain of literary production. In the study of the literary works of the 18th century, such as *Robinson Crusoe*, your focus is not only on works and writers, but also on the relationship between illustrations and the work. You have charted the medial migration of designs of illustrations as part of a work's dynamic and mobile reception. What is the process of this kind of travel?

Jung: You have mentioned that my work has been trying to chart the various interrelationships not only between authors and texts, but also the producers, the actual physical manufacturers of those texts, the publishers, the printers. It is important for my argument to focus on the entire chain of production in the sense that those involved in the making of the physical books are also usually directly or indirectly involved in bringing those books to people. Authors write. They do not have any significant part in the marketing of their own books, but the marketing is exactly what affects individual readers. It induces particular reading groups to buy one edition of the work as opposed to another. And manufacturers of books increasingly, once a text has reached canonic status, attempt to create competitive marketing models. So, they equip particular works with illustrations, for instance, with prefaces, with memoirs, with autobiographies, with notes, with cover art, to make their edition appealing, but above anything else to make that edition stand out from the whole mass of other illustrated or otherwise paratextually enhanced editions.

At the same time, you refer to migration—the migration of image material. My argument ultimately has been that illustrated texts are illustrated for a particular reason. The basic assumption is that illustrations in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are still expensive. If you can save yourself the cost of producing illustrations, you will do so. From an economic perspective, then, it is important to understand that any publisher who could have saved money would have done so—if there were not a particular usefulness in including images. Images naturally enhance the actual, physical appearance of a book by making it more aesthetically appealing. But I am more interested in the paratextual, interpretive function of illustrations, and how illustrations, seen diachronically over time, can give you an indication of how different visual interpreters, artists, promote different understanding, different readings of texts. My work has always been systematic and diachronic, focusing on a range of illustrated editions over time. I have done this in the case of *Robeson Crusoe*, for instance, limiting it to the eighteenth century, with *The Seasons*, covering the eighteenth and nineteenth, and most recently with Salomon Gessner's

Death of Abel over a period of about 90 years, to see how different attitudes towards the subjects depicted vary and how representational conventions change. In terms of the migration of images, what I am arguing is that current approaches in comparative literatary studies neglect the function of illustration, even though illustrations, especially if seen in a transnational cross-border context, have the ability to reflect particular interpretive patterns and readings.

My work on *Robinson Crusoe*, in particular, is not dialectical in focus. I do not focus on how one illustrated edition differs from another. Rather, I am interested in how the publishing mechanisms of a particular period affected the ways in which books were being produced: specifically, how in the year 1720 different responses on the continent of Europe—in the Netherlands, Germany and France—engaged with one another, how publishers reprinted illustrations, and altered them to incorporate some more local characteristic features. I stress that publishers devised their illustrated ventures in dialogue with the English illustrations that had been produced at the time.

The standard British narrative of how *Robinson Crusoe* was being perceived in the eighteenth century is that the illustrated edition of 1719 set the paradigmatic pattern; my empirical, publishing- and media-focused interpretation of different contexts, such as publishing, competitive marketing, and, above all, interpretation through the visual medium in editions published on the continent, contradicts the paradigmatic assumptions that have usually been made. In fact, in the year 1720, it was not the British edition that defined the way in which *Robinson Crusoe* was visualized. But it was the illustrations published on the continent, especially in Amsterdam, that did. For Amsterdam publishers produced two editions, one of a French translation, the other of a Dutch translation, which were equipped with different illustrations. We are not thinking about a single plate or two illustrations, as in the 1719 edition published in England. Rather, cumulatively, these publishers commissioned almost 40 different illustrations, a huge financial investment that was warranted by the ways in which those continental publishers that reprinted them and published them in the first place wanted to mediate and advance interpretations of this text for European reading communities.

Adding these illustrations to the study of the work's reception results in a new history of reading that gives us a much more complicated sense of how *Robinson Crusoe* was understood in the year 1720. It represents a micro-analysis of a single year, but it is part of a macro-analysis of how the publishing trade affected the way in which a reputation was being built for *Robinson Crusoe*. In terms of comparative literature studies, this focus on the mobile image and the image's transnational,

interpretive power is something that I would like to develop in China. Again, I do not privilege any particular medium, but I understand images as central components of the text and its meaning-making. These images are capable of shaping texts' national and transnational reputations. Because it is through these images that readers gained a visual, an imagined sense of what characters looked like, of what the island of Robinson Crusoe looked like, of what a character such as Friday looked like. Man Friday is of particular interest in this respect, for even though we might nowadays associate him as an Africo-American, he was not consistently depicted as black in the eighteenth century. Sometimes we have foreign features, but never in that period is his skin colour definitively black. And that is something that reflects the cultural ambiguity of the eighteenth century, which we nowadays—looking only at selected modern editions from Britain or from America—tend to forget because this selective consideration simplifies the situation historically; but the historical situation, especially the dynamism, the exchange, between Britain and Europe at that stage, and then more widely with America as well, and subsequently globally, shows us that there was not one single interpretation.

What happened in Europe in the year 1720, and what the images did in the year 1720 anticipates already what will happen, in editions of Defoe's novel, in Britain and the world more widely in the nineteenth century: with new technologies, the cost of printed images is significantly reduced, which, in turn, culminates in an explosion of images, including editions of *Robinson Crusoe* that boast up to 300 illustrations. Once a reader is confronted with 300 illustrations, they will be able to glean a much more differentiated, diversified and intermedially constructed reading experience than eighteenth-century readers. The book becomes a picture book; it is completely identified with the visual medium. By contrast, a picture book in the eighteenth century would have been a book like the two illustrated translations of *Robinson Crusoe* issued in Amsterdam in 1720. For the engraving and printing technologies required to produce copper-plate printed illustration then was so expensive that the inclusion of 25 images, such as in the French edition, was already an exclusive venture that transformed the book. This edition is one of the very few instances in 1720 when a work was hyper-mediated through 25 illustrations—a huge number of illustrations for an eighteenth-century reader, but not for us. We are now part of an image age, an age where we are so immersed in image culture that they are common to us. But they were not in the eighteenth century. That is why the particularity and special status of illustrations in the eighteenth century needs to be recovered as part of reading history.

Yang: The originator of the illustration and the author of the work are usually not the same person. The design of the illustration sometimes is inconsistent with the content of the text. For example, the four illustrations in the translated version of *Gulliver's Travels* published in *Tapestry Portrait Novel* are different from the plot of the original work. What do you think of the split phenomenon between the illustrations and the text?

Jung: This is a very good point. It is not generally acknowledged that there can be a disparity between the illustration and the text because scholars of illustration and scholars of literature usually want to read for coherence: they seek to establish a relationship of alignment, where the visual text, the illustration, does pretty much the same as the typographic or printed text, just in a different medium. However, Gérard Genette in his important work *Paratexts* talks about the function of illustrations very briefly as the function of "reinforcement." Reinforcement does not mean that the media need to be equivalent in terms of semiotic value. It does not mean that they have to be aligned completely, so that one has an equivalent meaning as the other; in many cases, in literary illustrations, you find instances where the images introduce details that are not part of the actual verbal description or the typographical narrative. And this is done for a particular reason of emphasis, trying to offer local inscription and characteristics, especially if you are thinking about a particular, geographical setting.

Imagine, as in the case of *Tapestry Portrait Novel*, a text from abroad, a canonic work published in the eighteenth century, illustrated numerous times, now introduced to a Chinese audience. If these Chinese readers were now confronted with a western image, including western conventions of iconography, including dress and objects, for instance, they might have considered it alien. They might have mentally emphasised only the difference to their own manner of visualising text through illustration, in the process misreading the image. For that reason, *Tapestry Portrait Novel* commissioned wood-cut illustrations that are fundamentally non-western in design conventions. As a result, the original readers of the Chinese translation in *Tapestry Portrait Novel*, in examining the illustrations, would not have felt that they were reading an alien work. They will have tried to make sense of some iconic features which they did not know, including the transportation device built to move Gulliver into the city. The four illustrations that accompanied the translations helped Chinese readers at the beginning of the twentieth century to understand *Gulliver's Travels* not as an English work, but as a work of world literature, with Chinese characteristics.

Compared to western illustrations of *Gulliver's Travels*, the woodcuts in the

Chinese translation follow a special temporal framework—they are a micro-series, capturing moments that succeed one another quickly. To a western reader with cursory knowledge of Jonathan Swift's work, the images—despite their Chinese representational characteristics—will still be intelligible: for Gulliver lying on the ground, being pinned down with ropes, has been an iconic rendering of the protagonist since the eighteenth century. The western reader would, however, also have recognised that a process of translation has been at work: Gulliver's facial features, the landscape, the built environment, and the trees all have a Chinese cast, and the action has been transplanted into a Chinese setting. There is no longer an exotic, vaguely defined western setting that is usually framed—in the early illustrations—as imagologically British. In the Chinese series of illustrations, the settings are naturalized as Chinese so as to overcome cultural-imagological difference: this is a Chinese version of *Gulliver's Travels.* So, is there actual alignment with the details of the text? No, there is no actual alignment; but, then, in terms of representational conventions, Gulliver never clearly specifies what the environment looks like. This openness in terms of the text, not providing details on the surroundings, helps the Chinese artist thoughtfully to engage with the text. Here, then, is not a case of a phenomenon that occurs frequently in Europe: the recycling and copying of a pre-existing composition of western origin. Here, the early twentieth-century Chinese illustrator invents a new way of reading and seeing Swift's protagonist: Gulliver within the representational conventions of China. He introduces Gulliver as a character who was so well known that he does not appear alien any more to a far-away eastern reading public, where efforts are being made to render him as familiarly as possible. To western reader-viewers, however, he would have been highly unfamiliar in this casting.

Yang: You pay great attention to the study of different versions of illustrations. In "Book Illustration and the Transnational Mediation of *Robinson Crusoe* in 1720," you sorted out the illustrations of different versions of *Robinson Crusoe*. The content of the text is constant, but the illustrations can have countless versions. What do you think of the relationship between the single text and the numerous illustrations?

Jung: This goes back to what I have already said about the transnational migration of images, but also of texts. The text, as you understand it, is still the typographical text only. The first image-text of *Robinson Crusoe* was produced in the year 1719, but now the text is no longer the property of Defoe—the copyright has been assigned to William Taylor, the work's publisher. It becomes a marketable

commodity sold by Taylor as part of his editions and illustrations. Publishers in the Netherlands, Germany, and France shortly after translated Defoe's text into their own languages, and they constructed a hybrid text, one that was illustrated, the illustrations offering visual interpretations of hitherto non-illustrated scenes from the novel. The hybrid text, including the intermedial construct of text and image, has a special dynamic of meaning-making, a dynamic of functioning simultaneously. It is fundamentally different from the English version of 1719, for the very fact that there are different illustrations included, but the French and Dutch translations also alter the original work through paraphrase and connotative meanings.

In my diachronic and systematic research on *Robinson Crusoe*, I have examined all editions issued within a period of 100 years. I have studied the significance of illustrations as part of a responsive archive and how illustrators looked to earlier illustrators' work and the ways in which these artists visualized particular moments from the novel. Each illustrated edition is a hybrid text. The typographical text should always be the same. However, illustrations, especially differing illustrations, import additional meanings: so, if you are looking at an illustration produced in France, in the 1810 edition, as well as at one produced in America in the same year, you will, of course, find different motivations that inform the illustrators' work. The publishers might have instructed them to focus on a particular scene, on a particular character, on a particular action. It is thus the selection of the scene or the character or the situation that is being selected, as well as how, artistically, it has been rendered that creates an emphasis.

Illustrations are synoptic nodes. They are cognitive clusters. We look at them: we open the book, we leaf through the book, we encounter illustrations. We recognize immediately that this is a different kind of text, a visual text, that we cannot read with the cognitive tools of our script literacy. What we need is visual literacy. As a result, we do not read illustrations from left to right, but we have to read according to a special temporal framework: it is the reader who has to establish what the subject is. They need to identify the setting and the spatial organization of the illustration, as well as its temporal order. What is the action? And which particular components of the action are being introduced? This is a complicated process that differs in its reading strategy fundamentally from what you call the constant text, the printed and supposedly static text that can be changed ever more through the addition of illustrations: Removing illustrations or adding new illustrations alters the text's overall meaning because the change not only affects the text-image ratio, but also the text-image relationship. If there are more illustrations, these illustrations function differently in relation not only to the whole

book but also in relation to the typographical text that goes before and comes immediately after the illustration, physically speaking. Because illustrations were still fairly uncommon in the eighteenth century, this relative rarity also added to their meaningful status. For they complicated reading procedures: however much typographic text there is in a book, whenever you see an image in the codex of the typographically printed pages, you have to adopt a new image-defined strategy to make sense of it. You switch from the script literacy of printed type to visual literacy, and this switching of reading modes characterises the intermedial nature of the illustrated book.

Images also are not read sequentially only, but readers return to them. Readers might return to a part of the typographic text, too. But images do have special appeal in that they concentrate meaning. And this meaning attracts the reader to look at them again, and to discover further meaning: images are thus media of return. You revisit them in order to reinforce associations that you have arrived at as part of your own reading, but also meanings that you think might not have been clearly articulated in the text. So, if we are thinking about *Gulliver's Travels* again, the environment is not very concretely depicted in the text. That is why it was possible for the Chinese illustrator to make a concrete version of that landscape available through his own illustrations. Thus spaces and gaps of meaning that are present within the typographical text are often supplied within the illustrations. Rather than having a reinforcing function at that stage, we have a supplementary or even an explanatory function within the illustration.

Yang: In our recent research on the Chinese translations of *Tapestry Portrait Novel*, you have paid close attention to the issues of publishing and the economic processes of book production and marketing. What do you think is the relationship between textuality and print culture?

Jung: The term "print culture" is very important here because scholars very frequently ask me, what do I see as the fundamental difference between "print culture" and "book history." Apart from researching print culture, I am certainly also a book historian: I study books' meanings, I examine at the actual codex, the bound book, but I also look as part of my charting of an alternative history of literature at texts that do not appear in book form.

If we take *Tapestry Portrait Novel* as an example, we have a magazine. The question is one of definition: is a magazine a book? Not initially, when it is published because it does not have any hard covers or book binding. It is usually presented in a temporary binding. It might be a stitched binding, not any binding

that is supposed to be durable. Because once readers had the complete run of issues for a single year collected, they had them bound into the shape of a book. But what we usually amateurishly call "book" might be a novel; it might be a play or a collection of poems or a gathering of separately published pamphlets bound together. The "book" does not provide any information on the print genre. For that reason, I prefer the term "print culture" because it is much more comprehensive. "Print culture" also covers individually issued prints, while comprising many other print objects—chapbooks, for instance.

Chapbooks often were redactions of longer literary works, of between 8 and 32 pages. They were common in terms of their promoting of popular knowledge of texts. In the year 1722, for instance, a chapbook of *Robinson Crusoe*, 28 pages long, was published. The typographical text of the novel has been compressed significantly through redaction but it has also been amplified by the inclusion of 14 small woodcut illustrations. In these short texts, which usually have not been studied, the ratio of the text to image is one in which the images are far more prominent. As a result, the woodcuts the reader saw are much more central to the reading experience than they would have been in the full-text edition of 1719. That edition featured only one frontispiece illustration and one map. Compare that with the 14 illustrations of the chapbook: the later illustrations were meant for a particular book-buying clientele, who did not have the ability to read long texts or who might have belonged to the lower social classes and who did not have the time to do much reading. For them, the illustrations would have had a central role in helping them to make sense of the printed text.

I have also worked on other forms of print, particularly media of print that were not supposed to last: calendars and diaries. The *Royal Engagement Pocket Atlas* is one of those titles I have been working on for about 10 years, focusing specifically on how these book-like objects—copies look like books but are sometimes bound in wallets or contained within slipcases—had a particular functionality attached to them. They were supposed to be used for one year only, after which time they were usually discarded. As a result of their ephemerality, they are very rare nowadays. They are of particular interest to me, however, because each number of the *Royal Engagement Pocket Atlas* included 24 miniature illustrations of literature. So, a user of the diary did not need to read a literary edition of a text to gain knowledge of the work. For the vignette illustrations, with their accompanying lines of text, mediated fashionable literature. In this respect, the *Pocket Atlas* was able to convey a sense of the meaning of the text. It would infer the work illustrated by recalling actual reading experience or by inducing users of the diary to imagine meaning through

the image because the entire text was not available.

"Print culture" encompasses both books and book-like print products such as chapbooks and diaries. Print culture also allows us to understand the impact and wide use of printing—not only on paper, but on other media such as ceramics and textiles. Printing processes were not only developed for application on paper but also for use on other surfaces and materials, so that printed images could be reproduced on a range of objects such as jugs, cups, mugs, and coffee pots. "Print culture" thus does not mean that the book needs to be central, as any medium that can be printed on can count as belonging to this field of print culture. The only requirement is that the object is planar, that it is smooth, and that it has a surface that can be printed on. Many furniture fabrics in the eighteenth century were printed on with particular dyes with copper plates: literary illustrations proved popular on furniture fabrics, and examples survive that feature illustrations of *The Seasons*, Oliver Goldsmith's *The Deserted Village*, and even *Robinson Crusoe*. You could thus sit on an arm chair and the medium around you would facilitate a "reading" experience of literature (via illustration). It was an immersive experience. In the nineteenth century, literary wall paper, depicting *Robinson Crusoe*, for instance, was occasionally used in children's nurseries. Looking at the wallpaper, the child would not only be able to see the adventures of this protagonist but also to reconstitute and imagine its narrative.

Textuality broadly defined, then, allows scholars to look beyond the book. It helps us to understand that the text has emerged from a virtual realm of consumption in which practically any object can be textually inscribed; it can carry meaning. And just to give you another example of how print culture promotes the dissemination, mediation, and experience of textuality: playing cards and advertising cards of *Robinson Crusoe* featured centrally in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century European children's understanding of Defoe's story. They became popular in the 1880s. By 1960, thousands of cards featuring literary works, including fairy tales, had been produced worldwide. They were produced in European countries, in Britain, France, Italy, and Germany, but also in America. German companies, including supermarkets, issued over 30 different series of these cards. And they were collectible, to be assembled in an album. The album itself is not a "book," as in an "edition" of Defoe's text. But it enabled children—by collecting the individual advertising card—not only to fill the blanks in the album, but also to complete the visual narrative of *Robinson Crusoe* and to learn about the story in the process. These albums were also issued by publishers, including one German publisher who, instead of the cards, issued much smaller advertising stamps, telling the story of

Robinson Crusoe in six images. In the 1930s, if you had a full stamp album, you could return it to the publisher, who would then reward you for your collecting with the publisher's edition of *Robinson Crusoe*. This edition included large versions of the stamps—book illustrations proper, which now functioned as part of the typographical text.

This is an area that I am working on at the moment. It has never been studied before. Taking into account the large numbers of these various artifacts, their presence in children's apprehension of literature cannot be doubted. But previous scholarship has not acknowledged their impact. There were many other media that capitalised on, and featured illustrations of, *Robinson Crusoe*, enabling reader-consumers to be immersed in knowledge of the work in a way that we cannot possibly imagine. It is this culture of reading through non-book media that my work tries to recover.

Yang: You wrote an article titled "Packaging, Design and Color: From Fine-Printed to small-format Editions of Thomson's *The Season*, 1793-1802." What is the relationship between printing, design, color, the interpretation and communication of the text? What is the role of media studies for an understanding of the processes that translate abstract texts into material forms such as books?

Jung: I shall focus on the issue of colour first. We have to bear in mind that we are thinking about a period before colour-printing for the masses. To see anything printed in colour would have been highly unusual. Recognising how special colour-printed books were in the 1790s, for instance, gives us an indication that a new market was developing, one in which illustrations that could be produced in colour were highly desirable, especially if they were also framed and displayed.

These colour-printed illustrations were much cheaper than the real paintings, but they were still expensive. They brought life to the image in a way a monochrome print did not. Colour is also linked to cultural status and fashion—but it was reserved for the financial elite. In the 1790s, it was still difficult to execute colour printing, and not many works were being produced. Colour, in general terms, was desirable as part of the new design culture of the eighteenth century. And literary illustrations were frequently translated into coloured media such as painted panels on furniture or designs on large pieces of porcelain such as vases to allow owners and viewers to contemplate the literary subject in the context of the luxury object of which it was a part. Illustrations—mostly printed but also painted or sewn—of *The Seasons*, Shakespeare's plays, Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*, and many other literary works were part of the modern furniture of polite households. Consumer

culture utilised the latest development in design and technology to create ever new opportunities for visual interpreters to engage with the fashionable textuality and literature of the period. Widespread interest in cultural fashions promoted the production of a multifarious material culture of literature. Even mourning rings—jewellery purchased on the occasion of someone's passing—feature illustrations from the bestselling German novel by J. W. Goethe, the *Sorrows of Werther*.

Especially my work on design and the transmedial uses of literary illustration has led me into finding many different objects that you would not normally associate with literature; these objects are, in fact, grounded in literary experience and used literary works very concretely. It would have been part of the marketing of these very expensive objects to emphasize their literary character and that literary works were fundamentally objects of culture within the household: they needed to be seen, to be held, to be looked at, and to be engaged with cognitively.

Yang: You have published many articles over the past 20 years but you have also edited a number of scholarly journals and book series. What does your work as Editor-in-Chief of the A&HCI journal ANQ entail and how do you promote Chinese scholars' research abroad?

Jung: I have been editing ANQ for the past 9 years; the journal was founded more than one hundred years ago, and it is published in its third series now. What I have been doing since I became editor is to broaden the range of the journal: it used to be a journal very much like *Notes & Queries*, focusing on the documentary history of literature, trying to fill gaps by publishing authors' correspondence, for instance, or adding hitherto unknown details to an author's biography. Part of the journal's mission is to continue to publish documentary sources, even though this is not frequently done now. The remit of the journal has changed in that I have broadened the coverage of ANQ.

Even though it is a journal focusing on short articles, "short" is now relative in the sense that submissions range between 3000 and 7000 words. We are also now opening ourselves up—and have done so for the past five years—to all historical periods. A strong focus of the journal in the past used to be old and middle English. We have still publish on old and middle English, but all other periods are represented now, especially the literature of the twentieth century. In fact, the majority of submissions I receive from Chinese colleagues are on twentieth-century literature.

Since my arrival in Shanghai, I have tried to help Chinese scholars in producing work that can be accepted in ANQ. I have sought to promote knowledge

of western journal article structure—a subject that is often flagged in peer-reviewers' reports. I am keen to give concrete feedback on how a western journal such as ANQ can help Chinese scholars to find a platform for their own work.

I receive many submissions each year, and Chinese colleagues regularly publish in the journal now. There have also been special issues involving Chinese scholars. What I generally find is that the work that passes through the peer review is theoretically astute; once there has been positive feedback on the part of the editorial readers, the authors can take that into account in order to produce a stronger and focused submission—one that formulates a research question, boasts a moderately detailed framework, and, above anything else, offers interpretation that is fundamentally new.

In terms of promoting Chinese scholars' research areas abroad, I try to showcase the kind of comparative literature research that is being done in China. I also try to demonstrate that there are particular innovative approaches that are being applied, such as ethical criticism, for instance. But I am also considering ANQ as a platform to report on developments (especially in terms of the criticism of postmodern fiction and how these works have been approached in China) and to facilitate discussion of what dialogue between China and western critical traditions can bring to the interdisciplinary field of literary studies.

One of our forthcoming special issues will be dedicated to literature and quarantine. In this special issue, we will have perspectives from the east and the west to reflect on how individual authors' experiences of the pandemic and other health crises can contribute not only to the medical turn in literary studies but also facilitate understanding of a transhistorical and transnational phenomenon. The contributions will address how texts deal with a pandemic, with epidemics, more generally, with illness and with global crises of health; how different approaches can be synergized, how this kind of cultural contact that I would like to establish between China and Europe can prove productive, and how it can shape the future.

Next year will be my tenth year as editor of the journal. We are thinking about celebrations and an ANQ symposium, bringing together Chinese scholars, in particular, to help them to formulate research questions that can address literature both historically and synchronously. What I would certainly like to encourage is a greater historical awareness of the great resources that China has: resources in the field of literary theory that offer new perspectives on how individual texts can be read. China has huge potential in terms of using its own impressive resources—such as the Shanghai Library and the National Library in Beijing—in order to recover material that has been in these repositories for many years, but that has not been

studied.

The recovery of empirical data, as you discovered in the case of *Tapestry Portrait Novel*, was made possible through a physical visit to the Shanghai Library. Furthermore, to mine archives of publishing-related information tells us much about how the marketing of a particular text occurred. But it also tells us a great deal about how readers would have encountered this particular form of magazine publishing. And this is what I see as an area that can still develop very forcefully in China: the history of reading, the actual reading of texts, which involves the study of material artifacts, ideally accompanied with the digitalization of these materials. The material that surrounds us everywhere in Chinese museums is wonderful. We need to (re)turn to this material, not only digitally: we need to look at the actual copies of works. And this turn to foreign literary materials in China is something I would like to develop in the next few years with a special issue about Chinese resources or Chinese collections of western works. I would, furthermore, like to probe how new models can be advanced with a focus on images and transnational, textual mobility to chart cultural exchange.

ANQ has come a long way. It has developed from an early twentieth-century journal that was fundamentally documentary into a strong international journal that is open to different perspectives and certainly open to Chinese contributions. At this stage, we have a journal that publishes contributions from many different countries, not only China, not only Europe, but we have many other countries that make a significant contribution to shaping ANQ and to making it ready for the future.