

On the Translation of Names in Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind*: A Study in Onomastic Acculturation

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This study examines the Chinese translation of personal names in Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind* (GWTW). In particular, four name forms are identified in the popular translation by Fu Dong Hua: two-character given names, Sinicized surnames, surname-less references, and fully transliterated personal names. Contrary to the conventional practice of fully transliterating foreign names, translated personal names in GWTW are unique in that they conform to Chinese naming practice, including the adoption of the common FN-GN (family name-given name) pattern and conscious selection of gender-appropriate characters. Examples of onomastically encoded power differential are also noted and discussed.

KEYWORDS: name translation, personal names, *Gone with the Wind*, onomastics.

Introduction

Names in works of fiction, whether original or translated, have been a subject of fascination for onomasticians and literary scholars. Studies of names in fantasy and science fiction (cf. Algeo, 1982; Robinson, 2012), for example, have revealed the etymology of names as well as the creative wordplay involved in inventing names that contribute to a sense of exoticism and enchantment. Translations of proper names in literary works have also been examined (cf. Newmark, 1981; Manini, 1996), although the focus is often on the problems encountered during the translating task rather than the form of names themselves. Antonopoulou (2004), for example, has noted the potential difficulty in translating names in Raymond Chandler's stories into Greek. In their original English, some of the allusive names may serve as a reference for something, so, unless the translator makes special efforts to overcome the language barrier (e.g. by providing explanatory footnotes), the original meaning may be lost in the translation. Maylath (1996) also pointed out the

dilemma in translating Henrik Ibsen's plays from Norwegian to English: whether the names should be translated literally or metaphorically. As translators are constrained by a range of linguistic, cultural, and traditional rules of the target language, the problems associated with the task of translation are understandable.

For Chinese translation of English-language literature, the convention has been to transliterate all English proper names. However, one translated work that deviates from this conventional naming practice is a Chinese translation of Margaret Mitchell's monumental epic of the South: *Gone with the Wind* (GWTW). Winner of the 1937 Pulitzer Prize, this popular novel has been translated into 25 languages and adapted into a classic Hollywood film. While there are many aspects of GWTW (e.g. its historical accuracy, depiction of life in the South, slave stereotypes, Mitchell's writing style, etc.) that could be argued as important within the context of the novel, my focus is on the translation of personal names, which has received little critical attention.

Methodology

For this analysis, 122 character names from a Chinese translation of GWTW by Fu Dong Hua (Mitchell, 1991) were collected and analyzed in terms of their form and meaning. The translation is in traditional Chinese characters, the standard script in Taiwan. The list includes not only names of key and supporting characters, but also names mentioned in passing (e.g. names of relatives, servants, and military figures). Great care has been applied to identify all the Chinese equivalents of names that appear in the original English version. Nevertheless, devoted fans of GWTW may note the absence of the names *Bridget Flaberty*, *Mr John*, and *Sylvie (Sadie Belle) Connington*. These character names were not found in the translated text.

For transcription of Chinese characters into Latin script, I have adopted the Hanyu Pinyin system. To avoid terminological confusion, in this article I will use the terms *surname* and *given names*, instead of *first name*, *middle name*, and *last name*. Here, surname will precede given name. For example, in the Chinese name *Chen Zhang San*, *Chen* would be the surname and *Zhang San* would be the given name. Because Chinese writing is in the form of logographic characters, each character is invariably monosyllabic. Furthermore, as noted in Louie (2006), transcription of two-character given Chinese names into English can be expressed in various styles: (1) transcribing as one word (e.g. *Shuilan Lee*); (2) transcribing as separate words (e.g. *Ng Poon Lee*); (3) placing a hyphen between the two words (e.g. *Yo-Yo Ma*); or (4) reducing the two characters to two initials (e.g. *I. M. Pei*). In this article, I adopt Louie's thesis that the two-character given names are not two separate names but one name. For consistency, the Chinese given names discussed in this article will be modeled after the second style, that is, as separate words.

Findings

Overall, four name forms were identified in the translation: two-character given names, "Sinicized" surnames, surname-less references, and fully transliterated personal names. All 122 names identified in the translation are listed in Appendix 1.

Character given names

The two-character given name form can be found in 90 (74 %) of the total cases, with the focus primarily on the first two consonantal phonemes of English given names, which can have one, two, or three syllables. Some examples of single-syllable English names translated into two-character Chinese given names are *Wade* (*Wei De*), *Boyd* (*Bao Yi*), *Tom* (*Dang Mo*), *James* (*Zhe Mou*), *Buck* (*Bo Ke*), *Cade* (*Kai Ti*), and *Rhett* (*Rui De*). Examples of two-syllable names that have undergone this process include *Fanny* (*Fen Ni*), *Letty* (*Lei Di*), *Dolly* (*Duo Li*), *Sally* (*Sai Li*), *Pauline* (*Bao Ling*), *Solang* (*Su Lan*), *Ella* (*Ai La*), *Darcy* (*Da Xi*), *Dallas* (*Da Lang*), and *Angus* (*An Gu*). The name *Xi Li* may be an attempt to derive the Chinese counterpart of the name *Ashley*. Although three-syllable English names occur less frequently, they have been identified and truncated to fit the two-character form: *India* (*Yin Di*), *Suellen* (*Su Lun*), *Pittypat* (*Bai Die*), *Camilla* (*Jia Mei*), *Dimity* (*Ti Mi*), and *Eulalie* (*Yo Lai*).

Other phenomena associated with the process of transliteration are also noted. For the names *Scarlett*, *Stuart*, and *Brent*, the extraction of consonant clusters — /sc/, /st/, and /br/ — and the subsequent insertion of final vowel phonemes yield *Si Jia*, *Si Tu*, and *Bo Ren*, respectively. As the /r/ consonant is prosodically restricted in Chinese (Duanmu, 2007), the alternative is often substituted with lateral /l/. Thus, *Carreen*, *Gerald*, *Frank*, and *Carey* become *Kai Ling*, *Jia Le*, *Fu Lan*, and *Kai Li*, respectively. Finally, in the case of *Charles*, the Chinese given name *Cha Li* is modeled after the nickname *Charlie*. Only six instances of one-character Chinese given names were found: *Jim* (*Qin*), *Jonas* (*Zhong*), *Hugh* (*Shu*), *Tommy* (*Tang*), and *Jeb* and *Joe* (*Yue*).

For Chinese names, gender is expressed through the semantics of the characters. Although authors have considerable freedom and variation in the selection of character, the general rule of assigning gender-appropriate names is consciously adhered to. Words denoting beauty, pleasantness, kindness, or names of flowers and gemstones are usually attributed to females. Among the Chinese given names in GWTW, feminine-marked characters include *mei* “pretty,” *lan* “orchid,” *ai* “love,” *li* “beauty,” *ni* “girl,” *fen* “pink,” *duo* “petal,” *na* “lithe,” *die* “butterfly,” *mi* “honey,” *bei* “shell,” *ling* “bell,” and *lu* “dew.” The Butlers’ daughter Bonnie, whom Melanie describes “as the ‘Bonnie Blue’ flag” is given the name *Mei Lan* (*mei* “pretty” + *lan* “blue”). Through selection of specific character morphemes, the translator/name-giver is able to retain enough feminine quality to identify and differentiate the genders of characters by their names.

Sinicized family names

Another salient feature of the translated GWTW is the “Sinicization” of English surnames. As with the given names, homophony also plays a role in the translator’s attempt to assign official family names to the characters. For example, the initial consonantal sound in the Chinese surnames *Bai*, *Wei*, *Mi*, *Meng*, *Fang*, *Gan*, *Shi*, *Han*, and *Gao* corresponds to those in the English surnames *Butler*, *Wilkes*, *Munroe*, *Fontaine*, *Kennedy*, *Slattery*, *Hamilton*, *Meade*, and *Calvert*. In the translated novel, all the Tarletons have the namesake *Tang*. All the O’Haras — Gerald, his wife, and their three daughters — have the translated surname *Hao*.

Moreover, of the 34 Sinicized surnames identified in the translated text, 32 (94 %) are *bona-fide* Chinese surnames. Although not as common as *Chen*, *Lin*, *Huang*, and *Wong*, these surnames are nevertheless listed in the 2015 Chinese Family Names and Ranking (CFNR, 2015). For example, the Sinicized surnames *Gao* (*Calvert*), *Peng* (*Benteen*), *Meng* (*Munro*), *Shi* (*Slattery*), *Gan* (*Kennedy*), *Hua* (*Watling*), *Mead* (*Mi*), and *Elsing* (*Ai*) are ranked 19, 35, 73, 97, 155, 180, 210, and 215, respectively, on the CFNR. Surnames not found in the CFNR include *Wei* (*Tommy Welburn*), *Rui* (*Caro Rhett*), and *Mai* (*Angus MacIntosh*).

Surnames in the novel often collocate with a courtesy title, which in turn often depends on the marital status of the individual. Just as in English, distinction is made in the form of address between married and unmarried women. In the translated version, *Mrs Hamilton* becomes *Han Tai Tai* (*tai tai* “Mrs”) or *Han Fu Ren* (*fu ren* “Madame”), but *Miss Suellen* (a common practice in the South was to refer to unmarried women by their first name) would be *Su Lun Xiao Jie* (*xiao jie* “Miss”). Where marital status has been changed, the translated text adheres to the surname changes accordingly. Before Scarlett was married to her first husband Charles Hamilton, she was addressed as *Si Jia Xiao Jie* (*Miss Scarlett*). After her mercenary union to second husband Frank Kennedy, she was addressed as *Gan Tai Tai* (*Mrs Kennedy*). Finally, the retention of a woman’s maiden name after marriage has been found in one instance: *Pi Mei Mei Bai* “Maybelle Merriwether Picard.”

Surname-less references

In the English version, Black slaves are generally conferred one-word names: *Mammy*, *Pork*, *Dilcey*, *Prissy*, *Rosa*, *Teena*, *Cookie*, *Toby*, *Archie*, and *Lou*. This naming pattern for the slaves in the novel is consistent with what authors and scholars have observed with respect to that of African-American slaves. Examples can be found in Toni Morrison’s compelling narratives, which provide critical insight into the naming patterns of Black slaves (cf. Lyles-Scott, 2008; MacKethan, 1986–1987). On this culturally sensitive issue, Carmean states that slave names were given by the owner without concern for the slaves’ identities: “For African-Americans, the issue of name/identity/heritage may be infinitely complicated by the loss of an original family name” (1993: 97).

As shown in Appendix 1, the Chinese translation preserves this power differential (and, in some ways, its historical accuracy) by not applying the three-character personal name form to slave names. The names of slaves contrast with those of poor Whites, whom even “the house negroes of the County considered themselves superior to” (Mitchell, 1936: 49). Even the Slatterys are given a Sinicized family name in the translation. Of the 16 slave names, only one (*Prissy*) is of the three-character form. Although the term *Mammy* is now typically considered a derogatory term, its Chinese equivalent, *Ma Ma*, does not carry this negative connotation. It means “granny, nurse” and is generally used as a term of endearment. For *Dilcey*, the translated name incorporates a common form of address between siblings: *Die Jie* (*jie* “sister”). In the case of *A-Ji* (*Archie*), *A-Bo* (*Pork*), *A-Dao* (*Toby*), and *A-Jing* (*Jeems*), the *A-X* pattern is common in the formation of nicknames. Such nicknames can be used as forms of address between friends or close neighbors. Another common form for nicknames is the *Lao-X* pattern, in which the word *lao* means “old.” In the translated novel, Old Doc Fontaine, Old Levi, and Big Sam are

referred to as *Lao Fang Yi Sheng* (literally, “Old Fontaine Doctor”), *Lao Le*, and *Lao San*. On a cultural note, if the relationship between the two individuals is not close or if one does not state his alternative name preference, the use of an A-X or Lao-X patterned nickname may be considered impolite to the hearer. Thus, another cultural parallel is the lack of respect shown by one character’s assuming the use of a familiar nickname for another character without permission or invitation.

Fully transliterated personal names

Of the 21 personal names of real-life historical and political figures, 16 (76 %) are fully transliterated. This pattern contrasts with that of names assigned to the fictional characters. By “full transliteration,” I refer to the process whereby there is an almost one-to-one correspondence between the English syllables and the character morphemes. As the novel’s plot is historically situated around the Civil War, key military and political figures are occasionally mentioned. For example, the names *Abe Lincoln* and *Joe Johnston* are fully transliterated to *Ya Bo Lin Ken* and *Yue Zhong Si Tong*. Most notably, military and political figures are referred to by their last name. Except for General Robert E. Lee (*Li Luo Bo*), there is no Chinese surname assigned to (President) Davis, (Senator) Stephens, (General) Beauregard, (General) Jackson, (General) Forrest, and (Governor) Brown. Whether in works of fiction or history books, the aforementioned individuals will be referred to as *Dai Wei Si*, *Shi Di Wen*, *Bao Li Ge*, *Jie Ke Xun*, *Fu Le Si*, and *Bai Lang*, respectively. In general, the transliterated personal names in these works can be of various lengths (or strings of phonological units), depending on the number of syllables in the English names.

Discussion

Concerning the translation of proper names, Haque (2012: 97) notes the dilemma that translators face, namely: “when to translate, when to apply the close local equivalent, when to invent a new word by translating clearly, and when to copy.” Proper names are considered to exist outside language so are found in a few monolingual and bilingual dictionaries. For Chinese translation of English-language works, the common practice is to transliterate almost all proper names. In the Harry Potter series, as translated by Peng Chien Wen, all English names were fully transliterated: *Ha Li Bo Te* “Harry Potter,” *Wei Nong De Si Li* “Vernon Dursley,” *A Bu Si Dong Bu Li Duo* “Albus Dumbledore,” *Sai Fo Le Si Si Nei Pu* “Severus Snape,” *Lu Ba Hai Ge* “Rubeus Hagrid,” and *Ao Li Fan De* “Ollivander” (cf. Rowling, 2001). This practice is observed in the translation not only of contemporary English fiction characters but also of characters in translated classics, such as *Pride and Prejudice* and *The Great Gatsby*. In terms of naming style in translated works, Fu Dong Hua’s translation of GWTW is unique in its deviation from the usual convention and the incorporation of a system that conforms to the Chinese naming system. Moreover, the unusual treatment of names by Fu is effective on three levels: pragmatic, artistic, and cultural.

Just as the anglicized versions of foreign names are easier to pronounce and remember for English speakers (Hoffman, 2008), the Sinicized names in Fu’s translation are helpful in reducing the cognitive load of the general Chinese reading public. The novel, after all,

contains more than 100 names spread over some 1,000 pages. Whereas the “Han” family could be quickly identified as the Hamiltons, the transliterated equivalent *Han Mi Er Dun* may require more processing time. In a way, the phenomenon of “localizing” given names and surnames is not much different from the Anglicization process of first names of European immigrants. The process and function of homophonizing names seen in the Chinese translation of *GWTW* is regularly seen in other instances of acculturation. Moore (1995), for example, has shown how native Mvskoke names have been transformed by homophony into standard Anglo-American names. Thus, *Chonoparye* became *Jonas Parker*, *Arsarharke* became *Arthur Harkey*, *Poyartunnar* became *Paul Turner*, *Ethlalinmay* became *Ethel Linney*, and *Chaleestar* became *Charley Starr*. The truncation of lexical elements seen in this study also appears in the truncation accompanied by the adoption of similarly sounding English names for Polish — e.g. *Peters* for *Piotrowski* (Hoffman, 2008). Such alterations of names may have drawn controversy and even been criticized as xenophobic treatment of certain European immigrants; however, there is also the undeniable advantage in terms of ease of production for English speakers.

In some languages, gender is encoded through specific endings or markings. For example, for Polish names, *-ska* (*Anaska*) is a feminine ending and *-ski* (*Anaski*) is a masculine ending. In Spanish, masculine is marked with the suffix *-o* (*Mario*) and feminine with *-a* (*Maria*). For Chinese names, gender is expressed through the semantics of the monosyllabic characters (also known as *hanzi*). Technically, Fu had many *hanzi* to choose from, as Chinese language contains a significant number of homophonous characters. For instance, he could have selected a character which means “road” (路) instead of one meaning “dew” (露), although both are pronounced the same: *lu*. With respect to naming, the latter logogram is more likely to appear in a Chinese female name than a Chinese male name. There is no particular reason why “dew” should be associated with the feminine gender, although it is interesting to note that even the English modifier *dewy* is generally used to describe a feminine feature. For example, it is women and not men who desire such a thing as a “dewy skin.” Thus, whenever possible, Fu selected *hanzi* that matched the gender status of the characters in the novel, as Chinese parents would for a newborn. The results are semantically and logographically appropriate names that Chinese readers can quickly identify as male or female.

Finally, personal names have often been described as mirrors of the culture of a society, and a person’s name reveals information about that person’s gender, ethnic, and linguistic background (Alford, 1988). The translator sometimes fills the role of a name-giver, taking into account the background of the name bearer. Fu succeeded in that capacity because he selected appropriate names with that understanding in mind, including reflecting the original onomastically encoded power differential that existed in nineteenth-century America between owners and their slaves. The naming style for slaves (surname-less references) provides insight into naming and power relations; as MacKethan argues: “It can be seen from the names how slavery denies a person’s right to both name and identity as a means of denying his or her humanity” (1986–1987: 200).

The task of conforming Western names to Chinese naming practice is time-consuming, but worth the effort. By infusing a bit of local flavor into the personal names in *GWTW*, Fu Dong Hua has produced a unique translation of a great classic. Not only did Fu capture the power differential in his name selections, but also he created for all characters

names which are transparent in the sense that the characters' gender status is generally obvious and known to those who know the language.

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Appendix 1

TRANSLATION OF NAMES OF CHARACTERS IN GWTW

Original names	Fu's translations
Scarlett O'Hara	<i>Hao Si Jia</i>
Gerald O'Hara	<i>Hao Jia Le</i>
Ellen O'Hara	<i>Hao Ai Lan</i>
Suellen O'Hara	<i>Hao Su Lun</i>
Carreen O'Hara	<i>Hao Kai Ling</i>
James O'Hara	<i>Hao Zhe Mou</i>
Andrew O'Hara	<i>Hao An Lu</i>
Mammy	<i>Ma Ma</i>
Pork	<i>A-Bao</i>
Dilcey	<i>Die Jie</i>
Prissy	<i>Bai Li Zi</i>
Teena	<i>Ding Na</i>
Rosa	<i>Lu Sa</i>
Jack	<i>A-Ji</i>
Toby	<i>A-Dao</i>
Big Sam	<i>Lao San</i>
Jonas Wilkerson	<i>Wei Zhong</i>
Emmie Slattery	<i>Shi A Mi</i>
Tom Slattery	<i>Shi Dong Mou</i>
Melanie Hamilton	<i>Han Mei Lan</i>
Charles Hamilton	<i>Han Cha Li</i>
Wade Hampton Hamilton	<i>Han Wei De</i>
Aunt Pittypat Hamilton	<i>Han Bai Die</i>
Henry Hamilton	<i>Han Heng Li</i>
William Hamilton	<i>Han Wei Lien</i>
Ashley Wilkes	<i>Wei Xi Li</i>
John Wilkes	<i>Wei Yue Han</i>
India Wilkes	<i>Wei Yin Di</i>
Honey Wilkes	<i>Wei Mi Er</i>
Beau Wilkes	<i>Wei Xiao Bo</i>
Uncle Peter	<i>Bi De Bo Bo</i>
Mose	<i>Mu Shi</i>
Jim Tarleton	<i>Tang Qin</i>
Beatrice Tarleton	<i>Tan Bi Li</i>
Boyd Tarleton	<i>Tang Bao Yi</i>
Tom Tarleton	<i>Tang Dang Mo</i>
Brent Tarleton	<i>Tang Bo Ren</i>
Stuart Tarleton	<i>Tang Si Tu</i>
Hetty Tarleton	<i>Tang Hai Di</i>
Camilla Tarleton	<i>Tang Jia Mei</i>
Randa Tarleton	<i>Tang Lan Di</i>
Betsy Tarleton	<i>Tang Bei Zhi</i>
Jeems	<i>A-Jing</i>
Old (Doc) Fontaine	<i>Lao Fang (Yi Sheng)</i>
Joe Fontaine	<i>Fang Yue Se</i>
Tony Fontaine	<i>Fang Dong Yi</i>
Alex Fontaine	<i>Fang Le Xi</i>
Sally Munroe	<i>Meng Sai Li</i>
Buck Munroe	<i>Meng Bo Ke</i>
Letty Munroe	<i>Meng Lei Di</i>
Dimity Munroe	<i>Meng Ti Mi</i>
Alice Munroe	<i>Meng Ai Li</i>
Evan Munroe	<i>Meng Yi Wan</i>
Hugh Calvert	<i>Gao Shu</i>
Cathleen Calvert	<i>Gao Jia Ling</i>
Raiford Calvert	<i>Gao Lei Fu</i>
Cade Calvert	<i>Gao Kai Ti</i>

Original names	Fu's translations
Fanny Elsing	<i>Ai Fen Ni</i>
Hugh Elsing	<i>Ai Shu</i>
Dr Meade	<i>Mi (Yi Sheng)</i>
Darcy Meade	<i>Mi Da Xi</i>
Phil Meade	<i>Mi Fei Er</i>
Cookie	<i>A-Ma</i>
Dolly Merriwether	<i>Mei Duo Li</i>
Maybelle Merriwether	<i>Mei Mei Bai</i>
Frank Kennedy	<i>Gan Fu Lan</i>
Ella Lorena Kennedy	<i>Gan Ai La</i>
Rhett Butler	<i>Bai Rui De</i>
Eugenie Victoria	<i>Bai Mei Lan</i>
"Bonnie Blue" Butler	
Solang Robillard	<i>Luo Su Lan</i>
Eulalie Robillard	<i>Luo Yo Lai</i>
Pauline Robillard	<i>Luo Bao Ling</i>
Philippe Robillard	<i>Luo Fei Li</i>
Dallas McClure	<i>Lu Da Lang</i>
Hope McLure	<i>Lu Xi Wan</i>
Faith McLure	<i>Lu Xin Nian</i>
Tommy Welburn	<i>Wei Tang</i>
Will Benteen	<i>Peng Hui Er</i>
Belle Watling	<i>Hua Bei Er</i>
Kells Whiting	<i>Hui Ke Er</i>
Able Wynder	<i>Wen Ai Bo</i>
Rene Picard	<i>Pi Rui Na</i>
Raoul Picard	<i>Pi Lu Er</i>
Carey Ashburn	<i>A Kai Li</i>
Johnny Gallagher	<i>Gao Zhan Ni</i>
Willie Guinan	<i>Jin Wei Li</i>
Caro Rhett	<i>Rui Jia Luo</i>
Angus MacIntosh	<i>Mai An Gu</i>
Andy Bonnell	<i>Peng An Chi</i>
Willie Burr	<i>Bo Wei Li</i>
Mammy Jincy	<i>Jing Ma Ma</i>
Lou	<i>Le Zi</i>
Old Levi	<i>Lao Le</i>
Archie	<i>A-Ji</i>
Renny	<i>Rui Na</i>
Hilton	<i>Shi Er Deng</i>
(Mr) McRae	<i>Mou (Xian Sheng)</i>
(Mrs) Coleman	<i>Ke (Tai Tai)</i>
(Mrs) Bixby	<i>Bi Ke Si Pi (Fu Ren)</i>
(Captain) Jaffery	<i>Xia (Dui Zhang)</i>
(Captain) Randall	<i>Lan (Dui Zhang)</i>
Abe Lincoln	<i>Ya Bo Lin Ken</i>
Robert E. Lee	<i>Li Luo Bo</i>
Joe Johnston	<i>Yue Zhong Si Tong</i>
Raphael Semmes	<i>Sai Mo Zi</i>
Jeb Stuart	<i>Si Tu Yue</i>
Napoleon	<i>Na Po Lun</i>
Cromwell	<i>Ke Lun Wei Er</i>
Sherman	<i>Hsieh Er Men</i>
Beauregard	<i>Bao Li Ge</i>
Davis	<i>Dai Wei Si</i>
Morgan	<i>Mo Er Gen</i>
Jackson	<i>Jie Ke Xun</i>
Stephens	<i>Shi Di Wen</i>
Forrest	<i>Fu Le Si</i>
Hood	<i>Hu Tu</i>

Original names	Fu's translations
Golden	<i>Ge Den</i>
Parmalee	<i>Ba Wan Li</i>
(General) Pickett	<i>Bi (Jiang Jun)</i>
(General) Pope	<i>Pu (Jun Zhang)</i>
(Governor) Bullock	<i>Pu (Zhou Zhang)</i>
(Governor) Brown	<i>Bai Lang (Zhou Zhang)</i>
