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Translating China : Henri Borel (1869-1933)

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Propositions

Relating to the subject of the dissertation:

1. Borel's self-proclaimed poethood profoundly influences his translation of China.
2. Borel increasingly assumes the role of a Chinese author by internalizing Chinese culture in his own writing and crossing the border between translating and authoring.
3. Borel's prominent presence as a translator means his readers are offered a personalized vision of China.
4. Borel moves across the full range from preconceptualizing China to essentializing, idealizing China and indeed sinicizing Chinese literature.
5. Borel is passionate about the language, culture and philosophy of China but strongly dislikes the everyday life of the Chinese.
6. Borel's criticism of others presents a stark contrast with his failure to recognize the limits of his own knowledge and his own mistakes.

Relating to the field of the subject of the dissertation:

1. The identity of the translator determines voice in translation.
2. A poetic approach to cultural translation makes the presence of the translator more prominent.
3. If the target language has no equivalent for a particular expression in the source language, the referent of this expression may still exist in the target culture.
4. Essays about Other culture(s) are translations.

Other propositions

1. Self-translation inevitably leads to rewriting.
2. An emigrant never comes home.