

The Social Function of Literary Researches: An Interview with Wu Di

Zhou Min

Abstract: Wu Di is a renowned Chinese scholar of foreign literature and an esteemed literary translator. He has not only written extensively, but also actively leads academic organizations, serving as president of the Chinese Association for Comparative Studies of Languages and Cultures, vice president of the English Literature Committee of the Chinese Association for Foreign Literature Studies, and honorary president of Zhejiang Provincial Association for Comparative Literature and Foreign Literature. His body of work includes 16 academic monographs, such as *Studies in English Metaphysical Poetry* and *History of Russian Fiction*, over 30 literary translations, including *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *The Complete Lyric Poems of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, as well as more than 80 edited volumes, such as *Studies in the Formation and Dissemination of Foreign Literature Classics* (8 volumes) and *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin* (10 volumes). His outstanding contributions to literary research have earned him numerous accolades from both the Zhejiang Provincial Administration and the Chinese Ministry of Education. This article presents an interview between Zhou Min and Wu Di, focusing on the social function of literary research. The discussion revolves around three key aspects: 1) the social function of literary research within the broader historical mission of literary scholars; 2) its role in interdisciplinary studies; and 3) its embodiment in the practice of literary translation. Professor Wu Di asserts that, despite the challenges posed by artificial intelligence to the humanities, literary research retains an irreplaceable social function, one that profoundly influences human experience by engaging with the depth of emotions and thought. He emphasizes that literary research not only focuses on textual analysis but also embraces interdisciplinary approaches, including ethical literary criticism, legal literary criticism, as well as the intersections between literature and economics, ecological criticism, and intermedia studies. Moreover, Wu Di underscores the critical role of literary translation within the broader scope of literary studies. Translation, he argues, serves as a vital conduit for cultural exchange and the communication of ideas and emotions, and it plays a key role in the creation and evolution of world literature. While acknowledging that AI technology may serve

as a helpful tool in translation, Wu Di firmly maintains that human translators, with their creativity and nuanced understanding of emotional complexity, are irreplaceable.

Keywords: Wu Di; literary researches; interdisciplinary approaches to literary researches; literary translation; artificial intelligence

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标题: 文学研究的社会功能：吴笛访谈录

内容摘要: 吴笛是中国著名的外国文学研究专家和文学翻译家。他不仅著述甚丰，而且积极主导学术组织，担任（中国）中外语言文化比较学会会长、中国外国文学学会英国文学分会副会长，以及浙江省比较文学与外国文学学会名誉会长等多种学术职务。著有《英国玄学派诗歌研究》《俄国小说发展史》等 16 部学术专著，《苔丝》《雪莱抒情诗全集》等 30 多部文学译著，以及《外国文学经典生成与传播研究》《外国诗歌鉴赏辞典》《普希金全集》等 80 多部编著。他的研究成果多次获得浙江省和教育部的优秀科研成果奖。本文是周敏对吴笛的访谈，主要探讨文学研究的社会功能。访谈从三个方面展开：1、文学研究的社会功能在于文学学者的社会使命；2、文学研究的社会功能体现于文学跨学科研究；3、文学研究的社会功能体现于文学翻译的实质。吴笛教授认为，尽管人工智能对人文学科构成挑战，文学研究仍具有不可替代的社会功能，它通过情感和思想深度影响人类。文学研究不仅关注作品本身，还与跨学科研究相结合，如文学伦理学批评和文学法律批评，以及文学与经济、生态、媒介的互融共通。吴笛强调，文学翻译也是文学研究的重要组成部分，它促进了文化交流和思想感情的沟通，是世界文学产生和发展的关键。他指出，尽管 AI 技术在翻译中起到辅助作用，但人工翻译因其创造性和对情感的深刻理解，无法被机器取代。

关键词: 文学研究；文学跨学科研究；文学翻译；人工智能

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I. The Social Function of Literary Researches Reflected in the Historical Mission of Literary Scholars

Zhou Min (hereinafter referred to as Zhou): In the current context, characterized

by the decline of the humanities and the growing impact of artificial intelligence, there is considerable debate and disagreement regarding the social function of foreign literature. Through several interviews conducted by other scholars, we have gained valuable insights into your distinguished academic career, your extensive research on foreign literature, and your significant contributions to literary translation. In this interview, I would like to ask you, Mr. Wu, as an esteemed literary critic and translator with a long-standing career, what are your perspectives on the future of literary researches?

Wu Di (hereinafter referred to as Wu): The current challenges facing foreign language and literary studies are, in many ways, unsurprising. It is often said that while literature originates in reality, it also transcends it, with emphasis here on the idea that literature is elevated above everyday experience. This transcendence suggests that literature maintains a certain distance from the practicalities of real life. Although literary texts convey information, it is not of a purely practical information. Literature distinguishes itself through its portrayal of events; however, these portrayals are not simple narrations but rather crafted expressions shaped by intellect and imagination. This is especially true in forms like poetry, where an element of pseudo-representation is often present. As a foundational discipline, the study of foreign literature may not directly influence societal or economic progress. Nonetheless, regardless of our social context or the rapid advancements in artificial intelligence, literature's subtle impact on human thought and emotion remains irreplaceable. Therefore, the future of foreign literature research is promising, and the mission of literary scholars continues to hold profound significance.

Zhou: You're absolutely correct! While literature may not provide practical information or directly influence economic or social development, it remains indispensable. Though it transcends reality, literature nonetheless has the capacity to critique life. Literary creation and research respond to the rhythms of their time, engaging with contemporary issues and often offering insights into the future. In his novel *Machines Like Me*, British author Ian McEwan writes about the age of artificial intelligence, using fiction to imaginatively explore the potential consequences and ethical dilemmas that arise when robots integrate into human daily life—even into intimate relationships.

Wu: I have read your review of the novel *Machines Like Me* by McEwan in *Foreign Literature Studies*, where you assert that the central theme of this novel is to explore the cultural and ethical issues arising from the coexistence of humans and

machines.¹ Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, which you mentioned in your article, also reflects the cultural and ethical dilemmas of her time. In *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley conveys, in a gothic manner, the anxieties of her era regarding creation being beyond the control of its creator. These anxieties are the concern about the ethics of science and technology. While literary scholars may not possess the ability to create scientific innovations or robots like Adam in the novel *Machines Like Me*, they can use their literary imagination to explore how the main character, Charlie, and other members of humanity might create what you refer to as a "human-machine community" with Adam. This approach could help mitigate human-machine conflicts and serves as a reflection on the ethics of science and technology in the age of AI.

Zhou: Excellent writers should also be thinkers, and critics even more so. The principle of "cultivating moral integrity," which is often emphasized in teaching practice, is actually always reflected in literary creation and literary research.

Wu: Indeed. Literary scholars serve as critical thinkers, using their insights to positively influence others and contribute to societal well-being. Literature's mission, fundamentally, is to establish moral values and to educate. One of the vital functions of literature is its capacity for ethical instruction. Professor Nie Zhenzhao's advocacy for "ethical literary criticism" has garnered international scholarly attention because it addresses one of literature's core attributes. While aesthetic pleasure remains significant, the social function of literature is equally indispensable. A novel like *Machines Like Me* transcends the concept of a mere "小说" (literally "small talk" in Chinese) and instead embodies profound reflections on humanity's fate in the era of science and technology.

Zhou: Reflecting on your insight, I now see that the "novels" I study are far from the "small talk" implied in the Chinese term; rather, they hold significant educational value. Yet, if literature serves an ethical teaching function, one might ask: what distinguishes literary works from educational texts?

Wu: The distinction between literary works and educational texts largely lies in the realm of imaginative thinking. The educational function of literature arises from its rich imagination, expressed through metaphorical language and vibrant literary techniques. As the renowned literary scholar Vladimir Nabokov remarked, "There are three points of view from which a writer can be considered: he may

¹ See Zhou Min, "The Imagination of a Human-Machine Community in *Machines Like Me*," *Foreign Literature Studies* 3 (2020): 75.

be considered as a storyteller, as a teacher, and as an enchanter. A major writer combines these three—storyteller, teacher, enchanter—but it is the enchanter in him that predominates and makes him a major writer” (Nabokov 5). For Nabokov, the writer’s role as an “enchanter” is rooted in his mastery of language and technique.

Zhou: The “enchanter’s” artistry arises from the writer’s unique wisdom, a fusion of creativity and imagination. What artificial intelligence lacks is the distinct creativity and vision required by an individual writer to craft a singular work. As Einstein once noted, Logic will take you from A to B, but imagination will take you anywhere. While AI excels in logic and rule-based processes, literature depends far more profoundly on imagination and emotional depth.

Wu: Literary creation is inextricably tied to emotion; works devoid of emotional resonance and depth of thought seldom connect with readers. Likewise, literary research cannot exist apart from feeling, as literature frequently serves as a bridge between human souls. Literary creation allows authors to share or explore their innermost reflections with others. Foreign literary scholars and translators in China act as cultural emissaries, playing an essential role in facilitating cultural exchange between China and the world. Without such emissaries, the vision of a global cultural community would be challenging to achieve. In the field of Caribbean literature, for example, you serve as an irreplaceable cultural mediator—a role that no AI technology could replicate. This function of bridging cultures is at the heart of literary studies and embodies their critical social purpose.

Zhou: Thank you, Mr. Wu, for acknowledging my research in Caribbean literature. Indeed, we have successfully bridged literary studies and regional studies by leveraging literature as a medium to foster positive relations with the Caribbean. Through initiatives such as inviting Caribbean dignitaries—including the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda—to deliver lectures and engage in exchanges at our Center for Caribbean Studies, and by practicing civil diplomacy through academic scholarship, we have made meaningful strides. In September of this year, we welcomed seven ambassadors from Latin America and the Caribbean to inaugurate the Center, marking a significant leap from literary studies to area studies. In recent years, “country and region studies,” now one of the five core disciplines within the foreign language and literature field in China, has seen substantial growth. Your research on foreign literature, encompassing the literature and culture of various countries—including Great Britain, the United States, and Russia—has achieved remarkable results. What are your views on integrating

“country and region studies” within foreign language and literature studies? Do you see potential synergy between “foreign literature studies” and “country and region studies” and what factors should we consider to better fulfill the social role of literary studies?

Wu: Although “country and regional studies” may seem to belong to different academic fields, they have long been integral to “foreign literature studies.” Today, when we discuss “country and regional studies,” we often emphasize its ties to international politics, economics, and world history. However, these studies are fundamentally intertwined with global literary studies. Literary research uniquely reveals the spiritual essence of a region—a depth of understanding that political, economic, and historical studies often cannot attain, as the cultural and artistic works of a country or area frequently encapsulate its core spirit. By paying closer attention to the social conditions reflected in literary research, we can better understand literature’s social role. The current emphasis on “country and region studies” highlights the essential social function that literary studies fulfill.

II. The Social Function of Literary Researches Reflected in the Interdisciplinary Studies of Literature

Zhou: I have observed that over the past two years, you have made significant contributions to the field with publications such as *History of Old Rus’ and Early Modern Russian Poetry*, *Researches on Frontier Issues in Foreign Literature*, and *Essays on Foreign Literary Classics*, among others. Additionally, this year you have published numerous articles, including “Film and Television ‘Translations’ of Literary Classics,” “A Study of Legal Ethics in Scott’s *The Heart of Midlothian*,” “A Study of Unfair Trials and the Legal Ideal in Scott’s Novels,” “A Study of the Scientific Spirit and Enlightenment Influence in Russian Neoclassical Poetry,” “The Trends and Translingual Qualities in Russian-American Literature,” and “The Possibility of Economical Literary Criticism.” These works encompass not only literary analysis but also interdisciplinary approaches to literature. In your view, does interdisciplinary study enhance the social role of literary research?

Wu: The social function of literary research is to broaden the boundaries of literature, with Professor Nie Zhenzhao’s theory and practice of ethical literary criticism serving as a notable example. I, too, aim to explore the interdisciplinary field of literature, particularly drawn to the concept of “Sphinx factors” in ethical literary criticism. As Nie explains, “The Enigma Sphinx is often used as a metaphor for complex, mysterious, and difficult-to-understand issues, but it contains a

deeper meaning: the quest for the definition of human existence” (Nie 275). In the area of legal literary criticism, my recent articles on the British author Walter Scott emphasize literature’s social role. Many works, such as Dickens’ *A Tale of Two Cities* and Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, also serve as excellent models for legal education. Legal literary criticism not only provides insight into legal principles but also enhances our understanding of the literary work itself. For instance, in Scott’s writings, we can explore themes of injustice, critique the irrational legal systems and trial procedures of his time, and examine the psychological struggles of suspects caught in ethical dilemmas. Through his portrayals of wrongful imprisonment and critiques of flawed judicial practices, Scott’s work embodies literature’s ethical teaching function and its pursuit of justice in the face of unfair trials.

Zhou: In addition to ethical and legal literary criticism, in “Film and Television ‘Translations’ of Literary Classics,” you explore the adaptation of literary works for film and television through the lens of translation studies. You argue that these adaptations not only enable the inheritance and renewal of the source text but also provide essential plot structures and creative inspiration for the film and television industry. This process embodies the social function of literary research, as literary classics offer invaluable cultural capital to the film and television sectors.

Wu: Indeed, literary classics not only serve as valuable cultural assets and sources for the film and television industry, but they also act as effective mediums for sharing content across different forms of media. Their inherent appeal allows adaptations to engage audiences on a deeper level, often reigniting interest in the original works. In this way, adaptations help popularize literary classics and the cultural heritage they embody, enhancing the transmission and appreciation of these works.

Zhou: Exactly. In your article, “The Possibility of Economical Literary Criticism,” you emphasize the relationship between literature and economics. Do you believe literature can meaningfully contribute to a country’s economic development?

Wu: While literature may not have a direct influence on a nation’s economic development, its subtle ideological impact is undeniably significant. In modern society, the connection between literature and economics has become increasingly evident. Literary scholars are not only “engineers of the human soul” but also creators of intellectual goods. For literary works to function as commodities and cultural capital, they must enter into circulation, much like any other product.

Similarly, literary translation carries not only intellectual and cultural attributes but also economic value, facilitating cross-cultural exchange. In the global marketplace, national literatures are positioned as commodities, leading to a discourse on world literature shaped by economic foundations. Literature acts as a “superstructure” intrinsically linked to the “economic foundation” that supports it. Even “ecocriticism” inherently contains an aspect of “economic criticism,” reflecting both interdisciplinary cultural critique and the essential principles of ecological civilization. In our material world, literature relies on economic support, with its evolution closely tied to economic growth and social progress. Goethe’s advocacy of “world literature” in the early 19th century, for example, was deeply rooted in historical and cultural legacies as well as economic exchanges among nation-states. Therefore, “literature possesses the ability to guide economic development, the imagination of literature can inspire economic progress, and literary representations of economic activity can offer insights for real-world economic practices” (Wu, “The Possibility of Economical Literary Criticism” 5).

Zhou: In your article, “A Study of the Ecological Ethical Thoughts in Ted Hughes’s Poems,” you note that poets employ poetry to “provide the necessary moral warnings for humanity to live in harmony with nature and to pursue sustainable development” (Wu, “A Study of the Ecological Ethical Thoughts in Ted Hughes’s Poems” 14). How effective do you believe such moral imperatives from literature can be in our modern, “accelerated” society?

Wu: In modern society, where efficiency prevails—embodied in phenomena like “fast food” and “clocking-in”—traditional literature is evolving alongside shifting social patterns. For instance, short story writer Alice Munro received the Nobel Prize in Literature, and Lydia Davis, known for her concise prose, won the Booker International Prize, highlighting the emergence of an “accelerated” literary form. In this fast-paced world, shorter forms like short poems and flash fiction may indeed see a resurgence. Furthermore, literature is no longer solely the domain of a select group of elite writers; its creation now involves more individuals than ever before. While literary reading has traditionally been class-based and thus never fully universal, it is arguably now as widely accessible as it has ever been. With the rise of social media, any literate person can readily access prose or poetry on their cell phone. This unprecedented accessibility means that, for the first time, literature can deliver its moral imperatives in new and far-reaching ways. Ecological literature and other socially conscious texts are now widely shared across social media, amplifying their impact on public awareness in ways that cannot be overlooked.

Zhou: You previously discussed the state of literature in the social media era, which brings to mind a lecture you gave about 20 years ago at the “Zhejiang Humanities Lecture Hall” titled “World Literature in Intermedia Perspective: From the Movie *Tess of the d’Urbervilles*.” Among your Ph.D. students, many are now emerging scholars engaged in “intermedia literary criticism.” In this age of information overload and social media, the social impact of literature confronts an increasingly complex cultural landscape. Is this complexity one of the factors you considered in advocating for “intermedia literary criticism”?

Wu: Media is indeed an essential element in literary studies. The scope of “intermedia literary criticism” is extensive, encompassing not only the relationship between text and image but also examining the impact of visual media on literary creation, among other areas. Western scholars have made significant contributions to the study of visual culture within their literary traditions, and intermedia criticism has also gained notable attention and recognition in China. Additionally, “intermedia literary criticism” intersects closely with fields such as communication studies and art history, fostering opportunities for interdisciplinary synergy and mutual reinforcement.

Zhou: The role of literature in enriching other disciplines is evident, and the social function of interdisciplinary literary studies further underscores the value of literary research.

Wu: The social function of literary studies is best realized through interdisciplinary approaches, which broaden the scope of literary research and allow scholars to engage in the evolution of social thought. An interdisciplinary perspective enables literary scholars to add depth and breadth to their analyses. For instance, when we read Francesco Petrararch’s “Sonnet 302,” “I Raised Myself in Thought to Where I Found Her,” an understanding of the historical and cultural dimensions behind its emotions enriches our interpretation. On the surface, it may appear as a beautiful lyrical poem about the separation of lovers. However, by immersing ourselves in the poem’s dreamlike world and the lyrical hero’s desire for spiritual union with Laura’s soul—expressed in divine images such as “innocent and happy in this third sphere” (Petrarch 271)—we uncover deeper layers of meaning. This longing for eternity reflects the tradition of Dante’s *Divine Comedy* and themes from *La Vita Nuova*, traditions that Petrarch reinterprets in *Il Canzoniere*. Similarly, in Goethe’s “The Wanderer’s Night-Song” and “The Hunter’s Even-Song,” the expression of “peace” at the end of both poems may seem unremarkable when considered in isolation.

Yet, when we take into account Goethe's role in the *Sturm und Drang* movement, his bureaucratic responsibilities in the Duchy of Saxe-Weimar, and his religious sensibilities, we move beyond individual introspection to grasp the universal emotional power conveyed in these poems. These historical and cultural contexts are vital to understanding poetry. As the Russian critic Victor Zhirmunsky observed, "Every poet requires a degree of historical interpretation. If we compare Pushkin with Fyodor Tyutchev, Nikolay Nekrasov, and Alexander Blok, each poem reveals a unique world of experience, each poet embodying a distinctive poetic personality and style" (20).

III. The Social Function of Literary Researches Embodied in the Substance of Literary Translation

Zhou: In addition to publishing over fifteen books on literary research, you are also an accomplished translator and have been honored with the title of "Senior Translator" by the China Translators Association. Do you believe that literary translation fulfills the social function of literary research?

Wu: Literary translation stands as a unique form of literary scholarship and fully embodies the social function of literature. In my monograph *Researches on the Art of Translation of Zhejiang Writers*, I assert that

literary translation is a crucial means of cultural exchange and serves as a conduit for communicating thoughts and emotions across nations. The rise and development of literary translation not only reflect the blending of foreign and national literatures but are also closely linked to societal development and the progress of specific eras. Indeed, it is through literary translation and translated literature that world literature emerges. Therefore, the history of world literature can also be viewed as the history of translated literature and international cultural exchange. (*Researches on the Art of Translation of Zhejiang Writers* 1)

To eliminate cultural barriers and promote mutual understanding among nations, exchanges between different cultures are essential, and literary translation remains an indispensable mode of such exchange. It not only facilitates intercultural communication but also serves as a vehicle for transmitting world culture. The translation is a crucial process for breathing new life into source texts, allowing masterpieces from literary history to gain renewed relevance. From ancient Egyptian

and Babylonian works to the classics of Greece and Rome, translation has played a key role in the endurance of these texts. Without the act of translation, many source texts would fade alongside their original languages. It is the translation that sustains intercultural communication and gives it substance and permanence.

Zhou: Literary translation plays a vital role in cultural exchange between nations. It is through the Chinese translation of foreign literary works that the window to world literature and international cultural exchange has opened, enabling China to learn about, connect with, and engage with the world. This connection has been instrumental in fostering China's comprehensive development and integration on the global stage.

Wu: Indeed, a review of the history of literary translation in China reveals a clear synchronization between the country's socio-economic development and the progress of literary translation. When literary translation thrives, China's development appears to accelerate; conversely, when translation efforts face setbacks or stagnation, national progress seems similarly impeded.

Zhou: There are also many misconceptions surrounding translation. In defining poetry, Robert Frost famously remarked that "poetry is what gets lost in translation."

Wu: When Robert Frost remarked that "poetry is what gets lost in translation," he was likely alluding to the notion that the musicality of poetry cannot be easily translated. However, for the translator of poetry, preserving the musicality of the source text is an essential academic pursuit. The role of a poetry translator goes beyond merely conveying cultural elements; it also involves maintaining key attributes of the original text, including its musical qualities, in the translated language. In this sense, we might amend Frost's famous saying to read: "Poetry should be something that is preserved in translation." Musicality, too, can be artfully rendered in the target language, as demonstrated by Professor Fei Bai's translations of Paul Verlaine's *Romances sans paroles* (*Songs Without Words*) and other works. Beyond musicality, the primary purpose of literary translation is cultural transmission. When Edward Fitzgerald translated the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* in the nineteenth century, he captured the elegance of the original text in a newly vitalized English version, sparking a revival of Persian poetry among English-speaking audiences. This illustrates that great works exist in a state of perpetual transformation and translation, underscoring the importance of the translator's role. A translator is not merely a "matchmaker," but a life-giving creator, and the process

of translation is one of ongoing creative renewal. The Latin proverb “traduttore, traditore” (meaning “the translator is a traitor”) implies that translation betrays the original text. Yet we might say instead that the translator is a transmitter. Translation is a dynamic process that breathes new life into literature, and translated works represent the rebirth of the original. Thus, rather than being a “traitor,” the translator is a “transmitter” of literary vitality.

Zhou: I note that in your monographs *Studies in the Formation and Dissemination of Foreign Literature Classics*, which received the National Award for Outstanding Achievements in Scientific Research, and *Researches on the Art of Translation of Zhejiang Writers*, you focus significantly on issues in literary and translation studies from an ethnic perspective. Do translated literary works with this “new life” also contribute to the formation of what Benedict Anderson terms an “imagined community,” continuously shaping a renewed national culture and national spirit?

Wu: Translated works hold a distinctive role in shaping national culture and spirit. As you know, translated literature has profoundly influenced the emergence and growth of modern Chinese literature, significantly advancing the development of national aesthetics, psychological style, and collective spirit. From the selection of source texts to the publication of translated works, translators—despite lacking a direct connection to the original authors—contribute to forming an “imagined community,” a process in which AI can never replace human insight or creativity.

Zhou: From a technological perspective, has the role of translation been diminished in the AI era, and could human translation ultimately be replaced by machine translation?

Wu: The digital revolution is driving remarkable advancements across science and technology, transforming our lives in previously unimaginable ways and poised to further reshape society further in the coming decades. Artificial intelligence will intensify the economic and social changes set in motion by the first wave of digitization. However, the core function of translation remains steadfast. Neural networks, composed of interconnected neurons, process and analyze data far more rapidly than individual human nervous systems. While AI technology developed by natural scientists provides significant support to literary translation, it is unlikely to replace human translators in this field. As AI continues to advance, translation tools have improved, offering innovative ways to enhance the translation process. For instance, I recently translated passages from the 2024 book *Generative Artificial*

Intelligence: What Everyone Needs to Know. AI accurately rendered the word “Introduction” as “导言” in Chinese, yet it failed to correctly interpret the new term “Outroduction” (Kaplan 188), which means “Conclusion” or “Epilogue,” translating it instead as “生产.” This misinterpretation occurred because the term is novel and absent from existing databases, highlighting the limitations of AI in handling unique or nuanced expressions. While AI excels in information processing and syntax, it lacks the capacity for the nuanced emotional experiences central to literary translation. The process of literary translation is inherently creative, and although AI possesses strong processing and generalization abilities, it lacks originality and ultimately can only imitate rather than create. Moreover, AI operates primarily within data and logic, falling short in perceiving and interpreting emotions, beauty, and other sensory experiences as the human mind does. Consequently, AI may serve as a valuable tool in literary translation, but it cannot replace the depth and artistry of human translators.

Zhou: I could not agree more with you Mr. Wu. There is no need for us to fear AI replacing human translation, as translation transcends the mere conversion of words. Similarly, we need not fear AI’s encroachment on literary creation and criticism. While AI may indeed produce literary texts and contribute to critical discourse, it remains fundamentally incapable of creating true masterpieces. Every masterpiece is an aesthetic articulation born of the unique, often serendipitous interaction between the author’s inner life and the world, and it is precisely this element of unpredictability that establishes an insurmountable divide between AI and human creativity. AI-generated literary criticism may tend towards superficiality, yet high-caliber criticism emerges from the complex engagement and negotiation between the critic’s personal experience and the textual world. It is through this dynamic interaction with society and culture that the social value of literary criticism is most fully realized. It has been a pleasure to conduct this dialogue with you. Thank you very much for your insights and time.

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