

Advancing a Faithful and Elegant Traditional Chinese Translation

Progress and vision for a refined Chinese translation

Sept. 25, 2025

Meeting Program

- Background and Current Situation
- Formation of the New Translation Team
- Current Progress and Achievements / Vision and Next Steps
- Appendix: Context for New Translation Initiative





Background and Current Situation

Team Composition Over Time

?	Richard						
?	Richard	Vicki					
?	Richard	Vicki	Tina	Lavila	MeiFen		
?	Richard	Vicki	Tina	Lavila	MeiFen		
2020/11	Richard	Vicki	Tina	Lavila	MeiFen	Eric	
2021/07	Richard	Vicki	Tina	Lavila	MeiFen	Eric	(Esther)
2022/11	Richard	Vicki	Tina	Lavila	MeiFen	Eric	(Esther)
2023/09	Richard	Vicki	Tina	Lavila	MeiFen	Eric	(Esther)
2024	Richard	Vicki	Tina	Lavila	MeiFen	Eric	(Esther)
2025	Richard						

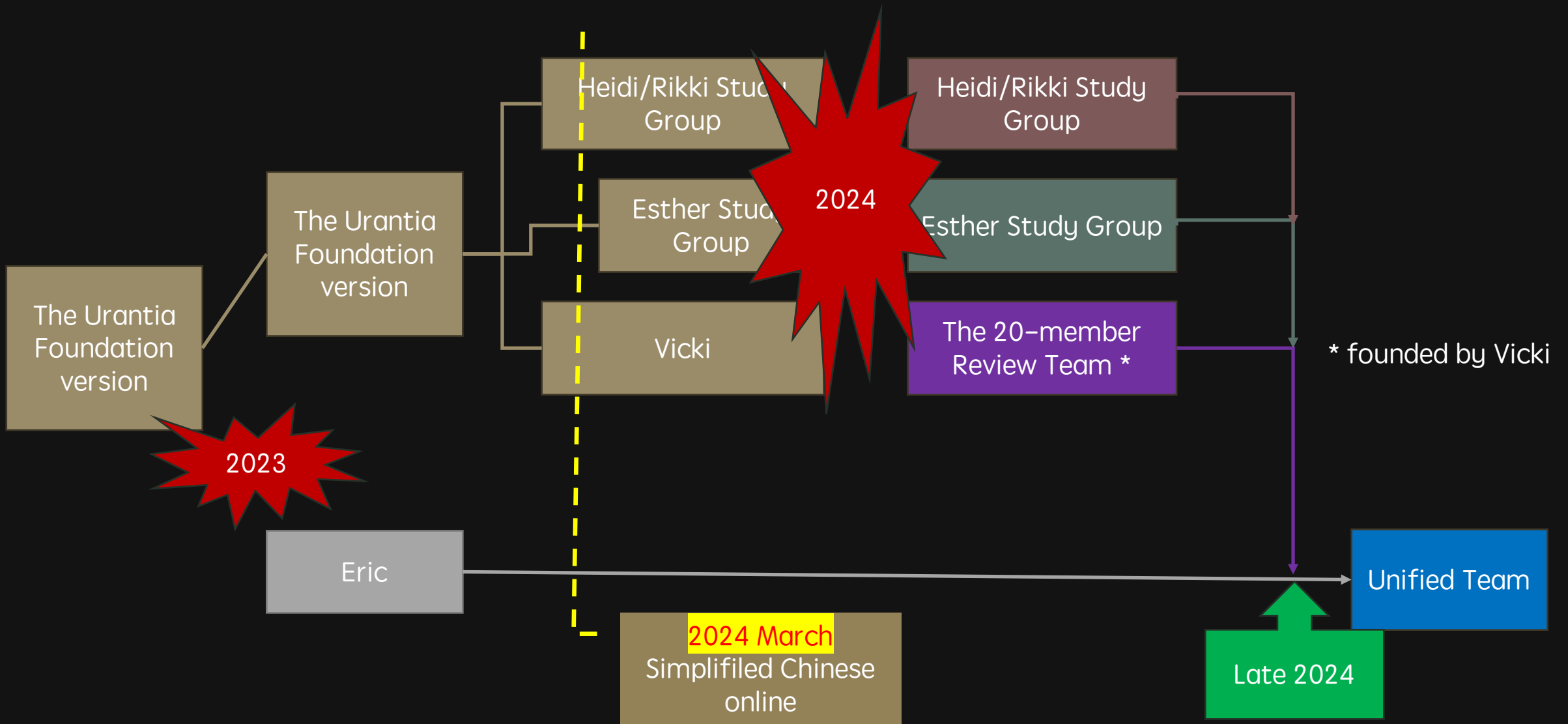
joined

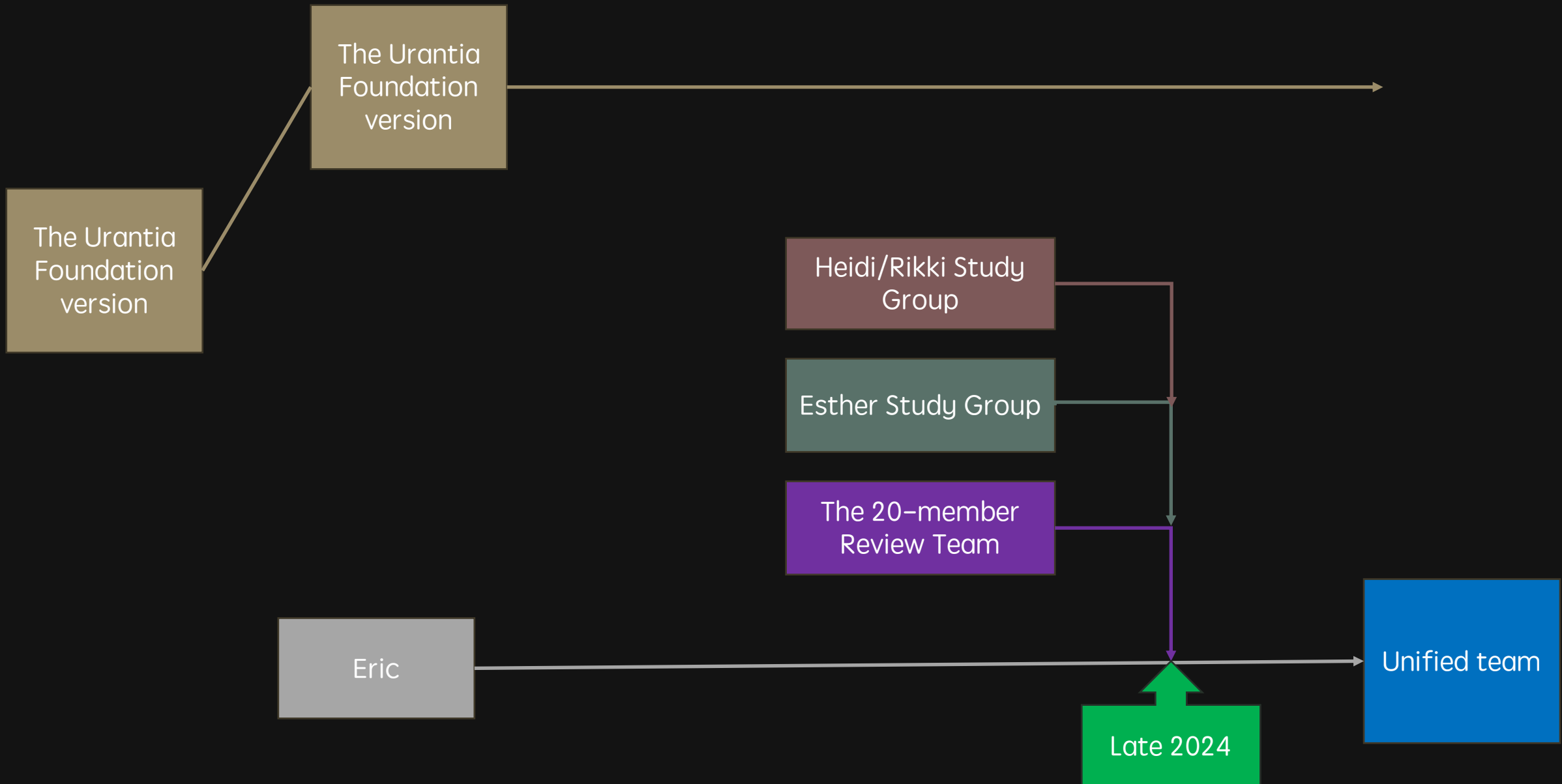
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Quality Concerns: Discussion Timeline

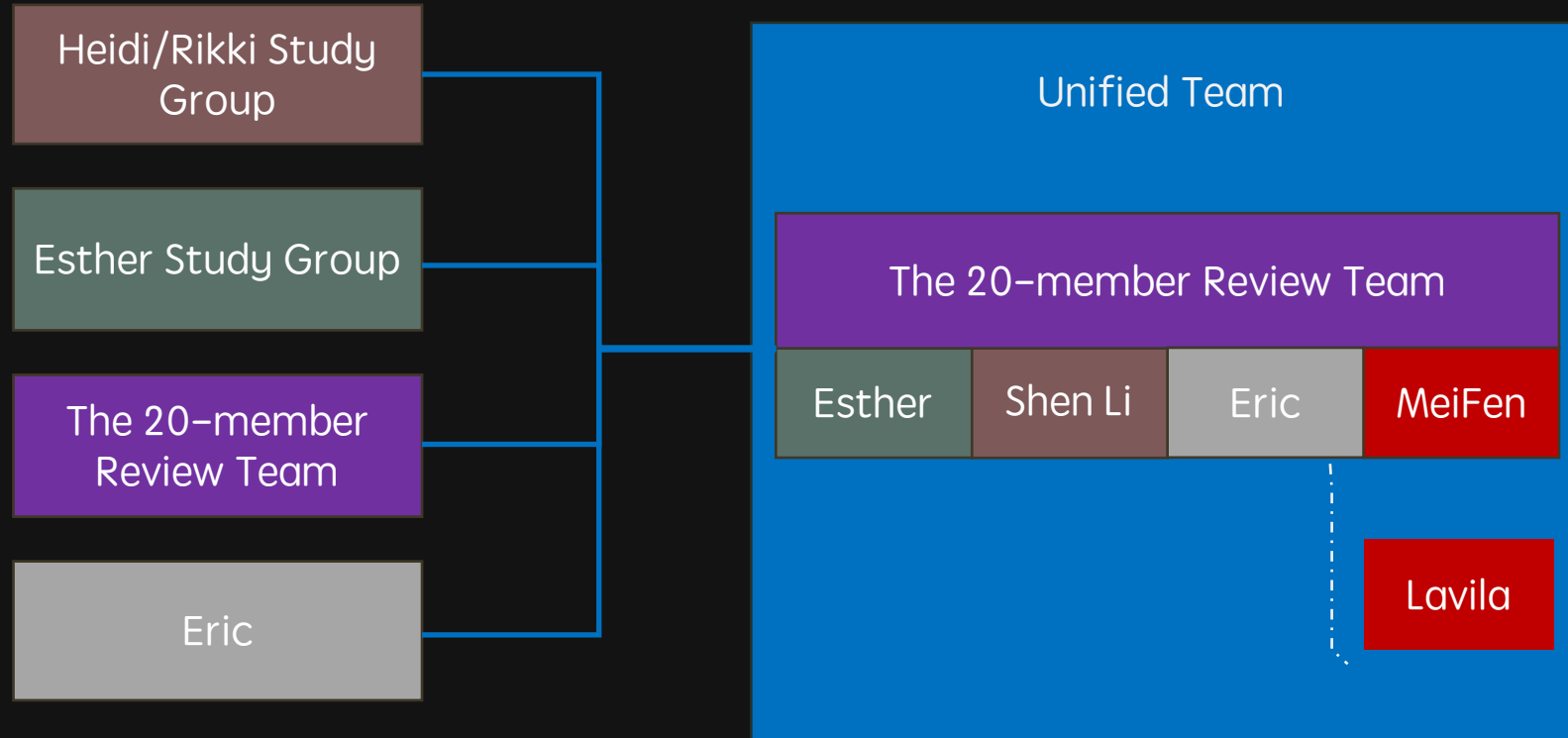


- **2021** : Eric and Vicki engaged in extensive discussions regarding translation quality concerns
- **Early 2022**: Internal concerns about current translation escalated within the community
- **2022**: Vicki, Esther, and Eric formally contacted the Foundation via email and online meeting outlining translation issues
- **2023**: Ongoing email correspondence with Foundation regarding translation improvements
- **October 2024**: Eric sent final comprehensive email to Foundation summarizing position and next steps
- **Overall communication efforts**: Countless emails and online meetings with main translator throughout this period to address concerns and seek collaborative solutions

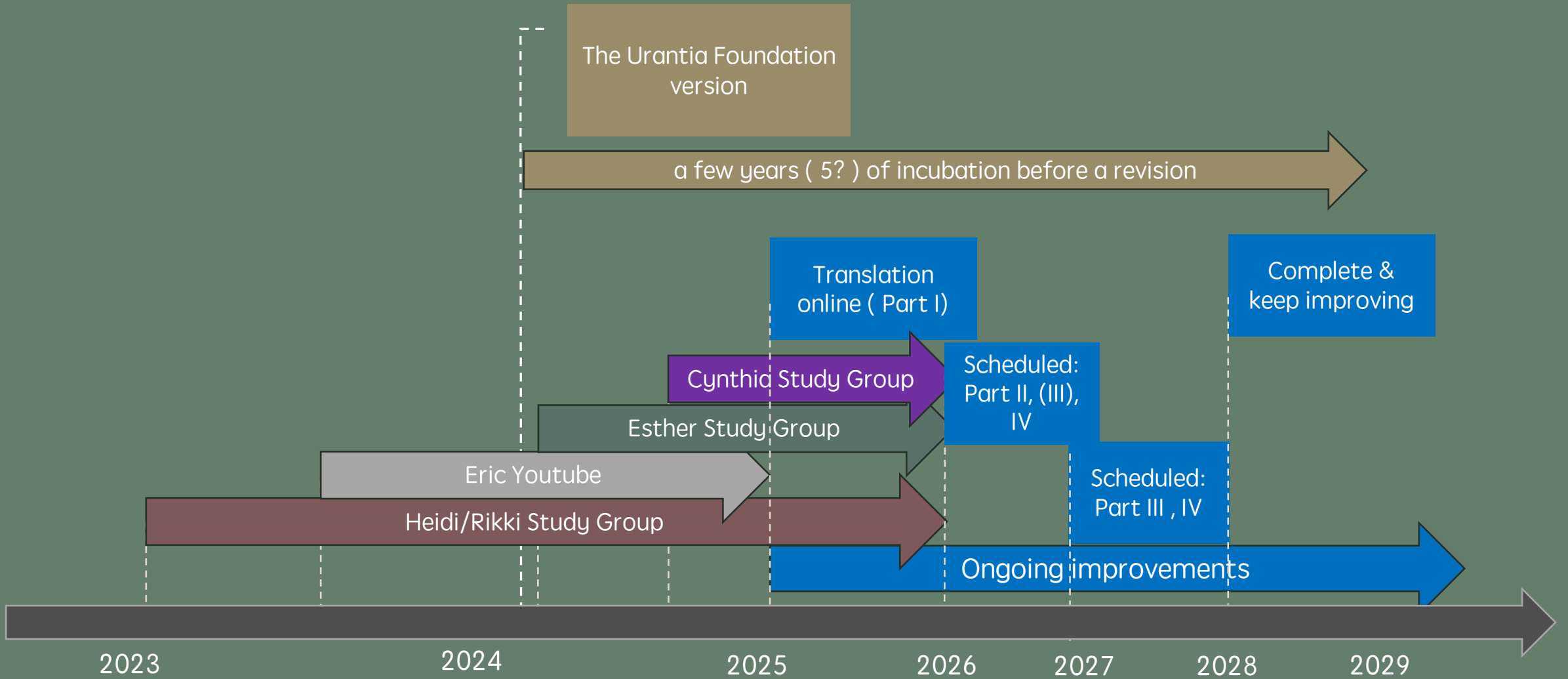




“Unified Team”



Esther, ShenLi, MeiFen and Eric serve as the 4-member decision group, with Lavila serving as part-time consultant



Timeline

Urantia Foundation's Support for the Simplified Chinese Translation

Official Endorsement

The Urantia Foundation officially endorsed the simplified Chinese translation to make the material more accessible to Chinese readers.

Translation Challenges

Despite endorsement, readers raised concerns about translation quality and style that remain unresolved.



Formation of the New Translation Team

Unified Chinese Translation Philosophy

Beyond character differences

- Simplified vs Traditional Chinese is primarily a character conversion issue
- Core translation principles remain identical for both versions
- Quality standards of faithfulness, fluency, and elegance apply equally

Universal Chinese translation approach:

- Proper word choice and elegant phrasing transcend character systems
- Good Chinese writing appeals to all Chinese readers regardless of region
- Cultural and linguistic depth should be consistent across versions

One quality translation serves all Chinese communities:

- Mainland China (Simplified)
- Taiwan (Traditional)
- Chinese communities worldwide.
- Unified approach ensures consistent message and quality

Proven precedent in existing literature:

- Many successful translations already serve both markets effectively
- Example: "A Course in Light" and other philosophical/spiritual works
- Demonstrates that quality Chinese translation transcends character systems



Unified Translation Team

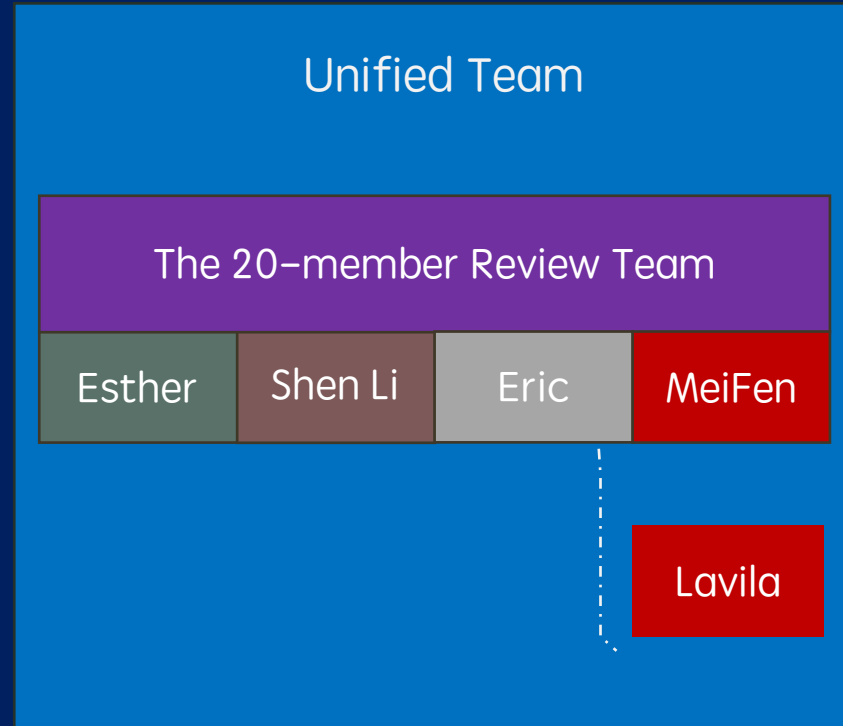
Unified Commitment Across Regions Team members from Taiwan and China, despite different linguistic habits and cultural backgrounds, work cooperatively toward one shared standard: faithful, fluent, and elegant translation of The Urantia Book.

Collaborative Quality Assurance Regional differences become assets in quality control—multiple perspectives help identify potential issues while working toward consensus on the best translation choices.

Shared Dedication to 信達雅 The team demonstrates that commitment to translation excellence transcends regional boundaries, putting the integrity of the revelation above individual or regional preferences.



Unified Team



Esther, ShenLi, MeiFen and Eric serve as the 4-member decision group, with Lavila serving as part-time consultant

The 20-member Review Team

Team size and structure

- Formed to review Vicki's translation work
- 20 members working collaboratively
- **Primarily Taiwan-based team members**
- Diverse expertise and professional backgrounds
- **Mix of bilingual and Chinese-only specialists**

Academic and educational expertise:

- University professors contributing scholarly rigor
- Teachers bringing pedagogical perspective and clarity
- Academic standards ensure translation accuracy and depth

Spiritual and cultural leadership:

- Leaders from various spiritual organizations
- Deep understanding of sacred text translation requirements
- Cultural sensitivity for Chinese spiritual concepts and terminology

Industry professionals:

- Members from diverse professional backgrounds
- Real-world experience in communication and language use
- Practical understanding of how Chinese readers engage with complex texts

Bilingual and linguistic diversity:

- Some members fluent in both Chinese and English
- Chinese-only members provide native language expertise
- Combined perspectives ensure both accuracy and natural Chinese expression

“4-member decision group”

Esther

- Age: 58, Female
- Educational Background: College degree in Business English, University degree in English, EMBA
- International Experience: Lived in **Germany** for 8 years as Project Manager at Bucher Hydraulics GmbH
- Current Location: **Lives in Germany with Simplified Chinese background**
- Spiritual Background:
 - Studies various religions and spiritual materials including A Course in Light, Catholic Bible, and TEP
- Urantia Book Experience: Reader and translator since 2021

Shen Li

- Age: 55, Female
- Educational Background: Master's degree in Precision Instrumentation and Computer Software
- International Experience: Lived in **France** for 7 years (1998-2005) in R&D and management of medical equipment
- Current Location: **Lives in China with Simplified Chinese background**
- Spiritual Background:
 - Practicing Buddhism for approximately 20 years
 - Studies various religions and spiritual materials including Seth Materials, A Course in Miracles, A Course in Love, and others
- Urantia Book Experience: Dedicated reader since 2023

MeiFen

- Age: 5x Female
- Educational Background: ?
- International Experience: ?
- Current Location: **Lives in China / Taiwan with Simplified Chinese background**
- Spiritual Background:
 - Board Director and Psychology Teacher at New Age Seth Foundation
- Urantia Book Experience: Dedicated reader since “long time ago”

Eric

- Age: 56, Male
- Educational Background: Master's degree in Electrical Engineering (Columbia University), College Major in Physics (Taiwan)
- International Experience: Lived in **U.S.** for 20 years (1997-2017) in R&D and software engineering
- Current Location: **Lives in Taiwan with Traditional Chinese background**
- Spiritual Background:
 - A Course in Light practitioner for 7 years
- Urantia Book Experience: Dedicated reader since 2020

Our Collaborative Approach

This is not claiming that the new team's work meets all requirements

- We acknowledge ongoing areas for improvement

This represents a continuous team effort

- Collaborative approach with sustained commitment over time

Team includes members from diverse backgrounds and cultures

- Multiple perspectives contribute to translation quality

Active engagement with reader feedback and discussion

- Open-minded approach to different opinions and suggestions
- Commitment to finding the best possible solutions through dialogue

Iterative improvement through ongoing discussion

- Back-and-forth refinement process
- Enhanced understanding as team knowledge of the book deepens

Monthly Translation Review Process

Regular team coordination meetings

- **Two monthly meetings** to discuss translation approaches and challenges
- Review progress and address quality concerns
- Collaborative decision-making on difficult passages
- **Growing together as a team**

Standardization discussions cover:

- Terminology consistency across all sections
- Style guide adherence and tone maintenance
- Cultural adaptation strategies for Chinese readers
- Technical translation challenges and solutions

Quality assurance protocols:

- Peer review of completed sections
- Cross-checking against original English text
- Reader feedback integration and response
- **Continuous refinement of translation guidelines**

This includes basic but essential professional standards:

- Systematic terminology management
- Consistent formatting and style applications
- Proper citation and reference practices



Example: Professional Terminology Standards :

Our standard practice:

- **First occurrence:** Chinese translation + (English original term)
- **Subsequent occurrences:** Chinese translation only
- **Example:**
 - First time: 思想調節者 (Thought Adjuster)
 - Later in text: 思想調節者

Why this practice is important:

- **Establishes terminology consistency** – readers learn the correspondence between Chinese and English terms
- **Maintains reading flow** – avoids cluttering later passages with repeated parenthetical references
- **Provides scholarly reference** – readers can trace back to original terminology when needed
- **Standard professional practice** – follows established translation conventions

Note: Given the book's substantial length and four distinct Parts, this practice applies **separately to each Part**. Key terms are reintroduced with English references at the start of each new Part.

Example: Meeting Topics

標點符號(續)

- 破折號、夾注號
 - ○ 寒夜中，不管是誰家的燈光，都讓人——尤其是漂泊的旅人——有種溫暖的感覺。
 - ○ 萬有之父與他的共存自我——天堂永恆之子——完全共享其靈性本質。
 - ✕ 萬有之父與他的共存自我——天堂永恆之子完全共享其靈性本質。
 - ✕ … 因為你們據稱是「照著他的形象」——由他永恆臨在之中央住處所派遣的神秘告誡者內駐創造的。
- That fragment of the pure Deity of the Universal Father which indwells mortal man *is a part of the infinity* of the First Great Source and Center, the Father of Fathers.
 - ✕ 內駐於凡人之內，宇宙天父的純神靈片段是第一偉大本源與中心，是眾父之父無限性的一部分。
 - ○ 那內住於凡人的萬有之父的純神靈片段是第一偉大本源與中心——眾父之父——之無限性的一部分。

AI 工具

- Claude: <https://claude.ai/>
- ChatGPT: <https://chatgpt.com/>
- Notebooklm: <https://notebooklm.google/>
- Perplexity : <https://www.perplexity.ai/>

nonpervaded-space vs unpervaded space

Claude

- nonpervaded-space → 非瀰漫空間：使用"非"，表示這些空間的固有性質就是沒有被瀰漫
- unpervaded space → 未瀰漫空間：使用"未"，暗示這些空間曾經可能被瀰漫或有被瀰漫的可能性，但目前處於未瀰漫狀態

ChatGPT

- nonpervaded space → 「非滲透空間」：這是分類性描述，表示「不是被滲透的空間」，屬於 neutral 分類，應用 non-
- unpervaded space → 「未被滲透的空間」或「尚未滲透的空間」：這則帶有「狀態尚未發生」的語感，適用 un-

Sovereign、Prince

Term	Now	Suggestion	Notes
System Sovereign	系統君主	系統君主	
Planetary Prince	行星君王	行星王子	
Planetary Sovereign	行星主權者	行星君主	40:3.1 ... on the day of the descent of the temple of light and the elevation of the Planetary Prince to the dignity of Planetary Sovereign

'presented', 'sponsored'

- 15:14.10 (183.2) [Presented by a Universal Censor hailing from Uversa.]
- 15:14.10 (183.2) [由一位來自尤沃薩的萬有審查者所呈獻。]
- 16:9.16 (196.12) [Sponsored by a Universal Censor from Uversa.]
- 16:9.16 (196.12) [由一位來自尤沃薩的萬有之監督者所呈獻。]
 - 16:9.16 (196.12) [由一位來自尤沃薩的萬有審查者所呈獻。]
 - 16:9.16 (196.12) [由一位來自尤沃薩的萬有審查者所保薦。]
 - 保薦、贊助、背書、監製
- 10:8.10 (117.2) [Sponsored by a Universal Censor acting by authority for Ancients of Days resident on Uversa.]
- 10:8.10 (117.2) [由駐居在尤沃薩的亙古常在者授權行事的一位萬有監察者所保薦。]
 - 10:8.10 (117.2) [由一位事駐居在尤沃薩的亙古常在者之權威行事的萬有監察者所保薦。]
 - 10:8.10 (117.2) [由一位萬有監察者保薦，其奉駐居在尤沃薩的亙古常在者之權威行事。]
 - 10:8.10 (117.2) [由一位萬有監察者保薦，奉駐居在尤沃薩的亙古常在者之授權行事。]

同位語 (appositive)

An appositive is a noun or noun phrase that renames or further describes another noun right beside it in a sentence. It provides additional information about the noun it modifies and is usually set off by commas.

Here are some clear examples:

"My brother, an experienced chef, opened a new restaurant."

(Here, "an experienced chef" is the appositive describing "my brother".)

"Paris, the capital of France, is known for its art."

("the capital of France" is the appositive explaining more about "Paris".)

Sometimes appositives don't need commas if they're essential to the meaning:

"My sister Julie lives in Boston."

(If you have multiple sisters, "Julie" is essential to identify which sister.)

Appositives help make writing more descriptive and efficient by combining two ideas into one sentence instead of using separate sentences.

同位語是一個名詞或名詞片語，它用來重新命名或進一步描述句子中緊鄰的另一個名詞。同位語為其所修飾的名詞提供額外資訊，通常用逗號隔開。

以下是一些清楚的例子：

「我的哥哥，一位經驗豐富的廚師，開了一家新餐廳。」

（這裡，「一位經驗豐富的廚師」是描述「我的哥哥」的同位語）

「巴黎，法國的首都，以其藝術聞名。」

（「法國的首都」是解釋「巴黎」的同位語）

有時候，如果同位語對於句子意思是必要的，則不需要逗號：

「我的姐姐小美住在波士頓。」

（如果你有多個姐姐，「小美」對於識別是哪個姐姐來說是必要的）

同位語有助於使寫作更具描述性和效率，因為它可以將兩個想法合併成一個句子，而不是使用分開的句子。

A photograph of a wooden desk with a laptop, notebooks, pens, and a cup of coffee. The image is slightly blurred, focusing on the foreground objects. The desk is made of light-colored wood. On the left, there is a stack of notebooks, with a black one on top. Two pens with gold-colored barrels are resting on the black notebook. To the right of the notebooks is a silver metal cup filled with coffee, sitting on a matching saucer. A portion of a silver laptop is visible in the bottom right corner. The background is out of focus, showing more of the desk and possibly a window.

Meeting Documentation & Accessibility

- **Comprehensive meeting records maintained**
 - Detailed written minutes for every meeting
 - Video recordings of all sessions
 - PPT presentations discussed during meetings
 - Systematic documentation for reference and accountability
- **Member accessibility priority:**
 - Accommodates members who cannot attend live meetings
 - Ensures all team members stay informed regardless of schedule conflicts
 - Enables participation across different time zones and commitments
- **Benefits of thorough documentation:**
 - Maintains continuity of decisions and discussions
 - Allows for review and reference of past translation choices
 - PPT materials provide visual context and structured information
 - Provides transparency in the translation process
 - Creates valuable archive of translation methodology development
- **Inclusive team participation:**
 - No member left behind due to scheduling conflicts
 - Equal access to all meeting materials and presentations
 - Supports both synchronous and asynchronous collaboration

Volunteer Dedication & Investment

Completely volunteer-based effort

- All team members contribute their personal time
- No compensation or funding for translation work
- Driven purely by commitment to sharing the Urantia Book

Technical infrastructure we provide:

- Custom website for Chinese readers
- Special server configuration to ensure content accessibility in China
- Video hosting and streaming capabilities
- Ongoing technical maintenance and support

Our motivation:

- Genuine dedication to making the Urantia Book accessible
- Belief in the importance of quality translation
- Commitment to serving the Chinese-speaking community



Principle of Independent Effort

Emphasis on Autonomy

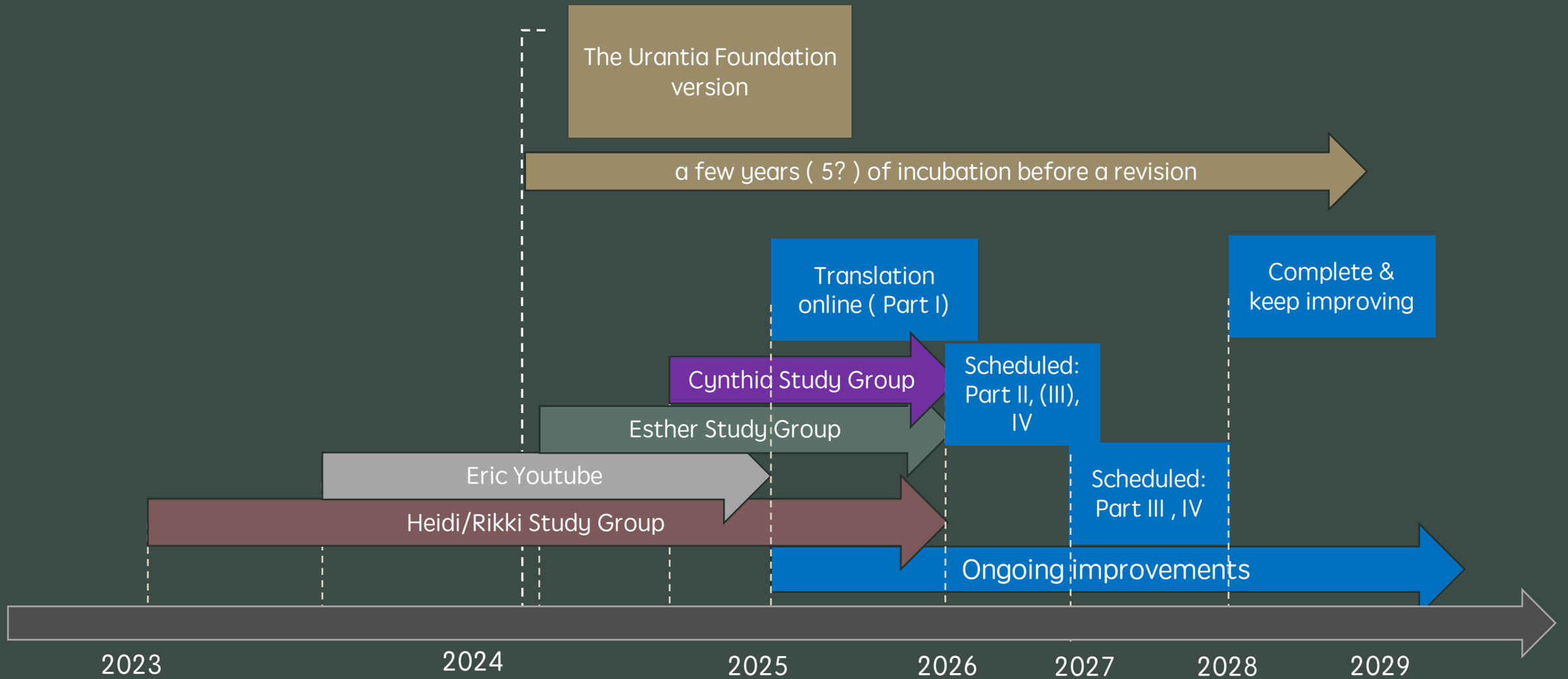
- The team values **self-direction**, working independently without relying on external approval or validation.

Focus on Quality and Consistency

- Natural, fluent Chinese that maintains spiritual dignity
- Accurate conveyance of complex concepts
- Appropriate for all regions
- Focus on maintaining high quality standards, not seeking personal recognition, only pursuing continuous quality results



Current Progress and
Achievements /
Vision and Next Steps



Timeline

Open Sharing of Drafts and Workflow Transparency

Open Draft Sharing (70% Standard):

- Release translated work online when 70% acceptable quality is achieved
- Prioritizes community access over perfectionism
- Draft translations shared openly to promote collaboration and invite constructive feedback
- Transparent about work-in-progress status to set appropriate expectations

Community-contributed revision process:

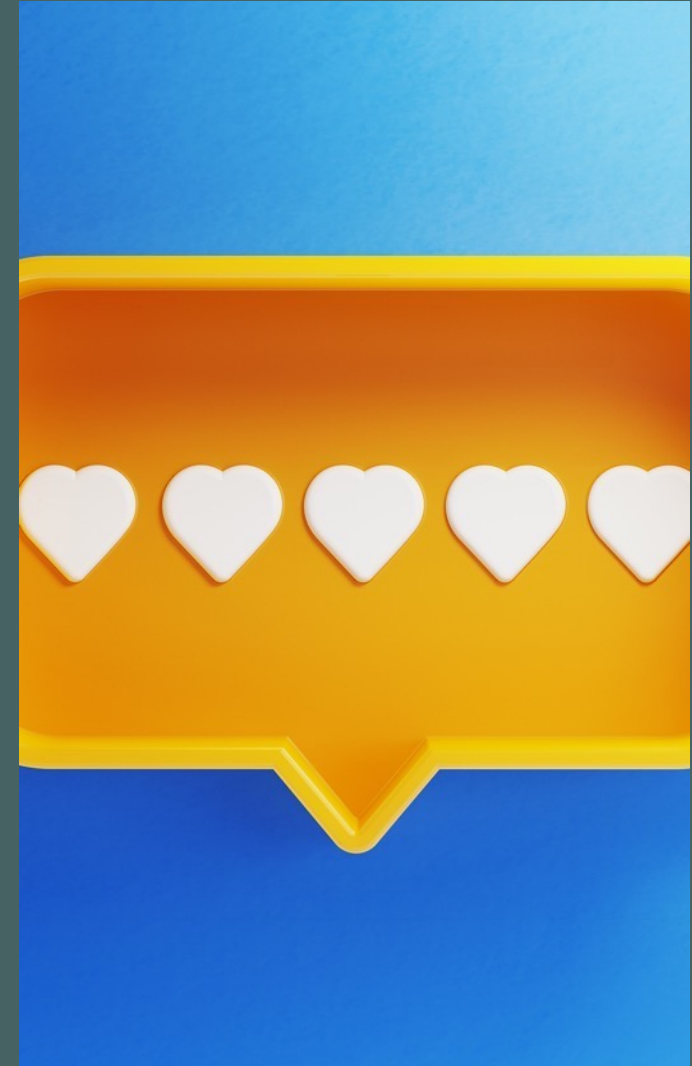
- We actively **incorporate reader feedback** into revision priorities and translation decisions
- Feedback determines which sections need urgent attention and improvement

Structured decision-making:

- Final translation decisions made by a 4-member decision group
- Ensures quality control while incorporating community feedback
- Balances reader input with expert linguistic judgment

Philosophy behind this approach:

- Better to provide accessible, improvable translation than delay indefinitely for perfection



Current Progress , Achievements and Future Plans

Translation Progress:

- **2025:** Complete Part I and ~20% of Part IV
- **2026:** Complete Part II, ~30% of Part III, and ~70% of Part IV
- **2027:** Complete all parts with continuous improvements

Infrastructure Achievements:

- Website development and launch
- Special server setup for China accessibility
- Video content hosting and distribution system

Translation Quality Systems:

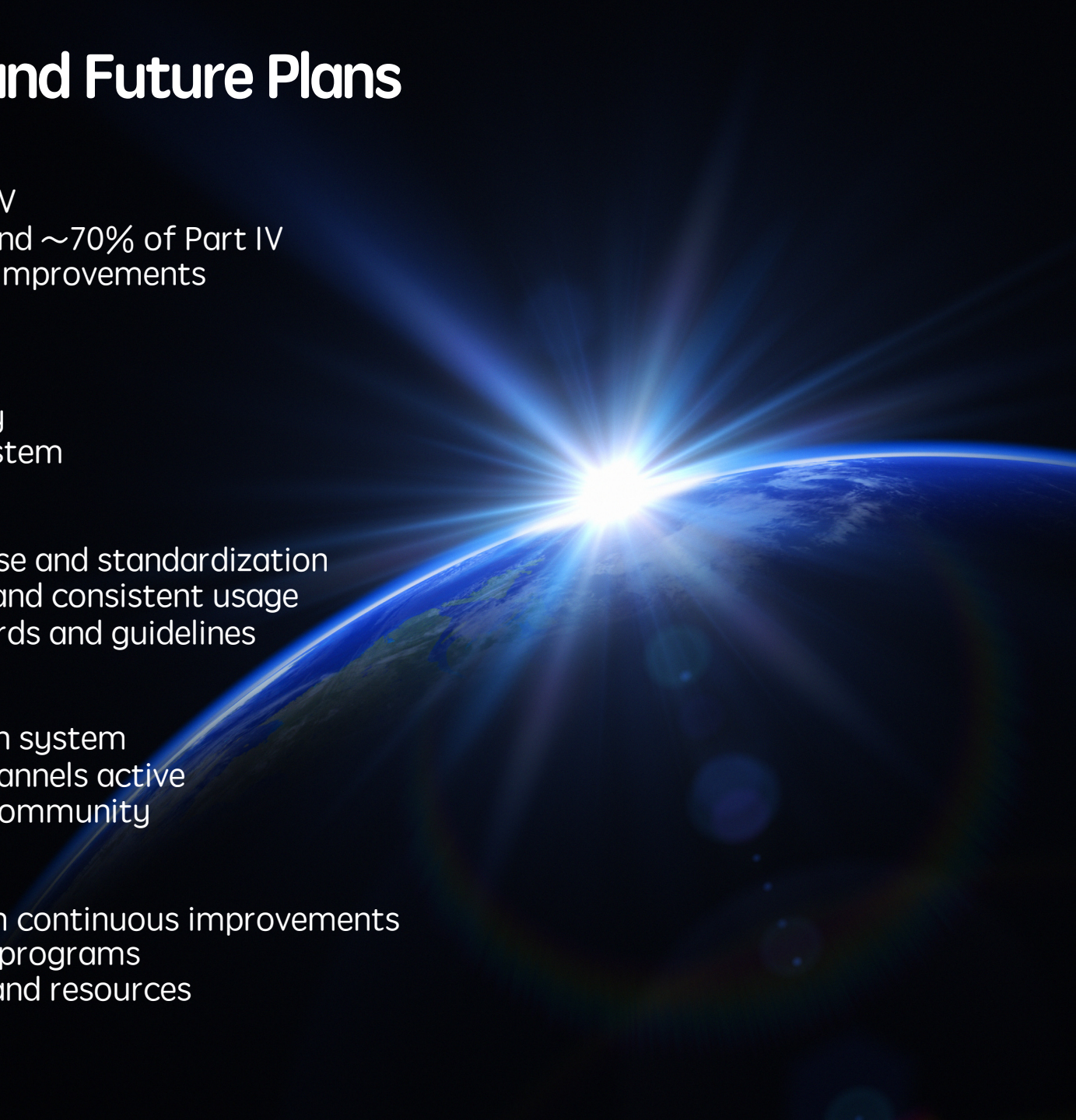
- Continue to establish terminology database and standardization
- Systematic tracking of specialized terms and consistent usage
- Ongoing refinement of translation standards and guidelines

Community Engagement:

- Reader feedback collection and integration system
- Discussion forums and communication channels active
- Growing Chinese-speaking Urantia Book community

Future Plans:

- Target: Complete translation by 2028 with continuous improvements
- Expand reader engagement and feedback programs
- Develop additional educational materials and resources
- Strengthen cross-regional collaboration



Our Path Forward

Commitment to Excellence in Chinese Translation

- Unified Team achieving 信達雅(faithfulness, fluency, elegance) standards through professional methodology
- Systematic quality control with transparent, community-engaged approach
- Volunteer-driven dedication to sharing the Urantia Book

Sustainable Path to 2028 and Beyond

- Clear timeline with realistic milestones and continuous improvement
- Open draft sharing (70% standard) balancing quality with timely access
- Reader engagement and feedback integration guiding translation priorities

Vision for the Future

- Preserve the original's depth and dignity in elegant Chinese
- Build lasting foundation for Chinese-speaking readers worldwide
- Team members serving as seeds for future study groups and community expansion

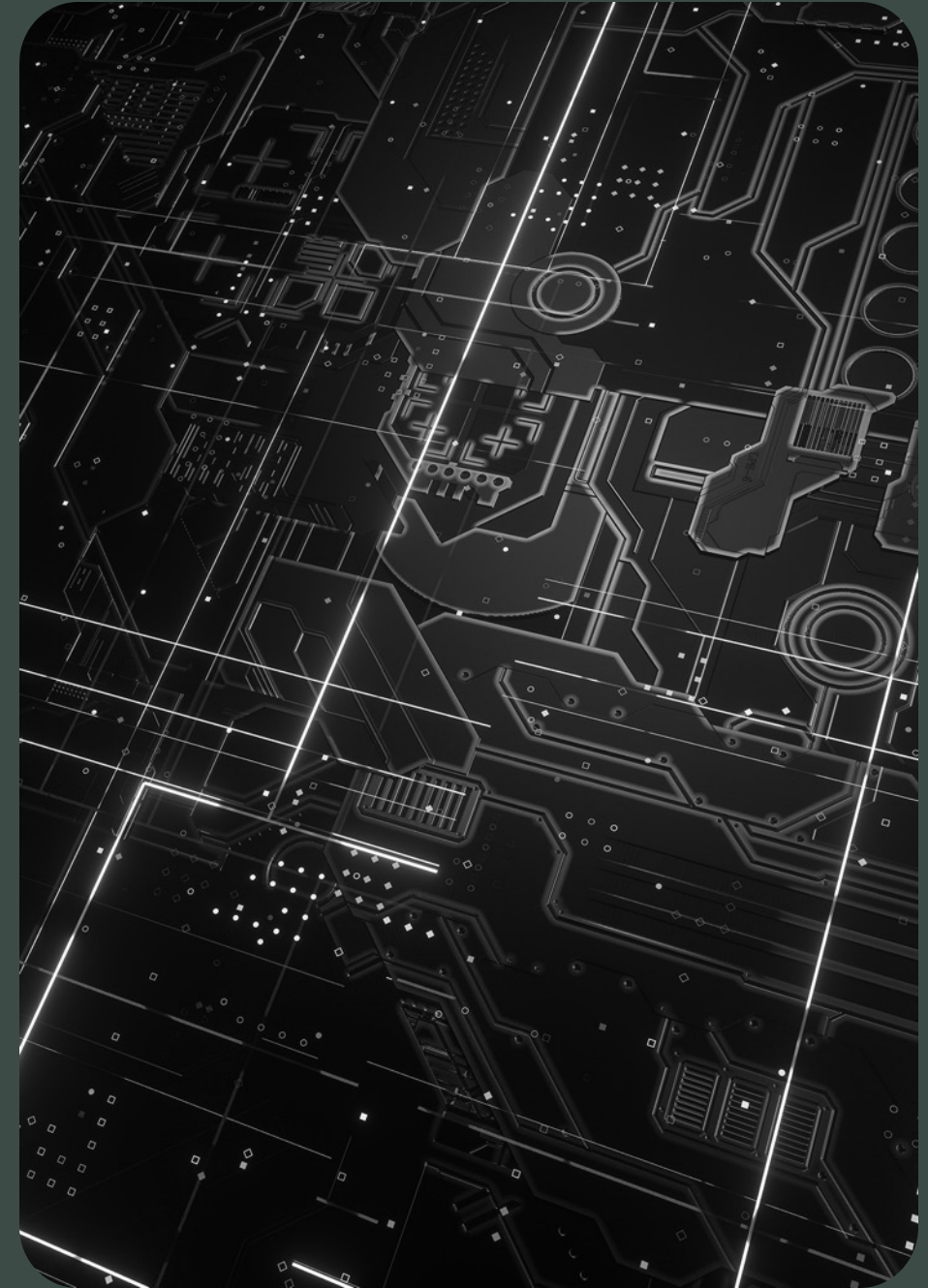
Community-Created Online Resources

Translation Platform:

- **UrantiaTalk.com** – <https://urantiatalk.com>
- Chinese Urantia Book translation drafts and community discussions
- Special server configuration ensuring accessibility in China

Educational Video Content:

- **Heidi/Rikki Study Group** – Group Study Sessions
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLCirYLUXCF-sQfFaGlzLZtCljJ6X3YMec>
- **Cynthia Study Group** – Community Study Discussions
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLktJQpVRImkexBOTjXBi6DUQseEmV0Jsv>
- **Eric's YouTube Channel** – Urantia Book Study Series
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL_YC5HbVczl-rTcYrJHTHvjZEWUIGR16G





Keep learning
keep translating
keep improving

Appendix: Context for New Translation Initiative

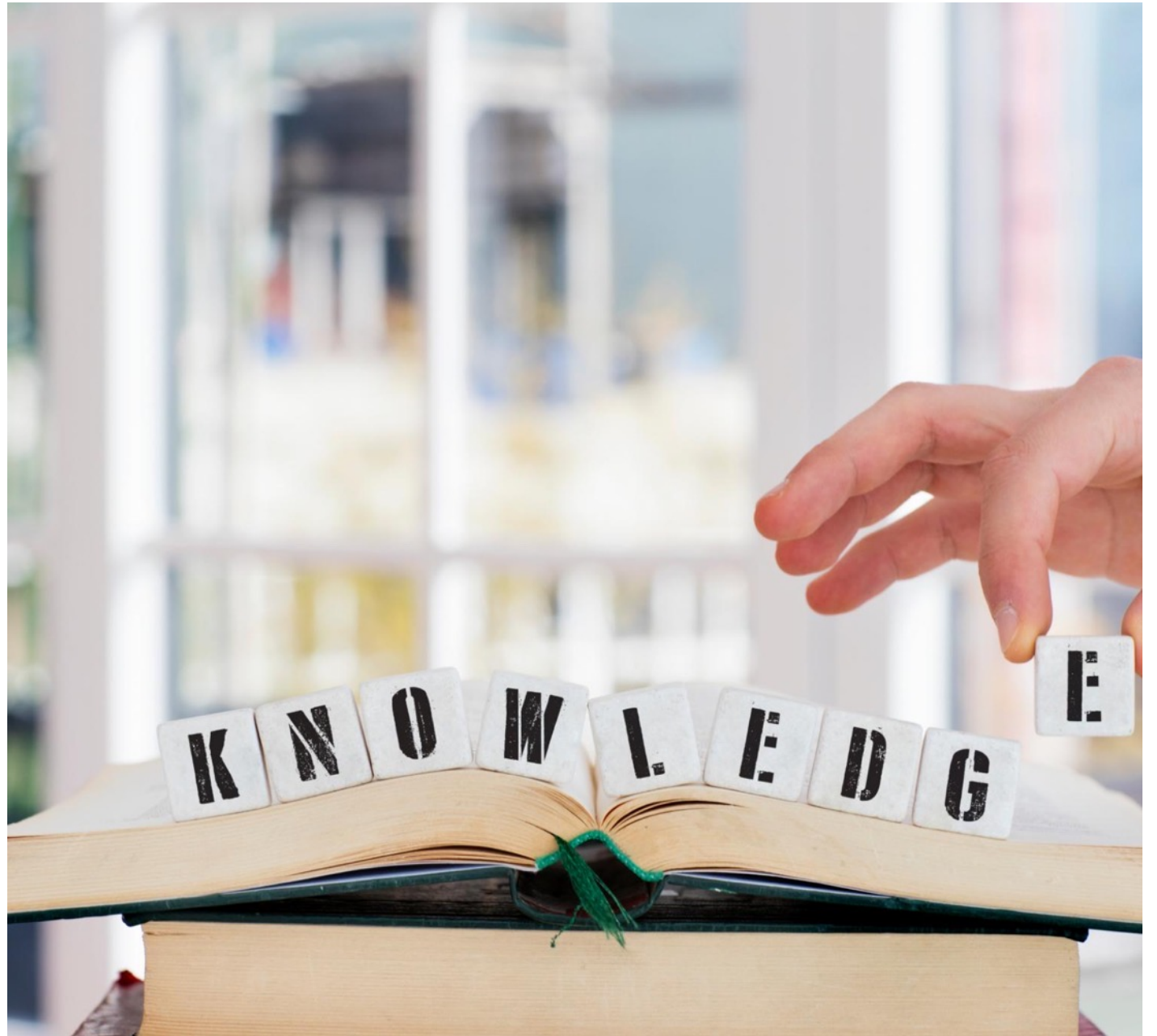
Awkward Language and Lack of Elegance

Unnatural Translation

The translation reads in a way that feels forced and lacks natural flow, impacting comprehension.

Lack of Literary Style

The translation misses the refined and elegant style needed to reflect the original's depth and dignity.



Concerns Regarding Accuracy and Faithfulness

Deviation from Original Meaning

Critics highlight concerns regarding changes that stray from the original message of the text, affecting its authenticity.

Awkward Language Choices

Use of unnatural or clumsy language reduces readability and may confuse serious readers.



Widespread Dissatisfaction Among Bilingual Readers



- **Language Quality Issues**
 - Translation lacks the **elegance**, power, and philosophical depth that Chinese writing should possess
 - **Word choices** and phrasing are inadequate to represent the book properly
- **Readability Problems**
 - **Text is awkward and flows poorly**
 - Sentences are **unnatural** and don't sound like native Chinese writing
 - **So difficult to read that readers cannot continue**
- **Sacred Content Mismatch / Loss of Text's Dignity**
 - The translation or adaptation may diminish the respected tone
 - Fails to convey the solemn and sacred nature of the source material
 - Translation doesn't do justice to the spiritual significance of the content
- **Translation Competency Concerns**
 - Current translator's **Chinese proficiency** appears insufficient for independent revision work
 - Overall quality falls short of what a Chinese translation of this important work should achieve



EXAMPLES
?

NOT TODAY