

Full Length Research

Translators' Selection of Chinese Fictions Translated into English during the Anti-Japanese War to the Establishment of the People's Republic of China

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Chinese fictions translated into English during the Anti-Japanese War to the establishment of the People's Republic of China are not paid enough attention. Besides, researches on the selection of Chinese fictions translated into English are few. The present studies are limited to the selection of individual works translated into English, which cannot reflect the impact of the socio-cultural contexts in the selection of Chinese fictions translated into English in a specific historical period. Hence, this paper will explore the content, characteristics and influences of the selection of Chinese fictions translated into English by foreign translators during the Anti-Japanese War up until to the establishment of the People's Republic of China. The study found that the selection of Chinese fictions translated into English by foreign translators involves historical themes, ways of the world themes, rural themes, people's living themes, and war themes. The selection of Chinese fictions translated into English by foreign translators has the following characteristics: the close interaction between the selection of Chinese fictions and the socio-political and cultural development, the highlighting of personal ideology of the foreign translators, etc. This study helps to promote Chinese studies and the canonization of Chinese fictions in the English world, and to reconsider the studies on translation norms in the Chinese academics.

Keyword: English translations; Chinese fictions; selection; foreign translators

INTRODUCTION

During the Anti-Japanese War to the establishment of the People's Republic of China, some Anglo-American

scholars and reporters translated Chinese literary works, contributing to the cultural exchanges between China and

the West and promoting the international community's understanding and the support of China's Anti-Japanese War. With the strategy of "The Chinese culture going global", studies on Chinese literature translated into English during the Anti-Japanese War to the establishment of People's Republic of China are paid more attention. Regrettably, researches on the selection of Chinese fictions translated into English are few. The present studies are limited to the selection of individual works translated into English, which cannot reflect the impact of the socio-cultural contexts in the selection of Chinese fictions translated into English in a specific historical period. Zhao (2012: 229) discusses the selection of *Rickshaw Boy* translated by Evan King from the perspective of translation norms. Wang (2013) selects five sets of English translation series of Chinese fictions published in Beijing, Hong Kong and the United States during the 20th century and analyzes the impact of the editors' preference on the selection of Chinese fictions to translate. These researches cannot reflect the overall characteristics of translators' selection of translation materials in one period. Hence, this paper will explore the content, characteristics and influences of the selection of Chinese fictions translated into English by foreign translators during the Anti-Japanese War to the establishment of the People's Republic of China. The research found that the selection of Chinese fictions translated into English by foreign translators involves historical themes, ways of the world themes, rural themes, people's living themes, and war themes. And the selection of Chinese fictions translated into English by foreign translators has characteristics such as the close interaction between the selection of Chinese fictions and the socio-political and cultural development or the highlighting of personal ideology of the foreign translators. The research helps to promote Chinese studies and the canonization of Chinese fictions in the English world, and to reconsider the studies on translation norms in the Chinese academics.

The present study first makes an overview to

summarize Chinese fictions translated into English by foreign translators during the Anti-Japanese War to the establishment of the People's Republic of China. Then, the study sorts out classical Chinese fictions and modern Chinese fictions, analyzing their themes based on the history of Chinese literature. Features in the selection of translated fictions are then explored through an analysis of foreign relations between China and America, cultural development and translators' ideology. Furthermore, influences of the selection are discussed at the end.

An overview of English translations of Chinese fictions by foreign translators during the Anti-Japanese War to the establishment of the People's Republic of China

In order to reflect the impact of the socio-cultural contexts in the selection of Chinese fictions translated into English in a specific historical period, the study selects all Chinese fictions translated by foreign translators during the Anti-Japanese War to the establishment of the People's Republic of China. To make the study comprehensive and scientific, the study takes into account Gibbs and Li (1975), Yang and Mao (1981), Louie and Louise (1993), Chan (2009), and Ho (2011), together with data collected from the web search, the library of Beijing Foreign Studies University, the National Library of China, the library of Peking University, and the library of Tsinghua University. As a result, we sort out English translations of Chinese fictions by foreign translators during the Anti-Japanese War to the establishment of the People's Republic of China. Based on our statistics, there are 20 booklets, 8 anthologies, 18 novels and short stories published in English magazines issued in China and abroad. The translators' choices of writer and text are inevitably tendentious because of their ideology, value orientations, aesthetic orientation, etc. (Tian 2013: 94). There are selections of classical Chinese fictions and contemporary Chinese fictions translated into English during the

Anti-Japanese War to the establishment of the People's Republic of China.

Classical Chinese fictions

In 1937, after the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, China entered into the Anti-Japanese War. Until the establishment of the People's Republic of China, foreign translators preferred Chinese classical fictions and translated them into the English world, which witnessed the history of classical Chinese fictions. Classical Chinese fictions feature ancient myths, fables, mystery fictions from the ancient Qin and Han Dynasties, ghost stories from the Southern and Northern Dynasties, legends from the Tang Dynasty, Huaben fictions from the Song Dynasty, and Zhanghui fictions from the Ming and Qing Dynasties. Almost all of these types of fictions are translated by foreign translators into the English world.

English translations of ancient myths, fables, and mystery fictions from the ancient Qin and Han Dynasties: In 1937, Wolfram Eberhard translated *Zhongguo Tonghua He Minjian Gushi* (中国童话和民间故事) from its German translation as *Chinese Fairy Tales and Folk Tales*, including two parts, the first part fairy tales, and the second part legends, myths, jokes, anecdotes, etc.

English translations of ghost stories from the Wei and Jin Dynasties, and the Southern and Northern Dynasties: In 1938, Evangeline Dora Edwards translated *Zhongguo Tangdai Sanwen Zuopin* (中国唐代散文作品) into Prose of the Tang Dynasty, including some chapters of ghost stories of the Jin Dynasty named *Sou Shen Chi* (搜神记). In 1948, Lionel Giles translated *Xianren Qunxiang: Zhongguo Liexian Zhuanji* (仙人群像: 中国列仙传记) into *A Gallery of Immortals: Selected Biographies Translated from Chinese Sources*, including English translations of *Sou Shen Chi* (搜神记). In 1941, in "Some Chinese Tales of the Supernatural: Kan Pao and His Sou-shen-chi" translated by Derk Bodde which was issued in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, including 8 stories of Kan Pao's

Search for the Spirits (Sou-shen-chi).^①

English translations of legends from the Tang Dynasty: In 1938, Evangeline Dora Edwards translated *Zhongguo Tangdai Sanwen Zuopin* (中国唐代散文作品) into *Prose of the Tang Dynasty*, including two works of legends from the Tang Dynasty which are *li wa zhuan* (李娃传, *The tale of Li Wa*) and *tai ping guang ji* (太平广记, *Records of The Taiping Era*).

English translations of Huaben from the Song Dynasty: *xingshi hengyan* (醒世恒言) edited by Feng Menglong in the late Ming Dynasty, belongs to vernacular short stories, collecting 40 stories of Huaben (话本) and Nihuaben (拟话本) in the Song and Yuan Dynasties. In 1941, Harold Acton and Lee Yi-hsieh's *Glue and Lacquer* was published by *The Golden Cockerel*, translating four stories of *xingshi hengyan* (醒世恒言, *Lasting Words to Awaken the World*).

English translations of Zhanghui novels from the Ming and Qing Dynasties:

English translations of *Shui Hu Zhuan* (水浒传): In 1937 J. H. Jackson's English translation of *Shui Hu Zhuan* (水浒传), *Water Margin*, including seventy chapters, was published by the Shanghai Commercial Press. In 1947, New Haven, Yale University Press published James I. Cramp-Jr.'s translation of *Shui Hu Zhuan* (水浒传), *Outlaws of the Marsh Selected*, which is also the selected version of the original novel.

English translation of *San Guo Yan Yi* (三国演义): As a second generation British sinologist, Lionel Giles translated some parts of *San Guo Yan Yi* (三国演义, *Three Kingdoms*) in 1938.

English translation of *Chin P'ing Mei* (金瓶梅): In 1939, Bernard Miall translated *Chin P'ing Mei* (金瓶梅, *Chin P'ing Mei: The Adventurous history of His Men and His Six Wives*), with a preface written by Arthur Waley. Bernard Miall translated it from Franz Kuhn's German translation. Also, in 1939, Clement Egerton, with the assistance of Lao She, translated Zhang Zhupo's Comments on *Chin*

P'ing Mei (金瓶梅, *Golden Lotus*). Egerton's translation is the earliest and most complete translation of *Chin P'ing Mei* in the West, and regarded as an "excellent translation" by critics. Later on, Egerton's translation was reprinted four times, in 1953, 1955, 1957 and 1964 respectively.

English translation of *Lao Can You Ji* (老残游记): In 1939, Harold E. Shadick translated it into *The Travels of Lao Ts'an: A Social Novel*, which is the English translation of the original novel's fragment, with illustrations and issued in *Yen Ching Journal of Social Studies*.

English translation of *Xi You Ji* (西游记): In July 1942, Arthur Waley's English translation of *Xi You Ji* (西游记, *Monkey*), was published by Allen and Angwen Publishing Company. It was reprinted several times, in November 1942, 1943, 1944, and 1945 respectively. It was translated into many languages, and is regarded as the most influential English translation of *Xi You Ji*. In 1944, in order to attract children readers, Waley made his *Monkey* into an adaptation, *The Adventures of Monkey*, published by John Day Company in New York in 1943 and 1944. According to Waley, the first seven chapters are the most attractive parts for Chinese children, which is the just reason that he only translated the first seven chapters. Meanwhile, the famous illustration master Kurt Wiese made the illustrations in the English adaptation.

English translation of *Liao Zhai Zhi Yi* (聊斋志异): As editors of *Outstanding Fiction World: One Hundred Sixty Novels* published by Tudor Publishing Co., New York, Maim Lieber and Blanche Colton Williams, collected *Liao zhai zhi yi* (聊斋志异) in their book. They thought only a few excellent Chinese fictions, such as *San Kuo* (三国志) and *Lian Zhai Zhi Yi* (聊斋志异), were popular among scholars and common readers. In 1946, the Australian sinologist Rose Quong translated *Liao zhai zhi yi* (聊斋志异) into *Chinese Ghost and Love Stories* which was published by the New York Pantheon Books. Quong chose 40 works to translate. She fostered a strong interest in Chinese philosophy, history and culture under

the influence of her father, a Chinese. Her translation is very vivid in the image, causing widespread concern in the field of sinology.

Modern Chinese fictions

Among the English translations of Chinese Modern Fictions, according to their creation time and themes, there are the English translations of fictions during the May Fourth Movement, the 1930s Left-wing Fictions, the Local Color Fictions, and the Anti-Japanese Fictions in the 1930s and 1940s. Moreover, some works which strictly do not belong to any of the above are also included according to their creation time.

The May-Fourth Fiction

Lu Xun's novels created during the May Fourth Movement have been translated into English. *Yijian Xiaoshi* ("一件小事"), *Yao* ("药"), *Ming Tian* ("明天"), *Feng Bo* ("风波") and *Gu Xiang* ("故乡"). The first three works were all written in 1919. *Yijian Xiaoshi* ("一件小事") translated by Edgar Snow and Yao Xinnong have been collected in Zhao Jingshen's *Contemporary Chinese Short Stories*. His short story *Yao* ("药", *Medicine*) was translated by Edgar Snow and Yao Xinnong in *Asia* magazine in 1935, also collected in Edgar Snow's *Living China: Modern Chinese Short Stories* and published as a monograph by Shanghai Wuming Press in 1941. *Ming Tian* ("明天") which is one of the novels reflecting on women's tragic fate and was published in the journal *Life and Letters* was translated by Joseph Kalmer, "At dawn". In September 1920, *Feng Bo* ("风波") published in Volume VIII No. 1 of *Xin Qing Nian* (新青年), was translated into "Storm" and collected into Robert Payne and Yuan Chia-hua's *Contemporary Chinese Short Stories*. *Gu Xiang* ("故乡") written by Lu Xun in 1921, was translated by George A. Kennedy into "Hometown" published in Volume III No. 5 and 6 in *Far*

Eastern Magazine in 1940.

Ling Shuhua's *Fengle de Shiren* ("疯了诗人"), first published on April 10, 1928 in *Xin Yue* (新月) Volume 1 and 2, depicting a poetic life, was translated by Julian Bell and the writer into "A poet goes mad" published in *Tien Hsia Monthly*.

The 1930s Left-Wing Fiction and Local Color Fiction

The Left-wing literature became the mainstream literature of the 1930s, and is characterized by a combination of class literature and politicized literature (Xu and Zou 2008: 207), which also had become the focus of the selection of Chinese fictions translated by foreign translators of the period. For example, in 1941, Ting Ling's *shui* ("水") published by the Shanghai Wuming Press, was translated by Edgar Snow into *The Flood*. Other works published by the Shanghai Wuming Press are Sun Xizhen's *A E* ("阿娥", *Ah Ao*), and Zhang Tianyi's *Yi Xing* ("移行", *Mutation*).

Ma Fang Zhi Ye ("马房之夜") written by Xiao Hong, depicting the loneliness of the elderly and expressing Xiao Hong's miss of her grandfather, was published in May 1936 in Shanghai by *Zuo Jia* (作家) magazine. In 1941, it was translated by Nym Wales and Chia Wu into English and published in the September issue of *Asia* magazine.

Favored by foreign translators are Lao She's works including *Luo Tuo Xiang Zi* (骆驼祥子) and *Li Hun* (离婚). The former was translated by Evan King in 1945 into *Rickshaw Boy* by New York Reynal and Hitchcock Publishing. In 1946, it was reprinted by Sun Dial Press and London Michael Joseph. The latter was also translated by Evan King in 1948 as *Divorce*, published by New York Reynal and Hitchcock Publishing.

Many of Shen Congwen's short stories were translated and collected in Robert Payne and Ching Ti's English translation anthology *The Chinese Earth* in 1947, *Zhang Fu* ("丈夫", "The husband"), *Fu Fu* ("夫妇", "The lovers"), *Xiao Bai Yang* ("小白羊", "The white kid"), *Hui Ming* ("会明", "The yellow chickens"), *Hong Qiao* ("虹桥", "The

rainbow"), *Long Zhu* ("龙珠", "Lung Chu"), *Bai Zi* ("柏子", "Pai-tzu"), *Sange Naren He Yige Nvren* ("三个男人和一个女人", "Three men and a girl"), *San San* ("三三", "San-san"), *Shisi Yejian* ("十四夜间", "The fourteenth moon"), *Deng* ("灯", "The lamp"), *Yuexia Xiaojing* ("月下小景", "Under moonlight"), and *Bian Cheng* ("边城", "The Frontier City")^②

Yang Zhensheng's *Bao Fu* ("报复"), describing a better life for fishing farmers, was translated by Emily Hahn and Ma Binhe into "Revenge"^④, published in volume VI Issue 5 of *Tien Hsia Monthly* magazine. His *Pao Mao* ("抛锚", "The anchor") is collected in Robert Payne and Yuan Chia-hua's *Contemporary Chinese Short Stories*.

Besides, the following works are also collected in *Contemporary Chinese Short Stories*: Shi Zhecun's *Can Qiu De Xiaxuan Yue* ("残秋的下弦月", "The waning moon"), *Zhang Tianyi's Jibei Yu Naizi* ("脊背与奶子", "The breast of a girl"); Shen Congwen's *Deng* ("灯", "The lamp") and *Hei Ye* ("黑夜", "Under cover of darkness"); Lao She's *Huo Che* ("火车", "The last train"); and Tuan-mu Hung-liang's *Hu* ("虎", "Tiger").

M. Q. Ho and Clarence Moy translated Li Huiying's short story into "Sanctuary", which was published in Volume XLII Issue 9 in *Asia* magazine in September 1942.

Nym Wales and Chia Wu translated Wu Qiang's short story into "By the fireside", which was published in Volume XX Issue 18 in *Life and Letters* magazine in February 1939. G. I. Begley translated Li Guangtian's short story into "The man who ate stones" in Volume LX Issue 137 in *Life and Letters* in January 1949.

Anti-Japanese Fiction

In 1941, the English translation of Zhang Tianyi's *Hua Wei Xian Sheng* ("华威先生"), *Mr Warwick*, was published by the Shanghai Wuming Press^⑤

In 1942, Evan King's translation of Xiao Jun's *Bayue de Xiangcun* ("八月的乡村"), *Village in August*, was published by Smith and Durrell in New York. Before this, its third

chapter *Di Sanzhi Qiang* (“第三支枪”) had been translated into “The third gun” by Edgar Snow and collected in his *Living China, Modern Chinese Short Stories*.

Tuan-mu Hung-liang's *Ciluhu de Youyu* (鸞鹭湖的忧郁) was translated by Robert Payne and Yuan Chia-hua into “The sorrows of the Lake of Egrets”, and collected in their anthology *Contemporary Chinese Short Stories*.

The English translation of *Ru Wu* (“入伍”) written by Ting Ling in 1940 into “The soldier and the journalist” in *Life and Letters* magazine is an important gain for the literature of the liberated areas.

Bian Zhilin's *Hong Kunzi* (“红裤子”) describes the story of the village men and women joining the guerrillas in the Anti-Japanese War. It was translated by Robert Payne and Yuan Chia-hua into “The red trousers”, and collected in their anthology *Contemporary Chinese Short Stories*.

These short stories in Asia magazine also describe the story of the Anti-Japanese War: Clarence Moy and M. Q. Ho's English translations of Zhang Tianyi's *Hua Wei Xian Sheng* (“华威先生”) into “Mr. Hua Wei”, Qiu Dongping's *Di Qi Lian* (“第七连”) into “Company seven”, and Li Huiying's *Bi Nan Suo* (“避难所”) into “Sanctuary”.

Yao Xueyin's *Cha Banche Maijie* (“差半车麦秸”) was translated by Robert Payne and Yuan Chia-hua into “The half-baked”, and collected in their anthology *Contemporary Chinese Short Stories*, reflecting the new character, the collective consciousness and the formation of national consciousness in the Anti-Japanese War.

He Gutian's short story *San Ge* (“三个”) was translated by Nym Wales and Chia Wu into “The Three of them”, published in the Spring volume Issue 5, *New Writing*, in 1938.

Themes of the selection of Chinese fictions translated into English

On the basis of combing the English translations of Chinese fictions during the Anti-Japanese War up until the establishment of the People's Republic of China, we

found that many of these Chinese fictions translated into English are not the writers' masterpiece. However, from these works of literary realism, people really can learn about the extraordinary traditional Chinese culture and an active China undergoing a profound change. During this period, the selection of classical Chinese fictions and modern fictions translated into English involves historical themes, mythical themes, themes of ways of the world, rural themes, subjects on people's life, and war themes.

Historical themes

During the Anti-Japanese War to the establishment of the People's Republic of China, historical themes were favored by foreign translators. Luo Guanzhong's *San Guo Yan Yi* (三国演义, *Three Kingdoms*) is the most famous historical novel in Chinese classical literature. The novel describes the contradictions and struggles of the three political, military blocs Wei, Shu and Wu led by Cao Cao, Liu Bei and Sun Quan in the third century AD. It praises the fine Chinese traditions and spirits, such as loyalty towards one's nation and the quality of considering the overall situation. It also shows such profound Chinese cultural traits and wisdom as Chinese philosophy, military strategy, and tactical deployment. It was translated by C.A. Jamieson in 1923 under the name Chugoh Leang and the Arrows, published in the Journal of the North China Branch of RAS issued in Shanghai, and is only an excerpt describing the story of *Caochuan Jiejian* (“草船借箭”, which means Chugoh Leang borrows the arrows with the aid of boats covered with grass). Later on, it was continuously retranslated. Till Giles's English translation in 1938 are all incomplete translations. *Shui Hu Zhuan* (水浒传) is the finest novel describing the heroes on Liangshan mountain participating in the peasant uprising, and reproduces all levels of life and requirements of the Song Dynasty. Since 1933, its first complete English translation was Pearl Buck's *All Men Are Brothers*, having great influence in the English-speaking world, constantly being

reprinted and retranslated. From the Anti-Japanese War to the establishment of the People's Republic of China, there are J. H. Jackson's translation in 1937 and James I. Crump's English translation. In 1936, Guo Moruo's historical short story named *Qiyongshi Biwu* ("齐勇士比武") translated into English as "Qi Yongshi contest", depicts the world in form of a fable.

Mythical themes

During this period, mythical fictions were also selected by foreign translators. These English translations aim to provide guidance for the Western readers to understand China, learn Chinese or do business and start an official career. As Wolfram Eberhard in his introduction of the German translation of *Chinese Fairy Tales and Folk Tales* said, "Formerly it was said: 'There are no fairy tales in China! The Chinese are far too sober a race.' Then appeared the first books to aim at translating fairy tales- for the most part they were extracts from novels, plays, or even from classical literature- and a strange world of demons and foxes, of wise emperors and virtuous women, was revealed.Almost all our most charming characters appear, in another dress it is true, and with other forms and customs, but they are none the less related. There is no division between them and us."(Eberhard 1937: Introduction xi)".

Mythical fictions generally are a reflection of China's society, religion, economy, and love. *Chinese Fairy Tales and Folk Tales*, *Sou Shen Chi*, *Records of the Taiping Era*, *Monkey*, etc. are favored by foreign translators. The classical short story collection *Laizhai Zhiyi* (聊斋志异) collects legends, ghost stories, and anecdotes, mainly describing foxes, magic power, flowers, and ghosts, summarizing the prevailing social relations, reflecting the Chinese society of the 17th century, exposing social contradictions, and expressing the wishes of the people. In *Records of the Taiping Era*, some novel anthologies from the early Tang Dynasty are saved, mainly describing

supernatural things and karma.

Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism are blended into one in *Xi You Ji* (西游记), the masterpiece of mythical fictions, an important fiction school of the Ming Dynasty. The Buddhist sutras story expresses two main themes of ghost fictions: find the solutions to some doubts and the pursuit of an ideal by defeating evil and the fell monsters. It tells people that they are bound to encounter difficulties and setbacks and they have to overcome these difficulties before they realize their dreams. Waley's version *Monkey* in 1942 and his adaptation for children readers in 1942 called *The Adventures of Monkey* were welcomed by the English-speaking world.

Themes of ways of the world

"Ways of the world" fiction belongs to popular fictions, also called *renqing xiaoshuo* (人情小说) or *shiqing xiaoshuo* (世情小说), referring to the description of family life, marriage, feelings between men and women and social reality.

The Tale of Li Wa is the best single piece of legends in the interim of the Tang Dynasty, narrating a love legend between Zheng Sheng and Li Wa, who went through many difficulties before a happy ending.

In *A Brief History of Chinese Fiction*, Lu Xun mentioned fictions in the Ming Dynasty, and he devoted two chapters to talk about the "Ways of the world" fiction. He holds that, when ghost stories are prevalent, novels of narrating persons also draw people's attention, mainly describing joys and sorrows, stories of clutching a large fortune, intermingled with karma, seldom mentioning elves and ghosts, and also describing human beings, reflecting on the social phenomenon that some people show their blandishments when others got the upper hand. They show their indifference when others lose power, thus called "Ways of the world" fiction (Liu 1993).

Lu Xun regards *Jin Ping Mei* (金瓶梅) as a pioneer for "Ways of the world" fiction. The novel describes how

Ximen made sudden wealth, did evil, indulged in sexual activities and the fates of his wives. It reflects on an extremely dark, dirty, ugly and scary society. Then, "Ways of the world" fiction from the Ming and Qing dynasties, focuses on writing about love and marriage, family disputes, depicting a picture of social life in a broad way, or taunting Confucian scholars, officialdom, and brothels.

Lasting Words to Awaken the World themes love and marriage, criticizes and praises feudal officials, exposes the dark officialdom, eulogizes chivalric spirits, and condemns ingratitude. It reflects on the social life and the desire of people of that time from a different perspective and to a different extent.

The novella in the Late Qing *Lao Can You Ji* (老残游记), revolves around the traveling of a doctor named Lao Can, exposing social contradictions. Lao Can dared to criticize that the upright officials might harm the country and its people. He is discerning to point out that the upright officials' fatuity can often be worse than the corrupt officials'. Such aspects of the novel as the refining of traditional national culture, the philosophy of life and the arts, female aesthetics and equality, the psychology of characters and the description of music and scenes are all reaching a superb level. It is rated as one of "four novels of denunciation" in the late Qing Dynasty by Lu Xun. It was translated into many languages and recognized by UNESCO as World Literature. The second chapter, *Minghu Hubian Meiren Juediao* ("明湖湖边美人绝调", "Extraordinary storytelling at the Minghu Lakeside"), describing the extraordinary skills of Bainiu's storytelling and showing the essence of traditional national culture, was first translated by section by Arthur Waley into *The Singing Girl*. In 1939, Harold E. Shadick published his translation of the fragments of *Lao Can You Ji*.

Rural themes

In the history of Chinese new literature since the May Fourth Movement, literary creations of rural themes have been well developed. As early as the rising of the May

Fourth Movement at the beginning, Lu Xun described the rural life with the realism technique. China's rural economy rapidly declined during the double attack of imperialism and feudalism in the early 20th century. Undoubtedly, farmers were the biggest victims. In face of the national conditions of modern China and the numbing soul of national character, Lu Xun felt sad for the farmers' unfortunate lives, but felt angry as they did not struggle for their future. He concerned himself with the fate of the old generation of farmers with great enthusiasm. As a result, he described and reflected the misfortune of the old farmers, and raised the severity of the problem of saving farmers in old China, in order to draw the common people and the revolutionists' attention. His short story *Yao* ("药", *Medicine*) was published in 1919, later translated by Edgar Snow and Yao Xinnong in *Asia* magazine in 1935, also collected in Edgar Snow's *Living China: Modern Chinese Short Stories* and published as a monograph by Shanghai Wuming Press in 1941. *Medicine* praised Xia Yu's unyielding revolutionary spirit, pointing out the limitations of the Xinhai Revolution. *Yijian Xiaoshi* ("一件小事") was translated by Edgar Snow and Yao Xinnong and published in 1919. It praised the working people, advocating that the intellectuals should learn from the working people, reflecting the slogan *Laogong Shensheng* (劳工神圣, *The labor, the sacred*) put forward in the May Fourth Movement. *Ming Tian* ("明天", *At dawn*), translated by Joseph Kalmer, is one of Lu Xun's novels describing the tragic fate of women. It describes a widow named Mrs Shansi losing her only son, denouncing the man-eating nature of the dark society and people's ruthless indifference in a declining society. *Feng Bo* ("风波", *Storm*) published in September 1920, seems to depict farmers' worry-free life, yet actually expresses the writer's grievances over the occlusion and conservation of rural society and interpersonal indifference. *Gu Xiang* ("故乡", *Hometown*) created in 1921, is typical rural fiction, showing humanitarian sympathy for *Run Tu* (闰土, the main character of the short story), and also concealing the sorrows of the cultural divide between the intellectuals

and the lower classes.

Under the guidance of Lu Xun, the writers of the “local color literature” in the 1920s and the writers of the Leftist-wing literature in the 1930s and literary works created by part of the Beijing School writers focused on creating fictions with rural themes. During the Anti-Japanese War to the establishment of the People’s Republic of China, the number of English translations of the “local color literature” is the largest, especially Shen Congwen’s works. In addition to his translated works in the English anthology *The Chinese Earth*, his works are also scattered in other novel anthologies in English. Shen Congwen’s *Xiangxi* (湘西, a place in China) series of novels expresses different themes. *Bian Cheng* (“边城”) and *Xiao Xiao* (“萧萧”) depict the mountain scenery with a slightly sad tone, simple human nature, and the extraordinary world of art (Xu and Zou 2008: 339、343). *Bian Cheng* (“边城”) expresses a world which is not contaminated by modern human civilization. *Xiao Xiao* (“萧萧”) and *Zhang Fu* (“丈夫”) reflect the vulgarity and stereotypes contrary to ethics and morality in the countryside of old China, and the loss of dignity of uncivilized people. *San San* (“三三”), *Fu Fu* (“夫妇”) and *Long Zhu* (“龙朱”) demonstrate the primitive and free life forms and the beauty of nature in harmony. *Hui Ming* (“会明”), *Deng* (“灯”) and *Yuexia Xiaojing* (“月下小景”) concern themselves with the national consciousness of hardship.

The novelist Yang Zhensheng from the early period of the New literary movement created *Bao Fu* (“报复”) and *Pao Mao* (“抛锚”), describing the poor fishing life of farmers, and were also translated into English. *Shui* (“水”) written by Ting Ling and translated by Edgar Snow and Yao Xinnong, reflects the theme of natural disasters such as flood and drought, and describes the awakening of farmers.

Subjects on people’s life

Lao She left about eight million words of literary works in

his lifetime, mostly describing the civilian life in old Beijing. His two works, *Luotuo Xiangzi* (骆驼祥子) and *Li Hun* (离婚), translated by Evan King, Rickshaw Boy and Divorce respectively, and his *Huo Che* (“火车”, “The last train”) translated by Robert Payne and Yuan Chia-hua and collected in their anthology *Contemporary Chinese Short Stories*, successfully depict the life of urban farmers and intellectuals in a realistic and plain style.

War themes

With the increasing intensification of national contradictions and the rising of the masses’ anti-Japanese sentiments, Chinese war theme literature experienced from advocating revolutionary literature, with the outbreak of the “September 18 Incident” and the “January 28 Incident”, to the growing works of anti-Japanese guerrillas such as *Bayue de xiangcun* (八月的乡村), which rose to the dominant position of modern Chinese literature. (Xu and Zou 2008: 356) These war theme works were mostly translated by Anglo-American reporters and teachers in China and Chinese writers.

Ciluhu de Youyu (“鹭鹭湖的忧郁”, translated into “The sorrows of the Lake of Egrets”) is the short story created by Tuan-mu Hung-liang in 1936, with his hometown in the Northeast as the background. The short story shows the disaster and fighting under the double oppression of the people and class. Ting Ling’s *Ru Wu* (“入伍”) created in 1940 was translated by G. I. Begley, and is an important gain for the literature in the liberated areas. The work uses Don Quixote and his servant as a metaphor, describing how a soldier named Yang Mingcai took care of a news reporter named Xu Qing who lacks life experience and is emotionally vulnerable but insists on recording the war at the front. *Di Qi Lian* (“第七连”, “Company seven”) translated by Clarence Moy and M. Q. Ho, takes the real life at the beginning of the Anti-Japanese War as a background, creating an image of a young officer named Qiu Jun who has a strong sense of

responsibility and patriotism. *Huawei Xiansheng* (华威先生), a political satirical novel written by Zhang Tianyi at the beginning of the Anti-Japanese War was translated also by Clarence Moy and M. Q. Ho. It describes a dishonest bureaucrat named Mr. Huawei, reminding people of facing the crisis in view of the Anti-Japanese War once forgotten by Chinese people (Xu and Zou 2008: 585). As the Anglo-American reporters, translators hoped to let the world understand the earthshaking changes taking place in China and praised the great Chinese Communist Party for rescuing the Chinese people through their English translations of modern Chinese fictions.

Features in the selection of translated fictions

Closer interaction between the selection of Chinese fictions and the socio-political and cultural development

The English translations of Chinese fictions during the Anti-Japanese War to the establishment of the People's Republic of China have some prominent features in the selection of Chinese fictions to translate. Firstly, we can find that the mainstream ideology of the society is obeyed by translators in their selection. Secondly, some translators act in concert with the needs of national diplomacy and reflect the development and changes of Chinese literature. In all, their selection of fictions to translate exhibits a close interaction between the selection of Chinese fictions and the socio-political and cultural development.

The outbreak of World War I and World War II promoted a large number of sinologists translating Chinese classical literature. They hoped to help to revive the Western civilization with the aid of the Eastern civilization by a better understanding of China and her people. Moreover, before the establishment of the People's Republic of China, China had been under the oppression of imperialism and feudalism. A large number of foreigners

entered China, doing business, preaching, teaching, or learning Chinese, etc. The English translations of Chinese fictions can provide them with chances to understand China and her people and make a better living in China or serve their government. These foreign translators almost prefer classical Chinese fictions to translate, and the themes of the selected fictions are mainly about Chinese society, politics, philosophy, history, etc. Their translations help foreign people interested in the Chinese missionary, business, and learning Chinese in China. In Lionel Giles's *A Gallery of Chinese Immortals*, the editorial note states that:

The object of the editor of this series is a very definite one. He desires above all things that, in their humble way, these books shall be the ambassadors of good-will and understanding between East and West, the old world of Thought, and the new of Action. He is confident that a deeper knowledge of the great ideas and lofty philosophy of Oriental thought may help to a revival of that true spirit of Charity which neither despises nor fears the nations of another creed and color. (Giles, 1948: Editorial Note).

After the outbreak of the Pacific War, the United States needed China's Anti-Japanese War to check Japan. On the other hand, due to U.S. long-term interests in the Pacific and the prospects of the U.S. in the whole international political post-war situation, the United States needed a close cooperation with China. All these drew the United States inevitably into China's internal affairs (Tao et al., 2009: 461). In order to promote the cooperation between the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party during the Anti-Japanese War and collect information on the Japanese army, American reporters were sent to Yan'an to investigate the anti-Japanese guerrilla base of the Chinese Communist Party. At the same time these reporters finished their intelligence gathering, they translated many fictions written by famous Chinese writers. Edgar Snow, Robert Payne and Nym Wales are the best examples of those who made an

outstanding contribution to the Anti-Japanese War and the rescue of the Chinese people. Take Robert Payne as an example. Robert Payne was born in the United Kingdom and once worked in a shipyard before coming to China. He created *A Young Man Looks at Europe* and the novel *The Song of the Peasant* with the pen name of Robert Young. In 1939, Payne accepted a post at the British naval base in Singapore. In 1941, he was appointed the cultural attaché of the British Embassy in China. He spent seven years in Asia, working first as a shipwright and attaché, then as the London Times correspondent in China, a participator of the Battle of Changsha in 1942, and as a teacher of English literature in two Chinese universities teaching Poetry and Shipbuilding. Among his experiences in Asia, the most important is his and Yuan Jiahua's compilation and translation of *Contemporary Chinese Short Stories* in 1946 as well as of *The Chinese Earth* in 1947. After the Pacific War, the America's involvement in Chinese affairs influenced those foreign translators, who adapted to the political situation and chose Lu Xun, Shen Congwen, Lao She, and other famous Chinese writers to translate for the Western readers' better understanding of China. They concealed the characteristics of Chinese society and Chinese people through the English translations of Chinese fictions, providing direct reference for American readers and even decision-makers. Meanwhile, they made a great contribution to China's Anti-Japanese War for making the international community aware of the real situation in China and the Anti-Japanese War in their English translations of literary works, winning the sympathy and support of the international community.

Furthermore, the English translations of Chinese fictions of this period are consistent with the development of Chinese literature. After the outbreak of the Anti-Japanese War in 1937, national conflicts rose rapidly and the cultural environment suffered devastating damages, thus making the pursuit of liberal arts impossible. Some publishing houses, newspapers and magazines had to evacuate or move to the Chinese inland

or Hong Kong. For example, *Tien Hsia Monthly* magazine moved to Hong Kong after the outbreak of the Anti-Japanese War. Some English newspapers published abroad or hid in Shanghai concessions. Roughly till the end of November 1937, a large number of well-known writers such as Guo Moruo, Mao Dun, and Xia Yan who once lived in Shanghai all had left. (Wang 1999: 402-403) The writers who remained in Shanghai were forced into seclusion in the face of a vicious political environment (Ibid: 413). Most of them chose to remain silent. Chinese literature has been seriously affected, which is reflected in the reduction of Chinese Literature in English Translation in number. English translations of Chinese fictions are mostly the creations of the May Fourth period and of the 1920s and 1930s. The foreign translators in China engaging in the English translations of modern Chinese fictions during this period mostly interacted frequently with Chinese literary and revolutionary circles, such as Edgar Snow and Lu Xun. At that time, Snow wanted to introduce the true conditions of the literary world in China to the world, and Lu Xun also wanted to introduce China to the world through the English translation of Chinese fictions. Therefore, the aspirations on both sides promoted the English translations of modern Chinese fiction.

Translators' personal ideology highlighted

During the Anti-Japanese War to the establishment of the People's Republic of China, foreign translators were active in translating modern Chinese fictions. And their images are very vivid if we put them in the features of that period, and the translators' different social roles resulted in diversified characteristics in the translations. Among these foreign translators, there are sinologists, teachers, scholars, writers, translators, reporters, etc. Moreover, a translator often had several social roles. Just like Robert Payne we mentioned above. He operated as a writer, a shipbuilding worker, a diplomat, a reporter, and a translator. Their different social roles are reflected in their

English translations of Chinese fictions. That is, the translator's own personal ideology can be traced in his/her English translations of Chinese fictions.

The biggest feature of sinologists translating Chinese fictions is that when the sinologists did their research on China, they translated Chinese literature as a career need or an interest. Mostly, their selection of Chinese fictions is often based on their own research areas or research interests. For example, the sinologist Wolfram Eberhard explained his reasons for his selection of Chinese literature in his translation of the German translation of *Chinese Fairy Tales and Folk Tales* in 1937. He believes that the spread of Chinese mythology in European countries conveys the ideas of the European people, and the story mode is of entirely European-style. The important point is that Chinese mythology told by the European translators is not suited to their readers. If the readers are not interested in them, Chinese mythology rich in Chinese elements will regrettably disappear and will not be enjoyed by readers of English-speaking countries. Hence, he thought that the previous anthologies in the strict sense did not collect myths and folk tales. He pointed out the difference between myth and a story processed by man. The "Fox" topic is very popular in Chinese literature, while many stories processed by man rarely include fox stories, which can not convey the themes that myths and folk tales often convey. Another difference is that the author's own ideas may be added though some stories processed by man contain mythical themes. For example in *Liao Zhai Zhi Yi* (聊斋志异) the moral teachings are added at the end of the story. Therefore, Wolfram Eberhard thought the stories processed by man cannot be regarded as myths, which is also his motivation to choose Chinese myths to translate (See Eberhard 1937, Introduction: xi-xiv).

Chinese fictions translated by foreign reporters highlight the translator's personal ideology. In order to collect intelligence of the Japanese army, the U.S. government sent a reporter mission to visit Yan'an. As American reporters, Edgar Snow and others found that under the

Kuomintang's encirclement, members of the Chinese Communist Party did not concern themselves with their survival conditions but battled for the entire Chinese people. These foreign translators were impressed by the indomitable spirits of the Chinese Communist Party. The reporters conveyed China's real voice to the international community with English translations of Chinese fictions. Ting Ling's *Shui* ("水", *The Flood*) translated by Edgar Snow, Lu Xun's *Yao* ("药", *Medicine*), Sunxi Zhen's *A E* ("阿娥", *Ah Ao*), and Zhang Tianyi's *Yi Xing* ("移行", *Mutation*) were all translated into English and published as monographs, which have been collected in Edgar Snow's *Living China, Modern Chinese Short Stories*. That is to say, war themes meet the needs of the society and the readers; and the translators' intervention successfully reflected and influenced the political issues at that time.

Influences of the selection

The image of China perceived

From the above, we know foreign translators translated classical Chinese fictions and modern Chinese fictions, showing the influences of the society, the culture, the literature and the tendencies of the translators themselves because of their own personal ideology. And they chose different themes to achieve their research purposes, their political aims, etc. First and foremost, as a reader, the translator read the original Chinese fiction and produced an image of China as a country. And then, his/her own image through his/her English translation passed on to the readers. Thus, the reader's image of China will be influenced by the translator's English translation and his/her image of China. Hence, the image of China in the westerners' eyes can be revealed by analyzing the selection of translated literature.

After the 1920s to the early 1940s, China in the eyes of Westerners was positive. Isaacs summarized this image of China as "the rise of the hero" (1999: 226). He pointed

out that China fought against Japan single-handedly as a member of the Allies, so in America, “the cartoonists portrayed China as a giant slowly waking up in the face of Japanese attackers” (1999: 234).

And because of the influence of Pearl S. Buck’s *The Good Earth* in the West^⑦ Americans gradually abandoned the previous bias for Chinese farmers, and began to look at them in a positive way, appreciating and admiring their strong, wonderful and kind characters. Zhou considered this transformation to be due to fact that “the First World War destroyed the confidence of modern capitalist ideology that had formed since the Enlightenment. The utopian image of China was reshaped with introspection and criticism, from the “imagination” of the intellectual elite circle, to the mass expression in Pearl Buck’s novels and movies in the 1930s and 1940s.....Westerners felt that the Chinese people are the same people and have the same human nature with them, and the Chinese people have some noble qualities respected by Western cultures and values.” (2006: 371) These active and positive images of the Chinese people can be found in the English translations of Chinese fictions by Snow, Nym and others.

Canonization of Chinese translated literature

During the Anti-Japanese War to the establishment of the People’s Republic of China, sinologists exhibited their unusual favorites of the classical Chinese fictions, which can be seen from constant retranslations and reprints of classical Chinese fictions. As a result, the canonization of Chinese translated literature has been greatly promoted in the English-speaking world.

The English translations of classical Chinese fictions such as *Journey to the West*, *Outlaws of the Marsh*, *Three Kingdoms* and *Golden Lotus* experienced constant reprints and retranslations, promoting the prosperity of the English translations of classical Chinese fictions. Some Chinese fictions in the English-speaking world have

become canons. Take the English translation of *Xi You Ji* (西游记) as an example. Though there were three English versions of *Xi You Ji* (西游记) before the Anti-Japanese War, Waley translated it into *Monkey* in 1942. And his version was reprinted in November 1942, 1943, 1944 and 1945, and also translated into many languages, becoming the most influential version in the English translations of *Xi You Ji* (西游记). In 1944, in order to attract children, Waley made his *Monkey* into an adaptation of *The Adventures of Monkey*. As a result, Wiley’s English translation of *Xi You Ji* (西游记) belongs to the first case, static canonicity, defined by Evan-Zohar, for it is accepted as a finalized product and inserted into a set of sanctified texts literature (culture) wants to preserve (See Even-Zohar, 1990: 19).

Moreover, during this period, sinologists translated a large number of supernatural fictions in pamphlets, anthologies, and English magazines, such as *Liao Zhai Zhi Yi* (聊斋志异), *Sou Shen Ji* (搜神记), *Zhongguo Shenhua Guhsiji* (中国神话故事集), *Tangxieben Sou Shen Ji* (唐写本搜神记), *Jin Gu Qi Guan* (今古奇观), and so on. The English translations of these novels were very popular in this period and even throughout the whole period of the Republic of China, became a productive principle in the translation system, which belongs to the second case, dynamic canonicity (See Even-Zohar 1990: 19).

Therefore, since the selection of Chinese literature into English to some extent determines the vitality of the English translations, something no translator can avoid, we must actively respond to the problem.

Impact on Sinology researches

During the Anti-Japanese War to the establishment of the People’s Republic of China, sinologists engaged in the English translations of Chinese fictions were engrossed in the research and dissemination of Chinese ancient culture and civilizations. The research on the selection of Chinese fictions translated into English can deepen

Sinology researches mainly in two aspects.

Firstly, the research has an influence on deepening the research of sinologists. Most monographs and papers on Sinology researches focus on a very limited number of sinologists, such as Lionel Giles and Arthur Waley. Due to historical data, academic perspectives and language acquisition, some sinologists translating Chinese fictions into English need further investigation. We can follow the English translations of Chinese fictions by sinologists as a clue, to dig deep down into the experience and researches of sinologists, hoping to expand the team of sinologists.

Secondly, the research on the selection of Chinese fictions to translate can expand the scope of Sinology research. For example: What Chinese fictions are translated into English by sinologists? What is the purpose behind their English translation activities and what are the selection features? What are the relations between these and their own research areas? These research areas and their personal and social contact thus can help scholars to extend their research vision.

Rethinking researches on Translation norms

Researches on the selection of Chinese literature to translate have made some achievements, yet are limited to the selection of one literary work or the spread and acceptance of one translated work or translation series book. However, it is undeniable that some studies are conducted without considering certain socio-cultural contexts, away from the constraints of social reality to the literary translation. Some studies prefer applying Western translation theories to one's study on the selection of norms, blindly exaggerating the impact of socio-cultural factors but ignoring the translator's subjectivity. Our research shows that the selection of fictions of the same period to translate will be affected by socio-cultural and political factors. However, even though translators have the same socio-cultural contexts and the same group of

readers, the selection may also show different tendencies. It still depends on the translator's personal ideology. Therefore, the role of the translator's subjectivity can not be ignored in the construction of the Chinese culture in the English-speaking world. And the researchers should be careful to apply Western translation theories. Of course, in addition to considering the socio-cultural and political environment and the translator's subjectivity, researches on the specific selection of the English translations of Chinese fictions must consider the impact of other specific factors, such as the reputation of writers of the original works, or whether the literary work selected can be considered a representative among all of one writer's works, or whether it is a best-selling book, etc.

CONCLUSION

The research on the selection of Chinese fictions translated into English during the Anti-Japanese War to the establishment of the People's Republic of China considered the socio-cultural and political environment and the translator's personal cultural context and value orientations, highlighting the interactions of ideologies and translations. Based on the overview of the English translation of Chinese fictions during the Anti-Japanese War to the establishment of the People's Republic of China, the paper explored the content, the characteristics and the influences of the selection of Chinese fictions translated into English by foreign translators in this period. The paper found that the selection of Chinese fictions translated into English by foreign translators involves historical themes, ways of the world themes, rural themes, people's living themes, and war themes. Additionally, the selection of Chinese fictions translated into English by foreign translators has the following characteristics: a closer interaction between the selection of Chinese fictions and the socio-political and cultural development as well as the highlighting of personal ideology of the foreign translators. The research helps to promote Chinese studies and the canonization of Chinese fictions

in the English-speaking world, and to reconsider the studies on translation norms in the Chinese academics.

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NOTES

①The English title and number in Wang Lina's book on "《超自然的一些中国故事》(*Some Tales of Supernatural*)", tr. by Derk Bodde, including 9 stories of *Sou Shen Ji* (搜神记) are wrong. We managed to find the original text, which wrote "9. Other stories" on pp355-7. Pay attention to the punctuation mark after the number 9. And in the part "9. Other stories", Derk Bodde introduced the reason for not translating other stories, and very briefly introduces two stories "Panhu" (盘瓠) and "Dongming" (东明) in *Hou Han Shu* (后汉书, *Book of Later Han*). Then he continued to say that he would not translate these two stories as they had been translated by others.

②In the anthology *The Chinese Earth* translated and edited by Robert Payne and Ching Ti in 1947, "从文自传: 一个大王" ("Ta Wang") was marked as "Short Stories", but should be marked as "Autobiography".

③In the present bibliography of English translations of Chinese literature, Xiao Hong's "A night in a stable" was translated by Nym Wales and Chia Wu, the Chinese title of which was marked as unclear. We have found the original work, whose title should be *Mafang Zhiye* ("马房之夜").

④In the present bibliography of English translations of Chinese literature, Yang Zhensheng's "Revenge" was translated by Emily Hahn and Ma Ping-ho, the Chinese title of which was marked as unclear. We have found the original work, whose title should be *Bao Fu* ("报复").

⑤This booklet was not found, the translator is unclear.

⑥The real name of Nym Wales is Helen Foster Snow, a friend of the Chinese people and the first wife of the American reporter Edgar Snow.

⑦According to Isaacs, Pearl S. Buck's *The Good Earth* had more than two million sales in 1937, the novel was adapted into a movie, with an American audience of about 23 million and 4200 million on a global scale, this figure is staggering. In contrast, Lin Yutang's *My Country and My People* had only 80,000 sales.

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