

Reflections on Reading 'Journey to the West in China'

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Abstract: This paper re-examines the classic thesis 'Journey to the West'. Through in-depth analysis of the text, the historical background, social landscape, and character images presented in the work were explored. Re-examined the author's writing perspective and narrative strategy, revealing its unique value in documenting the Chinese revolutionary process. It analyzes the vivid description of the revolutionary struggle under the leadership of the CPC and the true portrayal of all social strata at that time. Further exploration was conducted on the important significance of "Journey to the West" in cross-cultural communication and historical inheritance, emphasizing its important role in enhancing contemporary readers' understanding and cognition of that special historical period, and providing new perspectives and reflections for in-depth research on Chinese revolutionary history.

Keywords: Journey to the West; Red Star over China; Translation.

1. Introduction

Zhang Xiaoding's article "Journey to the West in China" uses a linear structure to narrate the historical development of the Chinese translation of *Red Star Over China* to readers, telling the story of its legendary experience of translation, publication, and dissemination in China. The tortuous development of the Chinese translation of *Red Star Over China* can be roughly divided into five stages: embryonic stage, budding stage, development stage, maturity stage, and completion stage. This is the result of generations of translators' tireless efforts and pursuit of excellence. The development history of translations to some extent reflects the history of China's Red Revolution. It objectively and truthfully reproduced the revolutionary style of China, stimulated the tenacious fighting spirit of Chinese red youth, and promoted China's revolutionary cause.

2. The Reception of Red Star Over China in China

Recording History "and" Creating History ": On the Historical Poetics of Snow's "Journey to the West " explores the value of Snow's "Journey to the West" from the perspective of historical poetics, analyzing how it records and presents the history of the Chinese revolution, as well as its creation and influence on history. [1] *The Narrative Art of "Journey to the West"* focuses on the narrative art of "Journey to the West" and provides an in-depth analysis of the artistic techniques used in describing the environment, detailing, and character development in the work.[2] The book *Impressions of Foreign Readers in the Northwest*, co-compiled by Wang Fushi, Guo Da, Li Fang, and Li Huachun in March 1937, was first secretly published in Beiping with the enthusiastic and selfless support and cooperation of Snow and the Helen couple. The response to the publication of this book was extremely enthusiastic and the dissemination was very extensive, like 'a bolt of lightning that awakened the people'. In October 1937, the British Galanz Company published *The Red Star Shines on China*, providing the people of the world with true information about the CPC and promoting the development of the cause of communism. In February 1938, under the promotion of Hu Yuzhi, twelve well-known figures

in the cultural industry collectively translated and published the first "Red Star" full translation under the name of "Fushe" - "Journey to the West". The widespread circulation of this book is like a torch, completely igniting the revolutionary spirit of China's progressive youth. They carry patriotic hearts, experience numerous difficulties and dangers, and rush one after another to the revolutionary holy land of Yan'an. On the eve of the birth of the People's Republic of China in 1949, a remarkable new version appeared in Shanghai, which was translated from the "Red Star" reprinted by the American publisher Landon in July 1938 and contained the content of Chapter 13. The release of the new version is still very popular and sold out in an instant, "irrigating the spirit of the Communist Party into the hearts of all Chinese people". In December 1979, two new important translations were simultaneously published in the capital city of Beijing. One was the finalized version of "Mao Zedong's 1936 Talks with Snow" by Wu Liping, which was published by People's Publishing House. The other important new version was the famous translator Dong Leshan's new translation "Journey to the West", which was revised by Snow and added the fifth section of Chapter 11, "That Foreign Think Tank", which was of milestone significance. In January 1992, translated by Li Fangzhun and Liang Min, proofread by Zhang Baolin, it was based on the famous "Pelican Edition" revised by Snow before his death. Compared with the previous translation, it added "chronology", "epilogue", "new annotations" and so on, and changed the present tense used in the original book to the past tense, in order to be suitable for today's readers to read. The novel version translated by "Pelican Edition" is different from the famous "Fushe" edition and Dong Leshan's "Sanlian" edition. It fills a gap in the Chinese translation. The book was first published in 62600 copies and later reprinted. It is worth mentioning that Langdon Publishing House in the United States also made important revisions to *Red Star Over China* in 1938, 1944, 1968, and 1971, and gained a large number of overseas readers, which eloquently proves the enduring charm of "Journey to the West".

3. The Vivid Description about Chinese Revolution

This article links the issue of translation with political

issues in China, rather than simply a language issue. It elevates it to a social and political behavior, and is a pioneering work in promoting the Chinese revolution. For translation, the original work is a historical product with distinct historical significance. Based on this understanding, translators need to examine it in the historical context when translating, and link the publication of the Chinese translation of *Red Star Over China* with the advancement of the Chinese revolutionary cause. Such translation issues are valuable. Upon closer reading of this article, readers will find that the translated version is limited by historical context and cultural environment, thus possessing both historicity and translator subjectivity. For example, *Red Star Over China* was translated as *Impressions of Foreign Journalists in Northwest China* in the prototype version, with "foreign journalists" as a shield and protective color; 'Northwest' actually refers to the Shaanbei Soviet Area. The emergence of this translated name is inseparable from the historical background of the Kuomintang's cultural dictatorship and the creation of the White Terror at that time. This shows us two basic qualities that translation workers should possess: one is the ability to master words, and the other is the ability to adjust translation strategies based on the historical context. In addition, to judge the success of a translation, it is not enough to just listen to what the translator and critics say, but also to see how well the work is accepted in the target language culture. From this perspective, the Chinese translation of *Red Star Over China* has achieved great success. Even on small bookstores at that time, its shadow still existed, and its wide dissemination and fast printing can be imagined. The Kuomintang government's ban on this book can also indirectly reflect the wide audience of this book. Its publication not only objectively and truthfully provided the revolutionary truth of our party and the Soviet area to the people at that time, spread the revolutionary ideas of Communists, to a certain extent accelerated the victory of the revolutionary cause, but also infected and educated today's readers and generation after generation of youth, with profound historical and practical significance. This is what translation research should do, which is to go beyond the simple language level, enter the cultural context and ideology of the receiving language, and have an indelible impact on the social and political life of the receiving country.

4. Contemporary Value and Implications for Academic Writing

In addition to reflecting on its content, this article serves as a template for our academic paper writing. Based on this, the author summarizes the following three points: firstly, how to plan the layout of the article. Firstly, there should be a foundation in terms of content, followed by a meticulous analysis around the sub arguments, and finally a summary. Furthermore, when writing academic papers, we should extensively cite sources to increase the authority and

persuasiveness of the paper. Footnotes should be used when citing, which is a specific manifestation of academic norms and also provides convenience for other researchers to further track literature. Finally, attention should be paid to version issues, and researchers and translators should attach great importance to the selection of publishers.

The Chinese translation of *Red Star Over China* comprehensively reports the truth of our party and the Soviet area, leaves the mark of the times, and emits the strongest voice of the times. In the history of blood and fire, it cries out to the people of the world about the greatness and hardships of China's communist cause. Under the influence of this book, countless revolutionary martyrs have sacrificed their lives and shed their blood for the revolutionary cause. Their deeds have moved generation after generation of Chinese youth. Through this, we hope to stimulate the thinking of today's translation workers on how to link translation with its times, so that the translated version has both historical warmth and ideological strength.

5. Conclusion

As a paper with profound influence, 'Journey to the West' has always shone with a unique light in the long river of history. Through this re-reading, we have a deeper understanding of the rich connotations and important values it contains. This paper documents how Snow, with fearless courage and a strong sense of mission, delved deep into the revolutionary base areas of northwest China, presenting a real, vivid, and hopeful picture of the Chinese revolution to the world. His creations not only broke through misunderstandings and prejudices in the outside world, but also became an important bridge connecting the Chinese revolution with global cognition. In depicting the Chinese revolution, the work presents the complexity, difficulty, and inevitable development trend of the revolution with delicate and comprehensive strokes. It has shown us the vigorous development of revolutionary base areas, the deepening of land reform, and the powerful force of military civilian unity, giving us a clearer and deeper understanding of the historical process of the Chinese revolution. Heart to heart. In short, 'Journey to the West' is not only a precious document that records history, but also a spiritual lighthouse that guides us forward. Every time we reread, we gain new insights and inspirations, inspiring us to constantly strive forward in the journey of the new era and make unremitting efforts to create a better future.

References

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