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# Translation and Communication of Shanhaijing under Transknowletology

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**Abstract:** Shanhaijing has unique academic value and cultural significance, and its rich content, ingenious expressions and in-depth research have received widespread attention not only from domestic readers, but also from overseas readers. With the wide dissemination of Chinese literary works in the international arena, it has become a topic full of contemporary significance to present Chinese classic literature to the world, to promote the globalization of local knowledge, and to incorporate it into the vast fence of world literature. Shanhaijing, with its rich intellectual connotation, remarkable literary style and distinctive local characteristics, has become an outstanding representative of this proposition. Starting from the characteristics of the original works, integrating the relevant theories of intellectual translation, and giving full play to the advantages of modern multimedia and materials, the translation practice should be in line with the pulse of the times and satisfy the readers' preferences, so as to ensure the effectiveness of the translation and dissemination of Shanhaijing.

**Keywords:** Transknowletology; Translation; Communication; Shanhaijing.

## 1. Introduction

The Shanhaijing (Classic of Mountains and Seas), which dates from the Warring States period to the Western Han Dynasty, is one of the three great ancient books of wonder, along with the I Ching and the Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine [1]. This work is unique in ancient literature for its profound content and unique form, and can be regarded as the originator of Chinese fantasy and treacherous literature. The book covers multi-dimensional knowledge such as history, geography, myths and legends, flora and fauna, medicine and knowledge, astronomy and calendar, and religious beliefs. Reflecting the life and spirit of the ancient people, the Shanhaijing draws a vivid blueprint of the civilization and cultural landscape of the ancient human race, and has become a precious source of research for future generations.

The Shanhaijing not only shines in the history of Chinese literature, but is also an important part of the literary wealth of all mankind, and its translation goes beyond the simple conversion of words to a cross-cultural dialog in a deeper sense. Translation is an important way to introduce and promote the ancient Chinese worldview and philosophy of nature, and promotes the international dissemination of the memory of China's ancient civilization and the construction of consensus. The symbols and metaphors as well as the wide range of mythological stories contained in the Shanhaijing provide a unique window for world readers to explore traditional Chinese philosophy, religious beliefs and ways of thinking, and the translation work has enabled the original text to transcend linguistic boundaries with its rich connotations and charms, and has given world readers unique insights.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Translation of Shanhaijing

The translation of the Shanhaijing began at the end of the 19th century. The first French sinologist León de Rosny completed and published a French version of Shanhaijing: Ancient Geography of China in 1891, which was a selection of translations focusing on the geographic information in the text. Subsequently, American scholar John William Schiffeler released an abridged English translation of The Legend of the Classic of Mountains and Seas in Taiwan in 1978. French sinologist Remi Mathieu released a full French translation of Studies in Myth and Ethnography of Ancient China in 1983, laying an important foundation for a comprehensive translation of the Shanhaijing. In Italy, Riccardo Fracasso released a full Italian translation of the Shanhaijing in 1996. Following it, in 1999, Anne Birrell, a British sinologist, published a pioneering full English translation of the Classic of Mountains and Seas. In the 21st century, a full English translation of the Classic of Mountains and Seas, planned by Wang Hong, was released by Hunan People's Publishing House in 2011, making it one of the few full English translations to date. In 2022, Tsinghua University Publishing House presented an illustrated version of the Shanhaijing, focusing on its rare and exotic beasts, which, through the meticulous translation of American sinologist Prof. Howard Goldblatt, presented the rich connotations of the Shanhaijing to the cultural connoisseurs of the English-speaking world. To date, the Shanhaijing has been revived in different contexts and cultures, and its translation and transmission have demonstrated the enduring appeal of this classic and witnessed the process of globalization of the Chinese classics.

In recent years, as Chinese culture goes abroad, the translation of the Shanhaijing has received extensive attention from scholars in China. Focusing on the edition compiled by Birrell, Gao Ju and Yang Liu analyze Birrell's logic of translation from three dimensions: the translator's position, the scope of the selected material, and the translation technique. The study reveals that Birrell favored an exegetical style of translation, with a penchant for reproducing the essence of the original text accurately-i.e., based on detailed explanations of translation terms such as the names of gods and goddesses, prioritizing English over Latin vocabulary, and implementing a word-for-word translation strategy. In addition, the introduction of rich subtexts such as introductions and accompanying maps provide English

readers with a colorful picture of ancient Chinese mythology [2]. Adopting qualitative analysis and case study method, Wang Min and Luo Xuanxuan carefully analyze the English translation of Shanhaijing with the concept of cultural presuppositions as the research entry point. They emphasize that the promotion of Chinese mythological culture is not only limited to cross-linguistic translation of classical literature, but also requires the conscious integration of intra-linguistic translation, intra-textual intertextual rewriting, and inter-symbolistic translation within a grandiose cross-modal narrative framework, weaving a dynamic intertextual space and realizing the multifaceted narrative remodeling and dissemination of Chinese myths in the international arena [3]. Li Zhengshuan and Cheng Gang systematically organize the terminology in the Shanhaijing, categorize it based on six domains-geology, culture, biology, minerals, medicine, and other terminology-and scrutinize their translation strategies in detail for each category. Drawing on the Bieler edition as a benchmark, they assessed the advantages and disadvantages of each strategy, and accordingly provided some theoretical support and practical guidance for the translation of scientific literature terminology [4].

In summary, it can be seen that the cross-linguistic translation and multifaceted interpretation of Shanhaijing not only highlights its profound historical heritage and academic contributions, but the existing discussions have largely focused on analyzing the translation strategies and styles, without paying enough attention to the knowledge value embedded in the work itself. Based on this situation, this study intends to investigate the translation project of Shanhaijing and its promotion in the cross-cultural context through the theoretical perspective of knowledge translation, so as to promote the international dissemination of local knowledge and the global transmission and interaction of Chinese civilization.

## 2.2. Transknowletology

Translation activity stems from the need for interaction between multiple languages and cultures, and its purpose is to promote cultural exchanges, enhance global cultural integration, and aim to contribute to the mutual mirroring of human civilization, which essentially contributes to the core kinetic energy of knowledge exchange [5]. With the opening of the new era, Transknowletology came into being, which is the product of cultural development, the narration of facts, and at the same time, the way of theoretical innovation. From the understanding, transfer and dissemination of knowledge, Transknowletology is devoted to the study of the relationship between language conversion, discourse shaping and knowledge construction, which not only makes translation an important tool for the production of knowledge in the world, but also provides theories and methods for the accumulation and transformation of knowledge in various disciplines [6]. The discipline defines translation as a cultural practice and social action of interlingual knowledge translation, reshaping and re-dissemination to the world. Yang Feng points out that translation is a cultural behavior and social practice of interlingual knowledge processing, reconstruction and in dissemination [7]. Knowledge between translators, people on top of knowledge, people and knowledge together interpret the ontological relationship of Transknowletology, the formation of the "truth, goodness, beauty" three rational practices as a whole methodology, to build ontology and methodology, theory and practice of the unity of the theory of general translation [8]. According to Yang Yonglin, understanding the interaction between linguistic regularity and translation expressiveness through the perspective of knowledge and translation is not only likely to be an interesting academic exploration, but also very likely to realize the re-creation of translation value [9]. Yuan Limei indicates that Transknowletology especially emphasize the great contribution of translation in the process of local knowledge sprouting worldwide meaning [10]. Local knowledge is transformed into world knowledge through borrowing, integration and transformation. The history of human translation is the history of knowledge translation, and the development of various disciplinary fields does not depend on the path of knowledge translation. Translation serves as a catalyzer for the flow of knowledge from the local to the global, constructing a platform for dialogue between the local and the world. Language serves as a medium for cultural transmission, while translation bridges the gap between interlanguage understanding and communication. Transknowletology focuses on the multidimensional perspectives of language conversion, speech shaping and knowledge construction, places translation in the historical lineage and framework of the knowledge community, synthesizes the use of knowledge logic, ethics and aesthetics, and establishes the methodology of "truth, goodness, and beauty" of scientific inquiry through an all-around interpretation of the cultural, social, and political dimensions. The research direction complements the theoretical framework of the translation process and practical application of the Shanhaijing.

The Shanhaijing integrates the knowledge of ancient China in many fields such as topography, history, myths and legends, astronomy, flora and fauna, medicine and religion, and it is a summary embodiment of the whimsical and exotic treasures of the prehistoric land of Huaxia, and it also records the many legends of the prehistoric period. Because of its undetermined author, the special nature of the time when it was written, and the complexity of the social and cultural environment, this classic inevitably undergoes the process of refining, reshaping, and transmitting knowledge in the interlingual transmission. The Shanhaijing, with its many translations, witnesses the continuity and process of translation practice, marking that the act of translation goes beyond mere structural migration to a more in-depth content reshaping [11]. Translation begins with the analysis and comprehension of local knowledge, aiming at its inclusion in the world's knowledge structure, opening up international horizons, and ensuring the worldwide transmission and internalization of the Shanhaijing. Furthermore, the process of constructing the Shanhaijing in the global knowledge system not only enhances the weight of Chinese culture in the global arena, but also contributes both academically and practically to the promotion of the internationalization of Chinese culture and the incorporation of Chinese wisdom into the world system. Therefore, the Shanhaijing has gained cross-cultural dissemination through translation, and has accomplished the inheritance and expansion of its concepts through translation.

# 3. Knowledge of Shanhaijing

The Shanhaijing is a book of eighteen volumes with a cumulative length of more than 30,000 words. It is structured by two main sections, the Shanjing and the Haijing, and is further divided into four major series, the Wuzangshanjing, the Haiwaijing, the Haineijing, and the Dahuangjing. The

"Wuzangshanjing" records in detail the topography of mountain ranges, the rituals and objects used in sacrificing to the gods, and describes the appearance and magical powers of the gods of the mountains; the "Haiwaiing" focuses on the strange people and objects of the strange overseas countries, and is also found in ancient mythological stories, such as Kuafu's chasing of the sun and Jingwei's filling up the sea; the "Haineijing" focuses on the recounting of strange things in the sea, such as the sights of the kunlongs, the appearance of jianmu, the ba snake, and the god of thunder, etc. The “Dahuangjing” focuses on the oracles and legends related to Emperor Jun and Emperor Huangdi, the latter two being the gods worshipped by the tribes of the East and the West. The book contains not only a wealth of regional knowledge, but also a wide range of disciplines, including geography, mythology, medicine, plants and animals, astronomy and calendar, and religious beliefs, and so on, which is why some scholars have called it the earliest encyclopedia in China.

## 3.1. Geographical Knowledge

The Shanhaijing is an accurate compilation of early Chinese geographic information, detailing the natural landscapes and human activities of the pre-Qin era and containing ancient data in multiple dimensions: from lakes, wetlands, deserts, mountains and rivers and their transformations, to the distribution of minerals, vegetation (mirroring climatic changes), and fauna, and even the historical traces of diaspora, exchanges, and migrations of various ethnic groups and tribes. The literature reveals a large geographical span, covering from the South China Sea and northern Vietnam in the south, the Qaidam Basin and the Pamir Plateau in the west, Lake Baikal and the Bering Sea in the north, the Korean Sea in the east, and extending to the southeastern coast of Taiwan Island. Among them are the Mangfu Forest in present-day Hubei, the Deng Forest in present-day Henan, and so on, which were once lush primitive forests, and the depiction of the West Sea (i.e., present-day Qaidam Basin) as a vast and sprawling swamp in the Shanhaijing, as well as the view of Zaozhi (i.e., present-day Lop Nur) with its colorful water and sky, all of them being precious records. In the study of environmental protection and ecological balance in modern China, the Shanhaijing provides valuable historical references and research materials.

## 3.2. Mythological Legends

The Shanhaijing document is an important collation of the records of the seven major types of myths in ancient China, providing textual evidence of the mythological concept of cosmic space. It indirectly maps the cosmic concepts of ancient societies through metaphors and symbols, and preserves materials that contain strong primitive cultural information, the latent value of which for mythological research should not be overlooked. The accumulation of epics in the Shanhaijing, in its various forms, has had a profound impact on future generations, shaping not only the group memory of historical figures, but also people's expectations of reality and the future, and even the trajectory of the development of Chinese civilization. Myth, as one of the sources of classical Chinese literature, is rich in the stories of creation, floods, national origins, heroes, tribes, and nature myths found in the Shanhaijing , which have provided a rich content and source of imagination for later generations of literary creations, and have had a unique and lasting impact on Romantic literature in particular. These myths reflect the core qualities and values of Chinese culture, and have contributed the foundational material for the shaping of many important themes and motifs in literary works. Myths and legends carry typical local knowledge and reflect the uniqueness and cultural flavor of Chinese civilization. The translation of such narratives is not only a linguistic translation, but also involves a complex cultural background and profound literary training. In this process, translators should have profound attainments in ancient literature, rich understanding of Chinese culture and knowledge of Chinese history.

## 3.3. Medical Knowledge

The Shanhaijing summarizes a vast amount of medicinal knowledge, including a systematic discussion of the types of medicinal herbs, their ecological environments, their physical properties, their medicinal effects, and the organoleptic qualities of specific medicines, and lays down the initial structure for the great works of herbology of all times, including the Bencaogangmu (The Compendium of Materia Medica). In this text, medicines are categorized into three main groups: plants, animals, and minerals, and further subdivided into subgroups. For example, in the botanical category, herbs are subdivided into herbs and woody herbs; the animal category is subdivided into birds, animals, fish, amphibians, and tallow; and the mineral category is divided into various types of ores and mineral springs. This classic work also analyzes in depth how the properties of medicines are affected by their native environments, climates and other factors, and discusses the diversity of medicinal herbs and their environmental adaptations in the light of the characteristics of different regions, thus providing a scientific guide for the investigation and collection of medicinal herbs. The morphological signs of herbs, such as leaves, flowers, fruits, and patterns, are depicted in detail, and uncommon herbs are identified by comparing them with typical plants; at the same time, the parts of medicinal use are clearly indicated, which enhances the accuracy of herb identification and collection. In addition to summarizing the names, forms, origins, and therapeutic effects of medicinal herbs, the book also records the names of many ancient diseases, contributing greatly to the formation of ancient medical theories. Many of these terms, such as "epilepsy," as cited in the Huangdineijing (Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine), have survived to the present day and have played an ongoing role in the construction of the modern classification system of Chinese medical disorders.

## 3.4. Animals Knowledge

Many of the bizarre creatures depicted in the Shanhaijing have been partially resolved against entities in modern zoological expeditions. Specialized studies have shown that these images are not entirely imaginary: for example, "Dangkang" actually refers to a male wild boar, "Deoshu" may be a prototype of the zebra, "Lin" and "Fenghuang" correspond to the legendary unicorn and possibly the Aurora. "Fenghuang" corresponds to the legendary unicorn and the colorful birds that may have inhabited the Aurora or the Tansenidae family of plants. The book also mentions a number of species that are now extinct in China, such as the "Deixu" (assumed to be a species similar to the Yangtse crocodile) and the "Malayan crocodile", which may have been commonplace in ancient times. In addition, there are accounts of currently endangered species such as giant pandas, Asian

elephants, crocodiles, and apes, which bear witness to their migration, disappearance, and evolutionary changes on earth. In terms of animal descriptions, the Shanhaijing names animals according to their calls or characteristics, and records the states and habits of their activities, which provides a preliminary documentary reference for the naming and behavioral studies of ancient species. At the same time, the book also records the process of domestication of dogs, horses, sheep, cows, pigs and other animals by the Chinese, which provide valuable historical information for understanding the development and deepening of the relationship between humans and animals in ancient times.

### 3.5. Astronomical Calendars

The Shanhaijing is a fusion of myths and legends with narrative art, skillfully embedding elements of astronomy and calendrical science, and organically interweaving this astronomical knowledge-related material with the plot. The literature accurately records the operation of the sun, moon, and stars, mapping out the exquisite wisdom of a series of sage philosophers of the Yao, Shun, and Yu eras, including Emperor Yan Di, Shaohao, Zhuan Xu, and Emperor Di, in their in-depth observation of astronomical phenomena and chronological deduction, which demonstrates a complete and rigorous "Observation of Signs and Observations of the Time" system. This system is not only practical and scientific, but also systematic and accurate, providing a solid foundation for the evolution of astronomical science and passing on a rich academic heritage and intellectual wealth to future generations. The detailed astronomical records in the Shanhaijing not only reveal the remarkable skills of the ancestors in observing the heavens and measuring time, but also present astronomical knowledge and time measurement skills that are undoubtedly of key significance to the study of the development of ancient science and technology, and also provide clues for revealing China's ancient concepts of the cosmos and time, making it a valuable and indispensable document for exploring the study of astronomy and calendaring in Ancient China.

### 3.6. Religious Beliefs

The totemic beliefs embedded in the pages of the Shanhaijing, from the myths of the sun and stars, to the symbolic patterns of wild animals, and even the sublime auspicious symbols of dragons and phoenixes, all reflect a strong religious aura. These symbols are not only a reflection of respect for nature and the laws of the universe, but also reveal the deeper framework of the primitive belief system of the deepest period. In the metal artifacts, ceramic vessels and other handicraft relics, those depicting the sun, moon, stars, mountains, rivers, landforms, winds, thunder, electricity and other natural landscapes, as well as animal symbols such as tigers, leopards, birds and beasts, were given sacred connotations, and were the pivot of the early religious rituals. The rituals and belief systems of the gods and witches described in the Shanhaijing reveal a deep and interwoven web of connections between human beings and divine entities. These ancient rituals and concepts based on the worship of nature have evolved with the times, and combined with the rituals of agricultural culture, they represent an important symbol of cultural transformation from a spontaneous state to a regulated civilization. Thus, in the process from oracles to rituals to community building patterns, the ancient people's religious perceptions, cultural concepts, cognitive processes, and rhetorical expressions have evolved and matured, presenting to the world a path of evolution from traditional superstition to rational cognition. This rich landscape, which cuts across and through religious culture, not only provides a unique perspective for exploring the primitive religious landscape, but also provides key clues for elucidating and dissecting the spiritual qualities, value systems, and worldviews of ancient social civilizations.

## 4. Translation and Communication of Shanhaijing

The Shanhaijing is regarded as a compilation of ancient knowledge of life. It embodies the cultural landscape of the prehistoric era, details the daily life and thinking activities of the ancient wilderness, and depicts the ancient civilization and cultural landscape, leaving us with a lot of precious information and revelations. This classic is not only a reference book for cultivating one's moral character and ruling the country, but also a treasure of ancient Chinese culture and art, whose literary, documentary, and historical values are all irreplaceable and valuable assets. Through translation, the Shanhaijing has been distributed and widely disseminated overseas, providing foreign readers with an account of the geography, plant and animal species, customs and relationships of the various ethnic groups during the pre-Qin period of China, preserving the authenticity of the prehistoric landscape to the best of its ability, and providing a rich repository of ancient information for future generations. This is a proactive and thoughtful process of cultural transmission, not a conformist one, which requires authenticity and completeness, and at the same time takes into account the readers' comprehension and aesthetic sensibilities.

In the translation and introduction of the Shanhaijing, in addition to the literary and artistic value of the work itself, it is also necessary to faithfully and accurately interpret the essence of Chinese culture within it. Setting sail with scientifically correct translation concepts and techniques, the translation should fully utilize paratexts and multimodal media means of communication to reproduce the classic work in a multi-angle, three-dimensional, and authentic manner, so as to disseminate the best works of Chinese literature. Translation is a matter of transforming local knowledge into a global identity. Wide dissemination is the only way to gain wide acceptance, and dissemination activities can be regarded as the basis and prerequisite for acceptance activities. Only through the in-depth excavation, transmission and promotion of traditional Chinese culture can Chinese culture actively go global, actively integrate into the global discourse system, and contribute to the construction of a more balanced and just new world order in the international arena.

### 4.1. Translation Philosophy

In translating and interpreting the Shanhaijing, scholars have followed the principles of searching for truth and establishing moral values. The core of the international transmission of Chinese culture and its integration into the global dialog system lies in deeply grasping and exploring the fundamental connotations of classical Chinese culture and selecting exemplary works of far-reaching historical significance and contemporary cultural value. In order for Chinese cultural heritage to be deeply understood and appreciated internationally, the translation work needs to compare East and West in terms of linguistic aesthetics,

differences in thinking, aesthetic heterogeneity, etc., so as to convey the essence of China's thinking and culture, its wisdom, and spirituality in a way that meets the understanding and acceptance of each cultural circle. This process is conducive to the organic combination of Chinese cultural traditions and modernity, and promotes the international community's in-depth knowledge and understanding of Chinese civilization, thus promoting the wide dissemination of classical Chinese culture in the new era, and building a bridge for the fusion of Eastern and Western cultures and spiritual communication.

The Shanhaijing is a collection of all-encompassing knowledge covering geography, biology, astronomy and calendars, and religious beliefs, depicting not only natural landscapes and exotic creatures, but also a detailed record of a long history of civilization and ancient farming, making it an exemplary work of traditional Chinese culture and civilization. Only by understanding the Shanhaijing in depth, understanding its historical lineage, and savoring the breadth of its encyclopedic knowledge can the text be accurately and appropriately deconstructed and reconstructed. Up to now, the Shanhaijing has been translated into a variety of versions, each with its own literary splendor. However, with the evolution of the times, the updating of the language, and the deepening of historical research, contemporary society needs new translations to satisfy the needs of modern readers, and to reproduce the intellectual connotation and spirituality of the Shanhaijing, so as to renew the life of the classical text in a way that conforms to the style of the modern language.

The translators' understanding of the Shanhaijing is diverse, and with the development of the target language and culture, the translators continue to refresh the old translations and create new fields of translation art. "Establishing righteousness with goodness" is not just a simple iteration of translation strategies, but a deep processing and reconstruction of knowledge in the process of cross-lingual communication. Xu Jun, a great translator, once emphasized, "In the practice of translation, many translators know that their fundamental task is to convey the true intention of the original as far as possible." [13] In order to present the original text faithfully, translators need to accurately grasp and express the original's ideas, concepts and cultural charms, and ensure the fluency, readability and literary quality of the translated text in the target language culture. The diverse translations, flexible translation techniques and different styles of many translators have provided a multi-faceted frame of reference for the communication and acceptance of Shanhaijing in the English-speaking world, and have opened up a positive and effective way for the construction and transmission of Chinese knowledge and culture in the English-speaking cultural circle.

## 4.2. Translation Methods

Translation, as a bridge of knowledge transfer, deeply involves the dimensional interaction and complementarity of language, culture and history, and its essence lies in realizing the exchange of information and mutual penetration of ideas across time and space. In the field of translation of ancient literature, this kind of exchange requires creative reconstruction of translations, which gives the translations the aesthetic soul of the original works. With regard to Shanhaijing, translators of different times have promoted differentiated translation routes based on their own theoretical foundations and methodologies. Taking Anne Bieler as an example, the uniqueness of her English translation lies in the fact that all the proper names in the scripture, such as names of people, places, creatures and mythological figures, are converted into English according to their original meanings, instead of only being transliterated phonetically, which, according to Bieler, makes the translation more energetic. Wang Hong's concept of translation quality can be summarized into three basic principles: "comprehensibility, fluency, and simplicity" [12]. Among them, "understanding" means that the translation should be intuitive and easy to understand; "fluency" emphasizes that the translation should be free from the constraints of the original discourse structure to ensure the comfort of reading; "simplicity" means that the translation should be "understandable, fluent, and concise" while ensuring the quality of the translation. "Simplicity" means that on the basis of "comprehensibility and fluency", the translation should be devoted to the construction of concise words. With the change of time, the language style and readers' aesthetic tastes are also evolving. Translators should follow the trend of the times and flexibly adjust their translation methods to meet the language update and audience's expectation. Translators should abandon their preconceived notions and constantly refresh their conceptions and interpretations of the original text and the translated text, which is not a denial of past translations, but an introduction of creative ideas to map the contemporary landscape and achieve the purpose of matching the aesthetics of the modern reading public.

The natural and fluent language of translations, close to the public, is a necessary condition for Chinese literature to be exchanged with the outside world. Only when it is easy for readers to understand can we talk about exchanges and mutual appreciation. The geographical knowledge, peculiar creatures, ancient myths and civilization records presented in the Shanhaijing together create a unique cultural tension that inspires readers to explore the translated text and perceive the original, so as to experience the regional and historical culture of Chinese characteristics. Translation work should take into account both the art of conveying meaning and the art of transformation, and explore the path of international dissemination of Chinese ancient literature in various translation methods and poetic forms. Instead of simply distinguishing between direct translation and Italian translation, the deep meaning and charm of the original should be restored through diversified means such as deconstruction, analysis, innovation and remodeling, and the artistic image of the original should be reconstructed in the translated language; at the same time, not only should the translation be faithful to the original, but also should attach importance to its literary character and the profundity of the Chinese language, so as to make sure that the translated text is honest to the original, and is also acceptable to the readers and their favorites. In the pursuit of "truth, goodness and beauty" in translation, the principle of bilingual artistic intersection should also be followed in order to translate the essence of the original work into the classical aesthetics of the foreign culture.

## 4.3. Paratexts

In recent years, the focus of research in the field of literary translation has gradually shifted to the study of paratexts, exploring the importance and implications of the content and form of paratexts and their translation practices for translation as a whole. In his book Paratexts-Thresholds of Interpretation,

French literary critic Gérard Genette first defined paratexts and emphasized their implicit mediating role between authors, editors, and readers; that is, the title of the book, the foreword, the inscription, the cover, etc. constitute the private and public history dimensions of books [14]. In translation, the field of paratexts is even wider, encompassing not only the text but also all the additional textual information, such as cover design, preface, endnotes, footnotes, afterword, translator's notes, illustrations, indexes and appendices. Through these diversified media, translators can build a finer communication bridge between the original author and the target language readers, make the translated work closer to the readers' expectations, and add heavy background information to make the work more complete.

In the extant editions, translators have come to realize the important role of the paratext with its added value. In order to present the original text as richly as possible, Birrell adopted a detailed translation technique that included a wealth of notes and explanations to enhance the depth and breadth of the language and culture. Of the 277 pages of Birrell's English translation of the Shanhaijing, the translation itself occupies 196 pages, nearly two-thirds, and the volume of the secondary text accounts for one-third of the book's entire length, covering acknowledgements, preface, trek, references, and illustrations of mythological creatures. In particular, in the preface, she provides a detailed introduction to the original text and its translation, effectively guiding the reader to a deeper understanding of the meaning of the text, and in the afterword she elaborates a glossary of terms, explaining the terminology of the translations carried out.

The paratext enriches the readers' access to information and meets the diversified needs of different readers. The preface not only introduces the historical and cultural background of Shanhaijing for Western readers, but also adds a level of understanding beyond the reading of the original text; the translators' preface or afterword shows their translation concepts and shortens the distance between them and the readers with friendly language; and the appendices help to sort out the development of the work. In addition, the uniqueness of Shanhaijing lies in its original illustrations, whose grandeur and unrestrained artistic style vividly present the original appearance of the work to the readers and bring profound visual impact.

### 4.4. Multimodal Methods

At a time when global interconnectivity is deepening, multimodal communication has become a key development trend in the field of communication, and translation, as a means of cross-contextual communication, needs to keep pace with the progress of communication, and incorporate multiple modes of communication into translation practice. As the traditional media gradually lags behind the times, a single text transmission can no longer satisfy the diversified needs of modern sensory experience. Nowadays, the way of obtaining information has been changed, besides books, magazines and newspapers, audio-visual information from online media has become the main contact point for people. Hornby's research classifies multimodal texts into various types, and multimodal translation has thus developed into a discipline that focuses on intermodal transformation and translation.

As a treasure of Chinese culture, the dissemination of the Shanhaijing is not limited to words, but also manifested in calligraphy, painting, music, film and television and other forms of art, which has become a source of inspiration for various academic and artistic creations. The use of multimodal communication means can better reproduce its profound meaning. In the tide of globalization and technological advancement, worldwide communication is becoming more and more fluid, and economic and cultural interactions are developing in a multifaceted manner in order to meet different communication needs. A variety of media such as sound, text, image and electronic media have opened up new paths for knowledge sharing and dissemination. The many elusive and abstract aspects of the Shanhaijing are expected to be simplified and its complexity simplified through the integration of multimodal communication to more concretely and vividly convey the grand narrative of the original text.

As the channels of world cultural and literary exchanges become more and more diversified, the dissemination of the Shanhaijing in the international arena is also experiencing a shift from single-text translation to a comprehensive multimodal mode of dissemination. In order to adapt to the communication characteristics of the new era and the new reading habits of the target language readers, overseas translation of Chinese literature should utilize innovative media, uphold the principles of comprehensibility and acceptability, and fully display the vastness and splendor of the Shanhaijing, while at the same time conforming to the characteristics of the modern media and respecting the reading habits and needs of readers.

## 5. Conclusion

Translating the Shanhaijing into other languages of the world is important for the international dissemination of Chinese culture, meaning that the profound myths and legends, folklore, and ancient geographic knowledge it contains are introduced to the world, thus providing the international community with a window to directly perceive the cultural heritage of China. As a combination of literary treasures and the wisdom and cultural creations of the Han people throughout the ages, the translation of the Shanhaijing is of great significance: translations of the Shanhaijing have conveyed to the world the unique qualities of Chinese culture-such as exotic creatures in the context of myths, place names recorded in history, legendary epics, and racial legacies-which serve as important pivots and bridges in the exchange of cultures between foreign lands. It plays an important role as a pivot and bridge in the exchange of cultures between foreign lands. Through delicate and vivid translations, readers from around the world are able to glimpse the cosmic and ecological concepts of China's forefathers, as well as their attitudes toward nature and the surrounding environment, which can lead to the emergence of a deeper identity and interest in Chinese culture. The multilingual translation of the Shanhaijing provides a valuable resource for the global scholarly community, with a view to promoting the deepening of the scholarly dialectic of ancient Chinese knowledge systems and philosophical thinking around the world. The sharing of cultural achievements between countries facilitates the discovery of empathy among global audiences, while the universal ethical concepts and common mythologies contained in the Shanhaijing can enhance mutual understanding and respect among heterogeneous cultures. The wide dissemination of the Classic of Mountains and Seas overseas is beneficial to the construction of a three-dimensional international image of Chinese culture,

providing a fruitful resource for the shaping of cultural soft power and broadening the appeal of Chinese culture in the international arena.

The Classic of Mountains and Seas is a crystallization of wisdom rooted in local culture. Through the bridge of translation, the reproduction of classical literature in the target language environment and the leap from local knowledge to global knowledge can be realized with the help of appropriate translation theory guidance, scientific and effective translation strategies, as well as rich paratextual resources and cross-media transmission methods. In conclusion, the process of translating the Shanhaijing goes far beyond the transformation of the textual level, and is essentially a far-reaching action to show the Chinese culture to the outside world, which is of long-lasting and substantial significance to the enhancement of the transmission and influence of Chinese culture in the world.

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