

Translation of Modern Classics:

Mo Yan, Yu Hua, Liu Cixin etc.

◆ The Translation and Dissemination of Contemporary Chinese Literature

➤ In English-Speaking Countries

The history of contemporary Chinese literature in English-speaking countries can be roughly divided into four stages: the “Seventeen Years” (1949-1965) at the beginning of the founding of the People’s Republic of China, the “Cultural Revolution”(1966-1976), the new period (1977-1999) and the new century (2000-present).

In the first stage, Chinese contemporary literature translated to English-speaking countries focused more on social and political aspects than on literary aspects.

In the second stage, due to the influence of the Cultural Revolution, the translation activities of Chinese literature dominated by China decreased.

In the third stage, with the gradual liberation of thought, “scar literature”, the most popular literary theme after the Cultural Revolution, received domestic and international attention and became the focus of translation in the late 1970s and early 1980s, but gradually went into decline in the late 1980s. However, it gradually declined in the late 1980s. The official translation focus in China shifted first, and some of the pioneering

writers were translated to the English-speaking world earlier than the European and American editors. However, domestic translation and publishing institutions did not pay much attention to writers such as Yu Hua and Su Tong, who were of great interest to the English-speaking world. At the same time, the proportion of works by Hong Kong and Taiwan has increased in the translation of contemporary Chinese literature under the domination of the West and China, and the translation of contemporary Chinese women writers has also reached a peak.

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the translation of contemporary Chinese literature has gradually become prosperous, and the mode of translation in China has also undergone significant changes. There are two major changes in the official-led mode of Chinese literature translation and introduction at this stage: first, in terms of translation selection, the translated works are more literary than propaganda; second, in terms of publication, more attention is paid to the commerciality of the translated works, focusing on exchanges and cooperation with overseas booksellers and market. The English-speaking world and Hong Kong and Taiwan have also become more diversified in their translations of contemporary Chinese literature, beginning to focus on popular literature, new literary forms and new writers.

➤ **In Spanish-Speaking Countries**

The translation and reception of contemporary Chinese literature in the Spanish-speaking world is basically represented by Spain, and most of the translations into

Spanish are organized and published by Spanish publishing houses. If we take the translation and reception of Chinese contemporary literature in Spain as an example, the history of translation can be roughly divided into four periods.

The period from 1949 to 1977 was the first phase. During this period, except for one collection of poems by Mao Zedong, which was translated into Catalan, the translation of contemporary Chinese literature in Spain was almost limited to Spanish. In the first phase, even though English was the most common language, there were various intermediary languages: four translations from English, one from Italian, and two from Portuguese.

The second phase lasted from 1978 to 2000, during which the number of direct translations exceeded that of indirect translations, with 14 direct translations and 10 translations published. The intermediary languages for indirect translations were mainly English and French compared to the first phase, with English being the most common one. The number of direct translations increased significantly in the 1980s and 1990s compared to the 1970s, due to the growing interest in Chinese studies and the Chinese language in Spain, as well as the increase in the number of translators able to translate Chinese works directly into Spanish and Catalan.

The third period, from 2001 to 2010, was a turning point when the award of the Nobel Prize to Gao Xingjian in 2000 reignited interest in Chinese literature in Spain. Since

2001, the number of Spanish translations of contemporary Chinese literature has increased dramatically, although indirect translations have also increased. According to statistics, 18 works were translated from English, 11 from French, and only one from Italian, and one from Spanish into Catalan during this period.

The second decade of the new century can be seen as the fourth phase. This phase saw a record number of translations and publications of Chinese contemporary literature in Spain. “Between 2012 and 2018, a series of translations of Chinese literature was published by local publishers in Spain. During this period, the vast majority of works were translated directly from Chinese into Spanish. 46 of these direct translations were made, including one by a Chinese translator, five by translators from China and Spain, and the rest by Spanish translators. There are also nine other translations, seven of which are from the English edition and two from the French edition.”

➤ **In France**

The 40 years of translation of contemporary Chinese literature in France can be divided into two periods, with the year 2000 as the dividing point: before 2000, French translators focused on the literature of the new period after the Cultural Revolution, translations mostly published in the form of collections. The works translated at the beginning were often used as materials to arouse social awareness and given more political references.

In the mid to late 1980s, with the establishment of Actes Sud and other publishing

houses, the pace of translation and publication of contemporary Chinese literature accelerated in France and even in the West.

In the 1990s, Chinese films such as *Red Sorghum*, *Farewell My Concubine* and *To Live* were screened in Europe, presenting to Western audiences the dramatic changes in China since the reform and opening up of the country and the distinctive Chinese elements, which dazzled Western audiences and indirectly contributed to the translation of contemporary Chinese literature in France.

A landmark event was the publication of *The Collected Contemporary Chinese Novels* by Gallimard Press in 1994. It was a comprehensive introduction of contemporary Chinese literature and proof of the authoritative recognition of the writers' level of creativity, which led to a wider translation of the works. A major feature of French translations of contemporary Chinese literature in this period was the increased attention given to contemporary Chinese female writers.

After 2000, with the establishment of a new model of literary exchange between France and China, the translation of contemporary Chinese literature in France entered a period of full prosperity. The number of collected works published in this period decreased, while the number of single-volume books translated in French increased rapidly. This phenomenon reflects the French publishing community's increased awareness of the style of contemporary Chinese writers' works, as well as their continuous tracking of

Chinese authors. The overall scale of translations greatly exceeded that of the 20th century, and the translation of contemporary Chinese literature in France entered a stage of systematization and scale.

◆ **Mo Yan and His Works**

With the implementation of “Going Global” strategy of China Publishing, more and more works of outstanding Chinese writers have been translated and published in countries around the world, and Mo Yan’s works are representative of them.

➤ **Mo Yan**

Mo Yan, a contemporary Chinese writer, was born in 1955 in Shandong Province. He was the vice chairman of the China Writers Association and is now a professor at Beijing Normal University. Influenced by magical realism since 1985, Mo Yan has produced a number of unique avant-garde works and is known for his bold and novel writing style. on October 11, 2012, Mo Yan was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, becoming the first Chinese writer to win the Nobel Prize in Literature.

Mo Yan has published more than 80 short stories, 30 novellas, 11 full-length novels, five collections of essays, and a complete collection of essays. Since 1988, Mo Yan’s works have been translated into English, French, Spanish, German, Swedish, Russian, Japanese and other languages.

In 1988, *Dry River* was published in Japan, which started the overseas publishing of Mo

Yan's works. As of October 2019, there are 388 kinds of Mo Yan's works published in 41 countries and Mo Yan has become a representative of contemporary Chinese writers to the world.

In terms of languages, Mo Yan's works have been translated and published in 45 languages. Among them, the top overseas publications are in English and French, with 31 works each, followed by Japanese, Vietnamese, and Spanish, with 21 works each.

At present, the 45 languages in which Mo Yan's works are published overseas are mainly located in developed countries in Europe and the United States, neighboring Asian countries and countries along the "Belt and Road", with most of the top 10 published works in Europe, the United States and Asia, and the number of language users is much larger.

➤ *Red Sorghum*

Red Sorghum is a long novel written by Mo Yan, divided into five chapters: *Red Sorghum*, *Sorghum Wine*, *Dog Ways*, *Sorghum Funeral*, and *Strange Death*. The five chapters were first published as novellas, of which *Red Sorghum* was first published in *People's Literature* in 1986.

Ps: 《红高粱家族》和《红高粱》的英译均为 *Red Sorghum*

Red Sorghum is a family saga of Yu Zhan-ao and Dai Fenglian(identified as Granddad

and Grandma from a boy's perspective), covering their romance, their spontaneous resistance against the Japanese invaders between 1939 and 1941. This novel is set in the fields of dense, tall, red sorghum plants in Northeast Gaomi Township, Shandong Province, China, hence the title *Red Sorghum*. *Red Sorghum* is a classic work that shows the tenacity and national spirits of the Gaomi people in the Anti-Japanese war.

The translator of *Red Sorghum*, Howard Goldblatt, is a leading contemporary American sinologist, translator and critic. He is an important translator of Mo Yan's works, and is known as the "midwife" of Mo Yan's works in the West. Compared with local Chinese translators, Howard Goldblatt has both profound linguistic and cultural knowledge of Chinese, and an in-depth understanding of the reading habits of Western readers and the market for literary publications, so the Chinese literary works he chooses to translate are more likely to enter the Western market, and his translations are more likely to be favored by Western readers.

In 1988, Mo Yan's work *Dry River* was first translated and published in Japan, and in 1999, a total of 54 foreign translations of Mo Yan's works were published during the 11 years, focusing on three works: *Red Sorghum*, *Red Sorghum* and *The Garlic Ballads*. A total of 30 overseas publications of *Red Sorghum* and *Red Sorghum* accounted for nearly 60% of the total overseas publications of Mo Yan's works during this period. The reason for this is that in 1988 Zhang Yimou's film of the same name *Red Sorghum* won the Golden Bear Award for the best film at the 38th West Berlin International Film Festival,

and it has won several other awards after that.

As Mo Yan's masterpiece, *Red Sorghum* was earlier translated and introduced to other countries, and is also the most translated and reprinted Mo Yan's work. Compared to most Chinese literary works that do not sell well overseas, the sales of *Red Sorghum* are more optimistic. According to scholar Bao Xiaoying's statistics, the English version of *Red Sorghum* was published in 1993 and sold more than 50,000 copies in a dozen years, which is not bad sales.

The acceptance of *Red Sorghum* overseas was made possible by many factors. The film of the same name is the pioneer. Thanks to the award-winning film, the translation and dissemination of the novel was promoted overseas. Coupled with the unique perspective and content of the work itself, and the translator Howard Goldblatt's promotion and personalized translation, the successful dissemination of this work was achieved.

➤ *Frog*

Frog, a full-length novel by contemporary Chinese writer Mo Yan, consists of five letters written, four full-length narratives, and a nine-act play by playwright Tadpole to Japanese author Yoshihito Sugitani, first published in December 2009.

Frog is set under the history of rural fertility in the last 60 years of New China's history of ups and downs, through the life experience of a rural female doctor, Auntie, who has

been working in obstetrics and gynecology for more than 50 years. Combined with the complex phenomenon of the family planning process, the novel dissects the humble, embarrassing, tangled and contradictory spiritual world of the intellectuals represented by the narrator Tadpole.

In 2011, *Frog* won the Eighth Mao Dun Literature Prize.

In just four years, from 2010 to 2014, *Frog* has been translated into 12 languages, including more widely spoken languages like English, French, German, and Spanish, and also Swedish, Albanian, Hungarian, and Esperanto.

From the first publication of Mo Yan's *Frog* in December 2009, it was in Vietnam that this new work by Mo Yan was translated and published in 2010. Almost as soon as Mo Yan has a new work, it will be translated and published in Vietnamese within a few months, and among contemporary Chinese writers, Mo Yan's novels are selling steadily in Vietnam, with a relatively wide age range of readers. Secondly, in Japan, the Japanese translation of *Frog* was published in May 2011 with a recommendation written by Kenzaburo Oe on the cover: the Asian writer closest to the Nobel Prize in Literature. Sure enough, one year and five months later, Mo Yan was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature. Once the news of his award was announced, Japanese translations of his works such as *Red Sorghum*, *Big Breasts and Wide Hips* and *Frog* quickly sold out in Japan.

France is the first country in the Western world to pay attention to the translation of Mo Yan's works. By now, France is the country that has translated the most of Mo Yan's works in the Western world. The French edition of *Frog* was translated by Chantal Chen-An-dro (尚德兰) and published in 2011 by the French publishing house Seuli (瑟伊). Before Mo Yan was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, the only translations of *Frog* in the Western world were in French and Spanish.

From 1988 to the present, the English translations of Mo Yan's works have been translated almost by the American translator and sinologist Howard Goldblatt alone. The stable translation quality, and the mature marketing system of Penguin Random House and other major publishing groups around the world has strengthened the influence of Mo Yan's works in the world.

◆ Yu Hua

Yu Hua, born on April 3, 1960 in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, a native of Haiyan County, Jiaxing City, Zhejiang Province, is a contemporary Chinese writer and a member of the committee of the Chinese Writers' Association. In 1998, he won the Grinzana Carver Literary Award, the highest prize for Italian literature, for his novel *To Live*. His major full-length novels include, *Cries in the Drizzle*(《在细雨中呼喊》) in 1991, *To Live*(《活着》) in 1993, *Chronicle of a Blood Merchant*(《许三观卖血记》) in 1998, *Brother*(《兄弟》) in 2008, *The Seventh Day*(《第七天》) in 2013 and so on.

Among the foreign translations of Yu Hua's works, *To Live* and *Chronicle of a Blood Merchant* are more famous for foreign readers, so these two works will be discussed in detail in the following passage.

➤ **The brief introduction of *To Live***

The main character's name is Fugui, he was born into a landowning family. When he was young, he was a prodigal person. He often gambled, and later, was cheated and lost all his family money, and his father died of depression as a result. Since then he decided to make a new life. Unfortunately, his mother fell ill soon, and when he took out the only money to buy some medicine, he was arrested by the Kuomintang and, after two years, was released. When he returned home, his mother was long deceased. His daughter became deaf and mute after a high fever, and his son died of a blood draw overdose. And a few years later, his daughter died of a postpartum hemorrhage. Finally, he was left with an old buffalo, which he named "Fugui".

➤ **Translations of *To Live* abroad**

To Live has been translated into more than 20 languages and sold abroad. Its acceptance has been more successful in Germany, Japan, Vietnam, the United States, Italy, and Korea. And The following is a detailed discussion of the specific information of *To Live* in these three countries: Japan, the United States and Korea.

● **In Japan**

Since *To Live* has been translated into Japanese and was published in March 2002,

Yu Hua's works have attracted much attention in Japan, and eight offprints have been published so far in Japan. Through Iizuka Yutori(饭冢容), Yu Hua's literary debut in Japan was realized. In 2002, Iizuka Yutori translated the novel *To Live*, which became the beginning of Japanese translations of Yu Hua's works.

序号	中文书名	日文书名	译者	出版社	出版年月
1	活着	活きる	饭冢容	角川书店	2002.03
2	兄弟（上）	兄弟〈上〉文革篇	泉京鹿	文艺春秋	2008.06 2010.12
3	兄弟（下）	兄弟〈下〉開放経済篇	泉京鹿	文艺春秋	2008.06 2010.12
4	十个词汇里的中国	ほんとうの中国の話をしよう	饭冢容	河出书房新社	2012.12
5	许三观卖血记	血を売る男	饭冢容	河出书房新社	2013.12
6	第七天	死者たちの七日間	饭冢容	河出書房新社	2014.06
7	世事如烟	世事は煙の如し (中短篇傑作選)	饭冢容	岩波书店	2017.06
8	—	中国では書けない中国の話	饭冢容	河出书房新社	2017.08

The two main reasons for its success

Firstly, Iizuka Yutori was the first person to introduce Yu Hua's literature to Japan. The rapid spread of Yu Hua's works in Japan and their development to the present size are closely related to Iizuka Yutori, a renowned scholar and translator. In order to compensate for the differences in customs and expressions between the two countries, he introduces the author's experience and the background of his works to Japanese readers in the "Commentary" and "Afterword" sections, so that they can better understand the works. In general, Iizuka Yutori played a very important role in the Japanese translation of Yu Hua's works.

Another reason is the participation of some famous publishers. In the process of translating Yu Hua's works, six famous Japanese publishers, including Heibansha(平凡社), Kadokawa Shoten(角川书店), and Iwanami Shoten(岩波书店)and other three famous publishers, participated in the publication of the Japanese translation of Yu Hua's novels. The publisher is one of the most important factors in the success of the translated works in a foreign language environment.

● In America

Before the official publication of *To Live* in 2003, the American translator Michael Berry(白睿文), with the permission of Yu Hua, began translating the novel in 1996. After completing his translation, Berry tried to contact a dozen publishers, but was rejected in the end. Because English-speaking publishers were looking for works that would expose the reality of Chinese society in a direct, bloody, and violent way, but Yu Hua's work was too introspective, serious, and simple to meet the publishers' needs. It was not until 2002 that substantial progress was made in the dissemination of Yu Hua's work in the United States. An editor-in-chief of Random House, who had previously rejected Michael Berry, reached out to him. Finally, in August 2003, the English translation of *To Live* was published and distributed by Random House for the first time.

The translators

For one work to achieve a success in foreign countries, translators play a very important role in this process. In the English version of *To Live*, we must mention Michael Berry and Alian H·Barr(白亚仁), and the latter is the translator of most of Yu

Hua's works.

In the process of translating *To Live*, Michael Berry, based on the principle of respecting the original work, focused on conveying cultural imagery such as thinking habits, historical customs and religious culture in the cultural context of the original work. When faced with the translation of cultural imagery unique in China, Michael Berry chose the method of foreignization, translating the words directly and adding notes to make the translation as objective and realistic as possible.

On the other hand, Alian H·Barr preferred to expose readers to a real China, so he invited Yu Hua to give a writer's lecture in the U.S. to let American readers understand a real China, and compiled the contents of the lecture into a book, which was also translated by Alian H·Barr himself.

The publisher

Yu Hua's works were initially rejected by more than a dozen publishers, but were finally discovered and published by **Random House**. Random House, the world's largest book publishing group, has made an indelible contribution to the success of the English translation of Yu Hua's works by using its good branding and strong marketing network.

● **In Korea**

Yu Hua's works began to enter Korea when *To Live*, directed by Zhang Yimou, made a splash at the 47th Cannes International Film Festival in 1994. After *To Live* won

a series of international awards, the Korean cultural community began to pay attention to the international status and popularity of the film, and the film *To Live* was released in Korea in May 1995. The Korean translation of *To Live* was published by Green Forest Press(绿森林出版社) in 1997, which was the first work of Yu Hua published in Korea, and Yu Hua really came to the attention of Korean readers. Although the Korean publishers were relatively late in introducing Yu Hua's works, since the publication of *To Live*, Yu Hua's works have been translated and published in Korea with a high frequency, with one work coming out every two years.

The translator

Baek Won Tam(白元淡), the translator of the Korean translation of *To Live*, is also one of the translators who has translated the most of Yu Hua's works and has made a direct and outstanding contribution to the dissemination of Yu Hua's works in Korea. He is a cherished friend of Yu Hua's, and is even at the forefront of Yu Hua's literary research, and a leading figure of Yu Hua studies in Korea.

➤ **The brief introduction of *Chronicle of a Blood Merchant***

Chronicle of a Blood Merchant is a full-length novel written by Yu Hua, first published in *Harvest*, No. 6, 1995.

Chronicle of a Blood Merchant tells a touching story of sorrow and joy. Xu Sanguan sells his blood to overcome the difficulties in his life and setbacks imposed on him by fate, but when he grows old and knows that no one wants his blood anymore, his spirit collapses. The ordinary little people in the novel struggle in the hard times,

using their not-so-thick arms to keep beating out the turbulent waves in life, without knowing the road ahead, while the suffering and sadness in between are clearly visible. The tragic comedy of an ordinary family is ridiculous and pathetic under Yu Hua's delicate brushwork. Among the ironic and humorous plots, we can see the characters' helplessness in their bitterness and the gap between reality and ideal that can never be bridged.

➤ **Translations of *Chronicle of a Blood Merchant* abroad**

Just like the work of *To Live*, we will talk about its development in detail in two countries, namely, Korea and Japan, because its acceptance is relatively high between these two countries.

● **In Korea**

In 2003, *Chronicle of a Blood Merchant* was adapted into a play of the same name and brought to the Korean screen, winning the Best Production Award at the 40th East Asian Drama Awards in 2004. And later, it was adapted into a movie for the screen. This was the first film of a contemporary Chinese literary work written and directed by a foreign actor. In Korea, Yu Hua's most popular works are *To Live* and *Chronicle of a Blood Merchant*, of which the latter has sold more than 100,000 copies, a significant number in a country with a total population of about 50 million.

The translator

Mr. Choi Yong-yeon(崔容晚), the translator of the Korean translation of *Chronicle*

of a Blood Merchant, has contributed greatly to the dissemination of Yu Hua's works in Korea. He, like the translator of *To Live*, is a cherished friend of Mr. Yu Hua and a leading figure in the study of Yu Hua in Korea. These two Korean translators have a close communication with Yu Hua.

● In Japan

The Japanese translation of *Chronicle of a Blood Merchant* is by the same author as the Japanese translation of *To Live*, Iizuka Yutori(饭冢容), and was published in December 2013 by Kawadeboshō Shinsha(河出书房新社出版). In his translation of Yu Hua's *Chronicle of a Blood Merchant*, he added in his "Afterword" an account of blood sales in Japan and the United States in the 1950s and 1960s, because he believed that young readers today knew little about this history. To help them understand that the sale of blood to support children and to meet basic needs is not unique to modern China, but was once common in both the United States and Japan. Only by understanding this background will Xu Sanguan's story resonate more with Japanese readers. *Chronicle of a Blood Merchant* has received a lot of attention in Japan for almost the same reasons as *To Live*, both of which were translated by the same translator.

◆ Liu Cixin

Born in Beijing in June 1963, Liu Cixin is a senior engineer, science fiction writer, member of the Chinese Writers Association, the 9th and 10th National Committees, member of the Chinese Association of Science Writers, Vice Chairman of the Shanxi Writers Association, Vice Chairman of the Yangquan Writers Association, and also one of the representative writers of Chinese science fiction. His representative works include the full-length novels *The Supernova Era*(《超新星纪元》), *Ball Lightning*(《球状闪电》), and *The Three Body Problem*(《三体》), etc., and the short stories *The Wandering Earth*(《流浪地球》), etc. Among them, the *The Three Body Problem* is widely regarded as a landmark work of Chinese science fiction literature. On August 23, 2015, he was awarded the Hugo Award for Best Full-length Novel at the 73rd World Science Fiction Convention, the first time in Asia, for *The Three Body Problem*.

➤ The brief introduction of *The Three Body Problem*

The Three Body Problem is a series of full-length science fiction novels written by Liu Cixin, consisting of three volumes, namely *Three Body*(《三体 1: 地球往事》), *The Dark Forest*(《三体 2: 黑暗森林》) and *Death's End*(《三体 3: 死神永生》). The first book was serialized in Science Fiction World magazine since May 2006, the second book was first published in May 2008, and the third book was published in November 2010. The work tells the story of the exchange of information, the life and death struggle between the human civilization on Earth and the three-body civilization, and the rise and fall of the two civilizations in the universe. The first book, translated

by Liu Yukun(刘宇昆), won the 73rd Hugo Award for Best Full-length Story.

➤ **Translations of *The Three Body Problem* abroad**

We will also discuss its translations in three main countries one by one, including Germany, America and Russia.

● **In Germany**

After 1980s, German translations of Chinese literature were in decline, and German translations of Chinese science fiction literature almost came to a halt. It was not until 2015 that Liu Cixin won the Hugo Award, the world's leading science fiction award, for his *The Three Body Problem* that Chinese science fiction literature was elevated to a world-class level. After 30 years, the door to German translation of Chinese science fiction was opened again.

In December 2016, the German translation of *The Three Body Problem* was published by Heyne Verlag(海纳出版社) in Germany and ranked fourth on the bestseller list of Der Spiegel(《明镜周刊》), the first time a Chinese literary work was listed on the list. *The Three Body Problem* won the Nebula Award in Germany for the Best Foreign Novel. And its translator, Martina Hasse(玛缇娜·哈瑟), won the prize for the best translation of a full-length novel.

In 2018, the second volume: *The Dark Forest*, which took more than a year to complete by translator Karin Betz(卡琳·贝茨), reached number three on the Der Spiegel bestseller list. 2019 witnessed the release of the third volume : *Death's End*,

translated by Betz.

● In America

After the English version of *The Three Body Problem* was published in the U.S. in 2014, it set off a wave of Chinese science fiction fever, and in addition to the Hugo Award, it was also nominated for the Nebula Award(星云奖), the Trajectory General(轨迹奖), the Campbell Award(坎贝尔奖), the Prometheus Award(普罗米修斯奖) and other international literature awards. In August 2015, Liu Cixin won the Hugo Award for *Three Body*, the most prestigious and influential science fiction award in the world, becoming the first Asian to win the Hugo Award. Relevant data show that in 2017, the English versions of "Three Body 2" and "Three Body 3" were rated as high as 4.6 and 4.8 respectively on the U.S. Amazon page, despite the shorter publication time of both.

The reasons for its success

1. The topic

Like the theme words "human", "planet" and "universe" in *The Three Body Problem*, it has a global perspective on the one hand, and on the other hand, it subtly integrate national cultures into it. This allows international readers to be familiar with and identify with universal themes, while remaining curious and fresh about the unfamiliar cultural elements they read.

2. The choosing of its translators

For works to be disseminated abroad, they have to be translated. Therefore, regarding the activity of foreign translation of Chinese literature, the question of who is

a suitable translator naturally arises. The best condition is that the translator is very skillful in the uniqueness of the translated work and the personal style of the original author, and already has a lot of experience in translation. Three Body 1 and 3 were translated by Liu Yukun(刘宇昆), and the second one was translated by Joel Martinsen(乔尔·马丁森) (Chinese name Zhou Hua). To save time and speed up the process, the two started translating almost simultaneously to facilitate subsequent publication and distribution. Liu Yukun is a Chinese-American science fiction writer, and this cross-cultural identity background gives him both a Western mindset and a knowledge base of traditional Chinese culture. In addition, he is a double-award winner in science fiction ("Hugo Award" and "Nebula Award"). Zhou Hua is both a veteran Chinese science fiction fan and a professional translator. In fact, the publisher's choice of translators proved to be a very wise one.

● In Russia

The release of *The Three Body Problem* in Europe and the United States quickly created a sensation in the English-speaking world and, naturally, in the Russian science fiction literature. Later, the novel won the Hugo Award, which directly accelerated the process of Russian translation of the novel. The first Russian translation of *The Three Body Problem* was unofficially published in 2016 by the first Russian translator, Grushkova (Ольга Глушкова)(格鲁什科娃), in reference to Liu Yukun's English translation. Three Body 2: The Dark Forest was translated into Russian by translator Nakamra (Дмитрий Накамра)(纳卡姆拉) with reference to the English translation

by American Joel Martinsen(乔尔·马丁森). In order to ensure the accuracy of the translation, the trilogy was also translated with the assistance of Sinologist Kryskoy (Альберт Крисской)(克里斯科伊), who made up for the missing parts and corrected some errors. The translation of the third part was done by Grushkova and Nakamura together, still referring to the English translation by Liu Yukun, and was officially published in Russia in 2018.

The reasons for its success

First of all, Liu Cixin's science fiction works have a strong Chinese culture, highlighting the strength and status of contemporary China in a literary way. Against the backdrop of China's steady economic development in the 21st century, the Russian also wants to learn about China through literature, a country that has created an economic miracle in just a few decades. The novel *The Three Body Problem* conveys the morality and values of Chinese culture in a broader and more far-reaching perspective.

Secondly, the attention of *The Three Body Problem* in Russia also has a lot to do with the active promotion of Russian mass media. In fact, even before Liu Cixin won the Hugo Award, his works have attracted attention and generated a lot of discussion on Russian online literary platforms. Many Russian readers said they initially read Liu Cixin's work because they saw the slogan "China's best science fiction work".

Finally, The commonalities between national cultures and the precise translation make *The Three Body Problem* more accessible to Russian readers. The novel reflects the universal values of the Chinese people, who never disturb the normal run of the world. Russian readers admire the spirit of collective collaboration in Chinese science

fiction works, which is related to the rich collectivist spirit of the Russian nation itself.

References

- 陈君. 余华作品在日本的译介与接受[C]. 贵州省翻译工作者协会 2018 年年会暨“西南少数民族文化的翻译与传播”学术研讨会论文集.[出版者不详], 2018:21-32.
- 郭恋东. 论中国现当代文学在西班牙语世界的译介和接受[J]. 小说评论, 2022, (02):168-175.
- 孔燕. 莫言作品海外出版研究[C]. 湖南师范大学, 2020.
- 刘舸, 李云. 从西方解读偏好看中国科幻作品的海外传播——以刘慈欣《三体》在美国的接受为例. 社会科学文摘 .09(2018):111-113.
- 李雅琳. 从《三体》的成功译介探究中国文学外译[J]. 湖北经济学院学报(人文社会科学版), 2020, 17(05):97-101.
- 王艳. 莫言长篇小说《蛙》在世界各国的译介传播与评论[J]. 潍坊学院学报, 2016, 16(03):13-15.
- 孙国亮, 陈悦. 刘慈欣小说在德国的译介与接受研究[J]. 南方文坛, 2020(06):106-111.
- 王立倩, 钱航. 余华小说海外传播特征研究. 2020 年社会发展论坛(西安)论文集.Ed., 2020, 128-136.
- 万聿. 中国当代文学英译概览与研究综述. 复旦外国语言文学论丛, 2021, 219-227.
- 晓初. 《三体》:中国科幻走向世界之旅[J]. 今日中国, 2015, 64(11):70-72.
- 张丽君;余慧君. 有声与无声——莫言《红高粱》海外传播的启示[J]. 文化创新比较研究, 2021, 5(21):89-92.
- 张雨晨. 余华作品在韩国的译介与传播[D]. 中央民族大学, 2018.
- 赵晨宇. 刘慈欣科幻作品在俄罗斯的译介传播研究——以《三体》为中心[J]. 当代

作家评论, 2021(04):193-198.

张寅德.中国当代文学近 20 年在法国的翻译与接受[J].中国比较文学,2000,(01):.