

The Paratext Strategies and Cultural Transmission in Sinologist Julia Lovell's Translations: A Comparative Study of Monkey King: Journey to the West and The Real Story of Ah-Q and Other Tales of China: The Complete Fiction of Lu Xun

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Abstract: The paratext in translation is an important research resource that directly reflects the translators' subjectivity. This paper takes the translation works of British Sinologist Julia Lovell, *Monkey King: Journey to the West* and *The Real Story of Ah - Q and Other Tales of China: The Complete Fiction of Lu Xun*, as the research objects, studying the strategies adopted in the paratext of their translations and their impact on the transmission of Chinese culture. By analyzing and comparing the covers, prefaces, postscripts, and annotations of the two works, they reveal how Sinologists promote cross-cultural communication and understanding through paratext strategies in translation activities and provide enlightenment for future sinology research.

1. Introduction

Under the background of globalization, modern and contemporary sinologists pay more attention to the interaction between China and the world and study China's role and influence on the global stage. They often study China by interdisciplinary methods, combining knowledge from history, literature, sociology and other fields, and tend to analyze China society and culture from a critical perspective, paying attention to social changes, political dynamics and cultural conflicts.

Paratext plays an important role in cultural transmission. It is not only a part of literary works, but also a bridge for cultural exchange. It can be used as a cultural symbol to show the cultural attributes of the work. Through the background information provided by the paratext, readers can better understand the literary works in different cultural backgrounds and reach the understanding of cross-cultural communication [1].

Julia's translated works have great value in culture and literature. In her translation, translation is not only a language conversion, but also an in-depth interpretation of the cultural background and historical context of the works, which provides valuable research materials for the academic community. Julia pays attention to the readability of the translation, and improves the acceptance

and popularity of her works in the target language market by simplifying the sentence structure and using expressions that are more in line with the reading habits of the target language [2]. Her translations have been included in the internationally famous Penguin Classic Library, which has promoted the status and recognition of China's literary works in the international literary world.

Therefore, Julia's translation work not only enriches the literary resources in the English-speaking world, but also provides a window for readers around the world to learn more about Chinese culture and literature. Her translation strategies and in-depth understanding of her works have enabled the classics of Chinese literature to glow with new vitality in different cultural backgrounds. Based on the current situation that most of the researches on paratext strategies start with a single translation, this paper selects two versions of Julia's *Monkey King: Journey to the West* and *The Real Story of Ah - Q and Other Tales of China : The Complete Fiction of Lu Xun*, and makes a comparative analysis of their cover, preface, postscript and annotations, and explores the application of paratext strategies in the translation from three dimensions: original presentation, cultural transmission effect and reader acceptance, so as to provide enlightenment for the spread of China's classic literary works.

2. Summary of Gérard Genette's Paratext

Paratext is a concept in literary theory, which was first put forward by Gérard Genette, a French literary theorist, in his book *Paratexts: The Threshold of Interpretation* in 1987. Paratext refers to those elements that surround literary works, but are not the text of the works themselves. They constitute the external framework of the works, which affects reception of readers and understanding of the works and is an introduction before the readers formally read the text. Genette divided paratexts into two types: internal paratext and external paratext. The internal paratext mainly includes information such as title, subtitle, preface, notes and some others, which are in the same space as the text. The external paratext is information with a certain distance outside the text through some media or other forms of communication [3].

Paratext provides readers with clues on how to read and understand the work, including the author's intention and the background of the work. It mainly has the following functions. Firstly, it attracts readers' attention through cover design, title, subtitle, preface and postscript, which increases the attraction of the work. The second is to provide the historical and cultural background of the work through preface, postscript and annotations, so as to help readers better understand the text [4]. Third, as a medium of cultural exchange, it shows the dialogue and interaction between different cultures and promotes cultural dialogue. Fourth, through the author's life introduction and photos to construct the author's public image, which affects readers' acceptance of the work to establish the author's image.

As far as the current research on paratext strategies is concerned, scholars have studied it from different angles. For example, Cui Zihan[5] has studied *The Journey to the West* from the perspective of communication; Hu Yanna[6] controls the Julia's translation of *Lu Xun's Novel* from the perspective of paratexts. Liu Qiao [7] makes a comparative study of the paratexts with two versions of *The Journey to the West* translated by Waley and Julia. Wen Shiming[8] explored the Complete Works of *Lu Xun's Novels* from the perspective of translators' voice and acceptance. Therefore, at present, the text research on the paratext strategies of two works translated by Julia from the perspective of cultural transmission effect is not sufficient, and it is generally the analysis of a single work. Therefore, a comparative study of the two versions, discussion of the paratext strategies of their translations and analysis of the cultural transmission effect of their works on Chinese cultural classics can bring references for the subsequent dissemination of Chinese cultural classics.

3. Analysis of Two Translated Works by Julia Lovell

As a famous sinologist and translator, Julia Lovell has rich and varied paratext elements in her works. She will cooperate with publishers to convey the theme and cultural atmosphere of her works through cover design and illustrations. In the process of translation, she may add translators' notes to explain specific cultural elements or concepts that are difficult to translate directly in the original text. She will carefully choose the title and subtitle in translation to attract the attention of readers in the target language and provide clues to the content of the work. In addition, her works are often accompanied by book reviews and comments, which can be used as part of the sub-text and affect readers' expectations and understanding. Her paratext elements, such as preface and translator's notes, often contain explanations of China's cultural elements, helping western readers to better understand and adapt to different cultural backgrounds. Through the choice of cover design and title, her works can attract the interest of specific readers and meet the market positioning. Moreover, in her paratext elements, such as preface and book review, they provide readers with guidance on how to read and understand the works, which affect readers' reading path and depth.

3.1 A Comparison of Paratext Strategies between Julia Lovell's Versions of *Monkey King: Journey to the West* and *The Real Story of Ah - Q and Other Tales of China: The Complete Fiction of Lu Xun*

3.1.1 Comparison of Covers between the Two Versions

"Color is the simplest visual symbol, which helps to attract the attention of the audience and arouse their feelings and thoughts about color [9]." Color has different meanings in different cultural contexts, and it is an important national cultural symbol, which can form a unique national cultural impression in the minds of the audience.

In Chinese culture, yellow, red, and blue all have positive meanings, and the cover of Julia's translation is mainly composed of these three colors. Then we can have a detailed covers comparison from Figure 1, and these figures are from Penguin Books. On its cover, the name of the translation and the author are written in the middle position in blue font, which is eye-catching and brings visual impact to readers. In the overall cover background, the totem image of the dragon is the base, which forms a binary opposition with the image of the Monkey King who pursues freedom and resists power, highlighting the plot conflict in the original work. In the middle of the cover is the mighty image of the Monkey King stepping on the lotus, and behind it is the Taoist view that presses him with the Five Elements Mountain and is closely related to it, which highlights the details of the story in the article, brings in the image before reading the text carefully, and brings the traditional three-dimensional image of China to readers a sense of integration before reading.

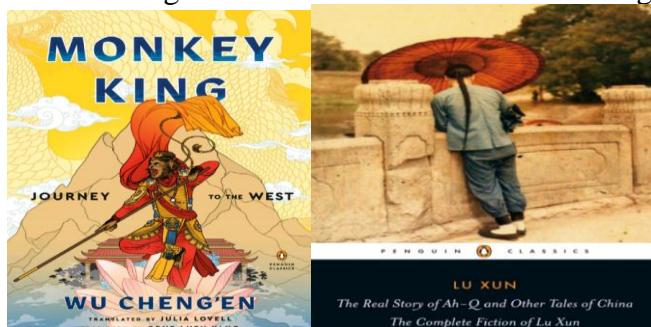


Figure 1: Covers Comparison

Julia's translation is different from other translators' sporadic translations of several articles that are interested in. She translated all 33 novels of Lu Xun into English for the first time and introduced them to Western readers. On the cover, a man with a long braid holds a red umbrella with his back to the audience, and red is meant to be passionate, but the man turns his back to the reader gloomily, as if thinking about something. At that time, the social background was dark, and the picture of men standing alone by the bridge thinking aroused readers' curiosity, and the characters were in line with the background of the times.

3.1.2 Comparison of Prefaces between the Two Versions

In the preface of the blue translation, it is introduced that her interest in this story comes from the enlightenment given to her by her mother when she was a child. Even after her mother suffered from Alzheimer's disease and forgot everything, she hopes to bring the public memories through her childhood stories and pass on this beauty. In the translator's preface, Julia analyzed the language of *The Journey to the West*, pointing out that it was deeply influenced by the trend of "combination of three religions", vividly presented the social situation of the Ming Dynasty, lashed out at all kinds of corruption, and highlighted the importance of tempering his mind. She believes that "*The Journey to the West* tells a story about finding and releasing his mind" [10]. It can be seen that the recommender's preface and the translator's preface reveal the value of the original narrative and theme, and point out that they have some elements that will meet the expectations of Western readers, which is helpful to stimulate Western readers' reading interests. As can be seen from the translator's preface, Julia has a comprehensive and objective understanding of *The Journey to the West*'s writing background, characters and plots, artistic characteristics and ideological connotation.

In the preface to *The Real Story of Ah - Q and Other Tales of China: The Complete Fiction of Lu Xun*, Julia introduced the life and creative experience of the original author Lu Xun, and also made a summary of his writing style and his translation methods, so that readers can have a clearer understanding of the cultural background before reading the text and bring them into the article. At the same time, the preface also provides an in-depth analysis of Lu Xun's use of irony and symbolism to help readers understand the deep meaning of the work.

3.1.3 Comparison of Postscripts between the Two Versions

In *The Journey to the West*'s translation, Julia mentioned the reasons for choosing to translate this work, including its important position in literary history, teaching needs and social requirements for the new translation. She particularly emphasized the dazzling fighting scenes in this book, its enlightenment to real life, and the fullness of the characters in the book. In addition, she also mentioned her status as a woman and a mother, and she has a preference for choosing the answers related to women and children. In addition, based on translation strategies and methods, she also discussed her translation strategies, including faithfulness to the original text and consideration for modern English readers. She chose some specific targets for translation and paid attention to language fluency and readability in the process of translation. The postscript of the translation emphasizes the important role of the translation in promoting the cultural translation of China. By using authentic modern English, she makes it easier for western readers to accept and understand this Chinese classic literature.

In the postscript of *The Real Story of Ah - Q and Other Tales of China: The Complete Fiction of Lu Xun*, she put forward the translation concept of "faithful re-creation", emphasizing the necessary creative adjustment based on faithful to the original text to improve the readability and acceptability of the translation[11]. She also mentioned the treatment of historical and cultural allusions and dialects in the process of translation, and how to help readers understand them through notes and

footnotes. Her postscript reflects her in-depth study and understanding of Lu Xun's works. She not only translated Lu Xun's novels, but also provided readers with rich background information through annotations and prefaces, helping readers to better understand Lu Xun's literary world and social background.

3.1.4 Comparison of Annotations between the Two Versions

In *The Journey to the West*'s translation, a map of the whole journey to the West is attached to the catalogue, which is convenient for readers to have a clear understanding of the overall context. In order to strengthen readers' sense of story reading, she made comments on the whole story after the introduction. It mainly includes the introduction of characters and historical background, and at the same time, for historical difficulties, she will recommend specific bibliographies that readers who want to know more detailed historical background can refer to. In addition, she also explained her translation, the plot she omitted, and the prominent theme and character characteristics. Because of the strong story of this novel, she simplified the narrative rhythm and integrated the interpretation of characters and stories into the story. For the omission of some puns, she will also supplement it by strengthening the narrative or other humorous parts of the dialogue. For example, the translation and annotation of Wiley's translation: "The man of T'ang is my master. I am his disciple, and no man of T'ang or sugar-man or honey-man either." Waley added a footnote to explain "sugar": Sugar in Chinese is T'ang. However, Julia did not annotate similar puns in her translation because she deleted the puns in the original text. Therefore, in *The Journey to the West*, she seldom uses annotations. In the story plot, she combines descriptive annotations, which enhances readers' sense of reading and story experience. Her annotation strategy reflects her sense of responsibility and mission as a translator.

In the translation of *The Real Story of Ah - Q and Other Tales of China: The Complete Fiction of Lu Xun*, Julia explained all the chapters in the novel in detail by means of endnotes, from cultural allusions to historical background, and then to the incomprehensible parts of the text. For example, in *Medicine*, Julia translated "Jing Hua Shui" into "well water". In the endnote, the meaning and cultural background of "Jing Hua Shui" are explained: "Our narrator is garbling the title of a famous herbal compendium by the Ming pharmacologist Li Shizhen (1518—1593). The book contains no such observation about the eating of human flesh—a delusion of the madman." Given the overall literary style of this novel, Julia uses endnotes to provide additional background information and explanations, which will be more academic and analytical when making annotations, which is beneficial to the needs of other researchers and scholars. Through her annotations, she reflects her profound research on Lu Xun's works and her rigorous attitude towards literary translation. Her annotation is not only the translation of the original text but also the dissemination of Lu Xun's thoughts and literary value.

Through comparison, it is found that Julia will adjust the cover setting based on the overall style of the work, and use China's characteristic colors to match, showing some elements in the text on the cover. *The Journey to the West*'s story is full of challenges, so the cover color is more vivid. The overall atmosphere of *The Real Story of Ah - Q and Other Tales of China: The Complete Fiction of Lu Xun* highlights the gloom of the society at that time, so the cover color is relatively dull. To sum up, its cover design will be adjusted according to the overall plot of the story, which will convey the traditional cultural elements of China. As for the preface and postscript, she shows different emphases, translation strategies, understanding of the original and the role of the translator, as well as the style and tone of the preface in the two versions. These differences reflect that she adopted different translation strategies and preface writing methods according to the characteristics of different works and the needs of target readers. Therefore, when she wrote the preface, she attracted the reader's attention and helped them to have a general understanding of the characters before

entering the text reading, helping the reader to read further. In annotation, she adopted different annotation strategies in these two versions, which reflected that she adopted different translation strategies according to the characteristics of different works and the needs of target readers. In *The Real Story of Ah - Q and Other Tales of China: The Complete Fiction of Lu Xun*, she pays more attention to explaining the deep cultural and symbolic significance, while in *The Journey to the West*, she omits some notes and melts them into the story, paying more attention to the coherence and fluency of the story. These strategies not only reflect her profound understanding of the original, but also reflect her sensitivity to the needs of the target readers and her serious attitude towards the role of the translator.

Generally speaking, Julia may pay more attention to providing annotations to help readers understand the cultural and historical background of Lu Xun's works in the choice of paratext strategies in *The Real Story of Ah - Q and Other Tales of China: The Complete Fiction of Lu Xun*. For *The Journey to the West*, in addition to the preface and footnotes, a brief introduction of key characters is added to help readers clarify the relationship between the characters and understand the background of the characters, which improves the fluency of the story. Therefore, in *The Journey to the West*'s translation, the use of paratexts is more diverse and rich, which plays a more important role in the spread of the translation and the image construction of Chinese culture.

4. Conclusion

4.1 Cultural Transmission Effect of Paratext Strategy in Julia Lovell's Works

When translating *The Journey to the West*, Julia not only restored the background of the times when her works were produced, but also reshaped the image of China, breaking the stereotype and prejudice of western readers against China [12]. In translating Lu Xun's novels, domestication and foreignization strategies are adopted, including free translation and transliteration annotation, to ensure readability and help the target readers understand the cultural background of the original text. The explicit translation strategy is adopted for culture-loaded words, and the embodiment and effect of explicit translation are analyzed from the perspectives of text factors, language factors and pragmatic factors, which provides enlightenment for the English translation of Chinese culture. As a female translator, she is better at grasping the emotional expression of female characters in the text and using supplementary strategies to highlight the emotions of female characters, making the female images more vivid and positive. Therefore, through these paratext strategies, her translated works are not only faithful to the original text, but also adapt to the target language and culture, providing readers with a rich reading experience, and at the same time promoting the international spread and understanding of Chinese culture.

By providing information and explanations, Julia's paratext strategies reduce the cultural barriers of the work, make it easy for non-professional readers to enter the work, and enhance its readability. She pays attention to the paratext elements such as cover design and title, so she has shaped the first impression of the work well, thus affecting readers' expectation and evaluation of the work; To help readers understand and respect different cultural values and concepts through the paratext elements such as notes and prefaces of her works as a bridge for cross-cultural communication; She will also add book reviews and comments to her works, which will provide multiple interpretations of her works and stimulate readers' critical thinking.

To sum up, Julia skillfully uses paratext strategies in her translated works, which not only enhances the attractiveness and readability of the works to readers in the target language but also promotes the understanding and dissemination of the works in different cultural backgrounds. Through the guidance and supplement of the paratext, readers can experience and think about the works more deeply and realize the cross-cultural dialogue and exchange of literary works.

4.2 The Significance of Studying Paratext and Its Enlightenment to the Future Study of Sinology

Julia's paratext strategies reflect the translator's subjectivity, which suggests that sinologists should fully consider the translator's personal style, cultural stance, and translation strategies when analyzing translated texts, and how these factors affect the quality and acceptance of translation. Through the study of her paratext strategies, we can find the diversity of translation strategies, which means that the choice of different translation strategies and their influence on the original and target texts need to be discussed in depth in future sinology research. As a platform for cross-cultural dialogue, Julia's practice shows how to promote understanding and respect between different cultures through sub-text, and her translation practice provides valuable enlightenment for future sinology research. First of all, her work emphasizes an in-depth understanding and respect for the original text in the process of translation. Secondly, her translation strategies, especially the handling of culture-loaded words, provide a reference for other translators. Finally, her success shows that through careful translation, China's literary works can be effectively introduced to non-Chinese readers, promoting cultural exchange and understanding. Moreover, her paratext strategies embody the application of feminist translation theory, which provides a gender perspective for future sinology research and encourages researchers to explore how gender plays a role in translation. With the development of technology, studying Julia's paratext strategy can inspire sinologists to explore how to use new technologies to enhance the quality and efficiency of translation, such as the combination of machine translation and manual editing.

Therefore, Julia's paratext strategy research not only enriches the theory of translation studies, but also provides practical guidance and new research direction for Sinology studies, especially in the fields of cross-cultural communication, translation education and translation criticism. The analysis of the paratexts of her works also provides a reference for the analysis of other translated works from the perspective of paratexts.

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