

EXPLORING TRANSLATORS' VISIBILITY VIA PERITEXTS IN THE ENGLISH (RE)TRANSLATIONS OF *XI YOU JI*

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ABSTRACT

Background and Purpose: Research on translators' visibility traditionally focuses on the analysis of the main text, with very little attention paid to the analysis of paratext. As the threshold of a book, paratext is a common venue for translators to enhance their visibility. This study first aims to identify whether the translators' work is acknowledged in the peritexts of the English translations of a Chinese classic *Xi You Ji*, and subsequently to explore the level of translators' visibility in the peritexts, and to determine how translators' visibility might affect the readers' reading experience.

Methodology: This study employed a qualitative research design. Nine English (re)translations of *Xi You Ji* were meticulously chosen and categorized guided by the method of screening and labeling adopted by Badić (2020). Case study was utilized to examine the peritexts of the selected editions collected from university libraries, second-hand book dealers and Amazon. Through the in-depth description and analysis of the data, the presence or absence of the translators in the peritexts were identified and effects determined.

Findings: The study revealed that while the translators' contributions are duly acknowledged, their contributions require reformulation in some editions. The translators' presence in the paratextual space is highlighted through their discussion of their translating approaches and comments on the previous renderings. The prefaces might affect the reading expectation of the prospective readership through the

provision of crucial information.

Contributions: This study provides a new paradigm for further research on translators' visibility and hopes to contribute to a better understanding of how paratexts can help facilitate the overseas spread of Chinese literature.

Keywords: *Xi You Ji*, *Journey to the West*, retranslation, visibility, paratext, peritext.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Within the realm of Translation Studies, both the paratext and the translator's visibility have gained much academic attention (Venuti, 1995; Hermans, 1996; Genette, 1997). The paratext is viewed as a mediator between the text and the target readers. It also helps to shed light on the network of various agents in the translation activity (translators, publishers, editors), and its interaction with the source text, the original author of the source text (ST), the target text (TT) and the target readership. The translator's visibility, meanwhile, lays an emphasis on the crucial role of translators. When reading translated texts, the voice of the translators can normally be discerned in "subtle as well as conspicuous ways" (Özbir, 2020, p. 628). The visibility of translators is more detectable in the field of literary translation, since the practitioners need to overcome many complex linguistic and cross-cultural barriers in the translation production (Hermans, 1996; Schiavi, 1996; Wai-on & Ng, 2020).

It is noteworthy that the presence of the translator can be observed not only within the main text but also at places outside the text. Typically, translators are invisible only when communication is clear. Once there are cultural gaps or bias, translators may take advantage of the paratext, i.e. the materials accompanying the text, to clarify their stances and the approach they used to translate the work as well (Newmark, 1983; Genette, 1997; Haroon, 2017). Among the various paratextual elements, prefaces and afterwords appear to be notable for their role as a vent for the translator's voice and their contribution in the wholeness of translated works (Yari et al., 2020). As such, researchers are able to detect the translator's visibility via an analysis of paratexts, especially prefaces and afterwords.

Xi You Ji (hereafter *XYJ*), also known as *Journey to the West* in the English-speaking world, is a Chinese literary canon (Wu, 2017). Loosely based on the historical facts of the respected monk Xuanzang, the fiction was written in the Ming Dynasty during the 16th century, and is often ascribed to Wu Cheng'en. The fiction depicts the arduous journey of Xuanzang to India in order to fetch sacred Buddhist scripts back to China with the escort of his three disciples, Monkey, Pigsy and Sandy (Tao & Gu, 2020). The party encounters and defeats numerous demons and temptations along the way, and eventually accomplishes their goal.

As a monumental work, *XYJ* has been regarded as an integral part of world literature. The intensive inclusion of fictionalized and fantastic elements, together with deep-layered cultural and religious connotations and a large amount of obscure verse presents a daunting challenge to translators, and compels translators to creatively mediate between the original text and Western readership. The first translation of *XYJ* into English in the form of an independent book appeared in 1913 under the title *A Mission to Heaven: A Great Chinese Epic and Allegory*, more than 300 years after the debut of its original (Wu, 1913). This heavily-abridged work was translated by a China-based Baptist missionary and was published by the Christian Literature Society's Depot, an English missionary-founded press in China. Since then, dozens of its English translations, as well as a large number of reprints, have appeared in the Anglophone book market.

Taking into account the importance of *XYJ* as one of the most widely-translated classical novels of Chinese literature and the significance of peritexts in translated literature, this study aims to explore the peritextual elements of selected English translations of *XYJ*. More specifically, the study aims to explore not only the visibility of the translators, but also how the visibility of translators, conditioned by "important agents constituting the translatorial field" (Pokorn, 2012, p. 49) of translated classic literature, might have influenced the Anglophone readership's reading and interpretation of *XYJ*. This study is guided by the following three questions:

- 1) Are the translators acknowledged in the peritexts of *XYJ*'s English (re)translations?
- 2) To what extent are the translators visible in the peritexts of *XYJ*'s English (re)translations?
- 3) How might the translators' visibility affect the readers' understanding of *XYJ*?

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Retranslation Theory and Retranslations

In 1990, Bensimon (1990) and Berman (1990) attempted to differentiate between first translation and retranslations separately, which formed the basis for the Retranslation Hypothesis (RH). It is argued that the first translation can be perceived as an attempt to integrate into another culture, while retranslations no longer need to bridge the gaps between two different cultures (Berman, 1990). In other words, a retranslation should be seen as a means of creating “great translations” given that the subsequent translations tend to be closer to the ST (Desmidt, 2009, p. 678). The RH holds that the earlier translations appear to be more domesticating and tend to minimize the otherness to fit into the target culture (Gambier, 1994; Koskinen & Paloposki, 2004). In contrast, retranslations are “more source culture oriented than first translations” (Desmidt, 2009, p. 669). A number of scholars have carried out empirical researches to confirm the RH (Andraka, 2019; Albudairi, 2023; Jnaidi, 2024; Wang, 2024). However, previous studies failed to provide sufficient and conclusive evidence that can fully support the hypothesis.

In the first place, “identifying and classifying retranslations” is a complicated and time-consuming process since in bibliographical databases, “there is no search word or bibliographical field for the crucial piece of information that a translation is in fact a retranslation” (Paloposki & Koskinen, 2010, p. 36). Meanwhile, it is imperative to pay attention to the demarcation between retranslations and revisions. As revision refers to making alternations “to an existing TT whilst retaining the major part”, it is viewed as “the first step towards retranslation” (Vanderschelden, 2000, pp. 1-2). Normally, “alterations may be done at various textual level” (Badić, 2020, p. 43). As Veselica Majhut (2019, p. 264) hints, “the problem is that the criteria for the extent of changes introduced into a translation that would qualify it as a truly revised edition or even a new translation seem to be quite arbitrary and depend on the publisher’s subjective judgement”. Thus, the retranslations and revisions of *XYJ* need to be carefully distinguished and the reprints should be excluded from the list. This means that the compilation of a bibliography of *XYJ*’s English retranslations needs to be done manually by the researcher.

In addition, the motives for the retranslations of the same original text in the same target language have drawn considerable academic attention. On the whole, the language and style of the first translations may turn out to be obsolete with time. The “aging” of the initial translations has long been viewed as the major cause for the production of later translations (Badić, 2020, p. 39). However, Paloposki and Koskinen (2010) summarize the findings of previous studies

and argue that new translations can be attributed to various factors such as classics' calling for retranslation (Ballard, 2000; Vanderschelden, 2000; Paloposki & Koskinen, 2010), the agency of translators (Collombat, 2004), the power struggles and conflicting interpretations (Susam-Sarajeva, 2006) and "the marketing potential of a new translation" (Paloposki & Koskinen, 2010, p. 32). Furthermore, Koskinen and Paloposki (2003) propose the notion of "supplementarity of different translations" (p. 22), indicating "the targeting of different versions to different sections of the audience" (Koskinen & Paloposki, 2003, p. 23). This concept challenges Bermans' statement about "great translations" (Berman, 1990, p. 6, qtd. in Desmidt, 2009, p. 678). Moreover, Koskinen and Paloposki (2003) take the RH further by underlining that "rettranslation is a result of shifting needs and changing perceptions" (p. 23). Later, Veselica Majhut (2019) and Badić (2020) subsequently conducted case study of peritexts of retranslations, and championed the concept of "supplementarity of different translations" (Badić, 2020, p. 39). More importantly, they posited this notion as an entry point to reveal the motivations behind retranslations. Significantly, Badić (2020) systematically categorized the Croatian (re)translations of *Oliver Twist* by using different labels and probed the translator's visibility through paratexts. The methodology and findings of the empirical researches mentioned above, especially Badić's (2020) study, are illuminating to this study. By unveiling the rationale behind the supplementarity of different English versions of *XYJ*, this study will pay closer attention to the presence of translators in paratexts and demonstrate the effects that paratexts might have on the understanding of literary works.

2.2 Paratext and Paratextual Visibility

The term "paratext" was coined by Genette (1987). Paratext refers to the "verbal or other productions, such as an author's name, a title, a preface, illustrations" accompanying the main text (Genette, 1997, p. 1). Furthermore, Genette (1997) categorizes paratext into two categories, peritext and epitext. Peritexts are materials that are physically attached to the book, including book cover, flaps, title page, preface, afterword, note and so on. Epitexts include "all metatextual discussion and explanation that lies outside and unattached to the text, but relates directly to it", for example, interviews, readers' reviews, translator's autobiography (Pellatt, 2018, p. 165).

The "close attention to paratexts" can help readers differentiate between "translation and nontranslation" and then inform them whether the book is worth reading or buying (Pym, 1998, p. 62). Some readers in the target culture have preference for authors, translators and presses, while some prefer to browse through "prefaces and epilogues of translators before

buying” (Taş, 2018, p. 150). Thus, paratexts become a threshold of translated texts.

It can be said that the study of paratext has provided researchers with the necessary analytical tools to explore a variety of subjects in Translation Studies such as historical translation research and the image transformation of translated works, to name just a few. In line with the research questions of this study, this subsection will probe into the connection between paratexts and translator’s visibility, narrowing the foci down to a consideration of peritexts.

The term “invisibility” was originally used by Venuti to “describe the translator’s situation and activity in contemporary Anglo-American culture” (1995, p. 1). Later, the translator’s visibility has become “one of the focuses of translation studies after the 1990s” (Wai-on & Ng, 2020, p. 2). Hermans (1996) echoes Venuti’s ideas and argues that paratext is a place for translators to express their own stances. It is Koskinen (2020) who first positioned the paratextual space as an excellent locus in constructing translator’s visibility. In other words, Koskinen confirms the existence of “paratextual visibility” (p. 99). From Koskinen’s lens, the paratext is likely to provide an approach to gauge translator’s visibility from quantities of translated works and over a great time span.

Till this day, many scholars have investigated translator’s visibility with the help of paratexts, especially prefaces and afterwords (McRae, 2010; Atefmehr, 2016; Neveu, 2017; Badić, 2020; Wai-on & Ng, 2020; Yari et al., 2020). Some scholars used peritextual elements of translated works from a certain time period as the corpuses. The sample size can be quite large. For example, McRae (2010), along with Yari et al. (2020) have separately conducted empirical studies on prefaces of 810 contemporary literary works to English and 300 English to Persian fiction translations, and held that prefaces is an ideal place for translators to spread their understanding of the original to readers. It is noteworthy that elements such as “introductions, notes, afterwords, or any other commentary preceding or following a translation written by the translator” are all counted as preface in McRae’s study (2010, p. 7). The presence of translators in peritexts was also explored by Atefmehr (2016). Through an examination of a smaller-sized corpus of Iranian translations, she concluded that “translators were visible, mainly due to their high social and educational status” and affirmed the function performed by preface of reflecting translator’s visibility (Atefmehr, 2016, p. 7). Additionally, some researchers sampled peritexts in the translations of a specific literary work, Neveu (2017) and Badić (2020), for example, focused their attention on the prefaces. Based on the analysis of the prefaces of 25 English translations of La Fontaine’s *Fables* from 1754 to 2014, Neveu (2017) asserted that translator’s visibility can affect the reading experience by “influencing the artistic

aspects or the informative/academic value of the work (p. 23). In a similar vein, Badić (2020) first categorized the Croatian (re)translations of *Oliver Twist* between 1945 and 2017 into first translation, modified first translation, retranslation and modified retranslation and then conducted case study on the peritexts. The conclusion drawn from Badić's study echoed that of Neveu's (2017). As such, it is justifiable to say that translators can influence the experience of reading in the target setting through their visibility in peritexts.

Based on the empirical studies mentioned above, it is worth noting that paratext has widened the scope of Translation Studies. To summarize, the studies listed above are all innovative attempts to measure translator's visibility via peritextual elements. The studies are illuminating and have provided directions for future research.

In the context of China, the focus of the previous studies on the English translations of *XYJ* has been on the analysis of texts, which often involves a comparative study of the ST and its translations (Hao, 2016; Lei, 2022; Zao, 2022; Zhu & Luo, 2022). More specifically, most of the studies laid an emphasis on the translator's strategy. This is understandable since that such an analysis can provide insights into the decisions made by the translator in the process of transmitting the text to a new readership. In contrast, the analysis of paratexts has received relatively less academic attention (Zhu, 2016; Wu, 2022). Moreover, the focus of the analysis of paratext is on how paratext can affect the image of the fiction or cultural image. Given the paucity of research on the paratexts of *XYJ*'s English translations, this preliminary study focuses on one category of paratext, which is peritext, with the aim of exploring the connection between peritext and translator's visibility in *XYJ*'s English translations. Specifically, this study intends to identify whether the work of the translators is acknowledged in the peritexts, to examine the level of the translators' visibility in the peritexts of *XYJ*'s English (re)translations, and to determine how the translator's visibility might affect the readers' understanding of *XYJ*.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 The Corpus of *Xi You Ji*'s English (Re)Translations

To answer the research questions, this study is conducted along the lines of the study by Badić (2020) to some extent. The method of screening retranslations adopted by Badić (2020) aligns with the suggestion regarding identifying retranslations put forth by Paloposki and Koskinen (2010). In examining the retranslations in Finland, Paloposki and Koskinen indicate that there is a "fine line between retranslating and revising" (Paloposki & Koskinen, 2010, p. 32). In this study, the reprints are excluded in "the actual categorizing of translations into first and

subsequent translations” (Paloposki & Koskinen, 2010, p. 37). The bulk of the screening work is carried out manually and is partly based on lists previously compiled by other scholars.

The corpus of this study includes all published English renderings of *XYJ* (see Appendix A). The list shows all available English translations, edited second versions and reprints of the fiction in chronological order. Details of the works, such as year of publication, the name of the translator, publisher, and the times of reprints, are recorded.

In line with the demarcation between retranslation and revision mentioned in the previous section, all the editions listed in Appendix A are examined and compared to the ST. The source text employed in this study is a reprint of the Chinese *XYJ* by San Qin Press in 2017. Given that carrying out the study necessitates the compilation of a corpus of *XYJ*’s English (re)translations, the editions which are reprints are excluded from further consideration.

The biggest challenge in the winnowing process is how to classify the editions of both the first translation (FT₁) and the retranslation (RT) of *XYJ*, all of which have had substantial modifications either within the body text or in the peritext. This study borrows part of the labeling adopted by Badić (2020) in marking the (re)translations. The 2012 edition by Timothy Richard’s English rendering, witnessed adjustments both within the main text and in the peritext, while the majority of FT₁ remains intact. Specifically, the 2012 edition integrated the contents of 100 chapters in the 1931 edition (FT₁) into 26 chapters, and the old preface was replaced with an introduction by a sinologist. In this case, this study classified the 2012 edition as a modified first translation (MFT₁). In addition, since the 1942 edition by Waley is not available either in physical nor digital form, this study uses its 1943 revised edition as a retranslation. Moreover, the 2006 edition of Anthony C. Yu’s translation is a heavily-abridged version. It compresses Yu’s four-volume translation into a single book. The 2006 edition with much shorter length appears to be more reader-friendly. Yu’s 2006 edition is thus labeled as a modified retranslation (MRT).

The adoption of the four categories, namely FT₁, RT₁, MFT₁ and MRT, is necessary for this study since it enables us to observe how the translated narrative evolves with the new market demands in the receiving culture and tap into the “intended function of the TT” in the target setting, together with translators’ motives” (Veselica Majhut, 2019, p. 264). With this categorization in mind, the editions that fall into the four categories are subsequently selected. Editions that cannot be found in physical nor digital form due to their age are not included. The selected editions which serve as the final corpus for this study are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: The first translation and retranlations of *Xi You Ji* into English

| Label | Year | Title | Publisher | Translator |
|-------------------|-----------|---|---|-----------------|
| FT ₁ | 1913 | <i>A Mission to Heaven: A Great Chinese Epic and Allegory</i> | Shanghai: Christian Literature Society's Depot | Timothy Richard |
| RT ₁ | 1930 | <i>The Buddhist Pilgrim's Progress</i> | New York: E. P. Dutton & Company | Helen M. Hayes |
| RT ₂ | 1943 | <i>Monkey</i> | New York: The John Day Company | Arthur Waley |
| RT ₃ | 1977-1983 | <i>The Journey to the West</i> | Chicago: University of Chicago Press | Anthony C. Yu |
| RT ₄ | 1982-1985 | <i>Journey to the West</i> | Beijing: Foreign Languages Press | W.J. F. Jenner |
| MRT _{3a} | 2006 | <i>The Monkey and the Monk: An abridgment of the journey to the West</i> | Chicago: University of Chicago Press | Anthony C. Yu |
| MFT ₁ | 2012 | <i>The Monkey King's amazing adventures: A journey to the West in search of enlightenment</i> | Tokyo/Rutland, Vermont/Singapore: Tuttle Publishing | Timothy Richard |
| MRT _{3b} | 2012 | <i>The Journey to the West</i> | Chicago: University of Chicago Press | Anthony C. Yu |
| RT ₅ | 2021 | <i>Monkey King: Journey to the West</i> | London: Penguin Books | Julia Lovell |

3.2 Data Collection

The peritexts of the selected editions listed in Table 1 are collected from various channels, including university libraries, second-hand book dealers and Amazon. With the research questions in mind and taking the space limitations of this paper into consideration, this study focuses only on the following peritextual materials:

- 1) Covers and title pages
- 2) Prefaces and afterwords

These peritextual elements are chosen primarily because they make the presence of translators audible and concrete. As such, they become a valuable foundation for researchers and potential readers to gain insights into the way in which the translators proceed with the cross-cultural activities.

3.3 Data Analysis

This study analyses the peritextual elements of the nine English versions of *XYJ* from a corpus of 30 English translations that have circulated in the Anglophone world, with the earliest version being published in 1913 and the latest one in 2021. In general, the paratext, especially the preface can be highly informative. It can help deliver the information that translators assume necessary to the prospective readers and further intrigue the readership in the target culture. Apart from its impact on the reading and reception of a translated work, paratext can manipulate “the way that the actual texts were written” (Tahir-Gürçağlar, 2002, p. 58). This entails that “paratexts ran parallel to these other processes of the transmission of translations ideologically” (Kovala, 1996, p. 141), making the production of (re)translations happen. Hence, this study focuses on examining the presence or absence of the translators in the paratexts of the selected editions via case study. First, the covers and title pages are examined in order to detect the labeling of translators and their contribution in the nine selected works. Then, the prefaces and afterwords are analyzed to examine the level of the translator’s visibility in the peritexts of *XYJ*’s English (re)translations, and to determine how the translator’s visibility might affect the readers’ understanding of *XYJ*.

4.0 DISCUSSION

4.1 The Labeling of Translators’ Contribution

In this section, this study highlights the labeling of translators’ contributions as discerned from the covers and title pages. The findings illuminate the translators’ visibility beyond the main text (see Table 2).

Table 2: Overview of the labeling of translators in the peritexts

| Edition | Labeling of translators and their contribution |
|-------------------|--|
| FT ₁ | Translated by Timothy Richard |
| RT ₁ | By Helen M. Hayes |
| RT ₂ | Translated from the Chinese by Arthur Waley |
| RT ₃ | Translated and edited by Anthony C. Yu |
| RT ₄ | Translated by W. J. F. Jenner |
| MRT _{3a} | Translated and edited by Anthony C. Yu |
| MRT _{3b} | Translated and edited by Anthony C. Yu |
| MFT ₁ | Translated by Timothy Richard |
| RT ₅ | Translated by Julia Lovell |

As shown in Table 2, the names of the translators all appear on the covers and title pages accompanied with their role in the translation activity. In other words, the efforts and contributions of the translators have been acknowledged in all of the selected editions.

It is noteworthy that the original ST has 100 chapters with a length of more than 1000 pages in Chinese. However, the length of Timothy Richard's FT₁ in 1913 has been significantly reduced to merely 362 pages and it contains many apparent mistranslations. Also, FT₁ is presented with a new title, *A Mission to Heaven: A Great Chinese Epic and Allegory*, and frequently uses Christian vocabulary to interpret terms in Chinese religions, for example, the word "Heaven" that appears in the title. The intervention of this scale could hardly be attributed to the act of translation only. As for the case of MFT₁, it greatly compresses the story into 26 chapters in a shorter length. Needless to say, the major adjustments regarding the body text and the peritext introduced in FT₁ and MFT₁ call for a restatement of the translator's contribution (see the section on prefaces and afterwords).

With regard to Helen M. Hayes' RT₁ in 1930, it contains only 6 chapter. The translator's deliberate omission of a great bulk of the ST prompts the re-formulation of the labeling, which will be discussed in the next section. As for Arthur Waley's RT₂ in 1943, the name of the translator is followed with the phrase "Translated from the Chinese by". The modification is mainly due to the addition of an allographic preface, which will be revealed with details in the following section. Allographic preface is termed by Genette, referring to prefaces to translated works written by third persons (1997).

As for the two complete translations of *XYJ* till today, Anthony C. Yu, the translator's name in RT₃ and MRT₃ both follows the phrase "Translated and edited by", while RT₄ "Translated by". The difference lies in Yu's high degree of participation in the translation activity, which will be elaborated in the next two sections. Lastly, the phrase "Translated by" is used in RT₅ by Julia Lovell in 2021. However, since the translator has abridged the story down to 36 chapters, removing some contents and merging some chapters based on her interpretation, the contribution of the translator requires a re-formulation.

4.2 The Level of Translator's Visibility and the Possible Effects It might Have on the Readers' Understanding of *Xi You Ji*

In the ongoing corpus, some of the prefaces and afterwords were written by translators themselves, while some by a third party. Normally, the writers of allographic prefaces and afterwords are renowned figures in the target culture and have not directly contributed to the

publication of the ST. These figures would be invited by the publishers to write a preface in order to expand the influence of the translated works in an unfamiliar culture.

The first translation of *XYJ* into English (FT₁) contains a 35-page long translatorial preface. Apart from the introduction of the ST and the author, the translator put in efforts to explicate on how he used Christian doctrine to paraphrase the difficult Buddhist terms (Wu, 1913, p. xxii). That is to say, through blending Christianity with Buddhist allegory, the translator attempted to fuse his religious stance into his rendering. In other words, as a missionary to China, the translator intended to use this work to evangelize to the Chinese people. The motive of the translator thus renders FT₁ into something more akin to an adaptation, deviating from the gist of the ST.

RT₁ by Hayes entitled *The Buddhist Pilgrim's Progress* is the first retranslation of *XYJ* into English. It was published by E. P. Dutton & Company in 1930 and included in a series called "The Wisdom of the East Series". Since the series was to introduce Chinese culture to the West, the inclusion of this 1930 edition indicates that Hayes' work aligns with the preference of the press. As suggested in the preface, the translator was deeply influenced by the Buddhist culture and firmly believed that the object of the ST is "to demonstrate the Buddha-nature in every man" (Wu, 1930, p. 17). In the preface, the translator focused on exploring the Buddhist philosophy in the ST. Hence, the story has been adapted into a Buddhist fable. However, the work distorts the ST with the excessive Buddhist implications. Additionally, the translator mentioned FT₁ in the preface and stressed that Richard's introduction of the "background" of the ST is meaningful (Wu, 1930, p. 15). However, it fails to explain explicitly the weakness of FT₁ or the motives behind the production of retranslation.

RT₂ by Waley entitled *Monkey* was published in 1943 by an American leading press of popular fictions at that time, the John Day company, which seems to imply that FT₁ and RT₁ were no longer fitting the need of Western mass readers. This edition is a turning point for the spread of *XYJ* in the Anglophone world given the fact that it has been acknowledged as the most wide-circulated edition of this Chinese literary canon (Luo & Zheng, 2017). Waley's retranslation includes a translatorial preface and an allographic introduction. In the introduction, the prominent Chinese scholar and the then Chinese ambassador in Washington, Hu Shih, touched upon various aspects of Wu Cheng'en's life experience which had had a major influence on his "evolution" of writing style and the creation of *XYJ* (Wu, 1943, p. 3). The introduction features a significant explanatory note revealing Waley's actual "selection of the episodes" and the method of "omitting many episodes, but translating those that are retained almost in full" (Wu, 1943, p. 4). Hu brought the note to an end by saying that "thanks to Mr.

Waley, it will now delight thousands upon thousands of children and adults in the English-speaking world for many years to come”, signaling that the target readership of this work is Western mass readers (Wu, 1943, p. 5). Moreover, the praise and approval of Waley’s work by such a highly-recognized figure in the target culture serves as a “brand name” to persuade the Anglophone readers to read this fiction (Maclean, 1991, p. 276). The introduction is followed by the translator’s preface. In the preface, the translator was fully aware of the existing translations and briefly appraised the works of the predecessors: Richard only translated “extracts from the book” and Hayes’ works is a “very inaccurate account” (Wu, 1943, preface). The translator was opposed to the translation method they adopted, “to leave the original number of separate episodes, but drastically reduce them in length” (Wu, 1943, preface). Waley closed the preface with his interpretation of *XYJ*: heaven is the replica of the bureaucratic system in China and the main characters stand for ordinary man with different traits (Wu, 1943). Overall, targeting at Western general readers in World War II, the textual materials in this work have been adjusted in line with the taste of the potential readers--battle-themed books. As such, RT₂ has been shaped into a light-hearted fiction which would be much more easily accepted by the public.

RT₃ by Yu entitled *Journey to the West* is the first complete English edition of *XYJ* and published in 1977-1983 by the world-renowned academic publisher, the University of Chicago Press, which magnifies the academic nature and educational function of this edition. In this thoroughgoing preface, the translator discussed the historical origin of the ST and the background of the original author. More importantly, the translator explicitly pointed out the weakness of the early versions. For example, FT₁ and RT₁ “were no more than brief paraphrases and adaptations” (Wu, 1977, p. ix), and RT₂ “is vastly superior to the others in style and diction”, but the omission of certain chapters and poems means that it “further deviates from the original” (Wu, 1943, p. ix-x). Hence, the motive of Yu’s full translation is to answer “the need for a version which will provide the reader with as faithful an image as possible” (Wu, 1943, p. x). Furthermore, Yu clarified his translational choice as maintaining “the fundamental literary form of the work”, along with its “narrative vigor and descriptive power” (Wu, 1943, p. x). It is fair to say that the faithfulness to the original has been prioritized by the translator in this full translation.

Almost simultaneously, RT₄ by W. J. F. Jenner entitled *The Journey to the West* was published by a state-owned press in China, Foreign Languages Press, in 1982-1985. The Press has been dedicated to the overseas promotion of Chinese literary works. Although RT₄ lacks a preface, it contains the translator’s afterword. The translator gave an account of the long and

complicated process of the creation of the ST and shared his understanding of the book's message and symbolism, as well as main characters, which can assure readers with the faithfulness of his edition. Additionally, the translator explained his translation methods. To keep the readers interested in reading the book, the translator aligned with the ST and intended to create "the impression of a storyteller's performance" (Wu, 1985, p. 638). Since the translator did not mention the existence of other English translations of *XYJ* or his motive to translate *XYJ*, a few paragraphs were selected from RT₄ and compared to their corresponding versions in MRT_{3b}. It appears that apart from the syntactic properties and lexical preference spotted in the text, the translator of RT₄, W. J. F. Jenner, adopted a more reader-friendly rendering of culture-specific items. However, based on the available peritextual elements, no implicit or explicit causes for the initiation of this retranslation program could be detected.

After almost two decades of the publication, Yu proactively resorted to the University of Chicago Press and initiated the retranslation project. Regarding the subsequent editions, this academically oriented publisher labeled the 2006 edition (MRT_{3a}) and 2012 edition (MRT_{3b}) as "an abridgment of *Journey to the West*" (Wu, 2006, book cover) and "revised edition" (Wu, 2012b, book cover), respectively. In the preface of MRT_{3a}, the translator recapped parts of his 1977 edition and admitted that the abridged version is a response to the general readers' "plea for a shorter edition" (Wu, 2006, p. xiv). Even in this reduced version, Yu insisted on providing "all the textual features" of the selected contents "as fully as possible" (Wu, 2006, p. xiv). Interestingly, the complaints about RT₃'s "unwieldy length and impractical size" made Yu recognize that the translation strategies adopted by Waley in RT₂ were reasonable to some extent (Wu, 2006, p. xiv).

In 2012, two English translations of *XYJ* appeared in the Anglophone book market. MFT₁ by Richard entitled *The Monkey King's amazing adventures: A journey to the West in search of enlightenment* left out the translatorial preface included in the 1913 edition. Instead, this modified edition is presented with an all-round allographic preface, in which Daniel Kane, an eminent linguist, traced the ancient books that record the life experience of Xuanzang, and argued that *XYJ* is a "fictionalized account of the legends that had grown up around Xuanzang's travels" (Wu, 2012a, introduction). Additionally, based on the discussion of Richard's professional history and the backdrop of that time, Kane explicitly associated Richard's status as an influential missionary with his interpretation of the ST (Wu, 2012a, introduction). In the end, by comparing with later translations after FT₁, especially RT₂, Kane highlighted that the re-issued edition becomes quite readable after the omission and merging of some chapters. Since Richard had passed away in 1919, the modifications made in the 2012 abridged version

were clearly manipulated by the press, instead of the translator. Unfortunately, the contribution of the publisher has not been acknowledged in the core text or the peritext. As for the case of MRT_{3b} by Yu, the translation added to the old preface in his previous translation. In the preface, the comments on the previous editions overlapped the 1977 edition. As stated in the preface of MRT_{3b}, the translator mainly revised the verse and prose in RT₃ and converted the entire romanization system in RT₃ to Pinyin for convenience of understanding (Wu, 2012b). On the whole, these modified versions attempt to broaden the audience of *XYJ* to Western mass readers.

In 2021, RT₅ by Lovell entitled *Monkey King: Journey to the West* was published by Penguin Books. This top-ranked commercial publisher in the English-speaking world has launched a great number of classic English titles in the Anglophone market. This edition features a foreword by an award-winning writer, Gene Luen Yang and a translatorial preface. In the foreword, Yang convinced the prospective readers that *XYJ* is well worth reading by comparing the heroic acts of Monkey with those of superheroes in Marvel films, such as “Superman, Spider Man and Captain America” (Wu, 2021, foreword). Although embedded in different cultural backgrounds, the heroism that was highlighted in the Chinese literary canon echoes the Americans’ worship of individual heroism. Suffice to say that this foreword performed the function of “recommending” the body text by making the work relatable to the prospective readers (Genette, 1997, p. 268). In a similar tone, the translator argued that the status of *XYJ* in the Orient rivals with that of *The Canterbury Tales* and *Don Quixote* in Europe, and Monkey’s abilities, for instance transformation, is similar to the weaponized plots of American superhero movies (Wu, 2021). The canonical status of *XYJ* is unquestionable, but the didactic approach used by Yang and Lovell turns out to be more compelling that can manipulate “the reading of the novel, suggestively bringing certain aspects of the novel to the fore while intentionally keeping others in the background” (Badić, 2020, p. 49), a feature that has been known as “the dual status of the TT in the target culture” (Veselica Majhut, 2019, p. 272). Another highlight of the preface is that the translator discussed the existence of the previous translations. Specifically, Yu’s full translation and Waley’s abridgment provided reference. The reason why Lovell decided to retranslate *XYJ* has also been articulated. First, there are language changes after Jenner’s full translation in the 1980s. Second, Lovell assumed that abridgment would be more appealing to general readers. Furthermore, the translator made clear of the omissions in her abridged version since the technical and linguistic fidelity has to be sacrificed to stay true to the overall tone of a text (Wu, 2021). In this way, the translator formed a “translation pact” that “proposes to the readers to read the translated text in a specific

way” (Alvstad, 2014, p. 271) and “assures the readers that (the translator’s) intervention [does] not significantly change the story or discourse” (Alvstad, 2014, p. 275).

To sum up, RT₁ attempted to form a linkage with FT₁ (Wu, 1913) by mentioning the contribution of FT₁ in the preface of RT₁; however, there is no explicit explanation of the potential motives for its own production. Subsequently, Arthur Waley, the translator of RT₂, not only acknowledged the existence of the 1913 edition and 1930 edition, but also pointed out the weakness of these translated works. More importantly, the motive behind the retranslation and the translation strategy adopted by the translator have all been stated in the preface. In the same vein, Anthony C. Yu, the translator of RT₃ (Wu, 1977; 1978; 1980; 1983), briefly criticized the presence of *XYJ*’s English translations, namely the 1913 edition, the 1930 edition and the 1943 edition, in the preface. Moreover, Yu laid emphasis on the faithfulness of his full translation to the ST. Interestingly, in RT₄, a full translation published simultaneously with RT₃, the translator, W. J. F. Jenner, only discussed his translation methods in the afterword, but failed to mention the existing editions and the motives of his work.

In MRT_{3a} (Wu, 2006), the translator recapitulated parts of his 1977 preface and complimented Waley’s valid selection of chapters. In 2012, two English retranslations of *XYJ* were published. In MFT₁ (Wu, 2012a), the translatorial preface in the 1913 edition was replaced by an allographic preface. The writer of the allographic preface suggested the importance of the previous translations, especially Waley’s work, which has influenced the modifications in this 2012 edition. As for MRT_{3b} (Wu, 2012b), the translator repeated the criticism on the previous works as he did in the 1977 edition, and stressed that the modifications in this edition in to expand the scope of target readers. In RT₅ (Wu, 2021), the writer of the foreword and the translator jointly narrowed the distance between this classic work and the Anglophone readers with proper citation of parallels. As suggested in the preface, Julia Lovell, the translator of RT₅, has referred to Waley’s and Yu’s works in the translation activity, and attempted to produce an abridgment in line with the current language use and the core of the original.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Considering that paratexts, especially peritextual elements, not only affect the reading and perception of translated works, but also provide a vent for agents involved in the translation activity to make their voice heard, this study focuses on the connection between peritextual elements and translator’s visibility. This study sets out to identify whether the translators’ contribution has been labeled in the peritexts of *XYJ*’s English (re)translations, to determine the level of translator’s visibility in the peritexts, and to discuss how the translator’s visibility

might affect the readers' understanding of *XYJ*. The data of this study includes the covers, title pages, together with prefaces and afterwords collected from nine English (re)translations of *XYJ*.

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that, the translators' contributions have all been acknowledged in the nine (re)translations of *XYJ* into English. However, the labeling of translators' contributions in FT₁, RT₁, RT₂, MRT_{3a}, MFT₁ and RT₅ need to be restated. The major modifications in the core texts and peritexts of the abridged versions mentioned above have confirmed the necessity of re-formulating of translators' contribution. Especially in the case of MFT₁, the modification made by the publisher needs to be clearly stated in the title page and preface instead of ascribing them to the translator.

Since RT₁, most of the retranslations have acknowledged the existence of the other English translations of *XYJ* in the Anglophone book market by discussing the value or weakness of the previous editions in their prefaces. This can be seen as an approach towards building dialogical connection with the previous English (re)translations of *XYJ*. The analysis of the prefaces of the abridged versions, namely RT₁, RT₂, MRT_{3a} and MFT₁, suggested that translators have all made deliberate omission of larger chunks of the body text, including the prose, verse and descriptions which were considered less important to the development of the plot. However, the reasons for manipulating the text have not been clearly stated. It seems that the translators, together with publishers of these editions deemed that translations of a shorter-length may easily appeal to Western mass readers.

Furthermore, the translators of *XYJ* became expressly visible due to their prefaces and afterwords and might possibly influence the readers' reading experience. As indicated in the prefaces, the translators' visibility in the English (re)translations of *XYJ* is likely to affect the readers' perception of this literary canon. The translators of FT₁, RT₁ and MFT₁ consciously presented the religious context to attract Western readers. By focusing on the battle scenes and the heroic figure of Monkey, along with sacrificing the text length, RT₂, MRT_{3a} and RT₅ attempted to meet the need of Western mass readers at that time and widen their general understanding of Chinese culture. It must be noted that the abridgments have distorted the message of the original to varying degrees, regardless of their popularity in the Anglophone world. In comparison, the full translations intended to present the diversity and inclusiveness of this Chinese classic to Westerners as fully as possible. However, the academic nature of the prefaces and afterword may come across as intimidating to general readers to some extent.

This study provides valuable insights into the nature of English (re)translations and the role of translators by sampling peritextual elements of *XYJ*'s English translations. However,

due to the limited scale of the corpus, it is difficult to generalize the overall situation of the English translations of Chinese literature. Thus, to gain a deeper and all-round understanding of the overseas spread of Chinese literature, further research could be conducted involving a larger corpus following the research paradigm in this case study.

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APPENDIX

English translations of *Xi You Ji*

| | Year | Publisher | Translator | Notes |
|----|-----------|---|-----------------|--|
| 1 | 1913 | Shanghai: Christian Literature Society's Depot | Timothy Richard | first translation |
| 2 | 1930 | London: John Murray | Helen M. Hayes | 1 st issue by this publisher |
| 3 | 1942 | London: George Allen & Unwin | Arthur Waley | 1 st issue by this publisher |
| 4 | 1943-1965 | London: George Allen & Unwin | Arthur Waley | 2 nd -7 th issue by this publisher |
| 5 | 1943 | New York: John Day | Arthur Waley | 1 st issue by this publisher |
| 6 | 1943 | New York: John Day | Arthur Waley | adaptation for children |
| 7 | 1944 | London: Readers' Union | Arthur Waley | 1 st issue by this publisher |
| 8 | 1958 | New York: Grove Press | Arthur Waley | 1 st issue by this publisher |
| 9 | 1961 | Harmondsworth: Penguin Books | Arthur Waley | 1 st issue by this publisher |
| 10 | 1964 | London: Paul Hamlyn | George Theiner | 1 st issue by this publisher |
| 11 | 1973-1994 | London: Penguin Books | Arthur Waley | 2 nd -3 rd issue by this publisher |
| 12 | 1973 | Glasgow & London: Blackie | Alison Waley | 1 st issue by this publisher |
| 13 | 1973 | New York: Bobbs-Merrill | Alison Waley | 1 st issue by this publisher |
| 14 | 1975 | London: Harper Collins | Alison Waley | 1 st issue by this publisher |
| 15 | 1977-1983 | Chicago: University of Chicago Press | Anthony C. Yu | 1 st issue by this publisher |
| 16 | 1982-1985 | Beijing: Foreign Languages Press | W.J. F. Jenner | 1 st issue by this publisher |
| 17 | 1987 | Torrance, CA: Heian International Publishing | Arthur Waley | 1 st issue by this publisher |
| 18 | 1992 | Boston: Shambhala Publications | David Kherdian | 1 st issue by this publisher |
| 19 | 1994 | New York: Grove Press | Arthur Waley | 2 nd issue by this publisher |
| 20 | 1994 | Hong Kong: The Commercial Press | W.J. F. Jenner | 1 st issue by this publisher |
| 21 | 2002 | Beijing: Foreign Languages Press | W.J. F. Jenner | 2 nd issue by this publisher |
| 22 | 2003 | Beijing: Foreign Languages Press | W.J. F. Jenner | 3 rd issue by this publisher |
| 23 | 2005 | Boston: Shambhala Publications | David Kherdian | 2 nd issue by this publisher |
| 24 | 2006 | Chicago: University of Chicago Press | Anthony C. Yu | 1 st issue by this publisher |
| 25 | 2008 | Tokyo/ Rutland, Vermont/ Singapore: Tuttle Publishing | Timothy Richard | 1 st issue by this publisher |
| 26 | 2011 | New York: Grove Press | Arthur Waley | 3 rd issue by this publisher |
| 27 | 2011 | Beijing: Foreign Languages Press | W.J. F. Jenner | 3 rd issue by this publisher |
| 28 | 2012 | Tokyo/ Rutland, Vermont/ Singapore: Tuttle Publishing | Timothy Richard | 2 nd issue by this publisher |
| 29 | 2012 | Chicago: University of Chicago Press | Anthony C. Yu | 2 nd issue by this publisher |
| 30 | 2021 | Penguin Books | Julia Lovell | 1 st issue by this publisher |