

The Circulation of a Chinese Classic – *A Dream of Red Mansions* in Western Countries

Yi Guo 5894794

MA Thesis

Literature Today

Supervisors: Birgit M. Kaiser (Utrecht University) & Anne S. Keijser (Leiden University)



STATEMENT: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Utrecht University defines "plagiarism" as follows:

If, in a thesis or some other paper, data or parts of a text produced by someone else are used without the source being identified, this counts as plagiarism. Among other things, plagiarism may entail the following:

- cutting and pasting text from digital sources such as encyclopedias or digital journals, without using quotations marks and references;*
- cutting and pasting any text from the internet without using quotation marks and references; copying from printed material such as books, journals or encyclopedias without using quotations marks and references;*
- using a translation of the above texts in your own work, without using quotations marks and references;*
- paraphrasing the above texts without using references. A paraphrase should never consist of merely replacing some words by synonyms;*
- using pictures, sound recordings, or test materials produced by others without references, so that it appears that this is one's own work;*
- copying work by other students and passing this off as one's own work. In case this is done with the other student's consent, the latter will be an accomplice to the plagiarism; even in cases where plagiarism is committed by one of the authors collaborating on a paper, the other authors are accomplices to plagiarism if they could or ought to have known that the first-mentioned author was committing plagiarism;*
- submitting papers acquired from a commercial source (such as an internet site offering summaries or complete essays) or written by someone else for payment.*

I have read the above definition of "plagiarism," and I hereby state that I have not committed plagiarism in the appended essay or paper.

Name: YI GUO

Student number: 5894794

Place: Utrecht

Date: 4 July 2017

Signature: Guo Yi

Contents

Introduction	3
Chapter 1: The reception of <i>A Dream of Red Mansions</i> in China	7
1.1 The Circulation of the Book in China	7
1.2 The Obscurity of the Book	17
Chapter 2: The Circulation of <i>A Dream of Red Mansions</i> in Western Countries	20
2.1 The circulation in the 19 th century	20
2.2 The Circulation in Modern Times	24
2.3 Factors Influencing the Circulation	28
Chapter 3: The Role of Translation in the Transnational Circulation	31
Conclusion	43
Work Cited	45

Introduction

A Dream of Red Mansions, known as the best of the Four Great Classical Novels in China, holds an extremely significant status in Chinese classic literature. It tells a story about the wax and wane of a traditional Chinese feudal family and how the fall of the family affects the characters' destiny. One of the most important plots is the tragic love story between two teenagers, Baoyu and Daiyu, who are separated by the feudal rituals and patriarchy. The main theme of the novel is the relation between appearance (色 se)¹ and reality, and “man maintains attachment to appearance through the agency of ‘feeling’ (情 qing)²” (Idema and Half 223). But “phenomenal reality is ultimately empty and that whatever exists is impermanent, so that attachment must inevitably result in suffering.” (Idema and Half 223). Raised up in a declining noble family in Qing Dynasty (1644-1912), the author Cao Xueqin (1715-1764) experiences the great honor as well as the endless suffering given by the feudal monarchy, and he writes down much of his personal reflections on life and society in the novel. One of those reflections that make the novel so great in Chinese history is that it shows early “anti-feudal and democratic awareness”. What’s more, Cao emphasizes the status and values of women. And as Cao is “a versatile poet and accomplished painter” (Cao Vol. I 23), his novel possesses high literary values. There are around 400 characters in the novel; each is with a distinctive personality. There are also around 100 Chinese traditional poems and parallel prose³ (骈文), one can find almost all the Chinese traditional literary genre in the novel. Moreover, Chinese

¹ The thought of 色 is the main philosophy in the novel. It is relating to “Nothingness”(空 kong see footnote 13) and called 色空 se kong. It refers to “phenomenal reality in its seductive aspect” and also “sex”. – Idema and Half, *A Guide to Chinese Literature*

² 情 qing means “feeling for the other sex; love; desire.” – Idema and Half, *A Guide to Chinese Literature*

³ A kind of rhythmical prose characterized by parallelism and ornate words appeared at the end of Han Dynasty (202 B.C.-220) and was extremely popular in the Northern and Southern Dynasties (420-589). Such literary form requires strict rules on both word number and rhythms, and frequently uses rhetorical flourish. So the text reads beautiful and melodious. However, to yield to the form, the content expression is often limited by the form, thus results in rigmarole.

scholars evaluate it as an encyclopedia of Chinese traditional culture. Because it contains various knowledge ranging from history, literature, religion, philosophy (Confucianism & Taoism) to Buddhism. Unfortunately, the first printed edition came out in 1792, 29 years after Cao died (Hawkes 15), before that the book circulated in manuscript copies, therefore some content in the original version is either incorrect or missing. After the first printed edition came out, the novel became extremely popular among both intellectuals and ordinary readers in China (Idema and Half 223). Based on this situation, scholarly study of the textual archaeology and criticism of this novel, known as Redology, appeared in the late Qing Dynasty. Adaptations in different categories including sequels, local operas came along successively. Until now, although due to different reasons, *A Dream of Red Mansions* is not as popular with ordinary readers as it was in Qing Dynasty, it still plays an important role in the Chinese literary field and is popular mostly with well-educated Chinese.

When the Opium War broke out in 1840, the seclusion policy of Qing Dynasty ended. China began to have contact with Western countries broadly and frequently. Hence in 1812, a missionary Robert Morrison (1782-1843) first introduced *A Dream of Red Mansions* to Western readers through translating several poems in the novel. In the next century, the novel was translated and introduced to Western countries in different translations. Until 1973, the first completed English translation (120 chapters), translated by a British sinologist David Hawkes (1923-2009) (chapter 1-80) together with his son-in-law John Minford (chapter 81-120), came out with a different title: *The Story of the Stone*. There are in total five volumes of translation, published by Penguin and listed in the Penguin Classics, appearing continuously from 1973 to 1986. This translation is the most widely circulated English version in Western countries till now. With the appearance of this translation, the scholarly study of the novel develops fast in Western countries (mostly in America and Britain). However, the circulation of the novel in Western countries is within minority circles, mostly within sinologists and

Chinese language learners. It seems that the values of literature and arts possess universality. Then what are the elements leading to this situation? How do the different translations of *A Dream of Red Mansions* play roles in the transnational circulation and what elements should be taken into consideration in judging their roles? So far, although some Western scholars have conducted research on the *A Dream of Red Mansions*, most of them are sinologists, and they focus on literary criticism usually from the perspective of comparative literature. Thus the studies are mainly done in several universities, mainly in America and Britain, who are in the leading place of Asian study. In recent years, even though along with the development of globalization, the study in the field of transnational/transcultural circulation in literature progresses rapidly, the study on a single text between Chinese and English translation decreases compared to the situation in the 20th century. And it is difficult to find an essay systematically analyzing the transnational reception of a text based on the translation of a Chinese traditional classic between these two languages. For these reasons, this essay tries to offer some research material in this field by analyzing one of the most successful Chinese traditional novels and tries to respond to those questions put forward earlier. Since this essay will only analyze the circulation of English translations, so the Western countries mentioned in this essay refer to English-speaking Western countries.

The essay will be arranged in the following sequence: Part I will give a brief introduction to the motivation, purpose of writing the thesis and the expected conclusion. Part II will then introduce the circulation of the book in China, explain its importance in Chinese literature and analyze what affects its circulation. Part III will first introduce the circulation of the book in Western countries since the 19th century, mainly focus on the development of English translation of the novel and how the translation accelerates the scholarly study of the book. It turns out that in the circulation of a book, translation plays an extremely important role. So part III will focus on the study of the role translation plays in the transnational

circulation of the novel. It will compare and analyze examples from two English translations of the Novel: *The Story of the Stone* translated by David Hawkes and *A Dream of Red Mansions* translated by Yang Xianyi & Gladys Yang. These two versions are often compared and discussed by linguistics because of the usage of different translation strategies. However, as Hawkes's version is widely recognized by Western scholars, the discussion on the translation strategy actually leads to an important but original question: What is the purpose of translation? The answer is transmission. So it is extremely important to study transnational literary text from the perspective of translation. Therefore, the essay will depend on David Damrosch's theory of world literature and Venuti Lawrence's theory on translation to find out how the translations affect the reception of *A Dream of Red Mansions*. At last, in Part V, it will summarize the previous analysis, clarify the logic of the whole essay and finally make a conclusion.

The reception of *A Dream of Red Mansions* in China

Chinese traditional fiction appears in Tang dynasty (618-907) and peaks in Ming (1368-1644) and Qing Dynasty (1644-1912). But in ancient China, poetry and prose are elite literature while fiction represents the civil culture for pastime. They often tell stories of legendary heroes or affection between gifted scholars and beautiful ladies, which are regarded by intellectuals as vulgar literature. Most of the stories end with happy ending or “bound by a conventional morality of reward and punishment” (Hightower 120). However, in Tang Dynasty, some intellectuals such as Han Yu (768-842) and Liu Zongyuan (773-819) began the Classical Prose Movement, which first put forward the idea that articles were responsible for transmitting Confucianism. This idea was later developed by an intellectual Zhou Dunyi (1017-1073) in the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127) into the theory of “文以载道⁴” (texts as a vehicle of the Way). It means that the texts should play the role of delivering ethics and the “Way” refers to Confucius ethics. Obviously, the content of those ancient fictions did not burden this mission, thus the fictions were looked down upon by the intellectuals. What is more, in ancient China, a limited amount of people was able to read and write, and most of them were men, only a very small portion of women from rich or noble families could learn to read. Therefore, lacking the favour from elite intellects, traditional Chinese fiction develops slow and without systematic structure and specific classification, not to mention the development of criticism.

The Circulation of the Book in China

In China, *A Dream of Red Mansions* is worshiped as “the summit of Chinese traditional culture” (Liang 63) and “the encyclopedia of Chinese feudal society” (Liang 63). Chinese writer Lu Xun (1881-1936) once said that “*A Dream of Red Mansions* breaks the traditional thoughts and

⁴ “文以载道” comes from Zhou Dunyi’s *Almanac*

writing style of Chinese fiction” (qtd. in Feng and Li 225). It is also the only novel that brings about the establishment of a school – Redology in Chinese history (Tong 36). Then why does this book hold such an important status and incredible reputation in Chinese literature? How does it circulate in China for hundreds of years?

As an influential novel in Chinese literature, *A Dream of Red Mansions*'s greatness mainly displays in the following respects. First of all, from the historical standpoint of Marxism, the book is a masterpiece which shows the consciousness of anti-feudalism by exposing the evil of feudal system. The novel was written in the year of Qianlong reign (1736-1796) in the Qing Dynasty when the commodity economy developed and the seeds of capitalism appeared. Although China was still one of the most powerful and wealthy countries in Asia at the time, the feudal system based on the agricultural economy and feudal landlord class faced the impact of a newly-born productive mode – commodity economy. With the development of the commodity economy, the humanistic thought (such as the pursuit for freedom) appears in China and affects the shackle of feudal domination on human nature. Instead of strictly deferring to the feudal rules restraining human nature, many progressives including Cao Xueqin started to think of the self-existence of human beings and insisted on liberating human nature (see Feng and Li 97). The reason why Cao Xueqin is among the early group generating the humanistic thoughts closely relates to his life experience. Cao was born in a feudal noble family which went through a prosperous time relying on the favor and trust of Emperor Kangxi (1662-1723) (see Feng and Li 22-23). But when Cao was born, his family had already had a tendency of downfall, and completely went broke when he was a teenager because his family lost the trust of the successor of the emperor Kangxi (see Feng and Li 22-23). Although so far no reliable documentary evidence proved that the book is the biography of Cao, his life experience definitely had a great influence on his writing. Because in the first chapter of *A Dream of Red Mansions*, the author writes in the third person: “In writing this story of the

Stone⁵ the author wanted to record certain of his past dreams and illusions, but he tried to hide the true facts of his experience by using the allegory of the jade⁶ of ‘Spiritual Understanding’.” (Cao & Gao 1). It indicates that the book tells “true facts”, but it has to hide them by telling the story in an imaginary dynasty. Thus, it is reasonable to say that both the subjective personal experience and objective social environment made Cao Xueqin realize the evil and cruelty of feudalism and then drove him to go against feudalism and admire humanistic thoughts. He saw through the crisis lying under the illusion of prosperity in reality through disclosing the extravagant and putrid life of Rongguo family and Ningguo family, unmasking the distortion of human nature under the oppression of feudal system. The love relationship between Baoyu and Daiyu becomes a sacrifice of feudal rituals. No matter how much they love each other, they cannot go against their elders’ order and decide their marriage. For 5000 taels, Yingchun⁷’s father forces her to marry a villain who tortured her to death. When she goes back home and cries about her experience to her auntie, she says “this is fate” (Cao & Gao 1759).

Cao also satirizes how the monarchy regime shackles human desires and dominates human beings. When Yuanchun⁸ becomes the imperial consort and visits her parents, all the elders including her parents and grandma have to kneel in front of her, because she is no longer

⁵ The stone actually refers to the jade. The novel begins with a fairy tale. It says a stone was left behind by the goddess Nü Wa when she melted down the rocks to repair the sky. The stone feels like he was not fully made use of. Meanwhile, he was obsessed with the prosperous mortal world, so he begged a Buddhist monk and Taoist priest to bring him to the mortal world to enjoy the happiness. The monk and the priest agreed and made its spirit a man – Baoyu, its body a jade to accompany Baoyu since he was born. Thus the stone experienced the sweets and bitters of being human. – Cao Xueqin, *A Dream of Red Mansions*

⁶ see footnote 1

⁷ one of the 12 ladies described in the novel, they are noble ladies in Rongguo and Ningguo family with distinctive personalities, but all end up with tragedy because of the constraint of the feudal system. Jia Yingchun’s father asks her to marry an atrocious man for 5000 taels even though the elder family members have already known the moral quality the man. Because it is an unalterable principle that the daughter has to listen to her father. – Cao Xueqin, *A Dream of Red Mansions*

⁸ one of the 12 ladies. She is separated from her family at a very young age and sent to the imperial palace to be a candidate for the emperor’s wife. Her fate is interdependently related to the fate of the two families. When she was selected to be the noble consort of the emperor, the two families’ power peak the summit. But as the two families’ power decrease, her status in the palace is threatened. At last, the death of Yuanchun signifies the death of the two families. – Cao Xueqin, *A Dream of Red Mansions*

their daughter or granddaughter, but the representative of supreme monarchical power. For thousands of years in China, since Wu-di (141–86 BC) of the Han Dynasty⁹, the rulers of each feudal dynasty take advantage of and keep intensifying the Confucianism as the Orthodox culture to strengthen their ruling. Learning Confucian classics and taking the imperial competitive examination to be the official becomes the only and the highly respected “right track” of fulfilling individual values. However, in the book, Cao Xueqin creates a character Baoyu who rebels against the orthodoxy. He loves reading and learning but hates reading Confucian classics, he looks down upon taking the imperial examination and is not interested in being an official, which makes him an alien in the eyes of people around at the time.

What is more, Cao emphasizes the status and values of women. In Chinese traditional culture, people always look up to men and down on women, women existing as appendants to men in the patriarchal society. But in *A Dream of Red Mansions*, Cao shows his respect for women in many ways. In the first chapter, Cao says, “I suddenly recalled all the girls I had known...all of them surpassed me in behavior and understanding; that I, shameful to say, for all my masculine dignity, fell short of the gentler sex” (Cao & Gao 1). In the book, the most capable person who is in charge of all the general affairs in the big family is a woman – Wang Xifeng¹⁰. The first one in the family who is aware of the family’s downfall is a girl – Jia Tanchun¹¹. The most talented poet in the family is a girl – Lin Daiyu.

⁹ In 134 BC, a politician called Dong Zhongshu suggested Wu-di to carry out a policy “rejecting all kinds of theoretical schools but Confucius,” since then Confucius became the only assessment criteria for being the official. – Wei Wenhua, *The Bibliography of Dong Zhongshu*

¹⁰ one of the 12 ladies. Unlike other ladies, Wang is raised up as a boy, who is very smart and competent. She is in charge of all the affairs in Rongguo family. Cao Xueqin describes her capability as “so resourceful and astute that not a man in ten thousand is a match for her.” – Cao Xueqin, *A Dream of Red Mansions*

¹¹ one of the 12 ladies. Jia Tanchun is a capable lady comparable to Wang Xifeng. However, she is not taken seriously enough in the Rongguo family because she is the child of a concubine. In the end, she replaces the child of a rani to a leader of a minority nationalities in the border areas and becomes the sacrifice of political interest. – Cao Xueqin, *A Dream of Red Mansions*

However, according to the historical standpoint of Marxism, due to the immature development of commodity economy and humanistic thoughts, the progressiveness on anti-feudalism in the novel is not thorough enough. Because almost all the characters do not struggle to fight against the system, they cannot escape the persecution of feudal system, and they end up with their “fate” arranged by the system.

Other than the progressiveness in anti-feudalism and respecting women, *A Dream of Red Mansions* possesses values in many respects ranging from history, philosophy, literature to architecture and traditional Chinese medicine. It lives up to its reputation as “an encyclopedia of Chinese feudal society” and offers abundant material for study in different fields. For instance, in chapter 17, Cao describes the structure and scenery of a classical Chinese garden – Grand View Garden. Many characters in the novel take Chinese medicine, the prescriptions given are usually from ancient medical text or are made according to Chinese medical principals. In chapter 3, Baochai¹² talks about Daiyu’s prescription: “there was too much ginseng and cinnamon in it. Although they stimulate the vital forces, you shouldn’t have anything too hot either...the first essential is to calm your liver and improve your digestion. Once the fire in your liver is quelled so that it can’t overcome the ‘earth’ element your digestion will be better and you’ll be able to assimilate your food.” (Cao & Gao 911) As mentioned earlier, Cao was born in a feudal noble family. In its flourishing period, Cao’s forefathers once accompanied Emperor Kangxi for four of his six inspection tours of the south. Therefore, Cao learned about many imperial and traditional rituals from his forefather and recorded them in the book, especially in chapter 18 when Yuanchun is selected as imperial consort and visits her parents on the Feast of Lanterns. This chapter contains specific descriptions of rituals on the process of welcoming imperial family members and even gives detail on the costumes of the

¹² one of the 12 ladies. Baochai is the representative of exemplarily sticking to feudal rituals. So she is very welcomed by the elders in the noble family and pointed to be the wife of Baoyu. However, Baoyu loves Daiyu, so their marriage is meant to be a tragedy. – Cao Xueqin, *A Dream of Red Mansions*

characters, which are precious materials for Chinese folklore studies. As an imperial consort, Yuanchun shows up in this way: “several pairs of eunuchs carrying dragon banners, others with phoenix fans, pheasant plumes and ceremonial insignia, as well as gold censers burning Imperial incense. Next came a curved-handled yellow umbrella on which were embroidered seven phoenixes...Last of all, borne slowly forward by eight eunuchs, came a gold-topped palanquin embroidered with phoenixes” (Cao & Gao 338). It describes the complicated steps and decorations needed for the imperial trip, through which manifests the strictness of feudal hierarchy.

Instead of worshiping Confucianism like most other intellectuals in the same era, Cao highly admires the philosophy of Taoism and accepts “Nothingness”¹³ in Taoism and “Lust and Emptiness”¹⁴ in Buddhism (see Feng and Li 88). It may be because of his personal experience, Cao understands life and death, wealth and poverty, love and friendship differently. “Nothingness” and “Lust and Emptiness” intercommunicate with each other in philosophy, they all contend that everything in the world is illusory and impermanent, only when one considers everything as nothing, will he/she be free from the status of senselessness and obsessiveness (see Feng and Li 88). Such reclusive philosophy runs through the whole story of *A Dream of Red Mansions* and reflects particularly in a poem *All Good Things Must End* in the novel. It says:

“All men long to be immortals,
Yet to riches and rank each aspires;
The great ones of old, where are they now?
Their graves are a mass of briars.

All men long to be immortals,
Yet silver and gold they prize
And grub for money all their lives

¹³ Nothingness is a core theory of Taoism. It holds that everything in the world experiences a process from nothing to being, and then to nothing again. Everything one experiences in the world is just an illusion, like a dream.

¹⁴ Lust in Buddhism means everything is existing objectively in the world. Emptiness is a concept meaning that the essence of Lust is nothing, illusory because one cannot possess Lust forever.

Till death seals up their eyes.

All men long to be immortals,
 Yet dote on the wives they've wed,
 Who swear to love their husband evermore?
 But remarry as soon as he's dead.

All men long to be immortals,
 Yet with getting sons won't have done.
 Although fond parents are legion,
 Who ever saw a really filial son?" (Cao & Gao 21-22)

This poem lists things that important to human lives: money, fame, love and affection, and emphasizes that they are all illusory, when one is dead, nothing left to him. So only if one gives up all the existence, can he/she be living in an ideal and perfect state. However, it is controversy whether “Nothingness” and “Lust and Emptiness” are the main philosophies Cao Xueqin wants to express. He Qifang¹⁵ deems that it is undeniable that these philosophies exist in the novel, but they do not indicate Cao Xueqin's negative attitude towards living. On the contrary, Cao wants to remind people not to be bound by the material but to focus on the pursuit of beautiful things such as love and freedom (see He 134). Actually, Taoism was a philosophy that many intellectuals chose to believe when they were frustrated in reality—mainly in the official career. Some of them would choose seclusions, such as the famous poet Tao Yuanming in the Eastern Jin Dynasty (317-420) and Wang Wei in the Tang Dynasty (618-907); some of them chose to become monks or Taoist priests, for example, the poet Jia Dao in Tang Dynasty (618-907). They were either indifferent to fame and wealth, and could not tolerate the dark officialdom or see through the sweets and bitters of life. Considering of Cao Xueqin's personal experience, it is natural for him to be affected by Taoism and the “Lust and Emptiness”, especially at the end of the story, Baoyu chose to become a monk. But it does not mean that he encourages the readers to see the world in a negative way and escape from it, the point is even though the mortal world is full of misery, it is still attractive, for the wonderful experience of

¹⁵ He Qifang (1912-1977), a Chinese poet, writer and redologist.

love and freedom. Just like if the Stone (Baoyu) never becomes human, it will not be able to experience the goodness of life.

As a classical literary masterpiece, this fiction contains a variety of scenes of daily life and hundreds of characters, each character with distinctive personality and image. Almost everyone can have the emotional resonance from one character or more; everyone can find similar personalities in the characters. This is not only because Cao's personal experience makes it possible for him to meet people in the different social classes, but because he is good at observation and expression. Cao creates character features mainly through dialogue and the description of appearance and psychology. One of the most successful descriptions is the show-up of Wang Xifeng in chapter 3: "Just then they heard peals of laughter from the back courtyard and a voice cried: 'I'm late in greeting our guest from afar!' Daiyu thought with surprise, 'The people here are so respectful and solemn, they all seem to be holding their breath. Who can this be, so boisterous and pert?'" (Cao & Gao 50) Just several sentences demonstrate plenty of information about Wang Xifeng. She is extroverted and bold, different and important. Her status must be higher than other people so that she can be "boisterous and pert."

In conclusion, the book contains a great deal of knowledge on Chinese classical architecture, traditional Chinese medicine, traditional Chinese opera, traditional handicraft art and so on, offering a great deal of information on Chinese traditional culture. The book is so great that its historic progressiveness and artistic and research values are unprecedented in Chinese literary history (see He 61). Meanwhile, the pursuit of freedom and love, the admiration of human nature reflected in the book give it vitality and realistic significance in contemporary society.

After *A Dream of Red Mansion* came out, it became popular very soon in each social class. With the appearance of printed edition, the novel became easy to buy, thus in the years of Qianlong (1736-1796) and Jiaqing (1796-1821) reign, almost every household has one book

(see Li 11). This might be exaggerating, but it shows the prevalence of the book at the time. Then a lot of sequels came out, until the early republican period of China (1912-1949), there were about 40 sequels and countless adaptations in the form of traditional opera and comic dialogue. (Feng and Li 131-132). Owing to the various forms of performance, *A Dream of Red Mansion* spreads on a large scale. In the meantime, intellectuals were no longer satisfied with appreciating the book, they began to conduct textual research, write annotation and criticism, such as Hu Shi¹⁶'s criticism of regarding the novel as Cao's bibliography and another methodology which is to study the novel by comparing the plots to actual historical issues (see Tong 43). Gradually a scholarly school named Redology comes into being in the late Qing Dynasty and develops extremely fast in the 20th century (see Tong 42). Based on different research method, the Redology divided into two schools – Old Redology and New Redology, then a series discussion on the study of the book began (see Tong 42). Redologists established many periodicals such as *Journal of A Dream of Red Mansions*, held a series of seminars (Feng and Li 139). The Redology develops to an unprecedentedly grand occasion. Until now, the development of Redology has already been very mature and many Redologists spring up. Merely in 2014, there are more than 60 monographs published in China (Du 2). Although they belong to different schools and hold different viewpoints with different research method, they all devote to the development of the research.

It is impossible to count the amount of editions and circulations of *A Dream of Red Mansions* that have been published since modern times in China. But according to statistics from the People's Literature Publishing House, till 2015, just this one publishing house had already published more than 7 million sets of the book, among which the edition of 1982 had already been sold more than 4 million sets (Zhang, "Tencent"). In 1987, a TV series made and

¹⁶ Hu Shi (1891-1962), a very important intellectual in Modern China, who is famous for leading the Vernacular Movement and the New Culture Movement, which start the modern Chinese literature.

broadcasted by CCTV popularized the story to thousands of households. The TV series is true to the original story and has been rebroadcasted for more than a thousand of times since then. The TV series wins public praise and has become a classic itself. In 2004, the Ministry of Education of China formulated and promulgated “The Curriculum Standards of Ordinary High-school”, in the appendix, it lists *A Dream of Red Mansions* as one of the recommended classical readings (People’s Education Press¹⁷). Responding to the policy of the government, publishing houses bring abbreviated versions, versions with illustration and versions for teenagers of the book to the market in succession.

However, even though *A Dream of Red Mansions* gains recognition and reputation, the degree of dissemination of the original book is far less than the popularization of the story in it. Thanks to different forms of pop culture, such as the opera, movie and TV series, many Chinese audiences know about the stories in the book, but only a small portion actually read the book. According to a web survey made by a publishing house: Guangxi Normal University Press, *A Dream of Red Mansions* takes up the first place on the list of “Books that You Cannot Finish Reading” (Guan Cha¹⁸). This indicates that the book is too difficult to understand without certain knowledge of classical Chinese and Chinese traditional culture, even though the reader is well-educated. The book belongs to the genre of high culture. Then what are the specific reasons that make the book hard to read?

¹⁷ [The source of this citation](#)

¹⁸ [Guan Cha](#)

The Obscurity of the Book

As mentioned earlier, *A Dream of Red Mansions* was written in the 18th century. Before the May Fourth Movement¹⁹, most of the Chinese literature works except for some fictions are written in classical Chinese, which is a written language and not easy to understand even for not well-educated people in ancient China. In 1917, a Chinese intellectual Hu Shi published an article on *New Youth*, a journal established and developed by a group of intellectuals who studied abroad and received western democratic thoughts in the Republican period of China, symbolizing the beginning of the Vernacular Chinese Movement (see Zhang and Du 50). From then on, more and more intellectuals including Lu Xun, Fu Sinian, and Yu Pingbo begin to publish articles on the journal to support the innovation of classical Chinese (see Zhang and Du 52). Through their efforts, in 1920, the then Ministry of Education had to announce the vernacular Chinese as the national language (see Zhang and Du 55). Then with the improvement in several decades, the language used in modern China gradually comes into being. Actually, the language used in *A Dream of Red Mansions* is not classical Chinese because it is written in spoken language and easy for most people to read (except for some poetry in the book) at the time, which explains why, in the year of Qianlong (1736-1796) and Jiaqing (1796-1821) reign, “almost every household has one book” (See Li 11). But after hundreds of years, the spoken language in Qing dynasty is quite different from modern Chinese. Thus, for present readers, the narrative method and expressions in the book are classical, many expressions are no longer used or replaced by other words. For instance, 放诞 (Cao 39) (“fangdan” meaning “unbridled”), which has the same meaning as 放肆 (fangsi), is no longer

¹⁹ The May Fourth Movement is an anti-feudal and anti-imperialistic patriotic movement happened in China in 1919. It is provoked by youthful students and then supported by workers in the form of demonstration. During the movement, a Chinese intellectual Chen Duxiu establishes a paper called *New Youth* in 1917, in which calls upon people to learn about Western science and democracy, and learn to write in modern vernacular Chinese.

used today and replaced by 放肆. And expression like 天气冷将上来(Cao 91) (“tianqi leng jiang shanglai” means “the weather is getting cold”) is replaced by 天气渐冷 (tianqi jian leng) with the same meaning. As these expressions (放诞, 天气冷将上来) are no longer used in the modern Chinese, they may cause misunderstandings in reading for the modern Chinese readers.

However, the most obscure part of the book does not consist in the language, but in the content. Cao lives in the Qing Dynasty, which was around more than 300 years ago. The complex rules of the feudal rank system lie in almost every respects of daily life in the book. For example, the description of the architectural structure (e.g. Cao 37), the costume (e.g. Cao 403), the process of having meal (e.g. Cao 46-47) and the rituals (e.g. Cao 235-237) are intended to show the extravagant life of the family members and the strict rank system, but they became obscure content for today’s Chinese readers to read because those things are no longer existing in modern life. It is hard to fully understand these contents unless one is interested in it and does some research. Moreover, the book contains almost all the traditional literary genre (see Huang 164), the poems in chapter 38 are up to 15, not to mention the number in the whole book. Writing poetry is a common recreation for the young ladies living in the Da Guan Garden. The poems either reflect the personality of the characters or imply their destiny, so it is essential to know the meaning of the poems. The ancient Chinese poetry is difficult to understand, and Cao uses rhetorical devices and literary quotations that from the classics or ancient works in the poetry (which will be analyzed later in part III), making the poetry more complex. Besides, maybe because of the anti-feudalism property of the book, in order to avoid political sensitivity of Qing government, Cao sets the story in an imaginary dynasty beginning with a mythology. The mythology not only explains the antecedents and indicates the consequences of the story, but also expresses Cao’s philosophical thinking (“Nothingness” and “Lust and Emptiness”). The philosophical thinking of Taoism and Buddhism runs through the whole story and mainly shows in the first chapter via dialogues between a Taoist and a monk

(Cao 2-10). The dialogues include a great deal of expressions in Taoist and Buddhist phrase, which is another elusive part of the book. Furthermore, some plot of *A Dream of Red Mansions* is either eliminated or lost during writing and transmission, which causes problems in comprehension. During writing, Cao makes corrections and deletions of some plot, but he does not finish corresponding modifications. For instance, according to the redologists' research, Cao deletes part of the story of an important character – Qin Keqing, the story deleted is about the adultery between her and her father-in-law (Feng and Li 39). The exposure of the behavior is the main cause of her death. Cao deletes this part for unknown reasons, but he does not find a perfect way to mend the plot holes until he dies. So in the book, the whole story related to Qin Keqing is abrupt and strange. Not only that, the book initially spreads in manuscripts. This method cannot ensure the accuracy of the content in copy, so until now, there are 11 known copies (Feng and Li 57). Most of the content in the copies are the same, but some of the copies lost one or more plot (Feng and Li 58). For example, the copy made in Jiayu year (1754-1755) has an explanation on how does the stone turn into a jade in the mythology. This part is missing in all other copies, thus affecting the logic of the story.

In conclusion, although, due to the limitation of the era, *A Dream of Red Mansions* is dissociated with modern life in some respect and not easy to understand for some readers, it is still a great work regarding its literary and cultural values. It circulates in China for hundreds of years and influences generations after generations. It is also scarce in China for a fiction generating the establishment of a school, which shows its important status and research values in China.

The Circulation of *A Dream of Red Mansions* in Western Countries

The circulation in the 19th century

The process of *A Dream of Red Mansions* transmitting from China to the Western countries is quite long. According to the established research, the first person introducing this book to Europe is a missionary Robert Morrison (1782-1843), he translates several poems in the book into English in 1812 (Y. Wang 43). Later in 1830, John Frances Davis (1795-1890), the then governor of Hong Kong, also translates several poems and sentences of the book (Y. Wang 44). Meanwhile, the first published Western criticism appears. In the 1840s, a Pomeranian missionary Karl Gützlaff (1803-1851) mistakes Baoyu as a female and regards him as a spoiled and vain lady (Minford 308). He deems that the book fully shows “the coarseness of the author’s mind” and contains “scarcely anything but the tittle tattle of the female apartments,” the only benefit is that one can learn “the spoken language of higher classes in the northern province (of China) ...” (qtd. in Minford 308). Karl’s comment is not only biased but also incorrect. What makes him come to such a conclusion remains unknown, but the possible reasons may be the author just read some fragments of the original book because, in the criticism, he only summarizes the synopsis of the first seven chapters and describes several scenes of the plot (see Li & Fan 101). But most likely he lacks enough understanding of classical Chinese. Karl mixed Jia Yucun²⁰ with Jia Zheng²¹ (see Li & Fan 101). Nevertheless, Karl is among the Westerners who writes the most critics on Chinese fiction before First Opium War (1840-1842). He divides Chinese fiction into two categories: historical fiction and

²⁰ Jia Yucun is an important character in the novel though he only appears in several chapters. He goes to Jinling (present-day Nanjing) with Daiyu as her teacher, and then he is recommended by Jia Zheng to be the official. He is a representative of the ancient Chinese intellectuals who are eager to be officials, and he is described by Cao Xueqin as a reflection of feudal officialdom corruption. – Cao Xueqin, *A Dream of Red Mansions*

²¹ Jia Zheng is the father of Baoyu, who is a feudalism protector. – Cao Xueqin, *A Dream of Red Mansions*

common fiction, *A Dream of Red Mansions* belongs to the second category (see Y. Wang 46) because it contains no serious and orthodox content, which means they do not fit the criterion of Confucianism. Like many other Chinese ancient intellectuals, Karl takes Confucianism as the orthodox thought, which may explain why he ignores the progressiveness of the novel and thinks it merely contains “the tittle tattle of the female apartments” and Cao Xueqin’s mind is coarse. It represents a part of Chinese intellectuals’ criticism on the novel. It is due to the limitation of recognition at the time, which means that most intellectuals at the time are without anti-feudal consciousness. Also, Karl’s opinion represents the mainstream of comments on the traditional Chinese fiction as well as *A Dream of Red Mansions*, for China is an unfamiliar and mysterious country to Westerners at the time and his comments are the very limited material that they can read. But this situation changes as more and more Westerners are interested in this book.

The first comparatively integrated translation of the book appears in 1892 when the British consul in Macao – Bencraft Joly (1857-1898) translated 56 chapters out of 120 into English (Hu 47). The translation consists of two volumes, the first one, published in 1892 by Kelly & Walsh Ltd. in Hong Kong, contains chapter 1-24 while the second volume, published in 1893 by Typographia Commercial in Macao, contains chapter 25-56 (see Y. Wang 43). In the preface of the translation, Joly says that the motivation to translate the book is that he has a confusing experience when reading the book and he hopes that his translation can help those who study Chinese at the time or in the future (see Hu 47). He also admits that his translation is deficient in many ways especially in the poetry translation (see Hu 47). Joly’s explanation may reflect a common problem for Western readers in reading the book: the novel is quite difficult to understand, even for Joly, who is capable of reading and translating the original text. Shortly after the translation comes out, a British missionary Joseph Edkins (1823-1905) publishes a review of volume I on *The China Review* with the penname E. J. E. He praises that

Joly abbreviates or even cuts out some despicable content of the original book in the translation (see Y. Wang 43). He also criticizes the author (Cao Xueqin) has no “ethical sympathies” (qtd. in Minford 308). What is “despicable content”? Edkins gives the explanation: “What the pornographic sculptures and mural decorations of Pompeii are, compared with the reverence-inspiring nudities of classic Greece, such are the scenes of Chinese Zenana life which the Red-Chamber Dream depicts, as compared with the moral realism of the ordinary Chinese novel.” (qtd. in Minford 309) Whether Joly adapts some content in translation for the purpose of eliminating immoral depiction is unknown, it is surprising that Edkins defines *A Dream of Red Mansions* as a pornographic work and denies its literary values. Although the book includes obscenity, it has no detailed description of a pornographic scene or regards obscenity description as purpose. Hence it is unreasonable to delineate the descriptions as pornographic sculptures. One possibility for Edkins to give such a comments, according to Wang Yan, is that in the 19th century, both in China and in Western countries, people are conservative towards sex and tend to be intolerant to obscenity depiction (Y. Wang 52). But this viewpoint is not valid enough. Because Herbert Giles’s comment on the novel strongly questions Wang’s inference. Giles is a British consul working with Joly in Macau; he thinks that “the plot (of the fiction) is worked out with a completeness worthy of Fielding, while the delineation of character...recalls the best efforts of the greatest novelists of the West...Reduced to its simplest terms, it is an original and effective love story...full of humorous and pathetic episodes of everyday life, and interspersed with short poems of high literary finish.” (qtd. in Minford 309) Apparently, Giles appreciates this fiction and speaks highly of its literary values. So it is not persuasive enough to say that Edkins’s criticism on the book’s obscenity description results from average people’s conservative attitudes towards sex, for Giles living at the same time does not hold the same opinion. Edkins’ conservative attitude is personal and may be affected by his clergy identity. Moreover, Edkins thinks that “the author (Cao Xueqin)’s mind is utterly

devoid of any trace of Confucian ethics, and conscience is to him a factor absolutely of no account...He works the complicated story of his book without a single lofty ideal and without any moral purpose whatever...Chinese read the Red-Chamber Dream because of its wickedness...the Red-Chamber Dream is Zolaism in its ugliest developments.” (qtd. in Minford 308). As a British missionary who receives the Western education, it is unexpected that he judges a book by whether it fulfils the standard of Confucian ethics. Regarding this, one can find that the criticism still does not jump out of the limitation of recognition half a century ago as Karl did, Edkins still judges Cao Xueqin negatively for his mind “is utterly devoid of any trace of Confucian ethics.” As mentioned earlier, Cao Xueqin criticizes the Confucian ethics that utilized and intensified by the feudal monarchical rule to control people. However, it is possible that the Western readers like Edkins and Karl at the time lack of anti-feudal thoughts either. What is more, both Edkins and Giles affirms that “as a panorama of Chinese social life” (qtd. in Minford 309), the fiction includes the specific description of Chinese social life. Therefore, it is “of the utmost value to the foreign student, and should be carefully studied by all who, for their sins, are condemned to penal servitude upon the written language of China...” (qtd. in Minford 309). This situation, which is regarding reading the novel as a way of learning Chinese traditional culture and Chinese, remains the motivation for most ordinary Western readers to read the book until recent years.

In conclusion, the circulation of the book in Western countries in 19th century shows the following features: firstly, instead of sinologists or linguists, it is mainly Western officials and missionaries who translate and review the fiction, so both the translations and the criticisms are often subjective and with many mistakes; secondly, the main purpose of translating the book is to help foreign people learn Chinese or learn about Chinese social life, so the translations are incomplete, and the criticisms do not focus on its literary values; thirdly,

although the book is translated and introduced to westerners, it actually only has influence limited on the westerners in China and does not walk out to Western countries.

The Circulation in Modern Times

Entering the 20th century, the translation and study of *A Dream of Red Mansions* experiences a flourishing period and develops fast in Western countries. In 1929, a translation (named *Dream of the Red Chamber*) translated by C.C. Wang is published by Doubleday in New York and Routledge in London respectively (Hu 48). Although the translation is still an incomplete (only includes chapter 1-39) version, it is the first time that the book is actually introduced to Western countries, because the English translations and criticisms made by missionaries and colonist officials earlier in the 19th century are published mainly in Chinese publications in Hong Kong and Macao. The first completed English translation (120 chapters) appears in 1973-1986 (X. Wang 18). It is translated by a British sinologist David Hawkes (1923-2009) (chapter 1-80), together with his son-in-law John Minford (chapter 81-120), with a different title *The Story of the Stone*. The translation is published by Penguin with five volumes and listed in the Penguin classics. As the most widely transmitted and recognized version in Western countries, this translation receives high compliments. It wins acclaim in the Western academic circle. American sinologist Jordan D. Paper praises it as “several major feats of translation” (qtd. in L. Y. Wang 200). British sinologist Gladys Yang thinks that Hawkes makes the book easy to read for Western readers with excellent English (qtd. in L. Y. Wang 201). American sinologist Howard Goldblatt recognizes it as an authoritative, exquisite and elegant translation that lives up to almost all the sinologists’, critics’ and audiences’ expectation (qtd. in L. Y. Wang 201). The translation becomes the most frequently used source material for the academic study of *A Dream of Red Mansions* as well as the most popular version for regular readers in Western countries (L. Y. Wang 203). On most booking retailers all over the world (including Amazon,

Bol.com), it is the only English version available. The importance of this translation shows in several respects. First of all, it is the first completed English version which allows Western audience for the first time have an overall understanding of the original story. Secondly, David Hawkes is a sinologist who has a good command of both English and Chinese. With the experience of studying at Peking University (X. Wang 18), he learns much about Chinese traditional culture. Therefore, he has a good understanding of the Chinese context; his translation is not only elegant but also faithful. Last but not the least, in translating the novel, Hawkes sticks to “one abiding principle” – “to translate everything – even puns” (Cao Vol. I 46). But he also admits that many subtleties (“symbols, word-plays and secret patterns”) have vanished in his translation (Cao Vol. I 45). For the purpose of “convey to the reader even a fraction of the pleasure this Chinese novel has given me” (Cao Vol. I 46), he generally uses domestication in translation. For example, in chapter 3, when Daiyu visits her uncle (Jia Zheng), he is not at home. Her aunt tells her that “你舅舅斋戒去了,” (meaning “Your uncle is observing a fast today.”) “斋戒²²” (zhai jie) is a Buddhist expression, which means to observe a fast. Hawkes translates it as “retreat²³” (Cao Vol. I 97), According to Oxford Learners Dictionaries, retreat here should take the meaning of “to escape to a place that is quieter or safer,” referring to the spiritual retreat of Christian. Although “zhai jie” and “retreat” have different meaning, retreat is better for Western readers to understand since most Westerners believe in Christian instead of Buddhism. In chapter 21, Jia Lian²⁴ says: “等我性子上来, 把这醋罐子打个稀烂” (Cao 288), which literally means that “when I lose my temper, I will break this vinegar jar.”

²² “zhai jie” is a kind of ritual in Buddhism in China, when someone is in zhai jie, he has to have a bath, reduce recreation, forbid eating meat and sexual behaviour to show piety and respect to the Buddha. — [Emei Buddhism](#)

²³ “Retreat” in Christian is different from “observing a fast” in Buddhism in China. In Christian, retreat means “an important part of spiritual formation”, it is “time consciously set aside for God, a change of focus, a deliberate act of stepping outside of normal routine by withdrawing (not running away) from the noise and pressures”. – from [Northumbria community](#)

²⁴ Wang Xifeng’s husband

Hawkes translates it as “when I get my temper up I’m going to lay into that jealous bitch and break every bone in her body” (Cao Vol. I 429). In Chinese culture, “醋罐子” (vinegar jar) is a metaphor for jealous emotion, specifically between men and women in love. Instead of translating “醋罐子” as vinegar jar, Hawkes’s translation explains the meaning of this metaphor, so it is much easier for Western readers to read and understand, which generates its circulation. However, some Chinese scholars criticize that adopting domestication makes this translation lose some values in academic studies (see Q. H. Wang 100) because it does not keep the local culture to the maximum and may lead to misunderstandings. So even though foreignization may affect the readability and fluency of the original text sometimes, it is better to adopt this strategy for it delivers the culture in the original text.

With the appearance of many mature-translations, the study of *A Dream of Red Mansions* also develops fast. Mostly, it concentrates in the field of comparative literature. In 1961, the publication of a Chinese scholar Wu Shichang – *On the Red Chamber Dream* by Oxford University Press “marks a turning point” of the study of the novel in Western countries. Because “for the first time, a serious Chinese scholarly study of the novel (albeit from a textual, not a literary, point of view), embodying important new findings and insights, appeared in English before it appeared in Chinese” (Minford 310). Seven years later, another Chinese-American Scholar C. T. Hsia publishes a criticism which “talks in the language that Western readers of fiction had come to expect” and “writes in much the same way a critic like John Bayley writes about Dostoevsky” (Minford 311). This comment means that unlike scholarly study inside China, which mainly focuses on the textual criticism, the study of the novel outside is “beyond the solution of textual criticism” and “an unresolved clash of attitudes in the author” (Hsia 262). The changes in the critical methodology of *A Dream of Red Mansions* is not a single case. Since the early 20th century, in America, the study of classical Chinese fiction is traditional textual scholarship – “the search for early and different editions, decisions on

emendations, the identification and verification of authorship...” (J. Wang 255-256), which is the same within mainland China. In the sixties, as New Criticism sweeps over America academe, the study of traditional Chinese fiction also faces a major change and switches to literary criticism (see J. Wang 255). After that, the scholarly study of the novel becomes more varied, including narrative methodology, rhetorical devices, gender issue, philosophy and portrait fate, to exemplify some essays: “Love and Compassion in *Dream of the Red Chambers*.” T. Hsia, “On Not Becoming a Heroine: Lin Dai-Yu and Cui Ying-Ying” by Ann Waltner and “Patterns of Fate in *Dream of the Red Chamber*.” Along with the development of the transnational literary study, the critical canon of Chinese traditional fiction changes, promoting the study of the novel into a new time. In America, “throughout the 1950s and in the mid-1960s, the requirements of formal realism served as the prevailing aesthetic cannon”, thus “the Western critics of the mixed narrative mode in Chinese fiction is generally negative” (J. Wang 257). Some Western scholars like Arthur Waley and John Bishop condemn Chinese literary taste and dismiss *A Dream of Red Mansion* as a “distasteful didactic framework” (J. Wang 257) and “a strange casing of supernatural” (J. Wang 257). As transnational culture exchange increase, controversies on the problem of evaluative criticism become more violent. According to a Chinese scholar Jing Wang, the controversy quiets down with a convincing summary provided by Eugene Eoyang. After that, “critics became more aware of the importance of examining the cultural context of literary texts and studying the interaction between their own cultural horizon” because “the fear of wearing the stigma of ‘cultural bias’ has probably cured many critics.” (J. Wang 259) The result of the controversy is both delightful and depressing. On the one hand, it is a great progress for the scholars to take the cultural context into consideration when dealing with transnational literary text. Because the cultural context is the soil for the sprouting and growing of the text, leaving the soil, it loses much of its values. Hence criticism that breaking away from the soil is often subjective and even incorrect. On the other

hand, it is disappointing to see that the fear of “wearing the stigma of ‘cultural bias’” impedes the development of literary criticism. This situation might also be one of the reasons that the study of *A Dream of Red Mansions* is cooling off gradually in the late 20th century in Western countries.

Factors Influencing the Circulation

Although the translation and criticism of the fiction grow fast in the 20th century, the book has limited influence in Western countries and is popular in minority groups – mostly Western sinologists and language learners. Chinese-American Scholar C. T. Hsia says the fiction is “the only work of Chinese fiction that invites valid comparisons with the tragic masterpieces of Western literature (Hsia 261). Hawkes praises the book in the preface to his translation: “*The Story of the Stone* is an amazing achievement and the psychological insight and sophisticated humour with which it is written can often delude a reader into judging it as if it were a modern novel” (Cao Vol. I 43). The book has already become the representative in the study of Chinese Classical Literature that almost no scholar can avoid. However, even though Western sinologists generally recognize the book’s literary values, the book mainly transmits as the Chinese learning material and seldom raises interests of ordinary readers. An American teacher at the University of Rochester who teaches Chinese literature thinks it is problematic because when his students regard the fiction as language learning materials, they seldom take it seriously as literature (see Campton 26). As to the reason why the book does not attract ordinary readers, the famous sinologist and translator Howard Goldblatt’s viewpoint gives one explanation. He deems that *A Dream of Red Mansions* is a masterpiece regarding character delineation (Goldblatt 48), according to the evaluative criterion of contemporary Western novels, it may be fun but not great because it contains too many irrelevant details which affect the fluency of narration (see Jie Mian). Apart from whether or not Goldblatt’s comment is fair

enough to value the book, at least it shows that the book may not appeal to the contemporary readers' taste. Another article from the Guardian is more straight and specific: "The book as it stands in the Penguin version runs to 2,500 pages – twice as long as *War and Peace*. Hard going at first because of the myriad characters (there are 40 main ones) and their (to a non-Chinese eye) difficult names" (Wood). Not surprisingly, both Goldblatt's and Wood's point receives quite much agreement in the comment of the article as well as the book comments in Amazon²⁵. Besides, as mentioned earlier, this novel is not easy to understand even for Chinese readers because of its obscurity in the content and language. Even though Hawkes uses domestication to translate the book into his understanding to make it easier to read for western readers, the novel is still quite strange to them especially if the reader knows little about Chinese traditional culture. Other than these reasons, the most crucial factor that prevents its circulation is the comparatively laggard development of Chinese literature, especially for the fiction. As mentioned earlier, the status of Chinese classical novel was low in ancient China, thus the development of fiction was laggard, the criticism system was unestablished until the 20th century, along with the May 4th Movement in 1919, "the systematic studies and surveys of the field (Chinese literature) have been attempted, and a great deal remains to be done in the way of basic studies of writers, periods, and genres before a really satisfactory general history of Chinese literature can be written" (Hightower 124). Due to these reasons, the development of Chinese fiction fell behind in the process of joining the world literature. Although nowadays the situation has changed a lot, some contemporary works (such as Mo Yan's *Frog*, which won the Nobel Prize in 2012) have won the recognition in Western countries, Chinese literature is still not widely recognized. That is why nowadays many Chinese scholars pursue the "walking-out" of Chinese literature, which means to push Chinese literature to gain recognition world-widely (see Wang 100). Therefore, even though *A Dream of Red Mansion* "ranks with the

²⁵ [Amazon](#)

greatest novels of the West” (Hightower 120), it still can hardly attract much attention in Western countries.

Through analyzing the circulation of *A Dream of Red Mansion*, it is not hard to see that the transnational diffusion of literature greatly depends on many factors: the translator’s ability, the limitation of the time, the quality of translations, the translation strategy and the general developing conditions of the book. Among all these factors, the development of the translation plays an extremely important role in accelerating the circulation of the novel in Western countries. From the development of relevant literary criticism to the transmission in the ordinary audience, they all to a great extent rely on the appearance of a good translation. In this case, although the circulation of the novel remains in a limited scale, most significant accomplishments on the scholarly study are made after Hawkes’s translation shows up. So in the next part, this essay will further analyze the importance of translation by comparing two translations of the novel.

The Role of Translation in the Transnational Circulation

With the development of globalization, the relations between different countries in almost every fields become closer. In the literary field, the need for communication and interactions between different culture also increases. One of the key factors in the circulation of literary works is the translation. Translations are the second-hand material, sometimes first-hand material for those who cannot read the source language, for people to read or criticize the literary work world-widely. Sometimes, criticizing an original work equals to commenting a translation because no one is capable of reading all the original texts in the world. Therefore, translation is a crucial component in the transnational circulation of a text. After Goethe put forward the notion *Weltliteratur* in the early 19th century, the concept of world literature changes over time. But regarding the translation “as an affirmative force and not merely an unhappy necessity is certainly something new in the concept of world literature.” (Zhang 519). In the development of world literature, scholars try to conduct research by establishing a theoretical structure. Moretti proposes a method called “distant reading,” which states that the study of world literature should focus on either smaller units (devices, themes, tropes) or larger units (genres, systems) but not text itself. However, this method is problematic because it classifies world literature roughly, for instance, by geographic regions (countries) or cultural background (Western/non-Western), hence it is not only in danger of “ignoring the local dimension” (Zhang 517) but also regardless of the individualities of texts. However, whether or not or to what extent a translation should reflect these individualities is quite controversial among scholars. In 1995, American scholar Lawrence Venuti put forward in his book – *The Translator’s Invisibility* the concept of “foreignization” and “domestication”. The foreignizing method is “an ethnodeviant pressure on those values to register the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text” while domesticating method refers to an ethnocentric reduction

of the foreign text to dominant cultural values (in English)” (Venuti 81). The definition shows that foreignization focuses on the linguistics of the source language and the cultures of the original context. Domestication concentrates on reduce the foreignness of the source text, converts the source text to the domestic expressions and contributes to the reading experience of the target audiences. However, although the translation can be fluent by domesticating, it will inevitably lose the accuracy and fidelity because “accuracy and fidelity are always locally defined, specific to different cultural formations at different historical moments” (Venuti 67).

As to the translation of *A Dream of Red Mansions*, there is also controversy on which method to take in translation. Especially as the “encyclopedia of traditional Chinese culture”, it is more localize comparing with other Chinese novels. Moreover, the novel is written in classical Chinese, which increases the difficulty to understand and translate it. So it seems like foreignization is more suitable for the translation of this novel. But the problem is not many Western readers can understand a completely foreignizing translation. As mentioned earlier, although Hawkes’s translation receives many compliments in Western countries and greatly promotes the study of the original book, it is criticized by most Chinese scholars for being too domesticating. It shows that people hold different opinions on a translation regarding different standpoint, culture or personal experience. Not only that, but the translation itself is influenced by the translators’ standpoint and cultural values. To solve this problem, David Damrosch proposes to read more than one translations and “use translations to triangulate our way toward a better sense of the original than any one version can give us its own” (Damrosch “How to Read” 71), especially when one cannot read the source language or is not familiar with the cultural background of source text. This method is especially important in the scholarly research of transnational literature because it helps the researcher to leave the expression habit in the native language and acquired a way of thinking, and dig out furthest the context of the original text. As to *A Dream of Red Mansions*, other than Hawkes’s translation (*The Story of*

the Stone), the most widely circulated translation is Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang's version (*A Dream of Red Mansions*) published by Chinese Foreign Languages Press in 1978. Even though this version is not published in Western countries, it still has a certain influence in academic circles as research or language learning material. Unlike Hawkes's translation, Yang's translation receives high recognition among most Chinese scholars, for they think that this translation sticks to the original text, accurately reflects the cultural spirit and benefits the transmission of Chinese traditional culture (Q. H. Wang 100). This judgment bases on the fact that most Chinese scholars believe that Yang generally adopts foreignization in translation while Hawkes adopts domestication. But does foreignization surely attain the goal of cultural circulation? Should spreading source text's culture be the prior criterion of judging a translation?

According to Damrosch, translators' choices of strategy are "at once linguistic and social" and reflect "their literary and cultural values, their sense of their reader's expectations" (Damrosch "How to Read" 68). Once translators decide what the original work's nature is, they begin to interpret based on their understanding (see Damrosch "How to Read" 75). Both translations of the novel appear in the 1970s, but the translators have similar life experience in a contrary way. Yang was born in a Chinese literary family and systematically learnt Chinese traditional culture and classical literature since young age. He later studies English literature at Oxford University and meets his wife Gladys Yang, who is a British sinologist deeply fascinated by Chinese culture (see Xing 101). Though Yang has a good command of English, it is undoubted that his native cultural background drives him to adopt foreignization more often, just as Hawkes usually uses domestication. Moreover, differing from Hawkes's simple purpose "convey to the reader even a fraction of the pleasure this Chinese novel has given me" (Cao Vol. I 46), Yang's translation bears a mission to spreading Chinese traditional culture abroad at the very beginning. The Foreign Languages Press is a state-owned publishing agency, who at the time mainly work on translating Chinese works to foreign readers and devotes to

introducing Chinese culture (see Xing 101). It requires the translation to be strictly original. Those differences reflected apparently in the choice of titles. Albeit both *Shi Tou Ji* (*The Story of the Stone*) and *Hong Lou Meng* (*A Dream of Red Mansions*) are Chinese names of the original work, *Hong Lou Meng* is more original than *Shi Tou Ji* because it contains more cultural background information, while *Shi Tou Ji* is easier to understand but with less “Chineseness”. The corresponding literary meaning of each Chinese word illustrates as follows:

红 Hong — Red 石头 Shi Tou — Stone
 楼 Lou — Mansion 记 Ji — Record
 梦 Meng — Dream

In Chinese culture, the colour red is a symbol of positive images standing for good fortune, prosperity, spring or sometimes youth. So the title *Hong Lou Meng* indicates that the prosperous life showing in the novel is illusory, it will disappear in the end like a dream. It cautions common people not to be captivated by material but focuses on the spiritual cultivation. This philosophy runs through the entire story, which is the core Taoism belief of the author. What is more, Hong Lou together in ancient China stands for the boudoir of the young lady, which is in correspondence with the story of Twelve Ladies of Jin Ling. In chapter 5, it shows that just like Baoyu, these twelve young ladies are also fairies or goods from the fairyland. They come to the mortal world to experience the illusory dream too. Comparatively, the title *The Story of the Stone* comes from an introductory story. The stone refers to a jade, which is captivated by the prosperity of the human world and transforms into a man (Baoyu) to experience the affluence. Of course, the reader may get the idea after reading, but regarding the title itself, it is hard for the reader to find the connotative meaning. What is more, there is evidence showing that Hawkes may intentionally avoid using *Hong Lou Meng* as the title. In the preface of his translation, Hawkes says that “the pervading redness of the Chinese novel” is missing in the translation. Because “redness has no such connotations in English” and “the Chinese reds have tended to turn into English golds or greens” in different circumstances (Cao

Vol. I 45). From this perspective, it seems like domestication is a quite good choice in translation. Because for those who have no basic knowledge of Chinese culture, they can hardly get the implication, as redness means nothing but an ordinary colour to them, while for those who know Chinese culture, the translation does not accomplish the mission of delivering Chinese culture at all. Under such circumstance, would keep the “redness” and add footnotes be a better choice? It is a tough decision. Hawkes says, his translation aims at conveying pleasure to English readers. So conducting domestication while adding footnotes may impede the smoothness, integrity, and readability of the text and add up a huge workload, thus decline audiences’ reading experience. Just as Damrosch argues, translators’ choices of the strategy involve too many factors. So the translation is not only a re-creation process but also a process of making compromises. If Hawkes’s choice of title translation is a choice of domestication, does this method always fail to transmit Chinese culture as those Chinese scholars’ comment? To what extent does Yang’s translation fulfil Chinese scholars’ expectation? Here is an example – an ancient Chinese poem taken from the novel. Chinese ancient poetry is among one of the most difficult literary genres to translate. Because it establishes a complex and unique system in hundreds of years, such as the matching of both sound and sense in two poetic lines and the correspondence of phonetic rhythm, much different from Western poetry. It has a strict structure and rhythm, but free content. The poetry often fills with rhetorical devices, such as metaphor and metonymy, which will be illustrated later in analysing the poem. Most significantly, ancient poets prefer to use allusions, which relates to abundant Chinese classical literature. This poem is “made” by the novel’s character Daiyu. Daiyu’s parents die before she grows up, so she has to move to Beijing to live with her grandmother. In a feudal society, it means her life is undecided. She is deeply in love with her cousin Baoyu and if her parents were still alive, she might be able to express this feeling to her parents and asked them to propose a marriage. But the death of her parents destroys this hope because, in a feudal society,

it is immoral for young men and women to fall in love privately or pledge to marry without the permission of parents. Though she lives in a wealthy family, and everyone seemingly respects and likes her, she feels that no one really cares about her except for her grandmother and Baoyu. Her pure and lofty personality stops her from appealing to other members living in the mansions. Thus what expresses in the poem is when she sees the falling petals, they call the complex emotions to her mind. By comparing the faded flowers to her life, in this poem, she bemoans her tragic life, expresses concern about the future and shows her determination to rather die than surrender to fate (to marry someone else except Baoyu). Hawkes and Yang translate the first four lines respectively as follows:

花谢花飞花满天，红消香断有谁怜？
游戏软系飘春榭，落絮轻沾扑绣帘。(Cao 371)

The blossoms fade and falling fill the air,
Of fragrance and bright hues bereft and bare.
Floss drifts and flutters round the Maiden's bower,
Or softly strikes against her curtained door.
(Cao Vol. II 38 translated by Hawkes)

As blossoms fade and fly across the sky,
Who pities the faded red, the scent that has been?
Softly the gossamer floats over spring pavilions,
Gently the willow fluff wafts to the embroidered screen.
(Cao Vol. I 539 translated by Yang)

This poem is a form of pre-Tang poetry (古体诗 Gu Ti Shi). It is different from the Chinese modern style poetry(近体诗 Jin Ti Shi), which has strict tonal patterns and rhyme schemes. For example, regarding the number of words, there are either a line of five or seven characters in the modern style poetry. While in the pre-Tang poetry, it can be a line of four, five, six and seven words, or a mix of them. Regarding the number of the lines, there are only three patterns in the modern style poetry: four lines, eight lines or more than eight lines, but no strict rules in the pre-Tang poetry. Regarding the rhythm, it is possible to use rhyme in each line with the same word in a modern-style poetry, but in a pre-Tang poem, there is only one rhyme in a poem

with different characters and except for the first line, each even line must use rhyme. As to this poem, in the selected verse, each line has seven characters. Except for the third line, each of them has the rhyme of “-ian”. Both of the translations break the limitation of word numbers and the form of rhythm. Hawkes’s translation uses different forms of rhythm, which makes the poem much more melodic in English. For instance, in the first, second and the last line, Hawkes uses the alliterations of “f” (fade and falling), “b” (bereft and bare) and “s” (softly strikes) respectively. The first two lines are with the rhyme of [eə] (air and bare). In this respect, Yang’s translation is inferior with only one alliteration in the first line (fade and fly), which makes the translation lack melody. Another property lost in both translation is the match of the part-of-speech patterns in Chinese. The part-of-speech in every two lines correspondents in Chinese: 花 noun 谢 verb 花 noun 飞 verb 花满天, 红 noun 消 verb 香 noun 断 verb 有谁怜? 游戏 noun 软 adjective 系 verb 飘 verb 春榭 noun, 落絮 noun 轻 adjective 沾 verb 扑 verb 绣帘 noun. Actually, it is possible to keep this pattern in English by literal translation, but that will definitely make the translation obscure in English in rhythm. Therefore, regarding the translation of ancient Chinese poetry, if the translator insists on using foreignization in translation, the consequence might be a loss of melody. And some properties of the original poem (such as the rhythm in Chinese, the character number and the corresponding part-of-speech) cannot be delivered either since Chinese has a different phonetic system than English. Regarding the translation of the content, Hawkes’s translation basically paraphrases the original text while Yang strictly sticks to it almost word-by-word. The second line, Hawkes changes the sentence pattern, eliminates “red” and replaces with “bright hues”, which expresses the literal meaning but loses a scent of poet’s lament by asking who cares? In the third line, “Maiden’s bower” substitute “spring pavilions”, the substitution not only explains “spring pavilions” but also remove ambiguity, for the reader may wonder: what is “spring pavilions”?

Are there also “summer pavilions” or “winter pavilions”? Here is another section of the poem involving the usage of allusions and images:

花开易见落难寻，阶前闷杀葬花人，
独倚花锄泪暗洒，撒上空枝见血痕。
杜鹃无语正黄昏，荷锄归去掩重门。
青灯照壁人初睡，冷雨敲窗被未温。(Cao 371)

Blooming so steadfast, fallen so hard to find!
Beside the flowers' grave, with sorrowing mind,
The solitary Maid sheds many a tear,
Which on the boughs as bloody drops appear.

At twilight, when the cuckoo sings no more,
The Maiden with her rake goes in at door
And lays her down between the lamplit walls,
While a chill rain against the window falls. (Cao Vol. II 39 translated by Hawkes)

Fallen, the brightest blooms are hard to find;
With aching heart their grave-digger comes now
Alone, her hoe in hand, her secret tears
Falling like drops of blood on each bare bough.

Dusk falls and the cuckoo is silent;
Her hoe brought back, the lodge is locked and still;
A green lamp lights the wall as sleep enfolds her,
Cold rain pelts the casement and her quilt is chill.
(Cao Vol. I 539 translated by Yang)

Cuckoo is a frequently used image in Chinese ancient poetry. The poets often use it to express homesickness²⁶ or grieve the time elapse, or the pass of spring²⁷. Here Daiyu compares the cuckoo to herself, grieving the youth-passing as well as homeless. The use of allusions is a

²⁶ According to legend, the Emperor of the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220) – Emperor Wang turned into a cuckoo after death. And he never stops singing because he still misses his homeland. – From Li Ying *The Record of Shu*. So later Chinese intellectuals use cuckoo to express homesickness for homeland or hometown.

²⁷ Cuckoo is a migratory bird which flies from South Sea to the mainland at the end of spring each year. So the appearance of cuckoo signifies the end of beautiful spring. And in Chinese culture, spring is believed to be the most wonderful season, indicating a brand new start of a year. There is a Chinese idiom: “The whole year's work depends on a good start in spring.” People looking at the faded blossoms and listening to the singing of the bird will feel sad and regrets time passing.

significant feature of ancient Chinese poetry. This section involves an allusion coming from a legendary²⁸. Actually, Hawkes's translation – “The solitary Maid sheds many a tear, Which on the boughs as bloody drops appear” is more accurate and vivid than Yang's “Alone, her hoe in hand, her secret tears, Falling like drops of blood on each bare bough.” The word “appear” not only literally translates the word “见 Jian” in the source text, but also corresponds to the story in the allusion that the wives' bloody tears drop and stain on the bamboo. Meanwhile, to literally translate the source text, Yang uses “secret tears” to translate “泪暗洒 Lei An Sa” – the Maiden silently shedding tears, the expression is weird. Unfortunately, both Hawkes and Yang do not add any footnotes to explain these images or allusions. It may not cause misunderstanding in the general meaning and emotion of this poem for the audience, but they may ask why cuckoo is used here? Why not crow or magpie? Or does Daiyu cry bloody tears? Goethe says “Poetry is cosmopolitan, and the more interesting the more it shows its nationality.” (qtd.in Zhang 514) If the rhythm and structure in ancient Chinese poetry are untranslatable, those translatable cultural elements should be delivered in the translation, for they not only help understand the text but also transmit very original information. But it is also not fair to criticize Hawkes's translation for incapable of transmitting Chinese culture by adopting domestication. On the contrary, his translation often builds on a good understanding of Chinese culture and expresses in smooth English, especially in the poetic form that Western readers would expect. As he declares in the preface, he tries to translate everything – even puns. To help Western readers understand the novel, he attaches a chart introducing Chinese phonetic alphabet (because he phonetically translates all the names), introduces the background

²⁸ According to legend, the Emperor Shun (2277B.C.-2178B.C.) died in fighting against the evil dragon. His two wives were so sad that their tears dried and begin to cry blood. The bloody tears drop on the bamboo, and the bamboo turns into mottled bamboo (a variety of bamboo). – From Zu Chongzhi *The Record of Bizarre Stories*. Futurity uses bloody tears or the two wives (Xiang Fei) to refer to devoted women and their single-minded love. It is said that Emperor Wang also crawls until spitting blood after he becomes cuckoo, so there is a correspondence between the two lines.

information of the novel and the author's life experience in the preface, adds a chapter to explain the complex character relations²⁹ in detail. However, adopting domestication is risky. It requires translators have a good command of the source language and culture and are capable of making good interpretation. If the translators literally translate a text word-by-word, the translation might just be obscure. But the paraphrase based on translators' own understanding might be wrong. For instance, in chapter 3, when Wang Xifeng first met Daiyu, she said: “天下竟有这样标致的人物，我今儿才算见了！况且这通身的气派，竟不像老祖宗的外孙女儿，竟是个嫡亲的孙女” (Cao 41). Hawkes's translation is “She's a beauty, Grannie dear! If I hadn't set eyes on her today, I shouldn't have believed that such a beautiful creature could exist! And everything about her so distinguished! She doesn't take after your side of the family, Grannie. She's more like a Jia.” (Cao Vol. I 92) Yang's translation is “this is the first time I've set eyes on such a ravishing beauty. Her whole air is so distinguished! She doesn't take after her father, son-in-law of our Old Ancestress, but looks more like a Jia.” (Cao & Gao 51) Differing from Western countries, the family relationship in ancient China has a very strict rank and nuances in the title. For example, for grandmother, in Chinese it has “奶奶” nainai (the mother of the father) “姥姥” laolao (the mother of the mother); for aunt, it has “阿姨” ayi (referring to female elders in general) “舅妈” jiuma (the wife of mother's brother) “姑妈” guma (the sister of the father) in correspondence in Chinese. This system inherits from the ancient society when women are inferior to men. So the relatives of the male are superior to those of the female family. However, the Confucianism also requires people to respect the elders. So even though the men hold absolute leading place in a family, all the family members have to respect the oldest person in the family. In this novel, the Grannie (Granny Jia) is the

²⁹ For example: Aunt Zhao – concubine of Jia Zheng and mother of Tan-chun and Jia Huan; Aunt Xue – widowed sister of Lady Wang and mother of Xue Pan and Bao-chai. (Cao Vol. I 535)

oldest person in the family. Daiyu is the daughter of Granny Jia's daughter (外孙女 waisunnü), so according to the general thought in ancient China, she is inferior to the daughter of Granny Jia's son (嫡亲孙女 diqin sunnū). By comparing Daiyu to the daughter of Granny Jia's son, Wang Xifeng compliment Daiyu and flatters the Grannie at the same time. Because theoretically, only the daughter of Granny Jia's son can be so beautiful. In this case, Hawkes's translation "She doesn't take after your side of the family, Grannie" obviously misunderstands the meaning of the original text.

In fact, both versions are good translations. Comparatively speaking, Hawkes's translation is more suitable for those who know nothing or have very limited knowledge of Chinese traditional culture while Yang's translation is better for those quite familiar with Chinese culture. It is the translators' choice of selecting translation strategy according to their own values but the readers' choice of choosing different version in accordance with their own needs and knowledge, or read more than one version, as Damrosch proposes. But the truth is even for such audiences, Yang's translation is not easy to understand and less readable. After all, *A Dream of Red Mansions* — such an intricate text, even difficult for ordinary Chinese readers, is a big challenge for Western readers. The fact that some Chinese scholars regard spreading original culture as the chief task or even the main judging criterion of a good translation is understandable, but not objective and fair enough. For such an elusive novel, unquestioningly pursuing domestication is problematic. Because translation is for the purpose of circulating the original text. But the pre-condition to accomplish this goal is to let the Western reader understand the text. Otherwise, what would there be to receive? If the translations blindly keep source culture but ignore the readers' receptivity, the translations would be either obscure or boring to them, which explains why Yang's translation merely circulates in the academic circle or as teaching material. Another noticeable problem is, as Chinese economy develops in these years, more and more scholars in Chinese academic circle

eagerly expect the Chinese literature to “walking-out”—to step on the stage of world literature, to gain recognition world-widely. This “walking-out” even risen to the state strategy altitude. Thus many Chinese literature works have to take this responsibility (see Wang 100). But it is not a problem that can be or should be solved by translation. Because first of all, what is world literature? Although the concept is changing, the founder Goethe gives a description: “great works literature always take root in particular linguistic, cultural, and national traditions, but they are at the same time capable of transcending the limitations of the local and the parochial to research readers beyond the boundaries of their provenance, either in original forms or in successful translations.” (qtd. in Zhang 514) By this definition, as analysed in part II, *A Dream of Red Mansions* is already such a great work. Therefore, it is within the circle of world literature. Translation is just a medium for Western audiences to appreciate it. The way some Chinese scholars define it is somewhat like what David Damrosch talks about global literature, which concerns more about the circulation of the book rather than the literary work itself (see “What Is” Damrosch 25). They care more about the cultural influence that this book should bring but neglect an important fact – that *A Dream of Red Mansions* is foremost a great literature. Of course, it burdens the original history and culture, but it exists in this world not primarily as a cultural-exchange ambassador. Literature communication is not utilitarian. Thus translations also do not have to take this mission primarily either. The criticism on both Hawkes’s and Yang’s translation needs to be more objective from various perspectives.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the literary and cultural values of *A Dream of Red Mansions* make it a great novel. But due to the facts that it contains a wide range of knowledge (especially Chinese traditional culture) and many obscurities (regarding both language and content), this book is not easy to read even for many Chinese readers. Thus even though the story is popular in China, the circulation of the text is less prevalent in modern China than in Qing Dynasty. These characters also make this novel difficult to translate. With the development of English translations, the novel is transmitted to Western countries, which promotes the circulation of the novel. Until the appearance of David Hawkes's translation does the circulation of the novel in Western countries develop faster and wider. Therefore, a complete and good translation plays a very important role in the circulation of a text, because it is the approach for most readers from different countries and backgrounds to know about the original text. However, in the process of translation, translators face the choices of the different strategies: foreignization and domestication, especially important and difficult in translating *A Dream of Red Mansions* since it is an encyclopedia of Chinese traditional culture. But no matter what strategy to choose in translation, the main problem is how to maximally deliver the content and culture in the original text while keeping the translation fluent and readable to the target audiences. It is almost impossible to have it both ways, so the translators have to strike a balance and make compromises sometimes. Therefore, it is not fair and objective enough to judge the quality of a translation simply by the translation strategies it adopts, not to mention regarding the literature as a utilitarian tool to transmits national culture. Different readers with different educational, cultural backgrounds or distinctive purposes can choose different translations to read and study. Or as Damrosch says, to read as many translations as possible to "dig out" the original text. So the translation strategy is not only a choice of the translators but also the audiences. But foremost, when reading a transnational/transcultural literary work, one should

try to ignore his own cultural and educational background, ignore the acquired criterions. It is very important and necessary to understand the context of the original text and try to analyze its values in that context. Because without this, the comprehension of a text (based on either the original text or the translations) can be biased or even incorrect. What is more, translations should not be utilitarian. Even though translations burden the property of transmitting culture, they are foremost for transmitting the original literature, but not for delivering original culture.

Work Cited

- Cao, X. Q. and E. Gao, *A Dream of Red Mansions*. translated by X.Y. Yang and Gladys Yang. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1978. Print.
- Cao, X. Q. *The Story of the Stone*. translated by David Hawks. London: Penguin, 1973. Print.
- Compton, Robert. "The Prospects for the Teaching of Chinese Literature in the United States." *Mahfil*, 6.1 (1970): 23-31. Web. 28 Apr. 2017.
- Damrosch, David. *How to Read World Literature*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009. EBook Collection. Web. 14 June. 2017.
- Damrosch, David, *What Is World Literature?* Princeton U.P, 2003. Print.
- Goldblatt, Howard. "An Interview of Goldblatt." translated by G. Q. Shi. *Chinese Comparative Literature*, 94.1 (2014): 37-50. Web. 28 Apr. 2017.
- Hightower, James Robert. "Chinese Literature in the Context of World Literature." *Comparative Literature*, 5.2 (1953): 117-124. Web. 26 Apr. 2017.
- Hsia, C. T. "Love and Compassion in 'Dream of the Red Chamber'." *Criticism*, 5.3 (1963): 261-271. Web. 27 Apr. 2017.
- Idema, Wilt and Lloyd Haft. *A Guide to Chinese Literature*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1996. EBook. Web. 29 June. 2017.
- Lawrence, Venuti. *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*. New York: Routledge, 1995. EBook Collection. Web. 14 June. 2017.
- Minford, John. "Rereading The Stone: Desire and the Making of Fiction in *Dream of the Red Chamber*." *China Review International*, 6.2 (1999): 307-318. Web. 27 Apr. 2017.
- Wang, Jing. "The poetics of Chinese Narrative: An Analysis of Andrew Plaks' 'Archetype and Allegory in the *Dreams of the Red Chamber*'." *Comparative Literature Studies*, 26.3 (1989): 252-270. Web. 27 Apr. 2017.

Wood, Michael. "Why is China's greatest novel virtually unknown in the west?" *The Guardian*, 12 Feb. 2016. www.theguardian.com/books/2016/feb/12/dream-of-the-red-chamber-cao-zuequin-chinas-favourite-novel-unknown-west. Web. 27 Apr. 2017.

Zhang, Longxin. "The Changing Concept of World Literature." *World Literature in Theory*, edited by David Damrosch, UK: Wiley Blackwell, (2014): 513-523. EBook Collection. Web. 20 May. 2017

Chinese – language works

曹雪芹 (Cao, X. Q.) 《红楼梦》 (*A Dream of Red Mansions*). 人民文学出版社 (Beijing: People's Literature Press), 1982. Print.

杜志军 (Du, Z. J.) 2014 年红楼梦图书出版述评 ("A Review of the Publications of *A Dream of Red Mansions* in 2014."), 《红楼梦学刊》 (*Journal of A Dream of Red Mansions*), 1 (2015): 1-22. Web. 20 May. 2017.

冯其庸 (Feng, Q. Y.) and 李广柏 (G. B. Li) 《红楼梦概论》 (*A General Introduction to A Dream of Red Mansions*), 北京图书馆出版社 (Beijing: Bei Jing Library Press), 2002. Print.

何其芳 (He, Q. F.) 《论红楼梦》 (*The Study of "A Dream of Red Mansions"*). 人民文学出版社 (Beijing: People's Literature Press), 1963. Print.

胡文彬 (Hu, W. B.) 《红楼梦》在西方的流传和研究概述 ("The Circulation of *A Dream of Red Mansions* in Western countries."), 《北方丛论》 (*Northern Forum*), 1 (1980): 46-53. Web. 22 May. 2017.

黄元军 (Huang, Y. J.) 《葬花吟》英译的生态翻译 ("Contrastive Study on the Translation of *Song if the Burial of Flowers* from the Perspective of Eco-translatology."), 《译

- 林》 (*Translations*), 6 (2012): 163-174. Web. 22 May. 2017.
- 李海军 (Li, H. J.) and 范武邱 (W. Q. Fan) 郭实腊对《红楼梦》的误读 (“Karl Friedrich August Gutzlaff’s Misreading of *Hongloumeng*.”), 《山东外语教学》 (*Shandong Foreign Language Teaching Journal*), 154. 3 (2013): 100-103. Web. 21 May. 2017.
- 梁归智 (Liang, G. Z.) 论《红楼梦》的文化意义 (“The Cultural Significance of *A Dream of Red Mansions*.”), 《红楼梦学刊》 (*Journal of A Dream of Red Mansions*), 3 (1989): 63-76. Web. 28 Apr. 2017.
- 童庆炳 (Tong, Q. B.) 经典的解构与重建 (“The Deconstruction and Reconstruction of Classics.”), 《中国比较文学》 (*Chinese Comparative Literature*), 61.4 (2005): 36-50. Web. 27 Apr. 2017.
- 王丽耘 (Wang, L. Y.) 论《红楼梦》霍克斯译本的西方传播 (“The Transmission of Hawks’ Translation in Western Countries.”), 《红楼梦学刊》 (*Journal of A Dream of Red Mansions*), 4 (2012): 199-220. Web. 27 Apr. 2017.
- 王璇 (Wang, X.) 《红楼梦》在美国的传播研究及其对文化外交的启示 (“A study on the Transmission of *Hong Lou Meng* in America and the Enlightenment to Cultural Diplomacy.”), Diss. Beijing Foreign Studies University, 2014. Web. 27 Apr. 2017.
- 王燕 (Wang, Y.) 十九世纪西方人眼中的“淫书”《红楼梦》 (“*A Dream of Red Mansions – A Pornographic Book in the Eyes of Western People in 19th Century*.”), 《红楼梦学刊》 (*Journal of A Dream of Red Mansions*), 4 (2016): 41-55. Web. 28 Apr. 2017.
- 汪庆华 (Wang, Q. H.) 传播视域下中国文化走出去与翻译策略 (“The Walking-Out of Chinese Culture and Translation Strategies.”), 《外语教学》 (*Foreign Language*

Education), 36.3 (2015): 100-104. Web. 27 Apr. 2017.

邢力 (Xing, L.) 对《红楼梦》杨宪益异化策略的文化思索 (“A Review of the Foreignization Taken by Yang Xianyi in the Translation of *Hongloumeng*.”), 《内蒙古大学学报》 (*Journal of Inner Mongolia University*), 39. 1 (2007): 100-105. Web. 30 Apr. 2017.

张中江 (Zhang, Z. J.) “不好读” 的红楼梦卖了 700 多万套 (“700 Million Sales of the Obscure *Hong Lou Meng*.”), Tencent, 11 Nov. 2015. cul.qq.com/a/20151111/056453.htm Web. 20. May. 2017.

张积玉 (Zhang, J. Y.) and 杜波 (B. Du) 《新青年》与现代白话文运动 (“*New Youth* and the Vernacular Movement.”), 《厦门大学学报》 (*Journal of Xiamen University: Arts & Social Science*), 162.2 (2004): 49-56. Web. 22 May. 2017.

中国文学为什么走不出去 (“Why Chinese Literature Can’t Walk Out.”), Jiemian, 17 May. 2016. www.jiemian.com/article/650474.html. Web. 20. May. 2017.