

Original Paper

Humanity in the Light of Revolution—A Study of Evan King’s
English Translation of National Patriotic Writer Xiao Jun’s

Village in August

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Abstract

*As one of the pivot figures of “Northeastern Writers”, Xiao Jun’s *Village in August* is of great importance in the history of modern Chinese literature, highlighting the local characteristics of Northeastern China, the revolutionary “banditry”, and the romantic personal heroism, attracting the attention of Chinese and Western critics. The translation by American sinology researcher Evan King shows attention to Chinese stories and makes a unique contribution to the cultural exchange between China and the West. His translation is noteworthy, but given the differences in cultural contexts between the two countries and the subjectivity of the translator, it is inevitably full of adaptation and mistranslation. Therefore, it is necessary to make a comprehensive examination of the literary style of the original work, and then propose handy translation strategies and principles for the new era: under the translation principle of truthfulness and accuracy, when translating Chinese culture, it is better to integrate both the foreignisation and domestication; when it comes to local culture, it is appropriate to apply various means to compensate for the cultural default given the specific situation and keep fidelity to the original text in the translation of the novel’s literary characteristics.*

Keywords

*Xiao Jun, *Village in August*, Evan King, a study of the English translated version*

1. Introduction

Xiao Jun (1907-1988), the pseudonym of Liu Honglin, was born in Linghai City, Liaoning Province. He began to write poetry after joining the cavalry in 1925. After the Mukden Incident in 1931, he formally became a writer and completed *Village in August* in 1934, which was published by Shanghai Rongguang Book Company in 1935. Like *Razgrom* written by Soviet writer Alexander Fadeyev, Xiao's book was also inspired by a team of guerrillas and describes battles among the squads of the Northeast Army of Volunteers and various enemies.

The English version of *Village in August* was translated by Robert Spencer Ward under the pen name of Evan King, an American diplomat then in China. It was published in 1942, prefaced and recommended by the famous reporter Edgar Snow. In the preface to the translated book, Snow described it as "a success from the moment it first appeared" and praised the translation as faithful and "sacrifices virtually nothing". As the first modern Chinese novel translated into English that received an enthusiastic response in America (Lv, 2011, p. 80), *Village in August* is noticed in both domestic and international scholarship. An examination of the widely-indexed database illustrates that so far 21 journal essays, 7 journal reviews, and 55 dissertations on Xiao Jun's works (Wang & Wu, 2021, p. 188) have been published until recently. These researches focus on book reviews and literary studies. *Understanding China through Books* by Alison B. Alessios asserts "it recounts the lives of the Chinese in Manchuria during invasion" (1944), and *Retrieving the Working Body in Modern Chinese Fiction: The Question of the Ethical in Representation* by Jian Xu comments "*Village in August* exemplifies nationalist literature precisely" (2004), as well as historical and cultural studies (e.g., *Political Allegory in the 1980s: Xiao Jun and Bai Hua* by Paul A. Cohen states Xiao Jun's writing life (2008) and *Demons in Paradise: The Chinese Images of Russia* by T. A. Hsia points out that this book has spoken for both patriotism and international communism (1963). But almost none of these articles specifically deal with the translation of Xiao Jun or his works, but rather take them as examples. Translation studies on Xiao Jun are also exceedingly rare.

In China, an examination of the popular index database CNKI (Chinese National Knowledge Infrastructure) illustrates the domestic studies of Xiao Jun are mainly related to Xiao Hong (another famous Northeastern writer and Xiao Jun's former wife) and "Northeastern Writers". Studies are concentrating on the resistance of his works (Yang, 2016), biographical studies (Ge, 2012), and literary criticism studies (Zhang, 2016). However, fewer studies in the translation field have been conducted, with only two studies on translation published in 2021: Wang Yan and Wu Liping's *Media-translatology Study on the Situation of Xiao Jun's Works in the United States* and Jiang Lei, Li Biyu, and Liu Di's *The Translation and Spread Situations of the Literary Works of the "Northeastern Writers" in the English-speaking World*, respectively examine the status of the collection, research status, and general interest in English translations of Xiao Jun's works in the United States, as well as the translation and spread of the works of the "Northeastern Writers" in the English-speaking countries.

The studies on translations of *Village in August* also focus on media-translatology, respectively from the perspectives of the translation strategy of the English translation (Lv, 2011) and the circulation in the United States (Zheng, 2019). So far, rare papers have been published to examine the quality of Evan King's translation from the perspective of culture and translation and make suggestions for improvement, especially regarding cultural differences and translator subjectivity.

This paper reexamines the version of Evan King's English translation given culture and the unique literary features of Xiao Jun's work, and then proposes solutions for reaching the translation goals in the new era, namely to emphasize both foreignisation and domestication with slightly stressing the strategy of domestication in translating Chinese culture, to use various means of compensation in translating local features, and to be faithful to the original text in translating the unique literary characteristics of the novel. Finally, it also shares some insights about translation teaching.

2. The Unique Literariness of *Village in August*

Xiao Jun's *Village in August* has distinctive local characteristics, highlighting northeastern regionalism and folklore, bandit-like individual heroism, romantic revolutionary character and humanitarianism, self-construction from the onlooker's angle of view, etc. While translating a literary work, translators are supposed to convey the creative style and characteristics of the author to the target language readers as much as possible.

2.1 Northeastern Regionalism and Folklore

The characteristics of Xiao Jun and his works are closely related to the regionalism of Northeast China and the folklore of his hometown. Northeastern Mandarin and local customs are commonly found in his writing, such as “*kang*” (“炕”, as the heatable brick bed in Northeast China that can keep people warm in winter) and “*laoge da*” (“老疙瘩”, designating the youngest child of the family) etc. Besides, the custom of widow re-marriage in Northeast China is depicted through the representation of the union of Li Qi's Widow and Tang Laogeda, which has been well-accepted by the public even though they were not formally married. Also, the prevalent “*hu zi*” (“胡子”, referring to a bandit in Northeastern Mandarin) culture in northeastern China before the liberation is common in Xiao Jun's works. In *Village in August*, both Big Liu and Captain Eagle had been bandits, and Liu mentioned: “*liu zi*” (“络子”) and “*guazhu*” (“挂注”) (Xiao, 2005, p. 20), respectively designating “bandit” and “join the gang” in argot.

2.2 “Banditry” and Individual Heroism

Xiao Jun was born in Xianpanpangou Village, Shenjiatai Town, Linghai City of Liaoning Province, where the people were tough and admired force, and thus there was a distinct culture of being bandits. Banditry in common sense is negative, generally referring to the gangster mentality, rogue spirit, and consumerism of bandits (Lan, 1993, p. 66), but the “banditry” depicted in *Village in August* is charged more than its original significance. Its connotation is revolutionary and rebelling and it reveals Xiao

Jun's individual heroism. First, the so-called "bandits" here are not real bandits, but a Resistance-Japanese volunteer force constituted by several former members of the Northeast Army and the people, whose composition can be roughly categorized as the regular army and police brigades, former military officers, integrated brigands, secret societies of peasants, intellectuals and young students. This huge force of up to 300,000 people was not acknowledged by the official government of that time, and thus its existence highlights the characteristics of the traditional form of banditry. With poor military discipline among the officers and soldiers as well as the ruggedness and simplicity of the peasants, this force is disorganized. Xiao captures the rustic qualities of this army and portrays a vivid image of "bandits".

Compared with the regular Red Army, the Northeastern volunteer force is rough, and even though lacking in unified ideology and professional military discipline as guidance, their simple sense of resistance to invasion and oppression is invaluable. These "bandits" also have some advanced thinking, understanding the principle of "soldiers kill no soldiers, but officials", and never robbing civilians; they use vulgar language and fight bravely against the enemy with a strong sense of resistance and simple armaments. Although this army is short-lived, its historical achievements cannot be neglected (Jiao, 2015, p. 37). As Xiao Jun (2005, p. 115) gave a positive comment: "We are the vanguard. We are the vanguard of the oppressed brethren. If we do not sacrifice, who will?" Although they seem to be bandit groups, they are essentially full of will to resist and revolutionary spirit.

The "banditry" of Xiao Jun is also connected to the "revolutionary" nature, and they are mutually dependent and inseparable. Born into a family lacking maternal love, into a hometown with a traditional coarse spirit, and troubled times in general, Xiao Jun's brave personality was inevitably cultivated (Cheng, 2010, p. 118). With his mother's premature death, his childhood hardships, and his ill-fated life, Xiao Jun possesses a strong motivation to become a "brigand", and he considers "rebellion" as the only way for the grass-rooted to fight against their unjust life. Such a longing makes Xiao Jun's words often demonstrate the style of "banditry", which profoundly delivers his stubborn and unyielding heroism and the rugged, impassioned, heroic tone of his works (Xiao, 2011, p. 274). The bandits at his heart illustrate the glory of heroes like Robin Hood, the British national folk hero, with the heroic spirit of doing righteousness and justice.

2.3 Romantic Revolutionary Character and Humanitarianism

The word "revolution" is repeated more than a hundred times in the source text, indicating its importance. In this case, "revolutionary character" refers to the spirit of resistance of the people of Northeast China against the landowners, Manchukuo, and the Japanese imperialist aggression. In the source text, Xiao Jun (2005, p. 151) narrates in the tone of Sun Er, a peasant, and describes his plain understanding of revolution as "to kill all those stinkers who have been bullying us since the times of our ancestors; to drive away all the Japanese soldiers now in the three Northeastern provinces, and to workfields for

ourselves. We will no longer grow food and pay rent to feed those stinkers who take all the benefits for granted, got it?" Such patriotism and strong resistance showed in the revolutionary writing of Xiao Jun's literary composition (Chen, 2011, p. 33), arousing the local people's consciousness to combat the aggressive ambition of Japanese imperialism, inspiring the national people to resist Japan's ruthless invasion and aggression, and exposing the Japanese conspiracy to falsify public opinion and establish a puppet regime of Manchukuo. Such spirit deserves praise because Xiao Jun is just like British romantic poets Byron and Shelley who call on the English suppressed populace to fight against the dictatorship of the English central government. If explored deeply into the essential quality and significance of such writing, it again illustrates the guiding power of literature. Even John Keats is both concerned about national politics by revealing the suppressive capitalism manipulated by the ruling and upper classes (Shen & Cui, 2022, pp. 1-14) and the national unity by depicting the geographical features (Zhang & Cui, 2022), even in his dream weaving narration (Peng & Cui, 2021, pp. 15-26).

However, due to the lack of systematic guiding thoughts and leadership, this revolutionary character has its limitations. The Northeast Army of Volunteers has difficulty understanding the deep philosophy of the Chinese revolution, and lacks professional military training, thus leading to its fundamental failure. These problems are also evident in the cases like undisciplined performances of Big Liu, the lack of combating competence of the elderly Cui Changsheng and the child Liang Xing, and the incomplete understanding of the land revolution by Xiao Ming and the peasants. Besides, Xiao Jun's revolutionary spirit is also romantic. He avoids directly writing the violent and bloody scenes by depicting those fights in a way that preserves the space for imagination. "The evening wind blew coolly, a beautiful twilight. With a roar, an almost brutal roar, the long, limp snake was cast aside long ago in the scream of the mouthpiece. Each wheel of the machine, still turning, was the end of destiny" (Xiao, 2005, p. 36). Such sentences depict the whole process of a battle from its outbreak to its end.

In addition, the humanitarianism conveyed in *Village in August* gives a hallmark of Xiao Jun's writing. It is reflected in Xiao Jun's portrayal of the helplessness of several characters while facing fate, as seen in plots like people's nostalgia for their hometown and peace and the series of miserable depictions of Li Qi's Widow after being raped. When Xiao Jun wrote about the revolution, he also questioned its violence. This ambivalence is especially evident after the overthrow of the landowner on the issue proposed by himself in the title of Chapter Seven: "Is it necessary to shoot them?" On one hand, this reflects Xiao Jun's humanitarian spirit—his valuing and cherishing of human life and his affirmation of human values; on the other hand, given that Xiao Jun himself, as an intellectual and writer, has always possessed a sense of detachment from the Chinese revolution, it is not unreasonable for him to lack profound comprehension of its necessity. As Liu Dong (2021, p. 165) points out, Xiao Jun wrote about the land reform in isolation from the political position of the revolutionary army. All in all, it is quite remarkable for him to eulogize the revolutionary spirit and humanitarianism simultaneously.

2.4 Self-construction from the Onlooker's Angle of View

Village in August does not adopt an omniscient narrative to describe the whole revolution but adopts a limited narrative perspective (Liu, 2021, p. 167) to reveal the psychological activities of each figure in a way more intimate and specific. In addition to switching the perspectives of the narrative protagonists several times, this novel also shifts the narrative stand of the nation by inserting two important characters from other countries—Taro Matsubara, a Japanese soldier, and Anna, a Korean girl—to view the War of Resistance Against Japan respectively in view of the aggressor and people whose motherland has already been occupied.

What we can read are the psychological activities of the new soldier, Matsubara Taro, especially his questioning of the meaning of war and the sovereignty of the Japanese emperor—“What is the emperor after all?” (Xiao, 2005, p. 75) his gradual abandonment of morality and rationality as a nameless soldier deeply involved in a meaningless war, his wife’s sympathy for the innocent Chinese and Japanese people (“Don’t hurt Chinese women there! It’s already tragic enough!” (Xiao, 2005, p. 72)), and the constant inner conflicts between her revolutionary mission on behalf of his father and the love affairs deserve our attention. Xiao Jun differentiates Japanese civilians from Japanese militarism, and he sympathizes with all the struggling of the suppressed people. His extensive empathy for almost every character, his depiction of the dilemma that women and children are involved in this tragic defense for their primary survival, and his emphasis on the principle of “soldiers kill no soldiers, but officials” all bring his humanistic concern for the realm of international humanitarianism.

3. The Merits and Limitations of Evan King’s Translation of *Village in August*

Village in August translated by Evan King was published in 1942. As one of the earliest translations that aid to spread the truth of China to the western world, its pioneering significance is highly commendable. The translation version was well spread in the United States and was published four times, being housed by a total of 215 libraries from 47 states (Zheng, 2019, p. 62). King’s translation is easy to read, and good at creating vivid images. His language is natural and authentic, sometimes even better than the author’s artistry, for “the Chinese landscapes and characters portrayed by King are even more vivid than the original” (Lv, 2011, p. 82).

However, it is notable that King’s translation does not closely follow up with fidelity. Wang Shuhuai (2020, p. 930) proposes the concept of the “Cultural Refraction Index (CRI)” to examine the cultural fidelity of the Target Text (TT) to the Source Text (ST), which is calculated by this formula: the total cultural value of the ST divided by the total cultural value of the TT equates CRI. This essay extracts 33 Chinese characteristic expressions from *Village in August*, including culture-loaded words, Northeastern Mandarin, vulgar language, etc. The CRI of Evan King’s translation is calculated to be about 2.06, which illustrates the existence of cultural distortion in his translation.

Table 1. Typical Examples of CRI in Evan King's Translation

	Examples	Translation Sample	Cultural Value of Translation	Proportion in Total Samples
Culture-loaded Words	织女星 (<i>Zhinvxing</i>)	Weaving Girl	0	45%
Northeastern Mandarin	绉子 (<i>Liu zi</i>)	Bandit	0.5	36%
Vulgar Language	王八蛋 (<i>Wang ba dan</i>)	Turtle eggs	0.5	18%

The English translation version mainly adopts the domestication strategy that is common in western translators, with free translation and rewriting as the main techniques. Free translation refers to adaptation, amplification, and omission according to the text and targeted readers' acceptance (Liu & Yang, 2018, p. 111). Rewriting was suggested by Andre Lefevere (1992, p. 2), referring to translators that are manipulated by various factors and therefore usually rewrite the text.

Evan King primarily freely translates and rewrites by reducing the fidelity of the original text, deleting secondary information, adjusting the narrative order, modifying the diction, and adding personal understanding, which leads to a large amount of loss, distortion, and even error in the translation of ST's culture and characteristics mentioned above. In terms of the northeastern regionalism and folklore, it is a pity that King made certain typical but general mistakes (usually appeared in the non-native speakers) in translating the northeastern mandarin, barely added annotations to culture-loaded words, and "westernized" the text to some extent. It also deserves our attention that in view of the bandit-like individual heroism, romantic revolutionary character and humanitarianism, King weakened the banditry and revolutionary nature while strengthened humanitarianism and he changed several expressions of the revolution featured with de-politicization. Given self-construction from the onlooker's angle of view, there is still certainly room for idealizing King's translation version.

3.1 The Translation of the Culture of Northeastern China

In King's translation, a great number of Chinese cultural phenomena are mistranslated, omitted, or domesticated, especially the translation of the local culture featured northeastern characteristics.

Xiao Jun's works are based on the Northeastern Mandarin, among which the nicknames of characters are the most representative, and that is tricky for King to handle. For example, it is customary in Northeast China to address people according to their family ranking in the generation, like "Tang Laogeda" was mistranslated by King as "Boil Tang" for he mistook the meaning of "*laogeda*" as "pimple", which is supposed to mean "the youngest child of Tang family". Such translation does not conform to the

handsome appearance of the Tang Laogeda and also fails to indicate the in-depth culture. Still, “Li Qi’s Widow”, whose name is based on her husband—Li Qi—the 7th brother in the Li family, was mistranslated as “seventh married sister who was the widow Li”, resulting in a factual error. There are also several mistranslations, such as “*wen mang*” (“文盲”) which means “illiterate” but was mistranslated into “blind”, “*guoqule*” (“过去了”), euphemized expression for “passed away” was mistranslated as “cross beyond”, and other similar mistakes such as “*cangying*” (“苍鹰”) was translated to “fly”, which is supposed to be “eagle” etc.

In addition to the mistranslation, the translation hardly adds annotations for the culture-loaded words, but just literally translated or paraphrased them, resulting in losing some cultural phenomena of Northeast China. For example, “*hu zi*” (“胡子”), the nickname for bandits in Northeastern Mandarin, was simply translated as “brigand” or “bandit”, and “*kang*” (“炕”) is translated as “brick bed”. Both translations are without any further notes from the translator, thus causing a “vacuum of sense” in the readers’ comprehension of the text and preventing them from connecting the information with the real experience. Hence, adding annotations properly is necessary for supplementing the context.

Moreover, in *Village in August*, Xiao Jun is very discreet in writing about sexual issues given the cultural taboo and skates over them. However, the translator directly and creatively added a couple of sexual descriptions between Tang Laogeda and Li Qi’s Widow as well as Xiao Ming and Anna, catering to the cultural and reading habits of Westerners, which makes the text obviously “Westernized”.

3.2 *The Translation of Banditry and Individual Heroism*

In the first part of the analysis, we can see that the main literary characteristics of *Village in August* are banditry and revolutionary nature. The former is mostly reflected in the characters’ vulgar language, rude actions, and plain thoughts, while the latter is mainly reflected in the depiction of hatred toward the enemies, combat and revolutionary practices, and the critical development of ideas. Both aspects are weakened in Evan King’s translation.

Example 1:

The Original Text: “为日本帝国主义作走狗的满洲军阀”

King’s Translation: “corrupt officials who are running dogs for the Japanese”

Most of the characters in *Village in August* once were peasants or bandits and are rarely educated, so their expression styles and ideas are not featured with vulgarity and patriarchy (Liu, 2014, p. 225). Offensive words as their pet phrases are commonly adopted in the novel. In Chinese culture, it’s a convention to use the image of dogs to insult someone; while in western culture, such kind of connotation does not exist. Copying the images of animals in Chinese offensive words is likely to confuse readers. As a result, full charged emotion conveyed by this verse has been greatly limited given the information transmitting. Likely, there are expressions including “*ta ma de*” (“他妈的” for condemning and humiliating) is translated as “his mother’s”, “*wang ba dan*” (“王八蛋” for insulting) as “turtle eggs”, and “*niaozhong*”

(“尿种” for insulting the cowardness) as “seedofurine” etc. King translated these humiliating expressions without conforming to their exact meanings. The word-for-word translation seems to inherit the meaning of Chinese expressions, but in fact, they only make the readers of the translated language confused, weakening the emotional transmission and cultural connotation.

In literature, sometimes curses expressed by the characters reflect their psychological activities and emotional changes, showing the figures’ personalities (Huang, 1998, p. 17). In this case, the meaning of the emotions carried by these words is far greater than retaining its original form of expression. The preferred communicative effect of the translated language is supposed to allow the target readers to understand the mood of the characters and immerse themselves in the story of the novel without barriers. Therefore, this paper argues that vulgar words are supposed to be replaced by similar and existing expressions in TT, which can convey the tone and alleviate the sense of exotic strangeness of the whole work.

3.3 The Translation of the Revolutionary Nature and Humanitarian

The translation adapted the revolutionary writing and added humanistic writing so that the revolutionary nature of *Village in August* is also weakened.

Example 2:

The Original Text: “你没听那位司令说吗？‘富人就是穷人身上的臭虫’，只有穷人，才是穷人的好朋友！穷人才能帮助穷人！富人们总也没有好念头在穷人身上打算的。”

King’s Translation: “It’s not a question of whether they’re rich or poor, or whether they follow the rules of etiquette! The question is they betraying their people into the hands of a foreign conqueror who will make slaves of their sons and grandsons, or have they the strength and the courage to try to resist?”

In Example 2, Evan King completely changed the author’s argument over the distinction between the rich and the poor. He does not think landlords’ wealth is gained through the exploitation of peasants, and in his translation, King stresses Master Wang is only guilty of being a traitor instead of an exploiter. There are two issues with the landlord—oppression against tenant farmers and collusion with invaders, while King just realizes part of them. His deletion of the discussion on the contradiction between the rich and the poor tends to narrow Chinese suppressive people’s struggling resistance and rebelling revolution to subvert the “the three mountains” (as the metaphors for feudalism, imperialism, and bureaucrat capitalism)”, which thus to the certain point could not reveal the feudalism enough. The method of “de-politicization” was adopted in his translation to dilute the differences in ideologies (Zheng, 2019, p. 64) and to blur the different national conditions between the TT and the ST.

Besides, due to the cultural differences, Western values generally tend to focus more on individuality and humanity than on collectivism and discipline-obeying. So, it is natural for King to add several sexual descriptions, psychological descriptions, linguistic descriptions, etc. into the translation. For example, Due to the strong miss for Li Qi’ s Widow, Tang Laogeda committed a disciplinary mistake leading to

the delayed retreat of the entire team, eventually resulting in the death of all three people. Chen Zhu's speech in memory of the dead was intended to be a reminder of the importance of discipline considering this lesson. But the translator misses the point. He strengthened the sympathy and understanding for the dead by deleting critical words like "mistake" and even added appreciative words—"They have died bravely for our cause. Bury them bravely with no tears, no doubts." (Evan, 1942, p. 206) It is emphatically different from the warning tone of Chen Zhu, leading to the blurring of the importance of military discipline, which on the one hand further fleshes out the characters and their feelings, while on the other hand distracts readers' attention from the original theme of the novel—revolutionary resistance. The translator further stresses humanitarianism based on Xiao Jun, highlighting the charm of the characters while reducing the presence of the revolutionary writing.

3.4 The Translation of the Onlooker's Perspective and Foreign Culture

Example 3:

The Original Text: “在那本来还是少女爱娇的脸上，已经提早的便刻就了辛苦的纹痕！”

King's Translation: “That face had once been that of a loved and petted daughter of a comfortable bourgeoisie family, but bitterness had cut deep scars into it!”

In writing foreign issues, King also made certain changes that lead to mistranslations of some contents. In Example 3, he added the underlined phrase “a comfortable bourgeoisie family”, which is not yet evident in the original work. In the novel narrative, Anna as the daughter of the leader of the revolutionary party in Korea, came to China to propagate Marxism to bring about a proletarian revolution to save her fallen homeland. Evan King did not explain why he changed Anna's identity from proletariat to bourgeoisie, but it is clear from the translator's subjectivity that such retranslation is in line with the cultural context of his country and brings the target readers—Western readers—closer to the text. Nevertheless, it is at the expense of textual accuracy, especially the ethical stance of the text, which is costly. Anna's story is meant to represent a scenario of revolutionary parties all over the world helping each other, instead of cooperation among different classes.

Similarly, the names of Japanese characters were mistranslated, including in Chapter 5 the Japanese soldier “*Matsubara*” was changed into “*Sekimoto*”, and his wife “*Yoshiko*” to “*AkiHayama*”. In addition to the lack of background knowledge, this is also a translation technique implemented by King: imaginatively deconstructing and reconstructing Eastern issues from a Western perspective to enhance readers' “sense of familiarity” (Ma & Li, 2021, p. 111). By replacing Japanese names that are more representative and suitable to the stereotypes, King stresses exoticism to meet the readers' reading expectations. This same technique can also be observed in other typical cases:

Example 4:

The Original Text: “李七嫂的血正如一缸腾热的豆汁，唐老疙疸的每一句话，正是卤水，这会形成一种可怜的分解！”

King's Translation: "Tang's return to her, and the nearness of him, had made Seventh Sister's blood as hot in her bosom as steaming congee in an earthen jar."

Here, soy milk and brine were replaced by "steaming congee in an earthen jar" in translation version. In the original text, Xiao Jun portrayed Li Qi's Widow as she felt her blood went solidified just like drops of brine that was added into a tank of boiling soy milk while making Tofu. However, such chemical-making process of Tofu may be alien to westerners; hence King applied other typical Chinese phenomena to convey similar meanings. However, the substitution reduces the sudden desperation of Li Qi's Widow after hearing Tang's words.

After analyzing the translation, we found out that the translation has limitations of its time. Although it has the pioneering significance of translating Chinese novels and was well-received by English readers at that time, it sacrifices much of Chinese cultural connotations, even resulting in the deviation of the informative issue of ST. Because of the translator's Western Identity, his translation aims mainly at sharing other peoples' WWII stories rather than purposely promoting Chinese culture, and in his translation, he intentionally or unconsciously appropriates Western thinking and culture, and even sometimes makes mistakes that are not aligned with historical facts. According to Lefevre's interpretation of rewriting, Since China's international status, discourse power, and cultural output were all not strong enough then with a comparison with the peer western, it would inevitably result in such translations that were dominated by domestication strategy and diverged from the original work, thus leading to the loss of the textual truth and content truth.

4. Principles of Translation for Chinese Works Spreading Abroad in the New Era

Translators like Evan King have made great contribution to transmitting Chinese novels, as important pioneers, for which we extend our sincere gratitude. While this paper aims to encourage to spread true stories of China to the world through the reintroduction of Chinese literature and under such a pure and primary target, we are supposed to adhere to principle of faithfulness to the ST and historical facts and implement a combination of defamiliarization, foreignisation, and domestication to retain as much of the style of the works as possible while facilitating the understanding of the TT readers.

4.1 The General Characteristics of Village in August and Translation of Chinese Culture

Translation of Chinese works is supposed to organically integrate the two means of domestication and foreignisation. The former enables to achieve a fluent and natural translation, and the latter can preserve the exotic atmosphere. When readers read foreign literature, they look forward to the novelty and charm of exotic culture in the collision of Chinese and Western cultures. Therefore, the importance of good dissimilation is obvious, for it cannot only strengthen soft power but also enrich the reading experience of target language readers. Especially, now that the "Scheme of the Chinese Phonetic Alphabet" has been recognized by the international community, China gradually replaces the old Wade-Giles Romanization

with Pinyin, helping the Western society become more familiar with the Chinese. For instance, David Hawkes added a four-page description of the Pinyin scheme in his preface of the translation of *Hongloumeng* (《红楼梦》), which is worth learning. Besides, Chinese unique units should be retained, including monetary units (e. g., yuan), distance units (e. g., li), weight units (e. g., jin) etc.

However, to achieve further effects and a wider range of communication, foreignizing blindly is not feasible and tends to necessarily deepen the gap. Only with the cooperation of the TT subjects can we help Chinese literature acclimatize to foreign environments with different institutions, cultures, and ideologies (Yin & Li, 2021, p. 81). From the perspective of communication studies, we should adopt a flexible communication strategy, for Chinese culture is still in a developing position, and a translation strategy that combines both foreignisation and domestication with a little emphasis on the latter is required to help Chinese culture spread abroad right now (Wang, 2015, p. 103).

4.2 Northeastern Characteristics of Village in August and the Translation of Regional Culture

There are a large number of Northeastern Mandarin and cultural phenomena in *Village in August*. Due to the existing cultural default between Chinese and English, translators are supposed to adopt various compensatory means while translating cultural expressions with Northeastern characteristics, including the methods of adding notes, increasing translation, domestication etc. (Su, 2008, p. 176). Especially defamiliarization can both keep the cultural connotation and the interest of readers (Li, 2016, p. 84). When it comes to curses, proverbs, and colloquialisms in dialect, it is appropriate to use the communicative translation method to find similar expressions in the TT to convey the same effect. Such as “*chui hu zi dengyan*” (“吹胡子瞪眼”, describing the face of rage) can be translated as “blowone’s stop”, better than the translation of Evan King’s “chewing his mustaches and staring out of glass eyes”, though vividly conveyed the literary significance but sacrifice or even ignore the underneath meaning. Sometimes, the cultural division may lead to different interpretations of the same image, and a literal translation from one culture to another may cause misunderstanding among readers. For example, to avoid different understandings of “dragon” in different cultures, the word “*zhen long tian zi*” (“真龙天子”, emphasizing the noble birth) can be just translated as “the emperor”.

4.3 Other Unique Literary Features of Village in August and the Translation of Textual Characteristics

Xiao Jun’s work has distinctive characteristics of himself. In addition to the regional and folkloric nature, it also has unique literary features such as banditry, personal heroism, romantic revolutionary character, humanitarian, and self-construction from the onlooker’s angle of view. Translators are supposed to consciously respect and preserve the writing style and literary characteristics of the original work.

The banditry and revolutionary nature of Xiao Jun’s writing refer to the heroic spirit of resistance against the landowners, the Manchukuo regime, and Japanese imperialism. As critics evaluate, “it has a raw barrenness, as if it is unpolished, with rich intuition and sensibility” (Zhao, 1986, p. 152). This revolutionary character is intertwined with the humanitarian spirit, and the conflict between the two

sometimes reflects the unique confusion of that times. Either shifting the focus of the novel or blurring the historical facts can cause the loss of the original text's character. As translators, we are supposed to respect the differences in history and positions in the translation, for the sake of truth and fact. The writing technique of self-construction from others' perspectives in *Village in August* has a good effect on defamiliarization, so the translator should also adopt a creative method of defamiliarization to convey the literary character (Shao & Wu, 2022, p. 178), facilitating the readers to truly understand and study the author's creative characteristics. Therefore, translators should use the literal translation method to be faithful to the original text and avoid adding too much personal understanding that leads to the "aphasia" of the author.

4.4 The Enlightenment and Requirement for Translation Teaching and Faculty Team Construction through Study of Village in August

While conducting the research on the translation of *Village in August*, it not only finally fulfills the prescribed aim of researching the methods and strategies in translating *Village in August* as the representative of Chinese contemporary literature with typical characteristics, but also offers us a new penetrative view into the instructing and studying such literary genre for translation teaching and translation teaching faculty construction. Given teaching, it is quite significant to arouse the attention of translation and English language major students to such genre and endeavor them to ponder over eternal topics and themes, including the local colorism, gender equality, imperialism, patriotism, humanitarianism, cosmopolitanism, shared future of people all over the world etc. Besides, it also converts the translation instruction to retrospect over the methods particularly designed for northeast novels. In addition, it also echoes the requirement of constructing cross multi-discipline teaching faculty against new arts background, which in this particular case requires the teachers and instructors not only to master English language teaching and translation strategies, but also Chinese contemporary literature knowledge and acquisition of the comparative literature of the east and west given genres, characterization, narratives, thematic analyses, western literary thoughts, approaches, theories, etc. Luckily, some Chinese teachers graduating with a literature-discipline master's or even doctorate degree have acquired these capabilities and knowledge, but we cannot deny or ignore a certain number of teachers possessing either sole linguistics knowledge or translation theoretical knowledge who always find it hard to penetrate the rooted characteristics of literary texts. A series of necessary training like updating learning, training, workshops etc., are needed in addition to the values previously mentioned. Also, besides the intimately incorporated literary theories, either information or knowledge of other disciplines interwoven into the literary texts is still to be explored and mastered such as politics, sociology, economy, geography, economics, medicine, etc., which proposes the challenges and opportunities for teachers specialized into translation. Further, translatology itself is also a subject constituted by a systematic subjects and contents that need to be explored and investigated.

5. Conclusion

As the main battlefield in the east of the world's anti-racist war, China contributes a lot to the final victory of justice, and we should not only remember but also share our stories with the whole world. To sum up, this paper focuses on the literary characteristics of *Village in August* and explored its featured "banditry", unique revolutionary, humanitarian spirit, exotic writing, etc. In Evan King's translation of the book, he adopts a free translation approach, resulting in several changes and cultural deviations from the original text. His translation loses partial characteristics of Xiao Jun, Northeast China, and even China, and it is sometimes against the author's intention and historical facts. Chinese translators in the new era should insist on the principle of faithfulness to the original text and historical facts. When translating Chinese culture, we should take the strategy of foreignisation and domestication at the same time, and with a slight emphasis on the latter one to achieve better acceptance by readers. When it comes to local culture, we should apply various means to compensate for the default depending on the situation, and keep fidelity to the author in the translation of the novel's literary characteristics. Our current translation practice should not only facilitate the understanding of foreign readers but also maximize the dissemination of Chinese culture, promoting Chinese works to more countries and building a strong cultural nation with flexible communication strategies. In translation teaching, we also need more qualified teachers to cultivate students who can become comprehensive translators in the future.

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