

Original Paper

Research on the Mechanism of Overseas Promotion and
Translation by Chinese Publishing Houses from the Perspective
of Sponsor

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Abstract

Translation activities are usually influenced by various factors. Lefevere mentioned in “Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Reputation” that translation activities are influenced by ideology, aesthetics, and sponsors, among which sponsors have the greatest influence on the translation activities. Sponsors are further divided into ideological sponsors, economic sponsors, and social status sponsors. Through the study from the perspective of sponsors, it is discovered that the government plays an important role in the publicity and translation activities of publishing houses in China, providing economic and ideological sponsorship for their publicity and translation activities.

Keywords

sponsor, government, publishing house, publicity works, translation activity

1. Introduction

China's national foreign communication and translation activities began roughly in the early period after the establishment of the People's Republic of China. Publishing institutions have shouldered the responsibility of China's foreign communication by translating China's books to introduce its governing philosophy, basic principles, policies, and the profound and extensive Chinese culture to the world. This has played an important role in promoting cooperation and mutual understanding between China and other countries by enabling the world to have a comprehensive and three-dimensional

understanding of China and its ideology.

Sponsors have had a profound impact on external publicity translation and introduction activities. In China's external publicity translation and introduction activities, the government acts as both an ideological sponsor and an economic sponsor in publishing house activities. Chinese external publicity works reflect China's ideology, and publishing houses cooperate with foreign publishing houses under the economic sponsorship provided by the government. This article analyzes the mechanism of external publicity translation and introduction activities of Chinese publishing houses, explores the role and impact of the government in these activities, and clarifies the mechanism of external publicity translation and introduction of Chinese publishing houses, in order to better promote the external publicity of Chinese works, tell China's story better, spread its ideas, and coexist peacefully with the world.

2. The Concept of Patronage

Lefevere's work *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* provides a systematic interpretation of the concept of the patron and emphasizes the importance of the patron in translation activities. Lefevere defines the patron as "any power that can contribute to the production and dissemination of literary works, while also potentially obstructing, prohibiting, or destroying them", and the patron mainly influences the ideology, publication, economic income, and social status of works. It can be religious groups, classes, government departments, publishing houses, mass media organizations, or individual forces (Lefevere, 2010). In translation, the patron can be defined as "the behavior of individuals or institutions providing financial support for translation activities or utilizing their influence to promote translation activities", so "the patron is a sponsor or supporter of translation activities" (Bai, 2009).

3. Sponsorship Mechanism for Publishing House's External Promotion and Translation Introduction Activities

In the foreign propaganda and translation activities of Chinese publishing houses, the government plays the role of a sponsor, both ideologically and economically. With the development of time, China's ideology is constantly changing, thus affecting the foreign propaganda and translation activities of publishing houses in different periods.

3.1 The Government as an Ideological Sponsor

Ideology generally refers to the superstructure of social ideas or thoughts, including politics, law, philosophy, religion, literature, art, etc. Its essence is a national phenomenon and collective discourse, fundamentally an expression of class will and a reflection of a certain social and economic formation as well as the political system determined by the economic formation. Publisher's external propaganda works are an important medium for promoting a national value system and cultural tradition to the

outside world. Therefore, publishers are influenced by the national ideology when publishing external propaganda works. National ideology evolves with the development of the times. This section takes the reform and opening-up as a turning point to analyze the impact of the Chinese ideology on the external propaganda translation activities of publishers from the establishment of the People's Republic of China to present-day reform and opening-up.

3.1.1 The Ideological Sponsorship from the Founding of People's Republic of China to the Period before the Reform and Opening-up

In the early days of the founding of New China, China hoped to promote its development path and governance concepts to the outside world through external publicity. Therefore, before the reform and opening-up period, China mainly introduced its development path, summarized experiences, and published works on Chinese leaders and party history to overseas audiences. The political nature of these publications during this stage of external publicity was relatively strong.

The China Foreign Language Publishing and Distribution Administration were founded by Chinese leaders, shouldering the important task of promoting the Communist Party and the country's external propaganda. The government systematically and plannedly promotes the translation and introduction activities of publishing houses, ensuring that the international propaganda works are consistent with the country's mainstream ideology. From its inception, the Foreign Language Publishing and Distribution Administration's purpose and principles have been to publish works in foreign languages including: the writings of Chinese leaders, government announcements, policy documents, and works related to political institutions in China, the works of important Chinese theorists, politicians, and scientists, as well as articles, communications, and literary works introducing China. Over the decades, under the leadership of the national ideology, the Foreign Language Publishing and Distribution Administration has never forgotten its original intention, always bearing in mind its mission, and keeping up with the pace of the country to do well in the publication of international propaganda works.

Table 1. China International Communications Group's Major External Publications from 1959 to 1976

Publication year	<i>Publications</i>	Languages of publications
	<i>Home</i>	English
1959	<i>Mao Tsetung Poems</i> (19 poems)	English, Spanish, Franch, Hindi, Dutch, Indonesian
1961	<i>Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung Volume IV</i>	English
1963	<i>Selected Military Writings of Mao Tse-Tung</i>	English
1964	<i>On the Discipline of Communist Party Members</i>	English, Franch, Russian, German and Burmese

	<i>Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung Volume I</i>	English
	<i>Selected Military Writings of Mao Tse-Tung</i>	Russian
	<i>From Emperor to Citizen</i>	English, German, Arabic and Urdu
1965	<i>Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung Volume III,</i> <i>Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung Volume II</i>	English
1976	<i>Mao Tsetung Poems (39 poems)</i>	English

Table 1 represents the main foreign propaganda publications from the early establishment of the Foreign Languages Bureau to before the reform and opening-up period. From the table, it can be seen that Chairman Mao Zedong's works were the primary focus of foreign propaganda at that time, covering political and poetic themes. Chairman Mao Zedong was a great leader of China. After the establishment of the People's Republic of China, introducing the works of Chinese leaders to the outside world effectively enabled people around the world to better understand China and promote the new China.

3.1.2 Ideological Sponsorship after the Reform and Opening-up

During the Cultural Revolution, the publishing activities of propaganda materials by publishing houses almost came to a standstill. However, with the implementation of the policy of reform and opening up, Chinese publishing houses began to regain momentum and reestablished contact with the outside world through various forms of learning, exchange, and cooperation. In order to further introduce China to the world, Chinese publishing houses successively dispatched a large number of editors, printers, and distributors to visit and exchange experiences with many countries and regions around the world. In addition, the China International Communications Group established subsidiary publishing houses to better promote China's image in all aspects. Table 2 shows the publishing houses established successively under the Foreign Language Bureau after the reform and opening up. All four newly established publishing houses focus on publishing overseas propaganda works. As can be seen from the table, in response to the proactive policy of opening up to the outside world, the publishing houses under the China International Communications Group publish foreign books on China's policies, Chinese language and culture, as well as various traditional Chinese cultures, in order to achieve the goal of overseas propaganda.

Table 2. Publishing Houses Established under the China International Communications Group in the 1980s

Publishing House	Establishment		Major Publication Subjects	Language of Publication	
	Time of Publishing			Publication	Publication

House				
Blossom Press	1982	Mainly publishing books, albums, and images that introduce Chinese culture, arts, and famous historical sites	<i>Dun Huang</i>	English
Sinoligua	1986	Mainly publishing foreign language teaching books in Chinese	<i>Interactive Chinese</i>	Chinese-English, Chinese-Japanese, Chinese-Korean, Chinese-Indonesian, Chinese-French, Chinese-Spanish, Chinese-German
Dolphin Press	1986	Publishing multilingual children's books	Yanni Painting Monkeys	English, French, German, Japanese and Spanish
New Star Press	1989	Publishing and promoting the principles, policies, laws and regulations of the Communist Party of China, the Chinese government, and introducing foreign basic information as well as relevant social sciences books	<i>Pictures of Old Beijing: Living Memo</i>	English

The Chinese Communist Party and Chinese national leaders have always been concerned about and supported China's overseas publicity work. The older generation of proletarian revolutionaries such as Mao Tse-tung, Zhou Enlai, Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, and Soong Ching-ling, as well as the third-generation leadership collective centered around Jiang Zemin, have given important instructions and guidance on overseas publicity and the work of the Foreign Languages Bureau. They have provided clear opinions on the guiding ideology and policy principles of book and journal publicity abroad, as well as the content and artistic presentation of publications. They have also given instructions on personnel allocation, cadre training, and institutional settings, which still have strong guiding significance to this day.

In 1986, the China International Communications Group formulated the plan for publishing house's overseas publicity works based on the requirements given by the central government, which maintained consistency with the mainstream national consciousness. As the sponsor, the government has set requirements for the Foreign Languages Bureau's guiding principles and policies on overseas publicity work. "Currently, the No. 17 document issued by the central government further clarifies the strategic position, guiding principles, and policies of overseas propaganda work, analyzes the problems and deficiencies in the current stage of overseas propaganda work, and points out the future efforts, work priorities, reliance on objects, and centralized management and leadership relationships" (Zhou & Qi, 1999).

The above content is selected from *Selected Historical Materials of the 50-Year History of the China Foreign Languages Bureau*, which represents the Chinese government's deployment for the development and publication of the Foreign Languages Bureau. It holds significant guiding significance, indicating that Chinese external propaganda publications need to be in line with the national ideology and emphasizes the role of the Chinese government as the ideological sponsor of the publishing house's external propaganda works.

Table 3. The Main Overseas Propaganda Publications of the Foreign Languages Bureau after the Reform and Opening-up

Publication Year	Publications	Language of Publication
1978	<i>A Dream of Red Mansions</i> , Volume I	English
1979	<i>A Dream of Red Mansions</i> , Volume II	English
1980	<i>A Dream of Red Mansions</i> , Volume III	English
	<i>Outlaws of the Marsh</i> (three volumes: Upper, Middle, and Lower)	English
1981	<i>Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party since the Founding of the People's Republic of China</i>	English, French, Spanish, German, Japanese
	<i>Selected Works of Zhou Enlai</i>	English
1982	<i>Journey to the West</i> , Volume I	English
	<i>Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping</i>	Japanese
1983	<i>Selected Works of Liu Shaoqi</i>	English, French
	<i>Journey to the West</i> , Volume II	English
1984	<i>Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping</i>	English
1985	<i>Building Socialism with Chinese Characteristics</i>	English
1986	<i>Journey to the West</i> , Volume III	English

	<i>Selected Works of Zhu De</i>	Japanese, Spanish, Russian
1987	<i>Compilation of Laws of the People's Republic of China (1979-1986)</i>	English
	<i>Selected Works of Chen Yun</i>	Japanese
1994	<i>Romance of the Three Kingdoms</i> (The complete book is divided into three volumes)	English
2007	<i>Zhenliang He and the Chinese Olympic Dream</i>	English
2010	<i>Selected Works of Jiang Zemin, Volume I</i>	English, French, Spanish, Japanese, Russian
2013	<i>The Elegant Bamboo Spirit - Selected Ancient Chinese Poetry on Bamboo</i>	English
	<i>Speech Record of Zhu Rongji</i>	English
2014	<i>The Chinese Dream: The Great Rejuvenation of the Chinese Nation</i>	English, French, Spanish, Japanese, Russian, Arabic
	<i>Xi Jinping</i>	English, French, Russian, Arabic, Spanish, Portuguese,
	<i>The Governance of China</i>	German, Japanese
	<i>Breaking Free from Poverty</i>	English, French
2017	<i>Xi Jinping</i>	English
	<i>The Governance of China, Volume II</i>	English, French, Spanish, German, Japanese, Russian, Arabic, Portuguese,
2018	<i>Secure a Decisive Victory in Building a Moderately Prosperous Society in all Respects and Strive for the Great Success of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era</i>	Vietnamese, Lao
	<i>Xi Jinping</i>	English, French, Spanish, German, Russian, Japanese, Arabic, Portuguese
2019	<i>The Governance of China, Volume II</i>	German, English
2020	<i>Zhejiang, China: a New Vision for Development</i>	English
	<i>Xi Jinping</i>	English
	<i>The Governance of China, Volume III</i>	English
	<i>The CPC</i>	English
2021	<i>Its Mission and Contributions</i>	French, Russian, Arabic, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Japanese
	<i>Xi Jinping</i>	English
2022	<i>The Governance of China, Volume III</i>	English
	<i>Xi Jinping</i>	English

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After the reform and opening up, China's ideological environment was influenced by the "tide of going abroad for business" and the "wave of reinterpretation and interpretation of Chinese traditional culture and western culture". Intellectual liberation and the rise of the intellectual community emphasized the knowledge, culture, and ideology in the publication of translated foreign propaganda books (Wei, 2018). From Table 3, it can be seen that the main propaganda books of the Foreign Languages Bureau at that time included the China's four great classic novels and works by Chinese leaders or important figures, reflecting the importance placed by the country on the translation of Chinese traditional culture and the ideological influence of the government as a sponsor on the activities of Foreign Languages Bureau.

3.2 Government as an Economic Sponsor

In order to better promote Chinese culture and tell the story of China to the world, a batch of funded book translation projects has been launched by China in 21st century. These books are sold worldwide in different languages, including works on Xi Jinping's Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, as well as major selected topics from the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China and the second, third, fourth, and fifth plenary sessions, focusing on the history of the Party, New China, reform and opening-up, socialist development, books on building a moderately prosperous society, and Chinese traditional cultural classics, as well as works by famous and contemporary authors (Fan & Wu, 2021).

The 21st Century Book Funding Project includes: the 2006 China Book Promotion Project, the 2009 China Cultural Works Translation Project, the 2009 Classic China International Publishing Project, the 2010 Chinese Academic Translation Project, the 2013 Translation Project for Contemporary Chinese Works and Translation Project for Contemporary Ethnic Minority Literature from China, the 2013 Shanghai Academic Translation Project, the 2014 Silk Road Book Publishing Project, the 2015 Shanghai Translation and Publishing Promotion Plan, and the 2016 Foreigners Writing about China Plan. Among them, the China Book Promotion Project and the China Cultural Works Translation Project are collectively referred to as the "Two Projects". The former has funded 3,459 projects in over 50 languages from 2009 to 2019, while the latter is an enhanced version and has funded 105 projects in 16 languages by 2017 (Fan & Wu, 2021).

Table 4. 21st Century Chinese Book Translation Projects

Department or unit	Project name	Startup time	the number of approved project achievements	the number of supported publicati	Publication requirements for the project	Requirements for publishers

		on language s				
National Office of Philosophy and Social Sciences	Chinese Academi c Translati on Project	2010	1222	25	Publishing in foreign language forms in authoritative overseas publishing institutions and entering mainstream overseas publishing channels	The foreign publishing institutions within the directory of guidance by foreign publishing institutions of the Chinese Academic Overseas Translation Project
	Classic China Internatio nal Publishin g Project	2009	1634	42	To export copyrights to non-Chinese language regions or to collaborate with publishing units outside of Chinese language regions for publication	Mainstream publishing institutions in non-Chinese speaking regions
Publicity Department of the Communist Party of China	Silk Road Literature Publishin g Project	2014	2226	56	Publishing works in the surrounding countries of China and countries along the Belt and Road Initiative	Any publishing institution
	Foreigner s Writing Chinese Project	2016	70		Once the project is approved, it is required to be published through collaboration within two years.	

	China					
	Book	2006	3459	50+		
	Promotion Plan					
	Translation and Publishing Project for Chinese Cultural Works				Foreign publishing institutions promote translation to the outside world through copyright collaboration	Any publishing institution
	Translation Project of Contemporary Chinese Works	2009	105	16		
	Translation Project of Contemporary Chinese Works		59 (There are 26 completed projects.)			
	Translation Project of Contemporary Ethnic Minority Literary Works in China		130 (There are 97 completed projects.)	26	Translate and publish after reaching a translation contract with foreign publishing houses	Any publishing institution
	Shanghai Academic Excellence Translation	2013	6	8	Published separately by foreign authoritative publishing institutions in the form of foreign languages or Chinese-foreign language comparison, or jointly	Authoritative publishing institution
Local project						

Project				published by Chinese and foreign publishing institutions, and entered into mainstream overseas distribution channels	
Shanghai Translation and Publishing Promotion Program	2015	24	9	Publications are disseminated worldwide	Any publishing institution

According to Table 4, in order to promote Chinese culture's "going global", the government has sponsored a large number of publishing houses to publish works for external propaganda, and these projects have achieved significant results since their implementation. The Chinese Cultural Works Translation Project mainly focuses on sponsoring a series of products, including funding for translation fees as well as publication and promotion expenses. Although the government acts as the economic sponsor of these projects, its purpose is not to obtain economic returns, but to introduce China's culture and ideology to the outside world. As the economic sponsor of the foreign translation projects, the government requires that the books published by publishing houses comply with its requirements, selecting and translating books that align with the themes of the projects, thus promoting the dissemination of Chinese culture abroad.

4. Conclusion

Lefevre subdivides the theory of manipulation into ideology, poetics, and sponsors. This article explores the mechanism of overseas promotion and translation of books by publishing houses from the perspective of sponsors. The overseas promotion and translation activities of Chinese publishing houses do not operate independently but need to be consistent with the mainstream ideology of the country. The government acts as the sponsor of ideological and economic support for publishing houses. The government acts as both the ideological sponsor and the economic sponsor of the publishing house. From the establishment of the People's Republic of China to the period of reform and opening up, the mainstream ideology of the country focused on introducing China's development experience and leadership thoughts to the world. As the ideological sponsor of publishing houses, the government requires that the overseas promotion books of publishing houses be consistent with the mainstream

ideology of the country and publish overseas promotion books on relevant topics. After the reform and opening up, the country aimed to promote traditional Chinese culture internationally. Therefore, the translation and publication of overseas promotion books focused on cultural books, such as the China's four great classical novels. China has established multiple book translation projects to promote Chinese culture internationally. With the economic sponsorship from the government, major publishing houses translate and publish relevant thematic books according to the government's requirements, selling them all over the world, allowing people from various countries to have a deeper understanding of Chinese culture and ideology. Chinese government should increase its sponsorship for book translation projects, enrich the themes of overseas promotion works, establish strict selection criteria for works, and ensure the quality of overseas promotion works, in order to enable readers to have a more comprehensive understanding of China. Books are an important medium for telling the story of a country. As a bridge for promoting Chinese culture, publishing houses should tell the story of China through the publication of overseas promotion books, maintain consistency with the mainstream ideology of the country, and vigorously promote the construction of China's international cultural dissemination capabilities.

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Note

Note 1. Datas in Table 4 are sourced from (Fan & Wu, 2021).