

1. Research originality

The present thesis aims to present a descriptive, contextualized, target-oriented translation history research into the introduction of Czech literature in China from a socio-cultural perspective. As a translation history study, its main goal is to answer the major research questions in translation history, as pointed out by Williams and Chesterman (2002: 16): What? Who? How? And Why? The issues examined in this thesis are novel in several ways:

First, it is the first systematic attempt to survey the history of Czech literature in Chinese translation. This is a largely under-researched area, and certainly merits more attention and efforts. In the books on literary translation history in China (see Chen 1989, Guo 1998, Fang 2005, Meng and Li 2005, Zha and Xie 2007, Wang 2008), translations of Czech literature are mostly mentioned in passing as part of a larger geographical area, namely Central and Eastern Europe, or some ideologically perceived communities, i.e. “the oppressed peoples”. Accounts of Czech literature translation are also scattered in the parts on individual translators or certain literary genres. The same is true of academic articles and dissertations. The only relevant academic effort can be found in the article “Jiekesiluofake wenxue zai zhongguo [Czechoslovakian Literature in China]” (Jiang 1987), which was written from the perspective of literary studies rather than translation studies. What’s more, it is just a survey and arrangement of historical facts and materials, and lacks a theoretical analysis of the translations. The present study tries to trace the translation and reception of Czech literature in China over the span of a century. It makes an endeavor to answer the major research questions of who, what, how and why by examining the socio-cultural conditions in various periods and investigating their influences on selection of texts for translation, adoption of translation approaches, choice of intermediate languages, and employment of various translation strategies. Apart from being a necessary complement to the existing history of translated literature in China, the study is intended to help audiences, whether Chinese, Czech or international, to gain a more comprehensive view on Czech literature abroad.

Second, a study like this may serve to address the imbalance in translation studies. There has long been an imbalance in translation history as well as translation theories and descriptive translation studies. English has been enjoying an elevated status in overall academic research. Many findings concerning this global language are presented as general principles of translation, while “contributions written in languages other than English and on topics outside Anglophile interests tend to be ignored or over-simplified” (Snell-Hornby 2006:x). Descriptive studies have concentrated on the reception of the ‘major’ cultures. Woods (2006:185, cited by Špirk 2011:12) points out that:

Translation Studies has tended to focus on case studies of major world languages [...] there needs to be an analysis of translations from so-called ‘minority languages’, and certainly one of the areas that has been ignored is ex-Eastern Europe: Central Europe and the Balkans, for instance.

This is also true of historical works on literary translation in China, as more importance has been attached to major nations while smaller nations have received limited attention. Such a canon-oriented way of studying translation would very likely impede our comprehensive understanding of translation phenomena and its nature. A systematic and in-depth contextualized research into Czech literature in Chinese translation may serve to complement the existing translation history researches, and broaden our perspective on descriptive translation studies.

Third, this study pays special attention to peripheral topics in translation studies, like indirect translation, retranslation and paratexts. Toury's (2012:109) DTS theory, as well as Even-Zohar's (1990:14-15) polysystem hypothesis, reject a priori value judgments in selection of the objects to be studied, thus allowing the study of translational phenomena "previously unnoticed or bluntly rejected" by the source-oriented approach. Yet they are still accorded only marginal positions, due to their deviation from the prototypical notion of interlingual translation characterized by the dichotomy of one source text and one target text, typically mediated by one translator. Furthermore, these concepts have fuzzy borders with plenty of overlap and borderline cases. However, their prevalence in translation history makes them worthy of more academic attention. And this study is expected to help deepen the understanding of such peripheral translation phenomena.

2. Research outline

Chapter 1 is the Introduction, which discusses the significance of the present research as well as the working definitions. The theoretical framework of this study is also presented, with its contextualized and target-oriented nature stressed. Even-Zohar's (1990) polysystem theory, which treats literature as an integral factor in human society and translated literature as the most active system within a literary polysystem, Toury's translation norms, which emphasize the identification of conditioning factors as well as the establishment of regularities of translational behaviour in recurrent situations, and Lefevere's rewriting theory, which sees translation as a rewriting of an original text motivated by a certain ideology or a poetics, serve as the theoretical underpinning of this thesis.

Chapter 2 presents a discussion of the concepts in translation studies most pertinent to this thesis, including (1) ideology, whose study in translation studies has been strongly linked to the idea of manipulation, power relations and rewriting (Munday 2007: 195-196); (2) censorship, which manifests the influence of ideology on translations; (3) paratext, "a zone between text and off-text" (Genette 1997: 2) that reveals a great deal about the production of a translation and affects its reception; (4) indirect translation, which "played an important role in connecting cultures, not least when (semi)peripheral languages have been involved" (Ringmar 2007: 1); and (5) retranslation, "a second or later translation of a single source text into the same target language" (Koskinen & Paloposki 2010: 294).

Chapter 3 first categorizes this study as empirical research mixing qualitative and quantitative approaches. It discusses the basic models of translation studies, before

pointing out that the present research is focused on socio-cultural factors in Chesterman's (2000) causal model. The research questions are presented and hypotheses formulated. It also lists the sources of data, on the basis of which a catalogue will be established and then reduced to "a reasonably extensive yet manageable and balanced corpus" (Pym 2014: 67). The corpora need to be analyzed to see how text variables are related to context variables. Finally, it is explained that, as a broad method, the present research will combine case study, corpus study, historical and archival research methods and the use of numeric data and statistical data analysis.

Chapters 4-6 give discussions of the history of translated Czech literature in mainland China, on the basis of its division into three periods. The first period (1921-1949) during the Republican era ended with the founding of the People's Republic of China. The second phase (1950-1977) can be further divided into two subdivisions, with the significant political event in 1963 serving as the dividing line. The third stage (1978-2020) commenced with China's Reform and Opening-up. In this century-long time span, translations of Czech literature in China have gone through rise and fall, and grown from obscurity to popularity. A remarkable array of Czech literary works have been introduced to China. The publications in these periods were marked by selections of different writers, genres and themes, and were subject to the influence of socio-cultural and political contexts.

Chapter 7 is a comparative textual analysis conducted on five different versions of Jaroslav Hašek's *The Good Soldier Švejk*: the original, Paul Selver's 1930 English direct translation, Xiao Qian's 1956 Chinese indirect translation based on Selver, Liu Xingcan's 1983 direct translation, and Parrott's 1973 direct English translation. Special attention will be paid to the translation of offensive language, tabooed subjects, and cultural elements. The aim is to shed some light on matters relating to the translating strategies, target culture restrictions, and faithfulness to the original versus manipulation.

Chapter 8 is the Conclusion, which summarizes the results obtained, especially those concerning the topics most relevant to the research questions: "ideology" and "censorship" closely related to the "what" and "why" questions, "indirect translation", "retranslation" and "paratexts" linked with the "how" question, and the topic of "translators" concerned with the "who" question. The Conclusion also discusses the limitations of this study and offers suggestions for further research.

The Conclusion is followed by a list of sources and bibliography, as well as appendices consisting of the main translated works of Czech literature in the three historical periods of mainland China: 1921-1949, 1950-1977, and 1978-2020. The translations are ordered chronologically (according to their years of publication).

3. Materials and methodology

This study is primarily empirical research, whose essential idea is to use data, either quantitative data in numerical form or qualitative data in non-numerical form, as the way of answering questions, and of developing and testing ideas (Punch 2014:

2-3). In other words, it seeks “evidence which supports or disconfirms hypotheses, or generates new ones” (Williams & Chesterman 2002: 58). It also takes a mixed-methods approach, presented by Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) as the third research paradigm mixing qualitative and quantitative approaches. As “today’s research world is becoming increasingly inter-disciplinary, complex, and dynamic”, the need arises for many researchers to complement one method with another, thus drawing from the strengths and minimizing the weaknesses of both (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004: 15). This research therefore has both qualitative and quantitative elements. The qualitative stage will come first, as we set up and define the concepts and categories we need; and the quantitative aspect will come in later during the analysis stage, when we want to make claims about regularities, tendencies, frequencies and distributions. Moreover, qualitative data and quantitative data can be synchronized for better result, for the reasons that “all qualitative data can be coded quantitatively” and “all quantitative data is based on qualitative judgment” (Ochieng 2009: 17).

In the present study, several methods are used to collect or analyze materials and data, both those typically associated with qualitative research, like historical research and case studies, and those associated with quantitative research, such as corpus analysis (ibid.: 23). The quantitative aspect is most evident in “the use of numeric data and statistical data analysis” in the study of translation history, which has been successful in revealing long-term historical patterns of change as well as the aggregate context and structures of history (Zhou & Sun 2017: 99).

Since the present research can be typologically accommodated within Pym’s (2014: 5) “translation archaeology”, which is “a set of discourses concerned with answering all or part of the complex question ‘who translated what, how, where, when, for whom and with what effect?’”, our initial research question pertains to one basic aspect “what”: What literary works were translated from Czech into Chinese? The question appeared justifiable on two grounds: “First, it should not have been done before. Second, the people carrying out the research must have an interest in it” (ibid.: 15). To render the list of material, or catalog, more homogeneous, the final research questions are formulated as follows: 1. What Czech literary works were translated into Chinese, in book form or in journals? 2. How was Czech literature translated into Chinese? 3. Who translated Czech literature into Chinese and what are their features? 4. Why was Czech literature translated the way it was in mainland China? The fourth formulation is especially important due to what Pym (2014: ix-x) calls “the first principle” of explanation of social causation in translation history. The hypothesis to be tested has been formulated as follows: there are patterns or tendencies in the translation of Czech literature into Chinese, which has possible contextual explanations.

To establish a catalogue of translations from Czech into Chinese, data will be gathered from:

- 1) Bibliography of Books in the Republic of China Period (1912-1949): Foreign Literature;
- 2) Bibliography of Classic Literature Books Translated in Mainland China

(1949-1979);

3) The Chinese National Bibliography;

4) China Archives of Publications;

5) Quan Guo Bao Kan Suo Yin (CNBKSY)

The next stage consists in reducing the list (catalogue) of translations discovered to a smaller field of some more specific importance. In order to arrive at “a reasonably extensive yet manageable and balanced corpus” (Pym 2014: 67), the decision has been taken to include only translations of literature (for adult readers) from Czech into Chinese published in mainland China.

In Translation Studies, where we try to see “how aspects of translations are related to aspects of the wider world”, two kinds of variables are dealt with: text variables, which have to do with the translations themselves, including “the existence and form of a translation (or set of translations)” and context variables, which have to do with the world outside the translations, including anything in the spatial, temporal or social environment of the translation that could be relevant to it. Our analysis of the corpora will take in account such context variables as source-language, translator, publication form, publisher, socio-cultural variables, etc., to examine the effect of context on text, the effect of text on context, and the relations between text and context variables themselves. The analyses will be presented in tables, graphs and diachronic distribution curves, which help offer a sense of control over otherwise unruly data. They can also confirm or deny the minor hypotheses, suspicions or hunches that surface as we go along compiling the lists, such as the “retranslation hypothesis”.

Our case studies in this research will be comparative textual analysis of the translated texts. The researcher in every translation history project, according to Assis Rosa, “should start by observing the back-drop and moving on to the particular case study, moving from context to text, or from macro to micro” (2013: 39–40). And the micro-textual comparative study, points out Toury, could involve a number of parallel translations into one TL, at one point in time or at different points in time, or several parallel translations into different languages (Toury 2012: 95-98). We therefore chose five texts for the textual comparison, including the original Czech text and four translations in both Chinese and English. One of the Chinese translations is a direct one from Czech, and the other indirect from English. The units of comparative analysis are the parallel textual segments in these texts. And our operations on some representative parallel textual segments involve attempts to establish regularities of behaviour and to reconstruct the translation strategies adopted. Special attention will be given to the translation of offensive language, tabooed subjects, and cultural elements.

4. Translation of Czech literature in China: 1921-1949

Our data from the first period include 105 Chinese translations (including retranslations of the same ST by different translators), which correspond to 60 Czech source texts originally written by 25 Czech authors.

One striking feature in this period's Chinese translation of Czech literature is the dominant role played by literary periodicals. A majority of the translations were published in journals, whereas just a small number appeared in book form. This is because the time period 1921-1949 under examination is one when new literary journals in China mushroomed and acted as a chief venue for the publication of literature, including translated literature. It also explains why the majority of translated Czech literary works in 1921-1949 were individual short stories (59%), poems (22%) and essays (6%), whose length made them fit for publication in periodicals.

The first ever translated Czech literary works in Chinese were four anonymous Czech folk songs published in 1920 on Vol. 8:3 of *Xin qingnian* (New Youth), a pioneering and leading periodical in the New Culture Movement. However, the introduction of Czech literature got started in earnest only one year later in 1921, when Jan Neruda's short story "Blbý Jóna (Foolish Jona)" was translated and published on Vol. 12:8 of *Xiaoshuo yuebao* (Fiction Monthly), another prominent periodical in the period.

With regard to the numbers of translations, the most translated writer is K. Čapek (and J. Čapek), followed by J. Neruda, B. Viková-Kunětická, P. Bezruč, K. Světlá, S. Čech, J. Vrchlický, I. Herrmann and J. S. Machar, etc.

In a literary system with "differentiated patronage", i.e., "when the economic component remains independent of the ideological one," competing critical schools will try to elaborate their own canons conforming to their poetics or ideology, and establish these canons as the only "real" one (Lefevere 2010: 17, 29). This was what happened in the early 20th century China: different literary communities promoting rival poetics, with their own idea of "what the role of literature is, or should be, in the social system as a whole" (ibid.: 26-27). Literary Research Society was an ardent promoter of "wenxue wei rensheng (literature for life)", "a literature that offered realistic portrayals of contemporary life and sober examinations of social problems in an attempt to advance changes in society" (Ying 2010: 112). It used its publications, notably the literary periodical *Xiaoshuo yuebao* (Fiction Monthly), to introduce foreign literatures to its members and the general public, particularly realist works from Russia and the so-called "oppressed peoples". By contrast, there are other literary organizations and writers who put more emphasis on the artistic aspect of literature. The most notable example is the Creation Society, especially in the early stage since its establishment in 1921, when it promoted a "art for art's sake" value and stressed the individualistic and romantic aspects of literary expression. They displayed a belief in the aesthetic purpose of literature in their creative writing and translation, and tended to keep a distance from the burning social and political issues.

"Literature of the oppressed peoples" is an important concept in the studies of modern Chinese literature as well as Chinese translation history. There are two most important characteristics of this notion that need to be noted. First, "the oppressed peoples" is both an extensive concept with a wide scope, covering most of the world's nations and peoples except for a few imperialist powers, and a dynamic notion changing with time. Second, the conception is subjective, motivated by the dominant

ideology of the time in the target Chinese culture: keen awareness of an existential crisis and the necessity of self-strengthening in the face of imperialist aggression. In this case, it is the target culture and its concerns that determined which aspect of a foreign culture was stressed, which was not because they necessarily felt “oppressed” in any inherent sense, but because they had been assigned this quality: namely, from the recipient vantage point. What’s more, the term “oppressed peoples”, “harmed peoples” or “smaller nations” indicated no condescension but genuine empathy on the part of the advocates of their literatures’ introduction to China. Actually, facing the aggression and encroachment of western imperialist powers in the late 19th and early 20th century, China itself was one of the oppressed and harmed nations. Song Binghui argues that the Chinese feelings towards the “oppressed peoples” could be mixed: sympathetic towards those who were still under total control of imperialist and colonial powers, and inspired by those who had obtained political independence (Song 2003: 7). When it comes to the then Czechoslovakia, it apparently belonged to the newly-independent smaller nations from whom China could draw inspiration.

The introduction of Czech literature as part of the “literature of the oppressed peoples”, championed by the Literature Research Society, who was also a strong promoter of realist literature, explains why a majority of the Czech writers and their works translated in this time period are national-based or social-oriented, including those that are social-critical (Petr Bezruč’s poems, Svatopluk Čech’s poems and satirical fictions, Josef Svatopluk Machar’s poems, etc.), those dealing with urban life of Prague, especially the life of the lower classes (Jan Neruda, Ignát Herrman and Karel Matěj Čapek-Chod’s short stories) and rural life (Karolína Světlá’s fictions), those that are folk-based (František Čelakovský and Josef Václav Sládek’s poems), plus works of the patriotic poetry by František Halas and the proletarian poetry by Jiří Wolker. Actually, these fit perfectly the comments by Irene Elber that, for China’s New Culture intellectuals represented by Lu Xun and others, “works that dealt with social injustice and oppression, national identity and emancipation, the urban poor and the toiling peasants were particularly attractive” (1985: 127).

As far as literary schools are concerned, besides the works with realist and national orientation that belonged to the Ruchovci (or National School) and the Májovci ("May School"), other literary schools can also be found, such as Vrchlický’s poems representing the more “cosmopolitan” Lumír school keen to absorb Western European trends, and poems by the impressionist poet Antonín Sova. What’s more, variations in themes can be observed, especially in the translations of Karel Čapek’s detective short stories, his essays about the ordinary and the everyday such as toothache and cat, as well as his light-hearted *Zahradníkův rok* [The Gardener's Year], a year-round guide to gardening. These varieties reflect the heterogeneous co-existing poetics in the period under survey, though they were limited in numbers. On the other hand, this limitation, as is the striking absence of some important Czech literary schools, such as the Romantic poets Karel Jaromír Erben and Karel Hynek Mácha, the Symbolist poet Otokar Březina, the Decadents like Jiří Karásek ze Lvovic and Karel Hlaváček, the Poetists like Vítězslav Nezval and Jaroslav Seifert, and the Catholics, shows the partial and slanted representation of the “literature of oppressed peoples”.

Poetics influences the selection of themes: as poetics changes with time, particular themes tend to dominate given periods in the evolution of a literary system (Lefevere 2010: 34). This is shown in the emergence of war-themed or anti-war works in the 1930s and 1940s, especially following the breakout of a full-scale war between China and fascist Japan in 1937 which later became part of the WWII. The Czech examples in our data include Karel Čapek's anti-fascist plays *Bílá nemoc* [The White Disease] and *Matka* [The Mother], Jaroslav Hašek's war satire *The Good Soldier Švejk*, František Halas' patriotic poems, and Julius Fučík's *Reportáž psaná na oprátce* [Notes from the Gallows].

To sum up, the "literature of oppressed peoples" promotion explains the dominance of social-oriented and national-based Czech works in republican China, as well as the slanted nature of the introductory activities in this period. On the other hand, the coexistence of heterogeneous poetics in the target literary norms underlies the presence of alternative literary schools and themes. Furthermore, literary translation trends and the emergence of particular themes in a period, such as war, can be a reflection of the concrete target socio-historical context. Finally, if we take into account the fact that the 1921-1949 Czech-Chinese translations were exclusively indirect, then it becomes clear that they were not just conditioned by the access in the original culture and the needs in the target culture, but also their availability in the mediating culture/language (chiefly English and Esperanto, in this case).

Examination of their life experience and career reveals one significant characteristics shared by most of the translators during this period. They are not just translators, but most of the time also writers or editors. The earliest among them, such as Lu Xun and Mao Dun, are influential intellectuals who played a prominent role in the development of modern Chinese literature.

Even-Zohar (1990: 45-46) perceives translated literature "not only as an integral system within any literary polysystem, but as a most active system within it". Normally, translated literature tends to be relegated to a peripheral position in the literary polysystem. However, three major cases, "which are basically various manifestations of the same law", allow translated literature to assume the central position in a literature polysystem:

- (a) When a polysystem has not yet been crystallized, that is to say, when a literature is "young," in the process of being established;
- (b) when a literature is either "peripheral" (within a large group of correlated literatures) or "weak," or both;
- (c) when there are turning points, crises, or literary vacuums in a literature.

Actually, these three cases all applied to the Chinese literature at the turn of the 20th century. From the viewpoint of the Chinese literature itself, it was undergoing a "turning point" from classical literature to a modern literature, due to crises in the socio-political context. With regard to the Chinese modern literature, it was "young" and yet to be established. Lastly, from the perspective of literatures in the world, Chinese literature was "peripheral" within the group of correlated world literatures. When translated literature occupies a central position in the literary polysystem, Even-Zohar argues, it participates actively in shaping the center of the polysystem as

an innovatory force. In this case, it often is the leading writers or prospective leading writers who produce the most conspicuous or appreciated translations (Even-Zohar 1990: 46-47). This is what happened in the early 20th century China's Czech literature introduction. Actually, some of the translators are not just writers, but also editors, literary critics and social activists. This supports Pym's argument, who sees "the multiple nature of their employment" as a major key to translators becoming active causes of translations (Pym 1998: 156).

Another defining feature of this first phase's Czech literature translation is indirect translation. Since the first ever Chinese known to translate from Czech is Wu Qi, whose first translated work came in publication only in 1957, and our extensive paratextual (both epitextual and peritextual) examination has produced no evidence of any translators' knowledge of Czech at this time, the conclusion is that the 105 Chinese translations in the first period are all indirect.

Maialen Marín-Lacarta talked about "a globalized system of transmission of texts that are mediated by dominant literary systems" (2012: 6), which partly explains why Czech and Chinese, two peripheral languages in the international system, had to conduct their literary communications in a mediated way. However, the most obvious reason for indirect translation, as Ringmar (2007) argues, is the lack of knowledge of the SL. In the case of the republican China, this lack was "absolute", i.e. literally no translator knew the original Czech language.

There were two major mediating languages, English and Esperanto, which together were involved in at least 69% of the translated Czech works in this period. With regard to the possible reasons for the languages' mediation, the intermediary role of English offers no surprise, given its dominant position within the international cultural transfer achieved by means of translation (see Heilbron 1999 and Hanna Pięta 2012). The use of Esperanto as mediation, however, seems peculiar and deserves more attention. The first half of the 20th century saw a rapid growth in the number of Esperanto speakers in China, as well as in Japan, the Americas and some parts of Europe. Many New Culture intellectuals and writers, including Lu Xun, were Esperanto users. Two reasons have been proposed for its acceptance in China. First, Esperanto's vision of different peoples living in harmony and all nations united in a common brotherhood echoed the concept of "datong shehui", an ideal future society described in ancient Confucian classics. Second, despite its seemingly neutral standpoint, Song Binghui argues (2003: 123), Esperanto inherently entails sympathies towards smaller nations and opposition to linguistic and national dominance¹. Hence its appeal to anarchists, Utopians, socialists² and "many other modern Chinese intellectuals who had social reformist ideals to rid China of weakness and poverty and to live in a fair and harmonious world" (ibid.).

¹ This is evidenced by the opposition to Esperanto's recognition at the League of Nations and its vetoing in 1923 by the French delegate, Gabriel Hanotaux, who saw the constructed language as a threat to French's position as the international language. See: THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS: Esperanto Spurned - TIME content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,727293,00.html

² Ulrich Lins (see 2016) points to the disapproval Esperanto encountered from influential Marxist leaders including Marx, Engels and Lenin.

The indirectness of Chinese translations, as a norm of this period, was not marked bibliographically. As a result, there is very limited explicit peritextual information regarding the source languages or the source texts used. Our data about the MLs in indirect translations have been reconstructed mainly on the basis of epitextual information, including the translators' life experience, educational background and their translation activities, combined with the information on the availability of the text in possible MLs.

Some scholars (eg. Hanna Pięta 2012) see the non-markedness of indirect translations as a sign of intolerance of them, whereas Laura Ivaska & Outi Paloposki argue that the lack of information may also be a sign that indirectness was "a default practice" (2018: 35). We subscribe to this "default" view, because the prevalence of indirect translations in the examined period shows no sign of "intolerance". For the majority of indirectly translated Czech literature, therefore, the lack of information on their indirect status and their MLs most likely indicates the default indirect translation practice in the republican era.

There are also other paratextual features that have been observed. Due to the lack of translation standardization and coordination, the writers' names were presented in a wide variety of forms. Some translations gave them as they are in the source language, which produced little disputes. But many, in compliance with the target norm, chose to transliterate the names with Chinese characters. Though the transliterations all sounded familiar, they varied a lot in the Chinese characters selected. For example, there are 10 variations for the Chinese transliteration of Čapek (either in K. Čapek or the Čapek brothers), 7 for J. Neruda and 5 for P. Bezruč. These might cause confusion by making the readers think they are different authors.

When it comes to Chinese retranslations of Czech literary works, they were more of a result of the target cultural market's demand in this period. Moreover, Paloposki & Koskinen (2010: 35), in their research of translations in Finland, point to a lack of coordination between translators and publishers as a cause of retranslations, or what they term "collisions", when multiple versions of the same work may have appeared more or less simultaneously. This happened prior to Finland's signing the Berne agreement in 1928, an international agreement governing copyright, as in the late Qing and early republican China.

It seems the most retranslated Czech works in the republican era can be put into two categories. In the first category are short stories by the most internationally acclaimed writers, dealing with universal themes of human nature: love, passion, death, and fear. These include K. Čapek & J. Čapek's short story "Ostrov" (The Island) (translated 8 times by different translators) and "Živý plamen" (Living flame) (7 times), and J. Neruda's "Upír (The Vampire)" (7 times). In the second group are short stories by two women writers. These include B. Viková-Kunětická's "Husy (Geese)" (6 different translations) and K. Světlá's "Hubicka (A Kiss)" (6 translations).

The emancipation of women and gender equality was a significant component of the modernization agenda of the New Culture Movement in the early 20th century, which sought to transform China into a modern nation. That's why women writers tended to receive some special attention, and also why Božena Viková-Kunětická,

who is known in the Czech Republic not so much as a writer but as a politician, had one of her short stories “Husy” translated 6 times, one of the most retranslated Czech works in this period. This example confirms Cadera and Walsh’s observation, “contrary to the initial hypothesis proposed”, that “there is not always a clearly identifiable relation between the importance of authors in their original culture and the retranslation of their work” (2017: 1). Meanwhile, it also confirms Toury’s claim that “[t]ranslators may therefore be said to operate first and foremost in the interest of the culture into which they are translating [...]” (Toury 2012: 6).

5. Translation of Czech literature in China: 1950-1977

The second period under examination, between the foundation of the People’s Republic of China in October 1949 and the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1977³, is peculiar in that in the 15 years from 1963 to 1977, not one Czech literature translation was published in mainland China. Yet we still decide to group them together with the previous 13 years from 1950 to 1962, because this whole period of 28 years was characterized by the politicization of literature under tight centralized control. The ideological control of literature was thus reflected not only in the existence of published Czech literature in Chinese translation, but in the non-existence of it as well.

In our data from this period there are 44 books in Chinese translations, including 4 retranslations but no republications. Apart from those in book form, Chinese translation of Czech literature can also be found in the periodical *World Literature* before 1963, which was previously named *Yiwen* in 1953-1958. Because “the popular reception of an author can be judged more accurately by the publication of his works in book form than by their single appearance in periodicals” (Edgerton 1963: 62), we will put more emphasis on the 44 Chinese translated books and their 21 original Czech authors. Among them, the most translated is A. Zápotocký with 5 books, followed by M. Majerová (4), I. Olbracht (4), M. Pujmanová (3), J. K. Tyl (3) and A. Jirásek (3). The other 15 writers all have either one or two books attributed to them.

Compared with the first period, one of the most striking features of this period is the dramatic increase in novel numbers and decline in short stories. In striking contrast with the first period, a large majority of the translated Czech works in this era came in books, rather than in periodicals. Moreover, all the periodical translations have been found to concentrate in one single journal: *World Literature*. Actually, a strong tendency of concentration has been found not just in periodical translations, but also in the publishers of books of Czech literature in Chinese translation. All these translation phenomena have to do with the target context.

As part of the industrial nationalization in the early People’s Republic era, the Chinese publishing industry went through a transition towards a centralized planning system following the Soviet pattern. Publishers around the country, which were all

³ The Cultural Revolution happened in 1966-1976, but many people regard December 1978 as the real end, when the watershed Third Plenum of the 11th CCP Central Committee introduced the economic reform policies (Sullivan 2007: 494).

privately owned during the previous republican era, were converted first into state-private joint publishing houses and then into state-owned ones. This was accompanied by the incorporation of smaller publishing houses into larger ones. A high degree of specialization was also introduced in the Chinese publishing industry in the 1950s, with each state-owned publisher specializing in the publishing of books in specific fields. Translated foreign literature in Chinese was mainly produced by two publishing houses, People's Literature Press in Beijing (including its affiliates in this period: the Writers Publishing House and China Theater Press) and Shanghai Literature & Art Publishing House (Sun 1996: 185-186). In July 1953, the journal *Yiwen* was founded and became a major platform for the introduction of foreign literature. Renamed *World Literature* (Shijie wenxue) in 1959, it was the only officially published foreign literature journal in China until 1978. That's why Wang (2015) characterizes the landscape of China's foreign literature translation in this period, especially after 1956 when the nationalization of publishing industry was almost completed, as "two publishers and one journal (liang she yi kan)", referring to People's Literature Press, Shanghai Literature & Art Publishing House, and *World Literature*. Reflecting this concentrated landscape, the two dominant state-owned publishers and their affiliates together make up 77% of the translated books from Czech literature.

The newly founded People's Republic of China imported from the Soviet Union the model of socialist realism, the "officially sanctioned theory and method of artistic and literary composition in the Soviet Union from 1932 to the mid-1980s" (Britannica Concise Encyclopedia online). It may also be seen as a poetics because it concerns "what the role of literature is, or should be, in the social system as a whole" (Lefevre 2010: 26-27). Caryl Emerson (2008: 200) sums up all artistic and literary works under the banner of socialist realism in four principles: "party-mindedness," which decrees that every artistic act is a political act; "idea-mindedness," which prioritize "idea" (or content) over artistic form; "class-mindedness," which requires artwork to highlight class struggle elements and serve the cause of the proletariat; "folk-mindedness," which decrees that all artwork should draw from the masses in both matter (traditions and values) and manner (e.g., language) in order to be accessible and appealing to them. The tenets of socialist realism also require writers to remove unsuitable or so-called bourgeois elements (Inggs 2011:80), to display the protagonists' courage, decisiveness and the ability to work in a team, and to reflect reality in a positive light (ibid.: 83, 85).

In addition to the dominant poetics of socialist realism, there is in the periphery another poetics: the introduction of foreign literary classics, which may be seen as a continuation of the previous dominating ideology and poetics in Chinese society since the late Qing when China was under the existential threat from imperialist powers: to borrow from foreign countries everything excellent, including literary classics, so as to save and renew the nation. Of course, it has to be noted that this peripheral poetics only worked when it did not come into conflict with the dominant socialist ideology and poetics.

After the Sino-Soviet split in the early 1960s, the translated literature from the

Soviet Union and other European socialist countries went into a dramatic decline. Then during the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), a period marked by ultra-leftist upheaval in all walks of life, the political and ideological censorship was so severe that the official publication of foreign literature almost came to a complete standstill (Tan 2014b: 21). And there was no Chinese translation of Czech literature in the 15 years from 1963 to 1977.

The important foreign literature translators in this period were mostly members of the Chinese Writers' Association, editors at state-sponsored journals, newspapers, or state-owned publishing houses, or foreign language teachers at universities. Their institutional affiliation stand in sharp contrast with the republican era literary translators who were mostly freelance translators, "free to pursue their own literary endeavors, and to associate themselves with whatever literary organizations and camps of their own choice" (Qi 2012: 121). If the republican era had a literary system with "differentiated patronage" in the sense that "the economic component remains independent of the ideological one" (Lefevere 2010: 17), then in this period the patronage is "undifferentiated" in that the ideological, the economic and the status components "are dispensed by one and the same patron" (*ibid.*), as a result of the institutionalization of translators.

Descriptive Translation Studies, especially in its initial phases, stresses the contextual conditions determining literary transfer and the target norms imposing constraints on translators. Yet Hanne Jansen and Anna Wegener argue that explanations sought out "on a structural level (in relation to literary systems, ideology, politics, national, religious or ethnic interests)" at times end up "being too general, abstract and deterministic to grasp effectively the variety and complexity of real-life translation processes in which individuals interact under very specific conditions and with very different motivations" (Jansen & Wegener 2013: 11). Hence their support for the "social turn" in Translation Studies, which in their view implies an increased attention to the "'minor,' less influential or at any rate less visible agents" in the making of a translation (*ibid.*). Similarly, Pym also proposes the treatment of translators as "the central object" of translation history and the discovery of them as "effective social actors" (Pym 1998: 5-6) with "socially conditioned subjectivity" (Pym 1998: ix). However, he seems to pay more attention to influential translators, seeing a major key to them becoming active causes of translations as "their status and competence in other professional activities", which gives them "considerably more social and intellectual power than they would otherwise have as just translators" and the ability to challenge power structures in some way (Pym 1998: 156).

One noteworthy figure is Mao Dun, a prominent translator and writer, who also served as the cultural minister in 1949-1965. In his speech at the 1953 national conference on the subject of literary translation, Mao Dun stated that the minimum standard for every translation was a faithful rendering of the original content in a clear and readable way. For literary translation, the main task of the translator was to duplicate in the target language the content as well as the spirit of the source text, so as to ensure the reader a chance to appreciate the beauty of the original (Mao 1984: 10). As the minister in charge of cultural affairs, Mao Dun's views no doubt played an

important role in guiding the translation practice in that period (Jiang 2006: 83). And Qi points out that, to the credit of many attending the meeting, including Mao Dun, who would be purged from his post as Cultural Minister later in the Cultural Revolution, “they tried to strike a balance between content (politics) and form (art) instead of letting the former completely supersede or overrule the latter” (Qi 2012: 121).

We believe that some Chinese translators in this period, with their subjectivity and their belief in the value of foreign literatures, acted as some sort of a counterbalance to the politicization of literary translation. These included not only influential translators like Mao Dun, but also some less influential translators who persisted in their underground translation endeavors even during the Cultural Revolution, such as Liu Xingcan, one of the most important translators of Czech literature in the third period and a graduate of Charles University, who recalled that she did Czech literary translations at that time, despite seeing no hope of publishing them.

In his study of literary translation history in modern China, Wang (2015: 500) notes the efforts of the intellectuals to strike a balance between cultural, literary and communication needs with political, ideological and diplomatic needs. They distinguished between long-term translation projects and short-term translation tasks. The long-term projects put emphasis on well-established and widely-accepted literary classics written by canonized writers, whose translation required longer time and the best translators, preferably from the original languages. At the same time, the short-term tasks were carried out to deal with political needs, which were in many cases done collectively by groups of translators and indirectly from mediating languages (Wang 2015: 105, 278). As a result of the short-term tasks, this period produces a large number of what Wang describes as “disposable” translations that were never republished or never saw their originals retranslated in the new era after 1979 (Wang 2015: 276), as happened with almost all the Czech socialist realist works of this time period. On the other hand, the long-term projects have left some excellent translations of literary classics that get regularly republished and followed by regular retranslations even to this day. Xiao Qian’s 1956 version of *The Good Soldier Svejk* and Wu Qi’s 1957 translation of *Babička* are two cases in point.

Admittedly, the inclusion of classic Czech literature does not mean the absence of ideological manipulation. As mentioned previously, this part can be seen as the continuation of the ideology since late Qing to save and renew the country by introducing everything excellent from the west. It may also be seen as the continued introduction of “literature of the oppressed peoples”, as most of the translated Czech literary classics in this period are realistic, such as J. Neruda and J. Hašek’s short stories. Many of them deal with the themes of national liberation and social oppression, like J.K. Tyl’s plays, S. A. Jirásek’s plays and novels, S. Čech and P. Bezruč’s poems, or anti-fascism, like K. Čapek’s plays *Bílá nemoc* (The White Disease) and *Matka* (The Mother), despite few exceptions like K. J. Erben and K. H. Mácha’s romantic poetry.

Meanwhile, the partial and slanted representation of the Czech literature in the

republican times did not get better in this period. The diversity of the Czech literary tradition was diminished, and the absence of some important Czech literary schools remained, such as the Symbolists, the Decadents, the Poetists, and the Catholics. As for the writers who arrived on the Czech literary scene in the mid-1960s, like Ivan Klíma, Bohumil Hrabal, Milan Kundera, and Václav Havel, their introduction was totally out of the question amid the rage for ultra-leftist ideology during the Cultural Revolution

Of this period's 58 Czech literature translations, 45% (26) were made from Russian, 21% (12) from English, 17% (10) directly from Czech, 5% (3) from Esperanto and 12% (7) from other languages (French and German). Compared with the first period in 1921-1949, the most significant shift in the languages used is the emergence of direct translations from Czech, the dramatic rise of Russian, and the decline of Esperanto.

The most obvious reason for indirect translation, as mentioned earlier, is "sheer lack of knowledge of the SL" (Ringmar 2007: 6). If during the first period of 1921-1949 this lack was "absolute, i.e. literally no translator knows the SL", then in the second period of 1950-1977 the lack was "relative, when no available translator knows the SL" (ibid.). The emergence of direct translations from Czech has a lot to do with the geopolitical and geocultural changes in this period. The close diplomatic and cultural communication made possible the appearance of Yang Leyun, who became interested in Czech culture and learned the language in her work at the diplomatic institution. Other important translators, Wu Qi and Kong Rou, were among the Chinese students sent to study in Czechoslovakia, as a result of the increased cultural and educational exchange between the two countries.

As for the dominant role of Russian in this period's Czech literature translation in China, the ideological and political motivation were undeniable, when the newly founded People's Republic of China (PRC) adopted a "lean to one side" policy in its foreign relations, in alliance with the Soviet Union (Garver 2016: 29). As a matter of fact, "the development of world literature via Russian translations" in the former Soviet Union and Eastern bloc countries was "one of the important features of the 20th century translation history" (Ding & Song. 2015: 513). From a perspective of power relations between cultures/languages, this fits Ringmar's assumption that the SL and the TL, in this case the Czech and Chinese languages, were "small/dominated languages", whereas the ML, Russian, was "a dominant language" (Ringmar 2007: 5). Furthermore, indirect translation may be used as "a means to control the contents of the TT" (ibid: 7), with "Russian being thus, effectively, a relay language and the language of censorship" (Gambier 2003: 59). In this sense, indirect translation became an extension of the censorship mechanism in the target culture.

A correlation has been observed between the profiles of some authors and the (in)directness of their translations. Generally speaking, the authors of socialist realist works have a higher indirect translation rate than the classic writers. On the other hand, the translators were more likely to translate the classic writers' works directly from Czech. This can be seen as a manifestation of the translators' distinction between short-term tasks, which were carried out to deal with political needs, and long-term

projects, which put emphasis on the artistic value of the translated works. By doing so, “they tried to strike a balance between content (politics) and form (art) instead of letting the former completely supersede or overrule the latter” (Qi 2012: 121).

Compared with the other historical periods, this period has the lowest retranslation rate and the smallest retranslation numbers. Of the 54 translated Czech literary works, just 4 were rendered more than once. One important reason is that, with the highly institutionalized and planned nature of translation activities in this era, the chances of what Paloposki & Koskinen (2010: 35) termed “collisions” due to a lack of coordination between translators and publishers were practically nil.

In 1951 the first National Translation Work meeting was convened. At the more technical level, the meeting advocated the standardization of translated proper names, places, and concepts and the establishment of national criteria concerning good translation and translation methods (Qi 2012: 119). Another directive issued that year required that the relevant information about the source text, such as the title, the author, the publisher as well as the publication date, be made explicit on the copyright page (see Yuan 1996: 15-16). These led to paratextual changes such as the markedness of indirectness and detailed information given about the Mediating Texts, as well as the standardized Chinese transliterations of Czech writers’ names, avoiding the aforementioned confusing variations of author names in the first period. That’s why this second period has been identified as the period with the highest transparency in the marking of direct and indirect translations and the only era in which explicit labeling was fully used for both cases (almost 100% of direct translations and indirect ones were marked as such). By comparison, unmarked translations predominated in the first period and took up a considerable proportion in the third period.

Kovala applied the Jakobsonian communication model developed by Leena Kirstina and Judith Lorincz (1991: 24-25), which adopts four functions: informative, conative, phatic and poetic, to her study of the relationship between translation, paratexts and ideology. The four functions foreground respectively “the information content of the works, their effect on the reader, their entertainment function, and their literary qualities and value” (Kovala 1996: 136). Our study of Chinese translation of Czech literature during the second period shows two main paratextual functions: informative and conative functions — that is, to inform and to influence the reader. Stress was placed on thought content and biographical and social context, as opposed to literary form and literary context.

Paratexts perform their conative function to influence the reader, by serving as “a form of interpretation”, thus rewriting the text so as to “present it in a certain light to a certain readership” (Pellatt 2018: 167). In this process, “paratexts were used to select certain aspects of the works they framed, while neglecting others” (Kovala 1996: 136). For example, class struggle was often foregrounded in the paratexts of not just socialist realist literature but also of classical works like Božena Němcová’s *Babička* (The Grandmother). Emphasis is given to the socio-historical context, usually with ideology-charged comments about the cruel exploitation and oppression of the ruling class such as the landlords, the capitalists or the Nazis, as well as the suffering of the laboring people including peasants and workers. The working class’s bravery, industry

and their indomitable revolutionary spirit are extolled. On the other hand, the practice of using paratexts in this way may also to some extent acted as “a strategy for dealing with censorship: by informing the reader of the correct ideological approach to a text, the editors hoped to facilitate its publication” (Lygo 2016: 56).

Paratexts can show signs of indirect translation, in that the features perceived as indicators of the indirectness of a Target Text can be displayed on not only the textual but also the paratextual level (Rosa, Pięta & Maia 2017: 122-123). Špirk proposes the concept of “indirect reception,” defined as “reception through the lens of another culture” (Špirk 2011: 59). Li Wenjie, who explored the concept from the perspective of paratexts, argues that critics, when commenting on a translated literary work, often build their interpretations and critical views on, or at least refer to, reviews in the mediating languages (Li 2017: 192). This “double indirectness” in both the process of translation and the process of interpretation will increase the risk of distorting and misrepresenting the original text (*ibid.*). The concept of “indirect reception” explains why some forewords of Czech translated literature quoted comments by Soviet Union critics, and why, in some cases, the entire forewords or illustrations were retained from the Russian mediating texts.

Finally, there are “three main means for mediating between the text and the reader” in the publication process, as pointed out by Kovala (1996: 140). The selection of works to be translated, modification of the text itself, and paratextual rewriting can all be involved in “processes of the transmission of translations ideologically” (Kovala 1996: 140-141). When it comes to the translation of foreign literature in 1950-1977 China, it seems that the ideological manipulation mainly happened on the levels of text selection and paratexts. Wang Yougui, in his research into the literary translation history in the second half of 20th century China, despite his generally critical attitude, draws attention to the loyalty to source texts of this periods’ translations, on the textual level. He claimed that the ideological rewriting mainly happened paratextually, and that deliberate and ideologically motivated textual modifications were far fewer than previously thought (Wang 2015: 90). Our preliminary textual analysis has confirmed his claim, though a more definite conclusion would require more extensive research. However, it is possible to propose some tentative explanations here. First, since a stringent text selection standard would ensure the blocking of politically incorrect works, and the paratextual interpretation would minimize the harm of ideologically dubious texts, there seemed to be no urgent need for textual modification. Second, this also seemed to have something to do with the subjectivity of the Chinese translators in this period, represented by Mao Dun, the cultural minister before the Cultural Revolution who insisted that a faithful rendering of the original content was one of the minimum standards for translations.

6. Translation of Czech literature in China: 1978-2020

Our data of the third period include 142 Chinese books in translation, whose corresponding Czech original texts were written by 32 Czech authors. These include first translations and retranslations of Czech literary works but not their republications.

Apart from the 142 books by single Czech writers, there are also 2 collections of works by multiple Czech authors, and 10 collections of works by multiple authors of mixed nationalities, which will be included in the discussion only when it is necessary.

The Czech writers with most of their works translated in 1978-2020 are B. Hrabal, I. Klíma, K. Čapek and M. Kundera. However, the low numbers of translated works by other writers do not necessarily mean few books in translation, as happened with J. Hašek and J. Fučík, both of whom had just one main work in translation but multiple retranslations. The first 6 writers, J. Hašek, K. Čapek, M. Kundera, B. Hrabal, I. Klíma, and J. Fučík, have 106 books to their credit, accounting for 75% of the total of 142 books. The books-per-writer ratio is 17, meaning each of them has 17.7 books on average in Chinese translated books. The remaining 26 writers, by contrast, make up just 25% of the total, with a 1.4 books-per-writer ratio.

The Good Soldier Svejk, with 24 Chinese versions⁴, is the most translated Czech literary work in this period's China. J. Fučík's *Reportáž psaná na oprátce* (Notes from the Gallows) has 11 translations, followed by K. Čapek's *Zahradníkův rok* (The Gardener's Year) and *Dášeňka čili Život štěněte* (Dashenka, or the Life of a Puppy). All of Milan Kundera's Czech works including novels, short story collection and play have been retranslated, along with K. Čapek's The Noetic Trilogy novels and Bohumil Hrabal's *Perlička na dně* (Pearls of the Deep).

One might assume that there is a direct correlation between the numbers of a work's Chinese versions and its popularity in China. The fact, however, is more complicated than that. To better see how popular a work is in China, we have to take into account not just how many times it has been translated, but also the print numbers and the numbers of republications and re-editions as well. For example, Milan Kundera's *Nesnesitelná lehkost bytí* (The Unbearable Lightness of Being), which so far has 4 different Chinese versions, is no doubt much more read by Chinese readers than J. Fučík's *Reportáž psaná na oprátce* (Notes from the Gallows), which has 11 versions.

In the previous period in 1950-1977, political considerations had been the dominant criteria for selecting and translating foreign literature, and no ideas about selling literary publications for profit were entertained (Kong 2005: 124). Beginning in the mid-1980s, the Chinese government began allowing the introduction of market forces in the publishing industry, including deregulation, financial autonomy, management decentralization, and diversification (Kong 2005: 40). Strict controls on book prices, wholesale discounts, and paper allocation were removed (Kong 2005: 41), and many of the bureaucratic and political restrictions on the content of publications were lifted (ibid.: 40). The number of publishers has increased steadily, from around 80 at the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976, to close to 200 in 1980, to more than 400 in the 2000s and over 500 in the 2010s. The private-sector publishing and distributing channel has during the past decades continued to develop rapidly and expand its reach (Kong 2005: 66). Almost every one of the hundreds of

⁴ These do not include the Chinese adaptations of this novel for teenage or children readers, which have very different features and deserve a separate research.

publishing houses across the country is now involved in publishing foreign literature, in contrast to the days before the 1980s, when this had been a heavily guarded monopoly and the privilege of a small handful of “reliable” publishing houses (ibid.: 137).

The marketization of literary publications in China has forced publishers and editors to engage themselves much more closely with the cultural market, to develop a more business-oriented attitude, and to thoroughly overhaul their publishing practices. These have brought profound and extensive changes to the publication of translated Czech literature, which fall under five main categories:

1. publication in book series;
2. mass retranslations of classic and canonized works;
3. broadening of the definition of literature;
4. improvements in the appearance and packaging of translated books;
5. cooperation with translators from outside mainland China.

Hong Kong scholar Tan Zaixi, in his research of censorship in translation in the PRC (People’s Republic of China), proposed a tripartite typology of (self-)censorship-affected translations in terms of translator-author relationship and translatorial commitment, i.e. full translations, partial translations and non-translations. He observed that developments in translation in China “were filled with significant cases of how, under the force of censorship, ‘non-translations’ came about, and how, with the change of times, some of the former ‘non-translations’ moved into the realm of ‘translations’ including ‘partial’ and/or ‘full’ translations” (Tan 2014b: 7). And the ban on most works that had been categorized as “untranslatable”, “bourgeois” “anti-Chinese” or “anti-communist”/“anti-socialist” was quietly lifted and these works gradually found their way onto the Chinese translated book market (Tan 2015: 334). One notable example is the Russian writer and Nobel prize winner Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn’s *The Gulag Archipelago*, which exposed the countless human rights abuses in the Gulag labor camp system, and whose three main Chinese versions, published in 1996, 2006 and 2015 respectively, have so far altogether garnered around 4000 ratings, with an average rating of 9.4, on China’s largest book review site Douban.

On the other hand, Tan also points to “the dialectic of the dual character, i.e. the changing and unchanging character, of censorship in translation in China, and perhaps in the world beyond China as well” (Tan 2015: 335). Despite the dramatic changes over the past decades and the considerably more liberal government position nowadays, the PRC still maintains the practice of literary and translational censorship, at least in certain subject areas (Tan 2014: 195), hence an unchanging status of some of the “non-translations” (Tan 2014: 198).

When it comes to the Czech literature, many of the works translated in this period, especially Kundera, Klíma and Hrabal’s works, can be seen as going through an evolution from non-translations to translations. Actually, many of these have gone from “non-translations” to “partial translations” and then to “full-translations”. For example, when the Chinese translation of Ivan Klíma’s collection *The Spirit of*

Prague: And Other Essays was first published in 1998 by the Writer's Press, two essays were deleted and the foreword specifically written by Klíma himself for the Chinese version did not appear in the published book. In a later republication in 2016 by the Guangxi Normal University Publishing House, the previously missing parts were restored, as confirmed in the postscript by the translator Cui Weiping, a professor at Beijing Film Academy and a famed literary critic. Another example is the first Chinese translation of Milan Kundera's *Nesnesitelná lehkost bytí* (The Unbearable Lightness of Being), indirectly from English, which saw around 3,000 Chinese characters deleted, including both descriptions of sexual scenes and terms like "the Communist Party", "Socialism", etc. Other earlier Chinese translations of Kundera's works were mostly censored in the same way. All of Kundera's translated works published by the Shanghai Translation Publishing House after 2002, however, are full translations, which we will further discuss in the next section. Ivan Klíma's memoir *Moje šílené století II* (My Mad Century II) is a case from "non-translations" to "partial translations", the preface of whose Chinese version, by the publisher, stated that "there have been some deletions and modifications". One notable case of "non-translations" is Václav Havel, both a prominent playwright and the former president of the Czech Republic, almost none of whose literary works have come into translation in mainland China⁵. It seems probable that his absence has more to do with his politician rather than writer status, especially concerning his political stance on Tibet and Taiwan, two highly sensitive issues for China.

The third period, especially since the 1990s and 2000s, has seen a shift away from the socialist realist convention in paratextual practices. The previous ideologically-charged comments have diminished, though they can occasionally still be found in the republications of earlier translations. Emphasis has been given to the literary techniques of the translated works, the inner world of the writers, the analysis of the characters and their behaviors, as well as the philosophical reflections on human nature and on the relationship between individuals and society. Some previous strict taboos have been broken. For example, the Chinese translation of Eva Kantůrková's *Po potopě*, published in 2008 by People's Literature, included a "To Chinese Readers", in which the Czech writer talked about the stifling of literary creation during the totalitarian rule of the 1950s and how her novels including one criticizing rural collectivization was banned by the government.

Another noteworthy thing since the 2000s is the citation of the praise or recommendation of other writers, such as Milan Kundera and J. Seifert. These citations of sponsorship by peer writers contrast sharply with the earlier convention of quoting comments by socialist political leaders or politically famous figures from Czechoslovakia or the Soviet Union.

Compared with the second period, one most significant shift in this period is the rise of direct translations from Czech to Chinese: direct translations increased both in

⁵ There is a collection of over 80 translated essays by writers from seven Central and Eastern European nations, published in 2000 by Baihua Art & Literature. Havel is among the 14 Czech authors included in the book, with one of his letters written in jail translated. Because of the multinational nature of the book, it is not included in the list of translated Czech works.

absolute numbers (from 11 directly translated works in the 1980s to 60 in the 1990s) and as a proportion of the total number of TTs (from 18% to 42%). There seem to be multiple reasons underlying the shift towards directness in Czech literature's Chinese translation:

First, the opening up and reform in China, along with the loosening of the ideological control and relaxing of censorship policies, make it possible to translate some formerly politically problematic Czech authors, including I. Klíma and B. Hrabal, whose works together comprise almost half of the direct translations.

Second, an increased focus on authors' style and their works' literary value, coupled with the wider language skills of new translators, resulted in a tendency towards adequacy.

Third, the Czech language courses and academic curricula for Czech studies in China's higher-education institutions, plus mainland China's increased communication with other parts of the world, have also substantially contributed to the rise in the number of direct translations. If in the second half of the 20th century Czech-Chinese direct literary translation was largely dominated by Chinese translators educated in Czechoslovakia, such as Liu Xingchan, Jiang Chengjun and Wan Shirong, the 21st century is seeing the growing role of translators who have graduated with a Czech major from Chinese universities, especially Beijing Foreign Studies University. The increased communications with the outside world have also made it possible for publishers to publish direct translations by translators from outside mainland China.

When it comes to the MLs used in indirect translation of Czech literature, Russian has dramatically declined both in absolute numbers (from 26 works translated via Russian in 1950-1977 to 5 in 1978-2020) and as a proportion of the total number of TTs (from 46% to 3%). If the domination of Russian language in the second period revealed a strong Soviet Union influence over not just China but the Czech nation, the scarcity of its mediation in the third period shows not only poor Sino-Soviet relations in the 1980s but also, more importantly, Russia's loss of a mediating center status after the collapse of the socialist Eastern Bloc and the fall of the Soviet Union. Another notable ML is Esperanto, which peaked in the first period, greatly diminished in the second, and has completely disappeared since the 1990s. This seems to be more a reflection of the rise and fall of the artificial language itself.

The correlation observed between (in)directness and the independent variable of author profile, especially the three canonical contemporary Czech writers, can be context-based. Kundera's translations are invariably indirect. During the 1980s his works were banned in Czechoslovakia, making the Czech versions virtually inaccessible. And his early Chinese translators obtained the English mediating texts largely by accident. After the 1990s, Shanghai Translation became the sole Chinese publisher with the rights to market Kundera's works in China in 2002, who then translated all of them from the French versions provided by the writer himself. Czech-Chinese literary translators tend to show a clear preference for B. Hrabal and I. Klíma, who also seem to be allegedly favored by the Czech people over Kundera, a

very controversial personality⁶. This affection for the two Czech writers also explains why many of their works have been translated by Chinese translators, such as Yang Leyun, Liu Xingcan, Lao Bai, and Wan Shirong, when they were in their 60s, 70s and even 80s. It is little wonder, therefore, that B. Hrabal and I. Klíma's translations into Chinese are predominantly direct.

Hanna Pięta (2018), in her research of how indirect literary translation constructed the images of communist Poland in para-fascist Portugal, summarized the theoretical implications of "image", a "discursive representation of a person, group, ethnicity or 'nation'" (Leerssen 2007a, 342). Image is not a sociological or anthropological fact but an "intertextual construct", which means it is often based "not on a direct empirical observation of reality but rather on an existing reputation derived from preexisting texts" (Pięta 2018: 346). Images tend to be highly variable, and can shift according to changing ideological circumstances. The major image of Czech literature in mainland China, generally speaking, has gone from one of "the oppressed nations" in 1921-1949, to "socialism-builder" in 1950-1977, and then since the 1980s to "intellectuals in a former socialist country who reflect on their nation's past and their own identity and position in society". Meanwhile, it is also possible for different images of a given nation to coexist in time and space. It remains to be seen if Czech literature's major image in China of the "reflective intellectuals" will shift in the future. The new trend at the end of this decade is the introduction of a relatively younger generation of award-winning Czech writers, like Radka Denemarková, whose novel *Peníze od Hitlera* (Money from Hitler) won her the 2007 Magnesia Litera award, and Jáchym Topol, whose *Chladnou zemi* (The Devil's Workshop) received the 2010 Cena Jaroslava Seiferta (Jaroslav Seifert Prize).

7. Comparative textual analysis

The comparative textual analysis will be conducted of five different versions of Jaroslav Hašek's *The Good Soldier Švejk*, which is one of the most important novels of 20th-century Czech literature, and whose translations are a prime candidate for investigation within Translation Studies (Špírk 2011: 247, 252). Among the five texts involved in the analysis, the foremost is the Czech original text. Yet this subchapter is not a full-fledged micro-textual contrastive analysis of the entire Czech novel and its complete translations, but is to be regarded merely as the treatment of a sample, especially considering there are two translations involved that are not complete themselves. Therefore, of the four-volume original *Švejk*, only the first volume *Díl První: V zákemí* [Part I: Behind the Lines] is included, which accounts for almost 28% of the entire novel. Also, there are Xiao Qian's 1956 Chinese version, an indirect translation, and Paul Selver's 1930 English version, the mediating text the former is based on. Liu Xingcan's 1983 direct translation is also included, whose comparison

⁶ The view that Klíma and Hrabal are favored by the Czech people over Kundera (who is the most read Czech writer and the most popular among Chinese readers) has been expressed on various occasions by some translators of Czech literature, but I have not found any data to support that. So that's probably just their personal assumption.

with Xiao's indirect version is expected to produce some interesting findings as to the different influence of (in)directness on translations. From another perspective, Liu's version is a retranslation following Xiao's, so their comparison might reveal something concerning the "retranslation hypothesis". Finally, Parrott's 1973 direct English translation is included to serve as a "reference value", since it is considered by Špírk to be "an edition that pays due tribute to the novel's significance" (Špírk 2011: 255) and to be "generally closest to Hašek's original text" (Špírk 2011: 267).

The micro-textual comparison was carried out on Part I of the Czech original, corresponding to approximately 28% of the total text, and its translations, with special attention paid to offensive language, tabooed subjects, and cultural elements. The intention of the comparative analysis is not to pass any kind of judgement on the techniques adopted by the translators, but to shed some light on matters relating to the translating strategies, target culture restrictions, and faithfulness to the original versus manipulation.

The textual analysis shows that the translators, when translating offensive words, need to take multiple factors into consideration: the referential meaning, the connotative meaning, the emotional charge, the frequency of use, the register in the original, and the target culture acceptance. Sometimes the translators attempt to strike somewhat of a balance between these; other times they tend to prioritize one factor over the others. Generally speaking, Parrott is the most faithful to the source text among the four translators, in terms of the translation of offensive language and the maintenance of the offensive load in the original. Selver has been observed in some cases to omit or neutralize the offensive terms. Xiao has shown a stronger tendency to neutralize offensive elements and especially to make omissions, therefore toning down the general offensive load. However, it needs to be noted that Xiao's omissions seem to be made mostly not out of micro-textual concerns. He omitted in his translation some minor characters and some of the anecdotes given by Švejk to illustrate his points. The omitted minor characters, most of them army officials and prisoners, tend to use more abusive language. Liu's translation of offensive language in *Švejk*, on the other hand, shows a remarkable tendency to intensify the offensive load, by adding some new abusive terms to the target text. This seems a bold move on the part of the translator, seen from the perspective of Toury's standardization law, according to which, "in translation, items tend to be selected on a level which is *lower* [emphasized in original] than the one where textual relations have been established in the source text" (Toury 2012: 305). The aim, it seems, is to make the target text more dramatic, to enhance the colloquial register in it⁷, and generally to get good target reception. Judging by the translated book's popularity in China and its large numbers of reprints and re-editions in the target culture, the aim seems to have been met. The five versions of *Švejk*, including the original and its four translations, in terms of the

⁷ The colloquial register in the original text of *Švejk* is shown in not just the choice of words, especially offensive terms, but also the change in word forms, such as word endings which are different from standard usage and only used on very informal occasions: *siamskej* vs. *siamský*, *každej* vs. *každý*, and *nějaký* vs. *nějaké*, for example. Since there is no such changes in Chinese, it seemed Liu chose to make up for this by using more offensive terms, so as to have similar effect in terms of the original informal register.

general level of the offensive load in their texts, can be ranked as follows: Xiao < Selver < Parrott = Hašek < Liu (this is just a tentative argument, which needs to be confirmed by future quantitative research).

The translators also took different approaches to tabooed subject, subdivided into three categories: those related to bodily functions and body parts, sex-related and religion-related. The textual parts with reference to the performance of bodily functions and body parts were mostly omitted by Selver, though the messages are in general conveyed euphemistically or implicitly in the original. Such omissions by Selver have also been inherited by Xiao in his indirect translation. In contrast, both Parrott and Liu have retained the taboo subjects of bodily function and body parts. However, a closer examination shows in Liu's version a tendency towards explication and what Ávila-Cabrera (2016) termed dysphemism, i.e., toning up the expression by substituting an euphemism or an implicit expression for a more explicit one. This also corresponds to her approach to translating the taboo/offensive words (see Section 4.3.1), when she at times intensified the offensive load. Parrott was generally faithful to the original, though he at times showed a tendency to use more euphemistic expressions.

The sex taboo subject involved in the discussion of *Švejk* is in a broad sense. It is manifested in two main aspects. The first is extra-marital relationship, which is a serious violation of sexual morality in the western as well as eastern societies. In Selver's and therefore Xiao's versions, the description of Lieutenant Lukáš's affairs with various ladies, though not completely erased, were significantly toned down. Xiao actually made additional omissions on the basis of Selver, by deleting all the plots involving Lieutenant Lukáš's affair with Mrs. Katy, another married lady, amounting to almost 5,000 words in the Selver version. So Xiao turned out to be more stringent than Selver on such issues, due to the reservedness of Chinese people, his target readership, on matters of sex.

Despite the completeness of the original messages in Parrott's and Liu's versions, a few minor and subtle alterations have been observed. In the original, Lieutenant Lukáš is said to have "kolem dvaceti jiných milenek". The Czech term "milenek" indicates a sexual partner in the general sense or a person who acts as a third party in the relationship of others. Liu translated the phrase accurately as "二十个左右的情妇 (some twenty other mistresses)", while Parrott, by rendering it into "some twenty other loves", avoided the sexual and immoral implication.

Another subcategory of the sexual taboo subject is sexually transmitted diseases. In one example, the original "kapavku" was translated by Liu and Parrott into "淋病 (gonorrhoea)" and "V. D. (venereal disease)" respectively, while the whole sentence was omitted by Selver and therefore Xiao. In another example, Liu and Parrott resorted to the same translations of the term, whereas Selver this time replaced the "tabooed" disease term with a vague "a certain disease", so that this taboo subject disappeared in the mediating text of Xiao's indirect translation. The avoidance of such terms in translations is another manifestation of the impact of taboo subjects on translators.

The differences in the translations of sexual taboo subjects shows not only

cultural specificity but also the development of human societies from different parts of the world. In the past, English and Chinese translators were both wary of sexual taboo subjects, even those in the broad sense, and tend to omit or tone down the relevant terms or descriptions. Chinese translators in the first half of the 20th century, such as Xiao, displayed greater intolerance to sexual taboos like extra-marital relationship, compared with their English counterparts such as Selver. This conservativeness stems from traditional Chinese philosophy and thought, especially Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, which all advocate reservedness and conservation on sexual matters. However, Trudgil points to “the rapidity with which patterns of taboo may change” (2000: 20). The change is not just reflected in the increased tolerance towards many formerly tabooed issues, but also the declining discrepancy between translations in many languages, as shown by Parrott’s and Liu’s versions, among many others.

When it comes to religion-related taboo subjects, compared with Parrott’s and Liu’s faithful reproductions, in Selver’s translation some unfavorable accounts of clergymen and their undesirable behaviors (making ungodly remarks, visiting brothel, gambling, eating meat on a Friday), as well as some of the unflattering descriptions of catholic icons and the altar, were deleted, so that Hašek’s mocking of the Catholic moral values, regarded by Habsburg dynasty as the keystone of the empire, was undermined. And these parts are of course also missing in Xiao’s indirect translation.

The fictional world (“Textwelt”), or the world within fiction, according to Nord (1993, cited in Pablé 2003: 99), is four-dimensional, i.e. it can be described on a historical, a linguistic, a geographical and a cultural level. Liu and Parrott, it seems, by reserving the numerous geographical, sociocultural and linguistic signals of the early 20th-century Czech Lands, have generally retained the fictional world of *Švejk* rather successfully in their translations. In contrast, Selver and Xiao removed much of the local flavor and some of the historical color from the ST. Their translations, interestingly, seem to fit more Parrott’s observation that “*Švejk* is not necessarily a Czech figure. He might be any Central European and is in fact a ‘Mr Everyman’, in the sense that he resembles any ‘little man’ who gets caught up in the wheels of a big bureaucratic machine” (Parrott in Hašek 2000: xv). So if Liu and Parrott moved the target readers as much as possible into the original fictional world of *Švejk*, then Selver and Xiao reconstructed the fictional world by adapting it to the target cultures and minimizing its foreign characteristics, and in some sense internationalizing it.

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