

Several Thoughts of Culture Translation and Transmission Based on Travelogues about Mount Tai

Guo Pengpeng

School of Philosophy, University of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing, China
guopengpeng1984@163.com

Abstract: In the early 20th century, many Westerners visited China and produced a lot of travelogues about China and Mount Tai. Their different concerns and attitudes caused their accounts depicted the different sides of Mount Tai. The Westerners have different understandings or even misunderstandings of Mount Tai. Some misunderstandings were due to cross-cultural communication. Mistranslations also appeared in literature back-translation for the lack of knowledge about the local attractions and cultures, which makes the readers' understandings rather obscure. Thus it's of importance to analyze the travelogues and then compare the images with the native ones. During the culture transmission and translation, some issues should be specially noticed. We should keep an open mind to trace the origin and illustrate the real face of the issues.

Keywords: Mount Tai; Culture Transmission; Travelogues

1. Introduction

In the early 20th century, many Westerners visited China and produced a lot of travelogues about China and Mount Tai. Some English versions were published in Britain and America, such as, Hesse-Wartegg's China's "Holy Land"—A Visit to the Tomb of Confucius,^[1] Wilson's Journey to the Sacred Mountain,^[2] Lockhart's Confidential Report of a Journey in the Province of Shantung Including a Visit to Kiaochou,^[3] Johnston's Account of a Journey in Shantung — From Weihaiwei to the Tomb of Confucius,^[4] Kemp's The Sacred Shrine of Taishan,^[5] Hackmann's Springtime in the Holy Land of China,^[6] Dickinson's Sacred Mountain,^[7] Edmunds' Shantung—China's Holy Land,^[8] Stidger's The Mountains of the Bible^[9] and Flashlights of Failure,^[10] Bishop's Shantung, China's Holy Land,^[11] Kietland's The Tomb of Confucius and Sacred Mountain Taishan,^[12] etc.,.

These travelogues showed different images of Mount Tai to the West from different perspectives. The travelogue authors in the early 20th century had different professional backgrounds, which causes their different concerns and attitudes, so their accounts depicted the different sides of Mount Tai. Nevertheless, as they had some common sources of information and understanding of Mount Tai, their focuses on and descriptions of Mount Tai had something in common. Thus it's of importance to analyze the travelogues and then compare the images with the native ones.

2. Synopsis of the Travelogues' Contents and Main Concerns

In view of the above mentioned travelogues, a brief introduction to the accounts regarding Mount Tai is needed, in order to highlight the authors' main concerns and attitudes towards Mount Tai culture.

Hesse-Wartegg's travelogue described in detail that in April 1898 he started from Jiaozhou, taking the way of Weixian, Boshan, Jinan and other places, and arrived at Taian in May, where he visited Dai Temple and climbed Mount Tai. Hesse-Wartegg narrated according to his tour process, firstly he expound his expectation and yearning for the ancient civilization remains of Taian. He was looking forward to seeing the spectacular relics of this ancient Oriental civilization in Taian, just as he had seen in Damascus, Cairo, and so on. He made a lot of descriptions of what he had seen and heard and how he felt in Taian City and Dai Temple, especially the visit to Dai Temple which left a very deep impression on him; he praised the grandeur of the main building of Dai Temple and the intactness of the murals in it. On the other hand, he made relatively brief record on the mountain road, but specially recorded the scene of the beggars on the road. In addition to his bad experience in Taian city when he was pulled toward the inns by their staff, as well as the description of experiences the preacher has gone through, his narratives

highlighted his antipathy towards the general public “ignorance” and rudeness. After he reached the top of the mountain, the descriptions of the landscape and the mountain temples and the gods were also sketchy, from which we can see that, as a traveler, Hesse-Wartegg paid less attention to the local culture and faith.

Wilson's article mainly recorded his experience of climbing the mountain, and his record appeared objective. He gave a brief account of what he had seen and heard, but not many feelings expressed. As to Dai Temple, which occupied important position in Chinese traditional culture, Wilson (1901) only used one brief sentence to record the visit and his feeling, “The next morning, after visiting a celebrated temple in the north part of the city, and finding it and its grounds somewhat more extensive than temples and grounds commonly are, but quite as dirty and decaying as the worst of them”.^{[2](P281)} As a soldier and engineer, Wilson paid more attention to the social conditions and political policies of the then government which were of great significance to their railway business. This resulted that the description about Mount Tai and its culture was not so detailed.

Lockhart's account is even briefer, which simply introduced the overall status of Taian City and Dai Temple, the experience of visiting the statue of “NiangNiang” on the top of Mount Tai. There was not much scenery description or feeling expression. As the magistrate of Weihaiwei Concession, he cared more about the development of the concession than the culture or customs of Mount Tai. The trip to Mount Tai was just for scenery enjoying and an episode of his visit journey to Shandong Governor and the Duke. More details of his report were given to the descriptions of the ports, towns which occupied significant military or economic positions.

Johnston compared the mountain worship in China with the mountain worships in other countries. He also analyzed the possible origins of the belief of “NiangNiang” and the tragedies brought to some of the believers. He said that “the patron deity ... belongs to those extremely ancient systems of superstitions belief which, as Mr. Fraser shown in *The Golden Bough*, are the root of many picturesque customs and nature-myths connected with the annual birth and death of vegetation.”^[4] The author also described the engraving on the way of the mountaineering, expressing his affection to the engravings. He then described the beauty of the sunrise at the top of Mount Tai, and finally, he concluded his account of Mount Tai tour by Confucius' story of “Tyranny is even more to be dreaded than tigers”. As a scholar, Johnston paid more attention to culture and beliefs than Lockhart, though they were both from Britain and worked in Weihaiwei. Johnston had studied much in anthropology and sociology, and besides, he was fond in the then society and its thought. Therefore, in his trip to Mount Tai, he made many accounts about the customs and culture of Mount Tai.

Kemp's account was brief, filled with descriptions of the landscapes, and recorded the beauty on her way to the top. At the same time, she gave great length to quotations of the translated Chinese classics to introduce the content and form of sacrifices on Mount Tai. The author was more impressed with the mountain chair carrier and recorded their skills of bearing the chairs. As a paintress, Kemp was more concerned about the landscapes and daily life of the folk she contacted. Even when she praised the location Shun had chosen for sacrifice, she put the reason to the beautiful scenery. Kemp (1909) noticed the old women pilgrims who kneed up the stone road, “and a Chinese woman with us went up on all-fours”,^[5] but she did not think more about the phenomena, as the customs and beliefs were not her chief concern.

Hackmann's article did not record the author's mountaineering process, but mainly elucidated some of the author's thoughts and opinions. The author introduced the origin of China's five sacred mountains and the possible origin of Mount Tai worship and the evolution of Mount Tai belief. As a religion/culture researcher, Hackmann paid much more attention to the worship details than touring.

In more details, Dickinson recorded his seen and heard when he visited Dai Temple and the spectacular of engraving along the road. The author exposted the perfect combination of Mount Tai with Chinese character and culture, and further expounded the emotion of Chinese spirit raised from what he had seen on Mount Tai, comparing with his antipathy to modern Western civilization. Being a writer, he concerned more about the society, the spirit of the people. He even called the West to study from China in the aspects of harmony with the nature.

Edmunds' article noted his experiences of climbing Mount Tai, and the author described the scenic spots, engravings and temples along the way in more details. He also used rational logical thinking to express his doubts about the story of Confucius' observation of the gate of Suzhou.

The two articles of Stidger first highly praised the ancient sacrifices and sacred status of Mount Tai. Through the interpretation of the preachers who stayed in Taian for many years, the author highlighted

the position of Mount Tai in China and in the heart of Chinese people from the view of the Westerners, and then expounded the deep reason why China resolutely refused to lose Shandong.

Before narrating the experience of climbing Mount Tai, Bishop first introduced some stories about Mount Tai and the knowledge of Mount Tai culture. He introduced the origin of Mount Tai belief, the Taoism, and its development, the evolution of folk belief of Mount Tai and the changes of god in Mount Tai belief. Bishop (1921) believed that “One of the striking things about the religion of China of feudal days is the entire absence of female divinities”,^[11] and then further compared the belief of the goddess in the south and north of China and in Japan. Next, basing on the climbing process, the author introduced the detailed experience and sentiment of visiting Dai Temple, mountaineering and mountaintop tours. There are some comparisons with other cultures and insights from the author, as well as landscape descriptions. This article is the most detailed account of the travelogues mentioned above.

Kirtland’s account is also sketchy. The author thought that Mount Tai and Qufu are the two places that one must visit in China, and even if there is one place left, it will be the main purpose of the next trip. The author, quoting the classic, introduced the story of Shun, who was the first to ascend Mount Tai to offer sacrifices. Kirtland (1926) said, “I should like to believe all of the legends which concern the Emperor Shun. They breathe the spirit of China as conclusively as do the sagas reveal the Viking spirit.”^[12]

Before 20th century, the solitary identity of the travelogue authors was subjected to the restriction of the historical condition at that time. Although the Qing Dynasty was defeated and ceded many rights, some of the core rights were still kept. The foreigners could not act willfully in China, going where they would like to go, or doing whatever they wanted to do. They held prudent attitude toward the rich traditions of China, and on the other hand, the recalcitrant resistance of Chinese people made them scruple. Following further threatening and blow of the Western powers, Qing government lost more rights, the core interest group disintegrated, and then the powers supported different interest groups to get more profit.

Therefore, entering the 20th century, Westerners got widened scope of activities and rights in China, and a variety of Westerners came to China, engaging in more professions, taking more activities. In the 12 authors, only Stidger is a professional priest, but the other authors held different professions. For example, Lockhart and Johnston were concession officials; meanwhile, Johnston was a scholar researching society, faiths, etc. Hasse-Wartegg was a traveler, Kirtland was a journalist, Wilson was a soldier and engineer, Kemp was a landscape paintress, Dickinson was a writer, Hackmann was a religious expert, Edmunds was a professor of physics, and Bishop was an anthropologist.

3. Issues in Culture Translation and Transmission

Due to the fact that these authors had different backgrounds and careers, they held different concerns and attitudes accordingly. In view of the introduction and influence of previous travelogues, they had formed some understandings and recognitions on Mount Tai and Chinese culture. By analyzing their backgrounds and concerns, the overall attitude of the group of people they represented can be inferred. Through the different concerns and attitudes, we can get a glimpse of the modern image of Mount Tai, which may provide certain reference for the intercultural communication of local cultures and Chinese traditional culture.

The “image” of cross-cultural imagology not only refers to the foreign characters and scenery, but also includes the sum of emotions, ideas and words related to the foreign. On the basis of the fact, imagology focuses more on the foreign image of literature and the cultural conflicts and dialogues it reflected. “Other” is an indispensable part of self-consciousness. To be full conscious, people must identify themselves from the image of others. Travelogue research is the traditional domain of comparative literature, as Meng Hua (2001) once said in his book, “travelogues writers tend to play a dual role: they are the constructors and advocators of social collective imagination. On the other hand, they are restricted by the collective imagination to a certain extent. So their exotic image became the projection of the collective imagination.”^[13]

The descriptions of the “Other” will always be different from that of the “Self”, which is not only due to the understanding of language and characters, but also due to the differences in culture and belief. Although the recognition of the “Self” is not necessarily correct and reasonable in the eyes of the “Other”, the image of Mount Tai is definitely inseparable from the growing soil as part of the culture of the “Self”. As a result, some of the recognitions of the “Other” has supplemented or corrected the cognition of the

“Self”, but there are also some misunderstandings.

There are some possible reasons why the Westerners have different understandings or even misunderstandings of Mount Tai. Some issues involved in cross-cultural communication and literature back-translation will be discussed.

3.1 Analysis on Causes of Different Understandings in the Travelogues

In China, the stories and cognition of Mount Tai are almost consistent, but in overseas, different people will have different understandings and opinions. Their knowledge and insights are not only closely linked with their identity background, religious belief, but also related to the reserves of knowledge and understanding of Chinese culture. Here are some of the possible reasons of their misunderstandings or specific cognitions.

3.1.1 Pre-gained Knowledge about Mount Tai

The initial visitors to Mount Tai published their own experiences and thoughts on Mount Tai after returning. The readers would accordingly form a kind of pre-impression and produce respective images of Mount Tai. And it's certain for them to make comparison unconsciously when they come to the land by themselves. For example, Hesse-Wartegg mentioned in the text what Williamson saw in 1870, and compared with what he saw by himself. It is not hard to see that Hesse-Wartegg formed certain pre-impression because he had read Williamson's article. Definitely, some of the account might affect the authors' points of view.

Besides, in these articles, almost all the authors wondered the long history of ancient sacrifices on Mount Tai. They believed that Mount Tai was the world's most ancient sacrifice place. This was mainly because of Legge's translation of *Shoo King*—“*Book of History*”, as it's recorded that in 2254 B.C., the Emperor Shun ascended Mount Tai and offered sacrifices on the top. The record is from Chinese classical literature and was marked with exact age by the later historians, and it's treated with authoritative influence. For the reason, the Westerners formed the established impression of Mount Tai as the world's most ancient sacrificial place. Combined with the mountain worship in their own religious beliefs, they possessed certain feelings of sympathy and worship to the sacredness of Mount Tai.

3.1.2 Imperfect Mastering of Chinese Language and Culture

Chinese language and culture are very different from those in the West, so the Westerners are bound to be influenced by language barriers and cultural differences when they try to know about China. For example, Mateer mentioned in his article the comparison of the pronunciation of “Yue (the mountain)” and “Jue (square rafter)”. He said “Yue” and “Jue” have the same pronunciation, while the latter has the meaning of “inspection”, which means inspect and determine the merits of the people, then the religious functions of the god of Mount Tai can be seen from the name. Actually the two words are totally unrelated on both pronunciation and meaning, as “Yue” pronounced as “/j uə /”, and “Jue” as “/ dʒ uə /” in Chinese. However, from the perspective of English pronunciation, Y&J pronounce the same, such like “yeau” with the phonetic symbol as /ji:n/, “u” as /ju: /, so Mateer misunderstood that the pronunciations of Y&J are the same. Moreover, the character “Jue” has no such meaning as he said. Actually, “Jue” refers to the square rafter, but not “inspection”. Perhaps he put the meaning of another “Yue (read and inspect)” onto “Jue”, just relying on the pronunciations, because “Yue” has the meaning of check and inspection. This indicates that although early missionary scholars have read Chinese scriptures and understood the culture to a certain extent, their understanding of the language and characters is far from enough. Although more and more Westerners came to learn and understand Chinese characters, and their application ability increased, their understandings of Chinese culture were still less mature. Hesse-Wartegg, for example, in the article thought China has no ancient relics remained. On his way to the mountain, he passed through a large area of ruins, which reminded him of Vesuvius and the ancient city of Pompeii, and he compared Mount Tai and Taian with them. He said that the preservation of ancient relics in China was very few, while the ancient relics in the West were much preserved. Actually, it has a lot to do with the architectural styles of China and the West. Western ancient architectures were mostly built with stones, hence the main body can be preserved even though it's burned. In contrast, Chinese ancient architectures chiefly used woods, once on fire, they would be burnt to ashes. The author once visited the ancient Egyptian temples in Egypt, and noticed that the great hall built with huge stones still remained largely intact, even attacked by artillery fire. In contrast, China's finely crafted wooden buildings were hard to survive in the fires of war. The disappointment of Hesse-Wartegg was due to his failure of taking into account the differences between the architectural styles of the East and the West, but he just value the historical accumulation of China with his own experiences in the West, which inevitably was biased.

The other is the misinterpretation about history and function of Dai Temple. Edmunds introduced the origin and brief development of Dai Temple, as he said firstly Qin Shihuang left two obelisks to commemorate his sacrifices ceremony on the summit, and a hundred years after that, Han Wudi planted cypress trees to the east of the lower one, and built or rebuilt a temple there, which became the nucleus or forerunner of Dai Temple that in turn became the nucleus of Taian City. However, in the history of the large-scale renovation of Dai Temple, Edmunds has made a mistake. He mistook the end of the Northern Song Dynasty (1020 to 1120 C.E.) as the end of the whole Song Dynasty (1279 C.E.). He also believed that the Dai Temple's massive renovation was "to accommodate the large number who, though coming to worship at the Holy Mountain, are unable to make the ascent"^[8]. Nevertheless, Dai Temple is a royal sacrificial site, and only members of the royal family can rest in it. Ordinary people and even officials are not eligible to stay in Dai Temple. Here Edmunds had a great misunderstanding about the history and function of Dai Temple.

3.1.3 Confusion of Chinese Religious Gods

China is a country of polytheistic beliefs, especially the folk religious beliefs, with various gods/goddesses complexly weaved. People who do not know the traditional culture, especially foreigners, can easily put the wrong names of the gods/goddesses to others. The main gods/goddesses of Mount Tai are Dongyue Dadi in Dai Temple at the foot of Mount Tai, Bixia Yuanjun in Bixia Ci on the top of the mountain, Yuhuang Dadi in Yuhuang Temple at the peak of Mount Tai, and Tai Shan Shi Gan Dang which is closely related to Mount Tai. Yet the authors of the travelogues introduced the gods/goddesses differently.

Hesse-Wartegg (1900) stated that "The center is occupied by a raised massive throne with a giant figure in a sitting position, representing the famous Emperor Shun, who reigned over China forty-two hundred years ago."^[1] In his eyes, as long as Emperor Shun ascended Mount Tai in 2254 B.C. to offer sacrifices to Heaven, Mount Tai became the sacred mountain since then. Perhaps just because of this, he thought that the chief god in Dai Temple was the embodiment of Emperor Shun. In fact, the god in Dai Temple is Dongyue Dadi who has many origins except Emperor Shun, yet there is no definite conclusion. He also said "Next to it sits a smaller female figure, said to represent." What he mentioned as "the holy mother of the Tai~shan" shall be Bixia Yuanjun, as he said on the top "the main temple is that of the holy mother, consisting of a number of buildings surrounded by a high wall." Yet there are two gods worshiped in Dai Temple, one is the god of Mount Tai — Dongyue Dadi, and the other is his wife — Empress Shuming. Though Bixia Yuanjun is worshiped in Yaocan Ting, all the travelogues collected did not mention this building and its worshiped god/goddess. Upon the analysis, "the holy mother of the Tai~shan" mentioned here is wrongly regarded as Bixia Yuanjun, but shall be Empress Shuming.

In 1919, when Edmunds visited Dai Temple, he said "(we) enter the inner shrine to behold the image of the 'Goddess of Mercy'." However, there is no Buddhist deity in Dai Temple. What he called "Goddess of Mercy" should be Empress Shuming. In addition, Edmunds even put Bixia Yuanjun into the wrong religion. At first, he said "everything is on sale from little yellow mud tigers to portraits of the 'Mother of Heaven' and fine brass works and silks" in the city of Taian. This appellation of "Mother of Heaven" is confusing as it can be easily misunderstood as "the Queen Mother of the West" (Wangmu Niangniang). Later, he said "Besides the chief shrine to the Buddhist 'Nurse or Mother of Heaven', there are two other temple groups at the summit".^[8] Thus, the "Mother of Heaven" mentioned formerly refers to Bixia Yuanjun as the goddess in Bixia Ci on the top of Mount Tai, but not the easily misunderstood "the Queen Mother of the West", but the author wrongly put "Mother of Heaven" into the Buddhist deities. The misunderstanding may be attributed to the ascription of the three temple groups on the top of Mount Tai, as Edmunds said "on its slopes every sect, Buddhist, Taoist, and Confucian, has its temples and its priest". This is the place where the three religions meet. He might think that the other two temples are to "Emperor of the Sky" in Taoism – Yuhuang Temple, and to the sage Confucius – Confucius Temple, and then the third temple goes "naturally" to Buddhism. But actually, Bixia Ci is Taoist temple.

Similar confusions of gods are frequent in the travelogues, and some of the authors have mistaken the name of the deities. E.g. Dickinson mistook Bixia Yuanjun by calling her "Pi-hsia-yüen". Maybe Dickinson thought that "jun" is a title of respect addressed to a person, which can be omitted in some occasions, consequently he did not use this title when he mentioned goddess of Mount Tai. Nevertheless, "Yuanjun" is a call to female deities of Taoism, which is normally not omitted. Another example, Bishop called "Emperor of Heaven" as "Jade Emperor", and treated him as the god of Mount Tai. Generally speaking, "Emperor of Heaven" is the supreme god of the heaven in charge of all the gods, while God of Mount Tai (Dongyue Dadi) is much lower in rank.

The causes of their misunderstandings and different realizations can not be claimed to have been fully

analyzed above, as there might be some potential factors in the deep affecting the cognition of the authors.

3.2 The Issues in Transmission and Back Translation

The cultural differences and misunderstandings of the authors are also reflected in their translation. In the travelogues, the authors, depending on their own understandings of Chinese language and culture, took different approaches to translate the attractions and stories. Some are in transliteration, while some in free translation. This kind of contents caused confusion in understanding to those who are not familiar with the local culture. In the presently existing Chinese translations, mistranslations also appeared for the lack of knowledge about the local attractions and cultures, which makes the readers' understandings rather obscure.

Basing on the analysis of the extents of different cognitions or misinterpretation of traditional cognitions and the mistranslations in back translations, some cases for supporting the issues that should be paid attention in the intercultural communication are supported.

3.2.1 Mistranslations by the Foreigners into the West

As discussed above, Edmunds misunderstood the history and function of Dai Temple. Still there are some other misunderstandings about Dai Temple. The wall painting in the main hall is an example. Edmunds (1919) said that “we transverse the main hall of the temple, on the walls of which are fine, large frescoes representing a horde of officials and gentry making a pilgrimage to Tai Shan”.^{[8](P239)} While Hesse-Wartegg (1900) has made another description, “but the walls are covered with magnificent paintings, the most beautiful I have seen in China. They present a succession of scenes describing the ascent of the Tai-schan by the first emperor of the present dynasty.”^{[1](P810)} Actually, the name and content of the wall painting in the main hall of Dai Temple haven't settled yet, as some consider it as the royal progress procession of God of Mount Tai, calling it Painting of Yuedi Touring, while others believe it is the scene of the forth and back journey of Song Zhenzong's offering to Heaven and Earth, calling it Painting of Imperial Faring and Returning. Edmunds mistook it as for gentries and officials, while Hesse-Wartegg mistook it as for the first emperor of the Qing Dynasty.

Regarding to the misinterpretation of gods/goddesses of Mount Tai, there are still some misunderstandings, such as Kemp's introduction of Yuhuang. She stated in her article that “another to Yu Huang, the Taoist Emperor of the Sky, who first drained the Empire”.^[5] As Chinese, it is not at all difficult to know that Yuhuang Dadi is the supreme god in Heaven, but it's really confusing to hear his feat as draining the Empire. The first who solved the problem of terrible flood in China is Da Yu or Emperor Yu. Possibly, Kemp had made a mistake of mixing the two names, and regarded Yuhuang as Emperor Yu.

Furthermore, there are many mistranslations or ambiguous translations in the introductions of attractions and allusions. For example, Dickinson mentioned Li Bai and his fellows when he was in Culai Mountain as a recluse. Yet the statement in the article may mislead the foreigners to other understanding. He wrote “more than a thousand years ago, the great Tang poet Li-tai-po retired with five companions to drink and make verses. They are still known to tradition as the ‘six idlers of the bamboo grove’”.^[7] Undoubtedly, the poets like to drink for making verses, but if called as “idler”, they may be surprised. As “idler” means “a person who does no work and hanging around”, the description may give the readers such impression that the poets are bored and with no good. However, Li Bai and the other five poets were living reclusion lives in the mountain, to avoid the secular annoyance. Besides, “Zhuxi Liuyi” means the six recluses who were living along the brook named “Zhuxi” or “Bamboo Brook”, while the “bamboo grove” means the small forest of bamboo. It's suggested the name should be as “Six Recluses of Bamboo Brook”. Another is that Edmunds gave an even longer name to a place which caused certain confusion in confirming the location. He said “at another place, where the stream plunges over a high wall of rocks, the latter bears the quotation from the classics, ‘A running brook is clear in itself.’” It took lot of time to confirm the places he mentioned, after consulting to the Mount Tai research expert Prof. Zhou Ying, the location was considered to be certain place in Valley of Sutra Rocks (Jingshi Yu). As “the latter” refers to the “high wall of rock”, and the inscription on the rock is “Gaoshan Liushui” which comes from a legend of an ancient musician who played a tune about the high mountain and the running water. Respectively, the name Edmunds referred to is better to be called the “high mountain and running water”, for easier recognition.

For the foreigners, due to the lack of knowledge about Chinese culture, their misunderstandings and misinterpretations are unavoidable. The direct name or meaning may be difficult for them to follow, so some of the names were transferred into extended meanings.

3.2.2 Mistranslations in the Back Translation

As some of the domestic scholars who are working on Mount Tai research can not master foreign languages well, it is necessary to translate the overseas literature back into Chinese. Therefore, some of the misunderstandings may be reproduced in the back-translation. Worse than that, some translators may also make new mistakes in understanding the foreign literatures. Hence it's necessary to analyze the mistakes and discuss the reason to find certain precautions to avoid further mistakes.

Among the selected travelogues, there are two published versions of back translation, in which there are some clear mistakes. The mistakes are resulted by the authors' ignorance of the attractions of Mount Tai.

For example, in Kemp's works, she said "It took us some five and a half hours to climb up, and as we neared the Gate of Heaven (the pink gateway in the sketch) the steepness grew, the last flight being over 1000 steps (I counted them)".^[5] While in the translated book, the translator stated "Pandeng dayue huale women wugeban xiaoshi jiejin Yitianmen (futu shang de mending) shi, podu zengjia le, zuihou yipai taijie shi yiqianduoji (wo shuguo de)".^[14] Mount Tai has several important gates imitating the reign on the heaven, such as Northern Gate of Heaven, Southern Gate of Heaven etc. The Gate of Heaven mentioned in Kemp's account is not that clear, but as she noted in parenthesis it refers to "the pink gateway in the sketch". From the sketch we can see clearly the magnificent gate towering on the end of the gorge, overlooking the mountain road. If one is familiar with or has climbed Mount Tai, it would be easy to know that the gate is Southern Gate of Heaven, but not First Gate of Heaven. The First Gate of Heaven is near the Red Gate Palace, and it means the beginning of the stairs to the heaven. So that the translation of the gate is incorrect, and also we can judge from the following description "the steepness grew" that the road is difficult for climbing there, while the First Gate of Heaven is at the foot of mountain with gentle slope. And later Kemp once again mentioned the gate in the statement "The view from the summit, which is but a gentle ascent from the Gate of Heaven, was absolutely glorious".^{[5](P51)} From this statement we can know that the gate is near the summit, therefore, it is clear that the name of the gate should be Southern Gate of Heaven. The translator did not confirm the correctness of the location and added unnecessary number to the gate which caused misleading to the readers.

Another is the mistranslation of the sentence "The way towered above us in contrast to the 'Peaceful Mile', a shady part of the road lower down".^[5] The translator put it "Daolu zai womende touding heran yanshenzhe, yu xiamiande lushing yibufen yinyingzhong de Taipingdao ganghao xiangfan".^[14] First let's talk about the phrase "in contrast to", this phrase means the two being talked objects are in companion to highlight the sharply different features. The translation as "ganghao xiangfan" makes us confused. If we put it as "daolu panjuzai women shangfang, yu xiamiande linyindao xingcheng duizhao", it will be easier to understand the feeling of the author. Moreover, regarding to the translation of "Peaceful Mile", it is confusing to locate the attraction. Just as mentioned above, if one has been to Mount Tai, it is easy to know that there is a shady and smooth road north to the Middle Gate of Heaven named "Kuaihao Sanli". According to the account of Kemp, "the shady part of road lower down" should be "Kuaihao Sanli". According to the measurement units, a mile equals 3.2 Chinese li. Peaceful also has the meaning of quietness. As this part of the road is smooth and shady, the environment is peaceful. Undoubtedly, Kemp transferred the name by the meaning into English as "Peaceful Mile". Hence in back translation we should check the exact meaning and reference of the proper names, especially the names of local attractions.

In addition, Dickinson stated in his travelogue that "We at least were glad to be chaired some part of the way. A wonderful way!"^[7] While the translator transferred as "Women zhishao feichang gaoxingde chengzuo huagan zouguole bufen lucheng. Yitiao qimiaode shanlu!"^[15] "Huagan" is an old style of vehicle, which was popular in old times in mountainous area of SouthWestern China. It is made by two long bamboo bars and some bamboo chips and ropes in the middle to form some kind of sling chair. Similarly, in Northern China, people use chairs instead of bamboo chips for helping traveling or climbing mountains. Wilson described the preparation of certain type of mountain chair used in Mount Tai area, "Each member of our party was provided with a chair lashed firmly to a hand-barrow, which was borne by two coolies, who travel abreast over all the steep places, both going up and coming down. As the chair faces the handle of the barrow, the passenger of course makes the trip sidewise".^[2] We can see from the description that people used chair for lifting visitors to the summit of Mount Tai, that's a bit different from the item mentioned in the translated version as "Huagan". Accordingly, it's better to call it "Shanjiao" or "Jiaoyi". Moreover, the second sentence is translated abruptly, which appeared with no connection with the context. That the word "way" in the sentence refers to the road or the traveling method of "to be chaired" is the key point. The author previously talked about the mountain road and shifted to the climbing method here, yet the word "way" in the sentence shall not refer to the whole

mountain road, but the style of climbing the mountain. Accordingly, the translation is better to be as “Zhishao women hengaoxingde chengzuo shanjiao zouguole bufen lucheng. Zheshi yizhong duome qimiaode fangshi a !”

Another case is about the name of an attraction, as Dickinson said “A rock is called ‘the tower of the quickening spirit’”. It’s really difficult to confirm the location of the attraction because he did not mention any other objects surrounding the rock. The translation put it as “Yikuai shitou beichengwei ‘Yuanshi Tianzun’”, which is not found in the related literatures though the writer tried to look it up in many ways. Even consulted with Prof. Zhou Ying, it’s considered to be really confusing and difficult to confirm the reference, as the description is sole and no more links found in the context. There are some similar places in Mount Tai, but all of them are not such tally with the account. One is Yuanshi Tianzun Temple (Yuanshi Tianzun Miao) at Fan Cliff (Shanziya), but it’s a temple not a rock. Another is Rock of Spirit Test on the summit, yet it can not be described as tower. The phrase “the quickening spirit” is an item from religious texts, which is used in old English, possibly from the King James Bible, with the meaning of resurrecting the dead. For such meaning, there is a closer option as Tower of Going West. The phrase “go west” literally means “die” in Chinese traditional culture. Yet the extended meaning is “to start another kind of life in the other world”, which is a bit similar to the meaning of “the quickening spirit”. As the meaning of “the quickening spirit” is so religious, if the translator failed to trace the origin, he will get confused. Though the assured reference is not clear, the account means a kind of tower, but not some kind of god, hence it’s not advisable for the translator to put it down as a name of some god.

As the translation of the local culture is important to the transmission, and the back-translation is of the same importance to the study of the local culture. We should pay more attention to the literature researches to dig out more valuable inspirations. Hence, the analysis of the statements in original travelogues and the expressions in back translation is of great importance to the related study, and is of high value to some extent in local culture studies.

4. The Inspiration to Mount Tai Culture in Intercultural Communication

In view of the fact that people from different cultures always meet some misunderstandings when come to understand other cultures, when we introduce our own culture out, we should pay attention to the overall grasp, to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings.

4.1 Objective Attitude in Transmitting Mount Tai Culture

First of all, we should hold an objective attitude. We should not be complacent and arrogant because of our long history, believing that our culture is unique in the universe and no other culture can match it. For example, Kirtland (1926) said in his article, “No two foreigners seem to be similarly impressed by the wonders of Taishan, although none fail of impressions. On the contrary, the Chinese hold to a standardized opinion that there is no view in the wide world to compare with it in majesty and ineffable beauty.”^[12] We can regard this statement as a comment or criticism on the domestic folk recognition to Mount Tai. The traditional dynasties and people always regard their own dynasty as a great and impressive country, and all the surrounding countries came to present tributes and learn advanced systems. But following the rising of the West, the Westerners treated their culture as civilization but the orient as barbarian. Therefore, the conflict between the West and the orient became ineluctable, but the stronger held the right of speech. We may sometimes face such views or statements of biting criticism on our culture, customs or religions from the West. In that case, we should consider the criticism tolerantly and try to seek certain ways to remedy such prejudiced opinions. However, if we actively transmit this view to foreign cultures, we may encounter antagonism or resistance which will influence the communication and transmission of our culture.

Some examples of such different views are common in the travelogues, like Johnston (1904) said, “An hour later we were descending the mountain under the full blaze of a hot September sun and a shadowless blue sky: willing enough to endorse the popular verdict that T'ai Shan is the most justly famous of all the mountains under heaven*. (*Tianxia Mingshan Diyi)”^[4]

Different cultures give different definitions to beauty. Though we consider the towering and majesty of mountain as beauty, the West may not possibly think so. They might love more the meadow, jungle as pretty. Hackmann said in the article, “There are hardly any green trees, but a few pines and cypresses grow out of the rocks.”^[6] Seemingly, the huge bold boulders and stark jagged cliffs are not spectacles in his eyes.

4.2 Familiarity with the Traditional Culture

Chinese traditional culture has deep accumulation, and there are rich and colorful history allusions and legends, which contain many philosophies and inspirations. To understand and communicate these ideas, one should be cautious and objective, instead of taking the words too literally or even try to figure out rashly. This requires people who are engaged in cultural communication to understand and master the traditional culture, to promote the active and inspiring elements.

There is a misunderstanding about traditional customs in Johnston's works, as he said "But it is painful to add that the hands of the Lady are deeply stained with human blood: for as a reward for her successful intervention she sometimes demands the lives of her supplicants. Near the top of the mountain there is a gloomy precipice, the name of which may be euphemistically translated as the Citadel of Sacrifice (Sheshentai), where countless devotees, mostly ignorant women, have keep the tragic vow made to the Lady at the time of their trouble."^[4] What Johnston mentioned is the custom of some fanatic devotees giving their lives to requite the blessing of Bixia Yuanjun. Actually, this kind of customs in folk religious beliefs started in Yuan Dynasty, affected by certain cultivating ways in Buddhism. As recorded in History of Song Dynasty, it was popular at some period that the folk monks did cultivation with candles or even torches stuck to their fingers or on the heads. This kind of brutal cultivation was prohibited by the government. Yet the custom still spread in the folks and developed to giving one's life. Actually, it is not correct for Johnston to blame Bixia Yuanjun for her ordering one's life to reward her successful intervention, as the custom is due to the ignorance or fanaticism of certain devotees.

5. Conclusion

Every event has its root or reason. What we should do is to keep an open mind to trace the origin and illustrate the real face of the issue. Therefore, in the transmission of our own culture or intercultural communication, attention needs to be paid to avoid extreme attitude and simple mistakes that may cause misunderstandings and confusions.

References

- [1] Ernst von Hesse-Wartegg(1900). *China's "Holy Land"-A Visit to the Tomb of Confucius*[J]. *The Century Magazine*, LX. 6, (10).
- [2] James Harrison Wilson(1901). *China-Travels and Investigations in the "Middle Kingdom"*[M]. New York: D. Appleton and Company.
- [3] J. H. Stewart Lockhart(1903). *Confidential Report of a Journey in the Province of Shantung Including a Visit to Kiaochou*[Z]. Record copy in Weihai Records Office, Record No. 229-001 -039-0170, the origin is in Watson College in Britain.
- [4] Reginald Fleming Johnston(1904). *Account of a Journey in Shantung-From Weihaiwei to the Tomb of Confucius*[Z]. Record copy in Weihai Records Office, Record No. 229-001-040-0174, the origin is in Watson College in Britain.
- [5] E. G. Kemp(1909). *The Face of China*[M]. London: Chatto & Windus.
- [6] H. Hackmann(1914). *A German Scholar in the East*[M]. Trans. Daisie Rommel. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd. New York: James Pott & Co..
- [7] G. Lowes Dickinson(1915). *Appearances: Notes of Travel, East and West*[M]. Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Page & Company.
- [8] Charles K. Edmunds(1919). *Shantung-China's Holy Land*[J]. *The National Geographic Magazine*, 3, (9):p.241.
- [9] William L. Stidger(1920). *Outdoor Men and Minds*[M]. New York, Cincinnati: The Abingdon Press.
- [10] William L. Stidger(1921). *Flash-Lights from the Seven Seas*[M]. New York: George H. Doran Company.
- [11] C. W. Bishop(1921). *Shantung, China's Holy Land*[J]. *The Museum Journal*, 2, (6):12.
- [12] Lucian Swift Kirtland(1926). *Finding the Worth While in the Orient*[M]. New York: Robert M. McBride & Company.
- [13] Meng Hua(2001). *Imagology of Comparative Literature*[M]. Beijing: Peking University Press.
- [14] E. G. Kemp(2009). *The Face of China*[M]. translated by Kan Fang, Beijing: China Workers' Publishing House.
- [15] G. Lowes Dickinson(1915). *Appearances: Notes of Travel, East and West*[A]. G. Lowes Dickinson. "Chinese Guy" Letters [M]. translated by Lu Yanming, Wang Yukuo(2008), Nanjing: Nanjing Publishing House.