

The Reception and Dissemination of Jia Pingwa's Works in France

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Abstract: In the 1990s, the works of Jia Pingwa, a Shaanxi writer, had a great impact on French society and were deeply loved by French readers. The French government and cultural circles awarded Jia Pingwa a high honor. Subsequently, Jia Pingwa's literature was widely spread in European and American countries, which meant that Shaanxi literature, publicized the spiritual style and regional culture of Shaanxi people, and had really stepped out of the country and entered the world. However, with the changes of the times, what is the evaluation of Jia Pingwa's works in the hearts of the French readers? This article attempts to summarize the current situation of translation and dissemination of Jia Pingwa's works in France, specifically analyze the acceptance of his works by French society in different periods, and find out the practical problems of the dissemination of Jia Pingwa's works in France, so as to provide a little reference for the further promotion of Jia Pingwa's works.

Keywords: Jia Pingwa's works; France; Dissemination and Acceptance

1. Introduction

Jia Pingwa has a source of puzzlement with France. As one of the first countries to accept Jia Pingwa's works, France affirms the great contribution his works have brought to mankind and gives him a very high evaluation. The French magazine *New Observation* selected Jia Pingwa as the "Top Ten Outstanding Writers in the World" in 1997. As one of the first Shaanxi writers to be translated into France, he has attracted great attention from the French media. At the end of the 20th century, France accelerated the translation and publication of many of his works. [1] Jia Pingwa was deeply loved by French sinologists, writers, critics, including ordinary readers. Subsequently, his writing career gradually ushered in a real spring, and his leapt to become the best of contemporary Chinese writers at home and abroad. However, with the change of the times, Jia Pingwa's creative pace has never stopped, and new works have been emerging, but we have heard less and less about him in France. Today's French readers prefer Chinese writers such as Yu Hua, Han Shaogong, Wang Zengqi, etc. Is the French tired of Jia Pingwa's writing style or is there something wrong with his works? Is there a problem with the translation and dissemination of Jia Pingwa's works, or has the wind direction of the mainstream French literature changed? This article will analyze it from two aspects: communication and reception[2].

2. The spread of Jia Pingwa's works in France

The overseas spread of Jia Pingwa's literature is related to the spread of all elements and links of each of his literary works from the beginning to the end. This article is to discuss the French spread of his literature from the three aspects of communicators, communicators and media.

Jia Pingwa's works were first translated by Beijing Foreign Language Press in 1990 and published in France. After that, the spread of Jia Pingwa's works in France can be roughly divided into three stages: the initial period (1990-1995), the development period (1997-2000) and the development gap period (2001 - present).

2.1. Initial period (1990-1995)

Jia Pingwa's works published and published in France during this period included French versions of short and medium-length novels such as *Jiwowa Family*, *Wukui*, *Mei Xue Di* and *Bai Lang*. French readers began to pay attention to Jia Pingwa and his works through these works. However, during this

period, the study of Jia Pingwa in France was in its infancy, and independent research had not yet formed in France, mainly focusing on translation [3].

In 1985, based on Jia Pingwa's novel "Jiwowa Family", the film "Wild Mountain" produced by Xi'an Film Studio won many domestic and international awards in France, such as the Feature Film Award of the 8th International Film Festival of Three Continents in Nantes, France, in 1986.[4] This is also the first time that Westerners, especially the French, learned about Jia Pingwa and the relatively backward and closed China at the beginning of the reform and opening up, which caused some French sinologists to pay attention to China and Jia Pingwa's works.[5] Then, in 1990, the little story "Jiwowa Family", which describes the rural development in Shangzhou, Shaanxi Province, from the cultural revolution, was translated and published by Beijing Foreign Language Publishing House to France. In 1995, Lv Hua, Gao Dekun and Zhang Zhengzhong jointly translated and published *The Camel Man Carrying the Bride*, which included three short and medium-length novels, Jia Pingwa's "Wukui", "Beauty Cave" and "Bai Lang". Among them, the film "Wukui", which was adapted by Huang Jianxin based on Mr. Jia Pingwa's novel, was released in 1993. [6]The film was translated into English and published in France. Although the film has not been translated into French, French readers and audiences still have curiosity and fascination about Chinese culture through these works, and even some French sinologists have begun to find ways to cooperate with Shaanxi writer Jia Pingwa.

2.2. Development period (1997-2000)

In the three years from 1997 to 2000, the research on Jia Pingwa's works in France has developed rapidly. Compared with the research in the initial period, it has made great progress in both breadth and depth, showing a different style. During this period, the French versions of Jia Pingwa's novels "Abandoned Capital" and "Tumen" were published. [7] At the same time, two French scholars, Anne Begle Curian and Zhang Yinde, also conducted in-depth research on Jia Pingwa's works and published a large number of research results[8].

In 1997, the French translator Ms. Amboran translated Jia Pingwa's "Abandoned Capital" and published it in France. Jia Pingwa won the French Fermina Prize for Literature; In 2000, Tumen was published in France, and he won the honorary prize for literature and art of the French Republic.[9] During this period, his works had not been spread in France for a long time, but with the continuous award-winning of his works in France, French scholars paid attention to Jia Pingwa. [10]Annie Begley Curian, who is mainly devoted to the study of contemporary Chinese literature, and Zhang Yinde, who is engaged in the study of Sino-French language and literature, have deeply analyzed the social reflection in Jia Pingwa's novels for French readers from the perspective of research and criticism, and explained the invaluable sociological function of Jia Pingwa's literary communication.[11] Then there were a group of translators, sinologists, critics, scholars, etc. who took great interest in Jia Pingwa and even Chinese literature. They successively translated and published a large number of works in China, with free and flexible forms, richer languages, and more emphasis on the readability of the translation, which had a great influence abroad. It not only prospered the external dissemination of Chinese literature, but also achieved the strategic goal of "going out" of Chinese literature to a certain extent, and accelerated the process of globalization of Chinese literature [12].

2.3. Development gap period (2001 - present)

After Jia Pingwa won two awards in France, France also began to introduce his new works. In the survey of the French National Library, it was found that after 2000, Jia Pingwa's various versions of books and materials introduced by France were the most abundant, with a total of 17 categories and 35 kinds of novels, essays, and English versions of commentaries and translated novels. Compared with the number of works in the beginning and development period, the spread of his works in France has entered a period of prosperity and development. For example, the French works anthology "Selected Works of China in the New Era" and "Chinese Literature: Past and Present" have been included in some of Jia Pingwa's works. However, among the many works introduced during this period, there were almost no works in French except Chinese and English. It can be seen that in the past ten years from 2000 to now, although the spread of Jia Pingwa's works in France has reached a prosperous stage, and has achieved unprecedented results in both quantity and type.[13] The French translation of Jia Pingwa's works has basically stagnated, belonging to the blank period of French translation of works. This makes most French readers forget him. Only a few sinologists or Chinese lovers and researchers who are proficient in English still pay attention to the works of this Shaanxi writer [14].

In short, from the perspective of the spread of Jia Pingwa's works in France, the French readers did not question his writing style and content, but because of the lag and lack of French translation, the reading direction of the French readers shifted.

3. The acceptance of Jia Pingwa's works in France

The translator's translation and the publishing house's publication are the preconditions for French readers to read Chinese works, and the readers' acceptance of the translated works will affect the translator and publisher's choice of foreign writers' works.[15] In addition, the overseas communication path of a work is not only related to the output effect of the literary value of the work itself, but also has a certain impact on the receptivity of readers. Therefore, by investigating the translation, publication and dissemination of Jia Pingwa's works in France, we can understand the acceptance of his works in France [16].

3.1. Translation and publication

So far, the author has found in the search of the French National Library that there are 49 studies on the dissemination and translation of Jia Pingwa's works (including Jia Pingwa's works and the discussion of his works) in France. Among them, only four of the novels that outline the spiritual outlook of Shaanxi people in the period of China's transformation have been translated into French and published in France: "Abandoned Capital" in 1997, "Tumen" in 2000, "Ancient Furnace" in 2017 and "With Lamp" in 2018. Others, such as "I am a farmer", "Qin Opera", "White Night", "Shangzhou", "Happy", "Remembering the Wolf", were introduced into France and published in Chinese; There is also "Impetuous" published in France as an English translation; Various versions of "Pregnancy", "Gao Laozhuang", "Sickness Report", "Jihua", "Lao Sheng" have not been introduced into the French market. There are even fewer short stories describing Shaanxi's regional customs and culture that can be translated into French and published in France. At present, there are only two novels, "The Camel Man Carrying the Bride" and "Jiwawo Family". Among them, "Wukui", "Mei Xue Di", "Bai Lang" and so on were merged into the "Annual Compilation of Pingwa Medium-Short Stories" when they were published in France. Jia Pingwa's poetry and prose are refined in language and difficult to translate. [17]At present, there is no French translation version. In addition, there are also French versions of comments on Jia Pingwa's works, such as Zeng Lingcun's Study of Jia Pingwa's Prose, Wang Yongsheng's Collected Works of Jia Pingwa, and Lin Jianfa's Commentary on Jia Pingwa. Compared with the dissemination of Mo Yan, Yu Hua and other works in British and American countries in the same period, the translation and publication of Jia Pingwa's works in France is not only later than that in British and American countries, but also less, which is related to the current situation of his work translation and research[18].

At present, the scholars who spread Jia Pingwa's works in France are mainly French sinologists, translators and Chinese translators. In 1987, Annie Bergeret – Curien translated "The Old Man and the Bird" and published it in the French version of "China Today". She personally edited the French version of "Collection of Contemporary Chinese Short Stories", which included some of Jia Pingwa's early works. Translator Ms. Ambolan translated and published Jia Pingwa's "Abandoned Capital" in France in 1997, Tumen in 2000, Ancient Furnaces in 2017, and with Lights in 2018. In 1995, Chinese translators Lv Hua, Gao Dekun and Zhang Zhengzhong translated "Wukui", "Mei Xue Di" and "Bai Lang", and collected a collection of "Camel Man with Bride" and published it on the French edition of "Chinese Literature". This masterpiece made French readers understand Chinese literature and the works of Jia Pingwa, a Shaanxi writer. In 1990, "The Family of the Wild Mountain" included two works, "Jiwowa Family" and "The Castle", which were republished and sold by the French Centennial Publishing House in 1998. It can be seen that the French literary community paid attention to the image of China in different periods. At present, Mr. Chen Yanqi, the president of Shaanxi Travel Association and French translator, is translating Jia Pingwa's poetry collection. We expect this "authentic old Shaanxi" to accurately convey the "Shaanxi flavor" of "Jia's poetry" to French readers and spread Shaanxi's poetry and literature to France. According to the author's incomplete statistics, there are 42 relevant studies on Jia Pingwa's works in France. It is mainly reflected in the research on Jia Pingwa's life, thought, creation, novels, essays, poems and other aspects of the thesis. For example, Patrick Doan's "la China à titre-d'ail" published by the Asia-Europe Language Center introduces Jia Pingwa's life and creation thought; Larus commented on Jia Pingwa's praise of his hometown Shangzhou in his World Literature Dictionary; French scholar Anne Curian deeply analyzed the relationship between Jia Pingwa's works and reality, and the social reflection that the characterization of characters in literature may bring in, in her essay "The Turbulence of Literary Scenes -- The Fiction of Jia Pingwa's Abandoned Capital". [19]Zhang Yinde, associate professor of the Third University of Paris, explained the current situation of the dissemination and acceptance of contemporary Chinese literature in France

in the past 20 years from the perspectives of translation quality, publication and distribution, topic selection, translation and criticism, and realized from Jia Pingwa's literary dissemination that the French literary community and some readers saw the invaluable sociological functions in contemporary Chinese literature. Compared with the current situation of the spread of Mo Yan, Yu Hua, Han Shaogong and other works in France, the number of scholars involved in the translation and research of Jia Pingwa's works is limited, and the whole translation process lacks the coherence of time and space[20].

3.2. Propagation path

In France, the publishing house is responsible for the promotion of Chinese contemporary literature, the bookstore is responsible for providing French readers with the Chinese-French translation of Chinese literary works, and the book salon is responsible for building the communication and exchange between the author and the reader. The publishing house with the largest promotion of Chinese literature is Birkier Publishing House, which is the window for Chinese modern and contemporary literature to go to Europe. Generally speaking, after the publication of the work of a contemporary Chinese writer by Birkier Publishing House, the English version will follow up quickly. So far, the agency has published 92 Chinese literature books, of which more than 60 are contemporary works. The other is China Blue Publishing House, which was founded in 1994 by Ambolan, a translator who is keen on modern and contemporary Chinese literature. The publishing house is not winning by the number of books published, but by the unique introduction of modern and contemporary Chinese literature. Among its more than 130 works, contemporary literature accounts for 120. The "Chinese Literature Series" of the Southern Book Publishing House has introduced contemporary writers such as Zhang Xinxin, Mo Yan, Zhasidava, Chi Li and Yu Hua to French readers for more than 10 years. Philippe Piquier's independent publishing house is the largest publishing house to introduce contemporary Chinese literature. Take Mo Yan's 21 novels, which are mainly completed by the cooperation of Piquier and Philip Piquier's publishing house. The two major publishing houses are competing for publication, sharing work and cooperation, greatly reducing the translation cycle of works. In this respect, many of Jia Pingwa's works are translated and published by only one publishing house, and their cycle and speed are far from meeting the needs of French readers, making the works that have just been accepted abandoned by readers because of their long publishing cycle.

In addition, the two special bookstores that provide Chinese books for French readers are Phoenix Bookstore and Youfeng Bookstore. Phoenix Bookstore was founded in 1964 and won the title of "Independent Reference Bookstore" issued by the French Ministry of Culture in 2009. This bookstore has carried out many literary activities, which have facilitated the meeting and exchange between many Chinese writers and French writers and readers. Youfeng Bookstore was founded in 1976, where readers can find the Chinese and French versions of the books. Youfeng also has book publishing business and has published a large number of works related to Chinese culture. According to the report of the China News Agency in Paris on March 21, Chinese books are very popular in France, and Chinese literary works are also very popular. At each Paris Book Salon, French visitors and book buyers in front of the Chinese booth came in an endless stream, and some local authors came to discuss cooperative publishing. In addition to the attention paid to the works of contemporary writers, the works of famous modern writers such as Ba Jin, Lao She and Lin Yutang are also very popular, especially the books translated into French to introduce Chinese characters, calligraphy and painting, which are more loved by French readers. According to people in the publishing industry who have participated in the Paris Book Salon for many years, the popularity of Chinese books, especially French books about Chinese culture, is increasing year by year. The Chinese delegation that participated in the Paris Book Salon six times was deeply affected by the enthusiasm of French readers for Chinese books and Chinese culture. These just show that French readers have never reduced their love for Chinese contemporary literature. Their love for Chinese culture is extensive, all-embracing and not limited by regional culture. Therefore, the dissemination of Jia Pingwa's literary works can provide the West with a platform to enter Chinese culture and understand Shaanxi regional culture.

In addition to the dissemination of books, the film art also plays a great role in promoting the dissemination of literary works. The success of the film can often arouse the audience's interest in the original novel, thus promoting the translation and development of the original work. Jia Pingwa's early work "Wild Mountain" was adapted into a film based on the novel "Jiwowa Family". After winning many awards in France in 1986, some French sinologists began to pay attention to China and Jia Pingwa's works. Although the film "Wukui", which was later adapted, was only released in English in France, the French readers and audiences were still curious and infatuated with Chinese culture through this film because of the understanding of its works by the French readers in the early stage. Unfortunately, the film-based adaptation practice of other works has not achieved good results in France and has not caused strong repercussions internationally. Compared with the film-based

dissemination of the works of Mo Yan, Su Tong and other Chinese writers in the same period, Jia Pingwa's works have not yet formed an independent and complete series of film brand effects, which will inevitably reduce the overseas attention of his works.

From the perspective of literary criticism, although Jia Pingwa's published works in France are not as many as those in Britain and America, France has given him a very high evaluation, which indirectly contributed to the spread of Jia Pingwa's works. In 1997, the combination of Chinese and Western creative techniques in "Waste Capital" created a new literary language, and Jia Pingwa won the French Fermina Prize for Literature. The French newspaper *Le Figaro* gave him a very high evaluation. "Jia Pingwa provided readers with a huge picture of contemporary life in China. He revealed the spiritual wasteland of contemporary society through careful analysis of intellectuals and noble classes with ironic writing style." In 2003, with the publication of the French translation of Jia Pingwa's work "Tumen", Jia Pingwa was awarded the "Honorary Prize for Literature and Art of the French Republic" by the French Ministry of Culture. This is one of the highest honorary awards in France. It is only awarded to those who have made creative contributions in the field of literature and art. The French ambassador to China said in a congratulatory letter to Jia Pingwa, "Your works have a great influence in France. This honor is to grant you the richness and variety of your works and the universality of your subjects." France is a great literary country, with more than 1500 national literary awards. Although the language and cultural environment between China and France are different, the French can really understand Jia Pingwa's Shaanxi rural novels full of regional characteristics, and his works have attracted high attention of the French media. In France, book reviews on such works as "Abandoned Capital" and "Tumen" are frequently seen in newspapers and periodicals. In 1997, *Le Monde* linked Jia Pingwa with Mao Dun and Ba Jin, affirming that "Fei Du" was "really a masterpiece" and "a social picture of Mao Dun or Ba Jin painted by Jia Pingwa". In 2000, *Le Monde* commented that Tumen "wrote the irresistible trend of modern economic society and the inevitable trend of rural urbanization, and Tumen painted us an immortal picture of a corrupt society regardless of tradition." Unfortunately, in the past ten years, due to the lack of translation, we have hardly heard the evaluation of its works from the French media.

4. The problems and strategies of Jia Pingwa's works spreading in France

Problem 1: The lack of translators leads to slow transmission

With the proposal of China's the Belt and Road strategy, more and more French people are eager to understand contemporary China. The translation and introduction of contemporary Chinese literature in France is in full bloom. The works of famous contemporary writers Mo Yan, Chi Li, Bi Feiyu, Yu Hua and other writers have been translated into French and published in France, which has been accepted and recognized by French readers. But for the French translation of Jia Pingwa's works, the speed of translation is far behind that of his creation, and the number of translations is small. The research results show that the French translation of Jia Pingwa's works mainly depends on the translation of individual sinologists. The original domestic translators have gradually lost their enthusiasm for the translation of their works, mainly because the regional language and culture in their literary works have become the "stumbling block" of many translators. Many translators are not unwilling to dislike his works, but spend too much experience and time translating his works. The local customs and regional culture reflected in his works are no longer concerned by the western mainstream culture, and this "local" atmosphere of literature will hinder the promotion value of his literary publishing.

Problem 2: The single transmission path leads to the deviation of the reading preferences of the receiving group

As far as the spread of Chinese literature in French society is concerned, media reports and news always play the most important role. Several important French newspapers and media, such as *Le Monde*, *Liberation*, *Le Figaro* and *The New Observer*, let French readers keep abreast of the latest developments in Chinese literature. It is through the active promotion of these professional media that Jia Pingwa's early works are gradually understood and accepted by French society; But in the past ten years, we can hardly find his voice in these newspapers and media, which eventually led French readers to gradually forget the works of this excellent Chinese writer. In addition, the "Book Salon" is held every year in the Sino-French Cultural Exchange Year, during which the meeting between authors and readers and the academic exchange of writers are organized. This is the best time to publicize Chinese literature, which has a great impact on the spread of contemporary Chinese literature in France. Compared with other Chinese writers who are more enthusiastic about participating in such activities, Jia Pingwa did not participate in such promotional activities with good publicity effect. Moreover, although several of Jia Pingwa's works have also been made into films, compared with the film publicity of other Chinese writers' works, his works have not played an obvious role in publicity.

Therefore, the fault of the French translator makes the translation speed of Jia Pingwa's works far less than the creation speed of his works. In addition, the author's lack of publicity and promotion activities, the poor effect of film and television adaptation of the works, and the disjointed media promotion finally lead to the deviation of the reading style of French readers. Now French readers prefer the works of Chinese writers such as Su Tong, Yu Hua, Han Shaogong, and Wang Zengqi, This will inevitably reduce the attention of Shaanxi writers and works in France and hinder the promotion of literature.

Strategy 1: establishing a translation incentive mechanism

Although the spread of Jia Pingwa's works in France has been broken and disjointed, this cannot prevent French readers from paying attention to and liking Shaanxi's regional culture. We should not give up the right of self-promotion because of the advertised "local" atmosphere. The rich regional culture in Jia Pingwa's literary works is a powerful "weapon" to promote Shaanxi culture. We should first establish a translation incentive mechanism from the policy, and encourage translators at home and abroad, especially local translators proficient in Shaanxi dialect and overseas Shaanxi Chinese, to participate in the translation of their works, Through various translation activities and incentives, translators' fear of difficulties will be dispelled and their enthusiasm for translation will be mobilized. Secondly, we should make good use of Shaanxi's educational resources, add some bases related to Shaanxi dialect translation and Shaanxi literature research in terms of language training and discipline construction, and increase the training of elite talents serving the regionalization of Shaanxi, so as to encourage overseas students to participate in the propaganda activities of Shaanxi culture, and fundamentally solve the difficulties encountered in the dissemination of Shaanxi culture. Finally, we should actively seek various ways of Sino-foreign cooperation, speed up the construction of communication and exchange platforms between Shaanxi scholars and overseas scholars, and support projects and activities to research and promote Shaanxi culture to speed up the external dissemination of Shaanxi culture. Only in this way can we seize the opportunity to avoid being eliminated by the times.

Strategy 2 - creating a diversified communication mechanism

Although classroom teaching and text reading are the main channels and media for overseas non-Chinese readers to accept Chinese literary classics, visual and image media are not excluded. What we need to do is how to spread the voice of Shaanxi writers and works through China's mainstream media in a timely manner in the new media era, and how to make Shaanxi culture sustainable overseas, so that more overseas readers can accurately and timely understand the voice of Shaanxi in different times. Therefore, we should build a professional promotion team to promote Shaanxi culture, responsible for promoting Shaanxi literature, art and culture overseas, establish a research base for the adaptation of Shaanxi literature, film and television plays and the dissemination of regional literature, and increase the investment in Shaanxi literature and film. We should also build Shaanxi literature into a brand of Shaanxi film and television culture, make it truly become a unique brand that spreads the charm of regional culture and even Chinese national culture, and let Shaanxi culture go abroad with the help of film and network platform publicity.

Strategy 3 - increasing publishing efforts and seeking international cooperation

First of all, we will formulate a number of incentive policies to promote international academic exchanges and platform building, encourage major universities and research institutes in the province to publish academic monographs extensively to deepen and expand the exchange of research results with foreign counterparts, so as to improve the popularity of scholars in the province in the same industry in the world. Secondly, we should establish a platform or base for external publicity of Shaanxi culture and a team spokesperson to promote Shaanxi cultural brands to export Shaanxi's characteristic culture from the network or other channels in multiple languages and forms, so as to let western readers pay attention to Shaanxi culture; Finally, the publishing and distribution institutions in the province are encouraged to increase the efforts to publish the provincial literature works to create a good environment for the promotion of Shaanxi.

5. Conclusion

The overseas dissemination of Shaanxi culture must rely on Shaanxi cultural symbols that are familiar to overseas audiences, improve the attention of overseas audiences to Shaanxi culture, and improve the communication ability. As an important representative of Shaanxi literature and a brand symbol of Shaanxi culture, Jia Pingwa's overseas communication status of his works to some extent represents the international situation of Shaanxi literature. Therefore, we should make use of our geographical and talent advantages to carry out interdisciplinary cooperation. On the one hand, we

should carry out cultural propaganda from a multi-disciplinary and diversified perspective, provide visual, auditory and other cultural backgrounds for the readability of Shaanxi literature, so that more western readers can further understand the regional human feelings of Shaanxi, China, through the dissemination of Jia Pingwa's works, represented by Shaanxi writers, more Chinese Shaanxi writers and works are integrated into the system of French and even western literature; On the other hand, from the perspective of translation and publishing, media, publicity mode and media review, we will increase the publicity of Jia Pingwa's works, so that Shaanxi culture can quickly go out of the country and into the world in the context of the "the Belt and Road" strategy.

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