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Change of Identity and Relationship Reflected in A Special Case of Back-Translation: From *Mo Xia Zhuan* to *Historia del Caballero Encantado*

Cambio de Identidad y Relación Reflejado en Un Caso Especial de Retrotraducción: Del *Mo Xia Zhuan* al *Historia del Caballero Encantado*

**从《魔侠传》到 *Historia del Caballero Encantado* 回译案例
中的人物身份及关系变化分析**

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Abstract: In 2021, Professor Alicia Relinque Eleta, the Spanish sinologist, translated *Mo Xia Zhuan*, which is the first Chinese translation of the Spanish classical novel *Don Quijote de la Mancha* (1603/1988) back into Spanish. *Mo Xia Zhuan* (1922/1933) was translated by Lin Shu (1852-1924), a monolingual translator, in collaboration with Cheng Jialin, using the English translation *The history*

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of the ingenious gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha by Peter Anthony Motteux (1663-1718) as the intermediary text. Therefore, during the process of translation, a lot of changes occurred if compared with the original Spanish text. By using the translation of Alicia Relinque (1960-) as a medium, the cultural encounters behind the texts are displayed to see which cultural elements were “activated” and which were “obscured”. As a pilot study, this research aims to discover and analyze a particular case of back-translation, focusing on the changes of identity and relationships of characters to figure out what alterations have been made and the possible reasons during the process of translation. This study can bring new dimensions to the complicated nature of back-translation in particular and translation in general.

Key Words: Back-translation; Alicia Relinque Eleta; Lin Shu; indirect translation; collaborative translation.

Resumen: Mo Xia Zhuan (1922/1933) es la primera traducción china de la novela clásica española *Don Quijote de la Mancha* (1603/1988). Fue traducida por Lin Shu (1852-1924), un traductor monolingüe, en colaboración con Cheng Jialin, utilizando como texto intermedio la traducción inglesa de P. A. Motteux (1663-1718). Por tanto, durante el proceso de traducción, se produjeron muchos cambios en contraste con el texto original. En el año 2021, Alicia Relinque (1960-) ha traducido esta versión de vuelta al español para representar los encuentros culturales que hay detrás del texto, así como para ver qué elementos culturales se “activaron” y cuáles se “oscurecieron”. A modo de estudio piloto, este estudio tiene como objetivo analizar un caso particular de retrotraducción, centrándose en los cambios de identidad y las relaciones de los personajes para averiguar qué alteraciones se han producido y sus posibles razones durante el proceso de traducción, lo que puede llevar a caracterizar el fenómeno de la retrotraducción y dotar de mayor complejidad la naturaleza de la traducción en general.

Palabras clave: Back-translation; Alicia Relinque Eleta; Lin Shu; traducción indirecta; traducción colaborativa.

摘要：清末著名译者林纾（1852-1924）翻译的《魔侠传》是西班牙经典反骑士小说《堂·吉诃德》的第一个中译本。该书以P. A. Motteux (1663-1718) 的英译本作为中介文本，由通晓英语的陈家麟口授和单语译者林纾笔录合作翻译。在翻译过程中，林译本与西语原著相比出现了许多改动。雷林科教授（1960-）于2021年将林译本回译成西班牙语，通过回归源语言的方法再现文本背后的文化遭遇，从而对比观察哪些文化元素被“激活”，哪些被“弱化”。作为一项先导性研究，本论文旨在发现和分析一个特殊的回译案例，以人物身份和关系为主要研究对象，研究在翻译过程中发生了何种变化以及这些变化产生的原因，为翻译研究，尤其是回译研究提供了新的维度，凸显了翻译活动的复杂性。

[关键词] 回译；林纾；堂吉诃德；雷林科；合作翻译；间接翻译

1. Introduction

Don Quijote de la Mancha is an anti-chivalric novel written by Spanish writer Miguel de Cervantes and published in two parts in 1605 and 1615.

In 1922, the first part of *Don Quijote de la Mancha* was translated by Lin Shu (1852-1924) and Chen Jialin (1880-?) collaboratively. *Mo Xia Zhuan*, the first translation of *Don Quixote* ever into Chinese, was translated from P.A. Motteux's English translation, *The history of the ingenious gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha*, and supplemented by Charles Jarvis's translation, *Life and Exploits of Don Quixote de la Mancha* (Relinque, 2021: 31) Relinque's translation of *Mo Xia Zhuan* back into Spanish, *Historia del Caballero Encantado*, was published in March 2021, which enables the Chinese Don Quixote, who has been away from his homeland for one century to return, promoting the cultural exchanges between Spain and China and reflecting the cultural differences.

In her translation, a special type of back-translation has been observed, thus providing us with an interesting and valuable topic to discuss. The common pattern of back-translation is A-B-A' (all referring to language), but as *Mo Xia Zhuan* also involves another phenomenon of indirect translation, the pattern becomes A-B-C-A', which means, in this case, between the Chinese text (target language C) and the Spanish text (source language A), there is an intermediary text, which is English (intermediary language B). Meanwhile, as for the target language C, the translation of *Mo Xia Zhuan* itself has also included a special phenomenon of collaborative translation, which makes the whole case even more complex. Furthermore, compared with the original Spanish text, many different kinds of changes occurred in *Mo Xia Zhuan*, but this paper will only focus on discussing the issue of the transformation of identity (role) and relationship reflected in back-translation. More importantly, as a pilot study, this research adds more dimensions to the complicated nature of translation by providing a special case of back-translation.

2. Methodology

In this research, a descriptive approach is used to compare and analyze the changes occurred in the whole process of the translation. The descriptive approach is a multidisciplinary and target- oriented approach which focuses on what translation is and does, and on the contextual reasons for what it is and does (Toury, 1995/2012). In other words, it encompasses how translation (as product, process, and function) is related to the sociocultural context in which it occurs. This paper uses Relinque's translation as a medium, comparing the back-translation directly with the original text, and then goes back to the English translation and the Chinese text once the changes are identified to see where the changes begin and to analyze the reasons behind the alterations.

This special case of back-translation will be examined by comparing the first five chapters from four different versions: the original version of *Don Quijote de la Mancha*, the English version of *The history of the ingenious gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha*, translated by P.A. Motteux, Lin Shu's translation of *Mo Xia Zhuan* and Alicia Relinque's back-translation of *Historia del Caballero Encantado*. However, the Jarvis's version is not included in the comparison because what the paper discusses here has little to do with the content of that version.

3. Theoretical Framework

In general terms, literary back-translation constitutes a peculiar phenomenon worth studying, but what is presented here is a more specific situation than the usual one, since two other varieties of translation are implied: indirect translation and collaborative translation.

3.1 The Concept of Back-Translation

Literary back-translation refers to the return of a translation to the language of its source text (Lane, 2020: 297), which simply means translating from source language A to target language B and from target language B back to source language A.

This phenomenon, although rare, was not uncommon in the ancient times, especially in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, when some works translated into vernacular languages were back translated into Greek and Latin (Lane, 2020: 297). Moreover, with the development of the times, in modern and contemporary, due to the reasons like publishers' interest, patrons' support or writers' inspirations, back-translations continue to be published and are becoming more common, and they challenge our understanding of translation both as a cultural practice to be investigated and as a literary product to be interpreted (Lane, 2020: 298).

3.1.1 The effect and characteristics of “back-translation”

Back-translation itself presents special characteristics because traditional translation is based on the source text and stresses fidelity to it, while the source text in back-translation is the translated source text, which means that the translation is accorded the status of source texts (Lane, 2020: 298). The study of back-translation revitalizes attention to the status of the translator and the literary value of translation from a new perspective. In the book of *Literary Back-Translations*, Lane (2020: 231) counters the view that writing should be perceived as creatively superior to translating, promotes the appreciation of translations as translations,

and calls for a new theoretical model of translation. And what is most striking about literary back-translations at the conceptual level is their reverse routing. Their trajectory seems counterintuitive in that it defies our teleological conception of translation. By introducing a third arrow of meaning, back translation disrupts our understanding of translation as an “act of repeated input” and breaks the dichotomy between translation and source text, interpreting the original from a new perspective. To a certain extent, back-translation is the supplementation and re-creation of the original. Although the translation originates from the source text, the result of back-translation will never be the same as the original text (Baker, 2011/2018: 7).

In addition, it is commonly assumed that translation is rewriting, which opens up possibilities of not only addressing difference but also creating it (Sun, 2014: 114). The phenomenon of back-translation also constitutes a form of rewriting, which is a real challenge, since it involves the recontextualization of cultural differences, exhibiting a peculiar linguistic and cultural displacement. Sun (2014) notes that If translation is based on and closely connected with a play of difference, back translation foregrounds and problematizes difference again in a different light, from a different perspective and for a different purpose. A back-translation provides insight into the changes in the structure of the translation made when the source text was translated, because when a back-translation brings a work back into the environment of the source language, the original work is translated twice, and the contrast makes the changes that occur in the translation process more visible: for example, the re-creation and rewriting of the translator or the ideological differences. The use of back-translation brings out the views and positions expressed in the translation (target language B) and gives us the opportunity to probe into the translators' motives for their choices and decisions.

On the one hand, it is appealing to use literary back-translation as a practical means of making language and translation accessible to a diverse group of readers. On the other hand, back-translation is considered as a ‘necessary compromise’ that is ‘theoretically unsound’ (Baker, 2011/2018: 7). However, because of its unique reverse process of translation, back-translation is theoretically as well as ideologically promising, and therefore worth studying.

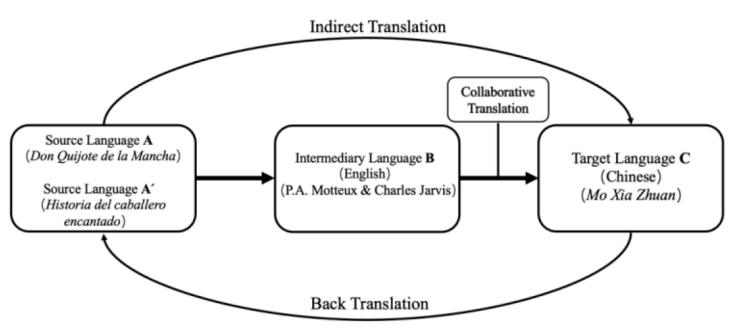
3.1.2 Back-translation in the Case of *Mo Xia Zhuan*

In 2021, Alicia Relinque translated Lin Shu's *Mo Xia Zhuan* back into Spanish, *Historia del Caballero Encantado*. In this case, the boundary between source text and target text which is always unambiguously clear

in traditional translation becomes blurred to such an extent that the target text (*Mo Xia Zhuan*) becomes the *de facto* source text. Alicia Relinque has consciously and explicitly back-translated these changes, preserving them and visibly marking the back-translated text into Spanish with an editorial annotation to recreate a special source text for the Spanish readers.

Unlike traditional literary back-translation, in the case of *Mo Xia Zhuan*, there is an intermediary text of language B, namely *The history of the ingenious gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha*, the English translation of P.A. Motteux's, published in 1892 (Relinque, 2021: 47). After comparing the different versions involved in the whole translation process, it can be clearly noticed that the Spanish version of Cervantes' *Don Quijote de la Mancha* is the source language A, and Lin Shu's Chinese translation of *Mo Xia Zhuan* is the target language C, but this translation is carried out indirectly through the English translation, which is the intermediary language B.

Figure 1: Special mode of back-translation in the case of *Mo Xia Zhuan*



This case of back-translation not only breaks the binary concept of traditional back-translation itself, which is A-B, B-A', but also brings in a new variety of indirect translation. Therefore, the whole process becomes A-B-C, C-A'. Alicia Relinque has used the text of *Mo Xia Zhuan* as the source text to back-translate faithfully the novel into Spanish. Back-translation allows us to see that the purpose of translation is not only to convey the meaning of a text or to compare the differences between source language and target language, but also to facilitate cultural exchanges.

Before the publication of *Historia del Caballero Encantado*, it was very difficult to compare the Chinese version and the source text *Don Quijote de la Mancha* directly and thoroughly, as Lin Shu translated *Mo Xia Zhuan* in classical Chinese, posing a great challenge to any researcher. Anyone who wants to compare Lin Shu's translation and Cervantes' source

text needs a high level of knowledge both in classical Chinese and Spanish, which is one of the reasons why there have been few discussions of Lin Shu's translation in recent years. However, Relinque finds differences occurred in the translation of *Mo Xia Zhuan* and marks them up, making the changes more visible after the back-translation, thus allowing us to see the differences presented in the texts and the cultural differences behind the words. Besides, her translation also constitutes significant research that paves the way for subsequent researches. Therefore, the back-translated version of Alice Relinque has been used as a medium means to find where does Lin Shu's version differ from Cervantes' source text. However, because of the presence of intermediary language B, the changes occurred in the translation can be classified from two perspectives: the changes in Lin Shu's translation due to the alterations or omissions made by P.A. Motteux in the translation, and Lin Shu's own changes due to problems of understanding or external factors, such as ideological and personal preferences.

3.2 Concept of Collaborative Translation

Collaborative translation is the first particular phenomenon included in this case of back-translation. The concept of collaborative translation has been used in multiple senses, reflecting the complex patterns of collaborative practice in different contexts (Neather, 2009: 70). Collaboration clearly implies the interaction of two or more agents, most obviously two or more translators working together, a situation which O'Brien (2010: 17) calls collaborative translation in the "narrow meaning". In a broad definition, collaborative translation refers to two or more agents working together in a certain way to produce a translation (O'Brien, 2010: 17).

3.2.1 Introduction to Collaborative Translation

Collaborative translation has been relatively common in the history of translation practice, for example, the translations of Buddhist scriptures and the Bible (the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek is reputed to have been undertaken by seventy-two translators working in collaboration with one another) in ancient times. Collaboration is normally understood to take the form of human-to-human cooperation. Specifically, there are different collaborative relationships: the author collaborates with the translator, the translator collaborates with the author and the editor, a translator collaborates with another translator (co-translation), etc. (Wang, 2005). However, with the digitization of products and content and ubiquitous broadband connections, human-to-machine collaboration is also involved (O'Brien, 2010: 17).

On one hand, translating collaboratively is likely to lead to higher quality translation and might contribute towards skill enhancement of novice or junior translators, because the translators can consult with the source text author or to exchange ideas and debate with a fellow translator (O'Brien, 2010: 19). On the other hand, as Cheung (2014: 57) states, “a translator translating into an unmastered language with the aid of a monolingual native scholar knowledgeable in the subject matter, whose role [was] to turn the oral rendition into written language”. The power politics of this model of collaboration are often complex. The position of local informants in this relationship can be one of extreme subordination (Hill, 2013: 34).

3.2.2 Collaborative Translation in *Mo Xia Zhuan*

Lin Shu, the translator of *Mo Xia Zhuan* was a famous translator who translated more than 200 novels collaboratively. As Lin Shu was monolingual, he had to work with other interpreters who knew the languages in which the works he intended to translate were written. However, he did not work with foreign collaborators but with Chinese colleagues (St. André, 2010; Hill, 2013). Throughout his life, he collaborated with twenty interpreters to introduce masterpieces of world literature into China (Lin, 2012: 2). Due to the specificity in the method of collaborative translation, Lin Shu’s translations are greatly influenced by preferences of his collaborators in selection of the content and style.

In the case of *Mo Xia Zhuan*, Lin Shu collaborates with an English interpreter named Chen Jialin. Relinque (2021: 29) observes a pattern of a very close collaboration between these two translators, with Chen Jialin dictating to Lin Shu for translation. The evidence of this thought has been given in the preface of the book *Historia del Caballero Encantado*, there are errors in the transcription of Chinese characters with similar pronunciations in some texts, such as the writing of [剑] (jiàn, sword) as [镜] (jìng, mirror) (Relinque, 2021: 29).

3.3 Overview of the Concept of Indirect Translation

The next particular phenomenon involved in this case is indirect translation. Indirect translation (ITr), which is also called “second-hand translation” (Toury, 1995/2012), “relay translation” (Dollerup, 2000) or “mediated translation” (Pym, 2011), has always been a common phenomenon, especially in the field of literary translation. Indirect translations are translation of translations (Pięta et al., 2022: 2). Pięta et al. (2022: 2) state that in the narrow terms, some people see ITr as a translation via a third language (e.g., St. André, 2019; Landers, 2001:

130), which means translating from language A to language B first and then translate from language B to language C by a different translator. Meanwhile, in a broad sense, some people believe that the definition is broad enough to include a great diversity of intralingual, interlingual, intramodal and intermodal process (e.g., St. André, 2019; Landers, 2001: 130, as is cited in Pięta et al., 2022: 2).

3.3.1 Introduction to Indirect Translation

Ringmar (2012: 142) notes that ITr may be occurred for several reasons, the most obvious being the lack of competence of the suitable translator for the original SL. In certain periods and geopolitical regions, some languages became more powerful than others, thus, the number of the people who can translate these certain languages is higher than the others, and the number of qualified translators who are able to work with these (semi) peripheral languages like Catalan, Chinese, Dutch, Hebrew, the Scandinavian languages etc. is relatively low (Ringmar, 2012: 141). Besides this geographical and political reason, other possible motivations can be listed as follows: availability of the source text, price, time, prestige, risk, difficulty, and access (Pięta et al., 2022: 9).

By looking at the history of translation, it can be noticed that indirect translation plays an important role in many different times and places (e.g., translations of the *Bible*, *I Ching*, *The Arabian Nights*). ITr develops contacts from European and non-European cultures from the sixteenth to the twentieth century (St. André, 2019: 472). For example, Chinese law was transplanted at the beginning of the twentieth century from Europe via Japan (Ng, 2014).

Although ITr has its undeniable importance through history, the notion of indirect translation is laden with negative connotations (Ringmar, 2012: 142). Walter Benjamin (1923/2022: 79) even deemed relay translation unfeasible, due to the special “relationship between content and language” present in originals but non-replicable in translation. During the process of ITr, the intervention of an intermediate version increases the distance between the source text and the final target text. For example, as Landers (2001: 131) states, “In the process of indirect literary transfer, something akin to the Xerox effect occurs: a copy of a copy of a copy loses sharpness and detail with each successive pass through the process.” Since the translation from the source language into the intermediate language already includes the translator’s interpretation, it is inevitable at this step that the translation into the final target language via the intermediate language includes the translator’s interpretation of the intermediate version. Therefore, the differences can be significant when compared

to the original words and phrases. In other words, indirect translation is assumedly linked to poor results, for example, as Pięta (2022: 10) has mentioned that there are three main ways in which indirect translation is viewed as a threats: threat to translation quality, threat to the balance between languages and cultures, and threat to the jobs, rights and ethics of translators.

3.3.2 Indirect Translation in Case of *Mo Xia Zhuan*

In the case of *Mo Xia Zhuan*'s translation, as is mentioned above, Lin Shu doesn't know any foreign language and is not capable of translating on his own. Therefore, in this case, he translates in collaboration with Chen Jialin, who is an English interpreter, therefore, they choose to translate from the English version translated by P.A. Motteux instead of translating directly from *Don Quixote de la Mancha*, which allows the image of Don Quixote to be successfully introduced in China, at a time when the reception of foreign literature was extremely restricted. This English translation was used as an intermediary text from Spanish to Chinese, and inevitably influenced the Chinese translation. Therefore, the comparison of the different versions of the text, the parts omitted, and the alterations found in the translation can help us reflect on the differences and similarities about the relationship between the original Spanish text and the English and Chinese translations, as well as the interpretations and choices made by Lin Shu and Chen Jialin in their translations.

4. Examples of the Alterations of Identity and Relationship

In the previous section, the concept and function of three theoretical frameworks (back-translation, collaborative translation, and indirect translation) and how they are presented in this special case of *Mo Xia Zhuan* have been discussed, placing the four versions involved in their different corresponding position (A, B, C and A') in the structure of this special back-translation process.

In this section, the first five chapters are selected for analysis and comparison. It is important to note that Lin Shu keeps the same division of chapters in his translation as in the original text, without changing the length of each chapter, splitting plots, or breaking down chapters. Several examples will be analyzed to find out the changes and possible causes. Many types of alterations are covered in these chapters, such as: changes in the presentation and relationships of characters, omission of action details, domestication strategies used in the translation of item names,

omission of bloody descriptions, etc. Since the changes in character identity and relationships are the most notable in these chapters and continue throughout all the chapters in the novel (Part 1), this pilot study mainly focuses on these two changes.

4.1 Changes in the Presentation of Characters

The first example is the change in the presentation of the priest.
Example 1:

TO: y estaban en ella el cura y el barbero del lugar, que eran grandes amigos de Don Quijote, que estaba diciéndoles su ama a voces:

“—¿Qué le parece a vuestra merced, señor licenciado, Pero Pérez-- que así se llamaba el cura--, de la desgracia de mi señor?”

TM 1: The curate and the barber of the village, both of them Don Quixote's intimate acquaintances, happened to be there at that juncture, as also the housekeeper, who was arguing with them.

“What do you think, pray, **good Doctor Perez**,” said she (for this was the curate's name), “what do you think of my master's mischance?”

TM 2: 盖奎沙达有友二人。一为剃发匠。一为医生。方与奎理家之妇辩论。妇呼医生曰。辟雷支医生。君意吾家主如何。

TM 3: Quisada tenía dos amigos, uno el barbero y otro un **médico**, y estaban discutiendo con el alma que se ocupaba de la casa. El ama le decía al médico:

—¿Qué le parece a vuestra merced, maese Pérez, lo que le ha pasado a mi amo?

It is clearly revealed that the presentation of the identity (role) of the character Pérez has been changed comparing the TO (original version) and TM 3 (back-translation). In the Spanish original text (A), the character is a priest, and when Motteux translates it into English (B), he maintains the identity of priest (el cura in the original text) by translating it as curate, but in the later dialogue, the curate Perez is addressed as “doctor”. However, in English, doctors (the academic degree of doctorate), doctors (persons dedicated to the study of health) and priests are all called doctors. Thus, no change is produced in the translation from language A to language B. But from Lin Shu's translation, that is, the text in language C , he translates “curate” as “医生”(doctor of medicine). From the footnote in Alicia Relinque's translation of this character in Chapter V, she mentions that this alteration is probably due to a misinterpretation of the word “curate” used in Motteux's translation (J and D use Priest) (Relinque, 2021: 79).

So, one possibility is that Lin Shu and Chen Jialin misunderstand the word “doctor” used to call the priest in the English version as the “doctor

of medicine” and the word “curate”, which is very similar to the word “cure” in English. Another explanation may be that in the social context of translating this book, Lin and Chen know very little about the Western Christian background, thus causing the change in translation. It is worth mentioning that Lin Shu’s translation of Christian concepts has two main approaches. One is a more faithful translation of the Christian-related content of the novel. Another is Lin Shu’s intentional misreading, adopting a translation that abridges and deliberately dilutes the Christian content (Yu, 2013: 72). Because after the first Opium War from 1840 to 1842, the ruling class and the elite literati of modern Chinese society did not accept Christianity, which manifested the conflict between Christian culture and traditional Confucianism, and the translators were inevitably influenced by the orientation of social consciousness when choosing approach to translation. Lin Shu and Chen Jialin use cultural misinterpretation strategies to dismantle and overthrow Western cultural hegemony and defend the Confucian morality which they believed in. Therefore, Lin Shu deletes or completely rewrites much of the religious content of the original works. So, in brief, this example could be seen as the result of a deliberate misreading by Lin Shu, to reduce the unfamiliarity of the translation to Chinese readers and to facilitate their acceptance and understanding of the novel at that particular time when traditional culture and Western ideology collided.

In the C-A’ process, Alicia Relinque keeps the changes in Lin Shu’s translation that do not correspond to the original text of *Don Quijote de la Mancha*, and still translates the character “el cura” as a “médico”, which allows us to see directly the changes Lin Shu has made. And as she says in her footnote in Chapter V, this change substantially alters the meaning of the priest’s behavior of burning all the knight novels (plot of chapter V), and of the doctor’s own attitude, who appears in this version as an enlightened man--to a certain extent, not as someone driven by religious zeal (Relinque, 2021: 79).

4.2 Changes of Relationship between Characters

China is a country without a formal national religion, but Confucianism¹ is considered to be the “religion” of the Chinese people (Hong, 2009: 92). In Lin Shu’s time, the education he receives and the books he reads were all under the sway of Confucianism. Among all the Confucian classics, one

¹ Confucianism, also known as Ruism or Ru classicism, is a system of thought and behavior originating in ancient China. Variously described as tradition, a philosophy, a humanistic or rationalistic religion, a way of governing, or simply a way of life.

of the most important books is *the Analects*², which was compiled by the disciples of Confucius after the death of Confucius, concentrating on the political ideas, ethical thoughts, moral concepts and educational principles of Confucius, which have influenced the thinking of Chinese people for thousands of years. In the Confucian system of human ethics, the master-disciple relationship constitutes an important pattern of human relations.

The Analects contains many stories between teacher and disciples and Confucius' views on the teacher-disciple relationship. Besides, as the Analects is presented in the form of question and answer between the students and Confucius (Hong, 2009: 92), this book has the function of a teacher providing a solution to the student's problems, which is one of the requirements of the Confucianism for teachers. Meanwhile, the discourses in the Analects are interpreted as political or moral dogmas (Hong, 2009: 92).

4.2.1 Teacher-Disciple Relationship

The following example presents how Lin Shu understood and changed the relationship between different characters in his translation compared with the original text of *Don Quijote de la Mancha*. Two changes of relationship made by Lin Shu in the translation will be listed. The first one is the relationship between Don Quixote and his servant Sancho, and the second one is the relationship between Don Quixote and the owner of the hotel.

Example 2:

TO: En este tiempo, solicitó Don Quijote a un labrador vecino suyo, hombre de bien —si es que este título se puede dar al que es pobre—, pero de muy poca sal en la mollera. En resolución, tanto le dijo, tanto le persuadió y prometió, que el pobre villano se determinó de salirse con él y servirle de escudero.

TM 1: “In the meantime, Don Quixote tampered with a neighboring laborer, an honest man, but of a very shallow brain; to whom he said so much, used so many arguments, and made so many fair promises, that at last the poor silly clown consented to go with him, and be his squire.”

TM 2: 而奎沙达觅得一人。颇忠诚足倚。然其人不惟家贫。即脑力亦贫也。质言之。此人木讷。而奎风狂。彼此商酌。遂允为奎沙达之弟子。

² The Analects (Chinese: 论语; pinyin: Lúnyǔ), also known as *the Analects of Confucius*, or *the Lun Yu*, is an ancient Chinese book composed of a large collection of sayings and ideas attributed to the Chinese philosopher Confucius and his contemporaries.

TM 3: ... En su locura, Quisada habló con él para que consintiera convertirse en su discípulo, para que lo acompañara por el mundo para realizar sus hazañas caballerescas.

In the first example, the original version by Cervantes and Motteux's translation use the word and expression of "servirle de escudero" and "squire", so the relationship between the two is that of master and servant, with Sancho having an empty brain and being taken in by the "knight" Don Quixote as his servant in his adventures according to the plot. However, in Lin Shu's translation, the relationship between the two becomes that of master and disciple.

Example 3:

TO: Prometiole don Quijote de hacer lo que se le aconsejaba con toda puntualidad; y así, se dio luego orden como velase las armas en un corral grande que a un lado de la venta estaba.

...ensillando luego a Rocinante, subió en él, y, abrazando a su huésped, le dijo cosas tan estrañas, agradeciéndole la merced de haberle armado caballero, que no es posible acertar a referirlas.

TM 1: Don Quixote promised to perform all his injunctions; and so they disposed everything in order to his watching his arms in the great yard.

...therefore, having immediately saddled his Kozinante, and being mounted, he embraced the innkeeper, and returned him so many thanks at so extravagant a rate, for the obligation he had laid upon him in dubbing him a knight, that it is impossible to give a true relation of them all.

TM 2: 当瑰克苏替即再拜曰。永配吾师之言。无敢废怠。

称曰恩师。

TM 3: Don Quijote volvió a hacer una reverencia y respondió:

—Siempre llevaré contigo las palabras de mi maestro, ¡No dejéis de hacerlo!

—y sentidas muestras de despedida al ventero llamándolo “generoso maestro”.

As for the second example, in Chapter III, Don Quixote has entered an inn, while in his perception, it is a castle, and the innkeeper is a highly respected and virtuous lord of the city. He hopes that the innkeeper will grant himself the title of knight, and the cunning innkeeper agrees and tells him that all the knights need to carry money and medicine with them while travelling. In the original version of Cervantes and the Motteux's translation, the relationship between the two is simply that of the innkeeper and an insane knight who comes to the inn to stay. But in Lin Shu's eyes,

their relationship is more like master and disciple, as the innkeeper “kindly persuades (teaches)” Don Quixote to bring some money and clean shirts during his adventure. Based on his own ideology and understanding, Lin Shu, in his translation, changed the relationship between the two men into that of master and disciple.

Both examples show that Lin Shu is influenced by the ideology of his time and therefore has a different interpretation of the relationships between the characters in the novel when he translated it. However, these changes have nothing to do with the language itself but are directly related to cultural differences at that time in China and the Confucian view and perception of the relationship between master and disciple can also explain Lin Shu’s choice to some extent.

In the framework of Confucianism, there is an old saying in the book of *The Unknown Book of the Ming Sha Stone Chamber-Tai Gong’s Family Teachings* (《鸣沙石室佚书-太公家教》, míng shā shí shì yì shū - tài gōng jiā jiào) that goes, “一日为师，终身为父”(yī rì wéi shī, zhōng shēn wéi fù), which can be translated as “One day as a teacher, a lifetime as a father.” It is a doctrine that promotes respect for teachers in Confucian scholarship in feudal society. The ancients are very filial and have great respect for their fathers, so they compare the disciple’s respect for their teacher to that for their fathers. For people at bottom of the society, they have to learn some skills, handicrafts or some knowledge from a master in order to survive. In traditional Chinese culture, the status of a master is equivalent to their parents, who could give them the most basic security for their livelihood. If they leave the master, they are likely to fall into desperate circumstances. A student learns some skills from his master, in order to survive and participate in the imperial examination ³to gain a prosperous future. Besides, worship is a serious matter in traditional Chinese culture. Hierarchy exists in the relationship between a master and a disciple, but they have a very close relationship: the master imparts knowledge to the disciple and is entitled to set rules for the behavior of the disciple, and the disciple should not only show the greatest respect to the master, but also should follow his advice and be close to him. What’s more, the teacher-disciple relationship in ancient China highlights loyalty, so once a person becomes the student of a master, he is not allowed to betray his teacher or treat him with disrespect.

³ The imperial examination, or keju (Chinese: 科举) was a civil-service examination system in Imperial China, administered for the purpose of selecting candidates for the state bureaucracy.

Likewise, Confucianism emphasizes that the teacher's task is to transmit wisdom, impart knowledge, and resolve doubts⁴, and the teachers should have high virtue and prestige. They need to instruct and educate students in both knowledge and virtue. Therefore, in the eyes of Don Quixote, the innkeeper is a man of high morality and teaches him the dos and don'ts during the adventure. Therefore, as for Lin Shu, this innkeeper has the necessary conditions to be considered as a teacher, that is, a high moral character and a tireless attitude to teach others. And as for Sancho, Don Quixote is undoubtedly the master who leads him out of the small village and guides him in his path.

In addition, the master-disciple relationship is prevalent in Chinese literature, thus, the readers can easily understand the bond and relationship between the characters. For example, in *Journey to the West*, one of the most famous classical Chinese novels, the relationship between the Tang dynasty Buddhist monk Xuan Zang and other three characters is a master-disciple one. They travel to the “Western Regions” (Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent) to obtain Buddhist sacred texts (sutras), going through enormous difficulties. The three disciples of Xuan Zang have very different personalities and once had done much evil, but they are converted by the master and join the team to seek sutras. The characters portrayed in the *Journey to the West* have had a significant impact on the literati and scholars as well as on ordinary readers and have influenced the way of thinking of people in the later generations (Wang, 2007). As Lin Shu was a literary figure after that era when *Journey to the West* was published, there is a high probability that he is also influenced by this book

4.2.2 Master-Servant Relationship

In the second example, in Lin Shu's eyes, Don Quixote is not looking for a servant or a squire, but a disciple for his journey. The reasons why Lin Shu translates the relationships between different pairs of characters into a master-disciple relationship can also be explained from the perspective of the master-servant relationship. The master-servant relationship in traditional Chinese culture was a family relationship prevalent in the society (Li & Chen, 2017: 41), where servants had a very low social status and were often treated harshly. Unlike the master- discipole relationship, this relationship is relatively rigid in ancient China, which requires absolute

⁴ A quote “传道受业解惑也” (chuán dào shòu yè jiě huò yě) from *Discourse on Teacher*(《师说》), a polemical essay written by Han Yu. The essay explains the reasoning of learning from a teacher.

obedience, just like the employment relationship between a landlord and a serf or between a master and a domestic servant, which never involves a strong emotional bond created by the adventure together as described by Cervantes.

Therefore, Lin Shu's treatment of translation rationalized the relationship between Sancho and Don Quixote to a certain extent, so that readers at that time could better understand it. In Relinque's back-translated version, she retains the changes Lin Shu has made, translating the relationship between the two couples mentioned above as master and disciple. So, by comparing the original Spanish version of *Don Quijote de la Mancha* and the Spanish back-translated version of *Historia del Caballero Encantado*, it is possible to see the change of the relationship directly and to feel the cultural meanings behind it.

5. Discussions

Based on the examples and analysis mentioned above, back-translation has a multifaceted impact. It allows the research on translation to broaden its boundaries from word to word correspondence to the mutual transmission and comparison of two cultures, noticing the different choices made by different translators in translating, allowing the translator of back-translation to walk the whole translation journey in its entirety like a traveler, recording the whole journey, observing how the translation changes step by step, and then comparing it with the original through back-translation to discover and emphasize this difference, thus triggering deeper reflection on the nature of translation.

The back-translation of Alicia Relinque enables the researchers to better consider the differences between different languages and cultures through the process of back-translation. Besides, the two particular and complex translation phenomena involved in the case of *Mo Xia Zhuan* reveal the complex nature of translation, allowing people both to observe and understand clearly through the text how different theories manifest themselves and function in practical cases through the text. The translation of a work is inextricably linked to the ideology of the society in which the translator lives and to his or her particular background, interests, experience and preferences, and the same text translated by people from different countries in different contexts can be very dissimilar. In this case, for example, considering the context of Lin Shu's time and his unique approach to translation, we can find that it is the influence of the Confucian teacher-student relationship and the political orientation of his

time lead to the alterations of the identity and the relationship of *Don Quixote*'s main characters, thus giving birth to a very different and unique version of *Don Quixote*.

In the preface of Alicia Relinque's translation (2021: 39), she mentions that the original purpose of the back-translation of this book was to find out to what extent Lin Shu had transformed the image of the main character and thus to get a glimpse of how the image of *Don Quixote* was accepted in China at that time. Alicia Relink chooses to translate this controversial but meaningful translation back into Spanish, enabling Spanish readers to see a different version of a familiar story, allowing the cultures of two countries to meet and collide in one masterpiece. She maintains all the variations so that the translation retains its uniqueness in its own time, activating the cultural connotations behind it and provoking profound reflection. She is just like a modern-day lady knight, taking *Don Quixote*'s journey from Spanish to English, from English to Chinese, and from Chinese to Spanish all over again, but with a very different responsibility: to observe the changes that *Don Quijote de la Mancha* undergoes during this journey. The purpose of the back-translation is not to reproduce the original translation, but to convey the cultural encounters behind the text, to learn through the back-translation about what changes Lin Shu made in the translation, and in the process of dissemination, which cultural elements were "activated" and which were "obscured". If one merely "reproduce the original text" or "return to the original" and erase all the changes, the uniqueness of the translation in the specific time will be lost, and the cultural significance behind it will be hidden.

6. Conclusions

Through the case of the back-translation of *Mo Xia Zhuan*, this paper introduces a particular back-translation phenomenon that includes both collaborative and indirect translations and discusses the meaning and function of back-translation. This paper examines the entire translation process in a descriptive approach and analyses the changes involved in the translation process. This research finds that Alicia Relinque's back-translation of *Mo Xia Zhuan* brings home a Chinese version of *Don Quixote* that has been away from its homeland for centuries and sees the initial images of *Don Quixote* when he first appeared in the eyes of the Chinese. Her back-translation retains the changes and deletions made by Lin Shu and Chen Jialin, making it possible to use her back-translation as a tool to

compare with the source text, amplifying the differences and facilitating the analysis of the alterations made during the translation process.

In addition, the pattern of intermingling the three translation phenomena that emerges in this case allows us to diversify our views on the whole phenomenon of translation and the translation process, breaking down the binary concept of translation.

Meanwhile, the analysis of the identity (role) and relationship transformation in this paper shows that the social context and Confucianism of the Qing dynasty and the early Republican period had a great influence on Lin Shu's translation choices and translation strategies, and that ideological and cultural differences differed greatly from country to country.

However, there are still some possibilities that could be addressed in future research. First, as a pilot study this paper only focuses on the transformations of identity and relationship, so it does not cover other aspects of changes, leaving room for future research. Secondly, the limited examples chosen for this paper may be fortuitous and may affect the analysis of the reasons behind. Thirdly, as back-translation is still an untheorized translation phenomenon, the value and role of back-translation is worthy of further discussion in future research.

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