

Ideology as an Invisible Hand in Transtoriography of Chinese Avant-garde Fiction

LIU Huawen 劉華文

YI Chuanping 裔傳萍

School of Foreign Languages, Shanghai Jiao Tong University

The western critics have a disbelief in the official historiographic discourse dictated by China's propaganda apparatus. They accuse the state-authorized literary history of univocality and biasedness. They argue that the literary historiography chronicles the twentieth century in China, especially its second half, need be rewritten to defy the official version. In this context, the critics rivet their attention to the avant-garde literature that has been once popular in the 1980's and 1990's and culminated in 2012, the year when Mo Yan won the Nobel Prize for Literature. A new historiography has sidetracked from the mainstream one once dominating Chinese contemporary literary landscape. This westernized historiography bifurcates into two branches: the one that is mainly embodied by the translating of Chinese avant-garde fiction, or new historical fiction; another one is implemented by the critics themselves (some of them are translators of Chinese avant-garde fiction) via their critical enterprise. The former, since involving the practice of translation across two cultures, can be labeled as transtoriography, a historiography formulated through cross-linguistic rhetoric. The latter one, despite a critical endeavor, actually co-conspires with the former one to constitute the transtoriography in a complementary way. Through examining their translations and critical endeavors, an argument can be launched that ideology is the invisible patron as the ultimate motivation behind the transtoriography of Chinese avant-garde fiction.