

Intertextuality in the English Titles of *Xiyouji*: A Comparative Study of Waley's *Monkey* and Yu's *The Journey to the West*

Zhou Yuanpeng

(Department of Modern Languages and Cultures, University of Nottingham, UK)

ABSTRACT : Extensive scholarship has explored the intertextual connections between *Xiyouji* and other literary works; however, the intertextuality of its English titles has been overlooked. This paper aims to examine how intertextuality operates in the English titles of *Xiyouji* by comparing Arthur Waley's and Anthony C. Yu's translations, with particular attention to their cultural interpretation and reader reception. Using comparative textual analysis, the study compares the two translated titles from both cultural and textual perspectives, focusing on how the key terms "Monkey" and "Journey" interact with the original text and shape readers' interpretations. The findings indicate that Yu's translated title demonstrates a higher degree of cultural intertextuality, reflecting closer connection with the thematic orientation of the original text. In contrast, Waley's title places greater emphasis on the narrative's adventurous aspects and reflects a more surface-level reading, may be influenced by the cultural connotations of "Monkey" in English. Shaped by different historical contexts and textual traditions, the two titles generate distinct intertextual effects, with Yu's version more effectively facilitating cultural resonance among Western readers. Conclusions: This study highlights the significance of translated titles in textual reception and demonstrates how intertextual awareness can influence the transmission and interpretation of literary works across cultures.

KEYWORDS - Anthony C. Yu; Arthur Waley; Intertextuality; Titles; *Xiyouji*

I. INTRODUCTION

In translation studies and cross-cultural communication, literary titles are not merely nominal labels of texts. They function as sites of meaning construction across linguistic and cultural boundaries. Translated titles participate in readers' interpretive processes and contribute to the reframing of literary works in the target culture.

Intertextuality, as theorized by Julia Kristeva (1969), conceptualizes texts as inherently relational entities. Meaning is not produced in isolation, but through connections with other texts. In translation studies, this perspective has been extended to highlight the role of translation in reconfiguring textual relations across cultural systems. Related discussions by Girard (2001) further emphasize the dynamic and relational nature of meaning construction. From this perspective, translation is not a simple process of linguistic transfer. It is a process of recontextualization and meaning reconfiguration.

Chinese classical literature provides a productive site for examining such processes. *Xiyouji*, one of the most influential classical Chinese novels, has been translated into English in multiple versions with distinct titles. These include *The Journey to the West* (Yu, 1977), *Monkey* (Waley, 1942). The variation in these titles is not merely linguistic. It reflects different interpretive strategies and cultural framings of the source text.

The original Chinese title *Xiyouji* does not foreground the character Sun Wukong. An alternative historical title, *Xiyou Shi'E Zhuan*, also does not fundamentally alter its thematic orientation. However, English translations often foreground “Monkey” or explicitly highlight “Monkey King.” This shift is significant. It elevates a narrative character to the level of the title itself. It also suggests a reconfiguration of meaning at the paratextual level.

Despite extensive scholarship on English translations of *Xiyouji*, existing studies have largely focused on narrative strategies, character representation, and cultural transmission. Less attention has been paid to translated titles as intertextual sites. Their role in shaping interpretive frameworks remains underexplored.

Against this background, this study examines the English translated titles of *Xiyouji*, focusing on Arthur Waley’s and Anthony C. Yu’s versions. It adopts a comparative intertextual approach. The study explores how different title choices construct meaning, mediate cultural interpretation, and influence reader reception in the target cultural context.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. The Concept of Intertextuality

The concept of intertextuality (French: *intertextualité*) was coined by the French post-structuralist literary theorist Julia Kristeva (1969). Drawing upon Bakhtin’s theory of dialogism, Kristeva argues that a text does not exist as an independent and isolated entity; rather, it is formed through the interaction and transformation of other texts. She defines intertextuality as the intersection and neutralization of several statements taken from other texts within the space of a text (Kristeva, 1969). In this sense, meaning is not produced solely within a single text but emerges through relationships among texts, cultural contexts, and previous discourses. Intertextual relations can be realized through various forms, including quotation, allusion, and recurring motifs.

However, Kristeva’s definition of intertextuality remains relatively broad and abstract. To further clarify the concept, Roland Barthes provided a more specific understanding, defining intertextuality as consisting of “anonymous formulae, unconscious citations, and untraceable references” (Barthes, cited in Samoyault, 2003). This perspective further emphasizes that texts are continuously shaped by existing cultural and textual systems rather than being completely original creations.

Genette (1997) further narrowed the scope of intertextuality by defining it as “the actual presence of one text within another.” He distinguished intertextuality from hypertextuality (*hypertextualité*) and contributed to the development of a more systematic classification of textual relationships. Based on these theoretical developments, scholars have gradually distinguished between broad and narrow forms of intertextuality. Broad intertextuality refers to the interaction between literary works and wider social and historical contexts, while narrow intertextuality focuses on the specific relationships between one text and other identifiable texts (Qin Haiying, 2004).

These theoretical discussions demonstrate that texts are not isolated objects but are embedded within complex networks of cultural and textual relations. Therefore, intertextuality provides a useful perspective for examining translated works, as translation involves not only the transfer of linguistic meaning but also the reconstruction of relationships between the source text, previous texts, and target cultural contexts. From this perspective, translated titles can be understood as important sites where intertextual meanings are preserved, transformed, or reshaped.

2.2. Intertextuality and Translation Studies

The concept of intertextuality has provided a valuable perspective for understanding translation as a process of meaning reconstruction. According to Kristeva (1969), texts do not exist independently but are produced through relationships with other texts and cultural systems. From this perspective, meaning is not fixed within a single text; rather, it is continuously generated through interactions among different textual and cultural contexts.

Therefore, translation can also be understood as a process in which meanings are reconstructed within a new linguistic and cultural environment.

Based on this understanding of texts as interconnected systems, translation scholars have further explored the relationship between intertextuality and translation. Hatim and Mason (1990) argue that translation is not merely a transfer of linguistic forms but a communicative activity embedded in specific social and cultural contexts. From this perspective, translators play an active role in selecting, transforming, and reshaping meanings. A translator's choices are influenced not only by the source text but also by previous translations, cultural traditions, and expectations of target readers. Therefore, different translations of the same work may establish different intertextual relationships and generate different interpretations.

In literary translation, titles deserve particular attention because they often function as the first point of contact between a literary work and its readers. Genette (1997) considers titles as part of the paratext, which helps guide readers' interpretation and shapes their expectations before they enter the main text. Therefore, a translated title does not simply reproduce the linguistic meaning of the original title; it may also activate specific cultural associations and construct new relationships between the source text, translated text, and target readers. Examining translated titles from an intertextual perspective can therefore reveal how translators negotiate between the meanings embedded in the source text and the cultural knowledge of the target context.

In the case of *Xiyouji*, the titles *Monkey* and *The Journey to the West* represent different approaches to constructing intertextual relationships. The former foregrounds the image of Sun Wukong and connects the novel with the cultural meanings associated with "monkey" in the English-speaking world, while the latter maintains connections with the historical and cultural traditions surrounding Xuanzang's pilgrimage to the West. Thus, intertextuality provides a useful framework for examining how translated titles influence the transmission, interpretation, and reception of Chinese literary works across cultures.

2.3. Previous Studies on Literary Title Translation and the English Translation of *Xiyouji*

Previous studies on literary title translation have suggested that titles are not merely functional labels but also important elements in the interpretation and reception of literary works. In the translation of Chinese classical literature, a title often contains cultural meanings that may not be directly transferred into another language. For example, studies on the English translations of *Hongloumeng* have demonstrated that different translated titles may highlight different aspects of the original work and construct different cultural associations for target readers. Luo Xuanmin's studies (2021) indicate that the translation of a literary title involves not only linguistic transformation but also the reconstruction of meanings and intertextual relationships across cultures.

Research on the English translation of *Xiyouji* has mainly focused on translation strategies, dissemination, and reception. Regarding Arthur Waley's abridged translation *Monkey*, previous studies have examined how this translation contributed to the circulation of *Xiyouji* in the English-speaking world. Qi Lintao (2022) investigates the dissemination of Waley's translation by examining different versions and publishing processes, arguing that the transmission of *Monkey* was shaped by multiple agents and historical contexts rather than by the translator alone. This perspective broadens the understanding of translated literature by emphasizing the role of publishers, editors, and other participants in translation circulation.

Similarly, Wenyan Luo and Bingham Zheng (2022) explores the reception history of Waley's *Monkey* through archival materials, revealing that the acceptance of the translation was a complex and historically conditioned process. The study demonstrates that the popularity of *Monkey* was closely connected with publishing practices and the cultural environment in which the translation was received. These studies have therefore provided important insights into how Waley's translation achieved a lasting influence in the Western literary field.

Compared with Waley's abridged version, Anthony C. Yu's complete translation *The Journey to the West* has been examined mainly from the perspectives of literary representation and reader reception. Feng Wang and Philippe Humblé (2019) investigates readers' perceptions of Yu's self-retranslation and discusses how translation choices influence readers' understanding and evaluation of the translated work. The study highlights

the interaction between translation strategies and reader reception, showing that translated literature is shaped not only by the source text but also by the interpretive experiences of target readers.

Although previous scholarship has significantly contributed to the understanding of the translation, dissemination, and reception of *Xiyouji*, several limitations remain. Existing studies mainly examine the translated works as a whole, focusing on issues such as adaptation, cultural representation, publishing history, and reader response. However, the translated title itself has received comparatively limited attention as an independent element of meaning construction. Since a title often serves as the first point of contact between readers and a literary work, it can influence readers' expectations and activate particular cultural and textual associations. Therefore, this study examines the titles *Monkey* and *The Journey to the West* from an intertextual perspective, exploring how different title choices establish different relationships among the original work, cultural traditions, and target readers.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative textual analysis approach to examine the intertextual meanings constructed through the English titles of *Xiyouji*. Rather than collecting empirical data from readers or conducting quantitative analysis, this research focuses on the relationship between the source text, translated titles, and their cultural contexts.

The theoretical framework of this study is based on the concept of intertextuality. Through reviewing relevant studies on intertextuality and translation studies, this research considers translation as a process of meaning reconstruction rather than a simple transfer of linguistic forms. From this perspective, a translated title is regarded as an important site where cultural meanings, textual associations, and readers' interpretations are negotiated.

The research materials include Arthur Waley's *Monkey* and Anthony C. Yu's *The Journey to the West*, which are selected because they represent two influential but significantly different approaches to translating *Xiyouji*. Waley's version is an abridged translation that achieved wide popularity among English readers, while Yu's version is a complete scholarly translation that aims to preserve the literary, cultural, and religious dimensions of the original work. By comparing these two translations, this study investigates how different title choices construct different intertextual relationships.

The analysis is conducted from three perspectives. First, the study examines the linguistic relationship between the translated titles and the original Chinese title *Xiyouji*, particularly focusing on the translation of the term “西 (Xi)” and the implications of different naming choices. Second, it analyzes the cultural intertextuality of the two titles by exploring their connections with Chinese cultural traditions, religious meanings, and Western cultural associations. Third, it investigates the relationship between the translated titles and related historical or literary texts, including previous translations and representations of Xuanzang's pilgrimage, in order to examine how earlier texts influence readers' interpretations of the translated titles.

Through this qualitative comparative analysis, this study aims to reveal how translated titles participate in the reconstruction and transmission of cultural meanings across languages and cultures.

IV. DISCUSSION

Xiyouji has been translated into English under various titles, including *The Monkey King's Amazing Adventures*, *The Journey to the West*, *Monkey*, and *Monkey King: Journey to the West*. Among these translations, *The Journey to the West* and *Monkey* differ most significantly in both naming strategy and interpretive orientation, while also enjoying the widest circulation in the English-speaking world. This study therefore focuses on these two translated titles in order to examine their respective translational characteristics and cultural implications.

4.1. Waley's Translation and the Title *Monkey*

In 1942, George Allen & Unwin Ltd. published Arthur Waley's abridged English translation *Monkey*. Waley condensed the original one-hundred-chapter novel into thirty chapters. While most of the first twelve chapters were retained, the remaining sections were heavily abridged, with only selected episodes preserved, including "The Lion Demon in the Kingdom of Crow-cock" and "The Cart-Slow Kingdom". Waley also simplified many of the original chapter titles, replacing them with concise English headings such as "I–VII The Monkey's Story" and "XV The Dragon Horse". In addition, he omitted a substantial number of poems and reduced the religious content of the original text (Liu Haifeng, 2023).

Waley's translation reflects a clear shift in interpretive emphasis. Rather than presenting *Xiyouji* as a complex religious and allegorical novel, he approached the work primarily as an adventure narrative centered on Sun Wukong. His translation places particular emphasis on readability, narrative pace, and popular accessibility. This tendency was closely related to the historical circumstances in which the translation was produced (Wang Wenqiang, 2019).

Waley began translating *Xiyouji* during the Second World War while working for the British government in intelligence-related services concerning the Far East (Alison Waley, 1973). Britain during this period experienced severe social and psychological pressures caused by wartime bombing, material shortages, and political instability. Under such circumstances, narratives featuring heroism and resistance held strong appeal for general readers (Stanley Unwin, 1960).

Against this background, Waley foregrounded Sun Wukong as the central narrative figure and selected episodes characterized by supernatural combat and heroic action. Through concise and accessible language (Zhu Mingsheng & Xu Wensheng, 2023), he constructed an image of Sun Wukong as a heroic figure capable of defeating evil and overcoming adversity.

The popularity of Waley's translation extended beyond the wartime period. George Allen & Unwin Ltd. reprinted *Monkey* six times between 1942 and 1965 (Luo Wenyan, 2020), and the work was later included in the *Penguin Classics* series in 1961 (Liu Haifeng, 2023).

Despite its popularity among general readers, Waley's translation has received mixed evaluations in academic circles. Anthony C. Yu (1977: 6) criticized Waley's extensive abridgement, particularly his omission of more than 750 poems from the original text. Yu argued that such omissions weakened the literary form and narrative vitality of the novel. Wang Zuoliang (2000: 14) similarly noted that Waley's translations were often characterized by heavy abridgement, including his translation of *Xiyouji*.

Nevertheless, the significance of Waley's translation should be evaluated within its specific historical and cultural context. Although the translation sacrifices certain literary and religious dimensions of the original work, its accessible style and heroic characterization of Sun Wukong greatly enhanced the novel's readability and contributed to its widespread popularity in the West. Waley's translation strategy therefore reflects an attempt to adapt *Xiyouji* to the expectations and cultural conditions of contemporary English readers.

4.2. Yu's Translation and the Title *The Journey to the West*

Between 1977 and 1983, the University of Chicago Press published Anthony C. Yu's four-volume complete translation of *Xiyouji*, titled *The Journey to the West*. Yu, a Chinese American scholar and professor at the University of Chicago, was exposed to *Xiyouji* from an early age. During the Japanese War of Aggression Against China, his grandfather reportedly recounted stories from the novel to distract him from the anxieties of wartime life (Wang Zhen & Guo Yanhua, 2022). Yu later received systematic training in both Chinese classical culture and Western academia, eventually earning his undergraduate and doctoral degrees in the United States. This bicultural educational background contributed significantly to the scholarly depth and cross-cultural sensitivity of his translation.

Yu's translation has received widespread recognition within academic circles. The American sinologist Owen Lattimore (1983) described it as "one of the great ventures of our time in humanistic translation and publication." Prior to publishing his translation, Yu had already written and published many articles on *Xiyouji*. He also included an introduction of more than sixty pages in the translated edition, discussing the novel's themes,

religious dimensions, literary structure, and allegorical implications while engaging critically with earlier scholarship.

Unlike Waley's abridged version, Yu's translation preserves a substantial amount of the original poetry and retains much of the novel's religious and cultural content. In translating culturally loaded expressions such as yuan (缘), Yu frequently adopted literal translation or transliteration accompanied by explanatory annotations. This strategy preserves the cultural specificity of the source text while also facilitating scholarly interpretation and cross-cultural understanding.

Yu approached *Xiyouji* not merely as an adventure narrative, but as a complex literary, religious, and allegorical text. He argued that the novel is "a work of profound allegory" (2006). This interpretive orientation is reflected in his translation strategy, which emphasizes textual completeness, cultural depth, and fidelity to the intellectual and spiritual dimensions of the original work.

4.3. The Meaning of “西 (Xi)”

According to Luo Xuanmin (2021), "the translation of literary titles may allow considerable flexibility, but such flexibility must remain grounded in an appropriate cultural context, and the interpretation of a translated title should reflect its underlying intertextual motivation."

Both Waley's *Monkey* and Yu's *The Journey to the West* demonstrate respect for the source text. However, Yu's title preserves a stronger form of cultural intertextuality by retaining the original spatial and religious framework embedded in *Xiyouji*.

In the context of *Xiyouji*, the term "Xi" does not merely indicate a geographical direction. It refers specifically to the western regions associated with the Buddhist pilgrimage undertaken by the historical monk Xuanzang during the Tang dynasty. Xuanzang traveled to India in search of Buddhist scriptures, believing that only the *Yogācārabhūmi Śāstra* (*Yujia shidi lun* 瑜伽师地论) could resolve doctrinal inconsistencies and answer his spiritual questions (Yu, 1977). The "West" in *Xiyouji* therefore primarily signifies India, or Tianzhu in ancient Chinese discourse, rather than the Buddhist paradise of ultimate bliss.

This distinction is significant for understanding the intertextual implications of Yu's translated title. By preserving the phrase "the West," Yu retains the historical and religious associations connected to Xuanzang's pilgrimage and the transmission of Buddhism from India to China. The title thus maintains the novel's broader cultural and spiritual dimensions rather than reducing it to a character-centered adventure narrative. In this sense, *The Journey to the West* preserves a richer network of historical, religious, and cultural references embedded in the source text.

4.4. Linguistic and Cultural Intertextuality

At the linguistic level, Yu's translated title *The Journey to the West* faithfully reflects the source text. Unlike earlier translators, such as Timothy Richard and Helen Hays, who rendered “西” as “heaven” or “western paradise,” Yu preserves the literal sense of “west,” indicating the journey to Tianzhu (ancient India) in pursuit of Buddhist scriptures. In contrast, Waley's title *Monkey* foregrounds the protagonist Sun Wukong, emphasizing individual heroism while downplaying the overarching narrative of the pilgrimage to the West.

At the cultural level, *Xiyouji* is far more than a simple adventure story about four pilgrims overcoming demons and obtaining Buddhist scriptures.

First, although the narrative is set in the Tang dynasty, many it also reflects the religious and social realities of the Ming dynasty, the period in which the novel was composed. During this period, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism coexisted in a complex relationship, while Daoist beliefs and the pursuit of immortality occupied a prominent position in both political and popular culture. Song Zhenhe (2010) argues that the repeated attempts by demons to consume Tang Sanzang may be interpreted allegorically, reflecting contemporary obsessions with longevity, spiritual power, and worldly desire.

More importantly, the obstacles encountered by the pilgrims can be understood not merely as external enemies but also as manifestations of inner struggles. As Pan Hua (2023) observes, the journey undertaken by Tang Sanzang and his disciples is fundamentally a process of overcoming internal demons rather than simply defeating supernatural beings. This interpretation is supported by numerous symbolic elements throughout the novel. Ye Zhou (2015) argues that the opening description of “The Mountain of Mind and Heart; The Cave of Slanting Moon and Three Stars.” alludes to the concept of the mind (*xin* 心), which constitutes a central theme of the work. Similarly, Zhang Zhenguo (2016) interprets the Six-Eared Macaque as a symbolic representation of Sun Wukong’s inner demons, while episodes such as “the Kingdom of Females” and “the Spider Woman” may be read as allegories of temptation and the conquest of desire (Song Zhenhe, 2010). Yu (1977) likewise argues that the pilgrimage to the West is, above all, a journey of self-cultivation, making spiritual transformation one of the novel’s most important themes.

Furthermore, Sun Wukong, Zhu Bajie, and Sha Wujing serve functions that extend beyond protecting Tang Sanzang from physical danger. They also play important roles in guiding and facilitating the process of moral and spiritual cultivation. According to Yu (1977), Sun Wukong in particular embodies this dimension of the narrative. This interpretation is reinforced by the recurring motif of the “Mind Monkey” (Xinyuan 心猿) in the novel. References to the “Mind Monkey” appear throughout the text, and Chapter Fourteen, entitled “Mind Monkey returns to the Right; The Six Robbers vanish from sight.” explicitly links spiritual cultivation with the elimination of sensory attachments. Wang Wenqiang (2019) argues that the “Six Thieves” symbolize the six sensory faculties, suggesting that enlightenment can be achieved only through their discipline and purification. Similarly, the episode of the “The Four Sages test the priestly mind” further emphasizes the importance of spiritual cultivation as a central concern of the narrative.

The journey undertaken by the four disciples is both a physical journey and a process of inner transformation. Their eventual arrival in the West and acquisition of the scriptures symbolize the completion of moral and spiritual cultivation. In this respect, Yu’s title, *The Journey to the West*, establishes a strong intertextual connection with one of the novel’s central themes. The word “journey” refers not only to the physical expedition to obtain Buddhist scriptures but also to the continuous process of overcoming desire, disciplining the mind, and pursuing enlightenment. Waley’s title, *Monkey*, by contrast, foregrounds Sun Wukong as an individual heroic figure and consequently weakens the title’s connection to the broader themes of self-cultivation and spiritual transformation embedded in the source text.

The differing cultural associations of the image of the monkey further reinforce this distinction. In traditional Chinese culture, monkeys are frequently associated with intelligence, agility, vitality, and auspicious symbolism. Monkey imagery has appeared in Chinese art, decorative objects, and visual culture for centuries. By contrast, the monkey has often occupied a more ambiguous position in Western cultural traditions. As Claudia Zeller (2023) notes, monkeys have historically been associated with ridicule, inferiority, or moral disorder in certain European cultural contexts. Morris (2013) similarly traces a long history of negative representations of monkeys in Western thought, ranging from Classical antiquity to Christian discourse and colonial imagery. Morris (2013) states “The ancient Greeks were particularly offended by the monkey’s lack of smoothly rounded buttocks... In ancient Rome the monkey was used as a token of humiliation in the punishment of individuals who had killed their fathers... The advent of Christianity saw the reputation of the monkey sink even lower.” Literary representations further illustrate these associations. W. W. Jacobs’s *The Monkey’s Paw*, often regarded as a classic supernatural tale, portrays the monkey as a source of danger and misfortune. Although such representations do not define Western attitudes toward monkeys as a whole, they demonstrate that the image of the monkey can evoke negative or unsettling associations within certain English literary traditions. Consequently, the title *Monkey* may evoke cultural associations that differ significantly from those attached to the monkey figure in Chinese culture.

As discussed earlier, Waley’s choice of *Monkey* was likely influenced by the historical and cultural circumstances in which his translation was produced. Nevertheless, for English readers unfamiliar with the cultural and symbolic significance of Sun Wukong, the title is more likely to foreground the image of an animal

protagonist than the broader themes of spiritual cultivation, pilgrimage, and enlightenment that underpin the original work.

4.5. Intertextual Relations between *Xiyouji* and Related Texts

Before the publication of Waley's *Monkey*, both *Xiyouji* and the historical pilgrimage of Xuanzang had already been introduced to Western readers through a variety of translations and scholarly works. In 1854, the British missionary Joseph Edkins published *Chinese Buddhism: A Volume of Sketches, Historical, Descriptive and Critical* in the *North China Herald*, in which he introduced Xuanzang's journey to India, his retrieval of Buddhist scriptures, and his subsequent translation activities before discussing *Xiyouji*. In 1858, the French sinologist Stanislas Julien published his French translation of *Mémoires sur les contrées occidentales de Hiouen Thsang*, a work documenting Xuanzang's nineteen-year pilgrimage. The translation exerted considerable influence within European Sinology (Li Hongman, 2021). Later, in 1884, the British scholar Samuel Beal produced an English translation of the same work *Si-Yu-Ki: Buddhist Records of the Western World* and further introduced Xuanzang's life and achievements.

Prior to the translations of Waley and Yu, Timothy Richard's *A Mission to Heaven* was among the more substantial English renditions of *Xiyouji*. Richard's primary objective was to promote Christian ideas, and he frequently replaced Buddhist and Daoist concepts with Christian terminology. As Zhu Hongbo (2021) observes, the work is better understood as a Christian missionary text based on the narrative framework of *Xiyouji* than as a faithful translation. Helen Hayes's *The Buddhist Pilgrim's Progress*, published in 1930, similarly establishes an explicit intertextual relationship with John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*. By invoking a well-known Christian allegory, Hayes foregrounds the religious dimension of the novel and situates it within a familiar framework for Western readers.

According to Luo Xuanmin (2021), texts from different periods can interact with and illuminate one another, thereby extending and generating new meanings. Viewed from this perspective, Western readers had already been exposed to both the story of Xuanzang's pilgrimage and the religious dimensions of *Xiyouji* before the appearance of Waley's translation. Consequently, references to a journey westward were capable of evoking a range of intertextual associations, including Xuanzang's quest for Buddhist scriptures and the broader religious significance attached to pilgrimage narratives. Readers influenced by Richard's and Hayes's translations may further associate the novel with religious themes, as these works frame *Xiyouji* within discourses of spiritual salvation and religious instruction, encouraging comparisons between Buddhist and Christian conceptions of redemption (Zhu Hongbo, 2021).

Against this background, Waley's title *Monkey* provides relatively few textual cues connecting the novel to this pre-existing network of historical and religious references. Combined with the extensive abridgement of the original text and the reduction of its religious content, the title tends to foreground Sun Wukong as the central attraction of the narrative. Readers may therefore be more inclined to approach the work as an adventure story centered on a heroic monkey figure rather than as a religious, allegorical, and culturally layered text. As Sun Yifeng (2016) argues, Waley's extensive omissions and adaptations significantly altered the literary and cultural character of the original work.

By contrast, Yu's title *The Journey to the West* not only remains faithful to the source text but also resonates with the historical and literary traditions already associated with Xuanzang's pilgrimage. Moreover, because Yu's version is a complete translation, readers are able to experience the full narrative of the pilgrims' westward journey, including its religious, philosophical, and cultural dimensions. The title thus corresponds closely to the content of the translated text and reinforces the interpretive framework suggested by the original work.

As Yu (2006) observes, the attainment of enlightenment requires the successful passage through the "eighty-one tribulations." In this sense, *The Journey to the West* captures both the external and internal dimensions of the narrative. Compared with *Monkey*, it preserves a broader range of historical, religious, and cultural

associations, thereby establishing richer intertextual connections with both the source text and related literary traditions.

V. CONCLUSION

This study has examined the English titles of Waley's and Yu's translations of *Xiyouji* from the perspective of intertextuality. By analyzing the two titles at both linguistic and cultural levels, it has explored how the key terms "Monkey" and "Journey" establish different intertextual relationships with the source text and influence readers' interpretations.

The findings indicate that Yu's title, *The Journey to the West*, not only preserves the meaning of the original title but also conveys broader cultural and philosophical implications embedded in *Xiyouji*. In particular, it highlights the theme of pilgrimage as a process of spiritual cultivation. In contrast, Waley's title, *Monkey*, tends to foreground the adventurous aspect of the narrative and the image of Sun Wukong, while providing fewer connections to the novel's deeper religious and philosophical dimensions. Moreover, due to the different cultural associations attached to the word "Monkey" in English, the title may evoke interpretations that differ from the heroic and culturally significant image of Sun Wukong in Chinese tradition.

The two translated titles therefore produce different intertextual effects under the influence of historical contexts, cultural traditions, and previous textual representations of *Xiyouji*. Yu's title maintains stronger connections with the historical narrative of Xuanzang's pilgrimage and the cultural meanings developed around the novel, thereby enabling a broader transmission of its literary and cultural significance.

Through the comparative analysis of Waley's and Yu's translations, this study demonstrates the relationship between translation and intertextuality, and highlights the role of translated titles in shaping the reception and interpretation of literary works across cultures. The selection of translated titles should therefore be considered an important aspect of literary translation, as appropriate choices can preserve cultural meanings and facilitate intercultural understanding.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to express sincere gratitude to Dr. Li Le of Zhejiang International Studies University for the insightful comments, valuable suggestions, and generous guidance throughout the preparation of this paper.

REFERENCES

- [1] J. Kristeva, *Séméiotikè: Recherches pour une sémanalyse* (Paris: Seuil, 1969).
- [2] T. Samoyault, *L'intertextualité* (Tianjin: Tianjin People's Publishing House, 2003).
- [3] G. Genette, *Essays on Genette* (Tianjin: Baihua Literature and Art Publishing House, 2001).
- [4] H. Qin, The origin and development of intertextuality theory, *Foreign Literature Review*, (3), 2004, 19–30.
- [5] B. Hatim and I. Mason, *Discourse and the Translator* (London: Routledge, 1990).
- [6] X. Luo, An examination of the translated title of *Honglouloumeng*: A perspective of intertextuality, *Chinese Translators Journal*, 42(6), 2021, 111–117.
- [7] H. Liu, Canonization of English Translation of *Xiyouji* in English-Speaking World, *Foreign Language and Literature Research*, 9(6), 2023, 94–104.

-
- [8] W. Luo and B. Zheng, Monkey's journey to the West: How manifold versions of one translation helped to disseminate a classic Chinese original, in L. Qi and S. Tobias (eds.), *Encountering China's Past: New Frontiers in Translation Studies* (Singapore: Springer, 2022).
- [9] F. Wang and P. Humblé, Readers' perceptions of Anthony Yu's self-retranslation of *The Journey to the West*, *Perspectives*, 28(5), 2020, 756–776.
- [10] L. Qi, Monkey's peregrinations in the West: An archival study of publishers' reception of Arthur Waley's translation of the *Xiyouji*, in L. T. Chan and Z. Cai (eds.), *History Retold: Premodern Chinese Texts in Western Translation* (Leiden: Brill, 2022) 154–182.
- [11] H. Li, Translation and research of *Da Tang Xiyu Ji* in the perspective of British Oriental studies, *International Sinology*, (4), 2021, 21–27+198.
- [12] H. Zhu and X. Wang, Narratives of *Xiyouji* in overseas Sinology, *Theoretical Studies in Literature and Art*, 41(1), 2021, 15–25.
- [13] Z. Wang and Y. Guo, On the Cross Cultural Communication of Journey to the West in America, *Journal of Jiangsu Ocean University (Humanities & Social Sciences Edition)*, 20(4), 2022, 46–55.
- [14] W. Luo, Applying Actor-Network Theory to the Description of Translation Production Process: A Case Study of Arthur Waley's translation of 'Journey to the West' from Chinese to English, *Foreign Languages Research*, 37(2), 2020, 84–90.
- [15] Z. Zhu, *Xiyouji* and East Asian popular culture, doctoral dissertation, Fudan University, 2010.
- [16] Y. Sun, *Cultural Translation* (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2016).
- [17] A. C. Yu, *The Journey to the West* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977).
- [18] A. Waley, *Monkey* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1942).
- [19] A. Waley, *Dear Monkey* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1973).
- [20] S. Unwin, *The Truth About a Publisher* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1960).
- [21] D. Lattimore, The complete "Monkey", *The New York Times*, March 6, 1983, A7.
- [22] Z. Pan, "Creating and overcoming calamities": A new interpretation of the theme of *Xiyouji* from the perspective of medical metaphors, *The Journal of Ming-Qing Fiction Studies*, (4), 2023, 157–178.
- [23] Z. Zhang, Cultural and psychological interpretations of the image of the "Six-Eared Macaque" in *Xiyouji*, *Journal of Southeast University (Philosophy and Social Science Edition)*, 18(1), 2016, 119–123+145.
- [24] W. Wang, Understanding the translator: A Study on Arthur Waley's Translation of *Xiyouji* (Journey to the West), *Shandong Foreign Language Teaching*, 40(1), 2019, 115–124.

- [25] W. Wang, *Historical study of Xi You Ji in English translation*, doctoral dissertation, Shanghai International Studies University, 2019.
- [26] C. Zeller, Monkeys as metaphor: Ecologies of representation in Dutch travel writing about Suriname from the colonial period, in R. Honings and E. Op De Beek (eds.), *Animals in Dutch Travel Writing, 1800–Present* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2023) 139–158.
- [27] D. Morris, *Monkey* (London: Reaktion Books, 2013).
- [28] C. Wu, *Xiyouji* (Beijing: People’s Literature Publishing House, 2018).
- [29] Z. Wang, Translation and cultural prosperity, *Chinese Translators Journal*, 42(6), 1985, 3–7.
- [30] M. Zhu and W. Xu, Arthur Waley and the canonization of *Xiyouji* in the English-speaking world, *The Journal of Ming-Qing Fiction Studies*, (2), 2023, 214–230