

An Interpretation of the Paratexts of *Three Kingdoms*

Translated by Moss Roberts

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Abstract

Paratext is an inseparable part of translation. It can reveal what the translated text cannot explain and is of great significance to translation studies. This article uses the English translation of the Romance of the Three Kingdoms by American Sinologist Moss Roberts as the research object, and attempts to interpret Roberts' translation views and translation promotional factors through peritext, such as the cover, acknowledgments, annotations and postscripts, and epitext, such as interviews, reviews and other external paratexts. It is found that Roberts' translation motivation of the Romance of the Three Kingdoms is mainly to spread Chinese culture by literature. He always keeps readers in his heart and has a strong reader consciousness. Therefore, he mainly adopts domestication strategies and uses a lot of annotations to make the readers better understand the meaning and Chinese culture. Secondly, the author found that the translator's own erudite and rigorous attitude, the cooperation of Chinese and foreign publishing houses, and the evaluation of well-known sinologists all promoted the spread and acceptance of the Romance of the Three Kingdoms. This study interprets Roberts' translation view and the promotional factors of the translation from the paratext, hoping to help comprehensively and objectively evaluate the value of Roberts' translation, and at the same time promote the in-depth and development of translation studies from the perspective of the paratext.

Keywords— Paratext, the Romance of the Three Kingdoms, Moss Roberts, Translation view, Promotional factors.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Romance of the Three Kingdoms, as one of Chinese four great masterpieces, has extremely high research value and dissemination value. The translation and introduction of *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms* embodies the characteristics from abridged translation to complete translation. Thomas' translation of the Death of the Famous Prime Minister Dong Zhuo was serialized three times in the Asia Magazine published in 1820 and 1821, which opened the prelude to the English translation

of the novel. Famous missionaries or diplomats such as John Francis Davis (1820), Samuel Wells Williams (1849), Joseph Edkins (1852), Davello Zelotos Sheffield (1885) and other famous missionaries or diplomats attempted to translate *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. In 1925, the first full translation completed by C. H. Brewitt-Taylor was published by Shanghai Biefu Foreign Company. Moss Roberts has successively published three English translations of *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, namely the 1976 section translation, the 1991

full translation and the 1999 section translation. In 1976, Roberts published an excerpted version of *Three Kingdoms: A Epic Drama*, and the full translation version of *Three Kingdoms: A Historical Novel* in 1991 was jointly published by the University of California Press and China Foreign Languages Press, which was recognized as the classic full translation of *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. As "a model of meticulous academic translation" (West, 1995: 158), *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, Roberts' complete translation, has been widely recognized by researchers in Sinology after its publication. In 1999, Roberts published the second translation of the section, which was published by the University of California Press. This article combines the peritext, such as acknowledgments, afterword and notes, with epitext, such as interviews, the translator, comments by some famous Sinologists and comments by some Chinese scholars, to analyze Roberts' translation view and the promotional factors of the translation, so as to provide reference for the further study of English translation of classics.

II. THE PARATEXT PERSPECTIVE IN TRANSLATION STUDIES

The concept of "paratext" was first proposed by French narrator and literary theorist Gérard Genette in the 1970s. In 1987, in his monograph "Seuils", Genette specifically discussed the issue of paratext, expounding in detail the definition, classification, function, effect, research approach and method of paratext (Genette, 1987). In short, the paratext refers to the linguistic and graphic elements that are not part of the main text in the printed book, but surround the text (main text) that can still affect reading (Wang&Yang, 2012: 104). Genette further divides paratexts into two subcategories: peritext and epitext. The former mainly includes text titles, subtitles, prefaces, epilogues, publication information, dedications, cover patterns, character relationship tables, notes, illustrations, etc., while the latter includes information about the text provided by authors and publishers for readers other than printed books. Book related information, such as interviews with the author, or diary provided by the author, even including the author's gender, age, or a list of all the author's current publications listed on the cover (Genette, 1997: xviii) . "The paratext is of vital importance to

translation studies, because the paratext is an important link that connects the author, translator, publisher, and reader" (Icklar Kocak, 2007: 171). "Paratext research not only has gradually become a new hot spot in the field of translation studies in China in recent five years, but also has become the frontier of research in this field" (Yin & Liu , 2017: 26). "By studying the translation prefaces and postscripts, it is possible to dig out and reveal the translator's translation motives, translation strategies, as well as the translator's personal ideology and translation views" (Xiao, 2011: 18). "Paratext is an very important way to carry Chinese and Western translation thoughts" (Geng, 2016: 106). The paratext of Roberts' translation contains a wealth of information, but it has not been fully and effectively researched. At present, the author has retrieved only 3 studies (Luo, 2010; Zhao, 2013; He, 2017) related to the subtext of the English translation of Roberts' *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. Most of the articles on the English translation of *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms* are based on text research. Luo (2010) interprets the historical details of the translation generated from the acknowledgments, preface and post-capture of Roberts' complete translation and the communication context accepted by the translation. Zhao (2013) analyzes the epilogues and annotations in *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms* translated by Roberts from the perspective of intertextuality. He (2017) compared the image of works constructed by Brewitt-Taylor's translation and Roberts' translation and found that the translation can play a huge role in constructing the image of the work. As it can be seen, the researches related to the paratext of the English translation of Roberts' *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms* mainly concentrate on the peritext, ignoring the epitext.

III. PARATEXTS IN ROBERTS' TRANSLATION

The internal paratext of the 1976 section translation mainly includes the foreword and the postscript. The foreword introduces the historical background of the novel and the main characters and characteristics of the novel. After the main text, there is not only a brief discussion of the dynasty of the original author Luo Guanzhong, but also the original Chinese names corresponding to the selected

chapters of the translation, and a brief introduction to the translator at the end.

The internal subtext of the 1991 full translation contains a wealth of content. Judging from the cover page, Roberts' translation was jointly published by the University of California Press and Foreign Languages Press. Next is the map catalog, including 11 maps such as the Battle of Guandu and the Battle of Chibi. Then there is Roberts' acknowledgment and the preface by John S. Service. At the end of the article, there are postscripts, index of main characters, chronology of major events, index of official positions, terminology and department names appearing in the novel, a list of abbreviations, and detailed notes of each chapter. It is worth noting that there are as many as 1,125 notes by Roberts, which mainly include introductions to historical and cultural background, proper nouns, allusions, etc., as well as comments in Mao Zonggang's criticism book, together with other editions of *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, such as Sanguozhi tongshu yanyi, Sanguozhi, etc., for readers' reference.

Compared with the 1991 full translation, the 1999 version of the section translation has added a preface to the translation, and deleted the endnotes, all maps and explanatory tables in the full translation.

The foreign paratexts of the Roberts' translations analyzed in this article mainly include the famous Sinologists Anthony C. Yu, Frederic Wakeman, Cyril Brich, Patrick Hanan, and some domestic scholars' comments on Roberts' version, as well as Liu Jin's interview with Roberts.

IV. AN INTERPRETATION OF THE PARATEXTS OF THREE KINGDOMS TRANSLATED BY MOSS ROBERTS

Paratext is only an auxiliary means and an appendage of the text. A text without a paratext is like an elephant without a mahout, and it is powerless; a paratext without a text backing is like an uncontrollable maestro, which can only be a stupid performance (Genette, 1997: 410). As an indispensable part of the text, the paratext contains a wealth of information. This article analyzes the content of the paratext to explore Roberts' translation view and the promotion factors of his translation.

1. The translator's view of translation carried by the paratext of *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*

Translation as a cross-language and cross-cultural communication process involves subject (translator), ontology (content), carrier (channel), recipient (target of translation), purpose (translation intent), environment (culture) and effect (The acceptance of the translation in the target language culture) and other factors (Lu & Hou, 1999:59). What is translation view? In translation practice, the translator is "self-aware of the purpose of translation, the information required for the translation task, can self-evaluate the ability to complete the translation task, and has the relevant ability to ensure and evaluate whether the translation is adequate and appropriate" (Kiryaly, 1995: 100). In this part, by studying the paratexts of the translation of *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms* translated by Roberts, it explores Roberts' translation view from the three aspects of translation motivation, reader awareness and translation strategy.

(1) Translation motivation

As a cross-cultural communication activity, translation has a strong purpose, regardless of whether the motivation is political, economic, social, cultural, professional, aesthetic, or both (Xu, 2009). Therefore, it is very important for the translator to understand the purpose of the original translation and the function of the translation (Munday Jeremy, 2014: 79).

Roberts mentioned in the interview that he continued to choose to study Chinese at the graduate level, on the one hand because of his love for Chinese culture, on the other hand because of the driving force of political power, a mission that drove me to let the United States understand the real China. In 1959, the outside world always thought that China was a "barbaric" country. At the same time, the United States was full of "anti-China" voices. However, he believed that Americans misunderstood China and did not understand the Chinese revolution. There was also a lack of understanding of the Chinese historical background in China. The Chinese stories they read in the United States do not seem to be credible and convincing. Roberts mentioned in the postscript of his 1991 translation, "Like other important Chinese classical novels, *the Romance of*

the Three Kingdoms provides Western readers with an opportunity to understand China from a Chinese perspective." It can be seen that one of his goals in translating *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms* is to enable the West to understand the real China, and he pointed out in the 1991 version that the 1976 translation "has its limitations and errors are inevitable. However, I always hope that one day there will be an opportunity to translate the entire work" (Roberts, 1991: x). At that time, China was in the early stage of reform and opening up, and our country was eager to let the world understand Chinese literature and traditional culture through active translation and let the world understand China. Therefore, in 1981, the Beijing Foreign Languages Bureau wrote to him to ask if he would translate the entire book into English. He was very happy. The purpose of translation is often clarified by the wishes, motives or requirements of the client, original author, translator, or relevant personnel. The above guarantees the normal progress of translation activities (Xu, 2005: 5). The consistency of translation purposes between Foreign Language Publishing House and Roberts makes the translation of the full translation of *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms* possible.

(2) Reader awareness

In the translation process, the reader is often an important reason for the translator to make translation decisions. Choosing readers means choosing the reader's "expected horizon" (Tu ; Li, 2007: 47) to meet the cultural needs of specific readers and achieve better communication effects.

When readers read a book, the first thing that catches their eyes is the cover. The text information, design, and material of the cover determine to some extent the reader's interest and love for reading. A major feature of the cover of the full translation in 1991 is the commentary by Professor Anthony C. Yu of the University of Chicago, the *Iliad of China*, which draws in readers with the inherent reading experience of Western readers (Luo, 2010).

Roberts clearly mentioned in the preface of the 1999 section translation that the target audience of this section is "American students who study Asian history and literature and comparative literature" (Roberts, 1999: vii). The translation of this section belongs to university textbooks.

As the target is for university students, Roberts simplified the 1991 full translation and deleted the notes on the main text and the postscript. But at the same time, the title of the translation of this section appears in the form of a serial number, and corresponds to the order of the chapters of the original work. "When readers want to have a deeper understanding of the character characteristics, overall style, and specific events of the original text, such labeling makes it easier for readers to find relevant chapters in the 1991 full translation" (Roberts, 1999: vii), to satisfy the needs of different reader groups. In the preface of the 1999 transcript, he also declares that "when necessary, he added some transitional paragraphs to make a reasonable connection between the selected parts, which is convenient for readers to understand, and at the same time, to a large extent to ensure the integrity of the narrative structure" (Roberts, 1999 : Vii). This shows that Roberts has a strong sense of readership.

As an annotation of the paratext, it also reflects Roberts' readership. In the acknowledgment of its full translation, it is mentioned that "in order to allow Western readers to get the most from reading, a complete set of annotations should be added to the translation, and an extended commentary should be written to the translation" (Roberts, 1991: x).

Example 1

ST : 六月朔，黑气十余丈，飞入温德殿中。(罗贯中，2000 : 4)

TT : And on the first day of the sixth month a murky cloud more than one hundred spans in length floated into the Great Hall of Benign Virtue. (Roberts, 2000 : 5)

Note 8: A span (chi) was slightly under 10 inches. Six chi made a bu (pace); and 300 bu made a li, about one-third of a mile. (Roberts, 2000 : 546)

"Zhang" is a unique unit of length in China. Roberts translated one zhang into ten feet. Knowing that Western readers are not familiar with ancient Chinese length, he introduced the relationship between feet and inches, as well as feet, steps, li and meters. Through annotations, readers can understand the differences in weights and measures between the East and the West.

Example 2

ST: 玄德遂以己志告之，云长大喜。（罗贯中·2000：12）

TT: Xuande then told of his own ambitions, to Lord Guan's great satisfaction. (Roberts, 2000 : 13)

Note23: For the reader's convenience the three heroes will be called Xuande, Lord Guan, and Zhang Fei unless the context requires the use of their other names. (Roberts, 2000 : 547)

In addition to the character and number, the names of ancient Chinese also replaced personal names with place names, official titles, posthumous names, etc. For instance, Liu Bei has titles such as Xuande, Liu Yuzhou, Xuzhou Mu, and Han Zhaolie Emperor. For foreign readers, if a person changes names frequently, it is difficult for the reader to identify the same person. In the commentary, Moss Roberts clearly stated that he unified the translation of Liu Bei, Guan Yu and Zhang Fei for the convenience of readers.

Example 3:

ST: “千里草，何青青！十日上，不得生！

卓问李肃曰：“童谣主何吉凶？”（罗贯中·2000：208）

TT : A thousand li of green, green grass

Beyond the tenth day, one can't last.

"What is the meaning of the rhyme?" asked Zhuo. (Roberts , 2000 : 209)

Note 6: These are visual puns : the Chinese graphs for "thousand," "li," and "grass" make up the graph for Dong, and the graphs for "divining," "ten," and "day" make up the graph for Zhuo. (Roberts, 2000 : 555)

"Thousand Miles of Grass" means Dong; "Ten Days" means Zhuo. No life means death, which implies that Dong Zhuo will die soon. In Chinese, this belongs to the usage of analyzing characters. However, translation readers who do not understand Chinese characters cannot make such associations, let alone understand the meaning correctly. The translator supplements relevant background knowledge by means of annotations, so that the target reader can understand the target text as the source reader

understands the original text, and resonate with the source reader in terms of thoughts and emotions.

The translator helps readers understand the content of the text very well through annotations. But at the same time, Roberts' translation has as many as 1215 notes, which are as short as a few words and are as long as several hundred words. In order not to impair the fluency of readers' reading, except for the three notes in the preface at the end of the preamble, all other notes are placed at the end of the text. This can ensure the fluency of the reader's reading. At the same time, if the reader encounters dyslexia or wants to know relevant background information, he can also consult the notes at the end of the article. In addition, due to the large number of notes, for the convenience of readers, all notes are sorted by chapter.

(3) Translation Strategy

"Translation strategy is a collection of principles and plans adopted to achieve a specific translation purpose in translation activities" (Xiong, 2014: 83).

The purpose of translation determines the translation strategy to a certain extent. Roberts (2018) mentioned in the interview that he uses domestication strategy, and he believes that translation should be in natural and fluent English. Regarding the expression of the cultural characteristics of the two countries that are quite different, he will use footnotes to explain the characteristics of Chinese culture, taking into account the obstacles to the understanding of Eastern culture by Western readers. For example, the word "huang jin" in the first episode literally means "yellow scarf". For the target readers, it is difficult to associate it with the rebel army. Roberts explained through annotations that "yellow" is the color used by the royal family, and the character "turban" is part of the Chinese character "di". Legend has it that Liu Bang once killed the White Snake when he was not in a hurry. The snake is the white emperor's son, and the killer is the red emperor's son. Therefore, Liu Bang was still red when he came to power. Liu Xiu is a descendant of Liu Bang. He wants to defend his morality and promote himself as the King of Fire Virtue, and he is still a red-haired man. Roberts pointed out that "yellow" represents the soil of China's "five elements theory", and soil restrains fire. In addition, Wang Mang preached "Exhaustion of Red

Virtue" and "Huang De rejuvenated" in order to "abolish Liu and rejuvenate the king." At the end of the Eastern Han Dynasty, the imperial family declined, and the superstition of "replacing red with yellow" rose again. In the second year of Lingdi Xiping two years, that is, eleven years before the Yellow Turban Uprising, "the people of Luoyang said that there were yellow people in the east wall of the Huben Temple, describing the beasts, eyebrows, and tens of thousands of people, and the province knew it, and the roads were cut off." In fact, it was rain eroded the walls, and the color was mottled and yellow. This sensational incident in Beijing shows that the "yellow, the color of the Han" has been deeply rooted in the hearts of the people. In the dark age full of superstitions in the Five Elements, the peasant class will inevitably be affected. Ma Mian, the revolutionary leader who predates the Yellow Turban Uprising more than 40 years ago, wore yellow clothes and was called the Yellow Emperor. Zhang Jiao's uprising put forward the slogan "Yellow Heaven should stand." This slogan is a reflection of "Huang De Dangxing". The translator explained through the notes that the behavior of wearing the yellow scarf was prohibited by the laws of the time. Therefore, the Yellow Turban Army also represented the insurgent army, and it also indicated that the comment was out, which was well-founded. The translator explained the historical background knowledge and related cultural information with detailed notes, so that readers can understand the culture with Chinese characteristics. In the interview, Roberts, if footnotes cannot solve the problem of translation, he will choose the way of interpretation to translate.

2. Interpreting the Recommendation Factors of the Translated Version From the Paratext

(1) Translator's subjectivity

"Translator's subjectivity refers to the subjective initiative shown by the translator as the subject of translation in translation activities for the purpose of realizing the purpose of the translation under the premise of respecting the target of translation" (Cha & Tian, 2003: 22).

Roberts received a bachelor's degree in Columbia University, a master's degree in English, and a doctorate in

Chinese in 1958, 1960, and 1966. Roberts' research interests include ancient Chinese, ancient literature and philosophy, Chinese history, modern Chinese, Asian literature and philosophy. He has a solid foundation in Sinology, is a member of the American Society for Oriental Studies and the Institute of Oriental Thought and Research at Columbia University, and the editor-in-chief of the Journal of Asian Scholars. *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms* is a long war novel containing the traditional culture, history, wisdom, and folk customs of Chinese feudal society. It is also a chapter-style novel integrating military strategy, politics, and management. The translation of *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms* is a huge and complicated Engineering. Therefore, before translating *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, Roberts had made sufficient preparations. He said in the interview that only by understanding the background of Chinese history and classic literature can he better interpret *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. He has studied Chinese classical literature and read a lot of Chinese literary works. Reading "Mencius" helped him understand Liu Bei's character. A thorough reading of Tao De Jing made him understand Kong Ming's character, because learning "Taoism" and "Confucian" knowledge laid the foundation for understanding Kong Ming's character. Kong Ming began to appear as a Taoist in *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. Then came the image of a Confucian military officer who was loyal to Liu Bei. In addition, he is also familiar with various related history books, and specifically studied the history book *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, because *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms* is a literature adapted on the basis of Sanguozhi, which is more than a thousand years later and that is the Original Version of *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. When Luo Guanzhong in the Ming Dynasty wrote the story material of *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, he quoted a large number of Yuanqu stories, and Moss Roberts was also familiar with "Yuanqu" and other related dramatic literature. At the same time, he also mentioned that only by familiarizing with the "past" literature can we lay a good foundation for translation and ensure the quality of translation, and be rigorous.

It can also be seen from the abbreviations table later that Roberts is not only satisfied with the translation of the

original version of *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms* by Mao Lun and Mao Zonggang's version. He also referred to other editions and read the related literature of *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. "The *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* has many editions. There are about 30 existing Ming Dynasty publications and more than 70 Qing Dynasty publications" (Shen, 2004: 150). In order to give readers a complete and accurate annotation, Moss Roberts refers to *Sanguozhi tongsu yanyi* of the Ming Dynasty, Chen Shou's *Sanguozhi* and *Sanguozhi pinghua*. Sometimes to provide different versions of content is for error correction, sometimes it is for readers to have the opportunity to compare different versions, and sometimes it is to provide complete background information and portray characters. The translator also referred to the related literature of *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, such as Fan Ye's *Hou Hanshu*, Sima Guang's *Shi ji* and *Zizhi tongjian*, *Sanguo yanyi chuanguo lun* written by Ye Weisi and Mao Xin, *Sanguoyany lunwenji* published by Zhongzhou guji chubanshe, *Sanguo yanyi zonghengtan* by Qiu Zhensheng, *Sanguo yanyi xuekan* and *Sanguo yanyi yanjiu ji* published by the Sichuan-sheng shehui kexueyuan chubanshe, as well as *Sanguo yanyi ziliao huibian* edited by Zhu Yixuan and Liu Yuchen, in order to achieve the purpose of understanding the original text.

Roberts not only attaches importance to the understanding of the original text, but also strives to achieve the same stylistic style of the original text and the target text. It took 15 years for Moss Roberts to translate *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. He mentioned in an interview (2018) that he would use the "Modern Dictionary" to look up unfamiliar Chinese characters and look at the meaning of a word in context. In the process of translation, he will refer to different styles for translation. Narrative, dialogue, poetry, etc. have their own English expression styles. Use footnotes to explain the characteristics of Chinese culture. Therefore, "Roberts' translation is based on context, translating vocabulary lively; translating individuality, reproducing image; attaching importance to language style and having unique characteristics" (Zhang, 2001: 49).

It was Roberts' rigorous attitude that promoted the birth of the classic translation in 1991 and became a "model for academic translation" (Guo & Luo, 2015: 101).

Roberts' excellent translators laid a good foundation for the promotion of *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*.

(2) Patron

In the book *Translation, Rewriting, and Manipulation of Literary Reputation*, Lefevere (1992) proposed the concept of patronage and defined it as a force that promotes or hinders a force, including individuals and institutions.

From the cover page, we can see that the full translation in 1991 was published jointly by the University of California Press and Foreign Languages Press. Founded in 1952, Foreign Languages Publishing House is a large-scale comprehensive international publishing organization specializing in translating and publishing Chinese national conditions and Chinese cultural books to foreign countries. With the purpose of "explaining China in foreign languages, and communicating the world with books", it is committed to spread China's splendid civilization. In the acknowledgment, Roberts mentioned that in 1982, Luo Liang, then deputy editor-in-chief of Foreign Languages Publishing House, invited Roberts to translate the entire *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* for Foreign Languages Publishing House, "I hope to convey Chinese culture to Western readers. Let more people understand one of Chinese four classic classics *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, and learn about China through *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*" (Luo, 2013: 57). Deputy Editor-in-Chief Mr. Luo Liang and Israel Epstein arranged for Roberts to visit China from 1983 to 1984 and acted as foreign experts in foreign language publishing houses. During Roberts' translation process, Deputy President Xu Mingqiang and Deputy Editor-in-Chief Huang Youyi not only provided much convenience for Roberts, but also arranged for C. C. Yin (Ren Jiazhen) to proofread. Roberts mentioned in his acknowledgements that "Mr. Ren carefully proofreads everything. For the translation, some of his suggestions for revision have greatly improved the quality of the translation." The invitation and help of foreign language publishing houses made the full translation of *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms* possible.

The University of California Press, founded in 1893, is one of the largest academic publishing organizations in

the United States and the only university publishing house under a multi-campus public university in the United States. Roberts mentioned in his acknowledgment that in 1984, Brian Gorgee of the University of California Press visited a foreign language publishing house, prompting the two publishing houses to jointly publish the English translation of *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. Later, William McClung and William McClung of the University of California James Clark and Zhao Yihe of Foreign Languages Publishing House carefully arranged related matters of co-publishing. Recommendations from the University of California Press and Foreign Languages Press have ensured the issuance of the translated version and promoted the dissemination of the translated version.

(3) Comments and introductions by well-known sinologists

Anthony C. Yu, Barker Professor of Humanities at the University of Chicago, and the only committee member of the School of Theology, Department of Comparative Literature, Department of English, Department of East Asian and Social Thought for nearly 40 years. He is currently a Barker of the school Professor of Literature Lectures retired. Anthony C. Yu is also an academician of the Academia Sinica in Taiwan and the National Humanities of the United States, and was honored as a communications researcher at the Institute of Chinese Literature and Philosophy of the Academia Sinica. Anthony C. Yu has translated *Journey to the West* (four volumes) to the academic world. In addition to "Rereading the Stone" and various papers, he also has "Parnassus Revisited" (Parnassus Revisited: Modern Critical Essays on the Epic Tradition and "Morphologies of Faith: Essays in Religion and Culture in Honor of Nathan A. Scott, Jr.", "The Collection of Anthony C. Yu's Journey to the West", "Rereading Stones""The Desire and Fiction in Li", "Looking at China's Politics and Religion Issues from the Perspective of History and Text" and several theses. Anthony C. Yu (2004) commented, "*Three Kingdoms* gives us the Iliad of China. "Iliad" is an important work of ancient Greek literature and one of the entire Western classics. His comment not only closes the distance with the reader, but also stimulates the reader's desire to read *Three Kingdoms*. "First of the five great works of traditional prose fiction", it can be seen that *the Romance of the Three*

Kingdoms has a high status in China. If Western readers want to understand Chinese classical novels, this book is a must-read. "This master narrative transforms history into epic and has thereby educated and entertained readers for five centuries with unforgettable exemplars of martial and civic virtue, of personal fidelity and political treachery. Moss Roberts's translation is of surpassing excellence and impeccable scholarship. It should delight and captivate Western readers for many years to come." The introduction of the content and value of the book make readers want to see and understand the history of China and the stories of the characters in the text. "Roberts' translation is super beautiful and academic. In the years to come, this book will bring the joy and charm of reading to Western readers." The final evaluation of the quality of the translation shows that the translation is as exciting as the original, so readers can rest assured read.

Patrick Hanan, a New Zealander, whose main research fields are: Jinxue and Hongxue studies, studies of Chinese vernacular novels, studies of writer Li Yu in the early Qing Dynasty, studies of Chinese novels in the 19th century, especially romance novels in the late Qing Dynasty and the study of modern literature. He is one of the most accomplished experts in the study of Chinese classical novels in the United States, and he has many insights into Chinese classical novels. Hannan (1991) commented, "A martial epic with an astonishing fidelity to history, which has been translated into lively English by Moss Roberts. ... The subject matter of *Three Kingdoms* has long held an extraordinary grip on the Chinese imagination. ... No less an authority than Mao Zedong asserted that when he set out on the campaigns that would ultimately bring him to power, *Three Kingdoms* was the book he valued most." This fully affirmed the value of *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*.

Frederic Wakeman, American sinologist and historian, professor at the University of California, Berkeley, former president of the American Historical Society and the Society for Social Sciences, president of the American Council for International Studies, president of the Joint Committee for Chinese Studies, and American academic groups Chairman of the Council and Chairman of the Chinese Research Civilization Committee of the Council of American Academic Societies. Shi Jingqian

praised him as the best Chinese historian since 1980. Wakeman's work was awarded the Levinson Prize by the American Association for Asian Studies in 1987, and the Berkeley Prize by the University of California Press in 1987. The best book on the history of non-North American cities from the American Urban History Association. He was awarded the highest medal of Berkeley for his outstanding contributions to the education of Chinese Studies in the United States and the University of California, Berkeley. Wakeman (1991) commented, "Moss Roberts's elegant and powerful translation of China's most important historical romance has a stunning directness that aptly conveys the dramatic boldness of the original episodic narrative. English readers may now finally understand why this fifteenth-century novel so strategically shaped the political worldview of generations of Chinese", which shows the high quality of Roberts' translation.

In addition to the above-mentioned Sinologists, the famous Sinologist Cyril Brich (2004) commented that "A superb translation. The style is excellent: lively, natural dialogue; vigorous prose in battle descriptions; dignified phrasing where called for. This translation is no less than classic", which indicates that Roberts' translation is a rare masterpiece. Cyril Brich is an American Sinologist. He received a bachelor's degree in Modern Chinese Literature in 1948. His doctoral dissertation is the first British thesis on the study of "Ancient and Modern Novels" (Ku-chin hsiao-shuo: A Critical Examination). From 1963 to 1964, he was a fellow of the American Council of Academic Societies and a fellow of the Guggenheim Foundation Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, and one of the editorial board members of China Quarterly. Tang Xianzu's "The Peony Pavilion" independently translated by Baizhi was published in the Hong Kong journal "Renditions".

The comments of several authoritative Sinologists fully affirmed the value of the original work of *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms* and the quality of the translation, provided a good environment for the promotion of Roberts' translation, and promoted the spread of the English translation of Roberts.

V. CONCLUSION

The Romance of the Three Kingdoms has been given many prestigious names in the history of Chinese literature, such as "the originator of Chinese historical novels" and "one of China's four great classics", and has had a great influence on world literature. Roberts' translation is a recognized classic and has important research value. This article takes Roberts' translation of *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms* as its object. Firstly, it interprets the translator's perspective on translation from the perspectives of translation purpose, readership and translation strategy. It is found that Roberts' translation motivation of *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms* is mainly for introducing Chinese culture. What's more, Roberts always keep readers in mind and has a strong sense of readership. Therefore, he mainly adopts domestication strategies and uses a lot of annotations. Secondly, we interpret the promotion factors of Roberts' translation from the paratext and find the translator's erudite and rigorous attitude, the cooperation of Chinese and foreign publishing houses, and the evaluation of well-known Sinologists have all promoted the spread and acceptance of *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. At present, there are a few researches on Roberts' translation view. In addition, Luo (2010) and other studies on the introduction factors of the translation ignore the subjectivity of the translator. This research studies Roberts' translation view from the perspective of paratext, and hopes that it can be used to promote the in-depth study of Roberts' translation view. This article takes into account the great role of Roberts' own erudition and rigorous attitude in the production and promotion of the translation of *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. From Roberts' translation view and the promotional factors of the translated version, it is not difficult to see that "translation is game" (Han, 2009: 65). The foreign translation of classics can not only coordinate the relationship between translators, readers, and patrons, but also promote the dissemination of translated texts and contribute Chinese culture to go out.

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