

## Power play in translation production: An archival study of the agents involved in *The Story of the Stone*

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*Hong Lou Meng* is a masterpiece of Chinese literature that has been translated and retranslated multiple times. The English version entitled *The Story of the Stone*, rendered by David Hawkes and John Minford, has gained high prestige in academia. The published volumes are not merely the efforts of translators, but the cooperation of multiple agents. The agents, including editors, translators and experts, exert their authority over the final presentation through various interventions in the publication. This study delves into the invisible practices behind the publication, puts agents on the spot and examines their roles and influences on how the translation is presented to the Anglophone readers. To investigate these activities in the production process, this study draws upon the primary sources, such as letters, agreements, and memos, collected from the Penguin Archive, which offers crucial access to the working conditions and practices in procedure, shed light on the role of agents and reveal the microhistory of the translation. Adopting a sociological approach, the study analyses the interaction between the agents in order to examine their mediation and the power play in the process. These agents endowed with different levels of power condition the procedure of the translation project and influence its formation and reception in the target culture.