

Translating Existentialism in the Cold War: The comparative reception of Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus in three USIS-funded journals in Taiwan

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This paper investigates the reception of Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus in Taiwan during the Cultural Cold War by focusing on three USIS-funded journals. The researchers analyze archival materials through the lens of Lefevre's (1992) concept of patronage to investigate the patronage networks shaping the reception of Sartre and Camus, then applies Baker's (2006) narrative theory to examine the public narratives about these writers created by the translations and the paratextual materials surrounding them, and how these public narratives were shaped by the meta-narrative of the Cold War. The researchers find that, while the public narratives about Sartre and Camus were completely different, all their works were subject to the patrons' ideological influence. Works by Sartre and Camus that aligned with the Cold War meta-narrative in Taiwan were selected while works that ran against the that narrative were de-selected. At the same time, almost all the works of Camus and Sartre selected were translated faithfully, except for some sensitive words and sentences regarding communism. Censorship took place primarily in the selection of works and in their packaging rather than in the process of translation itself. Also, censorship has both a repressive and a productive aspect. Although the selection and publication of articles published in the journals were subject to multiple controls and censorship during the Cold War, many of Sartre's books and articles and French leftist thoughts were able to reach Taiwan, thanks to clever strategies of translators, editors, publishers, critics, and other agents.

Keywords: USIS-funded journals; Jean-Paul Sartre; Albert Camus; Taiwan; the Cultural Cold War; public narratives