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► Images of Bohemia: The Translation of Czech Literature in Taiwan and Mainland China

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doi:10.29912/CTR.201909_12(2).0005

編譯論叢, 12(2), 2019

Compilation and Translation Review, 12(2), 2019

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頁數/Page：173-207

出版日期/Publication Date：2019/09

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Images of Bohemia: The Translation of Czech Literature in Taiwan and Mainland China

Melissa Shih-hui Lin

“Bohemia” is the historically rich and traditional name of the Czech lands or Czechia (i.e., the Czech Republic, the latter being its current official name). This term may suggest to us a “romantic” image, perhaps a romantic atmosphere and wandering, carefree style, though it is a word that cannot be defined precisely. Or perhaps a specific ethnic group will first come to mind, and/or a piece of land in Eastern Europe. Even in our so-called era of globalization, there still remains a great “cultural distance” between Chinese culture and Eastern European culture. Literary translation is of course an important bridge between Chinese and Czech culture, even if the translation itself is inevitably influenced by cultural differences. These differences are absorbed into the translated content – either intentionally or unintentionally – and thus affect the reader’s understanding. This paper investigates the development of translations of Czech literary texts in Taiwan and Mainland China during three periods: the period before 1989, when the Soviet iron curtain collapsed; the late 1990s, when translations of Czech literature in simplified Chinese characters were being increasingly re-published in Taiwan; and our contemporary period, in which we have Czech literary translations in both Taiwan and Mainland China. This study also introduces and discusses the results of a questionnaire, one which focuses on the image of Bohemia in East Asia, and the Taiwanese people’s understanding of Czech literature. This paper provides a comprehensive description of Czech literary translations in Taiwan and Mainland China, and further explores the impact of literary choices on the creation of Bohemian images in Taiwanese society.

Keywords: translation of Czech literature, images of Bohemia, Taiwan, Mainland China

Received: April 10, 2018

Revised: August 10, 2018, December 3, 2018, January 6, 2019

Accepted: June 5, 2019

波西米亞意象？——臺灣與中國的捷克文學翻譯

林蒔慧

本文從「波西米亞」一詞的意象出發，探討文學翻譯作品對跨文化認識的重要性。藉由問卷調查，本文驗證了臺灣民眾普遍對捷克以及捷克文學的了解過於侷限，探究原因除了市場需求所反映出來的翻譯數量外，翻譯本身的品質以及文學作品的選擇也是重要因素。本文更進一步整理並檢視臺灣與中國的捷克文學翻譯作品，映證兩岸政策與需求的不同，不僅直接反映在翻譯作品的選擇上，同時也間接地影響了兩岸讀者對捷克文學與文化的詮釋以及所獲得的捷克意象。除此之外，因政策導致的捷克語翻譯人才的斷層，更是未來捷克文學翻譯發展在華語世界的隱憂。

關鍵詞：捷克文學翻譯、波西米亞意象、臺灣、中國

收件：2018年4月10日

修改：2018年8月10日、2018年12月3日、2019年1月6日

接受：2019年6月5日

Introduction

Literature is an art. Reading literature can also be an artistic or aesthetic experience that has something in common with other aesthetic experiences, such as listening to music, watching dance, or looking at paintings (Miller, 1980, p. 3). Literature, as other aesthetic experiences, can sometimes bring us metaphors. The way inspiration flashes through the heart like lightning flashes over the earth, instantly illuminating the entire hidden landscape. As Zitlow (1997) stated:

One criterion used to determine if a literary piece is considered to be an artistic work is whether it succeeds in evoking in the mind of the reader vivid, lasting images that contribute to a feeling of possibility, even of believability. (pp. 413-414)

As the idea put forward by Fox (1994), “language and images are inextricably linked — in how we generate them, how we make meaning from them, how we use them, and how we remember them” (p. 11). From another perspective, Derrida (1997) considers that the image plays the role of a supplement to the text (p. 309). “It opens an empty space to be filled by the activity of the reader’s imagination. Ideally, it completes the text in the reader’s mind, in the world it projects, in the ‘spaces’ between its words” (Preminger & Brogan, 1993, p. 558). In addition, the words we read and the images we see are abstract concepts that are produced in reality and are chosen and produced by someone. When others carefully select words and create them to construct the birth of image in our minds, we are responding to elements of written works that contribute to literary value. Hence, the influence power of literature shall never be underestimated.

In the field of translation literature, the situation is even more complicated. According to Lefevere (1992, p. 15), translation is the rewriting or manipulation of the original text, and is mainly influenced by three social and cultural factors, including ideology, dominant poetics and patronage, which will also be discussed later in this paper. These above factors determine the process of translation, and thus the cultural representations literature produces. For example, ideology can limit the selected themes and the way of presentations. Dominant poetics can be interpreted as literary devices and the concept of the role of literature, which is relevant to the relation between literature itself and the social system. Patronage can be understood as power, which usually focuses more on literary ideology than on poetics. In addition to power, patronage also includes parameters related to the translator's economic survival rules (Lefevere, 1985, p. 227) or is treated as a global control factor, for example, by adjusting royalties and production costs both domestically and internationally (Lefevere, 2000, pp. 245-246). According to Lefevere (1992, p. 39), during the process of translation, ideology and patronage are the factors prior to poetics. This argument also corresponds to what Thomson-Wohlge-muth (2007, p. 94) points out: Translation can also be a tool for government policy, which helps to strengthen specific ideologies.

The process of foreign literature translation is challenging, not to mention relatively less used languages such as Czech, in part because of the relatively small demand for translation in the market. Weak market demand can help reduce the publication of translations and, consequently, reduce the impact on cultural representations. According to Deleuze, Guattari, and Brinkley (1983), the Czech literature in the Chinese-speaking world can be described as a “minor literature,” which “is not the literature of a minor language but the literature a minority makes in a major language” (p. 16). Czech is one of the relatively less used languages in Mainland China and in Taiwan, but it does not mean

that its majority status in its own territory can be neglected. The situation of the Czech literature in Mainland China and Taiwan is involved in so-called deterritorialization (Deleuze et al., 1983, p. 18). Bukova (2014) also stated:

To translate from major to minor languages is the natural thing to do. That is the natural direction of the flow of information, incontrovertible as a law of nature. The opposite: to translate from minor to major languages is an act carried out against the law of gravity. (p. 228)

In short, the reasons that could attract the attentions of readers, translators or publishers to a “minor literature” are probably the exoticism, emotional motivation, the figure of a well-known and successful author, or historical and political affections.

This paper first discusses the meaning of the term “Bohemia.” Next, discussions on the results of the questionnaire on the image of Bohemia and the understanding of Czech literature among the people in Taiwan will be focused. Finally, the author investigates the development of Czech literary translations in Taiwan and in Mainland China during three periods: the period before 1989, the year the iron-curtain collapsed; the late 1990s, when more and more translations of Czech literature in simplified Chinese characters were re-published in Taiwan; thirdly, the current development of Czech literary translations in Taiwan and Mainland China. The motivation behind this subject is deeply related to the translation of Czech literature in Taiwan and China and the image of Bohemia, mainly because of the belief that “the image can complete the text in the reader’s mind, and in the world it projects” (Preminger & Brogan, 1993, p. 558). When Chinese-speaking readers read the translations of Czech literature, they not only read the text, but also create another “space”

in the text, matching their interpretation of the Czech/Bohemian image in order to understand the text in the context of cultural history. Therefore, the investigation and analysis of whether the translation of Czech literature helps readers understand Czech/Bohemia is the main goal of this paper.

In brief, this paper serves as the pioneer to open a new perspective, commencing translation studies of relatively less used languages in Taiwan, and also is the first to focus on the translations of Czech literature in Taiwan and Mainland China. It prepares summaries of the translations of Czech literature in simplified and traditional Chinese characters. These summaries offer not only a comprehensive description of the development of Czech literary translations, but also present the selection of Czech literary translations in the Chinese-speaking society. For example, the translation of *Václav Havel: The Authorized Biography* (詩人政治家哈維爾) in Taiwan and the translation of Julius Fučík's *Notes from the Gallows* (絞刑架下的報告) in Mainland China present a certain amount of interesting contrast, which will be further discussed in the fifth part of this paper. With the evolution of the times, it seems to be the right time to review the translation development of Czech literature in Taiwan and Mainland China, and its influence on Czech/Bohemia understanding of these Chinese readers.

Bohemia versus Czech

Bohemia belongs to the historic and traditional name of the Czech lands or Czechia (i.e., the Czech Republic, the latter being its current official title). The term simultaneously constructs a wide variety of images and is a word that is also difficult to define precisely. If we look at its denotation, a term in semantics involving the relationship between a linguistic unit and the non-linguistic entities which it refers to (Crystal, 1991, p. 97), its denotative meaning

is “a region forming the western part of the Czech Republic. Formerly a Slavic kingdom, it became a province of the newly formed Czechoslovakia by the Treaty of Versailles in 1919” (Bohemia, 2019, para. 2). This word, on the other hand, has a connotation at the same time, referring to the personal or communal emotional associations pointed out by the linguistic unit (Crystal, 1991, p. 74). The connotative meanings of a word usually coexist with denotative meanings. The connotations of Bohemia are particularly evident in the related term “Bohemians,” which has been used since the mid-19th century to describe “socially unconventional, artistic people and the areas they frequent, viewed collectively” (Bohemia, 2019, para. 1). The term “Bohemia” should be viewed from the following perspectives. First, historically, the Indo-Celts settled in the land of Bohemia in the middle of the first century BC. At the time, a Celtic tribe named Boii settled there, making it the earliest inhabitant of the region (Rankin, 1996, p. 16). At that time, the Greeks and Romans who were familiar with the Celts called Boii’s land “Boiohaemum.” During the Middle Ages, scholars who used Latin writing borrowed the names of Roman geographers and named them “Bohemii” or “Bohemani” tribes and the land of “Bohemia” (Charvát, 2010, p. 5). In the first century BC, the Germans moved in and in the 6th century the Slavs further moved into Bohemia. When the Holy Roman Empire, dominated by the Germanic, evolved to be more powerful, the Germanic aristocracy in the Bohemian region established an independent kingdom, the kingdom of Bohemia. After the 14th century, the Habsburg monarchs ruled Bohemia but it was still an independent kingdom. In 1743, Bohemia became a province of Habsburg-Lorraine, where the official language was German and the Czech was used as a dialect. After World War I, the Austro-Hungarian Empire split. Bohemia became part of a new state in Eastern Europe, Czechoslovakia. It later became the Czech Republic in 1993. In the Czech Republic, although “Czech” and “Bohemia”

were used synonymously, “Czech” became the official term in the period 1919 to 1938 and between 1945 and 1993, thereby promoting the idea of a unified Czechoslovakia (Tuma & Panek, 2018).

Second, in terms of geography, Bohemia is an ancient Central and Eastern European geographical name, referring to land containing plains, plateaus and hills, surrounded by low mountains. This land currently belongs to the Czech Republic, accounting for two-thirds of the country’s area, approximately 20,367 square miles, with a total area of 30,450 square miles (Bohemia, n.d., para. 5).

Third, etymologically, the term “Bohemia” is derived from the Latin word “Boiohaemum,” which is composed of the prefix “Boii-,” a tribal name, and the old Germanic lexical stem “xaim-,” denoting “homeland” (Teich, 1998, p. 27). On the other hand, the term “Czech” was derived from one tribal name of the Slaves, who moved to this region in the 6th century.

Finally discussed, in literature and art, the term “Bohemia” has different referential meanings. In 1623, the land Bohemia in Shakespeare’s *The Winter’s Tale* refers to a place with deserts and seashore. In 1845, Henri Murger’s *Scènes de la Vie de Bohème* expressed another meaning of Bohemia, widely used in France during the 19th century, referring to the French Gypsy crowd supposedly from Bohemian region. In 1896, Giacomo Puccini’s opera *La Bohème* further promoted Henri Murger’s notion of Bohemia. Later, a new term “Bohemianism” appeared, meaning “socially unconventional in an artistic way” (Bohemianism, n.d., para. 1).

At this point, when we return to discuss the subject of this paper, questions arise: What does the term “Bohemia” mean nowadays? How is this meaning produced in contemporary Chinese society? Although the original meaning of the term “Bohemia” refers to the historic and traditional name of a region of the Czech lands, whilst in the Czech language the term “Bohemia” can be replaced by the term “Czech.” Our survey reveals that most Taiwanese

are more familiar with the use of the term “Bohemian” to imply “socially unconventional in an artistic way,” without realizing the connection between “Bohemia” and “Czech.” As mentioned in the first part of this paper, the literature is one of the main sources of image creation. In Taiwan, or broadly speaking, in Chinese-speaking society, Czech literature is translated relatively less than other so-called mainstream languages such as English, French, and German. On the other hand, the choice of translation of Czech literature also reveals the control from the government, publishers, markets and so on, which will be discussed further later (please see the fifth part of this paper). Therefore, when we return to the questions mentioned at the beginning of this paper: Does the translation of Czech literature support the understanding of Czech/Bohemia by these Chinese readers? Or does the image of Bohemia originate from the reading of translations of Czech literature, and is it consistent with the alleged meaning of the term?

Methodology

In this paper, we investigated the attitudes and opinions of the Czech literature translation in Taiwan. Our survey has a total of 451 respondents.¹ The age distribution of the respondents was as follows: 20-30 (31.5%), 30-40 (24.8%) and 40-50 (21.1%) (see Figure 1). This age distribution may reflect the participation of people who are used to the Internet as restricted by the survey channel. On the other hand, it also reveals the research limitations of this research method. Due to the use of an online questionnaire, respondents are usually of a younger generation, highly educated and well skilled at using the Internet. Hence, the result of the survey cannot fully reflect the overall situation in Taiwan and Mainland China, but it still can help to present images

¹ This questionnaire survey was conducted from June 5th to June 20th in 2017.

of Bohemia as seen by this target group in Taiwan, its understanding of Czech literature, and the relation between images of Bohemia and understanding of Czech literature.

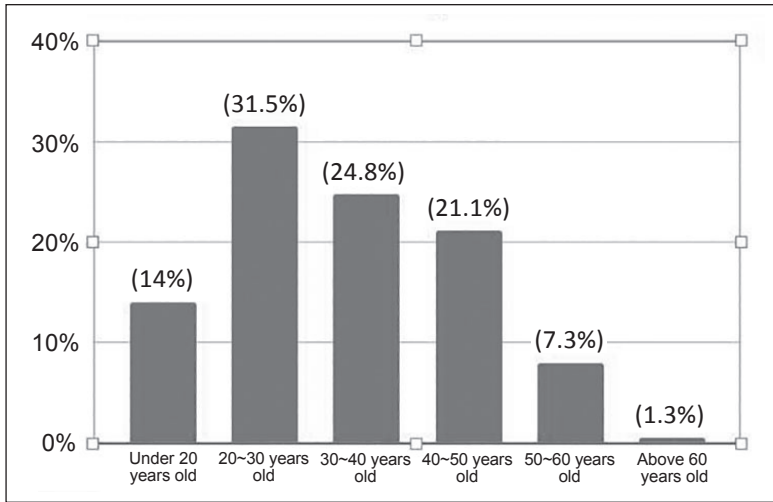


Fig. 1 Age distribution of the participants in this survey

According to Ackroyd and Hughes (1981), there are three types of surveys: (a) factual surveys, which are used to collect descriptive information, i.e., the government census; (b) attitude surveys, which, rather than attempting to gather descriptive information, collect and measure people's attitudes and opinions; (c) explanatory surveys, which go beyond the collection of data and aim to test theories and hypotheses and/or to produce new theory. In this paper, our survey is closer to attitude surveys, in order to perform an opinion poll on one specific issue. Ackroyd and Hughes further pointed out that the application of questionnaires for surveys has the following benefits: (a) it is practical; (b) enormous amounts of information can be collected from a large population in a short period of time and in a relatively cost effective way; (c) it can be carried out by the researcher or by any number of people with limited effect

on its validity and reliability; (d) the results of the questionnaires can usually be quickly and easily quantified by either a researcher or through the use of a software package; (e) it can be analyzed more “scientifically” and objectively than other forms of research; (f) when data has been quantified, it can be used to compare and contrast other research and may be used to measure change; (g) positivists believe that quantitative data can be used to create new theories and/or test existing hypotheses. However, there also exist some disadvantages, for example: (a) it can be argued that surveys are inadequate to understand some forms of information (i.e., changes of emotions, behavior, feelings etc.); (b) there is no way to tell how truthful a respondent is being; (c) there is no way of telling how much thought a respondent has put in; (d) people may read each question differently and therefore reply according to their own interpretation of the question.

The questionnaire used in our research was divided into three parts: The first part collected the basic information about the participants; the second part involved the respondents’ impressions and images of Bohemia; the final part was discussed about their understanding of Czech literature. A total of 18 questions were provided to the participants and they were asked to complete the questionnaire within 20 minutes.

Discussion of Survey Results

As mentioned in the third part above, through analysis of the general background of the participants, we observed that most of them had received postsecondary education (68.1%). Almost all of them had competence in at least one foreign language (91.6%). A total of 36.8% of the participants were competent in two foreign languages, and 20.6% were competent in more than two foreign languages. English was a foreign language which most participants

can use (98.9%), and 120 participants further indicated that they had studied English for more than 10 years. In short, the participants in this survey had a high level of foreign language competence and knowledge of foreign culture, all of whom were highly educated in Taiwanese society.

Our questions inquiry whether reading literature is one of the channels through which they are exposed to foreign cultures or objects, and to explore the time they spend in reading. In Figure 2, the result showed that 51% of the participants spent one to five hours per week in reading, and 23.1% spent six to ten hours. Only 14.6% of the participants spent less than one hour reading. This result pointed out that reading shall be one of the important channels for these participants to contact new culture or objects.

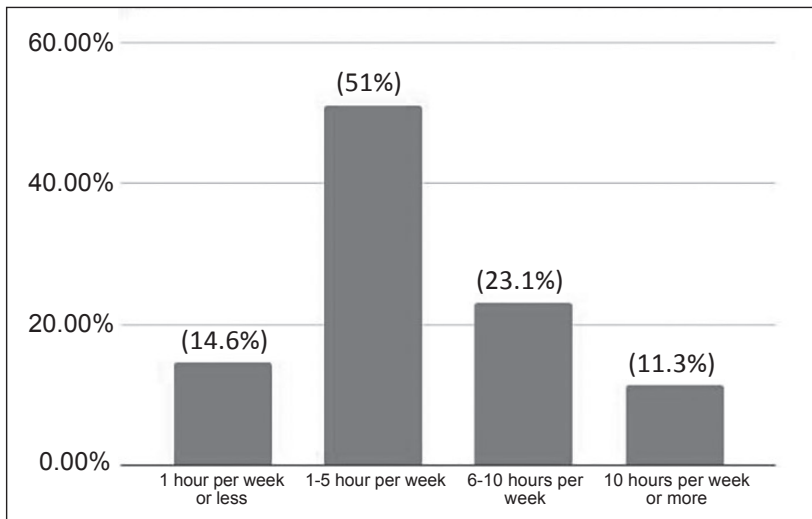


Fig. 2 Reading frequency of the participants in this survey

The questionnaire then asked what channels respondents used for reading, including internet, libraries, and new book shops, and used book stores. The survey results showed that internet (83.6%) was the most important channel for

these participants for reading. New book stores (49.7%) occupied second place, and libraries were chosen by 48.3% of participants. Please see Figure 3 below.

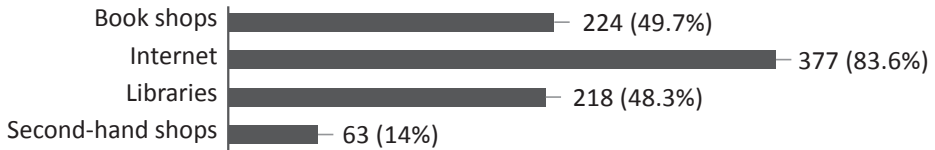


Fig. 3 Most frequent channels of reading of the participants in this survey

To summarize the results, participants in our survey had a high level of education and spent a significant amount of time reading. Our next question follows: What does the term “Bohemia” bring to mind? The result was shown in Figure 4. Almost 70% of the participants associated the term “Bohemia” with “Exotics,” 41.9% thought about “Wandering,” and 40.8% thought of “Gypsies.” Only 33.9% thought of “Czech.” The result of this question corresponds to the main focus of this paper. As mentioned in the second part, most Taiwanese are not familiar with the relation between the two terms “Bohemia” and “Czech.” Most Taiwanese are more familiar with the use of the term “Bohemian” referring to “socially unconventional in an artistic way.” This may be related in some way to “Exotic,” “Wandering” and “Gypsies” rather than the term “Czech.”

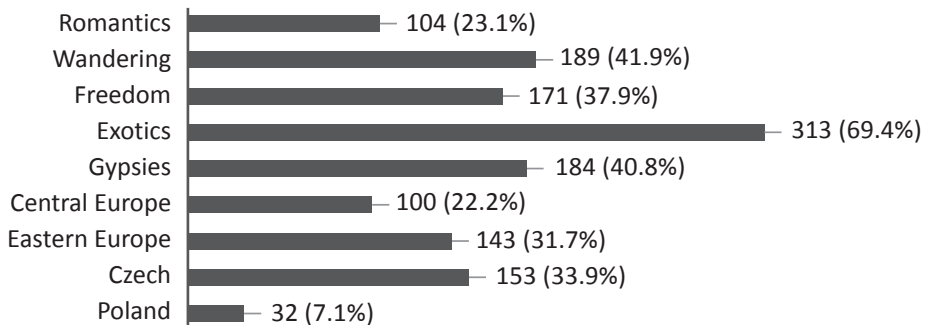


Fig. 4 Image of Bohemia of the participants in this survey

Our next question was: Does the term “Bohemia” make you think of literature, or is your impression and image of Bohemia the result of reading literature? The results were shown in Figure 5: 73.4% of participants agreed that their images of Bohemia were in response to literature. However, when we further asked these participants to provide some examples of the literature, 86 participants wrote Puccini’s opera *La Bohème*. The rest of the answers mainly referred to works of Franz Kafka and Milan Kundera. Interestingly, eight participants mentioned the work of Japanese writer, Murakami Haruki.

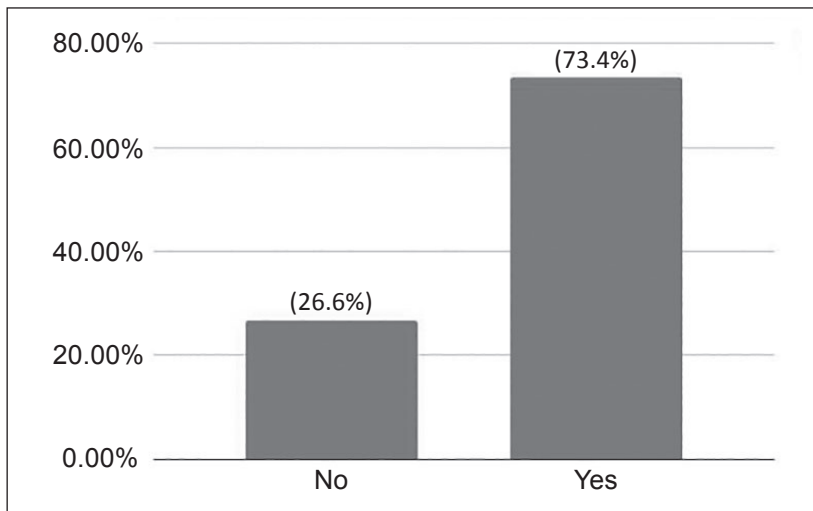


Fig. 5 Relation between image of Bohemia and literature

On the one hand, these survey results indicate that the translated literature provides participants with an understanding of the term “Bohemia,” but on the other hand implies that their image of Bohemia is narrowly regarded as a derivative cultural meaning, rather than its original denotation, referred to the term “Czech.” To give this survey a short conclusion, it seems that the translation of Czech literature does not adequately support the Taiwanese

readers' understanding of Czech/Bohemia. Their image of Bohemia is curated from other sources, such as Puccini's opera *La Bohème*.

Observing the results of the survey, among the Czech writers whose works were translated into simplified or traditional Chinese characters, 42.1% of the participants knew Franz Kafka, and 39.2% knew Milan Kundera. However, as mentioned, the former's works were written in German, not in Czech. The latter became a citizen of France due to naturalization, and his works were published in French instead of Czech. The third-ranked Czech writers in this survey are Bohumil Hrabal (23.3%) and Vaclav Havel (23.5%). This result corresponds precisely to the summaries of the Czech literature translation in simplified and traditional Chinese characters, as discussed in the fifth part of this paper. In addition to Franz Kafka and Milan Kundera, the works of Bohumil Hrabal are most often translated in both Taiwan and in China.

Another question raised in our survey is: Which work of Czech literature is most known to Taiwanese? The result pointed out that Milan Kundera's *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (生命中不能承受之輕) is the most well-known (37.7%), followed by Ivan Klima's *The Spirit of Prague: And Other Essays* (布拉格精神) (34.4%) and Bohumil Hrabal's *Too Loud A Solitude* (過於喧囂的孤寂) (25.5%). The last question in the questionnaire was about the impression of Czech literature. Most of the participants linked Czech literature to "History" (30.8%), "Philosophy" (30.6%) and "Exotics" (30.4%). Please see Figure 6 for data.

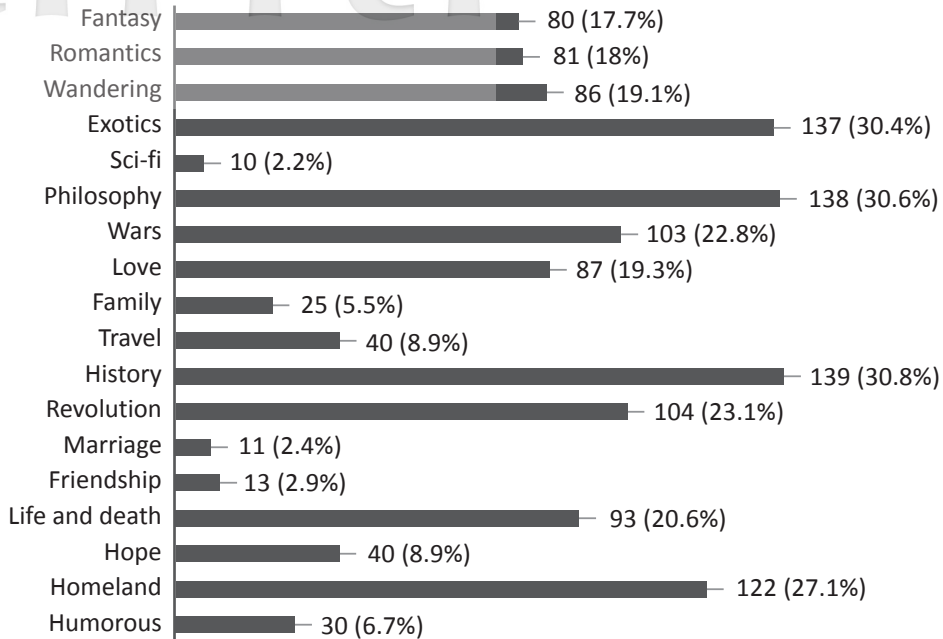


Fig. 6 Impression of Czech literature for the participants in the survey

The result of Figure 6 seemingly reveals some influence of the works of the most introduced Czech writer, Bohumil Hrabal, in Taiwan and Mainland China. First, the works of Hrabal are known to be full of “Philosophy” for his style, as in *Too Loud A Solitude*, *Pearls of the Deep* (底層的珍珠), *Palaverers* (中毒的人們) and so on. He even created a new Czech term, “Palaverers” (in Czech: “Pábiteľé”), to refer to the groups of figures he cares and writes about, sharing some similar characteristics. Secondly, his works are always set following a specific time line. *I Served the King of England* (我曾侍候過英國國王) is set in Prague in the 1940s, during the Nazis occupation and early communism. *Closely Observed Trains* (沒能準時離站的列車) is about a young man working at a train station during German-occupied Czechoslovakia during World War II. *Cutting It Short* (河畔小城三部曲：剪掉辮子的女人), *Joyful Blues/Beautiful*

Sadness (河畔小城三部曲：甜甜的憂傷) and *Harlequin's Millions* (河畔小城三部曲：時光靜止的小城) belong to a series of Hrabal's memories in the town Nymburk, where he grew up. *In-house Weddings* (妻子的眼睛三部曲：婚禮瘋狂), *Vita Nuova* (妻子的眼睛三部曲：漂浮的打字機) and *Vacant Lot/Gaps* (妻子的眼睛三部曲：遮住眼睛的貓) are another series of his memories about his marriage with his wife. In brief, the most introduced and translated Czech writer's works, "History" and "Philosophy," seem to result in the main impression of Czech literature for Chinese readers.

As we will discuss below, although the choice of translated literature affects Taiwanese understanding of Bohemia, and translation itself is also influenced by cultural differences. At the same time, this difference can affect the readers' understanding of the translation. Although the survey in this paper does not include Mainland China, the results of the survey in Taiwan trigger the development of Czech literature translation in Taiwan and Mainland China in the fifth part.

In addition, before investigating the summaries of the published Chinese translations of Czech literature, it is necessary to mention the translators of Czech literature in Mainland China and Taiwan. In the 1950's, the Communist Party of China sent students to Czechoslovakia, and contributed to the founding of the Czech study program at Beijing Foreign Studies University in 1954. After returning to China, most of the students worked at the Division of Eastern European Literature in the Institute of Foreign Literature at Chinese Academy of Social Science, which was founded in 1964. This division was later withdrawn and in 2010 reorganized into the current Division of Southeastern European and Latin American Literature. The rest students worked at Beijing Foreign Studies University or other relevant government agencies, which became an important influence of Czech literary translation. Among them, the most famous translators are Le-yun Yang (楊樂雲), Xing-can Liu (劉星

燦),² Bai Lao (勞白), Shih-rong Wan (萬世榮) and Cheng-jun Jiang (蔣承俊). These scholars are committed to promoting Czech literature in China. However their mission is not easy to achieve. One of the difficulties is the choice of translating literature. Most of the texts of literary translation have been carefully selected to strengthen the political order of the Communist Party. Most choices of works are triggered by the strategy of “ideologically consonant” (Sturge, 2010, p. 77). In this regard, the text selection strategy becomes “mechanisms of political intervention” (Rundle & Sturge, 2010, p. 7). The translation of Fučík’s *Notes from the Gallows* (絞刑架下的報告) is a typical example of a translation that is produced under this selection strategy. Despite this, until now the works of these translators are still the main representatives of Czech literature in Mainland China. So far, it seems difficult for the next generation to take over this daunting task. A generation gap between translators and translators is taking shape. The current translators of Czech literature in Mainland China are not as many as before, and they are still mainly from the two institutions mentioned above. One is the School of European Languages and Culture at Beijing Foreign Studies University. For example, Wei-zhu Xu (徐偉珠) translated Eva Kantůrková’s *After the Flood* (洪水之後) in 2008 and *The Ultimate Intimacy* (終極親密) by Ivan Klíma in 2014. The other is the Institute of Foreign Literature at Chinese Academy of Social Science, where Chang-jing Du (杜常婧) translated Arnošt Lustig’s *White Birches* (白樺林) in 2010, Josef Škvorecký’s *Ordinary Lives* (聚會) in 2013 and Ivan Klíma’s *Waiting for the Dark, Waiting for the Light* (等待黑暗, 等待光明) in 2014. She also translated Klíma’s *Lovers for a Day* (一日情人) with Xing Gao (高興) in 2014, who is also the current chief editor of the journal *World Literature* (世界文學) and of one national publication project called “Blue Eastern Europe.” This 10-year national

² Xing-can Liu (劉星燦) sometimes used her full name and sometimes only her first name “Can Xing” (星燦) in the different translation works.

publication project was launched in 2012, and aimed with the translation and publication of almost 80 Eastern European literature written in the 20th century, including nine Czech literary works. They are Klíma's *Lovers for a Day*, *The Ultimate Intimacy*, *Waiting for the Dark*, *Waiting for the Light*, *My Golden Trades* (我的金飯碗), *No Saints or Angels* (沒有聖人、沒有天使), *My Mad Century I* (我的瘋狂世紀(第一部)) and *My Mad Century II* (我的瘋狂世紀(第二部)). Except for Klíma's works, there are also Hrabal's *The Gentle Barbarian* (溫柔的野蠻人) and *Snowdrop Festival* (雪絨花的慶典). This project is still in progress so it is necessary to keep its development and influences under observation. However, there is still very little contemporary Czech literature translated into simplified Chinese characters, except for Mchael Vieweigh's *Women's Novel* (6封布拉格地鐵的情書), which is also the only one modified from the version in traditional Chinese characters in Taiwan. On the other hand, the translation situation in Taiwan is also not very optimistic. In Taiwan, although the government sent scholarship students to the Czech Republic in the 1990's, this policy lasted only a few years. Some of these students did participate in Czech literature translation after returning to Taiwan, and some students who did not receive government scholarship also actively participated, such as Karel Čapek's *The Gardener's Year* (恰佩克的祕密花園) translated by Yi-wei Geng (耿一偉) in 2002, who also translated Václav Havel's *Václav Havel: Selected Plays* (哈維爾戲劇選) with Xue-ji Lin (林學紀) in 2004. In addition, Melissa Shh-hui Lin (林蒔慧) translated Mchael Vieweigh's *Women's Novel* (6封布拉格地鐵的情書) in 2003 and Bohumil Hrabal's *Cutting It Short* (河畔小城三部曲：剪掉辮子的女人) in 2017. However, translation production is very limited mainly due to market demand.

Translation of Czech Literature in Taiwan and Mainland China

In this part, we are going to summarize the current development of Czech literary translation in Taiwan and Mainland China. Only the literature originally written in Czech is included in this discussion. Some famous writers who are considered to be Czech writers, such as Franz Kafka and Egon Kisch or later Milan Kundera did not appear because they used other languages to write. In addition, it's worth noting that the main purpose of these summaries is to introduce whether the selection of Czech literary translations in Taiwan and Mainland China will affect the Chinese-speaking readers' understanding of Czech/Bohemia. In other words, the discussion focuses mainly on the choice of Czech literary translation, rather than on the entire translation process. At the same time, we also know very little about foreign literature translations produced during the martial law period in Taiwan. Most of these translators are assumed to be from Mainland China, so during this period they were banned from revealing their real names in the translations in Taiwan (Lai, 2013). Therefore, it is unclear whether all such translations are translated from the original Czech. Secondly, except for some works by Václav Havel, Bohumil Hrabal, and Michael Vieweigh, which were translated by the Taiwanese translators from Czech to Chinese, most of the Czech literary translation in Taiwan are based on the versions in simplified Chinese characters of Mainland China. In short, it will be much more complicated to consider the entire process of translation here. Therefore, the summaries only focus on the choice of literature, so it is assumed that these documents allow us to understand which Czech literature has been introduced into the Chinese-speaking society. It is clear that the quantity of Czech literary translation in traditional Chinese

characters is relatively less than that of in simplified Chinese characters. A total of 40 works of Czech literature have been translated into traditional Chinese characters, and in comparison with 69 works translated into simplified Chinese characters.

For Czech literature translation in China, there are at least 26 Czech writers' works translated into simplified Chinese characters. Bohumil Hrabal is the most translated writer with 14 works translated. From Ivan Klíma, there are 13 works. From Karel Čapek and Milan Kundera,³ there are respectively eight and six works (see Appendix A). Before 1989, there were already Czech literature translated into simplified Chinese characters, such as Julius Fučík's *Notes from the Gallows* (絞刑架下的報告), Jaroslav Hašek's *The Good Soldier Švejk* (好兵帥克), and Alois Jirásek's *Ancient Bohemian Legends* (捷克古老傳說). Among them, Hašek's *The Good Soldier Švejk* is an internationally known work, having been translated into various languages already. Of these translations, the most worthy of further discussion is Fučík's *Notes from the Gallows*. At the time it was published, *Notes from the Gallows* was the most successful and popular Czech translation in China, describing Fučík's experience in prison when he was arrested by the Nazis and his hope for a better Communist future. The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia found Fučík and his book convenient as propaganda and took them as important symbols of the Party. For the Communist Party in China, Fučík's work was equally valuable as propaganda, explaining the historical importance of this book in China. As a result, it was used as elementary school textbooks for pupils there. By contrast, *Notes from the Gallows* has never been translated into traditional Chinese characters in Taiwan, and no participant in our survey included it in their list of works by Czech writers. This phenomenon corresponds to Lefevere's (1992) rewriting model,

³ In this section, we only talk about his works written in Czech, excluding his works written in other languages.

which identifies important contextual factors that impinge on the translation. The promotion of politics and other interests through translation is not restricted to the area of literature.

With respect to Czech literary translation in Taiwan, at least 12 Czech writers' works are translated and published in traditional Chinese characters. The most frequently translated writer in Taiwan is Bohumil Hrabal. There are 11 works of Bohumil Hrabal translated into traditional Chinese characters, and at the same time he is also the most translated Czech writer in China. From Milan Kundera there are eight pieces of his works. From Václav Havel and Karel Čapek, there are respectively six and five works translated into traditional Chinese characters (see Appendix B). Almost all translations were published in Taiwan after 1989, most of which were after 2000. Before 1989, some Czech literature was translated in Taiwan, including works by Milan Kundera. However, these translations are clearly not authorized and are not translated from the Czech language. Among these translations of Czech literature, almost all the translations in traditional Chinese characters have corresponding versions in simplified Chinese characters. Given the lack of professional Czech translators in Taiwan in this era, it is likely that most of the translations in traditional Chinese characters are modified from the versions in simplified Chinese characters. Compared with the most frequently translated Czech writers in Mainland China, Ivan Klíma only has one work translated into traditional Chinese characters in Taiwan, *The Spirit of Prague: And Other Essays* (布拉格精神). However, in Mainland China there are his 13 works translated. Undoubtedly, Klíma occupies an important position in Czech literature. It's not easy to understand the big difference between the numbers of his works translated in Mainland China and Taiwan. Instead of Klíma, there is another Czech writer who attracts more attention of Taiwanese publishers and readers, and whose works cannot be read easily in China. That is Václav Havel, whose works were mainly translated

and published in Taiwan after 2000. He is not only a writer, but also a former dissident and a politician. He had a very friendly relationship with the Taiwan authority. Through his writing and political career, Havel became a symbol of democracy, and its image is in stark contrast to the image of Fučík in China. This phenomenon also implies that accepting patronage signals to indicate the integration and acceptance of a certain group or their lifestyle, or the elite of the most talented and powerful group (Lefevere, 1985, p. 228). Havel is not only a symbol of democracy, but also shows the integration and acceptance of Taiwan society. He is also a fighter against communism, thereby encouraging Taiwanese society to strengthen its belief in democracy and freedom.

Conclusion

The term “Bohemia” surely is not necessarily related to Czechia. However, when the original meaning of a term is almost entirely replaced by other pragmatic meanings in one community, this phenomenon must reveal some ideas worth studying.

There is no doubt that literary translation is one the most important bridges between cultures. The choice of translated literature and the translation itself form a cultural representation and are influenced to some extent by cultural differences. These differences are absorbed into the translated content – either intentionally or unintentionally – thus affecting the reader’s understanding. On the other hand, it is also a necessary medium for integration into the global community. A total of 37.5% of the participants in our survey indicated that the biggest obstacle to understanding Czech literature is language and culture. This reveals that our society still does not have enough input into Czech literary translation.

As pointed out by Lefevere (1992), translation is one of several types of practices that result in partial representation of reality. The process of translation itself involves a variety of factors, which may affect the readers' images of a particular topic. Especially when hegemonic literature on an ever-larger scale seizes and absorbs the voices of other literatures (Bukova, 2014, p. 232), that makes the very existence of so-called "minor literatures" (Deleuze et al., 1983) redundant. To translate from minor into major languages seems against natural laws, hence needs additional assets. In other words, the principle of autonomy of the "global," or the "international," literary field, if left on its own, will maintain and even accelerate inequality.

This paper assumes that market demand and government policies are the most important factors in promoting the development of Czech literary translation in Taiwan and Mainland China. At the same time, if the Chinese translation of Czech literature is intentionally developed and serves as a well-functioning interface between cultures, it is necessary to train more Czech literature translators not only in Mainland China but also in Taiwan. To sum up, the selection and publication of translations of foreign literatures is challenging and needs to be considered, especially for the minor literatures, such as the Czech literature in the Chinese-speaking world.

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Appendix A

**Summary of Translated Works of the Most Translated
Czech Writers in Simplified Chinese Characters
(Chinese Translation Publications Information)**

Čapek, K. (1999). *War with the newts* (J. Bei, Trans.). Beijing, China: Daylight.
(Original work published 1936)

中譯書名：鯢魚之亂／譯者：貝京

Čapek, K. (2000). *The islands* (S. R. Wan & H. Xu, Trans.). Shanghai, China:
Shanghai Culture. (Original work published 1916)

中譯書名：海國風情／譯者：萬世榮、徐浩

Čapek, K. (2007). *The gardener's year* (Y. T. Jia, Trans.). Beijing, China: New World
Press. (Original work published 1929)

中譯書名：一個園丁的一年：一個波西米亞園丁的幸福生活／譯者：賈
毓婷

Čapek, K. (2008). *Dasbenka, or the life of a puppy* (F. F. Chen, Trans.). Tianjin,
China: Tianjin Education Press. (Original work published 1933)

中譯書名：小狗達西卡／譯者：陳菲菲

Čapek, K. (2013). *Rossum's universal robots* (Y. Bai, J. Ma & Mello, Trans.). Beijing,
China: Dongxiwenku. (Original work published 1920)

中譯書名：羅素姆萬能機器人／譯者：白淵、馬競、Mello

Čapek, K. (2015). *Tales from two pockets* (J. Hu, Trans.). Beijing, China: Xinhua.
(Original work published 1928, 1929)

中譯書名：形跡可疑的人／譯者：胡婧

Čapek, K. (2015). *War with the newts* (H. Song, Trans.). Zhengzhou, China:
Petrel. (Original work published 1936)

中譯書名：鯢魚之亂／譯者：宋寒

Čapek, K. (2016). *I had a dog and a cat* (D. Su, Trans.). Beijing, China: People's Literature. (Original work published 1939)

中譯書名：阿貓和阿狗／譯者：蘇迪

Čapek, K. (2016). *Noetic trilogy* (W. H. Jiang, S. C. Cheng & S. L. Shu, Trans.). Guangzhou, China: Huacheng. (Original work published 1933, 1934)

中譯書名：流星：卡雷爾·恰佩克哲理小說三部曲／譯者：蔣文惠、程淑娟、舒蓀樂

Čapek, K. (2017). *The gardener's year* (W. Chen & R. Yang, Trans.). Beijing, China: Beijing Science and Technology Press. (Original work published 1929)

中譯書名：園丁的一年／譯者：陳偉、楊睿

Hrabal, B. (2003). *Too loud a solitude & pearls of the deep* (L. Y. Yang & S. R. Wan, Trans.). Beijing, China: China Youth. (Original work published 1977, 1963)

中譯書名：過於喧囂的孤獨與底層的珍珠／譯者：楊樂雲、萬世榮

Hrabal, B. (2004). *Knots on a handkerchief – Who I am: Interviews* (C. Xing & B. Lao, Trans.). Beijing, China: China Youth. (Original work published 1987)

中譯書名：我是誰／譯者：星燦、勞白

Hrabal, B. (2004). *Palaverers* (L. Y. Yang & S. R. Wan, Trans.). Beijing, China: China Youth. (Original work published 1964)

中譯書名：巴比代爾／譯者：楊樂雲、萬世榮

Hrabal, B. (2004). *Trilogy of Hrabal's autobiography: In-house weddings, Vita nuova, Vacant lot/gaps* (C. Xing & B. Lao, Trans.). Beijing, China: China Youth. (Original work published 1986)

中譯書名：傳記體三部曲：婚宴、新生活、林中小屋／譯者：星燦、勞白

Hrabal, B. (2007). *The little town where time stood still* (S. R. Wan, Trans.). Beijing, China: China Youth. (Original work published 1974)

中譯書名：河畔小城／譯者：萬世榮

Hrabal, B. (2011). *Too loud a solitude* (L. Y. Yang, Trans.). Beijing, China: Beijing October Arts & Literature. (Original work published 1977)

中譯書名：過於喧囂的孤獨／譯者：楊樂雲

Hrabal, B. (2012). *I served the king of England* (B. Lao, Trans.). Beijing, China: Beijing October Arts & Literature. (Original work published 1971)

中譯書名：我曾侍候過英國國王／譯者：勞白

Hrabal, B. (2014). *Cutting it short* (S. R. Wan, Trans.). Beijing, China: Beijing October Arts & Literature. (Original work published 1974)

中譯書名：一縷秀髮（河畔小城三部曲之一）／譯者：萬世榮

Hrabal, B. (2014). *Harlequin's millions* (L. Y. Yang, Trans.). Beijing, China: Beijing October Arts & Literature. (Original work published 1981)

中譯書名：時光靜止的小城（河畔小城三部曲之三）／譯者：楊樂雲

Hrabal, B. (2014). *Joyful blues/Beautiful sadness* (C. Xing & B. Lao, Trans.). Beijing, China: Beijing October Arts & Literature. (Original work published 1979)

中譯書名：甜甜的憂傷（河畔小城三部曲之二）／譯者：星燦、勞白

Hrabal, B. (2015). *Trilogy of Hrabal's autobiography: In-house weddings, Vita nuova, Vacant lot/gaps* (C. Xing & B. Lao, Trans.). Beijing, China: Beijing October Arts & Literature. (Original work published 1986)

中譯書名：傳記體三部曲：婚宴、新生活、林中小屋／譯者：星燦、勞白

Hrabal, B. (2017). *The gentle barbarian* (X. H. Peng, Trans.). Guangzhou, China: Huacheng. (Original work published 1973)

中譯書名：溫柔的野蠻人／譯者：彭小航

Hrabal, B. (2018). *Snowdrop festival* (W. Z. Xu, Trans.). Guangzhou, China: Huacheng. (Original work published 1978)

中譯書名：雪絨花的慶典／譯者：徐偉珠

Klíma, I. (1998). *The spirit of Prague* (W. P. Cui, Trans.). Beijing, China: Writers. (Original work published 1994)

中譯書名：布拉格精神／譯者：崔衛平

Klíma, I. (1999). *My merry mornings* (L. M. Jing & K. X. Jing, Trans.). Nanjing, China: Yilin Press. (Original work published 1979)

中譯書名：我快樂的早晨／譯者：景黎明、景凱旋

Klíma, I. (2004). *A dialogue on love* (C. Xing, Trans.). Beijing, China: China Friendship. (Original work published 1995)

中譯書名：伊凡·克里瑪短篇小說卷·上：愛情對話／譯者：星燦

Klíma, I. (2004). *A summer affair* (S. R. Wan, Trans.). Beijing, China: China Friendship. (Original work published 1979)

中譯書名：伊凡·克里瑪中篇小說卷／譯者：萬世榮

Klíma, I. (2004). *Judge on trial* (X. Can, Trans.). Beijing, China: China Friendship. (Original work published 1986)

中譯書名：被審判的法官／譯者：星燦

Klíma, I. (2004). *My first loves* (X. Gao, Trans.). Beijing, China: China Friendship. (Original work published 1990)

中譯書名：伊凡·克里瑪短篇小說卷·下：我的初戀／譯者：高興

Klíma, I. (2014). *Lovers for a day* (C. J. Du & X. Gao, Trans.). Guangzhou, China: Huacheng. (Original work published 1970)

中譯書名：一日情人／譯者：杜常婧、高興

Klíma, I. (2014). *My golden trades* (X. C. Liu, Trans.). Guangzhou, China: Huacheng. (Original work published 1990)

中譯書名：我的金飯碗／譯者：劉星燦

Klíma, I. (2014). *My mad century I* (H. Liu, Trans.). Guangzhou, China: Huacheng. (Original work published 2009)

中譯書名：我的瘋狂世紀（第一部）／譯者：劉宏

Klíma, I. (2014). *No saints or angels* (L. A. Zhu, Trans.). Guangzhou, China: Huacheng. (Original work published 1999)

中譯書名：沒有聖人、沒有天使／譯者：朱力安

Klíma, I. (2014). *The ultimate intimacy* (W. Z. Xu, Trans.). Guangzhou, China: Huacheng. (Original work published 1996)

中譯書名：終極親密／譯者：徐偉珠

Klíma, I. (2014). *Waiting for the dark, waiting for the light* (C. J. Du, Trans.).

Guangzhou, China: Huacheng. (Original work published 1993)

中譯書名：等待黑暗，等待光明／譯者：杜常婧

Klíma, I. (2016). *My mad century II* (Z. H. Xu, Trans.). Guangzhou, China:

Huacheng. (Original work published 2010)

中譯書名：我的瘋狂世紀（第二部）／譯者：許澤紅

Kundera, M. (2004). *Laughable loves* (Z. X. Yu & C. J. Guo, Trans.). Shanghai,

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中譯書名：好笑的愛／譯者：余中先、郭昌京

Kundera, M. (2010/2014). *Life is elsewhere* (X. Y. Yuan, Trans.). Shanghai, China:

Shanghai Translation. (Original work published 1979)

中譯書名：生活在別處／譯者：袁筱一

Kundera, M. (2010/2014). *The unbearable lightness of being* (J. Xu, Trans.).

Shanghai, China: Shanghai Translation. (Original work published 1984)

中譯書名：生命中不可承受之輕／譯者：許鈞

Kundera, M. (2011). *The book of laughter and forgetting* (D. L. Wang, Trans.).

Shanghai, China: Shanghai Translation. (Original work published 1979)

中譯書名：笑忘書／譯者：王東亮

Kundera, M. (2011/2015). *Jacques and his master* (C. X. Wei, Trans.). Shanghai,

China: Shanghai Translation. (Original work published 1981)

中譯書名：雅克和他的主人／譯者：尉遲秀

Kundera, M. (2014). *The joke* (R. M. Cai, Trans.). Shanghai, China: Shanghai

Translation. (Original work published 1967)

中譯書名：玩笑／譯者：蔡若明

Appendix B

Summary of Translated Works of the Most Translated Czech Writers in Traditional Chinese Characters (Chinese Translation Publications Information)

Čapek, K. (1995). *Nine fairy tales: And one more thrown in for good measure* (Y. Q. Ren, Trans.). Taipei, Taiwan: Zhiwen. (Original work published 1932)

中譯書名：恰佩克童話故事集／譯者：任以奇

Čapek, K. (1997). *I had a dog and a cat* (Y. F. Wu, Trans.). Taipei, Taiwan: Zhiwen. (Original work published 1939)

中譯書名：家有貓狗趣事多／譯者：吳憶帆

Čapek, K. (1999). *I had a dog and a cat* (J. Cheng, Trans.). Taipei, Taiwan: Living Natural Cultural. (Original work published 1939)

中譯書名：我家的狗和貓／譯者：程靜

Čapek, K. (1999). *War with the nepts* (Y. F. Wu, Trans.). Taipei, Taiwan: Zhiwen. (Original work published 1936)

中譯書名：山椒魚戰爭／譯者：吳憶帆

Čapek, K. (2002). *The gardener's year* (Y. W. Geng, Trans.). Taipei, Taiwan: Rye Field. (Original work published 1929)

中譯書名：恰佩克的祕密花園／譯者：耿一偉

Čapek, K. (2005). *Dasbenka, or the life of a puppy* (Y. Z. Li, Trans.). Taichung, Taiwan: Morning Star Group. (Original work published 1933)

中譯書名：小淘氣達仙卡／譯者：李毓昭

Havel, V. (2003). *A farewell to politics* (Z. S. Lin, D. J. Cai, R. B. Chen & P. B. Xu, Trans.). Taipei, Taiwan: Rive Gauche. (Original work published 2002)

中譯書名：政治，再見／譯者：林宗憲、蔡東杰、陳榮彬、徐鵬博

Havel, V. (2003). *Anticodes* (L. Bei, Trans.). Taipei, Taiwan: Tendency. (Original

work published 1964)

中譯書名：反符碼／譯者：貝嶺

Havel, V. (2003). *Disturbing the peace: A conversation with Karel Hvižd'ala* (Anonymous, Trans.). Taipei, Taiwan: Tendency. (Original work published 1991)

中譯書名：來自遠方的拷問：哈維爾自傳／譯者：佚名

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