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Mánshu

Records of the Mán People

(唐) 樊綽 著

卜绍先 译



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Translator's Profile

The late Shaoxian Bu was born in February 1963. A native of Heqing, Dali, he was a professor of Dali University for many years. He graduated from the Department of Foreign Languages of Yunnan University in July 1984 with a Bachelor of Arts in English language and literature. As a visiting scholar in September 1988, he worked in the English Department of Peking University for one year. In April 1996, he was funded by the Chinese government to become a visiting scholar at La Trobe University, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia for one year. In March 2003, he received another grant from the Chinese local government and visited Clark University, Massachusetts, USA for one year. In 2006 he was selected as “Outstanding Professional Talent of Dali University”. Over the years, he served respectively as Deputy Secretary of the CPC Branch Committee and Vice Dean of the School of Foreign Languages, Dali University, Deputy Director of the University's Office of Academic Research, Secretary of the CPC Branch Committee of the School of Foreign Languages, and, Professor of English with the same School.

His main research areas were: Medieval English Literature, Robert Frost Poems, English translations of historical and cultural documents of Chinese ethnic groups. He was a published author of more than 20 papers and had translated *Dali shangxia siqian nian* (Dali: A History of 4000 Years) into English.



译者简介

卜绍先，1963年2月26日生，云南大理鹤庆人，大理大学教授。1984年7月毕业于云南大学外语系英语语言文学专业，获英语语言文学学士学位；1988年9月赴北京大学英语系访学一年；1996年4月获国家公派资助赴澳大利亚维多利亚拉筹伯大学（La Trobe University）访学一年；2003年3月获地方公派资助赴美国麻省克拉克大学（Clark University）访学一年。2006年被评为“大理学院优秀专业技术人才”。曾任大理学院外国语学院党总支副书记、副院长，大理大学科研处副处长，大理大学外国语学院党委书记，大理大学外国语学院英语教授。

主要研究方向：英国中世纪文学、Robert Frost 诗歌研究、民族历史文化文献英译研究等。公开发表论文20余篇，英译《大理上下四千年》（*Da Li A History of 4000 years*）等英文专著。

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A Preface of the English Version of Records of the Man People

Translation cause can be dated back to the time when Yan Fu unprecedentedly initiated translation to introduce western learning, earlier than the New Culture Movement, which flourished again in the 1980s. During the past 90 years, it has been witnessed that several systematic translations of western literature into China on large scales, as happens continuously up to now. The overall trend about Chinese and western cultural exchange is presented as “Western Learning Landing China”, namely the import of western learning to China. Domestic scholars tend to adopt these topics, such as classification system, conceptual system and development of western learning to delve into different disciplines. It is clear that they follow western scholars’ steps. The significance of “Western Learning Landing China” for the modernization of China is self – evident. In modern China, the construction of the modern disciplinary system and the conversion of the typical academic model all regard the existing western learning framework as the most, even the only reference, to form China’s knowledge classification system. For the disciplines that have been formed, both the traditional Sinol-

ogy with unique Chinese characteristics and the disciplines, such as ethnology and anthropology which contain rich and varied connotations, are all deeply marked with the features of western learning system.

As far as the study and promotion of the latest western study of Sinology is concerned, since the Enlightenment in the 17th and 18th centuries, a batch of Chinese books and literature have also attracted the eyeballs of the western scholars, including Voltaire, Leibniz, Hegel, Marx, Levenson, Fei Zhengqing and so on. A large number of western scholars deeply understand the value of Chinese literature and have made fruitful achievements in succession. Although western scholars devoted themselves to the translation of traditional Chinese literature, the materials they translated is mainly chosen on the basis of their own research topics and not systematic enough. Moreover, there are still a large number of excellent works in China's rich literature which haven't be translated or have no satisfactory version. And much literature has not yet drawn the attention of the field of international research. Based on that, the biased theory is inevitable in such western Sinology studies and the rich Chinese ancient books in the western system of disciplines can only play its role in philology, not enough to play the role in the level of concept composition, discourse remolding and system restructuring.

the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, China is increasingly approaching the center of the world stage. The world is paying more and more attention to the Chinese nation's greater contribution to mankind. When the world is paying attention to the Chinese nation's contribution to China's wisdom and plan in solving human problems, both Chinese and western scholars are increasingly aware that the translation, study, exchange and collision of Chinese ancient books will make the original western knowledge system and disciplinary paradigm be extended accordingly. In the course of the progress of the human knowledge paradigm, the Chinese culture with abundant literature resources shouldn't be ignored or abandoned anyway.

In consideration of the blending of human civilization and the advancement of knowledge disciplines, the translation and promotion of the rich literature in China naturally have a major historical significance in the world. This significance is not only reflected in our full academic understanding and value consciousness of traditional literature and books, but also in how we actively promote and disseminate the Chinese excellent traditional literature to the world. In the process of the inheritance of the Chinese civilization with thousands of years' history, it has formed a civilized form that is different from the western modern knowledge system through its own system and self-support. The heterogeneity of civilizations does not mean that we must make a decision between two choices, but mean

that the promotion of civilization requires full exchange and equal dialogue with each other. Only through mutual understanding and recognition, can we make civilization move forward continuously. “Western Learning Landing China” is not a mandatory output of values to the west. Of course, it is not intended to reconstruct the order of human civilization. Instead, it shows the west the traditional literature and books that fail to be included in the original knowledge system and disciplinary framework in a timely manner. And it shows the unique, systematic and self-consistent oriental civilization.

That what is ethnic is concurrently the world. Because the study of ethnology and anthropology guides the people to return to the original life of human beings, the panoramic record of the life of local nations should be made in different professional fields by different Chinese and western scholars to dissect the academic values and human values of ethnology and anthropology they possess, so as to expand and reconnect with knowledge system, blend and rebuild world civilization. Records of the Man People is an all-round description of the life scene of ethnic groups in Nanzhao by the ancients, which not only contains the faithful records of political life, military events and economic life, but also presents the appearance of national unique culture and custom property. In addition to Records of the Man People, there are a large number of Chinese literature and books presenting the original life

scenes of all ethnic groups in China, all of which have ethnological and anthropological values, containing much potential of human life and displaying the multiple dimensions of human life.

The promotion of world civilization made by the Chinese nation cannot be separated from the academic contribution of the large batches of translators. Through these translators' faithful and expressive translation, they can actively disseminate and express the wisdom from the ancient East to the heterogeneous western academic circles, which should be all the Chinese scholars' responsibility at present. Western scholars have limited understanding of China and even misunderstandings, which is largely related to China's lack of translation and promotion of its own literature. All the tasks, including to translate these literature into different languages in the form of excellent versions and to break the barrier of civilization and knowledge that were previously regarded as heterogeneous, require the active participation of a large number of translators and scholars.

My friendship with Professor Bu Shao-xian was established and fostered via academic research work, and I should say I know very well his rigorous and sincere attitude toward translation cause. He used to talk about that although there are numerous ancient books and extensive literature of Chinese nation, there is insufficient translation of Chinese works, resulting in a limited scope for in-

ternational scholars to explore and even many misunderstandings that are spread one by one. He earnestly hoped that today's scholars should shoulder the responsibility of spreading excellent national culture so that different forms of civilization can transcend differences and conflicts between civilizations, exchange each other at the root of civilization and produce new human civilization through cultural integration.

Having settled down in Dali for several generations, Professor Bu Shao-xian was deeply nourished by the ethnic culture. Furthermore, he grasped profound learning on the English language, dedicating himself to translating the important book, which is really admirable and respectable. Unfortunately, he who barely finished the translation had passed away before the proofreading was done, which really makes us sigh. Entrusted by Ms. Gao Yan-juan, wife of Professor Bu Shao-xian, I tried my best to compose this decent preface to the English version of *Records of the Man People* with a respectful and anxious mood.

By the aid of the preface, I would like to cherish the memory of Professor Bu Shao-xian.

May he rest in peace without any regrets!

Liu Rong

December 26, 2017

Translator's Preface

Mánshu(蛮书, Records of the Mán people), also known as *Yunnanzhi*(云南志, Records of Yunnan), is a classical work of 10 volumes, which offers a fairly accurate and comprehensive depiction of the Kingdom of Nanzhao during middle and late Tang Period, i. e., its geographical environment, political, economic, military and cultural affairs, local customs and produce, and so on. With this rich content and objective description, it is a source material with remarkable value for historiography. Since its appearance in Tang Dynasty, the book has been attached a lot of importance by scholars of subsequent generations, who have made innumerable annotations and commentaries to it. Since early 20th century, international scholars have started to pay attention to this text. Translations of parts or the whole book of *Mánshu* appeared, and the book was cited and discussed in treatises on various topics, all of which have indicated increasing research interest in Yunnan the Chinese southwestern borderland and its ancient records.

In 1904, famous French Sinologist Paul Pelliot published “Deux Itinéraires de Chine en Inde: à la fin du VIII^e Siècle” (*Jiaoguang Yindu liangdao kao*) in *Bulletin*

de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 4, in which he first mentioned the book of *Mánshu* and provided a footnote, where he explained about its author and editions, and noted that it was “worth being translated and annotated in full”. Being himself a professor at the *École Française d'Extrême-Orient* in Hanoi, Pelliot was going to spend a lifetime in the exploration and research of the historical geography of the hinterlands of Asia. In that work he probed ways of communication between ancient China and India, and researched in details the two routes, one overland through Jiaozhi and Yunnan to India, the other starting from Guangzhou and traveling all the way to India through the South Seas. Since it was the heyday of French sinology, his strong recommendation of *Mánshu* may have led to the creation and publication of a French translation before too long.

The English translation of *Mánshu* was first published in December 1961 by Cornell University Press, the title being “*Mánshu: Book of the Southern Barbarians*”. Its translator was British scholar Gordon H. Luce. Since 1912 Luce had started to teach British Literature at University of Rangoon, where he also engaged in the study of Burmese history and languages. During his more than fifty years living in Burma, he wrote extensively and produced such masterpieces as the three volume *Old Burma-Early Pagan*, which covers Burmese history, art and architecture and the city of Pagan in the 11th and 12th centuries,

and *Phases of Pre-Pagan Burma*. Till this day his works remain authoritative and are widely cited. Luce valued *Mánshu* for the new material, perspective and space it might provide for Burma studies. For that reason, he tried twice to translate the text into English. The first draft of his English translation was destroyed in the chaos after the Japanese invasion of Burma. His second attempt started only after the war, and the translation came out of a group study of the book paragraph by paragraph.

For his two English translations of *Mánshu*, Luce chose separately the two editions known as *Jianxicunshu congshu* (《渐西村舍丛书》) and *Haining Yangwensun (yunshi) shuzhengzhai* (《海宁杨文荪(芸士)述郑斋》) as the source text. Both editions were transcriptions made from *Neiju zhenben* (《内聚珍本》) during the early Republic era. While multiple transcriptions were in circulation during that time, few of them were properly collated and annotated. Thus many difficulties and problems with parsing and comprehension of the text have remained, which led to even more errors in subsequent historiographical works that built upon them. Although Luce enlisted the help of Chinese scholars in this task, it regretted him that the translation was not exactly clear, and many names of places stayed unidentifiable. Or, it could also be that when he found the translated text was different from what he had expected, plus other research tasks were piling up, he called an end to the project in some-

what haste, leaving many sentences or even paragraphs of the English translation unpolished. G. P. Oey, editor of the Cornell University Press edition of *Mánshu*, also noted this state of the translation in his preface to the book by quoting Professor Luce that it was not finished but a first draft for possible reference by anyone who may take an interest in such topics. As a matter of fact, reading Luce's translation of *Mánshu* can be a foggy experience that leaves one with just some vague ideas.

Sometime around 1992, Beth Notar, a young scholar with University of Michigan was working on her Master's thesis on the topic of *Mánshu* and came upon Luce's translation. As her advisor mentioned that the quality was less than satisfactory and suggested she should attempt an English translation of her own, Notar plunged in. She did have much difficulty reading, understanding and not to mention translating *Mánshu*, nonetheless she found it interesting. Ultimately, she only got to translate a few chapters that were to be used for her thesis. In 1999 Notar received her Ph. D. in Anthropology from University of Michigan. She currently teaches at Trinity College in Connecticut, U. S. A. Her research area involves the ethnic groups of Southwest China, popular culture, tourism and local reform, with a theoretical focus on the intersection of the culture and the material. For a long period, she had conducted her research in Dali, Yunnan. Her publications include a monography entitled Displacing De-

sire; Travel and Popular Culture in China, and many pa-

pers on the gender situation, consumption practice and the history of Southwest China. It is regrettable that because she has not yet published her English translation of *Mánshu* chapters or her Master's thesis, to this day I have not been able to benefit from this aspect of her scholarship.

The above thus serves as an overview of *Mánshu*'s introduction to the world and its translation into foreign languages. Admittedly, in their translation work, both Luce and Notar had to approach the original text from a perspective shaped by Western culture. Adding to the fact that the Chinese edition they used as source text had not gone through systematic collation, it would have been difficult to keep out any bias or improper treatment in their translations. For those reasons it is imperative that a new English translation of *Mánshu* be made.

In the case of *Yunnanzhi: A Critical Edition with Annotations* by Zhao Lüfu, systematic efforts were made to make sure that the text is well collated, historical facts are properly annotated, and names of people and places are correct. It is also the source text that this English translation works with. The text proper of *Mánshu* is rendered in full into English. The interspersed commentaries, citations and annotations that are added to the original text, either in between the sentences or at the very end, however, are not translated due to their large number and