

Reconstruction or collapse of the fantasy world: Translation of the place names in *Journey to the West*

Reconstrucción o colapso del mundo fantástico: traducción toponímica de *Viaje al Oeste*

TIAN MI

Nankai University. Foreign Languages College. Spanish Department. Weijin Road, 94. Nankai District, Tianjin Province, China, 300071.

Dirección de correo electrónico: mi_tian@nankai.edu.cn

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7316-6760>

RODRIGO MUÑOZ CABRERA

Universidad Internacional de La Rioja (UNIR). School of Humanities, Area of Translation and Interpreting. Avda. de la Paz, 137. 26006 Logroño.

Dirección de correo electrónico: rodrigo.munozcabrera@unir.net

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7890-4083>

Recibido/Received: 26/1/2023. Aceptado/Accepted: 13/8/2023.

Cómo citar/How to cite: Mi, Tian, Muñoz Cabrera, «Reconstruction or collapse of the fantasy world: Translation of the place names in *Journey to the West*», *Hermēneus. Revista de Traducción e Interpretación*, 25 (2023): pp. 225-247.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24197/her.25.2023.225-247>

Artículo de acceso abierto distribuido bajo una [Licencia Creative Commons Atribución 4.0 Internacional \(CC-BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). / Open access article under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License \(CC-BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

Abstract: Nouns are a characteristic feature that distinguishes one culture from another. Onomatology in general –and toponymy in particular– denotes culture and is affected by specific morals, religions, and ways of thinking, typical of a society. Likewise, it also embodies a varied range of extralinguistic information. In Chinese culture, toponymy is used to display an aesthetic symbolism, as well as a wide variety of connotations that are absent from Hispanic culture. Moreover, if we account for the use of different calligraphy, the translation of Chinese place nouns into Spanish implies a real challenge, a task that becomes more difficult if we deal with translating more than six-hundred-year-old nouns. Translators not only face problems regarding translating from traditional Mandarin Chinese, but also the challenge of translating a text full of religious concepts with no translation equivalents in our mother tongue. In this article, we analyze the translation of place names in *Journey to the West* in the two translations available in Spanish. Utilizing a corpus containing the original text and the two complete translations into Spanish, we focus on analyzing the techniques used during the translation process, taking into consideration whether the translators were able to identify and keep the harmony and aesthetics –typical features of the Mandarin Chinese– in the Spanish language.

Keywords: Toponyms; proper names; translation Chinese-Spanish; *Journey to the West*; cross-cultural studies.

Resumen: Los nombres son una de las características que distinguen una cultura de otra. La onomatología en general (y la toponimia en particular) denota una cultura y esta se ve influenciada por normas morales, religiosas y formas de pensar típicas de una sociedad en concreto. De igual modo, transporta una variada gama de información extralingüística. En la cultura china, la toponimia se emplea para describir el simbolismo estético, así como un amplio espectro de connotaciones ausentes en la cultura hispana. Si a ello le añadimos el uso de una caligrafía diferente, la translación de los topónimos chinos al español supone todo un reto, empresa que haría complicada cuando se trata de verter nombres de más de seiscientos años de antigüedad. Los traductores no solo afrontan el problema de trasladar del chino clásico, sino de hacer su labor con un texto profuso de conceptos religiosos de los que no existen equivalencias en la lengua meta. En este artículo se analiza la translación de los topónimos de *Viaje al Oeste* en las dos traducciones existentes en español. Por medio de un corpus compilado con el texto original y las dos versiones completas disponibles en nuestro idioma, el estudio se enfoca en analizar las técnicas empleadas en el proceso de traducción teniendo en cuenta si los traductores fueron capaces de identificar y mantener la armonía y la estética (características propias del chino mandarín) en español.

Palabras clave: Topónimos; nombres propios; traducción chino-español; *Viaje al Oeste*; interculturalidad.

Summary: Introduction; 1. Proper names and toponomastics; 2. The translatability of place names and other factors taken into consideration; 3. Toponymics in *Journey to the West*; 4. The translation techniques used in the two Spanish versions of the novel: differences and similarities, 4.1. Transliteration, 4.2. Translation, 4.3. Neutralization, 4.4. Conversion to common names and omission, 4.5. The gloss; Conclusion; Acknowledgements; References.

Sumario: Introducción; 1. Nombres propios y toponimia; 2. La translación de la toponimia y otros factores relevantes; 3. La toponimia en *Viaje al Oeste*; 4. Técnicas de traducción empleadas en las dos versiones en español: diferencias y similitudes, 4.1. Transliteración, 4.2. Traducción, 4.3. Neutralización, 4.4. Conversión a nombre común y omisión, 4.5. Glosas; Conclusión; Agradecimientos; Referencias bibliográficas.

INTRODUCTION

Journey to the West is one of the most famous classic novels of China. It is based on a historical event: A monk of the Tang dynasty (618-907), called Xuan Zang (602-644), goes to India to study Buddhism, and brings back lots of original sutras –sacred Buddhist scriptures– which are translated into Chinese by him and his disciples. This epic feat turned out to be excellent material for poets, storytellers, dramatists, and novelists. It inspired their imaginations to elaborate works of different kinds. However, it was not until the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) when Wu Cheng'en (circa 1500-1582) creates the monumental work of *Journey to the West*, the story of the Monk who goes to India accompanied by his three disciples –the Monkey, the Pig, and the Monk Sha– overcoming 81 difficulties. It became

very popular, not only in China but also in other countries (Mi and Muñoz, 2020. p. 286).

Journey to the West is composed of 100 chapters and, like other Chinese classic novels, has a special narrative structure and rhetorical resources and contains a variety of cultural, historical, religious, and moral codes which are unique to one culture. These features constitute the incomparable values of those novels but, at the same time, they may also become obstacles within intercultural communication. Despite this dilemma, there exist various Spanish versions of the novel, including partial translations, adaptations, picture books and two complete translations, made by María Lacea and Carlos Trigo Sánchez in 2010 (T1), and Enrique P. Gatón and Imelda Huang-Wang in 1992 (T2).

In this article, we focus on the translation of toponyms that appear in the novel considering, on one hand, their importance and abundance in a novel that describes a journey and, on the other, the difficulties of transference as they embrace almost all the features mentioned above in a concise way. Based on a parallel corpus –CCEVAO / Corpus Chino-Español de *Viaje al Oeste*– which consists of the original text and its two complete translations –T1 and T2–, we proceed to analyze and identify distinct methods used by the translators to transfer the place names. In sum, we aim at seeing if the place names that make up the geography of the fantasy world can also be located within those translations and, at the same time, at finding a better way to perform this task through a comparative approach.

1. PROPER NAMES AND TOPONOMASTICS

The concept of names and their relationship with the real world have long concerned logicians and philosophers. In the West, Socrates examined whether names reveal the nature of things or if they designated the things arbitrarily or by convention. Almost in the same period, Chinese sophists and philosophers also staged debates about the relationship between names and their essences, asking whether a white horse is not a horse, or if names are subordinate to the latter or otherwise. The issue was so important that Confucius introduced it into his moral theories and proposed the importance of the «correction of naming» for the social order (beginnings of 5th century B.C., 2003, p. 165).

While the authenticity and the correctness of names are discussed worldwide, names are also a linguistic and cultural phenomenon that attracts scholars' interest in multiple disciplines. For instance, the stoic grammarians first distinguished the *onoma* –proper names–, that have an «individual quality» from the *prosegoria* –common names–, that have a «common quality» (Robins, 1996, p. 12). Since then, this dichotomous division of names has been followed and developed by academics and is always drawn by putting the two concepts in contrast.

According to John Algeo, names are a category of noun and can be divided into two subcategories: proper and common ones (1973, p. 2). Compared to the latter, which has a general application, proper names have an individual application, as well as orthographic and morphosyntactic singularities. In Spanish, the majuscule forms and plurality are also representative characteristics of proper names (Rebollo, 1995, p. 401).

The mono-referential nature of proper names is clear, as well as the fact that many of them are meaningless terms; «names without semantic features» (Real Academia Española, 2014). Nevertheless, evidence from not only literary texts but also from informative ones shows that proper names are always semantically loaded, not least in Chinese. For instance, sometimes names can be considered lexical forms since most of them «retain the lexical meaning of their constituents» (Kałużyńska, 2016, p. 164). For this reason, Theo Hermans (1998) divides proper names into conventional and loaded ones. Based on this theory, Franco Aixelá denominates them as «NP convencionales» and «NP expresivos», according to the grade of «semanticization» of the proper names (2000, p. 98). Similarly, Lincoln Fernandes (2006) suggests three types of names, depending on whether they contain semiotic, phonological, or semantic meanings.

On the other hand, scholars also try to classify proper names by the nature of their referents and address the issue by investigating each category. Among these, anthroponyms and toponyms are the most studied. However, sometimes the boundary between these two kinds of onomastics is ambiguous. For better classification, George Stewart (2012) proposes nine categories of place names based on the mechanisms of naming: descriptive names, possessive names, incident names, commemorative names, euphemistic names, manufactured names, shift names, folk etymological names, and mistake names. Others, like Richard Randall

(2002), classify them into two general groups: names for natural geographic entities and anthropogenic geographic entities.

Considering the linguistic aspects of place names, Maximiano Trapero divides them into two groups: *toponimia mayor* and *toponimia menor*. The first are primary, including those toponyms that do not have a transparent meaning and serve simply to designate a place; the latter, meanwhile, are secondary, consisting of those that possess meanings, as in the case of Spanish. These may be composed by simple lexicon, derivative lexicon or lexicon originating from metaphoric relations (1995, pp. 33-35). This dichotomous division corresponds with the one proposed by Hermans (1998) between conventional and loaded names, as it pays special attention to the lexical composition of those loaded names in Spanish.

Chinese toponyms can be traced back to the beginning of recorded history and are found in the early records on the oracle bones (Hua, 2018, p. 4). In general, those primary place names are composed of oronyms, hydronyms or designate habitats. Moreover, they are all monosyllabic. Chinese place names developed into disyllable or polysyllable terms as of the Qin (221-206 B.C.) and Han (202 B.C.–220 A.D.) dynasties (Niu 2015, p. 7). Orthographically, both the anthroponyms and the toponyms are marked with a vertical line, except those found in classical texts which follow the vertical writing mode. However, after 1990, when the Chinese government started to apply a new standard for the use of punctuation marks, this practice was altered (Zhou, 2019, p. 75). Since then, Chinese toponyms have no significant orthographical features to be distinguished from other vocabularies, unless they are detected by readers based on their encyclopedic knowledge or deduced by the meaning of the sentence.

In general, Chinese place names consist of two parts or two different sets of characters: a proper name and a common name, and the first is always placed before the latter. According to Hu and Xiong, the common names that constitute Chinese toponyms can be divided into three types: those that describe geographical features, like mountains, rivers, and geomorphology; those portraying settlements, buildings, or places in which economic activities are undertaken; and names of administrative divisions (2012, p. 38). Although these common names, included as part of the place names, have evolved diachronically and are distinct synchronically all over the territory, they indicate types of place names to which they belong and, thus, are inseparable from proper names.

As the American anthropologist Clyde Kluckhohn (1986) proposes, the place names of different countries and regions have distinct linguistic forms and structures which constitute their explicit forms. Likewise, they reflect the religion, the custom, the ideology, the aesthetics, and other aspects of the culture which conform to the implicit connotations. As a result, when translators try to convert place names from one language to another, they may need to identify them first. In doing so, they will then struggle to conquer the linguistic barrier by adopting the linguistic system and respecting the orthographic norms of the target language (TL). At the same time, they will attempt to filter the connotations of the place names for a target audience who is probably not familiar with the original culture and tradition, as is the case of Spanish readers of Chinese classical texts.

2. THE TRANSLATABILITY OF PLACE NAMES AND OTHER FACTORS TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION

Since they are a member of the family of proper names, the translatability of toponyms has always been in doubt. As Peter Newmark argues, authors such as Mill consider place names as outsiders of the language that are «untranslatable and not to be translated» (2001, p. 70). In the same line of thought, Luca Manini considers that, to commence with, proper names should not be translated, and that the translator may undertake the risk of «annihilating the cultural context» of the source language (SL). Secondly, as proper names always bear allusions, wordplays, and ambiguity, they are difficult to translate (1996, pp. 161-178).

Nonetheless, since 1955, when the United Nations began to promote one uniform usage of place names for all countries (United Nations, 2006), their translation became a delicate and relevant international issue, which could not be simply regarded as an impossible task. Moreover, as the process of globalization accelerates and extends, the transference of place names from one language to another becomes inevitable, despite the risks and difficulties mentioned above.

Other writers argue that the translatability of proper names is «determined by the communicative-pragmatic function of a text» (Parianou, 2007, p. 407) and that, if we see the translation as «one of linguistic and/or cultural transfer» (Nord, 2003, p. 182), it is obvious that proper names can be translated. The question one must now pose is how

these proper names are to be translated. Many authors approach the problem based on whether names are conventional or loaded. While conventional names are always repeated, transcribed, or transliterated unless they are widely known, translators tend to translate the linguistic components of those loaded names (Franco Aixelá, 1996, pp. 59-60).

However, from a linguistic perspective, following Fernandes's proposal (2006), toponymies can be classified into names that have semiotic meanings, those containing semantic meanings and those holding sound symbolic ones. On the other hand, from an extralinguistic perspective, and following Randall's guidelines on the matter (2002), place names can be divided into two categories: those that designate natural geographic places and those denominating anthropogenic geographic entities.

When a translator is faced with proper names –those which are concise but do not lack intensity–, instead of taking a dichotomic stance, as with the «foreignization» and «domestication» proposed by Lawrence Venuti (1995), they can employ a variety of concrete methods based on selective materials, depending on the two pairs of languages involved. For this reason, Hermans (1998) suggests that names can be copied, transcribed, substituted, or translated into another language. Likewise, Fernandes (2006) recommends ten different strategies: rendition, copy, transcription, substitution, recreation, deletion, addition, transposition, phonological replacement, and conventionality. No matter which method is selected, it is advisable to follow Newmark's advice, which states that «first to translate the word that underlies the PN into the TL, and then to naturalize it back to a new SL proper name» (2001, p. 71).

Many factors may be taken into consideration when translators choose which method should be used. One such method is the nature of the target audience and the objectives of the initiators –which include the publishing house, the editors and, on some occasions, the book managers, the authors, the translators, etc.– all of which can differ. However, some researchers, such as Fernandes (2006, p. 48), consider that in certain text genres, such as children's literature, translated names are readable and memorable and thus matter more than others.

Concerning the translation of Chinese proper names, and in this particular case, Chinese toponyms, the Wade-Giles system was adopted in the mid-nineteen century in an early attempt to translate them into Western languages. The Wades-Giles romanization was devised by Thomas Francis

Wade (1818-1895), a British ambassador to China and Chinese scholar who was the first professor of Chinese at Cambridge University. The system was refined in 1912 by Herbert Allen Giles (1845-1935), a British diplomat in China (Aylmer, 1997). However, since the end of the 1950s, the Chinese government began to promote the use of *pinyin* as an official method of translating Chinese geographic names. This romanization system is used today in simplified Mandarin Chinese, as the Wade-Giles system was considered non-intuitive for non-specialists and not useful for teaching Chinese pronunciation (Kimball, 1988). This appeal for the use of *pinyin* was accepted by the United Nations in 1978 at the Second Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names. For this reason, certain general norms should be followed. For example, when a place name –for example, 华山– is composed of a proper name which is monosyllable –华 [*huà* in *pinyin*]–, plus a common name –山 [*shān* in *pinyin*], meaning *mountain*–, both should be transcribed into *pinyin* and then followed by the translated common name: Huashan Mountain (Hu and Xiong, 2012, p. 117).

Limited research has been conducted on the translation of Chinese place names into Spanish. It may have been due to linguistic differences and the cultural anisomorphism between these two language zones. At the same time, preservation or repetition –which are highly recommended in dealing with language pairs such as Spanish-English–, are not considered the best choice due to the lack of reference values. This is a key consideration, especially when translators are dealing with the cultural and linguistic transferences of a Chinese classic novel containing an amalgam of real, imaginary, religious, and historical place names.

In this article, based on the self-built parallel corpus «Corpus Chino-Español de *Viaje al Oeste*» (CCEVAO), we mark manually each Chinese sentence that contains place names and extract them to make a mini-corpus which also contains the number of the chapters and its two Spanish versions. We thus identify 414 items of place names that appear in the novel, with its two versions of translation for further analysis. Due to space limitations, we only show some examples below.

Proper Names	Number of Chapter	Original Chinese Version	Version T1	Version T2
--------------	-------------------	--------------------------	------------	------------

洪福寺	C09.xlsx	玄奘立意安禅，送在洪福寺内修行。	En cuanto a Xuanzang, como había decidido firmemente consagrarse a la vida monástica, lo enviaron al Templo Hongfu para seguir estudiando el dao.	Hsüan-Tsang, decidido a caminar por los puros senderos del Zen, fue enviado al Monasterio de la Bendición Infinita para continuar con su vida de meditaciones y ascesis.
泾河	C10.xlsx	却说长安城外泾河岸边，有两个贤人：一个是渔翁，名唤张稍；一个是樵子，名唤李定。	sino que hablaremos sólo de dos hombres muy sabios que vivían a orillas del río Jinghe, en las inmediaciones de la ciudad de Chang'an: el pescador Zhang Shao y el leñador Li Ding.	Sí lo haremos, sin embargo, de dos dignísimas personas, que habitaban a orillas del río Ching, a las afueras de la ciudad de Chang-An. Uno era un pescador llamado Chang-Shao, y el otro, un leñador conocido por el nombre de Li- Ting 1.

Table 1. Examples of the corpus of places names of *Journey to the West*

3. TOPONIMICS IN *JOURNEY TO THE WEST*

It is not difficult to imagine that in a fantasy novel based on a journey to India place names are abundant and, at the same time, indispensable to show the advance of the adventures of the main characters. Some place names are real, some are legendary or imaginary. There are place names that are closely related to the storyline or reflect certain characteristics related to the characters. Additionally, the novel also includes toponymics that have religious or historical connotations, or that contain wordplays or allusions. Thus, our first task is to classify them in order to have a more compressive view of the toponyms in the novel.

In this article, we modify Randall's extralinguistic categories of place names (2002) and subdivide each of them into two extra ones: real and fictional names, depending on whether the referents are entities that exist or have historically existed in the real world. Regarding natural geographic place names, there are many rivers, mountains and caves which are not just used to mark the travel map but are also listed by the author for rhetorical considerations on certain occasions. However, in other situations, they are carefully employed to match the magic powers of those monsters or spirits who occupy these places. As for the anthropogenic geographic entities, there are names for administrative divisions –such as countries, cities, and counties–, for government institutions, religious constructions –such as Buddhist and Taoist temples and pagodas– and for individual or civil properties –like manors, shops, buildings, pavilions, ports, and bridges– which are borrowed by the author to mark the locations.

Semiotically speaking, it is worth mentioning a mountain name, 泰山 [*tàishān*] or Taishan Mountain, a well-known mountain for Chinese readers as it is one of the most sacred mountains in China and closely related to the ancient imperial authority and the place where emperors celebrated ceremonies. In the novel, this geographic name is mentioned fourteen times and is always cited when the author wants to stress the heaviness or greatness of something, and it is not difficult for an SL reader to understand this association. In addition, as the destination of the protagonists is India, there are abundant exotic place names that can be easily identified as foreign by Chinese readers. Besides, because of its religious nature, the novel is full of geographic names related to Buddhism and Taoism.

Regarding semantics, the author diligently denominates the geographic names to show the magic powers or the characteristics of the spirits that take specific places as their habitats. For example, in Chapter 81, the main characters have a similar experience as in *Alice in Wonderland*, though distinct to a fairy tale narrative. The spirit of a rat, transformed into a beautiful young lady, captures the Monk, and takes him captive in her cave, named 无底洞 [*wúdǐdòng*] or Bottomless Den, a name which shows her capacity of digging a complicated maze of barathrums to hide from her enemies. Other geographic names are inherently related to the storyline, such as in Chapter 53, where peregrines arrive at 女儿国 [*nǚ'erguó*] or the Kingdom of Females. Here, the Monk and the Pig drink water from the 子母河 [*zǐmǔhé*] or the Motherhood River and the pig gets

pregnant. For this reason, they have no option but to go to the 落胎泉 [luòtāiquán] or Childfree Cave to get the water that can provoke an abortion.

On the other hand, there are place names that contain wordplays. We analyze once such example through the name of the mountain –灵台方寸山 [língtáifāngcùnshān]–, where the Monkey learns how to use his magic powers before he goes on the journey. While the first two characters could refer to the altar used in a religious context and used as a synonym for 心 [xīn] or *heart*, the third and fourth characters also form a word which can be used both as a unit of measure or to indicate the heart of a person, since the size of both is almost the same. For the ancient Chinese, the heart is another way to describe the mind. In a second reading, this name reflects the essential objective of the journey, which is to cultivate the mind. On other occasions, some place names are carefully arranged by the author to ironize social problems. In Chapter 68, the group encounters a monster who lives on 麒麟山 [qílínshān] or Qilin Mountain. *Qilin* is a mythical and sacred single-horned creature and is always used as a synonym which refers to talented persons or illustrious rulers in ancient China. On this occasion, the author may refer to those corrupted and vicious bureaucrats who occupy high positions so as to satirize the dark social background (Wang, 1990, pp. 26-28).

Similarly, the author seems to place greater emphasis on the sonic rhetorical aspects and less on the sound symbolic meanings of the place names. Here, it is important to point out that most place names are trisyllabic and it is not uncommon to see that the author enumerates several trisyllabic place names for rhetorical considerations.

4. THE TRANSLATION TECHNIQUES USED IN THE TWO SPANISH VERSIONS OF THE NOVEL: DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

As mentioned above, Chinese geographic names are composed of proper and common names; for the latter, it is not difficult to find equivalents in Spanish, since most of the geographical referents also exist in the TL culture. For instance, while the translators of T1 use *gruta* and *cueva* to translate 洞 [dòng] as caves, those of T2 use the word *caverna* more often. In this case, the three words are synonyms and the election of one or another may depend on the personal preferences of the translator.

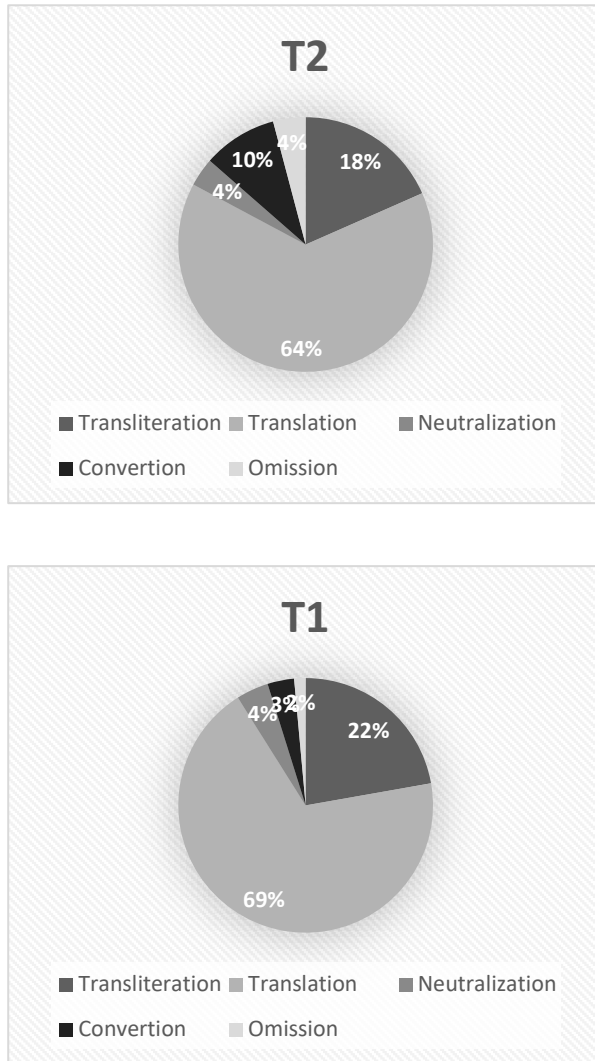
Cui and Wang (2016), for the translation of place names in the English

version of *Fusheng liuji*, a novel of the Qing dynasty, translated into English by the famous Chinese writer Lin Yutang in 1936, identify the existence of two main sets of strategies: the cultural conservation strategies and the cultural substitution strategies. While the first set of strategies includes transliteration, linguistic –non-cultural– translation, transliteration, plus linguistic translation –or plus gloss– and linguistic translation plus gloss, the second set comprises absolute universalization and naturalization.

In this research, we have detected five techniques of translation according to the 414 distinct place names extracted from the novel: transliteration, literal translation, naturalization, conversion to common names, and omission. While the first two techniques may conform more to those cultural conservation strategies, the other three may follow cultural substitution strategies. On some occasions, the two techniques may be combined by the translators to transfer place names, as in the case of 西梁女国 [xiliáng nüguó], which is literally translated in T1 as *Reino femenino de Liang Oeste*. However, this time we observe that the phonetic transcription of Liang has been included in the translated name. In these cases, we classify them according to the main characteristics represented in the translations.

In addition, sometimes there are inconsistencies in the translation of the same place name when it appears several times in the novel. For instance, the word 五台山 [wutáishān] appears three times and is transcribed phonetically the first occurrence as *Montaña Wu-Tai* in T2 and translated literally in the other two cases as *Montaña de los Cinco Estados*. This discrepancy may be due to the different treatments of the two translators in collaboration or as a result of the decision of the translators based on textual factors. In this respect, we examine the most regular translation based on its frequency of occurrence.

As a result, we have drawn two pie charts –see Figures 1 and 2– to show the distinct percentages of application of each technique in T1 and T2. According to these comparative pie charts, the literal translation technique is the most adopted, both in T1 and T2 and, in a general comparison, the translators of T2 convert more original geographic names into common names. Despite this, all the techniques are observed in both versions and there are still notable differences in the concrete treatment of place names in distinct categories.



Figures 1 and 2. Percentage of translation techniques used in the two translations

4. 1. Transliteration

As stated above, one noticeable difference between T1 and T2 is that the translators of the first adopt *pinyin* for the phonetic transcription, while those of the second use the Wade-Giles system. This variation may be due

to the specific requests and norms of the publishers. As T1 was published by the Chinese Foreign Language Publishing House in 2010 within a collection of the Greater China Library, the translation is more bound to the publishing norms of the SL. In contrast, T2 was published by a Spanish publishing house –Siruela– and, for Western readers, the Wade-Giles is normally easier to understand.

This correspondence to different norms is also represented in the treatments of those place names composed of a monosyllabic proper name plus a common name. For instance, in T1, 华山 [*huàshān*] or Huashan Mountain, is translated as *Montaña Huashan*, following the norms established by the Chinese authority by proposing the translated common name and repeating it in *pinyin* after the proper name. However, in T2, it is translated as *Monte Hwa*.

However, the manner of dealing with place names that are related to Buddhism is the most common aspect between T1 and T2. There are various denominations of geographic names related to Buddhist belief as the novel is based on a Buddhist pilgrimage from China to India. The translators of T1 and T2 use the Sanskrit romanization system to transliterate those Buddhist terms which are originally translated into Chinese from Sanskrit. For instance, the author constructs the human world in the novel based on Buddhist belief: In the center of the world there is a mountain called 须弥山 [*xūmíshān*] –T1: *Montaña Sumero*; T2: *Monte Sumero*– and it is surrounded by four continents, which are 东胜神洲 [*dōngshèngshéngzhōu*] –T1: *Purvavideja*; T2: *Purvavideha*–, 北俱芦洲 [*beijùlúzhōu*] –T1: *Kurudvipa*; T2: *Uttara-kuru*–, 西牛贺洲 [*xīniùhézōu*] –T1: *Djambudvipa*; T2: *Aparagodaniya*– and 南瞻部洲 [*nánzhānbùzhōu*] –T1: *Godania*; T2: *Jambudvipa*. The differences between the two versions are the distinct selection of Sanskrit transliteration system and the mistake made by the T1 translators in confusing the name of the continent of the south with that of the west.

In comparison with T2, this technique of transliteration is employed more in T1. This method may be the most efficient way to transfer the place names of the SL into the TL, as it simply represents the writing system of one language into another and copying its phonetic representation. However, by doing so, they lose almost all the semantic meanings of those names conveyed by the characters.

4. 2. Translation

This method is profusely adopted by the translators of both versions. On some occasions, the translations of the place names in T1 and T2 are very similar, except for some grammatical differences. For example, 黑松林 [*hēisōnglín*] (C19) is translated as *Bosque del Pino Negro* in T1 and the plural form as *Bosque de los Pinos Negros* in T2. On other occasions, the literal translations may differ much more due to the nature of the characters and their intensive meanings. As in the case of 玄英洞 [*xuányīngdòng*] (C91), the name of the cave is translated as *Cueva de la Esencia Negra* in T1 and *Cueva de la Flor Misteriosa*. Both versions are literally correct, since the first character 玄 [*xuán*] may mean *black colour* or *mysterious*, and the second character 英 [*yīng*] may describe a flower or its essence (Lexicographical Research Center of the Commercial Press, 2019). In the novel, this cave is occupied by three spirits of rhinoceroses who use their magic powers to transform themselves into Buddhas to cheat ordinary people to obtain valuable offerings. According to Wang, the name of the cave means *black and obscure*, in contrast to *white and pure* which, in Chinese, can be used to describe innocence and uprightness. The author denominates the cave this way to describe the corrupted officials of that time (1990, p. 26). For this reason, the version of T1 may fit more with the context and the purpose of the author.

In comparison with T1, T2 translators translate literally more place names than those of T1, although they also omit more and turn them into common names more often. For instance, the name of a hall, 华夷楼 [*huáyílóu*] (C95), is transcribed as *Salón Huayi* in T1 and translated as *Salón de la Paz Eterna entre los Chinos y los Bárbaros* in T2. According to ancient Chinese viewpoint, they live in the center of the world and foreigners are 夷人 [*yírén*], which always contains a derogatory meaning. Although the phonetic transcription appears more concise, the literal translation retains the meaning of those characters and their connotations.

A single evaluation of the translators' behaviour of both versions is difficult, not only because they do not always select the same method facing the same place name, but also because their method varies from case to case. For instance, the name of a city of the inferno 枉死城 [*wǎngsichéng*] (C11) is translated as *Ciudad de la Muerte Injusta* in T1 and as *Ciudad de la Muerte* in T2. Since in this city the Emperor of the Tang dynasty encounters numerous family members and citizens who have died unjustly, the translation of T1 embodies more in detail the meaning

of the original place name and the context. Nevertheless, in some cases, such as the name of a river 通天河 [tōngtiānhé] (C47), it is translated as *Río del Cielo* in T1 and as *Río que llega hasta el Cielo* in T2. Despite its concision, T1 does not transfer all the features of the original name as T2 does and, thus, loses its singularity.

4. 3. Neutralization

There are certain concepts that are shared by both cultures. In both – in the Chinese culture and in the Spanish one –, there exist concepts about the inferno, though with different connotations and denominations. In Chinese legend, the inferno where the King of Hell and his subjects live is called 酆都 [fēngdū] (C10), translated as *Reino de las Tinieblas* in T1 and as *Reino Inferior* in T2. The neutralization method is preferred by translators when dealing with those place names which contain animal and plant nouns, as in the case of the name of the mountain 麒麟山 [qílínshān] mentioned in 5.1. In both versions, the translators substitute the name of the Chinese sacred animal with unicorn, one legendary animal in Western culture which has a similar image to the Chinese one.

4. 4. Conversion to common names and omission

In comparison to T1, the T2 translators employ more often the above-mentioned methods dealing with place names, especially with those which are listed together by the author to create a rhetorical effect and that have little connection with the development of the storyline. In the following example, the author describes three different levels of the inferno from which the translators of T1 translate all of them into Spanish, while those of T2 omit the first one:

Original text: 酆都狱、拔舌狱、剥皮狱，哭哭啼啼，凄凄惨惨，只因不忠不孝伤天理，佛口蛇心堕此门。(Chapter 11)

T1: El Infierno Fengdu, el de la Extracción de la Lengua, el de la Desolladura: aullidos y llantos, terrible angustia. Ofendieron al Cielo obrando sin piedad filial ni lealtad. Tienen bocas de Buda pero corazones de serpiente.

T2: En el infierno de las lenguas arrancadas y de la piel desollada pagan su culpa, entre lamentos, sollozos y gritos, los traidores, los rebeldes, los que

murmuran contra el cielo y los que hablan como Buda y poseen un corazón de serpiente.

4. 5. The gloss

The gloss is always adopted by the translators when they choose the transcription, literal translation, and naturalization techniques. Besides, in comparison with the abundant uses of the other techniques, the gloss is scarcely used in either version. In fact, the gloss was never used independently. Due to this, we do not classify it as a separate category of technique. Nevertheless, it does not mean that its importance has been ignored.

For this reason, we do not count it as an individual method because it always appears together with those place names, which were transliterated, translated, or neutralized. The T2 translators add eight times more glosses than those of T1 and they prefer to input endnotes, while the latter prefer inserting brief explanations between the lines. For instance, the Chinese language describes the Galaxy as 天河 [*tianhé*] (C29, literally, *the river of the sky*); T1 translators translate it literally as *el Río Celeste* and added *Vía Láctea* directly in the text. Although the notes may interrupt the fluent reading of the target audience, they may preserve the connotations of the original place names which are lost using one of the translation methods.

CONCLUSIONS

Through the analysis, we find that the methods of translation and transliteration are the most adopted in both Spanish versions of the *Journey to the West*. Hence, T1 and T2 translators tend to implement the cultural conservation strategy for adapting Chinese place names into Spanish to a higher degree.

From a comparative perspective, T1 respects more SL norms, a fact ratified using *pinyin* and by the treatment of disyllable place names. However, T2 conveys more of the semantic features and the connotations of the original place names by using more literal translations and introducing more explicative notes, though it also converts more place names into common names. The adoption of different methods could perhaps be explained by the norms of the publishing house, the purposes of the translators and the expectations of the target audience.

In addition, there are inconsistencies according to the same place names in each version, which may be since both translations are corporative work or due to pragmatics considerations of the translators. Furthermore, although the frequency of the use of different translation techniques in T1 and T2 are similar in general, they always differ in concrete cases.

On the other hand, the application of a corpus contributes not only to the quantitative analysis, as it helps to extract all the items and compare them parallelly to the original material with its two versions, but also to the qualitative analysis, as it allows the reader to trace the meaning back to the original contexts. However, a bigger corpus consisting of materials of diverse nature needs to be built for more thorough research of the translation of the Chinese proper names into Spanish.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work was supported by The Youth Fund for Humanities and Social Sciences Research of the Ministry of Education of China, under Grant Number 18YJC740064. The project is entitled *Jiyu Yuliaoku de Xiyouji Xibanyayu Yiben Yanjiu* [Corpus-Based Research of the Spanish Translations of the *Journey to the West*].

REFERENCES

- Aylmer, Charles (1997). The Memoirs of H. A. Giles. In Geremie R. Barmé (Ed.), *East Asian History* (pp. 1-90). Goanna Print.
- Algeo, John (1973). *On Defining the Proper Name*. University of Florida Press.
- Anonymous (2006). *Viaje al oeste: las aventuras del Rey Mono*. Trans.Enrique P. Gatón and Imelda Huang-Wang. Siruela.
- Barros Ochoa, María (1992). Traducción de caracónimos en la obra de William Shakespeare. *Estudios Humanísticos. Filología*, 14, pp. 113-128. <https://doi.org/10.18002/ehf.v0i14.4265>

- Confucius (2016), *The Analects*. Trans. Xiaofen Chen. Zhonghua Books.
- Cuéller Lázaro, Carmen (2014). Los nombres propios y su tratamiento en traducción. *Meta*, 59 (2), pp. 360-379. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1027480ar>
- Cui, Shuangchang and Baorong Wang (2016). Translating Chinese Place Names into English: The Case of Lin Yutang's Version of *Fusheng Liuji*, *International Journal of Comparative Literature and Translation Studies*, 4 (2), pp. 24-32.
- Davies, Eirlys E. (2003). A Goblin or a Dirty Nose? *The Translator*, 9 (1), pp. 65-100. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13556509.2003.10799146>
- Fernandes, Lincoln (2006) Translation of Names in Children's Fantasy Literature: Bringing the Young Reader into Play, *New Voices in Translation Studies*, 2, pp. 44-57.
- Franco Aixelá, Javier (1996). Culture-Specific Items in Translation. In Román Álvarez and M.^a Carmen África Vidal (Eds.), *Translation, Power, Subversion* (pp. 48-62). Multilingual Matters.
- Franco Aixelá, Javier (2000). *La traducción condicionada de los nombres propios (inglés-español)*. Almar.
- Guo, Mingzhi (1997). Daogui yu xiyoujirenwude bieming daichen [Daogui, his Alias and Metonymy in *Journey to the West*], *Seeking Truth*, 2, pp. 64-69.
- Hermans, Theo (1998). On Translating Proper Names, with Reference to De Witte and Max Havelaar. In Michael J. Wintle (Ed.), *Modern Dutch Studies: Essays in Honour of Peter King* (pp.11-14). The Athlone Press, pp. 11-24.

- Hu, Fangyi and Xin, Xiong (2012). *Zhongying renming diming de tedian yu fany* [*Characteristics and Translations of Place Names in English and Chinese*]. Nanjing Southeast University Press.
- Hua, Linfu (2018). *Zhonghua diming shihua* [*The History of Chinese Place Names*]. Chinese People's Publishing House.
- Kałużyńska, Irena (2016). «Linguistic Composition and Characteristics of Chinese Given Names», *Onoma*, 51, pp. 161-186. <https://doi.org/10.34158/ONOMA.51/2016/8>
- Kimball, Richard L. (1988). *Quick Reference Chinese. A Practical Guide to Mandarin for Beginners and Travelers in English, Pinyin Romanization and Chinese Characters*. China Books and Periodicals, Inc.
- Kluckhohn, Clyde (1986). *Wenhua yu geren* [*Culture and individual*]. Trans. Jia Gao, Hong He, and Weiling He. Zhejiang People's Publishing House.
- Lexicographical Research Center of the Commercial Press (2019). *Gudaihany cidian* [*Dictionary of Ancient Chinese*]. The Commercial Press.
- Li, Xiaolong (2016). Xiyouji xiaoyao mingming yuanze, tili yu lai yuan shitan [Research on the Names of Little Monsters in *Journey to the West*], *Estudio sobre la Cultura China*, 1, pp. 133-141.
- Li, Hao (2018). *Liusheng: zhongguo xingming wenhua* [*Eternal Fame: Name Culture in China*]. SDX Joint Publishing Company.
- López García, Ángel (1985). «Lo propio del nombre propio», *Lingüística Española Actual (LEA)*, 7 (1), pp. 37-54.

- Lou, Guangqing (1985). «Cong Xingming kan shehui he wenhua» [An Approach on Chinese Society and Culture Through Names]. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, 63, pp. 14-19.
- Manini, Luca (1996). «Meaningful Literary Names: Their Forms and Functions and Their Translation», *The Translator*, 2, pp. 161-78. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13556509.1996.10798972>
- Mi, Tian and Rodrigo Muñoz Cabrera (2020). «¿Numerales que atraviesan la barrera lingüística? Un estudio práctico de la traducción del 9 del chino al español por medio del Corpus CCEVAO», *Estudios de Traducción*, 10, pp. 285-298. <https://doi.org/10.5209/estr.66684>
- Morala Rodríguez, José R. (1986). «El nombre propio, ¿objeto de estudio interdisciplinar?», *Contextos*, 8, pp. 49-62.
- Moya, Virgilio (1993). «Nombres propios: su traducción», *Revista de Filología de la Universidad de la Laguna*, 12, pp. 233-234.
- Newmark, Peter (2001), *Approaches to Translation*. Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.
- Niu, Ruchen (2015). *Mingshixinxue: dimingxue lilun siban* [New Perspectives About Names and Essence: Analysis of Theories of Place Names]. China Society Press.
- Nord, Christiane (2003). «Proper Names in Translations for Children: *Alice in Wonderland* as a Case in Point», *Meta*, 48 (1-2), pp. 182-196. <https://doi.org/10.7202/006966ar>
- Parianou, Anastasia (2007). «Translating Proper Names: A Functionalist approach», *Names*, 55 (4), pp. 407-416. <https://doi.org/0.1179/nam.2007.55.4.407>

- Plato (2003). *Bolatu quanji [The Complete Works of Plato]*. Trans. Xiaozhao Wang. Beijing Popular Press.
- Randall, Richard R. (2002). *Place Names: How They Define the World and More*. Trans. Yu Gao, Wei Che and Yuan Ji. Encyclopaedia of China Publishing House.
- Real Academia Española *Diccionario de la lengua española*.
<https://dle.rae.es/>
- Rebollo Torío, María A. (1995). El nombre propio y su significado, *AEF*, 18, pp. 399-406.
- Robins, Robert. H. (1996). The Development of the Word Class System of the European Grammatical Tradition, *Foundations of Language*, 2, pp. 3-19. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110801354-037>
- Stewart, George R. (2012). A Look Back at the American Name Society, *Names*, 60 (1), pp. 64-55.
- Trapero, Maximiano (1995). *Para una teoría lingüística de la toponimia: estudios de toponimia canaria*. Editorial de la Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.
- United Nations (2006). *Manual for the National Standardization of Geographical Names*. United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names. United Nations Publications.
- Venuti, Lawrence (1995). *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*. Routledge.
- Wang, Guogang (1990). *Xiyouji bielun [Different Viewpoints on Journey to the West]*. Xuelin.

Wu, Cheng'en (2010). *Peregrinación al Oeste*. Trans. María Lacea and Carlos Trigoso Sánchez. Ediciones en Lenguas Extranjeras.

Wu, Cheng'en (2018). *Xiyouji* [*Journey to the West*]. Popular Literature.

Zhou, Wei (2019). *Diming de mimi—hanyu diming waiyi yanjiu* [*Behind the Name: Chinese Place Names in Translation*]. Social Sciences Academic Press.

Zhuang, Zi (2019). *Zhuangzi*. Zhonghua.