

A Study of the Translation and Dissemination of China's Early Economic Propositions: Centered on *Pacific Affairs* (1929-1949)

Xin Yu, Jinyu Liu*

College of Foreign Languages, Inner Mongolia University, Hohhot, China
Email: *jinyuliu2008@163.com

How to cite this paper: Yu, X., & Liu, J. Y. (2026). A Study of the Translation and Dissemination of China's Early Economic Propositions: Centered on *Pacific Affairs* (1929-1949). *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 14, 605-618.
<https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2026.146035>

Received: May 28, 2026

Accepted: June 27, 2026

Published: June 30, 2026

Copyright © 2026 by author(s) and Scientific Research Publishing Inc.
This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Open Access

Abstract

From 1929 to 1949, China formulated a series of systematic economic propositions catering to national independence and people's liberation amid the development of China's revolutionary cause. As a key overseas academic journal focusing on China and the Asia-Pacific region in the first half of the 20th century, *Pacific Affairs* became a vital international platform for disseminating China's early revolutionary economic thoughts. Taking the journal's published articles, translations and commentaries from 1929 to 1949 as research materials, this paper explores the translation practices and international dissemination effects of the China's early economic propositions in Western academic and public spheres. It clarifies the core content, translational features and discourse strategies of China's economic ideas disseminated via *Pacific Affairs*, including rural economy, land policies, monetary finance, and international economic relations. This paper further analyzes the historical context and communication paths of such overseas translation, and discusses how the journal eliminated Western informational barriers and biased narratives to build the initial international image of China's economic governance concepts. This study holds that the translation and dissemination of China's early economic propositions based on *Pacific Affairs* realized the cross-cultural transmission of Chinese revolutionary economic thoughts, facilitated the international community's objective understanding of China's revolutionary concepts and governance capacity, and offers a valuable historical reference for the international communication of contemporary Chinese economic discourse.

Keywords

Pacific Affairs, Translation of Early Chinese Economic Propositions, International Dissemination of Economic Viewpoints

1. Introduction

In the first half of the 20th century, China was in a period of profound social upheaval and regime changes. Under extremely harsh geopolitical and public opinion circumstances, how China could convey its governance concepts and real situation to the outside world, especially to the Western society that held international discourse power and important strategic resources, was not only about the acquisition of international sympathy and assistance, but also directly related to the construction of the legitimacy of the regime and its survival. At that time, the core journal of the Institute of Pacific Relations, *Pacific Affairs*, as a highly influential international publication, became a key window for Western political circles and mainstream academia to observe the situation in China. Therefore, studying the literature in this journal has an irreplaceable academic reference value for restoring the overseas dissemination of China's early economic thought and exploring how the international community perceived the image of the CPC.

Among the numerous governance programs of China, economic policies, especially land reform, border area construction and anti-imperialist financial policies, constitute the core cornerstone of its revolutionary legitimacy. Economic policies directly address the fundamental question of "what kind of China should be established". However, the current academic research on China's early external discourse system and translation history shows a significant imbalance: the research objects mostly focus on purely political documents such as *The Communist Manifesto*, or news documentary literature like Snow's *Red Star Over China*; in terms of research methods, most adopt case analysis of individual texts, or are limited to a specific translation event. There is a lack of systematic diachronic examination of China's early economic propositions for external English translation in the academic circle.

This thesis focuses on the articles and translations related to China's early economic policies published in the *Pacific Affairs* from 1929 to 1949, and conducts an analysis by taking into account various international factors. The thesis has clarified the context, motivations and translation strategies of the translation of China's early economic policies. It may be inferred that the relevant translations have broken down the cognitive barriers between China and the West, laying a solid foundation for the external dissemination of Chinese economic thought.

2. Introduction to *Pacific Affairs*

Pacific Affairs was first published in 1928. During the 1920s and 1930s up until the early stages of the Cold War, this publication not only served as an academic platform for global Asian studies and international relations but also became the preferred authoritative window for Western political and diplomatic circles as well as mainstream think tanks to understand the situation in the Far East. As Stephen MacKinnon noted, "Historically, *Pacific Affairs* has been a first-rate international journal" (Mai, 2006: p. 420). Unlike the traditional Chinese studies

periodicals in the West that focused on classical cultural research, *Pacific Affairs* had a strong sense of practical concern and highly concentrated on political upheavals, economic system reforms, and social structure changes in the Asia-Pacific region, especially in China. The journal adhered to a relatively open and diverse editorial policy, gathering research results from scholars and journalists of various nationalities and political positions, and became an important international hub for cross-political and cultural barriers for ideological exchanges. Being able to publish translated articles on China's economic propositions in this journal meant that China's early economic propositions directly touched the vision of Western policymakers and mainstream academic elites.

During the specific historical period under examination in this study (1929-1949), *Pacific Affairs* played an extremely unique historical role. Against this backdrop, *Pacific Affairs* utilized its independent international think tank platform attributes to objectively provide China with a highly valuable voice channel. Through this platform, scholars represented by Chen Hans-heng, as well as numerous international friends, were able to translate and introduce China's core economic policies such as land revolution, border area construction, and anti-imperialist finance into the Western world in the form of articles published in the journal. These texts often carried strong class struggle colors and political mobilization functions in the Chinese context, but in the historical process at that time, the concept of translator was greatly expanded. They were not traditional professional language translators but historical participants with strong political demands. Depending on the different evolution of the historical period and the identity of the translator, the strategies and discourse postures for converting the source text into English were determined. Therefore, *Pacific Affairs* is not merely a static repository of documents; rather, it is a crucial public opinion arena that played a key role in China's early economic policies in breaking the international information isolation, achieving cross-cultural communication, and thereby reshaping its international political image. It documents the actual trajectory of the penetration of the CPC's economic discourse into the West and is the most ideal platform for this study to explore translation strategies and changes in discourse power.

3. Translation Studies on Early China's Economic Propositions

From 1929 to 1949, the strategy of translating China's economic propositions in *Pacific Affairs* evolved, presenting a three-stage characteristic that was highly synchronized with China's own strength growth and changes in the international situation. These three stages comprehensively delineate a trajectory of power construction from passive defense and concealment to active attack and regulation.

The Early Stage of the Agrarian Revolution (1927.8-1937.7)

In the 1920s and 1930s, due to the tight news and economic blockade imposed by the Kuomintang, China lacked official channels for external propaganda, and

the West had a great deal of misunderstanding about the Communist movement in China. Under such circumstances, scholars like Chen Hansheng, who held both the roles of author and translator, became the main force in breaking the blockade. Utilizing their educational background in the West, they keenly grasped the psychological expectations of the elite readers of *Pacific Affairs* and adopted an academicization packaging translation strategy, a method that replaces emotionally charged revolutionary rhetoric with objective, data-driven terminology standard to the West. By transforming the complex revolutionary texts with strong political demands into academic discourse that conformed to the norms of Western sociology and economics, they effectively refuted the views of mainstream Western scholars at the time, such as Buck, who believed that China only needed agricultural technology improvement (Miao & Ma, 2025: p. 9). They used objective data and logic to demonstrate to the West the inevitability and legitimacy of the CPC's land revolution.

Due to the political environment at that time, the English translations of China's early economic policies could not be directly presented as a complete party platform. Instead, they took on a fragmented form, appearing in specific agricultural surveys, tax or financial analysis papers. The translators helped to piece together the rational revolutionary image of the CPC in the Western society through the ingenious reconfiguration of China's native discourse. When dealing with complex local exploitation terms, the translator carried out precise cross-cultural adaptation. For instance, in Chen Hansheng's article *The Burdens of the Chinese Peasantry*, he translated “厘金” as “Transit Duty” and “拉夫” as “Pressgangs” within the context of Western history, using Western concepts that the readers could understand to reproduce the suffering logic of the lower class in China, directly pointing out that the taxation of the Kuomintang regime was “open robbery”. In Hu Shanheng's article criticizing the dual oppression of anti-imperialism, the translator retained the concrete metaphor “磨石 (millstones)”, visually presenting the oppression of imperialism and warlords on the people; at the same time, the translator adopted a softening and omission strategy, filtering out the overly radical revolutionary slogans in the original text, and shaping the Communist Party of China as a just resistance force forced to defend itself in a desperate situation. Moreover, when criticizing the Kemmerer Report of the United States, the translation frequently used “common people” and “burden”, injecting humanitarian concern into the serious financial discussion.

In conclusion, although the English translation during this period did not directly translate slogans such as “打土豪、分田地”, it constructed a complete logical chain in the minds of Western readers through academic packaging and the reconfiguration of local language: CPC was not a blind mob but a rational economic reformer dedicated to destroying the old exploitative system and establishing a peaceful new order. This greatly weakened the economic legitimacy of the Kuomintang in the West, laying a crucial cognitive foundation and a prelude to discourse for the international community to more comprehensively accept China's

policies during the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression.

The Period of the Full-Scale War of Resistance against Japan (1937-1945)

After the outbreak of the full-scale war of resistance, China made a significant shift in its external communication strategy: from the subjective output by internal scholars to the objective presentation by Western scholars. Previously, translations led by party members often carried a strong Soviet ideological tint and awkward political terms, which could easily raise the suspicion of Western readers. With the establishment of the united front, Western progressive journalists such as Martin R. Norins and Snow, as well as scholars from the IPR, took over the baton of translating the economic policies of the Communist base areas. According to communication theory, the “credibility of the information disseminator” has a significant impact on the acceptance of the audience (Guo, 2011: p. 183). These “others” with the same cultural background and values as Western readers have endowed the translation with unparalleled objectivity and persuasiveness. When they published translations in authoritative publications such as *Pacific Affairs*, they deliberately downplayed the class struggle elements in the original text and instead adopted Western economic and sociological discourse. Through travel records and detailed data, such as tax rates and grain production, they aimed to transform the image of the CPC from an aggressive revolutionary force to a pragmatic and efficient agricultural reformer dedicated to improving people’s livelihoods, greatly weakening the false propaganda of the Kuomintang.

The translation of economic documents during the Chinese People’s War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression was essentially a cross-cultural political persuasion aimed at seeking international recognition. The Western translators did not act as mere language converters, but rather as cross-cultural political mediators. Through strategies such as “adding democratic labels” and “direct translation with background explanations”, they contributed to dispelling the stereotypical image of the CPC held by the West. Norins’ translation in *Pacific Affairs* is an excellent example. The original Chinese title was “陕甘宁边区的人民生活”, and Norins changed it to *Agrarian Democracy in North-West China*. This rephrasing not only replaced the difficult-to-understand “Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia” with “Northwest”, but also added the word “democracy” in a forward-looking manner. This precisely met the ideological preferences of American readers and laid a democratic and progressive foundation for the economic construction of the CPC’s border regions.

When dealing with specific terms related to local exploitation, the translator skillfully employed ideological annotations. For instance, regarding the harsh tenancy system that existed in the border areas in the past, “one day’s work in three” (where landlords borrowed cattle to demand that farmers repay with three days of labor), Norins, after providing the translation, specifically added an annotation stating that it was “is a feudal survival”. This biased supplementary explanation clearly conveyed a signal to the West: The reduction of rent and interest by the CPC was not a communist-style property deprivation, but rather aimed at elimi-

nating the backward feudal oppression and establishing modern fair contracts. Through these micro-level textual manipulations, the translation helped to construct a dual positive image of the CPC as an anti-Japanese pioneer and an agricultural democratic reformer on a macro level, earning valuable international moral recognition.

The Period of the War of Liberation (1945-1949)

During the Liberation War from 1945 to 1949, with the continuous military victories, China's motivation for translation underwent a fundamental shift: from seeking international sympathy during the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression to solemnly declaring its political legitimacy and practical governance capabilities as the future ruling party to the world. This transformation directly gave rise to a comprehensive innovation in translation practice. During this period, China's external translation completed a paradigm shift from fragmentation to systematization. The translation subject gradually shifted to being dominated by overseas scholars and institution translators with professional academic backgrounds. The core significance of this systematic translation lies in that it marks a historic leap from the revolutionary party's discourse to the governing party's discourse. Revolutionary party discourse is often deconstructive and passionate; while the governing party discourse is constructive, normative, and requires objectivity, precision, and authority. During this period, the focus of translation shifted to official documents. By translating core documents such as *The Outline Land Law of China*, China conveyed a clear message to the international community: not only does it have the ability to destroy the old world, but it is also a modern ruling party with a complete policy program, high organizational discipline, and modern administrative capabilities. Through rigorous academic translations, overseas scholars enabled China's policies to align with international legal norms, objectively earning it political legitimacy endorsements from the international academic community and the public opinion field.

With the change in political status, the translation strategies of the documents have undergone a revolutionary transformation. Translators have abandoned the previous strategies of adaptation to Western audiences and metaphorical paraphrasing, and instead adopted the strategies of alienation and pursuit of high legal equivalence. This criterion means strictly matching Chinese policy terms with standardized Western legal vocabulary and grammatical structures, aiming to establish the absolute authority of official texts in cross-cultural communication. Taking the translation of *The Outline Land Law of China* by Frank C. Lee in 1948 as an example, regarding the core operational principle of land reform, “抽多补少，抽肥补瘦”，if the previous adaptation strategy during the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression period were adopted, it might be translated as a vulgar saying with moral connotations, which would seriously undermine the legal seriousness of the policy. However, Lee adopted a strict legal terminology equivalence strategy and translated it as: “Surplus land shall be taken to relieve dearth... Fertile land shall be taken to supplement infertile”. This translation not only uses

precise and neutral vocabulary, but also employs the typical mandatory passive voice structure in legal English, “shall be taken”, which strips away any moral judgment and precisely reshapes the land reform as a state administrative and legal act based on strict standards. Moreover, the translation deliberately retains the forceful four-character parallel sentence structure commonly found in the official language of China. This transformation is essentially the awakening of sovereignty consciousness at the textual level. It declares to the outside world that in the fundamental issue of reshaping China’s economic structure, the West likely needs to adapt to China’s legal terms. This helpfully ended the passive adaptation state of Chinese revolutionary texts in the Western context, established the absolute authority of the CPC’s legal documents, and laid a solid textual foundation for the independent and autonomous external discourse system after the founding of the country.

4. Translation and Discursive Construction of China’s Early Economic Propositions

Agricultural and Rural Economy

The agricultural crisis in the late 1920s marked the beginning of the CPC’s land revolution. Taking Chen Hansheng’s article *The Burdens of the Chinese Peasantry* published in *Pacific Affairs* as an example, when translating agricultural economic terms, the translator accurately matched them with mature political economic concepts from the West. This not only clearly conveyed economic information to Western readers and eliminated cultural misunderstandings, but also morally exposed the cruelty of the old system, thereby establishing moral legitimacy for the CPC’s revolution.

Table 1. Example of translation of terms in agricultural and rural economy.

ST in <i>The Taxation Burden on Chinese Peasants</i>	十余年来中国丝茶的出口递减，粮食的进口骤增，棉花烟叶的进口逐年超过出口。在此农业破产的趋势中，原料退步，物价腾贵，成本加重，购买力降低，工商业日益萧条，中国将由次殖民地沦为全殖民地了。(Chen, 1928: p. 9)
TT in <i>The Burden on Chinese Peasants</i>	Within the last decade many causes have combined to pull China from a status of hypo-colony, as expounded by the late Sun Yat-sen, down to the position of a full substantive colony. These have been the gradual decrease in the export of silk and tea, the increase in the import of staple food products, the import of tobacco and cotton exceeding the export of the same articles, the bankruptcy of the rural communities, the decline in the production of raw materials, the soaring prices of foreign commodities, the augmentation in the cost of production, the lower purchasing power and the depression of commerce and industry. (Chen, 1929: p. 644)

As shown in **Table 1**, when characterizing the nature of Chinese society, the translation of “次殖民/全殖民地” was rendered as the precise “hypo-colony/full substantive colony”, converting the Marxist judgment of the CPC into Western academic discourse. At the same time, the translation ingeniously added the back-

ground of “as expounded by the late Sun Yat-sen”, using the endorsement of a recognized Western leader to eliminate political bias and giving historical legitimacy to the economic propositions of the CPC. When describing the rural economy, professional terms such as “bankruptcy” were selected to accurately reveal the current situation of the complete breakdown of the rural production chain. Through the construction of objective academic terms, the translation clearly conveyed to the West the fundamental motivation of the CPC’s economic policies: to break the economic shackles of imperialism and save the collapsing national economy.

Table 2. The translation of the types of rural taxes.

Traditional Chinese tax names	The tax names in the translation
田赋	Land tax
契税	Transfer tax
盐税	Salt Gabelle/Salt Tax
附加税	Surtaxes/Surcharges
预征田赋	Advance collection of the land tax

As shown in **Table 2**, regarding the traditional Chinese tax terms, the translator avoided literal translation and precisely matched them with modern Western economic terms. “land tax” for “田赋”, “transfer tax” for “契税”, and “Salt Gabelle” or “Salt Tax” for “盐税”. The word “Gabelle” comes from the salt tax in French history and has a strong feudal heavy tax flavor. Using it here greatly evokes historical resonance among Western readers. For illegal and additional extortion, “附加税” in the original text is translated as “surtaxes” or “surcharges”. For “预征田赋”, the translation accurately sums it up as “advance collection of the land tax”. Through this standardized term conversion, Western readers can directly make cross-national quantitative comparisons, which greatly enhances the objective credibility of the information.

Base Area Construction

Taking *Agrarian Democracy in North-West China* published in *Pacific Affairs* as the research subject, this paper explores the cross-cultural discourse adaptation of China’s wartime policies. Targeting Western elites who remained wary of communism, the translator adopted differentiated translation strategies. In terms of political expression, prominent de-radicalization was applied to mitigate ideological resistance, a strategy that deliberately omits or softens Marxist class-struggle terminology to present communist policies as moderate democratic reforms. When rendering content related to economic production, the translator employed techniques such as explanatory amplification and generalized data processing to tactfully address indigenous units of measurement and traditional farming terminology. These efforts not only reconstructed a vivid picture of the thriving agricultural economy in the border region, but also likely projected to Western audi-

ences an image of the CPC as a pragmatic and democratic exemplary force in the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression.

Table 3. Example of translation of border region finance and production campaigns.

ST in <i>People's Life in the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region</i>	由于人民有了自己的土地，由于边区政府的倡导生产，使得生产力大大的提高了。安塞四区二乡救国公粮的缴纳，即为一例。1938 年全乡缴公粮为 37 石，去年关愉快的缴出 66 石。(Ma, 1940: p. 302)
TT in <i>Agrarian Democracy in North-West China</i>	Because the people now have their own land, and also because the Border Government has promoted production, there has been a notable increase in productivity. Thus another rural township in the same county, which in 1938 had contributed 37 tan to the Save the Country Public Grain Contribution, contributed 66 tan in 1939. [A tan is a grain measure varying from about 130 to about 83 pounds.] (Norins, 1940: pp. 414-415)

As shown in **Table 3**, the translator directly translated “救国公粮” into “Save the Country Public Grain Contribution”, which has a nationalistic flavor, highlighting the justness of the CPC’s fiscal policy in the fight against Japanese aggression. Meanwhile, when dealing with the Chinese capacity unit “石”, which is completely unfamiliar to Western readers, the translation not only used the transliteration “tan”, but also added detailed translator’s notes in square brackets in the text, accurately converting it into the commonly used weight unit in the UK and the US, “pounds”.

Table 4. Example of translation of border region construction policies with emphasis on democratic spirit

ST in <i>People's Life in the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region</i>	《陕甘宁边区的人民生活》 (Ma, 1940: p. 302)
TT in <i>Agrarian Democracy in North-West China</i>	Agrarian Democracy in North-West China (Norins, 1940: p. 413)

As shown in **Table 4**, the translator transformed the original title *People's Life in the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region* into *Agrarian Democracy in North-west China*. “Agrarian Democracy” was in line with the political concepts of the early days of the United States’ founding, effectively narrowing the cultural psychological distance with the audience and laying the foundation for the non-radical communist construction of the Communist Soviet Area. Moreover, by defining the “Border District” as “The Bulwark of Resistance Against Japan”, it diluted the Soviet influence and incorporated it into the discourse framework of the anti-Japanese united front.

Land Policy

In March 1948, Pacific Affairs published an article titled Land Redistribution in Communist China by Frank C. Lee and translated the entire *The Outline Land Law of China*.

Table 5. Example of translation of land and property ownership

ST in <i>The Outline Land Law of China</i>	<p>第一条 废除封建性及半封建性剥削的土地制度，实行耕者有其田的土地制度。</p> <p>第二条 废除一切地主的土地所有权。</p> <p>第三条 废除一切祠堂、庙宇、寺院、学校、机关及团体的土地所有权。</p> <p>第四条 废除一切乡村中在土地制度改革以前的债务。(Zhao, 2012: p. 15)</p>
TT in <i>Land Redistribution in Communist China</i>	<p>Article 1. The agrarian system of feudal and semi-feudal exploitation is abolished; the agrarian system of “Land to the tillers” is to be realized.</p> <p>Article 2. Landownership rights of all landlords are abolished.</p> <p>Article 3. Landownership rights of all ancestral shrines, temples, monasteries, schools, institutions and organizations are abolished.</p> <p>Article 4. All debts incurred in the countryside prior to the reform of the agrarian system are canceled. (Lee, 1948: p. 30)</p>

The Outline Land Law of China established the principle of “land to the tiller”, marking the first land property revolution in modern Chinese history that completely overthrew the feudal exploitation system. As shown in **Table 5**, when translating the four consecutive imperative verbs “abolish” used in the original text, the translator systematically transformed them into the most classic passive voice in English legal texts.

This kind of grammatical transformation plays a crucial role in objectifying and legitimizing cross-cultural communication. The term “abolish” in the Chinese context has a strongly subjective revolutionary connotation, which easily leads Westerners to associate it with violent class deprivation. When transformed into a passive structure and the actor of the action is omitted, it conforms to the pragmatic habit of legal English that emphasizes the established nature of facts. This transformation skillfully strips away the subjective violent color of the land reform and reshapes it into an unquestionable neutral legal state, thereby establishing the absoluteness and seriousness of this outline as the official written law in the eyes of Western readers.

Financial Monopoly and Capital Invasion

Based on *Foreign Economic Domination in China* and *A Critical Study of the Kemmerer Report*, this section analyzes how the translation can overcome language barriers and contribute to construct the image of China as a revolutionary force resisting foreign economic aggression at the macro level of capital expansion and the micro level of the financial hegemonic system.

As shown in **Table 6**, the source text accuses the British business group of being “掠夺中国的总机关”. When translating, the translator cleverly added the adjective “notorious” before “East India Company”. This is a typical ideological intervention strategy.

Meanwhile, as shown in **Table 7**, in the translation of the subtitle, “盘剥政府” was translated as “Fleeing of the Chinese Government”. The verb “fleece” origi-

nally means “to shear wool”, and by extension, it means “to mercilessly exploit and extort money”. This choice of words extremely accurately depicts the arrogance and greed of foreign capitalists who regard China as a lamb waiting to be slaughtered. Through these carefully crafted word choices and sentence structures, the translator painted a panoramic picture in the English-speaking world in *Pacific Affairs* of how imperialism uses capital output to suck the economic blood of China, shattering the long-standing false myth in the West that investing in China means helping China develop.

Table 6. Example of translation of capitalist plunder by foreign consortiums.

ST in <i>The Issue of Foreign Economic Forces in China</i>	英国人的北京商团，专做向华投资的买卖。福中煤铁公司，就是他们的资本……这个商团，要算是掠夺中国的总机关，和从前东印度公司之在印度一样的性质。(Hu, 1927: p. 25)
TT in <i>Foreign Economic Domination in China</i>	In short the office of the Peking Syndicate is not unlike that of the notorious East India Company. (Hu, 1929: p. 713)

Table 7. Example of translation of imperialist economic invasion.

ST in <i>The Issue of Foreign Economic Forces in China</i>	第二为盘剥政府。(Hu, 1927: p. 21)
TT in <i>Foreign Economic Domination in China</i>	Fleeing of the Chinese Government by the Imperialists. (Hu, 1929: p. 709)

Table 8. Example of translation of hegemonic monetary policy.

ST in <i>A Review of the Kemmerer Monetary Reform Plan</i>	彼之计划书标其名曰中国逐渐采用金本位币制法案，实则并非金本位，而为金汇兑本位也。(Chu, 1930: p. 31)
TT in <i>A Critical Study of the Kemmerer Report</i>	His proposal is called a project for the gradual introduction of a gold-standard currency system in China but in reality it is not a gold standard but a gold-exchange standard. (Chu, 1931: p. 213)

As shown in **Table 8**, this example involves exposing the core deception of the Kemmerer Plan. The original text sharply points out that what Mr. Kemmerer called the “Gold Standard” is actually the “Gold-exchange Standard”. The translator adopted a literal translation strategy and accurately translated this set of core financial terms. This professional and unadorned literal translation actually generates a kind of cold deconstructive power: it proves to Western readers that Chinese scholars weren’t deceived by Kemmerer’s set of abstruse technocratic jargon. Instead, they precisely caught the “fox’s tail” of his institutional design, tying China’s monetary lifeline tightly to foreign exchange funds through the gold-exchange standard, thus establishing Western financial monopoly.

When translating the damage caused by the currency reform to the livelihood of the Chinese people, the translator intensified the ironic and interrogative tones

in the source text, achieving an equivalent transformation of the appealing function.

Table 9. Example of translation of hegemonic monetary policy's impact on people's livelihood.

ST in <i>A Review of the Kemmerer Monetary Reform Plan</i>	今乃提高币值单位，益增小民之负担。起草者非于中国民情甚觉隔膜乎？(Chu, 1930: p. 36)
TT in <i>A Critical Study of the Kemmerer Report</i>	Now if it should be proposed to raise the unit of currency and increase the burdens of the poor people, those who make the proposal certainly are guilty of not knowing conditions in China. (Chu, 1931: p. 223)

As shown in **Table 9**, facing Kemmerer's act of ignoring the purchasing power of poor Chinese people and forcibly changing the currency unit, the original text posed a rhetorical question, “非于中国民情甚觉隔膜乎” Instead of using a plain declarative sentence, the translator used the phrase “are guilty of not knowing”, which carries a strong sense of moral condemnation, and directly elevated the bureaucrats' act of ignoring the people's situation to a crime against a weak country.

5. Conclusion

The English translation of China's economic policies in the early period was not a static language conversion, but a highly dynamic political strategic tool. Its evolution trajectory profoundly reflected the historical process of the CPC moving from a marginalized revolutionary party to national governance. At the macro level of historical evolution, this study found that the external translation and introduction from 1929 to 1949 could be clearly divided into three stages, each with different translation entities, motivations, and discourse characteristics.

In the early stage of the Agrarian Revolution (1929-1936), under the severe information blockade, translation heavily relies on the academic packaging provided by scholars. This is a covert expression based on the survival mechanism, aiming to initially construct a revolutionary image of the CPC opposing oppression in the Western academic community. The outbreak of the Total War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression (1937-1945) witnessed a crucial turning point. The CPC utilized the “other perspectives” provided by Western journalists and scholars to achieve a shift in its discourse power. Through the translation of wartime economic policies such as rent reduction and interest cut, the CPC was portrayed as a pragmatic and democratic anti-Japanese pioneer, leading to a transformation in the international community's attitude from passive acceptance to active recognition. The War of Liberation (1946-1949) became highly institutionalized. Represented by the translation of *The Outline Land Law of China*, the translators adopted a systematic translation strategy that aimed for legal equivalence, establishing the absolute authority of the text. This marked the successful transformation of the CPC's discourse power into that of a legitimate sovereign governance institution.

At the micro-textual level, translators employed sophisticated strategies of ideological mediation, terminological construction, and de-radicalization to shape the narrative of the New Democratic Economy. When translating agricultural and rural economic terms, translators utilized a concretized translation strategy to expose the cruel realities of feudal exploitation. Instead of relying on abstract Marxist jargon, the translations adopted highly descriptive and legally precise language to illustrate the exploitative nature of landlords, thereby justifying the CPC's agrarian revolution to foreign audiences. Furthermore, a critical finding of this study is the deliberate de-radicalization strategy employed during the wartime United Front. The discursive shift from the highly revolutionary, Soviet-inspired term to the more democratic, legally administrative term exemplifies a profound pragmatic adaptation. Translators actively modified the ideological temperature of the texts. By domesticating radical agrarian reform into production campaigns and framing the Border Region finance in terms recognizable to Western liberal economics, the translations aimed to mitigate Western anxieties about "Bolshevization". The translation of early economic policies served as a powerful mechanism for legalizing China's land revolution and challenging the dominant capitalist or imperialist financial discourse. The study reveals that the legalization of land policies was achieved through specific translational maneuvers, most notably through voice shifts and terminological equivalence. When translating the subversion of land ownership, translators systematically shifted the grammatical and authoritative voice to reflect objective, indisputable legal mandates, moving away from emotional revolutionary rhetoric. In the translation of monetary finance and international relations, the translator adopted a dual strategy of appropriation and alienation. On one hand, they appropriated standard capitalist financial terms and redefined them within a Marxist context, in order to accurately expose the predatory nature of the bureaucratic capital of the Kuomintang and the financial monopoly of imperialism; on the other hand, they alienated and retained local imagery to ensure that the historical suffering of the Chinese lower class was not erased by Western academic discourse.

It is important to note the limitations of this study. Due to the difficulty of retrieving direct historical reception data, the actual impact of these translations on broader Western society remains a potential influence rather than a definitively proven dissemination effect. Future research could expand the corpus to include mass-market newspapers to provide a more comprehensive picture.

Funding

This paper marks a stage in a research that was made possible by the funding supported by Basic Operational & Research Funds of Inner Mongolia University (2026).

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References

- Chen, H. S. (1928). Taxes and Burdens on Chinese Farmers. *Eastern Miscellany*, No. 19, 77-92. (In Chinese)
- Chen, H. S. (1929). The Burdens of the Chinese Peasantry. *Pacific Affairs*, 2, 644-658. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2750272>
- Chu, C. L. (1931). A Critical Study of the Kemmerer Report. *Pacific Affairs*, 4, 210-224. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2750331>
- Chu, Q. L. (1930). A Review of the Kemmerer Currency Reform Plan. *Eastern Miscellany*, No. 16, 31-35. (In Chinese)
- Guo, Q. G. (2011). *Course in Communication Studies*. Renmin University of China Press. (In Chinese)
- Hu, H. S. (1927). Issues of Foreign Economic Forces in China. *Eastern Miscellany*, No. 7, 11-22. (In Chinese)
- Lee, F. C. (1948). Land Redistribution in Communist China. *Pacific Affairs*, 21, 20-32. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2751909>
- Ma, N. (1940). People's Life in the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region. *Xinhua Daily*, No. 687, 302. (In Chinese)
- Mai, J. N. (2006). Chen Hansheng and the Institute of Pacific Relations. In *Proceedings of the International Symposium on Modern China, East Asia and the World (Volume II)* (pp. 420-426). Social Sciences Academic Press. (In Chinese)
- Miao, D. G., & Ma, H. Y. (2025). Marxist Research Methods from the Perspective of China's Rural Issues. *China Rural Survey*, No. 5, 3-22. (In Chinese)
- Norins, M. R. (1940). Agrarian Democracy in North-West China. *Pacific Affairs*, 13, 413-422. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2750963>
- Sin, H. H. (1929). Foreign Economic Domination in China. *Pacific Affairs*, 2, 707-714. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2749942>
- Zhao, L. (2012). Archives Revelation of the Outline Land Law of China. *Archives World*, No. 2, 14-16, 36. (In Chinese)