

## Transcontinental Revolutionary Imagination: Literary Translation between China and Brazil (1952–1964)\*

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*This paper investigates the literary translation between China and Brazil from 1952, when Jorge Amado visited China for the first time, to 1964, when the Brazilian military government detained and expelled Chinese diplomats after the coup d'état. It is mainly focused on Chinese and Brazilian writers who traveled between the two countries, and the role they played in literary translation as part of the hot battles in the cultural Cold War. I will show how important literary translation, assisted by writers' lectures and travel writing, were in the construction of a revolutionary China and Brazil that were sympathetic with each other in their struggles, which aimed at creating viable alternatives to not only the existing bipolar world order but also the discursive practices of the dominant colonial/imperial powers.*

**Keywords:** Cold War, China, Brazil, literary translation, Jorge Amado, Ai Qing, Emi Siao

On March 11, 2014, the Brazilian embassy and the China-based People's Literature Publishing House held a special workshop on Brazilian literature at Peking University to celebrate the publication of the Chinese translation of Brazilian writer Cristovão Tezza's novel *Eternal Son* [*O Filho Eterno*, 2007]. This workshop brought Tezza in dialogue with some Chinese writers and scholars about the connections between Chinese and Brazilian literature. After Tezza briefly introduced the literary tradition of realism and modernism in Brazil, rather than expressing their interest in Brazilian literary tradition, Chinese writers responded by talking about their reading experience of the Colombian novelist Gabriel García Márquez and magical realism.<sup>1</sup>

The Chinese writers' lack of knowledge of Brazilian literary tradition, and their diversion of the topic of discussion with Tezza to a Colombian author, prompt inquiries into at least three main issues. The discussion is indicative not only of a broader lack of cultural identification among cultural intellectuals in the global south

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\* I would like to especially thank Professor Lydia Liu, Professor Ana Paulina Lee, Professor Márcia Schmaltz, Wei Yiran, and Larissa Costa da Mata, who generously helped me during writing this paper.

1 I participated in this event as an audience member. The Chinese writers include Li Er, Jiang Tao, Xu Yue, and so on. There is no specific record of the details of their discussion.

that is overshadowed by the prominent economic integration of the BRICS, but also suggests the fact that Brazilian literature can gain its significance in China only as part of “Latin America,” of which Brazil is the unique Portuguese-speaking country. Moreover, the Chinese writers’ frequent reference to “magical realism,” a phrase that, taken to define the native character of Spanish American fiction that has circulated globally, is not a matter of meaningless coincidence but rather a mirror of its predominant hold over the Chinese imagination of Latin America. Since it was introduced to China after García Márquez won the Nobel Prize in 1982, the phrase has repeatedly appeared in Chinese mass media and academic works. The sensational response of Chinese media and audience to Peruvian writer Vargas Llosa’s winning of the Nobel Prize in 2010 demonstrates the continuing influence and draw of magical realism in China.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, when the Nobel Prize in Literature was awarded to Chinese writer Mo Yan in 2012 for his work as a writer “who with hallucinatory realism merges folk tales, history and the contemporary,” most Chinese media translated the phrase “hallucinatory realism” directly to “magical realism.” Such mistranslation, whether intentional or not, effectively fashioned a new trend of nostalgia for Latin American literature in China after thirty years.<sup>3</sup> The nostalgic power of magical realism explains why this topic came up at the center of the dialogue between Brazilian and Chinese literature. For decades magical realism has rendered Brazilian literature invisible and supplementary to the continuously glamorous boom writers.

It is not enough, however, to stress the invisibility of Brazilian literature in China simply by blaming magical realism or Spanish American literature in general, and arguing for the “uniqueness” of Brazilian literary tradition.<sup>4</sup> This paper will explore

2 Chen Zhongyi, ed., “*Mohuan ji xianshi: Lading meizhou wenxue jiyi* [Magic Is Reality: Memories of Latin American Literature],” *Ming* 12 (2010): 150–61. Right after Mario Vargas Llosa won the Nobel Prize, the Chinese magazine *Ming* (*Ming Ri Feng Shang*) published a special feature “Magic Is Reality: Latin American Literary Memories,” which combined a series of articles written by Chinese scholars and writers (including Chen Zhongyi, Ling Yue, Zhi’an, Chen Dongdong, Hu Xudong, Zhou Chonglin, Liao Weitang, and Zhao Deming). Zhang Zhongjiang, “*Nuobei’er wenxuejiang dezhu Lvesa zai shekeyuan yu Zhongguo zuojia jiaoliu* [The Nobel Prize Winner Llosa Communicates with Chinese Writers at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences],” *Sina News*, last modified June 18, 2011. <http://news.sina.com.cn/c/2011-06-18/095322663498.shtml>. On June 2011, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and some other institutes invited Mario Vargas Llosa to visit China. Many Chinese writers, for example, Mo Yan and Yan Lianke, met Mario Vargas Llosa and enthusiastically recalled their memories of reading his works in 1980s. These Chinese writers agreed that the way Llosa deals with the relationship between literature and politics had a profound impact on contemporary Chinese literature.

3 Kun Zhang, “Some Nobel Sentiments,” *China Daily*, last modified October 30, 2012. [http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/epaper/2012-10/30/content\\_15857142.htm](http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/epaper/2012-10/30/content_15857142.htm). The Nobel committee member Kjell Espmark had clarified the mistranslation of the word during his visit to China. “It was an intentional choice to avoid using the phrase ‘magical realism,’ which was a worn-out term, and the literary wave has passed,” he explains. “We didn’t want to give Mo Yan the wrong associations with Latin American Magical Realism writers.” See Zhang, “Some Nobel Sentiments.” Despite such clarification, however, this new trend resulted in republication of translated works of boom writers, particularly the first authorized Chinese translation of García Márquez’s novel *Cien años de soledad* [*One Hundred Years of Solitude*] in 2014.

4 So far there have been some discussions among Chinese scholars about how magical realism was transmitted to China and how it generated cultural misinterpretation of Latin America. Particularly, Teng Wei provides an insightful research mapping the dynamics of power relations that contribute to the changing process of the canonization of Latin American literature in China since the 1950s, which mainly focuses on Spanish American literature. In her book, she presents a sharp contrast between two periods:

the construction and circulation of the notion of a “revolutionary Brazil” through literary translation in socialist China. This is especially evident in the significance placed on the Brazilian northeast area, which socialist writers constructed as a revolutionary space through the translated works of Jorge Amado and Euclides da Cunha in the socialist camp. Moreover, a tracing of the change in canonization that mainly focuses on Spanish American literature is limited. Because it fails to explain why the canonization of Brazilian literature surprisingly maintains its stability by according Jorge Amado the most important status for more than fifty years. An analysis that focuses on Spanish American literature will not lead to further reflection of the lure of imagining “Latin America” as a unified geographical space, whether economically or politically beneficial for China, despite the recognition of its divergence. Particularly, it does not explain why there also exists nostalgia for Latin America’s leftist tradition in contemporary China as opposed to the nostalgic trend of magical realism.<sup>5</sup>

Moreover, if we limit our analysis to the dynamics between literature and politics in China, we may ignore the question of how to situate Latin American intellectuals’ choice within national and global politics during the Cold War era. To stress only those who had close contact with the communist camp is to ignore the different choices that Latin American intellectuals made among competing universals of Cold War. On the other hand, it is also worthwhile to further investigate the active agency of those Latin American intellectuals who were receptive to the Chinese revolution to Latin America. As Rothwell points out, studies of communist China’s influence on Latin America often ignore the agency of Latin Americans in the transmission of

in the first period, between the 1950s and 1970s, “third world” literature became an essential reference for Chinese literature through state-oriented institutionalization of literary translation and publication. In the second, since the 1980s and after China’s entrance into the world market, the third world view disappeared due to Chinese writers’ aspiration to modernize local literary sources and marketize literary translation and publication. The cultural misinterpretation that magical realism generated, Teng claims, not only shows Chinese writers’ use of local cultural resources to step onto a Western dominated world stage, but also constituted an attempt to defend themselves using the social commitment that the boom writers evinced. Teng Wei, *Bianjing zhi nan: Lading meizhou wenxue hanyi yu dangdai Zhongguo (1949–1999)* [South of the Borders: Chinese Translation of Latin American Literature and Chinese Contemporary Literature (1949–1999)] (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2011). For more discussions about magical realism, see Duan Ruochuan, *Andisi shanshang de shenyong: Nuobei’er jiang yu mohuan xianshi zhuyi* [The Condor over the Andes: Nobel Prize and Magic Realism] (Wuhan, China: Wuhan Publishing House, 2000). Since the 1980s, Chinese scholars have been consciously distinguishing Brazilian literature from Spanish American literature in their writing of the history of Latin American literature. Previous research has shown contemporary Chinese scholars’ reflection on the problem of magical realism and the divergence of Brazilian literature. The most representative work is *Lading meizhou wenxue shi* [History of Latin American Literature], which was published by Peking University in 1989. Particularly, Sun Cheng’ao wrote a book about Brazilian literature separately. See Sun Cheng’ao, *Baxi Wenxue* [Brazilian Literature] (Beijing, China: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, 1999).

5 For example, Han Yuhai criticizes contemporary Chinese writers for ignoring the fact that these Latin American writers who are popular in China—including Jorge Amado, Pablo Neruda, Jorge Louise Borges, García Márquez, and other boom writers—are all leftists and revolutionists. “Latin American people never give up their revolution against tyranny,” he claims, “[they] never forget the dream of a society of peace and justice.” By crediting these Latin American writers as leftists without acknowledging and allowing for any difference among them, Han clearly attempts to construct an imagination of “Latin America” as part of a third world united against imperialism through fetishizing the revolutionary identity of these writers. Han Yuhai, “*Meige zuojia jiuxiang gemingjia yiyang* [Every Writer Is like a Revolutionist],” *China Book Business Report*, March 12, 2004.

Chinese revolutionary ideology, “Although China was eager and willing to promote its revolutionary ideology among Latin Americans, there could be no question of those ideas gaining any traction without an enthusiastic effort by Latin American sympathizers.”<sup>6</sup> What specific reasons motivated several Brazilian intellectuals and writers to travel to China and bring Chinese revolutionary experience and Chinese literature back to their own countries? Why and how did they contribute to the Chinese imagination of a revolutionary “Latin America” and Brazil as part of it? Also, how did their translation and critique contribute to the imagination of a homogenous, historically progressive stage that both China and Brazil share?

Based on these questions, this paper investigates the literary translation between China and Brazil from 1952, when Jorge Amado visited China for the first time, to 1964, when the Brazilian military government detained and expelled Chinese diplomats after the coup d'état. Literary translation between China and Brazil in this period, I argue, should be regarded as both cultural and social practices that sought alternatives aimed at transcending the bipolar universals of the Cold War. My paper mainly focuses on the mutual appropriation of revolutionary literary sources, especially socialist realist works, in the service of constructing national literature during the period of anti-colonialist/imperialist struggles for national independence in both countries. Also, it examines the discursive practices of Chinese and Brazilian intellectuals who contributed to the circulation of these literary works and with them revolutionary imagination. This new form of imagination sought to build tri-continental solidarity among Asian, African, and Latin American countries, which aimed at creating viable alternatives to not only the existing bipolar world order but also the discursive practices of the dominant colonial/imperial powers. Countering backward stereotypes of “underdeveloped area” in previous periods, these literary works represented a new image of people who were fighting for national independence from colonial/imperial exploitation and oppression. It is, however, also worth noting that such discursive practices were not always the main form of exchange. The absorption of literary sources was quite limited due to the fact that European and Soviet Union literature still served as the main literary model for Chinese and Brazilian leftist writers. Moreover, the battles of the Cold War largely overshadowed in-depth discussion of colonial experiences and anticolonial struggles. The dominant influence of the Soviet Union on the circulation and evaluation of these works shaped the mechanistic interpretation of them as loyal to the aesthetic of socialist realism and evidence of anti-American imperialist struggles. It is such mechanistic interpretation of history shaped by Cold War discourse, I argue, that deterred a more thorough reflection on anti-colonial/imperialist experience.

### **Caught in Cold War Dynamics: Culture as Battlefield**

On January 31, 1952, Brazilian writer Jorge Amado arrived at the Peking airport with Cuban poet Nicolás Guillén after he received the International Stalin Prize for

6 Matthew D. Rothwell, *Transpacific Revolutionaries: The Chinese Revolution in Latin America* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 4.

Strengthening Peace among Peoples in the Soviet Union.<sup>7</sup> Waiting for them at the airport were some of China's most influential writers, including Guo Moruo, Mao Dun, Ai Qing, and Emi Siao. In the following month, Jorge Amado visited factories, villages, and historic sites such as the Great Wall and Summer Palace.<sup>8</sup> This visit marked the beginning of the close connection between the newly established People's Republic of China and Brazil that lasted until the mid-1960s. Hundreds of Brazilians traveled at the invitation of the PRC government during this period.<sup>9</sup> The most prominent visitors among them were the leader of the Communist Party of Brazil, Luís Carlos Prestes (1959), and Brazilian vice president João Goulart (1961), who was the first Latin American head of state to visit China. Chinese economic and cultural delegations also visited Brazil with the help of those who had been to China.<sup>10</sup> Among them were prominent writers including Ai Qing, Emi Siao (1954), and Zhou Erfu (1959). The transcontinental travel of these writers, together with their works and their dominant influence in the literary sphere, inaugurated a new phase of history in which culture and especially literary translation became a significant form of diplomatic strategy for the PRC government to reach out to Brazil.

Cultural diplomacy played an essential role in the PRC government's connection with Latin American countries during the Cold War era.<sup>11</sup> Being aligned with the Soviet Union, the PRC government adopted the Soviet "people-to-people" diplomacy rather than traditional "state-to-state" relations as counter to US intensified control of Latin American countries on the one hand and the Republic of China (ROC) government in Taiwan, who maintained its legitimate seat as China in the United Nations on the other.<sup>12</sup> To avoid suspicion from counterparts, such diplomacy mainly relied on establishing personal relations among intellectuals through the World Peace Council (WPC) and numerous cultural associations like the China-Latin American Friendship Association, whose activities appeared less aggressive than direct political

7 The International Stalin prize for Strengthening Peace among Peoples was founded in 1949 to award those who support the Soviet Union and international communist movement in the name of "strengthen the peace among comrades." In China, this prize was well known when Chilean poet Pablo Neruda and Soviet writer Ilya Ehrenburg visited Beijing and represented the Soviet Union to award it to Madame Sun Yat-sen in 1950. Chinese writer Guo Moruo won this prize in the same year as Jorge Amado.

8 Zélia Gatai, "Três Viagens à China I," *Correio Braziliense*, October 18, 1987. All articles and photos from Brazilian newspapers come from the online database Biblioteca Nacional Digital (BNDigital).

9 William E. Ratliff, "Chinese Communist Cultural Diplomacy toward Latin America, 1949–1960," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 49.1 (1969): 53–79. It is hard to know the exact number of Brazilian visitors because the Chinese official archive is unavailable. According to the calculation of Ratliff, there were about fifteen hundred Latin Americans visited China between 1949 and 1960. The number of Latin American visitors increased sharply between 1959 and 1960. The estimated number of Brazilian visitors is thirty-plus in 1959, one hundred-plus in 1960, and fifty-plus in 1961.

10 Huang Zhiliang, *Xin dalu de zai faxian: Zhou Enlai yu lading meizhou* [Rediscover the New Continent: Zhou Enlai and Latin America] (Beijing: World Affairs, 2004), 58–66. According to former Chinese diplomat Huang Zhiliang, China had sent about eighteen delegations to Latin America. He mentioned that China sent art delegations (in 1956 and 1959), journalist delegations (amount unknown, but *China Daily* shows that they visited in 1959), and economic delegations (1955 and 1964) to Brazil.

11 Jean Franco, *The Decline and Fall of the Lettered City: Latin America in the Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 1. Jean Franco describes how culture became a battle field in Latin America during the Cold War, "The United States staged its cultural interventions during the Cold War as a defense of freedom against censorship, while on an altogether different plane, in what was pitched as a war of 'Values,' the Soviet Union defended a realism in which the 'real' was defined as class struggle and 'peace' became a political tactic."

12 Huang, *Xin dalu de zai faxian*, 48.

propaganda. The performances that these art delegates brought to Brazil were mainly traditional Chinese arts such as the Peking Opera or acrobatics.<sup>13</sup>

In the initial exchanges, the WPC and the socialist camp served as essential intermediaries in China's efforts to gain support from Latin American leftist intellectuals.<sup>14</sup> For example, Emi Siao recalled that he became acquainted with Jorge Amado at the Union of Czech Writers in 1951.<sup>15</sup> And it is through entering the WPC that Guo Moruo and Emi Siao established close relationships with Latin American intellectuals, including Jorge Amado, and invited them to China. The mediating influence of the WPC can also be seen in the Asia and Pacific Rim Peace Conference that was held by the Chinese government between 1951 and 1952. More than 150 delegates from 11 Latin American countries (3 from Brazil) went to China. Right after the conference, some delegates established associations that aimed at promoting further cultural communications with China. In Brazil, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo each established a Brazil-China Friendship Society in 1953 and 1954, respectively.<sup>16</sup>

Additionally, the PRC government also sought to establish party-to-party relations with Latin American communist parties and make use of them to increase its political and cultural influence. The Brazilian Communist Party (PCB), which sent a delegation to China in July 1953, was the earliest to establish such a relationship.<sup>17</sup> The Chinese efforts at winning support from Latin American communist parties were intensified after Khrushchev gave his "secret speech" at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party, which greatly shocked Latin American leftist intellectuals and led to their disillusionment with the Soviet Union.<sup>18</sup> For example, Jorge Amado was one of the leftist intellectuals

13 Ibid, 54. Huang Zhiliang recalled that before the trip of Chinese art delegations, Zhou Enlai carefully censored the content and costumes of the art performances that might be perceived as communist propaganda. Zhou said to those delegates, "You have a 'red hat' on your head, people were afraid that you went there to 'communize' (*chi hua*) and to instigate revolution. Therefore, you should not even choose 'Havoc in Heaven' (*Da nao tian gong*)." Tad Szulc, "Chinese Troupe Opens in Brazil: 'Peking Opera' Received Rave Notices," *New York Times*, September 13, 1956. Tad Szulc, who was a Latin American correspondent of *New York Times*, noted the cautious erasure of political propaganda in the Peking Opera performance at Rio de Janeiro in 1956, "The Chinese were careful to leave obvious propagandizing or politics completely out of the performances and social contacts." Tobias Rupperecht, "Socialist High Modernity and Global Stagnation: A Shared History of Brazil and the Soviet Union during the Cold War," *Journal of Global History* 6.3 (2011): 519. Members of the Instituto Cultural Brasil-URSS, which was founded in Rio de Janeiro by a group of local intellectuals for the purpose of increasing the cultural influence of the Soviet Union, warned of the threat of its Chinese competitor at the same time. These reports show that no matter how carefully the Chinese government selected its art delegates, it still aroused anxiety from both the United States and the Soviet Union.

14 Patrick Iber, *Neither Peace nor Freedom: The Cultural Cold War in Latin America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 49–82. The World Peace Council was originally the Permanent Committee of Partisans of Peace, which was established by the World Congress of Partisans for Peace in 1949. The committee was reformed to the World Peace Council in 1950 for the WPC's role in the Cold War era and its connection with Latin American intellectuals.

15 Emi Siao, "Jieshao Yamaduo he Jili'an: lading meizhou de liangwei jiechu de wenhua zhanshi [Introducing Amado and Guillén: Two Prominent Cultural Warriors]," *People's Daily*, February 6, 1959.

16 Teng, *Bianjing zhi nan*, 5–6.

17 Rothwell, *Transpacific Revolutionaries*, 22.

18 Ernst Halperin. "Peking and the Latin American Communists," *The China Quarterly* 29 (1967): 119. Diogenes Arruda, who was the chief aide to Luise Carlose Prestes, was said to be more inclined to China after the congress, "Like so many other delegates to the 20th Congress, it was only in China that he [Arruda] had heard of the existence of Khrushchev's secret speech and had been told some of its salient



who immediately fell into disillusion and turned to Cuba and Afro-Asian countries.<sup>19</sup> What made these leftists particularly disappointed was the post-Stalin Soviet's policy of peaceful coexistence with the West, and its disavowal of violent struggle pushed more Latin Americans toward identification with anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggles of China and other Afro-Asian countries.<sup>20</sup> After the Cuban government established a formal diplomatic relationship with the PRC government in 1960, the Chinese embassy at Havana, together with the *Xinhua* [New China] News Agency, which developed branches in four countries (including Brazil), largely facilitated the PRC government's direct communications with Latin Americans without the Soviet Union as an intermediary.<sup>21</sup> As the competition between China and the Soviet Union in Latin America became increasingly fierce in the 1960s, the PCB split into pro-Soviet force (PCB), led by Prestes, and pro-Chinese force (PCdoB), led by Mauricio Grabois, João Amazonas, and Pedro Pomar.<sup>22</sup> PCdoB maintained contact with the PRC government and received revolutionary instructions from it. Whatever divergence there was, the PCB and later PCdoB's support was essential to China's efforts to increase its influence and support in Brazil in this period.

The Brazilian interest in China cannot be simplified as evidence of their political inclination to communism, however, because most of these visitors were non-communists. Besides the prevailing anti-American sentiment, many Brazilian visitors, like other Latin Americans, saw China's ongoing economic and cultural construction as an alternative way to achieve national independence apart from the Soviet and American models.<sup>23</sup> The defense of national culture against European influence that had been an urgent concern in Brazil since the early twentieth century inspired Brazilian writers and artists to enhance their cultural ties with countries in Asia and Africa.<sup>24</sup> The desire to identify with Asian and African peoples who were seeking national independence and economic development was further fueled by the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), which sprouted from the Afro-Asian Conference in

points. Angry about this and seeing that the situation was changing, Arruda decided to change himself, and in a radical manner. . . . One afternoon, stretched out on his hotel bed, cleaning his nails with a penknife, Arruda related to me his list of grievances against the Soviet bureaucrats. He compared them unfavourably with the Chinese. Proudly he told me how he, together with the rest of the Latin American Communist delegation, had been received by Mao Tse-tung, who had talked with them for two hours and even asked whether they wanted to continue the conversation. In the Soviet Union on the other hand, he said, he had never had the honour of being received even by the most obscure member of the Central Committee." Translated by Ernst Halperin.

19 Tobias Rupperecht, *Soviet Internationalism after Stalin: Interaction and Exchange between the USSR and Latin America during the Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 153.

20 *Ibid.*, 141–42.

21 Rothwell, *Transpacific Revolutionaries*, 21.

22 The pro-Soviet force changed its name from the Communist Party of Brazil to the BCP. About the detail of the split within the PCB, see Cecil Johnson, *Communist China & Latin America, 1959–1967* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 181–207. About the influence of the Cuba revolution and the pro-Chinese inclination among Latin American countries, see Tad Szulc, *The Winds of Revolution: Latin America Today and Tomorrow* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963).

23 Victor Alba, "The Chinese in Latin America," *The China Quarterly* 5 (1961): 56; William E. Ratliff, "Chinese Communist Cultural Diplomacy toward Latin America, 1949–1960," 77–78.

24 Rupperecht, "Socialist High Modernity and Global Stagnation," 508. The National Congress of Intellectuals [*Congresso Nacional de Intelectuais Reunido*] at Goiânia in 1954 was a remarkable event.



Figure 1: Firsthand report of Bandung conference on Brazilian newspaper, *Imprensa Popular*, May 1, 1955.

Bandung (1955) and the Cuban revolution.<sup>25</sup> (See Figure 1.) As the number of non-communist travelers between China and Brazil increased in the late 1950s, anxiety grew with regard to the Chinese government's strategy of cultural diplomacy to increase its influence in Brazil. Reports of the *New York Times* indicated that although the majority of the Brazilian visitors to China were neither communists nor leftist-inclined, they generally acquired positive impressions of China and tended to put more pressure on their president, Janio Quadros, to establish diplomatic and trade relations with China.<sup>26</sup>

NAM was not only attractive to Brazilian intellectuals, but also to reformist politicians who were inclined to get rid of their economic dependence on the United States and increase their influence in Latin America and the emerging third world. The socialist mode of state intervention in the national economy and social welfare system proved to be a better example for them than the capitalist mode of development in Western world.<sup>27</sup>

25 Wayne A. Selcher, *The Afro-Asian Dimension of Brazilian Foreign Policy, 1956–1968*, dissertation, University of Florida, 1970, *ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global*. Accessed Apr. 12, 2016. The interests in Afro-Asian countries were limited within the elite circle. Also, the elite interest in connection with Afro-Asian countries varied from one another in the 1950s. For example, Gilberto Freyre criticized Pan-Asianism when he participated in Congresso Internacional de História dos Descobrimentos at Lisbon in September 1960. Freyre compares Pan-Asianism's ethnocentrism to Pan-Europeanism and claims that the Bandung Conference and Pan-Asianism is just a competition between China and India to increase their political influence in Asia and Africa. Gilberto Freyre, *China Tropical: E Outros Escritos Sobre a Influência Do Oriente Na Cultura Luso-brasileira*, compiled by Edson Nery Da. (Fonseca, Brazil: Editora Universidade De Brasília, 2003).

26 Tad Szulc, "Red China Seeking Links with Brazil: Program of Inviting Leaders of Professions to Visit Nation Helps Peiping," *New York Times*, November 20, 1960.

27 Jorge Amado, *Navegação De Cabotagem: Apontamentos Para Um Livro De Memórias Que Jamais Escreverei* (Rio De Janeiro, Brazil: Editora Record, 1992), 151–54; Rupprecht, "Socialist High Modernity and Global Stagnation," 507–15. From 1956 to 1964, all three Brazilian presidents showed strong interest



Nothing demonstrated such policy orientation better than the Brazilian representative's appearance at the Belgrade Non-Aligned Conference and Jão Goulart's visit to China in 1961. In his lecture published in the Chinese official newspaper *People's Daily*, Goulart, who was then Brazilian vice president, claimed that the Brazilian government stands with all other newly independent and decolonizing countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America and adopts an independent policy that tolerated the difference of ideology. Moreover, he also expressed his government's willingness to recognize the PRC government's legal status in the United Nations.<sup>28</sup>

The positive reaction of the Brazilian government, particularly during Goulart's presidency, promoted the PRC government to increase diplomatic activities with Brazil. In 1963, the PRC government established the Xinhua News Agency in Rio de Janeiro.<sup>29</sup> The close contact with socialist China, however, aroused the suspicion that Brazil would become a socialist country. Brazilian sociologist Gilberto Freyre, who was the editor of the CIA-supported magazine *Cadernos Brasileiros*, warned his American audience that the United States must invest more money in Brazil's industrial development to prevent it from becoming a communist country.<sup>30</sup> Although the Brazilian government had been simultaneously trying to maintain a stable diplomatic relationship with the United States, there was no tolerance of the neutral stand of Brazil. Especially after Goulart became president of Brazil, his close connection with China and other communist countries was regarded as a great threat to the United States.<sup>31</sup> Such tension finally resulted in the Brazilian coup d'état in 1964, after which the military government arrested nine Chinese, including seven trade mission members and two correspondents of the Xinhua News Agency, in the name of spy activities.<sup>32</sup> This incident, also exacerbated by the influence of the Sino-Soviet split in Brazil, led to a dramatic decline of the China-Brazil connection.

Despite its shortness, the China-Brazil "honeymoon" period facilitated travel for writers and artists across continents. Their footprints and personal accounts vividly reflected the political dynamics of Cold War. For example, Jorge Amado traveled to China through the Soviet Union and Mongolia in 1952. In 1957, he visited China again with Pablo Neruda through India and Burma after they participated in the peace

in Afro-Asian countries. Kubitschek sent politicians on numerous visits to China. The Quadros government founded an Afro-Asian Institute (Instituto Afro-Asiático) that consisted of many left-wing intellectuals and advocated Brazil's new independent foreign policy. The establishment of the Afro-Asian Institute, Jorge Amado claimed, indicated that the Brazilian government had abandoned its support for the Portuguese colonial activities in Africa.

28 "Gu la te de yanjiang [Goulart's Speech]," *People's Daily*, August 18, 1961.

29 Jin Yanxia, "Wang Weizhen zai yi 'baxi Shijian' [Wang Weizhen Retold the 'Brazilian Incident']," *Da Di* 5 (2000). Accessed March 21, 2016. <http://www.people.com.cn/GB/paper81/661/77220.html>.

30 Cesar Vieira Da Costa. "Brazil's Land Reform." *The New York Times*, May 4, 1959; Gilberto Freyre, "Why a Tropical China." in *New World in the Tropics: The Culture of Modern Brazil* (New York: Knopf, 1959), 257–85. For Gilberto Freyre's connection with the CIA supported *Cadernos Brasileiros*, see Patrick Iber, *Neither Peace nor Freedom*, 180; Jean Franco, *The Decline and Fall of the Lettered City*, 32.

31 Tad Szulc, "Marxists Are Organizing Peasants in Brazil," *New York Times*, November 1, 1961; Tad Szulc, "Brazil Plans Ties with 3 Red Nations," *New York Times*, February 24, 1961; Julian Hartt, "Brazil May Recognize Communist China Soon." *New York Times*, February 20, 1964.

32 "Chinese Held in Brazil Called 'Just Plain Spies.'" *Los Angeles Times*, May 4, 1964; Huang, *Xin dalu de zai faxian*, 227–38; Jin, "Wang Weizhen zai yi 'baxi Shijian'"; Jules Dubois, "Red China Tie to Goulart in Brazil Bared," *Chicago Tribune*, April 4, 1964.



**Figure 2: (From left to right) Pablo Neruda, Zélia Gatai, Jorge Amado.**<sup>35</sup>

conference at Sri Lanka. (See Figure 2.) Like other foreign visitors, his travel in China also followed strict plans and rules restricting where he could visit and what he could know. He was shocked to discover that their friends Emi Siao, Ai Qing, and Ting Ling disappeared because of the Anti-Rightist Campaign.<sup>33</sup> On the other side of the planet, when Ai Qing and Emi Siao visited Brazil and other countries in 1954, they faced various restrictions on their visas and on the presents they could bring to celebrate Neruda's birthday.<sup>34</sup> In spite of the surrounding political tension, what is significant in this period is the role of these writers who not only contributed to a new form of diplomatic relationship, but also gave literary translation incomparable status and value in this period.

### Literary Translation in National and International Networks

In the 1950s, the literary translation between China and Brazil began with Jorge Amado's first visit to China. After Jorge Amado won the International Stalin Prize for Strengthening Peace among Peoples, the Chinese newspapers and magazines introduced his works to Chinese readers.<sup>36</sup> His translator Wu Lao recalled that he read the

33 Amado, *Navegação De Cabotagem*, 464. Jorge Amado mentions that he had a conversation with Ting Ling when they met in the hotel. He expressed his doubt about socialist regime. To his surprise, however, Ting Ling had never doubted her belief (or she did not allow herself to doubt) and said to him, "If I step on the mud, I clean my feet and move on." For more memoir of their experience, see Zélia Gatai, "Carta De Zélia Amado a Amália," *O Popular*, January 22, 1987; Ai Qing, *Lvxing riji [Travel Diary]* (Shanghai, China: Shanghai Literature & Art House, 2004), 518–35; Gao Ying, *Wo he Ai Qing de gushi [Stories of Ai Qing and Me]* (Beijing, China: China Drama Publishing House, 2003), 42–44.

34 Ai Qing, *Lvxing*, 313, 337, 361.

35 Gatai, "Carta De Zélia Amado a Amália."

36 Emi Siao, "Jieshao Yamaduo he Jili'an." Emi Siao published an essay about Amado and Guillén on *People's Daily* before their visit. Like other articles, Siao described Amado's political activities in Brazil and appraised him as faithful to revolutionary career. While introducing his works, Siao emphasized *Cacau* (1933), *The Knight of Hope* (1942), and *The Bowels of Liberty* (1954).

English translation of *Terras do Sem Fim* [*The Violent Land*, 1943] in autumn 1951 and translated it into Chinese before Jorge Amado's visit.<sup>37</sup> Between his two visits (1952 and 1957), four of his works were translated from other languages (English, Russian, French) into Chinese.<sup>38</sup> Teng Wei notices that the translation of Latin American literature was an important strategy for the PRC government to promote diplomatic relationships with Latin American countries. Whenever a Latin American writer visited China, there would be introduction or translation of his or her works.<sup>39</sup> No other Brazilian writers enjoyed the same level of reverence accorded to Jorge Amado. His influence in the Soviet Union-led socialist camp and his status at the WPC and PCB determined the importance of his works in China. Moreover, because Brazil refused to send an army to the Korean War, Jorge Amado's visit in 1952 was regarded as an inspiring message of support for the PRC from Brazilians.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, the Chinese state media frequently propagated his image as a fighter for peace and published his lecture about Brazilian peoples' ongoing struggle against American imperialism and support for the PRC.

In addition to diplomatic concerns, the translation of Jorge Amado's novel was also part of the ongoing institutionalization of literary translation and publication. Hong Zicheng emphasized the importance of reassessing the nature and value of both Chinese and foreign literary works. Since the establishment of the PRC, Hong says, it was necessary to set the basic norm for literary writing and the selection and absorption of certain literary sources that were useful for the development of national literature. This follows the tradition of Chinese leftist literature that had been regarding foreign literature as its indispensable nutrients since the early twentieth century. Lu Xun, Mao Dun, and other Chinese writers tried to broaden the view of national literature by translating non-Western European literature toward which they felt more empathetic.<sup>41</sup> The Chinese writers' empathy toward literature of oppressed nations was largely influenced by the Danish critic Georg Brandes, who regarded national literature as a reflection of its nationality and the carrier of the inner spirit of a nation.<sup>42</sup>

37 Wu Lao, "Epilogue," *Wubian de tudi* [*The Violent Land*] (Shanghai, China: Shanghai Culture Publishing House, 1953), 465. The English version that Wu mentioned was published by an American publishing house called Alfred A. Knopf in 1945.

38 The four works are: *Fuluo'er he tade liangge zhangfu* [*Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands*], trans. Cheng'ao Sun and Weixin Fan (Kunming, China: Yunnan Renmin Chubanshe, 1987 [reprinted in 1994 and 2008]); *Huangjinguo de tudi* [*The Golden Harvest*], trans. Yonghui Zheng and Mancheng Jin (Beijing, China: Writers Publishing House, 1956); *Ji'e de daolu* [*Red Field*], trans. Yonghui Zhen (Shanghai, China: Pingming Chubanshe, 1954 [reprinted by Writers Publishing House in 1956]); *Wubian de tudi* [*The Violent Land*], trans. Wu Lao (Shanghai, China: Shanghai Culture Publishing House, 1953 [reprinted by Writers Publishing House in 1958]); *Xiawang de qishi* [*The Knight of Hope*], trans. Yizhu Wang (Beijing, China: People's Publishing House, 1953).

39 Teng, *Bianjing zhi nan*, 8.

40 Jeremy Black, *The Cold War: A Military History* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2015), 65.

41 Hong Zicheng, "Literary Norms and the Literary Environment," in *A History of Contemporary Chinese Literature* [*Zhongguo dangdai wenxueshi*], trans. Michael M. Day (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 21–40.

42 Mao Dun, ed., "*Bei sunhai minzu de wenxue hao* [Literature of the Oppressed Nations]," *Xiaoshuo yuebao* [*Fiction Monthly*] 12.10 (1921): 2–7. Teng Wei also mentions this tradition in her book *Bianjing zhi nan*. In 1921, *Xiaoshuo yuebao* [*Fiction Monthly*] published "*Bei sunhai minzu de wenxue hao* [Literature of the Oppressed Nations]," which included literature from Poland, Czechoslovakia, Finland, Ukraine, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria. In the preface of this issue, the writers identified themselves with the

Although the oppressed nations here mainly refer to those of eastern Europe, Chinese writers looked for reference from other parts of the world perceived to share similar historical experiences. It is noteworthy that Indian and South African literary works were also translated in the *Compendium of New Chinese Literature* edited by Zhao Jiabi.<sup>43</sup> With regard to Brazilian literature, *Xiaoshuo yuebao* [Fiction Monthly] published Mao Dun's introduction of Graça Aranha's novel *Canaã* (1902), his translation of Aluísio Azevedo's short story "Útimo Lance" (1893), and Issac Goldberg's article "Brazilian literature" in the early 1920s.<sup>44</sup> Mao Dun was not the only leftist intellectual who was attentive to Brazilian literature. Zhou Yang also published his review of Brazilian literature in 1931.<sup>45</sup>

This tradition was later enhanced by the nationwide institutionalization of literary translation and publication after the foundation of PRC. In 1954, Mao Dun, who became the minister of culture and president of the Chinese Writers Association of PRC, gave a report at the National Conference on Literary Translation. In his report, Mao Dun stressed the importance of introducing progressive literature from colonial and semi-colonial countries suffering from imperialism.<sup>46</sup> Such deep identification with a shared colonial experience not only evoked the spirit of the May Fourth writers' translation of literature of those oppressed but also Mao Zedong's talk at the Yunnan Forum on Literature and Art to orient literary translation through political intervention in order to better serve the masses. For Mao, politics and literature are mutually dependent. He regards literature as part of the political practice that can transform writers and artists for social revolution at the spiritual level.<sup>47</sup> Literary translation has to be carefully examined because it matters to the critical absorption of foreign literary sources for new socialist literature. Candidates for literary translation must be politically or ideologically "healthy" in their content, as well as artistically

literature of the oppressed nations. In the preface, the editor claims that the nationality of literature, taking Argentinian and Brazilian literature as an example, does not depend on languages but rather on the specific environment and history of each nation. It is having suffered from oppression, they believe, that gives shape to the distinct character of national literature.

43 Zhao Jiabi, ed., *Zhongguo xinwenxue daxi* [Compendium of New Chinese Literature] 10 (Shanghai, China: Liangyou, 1936), 363–81.

44 Aluísio Azevedo, "Zuihou yizhi (*O último Dado*)," trans. Shen Yanbing, *Xiaoshuo Yuebao* [Fiction Monthly] 14.5 (1923): 59–62; Issac Goldberg, "Baxi wentan zuijin de qushi [Brazilian Literature]," trans. Pei Wei, *Xiaoshuo Yuebao* [Fiction Monthly] 13.12 (1922): 87–90; Shen Yanbing, "Baxi wenxuejia de yiben xiaoshuo [A Novel of a Brazilian Writer]," *Xiaoshuo Yuebao* [Fiction Monthly] 12.2 (1921): 108. In these publications, Mao Dun used his original name Shen Yanbing and another pen name, Pei Wei.

45 Zhou Qiyang. "Baxi wenxue gaiguan [Review of Brazilian Literature]," *Xiandai Wenxue Pinglun* [Modern Literature Review] 2.1–2 (1931): 1–16. Zhou Qiyang is Zhou Yang's pen name.

46 Mao Dun, "Wei fazhan wenxue fanyi shiye he tigao fanyi zhiliang er fendou—1954 nian 8 yue 19 ri zai quanguo wenxue fanyi gongzuo huiyi shang de baogao [Work Hard for Developing the Career of Literary Translation and Improving the Quality of Literary Translation—Report on the National Conference of Literary Translation Work on August 19, 1954]," *Fanyi lunji* [Selected Essays on Translation], eds. Luo Xinzhang and Chen Yingnian (Beijing, China: The Commercial Press, 2009), 570–81. "Through these [literary] works, we can deeply understand how peoples of these countries are carrying out arduous struggles for their own liberation from reactionary rule, imperialist invasion, and enslavement. We empathize with them not only because the miserable life that they are suffering today is what we had just experienced yesterday but also because their struggles for independence and freedom today is also part of the fight of peoples all over the world who defend peace and oppose aggression. It is through such fights that we Chinese people are as close to peoples all over the world as flesh and blood." (My translation.)

47 Mao Zedong. *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung* (Peking, China: Foreign Language, 1965), 89–90.

articulate using language that people could understand. Directed by state power, literary translation and canonization was raised to the center of political and social life in the 1950s.<sup>48</sup> State intervention, however, effected a radical transformation of each part and participant of the translation process, including translators, publishing houses, and literary magazines, in order to establish a highly collaborative form of production that left little space for individual choice.<sup>49</sup>

In addition, many universities opened foreign languages majors to train professional translators. The first Spanish major was established at Beijing Foreign Languages Institute (now Beijing Foreign Studies University) in 1953. The first Portuguese major was established at Beijing Broadcasting Institute (now Communication University of China) in 1960. One distinct characteristic of the Spanish and Portuguese majors was that they were established through the collaborative efforts of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Latin American visitors (except for those Spanish refugees who went to the Soviet Union at the end of the Spanish civil war).<sup>50</sup> These Latin American visitors not only taught languages but also explained the political situation and anti-imperial struggles of Latin American countries to students.<sup>51</sup>

Compared to the previous period, state-oriented literary translation placed increasing significance on the translation of Afro, Asian, and Latin American literature.<sup>52</sup> The translation of Brazilian literature also increased

48 All Students of Year 57 from French Major, Department of Spanish of Peking University. *Zhongguo fanyi wenxue jianshi (chugao)* [Brief History of Chinese Literary Translation (first draft)]. Reserved at Peking University Library, 1960.

49 Ma Shikui, "Wenge qijian de waiguo wenxue Fanyi [Translation of Foreign Literature during the Cultural Revolution]," *Chinese Translators Journal* 3 (2003): 65–69; Teng, *Bianjing zhi nan*, 27–29. In the early 1950s, private publishing houses went through a process of nationalization, after which they were either owned by the state or under joint state-private management. Under the guidance of the PRC government, these publishing houses transformed their previous commercial mode of literary translation and publication catering to the demand of the market into a state-oriented mode that aimed at serving and educating the masses. In accord with this transformation, the magazine *Yiwen (Translations)*, which claimed to be an inheritor Lu Xun's spirit of translation, changed its name to *Shijie wenxue (World Literature)* in 1959 and positioned itself to become the most influential literary journal publishing translations and reviews of foreign literature and introducing literary developments in foreign countries. In this period, translating or introducing literary works and criticism was as important for professional translators as service in diplomatic affairs. Therefore, it was common to see their names appear on literary magazines or translated literature. In short, the state's stress on collectiveness further intensified such that group translation became the predominant practice during the cultural revolution.

50 Huang, *Xin dalu de zai faxian*, 22–28; Rothwell, *Transpacific Revolutionaries*, 19. For example, the first Spanish teacher of the first Spanish major at Beijing Foreign Languages Institute was Peruvian painter José Venturelli's wife, Delia Baraona. In addition, the institute also hired Spanish refugees who went to the Soviet Union after the end of the Spanish Civil War.

51 Zhao Linlin and Hongliang Kou, "Yong shengming he ai tuohuang Zuo Ying tongzhi yu guangbo dianshi jiaoyu [Pioneer through Life and Love: Comrade Zuo Ying and TV Broadcasting Education]," *Modern Communication [Journal of Communication University of China]* 1 (2001): 121–27.

52 Fang Chang'an, "Lun waiguo wenxue yijie zai shiqi nian yujing zhong de shanbian [The Transmutation of Translation of Foreign Literature during the Seventeen Years]," *Wenxue Pinglun [Literary Review]* 6 (2002): 78–84. During this period, literary translation was mainly focused on three types of literature: first, literature of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries; second, classical Western literature (especially the realist literature in the 19th century); third, literature that reflected the struggles for independence in colonies and semi-colonies. The importance of each type of literature varied in different periods. Before the mid-1950s, literary translation was mainly focused on the first type under the advocacy of Hu Feng and Zhou Yang. Since the mid-1950s, the translation of Afro-Asian literature



dramatically.<sup>53</sup> Among Jorge Amado's three novels, for example, *Terras do Sem Fim* was printed three times (34,500 copies); *São Jorge dos Ilhéus* was printed twice (16,300 copies); and *Seara Vermelha* received four printings (31,500 copies). In addition, because the Portuguese language major was established very late in China, most of the works were translated from Russian, English, Spanish, and French translations except for Castro Alvez's poems. That most of the translation were based on books published in the Soviet Union or the French communist publishing houses testifies to the fact that these literary works were closely connected to socialist literary networks, which refused to limit the discussion of these works within national borders.

The Brazilian responses to the transformation of literary translation and publication in China varied on different sides. Learning of the passage of law effecting the socialist transformation of China's publishing industry in 1952, a Brazilian newspaper *Diário da Tarde* reported that Chinese editors were experiencing a hard time due to state intervention into their publishing businesses.<sup>54</sup> This raised concerns about the freedom of writing and publishing. Brazilian writer Lygia Fagundes Telles, who had been to China with a group of Brazilian writers in 1960, mentioned that when they had conversations with Chinese writers, their first question was how they survived within the socialist regime.<sup>55</sup>

Such intervention was, however, attractive for some Brazilians who had close observations and communications with Chinese editors and writers. Brazilian journalist Jurema Yari Finamour, who visited China in 1956, published his interview with an editor from the Shanghai Literature & Art Publishing House. During this interview, Finamour probed the editor on such concerns as how the PRC government guaranteed that writers had enough time to do creative works apart from working in the field; how the special committee of each publishing house examined the content of books before publication; and how much the government paid their writers. Although Finamour challenged the editor, for example, by complaining about the price of translated Chinese literature, the editor's detailed explanations suggested the desire of

increased due to the Bandung conference and Afro-Asian writers' conferences. After the Cuban revolution (1959), the translation of Latin American literature also increased.

53 Besides Jorge Amado's works, the Chinese publishing houses also translated Alina Paim's novel *A Hora Próxima* (1955; Chinese: *Shihou jiyao daole*, 1958), Euclides da Cunha's novel *Os Sertões* (1902; Chinese: *Fudi*, 1959), Afonso Schmidt's two stories "A Marcha" and "Misterios de Sao Paulo" (1945 and 1955; Chinese: "Yuanzheng" and "Shengbaoluo de mimi," 1960), selected poems from Castro Alves: *Poesias Completas* (1955; Chinese: *Ka si te luo a'er wei si shixuan*, 1959), Guilherme Figueiredo's drama *A Raposa e as Uvas* (1953; Chinese: *Yi Suo*, 1959), and Monteiro Lobato's children book *Histórias de tia Nastácia* (1937, Chinese: *Na si ta xia gugu jiang de gushi*, 1959). There were also several pieces published on *Shijie wenxue* [World Literature] including Machado de Assis's short story "Pai Contra Mãe" (1906; Chinese: "Fuqin gen muqin guobuqu," 1960), Lima Barreto's short story "O Homem que Sabia Javanês" (1911; "Dong zhaowa yu de ren," 1964), and some other poems.

54 "Dificuldades Editoriais Na China [Editorial Difficulties in China]," *Diário da Tarde* [Curitiba], November 8, 1952.

55 Lygia Fagundes Telles, *Passaporte Para a China: Crônica de Viagem* [Passport to China: Chronicles of Trip] (São Paulo, Brazil: Companhia Das Letras, 2011), 63–65. Lygia's memoir is a collection of the articles she wrote for the newspaper *Útima Hora* during their trip to China in 1960. Lygia went with a group of Brazilian writers, including Helena Silveira, Peregrino Júnior, Raymundo de Magalhães Jr., and Adão Pereira Nunes. Helena Silveira visited China again in 1963.

Chinese publishing house representatives to persuade foreign visitors to put aside their doubts about the freedom of writers and publishers.<sup>56</sup>

Similarly, Brazilian writer Eneida Costa de Moraes visited the Foreign Languages Press and the Youth & Children's Publishing House in Shanghai in 1959. Although astonished by the highly collective form of translation and publication works under the guidance of a special committee, Moraes was impressed that it raised the quality and quantity of the state-oriented literary translation and publication, which allowed Chinese readers to enjoy various types of books at reasonable prices. In her published report in the Brazilian newspaper *Diario de Noticias*, she mentioned that the price of children books fell by 50 percent since 1950 under the government's intervention. Moreover, Moraes noted that wherever she went, she always found young people with books, and the bookstores were always full.<sup>57</sup> Moraes's report highlighted the mass reading culture that grew largely under the policies of state-oriented publishing projects, which made books more widely available to the masses.

It is significant that Brazilian writers also participated the translation and canonization of Brazilian literature. Moraes's assigned tasks during her visit were illustrative of the collaborative efforts of Brazilian writers and Chinese publishing houses in circulating translated Chinese literature. Apart from introducing their works, Moraes recalled, the Chinese editors of the Foreign Languages Press also asked her to select some books to bring back to Brazil. Although she selected only a few, she found that there was a big package of books in her room when she returned to her hotel. Among the books she brought back were the French translations of *Selected Stories of Lu Xun* and *Folklore Art in China*.<sup>58</sup> It is clear that the Chinese publishing houses were making use of this opportunity to introduce their books to Brazilian readers through their Brazilian visitors. It seemed that Moraes also liked these books, for she cites Lu Xun's words from "*Guxiang* [My Old Home]" in the front page of her travelogue to socialist countries: "*No começo a Terra não tinha caminhos; mas cada vez que um grande grupo de homens passa pelo mesmo lugar, no fim um caminho se forma* [For actually the earth had no roads to begin with, but when many men pass one way, a road is made]."<sup>59</sup> And the title of the travelogue also comes from these words: *Caminhos da Terra* [Roads across the Earth, 1960].

Another example is Jorge Amado, who played the most important role in the translation and introduction of Chinese literature. Jorge Amado's interest in Chinese literature had begun before his visit to China. In 1945, he translated Sheng Cheng's *Wode muqin* [My Mother, 1928] from French to Portuguese, which was published by Editora Brasiliense in the collection "*Coleção Ontem e Hoje* [Collection of Yesterday and Today]." (See Figure 3.) Among the same collection was Xiao Jun (Tian Jun)'s novel *Bayue de xiangcun* [Village in August, 1935], which was translated from English (including Edgar Snow's introduction). (See Figure 4.) Both novels are focused on

56 Jurema Yari Finamour, "Encontro com Editores Chineses [Encounter with Chinese Editors]," *Para Todos*, January 15–30, 1957.

57 Eneida Costa De Moraes, "Duas Editôras Chinesa [Two Chinese Publishers]," *Diario de Noticias*, August 23, 1959.

58 Ibid.

59 The English translation is quoted from H. Yang & G. Yang, *Selected Stories of Lu Hsun* (1960) published by Foreign Languages Press.



**Figure 3: Book cover, the Portuguese translation of *My Mother*.**

Chinese revolution. Later he got acquainted with Chinese writer Emi Siao through the international networks of the communist camp. During his first visit to China, he became friends with Ding Ling, Ai Ching, Guo Moruo, and Mao Dun. Throughout the 1950s Jorge Amado had been dedicated to not only helping Chinese writers and artists with their trip to Brazil, but also introducing Chinese literature, art, and film to Brazilian readers.

When Emi Siao and Ai Qing went to Chile to celebrate Pablo Neruda's fiftieth birthday in 1954, Jorge Amado was also in the party and helped them during their transfer at Rio de Janeiro.<sup>60</sup> In 1955, the Brazilian publishing house Editorial Vitória published Luiz Barreto de Sá's translation of Ding Ling's novel *Taiyang zhaozai sanggan heshang* [*The Sun Shines over the Sanggan River*, 1948] under the direction of Jorge Amado. (See Figure 5.) When the Chinese performance troop went to Brazil in 1956, the newspaper *Para Todos*, of which Jorge Amado was the editor, published a considerable number of articles that thoroughly covered all their activities as well as Brazilian intellectuals' enthusiastic responses. Particularly, it invited a Chinese delegate to write an article to introduce the history of Chinese opera to Brazilian readers.<sup>61</sup> In

<sup>60</sup> Ai, *Lvxing*, 213–415.

<sup>61</sup> Chen Lin-juí. "O Teatro Chinês—Um Drama Dançado [Chinese Theatre—a Drama Dancing]," *Para Todos*, September 15–30, 1956.

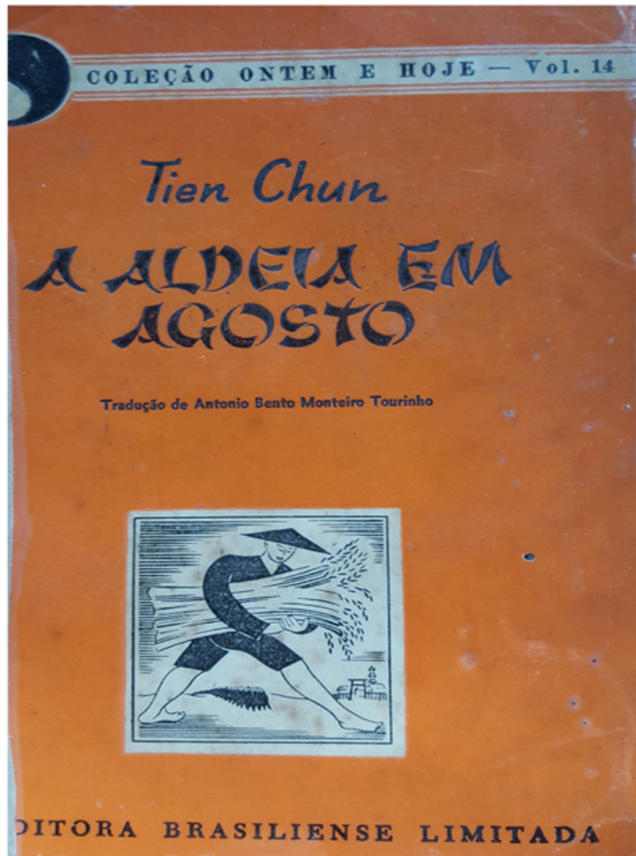


Figure 4: Book cover, the Portuguese translation of *Village in August*.

the following years, the newspaper continued to publish articles that introduced Chinese films and even held a competition to select Brazilian art delegates to make an exhibition in Shanghai.<sup>62</sup>

In addition to capitalizing on the personal influence of Brazilian visitors, Chinese publishers also utilized PCB-supported publishing houses to disseminate their literature. Ding Ling's novel was published by Editorial Vitória, which was founded in 1944. Throughout this period it had been the main publisher of PCB that published novels by national and foreign authors on Marxist theory and history. Moreover, it also offered subscriptions of many magazines that were released by Chinese publishing houses. Among them were the English magazine *Chinese Literature* in 1951, which was in charge of translating and introducing Chinese literature to foreign countries.

62 "Salão 'Para Todos' de Gravura De Desenho ["Para Todos" Salon of Graving and Painting]," *Para Todos*, October 15–30, 1957. Since the second issue of March 1957, *Para Todos* published a series of articles about Chinese cinema written by French critic Georges Sadoul.



**Figure 5: Editorial Vitória's advertisement on subscription of Chinese magazines.<sup>63</sup>**

To promote this magazine, PCB's newspaper *Imprensa Popular* introduced every new issue as soon as it was released. (See Figure 6.)

Another publishing house was Edições Zumbi, which was founded with support from PCB in 1957. Compared to Editorial Vitória, it was very small and only had three operators: Elvio Eligio Romero (Paraguayan), Antonietta Dias de Moraes (Brazilian writer), and Emiliano Daspett (Paraguayan).<sup>64</sup> As soon as it was founded, it published a series of translated foreign novels, including a collection of Lu Xun's *Kuangren riji* [1918; Portuguese: *Diário de um Louco*; English: *A Madman's Diary*] translated by Antonietta Dias de Moraes. (See Figure 7.) The advertisement of the book in newspapers recommends it by citing Mao Zedong's praise that Lu Xun was the model for all Chinese writers, whose works mark the beginning of the modern history of Chinese thought.<sup>65</sup> It is not clear why and how Brazilian translators selected Ding Ling and Lu Xun, and from what language they translated their novels. The published articles

64 Gustavo Orsolon (de Edições Zumbi), "Rebeliões Da Senzala" *Diálogos, Memória e Legado de um Intelectual Brasileiro*, dissertation, Universidade Federal Rural Do Rio de Janeiro, 2013, 70–76.

65 "Edições Zumbi LTDA: Apresenta Ao Público Brasileiro," *O Semanário*, September 18, 1958.



**REVISTAS DA CHINA**

Em espanhol:	assinatura anual
China Ilustrada, quinzenal	Cr\$ 650,00
Em inglês:	assinatura anual
China Pictorial, quinzenal	Cr\$ 650,00
Peking Review, semanal	Cr\$ 650,00
Chinese Literature, mensal	Cr\$ 450,00
Women of China, bimestral	Cr\$ 150,00
China's Sports, bimestral	Cr\$ 150,00
Evergreen, 8 números anuais	Cr\$ 150,00

Pedidos a  
EDITORIAL VITÓRIA LIMITADA  
Rua Juan Pablo Duarte 50, sobrado  
Caixa Postal 165, telefone: 22-1613  
RIO DE JANEIRO — D. FEDERAL

Figure 6: Book cover of the Portuguese translation of *The Sun Shines over the Sanggan River*.



Figure 7: Book cover of the Portuguese translation of *A Madman's Diary*.

about Ding Ling and Lu Xun's novels in Brazilian newspapers were mainly from PCB members or from those visitors who had been to China.

Unlike the translation of Brazilian literature in China, the reception of translations of Chinese literature was quite polarized due to Cold War tensions. In general, literature from the PRC was regarded as communist propaganda. An interesting example is that in 1957, a newspaper interviewed a failed contestant of a knowledge competition TV program called "*O Céu é o Limite* [The Sky Is the Limit]." The fifteen-year-old boy lost the competition because he failed to answer the question about Ding Ling's novel *The Sun Shines over the Sanggan River*. Having learned Chinese for six years at the ROC's embassy, the intelligent boy was angry that he lost the game only because of a novel of communist propaganda, which he believed merely collected some characters and created a falsified history, "We should not include it as Chinese literature."<sup>66</sup>

This incident exemplifies how Cold War concerns redefined the essence of what constituted proper "Chinese literature." Moreover, it directs our attention to the more popular, "true" Chinese literature that was competing with those from the "communist China" in Brazil. Besides classical Chinese literature, the most influential contemporary Chinese writer in this era was Lin Yutang, who was an active anti-communist writer living in the United States. At the same time that the Chinese writers from communist China were trying to get their visa, Lin Yutang also visited Brazil and gave his lectures to a large number of audiences as a "real" representative of Chinese literature and culture in 1959. In an interview, he cited the Stalin Prize winner Ding Ling, who was living in a poor situation after the anti-rightist movement, to criticize the PRC government for depriving writers of their freedom. Even writers in the Soviet Union, Lin claims, had more freedom than those in China.<sup>67</sup>

The development of Cold War tensions largely limited the introduction of literary works about the Chinese revolution. In 1963, Zumbi's advertisement of Lu Xun's fiction could still be found in Brazilian newspapers. After 1964, however, there were no more space for new translations of Chinese revolutionary literature. In spite of the difficulties, we can see that some Brazilian intellectuals did succeed in linking with the Chinese revolution through translated literature and magazines before 1964. These works, together with the large number of travelogues of China written by Brazilian visitors, served as the main source of discursive practices that connected China and Brazil through their shared struggle for national independence. There is no other period in which literary translation played such an important role in sharing experience of transcontinental solidarity against colonialism and imperialism.<sup>68</sup>

66 "*Ganhou Na Índia Mas Perdeu O Céu* [Won in India but Lost Heaven]," *Tribuna da Imprensa*, May 15, 1957.

67 "*Escritor Na China Não Tem Liberdade: Yutang* [Writers in China Have No Freedom: Yutang]," *Diário De Notícias*, September 29, 1959.

68 Humbert Droz, "*Lading meizhou de geming yundong* [Latin America's Revolutionary Movement]," *Shijie Zazhi* [World Magazine] 1.2 (82): 291–310. Before the 1950s, Chinese intellectuals had paid attention to the American imperialist activities and the anti-imperialist revolution in Brazil and other Latin American countries, however, these efforts were quite limited.

### Imagining the World Revolution through Literary Translation

The introduction and interpretation of Jorge Amado's trilogy in the early 1950s was the most revealing example of the position and function of literary translation. As a loyal supporter of the Soviet Union, Jorge Amado was first known as a "fighter for peace" and a "poet" who eulogized the socialist camp. When he went to China in 1952, *Renmin wenxue* [People's Literature] published the translation of an excerpt from *Os Subterrâneos da Liberdade* (*The Bowels of Liberty*) and an article that was written by a Soviet critic F. Kel'in.<sup>69</sup> Moreover, *Yiwen* also translated his eulogy of the Soviet Union, "Canto à União Soviética [Song for Soviet Union]" in 1953.<sup>70</sup> Because of his political influence, the introduction of Jorge Amado's political activities often overshadowed his writing career. Although three of his novels were translated into Chinese, they were mainly regarded as a faithful reflection of Brazilian history:

In the first novel [*Terras do Sem Fim*], Amado describes the fight between two feudal aristocrats for tropical forest, which expanded to civil war. In the second novel [*São Jorge dos Ilhéus*], the American capitalists' company came. It raised cocoa's price and then let it decline sharply. The local plantations went bankrupt and were sold to the American company. Therefore, the American company carried out fascist rule in the area. A young communist started to organize local proletariat to revolt. However, the party was young and lacked experience, so [the revolt] failed. . . . Then transitioned to the third novel [*Seara Vermelha*]. The reactionary rule made Brazilian people suffer cold and hunger, so the people organized and revolted. The zenith of this novel is the revolt in 1935. This revolt was led by Aliança Nacional Libertadora (ANL), which aimed at overthrowing the reactionary rule of Vargas but failed because of the violent suppression from both national and foreign forces. The end of the novel depicts the PCB finally emerging from underground after struggle.<sup>71</sup>

Almost all Chinese critics adopted such interpretations.<sup>72</sup> Such interpretations, however, were not created by Chinese critics but came from Jorge Amado himself and critics from the Soviet Union.<sup>73</sup> Jorge Amado, in his novel *São Jorge dos Ilhéus*, was said to move the historical time of the rise of planters from World War I—which quickly collapsed in the postwar era—to the 1930s, in order to associate it with imperialist exploitation.<sup>74</sup> By doing so, Amado successfully conforms Brazilian history to Marxist theory. In fact, Amado's revision was just part of Brazilian intellectual efforts to use Marxism to understand and seek solutions for the backwardness of their

69 F. Ke'in, "Lading meizhou de shige [Latin American Poetry]," trans. Yue Chen, *Renmin Wenxue* [People's Literature] 34.Z1 (1952): 76–79.

70 Jorge Amado, "Gechang sulian [Canto à União Soviética, Song for Soviet Union]," trans. Sun Wei, *Yiwen* [Translation] 10 (1953): 1–7.

71 Liu Huai. "Baxi de Heping Doushi [Shiren Yamaduo]," *Shijie Zhishi* [World Affairs] 24.25 (1951): 13. My translation.

72 Yuan Xiangsheng, "Heping zhanshi Qiaozhi Yamaduo [A Fighter for Peace: Jorge Amado]," *Wen Yi Bao* 4 (1952): 38–39.

73 William Rogle, "Soviet Critical Responses to Jorge Amado," *Luso-Brazilian Review* 212 (1984): 35–36.

74 Fred P. Ellison, *Brazil's New Novel: Four Northeastern Masters*, (Berkeley, CA: University of California, 1954), 91.

country since the 1930s.<sup>75</sup> In 1952, *Guangming Daily* published Li Sheng's translation of F. Kel'in's article on Latin American Progressive Writers, which summarized Amado's trilogy as a reflection of the three phases of Brazilian people's history: feudalism; foreign imperialist capital's invasion; and people standing up and fighting for freedom.<sup>76</sup> In spite of the World Peace Council's effort to support and promote literature that conformed to the criteria of socialist realism, the unanimous interpretation among Chinese and Soviet Union critics indicates the continuous influence of the Comintern's definition of Latin American revolution in their blueprint of world revolution, which had been controversial throughout its history.<sup>77</sup> Manuel Caballero points out that the Comintern was very arbitrary and too impatient to understand the historical and social prerequisite for launching a revolution in Latin America, arguing that "the Comintern proposed a revolution in Latin America and organized the armies to fight for it before making any attempt to understand what kind of societies the Latin Americans lived and therefore, what kind of revolution they needed." Despite the dissidence of some Latin American intellectuals, it still "placed Latin America as a whole in the 'semi-colonial' category," Caballero argues, "whose dominant class was that of big landed proprietors allied to imperialism."<sup>78</sup>

Although the Chinese Communist Party's stance was different from the Comintern concerning the issue of launching revolution in underdeveloped regions of the world, its understanding of Latin America was clearly influenced by the Comintern's views. By including all Latin American countries within a homogenizing notion of historical progress, it created a sense of closeness that connected anti-colonial struggles in the same semi-colonial category. Such configuration determined that Latin American literature had to be constructed as being whole regardless of its internal differences. In 1963, Wang Yangle wrote the first book about the history of Latin American literature, *Lading meizhou wenxue* [*Latin American Literature*].<sup>79</sup> Wang pointed out that the literary developments in each nation of Latin America were completely parallel, for they all conveyed the same aspiration for liberation and revolution from American imperialism. Similarly, another critic Wan Qing argues that

75 Ronald H. Chilcote, *Intellectuals and the Search for National Identity in Twentieth-century Brazil* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 126–72. Chilcote mentions the spread of Marxism among Brazilian intellectuals and their disputes over the adaptability of Marxism on Brazil.

76 F. Kel'in, "Lading Meizhou De Jinbu Zuoja [Latin American Progressive Writers]," *Guang Ming Daily*, October 4, 1952.

77 Manuel Caballero, *Latin America and the Comintern 1919–1943* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 76–96. Interestingly, Wang Ming, who was an important figure in Chinese Communist Party and later responsible for liaison with the Latin American Communist Parties in the Comintern, was also involved in the discussion. He gave a speech at the Seventh Congress in 1935, "The Revolutionary Movement in the Colonial Countries," which brought up the question of the anticolonial struggle in colonial countries, especially Brazil. See Chen Shaoyu, *The Revolutionary Movement in the Colonial Countries: Speech, Revised and Augments*. Delivered August 7, 1935 (New York: Workers Library, 1935).

78 Caballero, *Latin America and the Comintern 1919–1943*, 151.

79 Wang Yangle, *Lading Meizhou Wenxue* [*Latin American Literature*], (Beijing, China: Zuoja Chuban She, 1963), 2–3. This book was not written for the public but particularly for party and government leaders. The writer was the editor of the People's Literature Publishing House. His major was English. After studying Spanish, he started translating and introducing Latin American literature to Chinese readers. See Teng Wei, *Bianjing zhi nanBianjing zhinan*, 35.

“progressive Latin American literature had an anti-colonial, anti-feudal and anti-dictatorial character since it was born.”<sup>80</sup>

Wang’s conception of the origins and unity of “Latin America” reflects how Cold War dynamics shaped a highly politicized definition of a regional space and literature. It further developed into a literary imagination of world revolution in which anti-feudalist and anti-imperialist struggle for national independence united Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Wang Congcong points out that the name “ya-fei-la” (Asia-Africa-Latin America) became a new political and cultural symbol indicative of China’s self-identification of its position in the world. And the main function of literary relations with Afro-Asia Latin American countries is to enhance the mutual identification among peoples and stir up anti-imperialist fervor.<sup>81</sup> It was this particular function that determined how translated literary works were selected, introduced, and accepted in this era. In February 23, 1957, *China Youth Daily* published a reader’s letter “Wo xihuan ‘Huang jinguo de tudi’ ” [“I like *São Jorge dos Ilhéus*”]. In the letter, the reader Mu Zi, who worked in a hospital at Beijing, was deeply moved by parallels between Chinese landlords and Brazilian plantation owners through Jorge Amado’s novel.<sup>82</sup>

Mu Zi’s reading of the novel reflected how translated literature aroused Chinese readers’ imagination of a revolutionary Brazil that was suffering from the same exploitation and oppression. Unlike the Comintern, which marginalized Latin America, the Chinese regarded it as one of the most important actors in their imagination of the world revolution, particularly after the Cuban revolution. In some of his talks with Latin American representatives, Mao Zedong stressed the importance of breaking reverence for Euro-American civilization and strengthening identification among Afro-Asian Latin American countries. He called for reversing the general conception of what/who was considered advanced/backward, civilized/savage by claiming that Asia, Africa, and Latin America were more civilized and advanced than Western countries. It is interesting to see how Mao perceives racial difference as invalid in the context of third world solidarity,

I feel happy as long as I see friends from Asia, Africa and Latin America. Have you had contact with Africans? I recently met some young representatives from African countries from Kenya, Cameroon, Guinea and Madagascar. Malagasy’s skin color is between black and yellow, which is similar to ours. I don’t know any of them but still feel close [to them]. There is [only] one reason, that is, our countries are in the same position in the world.<sup>83</sup>

80 Wan Qing, “*Jinbu de lading meizhou wenxue* [Progressive Latin American Literature],” *Guang Ming Daily*, May 20, 1963.

81 Wang Congcong, “The Road to Revolution: The Imaginary World of Literature and Culture during China’s Socialist Period,” dissertation, Shanghai University, 2012, 81–98. In his dissertation, Wang Congcong also discusses how the imagination of world revolution was inscribed in literary creation during cultural revolution.

82 Mu Zi, “Wo xihuan “*Huang jinguo de tudi* [I like *São Jorge dos Ilhéus*],” *China Youth Daily*, February 23, 1957. My translation.

83 Mao Zedong, “*Tong lading meizhou yixie guojia gongchandang lingdaoren de tanhua* [Talks with Some Latin American Communist Leaders].” *China Feminine* 1959–1961 Accessed Apr. 21, 2016. <http://www.yhwcw.net/famine/Documents/mzdwj/mx08016.htm>. My translation.



In the Chinese imagination of world revolution, the main subject should be “people,” no matter what race or what ethnicity they are, of “ya-fei-la” (Asia-Africa-Latin America), which later developed into the concept of “third world.” By identifying people rather than any specific race, such imagination tries to transcend the cultural difference or racial difference that had been shaped and perpetuated by colonial discourse for centuries. The visual representation of Latin Americans went through a radical change in this period. In the previous period, the images and accounts of naked barbarians in the Amazon forests were still popular on circulated missionary magazines. (See Figure 8.) Since the 1950s, Latin Americans appeared in movies and magazines as a group who waved their arms and fought for revolution, especially after the Cuban revolution, which fixed fighting Cubans as the representative of Latin Americans. (See Figure 9.)

In addition to the visual representations, there were a large number of newspaper commentaries of the political situation in Latin America. Particularly, many writers traveled between China and Brazil and used their firsthand report, lecture, or writing to enhance such a sense of intimacy. Ai Qing wrote two poems about Black people he saw on the streets during his stay at Rio de Janeiro in 1954. Ai Qing’s sympathy with the miserable life of the Black people led him to write numerous stories in which he



Figure 8: Brazilian indigenous people.<sup>84</sup>

84 “Nanmei Baxiguo turen [Indigenous People in Brazil],” *Shizhao Yuebao* [Shizhao Monthly] 29.3 (1934).



**Figure 9: Documentary “Zhandou de guba” [Cuba Fight, 1960], made by China’s Central Newsreel and Documentary Film Studio.**

imagines the pain within their hearts. In “*Heiren guniang zai gechang* [A Black Girl Is Singing],” he describes a Black girl holding a White baby in her arms. The Black girl who is singing happy songs to the crying baby, Ai Qing guesses, might be a miserable maid serving a White family. In “*Lianmin de ge* [Song of Sympathy],” he criticizes Rio de Janeiro as a licentious society where old White men hold hands with young Black girls.<sup>85</sup>

Another Chinese writer, Zhou Erfu, who led a group of cultural delegates to Latin America between 1959 and 1960, published a series of reportage literature on Latin America’s colonial history and contemporary struggle in *People’s Daily*. In Brazil, Zhou Erfu visited the Museum of the Inconfidência Ouro Preto in Minas Gerais and a café plantation in São Paulo. Zhou Erfu reported on his close contact with Brazilian people and observation of their living conditions under the exploitation of American imperialism. Zhou’s understanding of Brazil’s colonial history, however, seems to be limited by his dogmatic understanding of Marxist theory. For example, while criticizing European colonial activities in Latin America, he praised Columbus’s discovery for promoting the development of world history. The discovery of Latin America, he believes, resulted in the decline of feudalism and acceleration of the progress of capitalism, which paved the way for socialist revolutions. More ironically, he treats Portuguese colonialism as bygone history and overlooks the cultural and economic connection between China and Brazil that was established through centuries of Portuguese colonial activities.<sup>86</sup>

It is interesting to see how the Brazilian Northeast became a central concern in those literary exchanges. The Brazilian intellectuals’ concern with the uneven economic development within the nation motivated them to construct a notion of the Northeast as a poor, miserable place that was full of potential for peasant revolt and

85 Ai Qing, *Lvxing rijì*, 490–93.

86 Zhou Erfu, *Zhou Erfu Sanwen Ji* [Collected Essays of Zhou Erfu], vol. 3. (Beijing, China: Hua Xia Publishing House, 1999), 177–355.

agrarian revolution.<sup>87</sup> And it was through the Northeast that some Brazilian intellectuals found their own parallels to China in the 1950s. Ding Ling's novel was introduced as a way of understanding the peasant revolution and land reform in Brazil. Interpretation of Ding Ling's novel was, however, also largely limited by the lack of in-depth observation of the land reform. There were very few analyses of the novel and its historical background except for a basic introduction of its plot.<sup>88</sup> Moreover, the imagination of an exotic Orient was still prevalent in Brazilian writings of communist China, of which the direct visual evidence are the book covers of translated Chinese literature.<sup>89</sup> (See Figures 3, 4, 5, 7.)

On the other side of the planet, hoping that Latin American peasants could also be mobilized through land reform, the PRC government also paid attention to the Brazilian Northeast as a potential region for joint peasant revolution. Francisco Julião, leader of the peasant leagues in Brazil's Northeast, was invited to visit China and meet with Mao Zedong at least once in the early 1960s.<sup>90</sup> Faced with the potential threat of peasant revolution in the Northeast, the United States was anxious to extinguish the fire of revolution by investing hundreds of millions of dollars to help the development of the Northeast.<sup>91</sup>

Since the Cold War placed the Northeast at the center of the discursive practices of both sides, it was not a coincidence that most of the translated Brazilian literary works in this period focused on the Northeast. Moreover, the late 1950s saw an increase of interest in Euclides da Cunha, whose novel *Os Sertões* [*The Backlands*, 1902] was celebrated by Chinese critics as the great reportage literature on the most noble peasant revolution in Brazilian history. In 1959, China held a major commemoration conference on the fiftieth anniversary of Cunha's death. Both Brazilian and Chinese writers participated in the event. Chinese writer Zhou Erfu and Brazilian writer José Geraldo Vieira gave lectures about Cunha.<sup>92</sup> This grand conference not only established the status of *Os Sertões* as a canon of the peasant revolution, but also highlighted the significance of reportage literature as a model to represent revolutionary struggles.

87 For more critique of the construction of the northeast as a revolutionary space, see Durval Muniz Albuquerque Jr., *The Invention of the Brazilian Northeast* (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2014), 131–219.

88 Maria de Lourdes Teixeira, "O Livro Traduzido: Sol Sobre O Rio Sangkan," *Para Todos*, March 10–23, 1956.

89 Rosario Hubert, "The Diplomacy of Exoticism: Brazilian Accounts of the Global South," in *Territories and Trajectories: Cultures in Circulation*, ed. Diana Sorensen (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018), 35–46. By analyzing the Brazilian travel writing of Asia, Hubert presents how exoticism should be read as a negotiation of Brazilian identity in relation to the global south.

90 Johnson, *Communist China & Latin America, 1959–1967*, 197–99.

91 James N. Green, "Forward," in *The Invention of the Brazilian Northeast*, trans. Jerry Dennis Metz (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2014), ix–x. Besides, the *New York Times* had published a series of broadcasts with regard to the peasant revolt in the northeast. Tad Szulc, "Northeast Brazil Poverty Breeds Threat of a Revolt," *New York Times*, October 31, 1960; Tad Szulc, "Marxists Are Organizing Peasants in Brazil," *New York Times*, November 1, 1961; Cesar Vieira Da Costa, "Brazil's Land Reform," *New York Times*, May 4, 1959; Henry Gemmill, "Brazil at the Brink: Land Is Ripe for Revolt but Jockeying by Rival Groups Postpones One," *Wall Street Journal*, October 25, 1963.

92 "Oukelidesi Dakuniya shishi wushi zhounian jinian [The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Death of Euclides Da Cunha]," *Guang Ming Daily*, October 28, 1959.

Chinese critics often ignored the trivial change of the canonical status of Brazilian literature in the late 1950s. After it was translated into Chinese in the same year, *Os Sertões* took the place of Jorge Amado's novels and dominated the Chinese imagination of Brazil as a revolutionary space that originated from the "fudi" of the Northeast. In 1960, Wang Shoupeng (Wang Yangle) published the article "Latin-American Literature Comes to China," which introduced the achievement of literary translation to foreign readers, in the English language magazine *China Reconstructs*. In this article, he does not mention any of Jorge Amado's works. This change did not simply result from Jorge Amado's retreat from communist activities; the Chinese magazine criticized him publicly until 1964.<sup>93</sup> Rather, it reflects the transition from the Soviet model to the Chinese model as the critic tried to understand Brazil. It also reflects how the Brazilian intellectuals, through constructing various discourses about the Brazilian Northeast and Latin America, inscribed these spaces on the utopian map of world revolution.

### Conclusion

In 1987, Jorge Amado made his third visit to China when the magic realism "boom literature" was popular among Chinese writers. After thirty years, he met again with his friend Ai Qing, who had just lived through the tough years of the cultural revolution.<sup>94</sup> By this time, Amado had long begun to refute his previous identification with the category of "Latin American literature."<sup>95</sup> By stressing the heterogeneity of national literature, Jorge Amado not only separates literature from political practice that sought to unite the continent, but also negates the political practices that searched for transcontinental anti-colonial/imperial solidarity among third world countries in the previous period. Ironically, his novels gained another round of popularity among Chinese readers and ensured the profits of publishing houses through the sexual image of his characters. (See Figure 10.)

It is generally believed that the Cold War politics depreciated the value of literature and the autonomy of writers. It is true that politics dominated the form and content of literary writing and translation in this period. Their practice, however, can hardly be reduced to political propaganda. For the writers' practice differed from each other. And they were not always in accord with the ideologies that they embraced. For

93 "Meiguo chuipeg Yamaduo gaixie guizheng [The United States Praises Jorge Amado for giving up Evil and Return to Good]," *Shijie Wenxue Qingkuang Huibao* [World Literature Report] 8 (1964): 28–29. In 1964, *Shijie wenxue qingkuang baodao* [World Literature News Report] published an article that cites American newspapers' appraisal of Jorge Amado's abandonment of socialist ideology.

94 Zélia Gatai, "Três Viagens à China III," *O Popular*, October 18, 1987.

95 Lin Yi'an, "Amado: Wo yongyuan shi ge putong zuojia [I Am Always an Ordinary Writer]," *Wen Yi Bao*, October 17, 1987. "However, I think, 'Latin American literature' is not a proper comment, because its meaning is very ambiguous, and even had certain colonial remnants. The literature of more than twenty countries of our Latin American continent have their own distinct character, they are not necessarily the same, and even fundamentally different. Who can say Brazilian literature has similarity with Argentinian literature? No. No [similarity] at all! Therefore, we can say Argentinian literature, Peruvian literature, Colombian literature, Mexican literature, Haitian literature, Brazilian literature; but cannot generalize them in one category. Some people call me a Latin American writer, which I cannot agree. I want to say that I am a Brazilian writer, not a Latin American writer, just like you cannot call your writers as Asian writers but Chinese writers." My translation.



**Figure 10: Book cover of Chinese translation of *Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands*, with the specific note of “full translation” (1994 reprinted version).**

instance, Ai Qing’s poem “Cape of Chile [*Zai zhili de haijia shang*],” which was written when he represented the PRC government at the celebration of Chilean poet Pablo Neruda’s birthday, became the “proof” of his formalism during the disputes over the form and content of Chinese new poetry. Feng Zhi criticized Ai Qing for appreciating the details of the decoration of Pablo Neruda’s house, which shows his inclination toward formalism, rather than filling his poem with combative spirit for the political struggle for peace.<sup>96</sup>

In addition, to treat writers as tools of political propaganda ignores the fact that many intellectuals, who were not necessarily leftist, played an active role in the hot battles of Cold War. To describe Cold War Latin American history within bipolar battles ignores the fact that these intellectuals traveled across the strictly defined Cold

96 Feng Zhi, “*Ai Qing wang hechu qu* [Where Is Ai Qing Going],” in *Fengzhi quanji* [Collected Works of Feng Zhi], eds. Fengzhi and Hang Yaocheng, vol. 6 (Shijiazhuang, China: Hebei Education Press, 1999), 292.



War boundaries and tried to construct a new way of cultural connection. We cannot deny that their attempts were quite limited because it was hard to transcend the influence of superpowers. We should, however, also value their efforts as part of the social practices that sought a new sense of interconnectedness between two continents that would override the old one that was shaped by Western missionaries for centuries. The interconnectedness between the two continents, and also with the African continent, was believed by many intellectuals to be based on anti-colonial/imperial struggles and the pursuit of national independence. Such belief thus contributed to the climax of discursive practices between China and Brazil in the twentieth century, which connected the two countries through a constructed imagination of the world revolution.