

Geographical Characteristics and Reception Process of Overseas Dissemination of Contemporary Chinese Literature: A Case Study of Xuemo's Works

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This study examines Xuemo's works as a case to explore the geographical traits and overseas reception of contemporary Chinese literature. It identifies a pattern of "geographical adaptability": four dissemination models—academically oriented, market-community collaborative, cultural affinity-driven, and project-linked—corresponding to Europe, North America, East/Southeast Asia, and South/Central Asia. Reception effectiveness depends on cultural-psychological distance, agent strategies, cross-cultural textual quality, and institutional environments. The study advocates shifting from extensive coverage to targeted adaptation, building multi-agent networks, and improving cross-cultural accessibility. Xuemo's case offers insights for Chinese literature's "going global", highlighting pathways from "dissemination reach" to "cultural integration."

Keywords: *Xuemo, Overseas dissemination, geographical characteristics, reception process, Translation and Introduction*

1. Introduction

Against the strategic backdrop of Chinese culture "going global," the overseas dissemination of contemporary Chinese literature has emerged as a significant subject of inquiry. However, existing dissemination efforts and research have predominantly focused on internationally acclaimed authors such as Mo Yan (Nobel Prize in Literature, 2012), Cao Wenxuan (Hans Christian Andersen Award, 2016), and Liu Cixin (Hugo Award for Best Novel, 2015). In contrast, the cross-cultural journey and reception of deeply rooted "local" works, which are embedded in specific regional cultures, have not received sufficient attention. Within this

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context, the representative writer of Western Chinese literature, Xuemo, and his oeuvre present a compelling case study. Xuemo's works are imbued with distinctive regional cultural characteristics and profound spiritual-philosophical depth, regarded as "authentic Chinese Western fiction and rare artistic treasures" (Lei Da 2007). To date, Xuemo's works have been introduced through translation into markets such as English, Arabic, and Korean, eliciting varied responses across Europe, North America, and Asia. Nevertheless, the translation of such literary works remains relatively underdeveloped. Therefore, this paper aims to systematically examine the geographical characteristics and reception process of Xuemo's works in overseas dissemination. It will analyze the specific conditions of their propagation and reception across different regions and, through comparative analysis, summarize their cross-cultural dissemination patterns, thereby offering insights for the overseas dissemination of contemporary Chinese literature.

2. Overall Landscape of Overseas Translation and Dissemination of Xuemo's Works

2.1. A Preliminary Overview of the Overseas Translation of Core Works

As a typical case of contemporary Western Chinese literature "going global," the overseas translation of Xuemo's works has preliminarily established an international dissemination network that is both extensive in coverage and rich in layers. This overall landscape can be described from three dimensions: the scale of translation, the timeline of translation activities, and the geographical distribution of translations.

Chinese Title	Foreign Title	Translator	Publisher	Publication Year
《大漠祭》	<i>Desert Rites</i>	Howard Goldblatt and Sylvia Li-chun Lin	Encyclopedia of China Publishing House	2018
	<i>Die Riten der Wüste</i> (German Ed)	Hans-Peter Kolb	BACOPA	2020
《猎原》	<i>Desert Hunters</i>	Howard Goldblatt and Sylvia Li-chun Lin	Encyclopedia of China Publishing House	2018

Chinese Title	Foreign Title	Translator	Publisher	Publication Year
	<i>Die Jäger der Wüste</i> (German Ed)	Hans-Peter Kolb	BACOPA	2023
《白虎关》	<i>White Tiger Pass</i>	Howard Goldblatt and Sylvia Li-chun Lin	China International Publishing & Media Group Co., Ltd.	2021
《沙漠的女儿》	<i>Into The Desert</i>	Howard Goldblatt and Sylvia Li-chun Lin	Long River Press (Beijing)	2022
《西夏咒》	<i>Curse of the Kingdom of Xixia</i>	Fan-Pen Li Chen	State University of New York Press	2023
《无死的金刚心》	<i>The Holy Monk And The Spirit Woman</i>	Jonathan Christopher Cleary	Encyclopedia of China Publishing House	2018
《女人·骆驼·豺狗子》	<i>The Women, The Camels and The Dholes</i>	Nicky Harman	BookBaby	2022
《世界是心的倒影》	<i>The World Is A Reflection of The Mind</i>	Jonathan Christopher Cleary	Encyclopedia of China Publishing House	2018
	<i>Il Mondo è Una Riflession Della Mente</i> (Italian Ed)	Paolo Marcenaro	Anteo Edizioni (S.P.E.C.E. DI BONILAURI STEFANO)	2022
《雪漠小说精选》	<i>Selected Stories by Xuemo</i>	Nicky Harman	Encyclopedia of China Publishing House	2018
	جمموعة قصص شيءمو (Arabic Ed)	Fouad Hasan	Center of Arabic Literature	2020
	췘모의 소설 정선 (Korean Ed)	Kim Seung-il	Gyeongji Publishing	2021
	VILDHUNDARNA FYRA BERÄTTELSER FRÅN ÖKNEN (Swedish Ed)	Alexis von sydow	Swedish Wan Zhi Book House	2021

Chinese Title	Foreign Title	Translator	Publisher	Publication Year
	<i>सिनचियाउः बुढो</i> (Nepali Ed)	Malla K. Sundar	BookHill Publishing House, Nepal	2021
	සුචිමෝගේ තෝරාගත් කෙටි කතා (Sinhala Ed)	Dinesh Kulatunga	Neptune Publications Sri Lanka	2022
	<i>Xuemo ANTOLOGIE de povestiri</i> (Romanian Ed)	Adrian Lupeanu	The Idea Europeana Publishing	2022
	<i>El ruido de las habas al crujir y otros cuentos</i> (Spanish Ed)	Liljana Arsovska	Siglo XXI Editores	2022
	<i>श्वेमो की चुनी कहानियाँ</i> (Hindi Ed)	Anand Swaroop Verma	Prakashan Sansthan	2021
	שואגה מו סיפורים בנחרים (Hebrew Ed)	Sheli Chen	eBookPro	2022
《凉州词》	<i>The Legend of Liangzhou</i> (Arabic Ed) أهازيج ليانغتشو	Fouad Hasan	Arab Literary Center Press	2021
《拜月的孤儿》	<i>The Fox Worshipping The Moon</i> (Romanian Ed) <i>Vulpea Care Venereaza Lună</i>	Constantin Lupeanu	The Idea Europeana Publishing	2022
《爱，不曾远离》 (《见信如面》)	<i>Love Letters from the Goddess</i> (Nepali Ed) <i>समीपमा प्रेम</i>	Sarbottam Shrestha	Times International Pvt. Ltd.	2022
《让心属于你自己》	<i>Reclaim the Throne of Your Heart</i> (Vietnamese Ed) <i>Tri tue của Tráí Tim</i>	Publisher-assigned translator	SKY BOOKS	2022
《母狼灰儿》	<i>Mother Wolf Gray</i> (Korean Ed) <i>후이얼</i>	Moon Hyun-seon and Kim Jin-young	The Canlan Corp	2022

First, in terms of translation scale and language coverage, Xuemo's works have transitioned from a singular to a pluralistic presence and from regional to global reach. According to statistics from the WorldCat bibliographic database and publishing information, as of 2022, Xuemo's works have been translated into 15 major languages, including English, German, French, Italian, Spanish, Swedish, Romanian, Arabic, Hebrew, Hindi, Nepali, Sinhala, Korean, and Vietnamese. This not only encompasses languages from mainstream Western cultural spheres but also extends into regions with distinct cultural traditions, such as Asia, the Middle East, and South Asia. Such extensive language coverage indicates that the regional cultural characteristics, ecological concerns, and life philosophies embedded in Xuemo's works have attracted translation and publishing interest across significant cultural divides.

Second, the translation activities of Xuemo's works exhibit a clear temporal evolution, reflecting a phased strategy in their overseas dissemination. The process can be broadly divided into two stages. The first is the breakthrough period for core works (approximately 2018–2020). This stage was marked by the publication of the English translations of *Desert Rites* and *Desert Hunters*, co-translated by the renowned sinologists Howard Goldblatt and Sylvia Li-chun Lin. Translated by authoritative scholars and released through channels such as the Encyclopedia of China Publishing House, these works signified the formal entry of Xuemo's writings into the mainstream academic and publishing spheres of the English-speaking world with high literary translation quality. During the same period, English translations of works such as *The Holy Monk And The Spirit Woman* and *The World Is a Reflection of the Mind* were also published, establishing the "literary-philosophical" image of his works in the English-speaking world.

The second stage is the multilingual diffusion period (approximately 2020 to the present). Since 2020, the translation of Xuemo's works have shown rapid and regionalized characteristics. On the one hand, *Selected Stories by Xuemo* served as a key vehicle, with nearly ten language versions—including Arabic, Korean, Swedish, Nepali, Sinhala, Romanian, Spanish, Hindi, and Hebrew—rapidly released between 2020 and 2022. This strategy of swiftly covering multiple regions through a "selected stories" format effectively conveyed the overall style and core themes of his works. On the other hand, the translation of full-length novels extended into languages such as German (e.g., *Die Riten der Wüste*) and Arabic (e.g., *Song of Liangzhou*). During this phase, the agents of translation became more diverse, with a significant number of local translators and publishers from various regions participating.

Furthermore, the geographical distribution of Xuemo's translated works exhibits a notable pattern of "simultaneous advancement in both East and West"

but with internal imbalances. This phenomenon cannot be explained solely from the perspectives of market dynamics or cultural affinity; rather, it should be examined within the framework of geopolitics and regional cultural strategies (Chun 2021). Xuemo's works have entered both the Western publishing system, represented by Europe and the United States, and the Eastern cultural markets, represented by Asia and the Middle East. Despite their broad coverage, their impact varies. In the Western world, English translations are relatively systematic, led by authoritative translators, and encompass the most comprehensive range of works; Western European languages such as German and Spanish follow closely, though the number of translations remains relatively limited. Within Asia, translations into Korean and Arabic are particularly active, with independent translations of specific works such as *Mother Wolf Grey* emerging, indicating strong market or cultural acceptance. In contrast, in South Asia and Southeast Asia, translations often take the form of selected anthologies, remaining at the stage of introduction and preliminary recognition. This "geopolitical logic" renders the translation of Xuemo's works not merely a literary endeavor but also a symbolic practice of cultural exchange and regional connectivity between China and other countries.

2.2. Core Pathways and Supporting Systems for Overseas Dissemination Chapters and headings

The ability of Xuemo's works to transcend linguistic and cultural barriers and achieve their current multi-regional distribution is not entirely a spontaneous process. Rather, it relies on a collaborative network of actors and is realized through differentiated publishing institutions.

The translator community plays a crucial role in the overseas dissemination of Xuemo's works. On the one hand, authoritative sinologist translators lend international credibility. For instance, Howard Goldblatt and Sylvia Li-chun Lin have co-translated several novels, including *Desert Rites*, *Desert Hunters*, and *White Tiger Pass*. Their involvement provides significant "quality certification" and readability assurance, facilitating the entry of Xuemo's works into the English literary sphere. On the other hand, local translators within specific regions are essential for deepening the penetration of the works into local markets. For example, the Arabic translator Fouad Hasan has translated not only *Selected Stories by Xuemo* but also *The Legend of Liangzhou*. Similarly, translators such as Kim Seung-il for Korean and Adrian Lupeanu for Romanian have served as cultural bridges within their respective regions.

The type of publishing institution determines the dissemination channels and target audiences. Publishing institutions can be broadly categorized into three types. First, academic presses, such as the State University of New York Press, which published *Curse of the Kingdom of Xixia*. This type of publishing places the work within library collections, prioritizing its literary and intellectual influence. Second, commercial and international publishers, such as BookBaby in the United States, The Ideea Europeana Publishing in Romania, and Siglo XXI Editores in Spain. Their operations focus more on market circulation and reaching a broader readership. Third, Chinese foreign-oriented publishing institutions, such as the Encyclopedia of China Publishing House and the China International Publishing & Media Group Co., Ltd. , these entities are not merely market actors; their publication choices and promotion strategies often carry the intent of cultural diplomacy and image construction at the national level (Geng Qiang 2010). For example, the English translations of works like *Desert Rites* and *Desert Hunters*, translated by Howard Goldblatt and Sylvia Li-chun Lin, were systematically released through the Encyclopedia of China Publishing House. This approach not only ensured the quality of the translations but also shaped the perception of “Western Chinese literature” as a representative of serious literature and ecological writing among overseas readers. Consequently, this process elevates the works from “local narratives” to “national literary symbols” within the context of cultural export.

Overall, the translation of Xuemo’s works has achieved phased success, establishing a preliminary dissemination network with broad coverage and providing a case study for the globalization of Chinese regional literature. However, the current state of translation also exhibits notable limitations and imbalances. First, with the exception of English and German translations, most language versions consist of only one or two anthologies or single volumes, indicating insufficient depth in translation efforts. Second, the dissemination of works rich in religious and philosophical contemplation remains largely confined to singular channels, with their impact on the general public yet to be determined. Finally, the translation efforts are characterized by a clear “output-driven” approach, and the genuine acceptance, sales data, and reader feedback within the target cultures require further in-depth investigation. Therefore, this paper will conduct a comparative study of the specific reception processes of Xuemo's works in different regions, including Europe, North America, and Asia.

3. Geographical Characteristics and Differential Reception Analysis of Xuemo's Works Overseas

3.1. Europe: Academically-Oriented Dissemination and Spirituality-Centric Reception

3.1.1. Geographically-Adapted Dissemination Characteristics

The dissemination of literature in Europe has long relied on a networked pathway constituted by academic centers and library systems (Moretti, 1998). The dissemination of Xuemo's works in Europe similarly exhibits a significant dependence on academic networks, primarily manifested in the scholarly positioning of publishing institutions, reliance on specific dissemination channels, and the selection criteria for translated works. This characteristic reliance on academic nodes not only delineates the scope of reception for his works in Europe but also shapes their identity as "texts for study" rather than popular reading materials.

The introduction of Xuemo's works to Europe relies first and foremost on a number of publishers with academic backgrounds or cultural specializations. These publishers do not primarily target the mass market but are dedicated to selecting and planning works at the level of intellectual exchange and civilizational dialogue. For instance, the Italian publisher Anteo Edizioni focuses on fields such as history, geopolitics, geoeconomics, human geography, and strategic science, "aiming to promote the most advanced and modern themes in the non-fiction sphere" (Anteo Edizioni). By including Xuemo's novels in such a series, the publisher essentially defines them, at the publication stage, as "intellectual texts" or "cultural research materials," rather than ordinary mass-market literary commodities. The German publisher BACOPA Verlag covers areas including ecology, philosophy, history, poetry, and cross-cultural studies, viewing itself as a "mediator of knowledge, ideas, ways of life, and philosophy between East and West" (BACOPA-Verlag), emphasizing the potential of Xuemo's works as texts of Eastern spiritual philosophy. Furthermore, the Spanish edition of *Selected Stories by Xuemo* was published by Siglo XXI Editores, a renowned publisher in the Spanish-speaking world for humanities and social sciences, and the two Romanian editions were published by The Ideea Europeana Publishing (which published the *Belt and Road Initiative Handbook* in 2024). Such publishing positioning determines that the initial tone of their dissemination in Europe is one of depth and interpretation, aimed at stimulating dialogue within intellectual and cultural circles, rather than pursuing widespread bestseller status.

Correspondingly, the dissemination channels also demonstrate a reliance on academic networks, primarily depending on the collection systems of university libraries and research institutions. To date, according to the WorldCat online catalog database, the 2023 translation of *Curses of the Kingdom of Xixia* by Fan-Pen Li Chen is held in 41 libraries across 10 countries overseas, including two in Germany, and one each in the United Kingdom, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Greece. The translations of *Desert Rites* and *Desert Hunters* by Howard Goldblatt and Sylvia Li-chun Lin are held in one library each in the UK and Germany; *White Tiger Pass* is held in one library in Germany; the biographical novel *The Holy Monk and the Spirit Woman* translated by J.C. Cleary is held in one library in Germany; and *The Women*, *The Camels* and *The Dholes* translated by Nicky Harman is held in one library each in the UK and Germany. However, the influence of the works tends to be confined to professional circles, making it difficult to permeate the broader general reader market.

In terms of the specific strategy for selecting works for translation, European publishers have balanced cultural otherness with philosophical speculation. On one hand, full-length novels such as *Desert Rites* and *Desert Hunters*, with their panoramic, epic depiction of Western rural society, have been translated to meet European readers' cognitive expectations regarding Chinese local knowledge, ecological writing, and human resilience. On the other hand, works like *The World Is a Reflection of the Mind* and *The Holy Monk and the Spirit Woman* have been readily embraced for their rich Buddhist philosophy and spiritual exploration, resonating with a long-standing intrinsic interest in Eastern spiritual traditions within European culture. This translation strategy reflects a typical expectation in the European receptive horizon towards "Chinese stories": a desire both to experience the geographical space of a different culture through narrative and to extract from it spiritual themes that resonate across cultures. Consequently, the "desert" in Xuemo's works is not merely a geographical marker but is interpreted as a metaphor for the modern spiritual predicament; the "spiritual practice" depicted is not just a religious act but becomes a universal exploration of life philosophy. This sublimation of meaning from regional specificity to spiritual universality is precisely the key to its recognition within Europe's academically-dominated dissemination system.

3.1.2. Case Study Analysis

The reception of Xuemo's works in Europe demonstrates two representative yet subtly distinct paradigms in the German-speaking region and the Italian-speaking region, respectively.

The dissemination of Xuemo's works in the German-speaking region is primarily represented by the German translation of *Desert Rites* (*Die Riten der Wüste*) published by BACOPA Verlag, which rapidly integrated into the rigorous academic evaluation network of German sinology. This reception pattern indicates that the academic community in the German-speaking region tends to employ established critical frameworks (such as ecocriticism and narratology) to "systematically decode" the works, transforming them into objects that can be absorbed and discussed within its own academic discourse. The underlying logic lies in using the mutual interpretation of theory and text to affirm the literary value of the works while simultaneously incorporating them into the existing track of European knowledge production, reflecting the pursuit of systematicity and theoretical depth characteristic of the German intellectual tradition.

In contrast to the German-speaking region's initial focus on long-form narratives, the Italian publisher Anteo Edizioni prioritized the translation of the philosophical essay *The World Is a Reflection of the Mind* (*Il Mondo è Una Riflessione Della Mente*). This publication strategy itself constitutes a form of reception guidance. In reader feedback, the book is seldom analyzed as a strictly Buddhist philosophical text; instead, it is more commonly regarded as a guide to a life philosophy concerning "inner peace," "conscious awareness," and "transcending materialism." This reception mode reveals that the Italian readership leans more toward a culturally-minded public with an interest in spiritual exploration. They filter out the specific Buddhist cultural elements, selecting instead universal themes directly relevant to their own life experiences and contemporary spiritual dilemmas, thereby engaging in a personalized construction of meaning and spiritual resonance during the reading process. This reflects the importance placed on the individual's inner world, the art of living, and emotional resonance within Southern European culture, as well as the expectation of Eastern thought as a form of "life aesthetics" and "spiritual resource."

These two cases vividly illustrate that the reception of Xuemo's works in Europe is not a uniform process but is shaped by the diverse cultural geographies and reading traditions within Europe. Together, they point to a deeper mechanism in Europe's reception of contemporary Chinese literature: based on their own cultural needs and cognitive frameworks, recipients selectively focus on and creatively transform the source text, ultimately accomplishing a cross-cultural acceptance that moves from "the story of the Other" to "nourishment for the Self." The dissemination of culture in modern society is not a process of linear diffusion but relies on the dynamic interaction of multiple nodes, networks, and forms of mobility (Urry, 2007). The dissemination pathway of Xuemo's works in Europe is precisely realized through a collaborative network composed of "translators -

publishers - academic institutions - libraries - reader communities.” The works not only move through physical space but are also continuously interpreted and reconstructed within networks of meaning, thereby forming a continuously evolving, multi-participatory cross-cultural dissemination ecosystem.

3.2. North America: Commercial and Community Collaborative Dissemination with Storytelling-Prioritized Reception

3.2.1. Geographically-Adapted Dissemination Characteristics

In the trans-Pacific dissemination of Xuemo’s works, the North American region exhibits geographical adaptability characteristics distinct from those in Europe. The dissemination ecosystem here is not singularly dominated by academic institutions but rather forms a collaborative network jointly constructed by the commercial market, academic evaluation systems, and active local communities.

The underlying dissemination logic points toward a demand for strong narrativity and culturally distinct stories. Within North America, due to its complex linguistic, cultural, and market composition, the region is further divided into three interconnected yet distinct dissemination sub-regions: the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

According to the WorldCat online catalog database, *Curses of the Kingdom of Xixia* translated by Fan-Pen Li Chen is held in 29 libraries in the United States and 3 in Canada. Following that, *Into the Desert*, *Desert Rites*, *Desert Hunters*, and *White Tiger Pass* translated by Howard Goldblatt and Sylvia Li-chun Lin are held in 24, 15, 15, and 15 U.S. libraries, respectively. *The Holy Monk and the Spirit Woman* and *The World Is a Reflection of the Mind* translated by J.C. Cleary are held in 15 and 13 U.S. libraries, respectively. *Selected Stories by Xuemo* translated by Nicky Harman are held in 6 and 1 U.S. library, respectively.

In terms of specific translation strategies, the North American market demonstrates a clear preference for “storytelling with dissemination potential.” Representative examples include the “Desert Trilogy” (Xuemo 2009) translated by Howard Goldblatt and Sylvia Li-chun Lin. These long-form narrative works, characterized by compact plots, dramatic character destinies, and intense regional flavor, have been prioritized and systematically translated. In contrast, Xuemo’s philosophical essay collections have fewer translations in North America and relatively limited dissemination. This reflects publishers’ assessment of the target readership’s habits, indicating that the North American mass market is more inclined to accept a “Chinese story” with strong narrative drive. In translation practice, while preserving necessary cultural distinctiveness, translators often

moderately simplify or provide contextual explanations for complex folk allusions and religious terminology to ensure narrative fluency.

Delving deeper into North America, dissemination patterns in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico share similarities but also exhibit differences. The U.S. market is the largest, with the most mature commercial mechanisms and the most rapid, though often noisy, feedback. The success of works here largely depends on their ability to capture readers' attention in a highly competitive market. Canada benefits from its multicultural policies; works may receive more institutional support through public cultural funding programs or discussions on immigrant literature. Its bilingual English-French translations also provide a unique case for observing the journey of the same text across different cultural contexts.

Mexico represents the forefront of reception in the Spanish-speaking world. The depth of its dissemination is influenced by Latin American literary traditions. If the themes of local narrative and social transformation in the works resonate with Latin America's "magical realism" or social realist traditions, they are more likely to gain deeper acceptance. Such regional variations indicate that Xuemo's works are not received within a homogeneous "English-language market" in North America but rather undergo their own localized journeys within multiple differentiated cultural sub-markets.

In summary, the geographical characteristics of Xuemo's works' dissemination in North America are shaped by its highly market-oriented publishing industry, its diverse and interactive dissemination networks, and its selective preference for strongly narrative texts. This characteristic lays the structural foundation for the "storytelling-first" reception model prevalent in North America.

3.2.2. Case Study Analysis

The dissemination and reception of Xuemo's works in North America can be revealed through three cases from the United States, Canada, and Mexico, illustrating their differentiated pathways within distinct cultural markets.

The U.S. case exemplifies dissemination through commercial market channels. Taking *Into the Desert* as an example, it does not have a direct corresponding original Chinese text but is a creatively adapted translation of Xuemo's novels *White Tiger Pass* and *Desert Rites*, tailored into a full-length novel suitable for American readers' tastes. Mainstream reader feedback on platforms like Amazon focuses on "narrative appeal" and "human resonance," confirming the dominant logic of story-driven reception. The Canadian case highlights the mediating role of community networks. Beyond commercial distribution, his works circulate continuously through community venues such as Chinese bookstores,

reading clubs, and cultural lectures, even exhibiting a “reader-to-reader” word-of-mouth dissemination phenomenon. Xuemo’s works are reportedly available in almost every bookstore in the U.S. and Canada (Xu Saiying and He Ying 2024). Xuemo mentioned in an interview that the first characteristic of his works’ overseas dissemination is “dissemination by overseas Chinese” (Yang Jianxin and Xuemo, 2023). This form of “networked mobility,” based on community identity and cultural belonging, significantly enhances the penetration and emotional resonance of his works within the North American Chinese community.

The Mexican case demonstrates the initial reception state within the Spanish-speaking market. The publication of the Spanish translation of *White Tiger Pass* (2021) marks an expansion in geographical reach, with sales primarily conducted through online platforms of local chain bookstores. Currently, this market is still in its early cultivation stage, with limited reader feedback available. However, the social realist inclination within the Latin American literary tradition holds potential for dialogue with the style of Xuemo’s works. Future depth of reception will depend on subsequent efforts in local translation and cultural interpretation.

In conclusion, reception within North America is not a uniform process. The U.S. market has mature mechanisms and the richest layers of reception; Canada relies on policies and community networks for cultural adaptation; Mexico represents the preliminary layout in an emerging market. These three cases illustrate that while the “storytelling” aspect of Xuemo’s works serves as a universal medium for their trans-oceanic dissemination, the generation of their specific meanings and the degree of their acceptance are always shaped and constrained by the specific cultural structures and social networks of the local markets where they land.

3.3. Asia: Culturally Affinity-Driven Domain-Specific Dissemination and Reception

3.3.1. East Asia (Japan and South Korea): Cultural Dissemination and Ethical Resonance Reception

Within the East Asian cultural sphere, the dissemination pathways of Xuemo’s works exhibit distinct characteristics oriented towards academia and connected by cultural affinity. The reception process profoundly reflects the interaction within this region based on shared ethical sensibilities and differentiated modern experiences.

In South Korea, Xuemo’s works have gradually entered the research landscape of contemporary Chinese literature through translation projects. For instance, the Korean edition of *Selected Stories by Xuemo* was translated by the renowned South Korean sinologist, Kim Seung-il, who is also the President of the

Korea East Asia Policy Institute and a professor at Dongguk University. This marked the first translation of Xuemo's works introduced in South Korea. The local major newspaper, *The Hankook Ilbo*, featured it as part of the publisher's classic book series in its book promotion column, signifying its formal entry into the South Korean publishing sphere. Commercial publication quickly followed suit, with Chanlan Media independently publishing the Korean edition of the full-length novel *Mother Wolf Grey* in 2022. This indicates a segmented interest within the South Korean market in specific narrative themes (such as animal narratives and ecological ethics), serving as an important marker of deepening reception. In reader reviews on Yes24, South Korea's largest online bookstore, keywords such as "family bonds," "spirit of sacrifice," and "attachment to homeland" appear frequently. Many middle-aged readers connect the intergenerational conflicts and family responsibilities depicted in the works with the ethical dilemmas encountered during South Korea's modern social transformations. This resonance transcends mere literary appreciation, touching upon a shared Confucian cultural-emotional structure. Some literary critics have drawn analogies between the resilience of the novel's characters and the aesthetic tradition of "Han" (한) in Korean literature, revealing an intertextual interpretation of cultural archetypes during the reception process.

In Japan, the dissemination pathway of Xuemo's works distinctly reflects a characteristic of "academic frontier knowledge construction" and has not yet entered the mass consumer market. Although systematic Japanese translations have not emerged, his works have garnered substantial attention through a dense, academic exchange network. For example, in July 2025, Xuemo himself engaged in a series of in-depth academic dialogues in Japan: he was invited to a literary symposium with poet Mutsuo Takahashi, scholar Tian Yuan, and University of Tokyo professor Kimihiko Abe; discussed cultural differences in the translation of his works with Professor Mikiko Moriyama of Tokai University; participated in traditional culture dialogues led by figures from the corporate and cultural sectors; and exchanged views with Wang Min, Vice Chairman of the International Confucian Association, on the similarities and differences between Chinese and Japanese cultures. The common features of this series of activities are: firstly, the interlocutors were all scholars, writers, and cultural elites, rather than professionals from the publishing market; secondly, the topics focused on academic levels such as literary comparison, translation studies, and dialogue on traditional culture and thought. This clearly indicates that the dissemination and reception of Xuemo's works in Japan are strictly confined to the realm of knowledge production and elite exchange. The feedback is necessarily analytical and maintains a certain distance, aiming to treat his works as a "research case" for interpreting Chinese literature

and culture, rather than as a “reading object” intended to evoke mass emotional resonance. This pathway stands in sharp contrast to that in South Korea, highlighting Japan’s characteristic caution and scholarly inclination when receiving contemporary Chinese literature.

The differential reception of Xuemo’s works in Japan and South Korea not only reflects the complex facets of intra-East Asian cultural affinity but also reveals how modern experiences profoundly shape literary interpretation. The reception of literature in East Asia often intertwines shared Confucian ethical traditions with differentiated paths to modernity (Hillenbrand 2007). In South Korea, the profound family narratives and homeland ethics in Xuemo’s works resonate with similar experiences of intergenerational conflict and loss of homeland during Korea’s modernization process, eliciting strong emotional communication from readers. In contrast, Japanese academia tends to analyze Xuemo’s works within the academic framework of “research on Contemporary Chinese Literature.” This receptive posture stems both from Japan’s long-established scholarly tradition regarding modern Chinese literature and reflects the subtle distance between the two nations in terms of modern experiences and historical memory.

3.3.2. Southeast Asia: Chinese Community-Led Dissemination and Identity-Oriented Reception

The dissemination of Xuemo’s works in Southeast Asia exhibits a distinct characteristic centered on the Chinese community as the core nexus. The essence of its reception process lies in the construction of cultural identity by diasporic communities through literary texts.

Overseas Chinese communities often maintain cultural symbols and spiritual resources to construct a “dual identity” within heterogeneous environments—adapting to the local context while preserving an emotional connection to their Chinese cultural roots (Wang Gungwu 2000). In 2022, SKYBOOKS Publishing and Cultural Communication Company Limited in Vietnam published the Vietnamese edition of *Reclaim the Throne of Your Heart*. This marked the first introduction of Xuemo’s works to Vietnamese readers and their inaugural publication in a Southeast Asian country. The publisher primarily focuses on translating Chinese spiritual philosophy and traditional culture books, clearly targeting local Chinese and culturally proximate groups as its intended readership. Themes within the works concerning inner cultivation and ethical perseverance precisely provide important spiritual reference points and identity resources for Chinese readers navigating contexts of cultural integration. Thus, the reception of Xuemo’s works in Southeast Asia is not merely literary consumption but rather a form of “identity-

oriented reading” rooted in the community's cultural psychology, aimed at affirming and sustaining cultural origins.

However, this reception pathway, highly dependent on a specific community, also delineates the boundaries of its influence. Firstly, the dissemination and discussion of the works remain largely confined within the Chinese cultural sphere, making it difficult to enter the mainstream literary landscape. Secondly, the reception process exhibits significant selectivity. Universal spiritual themes and distinct markers of Chinese culture within the works are emphasized and embraced, whereas the complex depictions and deeper critiques of specific regional societies are often downplayed. This results in a relatively singular image of the works within the local context, preventing their full literary and intellectual dimensions from being fully explored.

3.3.3. South Asia & Central Asia: Geopolitically-Linked Dissemination and Limited Regional Commonality in Reception

The dissemination of Xuemo's works in South Asia and Central Asia demonstrates clear characteristics of geopolitical linkage, but their reception is constrained by cultural differences, resulting in an overall limited impact.

Translation activities are closely tied to regional cooperation mechanisms. Nepal (2021), India (2021), and Sri Lanka (2022) successively released local language editions of *Selected Stories by Xuemo*, and Saudi Arabia (2020-2021) also published this anthology along with the Arabic edition of *Song of Liangzhou*. These publishing initiatives often rely on cultural exchange projects under the framework of the “Belt and Road Initiative,” such as officially supported book fairs and cultural exchange events, possessing distinct attributes of cultural diplomacy and regional connectivity. For example, a “Xuemo Works Readers' Sharing Session,” organized by Xuemo International Publishing Co., Ltd., was held on January 4, 2025, during the second Nepal South Asia International Book Fair. Distinguished participants included former Nepalese Ambassador to China Bishnu Pukar Shrestha, President of Nepal Academy Bhupal Rai, Chairman of the Nepal Arniko Society Sushil Prajapat, President of the Nepal Overseas Chinese Association Jin Xiaodong, and Dean of the Confucius Institute at Kathmandu University in Nepal Li Shuangcheng, all of whom delivered speeches.

However, the form of translation and the depth of dissemination reflect the limitations of reception. The aforementioned regions all prioritized moderately sized anthologies; complete translations of his core full-length novels have not yet appeared. Dissemination channels are mostly limited to cooperating publishing institutions and specific cultural venues, failing to enter mainstream commercial

distribution systems. The reason lies in profound cultural heterogeneity. The Hindu and Buddhist traditions of South Asia and the Islamic cultural background of Central Asia structurally diverge from the Chinese Northwestern local experience and the Confucian-Buddhist-Taoist spiritual foundation in which Xuemo's works are rooted. Certain cultural elements within the works might spark sporadic recognition, but the overall narrative concerns and emotional structures struggle to achieve deep resonance with the cultural expectations of local readers.

Therefore, the current reception is essentially a form of "demonstrative cognition". It accomplishes symbolic coverage and cultural reach in a geographical sense but has not yet managed to bridge the cultural divide to elicit profound communication. This case indicates that in regions with weak cultural affinity, the effectiveness of literary dissemination depends not only on the breadth of dissemination but, more critically, on a clear understanding of the difficulties of cultural transference and sustained efforts to cultivate localized interpretive mechanisms.

4. Core Patterns and Influencing Factors in the Overseas Dissemination and Reception of Xuemo's Works

4.1. Geographic Feature-Driven Adaptation in Dissemination Pathways

The overseas dissemination of Xuemo's works exhibits distinct geographic adaptability. The selection of pathways is based on active assessment of the target region's cultural structure, market ecology, and audience psychology, forming a clear "region-strategy" correspondence.

First, dissemination modes are aligned with regional cultural attributes. In Europe, dissemination follows an "academically-oriented" model, relying on universities, academic presses (e.g., Germany's BACOPA), and professional critical networks, pursuing intellectual interpretation and canonization. In North America, where market and community forces are equally emphasized, a "market-community collaborative" model prevails, driven jointly by commercial publishing, online platforms, and Chinese cultural networks, balancing commercial visibility with ethnic identity. In East and Southeast Asia, where cultural affinity is strong, a "cultural affinity-driven" model emerges, characterized by a blend of academic and market approaches and reliance on Chinese community networks. In regions with significant cultural heterogeneity, such as South and Central Asia, dissemination manifests as a "project-linked" model, primarily propelled by cultural exchange initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative, bearing a distinct policy-driven character.

Second, the selection of key actors follows a geographic logic. In mainstream English and Western European markets, authoritative sinologists like Howard Goldblatt ensure translation quality and literary credibility. In markets with cultural affinity or emerging status, local translators such as Kim Seung-il in Korea and Fouad Hasan in Arabic are more frequently chosen to enhance local acceptability.

Finally, the selection of content for dissemination reflects a strategic gradient. A “core narratives + selected anthology” strategy is employed: full-length novels like the “Desert Trilogy” are used to penetrate mainstream markets and establish a literary image, while Selected Stories by Xuemo serves as a flexible vehicle for low-cost exploration of diverse market responses. Genre deployment also shows regional preferences; full-length novels align with European reading interests, while spiritually enlightening works are more readily accepted in culturally proximate Southeast Asia.

In summary, the dissemination practice of Xuemo’s works demonstrates that effective cross-cultural communication is not about replicating a single model. Instead, it is the result of a dynamic “adaptive configuration” of agents, content, and channels based on geographic-cultural insight. This strategic geographic adaptation is a crucial factor enabling its effective dissemination across culturally diverse global markets.

4.2. Key Influencing Factors on Reception Effectiveness

The varying reception effectiveness of Xuemo’s works across different overseas regions results from the interplay of multiple factors. Analyzing its dissemination cases reveals four key categories of influencing factors: cultural context and psychological distance, the authority and strategy of dissemination agents, the adaptability and transference of textual characteristics, and the support conditions provided by market and institutional environments.

First, cultural context and psychological distance are fundamental factors influencing reception depth. In East and Southeast Asian regions like Korea and Vietnam, shared Confucian ethics, Buddhist culture, and Chinese historical memory significantly shorten psychological distance, making the familial narratives and homeland sentiments in the works prone to evoke deep communication and identity recognition. In contrast, in South Asia, Central Asia, and parts of Europe, the inherent Hindu, Islamic, or Christian cultural traditions structurally differ from the Northwestern Chinese local experience and spiritual world in which Xuemo’s works are rooted, forming a major reception barrier. This often results in reception remaining at the level of cultural display or superficial cognition.

Second, the authority and strategic approach of dissemination agents shape the reception pathway. In the English-speaking world and European academia, translations by authoritative sinologists like Howard Goldblatt ensure literary quality, provide credibility endorsement, and enhance the works' visibility within academic circles. In various regional markets, local translators (e.g., Kim Seung-il in Korea, Fouad Hasan in Arabic) effectively bridge gaps in cultural details. The choice of publishing institutions is also strategic: academic presses promote canonization, commercial publishers facilitate mass circulation, and Chinese foreign-oriented publishing institutions reflect systematic output. In terms of dissemination strategy, the combination of "core full-length novels for breakthroughs" and "selected anthologies for exploration," along with deploying different genres to specific regions, significantly impacts the scope and precision of reception.

Third, the cross-cultural adaptability of the text's own characteristics is a crucial intermediary. The "storytelling" quality of Xuemo's works, such as in the "Desert Trilogy" with its universal human conflicts, serves as an effective vehicle for crossing cultural barriers. Their "philosophical" nature, particularly Buddhist thought, faces greater challenges in transference, often undergoing simplification during dissemination. The translation treatment of numerous culture-loaded terms and local knowledge within the texts also affects the accuracy of reader comprehension and the reading experience.

Finally, the market mechanisms and institutional environment of the target region constitute external constraints. Mature commercial publishing markets (e.g., North America) possess efficient distribution networks and reader feedback mechanisms that can quickly amplify or filter reception effects. Regions with robust academic systems (e.g., Europe) provide stable support for the long-term canonization of works. Official cultural policies and diplomatic projects (e.g., Belt and Road Initiative programs) offer initial platforms and resources for translation in regions like South and Central Asia. Additionally, the size and vitality of overseas Chinese communities serve as a communal foundation for the initial landing and secondary dissemination of works in North America and Southeast Asia.

In summary, the overseas reception effectiveness of Xuemo's works results from the complex interaction between inherent textual qualities and external environments. Cultural-psychological distance sets the upper limit for reception, the strategy of dissemination agents determines the efficiency of reaching audiences, the quality of textual transference influences meaning transmission, and market and institutional environments provide the real-world stage. It is the configuration and interaction of these factors within specific regions that ultimately shape the significantly varied reception landscape

4.3. Universal Insights for the Overseas Dissemination of Contemporary Chinese Literature

Based on the case study of Xuemo's works, four universal insights with reference value for the overseas dissemination of contemporary Chinese literature can be distilled.

First, dissemination strategies need to shift from "extensive coverage" to "targeted adaptation." Successful dissemination does not involve applying a single model to all markets. It should be based on an understanding of the target region's cultural context and reception mechanisms, formulating differentiated strategies according to regional characteristics.

Second, it is essential to construct a multi-agent collaborative, locally-rooted "actor network". The dissemination of Xuemo's works relies on a collaborative network comprising sinologists, local translators, various publishing institutions, scholars, and communities. Future dissemination efforts should place greater emphasis on cultivating key "bridge figures" within the target culture, especially local translators and publishers, who can play an irreplaceable role in cultural transference and market channels. Support at the national level should focus on building platforms and facilitating cooperation to stimulate endogenous motivation.

Third, textual production and selection should enhance awareness of "cross-cultural accessibility." Texts within Xuemo's works that blend strong narrative with universal human themes demonstrate greater cross-cultural penetration. This suggests to writers and publishing planners that, while remaining rooted in local experience, they should consciously select and shape texts with greater "translatability" and "resonance potential" during creation and translation planning. A multi-level output system should be established, using full-length core works to establish literary stature, selected anthologies to broaden contact surfaces, and differentiated genres to respond to diverse demands.

Fourth, the focus needs to shift from emphasizing "dissemination reach" to cultivating a long-term mechanism for "deep reception." The endpoint of dissemination is not publication but the "activation" of the work within the target culture. This requires long-term support for academic research, curriculum inclusion, critical dialogue, and reader community building in the target countries. Genuine reception arises from sustained meaning interpretation and cultural dialogue, demanding a long-term perspective to cultivate a deep, locally-rooted reception ecology.

In conclusion, the overseas dissemination of contemporary Chinese literature is a systematic project. Its success depends on precise geographic-cultural adaptation, a collaborative actor network, text production with cross-cultural awareness, and the long-term cultivation of an ecology aimed at deep reception. Only in this way can a substantive transition from “going out” to “going in” be achieved.

5. Conclusion and Outlook

This study takes the writer Xuemo as a typical case to analyze the geographical characteristics and reception process of contemporary Chinese literature in its overseas dissemination. The research reveals a notable pattern of “geographical adaptability” in its propagation: differentiated dissemination models—academically-oriented, market-community collaborative, cultural affinity-driven, and project-linked—have been formed in response to Europe’s academic tradition, North America’s market and community ecology, the cultural affinity in East and Southeast Asia, and the project-driven environment in South and Central Asia, respectively. The reception effectiveness is profoundly constrained by the complex interaction of multiple factors, including cultural-psychological distance, strategies of dissemination agents, the quality of cross-cultural textual transference, and the institutional environment of the target regions. This demonstrates that effective literary cross-cultural communication is not the replication of a single model but rather a process of strategic configuration and adjustment based on a deep understanding of the target region’s cultural logic. The global journey of contemporary Chinese literature is a long-term undertaking that requires cultural insight, strategic patience, and ecological thinking. The cross-cultural journey of Xuemo’s works provides an enlightening case study in this regard. The experiences and reflections drawn from it will contribute to exploring more effective and sustainable dissemination pathways.

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