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Retranslated Chinese classical canon *Journey to the West*: a stylometric comparison between Julia Lovell's retranslation and Arthur Waley's translation

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Abstract

Journey to the West (西游记; *Xi You Ji*) is one of the best-known classic novels in Chinese literature, and it has been translated into English by various notable translators. This study compares the retranslation of the novel by Julia Lovell published in "Penguin Classics" in 2021 with Arthur Waley's translation in "Penguin Classics" in 1973. Employing a stylometric approach to compare the styles of the two translations, it uses the corpus tools of word lists, keyword analysis, and function word analysis. The results reveal distinct stylistic differences in the translators' styles, including lexical density, sentence length, and function words, which point to different translation strategies employed by the two translations of this classic Chinese novel. The book reviews published so far indicate that Lovell's version has been well received by contemporary Anglophone readers and that the changes in this retranslation may have helped to explain the recanonization of the original classic. This study provides new insights into the understanding of the differences between translation and retranslation, and thus has implications for the fields of translator style studies and stylometry research.

Keywords: *Journey to the West*; Chinese classic; (re)canonization; (re)translation; Julia Lovell; Arthur Waley; stylometric comparison

1. Introduction

The classic Chinese novel 西游记 (*Xi You Ji*; *Journey to the West*) is one of the four great classics of Chinese literature. It depicts the story of a Chinese Buddhist monk named Tang Xuanzang (Tripitaka) from the Tang Dynasty (618–907) and his pilgrims Sun Wukong (Monkey), Zhu Wuneng (Pigsy) and Sha Wujing (Sandy), who together went on a journey in search of Buddhist scripts in the Western Land in India. On their journey, they overcame a lot of hardships and difficulties and fought hundreds of demons. Finally, they achieved enlightenment and brought back the Buddhist scripts to the Tang Empire. The novel is generally believed to be written by Wu Cheng'en, a Chinese novelist during the Ming Dynasty, which spanned from 1368 to 1644. However, there is no confirmation about the authorship of the novel. The classic Chinese novel has undergone a process of canonization; this refers to the process by which a work of literature is recognized and accepted as a classic in a particular literary tradition (Thomsen 2008). Due to its profound impact on Chinese culture and literature, *Journey to the West* has been canonized in the Chinese literary tradition.

The process of canonization often involves translation, as it allows a literary work to reach a wider audience and gain international recognition. This is evident in the case of *Journey to the West*, which has been translated into various languages and has thereby gained global recognition (e.g. Qian 2017; Wang 2021). Its notable English-language translations include three abridged versions—Arthur Waley's *Monkey*, Anthony C. Yu's *The Monkey and the Monk*, and Julia Lovell's *Monkey King: Journey to the West*—and two unabridged translations, by Anthony C. Yu and W. J. F. Jenner. It has been eight decades since Waley's abridged translation of this Chinese classic was first published by Allen and Unwin in 1942, and since then it has been reprinted many times as one of the best-received novels translated from Chinese. It was published again by Penguin Books in 1961 and

included in the "Penguin Classics" series in 1973. In 2021, Penguin Books published a new abridged translation (*Monkey King: Journey to the West*), which was translated by Julia Lovell and was again included in its Penguin Classics series. Recanonization refers to the process by which a work is re-evaluated and reaffirmed as a classic in light of new interpretations (Schor 1988), and Lovell's new interpretation of the original text may have contributed to its recanonization. Therefore, it will be interesting to explore how Lovell's retranslation is different from Waley's translation, as this might reveal why Penguin would publish a new translation of the same Chinese novel.

This study aims to explore how Julia Lovell's re-translation of the *Journey to the West* is different from the previous Arthur Waley's version. In order to investigate this topic, the study seeks to answer the following three research questions (RQs), using a stylometric approach to illuminate the language patterns identified in a comparable corpus.

RQ1. Are there any stylistic differences between Lovell's and Waley's translations? If so, what are the differences?

RQ2. How is Lovell's retranslation received by Anglophone readers, as seen from its book reviews published so far?

RQ3. What factors have contributed to the recanonization of this classic Chinese novel through translation?

This article begins by laying out the stylometric studies of literature and literary translation. It then elaborates on the corpus and methods adopted in this study. The main part of the article presents a stylometric comparative analysis of Lovell's and Waley's translations. The findings of the analysis are also discussed, with particular consideration of linguistic, social, and cultural factors.

2. Stylometric studies of literature and literary translation

'Style' is an abstract term, which is frequently used in the literature and yet it is a concept which is difficult to define precisely. Despite its common usage, the term can broadly be defined as 'the way in which language is used in a given context' (Leech and Short 2007: 9). It applies to both spoken and written texts and has by tradition typically been used to describe written literary texts. In the field of stylistics, various definitions of style have emerged. Previous studies mostly defined 'style' as 'the linguistic characteristics of a particular

text' (Leech and Short 2007: 11). There are two main aspects to consider when discussing style: first, style is a choice, and secondly, it is described by reference to something else.

There are several approaches to studying style in literary texts. The majority of studies on style have been qualitative. Some researchers have adopted 'statistical methods in the analysis of literary style', which is referred to as 'stylometry' (Holmes 1998: 111). Numerical analysis is used to measure style and has always been a part of stylistics, especially in authorship studies. However, it has become more popular now, as computers greatly enhance the ease of its implementation. Numerical analysis involves counting things and knowing how to show the significance of what has been counted. Several studies have used the stylometric approach to study issues relating to the determination of the style of literary texts, such as authorship attribution and author profiling (Savoy 2020). A popular method for comparing the frequencies of common words, contrasting stylistic differences and therefore identifying likely authorship is the 'Delta' method (Burrows 2002).

Several lines of research postulate a convergence between stylometry and corpus linguistics. As Brezina (2018: 3) argues, 'statistics is crucial for corpus linguists because it helps us work effectively with quantitative information'. Although some corpus linguists have used statistical methods to analyse literary style, they have not termed their studies stylometric. This is partly because some statistical analysis is hidden away from the corpus linguistic software. Some studies (e.g. Hoover 2007) have examined the relationship between stylometry and corpus linguistics and have investigated the style of an author in literary texts.

With the rise of corpus-based translation studies, translation scholars have attempted to use corpus linguistic methods to investigate the style of a literary translator, and this is defined as 'a kind of thumb-print that is expressed in a range of linguistic as well as non-linguistic features' (Baker 2000: 245). Saldanha (2011: 31) revised the definition to 'a way of translating' or 'consistent and distinctive patterns of choice'. Corpus-based translation studies often compare the translations of a translator over time in order to identify any patterns of idiosyncratic behaviour of a particular author. Following this trend, some corpus stylistic analyses have used quantitative indicators as a reflection of the translator's style, including type/token ratio, average sentence length, reporting structures, and key clusters (e.g. Mastropierro 2018). Several studies have applied such methodology to analyse translators' translation styles and assess the impact of stylistic auto-analysis on how they translate (Youdale 2019). Only a few studies have conducted a stylometric analysis based on stylistic features. For instance, Rybicki

and Heydel (2013) applied stylometric analysis to identify the translator's style in the Polish translation of Virginia Woolf's *Night and Day*. Wu and Li (2022, 2023) compared the translated Chinese Wuxia fiction and Western heroic literature based on indices such as average word length, average sentence length, verb–adjective ratio, dispersion of word length, and most frequent words.

Previous research has provided important information on the translations of *Journey to the West*. Wang, Humblé, and Chen (2019) conducted a bibliometric analysis of studies on the translation of *Journey to the West* and classified the studies into micro-, meso-, and macro-levels. The studies at the micro-level examined the translation methods and strategies that the translators adopted in their translations (e.g. Wong 2013). The research at the meso-level explored the sociocultural background of the translations (e.g. Luo and Zheng 2017; Luo 2020; Wang, Humblé, and Chen 2020). The studies at the macro-level were conducted from the perspective of world literature (e.g. Hao 2016; Wang and Humblé 2020). This classification is not all-inclusive, but it provides insights into the research. Most studies have focused on the linguistic, social, and cultural factors concerning the retranslated version. Few studies have investigated the linguistic factor of the translations systematically, except for Wang and Humblé's (2018) corpus analysis of the characterization of the Great Sage and its collocates and collocation networks.

These studies indicate the usefulness of stylometric analysis in studies about literature and literary translation. However, there remain several aspects of the translator's style in translated Chinese literary classics of which relatively little is known. This article aims to compare two translations of *Journey to the West*—one by Julia Lovell and one by Arthur Waley—by employing a stylometric approach. This will be elaborated on in the next section.

3. Corpus and tools for stylometric analysis

A comparable corpus was compiled comprising Lovell's and Waley's translations. The plain text files were processed in WordSmith Tools 8.0 (Scott 2023), which provides such corpus tools as concord, keywords, and word lists. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics about the sub-corpora of Lovell's and Waley's translations. The size of Lovell's sub-corpus is slightly smaller than that of Waley's. Specifically, the Lovell sub-corpus consists of 111,628 tokens (running words), among which 10,154 are types (distinct words). On the other hand, the Waley sub-corpus comprises 126,501 tokens, with 7,843 types. This comparison highlights the distinct linguistic choices made in each translation and shows that Lovell used a

Table 1. Descriptive statistics about Lovell's and Waley's versions.

	Lovell	Waley
Tokens (running words)	111,628	126,501
Types (distinct words)	10,154	7,843
TTR	9.11	6.20
Standardised TTR (STTR)	47.08	40.45
STTR standard deviation	50.98	58.20
STTR basis	1,000	1,000
Mean word length (in characters)	4.56	4.18
Word length standard deviation	2.33	2.07
Sentences	7,921	7,773
Mean (in words)	13.76	15.84
Standard deviation	10.10	9.46
Paragraphs	2,322	2,397
Mean (in words)	42.34	45.93
Standard deviation	41.95	48.45
Headings	189	162
Mean (in words)	20.72	10.91
Standard deviation	52.56	19.09

wider variety of lexicons in her translation than Waley. This is further proved by the type/token ratio (TTR) and the standardized TTR (STTR) of Lovell, which are 9.11 and 47.08, respectively. These are higher than those of Waley's, which are 6.20 and 40.45. The STTR standard deviation based on 1,000 words of Lovell's is 50.98, whereas that of Waley's is 58.20.

It is interesting to notice two overall features of the data to be compared. First, although both Lovell and Waley have produced English-abridged translations of the original Chinese novel, their selections of the original chapters for translation are not the same. The well-known Chinese classic consists of 100 chapters. It can be seen from Fig. 1 that both Lovell and Waley translated Chapters 1–15, 18, 19, 22, 44–47, 49, and 98–100. Apart from these chapters, Lovell also translated Chapters 27–35, 40–43, 53–55, 59–61, 78, 79, 87, and 88, whereas Waley translated Chapters 37–39 and 48.

Secondly, as is illustrated in Fig. 2 which presents the word count for each chapter in Lovell's and Waley's versions, it is evident that each chapter in Lovell's translation is generally shorter than its counterpart in Waley's. Despite Lovell translating more chapters from the original text than Waley, the overall length of her translation remains shorter than Waley's in total. This suggests a difference in their translation strategies, with Lovell opting for a more concise approach. Lovell's chapters are an average of 2,785 words in length, whereas Waley's have an average of 4,145 words. Of the thirty-six chapters in Lovell's translation, the longest chapter contains 6,378 words, whereas the shortest has 352 words. The longest chapter in Waley's version has 6,484 words, whereas the shortest has 2,317 words.
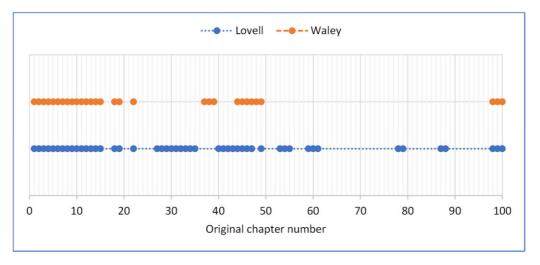
Figure 1. Original chapters selected for translation in Lovell's and Waley's (the above line) versions.
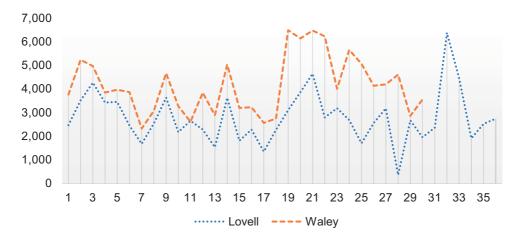

Figure 2. Word counts of each chapter in Lovell's and Waley's (the above line) versions.

In terms of the stylometric tools, this study focuses on word lists, keyword analysis, and function word analysis. These three aspects were chosen because they provide a comprehensive overview of the stylistic differences between the two translations (e.g. Baker 2000; Saldanha 2011; Mastropierro 2018). Together, these analyses allow us to capture both the lexical and syntactic aspects of the translators' styles.

1) Word lists offer insights into the vocabulary used by the translators. The word list tool generates a list of words with their frequencies per thousand words (ptw), by percentage, and by dispersion in the text. It also produces statistics about the corpus based on the word list, including types, tokens, STTR, mean lengths of words, sentences, paragraphs, and headings, as well as the number of words of different lengths.

2) Keyword analysis highlights the words that are prominently frequent in each translation. The keyword tool compares the frequencies of words in a word list with those of words in a reference corpus word list to generate a list of keywords that are unusually frequent in the corpus. The frequency of words in the word list of Lovell was compared with that of words in the word list of Waley to generate the keywords that are prominent in Lovell but not in Waley. The frequency of words in the word list of Waley was compared with that of words in Lovell to generate the keywords that are prominent in Waley but not in Lovell.

3) Function word analysis reveals differences in the use of lexis. The concord tool creates a concordance of keywords in their contexts, with statistics on their collocates on the left and right. (For example, L1 refers to a collocate one word to the left, L2 to a collocate two words to the left, R1 to a collocate one word to the right, etc.) The concordance list is sorted according to the L1 or R1 to generate patterns of these clusters.

4. A stylometric comparative analysis of Lovell's and Waley's translations

This section compares Lovell's version and Waley's version at the lexical level by using various corpus linguistic tools, including high-frequency words, keywords, and cluster analysis.

4.1 Word list analysis

Figure 3 shows the mean word length (in characters), the mean sentence length (in words), the mean paragraph length (in words), and the mean heading length (in words) in Lovell and Waley respectively. There are 7,921 sentences in Lovell's translation. The average sentence length in Lovell is 13.76 words. The number of paragraphs in Lovell and Waley is about the same. There are 2,322 paragraphs in Lovell and 2,397 paragraphs in Waley. The average length of paragraphs in Lovell is 42.34, slightly shorter than that of Waley's paragraphs which are on average 45.93 words in length.

The mean word length (in characters) in Lovell is 4.56 compared with 4.18 in Waley. Figure 4 compares the number of words of different lengths in Lovell's and Waley's translations. Of all possible word lengths, for both Lovell and Waley, the one which was most frequently used in their translations was three-letter words. These represented 24,795 (22.21%) and 30,501 (24.11%) words in their respective corpora.
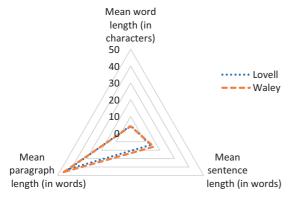

Figure 3. Mean lengths of words, sentences, and paragraphs in Lovell's and Waley's versions.

Lovell used fewer one-letter, two-letter, three-letter, four-letter, and five-letter words than Waley due to the lower number of total words. However, from six-letter words onwards, Lovell used a greater number of words than Waley. Lovell used one eighteen-letter word and three twenty-letter words, whereas Waley did not use any eighteen-letter, nineteen-letter, or twenty-letter words.

4.2 Keyword analysis

Table 2 shows the top twenty keywords in Lovell's and Waley's translations, including the frequency of the keyword, its frequency in the reference corpus, and its keyness score.

Lovell adopted the standard Mandarin Chinese pinyin system, which was developed in the 1950s, in naming the locations, characters, and proper nouns in the novel. As can be seen from the keywords on the left side of Table 2, the word *Guanyin* appeared 142 times (1.27 ptw) in Lovell but never in Waley. This is because it is spelt as *Kuan-yin* in Waley. Example 1 shows that Lovell and Waley render 观音 into *Guanyin* and *Kuan-yin*, respectively, referring to the same Bodhisattva of Compassion in Buddhism. The translation of 观音 into *Guanyin* and *Kuan-yin* reflects different romanization systems used for Chinese characters. *Guanyin* is a pinyin romanization, which is the official romanization system on the Chinese mainland. It is a phonetic system that uses the Latin alphabet to transcribe Mandarin Chinese sounds. On the other hand, *Kuan-yin* is a Wade–Giles romanization which was widely used in English-language publications outside China until the late twentieth century. The choice between *Guanyin* and *Kuan-yin* may reflect the translator's preference or the convention of the time when the translation was made. Wade–Giles was officially replaced by the pinyin system on the Chinese mainland in 1958.

> Example 1
> ST: 话表南海普陀落伽山大慈大悲救苦救难灵感观世音菩萨，自王母娘娘请赴蟠桃大会。(Wu 1993: 35)
>
> Lovell: The Queen Mother had invited the great compassionate Bodhisattva Guanyin from Mount Potalaka in the South Sea to the Peach Festival. (Lovell 2021: 91)
>
> Waley: Meanwhile the Great Compassionate Bodhisattva Kuan-yin had come at the invitation of the Queen of Heaven to attend the great feast. (Waley 1961: 65)

Example 2 shows that Lovell translated the names of Tripitaka's pilgrims Monkey, Pigsy, Sandy, and
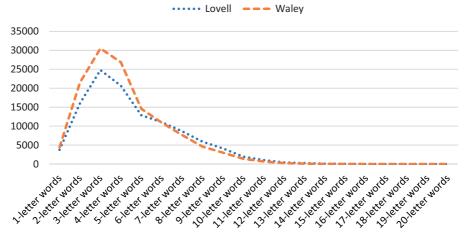
Figure 4. Number of words with different lengths in Lovell's and Waley's versions.

Table 2. Top twenty keywords in Lovell's and Waley's versions.

	Lovell					Waley			
No.	Keyword	Freq.	RC. Freq.	Keyness	No.	Keyword	Freq.	RC. Freq.	Keyness
1	GUANYIN	142	0	202.79	1	SHALL	161	7	143.71
2	AROUND	89	4	94.54	2	CRIED	205	26	123.83
3	TAIZONG	68	0	90.66	3	UPON	168	18	109.16
4	ROBE	82	3	89.71	4	SAYING	119	11	79.46
5	MONK	80	3	86.83	5	SHOULD	204	51	67.78
6	ONTO	69	1	82.96	6	BODHISATTVA	105	12	61.26
7	DEMON	156	42	72.50	7	TOWARDS	56	0	58.47
8	MILES	56	0	72.48	8	CH'EN	55	0	57.20
9	FIEND	88	10	69.02	9	PRIESTS	87	9	51.59
10	UNTIL	58	1	66.63	10	ERH	48	0	48.35
11	TANG	48	1	51.85	11	HSÜAN	46	0	45.82
12	IMMEDIATELY	101	23	50.82	12	TSANG	45	0	44.55
13	REPLIED	65	7	49.04	13	LANG	43	0	42.02
14	NOVEL	37	0	43.68	14	PRINCE	91	15	39.04
15	RESPONDED	35	0	40.65	15	ROUND	74	10	35.07
16	INSIDE	92	26	35.47	16	PATRIARCH	66	8	32.54
17	RED	103	33	34.72	17	YIN	100	22	32.33
18	PILGRIMS	104	36	31.14	18	LAO	35	0	31.90
19	TRAVEL	42	4	29.14	19	TILL	73	11	31.43
20	GOBLINS	36	2	29.03	20	TREASURE	62	7	31.36

Dragon the same as Waley, and Lovell followed Waley's translations of the names of the main characters: Xuan Zang as Tripitaka, Sun Wukong as Monkey, Zhu Wuneng as Pigsy, and Sha Wujing as Sandy. As Lovell (2021: 33) notes, 'Waley's version still has great charm and dynamism; because his names for Tripitaka's pilgrims are so well known'. It is interesting to note that while both translators use the same names for the characters, there are slight differences in their translations of the narrative. Lovell uses more descriptive language ('*glided uneventfully across Flowing Sand*'), while Waley's translation is more straightforward ('*arrived in perfect safety at the other side*').

These differences reflect the translators' styles and interpretations of the original text.

Example 2
ST: 那长老遂登法船, 坐于上面, 果然稳似轻舟。左有八戒扶持, 右有悟净捧托; 孙行者在后面牵了龙马, 半云半雾相跟; 头直上又有木吒拥护; 那师父才飘然稳渡流沙河界, 浪静风平过弱河。(Wu 1993: 155–156)

Lovell: Pigsy and Sandy embarked with Tripitaka, standing protectively to his left and right, Monkey and the dragon-horse followed behind on some passing mist, and Hui'an floated protectively

directly overhead. And so Tripitaka glided unevent-fully across Flowing Sand and stepped safely onto dry land on the other side. (Lovell 2021: 182)

Waley: Tripitaka then ascended the holy ship, which he found as secure as any light craft. Pigsy supported him on the left, Sandy on the right, while Monkey in the stern held the halter of the white horse, which followed as best it could. Hui-yen floated just above them. They soon arrived in per-fect safety at the other side. (Waley 1961: 175)

Lovell and Waley adopted different labelling for other characters in the novel. For instance, when referring to a Buddhist, *monk* appeared eighty times in Lovell, col-locating with *Buddhist* (12) on L1. Example 3 shows how the term 和尚 is translated differently by Lovell and Waley. In the original Chinese text, 和尚 is a term used to refer to a Buddhist monk. This term is directly translated, in a way which accurately reflects the origi-nal meaning in Lovell's translation. However, the term 和尚 is not directly translated in Waley's translation. Instead, the character Tripitaka (the Buddhist monk) is introduced by name and his purpose is explained. This approach focuses more on conveying the overall mean-ing of the sentence rather than providing a literal trans-lation of each word. Therefore, the term *monk* appeared only three times in Waley's translation. Lovell referred to other people who go on a journey to the West as *pilgrims*, as a description of someone going on a religious/spiritual journey. It is far more familiar to Western readers than Waley's use of *priests* (who are associated with preaching in a church but not trav-elling particularly) or *patriarch*. Lovell's terms, how-ever, are faithful to the original oriental flavours.

Example 3
ST: 三藏道：'贫僧是大唐驾下钦差往西天拜佛求经的和尚。' (Wu 1993: 89)

Lovell: 'I'm a Buddhist monk from the Tang em-pire, sent to fetch scriptures from the west.' (Lovell 2021: 145)

Waley: Tripitaka thanked the hunter, and explained what brought him to this place. (Waley 1961: 129)

Lovell and Waley used different reporting verbs in their translations: *replied* and *responded* in Lovell, *cried* and *saying* in Waley. The verb *replied* in its past tense was used sixty-five times (0.58 ptw) in Lovell but only seven times (0.06 ptw) in Waley. It collocates with *monkey* sixteen times, eight times on the left and eight times on the right. In Example 4, the reporting verb 道, a term used to indicate that someone is

speaking or expressing something, is translated differ-ently by Lovell and Waley. In Lovell's translation, 道 is translated as *replied* when used with the character Monkey, indicating a direct response to a question or statement. In Waley's translation, 道 is consistently translated as *said* for both characters, a more neutral term that simply indicates speech without implying any particular tone, emotion, or interaction. Other col-locates of *replied* on the left include *Guanyin* (3), *Emperor* (2), *Pigsy* (2), *Tripitaka* (2), *Subodhi* (2), *Hui'an* (2), and *it* (2). Other R1 words include *the* (6), *with* (3), and *Iron-Fan* (2). The verb *replied* occurred seven times in Waley, collocating with *Bodhisattva* (1), *Minister* (1) on the left, and *Liu* (1) and *Tripitaka* (1) on the right. The verb *responded* occurred thirty-five times (0.31 ptw) in Lovell but never in Waley. It collo-cates with *the* (10), *monkey* (3), and *to* (2) on the R1 or *monkey* (3) and *Tripitaka* (2) on the L1.

Example 4
ST: 祖师道：'不是这个性。你父母原来姓甚么？' 猴王道：'我也无父母。' (Wu 1993: 7)

Lovell: 'Hmpf,' conceded Subodhi. 'That sounds about right. So what's your name? Who were your parents?' 'I have no parents,' Monkey replied. (Lovell 2021: 48)

Waley: 'I don't mean that kind of *hsing*,' said the Patriarch. 'I mean what was your family, what sur-name had they?' 'I had no family,' said Monkey, 'neither father nor mother.' (Waley 1961: 18)

Contrarily, Waley used *cried* 205 times (1.60 ptw), collocating with words including *he* (58), *and* (25), and *they* (19) on the L1 and *monkey* (24), *the* (19), *Pigsy* (17), and *out* (10) on the R1. This verb in its past tense occurred twenty-six times (0.23 ptw) in Lovell. Its R1 collocates include *the* (7), *out* (3), and its L1 collocates include *he* (7) and *and* (2). In Example 5, the reporting verb 道 is not directly translated in Lovell's translation. Instead, the dialogue of the stone monkey is presented as a direct quote. This approach focuses on conveying the overall meaning of the sen-tence rather than providing a literal translation of each word. In Waley's translation, 道 is translated as *cried*. This not only indicates that the stone monkey is speak-ing but also adds an emotional context to the dialogue, suggesting that the monkey is speaking loudly or pas-sionately. The gerund *saying* is used 119 times (0.93 ptw) in Waley. It collocates with words such as *he* (14) and *that* (9) on the R1, *him* (13) on the L1, and *the* (11) on the L2. The gerund appeared eleven times

(0.10 ptw) in Lovell, collocating with *goes* (4) on the R1 and *the* (2) on the L1.

Example 5
ST: 忽见丛杂中跳出一个石猴，应声高叫道：'我进去！我进去！' (Wu 1993: 2)

Lovell: After three calls for a volunteer, the stone monkey suddenly jumped out of the crowd. 'I will go!' (Lovell 2021: 41)

Waley: Three times the call went out, when suddenly one of them leapt from among the throng and answered the challenge in a loud voice. It was the Stone Monkey. 'I will go,' he cried, 'I will go!' (Waley 1961: 12)

4.3 Function word analysis

Since Table 2 indicates that some of the keywords used frequently by Lovell and by Waley are not content words but function words, it was considered of interest to analyse the frequency of use of function words in the two translations. Figure 5 compares the frequencies of ten function words in Lovell's and Waley's translations.

Some function words are considerably more frequent in Lovell than in Waley. From Fig. 5 we can see that one of the most frequent function words in Lovell's translation is *around*, which occurs eighty-nine times (0.79 ptw). The term *around* is used by Waley only four times, equivalent to 0.03 ptw. In contrast, Waley used *round* seventy-four times, which is 0.58 ptw, while Lovell used it merely ten times or 0.09 ptw. Example 6 shows that in the original Chinese

text, the verb 围住 implies a circular formation around a central point. In Lovell's translation, the preposition *around* is used to indicate the circular formation of the monkeys surrounding the Monkey King. The word *round* is used to indicate the circular formation in Waley's translation. These two prepositions and adverbs are interchangeably used to refer to movements. However, it is worth noting that *round* is more commonly used in British English, while *around* is more commonly used in American English.

Example 6
ST: 众猴把他围住， 问道：'里面怎么样？水有多深？' (Wu 1993: 3)

Lovell: 'What's it like inside?' the other monkeys crowded around to ask. 'How deep is the water?' (Lovell 2021: 42)

Waley: 'What is it like on the other side?' asked the monkeys, crowding round him. 'Is the water very deep?' (Waley 1961: 12)

The preposition *onto* is used notably more frequently in Lovell's than in Waley's translation. It is used as one word in Lovell sixty-nine times (0.61 ptw), collocating with L1 words such as *hopped* (7), *clambered* (3), *climbed* (2), and *get* (2) but only once in Waley, who used *on to*, mainly as two words, forty-six times (0.36 ptw). As Example 7 shows, in the Chinese source text, 果独自登筏 roughly translates to *he got on the raft alone*. The verb 登 implies an upward movement onto something. The preposition *onto* is used to indicate the upward movement in Lovell's translation. The phrase *on to* is used in Waley's translation. While *on* and
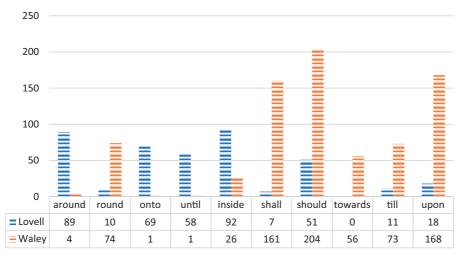

	around	round	onto	until	inside	shall	should	towards	till	upon
Lovell	89	10	69	58	92	7	51	0	11	18
Waley	4	74	1	1	26	161	204	56	73	168

Figure 5. Frequency of ten function words in Lovell's and Waley's versions.

onto can often be used interchangeably, there is a subtle difference between *onto* and *on to* to effectively convey the sense of upward movement and change of position in this context.

Example 7
ST: 果独自登筏, 尽力撑开, 飘飘荡荡, 径向大海波中, 趁天风, 来渡南赡部洲地界。(Wu 1993: 5)

Lovell: When all was ready, he hopped onto the raft and, pushing off with all his might, set off across the ocean. (Lovell 2021: 43)

Waley: He got on to the raft all alone and pushed off with all his might, speeding away and away, straight out to the sea, till favoured by a following wind he arrived at the borders of the Southern World. (Waley 1961: 15)

The same holds for the preposition or conjunction *until*, which appeared significantly more frequently in Lovell's translation than in Waley's. Lovell used *until* fifty-eight times (0.52 ptw), whereas it is used only once in Waley's translation. Instead, Waley used *till* seventy-three times (0.57 ptw) compared to Lovell's 11 (0.10 ptw). As Example 8 shows, both Lovell and Waley capture the essence of the original text, but they use different words to express the concept of time. In Lovell's translation, *until* is used to indicate a point in time up to which the rock had been nourished by heaven and earth, the sun and the moon. The use of *until* suggests a culmination or endpoint, in this case, the moment when the rock was divinely inspired by an immortal embryo. On the other hand, Waley uses *till* in his translation. While *till* and *until* can often be used interchangeably, it is generally believed that *till* predates *until* in the English language, and *till* is considered more informal than *until*. It is likely that *till* was used differently at the time of Waley's translation. Both translations effectively convey the intended meaning of the original text.

Example 8
ST: 盖自开辟以来, 每受天真地秀, 日精月华, 感之既久, 遂有灵通之意。内育仙胎, 一日迸裂, 产一石卵, 似圆球样大。(Wu 1993: 2)

Lovell: Since creation, this rock had been nourished by heaven and earth, the sun and the moon, until it was divinely inspired with an immortal embryo, and one day gave birth to a stone egg, about as large as a ball. (Lovell 2021: 41)

Waley: There was a rock that since the creation of the world had been worked upon by the pure essences of Heaven and the fine savours of Earth, the

vigour of sunshine and the grace of moonlight, till at last it became magically pregnant and one day split open, giving birth to a stone egg, about as big as a playing ball. (Waley 1961: 11)

Other function words occur considerably more frequently in Waley's version. Lovell used *shall* noticeably fewer times than Waley, with the word occurring seven times (0.06 ptw) in her translation compared with 161 times (1.25 ptw) in Waley's. In Example 9, the function words *will* and *shall* are used in the translations to express future tense and indicate the inevitability of certain events. In Lovell's translation, the word *will* in the phrase *we will grow old* indicates a certainty about the future event of growing old, which is a simple, direct way to express the future tense. In Waley's translation, the word *shall* is a more formal and somewhat archaic way to express future tense, which was used more frequently in formal writing than *will* at the time of Waley's translation. In both translations, these function words serve to convey the Monkey King's realization about the inevitability of ageing and death. However, Waley's use of *shall* instead of *will* gives his translation a more formal tone, which is more in line with the original text. The modal verb *shall*, which collocates with *I* (74), *we* (30), and *you* (13) on the L1, is mainly used to talk about the future in Waley's translation. However, it has become old-fashioned in modern English and was used only seven times (0.06 ptw) in Lovell. In all cases, it collocates with *we* (7) on R1 in questions form word order with the function of making suggestions or asking for advice.

Example 9
ST: 猴王道: '今日虽不归人王法律, 不惧禽兽威服, 将来年老血衰, 暗中有阎王老子管着, 一旦身亡, 可不枉生世界之中, 不得久注天人之内? ' (Wu 1993: 4)

Lovell: 'Life is good now,' the monkey king said, 'but eventually we will grow old and fall into the clutches of Yama, King of the Underworld.' (Lovell 2021: 43)

Waley: 'It is true,' said the Monkey King, 'that today I am not answerable to the law of any human king, nor need I fear the menace of any beast or bird. But the time will come when I shall grow old and weak. Yama, King of Death, is secretly waiting to destroy me. Is there no way by which, instead of being born again on earth, I might live forever among the people of the sky?' (Waley 1961: 14)

The preposition *towards*, which is mainly used in British English, occurred fifty-six times (0.44 ptw) in

Waley but not at all in Lovell. It collocates with *came* (3), *turned* (3), *bent* (3), *hurried* (2), and *down* (2) on L1 and was used to talk about the direction of movements in Waley's translation. Its US variant *towards* was used twenty times (0.18 ptw) in Lovell. Example 10 shows that, in the original Chinese text, 竟奔瑶池路上而去 literally translates as *rushed to the road and to the Jade Pool*. The verb 奔 implies a direction or goal, but it does not explicitly state *towards* in the text. In Lovell's translation, the preposition *for* is used to indicate the direction or goal, which is similar to *towards* but implies a more direct and determined action. The word *towards* is used to indicate the direction in Waley's translation. This choice gives a sense of movement and progression, which aligns well with the original text.

Example 10
ST: 大圣纵朵祥云, 跳出园内, 竟奔瑶池路上而去。 ([Wu 1993](): 30)

Lovell: He then hopped onto an auspicious cloud and headed straight for the Jade Pool. ([Lovell 2021](): 83)

Waley: Monkey set off on his magic cloud, sailed clear of the garden, and hastened towards the Pool of Green Jade. ([Waley 1961](): 58)

Lovell uses fewer modal words in her translation than Waley. In Waley's version, *shall* is the most frequently used modal verb, followed by *should*. The modal verbs *shall* and *should* are used relatively less frequently in Lovell than in Waley. Some of the words used by Waley are antiquated and are used less frequently in modern English, which may explain Lovell's reduced use of them. Lovell adopted American English spelling, whereas Waley used British spelling.

5. Discussion

Since the above section has identified stylistic differences existing between Lovell's retranslation and Waley's translation, this section examines whether the new translation is received by reviewers and readers as well as the previous translation.[1] This section also discusses various factors that might contribute to the differences between these two translations based on several key concepts in literary translation studies, including socio-cultural background and translation methods/strategies.

5.1 Different linguistic styles adopted in the retranslation

The results of keyword analysis found that when translating the names of proper nouns such as characters'

names and locations, Lovell adopted the modern Chinese pinyin whereas Waley used Wade–Giles, which is now largely outdated. The function word analysis indicates that Waley's usage of certain words predates similar usage by Lovell. Additionally, it was observed that Lovell employed American spellings, while Waley opted for British spellings. There are two likely rationales for the differences between Lovell's and Waley's stylistic choices. As [Lovell (2021](): 33) mentioned in a note on the translation, she had two reasons for undertaking the new translation: 'First, language changes' and secondly the fact that 'the sheer length of the original—a full translation stretches to four large volumes—makes an abridged version an appealing option for teachers, students, and general readers'.

Lovell and Waley adopted slightly different strategies towards translation. Lovell and Waley both translated the beginning and end of the original novel, but Lovell selected more chapters from the journey for translation than Waley did. However, the length of Lovell's entire translation and each corresponding chapter is shorter than that of Waley's. This indicates their different translation strategies, as both translators omitted a lot of information that was in the original. For those chapters they selected, Waley adopted a fairly faithful word-for-word (semantic) translation strategy, while Lovell maintained a fairly sense-for-sense (communicative) strategy ([Newmark 1988]()). These results are consistent with the translators' commentaries. As Lovell notes, 'First, although I have translated the book's opening and concluding chapters—which set up and conclude the quest—almost entirely, I have omitted outright some of the episodes describing parts of the pilgrims' journey' ([Lovell 2021](): 33) and 'I have also sometimes reduced and compressed individual chapters' ([Lovell 2021](): 34). In the preface of his translation, [Waley (1961](): 8) states that:

The method adopted in these abridgements is to leave the original number of separate episodes, but drastically reduce them in length, particularly by cutting out dialogue. I have for the most part adopted the opposite principle, omitting many episodes, but translating those that are retained almost in full, leaving out, however, most of the incidental passages in verse, which go very badly into English.

Another finding to emerge from the keyword analysis is that when translating culturally loaded items, Lovell adopted the foreignization strategy and translated them faithfully according to their Chinese meanings, while Waley used the domestication strategy and translated them into English equivalents which might be familiar to the Western readers ([Venuti 2008]()). This

finding broadly supports Lovell's (2021: 34) claim that '[l]iterary translators have two responsibilities: to the original text and readers of the target language' and that 'this version might read as a reworking as well as a translation; my hope throughout has been to communicate to contemporary English readers the dynamism, imagination, philosophy, and comedy of the original'. Lovell's translation creates a foreign vibe by maintaining the original cultural ambience. As Venuti (1998: 102) states, '[d]omestication and foreignization deal with the question of how much a translation assimilates a foreign text to the translating language and culture, and how much it rather signals the differences of that text'. This finding partially supports the retranslation hypothesis that claims that the first translation tends to be target-oriented whereas the retranslation tends to be more faithful to the original text (Deane-Cox 2014). Waley's translation is certainly more oriented towards the target readers, though Lovell's retranslation is not more faithful to the original than Waley's version.

5.2 Reception of the retranslation as seen from book reviews

The influence and reception of Julia Lovell's new version can be seen in the book reviews published so far. The book received 4.6 out of five among its 443 ratings on Amazon (2023). In his review in *Asian Review of Books*, John Darwin Van Fleet, Director of Corporate Globalization at Shanghai Jiao Tong University, compares Waley's and Lovell's versions by saying 'While Waley's translation may be closer to the original, Lovell's is not only twice as economical, it is also idiomatic for a 21st-century reader' (Van Fleet 2021). In her review, in the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, Chen (2021), who works at Princeton University Library, thinks that 'Julia Lovell's new translation of *Monkey King: Journey to the West* is the best English edition of the classic Chinese fantasy novel, *Xi You Ji* (literally 'west journey record')'. In her blog on Asian Books Blog, Nicky Harman, an esteemed literary translator, describes Lovell's new translation of *Monkey King: Journey to the West* as 'a tour de force' (Harman 2021). Willow Heath, a writer and founder of Books and Bao, asserts that '[t]his new translation of *Monkey King* breathes fresh life, humour, wit, and charm into the 16th century classic Chinese novel' (Heath 2021). In a *Washington Post* review, Michael Dirda, a book columnist, writes that '[t]he action-packed saga '*Monkey King: Journey to the West*' gets a modern take' and that '[b]ecause the novel's Chinese vernacular is both vulgar and linguistically playful, Lovell's translation adopts a snappy contemporary vibe' (Dirda 2021). In an interview with Jeffrey Wasserstrom, an American historian of modern

China, on the blog of the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, Lovell reveals that '[t]here's a ton of technical language in the original novel about particular demons, kung fu sequences, religious practices, alchemical compounds, so this was all very time-consuming to figure out and to translate' (Wasserstrom and Lovell 2020). Lovell argues that 'there's plenty of social, historical, and cultural illumination to the book, in addition to the far-fetched fantasy sequences' (Wasserstrom and Lovell 2020). A summary of Lovell's new translation on the Penguin website describes it as '[o]ne of the world's greatest fantasy novels and a rollicking classic of Chinese literature, in a sparkling new translation' (Penguin Books Limited 2023), and that '[w]ith this new translation by the award-winning Julia Lovell, the irrepressible rogue hero of one of the Four Great Classical Novels of Chinese literature has the potential to vault, with his signature cloud-somersault, into the hearts of a whole new generation of readers' (Penguin Books Limited 2023). These reviews reflect that Lovell's retranslated version is generally well-received by English-speaking readers.

5.3 Retranslation as recanonization of literary classics

This study found that of Lovell's retranslation version of the *Journey to the West* contributes to recanonization in the Anglophone world of the original classic Chinese novel that had already been canonized by Waley's translation (Wang and Sun 2020). This accords with one of the four types of Chinese works selected by Penguin Classics as Qian (2017: 301) suggested that '[w]orks which have secured their canonicity at home and experienced re-canonization in English culture'. Waley's translation of the novel was the first canonization, as '[t]he abridged translation has enabled Western readers to understand the work's general storyline in terms of a forceful response to the Western literary tradition that gives prominence to personal growth and development' (Qian 2017: 306). Lovell's retranslation is a process of recanonization in a different literary system (Even-Zohar 1990). As one of the four greatest classic novels in China, the original novel enjoys high literary fame in the country. The translated versions changed the original story, which mainly focused on Tripitaka's search of Buddhist scripts, into a story of the Monkey King fighting against gods and demons as the main focus, which can be seen from the titles of the translated books and the selection of original chapters for translation. The translated versions depicted the *Journey to the West* as a struggle of the Monkey King, who embodied the ideas of resistance and struggle. This theme of heroism is amplified especially in Waley's translation, possibly

because it was published during the Second World War. It is still kept in Lovell's retranslation but with a different take.

The retranslation of this Chinese classic from the Chinese literary field into English is a process of 'translation-accumulation' through which 'the dominated national literary fields attempt to import literary capital' (Casanova 2021: 410–411). This result reflects the findings of a previous study which found that 'retranslation progressively enables a national literature from a third world to exert a global influence' (Wang, Humblé, and Chen 2020: 117). As this Chinese work that enjoys enduring recognition in Chinese literature is bound to evolve over time. As Damrosch (2018: 187) points out, '[o]urs is an age of translation and also an era of retranslation, as translations are revised or replaced outright in order to bring works into conformity with new standards of translation and new interpretations of the works themselves'.

6. Conclusion

This article has analysed the styles of Lovell's retranslation and Waley's translation of the classic Chinese novel *Journey to the West* by adopting a stylometric approach. The results of the stylometric analysis show that the lexical density of Lovell's retranslation is higher than that of Waley's version. The mean word and heading lengths of Lovell's translation are longer than Waley's, but the mean sentence and paragraph lengths are shorter. The keyword analysis has identified words that are prominently frequent in Lovell's and Waley's translations. It has also pointed out that Lovell adopted pinyin whereas Waley used Wade–Giles in translating the proper nouns in the novel. While the frequencies of some function words among the top keywords are comparable to each other, some of the function words in Waley's translation are now outdated and old-fashioned. These stylistic differences help to justify the retranslation of this classic Chinese novel. The article has also identified that the new translation is generally well-received by Anglophone readers, as can be seen from the book reviews published so far. Lovell's different style of retranslation and her adoption of translation strategies which cater to contemporary readers might contribute to the recanonization of this Chinese classic in the English literary world.

The study demonstrates the strength of the application of stylometry in the analysis of translators' styles, and how corpus tools can provide data-based evidence for the conclusions. This study also enriches the field of translator-style studies and offers new insights about understanding of the disparities between the two translation versions. Furthermore, it contributes to style and stylometry research, paving the way for further investigations in this area.

While this study offers new insights, it has limitations in the following aspects. The stylometric analysis, primarily conducted at the lexical and linguistic level, could be consolidated with further semantic and literary analysis. Moreover, the comparative analysis was only conducted between two translations, so this could be further enhanced with another comparison between the original and a translated text. It is important to note that style is an abstract concept that can be understood and explored from various perspectives and angles, with different researchers focusing on different features. While our stylometric approach has allowed us to identify certain stylistic differences between the two translations, it does not capture all aspects of style. Other methods could be used to explore different features of style. These would provide additional insights into the translators' styles. These limitations therefore point to avenues for future research in this field.

Author Contributions

Yuan Ping (Data curation, Formal analysis, Software Visualization, Writing—original draft) and Binhua Wang (Conceptualization, Methodology, Project administration, Supervision, Writing—review and editing).

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Note

1. For details about how well Waley's translation was received, please see Wang (2021).

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