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Translation and Transmission of John Keats in China (1949-1979)

The years of 2021 witnesses both the bi – centennial anniversary of John Keats’s death, and the centennial anniversary of the Chinese translation and transmission of his poems. The latter one – hundred – years history can be divided into three stages: the beginning in the first half of the twentieth century (mainly during the period of Republic of China), the development from 1949 (when People’s Republic of China was founded) to 1979 (when the Great Cultural Revolution ended), and the flourishing new stage since China’s Reform and Opening up. It is generally assumed that Keats’s works are underappreciated during the first thirty years after the founding of People’s Republic of China, and thus the translation and transmission of Keats in China has been less discussed than necessary. This paper sorts out data concerning Keats being translated, introduced, and transmitted in the years of 1949-1979, and makes comments on the achievements obtained by Chinese translators and scholars. It attempts to argue that Chinese translators and scholars have made continuous efforts, and contributed considerably in the following fields: the translation of Keats’s poems and letters, the composition and translation of literary history textbooks and literary theory textbooks concerning Keats, the studies and transmissions of Keats’s poems and letters, etc. The translation and transmission of Keats in China (1949-1979) have inherited the tradition created by Chinese Keatsian scholars in the first half of the twentieth century, and laid solid foundations for the translation and transmission of Keats in China’s New Era of Reform and Opening – up.