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**Yourcenar’s Journey to the East: How a “Belgian” Author Made Her Way into China**

**Manon HAYETTE, University of Mons, Belgium**

Marguerite Yourcenar, through her many roles as a novel and novella writer, essayist, playwright, poet, translator, and literary critic, is undoubtedly one of the most influential Belgium-born women in the 20th century. Having started writing in the 1930s, the outstanding quality of her work gradually enhanced her visibility so that she finally became the first woman elected within the prestigious *Académie française*, in 1980.

This recognition brought her under the spotlight in the West, but also overseas, notably in China. There, the interest in Yourcenar began to grow with the publication of essays and articles, such as 柳鸣九 Liu Mingjiu’s 《我所见到的 "不朽者"》*Wo suo jiandao de ‘buxiuzhe’* (“The ‘Immortal’ I Met”, 1982) and 柳鸣九 Liu Mingjiu & 罗新璋 Luo Xinzhang’s《尤瑟纳尔研究》 *Yousena’er yanjiu* (“Study on Yourcenar”, 1987).

It was also in the 1980s that Yourcenar’s first translation, namely that of *Les Nouvelles orientales* (original: 1938/1963; translation:《东方奇观》 *Dongfang qiguan,* trans. 刘君强 Liu Junqiang and 老高放 Lao Gaofang, 1986), made its entry into China, in an anthology about 20th century *French* literature. This collection of novellas became Yourcenar’s most translated and reprinted work in the country. In that matter, the case of *Comment Wang-Fô fut sauvé,* whose plot takes place in China, must be singled out.

In this paper, an overview of Yourcenar’s translations into Chinese will thus be presented, followed by an analysis of the reasons and objectives behind these publications, within the frame of a historical sociology of translation. In addition, Yourcenar’s first translation, namely that of *Les* *Nouvelles orientales*, will be examined, as well as the first rendition of one of her best-known works (and the most Belgian of her novels): *L’Œuvre au noir* (《苦炼》 *Kulian*, trans. 赵克非 Zhao Kefei, 2002).