

World wants to read Xi's philosophy

Translations of president's book prove popular in many countries as a key window into China

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Translated Chinese books are starting to gain a foothold in overseas markets with President Xi Jinping's writings proving especially popular.

According to Zhang Fuhai, the director of China International Publishing Group, which runs Foreign Languages Press, publisher of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, 6.42 million copies of the book have been distributed so far worldwide. It has been published in 21 languages in more than 160 countries and regions.

Reviewers see the book as an important window into China and say that is why it is so popular globally.

"This is the first time a serving leader of China has made his philosophy, his ideas and his programs available to the international community in (so many) multiple languages," said David Ferguson, a Scottish writer, translator and foreign expert with the publishing group.

"An enormous amount of international attention is being paid to China at the moment. There are huge expectations of China. The

world wants to know what to expect of China under the current leadership," Ferguson said.

On Aug 23, the publisher launched the English and French versions of the president's work, *Up and Out of Poverty*.

The book was originally published in Chinese in 1992. It comprises 29 of Xi's speeches and articles written during his posting, from 1988-90, as Party secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Ningde Prefectural Committee in East China's Fujian province.

Speaking about the book, Wu Shangzhi, vice-minister of the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television, said: "To eradicate poverty and boost development in eastern Fujian, the president devised innovative ideas, mechanisms and methods, and he has shared those in the book.

"The book shows his concern and care for the people there, and his confidence and determination to fight poverty."

Bah Thierno Maadjou, a counselor with the embassy of Guinea in China, said the book offered thoughts, ways and a vision to help developing countries in fighting poverty.



Foreign language versions of new Chinese titles, including books by President Xi Jinping, on display at the Beijing International Book Fair. ZOU HONG / CHINA DAILY

Meanwhile, Zhang, the director of the publishing group, said: "President Xi's ideas and the summarization of his experience offered a theoretical and political foundation for poverty alleviation in the country, where 55 million people have been lifted from misery — a feat as well as a miracle in human history.

"The theories are an important part of the Chinese governing philosophy and strategy. And, in multiple languages, the book will offer Chinese wisdom and solutions to issues shared by the international community."

Separately, *The Governance of China* contains a fuller picture of Xi's ideas.

The book, comprising 79 articles and speeches — from Nov 15, 2012, to June 13, 2014 — is seen as a key read for China watchers.

Milos Balaban, a professor with Charles University in Prague, in the Czech Republic, said at a symposium

on the book in 2016 that the publication offered readers a chance to understand the reasons for China's development, especially from a wider historical, political and economic background.

Balaban said the book showed that progress "isn't possible without a sound and complete governing mechanism".

He also said the country's development model offered an example to the Czech Republic as well as other European countries.

Also at the 2016 symposium, Vojtech Filip, the leader of the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia, said: "One of President Xi Jinping's great contributions is that he made the new strategic plans and implemented them, leading China into a new phase of development."

Ten such symposiums, as well as 14 book launches, have been held around the world since the book was released in 2014.

Liu Yuhong of the promotion department of Foreign Languages Press said the publisher believes the global success of the book is a result of efforts by copublishers in different markets and the international branches of Chinese organizations.

Speaking about what impressed him most in the book, Ferguson said it was the Appendix, which offers a profile of Xi under the title, Man of the People.

"Often, Chinese political writing is all facts and figures. It is dry and conceptual, and lacks the human element that we value in the West. But the Appendix from Xi's book tells the story of Xi's experiences from his youth as an 'intellectual being reeducated' in rural Shaanxi (in Northwest China). This story enables you to ... see Xi as the very down-to-earth person he is in reality," Ferguson said.

In the profile, Xi is quoted as saying: "The people aspire to a decent life — that is what we are fighting for."

Demand grows for book translators

Domestic and foreign linguistic talent sought as exports of Chinese publications surge

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China will export more publications to other countries, both in print and digital formats, to further expand its visibility, officials said on Sept 13. This will increase the demand for translators.

According to figures released at the 13th Chinese Books Overseas Promotion Project conference in Shanghai, China sold more than 50,000 publication copyrights from 2012 to 2016.

Wu Shangzhi, deputy head of the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television, said at the Sept 13 meeting that China's copyright exports for books

grew by 30 percent over that same period. Books about contemporary China are making a great impact overseas, he said.

For example, 6.4 million copies of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* have been distributed worldwide and appear in 22 languages.

Cui Yuying, deputy head of the Publicity Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and vice-minister of the State Council Information Office, said despite all the efforts and achievements in introducing Chinese books abroad, few have made a significant international impact.

One of the problems, Cui said, is a lack of qualified translators. She sug-

gested the government should make a bigger effort to cultivate competent translators and bring talented translators to China.

"We could increase compensation for outstanding translators, and provide bigger subsidies for books translated from Chinese," she said. "We encourage foreign students in China, as well as those who live and work in China for long periods, to be passionate about Chinese culture, and to take up the translation of Chinese books."

Amazon's China book section has more than 673,000 titles available. Exclusive shelves for Chinese books have been set up in mainstream bookstores in Egypt and the United

Arab Emirates; and 27 Nishan House bookshops, a Chinese franchise, have opened in North and South America, Oceania and Africa.

A growing number of Chinese books are being sold on mainstream digital book sales sites. At the same time, digital platforms are being developed to provide information and an index of Chinese books in foreign languages.

At the conference, Shanghai Century Publishing Group shared its experience of selling school textbooks to the United Kingdom. In March, the company signed a deal with Collins Learning at the London Book Fair to publish English translations of mathematics textbooks used

by Shanghai's primary schools.

"This is the first time China's primary and middle school textbooks — systematically and on a large scale — have entered the national educational system of a developed country," said Wang Lan, president of Century Publishing.

Century Publishing has also successfully published a book series on Chinese culture. So far, 360 titles have been released and sold at major international airports, railway stations and other transportation hubs in 40 countries.

The group also plans to launch a new series of picture books featuring Chinese folklore in Europe and the United States.