

# HISTORY OF EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S LITERATURE XX/1 2025

---

eum

## History of Education & Children's Literature (HECL)

half-yearly journal / rivista semestrale  
Vol. XX, n. 1, 2025  
ISSN 1971-1093 (print)  
ISSN 1971-1131 (online)  
2025 eum (Edizioni Università di Macerata, Italy)  
Registrazione al Tribunale di Macerata  
n. 546 del 3/2/2007

*Editor-in-Chief / Direttore*  
Roberto Sani

*Editorial Manager / Redattori Capo*  
Luigiaurelio Pomante, Marta Brunelli, Sofia Montecchiani, Lucia Paciaroni

*Editorial Office / Redazione*  
Centro di Documentazione e Ricerca sulla Storia del Libro Scolastico e della Letteratura per l'Infanzia  
c/o Dipartimento di Scienze della formazione, dei Beni culturali e del Turismo, Università degli Studi di Macerata, P.le Luigi Bertelli (C.da Vallebona), 62100 Macerata, tel. (39) 0733 258 5965-5967, fax (39) 0733 258 5977  
web: <https://www.hecl.it>;  
e-mail: [roberto.sani@unimc.it](mailto:roberto.sani@unimc.it)

### Peer Review Policy

All papers submitted for publication are passed on to two anonymous referees, who are chosen – on the basis of their expertise – among members of an International Referees' Committee. The Editor of the journal is in charge of the entire process, and Luigiaurelio Pomante is in charge of the peer review activities.

### Referaggio articoli

Tutti gli articoli inviati alla redazione vengono sottoposti a referaggio anonimo da parte di due esperti, selezionati – sulla base delle loro competenze – nell'ambito di un Comitato Internazionale di *Referee*. Il Direttore della rivista è responsabile del processo, e Luigiaurelio Pomante è responsabile delle attività di referaggio.

### Subscriptions

An annual subscription (two issues a year) to the print edition is available.

#### Fees per year

Euro countries: € 108,00 (VAT included);  
other countries: € 139,00 (VAT included).

#### Single issues

Current issue: € 56 (VAT included);  
back issue: € 69 (VAT included).

For further details please contact the publisher-distributor ([ceum.riviste@unimc.it](mailto:ceum.riviste@unimc.it)).

### Abbonamenti

Abbonamenti annuali (due fascicoli l'anno) sono disponibili per la versione cartacea.

#### Quote annuali

Paesi dell'area Euro: € 108,00 (Iva inclusa);  
altri paesi: € 139,00 (Iva inclusa).

#### Fascicoli singoli

Fascicolo corrente: € 56 (Iva inclusa);  
fascicolo arretrato: € 69 (Iva inclusa).

Per ulteriori dettagli si prega di contattare l'editore-distributore ([ceum.riviste@unimc.it](mailto:ceum.riviste@unimc.it)).

### Publisher-Distributor / Editore-Distributore

eum edizioni università di macerata  
Palazzo Ciccolini, via XX settembre, 5  
62100 Macerata; tel. (39) 0733 258 6080  
web: <https://eum.unimc.it>;  
e-mail: [info.ceum@unimc.it](mailto:info.ceum@unimc.it)  
*Orders/ordini:* [ceum.riviste@unimc.it](mailto:ceum.riviste@unimc.it)

*Design / Progetto grafico*  
+ studio crocevia

*Cover Picture / Immagine di copertina*  
Laura Ralli

*Impaginazione / Layout*  
Oltrepagina

Finito di stampare nel mese di giugno 2025

ISBN 979-12-5704-006-2 (print)

ISBN 979-12-5704-007-9 (PDF)

Copyright © 2025 Author(s). The authors retain all rights to the original work without any restrictions.

Copyright © 2025 Autore/i. Gli autori mantengono tutti i diritti sull'opera originale senza alcuna restrizione.

Open Access. This issue is distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution ShareAlike 4.0 International License (CC BY-SA 4.0) which allows re-distribution and re-use of a licensed work on the conditions that the creator is appropriately credited and that any derivative work is made available under “the same, similar or a compatible license”.

Accesso aperto. Questo numero è distribuito secondo i termini della licenza internazionale Creative Commons Attribuzione - Condividi allo stesso modo 4.0 (CC-BY-SA 4.0) che consente la ridistribuzione e il riutilizzo di un'opera a condizione che il creatore sia opportunamente accreditato e che qualsiasi opera derivata sia resa disponibile con “la stessa licenza o una licenza simile o compatibile”.

# Contents

## Indice

### *Essays and Researches*

#### **Saggi e Ricerche**

- 9      Bomi Yi  
Educational policies and colonization: schooling in Eritrea  
under Italian rule (1890-1941)
- 31     Andrea Marrone  
Becoming Teachers: the Pedagogy Manuals of Normal  
Schools during the Franco Era (1939-1970)
- 53     Renata Brião de Castro  
Italian textbooks in Brazil: school material culture, trans-  
national circulation and fascist ideology in Italian Schools  
Abroad
- 81     Susanne Adina Meyer, Roberto Sani  
Storiche dell'arte nella prima metà del Novecento. Un ap-  
proccio prosopografico
- 111    Muhamed Çitaku  
The history of the characters of Albanian literature for  
children
- 133    Janina Kostkiewicz  
Eugenics as an Element of the Worldview and the Basis of  
Nazi Pedagogy in the Criticism of Polish Humanists

- 165 Serpil Karaoğlu, İlğım Veryeri Alaca  
Examination of Old Age Representation in Picturebooks:  
Inquiring Stereotypes, Embracing Diversity
- 193 Alessandro Montesi  
Il risparmio come strumento educativo e propagandistico  
nell'Italia dell'autarchia
- 213 Renata Bressanelli  
«In 1895, in a damp old sacristy in Mompiano...». The im-  
age of the Agazzi infant school on Italian national television
- 231 Carolina Martin, Tony Honorato  
The articulation of formal, informal, and non-formal educa-  
tion in Piracicaba-Brazil (1880-1910)
- 247 Giorgia Grilli  
I libri di divulgazione per l'infanzia nel panorama interna-  
zionale. Questioni teoriche, cenni storici e nuovi sviluppi
- 269 Ming Dong  
From image anxiety to image turn: the commencement of  
graphic narrative in Chinese children's literature
- 293 Mirosław Łopot  
Biography(s) of a Jewish teacher in Lviv during the period of  
Galician autonomy (1867-1918)
- 311 Carmen Betti  
«Infermiere dell'anima». Madrine del soldato o di guerra e  
altre forme di *maternage* nel I e nel II conflitto mondiale
- 331 Halit Aşlar, Erdal Aydoğmuş, Marcia Alejandra Castro  
Sepúlveda  
Examining Folkloric Elements in the Educational Works of  
Kasym Tynystanov: A Scholarly Identification and Analysis
- 349 Jinshan Yuan, Yawen Wu  
The Construction of Teacher-Student Relationships in Song  
Dynasty Academies under the Imperial Examination System

- 375 Maria Grazia Lombardi  
Percorsi generativi di Letteratura per l'Infanzia
- 395 Lucia Paciaroni  
Photography in Children's Literature in the 1960s and 1970s. A bibliographic review of Italian publishing houses and projects
- 413 Carla Callegari  
La direzione delle scuole elementari in vent'anni della rivista «Scuola Italiana Moderna» (1946-1966)
- 431 Sofia Montecchiani  
The Italian University System in the Aftermath of National Unification. Background, Reforms Trends and New Goals

*Sources and Documents*

**Fonti e Documenti**

- 451 Alberto Barausse  
Fonti per la storia della scolarizzazione etnica in Brasile. Le scuole italiane nello Stato di San Paolo secondo Arturo Magnocavallo

*Critical Reviews*

**Rassegne critiche, Discussioni, Recensioni**

*Critical Reviews / Rassegne critiche*

- 509 Carmela Covato, Albertina Vittoria  
Mario Alighiero Manacorda e la pedagogia marxista nell'Italia del secondo dopoguerra. A proposito di un recente volume
- 525 Renata Brião de Castro  
Pedagogical artifacts and transnational flows: an economic history of education

*Forum / Discussioni*

- 537 Florindo Palladino  
Intelligenza artificiale generativa e fonti storico-educative: prospettive metodologiche
- 551 Qimei Zhuoga, Buchi Bianzong, Yang Haoyue  
An Interdisciplinary Contextualization: Reasons behind the Translation of *Beggar Child*
- 569 Anita Gramigna, Camilla Boschi  
Starting from a leibnizian unpublished writing. Interpretation and educational proposal by Umberto Margiotta
- 581 Ivano Sassanelli  
*Lo Hobbit* a fumetti. Considerazioni su un «fantasy illustrato» tra il Novecento e gli anni Duemila
- 591 Daniel Kalinowski  
Kashubian Dramaturgy for Young Audiences. Review of Authors and Conventions

*Scientific News and Activities of Research*  
**Cronache scientifiche e Attività di ricerca**

- 609 Maria Ortenzi  
La storia dell'educazione tra bilanci storiografici, prospettive metodologiche e visioni comparative: la costruzione di un'agenda condivisa tra Italia e Argentina (Macerata, 16-17 settembre 2024)

# An Interdisciplinary Contextualization: Reasons behind the Translation of *Beggar Child*\*

Qimei Zhuoga  
School of Foreign Languages and  
Cultures  
Tibet University (Xizang Daxue,  
China)  
qimeizhuogachemi@utibet.edu.cn

Buchi Bianzong  
School of Foreign Languages and  
Cultures  
Tibet University (Xizang Daxue,  
China)  
dpalvdzoms@163.com

Yang Haoyue  
School of Foreign Languages and  
Cultures  
Tibet University (Xizang Daxue,  
China)  
yanghaoyue\_mia@163.com

**ABSTRACT:** This paper reads a translated novel, *Beggar Child*, to indicate how translation co-relates to popular narratives. *Beggar Child* writes about childhood poverty and the character's later success in adulthood. The novel is translated to 'educate' Tibetan children about hardship and success. In this paper, we illustrate that the social context of producing the Tibetan version of *Beggar Child* falls on an aspiration of pursuing material

\* This paper receives support from the grant: TAR Philosophy and Social Sciences (Xizang zizhiq zhexue sheke jijin), approval number: 23YBG22.

well-being in modern Tibetan society. The aspiration is mainly embodied via two aspects. The first aspect is the problematic self-help success logic, and the second is the grotesque carnival depiction in *Beggar Child*

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: Social context and translation; Material well-being; Self-help; Carnavalesque; Modern Tibetan society.

If rich, you are the best grandson; if poor, you are the worst servant  
[rgyu yod na a khu'i tsha bo rgyu med na a khu'i gyog po]  
– a well-known Tibetan folk adage and lyrics from the Tibetan pop song *Joke*.

### *Introduction*

The act of translation seemingly represents a certain value of literary works. For instance, the popularity of a children's book expands with the discourse of translation. However, the publishing of a translated text does not eliminate controversy. Translation of questionable source text occurs, and children indeed read various books. This paper explores the reasons behind the translation of disreputable books with the example of *Beggar Child*.

Lai Dongjin's autobiography, *Beggar Child* [*qigai kin a*], was first published in 2000 and then translated into several other languages<sup>1</sup>. The Tibetan translation of *Beggar Child* [*sprang phrug*] appeared in 2016<sup>2</sup>. *Beggar Child* tells how the main character, Ajin, grows up to be a successful man despite his struggling childhood. The bookshop from which I bought the Tibetan version of *Beggar Child* displays the book in the children's section<sup>3</sup>. Literary critics might frown upon the choice of translating *Beggar Child* due to scatological words, the portrayal of domestic violence, and the patriarchal ideology in this book. This paper's purpose is not to criticize the choice of the translator and editors as 'bad taste'; instead, this paper aims to concretize the reasons behind the translation. The authors of the paper contextualize reasons for translation beyond translators' subjectivity.

The topic of translators' subjectivity has consistently attracted scholarly

<sup>1</sup> This paper uses pinyin and Wylie transliteration for original sources in the Chinese and Tibetan languages.

<sup>2</sup> At present, there are no research papers on *Beggar Child* in the Chinese or English languages. Also, so far, only one paper, which is in Tibetan, addresses the Chinese to Tibetan translation issues of *Beggar Child*. The author Tsewang Tso provides an English title for her Tibetan paper: «An Analysis on the Translated Tibetan Novel: *Beggar Child*».

<sup>3</sup> My main reason for listing it as a children's book lies in the nature of its readership. School students, whose ages fit into the United Nation's definition of children, read *Beggar Child*.



attention<sup>4</sup>. Meanwhile, translation is a process of re-creation<sup>5</sup>. Indeed, translators have a creative space, especially regarding lexical choices. Subjectivity plays a more prominent role in the early step of choosing the source text. David Ball writes: «A step-by-step, detailed examination of the actual process of translating a short literary text revealed that the translator's subjective thoughts and feelings only entered the process at the beginning – the choice of text»<sup>6</sup>. However, scholars also put forward how social context influences translators. Clare Gilbert defines that: «translation is embedded in and reflective of social context»<sup>7</sup>. With the example of *Beggar Child*, this paper explores how popular ideas in society contribute to the production of translated books. Hence, this article asks: how do we understand the societal Zeitgeist that concretizes the Tibetan translation of *Beggar Child*?

This paper aims to answer the above research question using textual analysis. The authors of this paper consider that interviewing the translator and the publisher might not be an appropriate research approach. The inappropriateness especially grows in the Tibetan social context. It might be pompous to ask the translator and the publisher: «Why do you translate *Beggar Child*? We don't think the book conveys a progressive message». We closely read the text *Beggar Child* to exemplify why the narrative reflected in the novel is sought after. Therefore, this paper contextually illustrates self-help factors and scatological humour in *Beggar Child* to understand the reasons for translation.

Translators and publishers might choose certain books if the content echoes a popular narrative. This paper suggests that the compatibility between stories and societal zeitgeists might be essential while choosing source texts for translation. In the case of *Beggar Child*, its zero-to-hero success story and depiction of hardship might have been its major attractions. *Beggar Child* confirms a popular narrative – overcome adversity and become rich. While choosing *Beggar Child* for translation, it seems that defects of patriarchy and sexism remain unseen because a drive for success appear too bright to notice other narratives.

<sup>4</sup> W. Jun, *Translator's subjectivity in eco-translatology*, «Journal of Critical Studies in Language and Literature», vol. 1, n. 3, 2020, pp. 14-19; H. Gengsheng, *Translator-centredness*, «Perspectives: Studies in Translatology», vol. 12, n. 2, 2004, pp. 106-117; T. Lin, *A study on the translator's subjectivity*, in 2017 5<sup>th</sup> International Education, Economics, Social Science, Arts, Sports and Management Engineering Conference (IEESASM 2017), Zhengzhou, Atlantis Press, 2018, pp. 302-309; P. Denghua, *The subjectivity of the translator and socio-cultural norms*, «English Language Teaching», vol. 3, n. 3, 2010, pp. 29-34.

<sup>5</sup> J. Johnston, *Translation as Simulacrum*, in L. Venuti (ed.), *Rethinking Translation: Discourse, Subjectivity, Ideology*, London, Routledge, 2018, pp. 42-56.

<sup>6</sup> D. Ball, *Translator Subjectivity and the Process of Translation: The View of a Working Translator*, Taipei, The Wenshan Review of Literature and Culture, 2021, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> C. Gilbert, *Social context, ideology and translation*, in S. Harding, O. Carbonell Cortés (edd.), *The Routledge Handbook of Translation and Culture*, London, Routledge, 2018, pp. 225-242.

### 1. *Violence, patriarchy, and sexism in Beggar Child*

*Beggar Child* contains unhinged writing of a dominating father and suffering women. Patriarchy is reflected in the overt representation of a power imbalance in the impoverished family unit, with male figures abusing and exploiting women in *Beggar Child*. Ajin's father is probably the most paradoxical character in *Beggar Child*. Ajin's remembrance highlights his father's complicated and multidimensional nature, oscillating from vulnerability to wrath with great uncertainty. The walking stick of Ajin's blind father symbolizes how vulnerability and authority can coexist within a socially marginalized persona. Ajin's father simultaneously becomes the protector and the abuser of the family since he ruthlessly hits both trespassers and his family members with the walking stick. He is overtly domineering, with discipline and punishment as his primary approach. Ajin records eleven times about how his father severely beat him up in *Beggar Child*.

The power difference among family members is overt in the story as Ajin depicts his parents with striking opposition. While his father is outspoken, fearsome, foul-mouthed, short-tempered, and abusive, Ajin's mother is silent, harmless, passive, childlike, and pitiful. The contrast shows the husband's domination over the wife and children.

By adhering to a patriarchal system, Ajin's father treats women in the household as objects with a negotiable price. Ajin constantly hears his father describing his mother, in a mix of complacency and sympathy, as a «picked up [*sprang phrug*]» object from the street<sup>8</sup>. It is evident that she is belittled and dehumanized as a tradable object at the disposal of others. She has epilepsy and an intellectual disability, but her pain and struggle have been overlooked since she became the mad woman in the attic. Ajin's mother is an abandoned daughter, a mother who loses her reproductive rights, and a woman who is mentally and physically ill. Her misfortune is linked with inhumane parental abandonment, repetitive verbal humiliation, and domestic violence. The experience of Ajin's elder sister, another female character in the novel, highlights domestic patriarchal disregard for gender equality. The twenty-sixth chapter, «Sister's Destiny [*gcen mo'i las dbang*]», tells the appalling story of how the father sold his daughter to a brothel to cover his son's school fees and the family's living expenses<sup>9</sup>.

The education Ajin receives enables him to change his life completely. Ajin still acquiesces to his father's decision and enjoys the benefits of exploiting his sisters. Both Ajin and his father may be unaware of how problematic the patriarchy is. Ajin depicts complete obedience from other family members towards the father as natural and normal. The prevalence of gender inequality might

<sup>8</sup> L. Dongjin, *Beggar child*, transl. by Dra Sang, Lhasa, TAR People's Publishing, 2017, p. 5.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99.

have inappropriately normalized the immoral and unlawful treatment of women in the household. Despite the apparent depiction of patriarchy, gender inequality, and violence toward women, *Beggar Child* has been translated into different languages so that young people can correlate hardship with success.

## 2. *Materialism and success: the base of translating Beggar Child into Tibetan*

As a common everyday trait, materialism plays an equally conspicuous role in modern Tibetan society. This paper translates two sections of a famous Tibetan pop song, *Joke*. The purpose is to introduce the existence of material desire in Tibetan people's daily lives. Lyrics of the song not only tell current stories but also incorporate some folk adage from the past. The following lyrics satirize an excessive pursuit of materialism in Tibetan daily life.

The mother's son is marked for the golden throne  
 The father took a prayer beads and went shopping  
 The mother said prayer words and arrived home after buying meat  
 Brother Tashi made a speech and drank alcohol  
 Sister Lhamo resumed her secular life and ran away with her phone  
 The uncle said Buddhist fortune-telling costs 200 Chinese yuan per time  
 Is it a joke?  
 The fancy car says rich  
 If rich, you are the best grandson  
 If poor, you are the worst servant  
 If rich, we are good sisters  
 If poor, we are lady and attendant  
 If rich, you are the servant of wealth  
 If poor, you are the servant of men  
 (...)  
 With money, there is love  
 Without money, it's just fooling around  
 With money, there is life  
 Without money, it's just surviving

[a ma'i bu la rtags zhig rgyab nas gser gyi khri la bzhag gda'  
 a pha lags kyis phreng ba bzung nas tshong ra skor la song dus  
 a ma lags kyis ma ni bgrang bzhin sha nyos nas slebs song  
 a bo bkra shis la rgya bshad nas chang gis bzi song gda' ra  
 a ce lha mos 'khor ba spangs nas kha par mnyam du bros dus  
 a khu khong gis cho ga gsung na dmangs sgor 200 red zer  
 rlangs 'khor rdzig po la bltas na rgyu yod sa gda' o  
 rgyu yod na a khu'i tsha bo  
 rgyu med na a khu'i g.yog po  
 rgyu yod na bu mo spun gnyis  
 rgyu med na bu mo dpon gyog

rgyu yod na rgyu yi gyog po  
 rgyu med na mi yi gyog po  
 (...)
   
dngul yod na brtse dung  
 dngul med na rtsed mo  
 dngul yod na vtsho ba  
 dngul med na vtsho gnas]

*Joke* has been popular among the Tibetan community, and the band *Anu*, the song's writers, remains one of the most well-known Tibetan artists. Since its release, the song's lyrics have seldom received criticism or disagreement from the Tibetan community. Hence, the lyrics admit the existence of Tibetan people's worldly desires from past to present.

However, Tibetan people's pursuit of material success has rarely been the theme of any stories. Spirituality has become an overwhelmingly imagined identity of Tibetans. For instance, movies such as *Paths of the Soul* (2015) tell the story of a Tibetan family's arduous pilgrimage of kowtowing around 600 miles to the holy mountain Mt. Kailash. Similar pilgrimage is not universal among all Tibetans, yet religious piety has become a particularly emphasized impression and image of Tibetans.

The positive connotation of spirituality becomes a trap that leaves the described subjects out of the self-help-style competition regarding resources and survival. Money might talk, whereas spirituality is predominantly immaterial and silent, especially in the context of modernity. The most intense reality is the opposition between an increasing population and a diminishing number of resources. Hence, the self-help narrative propagates the mainstream's desire while effectively controlling others with its praise of spirituality. The claim that spiritual peoples, primarily indigenous peoples and minorities, are indifferent to money and power restricts changes in the current power structure. Any praise for these peoples as pure or uncorrupted is hypocritical since the unspoken consensus on spirituality is that it is unreal, fantastic, imaginary, and not of much use.

The imagination of a group of human beings as non-materialistic stems from the association of negativity with materialism. Dittmar and Ishama consider «materialistic value orientation» as a type of consumption which aims to improve self-image and social status, and they regard its effects on well-being as «detrimental»<sup>10</sup>. Materialism represents shallowness, vanity, and extravaganza. In addition, the image of spiritual Tibetans might result from a power imbalance. The claim of specific communities being indifferent to money and power most uniquely applies to Indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities.

The Tibetan social context might differ from what others, especially the

<sup>10</sup> H. Dittmar, A. Isham, *Materialistic value orientation and wellbeing*, «Current Opinion in Psychology», vol. 46, 2022, p. 1.

West, have imagined. The Tibetan region bears the burden of living in others' imagination and becoming the Other. As a result, two ends of prejudice, the stigmatization of being barbaric or the idealization of being overly spiritual, paradoxically compose juxtaposing images of Tibetans<sup>11</sup>. Yet worldly desire and material consumption rightfully exist in Tibetan society. Slavoj Žižek considers the Tibetan area «one of the central references of the post-Christian 'spiritual' imaginary» and «the projection of Western ideological fantasies»<sup>12</sup>. Žižek further explains that Tibetans are required to be spiritual on behalf of others so that the demander can keep going with excessive consumerism while pretending to care about the loss of «authentic» Tibetan culture.

However, material well-being indicates how people understand and deal with problems induced by money<sup>13</sup>. Typical examples of material well-being cover «financial satisfaction, financial stress, feelings of financial security, subjective economic well-being, satisfaction with standard of living, satisfaction with material possessions, and sense of economic deprivation»<sup>14</sup>. According to the data from 1996, material well-being affects the happiness index of over 50% of the US population<sup>15</sup>. Researchers Gill Main et al. prove that the level of children's material deprivation can be one indicator while understanding children's overall happiness<sup>16</sup>. Material well-being is essential in everyone's life; it is naïve to imagine certain people can escape its impact.

Therefore, it is problematic to assume Tibetans are more spiritual than others or that Tibetans are becoming more materialistic because of modernization. Pursuing material goods sustains human lives, and wealth accumulation might generate power. It is inaccurate to deny the existence of Tibetan people's worldly desires. Moreover, materialistic advantages, such as money in a consumerism society, might bring unbiased justice by surpassing the line of racial and ethnic discrimination. Resultingly, the status of material well-being can significantly affect people, naturally leading to the pursuit of materialism. On the one hand, materialism carries the name of being selfish fulfilment; on the other hand, the power of establishing and indulging materialism turns into an image of success. Thus, themes of hardship and material well-being go hand in hand in many stories. The narrative of overcoming difficulties and heading

<sup>11</sup> J. Sissons, *First peoples: indigenous cultures and their futures*, London, Reaktion Books, 2005.

<sup>12</sup> Z. Slavoj, *On Belief*, London, Psychology Press, 2001, pp. 63-64.

<sup>13</sup> M.J. Sirgy, *The psychology of material well-being*, «Applied Research Quality Life», vol. 13, 2018, pp. 273-301.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, p. 2.

<sup>15</sup> A.L. Ferris, *Does material well-being affect non-material well-being?*, «Social Indicators Research», vol. 60, n. 1/3, 2002, p. 279.

<sup>16</sup> G. Main et alii, *Inequality, material well-being, and subjective well-being: exploring associations for children across 15 diverse countries*, «Children and Youth Services Review», 2017, p. 69.

toward a better future is a recurring topic in children's books. And such a narrative attracts writers, editors, publishers and translators.

### 3. *Hardship and material well-being in Beggar Child*

*Beggar Child* seems to accentuate the acquisition of material success. Ajin's trouble vanishes with the change of his material well-being. Poverty is the source of Ajin's problems, and his relatively well-off status in adulthood becomes the panacea that brings him happiness. Ajin remembers spending his childhood in piercing wind, blazing sunshine, and pouring rain. Ajin writes: «The tree leaves are my roof, the cold land is my bed, the cemetery is my home [*shing gi yal gas thog dang sa grang mo nyal gril dur sa khang par bsten*]»<sup>17</sup>.

The writing of hardship in *Beggar Child* can be explained with the Marxist cultural outlook on the base and superstructure. Marx's early writing discusses human society in terms of how «the base», which stands for concrete objects such as material goods, determines «the superstructure», which refers to more abstract ideas such as social status and cultures<sup>18</sup>. Marx states: «The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual process of life»<sup>19</sup>. Raymond Williams sums up the dialectical proposition into «a determining base» and «a determined superstructure», or more bluntly, into the narrative of how «social being determines consciousness»<sup>20</sup>.

Material well-being is vital for Ajin's family, as poverty causes much agony. Financial status affirmatively affects personal well-being, as Bruce Headey et al. have proved<sup>21</sup>. In *Beggar Child*, Ajin recalls begging as a physically exhausting and emotionally humiliating experience. Being situated in the social margin, the family is too powerless to pursue other dignifying means of livelihood. In rather exclamatory remarks, Ajin says: «my mom and dad», being mentally ill and visually impaired, «could not make a living. I am the oldest son, but I am just a ten-year-old boy. And we have ten people in the family. How can we survive if we do not beg? [*pha ma gnyis po ni' tsho skyong gi 'jon thang las bral zhing phru gu'i rgan 'go yin pa'i nga ni lo bcu tsam yin*]

<sup>17</sup> Dongjin, *Beggar child*, cit., p. 8.

<sup>18</sup> T.B. Bottomore, *A dictionary of Marxist thought*, London, Blackwell Reference, 1999, p. 45.

<sup>19</sup> M. Karl, *The eighteenth brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Last updated: 20.02.2025, <<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1852/18th-brumaire>> (last access: 13.03.2025).

<sup>20</sup> R. Williams, *Marxism and literature*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1977, p. 75.

<sup>21</sup> B. Headey, R. Muffels, M. Wooden, *Money does not buy happiness: Or does it? A reassessment based on the combined effects of wealth, income and consumption*, «Social Indicators Research», vol. 87, n. 1, 2008, pp. 65-82.

*khyim nang mi grangs bcu tsam yod pas lto ma slong tshe ji ltar' tsho dgos sam]*»<sup>22</sup>. Disability, illness, generational poverty, and illiteracy leave beggary as the only available choice for Ajin's family.

Ajin's veracious confession about suffering from poverty in *Beggar Child* challenges the strategic understatement of economic hardship. Poverty affects a person's overall well-being, and essential material well-being matters. Therefore, Ajin's unvarnished narration of presenting material well-being as a pathway to happiness in *Beggar Child* becomes powerful rhetoric because it restores the voice from the grassroots.

#### 4. Self-help narrative and success

Self-help stories have been consistently popular in modern society due to the appeal of material success. Modern Tibetan society is not an exception. The Tibetan preface introduces *Beggar Child* as a self-help success story, and the foreword directly reflects the translator's ideas and motivation for translating *Beggar Child*:

«The main character of *Beggar Child* is Lai Dongjin. All the people ridiculed him when he was a young boy. With resilience and hard work, he shows the world that even a beggar can eventually get rid of suffering [*sprang phrug ces pa'i sgrung gtam 'di'i mi sna gtso bo la'e tung cing ni kho pa ni de snga skye bo kun gyis' phya smod bya yul zhig yin kho pas dpa' mi zhum pa'i blo stobs la brten nas 'jig rten thogs gi skye bo tshor gnas lugs 'di 'dra zhig ra sprod bya sa pa ste sprang phrug yin yang sdug bsngal las thar ba'i nyin zhig yod pa de'o*]»<sup>23</sup>.

Oxford English Dictionary associates the meaning of success with obtaining something, particularly wealth. According to OED's definition of success, beggars have little money and are thus less successful. However, the mendicancy of orphans becomes an exegesis of success. In self-help stories, an impoverished child often turns out to be the most successful adult. Similarly, the stark contrast between Ajin's childhood and adulthood magnifies the self-help narrative as the contrast makes the level of success tangible. Then, Ajin becomes a signpost for children in terms of surviving and striving according to the self-help logic-induced success.

*Beggar Child* depicts an emblematic image of success with the elements of a trophy, titles, and applause from the start. In the opening scene, Ajin holds a gold-plated trophy and «even» wins a standing ovation from «the officials» [*dpon rigs rnams kyis kyang rang gnas las ldangs te nga la thal mo sdeb*]

<sup>22</sup> Dongjin, *Beggar child*, cit., p. 108.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. XI.



because he has won the title of Top Ten Outstanding Youth<sup>24</sup>. The wording indicates that Ajin perceives the officials as social elites above him. Ajin's family was impoverished, and now they sit in «honored guest seats» [*sku mgron bzhuks gnas*] as the officials do<sup>25</sup>.

Ajin, a beggar from an impoverished family, stands on an honorary stage and overlooks the scene of how his family members and government officials converge into the same space, the unexpected convergence of social space between these groups reflects a personal identity shift for him. He recalls his life journey via forty-nine short stories, which develop the storyline through three interrelated matrices: striking poverty, individual efforts, and positive outcomes. *Beggar Child* tells a rather typical zero-to-hero story. It becomes a self-help book in accordance with its bildungsroman plot. Regarding readers' responses, the existing literature on *Beggar Child* almost entirely comes from school children who primarily write about its motivational self-help elements<sup>26</sup>.

The concept of self-help has been thriving since the Industrial Revolution. The narrative «describes the development of the subjective through industry and perseverance»<sup>27</sup>. Samuel Smiles became the most well-known speaker of self-help propaganda by creating a corpus of literature: *Self-help* (1859), *Character* (1871), *Thrift* (1875), and *Duty* (1880). Smiles most likely aimed to help the poor lower class who were struggling in a drastically changing society; nevertheless, his books evolved into «a gospel of success» based on «middle-class optimism»<sup>28</sup>. Instead of presenting information «in the form of abstract, logical argument», the self-help genre persuades «through biographical tales,

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> S. Rongjun, «rang guangmang zheshe zai yiqi—du qigai kin a yougan», *zhong xuesheng*, 03(2016):53; transl. *Let Lights Together: A Reading Report on Beggar Child*, School Student; S. Wenjie, «miandui pinqiong—du qigai kin a yougan», *chu zhongzheng youxiu zuowen*, Z1(2005):20-22; transl. *Facing Poverty: A Reading Report on Beggar Child*, Excellent Essays from School Student; Z. Yuanlong, «qigai kin a: yiben cuire fenjin de shu», *zhongguo qingnian*, 12(2004):51; transl. *Beggar Child: A Motivational Book*, China Youth; W. Shoumin, «Chenggong bushi ouran weiyou buduan xiangqian», *Zhong xuesheng wangzhan*; transl. *We Should Only Move Forward to Permanent Success*, School Student Website, <<http://163.32.84.93/office/lo/web/library/pieces/HS-composition/1000315/141%E5%90%B3%E5%AE%88%E9%96%94.htm>> (last access: 24.06.2024); X. Xiaoqi, «buxiang mingyun qufu» *dushu xinde qigai kin a*; transl. *No Submissiveness to Destiny, A Reading Report: Beggar Child*; <<http://w3.tkgsh.tn.edu.tw/99c537/%E8%AE%80%E6%9B%B8%E5%BF%83%E5%BE%97%E4%B9%9E%E4%B8%90%E5%9B%9D%E4%BB%94.htm>> (last access: 24.06.2024); H. Sijia, «qigai kin a», *shude sili gaozhong*; transl. *Beggar Child*, Shu-Te HC High School, <<http://lib.shute.kh.edu.tw/net-read/shs10003/309b.htm>> (last access: 24.06.2024).

<sup>27</sup> C.E. Murray, *Self-help and the helpless subject: Samuel Smiles and biography's objects*, «Nineteenth-Century Literature», vol. 69, n. 4, 2015, p. 482.

<sup>28</sup> T.H.E. Travers, *Samuel Smiles and the origins of 'self-help': reform and the New Enlightenment*, «Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies», vol. 9, 1977, p. 162.



by parables, stories, aphorisms, proverbs»<sup>29</sup>. Smiles' books are meant to encourage readers to follow their formulas for success: subjects from the lowest social class could potentially repeat the successful mode of others simply by trying hard enough<sup>30</sup>, Smiles writes about «the efficacy of self-respect and self-reliance in enabling men of even the humblest rank to work out for themselves an honourable competency and a solid reputation»<sup>31</sup>.

The didactic voice in such books is that if the most indigent poor could do it, anybody should be able to do it. But this voice also has an underlying tone: «it is your fault if you are not prosperous»<sup>32</sup>. It profiles the few successful non-elites, similar to how Asian Americans are upheld despite their race in the U.S. with the term «the model minority»<sup>33</sup>. This is part of the myth of considering Asians as the 'better' and more 'successful' minority in a multicultural Western society. On the one hand, such racial positioning dismisses the reality «that not all Asian Americans are successful»<sup>34</sup>. Also, many Asian immigrants who become the model minority have gone through multiple selective processes. They or their parents are among the few who graduate from top universities in their home countries and the United States with exceptional academic performances. On the other hand, the myth of Asian success aims to dismiss the wrongdoings from a colonial and slavery-filled past by shaming black Americans and blaming «their own deficiencies» for the assumed failure of the black community<sup>35</sup>.

The self-help genre is problematic since it has contributed to the deterioration of neo-liberalism. Smiles repeatedly writes about «a strong individualism» as the magical pill for the creation of a perfect nation and society in *Self-Help*; however, his praise of the 'individual' who is 'energetic' values only self-benefiting achievements and enhances the narcissism present in the modern world<sup>36</sup>. Self-help becomes what its creator Smiles denies: «a eulogy of selfishness»<sup>37</sup>. Self-help stimulates «the selfish pursuit of wealth and status at all costs», especially among the wealthiest group<sup>38</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> K. Fielden, *Samuel Smiles and self-help*, «Victorian Studies», vol. 12, n. 2, 1968, p. 158.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, p. 160.

<sup>31</sup> S. Smiles, *Self-help: with illustrations of characters, conduct, and perseverance*, New York, Harper & Brothers, 1871, p. 27.

<sup>32</sup> Fielden, *Samuel Smiles and self-help*, cit., p. 161.

<sup>33</sup> C.J. Kim, *The racial triangulation of Asian Americans*, «Politics & Society», vol. 27, n. 1, 1999, p. 108.

<sup>34</sup> C. Shih-Wen Sue, L. Sin Wen, *Good Chinese girls and the model minority: race, education, and community*, in *Girl in Translation and Front Desk*, «Children's Literature in Education», vol. 52, 2020, p. 2.

<sup>35</sup> Kim, *The racial triangulation of Asian Americans*, cit., p. 118.

<sup>36</sup> Smiles, *Self-help: with illustrations of characters, conduct, and perseverance*, cit., pp. 18, 20, 22.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, p. III.

<sup>38</sup> A. Kearney, *Thomas Hardy and Samuel Smiles: biography, fiction and the self-help debate*, «The Hardy Society Journal», vol. 1, n. 1, 2005, p. 33.

Since self-help values individual interests, it protects privileged individuals and powerful institutions more. As a result, self-help addresses the systematic inequalities of society with the seemingly fairest but utterly Janus-faced story: anybody can make it if one just works hard enough. The reality is that success belongs to the few. Self-help benefits the elites because it ensures an exploitative yet solidified social structure with submissive and self-blaming people.

Ajin explicitly writes about such a psychological process. He is perplexed by how his father never praised him for his academic achievements while repeatedly boasting that the then-two-year-old Ajin walked around forty kilometres for beggary. Though Ajin considers this forty-kilometre-trip as a «very saddening incident» [*shin tu yid skyo ba zhig*] for a two-year-old, he tries to make sense of it by painfully justifying the contrast between hierarchy and poverty as normal<sup>39</sup>. *Beggar Child* records the process of Ajin's passive acceptance of social inequality as he writes: «I don't know why my father praises such a thing, but after careful consideration, I think children from wealthy families are good at calculating and managing wealth; officials' children are good at singing, dancing, and establishing connections; so maybe we child beggars must have strength and endurance. [*khong gis don der bsngags brjod gnang dgos don ngas ma shes yin na'ang bsam blo zhib phra btang na phyug bdag gi phru gu ni rtsis la mkhas shing tshong dang rgyu nor do dam byed thub pa dang dpon po'i phru gu ni glu dang gar la mkhas shing 'bril lam 'dzugs mkhas pa yul gyar slong mo ba'i phru gur nges par du rkang shed dang thegs nus yod dgos pa de ma yin nam*]»<sup>40</sup>.

The compound experience and trauma in *Beggar Child* significantly shape how Ajin presents himself, others, and society. From a young age, Ajin is aware of his family's situation. Nonetheless, the narrator and character of *Beggar Child*, Ajin, successfully attain social elevation. According to the self-help narrative, the successful outcome makes all the pain and suffering a 'valuable' experience.

As has been illustrated in the first section of the paper, patriarchy, sexism, and resultant violence are the most apparent injustices in *Beggar Child*. However, this injustice remains socially normalized and systematically invisible for the writer, translators, and publishers of *Beggar Child*. In reverse, the self-help success narrative has been popular because it sells wish-fulfilment in the name of justice.

<sup>39</sup> Dongjin, *Beggar child*, cit., p. 7.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

### 5. *Justice in carnival gross-out and laughter*

People long for a just world where hard work pays off, and this hope for justice and equity stands behind the motivation of translating *Beggar Child*. In addition to self-help, the longing for justice and equity is embodied through carnivalesque in *Beggar Child*. Carnival celebrates a temporary equal state among all, allowing the occurrence of different expressions. With the established binary line between what is allowed and what is not, thick and heavy artistic forms such as grotesques have become a way of being carnival. The blurring of lines breaks hierarchy and achieves equality. *Beggar Child* retains multiple vivid descriptions of gross-out scenes which form carnivalesque.

In addition to writing about poverty, Ajin unapologetically describes physical impairments, human faeces, and spoiled food in *Beggar Child*. Ajin writes back to the elites as the gross-out elements overturn «the elegance of letters». Notably, Chinese literati often pursue «the elegance of letters» [*wenya*] in writing: «a tradition that celebrates refined tastes in literature, arts, and the landscape»<sup>41</sup>. The mode of elegance is a way of writing about disability and the grotesque through avoidance, metaphor, and the attachment of moral implications. In comparison, Ajin creates the Bakhtinian carnivalesque by writing urine, faeces, and flatulence into the novel, especially in the seventh, eighth, and fourteenth chapters of *Beggar Child*.

Mikhail Bakhtin writes about carnivalesque in *Rabelais and His World*<sup>42</sup>. Bakhtin initiates the concept by analyzing carnival, a celebration that features joy and crossover in medieval European culture. Carnivalesque stands against the solemnness and infrangibility of the medieval European church. The authoritative church is serious, but carnivalesque is festive, accessible, authentic, and joyous. The church has the agency to represent «elegance» when the standard of aesthetics is hierarchical; then, carnivalesque expression is often achieved through «grotesque realism»<sup>43</sup>. Eccentricity and exaggeration are features of grotesque realism that radically challenge normalized beauty standards. Thus, grotesque realism often reminds people about uncomfortable and unjust parts of human life.

Along with four other books which «have rocked the book market» [*hong-dong le shushi*], *Beggar Child* has been labelled by Li Ruiteng as popular literature [*tongsu wenxue*]<sup>44</sup>. The Chinese word *tongsu* often collocates lexically into *putong* ordinary and *suqi* vulgar. However, Ajin pushes elegant writing

<sup>41</sup> Q. Peipei, *Aesthetic of unconventionality: Fūryū in Ikkyū's poetry*, «Japanese Language and Literature», vol. 35, n. 2, 2001, p. 138.

<sup>42</sup> M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his world*, transl. by Helene Iswolsky, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1984, p. 10.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>44</sup> L. Ruiteng, «Taiwan tongsuwenxue luelun disanjie tongsuwenxue yu yazheng wenxue yantaohui lunwenji», vol. 7, 2002, p. 345.

to the opposite end since the homeless child's reality is full of anxiety as he searches for a place to defecate or is constantly aware of bearing odour in a crowded space. The carnivalesque subverts «the usual state of cultural affairs» by yielding precedence to «a non-standard, minority view of the world»<sup>45</sup>.

Moreover, Ajin laughs at those supposedly embarrassing moments, subtly yet powerfully challenging the authority. In the article «The Laugh of Medusa», Hélène Cixous interprets laughter from women as positively destructive. Cixous metaphorizes the Medusa as the powerful embodiment of women. Cixous writes: «If she's a her-she, it's to smash everything, to shatter the framework of institutions, to blow up the law, to break up the 'truth' with laughter» (888 translated from French to English by Cohens)<sup>46</sup>.

Children are the group of people who frequently execute a carnivalesque rebellion. Most children laugh at things that adults consider silly or inappropriate. When parenting and educating, adults are often the authoritative figure. In the face of a top-down request discouraging scatological words, children's laughs amuse, embarrass, or even anger the alleged authority when children purposely repeat those less graceful words. John McKenzie puts forward a connection between «children's laughter» and «scatological humour» based on Klor's writing below: «What makes kids laugh? The broadest, silliest types of humor-silly words and sounds, particularly ones related to the human body, incongruous actions, exaggerations, and spoofs. Ever said the word 'underwear' in front of a group of kids? Don't try it with a straight face!»<sup>47</sup>. Words about excrement become a social taboo, especially in public and professional spaces. While adults are training children, laughter from children essentially breaks the taboo.

Children's interest and excitement in discouraged words becomes «scatological children's humour», which «turn[s] the established order upside down and reveal[s] what is normally hidden and not spoken about»; also, it becomes «social communication» which «connects children with the older generation»<sup>48</sup>. With explicit scatological words and scenes in *Beggar Child*, the child protagonist Ajin joins those children who create «carnival laughter»:

«It is, first of all, a festive laughter. Therefore, it is not an individual reaction to some isolated 'comic' event. Carnival laughter is the laughter of all the people. Second, it is universal in scope; it is directed at all and everyone, in-

<sup>45</sup> P. Eyre, *Deafened by laughter: reading David Lodge's deaf sentence as a carnivalesque dismodernist text*, «Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies», vol. 6, n.1, 2012, p. 20.

<sup>46</sup> H. Cixous, K. Cohen, P. Cohen, *The laugh of the Medusa*, «Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society», vol. 1, n. 4, 1976, p. 888.

<sup>47</sup> J. McKenzie, *Bums, poos and wees: carnivalesque spaces in the picture books of early childhood. Or, has literature gone to the dogs?*, «English Teaching: Practice A Critique», vol. 4, n. 1, 2005, pp. 81-94.

<sup>48</sup> S. van der Geest, *Scatological children's humour: notes from the Netherlands and anywhere*, «Etnofoor», vol. 28, n. 1, 2016, pp. 127-140.

cluding the carnival's participants. The entire world is seen in its droll aspect, in its gay relativity. Third, the laughter is ambivalent; it is gay, triumphant, and at the same time mocking, deriding. It asserts and denies, it buries and revives»<sup>49</sup>.

With a laugh, children expand their space by making adults discuss scatological words. Articles such as «Why Are Kids So Obsessed with Poop Jokes?», «Why Kids Like to Say 'Poo', 'Wee', and 'Bum'», and «Tom and Dougie's Top 10 Poop Stories for Children» have appeared in media such as «The New York Times», the *BBC*, and «The Guardian». Children's laughs also influence adults and children's book writers to write Children's Choice Award-winning books such as *Why Do Dogs Sniff Bottoms?*

Beyond children's rebellion, the issue of «pees» and «poos» also indicates social problems. I acknowledge the importance of hygiene and health. However, people's responses to hygiene matters reflect a narrative of power, discrimination, and marginalization. The odour and the bacteria of waste are undoubtedly unpleasant, but they are becoming increasingly repugnant in the modern world. Naturally, the ability to limit the presence of faeces indicates the level of modernization. Dirty toilets are associated with the image of developing countries and rural areas, and it has become common to use flushing toilets, chemical fragrances, and even a code of language to avoid pees and poos to the greatest extent.

The chapter «Fake Beggars» [*sprang po*] in *Beggar Child* includes a carnivalesque story relating to excrement. Ajin cannot find any toilets while his stomach aches. When he is squatting on a farm to release himself, he sees the farmer approaching him. Ajin then hurriedly picks up a stone, «wipes his butt», and runs away [*rkub phyis tsam byas*]<sup>50</sup>. He repeatedly apologizes to the angry farmer and gets scared and decides to clean the site since the farmer is still yelling at him. Then Ajin puts his «excrement into the bowl» [*gtsog pa de phor pa'i nang blugs*], which he carries for food begging<sup>51</sup>. Though Ajin washed the bowl clean in a river afterwards, he can still sense «the faecal smell in the air» [*mkha' rlung khrod du da dung btsog dri zbig 'thul*]<sup>52</sup>. Ajin is «shivering out of hunger» [*grod khog ltogs nas lus po yongs 'dar gsig rgyag gi 'dug*] after restoring his calmness. Then he forgets about the faeces incident and wears the bowl on his hat while walking and thinking about food<sup>53</sup>.

In chapter seven, after several doughs of excrement dropped off the ragged trousers of Ajin's younger brother, the whole family, especially his mother, «doubled up with laughter» [*gzugs po yang kyog kyog bzos nas gad mo gad*]

<sup>49</sup> Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his world*, cit., pp. 11-12.

<sup>50</sup> Dongjin, *Beggar child*, cit., p. 31.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid*, p. 31.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*.

while covering their noses<sup>54</sup>. In the fourteenth chapter, «Nauseating Midnight» [*mtshan dgung gi dri chen*], Ajin pretends to be asleep while his father asks for directions; Ajin is scared of walking across the graveyard. Thus, his father's diarrhoea turns the chapter into a noisome carnivalesque. As one of those laughing children, Ajin challenges the authority of the elites by overthrowing elegant writing; also, he exchanges ideas with others by showing a lifestyle unknown to the elites.

Meeting the primary demand for material needs is so pressing that food shortage becomes a grotesquely prominent horror in Ajin's life. Before Ajin's adulthood, he had encountered numerous horrendous and saddening stories caused by food shortages. The eighteenth chapter of *Beggar Child* offers one example, which is titled «eat bugs so that we live» [*'bu srin bza' ba 'tsho gnas kyi phyir yin*]; it depicts the ruthlessness of hunger with many gross-out elements<sup>55</sup>. Ajin recalls the embarrassing «stinky sour smell» [*skyur dri*] of leftovers three times throughout the novel<sup>56</sup>. He also writes a gory and detailed description of how his father cooks a half-rotten chicken for the family. Ajin's father cuts the rotten parts from the chicken and asks Ajin to throw them away. The nausea-inducing smell stays in his memory as Ajin feels that «the smell still lingers even though I washed my hands like a hundred times» [*lag pa chus thengs brgya phrag bkrus kyang da dung dri ngan 'thul ba lta bur snang*]<sup>57</sup>.

Once, Ajin's father ate a piece of marinated pork with maggots. As a response to Ajin and his sister's shocking expression, the father says: «I won't die because I eat worms; I will survive instead» [*'bu bzas na shi rgyu las ltog te 'bu bzas na 'tsho gnas byed thub*]<sup>58</sup>. Ajin's family survives the harsh conditions with much compromise and laughs, optimistic yet saddening. Yet, the lack of shelter is one of the worst plights for Ajin.

## Conclusion

This paper reads *Beggar Child* in detail to understand the role of social context in translation. Why do translators and editors choose specific texts? Why are some controversial materials translated and published for children? This paper contextualizes the reasons that underline the translation by mainly analyzing how *Beggar Child* speaks the popular story. The content of *Beg-*

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 13, 15, 72.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72.



*gar Child* echoes an extensively pursued narrative: to be rich and successful with hard work. There is an overlapping between societal Zeitgeist and source texts' information. The desire to make the Tibetan version of *Beggar Child* seems set upon a longing for justice and equity. Yet, in *Beggar Child*, ways of expressing equality are opposing. One is the problematic self-help narrative, and the other is the carnivalesque concept.

*Beggar Child* contains an unfair depiction of girls and women. In the first part, this paper briefly introduces how patriarchy and sexism continue to exist as a norm in *Beggar Child*. However, while translating, problems of sexism and patriarchy have been forgotten with the zest for secular success. To present the basis of translating *Beggar Child*, the second part of this paper provides an outlook on materialism in Tibetan society. This paper depicts a more comprehensive Tibetan material world by translating sections of the Tibetan pop song *Joke*. Then, regarding the Tibetan version, the reasons for publishing *Beggar Child* come down to the appeal of success and the portrayal of hardship. According to the success narrative, hardship becomes a unique but indispensable path that eventually leads to success. The third section of the paper analyses writings of Ajin's hardship in *Beggar Child*. The novel solidifies a connection between materials and well-being. The connection is justified from a Marxist lens, specifically from the frame of the base and the superstructure. Excessive materials might not provide happiness, but there is much truth and justice in reaching overall well-being and obtaining daily necessities.

The fourth section of this paper writes about how *Beggar Child* constructs an appealing self-help narrative. In a modern society, the zero-to-hero self-help story has become increasingly popular. Stories of wealthy and successful people attract much attention. Self-help success stories turn into fairy tales for young adults, though self-help stories rarely promote equality. The scholar Tse wang tso regards the educational function of the *Beggar Child* as the key<sup>59</sup>. Similarly, translators and editors want to educate the younger generation about poverty, misery, and resilience.

In the meantime, *Beggar Child* shows justice using scatological words. In the fifth section, the authors of this paper state that gross-out scenes and rebellious laughter construct the embodiment of temporary equity and justice – carnivalesque. Gross-out elements and scatological words are not binarily and simply bad; they can be read from the aspect of Bakhtin's carnivalesque. In addition to momentary freedom and ecstasy, they function as a humorous communication bridge that narrows generation gaps.

While understanding the motivation of translation, it seems that the popular narrative in society plays a critical role. In the case of *Beggar Child*, a longing for justice swayed the translation of *Beggar Child*. And the pursuit of

<sup>59</sup> T. Wang Tso, *An analysis on the translated Tibetan novel: Beggar Child*, «Tibet University Journal (the Tibetan language version)», vol. 1, 2016, p. 111.

justice has been concretized through themes such as hardship, material importance, self-help, and carnivalesque. These themes derive from the question of how we define success in a society. A longing for a better future yet a complicated understanding of success might have made a Tibetan version of *Beggar Child*.