



湖南师范大学哲学社会科学名家经典丛书



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英 中 文 版

刘重德 著

蔡平 译

彭长江 审校

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## 总序

兹编凡九种，皆国师至湖南师大各时期学人之所撰著，涉国学与西学多门。将以纪念我校八十华诞，观澜溯源，回眸往迹，追缅先辈；亦欲以略窥前贤治学门径，砥砺同仁，商量旧学，培养新知，探奇揽胜，再谱新篇。

1938年，日寇猖獗，狼烟遍地，国运连遭。著名教育家、心理学家廖世承先生慨然以教育救国为自任，辞病父，别妻子，自上海来吾湘安化之蓝田，筚路蓝缕，以启山林，创建国立师范学院。世承先生以教员为学校之命脉，延揽人才不遗余力。其学识人格、恭谦态度又足以动人，故众多名家大师、学林翘楚不避险难，先后从四方辗转跋涉而至。钱基博、钱锺书、锺泰、谭戒甫、马宗霍、骆鸿凯、高觉敷、孟宪承、皮名举、李剑农、汪梧封、高昌运、沈同治、储安平、雷敢、唐长孺、张舜徽、吴世昌、周邦式、谢扶雅等，或为家传独诣之士，或出鸿儒硕学之门，或来自海内外知名学府。一时俊彦云集，彬彬称盛。

国师以“仁爱精勤”为校训，尤重人格与道德之养成。士子风操，侠肝义胆，铮铮愕愕，沛然浩然。1944年，日寇南进，长沙失守，逼近衡阳。战事不利，警烽四起，国师师生临危不乱，处变不惊，作息有序，弦歌不辍。其独立不移、动心忍性之民族正气，于稳定当地社会人心之作用甚巨，当时即为报章所称许。及衡阳城破，学



校转迁溆浦，钱基博先生犹欲独自留守，谓“非寇退危解，不赴院召，亦使人知学府中人尚有人站得起也”。孰谓书生怯弱，百无一用，须知国士一人，雄冠万夫！中华民族威武不屈之精神气概，我国师有之矣！

国师由蓝田而溆浦，由溆浦而南岳，播迁流离，殆无宁日。新中国成立初，国师并入湖南大学，1953年全国高等学校院系调整，成立湖南师范学院。1984年，湖南师范学院更名为湖南师范大学。1996年，湖南师范大学进入国家“211”工程重点建设行列。

“余既滋兰之九畹兮，又树蕙之百亩。”八十年，艰苦卓厉，弦歌鼓舞，春华秋实。今日之湖南师大，声望与日月俱来，美誉无羽翼自飞。然而，亦有可深思者。今之论大学者，皆据前辈教育家、清华大学校长梅贻琦先生之说：“所谓大学者，非谓有大楼之谓也，有大师之谓也。”何谓大师？非徒积学储宝、著作繁富之谓也，必得有独立之精神与自由之思想，能引领一代，可薪火相传者也。以此衡之，今人文社科领域之著述非不富矣，而大师之称号，能当之无愧者复有几人？我校学人，能不勉哉！

兹编定名为“湖南师范大学哲学社会科学名家经典丛书”，凡选九种：

- 廖世承撰《教育心理学》（1925年）；
- 锺泰撰《中国哲学史》（1929年）；
- 骆鸿凯撰《文选学》（1936年）；
- 马宗霍撰《中国经学史》、《文字学发凡》（1937年）；
- 钱基博撰《近百年湖南学风》、《经学通志》（1941年）；
- 李剑农撰《中国近百年政治史》（1948年）；
- 杨树达撰《汉书窥管》（1955年）；
- 林增平撰《中国近代史》（1958年）；
- 刘重德撰《文学翻译十讲（英中文版）》（1991年）。

经者，贯穿布帛锦绣之纵线，能一以贯之者也；典者，典籍也，典范也。所谓经典，乃能一以贯之，代相传递，能示人以轨范、法则者也。经典并非无可挑剔，其文献资料或有未逮，其具体观点或有可商，其概念话语或已过时，然其独立之思想，独创之方法，独到之见解，独特之价值，其大本大宗，却能远绍前哲，启示后昆。故其价值不会因时过境迁而衰减，反如深泉之水，随挹随出，老树之花，愈采愈香。

是为序。

蒋洪新

## Preface

I accept with pleasure Prof. Liu Zhongde's invitation to write a preface for his book *Ten Lectures on Literary Translation*. Not only have I known him since his school days at the Southwest Associated University; also, the subject of translation itself, whether from English to Chinese or vice versa, has long intrigued me as a professor of Western literature in Chinese universities and Chinese literature in American universities. For the specialist, it is true, translated works are no substitute for the original, and I have urged my students to learn as many foreign languages as possible, yet translations serve a useful purpose for the vast reading public who desires to seek world-wide knowledge in fields ranging from literature and culture to science and technology but who lacks the facility and opportunity to read books in the original language.

The art of translation is a combination of literary skills, acquired and perfected through long, persistent practice, and the knowledge of grammatical rules and linguistic principles, whose application makes for correctness and exactitude. In the "Ten Lectures", the author expounds in detail the dual nature of translation, i. e. , art versus technology, with many quotations and illustrations helpful for the beginners. After dwelling upon the principles and standards of translation such as faithfulness in content,



expressiveness in language, and closeness to the style of the original work, he delves into the controversial but fascinating question of literal and free translation, giving at the same time an account of the development of these two schools and their advocates in Chinese literary history. He also offers valuable suggestions on the various methods of translation and discusses its grammatical and linguistic aspects. Especially interesting to me are the last three chapters that deal with the question of literary style in translation and the problems of rendering English poems into Chinese and Chinese poems into English.

During the last several decades of my professional career as teacher, writer, and translator of Chinese and English literature, I have tackled the same problems and succeeded in producing, with the help of my friends, colleagues, and former students as contributors, a comprehensive anthology of Chinese poetry in English translation<sup>1</sup>. This experience enables me to appreciate in particular Prof. Liu Zhongde's introductory remarks and overall views on the translation of poetry. I agree with him that it is feasible, though difficult, to translate poems satisfactorily and successfully. Here, I just want to add that of the three schools of translation, the classical, the creative, and the free, mentioned in the chapter on "Problems of Translating Poems", the last has emerged as the most popular and attracted a majority of followers among Western scholar-translators. A new generation of competent and distinguished translators has taken over since Arthur Waley the field of Chinese-English translations, greatly extending for Western readers the horizon of Chinese poetry.

One regrets, however, that the same cannot be said of the situation in China, where there is only a meager attempt by translators to introduce Chinese poetry to Western readers. With this thought in mind, I read with

appreciation and anticipation Prof. Liu Zhongde's book, which is a useful, practical guide to the methods and techniques of translation. An author of numerous articles and books on the subject and a veteran translator himself, Prof. Liu both instructs and inspires in his "Ten Lectures" future generations of translators. Its publication, I hope, will not only inform readers of the art of translation but also attract them to the work of translation itself, especially in the rendering of Chinese literature into English and English literature into Chinese, thus giving an impetus to the cultural exchanges of the East and West. I look forward to the expected influence and valuable contributions of Prof. Liu's book in this field.

Liu Wu-chi 柳无忌

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Note 1.

*Sunflower Splendor: Three Thousand Years of Chinese Poetry* (1975), ed. by Wu-chi Liu and Irving Y. E. Lo. "Sunflower Splendor is the largest and, on the whole, best anthology of translated Chinese poems to have appeared in a Western Language." (—*The New York Times Book Review*)

## Foreword

When I was unexpectedly made a teacher of translation in the 1940s, I felt like sailing on an uncharted sea without a compass. To back myself up I had only some meager knowledge of Chinese and English; I had had no training in translation, nor had I ever been groomed for a teaching job.

Like other young teachers of English, I sought help from Chinese works. I hunted in the library and rummaged in the second-hand book stores. Unfortunately, the references I found were few and the information skimpy and ill-documented. True, there had been prolonged and heated debates on literal and free translation, but the participants were more emotional and polemical than methodical and illuminating.

Disappointed with Chinese pundits, I turned to Westerners. There was Alexander Fraser Tytler with his neat principles, but his examples were all unconnected with the Chinese language and so hardly of any use to Chinese students. There was Matthew Arnold sharply critical of the old translators of Homer, but since the original was in Greek, many of his remarks eluded my understanding.

Compared with those sweating over their exercises in the classroom in the old days, the teachers and students of translation in the 1980s could call themselves lucky. In recent years, there have appeared numerous articles

comparing Chinese and English; there have also been published some textbooks in Chinese on the practice of translation. Moreover, there have been introduced from abroad such theorists as Savory, Newmark and Nida, whose works are far more digestible and systematic than their predecessors. And now comes along Professor Liu Zhongde with his *Ten Lectures on Literary Translation*, the fruits of long years of research and experiments.

One thing that would soon strike the readers is the writer's extraordinary diligence and wide coverage. He has studied translation theories, old and new, with great patience. Starting from Yan Fu, he has gone through numerous works down to the 1980s. He has also dug into many volumes published abroad and emerged with brief summaries and interesting comments.

Any book on translation cannot do without examples, and here the writer has proved to be particularly helpful. While others have confined themselves to comparing isolated phrases and sentences in the source and target languages, he gives us complete passages whenever necessary. The provision of full contexts makes the meaning and style of the expressions under scrutiny much clearer to the readers, and so are the writer's remarks and observations.

In the opinion of Professor Liu, translation is at once a science and an art. It is a science because a comparison of the different language systems shows that there are rules to be followed by the translators, such as *The horse is a useful animal* should be rendered into 马是有用的动物 with the English articles unaccounted for. In so doing he is on solid ground, and his judgment can easily win general approval.

But, as pointed out in the first lecture, translation is also an art, and about art there are a multiplicity of theories. "Despite a number of

treatments of the basic principles and procedures of translation," concedes Eugene Nida, one of the noted theorists of today, "no full-scale theory of translation now exists." Consequently, if there should be in the book certain ideas hard to understand or agree to, they should cause no-one to raise his eyebrows.

I thank Professor Liu, for he has given me much food for thought.

Wang Zongyan 王宗炎

## Acknowledgements

The author thanks all those who have helped to make this a better book than it would otherwise have been. Among them, he is especially grateful to Professor Liu Wu-Chi, his former teacher, and Professor Wang Zongyan, his old friend, who were generous enough to write the preface and the foreword to this book and offered valuable and detailed comments on the manuscript. He is also indebted to a number of specialists in translatology, particularly to Professors Ma Zuyi, Gu Yanling, Peng Jing, Tan Zanxi, Lin Jihai, Xiao Liming, Chu Zhida and Xiong Xiling, who gave the author their precious suggestions for revision.

Liu Zhongde  
Professor of English  
Foreign Languages Department  
Hunan Normal University

## Lecture One Nature of Translation

By translation here I specifically mean translating, the process of translation, in which something is translated, instead of the work translated. So far as the definition of translation is concerned, of course, it is very easy for us to copy one from a dictionary; that is, a rendering from one language into another, but that seems to be too general and simple. Various definitions have been given to translation. Now I'd like to cite some of them:

Translation is a science.

Translation is an art.

Translation is a craft.

Translation is a skill.

Translation is an operation.

Translation is a language activity.

Translation is communicating.

All the definitions mentioned above may be taken for reference because each of them is true when looked at from a certain angle.

Among them the first two are most important for they represent two schools—the school of science and the school of art. The former maintains that translating should reproduce the message of the original by means of the



transformation of linguistic equivalence. It puts stress on the study of description of the process of translation, and the structures and forms of language so as to reveal the objective laws inherent in translating. The latter school advocates re-creating a literary work by using expressions of another language. It emphasizes the effect of translation. Lin Yutang (1895-1976) was once a representative. In his essay *On Translation* he declares that translation is an art whose success depends upon one's artistic talent and enough training. Besides these, there are no set rules for translation and there is no short cut for art.

In my opinion, both schools have their strong points and weak points so far as literary translation is concerned. Now there is a tendency to combine their theories into a comprehensive one. As a matter of fact, literary translation has a double nature. That's to say, on the one hand, it is a science with its own laws and methods and on the other, it is an art. Now let's have a further discussion of its double nature in the following.

## Translation Is a Science

We say that translation is a science, because it has its own laws and methods. Take the translation between English and Chinese for example, if we want to translate well, we must be entirely familiar with the content of the original and all the knowledge it concerns. In addition, we should have a comparatively comprehensive and thorough study of English and Chinese so that we may do our work with high proficiency.

Chinese and English have their respective characteristics. True, they have similarities, for example, the word order of the subject and its predicate, of the transitive verb and its object and of the preposition and the

object it governs; and at the same time, they have remarkable differences: for instance, the former has no articles but the latter has the definite “the” and the indefinite “a” and “an”. Although the two languages have their respective characteristics which are not quite alike, still we can do the translation between them. It is because language is the direct reality of thought and the basic law of reality-thought-language which reflects the objective existence is in common to both English and Chinese, thus making it possible to express the same ideas and feelings in different languages. And quantities of translated works have long proved the possibility of translation.

And at the same time, we must admit that the languages in which various peoples think and express their thoughts are quite different in characteristics and usage. This is the problem that troubles the translators, including the veteran ones. No matters can solve such a difficult problem. If one wants to be a qualified translator, one should, first of all, have a penetrating study and careful comparison of the similarities and differences between these two languages so that one may find the corresponding laws and methods in the translation between them, do translation effectively and ensure the quality of translation.

Corresponding laws do exist in translation. Take the following sentence as an example:

The horse is a useful animal.

This is a very simple sentence, and there is no question about word order. But the matter of how to deal with the two articles in the original is worth studying. Many beginners of English often, to our disappointment, translate the sentence like this:

这马是一个有用的动物