

国外翻译研究丛书之十四

TRANSLATION IN A POSTCOLONIAL CONTEXT

Early Irish Literature in English Translation

后殖民语境中的翻译 ——爱尔兰早期文学英译

MARIA TYMOCZKO



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出版说明

近年来,国内翻译研究取得了很大进展,有关翻译研究的丛书也出了多套。不过,长期以来,国内引进的原版翻译著作匮乏,不少研究都是根据二手资料;另外,学习翻译专业的研究生人数越来越多,这种状况若继续存在,将十分不利于学科的发展和翻译人才的培养。鉴于此,上海外语教育出版社约请了多名国内翻译研究著名学者分别开列出最值得引进的国外翻译研究论著的书目,并对这些书目进行整理、排序,最终确定了准备引进的正式书单。该丛书涉及的论著时间跨度大,既有经典,也有新论;内容的覆盖面也相当广泛,既有翻译本体的研究,也有跨学科的研究。这套丛书的引进将会满足翻译专业研究生教学原版参考书和翻译理论研究的需要。

上海外语教育出版社谨以此丛书献给我国的翻译学界。

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借鉴和创造 (代序)

上海外语教育出版社自成立以来一直是我国外语教育最优秀的后勤部和侦调部。因为它不但为我国各个层次(尤其本科与研究生层次)的外语教育提供了多种高水平的教材、教参和工具书,而且还出版了多学科、多语种和多系列的中文版和外文版的学术著作,比如“现代语言学丛书”、“牛津应用语言学丛书”、“美国文学史论译丛”、“外国文学史丛书”、“剑桥文学指南丛书”、“当代英语语言学丛书”以及列入国家及教育部规划的人文社科重点项目的外国语言文学、文化等方面的图书等。为了适应我国现代化建设和教育改革的需要,还出版了一批国际金融、对外贸易、涉外保险、国际经济法、国际新闻和管理科学等方面的教材与专著。这些著作在外语的学科建设与学术研究以及复合型人才培养等方面都在发挥着强有力的侦察、调研和指导作用。这是外语界有口皆碑的。

随着中外文化交流的纵深发展以及我国现代化建设对人才的需求,对比语言学和翻译学近年来在我国有了较快的发展,最突出的证据就是①外语类硕士博士点上研究对比与翻译方向的学生在逐年迅速增多,而且我们的高校已经有了翻译学院和翻译系(当然还太少)。②外语专业的学生考中文、法律等其他人文社科专业的硕士、博士以及反方向的走向已经起步。这种跨学科的人才已成为人才资源竞争的最主要对象,因此发展趋势定会看好。上海外语教育出版社为适应这种高层次人才培养和新学科建设的需要,不但积极出版国内关于对比研究和翻译研究的专著和论文集,最近又推出了原版“国外翻译研究丛书”,这套丛书时间跨度从古代到现代,所选书目皆为译学发展史上有里程碑作用的名家名著,堪

称译学经典。他们计划分批出版,以满足读者的需求。

这套丛书的出版首先可以解决国内翻译教学原版参考书多年匮乏的困难,真可以说是我国翻译教学与理论研究的及时雨。我想学习和关心这个学科的师生和其他人士定会对这套书的引进为之欢呼,为之祝贺。

这套丛书的价值还在于能大大促进我国翻译学科建设的发
展。译学学科的发展依赖于研究者在三个方面的深入研究和结
合。一是对本国译学的继承性研究;二是对外国译学的借鉴性研
究;三是对翻译实践和翻译教学中新问题的探索性研究。只有这
三者研究深入并结合好了,才可能从经验与技巧逐步升华为具有
科学性的译学理论。这三个方面的研究,改革开放以来,在我国已
取得了很显著的成就,这是有目共睹的。翻译学在我国已于 20 世
纪 80 年代末有了独立学科的初级形态,90 年代又有了新的发展,
对学科的独立性以及理论体系的结构与功能有了更多的探讨。依
照学科建设和规律和研究现状,我们尚需在上述三个方面加大研
究力度,而这套丛书就是借鉴性研究的主要资源。从这个角度讲,
这套丛书的引进也是我国文化基本建设的重要工程之一。

在新的世纪,文化(包括各类科学技术)会多方面快速深入人
类的日常生活,各国之间的交流会空前深广,因此翻译的功能会逐
步扩大,实用性翻译人才的需求量定会空前增加。这就要求我们
除了做好高层次研究型人才的培养以外,还应十分重视实用性人
才的培养和应用译学的研究。我想出版社一定会关注和引导译学
建设的理论研究与应用的的发展趋势。

杨自俭

青岛海洋大学六三居室

2001 年 3 月 28 日

出版前言

如果从文化角度研究翻译,爱尔兰无疑是一个很好的范例。因为爱尔兰不仅是英国的第一个殖民地,也是世界上第一个摆脱英国殖民统治的国家。在这个国家殖民化与非殖民化的过程中,在其作为殖民地处理与宗主国的关系中,翻译曾起到非常重要的作用。美国马萨诸塞大学阿默斯特分校比较文学教授玛丽亚·提莫志克(Maria Tymoczko)博士,作为翻译研究描写学派的重要代表人物之一,所侧重的就是翻译的文化研究。她早年毕业于哈佛大学凯尔特语言文学系,在文学与语言学领域都有极深的造诣,这使她得以在翻译领域左右逢源,既可从宏观的文化角度,又可从微观的语言学角度审视翻译。她于1999年出版的《后殖民语境中的翻译——爱尔兰早期文学英译》可谓文化翻译研究的一部力作。

全书共十章,以导言开头。在导言中,作者对翻译描写学派的研究下了一个定义:在研究翻译的过程、产品与功能时,将翻译实践置于时间之中,广而言之,即将它置于政治、意识形态、经济、文化之中予以研究。作者指出,翻译作为一门语言艺术,一直被认为是一种与时间无涉的语言规则(导致理论的规范化),或者是一种超验的灵感(导致彻底否定理论);而强调翻译的实质,把时间与空间作为翻译研究的基础的研究方法,则能把翻译理论导向新的途径。由此既将翻译置于共时的语境中,又揭示其历时的流程与模式。本书其他各章主要内容如下:第一章:翻译是一种转喻;第二章:爱尔兰文学英译过程中的政治因素;第三章:为使爱尔兰英雄故事与欧洲文学规范接轨所采取的形式策略;第四章:翻译爱尔兰早期文学的两种传统;第五章:论废弃语言的翻译;第六章:论库秋林(Cú Chulainn)的特征;后殖民语境中的翻译;第七章:翻译早期爱尔兰英雄故事中的幽默;第八章:猎犬的命名;第九章:语言学家的准确性;第十章:元转喻学(metametonymics)。

每章末尾均附有详尽的注释,这也是本书的一大特色。

通过对早期爱尔兰文学英译作品的广泛的案例研究,作者构建了一个繁复的双重主题。在探讨爱尔兰人争取独立的斗争中的翻译实践时,她向人们展示了翻译家在翻译爱尔兰民族文学遗产时,通过各种途径明确表达了对英国殖民主义和文化压迫的反抗。我们一贯强调“信”是翻译研究的首要目标,但在爱尔兰传奇故事的翻译实践中,“信”的幅度完全取决于怎样翻译才能达到既定的政治目标。

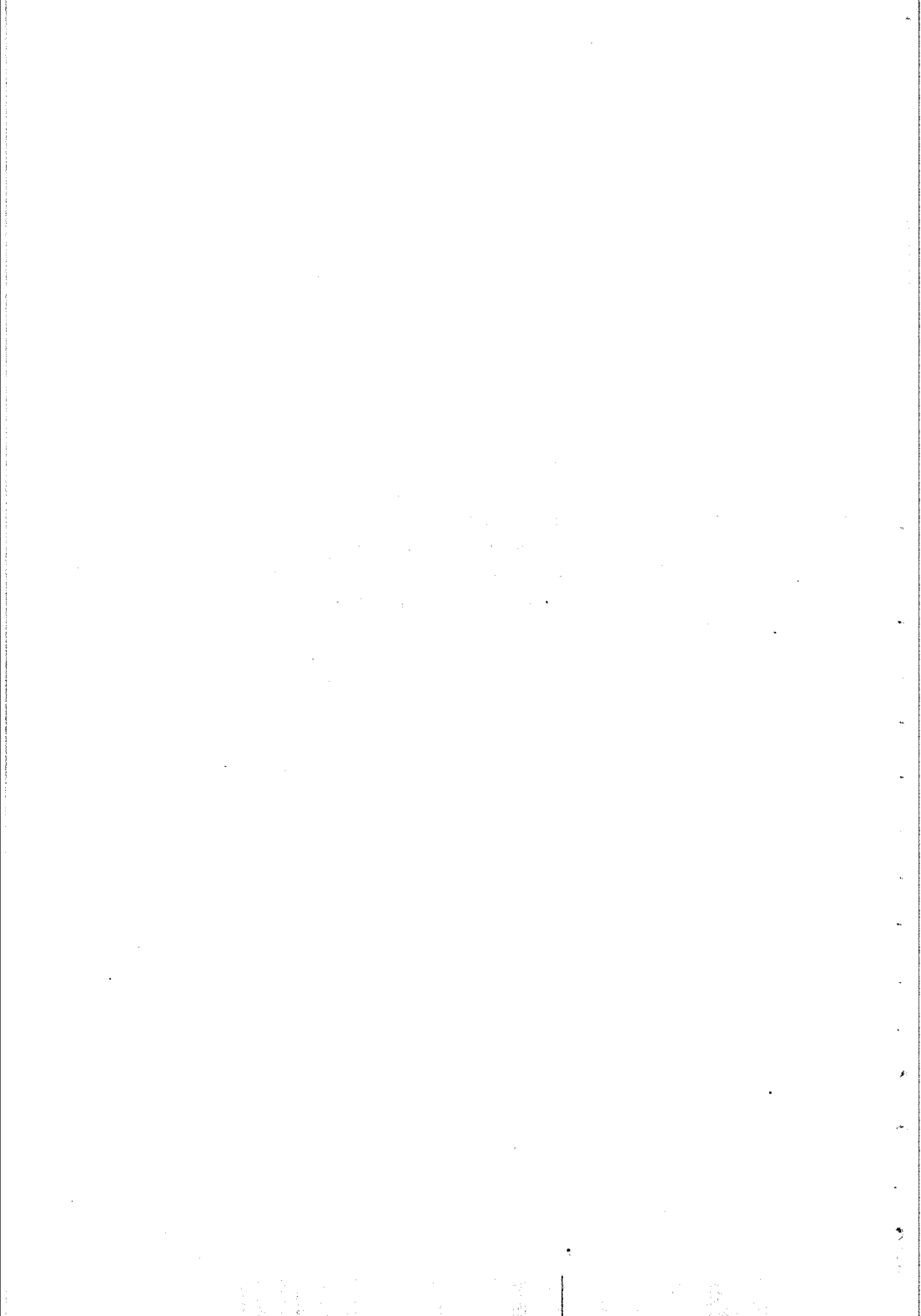
对英国第一个殖民地的文化轨迹的开创性分析是本书对后殖民研究的主要贡献,为曾经是殖民地与半殖民地的中国(特别是香港、澳门、台湾地区)以及其他有过这样类似殖民遭遇的各地文化研究提供了一个参照模式,无疑有其相当的普适性。同时,这些范例研究也成为质疑当代翻译理论的工具,印证了翻译研究学派的另一重要观点:不是译文依靠原文,而是原文要依靠译文才能在另一种文化中获得再生,使自己的生命得以延续。作者在文学理论与语言学、哲学与文化研究、人类学与系统论之间纵横驰骋,游刃有余,为翻译理论与实践所急需的完形研究提供了一个范式。爱尔兰的翻译活动与爱尔兰 20 世纪的伟大作家——包括叶芝和乔伊斯——的作品之间的相互依赖,在标志着他们走向爱尔兰形式主义的共生关系中,也被展示得清晰明了。

传统的翻译理论认为翻译是在两种平起平坐的文化之间通过自由交流信息的方式进行的,但是在后殖民语境中,这种前提并不存在,翻译是在殖民地与帝国主义中心两个不平等的实体间进行的。译文不仅仅是一个文本,而是一次行动;翻译的环境与翻译的文本同等重要。

翻译的描写学派作为翻译研究的一个重要分支,其重要性还体现在它所揭示的翻译技巧往往是和文化因素密切相连这一要旨。脱离对文化的研究,单纯讨论译者为何在某个特定的历史时期,采用某种具体的翻译技巧的作法是很难令人信服的。就此意义而言,这一专著为我们重新认识翻译描写学派、它的研究内容与方法,以及由此得出的某些重要观点,其指导性是不难预料的。

本书对翻译研究人员,英语专业研究生、本科生,以及对在翻译理论和实践、后殖民主义研究及 19 和 20 世纪爱尔兰文学方面感兴趣的读者而言,必不可少。

*For my family
whose acts of translation
across the barriers
of space, language, class, and gender
made this book possible*



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The importance of translation data and translation theory for investigations of the colonization and decolonization of Irish culture is outlined, as well as the value of Irish examples of translation for interrogating current positions in translation theory.

Chapter 1: The Metonymics of Translation	41
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All literary texts evoke metonymically the larger literary and cultural contexts from which they emerge. Issues raised by the translation of texts from postcolonial cultures set in high relief the metonymics of translation, thus challenging theoretical approaches to translation based on binary classifications (e.g. literal/free; domesticating/foreignizing; formal-equivalence/dynamic-equivalence; adequate/acceptable; fluent/resistant). Because dominant-culture audiences are unfamiliar with the culture, literary traditions, and language of texts of colonized peoples, translators of such texts are in the paradoxical position of “telling a new story”, even as they rewrite a source text. Constructing texts that metonymically stand for the literature and culture of such marginalized peoples, inevitably privileging certain metonymies over others, translators create images of their source cultures in a sensitive process having important ideological implications to be followed out in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 2: The Politics of Translating <i>Táin Bó Cúailnge</i> into English	62
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Irish cultural nationalism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries attempted to create new images of Irish culture that would counter English stereotypes and serve Irish nationalist purposes. The translation record – including the absence of translation – of *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, the centrepiece of Ireland’s heritage of medieval heroic literature, illustrates the impact of ideology on translation and the ways in which translation serves cultural agendas. In English translations the adaptation of the Ulster Cycle to a biographical framework, representing Cú Chulainn as an ideal of militant Irish heroism, and the focus on the Fer Diad episode of *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, in which violence toward one’s

friend and brother becomes a necessary price of fulfilling group loyalties, together set a trajectory leading to Easter 1916, as well as later violence in the North.

Chapter 3: Formal Strategies for Integrating Irish Hero Tales into Canons of European Literature 90

In part because early Celtic forms and genres are so different from those of modern European literatures, the translation of Celtic literature has generated some of the most intense controversies about translation in European letters. A series of generic codes for the representation of early Irish heroic narrative is examined (including epic, folktale, and a post-Joycean poetics), illustrating that reception of a text from a colonized culture involves a dialectic between assimilation to and alteration of the standards of the receiving culture. Epigonic representations of Irish form in the translations of early Irish literature complement the subversive ideological manipulations of the texts discussed in the previous chapter. The epistemology of translation is set in high relief by the Irish examples, and translation emerges as a mode of discovery, parallel rather than subordinate to learned investigations.

Chapter 4: The Two Traditions of Translating Early Irish Literature 122

Translated literature constitutes a system within any given literary polysystem. English translations of early Irish literature form a seemingly radically polarized system, consisting of popular literary translations and scholarly translations, the former monuments of style taking their place among the literary works of twentieth-century Ireland, the latter almost unreadable. This differentiated system of translation illustrates the necessity of close historical analysis in descriptive studies of translation and the unworkability of a facile historical determinism in translation studies. In the case of the English translations of Irish literature, historical and political circumstances related to Ireland's colonial history resulted in a bipolar field of translations that serve the ideological context in complementary ways. The translation traditions are symbiotic, each made possible only by the existence of the other. The chapter concludes with an exploration of the implications of this translation system for approaches to translation theory and practice based on binary typologies.

Chapter 5: On Translating a Dead Language 146

Dead languages like Old Irish represent a limiting case for the construction of a comprehensive theory of translation. Because no living

linguistic environment remains, ascertaining the meaning of texts in a dead language is problematic, raising in a radical fashion the question of indeterminacy of translation. In such texts meaning is established with reference to other languages, through translation itself, revealing translation again to be an epistemological process where translation precedes understanding rather than the inverse as is generally theorized. Nonetheless, it is argued that translation is no more indeterminate than other forms of knowledge, including the scientific disciplines. The chapter examines the imperialistic presuppositions of Quine's famous indeterminacy argument, showing that seemingly abstract considerations of the translatability of early Irish literature into English shed light on cultural transfer from subaltern groups and colonized cultures as a whole.

Chapter 6: On Cú Chulainn's Attributes

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Translating Culture in a Postcolonial Context

Because language and culture are intertwined, linguistic translation brings with it cultural translation. At the same time, cultural assertion is part of the dynamic of decolonization. Using theoretical perspectives on culture offered by Bourdieu and focusing on several "signature concepts" of Irish culture, this chapter argues that the representation of culture – particularly the culture of a colonized people – is never innocent. Three translation strategies are contrasted as responses to the alterity represented by Irish culture – an assimilationist strategy, a dialectical strategy, and an ostensive strategy – and compared with stages in the decolonization of an oppressed people. This chapter explores paradoxes of constructing a national culture, projecting a timetable for change in nations like Ireland that are emerging from colonization and cultural imperialism.

Chapter 7: Translating the Humour in Early Irish Hero Tales

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The comic is one of the few broadly integrated patterns of culture – incorporating language, ideology, social organization, and material culture, among others – discussed by translators, and it is generally acknowledged that comic texts are notoriously difficult to translate. The humorous aspects of early Irish literature delight contemporary readers but they contributed to the reception problems of this literature in English in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This chapter investigates the translation of complex cultural patterns, of which humour stands as a prime example. Drawing on Kuhn's concept of scientific paradigms, the argument proposes that divergence of cultural paradigms can block perception of cultural paradigms in texts

from radically different cultures, and that paradigm shifts in the receiving culture are associated with shifts in textual reception. Factors causing interference with the translation of early Irish humorous tales are explored, including nationalistic debates about humour and the nationalist rejection of the stage Irishman. Such interference led to the suppression of humour in translations of early Irish texts; more recent shifts in comic paradigms have made those same comic elements accessible once again in translation. The reception of the humour in early Irish tales stands as an example of the challenges to communicating the central cultural paradigms of colonized peoples.

Chapter 8: The Names of the Hound

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Proper names are essential linguistic markers that individuate persons and places, and naming practices are central to cultural formations as well, differentiating the identity of peoples. Naive translators often see names as resting places where no translation is needed, but in fact names are central textual elements to be translated and the paradoxes of translating phonological, semantic, and semiotic aspects of Irish proper names, including the name *Cú Chulainn*, illuminate the very essence of naming. The translation of such names, *prima facie* the least problematic area of translation, in turn takes us deep into the heart of issues having to do with knowledge, cultural power and prestige, assertion of identity and self-determination, and the legacy of colonialism in the modern world.

Chapter 9: The Accuracy of the Philologist

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Philological translations take a positivist attitude toward translation: what can be translated can be translated clearly, what cannot be translated clearly must be consigned to silence. But difficulty, openness, and ambiguity are at the heart of literary language. Under the banner of accuracy, using the tools of clarity and silence, philological translations replace literary texts with non-literary texts, thereby deforming the representation of much of world literature. Examples from the translation history of early Irish literature show how these philological norms of translation, continuing to the present, reenact cultural imperialism on postcolonial peoples.

Chapter 10: Metametonymics

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Translation has been modelled primarily as a process of selection and substitution, a metaphoric process; as a consequence, it has been devalued as a fairly mechanical activity. Roman Jakobson's distinction

between the metaphoric and the metonymic offers a point of departure for valorizing the metonymic aspects of translation – the creation of connections, contiguities, and contextures in and through translation. A metonymic approach to translation is key to seeing the translation of early Irish literature into English as one chapter of the history of the colonization and decolonization of Ireland. The case studies of the translation of early Irish literature into English illustrate how translation in a postcolonial context challenges some of the basic theoretical principles about translation.

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