

# 西方翻译 理论精选

申雨平 编

外语教学与研究出版社

FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS

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申雨平 编

封面设计: 林 力

¥: 34.90

ISBN 7-5600-1739-8



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**(京)新登字 155 号**

**图书在版编目(CIP)数据**

西方翻译理论精选/申雨平编. - 北京:外语教学与研究出版社, 1999

ISBN 7-5600-1739-8

I. 西… II. 申… III. 翻译理论-西方国家 IV. H059

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(1999)第 51631 号

**西方翻译理论精选**

申雨平 编

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**责任编辑: 王红卫**

**出版发行: 外语教学与研究出版社**

**社 址: 北京市西三环北路 19 号 (100089)**

**网 址: <http://www.fltrp.com.cn>**

**印 刷: 北京外国语大学印刷厂**

**开 本: 850×1168 1/32**

**印 张: 26.375**

**版 次: 2002 年 4 月第 1 版 2002 年 4 月第 1 次印刷**

**书 号: ISBN 7-5600-1739-8/H·994**

**定 价: 34.90 元**

\* \* \*

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## 序 言

丁往道

翻译工作者要不要研究翻译理论？对这个问题有不同的看法。一种看法是：只要精通两种语言，就能把其中一种译为另一种，并不需要理论或方法的指导，另一种看法是：一句话，更不用说一篇文章或一本书了，都会有不同的译法，究竟哪种译法好，好在何处；哪种译法不好，不好在何处；这里有个标准、尺度或角度的问题，要靠翻译理论来解决。

所以，对于翻译工作来说，翻译理论是有用的，甚至是必要的，因为理论提出了翻译应该遵循的原则。我国翻译界热烈讨论过的信、达、雅，直译和意译，忠实和通顺，都是翻译的原则和理论问题。这些讨论对提高翻译质量有积极的作用。近代西方的翻译理论家们结合语言学、逻辑学、交际学的理论，提出了有关翻译的一些新的观点，丰富了翻译理论，也很值得我们研究和借鉴。

中国各家的关于翻译理论的著述，早已汇编成书，为翻译工作者提供了研究和参考的方便。西方的翻译理论，虽有分别的评述，至今还没有得到系统的、综合的介绍。有志研究的同志想找到这一方面的文献，不论是中文的还是外文的，都不容易。

申雨平副教授在北京外国语大学英语系讲授翻译理论与实践已有多年，对中国和西方的翻译理论有深入的研究。鉴于全面介绍西方翻译理论的著作的欠缺，他特意广泛搜集这方面的材料，摘取各家学说的精华，汇编成这本选集。本书对翻译工作者、翻译理论研究者和对语言学、文体学、修辞学有兴趣的人士，都会极有帮助。它的出版确是翻译界和有关各界的喜讯。

## 前言

翻译在世界上已经进行了几千年,翻译理论也是古已有之,中外皆然。中国翻译理论早在佛经翻译时期就已经形成规模,有了不同的派别。后人继承发扬,到了近代、现代和当代,翻译理论更加蓬勃发展。

外国情况亦与此相似。早在古罗马时期,一些著名的作家、演说家已经论及翻译。以后各国又有人广为论述,提出了很多不同的见解,形成了不同的理论体系。

但是,我国的外语工作者对西方的翻译理论有系统的了解还是最近一些年的事。即使如此,很多人由于材料零散不易获得,接触不到一些著名的理论。为了解决这一问题,我们选编了这本《西方翻译理论精选》。

本书对西方早期的翻译理论采取了从轻处理的方法,把重点放到了现当代翻译理论家们的论述上面。这样做的原因是:古代的翻译理论一般没有什么很强的系统性,翻译论述多为作家、演说家、翻译家们的感想或他们阐述文艺理论时所附带提到的问题。如西塞罗的理论,尽管在翻译史上占有很重要的地位,但是论及翻译的文字是很有限的。贺拉斯、圣哲罗姆的理论也基本如此。如果从理论的系统性上讲,英国泰特勒(Alexander Fraser Tytler)1790年出版的《论翻译的原则》一书应算作西塞罗之后西方翻译理论史上的一座重要的里程碑。

到了19世纪和20世纪,“新理踵出”,各门学问纷纷相互结合,形成种种边缘学科。翻译理论也是如此。一些著名的翻译家不仅仅从事翻译,更是语言学、心理学、宗教学、教育学、自然科学等领域的专家。这样,他们所提出的翻译理论常常带有多学科色彩。

例如,萨瓦里就既是一位语言学家,也是一位科学家,因此,他的《翻译的艺术》既涉及古典诗歌、《圣经》的翻译,又论及科技翻译;纽马克认为,翻译理论应当借助哲学、逻辑学、语言学等学科的原理,求得发展;斯坦纳精通多种语言,可以对比多种语言和文化中的哲学、文化学、文艺理论等问题,对翻译理论问题进行探讨;奈达则从交际学理论出发,提出翻译的新概念,认为翻译不应过于注重语言形式的对等,而应把注意力更多地放在译文读者对译文的反应上。

这种多学科的性质大大地丰富了传统的以文艺学为基础的翻译理论,使其上升到一个新的高度。选编本书的目的就是使我国的翻译工作者能够较多地接触西方翻译理论,为推动我国翻译理论的发展尽一份力量。

选编本书的指导方针是力求在有限的篇幅内包括较广的内容,主要是选取英美翻译家、翻译理论家的论述和论著。由于篇幅所限,书中只能选取各家理论具有代表性的作品中的精华部分,其他部分则只能割爱了。本书的读者对象为高校英语专业翻译课教师、翻译专业研究生、翻译工作者和其他外语工作者。我们希望能为他们提供一个集中阅读西方翻译理论的机会。

不妥之处,恳请方家不吝批评指正。

编者

1999年5月

于北京外国语大学

## 目 录

西方翻译史、西方翻译理论史 .....	1
西奥多·塞弗里 (Theodore Savory) .....	4
<i>The Art of Translation</i> .....	4
3. Translation Through the Ages .....	4
乔治·斯坦纳 (George Steiner) .....	15
<i>After Babel—Aspects of Language and Translation</i> .....	15
4. The Claims of Theory .....	15
凯利 (L.G. Kelly) .....	90
<i>The True Interpreter—A History of Translation Theory</i> <i>and Practice in the West</i> .....	90
2. Models and Definitions .....	90
9. Theory of Translation? .....	141
西方翻译理论选粹 .....	155
西塞罗 (Cicero) .....	156
<i>de optimo genere oratorum</i> (Excerpt) .....	157
贺拉斯 (Horace) .....	158
<i>Ars Poetica</i> (Excerpt) .....	159
圣哲罗姆 (Saint Jerome) .....	160



<i>Letter LVII—de optimo genere interpretandi</i> (Excerpts) ...	161
<i>Preface to the Book on the Sites and Names of Hebrew Places</i> (Excerpt) .....	163
<i>Preface to the Books of Samuel and Kings</i> (Excerpt) .....	163
亚历山大·弗雷泽·泰特勒 (Alexander Fraser Tytler) .....	164
<i>Essay on the Principles of Translation</i> .....	166
1. Description Of A Good Translation—General Rules	
Flowing from That Description .....	166
麦修·阿诺德 (Matthew Arnold) .....	168
<i>Critical Essays</i> .....	169
On Translating Homer. . . Nunquamne reponam? .....	169
西奥多·塞弗里 (Theodore Savory) .....	255
<i>The Art of Translation</i> .....	257
4. The Principles Of Translation .....	257
罗曼·雅科布松 (Roman Jakobson) .....	269
On Linguistic Aspects of Translation .....	270
卡特福德 (J. C. Catford) .....	280
<i>A Linguistic Theory of Translation: An Essay in Applied Linguistics</i> .....	281
2. Translation: Definition and General Types .....	281
3. Translation Equivalence .....	290
4. Formal Correspondence .....	297
5. Meaning and Total Translation .....	300
6. Transference .....	310
7. Conditions of Translation Equivalence .....	317
12. Translation Shifts .....	326
13. Language Varieties in Translation .....	338
14. The Limits of Translatability .....	350

乔治·斯坦纳 (George Steiner) .....	364
<i>After Babel—Aspects of Language and Translation</i> .....	365
5. The Hermeneutic Motion .....	365
彼得·纽马克 (Peter Newmark) .....	513
<i>Approaches to Translation</i> .....	514
The theory and the Craft of Translation .....	514
What Translation Theory Is About .....	545
Communicative and Semantic Translation ( I ) .....	580
Communicative and Semantic Translation ( II ) .....	615
沃夫来姆·威尔斯 (Wolfram Wilss) .....	629
<i>The Science of Translation: Problems and Methods</i> .....	630
2. Translation as a Modern Means of Communication .....	630
4. Problems of Methodology in the Science of Translation .....	646
6. Textlinguistics and Translating .....	699
尤金·奈达 (Eugene A. Nida) .....	735
<i>The Theory and Practice of Translation</i> .....	737
1. A New Concept of Translation .....	737
2. The Nature of Translating .....	755
8. Testing the Translation .....	791
<i>Language Structure and Transaltion: Essays by         Eugene A. Nida</i> .....	810
Words and Thoughts .....	810

## 附录

外国翻译理论参考书目 .....	819
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# 西方翻译史、 西方翻译理论史

西方翻译史以及翻译理论史源远流长,早自古罗马的西塞罗、贺拉斯便已有关于翻译的精辟论述,后来的翻译理论更是内容丰富,异彩纷呈。

这一部分选取了西方三位翻译理论家作品中有关翻译史和翻译理论史的论述,可作为西方翻译史和翻译理论史方面的选读材料。

西奥多·塞弗里(Theodore Savory,生于1896年,卒年不详,生平简介见本书第二部分)的翻译论著 *The Art of Translation* 曾经被认为是翻译论著中的最佳作品,该书的第3章是从古罗马时期到二战以后西方翻译及翻译理论发展情况的概述。

乔治·斯坦纳(George Steiner,生平简介见本书中第二部分)所著的 *After Babel—Aspects of Language and Translation* 中的第4章 *The Claims of Theory* 介绍了从西塞罗以来的西方翻译实践和理论,并把西方翻译理论的发展大致分为四个时期:第一时期——公元前1世纪到公元19世纪,译者们依据自己的翻译实践进行经验总结;第二时期——19世纪初到20世纪中期,译者们已经开始进行理论探讨,把翻译实践上升到理论的高度;第三时期——也就是现代时期,翻译理论有了飞跃式的发展,人们运用现代语言学理论研究翻译问题,使翻译理论研究更加深入,出现了多种理论流派。另外,这一时期还出现了机器翻译;第四时期——什么时候为这一时期的开端,斯坦纳并未说明,因为第三时期何时结束他也没有说明。但是,据凯利说,我们现在就处于第四时期。(参阅 L. G. Kelly: *The True Interpreter—A History of Translation Theory and Practice in the West* 中的第9章 *Theory of Translation?*)当然,凯利的书出版于1979年,翻译理论在这近二十年的时间内又有了什么可以总结的东西,则有待于人们的研究。

凯利(L. G. Kelly,生平简介见本书第二部分)的 *The True Interpreter—A History of Translation Theory and Practice in the West* 一书是一本翻译理论史,但并非一本编年史,而是采用专题探讨的

方法,对历史上的译者和理论家们进行评述。本书所选的是该书的第2章和第9章。第2章讨论历史上人们对翻译的认识,以及人们所提出的各种各样的翻译理论模式;第9章介绍、分析、归纳了历史上一些著名的理论家所提出的种种翻译理论。

## 西奧多·塞弗里 (Theodore Savory)

### *The Art of Translation*

(London: Cape, 1957)

### 3. Translation Through the Ages

#### *‘Traduttori, traditori.’*

Translation is almost as old as original authorship and has a history as honourable and as complex as that of any other branch of literature.

In Europe the first translator whose name has been recorded was the manumitted Greek slave Livius Andronicus, who in about 240 B.C. put the *Odyssey* into Latin verse. Very possibly he was not the first writer who actually made a translation, but his effort is of interest because of its long survival. Horace knew it and used it, and some fragments of it are still extant.

Later, the early Latin authors Naevius and Ennius made translations of Greek plays, particularly those of Euripides, and were in part responsible for bringing the hexameter to Rome. Cicero was a frequent translator; so also was Catullus. In fact, a general translation of Greek into Latin—and, to a smaller extent, of Latin into Greek—continued as long as there was literature to be translated and a tradition of learning to appreciate the results.

A jump of several centuries brings us to a group of translations

which have a historical significance by reason of the influence they exerted on European scholarship. The rise and development of Arabian learning in the eighth and ninth centuries was inevitably founded on that of Greece, the works of whose writers were made available by a company of Syrian scholars. These came to Bagdad, where they translated the works of Aristotle, Plato, Galen, Hippocrates and others into Arabic; and the city became the site of what might almost be called a school of translation, to which Arabian scholarship was greatly indebted.

The importance of these translations extended beyond both the time and the place. In due course Arab learning declined, to be succeeded by a European interest in intellectual matters, and three centuries later the Arabian texts are found possessed of no less vitality in Spain. Here Bagdad was replaced by Toledo, where a comparable 'college of translators' was busily occupied converting Arabic into Latin. It follows, therefore, that when a writer in the twelfth century refers to an author like Aristotle, he may in fact be thinking of a Latin translation of an Arabic translation of a Syrian translation of the Greek. A process of this kind was not a guarantee of accuracy, and was the cause of a considerable number of mistakes and misunderstandings.

Toledo attracted scholars to work in its libraries for more than a century. Among those who came to do so was Adelard of Bath, who translated an Arabic version of Euclid's *Principles* into Latin, and Robert de Retines, who in 1141—1143 produced the first translation of the Koran. By 1200 A. D. copies of the original Greek texts were beginning to find their way to Toledo, and the desirability of making translations from them by direct study, instead of by way of a third, intermediate language began to be recognized.

To this period, though not to Toledo, belongs the famous translation known as *Liber gestorum Barlaam et Josaphat*. The Greek original was a legendary life of Buddha, adapted to read as a Christian story; it had a vast circle of readers in many European languages; and Barlaam and Josaphat appealed so vividly to the faithful that the Latin church was obliged to recognize them, fictitious though they were, as saints. This has been described as 'perhaps the most curious result attained by any translation'.

By the twelfth century the art of translation touched heights which it may since have equalled but has not surpassed. Wycliffe's Bible was followed by those of Tyndale and Coverdale, but these cannot bear comparison, from a translator's point of view, with the German Bible of Martin Luther (1483—1546). Among the far-reaching results of this work was the establishing of an acceptable form of literary German. Not many years later appeared the work of Jacques Amyot, bishop of Auxerre and 'prince of translators'. The great debt that English literature owes to him is due to his translation in 1559 of Plutarch's *Lives of Famous Greeks and Romans*, for this was the source from which Sir Thomas North in turn made his translation in 1579, and so contributed to an appreciable extent to *Coriolanus*, *Julius Caesar* and *Antony and Cleopatra*.

This brings us to the British translators and, returning a little in time, to John Bouchier, Lord Berners. (1467—1553). Most of his translations were from Spanish, and have retained but little interest today; but his fame rests securely on his translation of the *Chronicles* of Froissart, where he found an author whose method and material suited him admirably.

The age of the first Elizabeth was also the first great age of translation in England, even as the age of the second Elizabeth is the



second such era of copious translation. The national spirit of the time, a spirit of adventure and conquest in the physical world, was reflected in the spirit of the libraries; the translators went about their work with the same ambitions, discovering new realms of literature, bringing home new treasures of human thought. Philemon Holland, for example, looked on his achievements as conquests, and so described them. He and his contemporaries sought to display the political and civic practices of the great nations of the past, and their chief concern was with the matter of their authors, rather than their literary skill.

And so they seldom translated directly. This fundamental principle, which Toledo had established, they almost wholly neglected. Amyot served North for Plutarch, but in this North was far from being alone. Thucydides undoubtedly wrote his histories in Greek, which Laurentius Vallon put into Latin, which Claude de Seyssel put into French, which Thomas Nicholls put into English. This was but one example of a language-chain, where scores existed. Nicholls was a London goldsmith, and many of the Elizabethan translators had no greater academic claim to the status of scholar. But they were active-minded and alert, and their results, if marred by inaccuracies, were as robust and as exhilarating as Elizabethan life itself. Their range was wide and their accomplishments were great.

Sir Thomas North was perhaps the most famous of them all. Philemon Holland (1552—1637), who has also been mentioned, was a surgeon, and was headmaster of Coventry Grammar School; he was a classical scholar and a writer of great industry, whose translations will bear comparison with the originals. He made translations of Xenophon, Livy, Suetonius and Pliny.

It must not be forgotten that the Homer of George Chapman was