

许建忠◎著

By Xu Jianzhong

# 翻译地理学

## Translation Geography



译地理学是翻译学和地理学交叉研究的结果，具体地说，是将翻译及其地理因素相联系，地理学和翻译学的研究成果引入相关研究，并以其相互关系及其机理为研究对象进行探讨，力求打破传统的“决定论”研究模式，从系统论角度审视翻译、研究翻译，对翻译中的种种现象进行地理剖析和阐释。

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Translation Geography

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試題許建忠教授大作翻譯地理學

許多次譯學，能說少勞年，生態與地理，  
煌煌姊妹篇。明珠探既得，敢為天下先。  
美君凌云志，木可託之朋。實南冥矣必達，赤水其勉旃。

忠金馬神教布于來得二命



## 序

天津理工大学外国语学院副院长许建忠教授,是一位多产作家。今年《翻译地理学》专著又面世了。学术界前辈马祖毅老挥毫赋诗赞道:“生态与地理,辉煌姊妹篇”,已高度概括了新著的成功。大家知道,马老诗里明指的“生态”,是指2009年元月中国三峡出版社出版的《翻译生态学》,全书30万字,已有国内外的书评多篇,获得了同行们的好评。现在再来看看《翻译地理学》新书,人们又不难发现,作者高屋建瓴的学术视野和勤于思考的认真“探索”精神。笔者尤其要指出的,是《翻译地理学》中的几个显著特点。

其一,紧扣着译学研究主题。

译学研究是近百年来译坛热议的话题。特别是自上世纪七十年代末改革开放以来,中国译坛环境同全国各条阵线上的现实情况一样,确实发生了翻天覆地的变化。由于祖国的国际地位空前提高,对外的经贸商务活动和文化交流活动日益增多,翻译的地位与作用日益凸现出来。的确,国家急需翻译,也正在不断培养多方面的翻译建设人才。已进入“不惑”之年的许建忠教授就是新中国成立以来脱颖而出的佼佼者之一。他在十年前的《工商企业

《翻译实务》刚出版之后,港、台同行就争相购买版权,同时,在国际译联的机关刊物 Babel 上也受到了好评。这都是早为人知的事实,这里无须赘述。

笔者只想说,现在的《翻译地理学》保持和发挥了原有的学术思想基础,继续以十分“务实”的态度,投入了全新的研究。作者认为:地球是人类的家园,人类赖以生存的自然地理实况和人文地理种种现象,就是译学研究之源,“从地理学角度研究翻译,可谓真正抓住了其源头所在”。由于有不同的地理气候,不同的生活环境,产生了不同的文明历史,所以翻译地理学的主旨,不是在于研究自然地理和人文地理本身,而是透过这些生活在不同地理位置的人们,研究他们不同的生存方式、语言文化、处世哲学、性格特征。应如何来研究这些不同民族之间的语言文化交流呢?这种存在不同肤色、生活在不同区域、操着不同语言的各民族都具有自己的特色,各民族之间的交流,必须通过翻译。也唯有如此,才能达到相互认识了解和交流之目的。也就是说,各民族之间之所以能进行交流,还因为其具有共性,共性来自于人类各民族共有的一个客观的大自然,就是同住一个地球村,人类对地球村大局的认识基本相同。共性是交流的基础,个性是需要交流的必然。

其二,促进译学研究的发展。

自上个世纪以来,学术界对于外国译论的“引进”可谓多矣。正是由于国家教育科学的发展,才有了这些“引进”交流,才让我们国家产生了一大批翻译家。正是由于他们的翻译理论和实践经验结合得很好,才使不断引进的作品保存了原作的“情调”(但也不可避免地存在许多非议)。同时,也使我国主动推出国门的一些作品,仍然保存了原作的“丰姿”(同样难免还有许多不同声音),受到了国外同行的欢迎。近 30 年来的实践经验告诉我们,

在国际译坛上,作为正在和平崛起的中国学者,一切还必须从实践出发,既不能固步自封,亦无须妄自菲薄。从整体上来说,我们的译论研究在国际上的话语权还是不多的。这与我们受到外语的限制有关系,更重要的是,与我们缺乏创新性的研究成果有关系。改革开放初期,由于“史无前例”的思想禁锢刚刚松绑,似乎有的人有一种饥不择食之态,把一切“引进”的东西都看成是好的,通盘吸收进去,但是食“洋”不化,研究的套路总是(先要挂上一大批外国人名或作品内容,然后才开始谈得到的启示。这样的译论少见深度)大同小异者多,在国际上的影响总是十分有限。近些年来,这种现象正在大为改观,在祖国东南西北中都涌现出一大批年富力强的翻译家的新作,许建忠教授就是其中之一。他的《翻译地理学》将翻译及其地理环境相联系,并把其相应关系及其机理作为研究对象,力求打破传统的“决定论”研究模式,从地理系统论角度审视翻译,对翻译中的种种现象进行地理剖析和阐释,研究译论与实践出现的种种问题,解释翻译地理的客观规律。这种借鉴翻译学和地理学学科领域的研究方法,既有宏观的思维,又有微观的操作,其命题新颖,逻辑缜密,具有鲜明的创新思维,在国内尚无同类选题进行系统研究的专著问世,实属难能可贵。

其三,增添翻译研究新养分。

《翻译地理学》中的研究内容十分广泛,包含了自然地理学和人文地理学及其分科的多学科综合理论(实践)研究的诸多方面和种种问题。例如,广义的人文地理学就包括社会文化地理学,政治、经济地理学。社会地理学中研究各种社会类型的区域分布,比较它们之间的相互关系。在探讨人地关系上强调社会因素对地区文化景观、生活方式的影响。其研究内容包括人口、聚落、民族宗教、语言行为和感应等方方面面的地理问题,这也是翻译工作者难

以回避的翻译问题。因为,正是由于居住在同一个地球村里的各民族,有其不同的生态环境,包括不同物质文化环境、不同的社会文化环境和不同的宗教文化环境,这便产生了不同的语言文化环境,这些不同的各民族之间的交流是无可避免的。要翻译交流得好,就必须对翻译有一个科学的定义,对翻译中的诸多问题包括对翻译的标准、翻译的原则、翻译的技巧、翻译的方法有些基本的共识。翻译究竟是科学还是艺术,或者说既是一门科学又是一门艺术?毫无疑问,前些年对这些现象的一度热议,亦为我们今天的译学研究打下了良好的基础,也让我们加深了对许多前辈学者的一些真知灼见的更多理解。例如,刘重德老说过:“文化、语言、翻译”三者之间的关系十分密切。文化包含着语言,并影响语言,而语言则是文化的重要组成部分,同时,也是保存文化、交流文化和反映文化的必需工具。文化反映一个民族的特征。各国各民族的文化交流必须依赖翻译来进行。翻译已成为一门真正的学问。政治、文化、科学、艺术如何翻译得好,这不是三言两语能说得了的。但翻译地理学无形中给我们在译学研究上增添了新的养分。

其四,令人难忘的联想。

读书看报,容易深有感触和引发联想。更多的话不必多说,就从一年前北京奥运会主题歌英文歌词的理解和翻译来谈吧,便是一个很现实的实例。29届奥运会的主题歌《你和我》(You and Me)早已脍炙人口,其英文歌词也早已引起人们的极大兴趣,我们从语言和翻译的角度对歌词进行剖析,其流畅自然的歌声,亦犹在耳旁荡漾:

我和你,心连心,同住地球村,  
为梦想,千里行,相会在北京。



来吧！朋友，伸出你的手，  
我和你，心连心，永远一家人。

You and me  
From one world  
We are family  
Travel dream  
A thousand miles  
Meeting in Beijing  
Come together  
Put your hand in mine  
You and me  
From one world  
Forever we are one family

这首歌词将其内涵意义玲珑剔透地表达了出来，这不就是“翻译地理学”正要“探索”追求的人文思想和社会意义吗？如前所述，翻译地理学的重点，并不在于地理，而在于开发交际翻译（communicative translation）。因此，它不是字对字、行对行、句对句的翻译（word for word translation, line for line or sentence for sentence translation），而是力求译作与原作功能等值的翻译，是这种开发人文主义思想的翻译。中国正在和平崛起，中国人选择的是一种和谐社会，期盼建立的是和谐世界。大家知道，在 29 届奥运会上，中国健儿赢得了最多金牌，获得了世人的尊敬。中国在国际体坛上的话语权明显是增大了！这是全国人民和全球华人的光荣和骄傲。翻译地理学增添了国际学者在国际译坛上的话语权，这同样是我们同仁的光荣和骄傲。

总之,《翻译地理学》是译学研究领域里的一部令人瞩目的专著。其创新思维与新颖研究方法,真是别具一格,值得肯定。笔者认为,翻译地理学作为一门新型的交叉边缘学科,把它置于自然地理与人文地理环境中,就其人类生活、生理特点、语言差异、人文多元、心理环境因素等诸多方面的翻译研究,不仅具有重要的学术价值,而且富于鲜活的现实意义。

是为序。

李亚舒

于中国科学院

2010年元月18日

## INTRODUCTION

Cay Dollerup

Copenhagen, Denmark

It is an honour for me to write this introduction to Professor Xu Jianzhong's new book.

Approaching Translation Studies with a thorough basis in Chinese perspectives not only on translation but on human life and activity in general, this book opens up the prospects of new fields for the discipline internationally. At the same time the Chinese orientation is emphasised by Professor Xu's perceptive overviews of the Chinese translation theories of Hu Gengshen and Xu Jianzhong himself. Both theories stress the balance that must be struck between translations and the ecological systems in which they exist.

Professor Xu analyses in depth and incisively the connections between physical geographical placement, human nations, cultures and translation activities. He then turns his perspicacious eye towards human geography and first focuses on the dependence and interrelations of man and land, including man's activities and the geographical environment. It is argued that, in the same way that Chinese translatology is based on the idea that phenomena such as translational activities should strive for harmony in nature, physical geography and national characteristics have created Western translation theories that are in keeping with the cultures in which they have arisen.

However, this implies that Western theories cannot be transferred directly between cultures but have to be adapted to local conditions. The relationship between man and land is deeply rooted and can be seen even in minute linguistic differences between various cultures.

Next the study takes up the relationship between translation and urban centres. They are shown to be crucial importance to translation activity notably as hubs for international communication in which translation looms large.

Professor Xu rightly posits that tourism depends on the geographical environment and that good translation work is of prime importance to guiding and escorting skills, and to the ability of local agencies to communicate and translate adequately information about local sights and amenities. At this point, Professor Xu offers some timely advice on how to provide tourists with appropriate information. He stresses that, rather than being translated literally, material for tourists often requires rewriting that takes into account the tourists' cultural background and natural environments.

The world of translation depends on the natural and human worlds that are, in turn, governed by politics which permeate all activities. Appreciating that this topic cannot be covered in its entirety, Xu limits it to translation and feminism, which is not widely embraced primarily because of the practical orientation of translation discussions in China. Whereas translation is ideally looked upon as a balanced dialogue between two cultures, Professor Xu is inclined to believe that differences between dominating and dominated cultures, and consequently in languages used in translation, will continue to be with us in the present century.

## Introduction

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Cultural geography centres on the interplay between human cultures and their environments, which have created cultures and nations formed by the different localities. In the translational communication between cultures, issues in intercultural studies loom large. By way of exemplification, Xu cites features in the Bai culture in China that show the close ties between Bai language and the geographical environment, an earthquake zone. Similar features are found in the areas of food and clothing.

In addressing the economy of translation, the main focus is on the translation industry and how it can be improved. The obvious areas of adequate training, standardised services, a standard marketing system and the use of advanced translation technologies are recommended. And this is followed up by a plea for brevity in translation.

Stressing the great diversity of languages, nationality and ethnic groups, Professor Xu highlights the need for taking ethnicity into account in translation activities; he points specifically to post-colonial theories that have paid attention to ethnically determined features. He underlines the need to understand that translation depends on the translator's linguistic ability. Similarly, he stresses the need to combat cultural hegemony, notably so in China's case since the cultural exchange between China and the West is, at present, not balanced. In order to illustrate the need to overcome ethnic barriers, the author refers to the cultures of the ethnic groups in the Qinghai province of China, and argues that in order to communicate knowledge of such ethnic cultures adequately, translators must be familiar with their psychology, customs and religion. Translators working with such material must broaden their focus to embrace the cultural riches to open for full

communication between peoples with different ethnic backgrounds.

Xu now turns towards religious geography of translation. It is pointed out that religions are also due to the environments in which they exist. He makes the points that both in China and the West early thinking about translation activity centred on the translation of religious texts and that these theories were heavily indebted to practice, and that such large-scale translation activities are subject to many constraints concerning the target language and its cultural grids. Xu discusses how conflicting views concerning translation strategies have raged around the major religious writings, but also that there are differences in that the Buddhist sutras were translated into Chinese, has one main version and is meant for mostly in philosophy and literariness, whereas the Bible was translated into many target languages, in different versions for different groups, and for its religious value.

Xu emphasises that behaviour is shaped by cultural and geographical environment, and that translation and consequently translation theory are affected by both their macro—as well as their microenvironments. It is pointed out that the German Skopos notions emphasised ‘adequacy’ and widened the notion; this constituted a breakthrough for translation thinking that aligned theory with empirical translation studies. In this context it is important that translators obey the norms and ethics in their cross-cultural assignment in order to ensure cross-cultural communication. Such translational acts are externalisations of the translators’ competence and should be understood as cultural behaviour that differs from translators with different cultural backgrounds. At the same time the translators’ adaptation and selection also involves that, given the specifics of their given environment,

they can actively reject translation assignments.

In the last chapter Professor Xu Jianzhong presents an overview of the present scene in which globalisation has entered translation and Translation Studies. He finds that in 'glocalisation', globalisation and localisation are integrated and will hopefully serve to unite the cultures of this planet. We should avoid parochialism and narrow nationalism and we should welcome glocalisation.

The book is breaking new ground in Translation Studies by its consistent view that translation and the environments in which translation activities take place are closely related and affect one another in terms of their manifestations. Therefore the book will prompt further studies of the topics discussed and the issues raised. It is sure to inspire future scholarship.

Chinese Translation Studies scholars in particular are encouraged to continue in the traditional ways of thinking and yet receive inspiration from foreign sources in order to be aware of problems and of innovative thinking and yet to continue to work towards harmony.

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