

国 外 翻 译 研 究 丛 书 之 一

CONSTRUCTING CULTURES

Essays on Literary Translation

文 化 构 建 —— 文学翻译论集

Susan Bassnett & André Lefevere



上海外语教育出版社

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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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(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察部。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些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。依照学科建设的规律和研究现状,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

1976年在比利时勒芬召开的学术会议被西方许多学者认为是翻译研究学派宣告成立的历史性大会。在其后的20多年里,翻译研究取得了长足进展;然而,其中进行得较多的是翻译的描写性研究工作。由此,翻译研究领域的学者们不禁有些困惑:除了描写性研究外,翻译研究今后向哪个方向发展?

1990年,由苏珊·巴斯内特和安德烈·勒菲弗尔合编的《翻译、历史与文化》一书出版。他们第一次正式提出翻译研究“文化转向”的发展方向。“一石激起千层浪”,从事翻译研究的学者们深受启发和鼓舞,由此开始了翻译研究的又一突破性进展,并最终形成了西方翻译理论领域的另一新的学派——文化学派。

《文化构建——文学翻译论集》共收录苏珊·巴斯内特和安德烈·勒菲弗尔的八篇论文。他们不仅向读者讲述翻译研究的发展历史,总结翻译理论研究、文化研究、描写翻译研究以及翻译教学方面的最新发展动态,而且两位学者、翻译家还进一步拓展翻译研究的疆域,指出这一学科在下一世纪的发展方向。在序言部分,巴斯内特和勒菲弗尔回顾自1978年以来的翻译发展。他们认为,翻译工作者在促使不同文化交流方面起了重要的纽带作用,研究翻译作品在一定意义上即是研究不同文化的相互作用。此外,他们又提出新课题以作今后进一步研究,其中包括翻译史研究、后殖民主义翻译学派的研究等等。勒菲弗尔在第一章中阐释了文本模式对进行比较分析的帮助和影响。此后在第五章,勒菲弗尔通过对芬兰史诗 *Kalevala* 的收集整理及其英语翻译的研究,提出已有文本模式(如荷兰史诗和北欧史诗)对其的影响。巴斯内特在第二章中指出

由于某些文化因素的制约,原文有时往往以译作的形式呈现给读者。这样的翻译当然不是翻译,而是伪翻译(pseudo-translation),作者/译者和读者之间亦存在“共谋”(collusion)。在第三章,勒菲弗尔对古罗马诗人维吉尔所著的《埃涅伊特》(*Aeneid*)几个英译本作了历时研究。他认为《埃涅伊特》某些译本的成功较大程度上与原语文化在译作读者心中的地位有关,而不只是译作质量好坏的问题。在第六章,勒菲弗尔分析了德国戏剧作家布莱希特作品 *Mother Courage* 的三个译本,揭示了从二战时期到 20 世纪 70 年代美国文学及意识形态领域存在的偏见,指出文学评论家和翻译家的有效结合,尤其是前者通过另一种形式的“共谋”,在西方为不懂德语的人成功地重塑了布莱希特的形象,完成了一种社会构建和文化构建。巴斯内特在第四章和第六章中分别论述了诗歌和戏剧作品的翻译。她首先表明自己不能同意弗洛斯特(Robert Frost)代表的诗不可译的观点,认为诗歌翻译的任务就是“拆散”(dismantle)原诗的语言材料,然后在目的语中“重组”(reassemble)这些语言符号;译诗不是复制原文,而是创作相似的文本,是“种子移植”(transplanting the seed)。面对有些学者提出的戏剧作品的“可表演性”(performability)观点,巴斯内特认为翻译人员的任务并不是把一作品译成能够表演,他们的目标应是保留作品的异域特色,让读者(或艺术指导)自己去发现和体味剧本。第八章是本书的结束,巴斯内特把文化研究和翻译研究联系起来,追溯两者过去 30 年中平行发展的历史,她认为两学科跳出各自轨道联合发展的时候已经来临,翻译研究已向文化转向,现在该文化研究向翻译转向了。

正如巴斯内特和勒菲弗尔在书中所论述的:翻译研究实际就是文化互动的研究。因此,本书不仅对从事翻译研究的读者有直接帮助,而且对从事文化、文学理论、人类学、心理语言学、语言哲学等领域研究的学者亦有借鉴和启发作用。

Preface

SUSAN BASSNETT

The idea for this book emerged from a series of post-graduate seminars that took place at the University of Warwick in the 1990s. André Lefevere was Honorary Professor at Warwick and every year he would come over to England from his home base in Austin, Texas, to talk to students and share views on developments in Translation Studies. Just before his sudden tragic death from leukemia in 1996, he sent me the essays in this volume in draft form. There was no possibility of reciprocation, and though he had heard earlier versions of my essays in lecture form, he never had the opportunity to offer any critical comment on any of them.

Translation is above all a dialogic process, and our working method for years had been dialogic also. This volume should have gone through many more transformations as we read and reread one another's work and rewrote in response to one another's comments. Sadly, the present volume is far too monolingual, though this means that any blame for its shortcomings can be placed firmly on my shoulders alone.

There is a great deal of exciting, innovative thinking going on in Translation Studies at the present time. The subject has come of age, and there are many different approaches, different schools and different perspectives. This is as it should be; all of it is not necessarily congenial to everyone with an interest in the field, but the very fact of diversity is a statement of the successful dissemination of ideas in an interdisciplinary area that has only recently established itself with any seriousness in the academic world.

André Lefevere and I came to work together because of the similarities in our approach to the field. We came into Translation Studies originally for a number of reasons: on a personal level, we had both been educated as bilinguals and were fascinated, as all bilinguals are, with linguistic and cultural difference. Similarly, we had both acquired experience as translators and interpreters and consequently approached theoretical questions from a practical starting point. We were always concerned to make theoretical concepts accessible, since we saw the accessibility of ideas of a means of bridging the gap between those who define themselves as

translation scholars and those who define themselves as translators. That such a gap between theorists and practitioners should have existed for so long disadvantages all parties.

Our greatest point of contact, however, lay in the fact that we both saw the study of literary translation(and we have always, unashamedly been interested principally in literary translation) as intimately linked to the study of comparative literature, and we further saw the study of literature as indissolubly connected to history. Quite independently, we came to the conclusion that the relationship between comparative literature and translation studies had worked to the disadvantage of the latter and we sought a change of perspective, arguing that Translation Studies should be seen as the discipline within which comparative literature might be located, rather than the other way round.

The present collection of essays reflects our shared interest in comparative literature and in literary and cultural history. All these essays derive from lectures given to students all over the world, and we are grateful for all the discussions that helped shape our ideas . We are also especially grateful to those colleagues who have helped with the making of this book, in particular Roger Bell, Edwin Gentzler, Piotr Kuhiwczak and Maria Tymoczko.

Foreword

EDWIN GENTZLER

In their work over the past twenty years, Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere have consistently built bridges within the field of translation studies and developed interdisciplinary connections to fields of study outside the discipline. In 1990, they were the first to suggest that translation studies take the 'cultural turn' and look toward work of cultural studies scholars. In their new book *Constructing Cultures*, they present a strong case for moving the field of cultural studies closer to translation studies. New strategies gleaned from translation histories, such as we see in Lefevere's discussion of *Aeneid* translations or Bassnett's discussions of *Inferno* translations that follow, not only give translators more insight into the actual practice of translation, but they also give cultural studies critics new insight into cultural manipulation by those in power. Following Bassnett and Lefevere, translators have increasingly become more empowered and less self-effacing, a development that has allowed theorists to better view the process of mediating between cultures and/or of introducing different words, forms, cultural nuances, and meaning into their own respective culture. As Bassnett and Lefevere argue in *Constructing Cultures*, the study of translation is the study of cultural interaction, and thus the appeal of this book to cultural studies scholars, literary theorists, anthropologists, ethnographers, psycholinguists, and language philosophers and all of those interested in multicultural socialisation processes.

Constructing Cultures builds on a series of landmark texts by Bassnett and Lefevere, who, perhaps more than any other scholars in the field, have been responsible for putting translation studies on the academic map. Both were present at the historic 1976 conference in Leuven (Louvain), Belgium, which most scholars agree was the conference at which translation studies was founded. In the collected papers of that conference entitled *Literature and Translation* (Holmes *et al.*, 1978), Lefevere contributed the essay 'Translation: The Focus of the Growth of Literary Knowledge', which traces the linguistic, literary, and cultural components of translation studies, topics that are further elaborated in essays that follow in this anthology. His often quoted 'Translation Studies: The Goal of the Discipline', also collected in

the 1978 anthology, argues that translation practice should inform theory and vice versa, a dynamic that has allowed the field to grow so productively. In the same anthology, Bassnett's essay 'Translating Spatial Poetry: An Examination of the Theatre Texts in Performance', expands the purely linguistic and literary methodologies for study to include intertextual and intersemiotic factors, again topics further developed in essays collected here. Bassnett went on to write the book *Translation Studies* (1980), a book that remains the definitive text in the field. Bassnett provides scholars with an historical survey of theoretical developments as well as illuminating samples of comparative analysis. She also discusses strategies for practising translators of poetry, drama, and fiction, again showing how translation theory and comparative analysis can inform practice.

In 1985, the next milestone in the development of the field of translation studies appeared: *The Manipulation of Literature* (1985), edited by Theo Hermans. The title of the anthology ended up giving this group of contributing scholars, including Bassnett and Lefevere, the nickname 'The Manipulation School', a name some associated with the new discipline resisted, but one which in some ways is appropriate. For translation studies scholars were beginning to show that translations, rather than being a secondary and derivative genre, were instead one of the *primary* literary tools that larger social institutions — educational systems, arts councils, publishing firms, and even governments — had at their disposal to 'manipulate' a given society in order to 'construct' the kind of 'culture' desired. Churches would commission Bible translations; governments would support national epic translations; schools would teach great book translations; kings would be patrons for heroic conquests translations; socialist regimes would underwrite socialist realism translations. The 'manipulation' thesis posited in 1985 evolves into 'cultural construction' of the anthology in your hand. The present analysis is much more sophisticated and complex than some of the early ideas, but the ideas posited then have held up to academic and cultural scrutiny.

The *Manipulation of Literature* contained significant contributions by Bassnett and Lefevere. In 'Ways Through the Labyrinth: Strategies and Methods for Translating Theatre Texts', Bassnett suggested including more semiotic markers — gestures, lighting, sound, silences, etc. — than just verbal signs in her methodology for translating drama texts. One can see the development of her thought over the past decade in the essay 'Still Trapped in the Labyrinth' that follows in the present volume. Lefevere contributed the essay 'Why Waste our Time on Rewrites? The Trouble with the Role of Rewriting in an Alternative Paradigm', in which he lays out his concept of 'rewriting' — a genre that includes interpretation, criticism,

anthologising, as well as translation — and shows how all rewriters operate under constraints of poetic norms and ideological beliefs inherent in the target culture. We see the development of his pioneering ideas in essays such as 'Translation Practice(s) and the Circulation of Cultural Capital: Some *Aeneids* in English' and 'Acculturating Bertolt Brecht' in the essays that follow in this book.

A real breakthrough for the field of translation studies came in the 1990s with the collection of essays titled *Translation, History, and Culture*, co-edited by Bassnett and Lefevere. It was then that translation studies officially took the 'cultural turn', the authors redefining the object of study as a verbal text within the network of literary and extra-literary signs in both the source and target cultures. As Bassnett notes in Chapter 8, 'The Translation Turn in Cultural Studies', that follows, she and Lefevere were suggesting that such a redefinition of the field

could offer a way of understanding how complex manipulative textual processes take place: how a text is selected for translation ... what role the translator plays in that selection, what the role of an editor, publisher, or patron plays, what criteria determine the strategies that will be employed for the translators, and how a text might be received in the target system.

While many scholars were inching toward the cultural turn in the early 1990s, Bassnett and Lefevere were the first to articulate the position. In the explosion of events that have followed, Bassnett and Lefevere again have led the way.

In 1992, Lefevere published not just one, but *three* books on translation: *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*, *Translation/History/Culture: A Sourcebook*, and *Translating Literature*. In addition, he published them not with obscure firms, but with major publishing firms such as Routledge and MLA Press. The books sold well, and the boom in translation studies was on. New journals such as *The Translator* and *Target* sprang up. Conference activity increased all over the world, including England, Holland, Poland, Finland, Spain, Austria, Brazil, and Canada. New publishing firms got into the market, e.g., Kent State University Press in the USA or Jerome Publishing in England. Old series were revived, such as the Rodopi Series in Holland. Encyclopedias of translation studies were developed in England, Germany, China, and elsewhere. Perhaps most significantly, translation studies entered academia, with new MA and PhD programmes starting at universities such as Middlesex, Massachusetts, Salamanca, São Paulo, and elsewhere. It is a shame that André Lefevere is no longer with us and is unable to see the fruits of the seeds that he planted.

In many ways, *Constructing Cultures* can be viewed as a celebration of André Lefevere's life and work. Everyone in the field, most deeply Susan Bassnett, perhaps his closest colleague and friend, is saddened by his passing. With difficulty and great care, Bassnett has collected and edited his final words in the shape that follows here.

The explosion of thinking and writing on and about translations has made it hard for anyone to keep up. For those recently discovering the field, Bassnett's and Lefevere's *Constructing Cultures* offer a variety of essays that reflect the evolution of the field: these essays address the most recent developments in theory, in cultural studies, in translation research (called descriptive studies by translation studies scholars), and in teaching translation. Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere also continue to push the boundaries of the definition of the field of translation studies. This book is not just a collection of essays and talks presented at colloquia of the past and/or previously published in journals. Rather, it presents new and unpublished material, either in the form of new work the two of them had presented in process at closed seminars of the graduate programme at the Centre for British and Comparative Cultural Studies at the University of Warwick, or radically rethinking and revising positions taken in previously published essays.

Constructing Cultures begins with three new essays: first, the introduction co-authored by Bassnett and Lefevere entitled 'Where are we in Translation Studies?'; then the first chapter by Lefevere entitled 'Chinese and Western Thinking on Translation'; and next the second chapter by Bassnett entitled 'When is Translation not a Translation?'. The co-authored introductory essay combines a blend of translation history followed by a new set of questions and openings for future research. It also contains the central thesis of the book, and answers a question those who first pick up the book might ask. Why is a book by two prominent translation scholars called *Constructing Cultures*? The answer indicates just how far translation studies has evolved since 1978. Translators, argue Bassnett and Lefevere, have always provided a vital link enabling different cultures to interact. The next logical stage posited by Bassnett and Lefevere is not just to study translations but to study cultural interaction. Perhaps the most obvious, comprehensive, indeed empirical data for studying cultural interaction are the translated texts themselves. To do so, Bassnett and Lefevere posit three models for studying translations that they have found useful: the Horatian model, in which the translator tends to be faithful to his/her customers, i.e., the target audience; the Jerome model, in which the translator tends to be faithful to the source text, in this case the Bible; and the Schleiermacher model, which emphasises preservation of the alterity of the source model

for the target reader. Rather than suggesting that one theory of translation is valid across cultures and time, Bassnett's and Lefevere's multiple models are helpful for studying translations in different cultures during different periods. They also offer new critical tools to enable such study, such as the concept of 'textual grids' derived from the work of Pierre Bourdieu. A textual grid is understood as the collection of acceptable literary forms and genres in which texts can be expressed. For example, Chinese novels have their own set of rules, rules which differ from the ways in which novels in Europe tend to be constructed. These 'grids' cause patterns of expectations in the respective audiences, and both practising translators and in particular literary historians need to take into consideration such grids in order to better produce and/or analyse translations. Of most interest in the introductory essay are the set of questions Bassnett and Lefevere ask. For example, why are certain texts translated and not others? What is the agenda behind translation? How are translators used by those in control of such agendas? Can we predict how a given translation might function in any given culture? The future of the field is bright, according to Bassnett and Lefevere; areas for future research include, among others, the study of the history of translation to better relativise the present, the study of postcolonial translation to better re-evaluate Eurocentric models, and the study of different kinds of criticism, anthologies, reference works, as well as translations, to see how images of texts are created and function within any given culture.

In Chapter 1, 'Chinese and Western Thinking on Translation', André Lefevere shows how a textual grid might help scholars doing comparative analysis. He views the concept of translation historically, showing just how culturally dependent our Western definition is. In a fascinating essay that juxtaposes the history of translation in the West and China, we see that our definition (white, Anglo-Germanic) of translation may not be as universal as some theorists speculate. Lefevere compares a system in the West in which translations are invariably written by a single author and read in silence by single readers to a system in China in which translations tend to be oral in nature, often translated by teams of scholars, and frequently recited and/or chanted publicly. In the West, he suggests, the 'original' text always consciously or subconsciously looms behind the translated text, whereas in China, the translated text often *replaces* the original, with the reader asking few questions about the 'original'. Lefevere examines powerful institutions that may shape such sensibilities such as the Roman Catholic Church in the West and powerful emperors in China. As a result, Lefevere forces the reader to see that our very definition of translation as a kind of language transfer is embedded in larger systems or grids that define

and limit our practice to a greater degree than hitherto imagined. Only by taking a step back from the immediate language transfer process, and by taking the larger institutions involved in cultural construction into consideration can the scholar begin to see the nature of the role translations play in cultural construction.

Lefevere continues to explore the usefulness of the concept of a textual grid throughout the book that follows. For example, in Chapter 5, 'The Gates of Analogy: The *Kalevala* in English', Lefevere examines the construction and translations of the *Kalevala*, a collection of Finnish oral poetry, a kind of Finnish national epic, to show how readers and critics consciously and unconsciously submit to a culturally constructed concept of an acceptable form for national epics, a 'grid' influenced by our concept of Homeric epics or Nordic epics. Lefevere argues that submitting to such a grid that underlies our notion of 'world literature' is particularly important to literatures written in languages less widely spoken. If a nation wants to be recognised as a nation among world nations, as was true of Finland in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, then constructing a national epic is one of the main requirements. Lefevere shows that that very construction was exactly what a series of Finnish critics and translators set out to do. Quoting *Kalevala* translator Keith Bosley, Lefevere points out that the Finnish historians who constructed the epic were 'concerned less with fidelity to sources than with the validation of a national culture'. Ironically, because of the predominance of the Swedish language in Finland at the time, the very scholars who constructed the Finnish epic had to do so using *Swedish* at first, the only literary language they knew. For lesser-known languages such as Finnish, Czech, Flemish, Gaelic, such a ironic twist is not unusual; their revival is often dependent upon translations from Swedish, German, French, or English to bring them into existence. In 'The *Kalevala* in English', Lefevere shows that both critics such as Lönnrot and translators such as the first two English translators very definitely use grids such as those of the classical Nordic epic to manipulate the original to conform to what readers typically associate with classical epics. This kind of research on the role translations play in emerging nations is one of the most exciting contributions of translation studies scholars. Pioneering work by translation studies scholars such as Lefevere provide us with models from the past that will have enormous influence on cultural studies and identity formation in the future.

One of the most fascinating texts illustrating the phenomenon of the construction of a national epic via translation is James Macpherson's translation of *Ossian*, a Scottish national epic, right around the same time Finnish scholars were constructing the *Kalevala*. The only problem was that