

翻译简史

A Brief History of Translation

孙迎春
／ 主编



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泽无水,困。君子以致命遂志。

——《周易·困》

地中生木,升。君子以顺德,积小以高大。

——《周易·升》

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

—— Theodore Savory

Rewritings can introduce new concepts, new genres, new devices, and the history of translation is the history also of literary innovation, of the shaping power of one culture upon another. But rewriting can also repress innovation, distort and contain, and in an age of ever increasing manipulation of all kinds, the study of the manipulative processes of literature as exemplified by translation can help us toward a greater awareness of the world in which we live.

—— Susan Bassnett, André Lefevere, “General editors’ preface” to
The Translator’s Invisibility: A History of Translation by Lawrence Venuti

Such metonymies are to be found in the way that translation is always a partial process, whereby some but not all of the source text is transposed, and in the way that translation represent source texts by highlighting specific segments or parts, or by allowing specific attributes of the source texts to dominate and, hence, to represent the entirety of the work.

—— Maria Tymoczko, *Translation in a Postcolonial Context*

前言

英语语言文学专业翻译简史方面的教学目前尚无正式的以英文撰写的教科书,因此许多学校不开此课,而作为一种基础知识,翻译简史课又是必修课。笔者喜欢历史,深知人文学科的研究必须植根于历史的道理,自1997年以来一直为硕士生开设翻译简史课,教材选自《中国翻译简史》(马祖毅,中国对外翻译出版公司,1984)、《西方翻译简史》(谭载喜,商务印书馆,1990)、《翻译研究论文集》(中国翻译工作者协会,外语教学与研究出版社,1984)、*Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (《翻译研究百科全书》,Mona Baker, Routledge, 1998)等多种著作。原作用汉语写的,用汉语讲授;原作用英语写的,用双语讲授。十多年来,笔者一直在考虑是否该进一步有所作为,并于2009年初向山东大学研究生院申报了英文本《翻译简史》项目,很快得到支持,获准立项。

本教材是一部用英文撰写的《翻译简史》,力图在以上所述著作基础上进行扩展,从更多的书籍和文章取材,丰富授课内容。有了英文教材,教师可以在英语单语授课、英汉双语授课之间进行选择,使更多的学校能够开设这门翻译方向的必修课,既可以促进翻译史知识的传播和翻译史研究,又可以为史学爱好者提供一种新的精神食粮。

英语语言文学专业一般分为“英语语言”、“英美文学”、“英汉翻译”三个大的研究方向。在英汉翻译方向,翻译简史是必修课,正如研究英美文学不能不学英美文学史,不懂文学史就无法研究许多文学现象。同理,研究英汉翻译的理论与实践,如果没有必要的翻译史知识,也只能浮于表面,弄不清某些翻译思想、概念、学说、方法的来龙去脉,难于提出具有深度的见解。有时还会弄出笑话,把历史上早就提出过的观点当做新见解提出、论述。割断历史不是做学问应有的态度。当代的某些见解并不是全新的,而是渊源有自,如“翻译竞赛论”,从观点上看是大约两千年前古罗马时产生的。那时罗马帝国侵占了西方文明的摇篮希腊,大肆掠夺其物质、文化财产,结果精神产物在翻译行为中也成了战利品,人们在政治、军事行为中的态度被转移到了翻译过程中。原文中的意义被看成了战利品,可由战胜者任意处理。似乎是生命本身在言说着

一种翻译理论,典型代表是昆体良(Marcus Fabius Quintilianus, 35?-95?)。他在其著作《演说术原理》中表达的思想是,“罗马人在一切翻译、写作中,都必须与希腊人比高低。他说:‘我所说的翻译,并不仅仅指意译,而且还指在表达同一意思上与原作搏斗、竞争。’这就是说,翻译也是创作,这种创作必须与原作媲美,译作应力争超过原作”。(谭载喜,1990:26)这种言说,代表着当时罗马征服者的一种普遍心理,里面清晰地映射出当时的翻译与政治、军事、文化的关系。

意义的理解与传达,始终是翻译的核心问题。20世纪以来的翻译实践不论在规模上还是在种类上,都发生了巨大变化,然而仍有学者将翻译看做 aggression(入侵),只是解释得更加详细,形成系统,且不无道理,得到不少响应。可见,翻译历史告诉人们的,所能够给予学子的启发,远远超出了人们的想象。翻译是历史的一部分,研究翻译不能脱离历史。“学而不思则罔,思而不学则怠。”学自然包括历史知识的学习,任何一门学科,缺乏必要的历史知识,都会影响当前的学习与研究,翻译学科尤其如此。翻译简史的设置,作为翻译方向的一门必修课,其在学科中的重要地位和对于研究生、翻译专业本科生知识结构形成与学术探究能力培养的重要作用显而易见。

本教材分为中国翻译简史和西方国家翻译简史两个组成部分,按常见历史分期划分为不同的章节进行叙述。希望它在翻译方向研究生、翻译专业本科生培养中能够发挥作用,其主要特点如下:

1. 本教材所用语言为英语,语言风格追求简捷、准确,达意传神。这就要求,对英语原文做大量综合、简化、概括的处理,对汉语原文在同样加以综合、简化、概括处理的同时,做到信、达、雅高标准要求的编译加工。
2. 具高度的综合性,以我国翻译史和英、美、法、俄、德等西方主要国家的翻译史为主体,附以必要的具有较高价值的其他国家史实。
3. 以翻译实践的发展和叙述为主线,同时渗入比较研究的精神,对不同理论和翻译观的提出及其发展予以清晰的反映。
4. 本教材既是翻译方向研究生的主干课,又可用做翻译专业本科生教材或一般文化知识学习的辅助性材料,使更多的人对作为文化组成部分的翻译史有所了解。
5. 可以英语单语教学,亦可将此书用做英汉双语教学的基础或教学参考书。

本书的编写出版得到了编辑于长金,天津师范大学外国语学院张智中、袁朝云,江苏淮阴师范学院外语学院陈霞、高雷等学者的大力支持,我们在此向他们表示衷心的感谢!全书的完成是多所高校学者精诚合作的结果,具体分工如下:孙迎春(山东大学威海分校翻译学院)负责撰写引言、第一、二、三、九章和结语,并负责组织、审订工作;翟清永(山东科技大学外语学院)负责撰写第四章;第五章主要由李气纠(湘南学院外语系)负责撰写,其中“5.2.3 中国古籍英译”由崔莹辉(山东大学威海分校翻译学院)撰写;李莹莹(合肥工业大学外国语学院)负责撰写第六、七章;黄远鹏(山西中北大学外语学院)负责撰写第八章;孙昌坤(山东大学外语学院)负责撰写第十章。

中国和西方两大翻译传统,起源不同,沿着各自的路线运行,互相独立,而因所属社会文化体系不同打上了迥然相异的烙印,形成了特色鲜明的两种翻译体系。它们之间有许多相似的翻译思想,也有无数的差异。我们在本书中将这两大翻译传统并置在一起,是希望学习者用比较的方法进行阅读,通过认真的思考,对翻译和翻译学各个方面的问题了解得更加深透、全面。当然,二者之间也有不可比性,因为中国是一个国家,西方是数十个国家,层面不同,可见这个问题相当复杂。所以我们的态度应当是既比又不比,在比中发现差异,认知翻译的性质与规律;同时,不该比时就要戛然而止,不要比丢了自信心。中国作为一个拥有数千年文明的国家,在译学上对世界的贡献具有独特性,故而在向世界各国译学传统学习的同时,也要特别珍视自己的译学传统,注重其继承与发展,传播与交流,让世人都来分享它。

七言打油

咏译

共和创建六十年, 世界瞩目实堪赞。七行八作万马奔, 通事象寄非等闲。
美言不信创艺术, 信言不美象映直。老氏之辨尤在耳, 偏美偏信均不然。
名从主人孔子曰, 物从中国圣人说。小辨之论莫求疵, 国主自有国主责。
摩腾鸠摩传佛学, 四谛真言入我国。西天求法显玄奘, 贞观盛世太宗决。
佛光普照中华地, 梵文携来西人意。落户汉地三居一, 大肚能容万千骑。
科学翻译利玛窦, 天主之教东来求。数理译祖徐光启, 千载国史一名有。
耶稣会士厥功伟, 若望怀仁可歌悲。万历皇帝虽可赞, 译祖之梦终成灰。

七千西书惜逸译，廷筠呼号未达意。放难收易是清廷，引发后果难移易。
 华事夷言林则徐，开眼观世数第一。海国图志魏源纂，窥知西政自兹始。
 代数学出李善兰，王韬导经出华天。善译之议马建忠，镜花水月译书院。
 形下之粗严复批，天演之论国人议。翻译标准信达雅，西学圣人例言立。
 译书之风炽且烈，启超首冲意切切。时务国闻见南北，书生意气亦豪杰。
 可怜一卷茶花女，译书大王数林纾。纯属偶然操译笔，桐城之风吹译书。
 侦探小说出桂笙，忌率忌泥高论生。直译窃恐未必解，量为变通意译经。
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 茅盾巴金郭沫若，语堂傅雷张谷若。钱锺书出化境论，根深蒂固神似说。
 宓庆载喜暨黄龙，自俭正坤许渊冲。探究译理各逞能，不一而足朝气生。
 翻译学科今已立，茫茫九派光熠熠。民族之林若立欲，信息之世更靠译。
 开放之路小平导，锦涛家宝智慧高。中华崛起惊世界，六十华诞在今朝。
 他族之异不可忽，译在学异靠译艺。大道隐形若小道，译学绝非形下粗。

这是笔者为中华人民共和国建国六十周年所作的一首打油诗，录在这里意在对中国翻译史的杰出主人公进行咏歌，出于方寸，发自肺腑，俾与爱史者交流。

孙迎春

2010年8月于

东海之滨耳顺室

Introduction

It can be imagined that in both the Chinese and the Western traditions, translation seems to have begun with the interpretation of oral discourses, rather than the transference of written texts. Since the first tribal battle or produce-exchange there has been interpretation. If man has a history of two million or so years, then interpretation must have continued for the same length of time. The recorded history, of course, is incomparably shorter. This short recorded history, however, concerns us closely, so it is the object of our research.

In the 3,000 years from the Zhou Dynasty to the present times, the bread-and-butter of the Chinese translator's work has always been chiefly in government and commerce. There are extant poetry translations dating back to at least the fourth century BC, but these early literary translations were mostly recorded as part of the experience of various diplomatic missions, for instance, records concerning the diplomatic activities in the Xia and Shang Dynasties. And much later, during the Tang Dynasty (618-906), a period in which cultural exchanges between China and her neighboring states reached new heights, a considerable number of foreigners who lived in China were employed as government interpreters and were allowed to accompany Chinese officials on diplomatic missions. There have been periods, however, when translation played a crucial role in China's cultural and social development, going far beyond the confines of government and commerce. The most significant of these periods relate to the translation of Buddhist scriptures, to the work of Christian missionaries and their Chinese collaborators who translated hundreds of scientific, cultural and religious works, and to the political and cultural events leading to the May Fourth Movement, and the emergence of the People's Republic of China and subsequent international contact, especially with Western countries.

But translation and interpreting have also had a role to play in China outside of such peak periods and, apart from the major languages involved in those periods, a significant number of Chinese books have been translated from the eleventh century onwards into such languages as Mongolian, Western Xia, Manchurian and Japanese.

The recorded material told us that the Western history of translation began in the third century BC, when the Old Testament was rendered in the City of Alexandria, 285-249 BC, by 72 Jewish scholars. The translation in the West has

gone through 5 major periods, including (1) ancient times; (2) Middle Ages; (3) The Renaissance; (4) modern times; and (5) contemporary times.

It is attempted in this book to give a brief account of the history of translation. The task seems too arduous since the materials are so huge in quantity and there are so many countries, figures, events, and theories to be considered. For the practical purpose of providing the Chinese students at various levels, especially candidates for the degrees of bachelor and master of translation studies, with valuable information, attention will be paid to figures who made great contributions in translation, especially those who were also theoretically strong, and to events which played an important role in cultural development.

The Chinese traditions are utterly different from those of the Western countries in terms of source and course of development. Based on disparate philosophical bases, different cultures may, of course, complement one another. When people of different nations try to know and learn from one another, translation is indispensable. Translation traditions, reflecting a variety of culture, will certainly provide people with much useful knowledge.

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Part 1

A Brief History of Chinese Translation

Chapter 1 Embarkation and Buddhist Translation

1.1 Embarkation

A vast country with scores of regional languages, China has probably witnessed interpreting activities since the first tribal battle or produce-exchange. Early historical works such as *Ce Fu Yuan Gui* (《册府元龟》^[1]) contain many references to translation of Xia (2070-1600BC) and Shang (1600-1046BC) Dynasties in the context of diplomacy and commerce, but they were all too brief to give a clear glance at the past events. When it was the Zhou Dynasty, in the ninth century BC, there were special government officials in charge of interpreting and translation work; their titles varied according to the group of languages they covered. In the section “Kingly Institutions” of *The Book of Rites* (《礼记·王制》) there were recorded the titles for officials in charge of translation of languages of nationalities which were east, west, south or north of the region where the Han Nationality was:

Peoples from different places are different in language, ideology and customs. There are officials specially responsible for communication among them. The ones in charge of translation involving the eastern peoples are called *ji* (寄), of the southern, *xiang* (象), of the western, *diti* (狄鞮), and of the northern, *yi* (译).

They were government interpreters, generally called *sheren* (舌人). This term was well given since it literally meant ‘tongues-man’ and the tongue was certainly indispensable in communication. They were always present at meetings with foreign emissaries. The current Chinese word for ‘translation’, *yi*, forms the basis for the official title adopted since the Han Dynasty (195BC- 7AD): *yiguan* (译官) or *yishi* (译史), literally ‘translation official’. Historical records also show that during the Han Dynasty, translators/interpreters (*yizhang* 译长) were routinely employed by merchants on their long trips to South-East Asia and India;

they were also present in the merchant caravans bound for states to the north-west of China. “Yi”, of the four titles, became a general reference which has been used up till now simply because interlingual communication in politics and military affairs with the northern nationalities was the most important.

Lu Aigong (鲁哀公) was once interested in translation and asked the opinion of Confucius (551BC-479BC). Sage Kong thought Lu was head of the state, so he should learn such important matters as rites and music for administration instead of such minor Dao as Xiaobian (小辨, used to refer to translation). If there were foreign affairs he could simply ask an interpreter to “convey words”. Chen Fukang commented, “What Confucius said indicates, on the one hand, he had realized translation could play the part of filling the gap between peoples who employ different languages; on the other, it reflected his contemptuous attitude toward translation since he called it ‘xiaobian’.” (陈福康: 13) This author, however, does not think Confucius was wrong. The head of a state should certainly pay attention to politically important things and, if he strives to become a translator, the day when he arrives at his purpose a duke will be lost in the birth of a translator.

The earliest appearance of translation theory was, perhaps, the phrase “names should follow their bearers and things China.” (名从主人, 物从中国) In other words, names should be transliterated, while things rendered by meaning. The theory was raised by Confucius in the second year of Huangong (桓公). It was raised mainly as the way of recording object names when a historical book was written, however, it was also a principle applicable to the translation of names. Two thousand years later, when they discuss the transliteration of names, such scholars as Zhou Zuoren (1885-1967) still put “names should follow their bearers” as a general principle without rousing any controversy. It can certainly be seen that this idea of Confucius is full of vitality. He was four or five hundred years earlier than Marcus Tullius Cicero (106BC-43BC), one of the most famous earliest translation theorists in the West.

1.2 Buddhist Translation (from Eastern Han Dynasty to Song)

The first wave of translation activities in China came in the wake of the spread of Buddhism. By the middle of the second-century AD, the first Chinese translations of Buddhist sutras had been undertaken. This marked the beginning of

a massive translation movement, often sponsored by the government, which lasted for nine centuries. Given the time span and the number of translators involved, translation methods and approaches did not remain static, and of course, some in sightful theories were raised; even the cultural and linguistic background of the translators changed considerably over the centuries. It should be said that Buddhist translation, in terms both of historical material and theoretical research, has contributed a lot not only to the Chinese but the world culture.

Sakyamuni (释迦牟尼) was called Buddha because he was believed to be the Enlightened one, i.e. the name Buddha meant such in the ancient Indian language. The date of his birth and death is still controversial, one branch of Buddhism, spread north, putting it as 565BC-486BC. At the age of 29 he was fully enlightened concerning man's birth, senility, illness and death, and became Buddha.

Buddhist translation in our country began in the Wei-Jin period. Some say *The Buddhist Sutra* (浮屠经), others say *The Sutra of Forty-Two Sections* (《四十二章经》), was the first translated Sutra, but the one that can be certainly assured was *Ming Du Wu Shi Jiao Ji Jing* (《明度五十校计经》), translated by An Shigao (Parthamasiris 安世高) in the period of Huandi of the Eastern Han Dynasty.

The translation of Buddhist sutras from Sanskrit into Chinese can be divided roughly into three phases: (1) Eastern Han Dynasty and the Three Kingdoms Period (c. 148-265); (2) Jin Dynasty and the Northern and Southern Dynasties (c. 265-589); and (3) Sui, Tang and Northern Song Dynasties (c. 589-1100).

1.2.1 Eastern Han Dynasty and the Three Kingdoms Period (c. 148-265)

During the first period, the translators were monks from Central Asia and Xinjiang, generally called Western Region (西域) at that time; the majority were respected for their religious knowledge, but they were very poor in their command of the Chinese language and their knowledge of Chinese culture. Monks like An Shigao from Parthia (西域安息, transliterated as 帕提亚), said to have achieved a fair command of Chinese not long after his arrival in the country, were few and far between. This linguistic disadvantage was reflected in the translations produced during this period: although the foreign monks had the assistance of their Chinese pupils or counterparts, many of the translations still read awkwardly. Moreover, a large number of the early Chinese Buddhist translations were not based on Indian texts, but were indirect translations via sources in the monk-translators' mother tongue.

One of the two earliest translators, An Shigao was said to be the crown prince

of Parthia. He came to Luoyang in 148 during the reign of Emperor Han Huandi, starting the Buddhist translation by rendering in more than 20 years 35 books, including 22 volumes, of which 22 books, including 26 volumes, are still in existence. What was translated consisted mainly in the basic doctrines and ways of practicing Xiao Cheng Buddhism.

The other was Zhi Lou Jia Chen (支娄迦讖) from Yuezhi (月支) in the Western Region. Knowing Chinese, he translated by the Zhong Ping Year of Emperor Han Ling Di (184-189) 3 books, including 14 volumes, which were all Da Cheng scriptures. The process was a collective effort, for instance, *Bo Ruo Dao Hang Jing* (《般若道行经》), present title *Xiao Pin* (《小品》), was recited by Zhu Fo Shuo, rendered into Chinese by Zhi Lou Jia Chen, dictated and edited by Meng Fu. These were mostly transliterated in order to preserve the original feature.

An Xuan(安玄) from Parthia and Yan Fodiao(严佛调) from Lin Huai, Jiangsu Province also did work worth mentioning. Zhu Shixing (朱士行), however, was the first true Chinese monk and the first one who went west for acquiring Buddhism. He was from Yingchuan, Henan Province, starting from Chang'an County (长安县) in 260, sending his disciple Fu Ru Tan (弗如檀) to carry 600,000-odd characters of Scriptures back to Luoyang from Yu Tian (于阗) in 282. He passed away in Yu Tian at 80.

The early translation method reflected the strength and weakness of the translators of this period, as well as the emphasis placed on theological accuracy. Translation Forums, or *yichang*, were set up, with a highly revered Buddhist monk as Translator in Chief (*yizhu*). The foreign monk's task was that of explaining in detail the precise meaning of the texts. Under the foreign monk were one or more interpreters (*duyu* or *chuanyu*) conversant with the monk's language; their task was to interpret the monk's explication into Chinese. In the audience were scores, sometimes hundreds, of Chinese monks and lay scholars who recorded in note form the foreign monk's explication. The Chinese translation was then compiled by the Recorder (*bishou*) — the person responsible for writing down the Interpreter's words in Chinese. The process involved consulting not just the Recorder's own notes, but also notes taken by others in the audience. The three steps of interpreting, recording and checking were the basis for all Translation Forum work. It was obvious that the forums were not only meant to produce Buddhist texts in Chinese, but were also a kind of intensive seminar on Buddhist sutras, and it was not unusual for the Chinese text and a detailed annotation to be produced

simultaneously. Because of the strong theological emphasis, the foreign monk — despite his lack of knowledge of the target language — was always billed as the Translator, while the person who did the actual writing in Chinese was credited as the Recorder.

The one worth emphatic depiction was Zhi Qian (支谦) although Kang Senghui (康僧会) was brilliant in his work in Sun Quan's Wu Kingdom. Zhi Qian was from Yue Zhi, a grandson disciple of Zhi Lou Jia Chen. The end of Eastern Han witnessed turmoil and chaos of war in the area surrounding Luoyang, so Zhi Qian went with his relatives to the Wu Kingdom in Southeast China, where he was engaged as doctor by Sun Quan after much difficulty. Zhi Qian attached great importance to elegance and brevity, replacing transliteration with paraphrase. Striving to get the favor of the Chinese readers, his versions had certainly the defect of not being very faithful to the original. Nearly all important philosophical concepts came from the Chinese classic *Laozi*. He was criticized vehemently by critics of later generations, the translation style he started, however, occupied a dominant position during the period from the Three Kingdoms to the Western Jin Dynasty, Buddhism being widely spread. "Comparative translation" (会译) was first created by him, i.e. retranslation on the basis of comparing two older versions. Adding notes in the version, besides, was also started by him.

The third year of Huang Wu (224) saw Wei Zhi Nan (维祇难) bring *Fa Ju Jing* (《法句经》) in a western language to Wu Chang and begin to turn it into Chinese with Zhu Jiang Yan. Later Zhi Qian learned the sutra from Zhu Jiang Yan and started to correct and retranslate the book. He criticized the latter for his "not being familiar with Chinese although conversant in the Indian language. His version, therefore, either rigidly followed the Indian or gave only the speech sounds instead of the meaning, presenting a style of being simple and direct" (Preface to *Fa Ju Jing*, cited as in Ma Zuyi, 1998:29), Zhi criticizing the version as "not elegant in wording" and, as a result, leading to an argument between the two schools of elegance and directness. Wei Zhi Nan refuted, saying:

"Buddha says that it's unnecessary to decorate in transferring the meaning, that the ways are to be followed flexibly, and that it will be all right if the sutra translator is capable of turning sutras in a language easy to understand without losing the sense." All present agreed: Lao Zi says, beautiful words are not true while true words not beautiful; Also, Confucius says, what is written cannot exhaust words to be spoken, and what is to be spoken will not possibly give all