

A Review of Chinese Translation of Biographical Literature (1949 - 1978)

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Abstract

Biographical literature is one particular type of literary work centering on the story of the biographee's life, presenting truthful description of the main characters and their experiences. This paper probes into the characteristics and strategies of the biographical literature translation in Modern China (1949-1978), demonstrating that the selection of what work, whose work and whom the work is depicting to translate is overtly affected by the following three factors: ideology, poetic and patronage. The translation orientation in the early days of the founding of P.R. China can be summed up as politics-oriented. A large number of translators prefer Soviet literature and domesticating translation method due to the special diplomatic environment and the constraint of contemporary condition. Although the "Cultural Revolution" has brought an indelible damage to the translation course and the subjectivity of translators were greatly depressed, there are still many translators who undertook the historical responsibility for carrying forward to translation course, having left quite a few classic translated works for later researchers to explore, such as *Celebrity biography* translated by Fu Lei and *Karl Marx* translated by He Feng. Through a comprehensive review of the history of Chinese biographical literature translation from 1949 to 1978, this paper also innovatively proposes a reflection on the translation cause at that time and its enlightenment to the contemporary translation circle.

Keywords

Biographical literature; Translation history; Translation approaches.

1. Introduction

Biographical literature refers to literary works that focus on describing a life or a relatively complete life by taking specific characters in history or reality as the main subject and considering narration as the primary approach of expression. In other words, biographical literature is one particular type of literary work centering on the story of the biographee's life, which often concerns certain philosophy of biographee's life through the truthful description and narrative of the main characters and experiences, aiming to inspire readers to have an extraordinary willingness to appreciate their remarkable life experiences and be reminiscent of their achievements. In addition, biography is the product of the joint role of "history" and "literature", so biographical literature is historical, authentic, literary and aesthetical [1]. From the perspective of the translator, the translation of biographical literature seems to be challengeable since it texts the translator's professional ability as well. Translation of this kind of genre not only requires the translator to follow the historical nature and authenticity of the work and retain the mainstream thought in the source works, but also requires the translator to give full play to the initiative, subjectivity and creativity in translating, managing to stimulate the vitality, interest, literature and aesthetics through the translation of biographical literature.

In late Qing dynasty, with the impact of the wave of “West Learning”, western theories were notably absorbed, and Modern Chinese Biographical Literature gradually stepped into the threshold of modern literature. It has been deeply marked with the brand of national culture in spiritual essence. Since the late 19th century, tremendous changes have taken place in China’s social and economic status as well as the cultural ideological trend. During the period of the Opium War to the founding of The People’s Republic of China, China has formed the social-cultural ideological trend of enlightenment, saving the nation from subjugation especially among some advanced intellectuals. Literary authors and translators began to translate and introduce western biographies, among which, the autobiography of authors, artists and politicians have become the primary choice for Chinese translators [2]. For example, the autobiographies of eminent people such as Rousseau, Goethe, Franklin, Tolstoy, Duncan, Gorky or Byron were introduced into China gradually. After the founding of The People’s Republic of China in 1949, Chinese translation boomed with national rejuvenation. As a link and bridge with the outside world, translation was attached great importance by the central and local governments of New China.

During 1949 to 1958, under the influence of New China’s foreign policy and socialist ideology, the Soviet (Russian) literature and art works translated and published in China occupied most of the foreign literature translations at the time. Statistics show that during the 17 years from the founding of the People’s Republic of China to the eve of the “Cultural Revolution”, the total number of foreign literary works that being translated and published was not less than 100 million. From 1949 to 1966, there were roughly 3500 kinds of Soviet/Russian literary works published by Chinese, accounting for the primary of the foreign works of literature published during that period [3]. Since 1958, the relation between China and Soviet began to deteriorate while the socialist ideology in China was re-strengthened, and became a leading guide in people’s cultural and political life, setting off an upsurge in the translation of Asian-African and Latin American literature. It reflected the anti-colonial trend of thought in China at the time and its support for the anti-colonial struggle among Asian-African and Latin American [4]. From the mid-1960s to the late 1970s, the translation research in mainland China almost desisted in consequence of the disorder and errors of the “Cultural Revolution”. The traditional translation cause suffered a great setback, and fell into a stagnant period of development. A large number of translators were forced to drop out of translating career on account of that they did not conform to the mainstream ideology of the time.

There have been three times in the history of Chinese translation climax: the translation of buddhist scriptures during the Late Han Dynasty to Tang and Song Dynasty, the translation of science and technology between Ming and early Qing dynasty, and the translation of western works during the Opium War to the “May 4th” Movement [5]. In 1978, the national policy of reform and opening witnessed the fourth translation climax in the history in China. The subject, type and depth of translation were greatly enlarged, so as to improve the position of translation [6]. However, as for the period between the third and fourth translation climax, researchers do not carry out continuous studies in depth, and are more inclined to observe the characteristics of translation history during the period features of stable social development and prosperous translation industry. As a matter of fact, during the period of 1949-1978, the translation course developed toughly in hardship, which was imprinted with unique marks of the time and laid a foundation for the vigorous development of translation after the reform and opening.

Following the development of modern Chinese translation as a clue, this research aims to review the translation history of western biographical literature in China from 1949 to 1978 systematically and probe into the characteristics and strategies of biographical literature translation, in order to figure out what and how translation strategies and methods were adopted in particular historical period. In addition, this paper is going to explore merits and

demerits of such trend of translation as well as its contributions and enlightenment to the current China translation circle.

2. Characteristics of the Translation of Western Biographical Literature

2.1. The Politics-oriented Translation

Ideology and national policies have to be taken into account in the purpose of biographical literature translation from 1949 to 1978, when the situation at home and abroad has undergone tremendous and irreversible changes, which has also exerted an indelible influence on the translated work in China. The impacts of ideology on political factors mainly involve the institutional difference, domestic and international situation, mainstream thought in social-cultural background and some economic factors such as the patronage and client. Briefly speaking, the translation policy in China during 1949 to 1978 can be summed up as politics-oriented one that was completely subject to political needs and served for political purposes, especially impacted by the particular diplomatic policy.

“The subordinate status of translation to political needs could be attributed to the Marxist opinion concerning art and literature” [7]. As China and Soviet both belong to the socialist camp and Soviet was the first socialist country in the world, the relationship between two countries developed even much closer and friendly from 1949 to 1966. Considering the confrontation between the two camps headed by the Soviet Union and the United States, China chose to adopt “The Learning-to-One-Side Diplomatic Policy”, which indicated “The Soviet-learning Translation Policy” later [8]. Hence, it’s no doubt that Chinese government strongly encouraged translators to translate the literature from Soviet or other socialist countries. Zhou Yang(1958), the leader of the Chinese cultural circle in that period, also stated that the pressing task for literary and art workers was to popularize Soviet literature and art among the Chinese people as “The glorious new culture created by the great Soviet people has improved human civilization to an unprecedented new altitude” in his report on the Asian and African Writers Conference. Some venerable translators such as Bian Zhilin, Ye Shengtao and Mao Dun also manifest partiality towards Soviet Literature in their published articles. Those politics-oriented translation have implied that China was eager to follow the way of Soviet not only in politics or economy, but also in culture as China strove for being striking and respectable in the world.

From the “Cultural Revolution” in 1966 to the collapse of the “Gang of Four” in 1976, domestic translation course at the time began to appear the lowest point in Chinese modern history when many prestigious translators, such as Lao She, Fu Lei, Feng Zikai, Xiao Shan and Man Tao were persecuted and died one after another. Translating foreign literary works was denounced as worshipping the foreign world and propagating capitalist revisionism. “Most of the excellent foreign literary works previously translated and published were isolated in bookstores and libraries as poisonous weed, and even the Soviet literature works that were once held up as models also criticized for its tendency toward revisionism. The field of translation theory research is almost empty” [9]. During this period, the disconformity against the mainstream consciousness is ultimately attributable to the reasons for silence of translation studies in China. The impact of politics and ideology on translation reached its peak in this period, and the purpose of translating works was more strikingly politics-oriented. In this special period centering on political life, the translation of literary works has only one purpose, that is, to serve the class struggle. “ It not only serves as a tool of struggle between different political groups within the ruling party, but also serves as a tool of struggle between different political parties in the world” [10].

As the translation was required to serve artistic creation as well as the revolution at the time, translation policies carried out by the government exerts great pressure and manipulation upon translators and their selection of translated works. It can be seen that both national

leaders and translators always maintain a nationalistic stance when exposed to foreign cultures, believing that translation bears a sacred political mission. The purpose of translation is to make the foreign culture localized, whether for the positive propaganda, or the criticism of divergent materials. The fundamental goal is to serve the political and ideological needs, which exerts the effect of anti-imperialist and anti-capitalism trend.

2.2. The Soviet-dominated Translation

The influence of Soviet was so profound that the selection of translation of biographical literature was overtly determined by Soviet from 1949-1966. Whose work is going to be selected and translated depends on their status in the Soviet Union, instead of on the basis of their own qualifications [11], which means only the literature works that were in accord with the dominant ideology could they be chosen by translators. Among the translation and introduction of Soviet literature works, the 19th century Soviet realistic literary works featuring idealism, patriotism, revolutionary heroism have been highly valued in China, and works of Pushkin, Tolstoy, Turgenev, Dostoevsky and Chekhov account for a large proportion, most of which are mainly about criticizing autocracy, eulogizing freedom and advocating humanitarianism, and were conformed to the cognition of intellectuals in China.

As a member of the socialist countries, China followed the Soviet pattern in several aspects, encouraging domestic translators to translate literature from Soviet. The quantity of translated Soviet literary works was impressive from 1949 to 1966, which covers approximately 65% in category and more than 70% in number of all foreign translated works [12]. Obviously, British and American literature in this period of capitalist countries cannot be a typical positive classic to learn, but the negative works [13]. Despite the deterioration of Sino-Soviet relations in the late 1950s and early 1960s, translation of Soviet Literature decreased dramatically, and “the translation of the literary works of Asia, Africa and Latin America countries experienced a boom”[14]. Nevertheless, in general, during the period of 1949 to 1966, the popularization and propaganda of Soviet literature became a distinct trend. Many researchers, as translators of Soviet literature, made great contributions to the popularization and propaganda of Russian literature. There are a large number of translated Russian and Soviet literature works and it's prominent and common that there are always multiple translations of the same books translated by different prestigious translators. For instance, the biography Karl Marx was translated by quite a few translators such as He Feng and Li Ji since 1949, which provided a detailed introduction of Marx's life and the systematic introduction of Marxist theory.

2.3. Admiring Realism and Revolutionary Hero

Chen Nanxian claimed that during the 17 years after the founding of New China, social critical power from Leo Tolstoy was especially emphasized and advocated among Chinese literary circles. His affirmation of the moral critical power in his works undoubtedly provide a proper theoretical premise and a good literary model for Chinese new literature. His trilogy of autobiographies, *Childhood*, *Juvenile* and *Youth*, was the beginning of his realistic literary career. It is said that the deep inner confession, the dialectics of the soul, the strong sense of morality, as the identifying symbols of Tolstoy's whole creation, all first appeared in these three early works. Famous translators such as Liu Liaoyi and Xie Sutai attached great importance to Leo Tolstoy's literary works and autobiography, hence translated or retranslated his classical works in succession, which were published by the People's Literature Publishing House. In addition, the People's Literature Publishing House published Han Ling's translation of Turgenev's *Commentary Biography* written by Postovoy in 1959, and in 1962, Shanghai Literature Publishing House published Turgenev, written by Bialk while translated by Mao Xiaolu. The themes of intellectuals' goals in Turgenev's novels and the description of barbarism and barrenness of the rural world coincide with the inherent appreciation habits of Chinese literati. Turgenev paid high attention to human emotional value and affirmed their loving rights,

which could always arouse the psychological resonance of Chinese literati [15]. Besides, lots of modern writers have been influenced by Chekhov, whose works undoubtedly provide a literary model with artistic appeal and critical thought for the Chinese new literature, which takes short stories as its main form. For a long time, while commenting on Chekhov, Chinese scholars tended to focus on the description of the misfortunes of the small potato, exposing the social darkness and criticizing some popular trends of thought in pursuit of a new life. They emphasized the social criticism indicated by Chekhov, while ignoring the criticism of national culture mentality [16]. Chinese Publishing House has also published Communications Collection between Chekhov and Gorky in 1950 and Chekhov Notes in 1953.

In addition to the biographies depicting the life of eminent literary figures and written by authors who manifested great favor in realism and criticism, the biographies describing experiences of outstanding political figures have also become the target of translators' competition for translation. For instance, from 1949 to 1956, He Feng translated the book Karl Marx written by Engels, Cao Jinghua translated The Story of Lenin and Stalin, Yang Bingchen translated The Biography of Tang Ruowang written by the German writer Wilt, Jin Jin translated the book Buster from the French author, Dourais, and Fan Ping translated A short biography of Chairman Mao Zedong written by American writer Snow in virtue of Mao Zedong's dictation. Different from sheer literary translation, these biographical translations of political figures regards political significance as priority rather than literary aspects.

The biographical literature that translators chose to translate ought to have a correct and positive value orientation, which would give full play to the function of social education and cultivation. Most importantly, it should be in accord with the mainstream ideology and policy at that time. The translated biographies of political and revolutionary figures highlight the personal charm and integrity by depicting the legendary and impressive life stories of the biographee, setting a good model for the target readers and strengthen their faiths [17].

3. Translation Paradigms

3.1. Impressionalism and Harmonious Methods

"The Artistic Conception Theory" (意境论) was put forward by Mao Dun in National Conference on Literary Translation in 1954, in which he stated that the fundamental task of literary translation is conveying the artistic conception of the source text. That means the status of the translator is as equal as the original author, and what the translator has to do is being innovative in forms and expressions in translating while being completely faithful to the original author's intentions. So it emphasized the significance of the manifestation of "artistic conception" in source text so that audiences would be inspired and moved by the translated text just as they were reading the source work. In order to attain the goal of artistic and creative translation, Mao Dun claimed that translators are required to be equipped with richer and broader life experiences than before, from which they could gain much inspiration. What's more, translators ought to make their own translation get rid of the particularity of the grammar and vocabulary of the source text, so that translated texts would be presented in a pure mother tongue language, and faithfully convey the content and style of the source text [18].

The well-known scholar and translator, Fu Lei put forward "The Spirit-Alike Theory" (神似论) due to the actual recognition of social-cultural differences between China and the West and the divergent principles of aesthetics. Aiming to solve these contradictions, break the barriers between Chinese and Western languages in translation and faithfully translate the source text, Fu Lei took the literary works conformed to the political ideology and were in line with the trend of social development as well as the needs of readers into consideration. Accordingly, Fu Lei believed that "being faithful to readers is being faithful to the source work" [19]. Based on this theory, the translator should strive to pursue the harmony between the source text and the

target text in language, structure and style, and the consistency between the translator and the translation in artistic manifestation rather than in literal consistency, that is, to pursue the equivalence between the translation and the source text in connotation and impression, and to reform the language and syntactic structure of the source text in Chinese style.

Qian Zhongshu raised the standard like “Sublime Realm Theory”(化境论) in translation practice, developed by the translation standards “faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance” established by Yan Fu in the late Qing Dynasty. He explained that the highest standard of translation was to maintain the source implications in source texts, preserve the source’s flavor and show no trace of stiffness at the same time. Applying the domestic language and style, the translator is recreating a new literary work in translation rather than sticking to literal translation or stiff translation [20].

“The Holism Theory” (整体论) put forward by Jiao Juyin highlights the concept of ensemble. He indicated that translators should take the function of the linguistic discourse of a unified whole into consideration. It infers that only if translators comprehend the theme, flavor, and ideas of the source texts on the basis of the holism view could they further master the source author’s ideological process, comprehend his ideology, position, attitude, spirit, national and local characteristics and thus understand his personal special technique of expression. In other words, he emphasized that the translator must focus on the center and theme of the text, from the whole to the part, so that the whole translation can be organically coherent and active. “Jiao Juyin’s Holism Theory has made great contributions to the theory of text translation and has important theoretical significance and practical value” [21].

Chinese features in the characters that are most metaphorical and highly impressionable, emphasizing on implication and comprehension, instead of prescribed regularities [22]. The traditional Chinese translation thought is historically influenced by the proposition of Confucianism and Taoism, emphasizing the aesthetic harmony between the source and target text. Inheriting and developing the traditional Chinese translation principles, the above four influential translators also pursued the sensitive comprehensions of the charm, perception and impression, so as to achieve the harmonious aesthetic fusion between the translation and the source text. After the founding of the PRC, the new China would have a task of rebuilding. In the face of the crucial moment of cultural transformation, translators took on the historical responsibility of propagating Chinese culture not only at home but also at abroad, advocating for the balance of connotation, form, effect and perception with the source text, promoting readers’ appreciation of Chinese culture.

3.2. Translators with Multiple Identities and Low Subjectivity

At the turn of the foundation of China, a large number of scholars who were not originally specialized in translation have also begun to study translation for better introducing foreign excellent literary works into China. Most of these translators have multiple identities. For example, besides being a translator, Mao Dun is also a famous modern writer, literary critic and social activist. Guo Dali, who worked as a politician and economist, translated quite a lot Marxist works. Philosophers Ai Siqi and He Lin translated some philosophical works, and Jiao Juyin translated quite a few dramatic works as a dramatist. On the one hand, these translators did well in translating foreign literary works of their own fields of expertise, leaving unique translation ideas which have transmitted from generation to generation. On the other hand, their own artistic views and creative experience will inevitably affect their understanding of the essence of translation theory. As a result of the unbalanced development and inferior research quality of linguistics at the time, people found it hard to elaborate rules and characteristics of translation from the perspective of linguistic theories, so many translators basically discussed translation theories from the perspective of literature and art, and mainly carried out theoretical research on literary translation [23].

During the Cultural Revolution, a large number of translations adopted collective signature, weakening translator's subjectivity greatly and marginalizing the unique identity. According to the classification of Ma Shikui [24], there were mainly three forms of foreign literary translation from 1966-1971: First, the public translation which refers to works consistent with the trend of the mainstream and the consciousness of social ideology; Second, the internal translation, that is, the foreign literary works issued by the publishing house for just a few readers, mostly for the purpose of criticism; Three, the potential translations, which are namely works completed or almost completed during the Cultural Revolution but published after the Cultural Revolution on account of that they did not conform to the literary and artistic direction at that time. The formation of these three translations was determined by the degree of acceptance of the mainstream ideology. After 1956, those publishing houses and magazines were completely under the leadership of the relevant government departments in terms of the selection of translation topics and ideology [25]. Sometimes the government could act as the translation agent directly, praising the translated works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and other socialistic or realistic literature. The publication of Fu Lei's translated works later was incorporated into the publishing mechanism of the authorities and became more of a part of the cultural construction of the government. That means Fu Lei himself has virtually no right to decide when and how his translated work would be published, which was quite different from the free and private nature of his early translation and publication [26].

In short, the pressure and constraint came from the society and patronage deeply let those translators down and dampened their subjectivity in consequence of the Cultural Revolution. In line with the mainstream thought of "taking class struggle as the outline", most translators were devoted to the translation of the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Mao Zedong. Numerous anthologies of Marx and Engels were published during the past ten years. Nevertheless, a large number of translators were still persecuted and oppressed severely, resulting in the loss of individuality of translators and the consequent lack of vitality and diversity of translation.

3.3. Domesticating Translation Method

The American translation theorist Lawrence Venuti distinguishes between foreignizing method and domesticating method in his book *The Translator's Invisibility*. To sum up, foreignizing method requires the translator to get close to the original author and pay efforts to adopt the translation method corresponding to the source text while the domesticating translation method aims to minimize the exoticism in the target language and provide a natural and smooth translation for the target language readers. Significantly, Venuti believes that domesticating translation would lead readers to get used to accepting the natural and smooth translation which has hidden the values of the foreign text in the values of their own country, thus engaging readers to enjoy their own culture in a narcissistic way when are exposed to other cultures [27]. Retrospecting the history since 1949, it is obvious for readers to discover that the majority of Chinese translators tended to adopt the domesticating translation method, which requires the translation to be formed similarly with the target language and to be equally fluent and smooth, narrowing the gap between different languages. Especially "in poetry translation, it is almost impossible to imitate the source and translate literally. Therefore, translators began to notice the active creativity in translation. So-called 'The Spirit-Alike Theory' or 'Sublime Realm Theory' then came into being, which belongs to the extension of free translation essentially" [28].

Deeply influenced by literary and artistic schools and creative aesthetics, writers and translators who have been mentioned above all advocate artistic creation and emphasize the consistency of connotation with the source, which promotes the translation to be more fluent and in line with the readers' reading habits. They managed to make their translation not like translation, but like "rewriting". Just as Qian Zhongshu stated that the translation should be

faithful to the source and presented not like the translation but new creation, as the translation work will never read like the translation accordingly [29].

Although some foreignizing methods were also proposed by other translators, they are gradually drowned by the inexorable tide of history due to the conflict with the mainstream thoughts of translation at that time. "Formation of the national centralism and strong sense of national pride in the long term prompt the translator and the reader to translate or appreciate the translated works obeying the traditional culture and literary norms", resulting in the priority of domesticating method than the foreignizing method[30]. In fact, the closed state of Chinese society for a long time, the restriction of leading ideology in each period, and the limitation of readers' acceptance ability all have a certain influence on the translator's translation approached. In addition, as most Chinese translators at the time were also writers, who were deeply impacted by the aesthetics of literary creation, few of them concerned about translation theories or principles, and lacked of advanced and systematic translation theories to guide them. Of course, Western translation thoughts have not been widespreadly introduced to China at the time, which also ascribed to an objective reason for the weak theoretical concepts of Chinese translators [31]. Besides, the foundation of China witnessed a cruel reality that laboring people who were at the bottom of the social ladders were mostly illiterate. Striving for achieving the popularization of intelligence, and allow the readers get easier access to the outstanding foreign works, especially some biographical literature of revolutionary political figures from the socialist countries and thus enable the class of workers, peasants and soldiers to respect and admire them, domesticating translation could manage the interaction between the biographee and readers more effectively.

4. Conclusion

In general, the Chinese translation of biographical literature from 1949 to 1978 experienced a history of ups and downs, marked with particular stamps of the time. The translation policy in China from 1949 to 1978 can be summed up as politics-oriented one that was completely subject to political needs and served for political purposes. It is conducive to propagating political-correct ideas in society and maintaining the unity and stability of social order. Before the "Cultural Revolution" in 1966, the selection of translation of biographical literature including both the author and the biographee were overtly dominated by Soviet.

Relying on the diplomatic policy that China chose to stand side by side with the Soviet Union and adhere to the socialist road while against the western capitalist countries, it's doubtless that advocating the revolutionary spirits of the Soviet Union was quite reasonable, establishing the firm and justice stance of China on international stage. On account of the special social background, translated works admiring realism and revolutionary hero were highly praised and advocated. The translated biographies highlight the personal charm and integrity by depicting the legendary and impressive life stories of the biographee, setting a good model for the target readers and strengthen their faiths.

On the basis of inheriting and developing traditional Chinese translation thoughts, writers and translators such as Mao Dun, Qian Zhongshu, Fu Lei and Jiao Juyin have put forward their unique translation strategies that were impressional, which have exerted a profound influence on later generations. Such strategies that were similar to domesticating method strengthened the cohesiveness of the Chinese nation and provided a convenient and accessible opportunity for people who are still illiterate to appreciate foreign literary masterpiece. Since the "Cultural Revolution", translators' enthusiasm and option for translating literature was suppressed and their subjectivity suffered a setback. The disconformilty against the mainstream consciousness is attributable to the depression of translation studies in China at the time.

Having reviewed the translation history of Chinese translation of biographical literature from 1949 to 1978 systematically and comprehensively, this paper also come up with some reflections of the deficiencies on that during specific historical period as following:

First, varieties in selection were limited. Impacting by the situation both at home and abroad, it was no doubt to select biographies written by Soviet writers or depicting prominent Soviet figures to propagating politically correct ideas. However, the creativity of translators was greatly suppressed, especially after the "Cultural Revolution" that a large number of published translations of foreign literature were basically came from democratic countries friendly to China, which reflected and praised the socialist people's tenacious struggle against the Western invaders. At the same time, some classics from Europe or America were no longer as popular as before. The translated literary works were monotonous and biased.

Second, the study and discussion of translation theory among Chinese literary translation circles were still impotent in depth. Under most circumstances, the literary translator just took on the simple experiential and practical role, but failed to summarize in distinctive theory. Of course, it was related to the political situation at the time and the ability to do research on translation theory in domestic translation circle. Many translators, who were also writers or scholars, deliberately pursue spiritual likeness and smoothness, and few of them took translation theories or principles into account. As a result, they often follow their own feelings in translation without the guidance of advanced translation thoughts.

Last but not least, translation researches were mainly done in the form of texts. Since 1949, translators have paid more attention to the translation based on language and characters superficially, but neglected to consider other aspects involved, such as translation teaching. Meanwhile, in the early days of the founding of New China, there existed a disorderly phenomenon of retranslation or random translation, and due to the lack of a good command of a totally different language, translators were easy to make mistakes in mistranslation and obscure translation, which also reflected the uneven professional capacities of domestic translators at that time.

Historical experience have proved some tentative suggestions towards modern society. Today, translation is supposed to be the motivation and result of multicultural integration. Therefore, the construction of Chinese translation ought to open up to different civilizations in the world and closely communicate in economic, cultural, scientific and technological aspects. Then, translators should concentrate on the development of correlative disciplines as well, for translation activities cannot be isolated, but closely related to human politics, economy, science, technology and culture, playing the role of an essential bridge for the exchange of cultures and thoughts. Finally, after entering the 21 st century, translation becomes increasingly indispensable. Therefore, Chinese translators should undertake the responsibility of concerning about major practical problems both at home and abroad on the basis of inheriting and developing the experience of history, which not only promotes us to deepen our comprehension and cognition of the connotation of translation, but also evokes us to think about how to formulate and manage translation activities while facing the complex background in the large world of diversity.

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