

Research on the Historical Value of Yan Fu's Translation Thoughts from the Perspective of Historical Materials

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Abstract: As China's opening up to the outside world continues to accelerate, China's translation work has entered a new era. The research and discussion on translation thought is conducive to promoting the development of Chinese translation industry. On the basis of combing the previous researches on Yan Fu's translation thoughts, this paper analyzes the theoretical basis of historical materials and further explores the origin and intention of Yan Fu's translation thoughts. Finally, based on the perspective of historical materials, the author studies the historical value of Yan Fu's translation thoughts from the perspectives of inheriting the predecessors to inspire the descendants, laying the foundation of translation theory and improving the height of translation thought.

1. Research Background

1.1 Literature review

For the study of Yan Fu's translation thoughts, the domestic academic circles have formed a certain scale of literature. By comparing the new historical materials, Zhou Lingshun analyzes the inclusiveness and explanatory power of "Faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance" from the perspective of development. He found that Yan Fu's translation practice confirmed his translation thinking, and the essence of Yan Fu's translation can effectively guide translation practice (Zhou, 2006). Sun Jianlong compared Yan Fu's translation theory of "Faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance" with the "skopos theory" of the German functional school, and compared the origin, content, historical significance and limitations of the two positive translation theories (Sun, 2011). Li Guangrong regards the historical and social nature of translators as the basic point, analyzes the different aspects of the meaning of the text, and the meaning of the translators' practice, and finds that Yan Fu's value rationality is constructed in his translation, including other rationality, purpose rationality and criticism. Rationality, etc., can demonstrate the translator's subjectivity (Li, 2012). From the perspective of translation studies, Wang Yang analyzed the historical value of Yan Fu (Wang, 2013). Liu Yuwen and Hu Dongping explored the process of "elegance" in Yan Fu's translation standard from a philosophical point of view, using historical perspectives, contradictory law analysis and scientific development concept to analyze the "elegance" in translation (Liu and Hu, 2014). Through a comprehensive analysis of Yan Fu's "Faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance", the multiple links between translated texts and social historical contexts, Lu Shisheng found that the intrinsic connection between the three concepts of "Xin Da Ya" is the key to understanding Yan Fu's translation thoughts (Lv, 2017). Through in-depth analysis and numerous examples, Wang Yamin discovered that Yan Fu's translation style continued the lexical and syntactic structure of the pre-Qin style, absorbed the essence of the Buddhist scriptures and the style of the "Historical Records", and inherited the "Yajie" features of the Tongcheng School's ancient texts; the translation strategy is mainly By deleting chapters, adding comments, and rewriting translations, the ideas in the source text are optimized and disseminated, and the readability of the translation is enhanced (Wang, 2018).

1.2 Purposes of research

In recent years, with the gradual expansion of China's opening up pattern, the demand for high-quality translators at home and abroad has further expanded. Translators not only need to have

sufficient skills, but also the historical values and translation ideas embodied in Chinese traditional culture. In the research of translation thoughts, many scholars in China have carried out research, among which Yan Fu has the most research on translation. Among them, the most representative point is that Yan Fu established the first translation standard in the field of Chinese translation, namely “Faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance”. Moreover, in the translation field, Yan Fu's translation standard is the golden rule in translation work, and his translation thought has important historical value for the translation profession (Zhang, 2019). However, at present, the academic research on Yan Fu's translation thoughts covers a wide range and has many research perspectives. From the perspective of historical materials, there is very little research on the historical value of Yan Fu's translation thought. Based on this, based on the previous studies, this paper further analyzes the origin and intention of Yan Fu's translation thought from the perspective of historical materials, and further explores its historical value, in order to explore new ways to promote translation work.

2. Historical Basis of Historical Materials

Historical materials are subjects that analyze historical materials, analyze historical materials, and study historical sources, values, and methods of utilization. Historical materials research mostly focuses on the field of history, is a branch of history, and plays an important supporting role in historical research. Historical materials based on the common background of natural sciences and social sciences are not only a reference book for introducing historical documents and materials, but also involve a variety of research contents, including historical data collection, sorting, inductive classification and practical application. The general discourse is the context of historical materials. In the general discourse, it also includes a large number of factual expositions and related theories on specific historical materials. Among them, the viewpoints are obtained after rigorous and thorough investigation and research. The specific historical data is recorded by the researchers themselves. At present, although the academic circles have different opinions on the frame of the concept of historical materials, the understanding of their importance tends to be consistent. It is believed that historical materials are the science of collecting, analyzing, discriminating and studying historical materials. The study of the significance and value of historical materials mainly stays at two levels. The first is the introduction to historical materials, which mainly studies the general methods or specific laws of collecting, summarizing, sorting and analyzing historical materials. The second is the specific meaning of historical materials, mainly studying the historical sources, application methods and historical values of a particular historical period or specific historical figures.

3. The Origin and Intention of Yan Fu's Translation Thoughts

3.1 Translation thought source

In modern China, Yan Fu was the first scholar to translate Western bourgeois academic thoughts. Under the impact and collision of the Chinese native culture and the Western foreign culture, Yan Fu adopted the translation strategy of “adaptation and choice” from the end of the 19th century to the 1920s, and successfully translated the “Evolution of Heaven”. Most of the translation methods used in “Evolution of Heaven” are inherited from predecessors, that is, “the method of copying Buddhist scriptures in the Jin and Tang Dynasties.” For example, Yan Fu’s method of inheriting the translation of the Kumarajiva adopts the principle of not being subject to the original system, simply translating the original text and deleting the heavy parts. In his view of Lu Xun, this translation method is a mirror for translating Buddhist history in the Han Dynasty and the Tang Dynasty. The “expressiveness” and “elegance” are the essence of Yan Fu translation. In addition to inheriting the translation methods of the predecessors, Yan Fu's translation thoughts were inspired by the adaptation strategies of foreign missionaries during the Ming and Qing Dynasties, and benefited from the talented people of the time. In the early Qing Dynasty, some Western missionaries

promoted the spread of Western scientific knowledge by spreading Western religions. Therefore, Yan Fu adopted a translation method suitable for the translation of the ecological environment at that time, that is, “reduction”, “writing”, etc. This is the difference between Yan Fu and his predecessors' translation thoughts. Yan Fu is proficient in Chinese and foreign bilingual culture and international situation, and at the same time is very aware of the needs of China's economic development, so he used different translation methods to translate the eight famous books. For example, for the translation of social science literature, such as Buddhist scriptures, Yan Fu used “Faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance” to translate thoughts and standards.

3.2 Translation intention

Since the Westernization Movement, the ideas of progressive intellectuals have gradually changed, from the traditional mutated thought to the self-improvement ideology. In this context, the translation industry has been given a new historical responsibility. According to the theory of natural selection, Yan Fu pointed out that the powers outside the country are constantly approaching, and it is most appropriate to make changes at this time. Western powers have become powerful countries like this, and they have only used for about two hundred years, so we should also work hard. In *The Biography of Montesquieu*, Yan Fu pointed out: Montesquieu's division of government is derived from Aristotle. At that time, Chinese nationals such as homesicks and ordinary people believed that China did not have a “three-point” saying. This kind of argument was contrary to the ancient legal system, so they did not talk about it. Yan Fu, who studied abroad, had a good relationship with the students who were more active at the time, and studied the difference between the country and the Western academics. In the course of the research, “Sociology Research” became the work of Dr. Yan Fu. Yan Fu found that “Sociology Research” emphasizes that the study of fame and fortune and humility is the core of governance. This is similar to the viewpoints of ancient books such as “University” and “The Doctrine of the Mean”.

The translation of “Evolution of Heaven” is because Yan Fu wants to find ways to respond to human behavior in Darwinism and help the Chinese to break old ideas. Yan Fu believes that the wise men of the West understand the evolutionary process of human beings, but the Chinese are immersed in the ancient theoretical doctrine, ignoring the total knowledge at that time. Therefore, in order to achieve the country's prosperity, he deliberately defended Spencer, which reflects his patriotism. In the translation of “The Wealth of Nations”, Yan Fu added a lot of language. He believes that the trend of changes in Western social economy is generally consistent with Smith's theory. Specifically silent, Smith's advice to the government has led to the establishment of a sound free economic system in the UK. This kind of free economic system is also an important driving force for promoting the prosperity of the UK.

4. The Historical Value of Yan Fu's Translation Thoughts from the Perspective of Historical Materials

4.1 Undertaking the predecessors to inspire others

Judging from the historical data, before the Chinese translation industry was severely rehabilitated, many people had already started research and achieved certain results. The most prominent of these is the Buddhist scriptures translated by Dao'an during the Eastern Jin Dynasty. Shi Dao'an put forward the translation ideas of “five losses” and “three difficulties”, effectively solving the problem that the translation of Buddhist scriptures often encounters that cannot be translated. Moreover, her thought is the first theory in the field of traditional translation in China, which is the theoretical basis for the development of translation. In the late Tang Dynasty, China's translation industry gradually declined. Until the Qing Dynasty, Wei Xianggan proposed a positive translation in order to identify the advantages and disadvantages of the translation of the evaluation works, combined with all the previous Chinese and Manchu translation theories. Afterwards, Yan Fu summed up the excellent experience of many previous translation theories, and combined his thoughts on the social reality at that time, as well as the professional views on translation, put

forward the “Xin Da Ya” translation thought. This has added fresh blood to the development of China's translation industry. And with a large number of high-quality translation works, Yan Fu has received people's attention and recognition. Yan Fu's “Xin Da Ya” translation thought pays attention to ensuring the elegance and grace of literary decoration while accurately translating the meaning of the text, and has become the standard scale in the field of translation. Moreover, this translation idea has had an impact on many people. For example, Lin Yutang’s translation standards of “Faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance” are based on Yan Fu’s translation thoughts. From the perspective of historical materials, it can be seen that Yan Fu's translation thought is the existence of inheriting history and creating the future in the field of translation.

4.2 Lay the foundation of translation theory

In fact, before Yan Fu, many scholars in China have already expressed their opinions on translation. However, in general, most of these scholars only published their translation experience based on their personal translation practice. They did not give a systematic and scientific analysis of the translation work, nor did they propose a unified translation standard, or even proposed translation. concept. Most of their opinions on translation are the circumstance of translation work, and they have not played a significant role in the formation of the translation theory system. In contrast, Yan Fu's translation thoughts not only combines personal translation experience and understanding, but also analyzes and summarizes a large number of predecessors' translation ideas, and clearly puts forward the theory and standards of translation, including translation preparation, specific translation principles, and translation. Purpose and other related translation basics. Yan Fu's translation standards have a benchmark for modern translation majors. Moreover, through repeated detailed explanation and explanation, it laid the foundation for the establishment of the translation theory system. For example, Yan Fu clearly stated that the purpose and principle of translation work is to properly reflect the reader's views and needs on the basis of not distorting the original content, fully demonstrate personal cultural accomplishment, and ultimately influence the readers and even the masses' ideology through translation.

4.3 Translation thinking is highly enhanced

It can be seen in Yan Fu's translation works that Yan Fu not only regards translation as a conversion between different languages and languages, but also regards translation as a communication and collision between foreign cultures and ideas. Yan Fu has already raised the main work of translation from the category of writing and literature to the height of thought. Moreover, after continuous study and research, Yan Fu formed his own unique views and views on Chinese and Western cultures, and at the time belonged to innovative ideas. For example, in the translation of “Evolution of Heaven”, Yan Fu did not translate the full text, but only selected a section of the essence for translation. Moreover, in the process of translation, he highlighted the spiritual connotation and historical culture behind the work. It can be seen that Yan Fu's translation thought pays more attention to conveying advanced culture and ideology, which is a deeper level of thinking.

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