

The Embodiment of Behrman's "Transfiguration Tendencies" in the Translation of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* by Zhang Guroo

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Abstract: There are two translation strategies in translation: one is the faithful translation of the source language and culture, and the other is the domestication translation in line with the target language and culture. Based on Antoine Behrman's 12 transfiguration tendencies, this paper discusses and analyzes Zhang Guroo's naturalized translation of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* in terms of language and culture.

Key words: naturalization; twelve deforming tendencies; Literary translation; novel

1. The introduction

Tess of the D'Urbervilles is a novel by Thomas Hardy, the study of which is of great help to the comprehension of English literature and English culture. This main idea of the novel is that the decent and good-natured girl of Wessex, Tess, fights against all kinds of evil forces in society, but finally falls victim to so-called social morality. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* has been translated into Chinese in seven versions, among which the earliest version is created by Zhang Guroo and well received and extensively acclaimed by readers. After Mr. Zhang's translation was published by the Commercial Press in 1935, it was further refined in 1953, 1957 and 1984, and the final version was published by the People's Literature Publishing House in 2003. Zhang Guroo has always been revered as the

representative of the “naturalization school” (Sun Zhili, 2002). He has two translation principles: (1) The word-to-word translation is inadvisable; (2) Authentic original text is expected to be matched with orthodox translation. In the translation of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Zhang Guruo skillfully converted the Wesleyan language with the Shandong dialect of China, making the translation more expressive and smooth. In addition, there are a lot of four-character words and reduplicated words with Chinese literary flavor in the translation. This paper compares the original work of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* with the translation of Zhang Guruo published by the People's Literature Publishing House from the theoretical perspective of Antoine Behrman's twelve translation tendencies. Through the analysis of relevant examples, the paper is written to appreciate and analyze Zhang Guruo's naturalized translation and translation effect in terms of language and culture.

2. Antoine Behrman's “Negative Nnalysis” and twelve “Transfiguration Tendencies”

Antoine Berman is a famous theorist in contemporary France and a translator of Latin American literature and German philosophy. His major works include “The Experience of the Foreign: Culture and Translation in Romantic German”, “Translation and the Test of Difference” and etc. “Translation and the Test of Difference” exerted a profound influence on Lawrence Venuti, an American translation theorist. In 2000, Venuti translated Behrman's paper “Translation and the Test of Difference” into English, which made it widely spread in the English translation community.

2.1 Negative analysis

Behrman has published many insightful opinions in the field of translation criticism, believing that the analysis of translation should not be limited to the comparison between the original text and the translation, but should extend to the study of the original author, translator, reader and cultural background. He also suggests that translations often have a “text-based distortion system” that prevents heterogeneity from passing through. He called the analysis of deformation as “Negative Analysis”. “Negative Analysis is primarily concerned with ethnocentric translation, annexationist translation, and hypertext translation (mixing, imitating, adapting, and free-writing), in which the influence of transformational forces can be seen everywhere. (Berman 1985b/2004: 278).

2.2 Twelve “Transfiguration Tendencies”

On the basis of a long-term translation experience of Latin American novels, Behrman further proposed twelve “Transfiguration Tendencies” (Berman 1985b/2004:280). The author presents these twelve transfiguration tendencies in the form of a table and facilitates readers have a more intuitive impression, as shown in the following table (see table 1) :

Table 1

01 Rationalization	07 The destruction of rhythm
02 Clarification	08 The destruction of underlying networks of signification
03 Expansion	09 The destruction of linguistic patternings
04 Ennoblement	10 The destruction of vernacular networks or their exoticization
05 Qualitative impoverishment	11 The destruction of expressions and idioms
06 Quantitative impoverishment	12 The effacement of superimposition of language

According to “lexical units and discourse unit”, these twelve “Transfiguration Tendencies” of Behrman can be roughly divided into two categories (Mundy, 2006: 212-214; Jiang Wenjuan, 2010; Yan Xuanye, 2012). From the perspective of lexical units, transfiguration tendencies comprises qualitative impoverishment, quantitative impoverishment, the destruction of underlying networks of signification, the destruction of vernacular networks or their exoticization, and the destruction of expressions and idioms. From the perspective of discourse units, transfiguration tendencies contains rationalization, clarification, expansion, ennoblement, the destruction of rhythm, the destruction of linguistic patternings and the effacement of superimposition of language.

2.2.1 “Transfiguration Tendencies” in the perspective of lexical unit

Qualitative impoverishment: It refers the replacement of words and expressions with TT equivalents “that lack their sonorous richness or, correspondingly, their signifying or ‘iconic’ features” (Berman 1985b/2004: 283). By iconic or iconicity, Behrman means terms whose form and sound are in some way associated with their sense.

Quantitative impoverishment: This is loss of lexical variation in translation. Behrman gives the examples of a Spanish ST that uses three different synonyms for “face” (*semblante*, *rostro* and *cara*), rendering them all as “face” would involve loss.

The destruction of underlying networks of signification: The translator needs to be aware of the lexical system formed in the whole text. These words alone may be insignificant, but these seemingly unimportant words, such as affixes, can add unity and semantic integrity to the text as a whole.

The destruction of vernacular networks or their exoticization: This relates to especially to local speech and language pattern which play an important role in establishing the setting of a novel. There is severe loss if these are erased, yet the traditional solution of exoticizing some of these terms by, for example the use of italics, isolates them from the co-text. Alternatively, seeking a TL Vernacular or slang is a ridiculous exoticization of the foreign.

The destruction of expressions and idioms: It means the replacement of an idiom or proverb with the “equivalent” of the target language.

2.2.2 “Transfiguration Tendencies” in the perspective of discourse unit

Rationalization: This mainly refers to adjustment of syntactic structure, including punctuation, sentence structure and word order. For example, in Dostoyevsky's translation, certain repetitions are removed and complex syntactic structures are simplified.

Clarification: It includes clarification, which “aims to say ‘clearly’ what is not clear in the original text” (Berman 1985b/2004: 281).

Expansion: Behrman thinks that translated works are usually longer than the original ones because of the clarification of meaninglessness in the translation that disrupts the rhythm of the original, “over-translation” and “flat translation”.

Ennoblement: The translator “refines” the original text by rewriting it in a more elegant style.

The destruction of rhythm: The distortion of word order and punctuation results in a change in rhythm. It is mainly reflected in the translation of poems and plays.

The destruction of linguistic patternings: The original text may be systematic in sentence composition and structure, and the translation tends to be “non-systematic” (Berman 1985b/2004: 285). Translators usually adopt a variety of techniques (such as rationalization, clarification and expansion) to standardize the target text.

The effacement of superimposition of language: the translation attempts to eliminate the coexistence of different languages in the original text. There can be two or more common languages in the source text, such as the native language and other dialects, the surface language and the potential language. The coexistence of these languages poses a great challenge to translation and reading.

3. The embodiment of “Transfiguration Tendencies” in Zhang Guroo's translation of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*

Clarification: Translation is not only an art, but also a science. Translators should carefully study the different cultural backgrounds and customs of China and the west. Due to the differences between English and Chinese language systems and the differences between Chinese and English cultures, information supplement is often needed in English-Chinese translation.

In the process of translation, the translator should pay special attention to the differences between different cultures, which can be presented through translation and annotation to avoid ambiguity. In addition, the translator cannot add information arbitrarily, but only express the “self-evident” elements of the original text. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* covers a lot of knowledge of geography and folk customs, so there are numerous notes of clarification in the translation.

E.g. (1)

We can't get there anyhow, without walking right through it, or else going round the Turnpike way; and that would make us so very late.

依俺说，咱们想到教堂，不干脆从水里趟过去就不行；再不就得绕弯，走卡子路（注释：英国从前有些大道，路上安着带有栅栏收路税，叫做“卡子路”。这种制度，始于一六六三年。一八二七年以后，这种门渐渐取消，这种路都变成公路了）。

Example (1) describes the scene when Tess and her three partners went to church in Meretau and encountered the muddy morass after a heavy rain. In translation, the pronoun “it” is further explained and clarified, which is convenient for readers to understand the context. Besides, from the detailed notes, it is not difficult to see that Mr. Zhang Guruo conducted an in-depth and extensive survey of the road conditions in Britain from the 17th century to the 19th century, so as to accurately explain the origin of “Kazi road” and introduce the geographical culture of Britain at that time to Chinese reader. Such rigorous clarification and expansion help readers better understand the original text, enriched readers’ geographical knowledge. What’s more, it enables readers to have a clearer understanding of the rural environment in England at that time, and have a sense of immersive experience.

Ennoblement: In translation, more rhetorical expressions will be used according to the situation to make the translation more beautiful and thought-provoking.

E.g. (2)

Secondarily, he made close acquaintance with phenomena which he had before known but darkly—the seasons in their moods, morning and evening, night and noon, winds in their different tempers, trees, waters and mists, shades and silences, and the voices of inanimate things.

除此之外，他对于外界的现象，像季节流转、情态之不同；大块嘘吸、气势之各异，暮暮与朝朝，子夜与亭午，水之浩荡，雾之迷颯，草之滋蔓与黄落，木之盛衰与枯容，寂寂与悄悄，昏昏与暝暝，以及本来无生之物，却能听之有声——所有这一切，从前只模模糊糊地知道一点，现在也都有了亲切细致的认识了。

The translation adopts the sentence pattern of “zhi” in classical Chinese that appears simple and elegant, and employs the reduplicated words and four-character expressions with neat antithesis and harmonious phonology to express a sense of painting and poem. Such concise and comprehensive descriptions with extremely strong tension give us infinite art enjoyment and make the readers feel as if they are on the scene. In addition, this four-character expression is concise, exquisite and fluent but offers an omni-directional map of various situations in line with the needs of literary translation and Chinese rhetoric aesthetics.

The destruction of vernacular networks or their exoticization: Dialect is a product of regional culture, a variant of language with its own characteristics, which has an important influence on the shaping of characters and the description of story background. *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* is a typical Wessex novel with a large number of Wessex dialects. It is an uphill challenge for readers to understand the semantic connotation. Therefore, using localized dialect is a wise translation strategy. Mr. Zhang Guruo also puts forward that “original language should be translated into authentic language” (Zhang Guruo, 1980). Through a variety of comparative studies, Mr. Zhang Guruo found that the Wessex dialect and the Shandong dialect are close to each other in terms of elegant and vulgar expressions, so there are more bold dialect translations in the translated version to better help readers take in the text.

E.g. (3)

Oh, this you, Mrs Durbeyfield - Lord - how you frightened me-I thought it might be some gaffer sent by government.

哟，是你呀，德北太太.....俺的老天爷.....你可真把俺吓了个可知道!俺还只当是衙门里打发来的头儿脑儿哪。

In the source text, the proprietress of the Louriefan rural hotel does not have a business license, but secretly allows guests to drink at her house. Example (3) describes the scene that the unexpected visit of Tess' mother surprises the proprietress. Here, "lord" is translated as "laotianye", and "government" as "yamen". Chinese people tend to say "laotianye" when they are surprised, while westerners tend to call "lord" when they are frightened because they believe in Christ. Furthermore, "yamen" is a unique image in China. In ancient China, ordinary people would go to the yamen to handle any grievances they encountered, and there was no concept of government at that time. These two clever transformations make the translation more humorous and lifelike, which not only endows the translation with strong Chinese traditional culture, but also makes the expression more consistent with Chinese speaking habits, and the characters are vividly portrayed. Landlady is a rural woman who has lower social class and has not received any education. The translation successfully depicts the character image of a timid hotel landlady by using the authentic Shandong dialect "An" to hint the cultural level and social hierarchy of the character. As can be seen from all examples above, dialect translation can make the target text more close to the life of the target language readers and make them more receptive to foreign cultures.

4. Recommendations

Just as Sun Yingchun said, "If the original uses authentic language, translation should also be authentic accordingly" (Sun Yingchun, 2004). Therefore, when translating literary works, translators are suggested to allow a full play of their own creativity instead of being constrained by the words and syntax. Through exoticization, it is imperative to narrow the distance between the reader and work so as to add more colour and flavour to works.

5. Conclusion

Tess of the D'Urbervilles is an exotic literary work set in the remote and backward countryside of southwest England in the 19th century. This paper, based on the twelve "Transfiguration Tendencies" of Behrman, analyses the original work of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and Zhang Guroo's translation in Chinese in terms of occidental and oriental culture as well as expression habits of English and Chinese. Combined with specific examples, this paper studies how Zhang Guroo carries out domesticating translation with "Transfiguration Tendencies", and further appreciates the translation effect.

Throughout the whole text of the translation, there are mainly translation deformation strategies such as clarification, ennoblement, the destruction of vernacular networks or their exoticization, so as to successfully reproduce the local color of the original text. To be more concrete, clarification and supplementation of the contextual meaning of the vacancy can help readers better understand the text. Ennoblement gives full play to the language advantage of Chinese, and the use of the four-character expressions makes the article concise and comprehensive, and profound. The destruction of vernacular networks or their exoticization reshapes the local characters in the article, makes the translation full of

wit, and increases the readability and interest of the article.

In the process of English-Chinese translation, translators should pay attention to these twelve transfiguration tendencies, analyze the differences between Chinese and western cultures, comprehensively consider the translation effects that can be achieved with these transfiguration tendencies, and carefully select corresponding translation strategies, so as to maximize translators' creativity.

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