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Keep Harmony in Diversity: The Differentiation and Analysis of Creative Treason, Prejudice and Literary Misreading

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Abstract: The core concepts are the keys to understand the connotation of the disciplines, while the “creative treason” in Medio-translatology, the “prejudice” view in Hermeneutics, and the “literary misreading” in the Variation Studies of Comparative Literature have literally brought some confusion and doubt to scholars. In order to have a clear understanding of these disciplines, this paper uses the method of comparative study to distinguish the similarities and differences among the three, and presents their respective characteristics from the point of view of defining the concept, looking for similarities and differences, and exploring the characteristics of the discipline, by which some help and guidance could be given to later scholars. After the study, it is found that the three have something in common among objective neutrality, inevitability and recipient subjectivity, while the differences are mainly reflected in the research category, research purpose and research focus.

Keywords: Creative Treason; Prejudice; Literary Misreading; Similarities; Difference.

1. Introduction

Since the cultural turn of translation studies, the field of translation studies has become more and more extensive, and its interdisciplinarity has become increasingly more prominent, such as the cross with comparative literature, linguistics, sociology and other disciplines. Among them, as a new theory in the field of translation studies, Medio-translatology is developed from the media studies in comparative literature. Hermeneutics, as an all-encompassing philosophical theory, is one of the theoretical bases of Medio-translatology, and is also closely related to the study of The Variation Studies of Comparative Literature. In the book of Course of Comparative Literature, Professor Cao Shunqing included Medio-translatology into the theoretical framework of Variation Studies. Thus, Medio-translatology, Hermeneutics and the Variation Studies of Comparative Literature have inseparable internal relations.

The core concept of Medio-translatology “creative treason”, the “prejudice”in Hermeneutics, and the “literary misreading” in Variation Studies of Comparative Literature show a negative side literally, and many scholars are confused about these concepts. Therefore, this paper aims to clarify several key words in these three fields, analyze their similarities and differences, clarify their vague boundaries and research fields, as well as strengthen the understanding between disciplines.

2. Creative Treason, Prejudice and Literary Misreading

Admittedly, some scholars may be confused when seeing these concepts for the first time. For example, when referring to the conclusion that “translation is always a kind of creative treason", they would never combine "creativity" with "treason" and consider both "creativity" and "treason" as disloyalty or betrayal to the original text. "Prejudice" also means that people tend to understand it blindly and with subjective consciousness, that is, individuals are constantly assimilated by social groups under the influence of their living environment, and such personal prejudice is largely acquired through learning [1], and the "prejudice" view in Hermeneutics has its unique connotation. It is also conducive to the study of translator subjectivity in the field of translation. In addition, although "literary misreading" is one of the core concepts of Variation Studies of Comparative Literature, it is also closely related to Hermeneutics. And the "misreading" here does not refer to the wrong understanding due to individual subjective consciousness. Therefore, three core concepts, namely "creative treason", "prejudice" and "literary misreading", can be sorted out to grasp the subject connotation more clearly.

2.1. Medio-translatology: Creative Treason

"Creative treason" comes from the view that "translation is always a creative treason" put forward by Escarpi, a French literary sociologist. It is characterized by placing literary works in a completely unexpected reference system (language) and giving them a new look or even a second life [2]. Translation and communication was proposed by Professor Xie Tianzhen in the 1990s, and is now well known in the field of translation studies. The research focus of translation studies is not just on words and sentences in traditional translation studies, nor only at the language level, but elevates translation into a cross-cultural communicative behavior, focusing on ideology, literary concepts and cultural behaviors in other countries' cultural contexts [3]. It does not consider how to convert between two languages or how to make the translation correspond to each other as far as possible, but analyzes the understanding, acceptance and interpretation of certain phenomena by different groups and nations.

In fact, the two words "creativity" and "treason" reveal the essence of translation fundamentally: no matter how much the translator tries to approach the original text in translation, the translation and the original text cannot be absolutely equal, and there is always deviation to some extent [4]. This expression aims to emphasize that "creative treason" is not a means to guide translation practice, but rather a descriptive

study, an interpretation of cultural image changes, such as loss, distortion and addition. It focuses more on "why it is translated this way" rather than "it should be translated this way".

Xie Tianzhen's classification of this concept is very detailed. One is personalized translation, which indicates that the translator has his own translation style. For example, when translating Byron's poems, Liang Qichao uses Yuan Qu style, Ma Junwu uses seven Words ancient poetry style, Hu Shi uses Lishao stylem [3]. The second is adaptation and omission. The translator unintentionally deviates from the original text. For example, "Er ba" in poems is translated as 18 years old. Due to different cultural backgrounds, misinterpretation is inevitable, but it has important research value to reflect the collision between different cultures. Third, translation and compilation are the conscious creative treason of translators, mainly to cater to the interests of readers or recipient countries. Fourth, translation and adaptation, which belongs to a special type of creative treason, is often seen in translation during the May Fourth Movement.

In addition, the objects of creative treason research include readers, recipients and the receiving environment. On the one hand, the reader's creative treason comes from his subjective factors: World outlook, morality, literary concept, personal experience and so on. On the other hand, it also come from his objective environment, such as the word White Nights from French, meaning "sleepless night", while in the movie "White Nights" did not reflect the meaning of "sleepless", but a natural phenomenon. The recipient's creative treason includes both the reader and the translator. Since the reader's "translation" is based on the translator's translation, his "translation" is bound to be more creative treason than the translator's translation is compared to the original text [3]. As for the acceptance environment, generally speaking, the author always has a specific object in mind when he is engaged in literary creation. However, after the re-creation of literary translators, the works are put on the coat of another culture and introduced to the reading objects beyond his expectation, so the transformation of the works also occurs in such acceptance. For example, Gulliver's Travels is a political novel, which was translated into China and became a children's book. Cold Mountain Poems were not popular in China, but it became a hit when translated to the United States.

2.2. Hermeneutics: Prejudice

In the 1960s, Hermeneutics became a popular philosophical and cultural trend of thought in the West. After the turn of linguistics, the Philosophical Hermeneutics represented by Heidegger and Gadamer made the humanities get rid of the long-term rule of scientism, give up text-centered theory and turn to reader-centered theory [1]. Therefore, hermeneutics is endowed with the connotation of understanding and expounding human history and cultural activities as well as various literary texts.

The core concepts of Hermeneutics include "history of understanding", "fusion of horizons" and "prejudice". As for "prejudice", Gadamer claimed that "prejudice is not incorrect or wrong, nor is it inevitable to misinterpret truth and facts, but more reflects our tendency to open up to the world" [5]. In other words, "prejudice" means that people cannot understand and analyze the text with an objective thought in the process of interpretation or acceptance, which is mainly influenced by language, culture and historical background. Gadamer proposed "legitimate prejudice" and "blind prejudice" and his affirmation of "prejudice" is not to instigate people to pursue “blind prejudice”, but rather to recognize the historic, legitimate and inevitable nature of “legitimate prejudice”. It is precisely because "prejudice" will have its own characteristics with the change of history, and will give literature a variety of interpretation perspectives, it is also considered as one of the creative sources of authors or translators.

One of the contributions of hermeneutics is that it creatively takes understanding itself as the object of study and reflects on the subject's knowledge and understanding of the object. The bias in understanding, the preunderstanding, is not only the premise for us to enter the new text, but also the basis for re-creation in translation, because hermeneutics emphasizes that the interpretation of art or literature is not prescriptive. "Translation is interpretation" is the combination of hermeneutics and translation. Since hermeneutics is regarded as one of the theoretical cornerstones of translation and communication, Professor Xie Tianzhen mentioned that if understanding is the acceptance of the original text, then interpretation is a kind of elucidation of the original text, which makes everything unclear clear [3]. For translation, we can say that the translator is not only the receiver of the original text, namely the reader, but also the interpreter, namely the re-creator.

Hermeneutics has a profound influence in the field of translation, involving the translatability and untranslatability of translation, the diversity of translation, the impossibility of back translation and so on. The prejudice of understanding connects the works with the readers' own experience and imagination of the world, generates the reflection of meaning, and provides greater space and possibility for the dialogue between the readers and the text. Different readers make use of their pre-understanding structure to interact, communicate, adjust and integrate with it, and produce different interpretations and even different translations in the interaction between the two. This is also the reason why various real translations of a literary work will have their own characteristics and never be the same.

2.3. Variation Studies of Comparative Literature: Literary Misreading

The Variation Studies of Comparative Literature is a new theory of comparative literature proposed by Chinese scholar Cao Shunqing. The core of its theory is to take "heterogeneity" and "variability" as the basis of comparability of Comparative Literature, dig deep into the variability in the relationship between different countries, civilizations or disciplines, and then narrow the differences to realize the communication and integration of world cultures and civilizations [6]. Its research objects are very rich, including transnational variation, interlingual variation, cross-cultural variation, etc. It studies differences from the national, cultural and linguistic levels, focusing on "difference".

The phenomenon and nature of "cultural filtering" and "literary misreading" are particularly emphasized in the study of cross-cultural variation studies. The "misreading" mentioned here refers to the interpretation of art or literary works. People cannot accurately grasp the value connotation of text or art within a certain period of time, which is completely different from the misreading mentioned today. Professor Cao Shunqing pointed out that misreading is the product of the combined force of many factors in the process of cultural filtering, which exists in the whole process of

cultural exchange, and it is also the deep cause of the variation of foreign images [6]. However, misreading is not random. According to their own cultural environment and way of thinking, readers will choose national images that are easily accepted by them to transform and reconstruct texts or arts [7]. There are many factors that cause literary misreading, the most obvious one is the personal subjectivity of the receiver or the reader, then is the hermeneutic "historicity of understanding" that leads to bias and misinterpretation, as well as the innovation of misreading due to the difference and asymmetry of language.

The relationship between Variation Studies and Translation Studies is mainly reflected in its study of "interlingual variation". The exploration of the variation at the linguistic level and in the process of literary translation. Interlingual translation was once considered impossible. For example, Tetler once said that translating was like dancing with shackles on your feet. Schleiermacher also pointed out that the translator was approaching either the source language or the target language. Humboldt, as same as the two, showed that all translation was but the completion of an impossible task. What's more, Dao 'an also put forward the theory of "five lost roots" and "three not easy". However, Professor Cao Shunqing proposes that cross-language communication is possible, and that language develops more creatively as communication deepens, which means that translation in a broad sense is possible [6]. In terms of the relationship between translation and variation studies, translators should keep a balance between loyalty and treason, and on the premise of accurately conveying the form and spirit of the original text, carry out appropriate language variation on the original text to adapt to the acceptance of the target language country.

Hermeneutic master Gadamer integrated understanding and prejudice, and made scholars realize that the creation of human culture is in the process of "misreading" of understanding. The diverse perspectives brought by "misreading" make human culture move towards the profound and extensive historical construction. "Prejudice" and "misreading" are expressed in English or Chinese. All are simply different signifiers covering the same signified [8]. The relationship between Variation Studies and translation is mainly reflected in its study of "interlingual variation", that is, the exploration of the variation at the linguistic level and in the process of literary translation.

3. The Essence of Harmony in Diversity

After a careful analysis of disciplines and concepts, it is not difficult to find the connection among Medio-translatology, Hermeneutics and Variation Studies, especially the essential connotation expressed by several key words. Hermeneutics is one of the most prominent theories in philosophy. Its research object and field are very broad, and there is no lack of contributions to translation, literature or art. Medio-translatology and Variation Studies not only influence each other in the field of translation and comparative literature, but also involve other aspects such as humanity, language and society. Therefore, it is particularly important for beginners to sort out the relationship between the three. Clarifying the boundary and connection of disciplines is conducive to the development of interdisciplinary research. In this regard, the similarities and differences between several keywords will be analyzed.

3.1. Commonality and Relation

Commonality refers to the universal nature of different things. For "creative treason", "prejudice" and "literary misreading", they have the following commonalities:

First of all, the three are objective and neutral. Creative treason was introduced into Translation Studies from Comparative Literature, which is a neutral word after translation, even though its condition changing. Creativity and treason are without any emotional color because the two words in Chinese has positive and negative connotations. Professor Xie Tianzhen emphasizes that it is an objective description of the inevitable "deviation" and "deviation" between the translation and the original [4]. There is no such thing as good or bad creative treason, and we don't need to evaluate it as positive or negative. "Prejudice" refers to the process of understanding, in which people cannot understand objectively in a specific historical context. Gadamer called it "legitimate prejudice" to oppose what we now call "blind prejudice", and to emphasize the value and significance of its existence to people, especially the understanding of texts or works of art. In addition, "literary misreading" also does not have the meaning of praise or criticism. This kind of behavior constantly reveals the connotation and value of aesthetic objects in the process of interpreting texts, rather than intentionally destroying or causing academic chaos as a malicious misreading [1]. The willful misreading, distorted misreading and malicious misreading mentioned by Zhu Shoutong in his article can be in sharp contrast with the connotation of "literary misreading" here [9]. Therefore, they are all neutral words, not good or bad, and can be said to be several special ways for people to know and understand the world.

Second, inevitability. "Creative treason" profoundly reveals the nature of translation activities. It is impossible to be completely faithful to the original text in practice, and the inevitable gap between the target text and the original text also predestined the fact of "treason" in translation [10]. And Xu Jun also put forward that "as the works are placed in a different language and culture system, cultural gap will make treason in the translation process inevitable" [11]. In addition, the emergence of bias is also inevitable. From the perspective of the history of understanding, when a work enters another language and culture, the dislocation of spatial region and historical time and space will inevitably lead to the bias of understanding, as well as the phenomenon of misinterpretation [6]. In addition, for translators, such inextricable bias is actually a favorable element to help translators understand different cultures, rather than a negative hindrance [12]. "Prejudice" refers to the difference in perspective of things. In fact, "literary misreading" is essentially similar to "prejudice", that is, it is also inevitable to analyze from the perspective of "history of understanding" proposed by hermeneutics. Moreover, due to the inevitability of cultural filtering in cultural exchanges, literary misreading can be seen everywhere in the whole civilization interaction. Thus, all three are beings that are independent of individual will.

Third, recipient subjectivity. In translation studies, the objects of "creative treason" include the original reader, the target recipient and the environment in which the target language is received. Since readers' understanding is based on the translator's translation, readers are bound to be more

creative and rebellious than the translator's translation of the original text [3], that is to say, different recipients will have different understandings of the original text due to personal subjective factors, so the "creative treason" is also different. Similarly, "prejudice" is the understanding of an individual subject to something. People will be infected by a specific cultural language at birth and have different perceptions, which enables people to see the diversity of the world. In addition, due to the history of understanding, prejudice against past texts is a common phenomenon, and prejudice itself can be regarded as the expression and source of people's creativity, profoundly reflecting people's subjective initiative and creativity [13]. Therefore, no matter the object of interpretation is reader, receiver or translator, they all have their own unique thinking. "Literary misreading" is because different subjects, according to their own cultural traditions and thinking habits, will have understanding dislocation when interpreting heterogeneous cultures. This dislocation is the dislocation of both the output culture and the recipient culture [6]. That is to say, the process of the recipient's selection, penetration and integration of the source language culture leads to the substantial error of the two cultures, namely the formation of misreading. To sum up, the subject factor of the recipient is also one of the commonalities of the three.

3.2. Difference and Emphasis

First of all, the research scope is different. The term "creative treason" has been introduced into the field of translation studies from the field of comparative literature, focusing more on creativity and treason in literary translation. Literary translation uses artistic language with aesthetic functions, because literature is the only art limited within the language framework compared with other arts [3]. Therefore, "creative treason" is to appreciate and evaluate the artistry, creativity and rebelliousness in literary translation. For example, Wang Zuoliang's translation of Bacon's "Of Studies" is to creatively interpret a completely new cultural and aesthetic system. The starting point of modern hermeneutic theory, including "understanding" and "prejudice", is not aimed at translation, but mainly aimed at the understanding, interpretation and study of artistic works [3], such as theological hermeneutics, legal hermeneutics, literary hermeneutics, etc. In addition, the "literary misreading" of variation is an emerging theory proposed by Chinese scholars in the field of comparative literature, whose research objects include the differences between different countries, different civilizations and different cultures, not limited to literary or artistic works.

Second, the research aims are different. The concept of "creative treason" is put forward because Professor Xie Tianzhen believes that it reveals the essence of literary translation, and its purpose is to let translators or researchers understand and accept the essence of translation. At the same time, it also gives translation studies a new vision and Angle, which breaks out of the text framework and leads to cultural exchange. The difference between hermeneutics and translation studies is that its development is particularly rich, with different representatives and theoretical bases in different periods, especially Gadamer, who is headed by modern hermeneutics, put forward the concept of "prejudice" on the basis of Heidegger, aiming at understanding and explaining the world with "prejudice" and criticizing the standpoint and viewpoint of historicists. Gadamer suggests that the real priority of interpretation is self-criticism [14]. As the global culture tends to be diversified and comprehensive, there are often conflicts among different civilizations. Therefore, Chinese scholars put forward the theory of variation in the face of the differences and conflicts among civilizations. It mainly explores the relationship between different countries, different disciplines, different cultures and civilizations by focusing on differences, so as to realize the communication and integration of world culture and literature, and build a harmonious world of "harmony but diversity" [6].

Finally, the research focus is different. Professor Xie Tianzhen emphasizes that "creative treason" is concerned with the unique value and significance of translation (mainly literary translation) as a practical activity of cross-cultural communication [4]. In other words, it is concerned with the acceptance and dissemination of translations overseas as well as the translation effect. In addition, "creative treason" is represented by the creative behavior of the translation subject, which in a broad sense includes the original author, the translator, the reader and the receiving environment. In a narrow sense, it is aimed at the translator subject, while translation studies tend to study the translation subject in a broad sense. As one of the theoretical cornerstones of transliteration, the concept of "prejudice" in Hermeneutics is closely related to history. Gadamer believes that only time and distance can solve the critical problem of hermeneutics, that is, how to distinguish the legitimate prejudice (through which we understand) from the blind prejudice (which is caused by our misunderstanding) [14], that is, the "prejudice" view focuses on the art of studying history. For example, the meaning of a literary work has changed in different periods. The Variation Studies of Comparative Literature focuses on a word "cross-country", cross-civilization, cross-language and so on, mainly focusing on "heterogeneity", especially the conflict and reconciliation between different civilizations. If Hermeneutics and Medio-translatology focus on diachronic studies, then Variation Studies pays more attention to synchronic studies. Hermeneutics focuses on micro studies, while Medio-translatology and Variation Studies tend to be macro studies.

4. Understanding of Discipline Attributes Through Core Concepts

After a detailed analysis of the three core concepts of "creative treason", "prejudice" and "literary misreading", it is not difficult to find the common attributes of the disciplines behind the three concepts:

First, all three are clearly interdisciplinary. Since hermeneutics has the longest history, its interpretation of all literary works or art will also penetrate into different fields, such as "interpretation is translation", "the art of avoiding misunderstanding", "psychological interpretation" and so on. At the same time, hermeneutics can be regarded as one of the theoretical bases of translation and translation studies, and it has a common conceptual origin with the cross-cultural studies of variation. Originating from comparative literature, translation studies not only discuss translation in literature, but also studies literature in translation. However, it is also closely related to comparative literature variation studies. For example, the variability of "creative treason" in translation and variation studies are one of the practical aspects of translation studies, and both study the phenomena of image loss and misreading at the cultural level. Zhang Xiping said,

"Mr. Xie's 'creative treason' not only exists in the translation of literature, but also in the translation of history and philosophy" [15]. Comparative Literature is a cross-ethnic, cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary literary study, which goes beyond the scope of a country. In addition to the obvious intersection with translation, it also studies the relationship between literature and art (painting, sculpture, music, architecture), philosophy, history, social science, religion and other fields.

Second, all three are epistemology, not methodology. Heidgeger, the hermeneutic master, started from the traditional interpretative thought and elevated hermeneutics from the study of methodology and epistemology to the study of ontological properties. Gadamer then transformed hermeneutics from the methodology of spiritual science to a philosophical thought [13]. Modern hermeneutics believes that artistic texts are open, and the understanding and interpretation of artistic texts is also a process of continuous opening and generation [3]. The true understanding is not to overcome the limitations of history, but to properly adapt to and evaluate the world. In addition, hermeneutics has essential relation with the "logos" in western philosophy and the "Tao" in Chinese Taoist thought, all of which try their best to present an objective world for people and provide them with the Angle and method of understanding the world. The study of translation and communication has stepped out of the research field of traditional translation studies. It no longer guides scholars on how to do translation well or try to be faithful. On the contrary, it treats translation as an established fact and studies its influence and acceptance, giving researchers a new angle to study the heterogeneous culture. Looking at the Variation Studies of Comparative Literature, cultural conflict makes Chinese scholars take the lead in the field of comparative literature to put forward this theory, which is mainly to investigate the variability between cultural civilizations, in order to build a harmonious society. Due to the influence of history, culture, psychology and other factors, literature in communication, communication and influence is bound to produce variation [6], and the study of comparative literature variation aims to explore the causes and effects of literary variation. Just as translation studies will not teach translators how to "creative treason", mutation studies will not teach readers how to "misread" texts. Instead, it is more about explaining a phenomenon and exploring its cause and effect.

5. Conclusion

"Creative treason", "prejudice" and "literary misreading" may indeed cause confusion to scholars literally, but the differences and connections among these three keywords are thoroughly understood by means of concept explanation, seeking commonalities, emphasizing differences and exploring disciplinary attributes. After a detailed analysis of the concept connotation, it is not difficult to find that the commonality of the three is mainly reflected in the objective neutrality, inevitability and subjectivity of the recipient, while the differences are roughly reflected in the three levels of research category, research purpose and research focus. After clarifying several core concepts, this paper explores the attributes and connections among disciplines from the perspective of the small and the big, and finds that translation, hermeneutics and comparative literature variation show obvious interdisciplinarity, which is in essence cognitive theory rather than methodology.

In short, deepening the cognition of discipline concepts and strengthening the connection and research between different fields may be an important research direction for scholars in various fields in the future, which can not only enrich the discipline knowledge, but also serve as one of the key factors to promote the development of theories.

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