

Abstract

Memory is a mark of time; it on the one hand retrogresses and on the other hand prolongs our finite lives. But representing memory in verbal language generates problems of language as such and translation. It simultaneously calls forth the intertwined relationship between memory, the act of writing, temporality, and the nature of language. This dissertation concerns this complex relationship and furthermore attempts to explore the un/translatability of writing memory between different languages, namely, Western languages and Chinese.

Proust's *In Search of Lost Time* is exemplary in discussing the interwoven relationship; its Chinese translation opens a possibility to examine temporality in language, since, to translate a writing of memory from French with tenses into Chinese, a language without conjugation, evokes an unsolvable puzzle of translation. This puzzle of translation calls for a clarification of relation between different linguistic systems.

After the introductory chapter, this dissertation starts with a close examination of the notion of "translation." In deepening and widening the idea of translation, the aim is to seek a non-hierarchical relation between original and translation. The third chapter is devoted to historical and philosophical constructs of the relation between Western languages and Chinese. The framework of Western metaphysical discourses and discussions of historical construction prepare a base for the following two chapters, which allows us to read Proust from a translation perspective. Chapter four deals with the nature of memory and employs the idea of translation in its broader sense to show how experiences of the senses are translated in Proustian writing. The final chapter presents a comparison of Proust in French, English and Chinese. This comparison is meant to indicate multi-dimensional readings of Proust. By pointing out plural readings

of Proust, the role of translation as subordinate to the original is challenged—translation designates itself as an indispensable work. Chinese translation of Proust brings a different reading; it reincarnates Proust's memory in a non-phonetic language where the internal temporality of French is disfigured.

Keywords:

Proust, translation, philosophy of language, Being, time, Chinese, memory