

Comments on the Session 3

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The theme of this session 3, was “Divers aspects of translation”, and had done three releases.

① MIYAJIMA, Junko, “The Formation and Development of Chinese Buddhist Literature”

② SATO, Minoru, “Changes in the Translation of Terminology by Chinese Muslim Intellectuals: Is God Shan-di?”

③ HINO, Yoshihiro, “Chinese on the Internet: Case of Wikipedia’s Chinese”

These three releases correspond to the influences with three foreign cultures which came to China, and they also show the historic steps of the influences with the foreign cultures that China received. The releasing of Miss MIYAJIMA was the Chinese Buddhism acceptance in Han-Wei and Six dynasties era. Mr. SATO’s releasing was one about the Chinese Islam philosophy in Ming-Qing era. And Mr. HINO’s releasing was about the Internet of the present-day civilization.

In addition to these three releases, if there were a releasing about the Christian influence over China in Ming-Qing era, most of the foreign cultural influences to the Chinese culture would be described.

Here, the present writer wants to state a few, about “the translation”, of the main theme of this session. “The translation” is the fact to translate a foreign language into the vernacular language, namely, it is mainly a problem of “the language”.

However, to interpret resembles to translate, but they are different a little. It is because “the translation” is to translate “literature” mainly. Therefore, it is necessary the process to understand literature reflectively. In other words, the advanced and more intellectual understanding is demanded. Therefore, when some culture tries to accept the intellectual contents of the other culture, “the translation” working stands in the forefront. When seeing from the viewpoint of “negotiating with the other culture”, the work of “the translation” occupies the

position of the basis. In other words, if there is not “the translation”, it is impossible to negotiate with the other culture. But, the act to translate is accompanied by the act of reading the others one-sidedly. It had read the object which the receiver receives in his cultured context. The misunderstandings or the misreadings always accompany there. However, it thinks that these misunderstandings or the misreadings are actually very important (in case of actual translation work, the no-mistaken-translation is decided to better). It ordinary happens that when a text of one culture is misunderstood or misread by the other culture, where the new life force or the new type of energy occurs, which is different from original culture. At least, it thinks that there is not an exception in the history from 500 B.C., so-called the axis times, which Karl Theodor Jaspers said. For example, European modern philosophy is supposed and has been generally concluded, to have spread out only inside Europe, under the pure traditions of Europe, the Greek philosophy and the Christianity. However, it mistakes this explanation probably. If there is not an influence of the other culture, in the philosophical history from the enlightenment to near today, it doesn't seem to have spread out such dramatic as that.

By the way, as for today, mainly in the key word “the translation”, we had three lecturers, and we had talks about the problem, “the influence from the other culture in China”, from each viewpoint.

The 1st was Miss MIYAJIMA Junko's “The Formation and Development of Chinese Buddhist Literature”. As for this releasing, the followings were described. In the early stages of the Buddhism acceptance in China, the translation work was cultural negotiation itself. It argues that “the translation place (Yi-chang 訳場)” indeed became the place of the cultural negotiation. Also, when the times descended, it was described that the character of the translation changed. As for the direction of the change, when the Buddhism understanding by the Chinese moved ahead, the precision of the contents became sought than the ease to understand having to do with Chinese.

The release of Miss MIYAJIMA was broad, arguing that the translation was deepened gradually in case of acceptance of the culture in the early stages of the Buddhism acceptance. Especially, the translation work changes as the understanding to the other culture deepens, and using some materials, it was described persuadable. Only, there is a place to hope for persuade-ability's increase in some points. First, it is the point to have supposed “that the understanding to The Other

Person was progressed” in the deepening Buddhism understanding. Sure, it thinks that the Buddhism was “The Other Person” for China. However, the times which Miss MIYAJIMA took up were the long time which lasts for Han-Wei and Six-dynasties approximately 500 years. In these times, did the Chinese Buddhism understanding change into its own one, hardly if anything? That is, in the Chinese Buddhism which is different from India, already, isn’t it possible to ask to have been formed? In addition to translation’s moving a word and only and replacing it and a meaning, in the case, was its own opinion never reflected by the translation? To make more persuading, I thought that it was necessary to be reviewed about specifics of the Buddhism literatures which was actually translated with the specific situation in “the translation place”.

Also at the same time, Miss MIYAJIMA using “Chu Sanzangji-ji 出三藏記集”, described that the people in those days thought “the character is different but the function to say a truth to is the same”. This does not mean that the people think in the naive. But, to be seen from the quoted sentences is the conviction which is based on the tradition in China since “Zhuangzi 莊子”, or the conviction on the background of the arguings on “Yan-jin-yi, bu-jin-yi 言尽意不尽意” of the six-dynasties era.

Also, Miss MIYAJIMA referred to the problem of ‘Wen 文’ and ‘Zhi 質’ in case of translation. Then, it understood ‘Wen’ to the meaning like ‘the ornament or the decorations’ only. Then, will ‘Wen’, which Emperor Cao Pi of Wei said that “‘Wen 文’ and ‘Zhang 章’ are the great works to rule a country”, be how meaning? As the Buddhism acceptance problem in the time of six-dynasties, if holding such a background the beforehand, it thinks that the persuasion target became better.

The 2nd release by Mr. SATO Minoru was “Changes in the Translation of Terminology by Chinese Muslim Intellectuals”, and was subtitled “Is God Shang-di?”. It took up the following problem, that, Islamic “Allah” is the same word as Chinese traditional “Shang-di”, which was used by the Chinese Islamic philosophers. Chinese Islamic philosophers were Muslim. But as the Chinese, they could not help contradicting a Chinese traditional thought. This release specifically tried to see that status. It was the release of the wide prospect.

The release contents were as follows, that Chinese Islamic philosopher Wang Daiyu, in the early stage of the history of Chinese Islamic philosophy, avoided to use the word “Shang-di”, but the Chinese Islamic philosophers in the coming ages

(except Liu Zhi) got to use the word “Shan-di”. Mr. SATO stated, for because the Muslim philosopher in China, not to use the word “Shang-di” was self denial as Muslim, or, it was the denial of the community of Muslim.

By the way, Christian missionaries of Ming time already pointed out that the word “Shang-di” was always not support a Christian “God”. And, it is much more not until to say, Islam’s “Allah” is on the same system of the Christian “God”. Now, why the Chinese Muslim philosophers did use “Shang-di” or didn’t use “Shang-di”? Mr. SATO pointed out with the wonderful answer. He discovered the traces of the quotations from “Tianzhu Shiyi 天主實義” of Matteo Ricci, in the sentences of Wang Daiyu. In other words, this fact means that Wang Daiyu knew the opinions of the Christian missionaries. If so, it is possible to consent for him not to have used “Shang-di”.

There is another problem to be opposite. It was about the concept “Shang-di”, which was used by the Chinese Confucian scholars of Ming-Qing times. As for the “Shang-di” concept that Ge Yinliang 葛寅亮 or Guan Dongming 管東暉 famous scholars of that time used, had become the color of the monotheism thick, and actually, it seems to be influenced by Christian missionaries staying in Beijing at that time. If the concept “Shang-di” such as Confucian scholars used was accepted among Muslim, that the Muslim philosophers after Wang Daiyu used “Shang-di”, too, would have been consequential.

Moreover, it is another problem. Mr. SATO referred to the argument of “the root is one about Islam and Confucianism” . The present writer does not state this for details, but, at that time Beijing there was the “Chinese culture born from Western origin” theory, argued by the one of the part of missionaries, so called “Christian Figurists”. On the other hand, the side of the Chinese, there was a famous mathematician to argue “Western culture born from China origin” as Mei Wending. The solution of these related problems will be one in the future.

The 3rd release was “Chinese on the Internet: Case of Wikipedia’s Chinese” by Mr. HINO Yoshihiro. It was a release having to do with just today. As you all know, “Wikipedia” is a kind of encyclopedia which is built on the Internet. Anyone may write and correction is repeated every day, and in a sense unstable one. Today, the trend which tries to get information from Wikipedia is very vast. Now, Wikipedia become one of the huge media worldwide.

This release was the one that have chased Wikipedia of Chinese. If being the one to have pursued the change and the change of the use language, it is too much

today-like too, and is difficult to review still. But, there was a pointing-out with very interesting. That is, by Wikipedia of every country, the character of the index it has a difference. It is pulled from sound such as ABC or AIUEO in English or Japanese. But the index of Chinese Wikipedia becomes matters classification. According to Mr. Hino, the way of this index is a way of “Lei-shu 類書”, which is a tradition in China. Mr. Hino points out, such Chinese classification should be called Chinese customization. The technology in the Internet improves steadily, so that the linguistic barrier on the Net will be technically solved in the near future. However, “the differences in the indexes problem” can be grasped as follows. It is the fact that there is possibility to change as one system has the cultured character which is different wholly as original system. It was thought that in the future, at the scene of the cultural contact and the cultural negotiation, this kind of the System Changing may become a big problem.

The present writer commented about the three releases above. To any releases, it should be paid more attention, and in the future, they will richly include the problems which should be more searched for. It thinks that they were wonderful contents.