

Translating Nonhuman Agency: A Posthumanist Reading of *The Zhuang Zi* and its Three English Translations

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the translation of nonhuman agency in *The Zhuang Zi* from two perspectives. Zhuang Zi wrote this Taoist classic on nature in the late 4th century BC and accentuated the agency of things. From the perspective of intersemiotic translation, Zhuang Zi proposes four interconnected approaches to facilitate species communication: anthropocentric relinquishment, nonhuman agents, equality of things, and cross-species becoming. He often examines the world from nonhuman angles and creates an aura of Taoist mystery in his work. From the perspective of interlingual translation, translators have intervened in this process with different strategies. For example, Burton Watson's anthropocentric translation demystifies nonhuman agents and popularizes the Chinese classic among English speakers. The "translation disparation," to borrow the term from Michael Cronin, of (de)mystifying nonhuman agency generates creative responses from translators. A.C. Graham acknowledges the mysterious quality but aligns it with literary sections, so his paratext of thematic reorganization is a reinforced version of anthropocentrism. In contrast, Victor H. Mair presents a more accurate Taoist account of species relationships and recreates the mysterious aura in his translation.

KEYWORDS: intersemiotic translation, nonhuman agency, posthumanism, translation disparation, Zhuang Zi

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翻译非人类主体：后人类主义视域下的《庄子》译本比较

论文从两个方面探讨《庄子》中的非人类主体。道家经典《庄子》重视自然和“万物”。从符际翻译层面来看，庄子提出四种方法促进物种交流：放弃人类中心，重视非人类主体，齐平万物，跨类变化。他从非人类视角审视世界，创造神秘道家氛围。从语际翻译层面来看，译者采用不同应对策略。华兹生的人类中心主义翻译策略，清楚阐释非人类主体，使《庄子》在英语世界深受欢迎。非人类主体的“翻译不对等”激发了译者创造性反应。葛瑞汉采用主题分类的类文本策略，把神秘性归类于《庄子》文学部分；这实为增强版本人类中心主义。相反，梅维恒译本准确翻译道家“万物齐平”之物种关系，再现道家神秘氛围。