

A Sociological Perspective on Morrison's Translation Work in China

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ABSTRACT

During his twenty-five years of missionary work in China, Robert Morrison creatively engaged in activities such as translating the Bible, compiling the Chinese-English Dictionary, and founding the periodical of the Anglo-Chinese Evangelization Society. He made the acquaintance of and employed Chinese engravers, printers, and language teachers like Yong Sam Tak, Leang-Kung-fah, Tase-a-ko, and Kew-agong, and conducted various translation activities in China. This article, from the perspective of social translation studies, explores the structure and dissemination of Morrison's translation endeavors in China from a macro perspective. Using Latour's Actor-Network Theory (ANT) to analyze both human and non-human actors, and supplementing it with Bourdieu's social theory, this study reveals how Morrison mobilized and coordinated these actors to advance his translation projects. Ultimately, this forms a complete closed loop of Morrison's translation network in China, providing insights for translation activities, sinology, and translation studies during the period of Sino-Western cultural exchange.

Keywords- Morrison; Translation; Sociology; Actor-Network; Bourdieu.

I. INTRODUCTION

Social translation studies represent a new approach to researching translation. The sociological turn that occurred in the 1990s shifted the focus to the social attributes of translation. This approach, interdisciplinary and cross-domain, emphasizes the social functions and contexts of translation, investigating the process of translation within a broader social macro-context. From the perspective of "sociology of associations", society is seen as the connections between constantly changing heterogeneous elements. By tracing the network of an action and the connections between actors, society can be "reassembled" [1].

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, scholars dedicated to sociological research established Actor-Network Theory (ANT). Leading figures in this field include Bruno Latour and Michel Callon. Actor-Network Theory posits that society is a product of the interactions among actors. The actions of actors within this network alter their relationships with one another, continuously defining and reconfiguring social identities. The

interactions and evolutions among these actors place the social structure in a state of dynamic flux.

In ANT, the concept of an actor is broad, referring to entities that can alter the course of events through their actions. Actors can influence and change the actions and trajectories of other entities. Human actors have agency, exerting proactive influence and actively contributing to the development and changes within the network. Simultaneously, ANT eliminates the binary opposition between human and non-human, as well as society and nature, by including non-human factors in its considerations. These non-human factors, while lacking subjective agency, are still part of the network and can influence other actors and the development of society. ANT emphasizes the interactive relationships between humans and non-humans within the network, illustrating paths, nodes, and various connections. Its goal is to explain the operation of the network, shifting the research focus to the methods and processes by which the network is formed [2].

Under the influence of these actors, different actors engage in actions, constructing complex and

diverse connections that form a complete social network. This network presents a linear connection rather than isolated boundaries. Because actors are characterized by uncertainty and heterogeneity, the formation of the network is diverse and dynamic. In this macro social context, the existence of the network relies on the collaborative connections of actors, and actors cannot function independently of the network, indicating their mutually constructive relationship. Only by successfully mobilizing actors and resources can an actor-network be smoothly formed. Therefore, actors need to integrate their respective interests, unify goals and actions, and form a cooperative entity to promote the network's coherence, thereby facilitating its development and growth.

II. MORRISON'S TRANSLATION WORK IN CHINA AND THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK MODEL

Under Bourdieu's field theory, the main components include habitus, field, and capital. Habitus is a durable yet transformable system of behavioral tendencies that originate from practice and are continually constructed through practice. Social norms can become internalized within the thoughts and actions of actors, thereby indirectly influencing their environment [3]. Capital primarily consists of four types: economic capital, cultural capital, social capital, and symbolic capital. Capital is not static but can be converted between these forms. The field refers to social space, a network of objective relationships. Within this space, habitus and capital operate. Competition for resources and pursuit of interests occur within the field. Power relations within the field are neither balanced nor stable, leading to disparities in resource possession among actors. Hence, actors within the field engage in struggles for capital to either maintain or enhance their positions.

Placing Morrison's translation endeavors in China within a comprehensive social perspective is justified for several reasons. Firstly, Morrison's translations and dictionaries in China constitute cultural products that require an effectively operated actor-network composed of both human and non-human actors for circulation in the target market. Secondly, the actor-network operates within the cultural production subfield in China, which had its own operational mechanisms given the unique social conditions of the time. Thirdly, the actors involved in Morrison's endeavors in China include both human and non-human entities, each bringing their respective capital. Recruited by Morrison, these actors enter the field, engage in interactive operations, and through the transformation of capital, interconnect to ultimately establish a dissemination network for translation activities in China.

This paper attempts to comprehensively trace and reconstruct the dynamic construction of Morrison's translation enterprise in China from a holistic perspective. It aims to uncover how Morrison recruited both actors and non-actors to build a translation network and develop translation activities in China. Recognizing the limitations of a single theoretical model in fully capturing the social processes of Morrison's translation efforts in China, this study integrates Bourdieu's field theory. By complementing each other, these two theories provide a comprehensive framework to explore the interactions, transformations, and connections among capital, field, and various actors within Morrison's translation network.

Operating at macro, meso, and micro levels, the study aims to thoroughly examine how actors operated within the Chinese field, analyze their roles in advancing Morrison's translation enterprise, and depict their interactions within the network. By doing so, it seeks to elucidate how Morrison's recruitment strategies and network dynamics contributed to the development of a translation ecosystem in China, ultimately forming a closed loop for translation activities.

III. MORRISON'S TRANSLATION AND TRANSLATIONAL TRAJECTORY IN CHINA FROM A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

3.1 Human Actors

3.1.1 Initiator and Mobilizer: Morrison

Before initiating a translation project, it is necessary for an actor to recruit other actors, and Morrison himself was the initiator of this endeavor. Early Protestant missionaries in China faced the difficult situation of strict anti-Christian policies imposed by the Qing government. In 1784, Emperor Qianlong (乾隆帝) issued an edict prohibiting all missionaries from entering the mainland from Macau, and in November 1805, the court reaffirmed the ban on missionary activities in Guangdong province. Since Western capitalist countries began extending their influence into China, the Qing government maintained a hostile and fearful attitude toward foreigners, continually increasing its supervision and suppression of missionaries. All signs indicated that missionary works in China were extremely challenging. Additionally, Chinese people, deeply influenced by traditional morals and Confucianism, held a hostile attitude toward foreign ideologies. The language barrier further increased the friction Morrison faced in his translation endeavors in China.

Therefore, due to the influence of policies and traditional ideologies within the Chinese field at the time, the initiator's personal capital was crucial in the social environment of that period. Their qualifications, academic status, and reputation in the field of cultural

production were all part of their cultural and symbolic capital. Firstly, Morrison possessed substantial cultural capital. Raised in a devout religious family, his father was an elder in their local Presbyterian church, instilling a strong Christian faith in Morrison from an early age. Influenced by this environment, Morrison studied at Hoxton Academy and the Gosport Academy for Missionaries, where he developed a desire to engage in overseas missionary work, earnestly seeking to serve the Christian gospel. In 1804, when the London Missionary Society decided to commence missionary work in China, Morrison applied to go to China as a missionary. During his formative years, Morrison acquired a solid foundation in missionary knowledge, supplemented by scientific and astronomical knowledge gained at the missionary academy. Before coming to China, he also studied Chinese with a Chinese teacher, thereby amassing substantial cultural capital. Additionally, Morrison had excellent work and social relationships, possessing significant social capital. These aspects could be converted into symbolic capital, facilitating his translation efforts in China. Morrison was affiliated with the British London Missionary Society, maintaining connections with church organizations from a young age, and receiving ample support and resources from religious organizations and missionary groups. The British London Missionary Society, formed by the merger of the British Parliament, Presbyterian Church, and Congregational Church, was a large organization. Through introductions and collaborations, the church helped Morrison meet relevant officials and foreign merchants, who subsequently assisted him in his translation activities.

Therefore, Morrison had sufficient capital to act as an initiator and recruiter within the actor-network. His strategy of engaging in translation work to open doors for missionary activities in China was an appropriate response to the times. To ensure the smooth progress of his translation projects, Morrison actively initiated the translation network in China, laying the foundation for the collaboration of human and non-human actors.

3.1.2 Early Assistance from Chinese Newspaper Staff

During his early activities in China, Morrison was confined to Guangzhou. Additionally, the Qing government's strict prohibition on Christianity left him isolated. Under such circumstances, the assistance from early Chinese newspaper staff was crucial.

Firstly, as early as January 7, 1803, through 1805, while studying at Hoxton Academy, Morrison developed the desire to engage in overseas missionary work. When the London Missionary Society decided to start missionary activities in China, Morrison applied to the society to become a missionary in China. On May 30, 1804, Morrison moved to the Gosport Academy for Missionaries in southwest London to receive targeted training for overseas missions. At that time, Yung Sam-tak (容三德), a young man from Guangdong, had come to London from Guangzhou to study English at a

boarding school in Clapham, south London. By chance, Dr. Moseley of Clapham encountered Yung Sam-tak on the street and introduced him to Morrison. On October 8, 1805, Yung Sam-tak began living with Morrison and became his first Chinese teacher [4]. Without Yung Sam-tak's early Chinese instruction, the setbacks and obstacles Morrison faced upon his arrival in China would have been even more severe. After Morrison arrived in China, he reunited with Yung Sam-tak, who provided substantial assistance. Morrison's memoirs mention that Yung Sam-tak had performed exceptionally well so far, doing everything possible to assist Morrison and even introducing him to a household servant. Morrison's 1808 diary notes Yung Sam-tak's loyal support. Since Morrison's arrival in Guangzhou, Yung Sam-tak had enthusiastically helped him purchase books and find ways to transport them to Macau. At that time, Chinese people were afraid to approach Morrison, but Yung Sam-tak courageously served him [5]. Facing a challenging situation, Morrison could reside in the French factory in Guangzhou, thanks to the assistance of Yung Sam-tak and his employer, until he moved to Macau on June 1, 1808. In a report in 1810, the leaders of the London Missionary Society also acknowledged Yung Sam-tak's role in supporting Morrison's missionary work in China, expressing gratitude for his friendly help [6].

Another significant human actor in Morrison's translation activities in China was Leang-Kung-fa (梁恭发), the first Chinese pastor. In March 1823, Morrison went to Malacca to inspect the Anglo-Chinese College. In December of the same year, Morrison decided to leave China and return to Britain. At that time, there were no missionaries in China who could take over his work. After careful consideration, Morrison ordained Liang Fa as a preacher, making him the first Chinese pastor. By then, Leang had worked with Morrison for eight years and was qualified to perform holy work as a Chinese Protestant.

After Morrison left China, Leang wrote two books, which were *The Book of Hebrews* and *The True Principles of the World's Salvation*. In Morrison's report on the 25th anniversary of the opening of the mission in China, dated September 4, 1832, he mentioned Leang among his colleagues in China: "Leang-Afã, native teacher of the London Missionary Society in China" [7], indicating Leang's significant contributions. According to the London Missionary Society's report, in the 25 years since the establishment of the mission in China, 10 people had been baptized, including 3 Chinese. Meanwhile, Leang had written and printed nine exhortatory texts, with Morrison reviewing and editing them, and the Religious Tract Society of London funding their publication. Robert Morrison even believed that the early development of the Protestant Church in China owed much to Leang's efforts.

The printer Kew-agong (屈昂) worked for the London Missionary Society and learned lithography

from John Robert Morrison (1782-1834). Kew had worked at the Malacca mission station for many years. After his baptism, he, along with Leang, distributed religious tracts. He printed and distributed Christian materials in both Guangzhou and Macau. In 1833, Morrison published a series of printed works, including *The Chinese Repository* and *The Evangelist and Chinese Miscellany*. These publications drew the attention of the Catholic authorities and priests in Macau. Under pressure, the East India Company in Macau demanded that Morrison cease his printing activities. Although Morrison protested, he ultimately had to temporarily comply, relying on Chinese Christian assistants like Leang and Kew to continue his work.

These Chinese individuals were important actors in Morrison's translation network. They contributed to Morrison's translation endeavors in China in various ways, ranging from Chinese teachers to printers and preachers. With the support of these early Chinese collaborators, Morrison's efforts in modern translation significantly accelerated the process of introducing Western knowledge to the East.

3.1.3 Foreign Merchants in China

Foreign merchants and missionaries have historically been closely connected, bound together by the threads of fate. During the Qing Dynasty, Guangzhou was a thriving commercial hub. In 1699, the British East India Company established its first office in Guangzhou. Subsequently, from 1757 to 1840, the "Canton System (一口通商)" was implemented in Guangzhou, allowing trade through a single port. Foreign merchants gathered in Guangzhou, and in 1862, a legal residential area for foreign merchants was officially established in the Shamian concession in Guangzhou. The identity and commercial activities of these foreign merchants provided cover and financial support for the missionaries' activities in China. Before Morrison was employed by the East India Company, his public identity was that of a merchant, temporarily sheltering in an American commercial firm.

In the early 19th century, there were a small number of Western merchants active in Guangzhou. Frustrated by the Qing government's strict policies limiting Western commercial activities in China and the delayed opening of the Chinese market, these merchants were not content to stay passive. They constantly sought ways to break through policy restrictions, and in this process, they discovered that missionaries were their most powerful allies. One such merchant was Olyphant, the owner of the American firm Russell & Co. He was wealthy and generous, providing significant assistance to Morrison's missionary activities in China by offering economic capital. As a devout Christian, Olyphant was deeply committed to sponsoring American missionary work in China and was even dubbed the "Father of American Missions to China". In 1829, American missionaries such as Morrison and Samuel Wells William (1812-1884), came to China with the financial

support of Olyphant. Later, Olyphant provided a building rent-free for editing and printing purposes. Even at the inception of the *Chinese Repository*, Olyphant pledged that if the venture failed, he would personally bear the losses instead of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Without Olyphant's substantial funding, the *Chinese Repository* would have struggled to survive. For over forty years, this publication thrived in the building he provided.

As one of the key actors, Olyphant's financial support eliminated significant barriers for Morrison to enter the translation field. Without his sponsorship of other missionaries coming to China, Morrison alone would have found it difficult to spread translation work in China, especially given the restrictions imposed on missionaries and Morrison's limited income. Lack of economic support would have severely hindered Morrison's efforts in compiling dictionaries, publishing books, and developing the network of translation actors.

3.1.4 East India Company

The East India Company held a monopoly on trade during that time. In the early days of Morrison's activities in China, he faced immense economic pressure, as the annual salary of 200 pounds provided by the church was insufficient to cover his living expenses. Under the guise of being a Chinese translator for the company, Morrison found convenience in conducting missionary activities in China. Additionally, the company provided significant support to Morrison's translation endeavors. For instance, when Morrison was compiling *A Dictionary of the Chinese Language, in Three Parts*, the printing costs were substantial, and the London Missionary Society lacked the means to raise the necessary funds. The company specifically dispatched printing technician Peter Perring Thoms (1790-1855) from England to China with English type molds, printing presses, and other equipment. They established the Honorable East India Company's Press in Macau and provided 10,440 pounds in sponsorship funds. They also supported Morrison's accommodations in Guangzhou, covered his transportation costs between Guangzhou and Macau, and sponsored the publication of the Bible. It can be said that without the East India Company providing the change in identity, Morrison's initial forays into translation work would have been exceedingly difficult. Undoubtedly, the East India Company was a crucial actor in Morrison's translation network, providing him with the entry ticket into the field of Chinese translation.

3.2 Non-Human Actors

3.2.1 Compilation of Books and Dictionaries

Language alone can truly convey the inherent relationship between humans and the world. Humans possess the world in the form of language, and understanding existence is only possible through language. Language provides a unique attitude towards the world and a worldview. To enter a cultural system, one must first enter its linguistic system. Through language, people with different cultural backgrounds and

historical traditions can communicate and connect. Using a common vocabulary system and grammatical forms, they construct a “linguistic community”, forming a unique group through shared understanding of meaning and experiences.

On one hand, these books and dictionaries provided references and tools for Morrison’s translation activities, forming the foundation of his endeavors. After gaining some familiarity with Chinese characters, Morrison was assisted by his Chinese teacher, Yung Sam-tak, to transcribe portions of the New Testament translated into Chinese by the Roman Catholic Jean Basset at the British Museum. This included *The Harmony of the Gospel*, *The Acts of Apostles*, *The Pauline Epistles*, and the first chapter of *The Hebrews*. Morrison also transcribed a manuscript Latin and Chinese dictionary from the museum’s collection. Ge Gongzhen’s *the History of Newspaper and Journalism in China* states, “Morrison, in London, visited Yung Shantak, and in the museum, read and copied the Chinese *New Testamen*’ and the Latin-Chinese Dictionary...” [8]. Yung Sam-tak used these two copies as textbooks for Morrison to learn Chinese. Under Yung’s strict guidance, Morrison completed his study of Chinese translations in a matter of months. According to William Milne’s recollections, these handwritten translations, especially the dictionary and *The Harmony of the Gospel*, laid the groundwork for his Chinese studies before arriving in China, and continued to be influential after Morrison’s arrival [9].

On the other hand, periodicals such as *The Chinese Repository* and *Eastern Western Monthly Magazine* adopted strategies and methods in their editing to mitigate Chinese resistance, adapt to local conditions, and cater to Chinese psychology, thoughts, and habits. Firstly, they presented a “friendly” face by promoting Sino-foreign friendship, advocating for foreigners and missionaries coming to China for the benefit of the Chinese people. Editors often used pseudonyms like “Lover of Charity (博爱者)” (William Milne), “Advocate of Virtue (尚德者)” (Robert Morrison), and “Lover of the Chinese (爱汉者)” (Karl Gützlaff), and phrases such as “Harmony between China and the West (中外雍睦)”, “All People as One Family (百姓一家)”, and “Brothers throughout the Four Seas (四海之内皆兄弟)” were common on the covers of these Chinese periodicals. Secondly, they employed Confucianism associated with Christianity, or used Confucianism to justify Christianity, using Confucianism as a platform to promote Christian doctrine. Consequently, the covers of these periodicals often featured Confucius’ sayings, and the articles extensively quoted from the *Four Books* and *Five Classics* to explain and propagate Christian beliefs.

To cater to the interests and reading habits of Chinese readers, missionaries also adopted forms that were appealing to the Chinese audience, essentially “when in Rome, do as the Romans do”, making the

periodicals more localized. For instance, they mimicked the style of traditional Chinese woodblock-printed books in their format, and adopted the episodic structure of classical Chinese novels in their literary style. At the end of articles, they often used the conventional cliffhanger ending of classical Chinese novels, saying “To know what happens next, wait for the next installment (欲知后事如何，且看下回分解)”.

Through books, dictionaries, and periodicals as non-human agents, Morrison expanded the reach of his translation activities in China, reaching a broader audience and establishing himself in the field of translation in China.

3.2.2 Translation Strategies

Robert Morrison utilized effective translation strategies to broaden the audience for his work through books and dictionaries. When translating Chinese books, Morrison catered to the dual demands of accuracy and cultural relevance. *Habitus*, which refers to the open, adaptable system of dispositions, is inherently constructive and creative. Thus, when Morrison arrived in China, he entered a new field that influenced his initial *habitus* and led him to form new practices under the influence of this new environment. To minimize resistance to his evangelical efforts in China, Morrison subconsciously adopted a domestication strategy in his translations. Given that Confucianism was deeply rooted in Chinese culture, he combined Confucian and Christian thoughts to mitigate local resistance to his missionary activities. In *Memoirs of the Life and Labors of Robert Morrison*, Morrison himself mentioned his translation principles: “The translator’s duty in any book is twofold: first, he must accurately understand the original meaning and spirit of the work; second, he must express the meaning and spirit of the original faithfully, clearly, and elegantly” [10]. Morrison considered the first duty to be more important and diligently worked to achieve faithful, clear, and concise translations. He preferred using simple language and avoided obscure and rare allusions, striving not to use terms specific to non-Christian philosophies and religions. When faced with difficult sentences, his strategy was to draw on extensive references to ensure he did not deviate from the original meaning.

In translating the Bible, Morrison balanced foreignization and domestication, aiming to reduce barriers to reader acceptance. His activities were primarily based in Guangzhou and Macau, where the local people spoke Cantonese. Thus, the Cantonese-speaking regions were among the first in China to accept Western Christian culture. Morrison compiled several dictionaries, including the *A Dictionary of the Chinese Language, in Three Parts* and *A Vocabulary of the Canton Dialect. A Vocabulary of the Canton Dialect*, published by the East India Company in Macau in 1828, was the first Chinese dialect-English bilingual dictionary, marking a significant milestone in the history of bilingual lexicography.

Additionally, Morrison co-edited periodicals by employing various paratextual elements, transliterations, and explanations. For example, *Eastern Western Monthly Magazine* used traditional Chinese formats and content to make it more acceptable to Chinese readers. These periodicals utilized friendly and culturally relevant presentations, emphasizing Sino-foreign friendship and the benefits of foreigners and missionaries for the Chinese people. The writing style of Morrison's translations adopted forms familiar to the Chinese audience, such as argumentative essays, chapter-novel styles, poetry, and aphorisms. The articles were short, easy to understand, and took into account the cultural level and reading habits of the readers.

Through these strategies and the mediation of books, dictionaries, and periodicals as non-human agents, Morrison expanded the reach and impact of his translation work in China, effectively establishing a presence in the Chinese translation field.

3.2.3 Printing Technology

The development of Chinese movable type printing was mainly driven by missionaries and was practically applied in their printing and publishing activities. This technology evolved through three main stages of improvement and refinement, ultimately resolving the challenges of Chinese movable type manufacturing. Traditional woodblock printing methods relied heavily on Chinese craftsmen, but employing these craftsmen was severely constrained by Chinese authorities. It was risky and costly to obtain their assistance domestically if discovered, while working abroad required smuggling craftsmen out of the country. Consequently, Morrison abandoned the traditional woodblock printing method and turned to Western printing techniques. The development of Chinese movable type printing involved three distinct phases:

- 1) Initial Phase: Creating movable type based on traditional Chinese woodblock methods.
- 2) Second Phase: Completely breaking away from traditional Chinese woodblock influences and adopting European standard craftsmanship for making type.
- 3) Third Phase: Using electroplating methods for type production.

The practical and efficient method of typesetting Chinese characters addressed the fundamental technical issues of using modern Western movable type for Chinese printing, leading to the development of relatively mature Chinese movable type printing technology. The importance of printing technology as a crucial medium for translation and dissemination cannot be overstated. Without advanced printing techniques, it would have been difficult to distribute translated texts and cultural products widely. Around 1808, Baptist missionary Joshua Marshman (1768–1837) began carving Chinese wooden movable type in Serampore, South Asia. He quickly realized the numerous drawbacks of wooden movable type,

prompting him to start casting lead type in 1811. By 1813, he had used lead type to print *the Gospel of John* from the *New Testament*, followed by the printing of *Elements of Chinese Grammar* and *A Grammar of the Chinese Language* in 1814 and 1815, respectively. These achievements were widely publicized by the Baptist community, which significantly influenced the London Missionary Society and Morrison in China [11].

Morrison adopted metal type printing, producing the first Chinese-English Dictionary using this method. This shift significantly increased the printing speed of Morrison's translated works and liberated the printing industry from its dependence on Chinese craftsmen, thereby reducing costs and the risks associated with hiring Chinese workers. Finding Chinese printers willing to work under risky conditions was also challenging, which could have considerably slowed the production of translation materials.

Therefore, it is evident that printing technology, as a non-human actor, played a critical role in Morrison's translation activities. Without the support of advanced technology and craftsmanship, it would have been impossible to establish a comprehensive chain of translation and dissemination.

IV. CONCLUSION

As a social activity, the practice of translation is inevitably influenced by the social environment of its time. Simultaneously, it also reconstructs and impacts that society. Translation studies from a sociological perspective should not solely focus on macro contexts, emphasizing power, ideology, and patrons while neglecting the micro-level analysis of textual language. It should not deny or replace the fundamental nature of translation, moving from the central focus to a centrifugal one. The dual attributes of translators—both linguistic and social—mean that their social nature determines the socialization and complexity of translation practices. This social aspect of translation practices underscores the necessity and potential for examining literary translation from the interface of translation studies and sociology.

By examining Robert Morrison's translation activities in China, it becomes evident that, although his missionary work did not achieve its expected outcomes, Morrison inadvertently became an early promoter of the "Western Learning Spreading to the East". He introduced fresh ideas, viewpoints, and knowledge to a long-isolated China.

Moreover, Morrison nurtured early Chinese journalists who not only advanced the printing industry in the process of spreading Protestantism but also served as bridges for cultural exchange between the East and the West. They opened up channels for the introduction of Western culture, facilitating the gradual unfolding of Sino-Western cultural collisions. From a sociological perspective, it is clear that human agents, such as

Morrison himself, his early Chinese assistants, Western merchants in China, and the East India Company, played indispensable roles in Morrison's translation endeavors in China. Similarly, non-human agents, such as the distribution of books, dictionaries, periodicals, the adoption of translation strategies, and advancements in printing technology, all provided the impetus for the development of translation activities in China.

Therefore, exploring Morrison's translation activities in China from the perspective of social translation studies can help delve into the translation activities during the period of Sino-Western fusion, providing valuable references for Sinology and translation studies.

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