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The main characters' interpretation in the first French translation of Mikhail Lermontov's novel "A hero of our time"

Abstract

Studying translations contemporary with creation of originals is crucial to create a comprehensive picture of translator's individual style. The present paper analyzes the interpretation of main characters in the first French translation of Mikhail Lermontov's novel "A hero of our time" performed by A. A. Stolypin (Mongol) who was Lermontov's coeval belonging to the poet's inner circle. The research resorts to functional and descriptive methods as well as to the frequency analysis of lexical units actualizing the characters in the original and translated texts. The results show that the most significant features of rendering the characters by A. A. Stolypin's are: certain subjectivity and freedom of interpretation often due to the extralinguistic cultural environment of the translator; desire to facilitate heroes' nominative identification for foreign reader; predilection for hierarchy and status labeling of the characters; context modification by introducing additional specifications, features and descriptions; some tendency to soften the author's judgments and add explanations of the heroes' motives and behavior patterns; creation of his very own extratextual references.

Keywords: translation, architectonics of artistic image, characters' identification, characters' marking, individual translator's style, A. A. Stolypin (Mongol), French language

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