

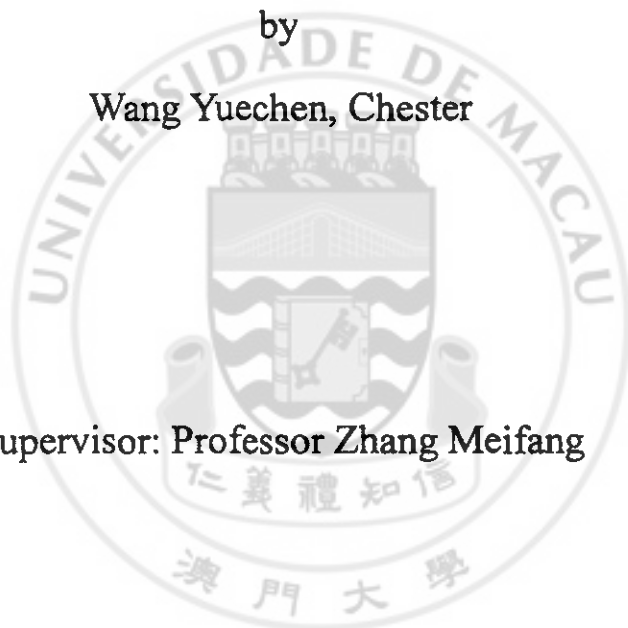
Bible Translation in China

— A Case Study of Robert Morrison's Translation

by

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## Abstract

Robert Morrison was the first Protestant missionary who came to China. He devoted his whole life to the intercultural communication between China and the West. Not only was he a missionary, but he was also an expert in China and a productive translator. Morrison produced abundant works on both Chinese culture and Christianity. One of his greatest achievements is the translation and publication of the Bible, which cost him almost 16 years of hard working.

The present thesis intends to study this important part of translation history, and to see how Morrison translates the Bible in a culturally heterogeneous country. The study starts from Morrison's detailed report on the completion of biblical translation, and studies his perspective and goal of biblical translation. Then the study turns to his translation and focuses on two aspects: 1. the relationship between Morrison's translation and Basset Manuscript; 2. the translation of Christian terms.

The study compares Morrison's translation and Basset Manuscript and calculates the percentage of similarity between the two versions. The terms are studied by comparing Morrison's and Basset's translations, and their connotations in Chinese culture are investigated.

The result shows that Morrison's translation of the New Testament is deeply influenced by the Basset Manuscript, especially the books from

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Acts to Philemon. The results also show that Morrison has carried out extensive revisions and improvements throughout the text. As for the translation of Christian terms, Morrison's version is also influenced with Basset's translation, and many of the terms in the two versions are the same. It is also found that Morrison's terms are more inconsistent, and many of them have different connotations in Chinese culture, which might cause confusion and misunderstanding to the Chinese readers. It is hoped that the study will reveal the story beyond the first translation of the Bible in China.

**Key words:** Robert Morrison, Bible, translation, China, Christianity

