

## **Yan Fu's Trans-hermeneutics: A Historical Perspective**

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Yan Fu's principle for translation, namely, faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance, is formulated with reference to the ideal result of translation. This principle has in some way betrayed Yan Fu's subjectivity as a translator at the node of dynastic transition. However, his subjectivity can be further surveyed through elaborating retrospectively the hermeneutic characteristics in his translation of the western philosophical works. His principle is expected to be illustrated more deeply in light of his hermeneutic subjectivity. How to locate historically Yan Fu's hermeneutic act is raised as an issue to be addressed against the overall backdrop of China's long hermeneutic tradition. His translation is hermeneutically identified as based on a hermeneutic of exegesis or interpretation or reconstruction, each of which underlines the hermeneutic efforts in different phases of Chinese classical hermeneutics. As the result of these hermeneutic approaches, Yan Fu could come up with a translation as a genre-neutral annotation or a philosophical interpretation, or even almost his own philosophical text which stands quite independently of its original counterpart.