

ANAXIMANDER'S FRAGMENT: TRANSLATION PROBLEMS

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In the publication, the problems of translating Anaximander's fragment from ancient Greek into Russian, English and German are the topic of the article. The aim of the article is to explicate the key problems in translation of Anaximander's fragment. Two blocks of problems are distinguished: the first block is connected with details and nuances of translation of the concepts used in the fragment τοῖς οὖσι, τὸ χρεών, δίκην, τῆς ἀδικίας, τοῦ χρόνου, τὴν τάξιν; the second block is connected with inclusion or exclusion of legal and moral connotations from the translation. The problems are illustrated and confirmed by examples of some authoritative translations of the fragment. It is substantiated that the problems described in the article should be taken into account in the translation process. The results can be used in further research on fragment translation, as well as in translation practice from Ancient Greek.

Key words: Anaximander, structuralism, τοῖς οὖσι, τὸ χρεών, δίκην, τῆς ἀδικίας, τοῦ χρόνου, τὴν τάξιν.

The aim of the article is to point out key translation problems in translating Anaximander's fragment. It is important to note that I will not be discussing deep methodological preconditions and background of translations, for such discussion can be based only on well-grounded research on the fragment, its translation and its meaning. The paper rather presents the very problems of translating Anaximander's fragment.

So what is the fragment in question? It is the first known written text by a Western philosopher. It is first mentioned by Simplicius [Simpl. phys. 24, 13] comment on Aristotle's «Φυσικά». Simplicius took that testimony from Theophrastus «Φυσικῶν δόξαι» [Theophrastus, Phys. Dox. fr. 2 D. 476], the first doxographic book. Doxographic is based on Ancient Greek «δόξα» which means «an opinion, a judgment», which can be well grounded or not [LSJ: hereinafter it means Liddell & Scott's Greek-English Lexicon]. So-called doxography is the term invented by Hermann Diels, to define those ancient authors who wrote widely on δόξαι of their predecessors (poets, philosophers, scientists etc.)

None of the fragments of Theophrastus's «Φυσικῶν δόξαι», which consisted of sixteen books, has not survived throughout the ages, but Simplicius's has. Here is the original fragment:

ἐξ ὧν δὲ ἡ γένεσις ἐστὶ τοῖς οὖσι καὶ τὴν φθορὰν εἰς ταῦτα γίνεσθαι κατὰ τὸ χρεών διδόναι γὰρ αὐτὰ δίκην καὶ τίσιν ἀλλήλοις τῆς ἀδικίας κατὰ τὴν τοῦ χρόνου τάξιν

Down below are several recognised translations of the fragment into Russian. Furthermore, we will take into account translations into the German and English without direct quotation because of article text limitation's:

«А из коих возникают сущие (вещи?), в них же они и переходят, погибая по необходимости, ибо несут наказание и получают друг от друга возмездие за несправедливость, согласно порядку времени» [2, с. 142]

«А из каких [начал] вещам рождение, в те же самые и гибель совершается по роковой задолженности, ибо они выплачивают друг другу правозаконное возмещение неправды [= ущерба] в назначенный срок времени» [3, с. 127].

«А из чего возникают все вещи, в то же самое они и разрешаются согласно необходимости. Ибо они за свою нечестивость несут наказание и получают возмездие друг от друга в установленное время» [1, с. 99–100].

We are going to point out the obvious variations, differences in these translations, without taking into consideration the methodological background of the translators and their philosophical interests. It will be the concepts of «τοῖς οὓσι», «τὸ χρεών», «δίκην», «τῆς ἀδικίας», «τοῦ χρόνου» and «τὴν τάξιν». First question we have to answer is: «What is the fragment talking about?» One can find the answer in the very beginning of the fragment – ἐξ ὧν δὲ ἡ γένεσις ἐστὶ τοῖς οὓσι. Anaximander wants to talk about «τοῖς οὓσι». In the above mentioned Russian translations, it is the «сущие (вещи?)» [2] «вещам» [3] «все вещи» [1]. However, what is the meaning of «τοῖς οὓσι» in Ancient Greek? Can one translate it as «вещь» without any comments whatsoever?

«Τοῖς οὓσι» is pluralis dativus for «τὰ ὄντα» which is pluralis participium of the verb «εἶμί». Εἶμί means «to be». In LSJ dictionary, we find for τὰ ὄντα translations such as «the things which actually exist, the present» [LSJ]. Indeed, Barnes translates it as «the things» [5, p. 102], Kirk and Raven as «existing things» [3, с. 106–107], Burnet as «things» [2, с. 37]. Nietzsche as «die Dinge» [10]. However, it is not obvious how close to the original are these translations. When we think about the very concept of «thing», «die Dinge» or «вещь» we are actually under the influence of the Middle Age conceptions. The question arises: is the «thing» God or a human? Obviously, it is not. When European thinks about examples of things, it is about something like a table or a tree, something that conceptualize as having no soul.

Nevertheless, the key of Ancient Greek τὰ ὄντα is primarily applied to gods, humans and animals and only after that inanimate trees or tables. Let see how Heidegger translates this part of the fragment: «whence emergence is for what respectively presences» [7, p. 87]. As we can see he translates τὰ ὄντα as «what respectively presences». He also points out something extremely important we underscored earlier: «...τὰ ὄντα, означает: сущее... Также к

сущему принадлежат и демонические и божеские вещи. Все это не только тоже сущее, но это и более сущее, нежели просто вещи» [4, с. 35].

Moreover, the second obvious problem we face in the translations of the first part of the fragment in order to understand what is the fragment talking about is whether it is about τοῖς οὖσι or about the emergence of τοῖς οὖσι, «die Geburt» in Diels or «coming-to-be for existing things» in Kirk and Raven. It is necessary to make a well-grounded argument for a translator and a researcher on the important difference, whether Anaximander talks about emergence of τοῖς οὖσι or τοῖς οὖσι themselves.

The concepts of «τὸ χρεών», «δίκην» and «τῆς ἀδικίας» should be considered simultaneously. «τὸ χρεών» is usually translated as «по необходимости» [1; 2], «по роковой задолженности» [3], «what must be» [5], «according to necessity» [7], «Notwendigkeit» [10], Schicksal [9, p. 16]. Concepts of «δίκην» and «τῆς ἀδικίας» usually translated together. In Russian it sounds as follows: «получают... возмездие за несправедливость» [1], «выплачивают... правозаконное возмещение неправды» [3], «за свою нечестивость несут наказание и получают возмездие» [2]. In English it is they give justice (dikê) and reparation... for their offence (adikia) [5], «they pay penalty and retribution... for their injustice» [7], «they make reparation and satisfaction... for their injustice» [6]. In German it is «denn sie müssen Buße zahlen und für ihre Ungerechtigkeiten gerichtet» [10], «Denn sie zahlen einander Strafe und Busse für ihre Ruchlosigkeit» [9].

These parts of the fragment point out another obvious stumbling block for translators about the connotations of the fragment. As one can see, most of the translations include moral and judicial aspect of the meaning of the fragment. The connotations are brought up mostly by the concepts «δίκην» and «τῆς ἀδικίας». This point of view of that kind to judge ontology or cosmology in correlation with social structure and the way society organized. The well-known way of thinking cosmology as some kind of generalization of Ancient Greece society structure onto the cosmos itself. However, it is disputable whether we should treat ontology in itself, treat this way of thinking, considering in details the way language works here or we should consider such texts deeply in the correlation between our knowledge of the culture in which text is emerged.

This is disputable because the very common contemporary methodology of treating any text in the context of the culture is a cultural phenomenon. It came out from late XIX century's structuralism, The basic methodological claims of which make the basis of contemporary studies. However, the very answer to the question «could any text lay beyond the culture and what does it mean if it is?» is not as obvious as one could think. The methodology of structuralism is based on the specific Saussure's approach to language, specific

treatment of culture, on the very specific semiotics premises. Those are not beyond doubt. So there are different traditions and points of view on the language itself and on the connection between thinking and language, language and culture and so on and so forth. I argue that one cannot simply apply structuralism's methodology without considering other point of view and making argument with them.

This is applicable also to the topic of the present article. As has already been mentioned above, it is questionable whether we should translate in the socio-cultural context or consider the text per se, maybe treating this specific text as laying beyond the culture in the structuralism's terms. Moreover, maybe, hypothetically, one could find other domains of what is denoted by the term of culture – one could find that the structuralism's term of culture is incomplete and misses something.

Applying this to the context of the Anaximander's fragment, Heidegger disagrees with those who treat it in moral and judicial meaning. He put his translations forward to ontology itself, translating the above mentioned concepts without those meanings, ontologically only. Thus the area of study for researchers and translators becomes quiet obvious.

In addition, such differences between translations as «необходимость», «рок», «what must be», «Notwendigkeit», «Schicksal» must be clarified. In the translation of this type of texts that claim something about the concepts which are the basis of our thinking and treating the world and ourselves one should always go forward looking closely at nuances and details. It is not only about the obvious difference between German «Schicksal» and Russian «необходимость», it also concerns the similar Russian «необходимость» and «рок». Moreover, making a decision which word to use in the translation we have to put forward a detailed argument on the nuances of meanings, always considering similar words in Ancient Greek, such as «Ἀνάγκη».

Finally, we should point out the difficulties in the translation of such concepts as «τοῦ χρόνου» and «τὴν τάξιν». Translations can be as follows: «согласно порядку времени» [1], «в назначенный срок времени» [3], «в установленное время» [2], «in accordance with the ordinance of time» [5], «according to the assessment of Time» [7], «according to the ordering of time» [6], «gemäß der Ordnung der Zeit» [10], «nach der Zeit Ordnung» [9].

All mentioned above, all the arguments made onto previous concepts are applicable to this one. The word «τοῦ χρόνου» is not the only one way of talking about the concept of «время», «time» or «der Zeit» in Ancient Greek; as long as «τὴν τάξιν» is not the only way of thinking and talking about «порядок», «accordance» or «der Ordnung». One can talk about time in Ancient Greek using the word «αἰών» [LSJ]. For example, Heraclitus uses this term in the significant B52 (index. acc. to Diels-Kranz) rather than «ὁ χρόνος».

Thus, in conclusion of the article, the researcher and translator of the Anaximander's fragment face several difficulties. They are connected with the nuances and details of translation the concepts of «τοῖς οὐσι», «τὸ χρεών», «δίκην», «τῆς ἀδικίας», «τοῦ χρόνου» and «τὴν τάξιν». We argued that traditional translations of these concepts into Russian, English and German are disputable. Another group of issues, which were explicated in the article, is connected with the common contemporary structuralist approach to the studies. We argued that it is an arguable approach and that one should be aware of it and provide an explanation when choosing the path of research or translation of this fragment by Anaximander.

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