談董橋早期的一篇譯作

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董橋先生素有文名,但他早期的翻譯文章如今難得看見。董橋先生曾説翻譯自己熟悉和喜歡的作品,是退休的譯林高手應該做的大事業。董橋〈劉文指要〉:「吃過十幾年翻譯飯,我終於不敢再做翻譯,也不敢再議論翻譯了。新聞電訊翻譯關心的是傳遞資訊的功能而已,經史子集古今小説的翻譯,追求的才是兩種文化的溝通技巧和傳意藝術,牽涉了學和術和情和理,不經過數十寒暑的浸淫,沒有資格置喙。」「我偶爾在舊書攤看見董氏早年翻的一篇作者名為羅柏特・科茲(Robert M. Coates)的美國短篇小説,篇名"The Happy Hour",覺得值得研究,因為坊間系統研究董橋翻譯的文章非常少,而且這篇翻譯所載書籍以中英對照形式編排,英文及中譯配合閱讀甚便,最好是排除了版本未必對應的麻煩。

「羅柏特・科茲一八九七年生於康乃狄格州新港。一九一六年在耶魯大學畢業之後,他先給一個報業企業組合撰寫特稿,嗣後定居紐約,給紐約時報和論壇報寫書評和星期特稿。三十年代初,他加入了《紐約客》,先後出任幾種不同的職位,現為該雜誌評介藝術作品(按:羅柏特・科茲於一九七三年去世)。一九四二年以還,他出版了兩部小說和一部短篇小説集,這些作品,保持了一貫的簡潔和謹嚴的風格,很有《紐約客》裏所有創作的特色。威廉・騷士京批評科茲的作品時說:『羅柏特・科茲不僅可以照顧到人物的心理狀態,同時又可以烘托出磅礴的氣勢,悲愴的胸懷以及真摯的同情心,這一點並不是每一個作家都能做得到的。』」2

羅柏特·科茲這篇"The Happy Hour"寫的是一個男子在紐約漫步時碰到的人和事,這男子的精神恍惚,語多夢囈。於名為"The Happy Hour"的酒吧裏他又「重遇」

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¹ 董橋:〈劉文指要〉,載《蘋果日報・小風景專欄》,2006年07月23日。

² 董橋等:《短篇小説撰讀》(香港:今日世界社,1972年,第1版),頁40。

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以前認識的一些朋友。

以下是我對董橋翻譯"The Happy Hour"的一些看法:

一、董橋先生翻譯的優點,除了理解原文能力之外,還能

A. 酌量增添中文詞句

"My dilemma was resolved a few moments later...."董橋是這樣翻譯的:「我看上看下,左右為難的情境不久消除了。」。「我看上看下」是為連接上下文而加的。

B. 妥貼運用中文成語

- 1. "These are days for the slow, rambling walk, with no purpose, no destination."董橋是這樣翻譯的:「這是一種最適合去四處緩步蹓躂的日子,逍遙自在,漫無目的。」#成語逍遙自在意謂自由自在、無拘無束。
- 2. "..., and at that moment he snapped his fingers in triumph."董橋是這樣翻譯的:「這一來他倒洋洋得意地彈了一下手指。」5

成語洋洋得意意謂十分得意的樣子。

C. 靈活移動中文詞句

"A man wearing one of those striped, flat-topped caps that locomotive engineers wear looked at me as we stood together at the corner of Sixty-sixth Street, waiting for the light to change." 董橋是這樣翻譯的:「我在六十六街街口站著裏等交通燈轉色的時候,另外一個人也站在那一,他頭上戴著火車司機常戴的那種條紋平頂便帽。」6

二、文章譯意未達精確完美的一些地方:

A. 專有名詞的翻譯查證可以更準確些

"On one such day, walking on Fifth avenue, downtown, I raised my eyes above their own level, for once, and saw, far above the street, a group of four men working at the very top of one of those tall, cagelike affairs they erect as a sort of skeleton elevator shaft along the side of a building under construction."董橋是這樣翻譯的:「在這樣一個日子裏,我在第五街繁華地段漫步,我偶然抬起雙眼,向高處仰望,祇見離開街面很高的地方,有四個人在高聳的、升降車箱的塔頂上工作;那是他們傍著在興建中的大樓昇降機道的骨架。」

³ 董橋等:《短篇小説選讀》,頁43。

⁴ 董橋等:《短篇小説選讀》,頁42。

⁵ 董橋等:《短篇小説選讀》,頁48。

⁶ 董橋等:《短篇小説選讀》,頁45。

⁷ 董橋等:《短篇小説選讀》,頁42。

「昇降 | 統一作「升降」。

翻譯前可以考慮按如下的基本步驟作:

以"elevator shaft"一詞舉例

1. 查可靠的英文辭典

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary 7/e

shaft noun, verb

noun

1 (often in compounds) a long, narrow, usually vertical passage in a building or underground, used especially for a lift/elevator or as a way of allowing air in or out: a lift/elevator shaft a mineshaft a ventilation shaft...... 8

2 找專科辭典

閱讀原文及查可靠的英文辭典後,了解"elevator shaft"與樓房建築有關,先找建築專科辭典。

elevator shaft 升降機井,電梯井9

elevator shaft 電梯(豎)井10

3 上網查相關的材料

經搜索引擎尋得"elevator shaft"跟防火設備也有關係。原文的寫作背景為美國紐約,嘗試上北美區域專用的搜索引擎搜尋。當你想搜尋特定語言的內容時,指定語言可能會有用。在 Google 中要多個關鍵字當作一個詞來搜尋,必須要用英文的引號""括起來。例如:搜尋有關奧運的英文訊息,搜尋方式為「"Olympic Game"」。因此,把elevator shaft 以一對括號括住,即"elevator shaft",告訴搜索引擎 Google 這是一個詞,而不是兩個關鍵字。

"A construction worker hangs tight as work on the elevator shaft continues. Steel skeletons loom in the evening sky." 11

進一步認識了 elevator shaft 的模樣性質。

循序完成了以上三個步驟,略改董橋先生的文章如下:

"On one such day, walking on Fifth avenue, downtown, I raised my eyes above their own level,

⁸ 見http://www.oup.com/oald-bin/web_getald7index1a.pl

⁹ 李肇祥:《商務英漢土木工程建築詞匯》(香港:商務印書館,2005年,第1版),頁209。

¹⁰ 范強強:《英漢漢英消防詞典》(上海:上海科學技術出版社,2000年,第1版),頁115。

¹¹ 見http://www.google.com/Top/Regional/North_America/ 及http://www.churchilldowns.com/visit_the_track/master_plan/082002.html

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for once, and saw, far above the street, a group of four men working at the very top of one of those tall, cagelike affairs they erect as a sort of skeleton elevator shaft along the side of a building under construction." 擬這樣翻譯:「在這樣一個日子裏,我在第五街繁華地段漫步,我偶然抬起雙眼,向高處仰望,祇見離開街面很高的地方,有四個人在高聳的<u>籠子</u>上工作;那是他們傍著在興建中的大樓升降機道的電梯井骨架。」

有顏色底線的字是我加的,以示與董橋先生的文字有所分別。下同此。 改動文字後詞義必須貼合語境。

B. 翻譯盡量避免走失語意

1. "Well, so there I was, with two things to watch: the ball, large, red, vulnerable among the just-barely-missing-it cars, and the men above…---- the men vulnerable, too." 董橋是這樣翻譯的:「這一來,我就落得站在那裏看兩樣東西:那皮球,大大的、紅色的皮球,在來來往往的剛剛沒有碰到它的車子之間苟安一時。還有上面的那些人 (……) 那些人也在苟安一時。」12

vulnerable among 的用法可以再商権、盡量多看作者的其他作品關於近似 vulnerable among 的字詞用法;相近年代的作家的作品也值得參考。

試看 John Updike 作品 "Home" 的兩句:"They maneuvered the baggage into the trunk of his father's brown '49 Plymouth. The little car looked dusty and vulnerable amid the vibrant taxis." ¹³ John Updike 和 Robert Coates 是並世同行的身分,都是美國 20 世紀的作家,且 "vulnerable amid" 的用法與 "vulnerable among" 類近,適合比照。

略改董橋先生的譯文如下:

"Well, so there I was, with two things to watch: the ball, large, red, vulnerable among the just-barely-missing-it cars, and the men above···--- the men vulnerable, too." 擬這樣翻譯:「這一來,我就落得站在那裏看兩樣東西:那皮球,大大的、紅色的皮球,在來來往往的剛剛沒有碰到它的車子之間<u>抵不住打擊</u>。還有上面的那些人(······) 那些人也<u>經受不</u> 住打擊。」

John Updike 的寫作背景大抵與 Robert M. Coates 同,也同樣生活在美國,兩人的作品宜同時參看。

2. "Or another time, when I was standing like that (not dreaming, exactly; one's too conscious of things for it to be that, but still there is a certain remoteness), a crew of men and

¹² 董橋等:《短篇小説選讀》,頁43。

¹³ Updike, John. The Early Stories. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003, p.217.

girls on motorcycles went past."董橋是這樣翻譯的:「還有一次,我也在那樣漫無目的地站著的時候(嚴格說來並不是在作夢:周遭的事物逼入眼簾,不容你作夢,但仍然有些迷迷惘惘就是),一群騎機器腳踏車的男男女女飛馳而過。」14

我不盡同意董橋的翻譯。試看:

- a. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary 7/e
- re mote adj., noun
- re mote ness noun [U]: the geographical remoteness of the island $\diamond H$ is remoteness made her feel unloved.
 - noun (informal) = REMOTE CONTROL: The remote's not working. 15
- b. O'SHAUGHNESSY, ARTHUR WILLIAM EDGAR (1844-1881). -Poet, b. ...He pub. various books of poetry, including *Epic of Women* (1870), *Lays of France* (1872), and *Music and Moonlight* (1874). Jointly with his wife he wrote *Toyland*, a book for children. He was associated with D.G. Rossetti and the other pre-Raphaelites. There is a certain remoteness in his poetry which will probably always prevent its being widely popular. He has a wonderful mastery of metre, and a "haunting music" all his own. (John W. Cousin, *A Short Biographical Dictionary of English Literature*, published at 1910.) ¹⁶

略改董橋先生的譯文如下:

"Or another time, when I was standing like that (not dreaming, exactly; one's too conscious of things for it to be that, but still there is a certain remoteness), a crew of men and girls on motorcycles went past.""there is a certain remoteness" 一句的翻譯似可再研究。擬這樣翻譯:「還有一次,我也在那樣漫無目的地站著的時候(嚴格說來並不是在作夢:周遭的事物逼入眼簾,不容你作夢,<u>卻顧得有些遠人</u>),一群騎機器腳踏車的男男女女飛馳而過。」

3. "...a young fellow in advertising, and maybe another, just starting in a brokerage house downtown, whom we all made fun of a little for his cheerful bumblingness, but who often was useful when it came time to pay for the drinks." 董橋是這樣翻譯的:「一個廣告界的小伙子,說不定還有一個開始在市區一家經紀公司混飯的人,我們當時都嘲笑他好管閒事;

¹⁴ 董橋等:《短篇小説選讀》,頁44。

¹⁵ 見http://www.oup.com/elt/catalogue/teachersites/oald7/?cc=global

¹⁶ 見http://classiclit.about.com/library/bl-etexts/jcousin/bl-jcousin-bio-o.htm?terms =edward%20de%20vere

¹⁷ 董橋等:《短篇小説選讀》,頁50、51。

但是,付酒錢的時候,這傢伙倒是蠻有用處的。[17

略改董橋先生的譯文如下:

"…a young fellow in advertising, and maybe another, just starting in a brokerage house downtown, whom we all made fun of a little for his cheerful bumblingness, but who often was useful when it came time to pay for the drinks."我想作些改動:「一個廣告界的小伙子, 說不定還有一個開始在市區一家經紀公司混飯的人,我們當時都拿他的稍嫌笨手笨腳開玩笑;但是,付酒錢的時候,這傢伙倒是蠻有用處的。」

試看:

a. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary 7/e

bum • bling adj. [only before noun] behaving in an awkward confused way, often making careless mistakes 18

bumbling 用作形容詞。

b. Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English

bum • bling [only before noun]

behaving in a careless way and making a lot of mistakes:

- a kind bumbling man with a gentle smile 19
- 4. "Ah, I'm telling you, those were the days!" 董橋是這樣翻譯的:「對了,我説啊,那些日子可真夠瞧的!。」²⁰
 - a. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary 7/e

tell /tel/ verb

- ■I'm telling you (*informal*) used to emphasize what you are saying, especially when it is surprising or difficult to believe: *It isn't cheap, I can tell you!* ♦ *I'm telling you, that's exactly what she said.* ²¹
 - b. Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary

those were the days

something you say which means life was better at the time in the past that you are talking about:

¹⁸ 見 http://www.oup.com/elt/catalogue/teachersites/oald7/?cc=global)

¹⁹ 參 http://www.ldoceonline.com/

²⁰ 董橋等:《短篇小説選讀》,頁49。

²¹ 見http://www.oup.com/elt/catalogue/teachersites/oald7/?cc=global

²² 見http://dictionary.cambridge.org/

We were young and madly in love. Ah, those were the days! 22

c. 在 1968 年英國女歌手 Mary Hopkin 唱了一首歌 "Those Were The Days" ,記述 朋友們在酒館 (tavern) 內舉杯相慶,回味昔日快樂的時光。

部分歌詞是這樣的:

Those were the days, my friend

We thought they'd never end

We'd sing and dance forever and a day

...

For we were young and sure to have our way

這歌的背景跟 "The Happy Hour" 一文有些相似呢。「朋友啊,昔日那些好時光 我們以為永遠不會結束。」

略改董橋先生的譯文如下:

"Ah, I'm telling you, those were the days!" 擬這樣翻譯:「<u>啊,我敢說,那才是好</u> 年頭!」

董橋先生的早期翻譯仍是好的,小瑕疵任誰都不能避免。有人說翻譯是有限的創作,好的壞的文章都要如實跟隨,漏譯或改動原作不可取。務求使譯文貼近原文是第一要務。