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英美文学欣赏

刘世沐主编编辑应瑜秦岭

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《帕特里克·斯本士爵士》

刘世沐

《帕特里克·斯本士爵士》(Sir Patrick Spens)是一首古老的苏格兰民谣。所谓古老,也不过十四、五世纪,这时苏格兰的方言文学刚在形成。至于这首民谣所讲述的故事,可能要更古老一些,因为故事开头说:

The king sits in Dunfermline town

而 Dunfermline 作为苏格兰的首府确是更早一个时期的事情。

就在十四、五世纪,在苏格兰南部,即所谓"低地" (Lowlands),以及英格兰北部和苏格兰接壤的地区,即所谓"边境" (Border),流行着无数民谣。这些民谣很多已经失传,保存下来的三百〇五首,都是后人搜集所得,总称为《英格兰和苏格兰民谣》(English and Scottish Popular Ballads),是英国文学中一份极其宝贵的遗产。《帕特里克·斯本士爵士》就是其中的一首。

这三百首民谣都是叙事诗,用诗歌的形式来讲述各式各样的故事。内容极为丰富,反映早期英格兰和苏格兰人民生活的各方面,其中不无糟粕,但总的说来是健康的。有些民谣,象有名的《彻维山的追猎》(Chevy Chase),讲到苏格兰人和英格兰人在边境上的战斗。有些民谣是关于海上生活的,说明苏格兰和英格兰人民有悠久的航海历史,《帕特里克·斯本士爵士》即属于这一类。又有很多民谣是讲述罗宾汉(Robin Hood)的

故事的,我们今天所知道的关于这位绿林豪杰的故事,大都来 自这些民谣。此外,民谣中还有神怪故事,有家庭悲剧,有爱 情,有仇杀,有滑稽幽默,等等。这里边的许多故事和人物流 传很广,在英国,已经是家喻户晓。

这些民谣全都属于民间文学,并无固定的作者。当时苏格兰南部以及英格兰北部,和英格兰南部情况很不相同,社会比较稳定,风尚比较质朴,文艺创作基本上还处在人民群众口头创作的阶段,在集体基础上进行,受专业诗人和艺术家的影响不大。在这种特殊的社会条件下,民谣有了一个全盛时代,得到空前的繁荣与发展。

我们不难想象一首民谣产生的经过。民谣的题材非常广泛,史实、传闻以及街头巷尾发生的事件,都可以入民谣。人们在节日或其他集体活动的场合,往往运用他们熟习的方式如问答、唱和等来歌唱某些故事情节,起初,情节可能简单些,语言也可能较粗糙,后来在传播的过程中逐步得到改进,最后在内容和形式上都达到比较完善的地步。当然,在传播的过程中,也一定有许多民谣因为质量不高而受到淘汰。

所以,我们说,民谣从头就是人民群众的集体创作,而且是在口头上进行的。这就使民谣在很多方面不同于个人创作的诗歌。首先,民谣从头与书面文字无关,并没有什么固定底稿,其次,人民群众在集体创作的过程中不会象一个专业诗人那样推敲词句或追求形式上的完美。因此,我们欣赏《帕特里克·斯本士爵士》这样一首民谣时,就不必过多考究这个词是否用得好或那个句子是否造得精,也许,我们会发现一些粗糙的地方,例如韵脚有问题,等等。但是,这并不是说民谣的语言不好,不值得学习。相反地,应该看到,民谣的语言是人民大众的语言,是最地道的语言,不仅干净利落,明白晓畅,而

且非常生动,富有表达力。只是民谣与一般诗歌不同,不以雕琢词句取胜,因此,不一定有精采的警句可供玩赏,但对我们学习英语的人们而言,象:

'I saw the new moon, late yestreen,
Wi' the auld moon in her arm;
And if we gang to sea, master,
I fear we'll come to harm.'

这样平易而又生动的语言,正是我们应该学而不容易学得到的语言。我想,多读几首民谣对于我们语言质量的提高是有帮助的。

当然,民谣中有一些词的形式是古老的,如 eldern (elder), shoon (shoes), gang (go), Monenday (Monday), Wodensday (Wednesday) 等,有些词在读音、拼写或用法上是方言,如 blude (blood), gude (good), faem (foam), aboon (above),以及 lift 用作 sky 的意义等等,但是这些困难是极其表面的,通过注释或多读几首也就可以解决。由于民谣的写定往往是几百年后的事情,文字并不如想象的那样古老。

民谣的艺术成就还不仅仅在于它的语言,所有的民谣都善于讲述故事。由于民谣的长度有限,表达的故事就不能复杂,多半环绕一个中心情节展开。象《帕特里克·斯本士爵士》的中心情节,就是故事的主人翁奉了使命去挪威,在归航途中遇风暴而淹没,如此而已,附带的情节极少,又没有人物刻划或心理描写,要想把这样一个故事讲得生动而不平板,就十分不容易。但是,我们读起这首民谣来会觉得故事内容虽不多,故事性和吸引力却相当强。这是因为民谣的故事有一种戏剧性。首先是动作多,通过动作或发生的事情来发展故事,一件接一件,

始终不会有"冷场"的情况。最有趣的是帕特里克爵士接到国王书信后的反应。

The first line that Sir Patrick read,
A loud laugh laughed he;
The neist line that Sir Patrick read,
The tear blinded his e'e.

他心中的矛盾是通过一笑一哭的动作来说明的,这就非常形象化。此外,广泛运用对话来讲述故事,也是民谣的特点。通过一问一答来发展故事,而又不失之于冗长啰嗦,就会使简单的情节带有高度的戏剧性。有些民谣从头到尾都是对话,而又不拖沓,非常紧凑,在这种情况下,任何情景上的细节也就都不需要了。这也就说明,民谣和一般的故事或小说不一样,是不依靠细节取胜的。细节之多寡对于一首民谣的故事质量是没有决定性意义的。

此外,作为诗歌,民谣虽以叙事为主,但也有其抒情成分。每一首民谣都有一种气氛或调子,是欢乐还是悲伤,是沉重还是轻快等等,存在于故事之中,使故事具有感染力。《帕特里克·斯本士爵士》的调子是比较低沉的,有一种气氛预示结果将很不幸。结尾的数段反复咏叹,更属于抒情性质。

最后,我们要提一下民谣的诗歌形式。这里我们见到的形式是每节四行,第一、二行和第三、四行各成一组,韵押在第二和第四行上,第一行和第三行有四个重音,第二、四行只有三个重音。这种形式正是民谣最常用的形式,它既宜于叙事也宜于抒情,而且容易掌握,许多诗人都喜欢用民谣的这种诗歌形式,不是偶然的。我们认识到这种形式就不难理解为什么象

They hadna sail'd a league, a league,

A league but barely three.

要重复 a league 三次,或者象

A loud laugh laughèd he

要把 laughed 读成两个音节,无非是音律的要求。但是我们也不应把形式看得过分死板,如果那样,我们又会觉得到处是问题了。

说来说去,民谣原是口头文学,它的好处还是要在口头上去领略。多读几遍是有利于我们欣赏的。

现在就让我们来读《帕特里克·斯本士爵士》这一首民谣的本文吧!

Sir Patrick Spens

I

The king sits in Dunfermline town
Drinking the blude-red wine;
'O whare will I get a gude sailor
To sail this ship o' mine?'
blude-red = blood-red; whare = where; gude = good;
o' = of.

H

Up and spake an eldern knight,

Sat at the king's right knee:

'Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailor

That ever sail'd the sea.'

spake = spoke; eldern = elder; sat; who sat.

Ш

Our king has written a braid letter,
And sign'd it wi' his hand,
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spens,
Was walking on the strand.
braid = broad; was walking:who was walking;
wi' = with.

IV

'To Noroway, to Noroway,
To Noroway o'er the faem;
The king's daughter o' Noroway,
'Tis thou must bring her hame.'
Noroway=Norway; o'er=over; faem=foam, 泡沫, 此处指海; hame=home; 'Tis=It is.

V

The first line that Sir Patrick read
A loud laugh laughèd he;
The neist line that Sir Patrick read
The tear blinded his e'e,
neist = next; e'e = eye.

VI ·

'O wha is this has done this deed
And tauld the king o' me,
To send us out, at this time o' year,

To sail upon the sea? wha - who; has done: that has done; tauld = told.

VII

'Be it wind, be it weet, be it hail, be it sleet,
Our ship must sail the faem;
The king's daughter o' Noroway,
'Tis we must fetch her hame.'
weet=wet, rain, 雨.

VIII

They hoysed their sails on Monenday morn Wi' a' the speed they may;
They hae landed in Noroway
Upon a Wodensday.

hoysed = hoised, 升起, Monenday = Monday; morn = morning: hae = have; Wodensday = Wednesday; a' = all.

IX

'Make ready, make ready, my merry men a'!

Our gude ship sails the morn.'—

'Now ever alack, my master dear,

I fear a deadly storm.

X

'I saw the new moon, late yestreen, Wi' the auld moon in her arm; And if we gang to sea, master,

I fear we'll come to harm.'

yestreen: yesterday evening; auld = old; gang = go.

ΧI

They hadna sail'd a league, a league,
A league but barely three,
When the lift grew dark, and the wind blew loud,
And gurly grew the sea.

hadna = had not; lift: sky; gurly = growling, surly, 汹涌.

XII

The ankers brake, and the topmast lap,
It was sic a deadly storm;
And the waves came o'er the broken ship
Till a' her sides were torn.
ankers = anchors, 锚, lap = lept, sprang, 跳起, sic = such.

XIII

'O whare will I get a gude sailor

To take my helm in hand,

Till I get up to the tall topmast

To see if I can spy land?'—

XIV

'O here am I, a sailor gude, To take the helm in hand, Till you go up to the tall topmast,

But I fear you'll ne'er spy land.'
ne'er = never.

XV

He hadna gane a step, a step,

A step but barely ane,

When a bolt flew out of our goodly ship,

And the salt sea it came in.

gane = gone; ane = one.

XVI

'Go fetch a web o' the silken claith,
Another o' the twine,
And wap them into our ship's side
And let na the sea come in.'

claith=cloth; a web of silken claith: a length of silk, 一段绸, another=another web; twine: linen, 麻, wap=wrap.

XVII

They fetch'd a web o' the silken claith,
Another o' the twine,
And they wapped them round that gude ship's side,
But still the sea came in.

XVIII

O laith, laith were out gude Scots lords

To wet their cork-heel'd shoon;
But lang or a' the play was play'd
They wat their hats aboon.
laith = loath, 不愿; shoon = shoes; lang = long; or = over; wat = wetted; aboon = above.

XIX

And mony was the feather bed
That flattered on the faem;
And mony was the gude lord's son
That never mair came hame.
mony = many; flattered: tossed afloat, 默泽, mair = more.

XX

O lang, lang may the ladies sit,
Wi' their fans into their hand
Before they see Sir Patrick Spens
Come sailing to the strand!

XXI

And lang, lang may the maidens sit

Wi' their gowd kames in their hair,

A-waiting for their ain dear loves!

For them they'll see nae mair.

gowd kames = gold combs; ain = own; nae mair = no more.

XXII

O forty miles off Aberdeen

'Tis fifty fathoms deep;
And there lies gude Sir Patrick Spens,
Wi' the Scots lords at his feet!

培根"谈读书"

王佐良

弗兰西斯·培根 (Francis Bacon, 1561—1626) 是活动在英国文艺复兴时期的一个博学多才的人物,既是哲学家、实验科学的先驱者,又是律师、历史家和政治家。在文学史上,他又是一个出色的文章家,笔下时而洋洋洒洒,时而十分简约。就风格而论,他的学术著作如《学术的进展》(Advancement of Learning, 1605),大体上属于前者;他的五十八篇称为《随笔》(Essays, 1625) 的短文则属于后者。

随笔(亦名小品文)作为一种文学形式,始于十六世纪法国散文家蒙田(Montaigne)的《散文集》(Essais)。书出后在英有译本,有仿作,但到培根才出现第一部重要的英文随笔。因此他被认为是这一文学形式在英国的创始者。

读者当中,必有久闻培根《随笔》之名的。究竟他的随笔好在何处?仅仅因为它们在英国有创始之功呢,还是本身确有一些难得的优点?

过去在中学读英文,常常是一上来就碰到培根的随笔,有些人读了之后,感到枯燥无比,不但不爱好,而且以后再也不想看培根的作品了。这也是一种实际有过的情况。

现在且让我们撇开种种议论,来仔细读读培根的随笔本身。为此我们挑了一篇最常见于选本的"谈读书"(Of Studies)。

Kra: +tila in 11 10

Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight is in private-ness 1 and retiring; 2 for ornament, is in discourse; 3 and for ability, is in the judgement and disposition of business for expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshalling of affairs 5, come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies is sloth; 6 to use them too much for ornament, is affectation; 7 to make judgement wholly by their rules, is the humour 8 of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience: for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need proyning by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, 10 except they be bounded 11 in by experience. Crafty¹² men contemn studies, simple 13 men admire 14 them, and wise men use them; for they teach not their own use; but that is a wisdom without 15 them, and above

读书足以怡情。足以 傅采,足以长才。其怡情 也, 最见于独处幽居之 时, 其傅采也。 最见干高 谈阔论之中, 其长才也, 最见于处世判事之际。练 达之士虽能分别处理细事 或一一判别枝节, 然纵观 统筹、全局策划,则舍好 学深思者莫属。读书费时 过多易惰, 文采藻饰太盛 则矫,全凭条文断事乃学 究故态。读书补天然之不 足,经验又补读书之不 足, 盖天生才干犹如自然 花草,读书然后知如何修 剪移接; 而书中所示、如 不以经验范之,则又大而 无当。有一技之长者鄙读 书, 无知者羡读书, 唯明 智之士用读书, 然书并不 以用处告人, 用书之智不 Wieden I'wizdmile 智慧的智文发音

them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; 16 nor to find talk and discourse; 17 but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously, 18 and some few to be read wholly. and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, 19 and extracts made of them by others; but that would be 20 only in the less important arguments, 21 and the meaner sort of books; else, distilled books are like common distilled waters. flashy things. 22 Reading maketh 23 full man; conference 24 a ready man; 25 and writing 26 an exact man. And therefore, if a man write little, 27 he had need have 28 a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit; 29 and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that 80 he doth not. 31 Histories make men wise; poets witty; 82 mathematics subtile; 33 natural

在书中,而在书外,全凭 观察得之。读书时不可存 心诘难作者, 不可尽信书 上所言, 亦不可只为寻章 摘句, 而应推敲细思。书 有可浅尝者, 有可吞食 者,少数则须咀嚼消化。 换言之。有只须读其部分 者,有只须大体洗猎者, 少数则须全读,读时须全 神贯注, 孜孜不倦。书亦 可请人代读, 取其所作摘 要。但只限颗材较次或价 值不高者, 否则书经提炼 犹如水经蒸馏,淡而无味 矣。读书使人充实。讨论 使人机智,笔记使人准 确。因此不常作笔记者须 记忆特强, 不常讨论者须 天牛聪颖,不常读书者须 欺世有术,始能无知而显 有知。读史使人明智,读 诗使人灵秀。数学使人周