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译稿杀青！

文学翻译与翻译研究文集

TRANSLATED!

Papers on Literary and Translation Studies

(美) James S Holmes 著



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译稿杀青！文学翻译与翻译研究文集 导 读

外研社翻译研究文库

霍姆斯（James Stratton Holmes, 1924—1986）生于美国，1949年起客居荷兰，直至故去。自20世纪50年代起，他一边以着装花哨的同性恋者的面目厕身荷兰诗坛，一边通过翻译将荷兰语文学——特别是荷兰语诗歌——介绍到英语世界。60年代初，霍姆斯开始“认识到50年代预示着翻译研究革命的来临”。60年代末，霍姆斯在供职于阿姆斯特丹大学普通文学研究系、同时兼职于阿姆斯特丹翻译学院之时，在进行诗歌创作、诗歌翻译和翻译教学之际，开始了对翻译理论的研究。1975年，《翻译研究的名与实》（*The Name and Nature of Translation Studies*）一文在哥本哈根应用语言学年会上的宣读，使霍姆斯一鸣惊人。至1988年，《译稿杀青！文学翻译与翻译研究文集》（*Translated! Papers on Literary Translation and Translation Studies*）的出版，霍姆斯不仅为国际译界所瞩目，也为中国译界所关注。该论文集在国内的出版，正是应运而生的产物。

从互构语言文化学的角度而言，任何译学思想的形成与发展，除去语言载体形态的因素之外，往往也要受时代精神、民族（或地域）传统和个人特色三大文化要素交互影响制约，而前两大要素往往又体现在后一要素之中。因此，要探究霍姆斯在该论文集中所提出的译学思想，首先应关注霍姆斯作为译学研究者的主体特色，包括该主体特色所依托的时代的和民族（或地域）的文化背景。

若将霍姆斯的译学主体性特征一言以蔽之，即为：复合性，或拼合性。首先，从霍姆斯所处的时代文化背景来看，其译学研究复合或拼合了结构主义和解构主义、或者说现代主义和后现代主义两大时代文化阈限。上世纪50年代，他意识到翻译研究革命即将来临之时，西方译界以语言学为认知视角的结构主义认知模式正开始大行其道；而到1968年，他的译学研究成果最初面世时，解构主义思潮正在西欧特别是在法国风行一时；1975年之后，他对翻译研究的一系列高屋建瓴的探讨，也与西方后现代主义的高潮形成了巧妙的际会。可以说，霍姆斯译学思想的形成和发展是跨时代的产物。其次，从霍姆斯所处的民族（或地域）文化背景来看，其

译学研究也复合或拼合了北美实用主义主流民族文化传统和西欧低地国家非主流民族文化传统的分野。霍姆斯在 40 年代末从美国来到荷兰,这一跨民族、跨地域的生活经历,自然使其译学研究兼有北美和西欧两种民族认知文化传统的印痕。因此也可以说,霍姆斯的译学探究模式是跨民族、跨地域的认知模式的产物。再次,从霍姆斯本人的知识背景来看,他也成功地复合或拼合了直觉的、感性的和理性的各种认知主体性倾向。这主要体现在,霍姆斯不仅是一位“造诣非凡的文学艺术家”,而且是一位“头脑异常清晰的思想家”;不仅是一位成就卓然的翻译家,而且还是一位洞见独到的翻译理论家。一方面,其文学艺术家或诗人的艺术直觉不仅使他的译学研究“远离空洞的理论思辨”,而且其思想家的缜密求证也使他“远离自以为是虚妄”;另一方面,他“作为翻译家的广泛经历”,使他“有可能时而将某些合宜的文字加诸翻译研究之中”,而他作为翻译理论家的理论研究,又“使他对翻译实践的可能态度的相关本质有着更深切的感受”。故而也可以说,霍姆斯的译学思想还是其自身复合认知结构的必然产物。由此可见,不同的时代文化因素,各异的地域文化因素,多样的个体认知主体性因素,都在霍姆斯身上达成了某种调和;而这种调和,又使他通过一个复合性或拼合性的独特视角,开拓了翻译研究的崭新视野。

霍姆斯以诗人、学者和翻译家三位一体的身份对翻译研究的关注经历了一个逐渐认识的过程。早在 60 年代初,身为阿姆斯特丹大学普通文学研究系讲师的霍姆斯,对“作为一门学科的文学翻译研究几乎没有任何兴趣”。到 60 年代末,他不仅“对文学翻译理论在文学研究领域所起的先锋作用有了充足的认识”,而且对语言学、文本批评和比较文学等新学科给翻译研究所提供的重要视角表示了密切的关注,由此也认识到了一场翻译研究革命的来临。从那时起,霍姆斯就以其特有的认知视角,对翻译问题开始了深入广泛的探究。该论文集所收录的论文就是他翻译研究(1968 年至 1984 年)的主要成果。

统言之,霍姆斯的译学研究理路有以下两个特征:第一,既从崭新的学科视角对翻译(特别是诗歌翻译)现象和翻译研究的古老话题进行了细致入微的观察,又借助旧有的有价值的翻译理论,对翻译研究现状进行历史视角下的阐释;第二,既从诗歌翻译的特定场合下对个人翻译准则或译法选择取向进行客观观察,以抽象出翻译技艺的通用范式,又以其高屋建瓴的理论视野在翻译理论思辨及翻译研究法方面进行了忠实的探索。在该论文集所收录的翻译研究论文中,霍姆斯的译学研究理路的这两大特征一

目了然。

该论文集共收录霍姆斯在 1968 年至 1984 年期间发表的译学论文 10 篇, 根据内容的不同, 又可分为两部分: 即“译诗部分”(The Poem Translated)和“翻译研究部分”(Studying Translation and Translation Studies)。“译诗部分”收录论文 5 篇, 主要介绍了一些诗歌翻译家在诗歌翻译技巧方面的洞见。该洞见或由个人经验所致, 或由理论研所得, 并转化为客观观察的更抽象的层次。其中第一篇论文《诗与元诗: 论荷兰诗英译》(Poem and Metapoem: Poetry from Dutch to English)旨在洞悉译事奥妙, 主要着眼于探究“诗歌翻译怎样成为复杂的决断过程的结果”。第二篇论文《诗歌翻译的形式和诗歌形式的翻译》(Forms of Verse Translation and the Translation of Verse Form)通过对诗歌结构形式的探究, 对“文本”和“元文本”的核心概念进行厘定, 旨在厘清诗歌翻译形式的混乱。在第三篇论文《诗歌翻译中的时间交叉因素》(The Cross-Temporal Factor in Verse Translation)和第四篇论文《重建波迈尔桥: 论可译性的限度》(Rebuilding the Bridge at Bommel: Notes on the Limits of Translatability)中, 霍姆斯旨在从文本分析的层面上解决“拟古”(to historicize)与“循今”(to modernize)的传统译学之争, 并将文学翻译中的“自然倾向”(naturalizing tendency)与“异化倾向”(exoticizing tendency), 同“保持原样的翻译”(retentive translation)与“再创造的翻译”(re-creative translation)的基本部分联系起来。第五篇论文《配制地图: 从一个译者的笔记谈起》(On Matching and Making Maps: From a Translator's Notebook)对“翻译对等”这一传统翻译标准进行了颠覆性论证, 指出“对等”并非是译者所应信守的译事圭臬。

该论文集的第二部分即“翻译研究部分”亦收录论文 5 篇, 反映了霍姆斯对翻译理论研究的总体关注, 并从方法论的角度对翻译范畴作出了有力的界定。除第一篇论文《论翻译研究的名与实》(The Name and Nature of Translation Studies)之外, 该部分的其他论文探讨了与翻译研究有关的一系列思考, 其要点表现在: 一、翻译研究实质是“对翻译现象的描述和解释”, 换言之, 对翻译及其过程的描写(该描写没有合理的理论模式), 是所有翻译理论必不可少的前提条件。二、对译作的研究必须关注“不同相关要素的相互关系”。三、翻译实践具有“提供有价值的洞见”和“成为检验假设的试金石”双重作用。总之, 该论文集展示了霍姆斯在翻译研究领域的虽不完全但却非常忠实的多样化研究画卷。

霍姆斯在翻译研究中的开拓性贡献, 主要体现在《论翻译研究的名与

实》一文中，故需特别关注。该文理论意义的主要体现有二：一、对翻译研究作为一门独立学科的正名；二、对翻译研究学科的基本架构的规划。一方面，霍姆斯对翻译研究学科的命名提出了自己独到的见解。他认为，“Translatology”、“Translation Science”和“Translation Theory”等名称对翻译研究学科的界定要么太偏，要么太泛，皆不适合作为翻译研究学科的命名。随即他根据英语中新学科命名的习惯，提出了一个新的名词“Translation Studies”，作为翻译研究学科的命名。该命名提出之后，即得到国际译界某种程度的响应。除霍姆斯之外，以勒弗维尔（Andre Lefevere）、巴斯内特（Susan Bassnett）、赫尔曼斯（Theo Hermans）、斯内尔霍恩比（Mary Snell-Hornby）和图里（Gideon Toury）等人为代表的“翻译研究派”的出现，以及各大学翻译研究系（Department of Translation Studies）的陆续成立，即为其理论影响的明证。另一方面，霍姆斯对翻译研究学科的基本架构也进行了初步的规划。他首先将“翻译研究”（Translation Studies）学科分为“纯翻译研究”（Pure Translation Studies）和“应用翻译研究”（Applied Translation Studies）。前者又分为“理论翻译研究”（Theoretical Translation Studies）和“描写翻译研究”（Descriptive Translation Studies）。其中，“理论翻译研究”包括“普通理论”（General Theory）和“局部理论”（Partial Theory）的研究，而“局部理论”的研究主要包括“特定媒介理论”（Medium Restricted Theory）、“特定区域理论”（Area Restricted Theory）、“特定层级理论”（Rank Restricted Theory）、“特定文类理论”（Text-Type Restricted Theory）、“特定时间理论”（Time Restricted Theory）和“特定问题理论”（Problem Restricted Theory）的研究。“描写翻译研究”包括“产品取向”（Product Oriented）、“过程取向”（Process Oriented）和“功能取向”（Function Oriented）的研究。而“翻译研究”的另一大分支——“应用翻译研究”，则包括“译者培训”（Translator Training）、“翻译工具”（Translation Aids）和“翻译批评”（Translation Criticism）的研究。霍姆斯将翻译研究这门新兴学科的蓝图规划得如此清楚完备，开启了西方翻译学的学科性和系统性研究的先河。这一重大理论贡献，在西方译学界几乎无人堪与比肩。

研究霍姆斯，不能不提及董秋斯。60年代初，霍姆斯开始“认识到50年代预示着翻译研究革命的来临”的时候，董秋斯早在1951年就已提出要写一部《中国翻译学》的构想；1975年，霍姆斯在哥本哈根名声鹊起时，董秋斯的译学构想却被冷落殆尽；而时至今日，霍姆斯的译学思想在中国译界受到关注，而董秋斯创建“中国翻译学”的译学理念也同样得到了应

有的重视。

但是，尽管霍姆斯的译学研究是客观的、抽象的、忠实的，并非意味着中国译学界就可以不加选择地生吞活剥之。前已提及，除去语言因素，时代、民族（或地域）和个人的文化要素也会影响和制约译学思想的形成和发展。例如，在西方天人相分、知行异道的文化传统下，霍姆斯自然得出“实践和理论永远都是不会相混”的译学观，这与崇尚“知行合一”的华夏认知传统无疑是相悖的。又如，霍姆斯《论翻译研究的名与实》一文的面世，勾勒出了翻译学发展的总体蓝图，这是西方民族理性认知的传统使然；而董秋斯并未对“放之四海而皆准”的翻译学大道进行细致入微的逻辑推论，只是对带有地域色彩的“中国翻译学”的研究理路约略提及，实为“道昭而不道”、“大道至简至易”和“大道可执而不可说”的华夏认知理路的自然展现。总之，只有在特定的东西方文化背景下，合理的吸收和科学的借鉴才能成为可能。因此，读者在学习研究霍姆斯的译学思想之时，既应把握中西译学发展的不同理路，也应关注中西文化发展的不同传统，如此方能相得益彰。

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Table of Contents

Introduction by Raymond van den Broeck	1
<i>Part One: The Poem Translated</i>	7
1 Poem and Metapoem: Poetry from Dutch to English	9
2 Forms of Verse Translation and the Translation of Verse Form	23
3 The Cross-Temporal Factor in Verse Translation	35
4 Rebuilding the Bridge at Bommel: Notes on the Limits of Translatability	45
5 On Matching and Making Maps: From a Translator's Notebook	53
<i>Part Two: Studying Translation and Translation Studies</i>	65
6 The Name and Nature of Translation Studies	67
7 Describing Literary Translations: Models and Methods	81
8 Translation Theory, Translation Theories, Translation Studies, and the Translator	93
9 The Future of Translation Theory: A Handful of Theses	99
10 The State of Two Arts: Literary Translation and Translation Studies in the West Today	103
<i>Index of Names</i>	113

Introduction

The publication of the present collection of essays and papers by the late James S Holmes (1924-1986) is an event that has a double importance. It is important first because the author's observations on translation, in particular that of poetry, and on the academic study of translation and of translations, previously presented over a period of about fifteen years (between 1968 and 1984) in a wide range of periodicals and on a variety of occasions, are now brought together in a convenient and accessible form. Secondly, it is important because this over-all view provides the interested reader with a very faithful reflection of the developments that, during the period in question, have taken place in theoretical thinking about translation and in the methodology of translation studies. The importance of this second point will be appreciated when we consider that between the 1960s and the 1980s this discipline has progressed from its difficult beginnings to experience an unprecedented expansion.

Among the translation scholars known to me, James S Holmes always held a privileged position. This arose from the exceptional range of his talents: he was a gifted literary artist as well as a remarkably clear thinker in his academic field. I should like to say a little more about this two-sided quality of Holmes' personality. He was in the first place a poet with a voice of his own and a highly personal subject-matter; the fact that he quite soon put his poetic talent at the service of the other poets whose work he translated had partly to do with the fact that he left his native America in the late 1940s for the Netherlands, which was to become his second homeland, the country where he was to spend most of the rest of his life. Even so, he retained his U.S. citizenship, which made it easier for him to spend, at regular intervals, periods in his distant native land. A participant in two cultures, at home both with their languages and with the literatures written in those languages, he was thus the ideal mediator between the Low Countries and the Anglo-American world. Modern Dutch poetry, in particular, won international attention through his translations. His excellence as a translator received official recognition both in the Netherlands — where he was awarded the highest distinction for literary translators, the Martinus Nijhoff Prize, as early as 1956 — and in the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium — where in 1984 he received

the Flemish Community's first Triennial Prize for the translation of Dutch literature. In the Low Countries he counted many poets among his friends. Together with Ed. Hoornik and Hans van Marle he was the driving force of the periodical *Delta: A Review of Arts, Life, and Thought in the Netherlands* (1958-1973), in which he published translations of almost all important Dutch and Flemish poets. He also translated such Latin poets as Catullus and Martial, being attracted in particular by the homo-erotic element in their work. Not least, he wrote poems of his own, at one moment under the transparent pseudonym of Jacob Lowland (using bound verse), at another moment under the more familiar name Jim Holmes (using free verse). Of his epic *Billy the Crisco Kid*, a narrative poem in *ottava rima* intended to comprise ten cantos of 800 lines each, he was alas not even able to complete two cantos.

James Holmes had, without doubt, a passion for translating poetry. It was not merely, as in the first years, a way out of the impasse of a poetic activity of his own that still had to find its own vision and its own forms. It was, far more, the expression of a character trait common to many translators, which Holmes defined, in an interview he gave in 1984, as "something in the introverted type that greatly enjoys being a mediator".

Alongside Holmes the creative artist there was also Holmes the literary scholar, with whom we are here chiefly concerned. It would however be wrong to discuss the latter without having first given some account of the former. Even though Holmes himself admitted, in the interview already referred to, that when he began to look into theoretical problems he found it necessary to divide himself "rather schizophrenically" into the practicing translator on the one hand, the theoretician on the other, one can see in him a distinct interaction between these two personalities. "It has been my extensive experience as a translator", said Holmes, "that has made it possible for me to contribute the occasional sensible word to translation studies." At the same time, the study of theory made him more aware of the relative nature of possible attitudes towards translation as praxis. While in the literary theory of the 1950s and '60s many of those who wrote about literary translation were inclined to take their own way of translating as the norm for how everyone should translate, Holmes quite soon was to perceive that when it came to the theoretical study of the craft the best thing one could do was to detach oneself as far as possible from one's own working rules and personal choices in particular translational situations. In his case, then, practice and theory were never confused, and never distorted each other; on the contrary, their fruitful interaction at once guarded the scholar from sterile theorization and the translator from vain complacency.

When in the 1960s Holmes became a lecturer at the Department of

General Literary Studies of the University of Amsterdam (a post he continued to hold until a year before his death), there was as yet hardly any interest within this field for the study of translated literature as an academic discipline. Any such subject was at that time even regarded as somewhat revolutionary — which may have been an added attraction for Holmes, who never had any use for established social values or rigid, institutionalized points of view.

By the late 1960s he had sufficiently familiarized himself with the literature of translation theory to be able to play a pioneering role in this area of literary studies. He realized as did few others that the 1950s had heralded a revolution in translation studies. He knew that the new disciplines whose practitioners were beginning to concern themselves with the various aspects of the phenomenon of translation could provide this discipline with important insights. Yet at the same time he remained deeply convinced of the importance of familiarity with the history of translation and translation theory. Since he was of the opinion that the present could be explained only with reference to the past, there was scarcely any worthwhile past contribution to translation theory that escaped his attention. The library he virtually built up from nothing at his department in Amsterdam strikingly demonstrates that solicitude. In the series *Approaches to Translation Studies*, of which he was the founder and until shortly before his death the general editor, appeared two very important historical studies (Nos. 2 and 4: T.R. Steiner, *English Translation Theory 1650-1800* and André Lefevere, *Translating Literature: The German Tradition from Luther to Rosenzweig*). Works for which he himself took direct responsibility included the first English translation of Estienne Dolet's *La manière de bien traduire d'une langue en aultre* (*Modern Poetry in Translation*, No. 41/42) and, under the title "The Essential Tytler", an abridged version of A.F. Tytler's *Essay on the Principles of Translation* (MPT, No. 43).

At the same time Holmes remained alert to every new development in linguistics, textual criticism, or comparative literary studies that concerned translation and the study of translation. As a regular participant at the world conferences of the Applied Linguistics Association and the International Comparative Literature Association, he knew that in both fields translation and translations regularly came under discussion. The diversity of points of view and methods that accompanied such discussion did not disturb him; he saw them, rather, as an advantage in that they led to the object of study being considered in greater depth and in greater breadth. Even so, he often thought it a pity that attention given to translation remained in this way somewhat fragmented, and this stimulated him to strive for appropriate channels of communication by means

of which translation scholars could more easily exchange views concerning the results of their researches. He thus made plans for an international journal of translation studies, for years published a *Newsletter*, and founded the series *Approaches to Translation Studies*. Reliable and friendly as Holmes was in discussion, he established a great number of international contacts through the many conferences, colloquia, and symposia he attended. Many will for instance have met him at one of the world conferences of the FIT (International Federation of Translators), at which time and again he was the spokesman for those who advocated a scholarly approach to translation and translation studies. I myself had the good fortune to meet him for the first time in 1968 during the International Conference on General and Applied Linguistics at Antwerp. Through him I met, that same year, the Slovak translation scholar the late Anton Popovič, who was on an academic visit to Amsterdam. Some years later Itamar Even-Zohar (Tel Aviv) spent some time in Amsterdam at Holmes' invitation. These contacts made possible a fruitful collaboration, whose results are to be seen. A succession of three international colloquia, at Leuven (1976), Tel Aviv (1978), and Antwerp (1980) respectively, were the direct result of these contacts. If not the driving force behind these high-level academic encounters, Holmes certainly provided the inspiration behind them, and much experienced advice. The group of translation scholars at present gradually becoming internationally known, from the circuit Amsterdam-Anwerp-Leuven-Nitra-Tel Aviv, can with a certain pride call itself Holmes' progeny.

The present collection presents a faithful though, alas, incomplete picture of Holmes' multifarious activities in the field of translation studies. This is particularly the case of the first part (The Poem Translated), which could in fact be considered as complete only if it were accompanied by its necessary complement: the translated poems themselves. Let us hope that it will not be long before these valuable texts are published in collected form. This part introduces us to the poetry translator who tries to share with his colleagues insights into his craft acquired through both personal experience and theoretical study, transferred to a more abstract level of objective observation. The topics are in fact age-old, but are here given original expression. The first essay offers the reader the opportunity to take a look into the translator's secret workshop and to see for himself how the translation of a poem comes about as the result of a complex process of decision-making (Jiří Levý is here a constant background presence). In the second essay the author succeeds in bringing order into the chaos of possible modes of translation as applied to the original verse text, by means of a structural model in which the paired concepts text/metatext occupy a central place. The third

and fourth settle the traditional dichotomy of "to historicize" *versus* "to modernize", by placing the problem on levels of text analysis on which also naturalizing *versus* exoticizing tendencies in literary translation can be linked with the fundamental option between "retentive" and "re-creative" translation. The fifth essay makes clear, among other things, why the notion of "translation equivalence" is in fact, if taken literally, not a reliable criterion.

The second part of this collection reflects the author's unflagging concern to secure an independent academic status for his field, and to define within it methodologically well-grounded lines of force. The first essay, in particular, is one that provides a lead in this direction, and is innovative, especially when one considers when it was written. I know of no other contribution to translation studies in which the methodological problems faced by the young discipline are explained so clearly and so completely. I should like to draw the attention of readers to a piece that complements this essay: Holmes' bibliographical contribution to the volume *Literature and Translation* (Leuven, 1978), a well-considered survey in which, true to himself, he puts into practice the classificatory principles he had expressed in the essay in question. The other essays and papers in the second part pursue the train of thought thus begun: translation studies, with its claims to describe and elucidate the phenomenon of translation, and translations, stands a chance of success only in so far as translation scholars are aware of the interrelations of the various components involved. That is to say that the description of translation and translation processes is an indispensable precondition for all theorizing; that description, in turn, cannot manage without plausible theoretical models; and that the practice of translation, finally, is assigned a double role: it provides valuable insights, and it is the touchstone by which hypotheses are tested.

This volume is dedicated, in respectful posthumous homage, to the late James Stratton Holmes. It is recommended to readers as a continuing reminder, or else a refreshing introduction, to the thinking of a man who not only did pioneering work in his field but whose views on translation will continue to stimulate future generations.

Raymond van den Broeck

For a selective bibliography, see Scott Rollins, "Publikaties van James S Holmes", *PEN Kwartaal* (Amsterdam), No. 62/63 (December 1986/January 1987), pp. 39-41.