

北京大学教授 许渊冲◎译 Translated by Pr. Xu Yuanchong (Peking University) Book of Poetry Chinese-English

窈窕淑女,

By riverside a pair of turtledoves are cooing; There is a maiden fair whom a young man is wooing.

君子好逑。

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电 话 / (010) 68359376 68359303 68359101 68357937

邮 编 / 100044

传 真/(010)68357870

电子邮箱 / book@ctpc.com.cn

网 址 / http://www.ctpc.com.cn

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前言



欧美国家很少有人知道:世界上最早的诗集是中国的《诗经》。《诗经》包括三百零五篇诗歌,大约产生于两千五百年前。最早的一篇据陈子展《诗经直解》,是《商颂》中的《长发》,约作于公元前1713年。最晚的一篇,一说是《秦风》中的《无衣》,公元前505年申包胥哭秦庭时,秦哀公为代赋《无衣》之诗,一说是《陈风》中的《株林》,是刺陈灵公"淫乎夏姬"之诗,据《诗经直解》,约作于公元前599年。两说都是公元前6世纪。

《诗经》按照音乐类型分为《国风》、《小雅》、《大雅》和《颂》四个部分。《国风》一百六十篇包括周王室的乐官在十五个诸侯国的封地采集到的民歌民谣。《小雅》七十四篇多是西周贵族宴会用的乐章,《大雅》三十一篇多用于朝廷庆典。《颂》四十篇是用于宗庙祭祀的赞歌,又分为《周颂》三十一篇,《鲁颂》四篇,《商颂》五篇。《商颂》最早,约作于公元前17世纪至12世纪,相传是西周后期宋国大夫正考甫从周太师处得到的,一说是正考甫所作,商王室的后人宋襄公祭祀祖先所用,但是证据不足。

西周早期的诗篇约作于公元前 11 世纪至 9 世纪,包括全部《周颂》,一部分《大雅》和一小部分《国风》。大部分诗篇都是"赋" (叙事诗) 或史诗,最出色的是《大雅》中的《生民》、《公

刘》、《縣》、《皇矣》和《大明》,这些史诗描写了周王朝是如何建立,商王朝是如何灭亡的。西周后期的诗篇约作于公元前9至8世纪,包括大部分《大雅》,几乎全部《小雅》,还有一小部分《国风》。有些雅歌赞颂了中兴的周宣王(公元前9世纪末至8世纪初在位)南征北战的赫赫武功,如《大雅·常武》描写了宣王东征徐国的胜利;《小雅·六月》记载了尹吉甫北伐俨狁的史实;《小雅·采芑》叙述了方叔南征荆楚的武功。这些意气风发、斗志昂扬、威震四方的赞歌颂词的作者,有的是朝廷的史官,有的却是统率三军的大将,如《六月》的作者是"张仲孝友",而《大雅》中的《崧高》和《烝民》却是"文武吉甫"赠别申伯和仲山甫时所作。这些诗篇虽然极尽了赞颂之能事,但是比起《小雅》中描述士兵亲身经历的《采薇》来,却又显得稍逊一筹;《采薇》中的"昔我往矣,杨柳依依;今我来思,雨雪霏霏"传诵千古,被誉为"《诗》三百中最佳之句"。

《诗经》中最好的作品还是《国风》,包括东周时期采集到的民歌民谣,大部分作于公元前8至6世纪。民歌大都纯朴自然,反映了古代人民各方面的生活,劳动斗争,思想感情,喜怒哀乐。如《豳风·七月》描写了农民一年的劳动生活,他们耕地,织布,打猎,为主人酿酒,修建房屋,自己却不得温饱。《魏风·伐檀》讽刺了不劳而获、贪得无厌的贵族;《周南·芣苢》是农村妇女采集车前子的劳动之歌。《召南·野有死廧》描写了猎人如何爱上了一个美丽的少女。《周南·关雎》叙述一对青年男女如何在春天钟情,在夏天求爱,在秋天订亲,在冬天结合的过程。《唐风·鸨羽》表达了农民在外服役的辛苦;《邶风·日月》写出了弃妇的不幸。《击鼓》抒发了士兵思家之情,而《燕燕》和《绿衣》却描写了生离死别的痛苦。

孔子说过: "诗可以兴,可以观,可以群,可以怨。" 用今



天的话来说,就是诗可以启发,可以反映,可以交流,可以讥讽。在我看来,《国风》主要反映了劳动人民的生活,启发他们去做好事,讽刺了统治者的丑恶行为。如《周南》、《召南》反映了古代人民的家庭生活,《卫风》、《邶风》讽刺了贵族腐化堕落的习俗;《郑风》、《陈风》反映了民间的爱情生活;《豳风》启发了人民对周公的拥戴。

《小雅》主要用于贵族之间交流,反映了贵族的生活,也指责了他们的错误。如《鹿鸣之什》中有六篇用于王家宴会;《南有嘉鱼之什》中有两篇用于诸侯宴会,两篇描写王家狩猎;《鸿雁之什》中第一篇发泄了对乱世的不满,《祈父》 却是士兵对大臣的怨言;《节南山之什》都是对周幽王宠爱褒姒的批评;《谷风之什》中有被压迫贵族的呼声;《甫田之什》中有收获时贵族祭神求福的乐歌,其中《宾之初筵》写贵族酗酒的醉态,栩栩如生,是不可多得的佳作;《鱼藻之什》则多是对周厉王暴虐无道的批评。不过《小雅》有些诗篇可以收入《国风》或《大雅》中,如《采薇》、《出车》记载西伯、南仲西征的事,可以算是《大雅》。

《大雅》记载史实,反映统治者的生活。如《文王之什》中有 六篇记文王事,两篇记武王事,《繇》记古公亶父自豳迁岐,《皇 矣》记太王、王季及文王伐密伐崇的事,都是史诗;《生民之什》 中第一篇叙述周民族始祖后稷的神话,《假乐》、《洞酌》、《卷阿》是 成王的诗,《民劳》、《板》是刺厉王的诗;《荡之什》中有三篇讽 刺厉王,《云汉》等三篇赞美宣王,《崧高》赞美申伯,《烝民》赞美 仲山甫,《韩奕》赞美韩侯,《瞻卬》、《召旻》 讽刺幽王。所以 《大雅》可以算是西周王室的兴衰史。

《颂》主要用来赞美王室祖先的丰功伟绩,启发后人对祖先的崇拜,达到齐家治国的目的。《周颂·清庙之什》中歌颂文王、武王、成王的各有三篇,《思文》一篇歌颂后稷。《臣工之什》第一

篇是农事诗,第十篇《武》是宗庙舞歌,其他八篇都是祭祀诗。《闵予小子之什》据说是周公摄政时所作,前七篇都与成王有关;《访落》是成王登基的赞歌,《敬之》写成王君臣关系,《小毖》写成王自我批评,《载芟》是农事诗,《良耜》、《丝衣》是祭祀诗,《酌》等四篇和《武》一样是宗庙舞歌。《鲁颂》只有四篇,都是赞美鲁僖公的,僖公其实是个平庸之辈,但是作为周公的后裔,享受了王室祭典的特权,受到过孔子的批评。《商颂》是《诗经》中最古的诗篇。《长发》是商王朝的开国史;《那》等三篇歌颂汤武开国之君,《殷武》赞美武丁中兴之举。从内容看,说《商颂》是宋人祭祖乐章,似乎不能令人信服。大致说来,《颂》可以兴,《大雅》可以观,《小雅》可以群,《国风》可以怨。

《诗经》中常用的三种修辞手法是"赋"、"比"、"兴","赋"是直叙其事,"比"包括明喻、暗喻,"兴"是"先言他物以引起所咏之辞也"。《魏风·硕鼠》就是以动物比人的一个好例子。在这首诗中,硕鼠的形象和全诗主题有关;有时,"先言他物"和"所咏之辞"并无直接关系,只有作者感情上的联系,也就是说,同为作者爱憎的对象,如《鄘风·墙有茨》,"茨"与"中冓之言"并无关系,只是同为作者所憎。有时,"先言他物"不过是为了押韵顺口的缘故,如《召南·草虫》。

《诗经》的另一个特点是重调叠咏很多,可以增强诗歌的情韵,加深读者的印象。有时一行只变换一两个字,韵也变了,诗情也发展了;有时整行重复,有时整段重复;如 《周南·芣苢》和《召南·摽有梅》。中国古诗的句式大致可以分为四言体、五言体、七言体和杂言体。四言诗出现最早,在《诗经》中也最多,可以说是已臻成熟了。四言体每行只有两个音步,比起五、七言体来,节奏更加干脆利落。《诗经》中的绝大部分诗歌都押韵,韵式多种多样:有的每行押韵,有的隔行押韵,有的整段一韵到底,

有的行内有韵,有的还用双声加强音乐效果。

《诗经》中的词汇丰富,尤其是叠字、双声、韵语等的运用,变化多端,使得诗歌描写生动,声调悦耳。此外,还有叠句、合唱等等,也是民间歌谣常用的手法。

《诗经》的"风、雅、颂、赋、比、兴"叫做六艺,受到后世高度评价,对历代诗人产生了重要的影响。试比较下列引文,可见一斑。

- 1. 《周颂·桓》:保有厥士,于以四方。 刘邦《大风歌》:安得猛士兮守四方?
- 2. 《唐风·蟋蟀》: 今我不乐, 日月其除! 《古诗十九首》: 为乐当及时, 何能待来兹?
- 3. 《邶风·燕燕》: 瞻望弗及, 泣涕如雨。 苏武《别妻》: 握手一长叹, 泪为生别滋。
- 4. 《卫风·氓》:三岁为妇,靡室劳矣。 夙兴夜寐,靡有朝矣。
 - 《孔雀东南飞》:鸡鸣入机织,夜夜不得息。 三日断五匹,大人故嫌迟。
- (陈风·衡门》:衡门之下,可以栖迟。
 沁之洋洋,可以乐饥。
 陶潜《归园田居》:户庭无尘杂,虚室有余闲。
 久在樊笼里,复得返自然。
- 《陈风·月出》:月出皎兮! 佼人僚兮!
 李白《越女词》:镜湖水如月,耶溪女如雪。
- 7. 《鲁颂·闷宫》:泰山岩岩,鲁邦所詹。 杜甫《望岳》:岱宗夫如何?齐鲁青未了。
- 8. 《齐风·东方之日》:东方之日兮。

彼姝者子,在我室兮。 在我室兮,履我即兮。

李商隐《无题》:金蟾啮锁烧香入; 玉虎牵丝汲井回。

9. 《魏风·硕鼠》: 硕鼠硕鼠, 无食我黍! 三岁贯女, 莫我肯顾。

曹邺《官仓鼠》:官仓老鼠大如斗, 见人开仓亦不走。 健儿无粮百姓饥, 谁遺朝朝入君口?

10. 《陈风·东门之杨》: 东门之杨,其叶牂牂牍。 昏以为期,明星煌煌。

欧阳修《生查子》:去年元夜时,花市灯如昼。 月上柳梢头,人约黄昏后。

从以上十例可以看出《诗经》对历代诗人影响多大。《诗经》在国内虽然非常重要,但在国外并不广为人知,直到 18 世纪威廉·琼斯爵士才把部分诗篇译成英文散体和韵体,据说对英国 19 世纪诗人拜伦,雪莱、丁尼生等产生了巨大影响(见《外国语》总 15 期 8 页)。到了 19 世纪 60 年代,英国理雅各才把全部《诗经》译成散体英文,在香港出版;到 1871 年,他又在伦敦出版了《诗经》三百零五篇的韵体译本,并于 1967 年在纽约重印。他的译本注释丰富,是学者的译文,但不如原文简朴。1891 年伦敦又出版了艾伦和詹宁斯的《诗经》英译本:艾本押韵,译文随意改动原文,有增有删,与其说是翻译,不如说是改写。吕叔湘编《中诗英译比录》选了几篇艾译,詹译本则没有见到,不好妄评。

到了20世纪,1906年伦敦出版了克拉默宾的韵体译本,他译的《玉笛集》(中国诗选)十年之内重印十次,可算畅销;从

《中诗英译比录》中选的《氓》看来,他的译文不像艾译那样自由,而且格律也不如艾严谨。1913 年在波士顿出版了海伦·华德尔的韵体译本,从她译的《氓》看来,删节太多,而且重新组织。她的译本销路较好,二十年内重印六次。和她相反,路易丝·哈芒德走了另外一个极端,她试图把一个中文字译成一个英文音节,毫不增减,而且保持原诗韵律。她的《邶风·式微》译得很成功,但不知道她译了多少篇《诗》。

《诗经》的早期译者都用韵体。庞德是在理雅各之后、第一 个把《诗经》译成自由体的诗人。他的译本于 1915 年在剑桥出 版、1954年在哈佛大学出版社重印。他认为译诗是个创造性的问 题,他的译文经常被当成创作而选入近代英美诗选,影响很大, 但译文错误很多、不能算是佳译。另外一个把《诗经》译成自由 诗的是韦理、他的译本于1937年在伦敦出版。他在《译自中文》 的序中说:中国的旧诗句句都有一定的字数,必须用韵,很像英 国的传统诗, 而不像欧美今天的自由诗。但他译诗却不用韵, 因 为他认为用韵不可能不因声损义;他用一个重读音节来代表一个 汉字,并将这种格律比之为英诗的无韵体。庞德和韦理都不知道: 译诗如不传达原诗的音美,就不能保存原诗的意美。《诗经》 总的 说来是用韵的, 译诗如不用韵, 绝不可能产生和原诗相似的效 果。恰恰相反,用韵的音美有时反而有助于传达原诗的意美。这 就是说、用韵固然可能因声损义,不用韵则一定因声损义,用韵 损义的程度反比不用韵小。试比较韦理《周南·关雎》和本书的译 文, 韦译"关关雎鸠", 无论意美、音美, 都远不如本书。

诗无达诂,就以《关雎》而论,"雎鸠"到底是什么鸟?"君子"到底是什么人?"荇菜"到底是什么菜?众说纷纭。而"左右流之",有人说"流"是"求"或"采",韦理就是这样译的,但读来觉得牵强。我认为译诗要博采众家之长,而对《关雎》解释

得最好的,是《诗经鉴赏集》王气中的文章。他说"关关"两句表 示时令, 夏历二月春分季节, 鸟兽开始交配。"荇菜"开春发 芽,入夏才浮出水面: "左右流之",是说明荇菜在水面或左或 右浮动的样子。"左右采之",是说荇菜到了夏秋之间长大可采, 比兴新郎新娘双方的恋爱已经达到成熟阶段; "琴瑟友之"说明 还举行过订婚的仪式。"左右笔之"说明他们的结婚季节、是在 秋冬农事生活闲隙, 荇菜成熟的时候, 人们要把它熟食了。总 之,《关雎》歌唱新婚夫妇在一年内由相识、求爱、热恋、订盟以 至结婚的全过程。这样一讲,才会明白孔子为什么把《关雎》列 为《诗经》之首,因为这篇诗概括了我国礼乐治国的哲学。由此 可见。外国译者对中国传统文化没有深刻的了解,是不大可能译 好《诗经》的。一些诗有不同的解释,难分高下。如《周南·卷耳》, 余冠英说"这是女子怀念征夫的诗。她在采卷耳的时候想起了远 行的丈夫, 幻想他在上山了, 过冈了, 马病了, 人疲了, 又幻想 他在饮酒自宽"。钱锺书认为这不是幻想,而是实事: "作诗之 人不必即诗中所咏之人, 妇与夫皆诗中人, 诗人代言其情事, 故 各曰'我'。……夫为一篇之主而妇为宾也。男女两人处两地而 情事一时,批尾家谓之'双管齐下',章回小说谓之'话分两 头'。"从真的观点看来,钱说更高,但从美的观点来看,则又以 余说为上,因为"不言己之怀人,而愈见怀人情笃"。因此,我 在河南译本中采用余说, 而在湖南译本中则采用钱说, 这样更可 以看出《诗经》内涵的丰富。又如《召南·小星》、传统的解释是 指小妾,以致"小星"成了妾的代称,今天一般认为是写小臣出 差:我也是在河南本中用前说,在湖南本中用后说。但如《唐风· 无衣》、一般认为是览衣感旧、睹物思人;《诗经楚辞鉴赏辞典》 却认为是伤逝,情真意切、不胜依依、我就两本都按伤浙译了。 总而言之,我的英译希望尽可能传达《诗经》的意美、音美和形



美,并且与以往的各种语体译文也不尽相同。

《诗经》是我国古代的教科书,对建立及维护我国几千年的传统文化起了非常重大的作用。概括起来,儒家治国之道就是"礼乐"二字。"礼"模仿自然外在的秩序,"乐"模仿自然内在的和谐;"礼"可以养性,"乐"可以怡情;"礼"是"义"的外化,"乐"是"仁"的外化。做人要重"仁义",治国要重"礼乐",这就是中国文化几千年不衰的原因。世界各国,希腊罗马有古无今,英美法德俄有今无古,印度埃及都曾遭受亡国之痛,只有中国屹立世界东方,几千年如一日,对世界文明作出了独一无二的贡献。因此,把中国文化的瑰宝《诗经》译成具有意美、音美和形美的韵文,对东西文化的交流,对 21 世纪世界文化的建立,一定会有不可低估的意义。

许渊冲
1993年4月18日
北京大学畅春园舞山楼

Preface



Few people in Europe and America know that the earliest anthology of verse in the World is the Book of Poetry compiled in China 2500 years ago. This book consists of 305 poems dating from 1713 B.C. ("The Rise of Shang") to 505 B.C. ("Comradeship"). It is divided according to the type of music into four main sections: 160 Songs sung by the people in 15 city states and collected by royal musicians; 74 Odes and 31 Epics sung by the no nobles at court or at banquets, and 40 Hymns used during sacrifice to the gods and ancestors. The section of Hymns is subdivided into "Hymns of Zhou", "Hymns of Lu" and "Hymns of Shang", the last of which is said to be the oldest, dating from between the 17th and the 12th century B.C.

Songs of the early Western Zhou dynasty composed from the 11th to the 9th century B.C. include all the "Hymns of Zhou", a small part of the *Epics* and a few lyrical *Songs*. The majority of these songs are narrative or historical poems, the most outstanding being "Hou Ji, the Lord of Corn", "Duke Liu", "The Migration in 1325 B.C.", "the Rise of Zhou" and "Three Kings of Zhou" in the *Epic*, all of which describe the founding of the Zhou House. Songs of the later Western Zhou

period during the 9th and 8th centuries B.C. include most of the Epics and practically all the Odes as well as a few folk Songs. Some Epics and Odes extol the military prowess of King Xuan who reigned at the end of the 9th and the beginning of the 8th century and led expeditions against the frontier tribes. "Expedition against Xu" describes his attack on the Xu tribes in the east, in which we find the embryo of Sun Wu's military strategy; "General Ji Fu" narrates King Xuan's north ern expedition against the Huns and "General Fang" his southern campaign against the Chu tribes. These spirited, vigorous yet dignified Odes were composed by officials or historians, for example, "General Ji Fu" by Zhang Zhong, "Count of Shen" and "Premier Shan Fu" by General Ji Fu. Although competent enough, they cannot compare with soldiers' song like "A Homesick Warrior", of which the last stanza was considered as the most beautiful verse in the Book of Poetry.

The best verse comes from the Book of Songs collected in the Eastern Zhou dynasty from the 8th to the 6th century B.C. Most of the folk songs, written in a simple and natural style, reflect the life and struggle, labor and love, joys and sorrows of the people in ancient times. For instance, "Life of Peasants" gives a fairly comprehensive picture of the work of the peasants; "The Woodcutter's Song" satirizes against those idle and greedy lords, "Plantain Gathering" sings of the labor of women who gathered plantain seed; "A Deer Killer and a Jadelike Maiden" describes a hunter's love, "Cooing and Wooing" narrates the life and love of a young man and a fair maiden from spring to winter and their joy at wedding; "The Peasants' Complaint" expresses the

sorrows of peasants, "Complaint of a Soldier" that of a homesick soldier, "A Farewell Song" and "My Green Robe" describe grief at parting and over death.

As Confucius said, "Poetry may serve to inspire, to reflect, to communicate and to admonish," we may say that the Book of Songs serves chiefly to reflect the life of the labouring people, to inspire them to do good and to admonish the rulers against doing wrong. For instance, the first and second sections reflect the domestic life of the ancient Chinese people, the third to fifth sections serve to admonish the lords of their faults, the seventh and twelfth sections are mostly love songs, the thirteenth and fourteenth sections reflect the general decay of the State and the last section inspires the people to admire their Duke.

The Book of Odes serves chiefly to communicate, to admonish and to reflect the life of the nobles. For instance, the first decade contains six Odes used at the royal banquet, the second decade includes two Odes used in district entertainment and two describing the royal hunting, the third decade contains an official's complaint against the disorder of the time ("The Toilers") and a soldier's against the minister of war ("To the Minister of War"), the fourth decade is composed of complaints against King You and his favorite Lady Shi of Bao (from "To Grand Master Yin" to "A Eunuch's Song"), the fifth decade consists of Odes of the oppressed nobles and "Revelry" is a very good picture of the dissipation of the time, the sixth decade is remarkable for "Harvest" and "Farm Work", and the last decade is chiefly censure on King Li's misgovernment, "A Homesick Warrior", "A Soldier's Wife", etc. might be classified as Epics for they describe the life of soldiers and generals.

The Book of Epics records historic deeds and reflects the life of the rulers. For instance, in the first decade there are six epic odes about King Wen, two about King Wu and two about their ancestors King Tai and King Ji ("The Migration in 1325 B.G.", "The Rise of Zhou"). In the second decade "Hou Ji, the Lord of Corn" tells us the story of Hou Ji, Lord of Grain or Corn, founder of the Zhou House, there are three epic odes about King Cheng, and another three are censures on King Li. The first three epic odes in the third decade are admonitions against King Ping, King Li and King Xuan respectively, the next three epic odes record the deeds of "Count of Shen", "Premier Shan Fu" and "The Marquis of Han" and the last two are censures on King You.

The Book of Hymns serves chiefly to glorify the ancestors of the rulers and inspire their descendents to worship them as gods. The book is subdivided into three sections: "Hymns of Zhou", "Hymns of Lu" and "Hymns of Shang". In the first decade of the "Hymns of Zhou" there are three odes singing the praises of King Wen, three of King Wu, four of King Cheng and one of Hou Ji, Lord of Grain or Corn. The second decade begins with an ode on husbandry and ends with a hymn to Kingi Wu sung to the music regulating the dance in the temple. Other Hymns are sacrificial odes. The third decade is said to be composed by the Duke of Zhou himself as regent. The first seven Hymns are all concerned with King Cheng, his ascension, his consultation with his ministers, his self-criticism, his cultivation of the ground and his thanks-giving sacrifice. The last four are said to belong to the same series as "Hymn to King Wu Great and Bright", sung to accompany the dance in honor of King Wu.

The "Hymns of Lu" contain only four odes celebrating Duke Xi



of Lu, who was in fact a mediocre ruler, but as the deseendent of the Duke of Zhou, he wes privileged to employ royal ceremonies and sacrifices, which was condemned by Confucius.

The "Hymns of Shang" contain five oldest Hymns in the Book. Some critics said the "Hymns of Shang" were written in the eighth century B.C. by Shang descendents in the State of Song, but there is no authentic proof for it.

Two devices are commonly employed in the Book of Poetry, the frequent use of simile and metaphor, and the practice of "evocation" or "association," that is, starting a song by evoking images quite apart from the central subject. "Large Rat" is a good example of a song in which an animal is compared to certain type of man. Sometimes the images first mentioned are related to the general theme like this, but again there may be no close connection between them, for instance, the grasshopper in "The Rat" is not closely related to the wife's longing for her husband. Certain images have emotional associations, others are chosen solely for the sake of rhyme.

Another striking feature of the Songs is the repetition of whole phrases and stanzas, done perhaps simply for effect. Occasionally a few words of the first stanza are altered to show the development of some action, or to introduce a new rhyme or produce a more melodious effect. The form of repetition varies: sometimes certain stanzas are repeated, sometimes a few lines only, sometimes whole lines and phrases as in "Plantain Gathering" and "An Old Maid".

The metres of traditional Chinese poetry may be roughly divided into tetrasyllabic, pentasyllabic and heptasyllabic lines as well as lines of irregular length. The tetrasyllabic lines were the earliest and most songs

