



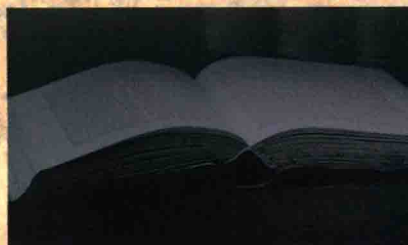
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表演的力量

——《玛格丽·坎普之书》的表演学解读

Power of Performance:

A Performance Study of *The Book of Margery Kempe*



王 睿 著



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前言

《玛格丽·坎普之书》是现存最早的一部英文自传体作品,更是为数寥寥的中世纪女性写作成果之一。它记载了15世纪女性玛格丽·坎普从一名普通的平信徒到神秘主义者的转变。书中录有坎普与耶稣的大量对话,更记述了坎普因为敬虔方式的改变而在世俗生活中历经的冲突和考验。传记在历史中湮没五个世纪后被学者偶然发现,于20世纪后期重返文学研究的视野。我在2004年接触到这部作品,并进而对中世纪文学、宗教、历史产生了浓厚的研究兴趣。对我来说,它就是每个研究者在学术之旅中都会遇到的“让世界豁然开朗的那扇窗”。

2014年我终于一偿夙愿,到坎普的家乡金斯林(King's Lynn)去看一看。金斯林距离伦敦约两个小时的车程,想到生活在15世纪的坎普舟车劳顿,足迹遍布金斯林、英国本土和欧洲大陆的多处圣地,钦佩之余不免有些唏嘘。金斯林不大,如果暴走,一天下来可以走遍所有主干道。大乌斯河畔店铺外装饰性的晒鱼架、被拆毁得只剩一个钟塔但曾经鼎盛的方济会修道院、街边墙壁上的古迹铭牌,都在遥遥呼应着坎普书中的历史掠影。在小镇中穿行,我不禁想,如果我们在世界上的存在是以空间、而不是线性的时间为坐标,我一定在某个位置和坎普重逢了吧。

得知我要去金斯林,牛津大学的Vincent Gillespie教授善意地提醒我,一定要站在坎普最常去的玛格丽特大教堂门口,背门而立,好好环顾教堂、右手的行会大厅和前方的约翰国王驻足地构成的三角地带,“那就是玛格丽·坎普的小小世界”。的确,30年来国际上的坎普研究之所

II 以生机蓬勃,多样角度的探讨之所以可能,正是因为坎普其人其书构成了一个多方力量汇聚的中心点:个人的选择,却承载着政治的动荡;宗教的体验,却活在世俗的期待中;女性的视角,却时时叩问着性别的藩篱。我着手研究的时候,学术界对这本传记的史学研究和宗教研究已经非常成熟,对它的性别研究(主要是女性主义批评)和文学性研究(对文类、作者身份和叙事策略的探讨)则可以说是方兴未艾。尽管我深信对历史文本的研究不需要明示它对现代生活的“近期实用价值”,但聆听文学与生活、中世纪文本与现代生活之间的对话却是我个人的兴趣所在。通过《玛格丽·坎普之书》这样一个案例,我想探索个体在社会剧场中如何言说、表演、发展乃至存活这样一个跨越时空和文化的议题。选择人类表演学这个研究角度,很大程度上也是因为表演学在个人的社会性存在和艺术表演之间做了一个形象的类比,在分析层面操作性很强,也容易与现代人产生理解上的共鸣。

很开心的是,对文本和相关资料的分析印证了最初的猜想:玛格丽·坎普的社会表演和文本表演呈现出现代行为艺术特有的洞察力、表演技术和自娱精神,为20世纪末兴起的“社会表演性”这个概念提供了注释,也为当代人提供了与独白话语协商、争取差异性生存的策略。相信坎普对这个解读应该不会太抗拒,因为伸出双手去连接人与人、连接人与神在坎普的工作日程上一直高居首位。在朴素的金斯林公共图书馆大厅墙上,写着“Borrow, Discover, Connect”(借阅,发现,连接)。图书,作为知识的来源和言说的载体,是坎普渴求而无法直接拥有的资源。坎普和绝大多数中世纪女性一样,没有接受教育的权利,因而不能读写,《玛格丽·坎普之书》是由牧师听写而成的。作为平信徒,她无权使用圣经,想了解他人的宗教体验也必须依赖牧师给她选读一些文本。在她数十年向上帝靠近的努力中,她总在试图从有限的资源中获得力量,将她发现的神圣之爱与世人分享,来构建一个更富有包容性的社会大家庭。在这一过程中,痛苦与喜悦往往并存。坎普对“表演性”几乎是默会式的认识,以及她在实践中演化出的“行为艺术”,为我们研究她与同代人以及与现代人之间的“连接”提供了可能。

现代读者对坎普的关注点往往集中在她和外部世界因为理念不同而激发的各种冲突上,但非常值得重视的是,坎普生命的很大一部分其实发生在她的头脑和心灵中。坎普不是无往不克的女勇士,她面对外部

世界的脆弱是真实的,她面对内心那些声音的困惑是真实的。那些对信念的不确定、确认过程中的艰辛和确认后的勇气对六个世纪后的我们依然有关联性,依然让人动容。我经常想,如果说借着表演的力量,中世纪的坎普发现了在尘世游走的策略,那对于似乎更为自由的我们当代人来说,表演的力量不只作用于外部世界,更富意义的或许是它让我们从观众的角度看自己,时刻保持清醒。世易时移,城市的名称会变化,今日的“国王的林”在坎普年代一直都只是“主教的林”^①。坎普所信仰的,可能会随着时代变化再次经历是非对错的质询,但不变的是我们都需要借表演之力在心灵的舞台上审视自我和世界。

论文付梓之际,感谢我的导师刘乃银教授引领我们走进中世纪文学的圣殿。他严谨治学的态度和高尚的人格是我一生学习的榜样。感谢费春放教授在戏剧课堂上带给我们的智力喜悦和在人类表演学领域给予我的独家指导。论文审核、答辩和后续修改过程中,严维屏、张和龙、乔国强、沈弘、徐晓东、孙建、朱振武、张弘、黄源深等多位专家曾不吝指正,在此深表谢意。感谢留学基金委的资助和上海外国语大学的支持,我得以到牛津大学英语系访学,向Vincent Gillespie、Annie Sutherland、Stuart Lee等多位研究中世纪的学者请教,从浩瀚的图书资源中受益并完成论文修改。感谢Mapping Margery Kempe网站的创始人Virginia Raguin两度许可我使用网站上的图片。感谢上海外语教育出版社孙静老师、梁晓莉老师的关怀和鼓励,让必然有些寂寞的学术研究之路充满温情。感谢我的朋友们,尤其是丁建宁、梁中贤、贺安芳、张亚婷、Kwok Li、秦宝莲、李晓石、沙梅,他们与我分享思想火花,从国内外各种渠道帮我搜集资料,多年来,几乎成长为民间的坎普专家。感谢我的家人,让我无需表演,依然有力量。

^① 坎普的故乡金斯林旧称Bishop' Lynn,在1537年后改名为King's Lynn。

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Introduction

Putative autobiography of its eponymous 14th-15th century heroine, *The Book of Margery Kempe* has not only survived the bruises of time but also the generally short readerly attention span. It is now among the most contested pieces in the medieval English literary tradition. While sustained interest in the author has fruited in a vibrant academic area now broadly recognized as Kempe studies, a performance approach, seeking not to define Margery Kempe but to tap the *Book*'s resilience to modern performance theories, may help us recognize its yet unappreciated contribution to the issue of alternative existence within a given cultural matrix.¹

Given the wide gap between the year of its composition, 1436-38, and that of its first modern publication, 1940, *The Book of Margery Kempe* (hereafter the *Book*) is a comparatively latecomer onto the medieval literary-critical stage. The entirety of the book went missing for centuries but the same seven-page selection of passages, under the description of “a shorte treatyse of contemplacyon [...] taken out of the boke of Margerie Kempe of Lynn,” were in print via Wynkyn de Worde's 1501's collection of devotional extracts, Henry Pepwell's 1520 anthology of mystical texts, and Edmund Gardner's 1910 reprint of Pepwell's anthology. The woman and her book, by 1752, had “escaped the knowledge even of the indefatigable

2 compiler of Typographical antiquities,” according to English antiquary and biographer George Ballard. Indeed, his was the single mention of Margery Kempe amidst a vast expanse of oblivion until in 1934 the sole surviving manuscript consisting of 99 chapters was identified by Hope Emily Allen at the Victoria and Albert Museum, UK, and subsequently edited and published for general access (Ballard 8; Windeatt, *Book* 430).²

But there is no exaggeration in calling the *Book* “a dark horse”, after Marea Mitchell who describes it as “coming from nowhere to generate wide-scale interest” (2). The fact that the manuscript bears four distinct sets of annotations and the name of the library of a most orthodox monastery, Mount Grace, and that the *Short Treatise* was printed twice within a span of twenty years, indicate that the work had been most ardently read and responded to both in its own time and in the succeeding century.³ Resurfacing as “the first-ever English autobiography” and a weighty addition to the feeble tradition of medieval women writing, the *Book* has since been placed in a critical spotlight rarely accorded its contemporaries. While many medieval classics are now strictly scholarly matters, to date the *Book* has seen four critical editions, nine translations into three modern languages, rewritings into three plays, one poem, two novels, one musical composition and two BBC programs, its excerpts most frequently anthologized.⁴ Secondary works on the *Book* abound, including five monographs, a rich variety of articles and essays, and several websites and web pages dedicated to mapping the material and textual cultures of Kempe’s world digitally.

In reciprocation for the critical attention gained, the *Book* has been frequently listed among primary sources in history, spirituality, philology, and sociology studies as illustrative of late medieval English lay attitudes, and now forms part of a compulsory curriculum across disciplines at college. The past two decades have witnessed a booming interest in locating marginal voices and a wider flourishing of medieval gender studies, bringing Margery Kempe closer to the forefront of the higher

educational mainstream in major English-speaking countries. Margery Kempe the author (ca. 1373—ca. 1439) is now rehabilitated as one of the three medieval English women writers canonized and highlighted in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, one of the three post-Chaucer 15th-century English literary contributors, and one of those few recorded voices defining the 14th and 15th centuries as a distinct historical period heralding the literary renaissance in Britain.⁵

Kempe Studies

Though the subject of a host of specialized inquiries, the *Book* has been strongly resistant to defining efforts. Its proem recounts a prophetic episode of how the scribe's eyes "failed so that he might not see to make his letter [...]. All other things he might see well enough," and how he gained both eyesight and comprehension of the words he was copying via Margery's verbal intercession: "She said his enemy had envy at his good deed and would hinder him [...] and she bade him do as well as God would give him grace and not leave off. [...] When he came again to his book, he might see as well, he thought, as ever he did before" (6).⁶ Interestingly, many of Margery Kempe's textual companions and the *Book*'s readers have taken a similar route from initial confusion to multifarious, self-serving conclusions, applying varied interpretative grids. Scholars approached such diversified social and cultural matters as "literacy, Episcopal control, heterodoxy, female/lay piety, gender roles, rise of nationalism, community, making of individual identities, nature of authority" (Staley 5). Consensus, if any, has shifted dramatically from one end to the other of the critical spectrum.

Initial responses to Margery the protagonist and the *Book* were largely negative if not dismissive.⁷ If the *Book* is for the most part a recount of Margery's crisis-ridden reception at home and abroad, being accused on

different occasions as “sick,” “insane,” “hypocritical,” and “heretic,” the *Book*’s earlier reception history displayed an as troubled chemistry between
 4 Margery and her readership. R. W. Chambers warned early in 1944 that the *Book* “may disappoint or even shock the reader,” and “we must come to her [Margery] without expecting too much” (xviii). He was only the first of many to discount Margery’s spiritually oriented life as mere “anecdotal curiosity” (Glenn 542). Influenced by Pepwell and Gardner’s positioning of Margery as an anchoress and mystic, modern historians were in general likewise disappointed by the missing of theological profundity as previously found in Julian of Norwich’s speculative, vision-intensive *Revelations*, and were shocked instead by what Sarah Beckwith would later term as Margery’s “very material mysticism” (37).⁸ There *are* visions of and communications with Christ, but the bulk of the *Book* is about the insistent social dimensions of Margery’s here-and-now life in and beyond England, featuring survival concerns, outspokenness and physical mobility, and oddities like public weepings and cryings.

Others sought to explain away those perceived aberrations, through the lenses of pathology and later the very popular psychoanalysis. Margery was tersely diagnosed as an English patient, suffering from postpartum hysteria and/or histrionic personality disorder.⁹ The tag was to stick fast, though scholars came to find different causes, and uses, for it. Anthony Goodman, writing in the late 1970s, found Margery afflicted with profound psychological problems that indicate her rejection of “bourgeois norms of familial, parochial and commercial life” (“Piety” 353). In the footsteps of Weissman, Peterson, and Mazzoni who saw self-therapy or anti-patriarchal stratagems in Kempe’s alleged malaise, Richard Lawes in his 1999 essay diagnosed “the madness of Margery Kempe” as temporal lobe epilepsy, which unlike psychosis, would not affect the authenticity and sincerity of her reportage. In contrast to early understandings that served only to disparage her, critics in the last quarter of the 20th century were notably more ready to reconcile the two ends of the story.

A similar optimism came from the general direction of historical and religious studies. Despite the initial excitement over the discovery of the *Book* and the continuing interest in Margery Kempe, only about fifty articles and booklets were published prior to 1981, mostly a retelling or citing in passing of the woman's peculiar practices. In the 1980s, however, with the increasing sophistication in the study of medieval spirituality and a stronger appreciation of women's participation in history, scholars took a new and rewarding look at the *Book*. Given the paucity of information about the historical Margery Kempe, scholars have almost unanimously resorted to the research strategy of contextualization; assuming the role of the patient archeologist, they turned over each of the many pebbles in the *Book* both to extract as much information about the past as possible from this rare document, and to see Margery in perspective. Among others, the understanding of mysticism had broadened so as to acknowledge the existence of a positive, or affective, strand of experience, popularly found on the Continent, other than the negative one, better known in England.¹⁰ Definitive studies by Clarissa Atkinson and Susan Dickman, on the great influence of continental holy women as well as Margery's divergence from English practices (e.g., enclosure for female religious and that affective piety practitioners had to be male and clerical), persuasively established Margery as "an isolated English example of a widespread continental phenomenon" (Beckwith 36). Newly liberated from "the narrow confines of insular, illustrious mysticism within which it is habitually condemned," Margery Kempe was happily admitted into a growing community of continental/affective mysticism (pseudo-Bonaventure, St Bridget of Sweden, Richard Rolle) as ensuing scholarship continued to explore the many references in the *Book* to mystical texts (Wallace, "Mystics" 170). While in the early 1980s, in a compilation of medieval women writers, Margery Kempe was still introduced by William Provost under the title of "the English religious enthusiast" (twenty eight pages after Julian of Norwich, "the English Mystic"), by the later 1980s, she had been broadly

accepted as a mystic proper (300).

- 6 Fleshed out was also Katharine Chomeley's 1947 supposition that Margery Kempe could be a spokeswoman of the devotional currents of her time. The *Book's* affinities with lay piety and vernacular theology were rediscovered and studied by scholars like David Wallace (1984), Gunnell Cleve (1986), Susan Eberly (1989), Alexandra Barratt (1992), Julia Bolton Holloway (1992), Julia Boffey (1999), and Yoshikawa (2003), allying Margery in one powerful sisterhood with such famed saints as St Elizabeth of Hungary, Mary de Oignies, St Catherina, Blessed Angela of Foligno and St Dorothea of Prussia, and at the same time locating popular scriptural models like Virgin Mary, Mary Magdalene and ultimately Christ.

Over time the tendency to see Margery as an exception was revised, if never replaced, by contextualizing and normalizing efforts. Those who wished to tap the *Book* as a historical source but found internal data scarce and authorial reliability suspicious could now do it, not so much as a "window into locked attics" but as a door that leads on to more doors. Margery as a social existence was thoroughly historicized by scholars like Kathleen Ashley (1998), Anthony Goodman (2002), and John Arnold who edited *The Companion to The Book of Margery Kempe* (2004); in these books copious information is provided to localize Margery on all levels — Lynn, Norfolk, East Anglia, Lancastrian England — greatly substantiating the field and providing a jumpstart for Kempe studies outside the British Isles.

While criticism of the *Book* has all along been guided by at least one of the three theoretical frameworks — the theological, the psychological, and the socio-historical, Kempe studies from the 1980s onwards were also punctuated by quite a few belligerently feminist claims that harkened back to the Thurston phraseology of "Margery the astonishing" (this time in a good sense) ("Margery" 446). Fuelled by growing concerns over women writing and women conditions, the last two decades witnessed a concerted drive setting Margery up as the ingenious, scheming woman who is able to by-pass the patriarchal authorities through appropriation of a virginal

status, sanctification of her sexual identities as wife and mother, or Shamanistic, subversive empowerment of people and herself (Salih; Higgs; Hoppenwasser “Margery”). The feminist critique was consummated with Karma Lochrie’s 1991 book-length study, *Margery Kempe and the Translations of the Flesh*, which exposes medieval misogyny as based on gendered ideologies of the body and celebrates Margery Kempe’s transgression of those cultural taboos designed to exclude and silence the female.

Other feminist scholars acknowledge Margery Kempe’s singularity as a defiant figure, but they are dubious about the difference she makes and even see in her a failed attempt to escape patriarchy. Both Sarah Beckwith (1986) and Janet Wilson (1992) argue that her identification with the Holy Family romance subjects her again to the subordinate roles of wife and mother, and thus reinforces existing social structures. The change she was able to make, “like a serf becoming king, [...] is a usurpation that changes the terms but never the structure” and therefore too limited (Beckwith 54).

A latest accomplishment in Kempe studies rang very literary and started with a refusal to equate autobiography with facts.¹¹ Indeed, earlier commentators tended to cherry-pick episodes from the *Book* as illustrative and even representative of late medieval religious, economic, political and gender “realities,” without considering the fact that the narration is governed by literary and cultural conventions, and therefore pendulums uneasily between fact and fantasy, if not sheer fraud (making it a faction at best). Noting the narrative voice of the scribe and the consistent use of “this creature” rather than “I” for Margery, a few literary critics worked from the alert stance of seeing the *Book* as a textualized and therefore mediated production precariously poised in the gray zone of (auto) biography, and examined its writing strategies to construct an author image.¹²

Roberta Bux Bosse (1979) and John A. Erskine (1989), pioneers into the authorship issue, both contended that the scribe, rather than Margery Kempe, was the true authoring voice.¹³ Lynn Staley went further. Her *Margery Kempe’s Dissenting Fictions* (1994) — in which she “toyed with