

《西学东渐记》“代跋”中文译本

几处译文商榷

——容闳与中国现代化学术研讨会

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容闳所著《西学东渐记》(My Life in China and America, 1909年, 纽约 Henry and Company 出版) 原文后原有一附录, 乃特韦契画 (Jeseph H. Twichell) 牧师 1878 年 4 月 10 日在耶鲁大学法学院肯特俱乐部之演讲词, 系统介绍了容闳之奋斗经历, 与容闳自传体之《西学东渐记》于叙述容闳之历史, 实互为补充。惜乎商务印书馆于 1915 年翻译出版《西学东渐记》时, 此附录未予录入。本书译者徐夙石、恽铁樵两先生之译文, 乃文言文, 带有当时林纾、严复的译风, 译文简易畅通。学子阅读此书, 获益匪浅。然这段附录却数十年未能与国内读者见面, 自为憾事。70 年后的 1985 年, 长沙岳麓书社由钟叔河先生主编《走向世界》丛书, 收《西学东渐记》为书目, 请张叔方先生对 1915 年译文作校正; 并以当今流行的语体文译出原稿后之附录, 名为“代跋”。译笔也明白清新, 不易多得。但也有一些值得商榷之处, 趁此纪念容闳诞生 70 年学术会议之际, 本文特辑录于此, 以就教于原译者。

(1) 原文: These gentlemen are officers, and these boys are pupils of the Chinese educational mission, although one of the most remarkable and significant institutes of the age on the face of the whole earth. The object of the mission, now of nearly six years standing, is the education in this country, through a term of fifteen years, of a corps of young men for the Chinese government service; that government paying

the whole cost—an annual expense of about \$100,000. (p. 247)

原译文：这些有身份的人是官员，这些孩子是中国留学事务所的学童。这个留学事务所是当时最堪注意和最为重要的组织之一，已有将近 6 年的历史，其宗旨是在美国以 15 年为期为中国政府培养一批年轻人。(p. 1)

建议译文：可这些男士却是中国留学事务所的官员，而孩子是其学童。这个留学事务所是当时全球最堪注意与最为重要的组织。现在这个留学事务所的成立已近 6 年，其宗旨在于使这一群特殊的青年人能接受美国教育从而为中国政府服务。这个训练以 15 年为期，中国政府承担年度开支大约为 10 万美元的费用。(p. 1)

(2) 原文：the plan is to afford these boys the advantages of our best educational institutes—academies, colleges, and, to the extent, professional schools—to assign them, by and by, as they shall develop aptitude, to various special courses of study and training in the physical, mechanical and military sciences, in political history and economy, international law, the principle and practice of civil administration and in all departments and branches of knowledge, skill in which is useful for public government service in these modern times. (pp. 248-249)

原译文：这一计划是要借用美国的教育组织：学院，大学以及部分专门学校为这些学童提供方便。等他们的才智逐步增长后，再派他们攻读各种专门课程，如物理、机械、军事、政治史和经济、国际法、民政原理与应用以及一切对现代行政有用的一切知识。(p. 2)

建议译文：这个计划是要为这些儿童提供美国最优秀的教育机关：学院、大学、甚至某些职校这个有利的条件，待不久他们才智逐步增长后，就安排他们攻读各种各样的专门训练及学习的课程。这些课程包括物理学，机械学及军事科学，政治史及经济学、国际法、行政管理实践及原理，以及一些蕴涵当代政府公共服务所需的知识及技能的各类学科的所有分支。

(3) 原文：He suffered, however, during this time serious

interruption by the death of his father, which required him to go home. And a boy that he was, assist in the support of his family. This he did by wages earned in the printing establishment of Portuguese Roman Catholic mission in Macao. (p. 251)

原译文：可是容闳的学业这时由于父丧，而受到影响。尽管他还是一个孩子，他就得回去从葡萄牙天主教澳门传道会的印刷所挣取工资来帮着养家。(p. 3)

建议译文：这时，由于父丧，容闳忍痛遭受学业严重中断。尽管还是一个孩子，他得回家并在葡萄牙罗马天主教澳门传道会的一所印刷厂挣工资协助养家。

(4) 原文：Moreover, through the notice into which his graduation brought him, it came about that a very inviting opportunity was open to him to remain and have his career here if he chose to. (p. 257)

原译文：而且，由于他的毕业引起人们的注意，一个很有吸引力的机会向他开放了，只要他乐意，他可以留在美国并找到职业。(p. 7)

建议译文：而且，由于他的毕业引起人们的注意，这样的事就发生了：只要他愿意，非常诱人的机会向他敞开了大门，使他留下，在美国成就他的事业。

(5) 原文：He had, soon after his return in 1855, in accordance with his views of what was due to his purpose, resumed his native dress and identified himself not only thus externally, but also in large measure in every other aspect with his own people. (p. 267)

原译文：1855年回国后不久，他重新穿上了本国服装，而且不只从外表，还从各方面尽量同本国同胞打成一片。(p. 12)

建议译文：1855年回国不久，他依照便于实现其计划这个想法，重新穿上了本国服装，同时，更想使自己不仅在外观上不像外国人，而且在其他的各方面能尽量同本国同胞打成一片。

(6) 原文：The three friends of his idea being together and countenancing one another, then and there agreed that they would at

once take action to have the thing he proposed done, and would cast their united influence with the Government in its favor. (p. 269)

原译文：三位赞助者当时当地就议定立即办理，并愿意影响政府，促其赞成。(p. 14)

建议译文：三位赞同他观点的同僚既然聚在一起，便相互支持，并在当时当地协议立即采取行动，以期容闳的倡议得以实现。他们并联名向政府施加影响，促其赞成。

(7) 原文：They are certainly to be objects of the highest and most friendly interest to every Christian citizen of the United States. (p. 271)

原译文：他们理所当然地值得美国公民尊重和友好。(pp. 14-15)

建议译文：他们确实堪称每一个信奉基督教的美国公民最高尚最友好的情操的表率。

此外，还有某些零散译文值得商量。例如，Yale Law School (p. 247) 似应译为“耶鲁法学院”；又如，... better equipped in all save experience to do for that land what most needs to be done, (p. 249) 似应译为“（他们）具有可靠的经验为其祖国解决当务之急”；又如，The head and front of the whole marvellous enterprise, humanly speaking, is Commissioner Yung Wing. (p. 250) 原译文漏译了“就人情而言”；又如，metaphysics 不宜译为哲学，应为玄学；又如，Thatcher (p. 255)，现在通译为“撒切尔”；又如，Law of Contract (p. 264) 为“合同法”；又如，“... that he was impracticable” (pp. 267-268) 中 impracticable 一词，似译为“不切实际”为好。

总之，“代跋”的译文整体很好，诚实简洁流畅优美，瑕不足以掩瑜，是难得的好译文。上述各点，提出聊供商榷，尚望行家指教。