

第 10 回 文化庁翻訳コンクール 古典文学部門講評

詩人、翻訳家

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文化庁翻訳コンクール古典部門のコンクールもぶじ2回目を迎えました。今回の課題作となった井関隆子は日本でもあまり知られていませんが、幕末に向かう江戸期の貴重な記録を残しています。本コンクールの課題となることによって、埋もれがちな女性の書き手が発掘され、注目されることも喜ばしく、重要なことと思います。

隆子の日記作家としての特徴のひとつは、正確な描写です。審査に当たっては、本課題の1つめの「入れ歯」にある描写とユーモアがどのように訳されているか。また2つめの「水鳥」では、平安文学の文体を倣いながら、実はそこに天保の改革という時代背景があり、為政者への鋭い社会批判も潜められています（深沢秋男『旗本夫人が見た江戸のたそがれ』文春新書）。ですから課題文に直接記されていなくとも、隆子の人物像や生きた時代を正確、具体的に掴みイメージしているかも、見たいと思いました。

また隆子は旗本夫人ですから、日記文は敬語表現を含め、品格ある文体です。身分に合った表現が読み取れているか。現代日本語では失われた古語の助動詞などがどのように訳出されているか。これらが古典部門として鍵となるポイントと考え、審査に当たって注目しました。

最優秀賞：ヒンツマン・ライアン

ヒンツマン・ライアン氏の翻訳は、全体のトーン、リズム、テンポ、正確さなど、応募作のなかで飛び抜けて優れていたと思います。文章の流れも読みやすく、最優秀賞にふさわしい作品でした。

「天保十四年十一月五日」の冒頭、隆子は婉曲表現を用いて謙遜を表明していますが、そのニュアンスも“I would give it a good effort”や“I’m rather shallow-minded”など、英語でも自然に言い表されていました。“I was hoping you would perhaps be able to...”など、勾当から語り手（隆子）への敬語表現も読み取って訳しています。

また「べし」「めり」「む」「ぬ」などの助動詞は、それぞれ文脈によって多様な意味合いを含みますが、そこにも細やかに目を配って翻訳されており、高く評価したい点でした。たとえば、「心に思ふことをえ言つゞくるべくもおぼえず」の possible 「べし」は“there’s no

way I'll be able to pull off the story”の”be able to”に。「とく聞し召もおよばれためり」の推量の「めり」は“It seems that news of my situation has already reached you”の”it seems”に。

「とく池の様を見むと思ほすに」の意志の「見む」についても“thought to himself that he should quickly go look at the pond”の”should”を用いて翻訳されていますし、この一節については「とく」という副詞も、“quickly”とあって訳し落としがありません。同じ「とく」でも、先ほどの「とく聞し召もおよばれためり」では“has already reached you”となっていて、文体も単調にならず、多様な語彙やフレーズが用いられています。

“Now winter's withering winds were gusting, and the radiant foliage blown from the trees gathered like wind-fashioned weirs on the face of the water.”の一文などは、頭韻含め、音感からも木枯らしの凄まじさ、冬枯れの侘しさが感じられます。

和歌翻訳についても、日本語、ローマ字を加え、日本の古典文学に馴染みの薄い読者にも韻律などが伝わり、親切で丁寧な翻訳であると思います。英語詩として五行にきれいにレイアウトしている工夫も、好ましいものでした。視覚からも和歌が詩であることが伝わりますし、読みやすく、整った、たいへん優れた翻訳と感じました。歌枕や掛詞の説明も含め、和歌の意味は注に記されており、日記本体の文章の流れを妨げないようになっています。

そのほかの注での『伊勢物語』や『古今集』への言及からも、訳者の古典への深い知識と実力が十分に窺えました。審査員一同、本作を最優秀とすることで、すぐに一致いたしました。見事な翻訳だと思います。

優秀賞: 伊藤欣司

伊藤欣司氏の翻訳は自然で美しく、特に「水鳥」の難しい文脈でも流れが途絶えずに訳出され、素晴らしいと思いました。”But as the seasons changed, trees shed their leaves, and fallen foliage settled thickly upon the water, weaving a lattice of autumn color.”など、頭韻を踏んで、音楽的な響きです。“Before long, a man appeared at his bedside. Clad in pale blue hunting robes, he carried himself with calm dignity.”という箇所も、夢のなかの劇的で不思議な展開が伝わる、文学的な翻訳だと思います。

やや惜しまれた点は、込み入って文意の読み取りにくいところを省略して文脈を優先し、流している箇所が見受けられたことです。文章は流麗になりますが、翻訳の忠実性としては(とくにコンクールへの応募作としては)、最優秀賞には一步譲るものだったと思います。

古典文法への正確な知識が、もうすこし求められるのでは、と感じました。

また「水鳥」では語り手、盲目の勾当、物語に登場する「あるやごとなき人」、夢に現れる「青き狩衣の男」など、それぞれの身分、階層に応じて敬語が使い分けられていますが（そこから主語が読み取れます）、その点への目配りがもうすこし見られる英語になっていたら、古典作品の翻訳としてさらによいものとなったのではないのでしょうか。

優秀賞: マシュー・フェルト

マシュー・フェルト氏の翻訳は、全体に好ましく読みました。すこしトーンが一貫していないように感じられたのが残念です。惜しまれたところは伊藤欣司さんと同じく、文意のとりにくい箇所を省略していた点です。コンクール作品として、もし誤訳となっても細部への丁寧な姿勢を見せてほしい、と思いました。また動詞の選択がやや硬く、日本の古典語、とくに「水鳥」で『伊勢物語』の雅びに似せた文体にそぐわない雰囲気だったかもしれません。和歌の訳にも、もう少し詩的な感覚を生かせたらと思います。

それでも特に散文の部分は英語として優れている、との評が集まり3位受賞となりました。

10th Japan International Translation Competition: Classical Literature Category Review

Moriyama Megumi

Poet, Translator of Japanese literature

The Classical Literature Category of the Japan International Translation Competition has successfully completed its second edition. The author of this year's text, Iseki Takako (1785–1844), like other women writers of her era, is not widely known, even in Japan, yet her diaries constitute an invaluable record of life under the Tokugawa shogunate (1603–1868) in its waning decades. I am therefore delighted that the competition chose to shine a spotlight on this important but oft-overlooked literary figure.

One of Iseki's distinguishing qualities as a diarist is the precision of her descriptions. In the first diary entry chosen for the competition (dated September 1840) on the theme of "Dental Implants" (*ireba*), the judging committee was intrigued to see how the translators had rendered her descriptive detail and humor.

The second diary entry (dated December 1843) on the theme of "Waterfowl" (*mizutori*), represents a veiled social critique couched in Heian-period prose of the shogunate during its harsh and unpopular Tenpō Reforms (1841-1843), as Fukazawa Akio observes in *Edo's Twilight Seen Through a Samurai Lady's Eyes* (*Hatamoto fujin ga mita Edo no tasogare*, Bunshun Shinsho, published by Bungeishunjū). While this context is not made explicit, the judging committee was looking to see how well the translators captured both Iseki as a person and the atmosphere of her era.

Herself the wife of a high-ranking samurai, Iseki naturally employs a refined and honorific prose style. In evaluating the English translations, the judges paid close attention to key criteria unique to the translation of classical Japanese literature, such as the translators' ability to capture the subtleties of social rank expressed in the original and the treatment

of verb endings that have since fallen out of use.

Grand Prize: Ryan Hintzman

Among the submissions, Ryan Hintzman's translation stood out as exceptional in its overall tone, rhythm, pacing, and accuracy. The text flows smoothly and is a pleasure to read, making it a work fully deserving of the top prize.

At the beginning of "Waterfowl," expressions such as "I would give it a good effort" and "I'm rather shallow-minded" deftly and naturally capture the subtleties of the narrator's indirect, self-deprecating language. The nuances of Japanese honorific speech directed at the narrator by "the blind official Sugishima" is also expressed in phrases such as "I was hoping you would perhaps be able to..."

Japanese classical verbs endings such as *-beshi/beku*, *-meri*, *-mu*, and *-nu* carry a range of meanings that vary depending on context, and the translator's careful attention to these nuances is another aspect of the work that deserves high praise. For example, in 「心に思ふことをえ言つゝくるべくもおぼえず」 ("There's no way I'll *be able to* pull off the story") the potential sense of *-beku* is expressed as "be able to," and in 「とく聞し召もおよばれためり」 ("It *seems* that news of my situation has already reached you") the conjectural sense of *-meri* is rendered as "seems." Likewise, in 「とく池の様を見むと思ほすに」 ("He... thought to himself that he *should* quickly go look at the pond"), the word "should" accurately captures the volitional sense of *-mu*. Also, in this passage, the adverb *toku* is accurately rendered as "quickly," whereas in the phrase cited above, "It seems that news of my situation has *already* reached you," the same adverb is correctly translated as "already." Such variation of vocabulary and phrasing depending on context also serves to prevent a monotony of tone from creeping into the text.

One sentence that illustrates the translator's evocative use of language is the following: "Now winter's withering winds were gusting, and the radiant foliage blown from the trees gathered like wind-fashioned weirs on the face of the water." Through the use of sound—

notably alliteration—the translation superbly captures the ferocity of the wintry gusts and the desolate beauty of the winter landscape.

Iseki's use of *waka* poetry in the text is likewise handled with great care in the translation, providing the Japanese original (in kanji/hiragana and romanization) alongside the English to enable readers, even those less familiar with classical Japanese literature, to appreciate the prosody. Also, the decision to break the poems into five lines of English verse is commendable, as it visually signals that the *waka* are poems, enhances their readability, and results in translations that are polished and of a very high standard. Notes explaining poetic place names (*utamakura*) and pivot words (*kekekotoba*) are helpfully presented to the reader without impinging on the flow of the text itself. References in the notes to *Tales of Ise* and *Kokinshū* likewise testify to the translator's knowledge and command of the classical literary canon. The judges were unanimous in selecting this work for the top prize. It is in every respect a superb translation.

Second Prize: Ito Kinji

Ito Kinji's translation is natural and elegant, and the judges were particularly impressed by the way it sustains a smooth narrative flow, especially in the longer and more challenging “Waterfowl” entry. This highly literary translation employs alliteration to create a richly musical effect, as in: “But as the seasons changed, trees shed their leaves, and fallen foliage settled thickly upon the water, weaving a lattice of autumn color.” Likewise, the dramatic and uncanny unfolding of events within a dream is conveyed in: “Before long, a man appeared at his bedside. Clad in pale blue hunting robes, he carried himself with calm dignity.”

The judging committee's one regret was that in several places where the syntax is particularly complex and the meaning difficult to parse, passages appear to have been smoothed over or abbreviated in favor of maintaining narrative flow. While this lends the prose an elegant fluency, it comes at the cost of fidelity—especially important for a competition submission—and therefore places the translation just short of the top prize. We would have

liked to see a more rigorous attention to Japanese classical grammar.

In the “Waterfowl” entry, Iseki uses honorific language to carefully differentiate among the various characters according to their social class: the narrator, the blind official Sugishima, the “nobleman” of the narrative, and the man “clad in pale blue hunting robes” who appears to him in the dream. This also makes it possible to infer the subject when none is stated. Had the English shown a slightly greater sensitivity in this regard, the translation might have been even stronger as a rendering of a classical work.

Second Prize: Matthieu Felt

Matthieu Felt’s translation was, on the whole, enjoyable to read. Unfortunately, the tone did not always feel consistent, and, as with the Second Prize entry, another point of concern was the simplification of passages whose meaning is particularly difficult to construe. For a competition submission, the committee would have liked to see a more meticulous engagement with the text, even at the risk of occasional misinterpretation.

The choice of verbs also tended to be somewhat unsuited to the elegance of classical Japanese, particularly in “Waterfowl,” where the prose consciously echoes the courtly refinement of *Tales of Ise*. We also felt that the translations of the *waka* might have benefited from a more fully realized poetic sensibility. Even so, the judges agreed that the prose sections in particular were of sufficiently high standard to merit placing it among the top three entries.