



## On Huang Gaoxin's Choices in the Translation of *The Canterbury Tales*

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### Abstract

As a Chinese translator, Huang Gaoxin has been devoting himself to the translation of poetry for over fifty years and has successfully translated a large number of collections of English poems into Chinese, among which *The Canterbury Tales* is an essential one. By comparing the translated version of *The Canterbury Tales* by Huang with its original version and analyzing his theory of poetry translation, this paper explores the choices regarding translation text, translation method and language style he made during his translation process, and offers the underlying reasons behind the choices from the perspectives of translation purpose, views towards poetry translation, qualities as a translator and audience awareness.

**Key words:** Huang Gaoxin; *The Canterbury Tales*; Translator's choice

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### INTRODUCTION

*The Canterbury Tales* is a collection of narrative poems created by the English poet Geoffrey Chaucer. The collection narrates the stories told by pilgrims from all walks of life on their way to Canterbury, thus presenting an epitome of English society in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. It criticizes the feudal morality and the ecclesiastical

asceticism and praises people who pursue happiness and freedom, which embodies the humanism spirit of Chaucer. Meanwhile, in this work, Chaucer created the heroic couplet<sup>1</sup>, which has been widely used by later English poets. As a result, this collection is regarded as the beginning of modern English poetry.

Over the next few hundred years, the collection has been translated into many languages and spread to many countries. Since the 1940s, it has been translated into Chinese by many Chinese translators, one of whom is Huang Gaoxin. However, Huang did not translate it into free verse, nor did he adopt a unified translation method to translate different poetic forms in the original work. In order to retain the original poetic charm, he chose a new way of translating English poems into Chinese. In the end, his translation received a lot of praise, and he won the first prize in the Fourth National Excellent Foreign Literature Book Award with the highest votes (Ma, 2006, p.231).

The huge success of his translation is certainly inseparable from a series of choices he made in the process of translation. Therefore, based on Huang's translated version of *The Canterbury Tales* and his theory of poetry translation, this paper intends to investigate his translation choices in three aspects: translation text, translation method and language style, and the reasons behind his choices.

### 1. THE CHOICE OF TRANSLATION TEXT

Before translating *The Canterbury Tales*, Huang had already translated a series of collections of classical English poems, including *Rubaiyat*, a collection of English lyrical poems. Compared with the short poems in *Rubaiyat*, *The Canterbury Tales* is a large volume of

<sup>1</sup> The heroic couplet is a poetic form composed of pairs of rhyming lines written in iambic pentameter that is often used in English narrative poems. It rhymes in pairs: aa, bb, cc, and so on.

long narrative poems, which would be an overwhelming challenge for Huang especially because he suffered from a serious eye disease. In addition, as early as the 1940s, Chinese renowned translator Fang Zhong had already translated *The Canterbury Tales*. Fang's version conformed to the original work in content and style, and his translation was graceful and fluent, and thus was widely welcomed by Chinese readers (Ma, 2006, p.230). So why did Huang still choose to spend years translating the nearly thousand-page book? After reading his translation work and theory of poetry translation, it can be found that his choice was made mainly due to the following two considerations.

The first consideration is cultural consideration. *The Canterbury Tales* narrates the stories told by people from all walks of life in the 14<sup>th</sup> century English society and clearly presents to the readers a comprehensive realistic picture of the social situation of that time for the first time in English literature. It also initiated the turn of English literature from medieval romanticism to realism. At the same time, it used the rhymed stanzas of various types borrowed from France to replace the old English alliterative verse, which laid the rhyme<sup>2</sup> and poetic form foundation for the development of English poetry. These factors together contributed to the pioneering position of *The Canterbury Tales* in the history of English poetry.

Although Fang Zhong had translated *The Canterbury Tales* and won wide acclaim, he adopted the prose style rather than conformed to the poetic form of the original work (Ma, 2006, p.230). Thus, Huang decided to translate the work in a manner of conforming to the original form while remaining faithful to its content so as to provide *The Canterbury Tales* with a poetic form translation. And then Chinese readers would be given an opportunity to enjoy rich and changing rhyme and poetic forms of the English poetry while experiencing the sharp conflict between medieval system and social development in the 14<sup>th</sup> century English society.

The second consideration is theoretical consideration. For a long time, many poets and scholars worldwide have thought that poetry is not translatable. The Italian poet Dante Alighieri (1903) asserted "nothing which hath the harmony of musical connection can be transferred from its own tongue into another without shattering all its sweetness and harmony" (p.34). The English poet Percy Bysshe Shelley (1930) wrote in *A Defense of Poetry* "Hence the vanity of translation; it were as wise to cast a violet into a crucible that you might discover the formal principle of its color and odor, as seek to transfuse from one language into another the creations of a poet" (p.114). Chinese scholar Zhu Guangqian (1984) believed that although the content of poetry can be

translated, the sentiment of poetry cannot be translated; once a poem is translated, the soul of the poem will get lost (pp.112-113).

However, Huang did not agree with such ideas. From his point of view, poets usually have strong feelings for their own poems. They think that their poems and the feelings in them cannot be fully understood by other people, let alone be translated into another language, so they conclude that poetry is untranslatable. As for translators, they hold that poetry is untranslatable largely because they find it difficult to translate poetry and usually fail to convey all the elements contained in poetry in the process of translation. As for those who do not translate poetry, their assertion that poetry is untranslatable is not credible given their lack of practice (Huang, 1999, p.5). Huang believes that although to translate some lyric poetry or classical Chinese poetry is extremely difficult, it cannot fully prove that poetry is completely untranslatable and at least some English narrative poetry is translatable in Chinese. So he chose to translate *The Canterbury Tales* as a rebuttal to the untranslatability of poetry.

In his practice of translating *The Canterbury Tales*, Huang tried to prove not only the translatability of some poetry, but also the necessity to keep the form of translated poetry consistent with the form of original poetry in order to present the rhyme of the original poetry. *The Canterbury Tales* is a collection of verse stories told by people from all walks of life; thus the content and the language style reasonably vary from one story to another. In order to reflect this feature, Chaucer did not use a same poetic form from the beginning to the end, but used a variety of poetic forms. For the most part, the collection used heroic couplets, as well as seven-line stanzas with a rhyme scheme of "ababbcc" and eight-line stanzas with a rhyme scheme of "ababbcbc". Accordingly, Huang did not choose a unified form of translation when dealing with different poetic forms, but chose to conform to the original poetic forms while remaining faithful to the original content so as to present the rhyme of the original poetry. Such a translation method brought huge success to his translation in the end.

In addition, Huang also gave sufficient consideration to which version of *The Canterbury Tales* to translate: the original version or the latter revised version. Chaucer lived in the 14th century and he wrote *The Canterbury Tales* in Middle English, which is not easy to read even for modern native English people. So it has been revised in Modern English by latter scholars. But Huang chose *The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*<sup>3</sup> as the source language text and translated directly from Middle English with the Modern English version only as a reference (Huang, 2007, p.14). Why did he choose a much more

<sup>2</sup> Rhyme is generally composed of the rhyme scheme and the rhythm of a poem and rhyme is achieved through the form of poetry, namely poetic form.

<sup>3</sup> *The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* was edited by Walter W. Skeat and published by Oxford University Press in 1900.

difficult version to translate? The answer can be found in one article, “When I translate classical works, I am like a gadfly on a horse. It would be better to keep myself tight on it so as to run farther with it without being left behind” (Li, 2017, p.1). It can be clearly seen that the reason why he chose the Middle English version is that he wanted to keep as close to the original work as possible and then present the authentic work to his readers.

## 2. THE CHOICE OF TRANSLATION METHOD

As mentioned above, to translate *The Canterbury Tales*, Huang aims to illustrate that the translated poem should be as faithful to the original work as possible not only in the content but also in the form in order to present the rhyme of the original poetry. For most translators, it is not difficult to be faithful to the content of the original work; the difficulty lies in how to keep the form consistent with the original work. Due to the difficulty, many translators choose not to be faithful to the form of the original work. Some translators choose free translation, only remaining faithful to the content of the original work while disregarding the number of a stanza’s lines and the rhyme in the original work. Some choose the free-compensation translation method, namely adding rhyme to the translated work to compensate the rhyme of the original work lost in the process of translation; but there is not much connection between the added rhyme in the translated work and the rhyme in the original work. Some translators choose semi-free translation, keeping the rhyme and the number of lines in the translated work consistent with those in the original text, but the length of each line of stanza in the translated work is not the same with those in the original work. Regarding the translation method, what was Huang’s choice?

Huang (1999) believes “the only way to achieve successful poetry translation is to reproduce the original work’s rhyme embodied in the form of translated work on the premise of being faithful to the content of the original work” (p.114). Rhyme mainly includes the rhyme scheme and the rhythm of a poem. Due to a wide range of rhymes in Chinese, Huang could relatively easily keep the rhyme scheme of his translated work the same with the rhyme scheme in the original work. Most of the rhyme schemes in *The Canterbury Tales* are heroic couplets, pairs of rhyming lines with the rhyme scheme of “aabbcc...”. When he encountered this kind of rhyme scheme, he reproduced it accordingly and his translated work is of the same pairs of rhyming lines with the rhyme scheme of “aabbcc...”. And when the rhyme scheme in the original work is “ababbcc” with seven lines in a stanza, the translated work also shares a seven-line stanza with the rhyme scheme of “ababbcc”. But to reflect the

rhythm of the original work, namely the number of foot<sup>4</sup> and syllables in each line, is much more difficult. To solve this problem, some translators suggested to substitute Chinese “dun”<sup>5</sup> for English foot to reproduce the rhythm of the original poem. On the basis of substituting Chinese “dun” for English foot, Huang took a step forward. He kept the number of “dun” in the translated work equal to the number of foot in the original work and matched the number of Chinese characters in each line in the translated work to the number of English syllables in each line in the original work in a proportional manner. In practice, Huang quantified such a numerical relation: five foot and ten syllables each line, four foot and eight syllables each line, and three foot and six syllables each line in the original work should be transformed to into five “dun” and twelve Chinese characters each line, four “dun” and ten Chinese characters each line, and three “dun” and eight Chinese characters each line respectively in the translated work. In the following part, a comparative analysis is conducted between the original version of *The Canterbury Tales* and the translated version by Huang on two common poetic forms in *The Canterbury Tales*, namely the heroic couplet and the seven-line stanza with the rhyme scheme of “ababbcc”, so as to show how Huang applied the above translation method to practice.

### 2.1 Comparison on the Heroic Couplet

The heroic couplet is a poetic form composed of pairs of rhyming lines written in iambic pentameter. It rhymes in pairs: aa, bb, cc, and so on. The heroic couplet is used for most part of *The Canterbury Tales*. The following excerpt is selected from “the Merchant’s Tale”. It narrates that an old merchant named January married a maiden named May and May cheated on January; later January found it but May covered the cheating with a lie. The English excerpt is the original work and the Chinese excerpt is Huang’s translation.

ST1: ‘Non other lyf,’ seyde he, ‘is worth bene;  
For wedlok is so esy and so clene,  
That in this world it is a paradys.’

Thus seyde this olde knight, that was so wys. (Chaucer, 1900, p.427)

TT1: “其他的生活方式都不值一文;  
要安宁、纯洁的生活就得结婚,  
因为婚姻生活是人间的天堂, ”

素来明智的年老爵士这样讲。(Huang, 2007, The Merchant’s Tale)

First of all, each two lines in the excerpt from the original work rhyme with each other: “bene” rhymes with “clene” and “pradys” rhymes with “wys”. Each two lines

<sup>4</sup> Foot refers to the special combination of stressed and unstressed syllables in English poetry. The number of syllables in one foot may be two or three, but only one of them is stressed.

<sup>5</sup> “Dun” means a relatively complete meaning group composed of one, two, three or four Chinese characters; when it is read, it sounds like English foot with a natural rise and fall of tone.

in the excerpt from the translated work rhyme with each other as well. The Pinyin<sup>6</sup> of “文” and “婚” are “wén” and “hūn”, and the final<sup>7</sup> of them is “én” and “ūn”. Although the two finals are not the same, the pronunciation is similar; so they rhyme with each other. The Pinyin of “堂” and “讲” is “táng” and “jiǎng”, and the final of them is “áng” and “iǎng”. The two finals are partially same; thus they rhyme with each other. In this way, the rhyme scheme of Huang's translation is consistent with the rhyme scheme “aabb” in the original work.

Then, the number of foot and syllables in each line of the original work is five and ten respectively, which means each line is composed of five foot with ten syllables (each line has been divided in terms of foot and syllable, with space separating syllables and vertical lines separating foot).

ST1: ‘Non o| ther lyf,| seyde he,| is worth| be ne;  
For wed| lok is| so esy| and so| cle ne,  
That in| this world| it is| a pa| ra dys.’

Thus seyde| this ol| de knight,| that was| so wys.  
(Chaucer, 1900, p.427)

The number of “dun” and Chinese characters in each line of Huang's translation is five and twelve respectively, which means that five “dun” with twelve Chinese characters each line correspond to five foot with ten syllables each line in the original work (each line has been divided in terms of “dun”, with vertical lines separating them).

TT1: “其他的|生活|方式|都不值一文;  
要安宁、|纯洁的|生活|就得|结婚,  
因为|婚姻|生活|是人间的|天堂, ”

素来|明智的|年老|爵士|这样讲。(Huang, 2007, The Merchant's Tale)

## 2.2 Comparison on the Seven-Line Stanza With the Rhyme Scheme of “ababbcc”

The seven-line stanza with a rhyme scheme of “ababbcc” is one of Chaucer's preferred poetic form. “The Man of Law's Tale”, “Sir Topaz's Prologue”, “The Clerk's Tale”, “The Second Nun's Tale” are all created with this poetic form and the content of these stories is of strong religion and morality. The following excerpt is selected from “The Man of Law's Tale”. It narrates what Constance, daughter of a Christian emperor, had gone through and suffered before she was finally reunited with her husband and her father. The English excerpt is the original work and the Chinese excerpt is Huang's translation.

ST2: In hir is heigh beautee, with-oute pryde,  
Yowthe, with-oute grenehede or folye;  
To alle hir werkes vertu is hir gyde,  
Humblesse hath slayn in hir al tyrannye.  
She is mirour of alle curteisyse;  
Hir herte is verray chambre of holinesse,

Hir hand, ministre of fredom for almesse.’ (Chaucer, 1900, p.135)

TT2: “她极其美丽却一点也不骄傲,  
虽非常年轻却又成熟而稳重,  
她的谦逊使专横显得很渺小,  
她以道德指导她所有的行动,  
她是面镜子反映出一切雍容,  
她的心就是圣洁的神龛一座,  
她的手总在执行慷慨的施舍。” (Huang, 2007, The Man of Law's Tale)

(Huang, 2007, The Man of Law's Tale)

First, the rhyme scheme of the original work is “ababbcc”: “pryde” in the first line rhymes with “gyde” in the third line; “folye” in the second line, “tirannye” in the fourth line and “curteisyse” in the fifth line rhyme with each other; and “holinesse” in the sixth line rhymes with “almesse” in the seventh line. In other words, the first line rhymes with the third line; the second line, the fourth line and the fifth line rhyme with each other; and the sixth line rhymes with the seventh line respectively. The translated work follows suit in this regard. The Pinyin of “傲” and “小” are “ào” and “xiǎo” and the final of them is “ào” and “iǎo”. The two finals are partially same; thus they rhyme with each other. The Pinyin of “重”, “动” and “容” are “zhòng”, “dòng” and “róng”; the final of them is “ong”, so they rhyme with each other. The Pinyin of “座” and “舍” are “zuò” and “shě” and the final of them is “uò” and “ě”. Although the two finals are not the same, the pronunciation is similar; so they rhyme with each other. Therefore, the rhyme scheme of Huang's translation is consistent with the rhyme scheme “ababbcc” in the original work.

Then, compared with the previous excerpt, there are differences among each line in terms of the number of foot and syllables in this excerpt (each line has been divided in terms of foot and syllable, with space separating syllables and vertical lines separating foot).

ST2: In hir| is heigh| beau tee,| with- oute| pry de,  
Yow the,| with- oute| gre nehe| de or| fo lye;  
To al| le hir| wer kes| ver tu| is hir| gy de,  
Hum blesse| hath slayn| in hir| al ti| ran nye.  
She is| mir our| of al| le cur|tei sye;  
Hir her| te is| ver ray| cham bre| of holi| nes se,  
Hir hand,| mi nis| tre of| fre dom| for al| mes se.’

(Chaucer, 1900, p.135)

Although not every line in the above original work follows a pattern of five foot with ten syllables, Huang still translated them in a pattern of five “dun” with twelve Chinese characters in the Chinese version (each line has been divided in terms of “dun”, with vertical lines separating them). On this point, Huang (1999) thinks that the quantification relationship between the number of “dun” and Chinese characters in the translated work and the number of foot and syllables in the original work is relative, rather than absolute; and some adjustments to the quantification relationship are acceptable (p.102).

<sup>6</sup> Pinyin refers to Mandarin phonetic symbols.

<sup>7</sup> Final refers to simple or compound vowel of a Chinese syllable.

TT2: “她|极其美丽|却一点也不|骄傲,  
虽|非常年轻|却又|成熟|而稳重,  
她的|谦逊|使|专横|显得很渺小,  
她|以道德|指导|她所有的|行动,  
她|是面镜子|反映出|一切|雍容,  
她的心|就是|圣洁的|神龛|一座,  
她的手|总在|执行|慷慨的|施舍。” (Huang, 2007, *The Man of Law's Tale*)

Through the analysis of the above two examples, it can be found that Huang practiced “emulation method” in his translation work to present the rhyme of the original poetry. In other words, he sought a proportional match or equivalence between the rhyme scheme, the number of “dun” and Chinese characters in the translated work and the rhyme scheme, the number of foot and syllables in the original work. The reason why Huang insisted on such a “emulation method” is due to his views towards poetry translation, which includes the possibility of “emulation method” and the necessity of “emulation method”.

As for the possibility of “emulation method”, first of all, it is not difficult to match the rhyme scheme in the translated work with that in the original work. Chinese poets have paid great attention to rhyme in their poetry creation since ancient times; and in modern Chinese poetry, rhyme has been expanded, and the difference of tone is no longer used to differentiate rhymes. Sometimes it is even possible to rhyme when the pronunciation of Chinese characters is merely similar. As a result, the difficulty to rhyme in Chinese has been greatly reduced.

Secondly, it is possible to achieve a proportional match or equivalence between the number of “dun” and Chinese characters in the translated work and the number of foot and syllables in the original work. On the one hand, English foot consists of one stressed syllable and one or two unstressed syllables, which is equivalent to Chinese “dun” comprised of two or three Chinese characters in terms of volume, so it is possible to substitute Chinese “dun” for English foot and thus achieve equivalence between the number of “dun” and the number of foot (Huang, 1999, p.101). On the other hand, since the number of syllables forming one foot is certain, it is reasonable for Chinese “dun” to be composed of a certain number of Chinese characters and then the number of Chinese characters can proportionally match the number of syllables (Huang, 1999, p.147).

The possibility of “emulation method” at its root lies in the great potential of Chinese and Chinese characters. Huang (1999) once summarized the basic characteristics of Chinese as follows: 1. conciseness, 2. rich vocabulary, 3. a wide range of rhymes, 4. flexible structure and expression, 5. characters carrying sound, meaning and picture, 6. high adaptability (p.71). Although there are only about 400 independent syllables in Chinese, they are flexible and can be easily used. Therefore, in most cases, it is possible to be faithful to the form of the original work

while remaining true to the content of the original work. Even some rhyme that is difficult to replicate can find equivalence in Chinese.

As for the necessity of “emulation method”, rhyme is the symbol of the musicality of a poem and is the most apparent sign that distinguishes one poem from another. The rhyme of a poem clearly reflects the times and the content of a poem and the personal style of a poet. Therefore, when a translator chooses to only translate the content of an original poem and to disregard the rhyme of it, the translated poem may no longer be the original poem. In addition, the rhyme of poetry can also reflect the national characteristics of poetry, such as Chinese Jueju<sup>8</sup>, Japanese Haiku<sup>9</sup>, and French Rondeau<sup>10</sup>. Since the rhyme, which is reflected by the form, contains so much information of a poem, it is essential to transfer both the content and the form of an original poem into its translated version. In this way, geological, national and historical characteristics of an original poem can be identified; introduction, restructuring and reference relations among different poetic forms of different nations can be clarified; sublation, inheritance and promotion relations among different poetic forms of different generations can be established (Huang, 1999, pp.139-140).

### 3. THE CHOICE OF LANGUAGE STYLE

Huang not only pursued the equivalence of rhyme between the translated work and the original work, but also paid attention to the language style of the translated work. To be specific, when translating *The Canterbury Tales*, Huang tried his best to reproduce the original language style in the translated work. On the one hand, *The Canterbury Tales* is a collection of narrative poems, whose language style is generally fluent and concise, and even colloquial in some stanzas. Huang has successfully transferred such features into his translated work. On the other hand, the stories in *The Canterbury Tales* were told by people from all walks of life with different language styles. Huang's translation imitated the language style in the original work and thus vividly presented different storytellers' identities and personalities. An comparative analysis is provided below to demonstrate how Huang's translation is consistent with the original work in terms of language style.

The following excerpt is selected from “The Knight's

<sup>8</sup> It refers to a kind of short Chinese poetry consisting of four lines with five or seven Chinese characters in each line.

<sup>9</sup> It refers to a kind of classical short Japanese poetry developed from ancient Chinese poetry; and it consists of three sentences with seventeen tones: five tones in the first sentence, seven tones in the second sentence and five tones in the last sentence.

<sup>10</sup> It refers to a fixed form of verse based on two rhyme sound and consisting usually of thirteen lines in three stanzas with the opening words used twice as an unrhyming refrain at the end of the second and third stanzas.

Tale". The story narrates that two noble young men in ancient Greece defeated the King Theseus and fought for Theseus's sister. The knight's image in the story followed the traditional knight's characteristics, featuring nobility, gentleness with great aspirations and ideals. The language used in the original work is serious and solemn, such as "moevere of the cause above" and "the faire cheyne of love", which conforms to the linguistic characteristics of knight.

ST3: 'The firste moevere of the cause above,  
Whan he first made the faire cheyne of love,  
Greet was theeffect, and heigh was his entente;  
Wel wiste he why, and what ther-of he mente;  
For with that faire cheyne of love he bond  
The fyr, the eyr, the water, and the lond  
In certeyn boundes, that they may nat flee;  
That same prince and that moevere,' quod he, (Chaucer, 1900, p.85)

TT3: “当那位最初创造万物的天神最初把美好的爱的锁链造成，意义很重大，用心也非常崇高——此举的目的，他自然完全知道。因为凭这副美好的爱的锁链，他就可以在一定的范围里面，束缚住空气水火土，不使脱逃。就是这位造物主，”忒修斯说道，(Huang, 2007, *The Knight's Tale*)

Accordingly, Huang's translation transplanted the language style of the original work. On the one hand, the translation is fluent and readable. On the other hand, the formal language in the translation, such as “爱的锁链” and “束缚住空气水火土”，reflects the dignity and nobility of knighthood.

From the above example, it can be seen that Huang, while practicing “emulation method” to ensure that the rhyme of the original work can be reproduced in the translation, also did not forget to transplant the language style of the original work, which reflects his spirit of pursuing perfection. The reason why Huang did so can be attributed to his qualities as a translator and audience awareness.

First is Huang's qualities as a translator. He has devoted himself to poetry translation for more than 50 years and has translated many collections of English poems with high quality. At the same time, he has also conducted research on the theory of poetry translation, and constantly enriched and improved his theories of poetry translation, and published many influential monographs on the theory of poetry translation, such as *From Rubai to Canterbury—Views on Chinese Translation of English Verse*, and *Studies on Chinese Translation of English Verse*, so as to better guide the practice of poetry translation. His qualities as a translator have remained consistent throughout his entire translation career, including his translation of *The Canterbury Tales*,

which he spent several years in creating while suffering from a serious eye disease. Second is his audience awareness. Specifically speaking, due to his responsibility to audience, Huang has paid attention to the guarantee of translation's quality to ensure that the effect of the translated work to its readers is the same as the effect of the original work to its readers. He once said, “I don't think I have the ability to make perfection even better, so I have not ruined perfection by adding something superfluous” (Li, 2007, p.1).

## CONCLUSION

A translator's values, namely his attitude towards life and his aesthetic taste, decide his translation purpose; his translation purpose gives rise to his views on translation, which ultimately affects choices he makes in the translation process (Sun, 2008, p.85). Huang (1999) once wrote, “Wu Lao, one of my most devoted and outspoken colleagues, said that it would be a great pity for the Chinese translation community if Homer's *Epics*, Dante's *Divine Comedy* and Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* were not translated into Chinese in poetic forms. I was struck by such a statement because, in my opinion, it reflected the earnest need of tasteful readers for poetic translation, which should be a motivation for responsible poetry translators” (p.54). From his saying, it can be seen that as a translator, Huang regarded the promotion of excellent western cultural works' dissemination in China as his mission. With the mission in mind, Huang has made his choices regarding translation text, translation method and language style during his translation of *The Canterbury Tales*, which reflects his translation purpose, views towards poetry translation, qualities as a translator and audience awareness. In the end, his excellent translation of *The Canterbury Tales* provides an opportunity for Chinese readers to appreciate the essence of English poems.

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