

ཐུགས་སྐྱོལ་

འགྲུབ་ལཱ་ལྷན་ཁག་

TRANSLATION & TRANSMISSION

ཐུགས་སྐྱོལ་

OCTOBER 2-5, 2014

KEYSTONE, COLORADO, USA

Workshop 1 | Room: CASTLE PEAK | 4:30-6:30pm, October 4, 2014

Translating Poetic & Inspirational Materials

with Holly Gayley, Wulstan Fletcher, Andrew Quintman



Wulstan Fletcher

(Padmakara Translation Group; Tsadra Foundation Fellow)

Wulstan Fletcher studied modern languages and theology in Oxford and Rome. He completed a three year meditational retreat in Chanteloube, France 1986-1989 and is a member of the Padmakara Translation Group. He has been a Tsadra Fellow since 2001. Wulstan has completed several Tibetan-English translation projects in collaboration with Helena Blankleder, including *Treasury of Precious Qualities* (Book 1 2010; Book 2, 2013), *The Root Stanzas of the Middle Way* (2008), *The Way of the Bodhisattva* (revised 2006), *The Nectar of Manjushri's Speech* (2007), *White Lotus* (2007), *Introduction to the Middle Way* (2005), *The Adornment of the Middle Way* (2005), *Food of Bodhisattvas: Buddhist Teachings on Abstaining from Meat* (2004), and *Counsels from My Heart* (2003). Wulstan is currently working on Longchenpa's *sems nyid ngal gso* and Mipham's *brgal lan nyin byed snang ba*.

Wulstan Fletcher's Presentation

དགོ་བ་རྒྱུ་དུ་དག་ལ་ཡང་། །མི་ཕན་སྐྱམ་དུ་བརྒྱས་མི་བྱ། །རྒྱ་ཡི་ཐིགས་པ་བསགས་པས་ཀྱང་། །
སྒོད་ཆེན་རིམ་གྱིས་འགོངས་པར་འགྱུར། །སྤྲིག་པ་རྒྱུ་དུ་ཚམ་ལ་ཡང་། །མི་གཞོད་སྐྱམ་དུ་བརྒྱས་མི་
བྱ། །མེ་སྟག་སྤོ་མོ་ཚམ་གྱིས་ཀྱང་། །རྩ་ལུང་རི་ཚམ་བསྐྱགས་པར་བྱེད། །

Although [your] virtue is small, do not despise it thinking that it will bring no benefit.
Indeed by accumulated drops of water a large vessel will gradually be filled.
Although [your] negativity is small, do not despise it thinking that it will do no harm.
By just a tiny spark a mountain of hay may be burned.

Little virtues do not shun
Thinking that no gain is won.
For drops of rain from cloud and sky
Will fill an ocean by and by.
And little faults do not ignore
And think there is not ill in store.
A spark though tiny it may burn,
A mountain of dry grass to ash will turn.

It is the first Grand Duty of an Interpreter to give his Author entire and unmaimed; and for the rest, the Diction and Versification only are his proper province; since these must be his own. But the others he is to take as he finds them.

Alexander Pope (1688-1744)

The elegiacs of the Greek and Roman poets, with their usually independent couplets, are scarcely reducible to any convincing shape in prose. Their general effect seems inseparable from a strict metrical form, and this in English has usually meant rhyme as well. In the Greek Anthology there is a two-lined epigram of uncertain date which the Loeb (parallel) translation renders thus:

"The rose blooms for a little season, and when that goes by thou shalt find, if thou seekest, no rose but a briar."

Conscientious, straggling, flat.

Dr Johnson, using the couplet to head an essay, has made this of it:

Soon fades the rose; once past the fragrant hour,
The loiterer finds a bramble for a flower.

The details are not closely kept to, but the English couplet, like the Greek, is a visible unit conceived in verse; it has concision; it has a touch of pathos. Call it a paraphrase or call it a free translation, it is good.

Walter Shewring, *On Translating Homer*

Other prose translations of Homer over the last forty years or so have followed much the same lines as contemporary translations of the Bible, choice among which is indeed embarrassing. Authors of these profess to write a "twentieth-century English" which everyone is to understand. But what is twentieth-century English? In its most familiar and typical forms, it is manifestly debased English--that of journalists, publicity agents, politicians. Yet amidst these aberrations there have persisted other quite different forms of English...

This is work of the twentieth century and no other, and yet it seems to have taught nothing whatsoever to translators who assume in readers a feeble-mindedness and a deep distaste for serious language on serious matters, the more trivial word being the more genuine. Distress, for example, grief, anger and indignation remain common human experiences, and their natural names puzzle no one. But these translators prefer to describe human beings as "depressed", "worried", "upset" or "annoyed"... This widespread technique--applied to the Bible or to Homer--degrades the writer while it insults the reader.

Walter Shewring, *On Translating Homer*

The clue to the immense literary success of the Authorized Version [King James Bible] is the clause on its title page: "appointed to be read in churches". The ear of the AV translators for the rhythm of the spoken word, though there are many lapses, was very acute, and it is a sobering thought that it is sensitivity to one's own language, not scholarly knowledge of the original, that makes a translation permanent. A translator with a tin ear, including a translator of the Bible, is continually mistranslating, whatever his scholarly knowledge. The AV renders Yahweh Tsabaoth as "the Lord of Hosts"; the American Revised Version (1901) renders it "Jehovah of Hosts", which is a greatly inferior translation. Anyone who doubts this has only to try it on his eardrum.

Northrop Frye, *The Great Code*, p. 208