

In thus systematizing for us the information concerning this significant episode in the Maoist movement, Mr. Lötveit has utilized a total of 139 documents and 10 different journals from the Shih Sou Collection and dozens of other, secondary sources. Among the documents, 8 are specified as authored by Mao personally—although many others labeled Government and/or Party products can apparently be also traced to him—and 1 by Mao's brother Tse-t'an. Mao is quoted extensively. Such a documentary analysis necessarily has its limitations, of course, and the author, as a beginner, must also clarify and learn many basics in both Chinese studies and political science in his own background. It is not this reviewer's task or intention to touch upon such basics here. But a few instances of neglect or unawareness or undue modesty seem rather excessive. Using almost habitually the term "the Party centre" many times himself throughout his dissertation (pp. 96, 99, 154, etc.), for example, the author should have no great need to profess "difficulty" in establishing "what the word 'Centre' (Chung-yang) stands for" (p. 69); there could be a more definite interpretation in the given context. If his reading of Chinese Communist material had been more extensive, again, Mr. Lötveit would have realized that such a term as "t'u-chi-tui," which he renders as "surprise attack teams," may suggest "trouble-shooting" rather than purely military roles. He shows no awareness, also, of the concept—the very characteristic if not important concept—of "semi-proletariat" created by Mao in his class analysis. And, while indulging in concepts like "will of the people," "opinions of the people" and "the rule of the will of the people," etc., above all, the author, like many others, singularly neglected to define "people" after the Maoist fashion, or to exhibit understanding that "democracy" in the Communist ideology stands out not so much for its weakness in relation to "centralism" as for its auxiliary role—a definite subordinate and non-voluntary role—in the realization of a pre-determined, an ideologically designed, a teleological society that is not for "the people" of any description to "choose" freely. This realization ought to have saved many arguments, political or intellectual. Finally, from Mr. Lötveit's presentation, we cannot be sure whether there was a complete Constitution passed by the First or the Second Congress whereas those who are familiar with the *Documentary History* compiled by Brandt, Schwartz and Fairbank, which he lists in his bibliography, have long taken it for granted. Isn't this lingering uncertainty a bit too basic and too glaring?

SHEN-YU DAI

*The Romance of the Western Chamber*. Translated and adapted by Lai, T. C. and Ed Gamarekian. (Hong Kong, etc.: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1973. HK\$8.50.)

Among the Yüan plays, only *Hsi-hsiang-chi* by Wang Shih-fu has been a favorite of translators' pens. It has been rendered into French by Stanislas Julien (1872), Soulie de Morant (1928) and Chen Pao-ki (1934), into German by Vincenz Hundhausen (1926), into English by S. I. Hsiung (1935) and Henry H. Hart (1936), to name only the relatively complete versions. Uneven as they are in their qualities, all of them aim at scholars or serious students of Chinese literature. The need of a shorter, simpler, nontechnical version for the general public has long been felt. Lai and Gamarekian filled this gap by providing an adaptation of this great play of China.

Despite the thinness of the volume, this version presents the complete story in five parts or 20 acts. (Henry H. Hart translated only 15 acts while Chen Pao-ki gave only synopses for parts.) By condensing monologues and eliminating repetitious matter, the whole romance between Chang Kung and Ts'ui Ying-ying (Little Nightingale) is rendered in abridged, but not sketchy, form. The language is highly readable, even by readers who have no knowledge of Chinese literature.

Comparison between the three English versions shows that Hsiung was faithful to the meaning which he interpreted accurately; Hart followed the original rather closely, at time adding details; this present volume brings out the theme, rewriting some sentences when necessary. Their differences might well be illustrated by a few passages.

*Example 1* 日近長安遠。

HSIUNG I see the sun which seems nearer than the unseen capital.

HART The very sun seems nearer  
Than Ch'ang An.

LAI & GAMAREKIAN . . . no closer to the Capital than I am to the sun. (p. 2)

*Example 2* 這些時坐又不安，睡又不穩，我欲待登臨又不快，闌行又悶。每日價情思睡昏昏。

HSIUNG Of late I can neither sit nor stand steadily.  
No vista now brings pleasure to me.  
Even when I walk leisurely I feel wearied.  
All day long, full of thoughts of love, I feel spiritless.

HART If I sit down I cannot be at peace,  
And if I stand I know no rest.  
If I climb the steps to look out into the distance  
No joy is mine.  
And if I try to walk I am seized with utter weariness.  
I cannot sleep.

LAI & GAMAREKIAN I am as restless during the day as I am at night. I am unable to take leisurely stroll without wanting to sit, and unable to sit without wanting to move. My thoughts are filled throughout the day of love. And him. (p. 29)

*Example 3* 「請」字兒不會出聲，「去」字兒連忙答應。

HSIUNG Before I could say a word he kept on answering me repeatedly and hastily, . . .

HART Before I could finish my sentence,  
He has leaped to answer me.

LAI & GAMAREKIAN Before the word "invite" comes out of my mouth, the word "yes" has already come out of his. (p. 44)

*Example 4* 白茫茫溢起藍橋水，不鄧鄧點着祆廟火。

HSIUNG [Ying-ying] I am suddenly separated from my lover, who may be compared with him who was overwhelmed in the white waves while keeping his tryst at the Blue Bridge,  
Or with him who, missing his beloved, in fury set fire to the Temple of the Fire God, which was consumed in flames, . . .

HART [Hung Niang] The white waters have swept up  
And overflowed the bright blue bridge.  
A sudden fire has burst out  
And consumed the sacred shrine with flame.

LAI & GAMAREKIAN [Chang] Suddenly the water is rising and I am caught underneath the Blue Bridge. The Temple of The Fire God is consumed in flames . . . (p. 50)

*Example 5* 待月西廂下，迎風戶半開，隔牆花影動，疑是玉人來。

HSIUNG Await in the moonlight at the Western Chamber,  
Where the door stands half opened by the breeze.  
While the shadows of the flowers move on the wall,  
The Precious One may be coming!

HART When the moon sinks below the western chamber,  
The side door will be half-open to the wind.  
When I see the shadows of the flowers  
Move upon the wall,  
Then I shall know that the man,  
Handsome as is jade,  
Has come to me.

LAI & GAMAREKIAN When the moon is over the Western Chamber,  
And the wind sets the door ajar,  
Watch for the shadows on the wall to move,  
The jade flower will not be far. (p. 70)

*Example 6* 柳絲長玉驄難繫，恨不得倩疏林挂住斜暉。

HSIUNG Long though the willow branches may be, it is impossible to tie to them the white  
steed in order to delay his departure.  
I pray you, O autumn forest, to hinder the setting of the sun for my sake.

HART The branches of the willow are long indeed  
But not long enough to entangle and hold back  
His jade-white horse.  
I pray to you, O forest,  
Stop the setting sun in his heavenly course.

LAI & GAMAREKIAN Would that I could delay this departure by tying these long willow  
branches to his horse, or by hindering the movement of the sun.  
(p. 102)

In most of the above examples, Lai and Gamarekian gave obviously better renderings than their predecessors. While Hsiung and Hart kept to translate verse into verse, some import and color of the original language have to be sacrificed. But Lai and Gamarekian are by no means less capable in verse, as Example 5 demonstrates. (Here Hart misread the lines and commit serious errors.) How the translators dealt with allusions can be seen from Example 4, where the disappointed Chang Kung was compared to 尾生 who was drowned while waiting for his lover, and to 陳氏子 whose grievances burst into flame consuming a temple when the princess he was waiting for left while he felt asleep. Hsiung tried to incorporate the stories in the lines without any commentary, but the other two explained in exegetical notes. Lai and Gamarekian retold the allusions most accurately. It is also interesting to note that the three versions attributed these words to three different persons. In this case Hsiung is correct as in the original text this part was actually sung by Ying-ying. Lai and Gamarekian, on the whole, succeeded in rewriting many lines in readable English at the same time preserving the essentials and weaving the themes into a continuous piece.

*Hsi-hsiang-chi* was written in such idiomatic and enriched language that here the task of translation must indeed have been baffling. Like all other attempts, possible improvements can be suggested. Besides a few petty mistakes, like translating 潼關 as “Tu Kuan” (p. 3)

and 臨皓魄 as “my soul face heaven” (p. 19), the book is spotted by uneven treatment of explanatory materials and other details. It is unnecessary, for example, to mention Ying-ying’s tiny feet “worth 2400 taels of gold” with footnote explaining “A tael is 1½ ounces” (p. 5), but in the sentence “And the Prime Minister, who is now beyond the nine stream . . .” (p. 39) without relating the “nine stream” to the other world is an over-brevity. Here and there some retouching can be made to bring this adaptation closer to perfection. However, it is ungrateful to complain when presented with such a feast.

The Foreword by Lin Yutang and the translators’ introductory remarks contain no wasted words. The six line-drawings by Lo Koon-chiu are well-executed and properly placed in the book. Each of them illustrates an important event in the story. On the other hand, it is rather unconventional to use a movie picture as the cover photo, but it certainly has more appeals to the general reading public than a black-and-white woodcut of old China.



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MING-SUN POON