

occurred when they did. He never discusses the politics that divided literati during the Northern Song and only very briefly touches on the role of the court in aesthetic matters (pp. 379–81). My own inclinations would be to probe connections to such major historical changes as the expansion of the educated class, increasing prosperity and urbanization, and above all the rapid spread of printing. As the market for books changed, people's understanding of books and their purposes would have changed as well. The types of new books Egan discusses in *The Problem of Beauty* are only a few of the many new types that appeared in Song times.

In conclusion, *The Problem of Beauty* is a book that should be read not only by scholars of literature, but also by historians and art historians. The individual chapters stand on their own, so that one need not read the full book to benefit from Egan's sensitive readings. But reading and pondering the implications of the full set of chapters greatly enriches our understandings of literati culture in the Northern Song period.

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Madmen and Other Survivors: Reading Lu Xun's Fiction. By Jeremy Tambling. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2007. Pp. vii + 126. \$39.50 cloth, \$17.95 paper.

Professor Jeremy Tambling, for many years professor of comparative literature at The University of Hong Kong, must be used to the malice that sinologists are apt to vent on writers who address readers of Chinese literature who are not (or barely) able to read the works in their original language. It would be a great shame if jealousy of this kind prevented students and scholars of modern Chinese literature from taking up this short book, of which much can be read with profit. Its limitations are immediately set out (it deals only with translations into English of Lu Xun's 魯迅 first two fiction collections) and are the products of Tambling's own teaching experience. Realistically, for many readers this treatment is sufficient.

Tambling does not underestimate what is lost, and his comparison between the narrative and discursive Lu Xun (p. 3) makes this reader regret that his essays are not included in this study. I am less sure that *Gushi xinbian* 故事新編 (Old tales retold) is unquestionably irrelevant to a study of Lu Xun's fiction, despite its differences from the other two collections.

Tambling's Introduction makes excellent points early. The passages on translation are particularly useful not only in defence of his own methodology but also in expounding basic principles in literary translation studies which are sadly little known outside literary translation studies. His remarks on the short story as a genre are brief and to the point, and his disarming comments on why each story is separately discussed in this book are persuasive.

This is not to say that Tambling proceeds with textbook regularity: over fifty pages are devoted to *Nahan* 吶喊 (Call to arms) but only thirty-five to *Panghuang* 徬徨 (Hesitation).

Tambling's own title suggests that his interest is in the madmen in the first collection rather than the inadequate intellectuals surviving in the latter, but the lack of a general conclusion will leave some readers wondering. Discussions of some stories are also much too cursory (given that this is a *very* short book), e.g. "Toufa de gushi 頭髮的故事" (The story of hair) and, even more, "Guxiang 故鄉" (My home town), one of the most famous and evocative of all the stories in *Nahan*.

The brevity in Tambling's investigation of these two stories is disappointing in that both would support one of his most innovative claims. In his Introduction (pp. 9–10), Tambling asserts that sexuality occurs as "a crisis" (acknowledged nor not) in these stories, but he neglects this sub-theme until the discussion reaches "Guxiang." Tambling notes that Lu Xun (who appears in the story as an autobiographical author) mentions his mother but not his wife Zhu An 朱安, but Tambling does not refer even in passing to the highly visible Mrs Yang, formerly known as "Beancurd Beauty" ("thanks to her, that beancurd shop did very good business"). There are few sexually aggressive women in Lu Xun's fiction, so the description of Mrs Yang as unscrupulous, hypocritical and charmless in middle age is all the more noteworthy. Mrs Yang is not a portrait of the invisible Zhu An but her character might owe something to his sister-in-law, Zhou Zuoren's 周作人 wife Hata Nobuko 羽太信子.

Elsewhere some famous passages from the stories are ignored, possibly on the entirely reasonable grounds that they have been more than adequately treated elsewhere (e.g. the famous last lines about hope in "Guxiang") or because they have no particular relevance to Tambling's thesis (but, it may be asked, does "hope" keep survivors alive or destroy them?).

In this context, Tambling's decision to overlook biographical readings of the stories is a useful attempt to shift attention to the textual evidence. Again, we can respect his decision while doubting its universal validity. There is good evidence for autobiographical reference in "Shangshi 傷逝" (Regret for the past), "Xiongdi 兄弟" (Brothers) and "Lihun 離婚" (Divorce), and an analysis of what is and what is not imagined (such as Zhu An's exclusion from "Guxiang") allows more persuasive interpretations than when this evidence is ignored.

On the plus side, Tambling's experience in literary criticism leads him to make distinctions that many sinologists have overlooked; for example, distinguishing between the Preface to *Nahan* as a text and the events it relates at a distance of many years (pp. 14–17). It is only a pity in this case that his self-imposed limitations deter him from pointing out that the word translated as "literature" in the sources he quotes is more likely to mean "the humanities" or "writing [in general]."

Tambling is also thoroughly professional in his up-to-date and comprehensive notes, which students will find very useful. One of his sources, however, leads him astray on the issue of realism in modern Chinese literature. As has been pointed out repeatedly in recent years, claims that literature from the 1920s to the 1940s was dominated by one or another theories of realism ignore the vast amount of poetry, fiction and drama that is not usefully described as realistic, and there has always been a school of thought (led by Jaroslav Průšek) that stressed the importance of subjectivity in modern Chinese literature. Misleading assertions on realism were spread by Chinese and Western-based scholars who focussed mostly or exclusively on male authors as well as orthodox mainland critics from the 1950s

on. Writing in the mid-1980s, Fredrick Jameson (Tambling's authority on this point) took his examples from these now discredited sources.

Lacking familiarity with the discursive styles of the 1910s and 1920s, Jameson and Tambling also overlook the strong likelihood that Chen Duxiu 陳獨秀 neither knew nor cared very much in 1915 about theories of realism in Western literature: to most of its Chinese advocates of the time, "realistic" meant little more than "modern." In his light it is not surprising that Chen includes Oscar Wilde in his recommendations of realistic authors.

Similarly, Tambling's support of Jameson's denunciation of the neglect of Lu Xun in Western cultural studies (p. 2) overlooks two factors: one, that Lu Xun's importance is hard to appreciate outside the historical context that Tambling knows well but that most English-language readers do not; and two, that if everything potential readers knew about Lu Xun came from Jameson or orthodox mainland critics they can hardly be blamed for not bothering to read his work. Fortunately, Tambling's Lu Xun is a much more complex and subtle writer.

There are a few minor errors that Tambling may have imported from his secondary sources, such as the pronunciation of Hata (not Habuko) Nobuko's surname. Lu Xun was not invited to join the Ministry of Education by Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培; his appointment was arranged by his friend, Xu Shoushang 許壽裳. 1927 was not the year when "China came under the domination of the warlords" but when the joint Nationalist-Communist Northern Expedition managed to unseat a good many of them. Only the first two sections of Hu Shi's 胡適 1920 poetry collection *Changshi ji* 嘗試集 (Experiments) are in the vernacular; the remainder, relegated to appendices, are in classical forms.

The publisher must share the responsibility for other shortcomings. The Hong Kong University Press should be able to provide copyeditors and proofreaders who are familiar with Hanyu pinyin, who can distinguish Shaoxing from Shandong, and who can tell Yang Xianyi's 楊憲益 surname from his personal name (to give just a few examples). If tone marks are to be used for title transcriptions, the whole title must show tone marks, not just random syllables.

A good copyeditor might also have advised the author how sentences of over eight lines of text could be simplified and shortened; pointed out grammatical errors such as hanging participles and incorrect comparatives; and known that short story titles are placed within quotation marks, not italicised. On the other hand, the author himself should have been able to decide whether the school where Xu Guangping 許廣平 studied and Lu Xun taught is a woman's or a women's normal college.

I should dearly like to recommend this book for undergraduate reading in a wide range of English-language classes on Chinese history, culture and literature. If the author could persuade the publisher to correct the unacceptably large number of typographical and other errors, and perhaps at the same time use that opportunity to add a conclusion and a few more lines on some of the stories, I would do so with enthusiasm.

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