

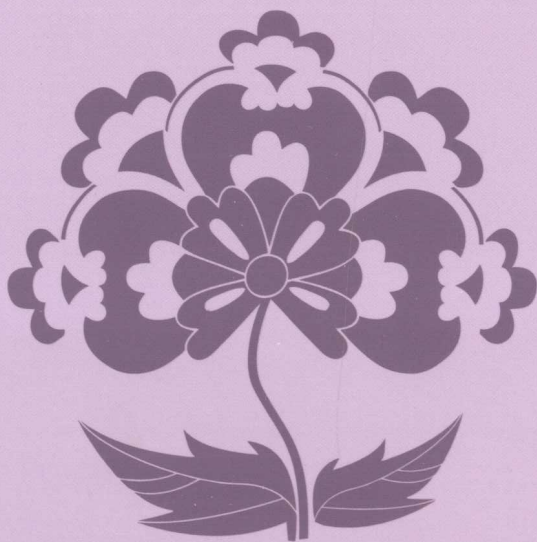
CLASSICAL CHINESE POETRY AND PROSE

DREAM IN PEONY PAVILION

TANG XIANZU
TRANSLATED BY XU YUANCHONG
& FRANK M. XU

许译中国经典诗文集

牡丹亭 | 【明】汤显祖 著
许渊冲 许明 译



九州传播出版社 | 中华书局
China Intercontinental Press | Zhonghua Book Company

PROJECT FOR THE PRESERVATION AND PUBLICATION
OF CHINESE CULTURAL WORKS
中国文化著作翻译出版工程项目



CLASSICAL CHINESE POETRY AND PROSE

DREAM IN PEONY PAVILION

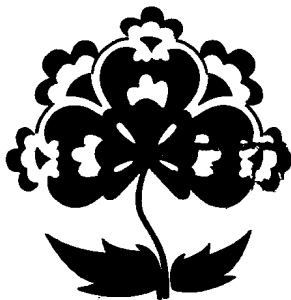
TANG XIANZU

TRANSLATED BY XU YUANCHONG & FRANK M. XU



许译中国经典诗文集

牡丹亭 | 【明】汤显祖 著
许渊冲 许明 译



国际传播出版社
China Intercontinental Press

中华书局
Zhonghua Book Company

图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

牡丹亭: 汉英对照 / 许渊冲译. —北京: 五洲传播出版社,
2011.10 (许译中国经典诗文集)
ISBN 978-7-5085-2198-5

I. ①牡… II. ①许… III. ①汉语-英语-对照读物
②传奇剧(戏曲)-剧本-中国-明代 IV. ①H319.4: I

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字(2011)第199511号

策划编辑: 荆孝敏

责任编辑: 王 峰

中文编辑: 张 梅

英文编辑: 马培武 鲁大东

装帧设计: 北京正视文化艺术有限责任公司

牡丹亭

出版发行: 五洲传播出版社

地 址: 北京市海淀区北三环中路31号生产力大楼B座7层

邮 编: 100088

电 话: 010-82005927, 010-82007837

网 址: www.cicc.org.cn

开 本: 140mm × 210mm 1/32

印 张: 8.25

版 次: 2012年1月第1版第1次印刷

印 刷: 北京海纳百川印刷有限公司

书 号: ISBN 978-7-5085-2198-5

定 价: 79.00元

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Ancient Chinese classic poems are exquisite works of art. As far as 2,000 years ago, Chinese poets composed the beautiful work *Book of Poetry* and *Elegies of the South*. Later, they created more splendid Tang poetry and Song lyrics. Such classic works as *Thus Spoke the Master* and *Laws Divine and Human* were extremely significant in building and shaping the culture of the Chinese nation. These works are both a cultural bond linking the thoughts and affections of Chinese people and an important bridge for Chinese culture and the world.

Mr. Xu Yuanchong has been engaged in translation for 70 years. In December 2010, he won the Lifetime Achievement Award in Translation conferred by the Translators Association of China (TAC). He is honored as the only expert who translates Chinese poems into both English and French. After his excellent interpretation, many Chinese classic poems have been further refined into perfect English and French rhymes. This collection of Classical Chinese Poetry and Prose gathers his most representative English translations. It includes the classic works *Thus Spoke the Master*, *Laws Divine and Human* and dramas such as *Romance of the Western Bower*, *Dream in Peony Pavilion*, *Love in Long-life Hall* and *Peach Blooms Painted with Blood*. The largest part of the collection includes the translation of selected poems from different dynasties. The selection includes various types of poetry. The selected works start from the pre-Qin era to the Qing Dynasty, covering almost the entire history of classic poems in China. Reading these works is like tasting "living water from the source" of Chinese culture.

We hope this collection will help English readers "understand, enjoy and delight in" Chinese classic poems, share the intelligence of Confucius and Lao Tzu (the Older Master), share the gracefulness of Tang poems, Song lyrics and classic operas and songs and promote exchanges between Eastern and Western culture. We also sincerely invite precious suggestions from our readers.

Oct. 2011

出版前言

中国古代经典诗文是中国传统文化的奇葩。早在两千多年前，中国诗人就写出了美丽的《诗经》和《楚辞》；以后，他们又创造了更加灿烂的唐诗和宋词。《论语》《老子》这样的经典著作，则在塑造、构成中华民族文化精神方面具有极其重要的意义。这些作品既是联接所有中国人思想、情感的文化纽带，也是中国文化走向世界的重要桥梁。


许渊冲先生从事翻译工作70年，2010年12月荣获“中国翻译文化终身成就奖”。他被称为将中国诗词译成英法韵文的唯一专家，经他的妙手，许多中国经典诗文被译成出色的英文和法文韵语。这套“许译中国经典诗文集”荟萃许先生最具代表性的英文译作，既包括《论语》《老子》这样的经典著作，又包括《西厢记》《牡丹亭》《长生殿》《桃花扇》等戏曲剧本，数量最多的则是历代诗歌选集。这些诗歌选集包括诗、词、散曲等多种体裁，所选作品上起先秦，下至清代，几乎涵盖了中国古典诗歌的整个历史。阅读和了解这些作品，即可尽览中国文化的“源头活水”。

我们希望这套许氏译本能使英语读者对中国经典诗文也“知之，好之，乐之”，能够分享孔子、老子的智慧，分享唐诗、宋词、中国古典戏曲的优美，并以此促进东西文化的交流。也敬请读者朋友提出宝贵意见。

2011年10月

CONTENTS

目 录

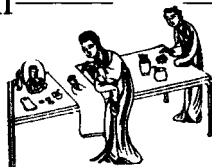
	Preface	/ 1
	序	/ 139
ACT I		
第一本		
	Scene 1 Prelude	/ 7
	第一出 标目	/ 146
	Scene 2 Liu Dreamer of Mume Flower	/ 9
	第二出 言怀	/ 148
	Scene 3 Parental Admonition	/ 12
	第三出 训女	/ 152
	Scene 4 A Scholar's Complaint	/ 18
	第四出 腐叹	/ 157
	Scene 5 The Tutor Selected	/ 21
	第五出 延师	/ 160

ACT II
第二本



Scene 1 A Gloomy Outlook	/ 27
第一出 怅眺	/ 165
Scene 2 Private Lesson	/ 33
第二出 闺塾	/ 170
Scene 3 The Garden	/ 41
第三出 肃苑	/ 176
Scene 4 An Enchanting Dream	/ 47
第四出 惊梦	/ 180

ACT III
第三本



Scene 1 Mother's Admonition	/ 59
第一出 慈戒	/ 188
Scene 2 The Dream Retraced	/ 61
第二出 寻梦	/ 190
Scene 3 Departure	/ 72
第三出 诀谒	/ 196
Scene 4 The Portrait	/ 76
第四出 写真	/ 199

ACT IV
第四本



Scene 1 An Inquiry	/ 84
第一出 诘病	/ 205
Scene 2 The Diagnosis	/ 89
第二出 诊祟	/ 209
Scene 3 Untimely Death	/ 96
第三出 闹殇	/ 214
Scene 4 The Infernal Judge	/ 103
第四出 冥判	/ 219

ACT V
第五本



Scene 1 The Portrait Discovered	/ 108
第一出 拾画	/ 223
Scene 2 The Portrait Admired	/ 112
第二出 玩真	/ 226
Scene 3 The Roving Soul	/ 117
第三出 魂游	/ 229
Scene 4 The Tryst	/ 120
第四出 幽媾	/ 231
Scene 5 The Next Tryst	/ 131
第五出 欢挠	/ 238

PREFACE

There were four classics of poetic drama in Chinese history, that is, *Romance of the Western Bower*, *Dream in Peony Pavilion*, *Love in the Long-life Hall* and *Peach Blossom Painted with Blood*. The subject of the *Romance* is the conflict between love and honor of a feudal family, and that of the *Dream* is the life and death of a lover. In the former, love triumphs over honor, and in the latter it further triumphs over death. In the mean time, we have Shakespeare's tragedies in rivalry with Chinese classics in the Western countries, though they are two hundred years later than the *Romance* but earlier than *Long-life Hall* and *Peach Blossom*. In the *Romance*, the lovers are separated by the mother's idea of honor and re-united by the hero's success in the civil service examinations, while in Shakespeare's tragedy, Romeo and Juliet are separated by enmity between their parents but re-united by death. The happy ending of the *Romance* shows the progress of Chinese civilization while the tragic end of *Romeo and Juliet* hints at the conquest of enmity by reason which foretells the triumph of realistic and scientific spirit. Here we can see the different development of Oriental and Occidental civilisation.

The author of the *Dream in Peony Pavilion* was a contemporary of Shakespeare and the *Peony Pavilion* is his representative work while Shakespeare's is *Hamlet*. Can their representative works be compared? *Hamlet* begins with the revival of the dead king who tells his son how he was poisoned by his brother who usurped his throne and married his wife. The son is not sure of the truth of what the

dead king said, so we have the well-known monologue in Act III:

*To be or not to be — that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them,*

Here *to be* may mean to *take arms* and *not to be*, to *suffer*; the *outrageous fortune* may refer to the murder of his father, his uncle's usurpation of the throne and his mother's re-marriage. He hesitates about what to do: whether he should suffer for the love of his mother or rise to revenge the death of his father. Here we see the conflict in his mind or contradiction in his inner world. Besides, there is conflict in the outer world. For instance, we see the contradiction between uncle and nephew in the following dialogue:

Uncle: *But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son —*

Nephew: *A little more than kin and less than kind!*

Uncle: *How is it that the Clouds still hang on you?*

Nephew: *Not so, my lord. I am too much in the sun.*

The usurper uncle is unwilling, but he cannot refuse, to call his nephew *my son*, nor is the nephew willing to be so called, but he is very clever at reply by playing on the words *kin* and *kind*, *son* and *sun*, implying that the uncle is not a kind kin, and that it would be too much for himself to have been called *son* by his father and mother, and now by his uncle, who is compared to the clouds that overshadow the sun (son). There is conflict not only between uncle and nephew but also between mother and son, for example, we may read the following dialogue:

Mother: *Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.*

Hamlet: *Mother, you have my father much offended.*

Hamlet playing on words has offended his uncle but the mother's second marriage with her husband's brother has offended her first husband. Here we find the contradictions complicated.

In the *Dream of Peony Pavilion* the contradiction is simple. We find more contradictions in the outer world than in the inner one. There are contradictions between the heroine and her father, her mother, and her teacher, more contradictions than in her own mind. For instance, we may read the teacher's song sung to the tune of *Changing Roles* in Scene 2, Act II.

*Of the Six Classics the Book of Poetry is true
To life. It shows what a noble lady should do.*

*The Story of the Lord of Corn
Tells her not to forget by whom she's born.*

*She should be pious to her mother,
And not be jealous of another,*

*Be virtuous as a queen
Whenever she is seen.*

*At cock's crow she should rise,
and grieve when swallow away flies.*

...

*She would wash powder off her face
And live with grace.*

*She'd be a faithful wife
And lead a virtuous life.*

...

*The three hundred poems in the Book of Poetry, in a word
teach you to do no wrong.*

Does the heroine believe what her teacher says? Read what her maid says in Scene 3, Act II:

When the teacher taught my young mistress the *Book of Poetry*, she sighed at the following verse:

*By riverside are cooing
A pair of turtledoves;
A good young man is wooing
A fair maiden he loves.*

Closing the book, she said, here we can see the heart of a sage and the feeling shared alike by the ancient and the modern.

That is to say, she may not believe what his teacher tells her, *to lead a virtuous life*. What is more, we may read her own monologue in Scene 4, Act II:

O Heaven! Now I believe spring is stirring the heart. I have read in long or short poems of ancient days that maidens were moved in spring and grieved in autumn. Now I understand the reason why. I'm sixteen years of age, but where is the young man who would win the laureate for me, or fly up to the moon to woo the beauty in the silver palace?

This monologue reveals the contradiction of love and virtue in her heart. When love triumphs over virtue in the end, she feels no contradiction any more. This shows there is more contradiction in the outer world than in the inner world in the *Peony Pavilion*. The play begins with a dream of love, follows by her death for love and ends by her revival and marriage with her lover. It may be called a trilogy of love while Shakespeare's tragedy may be called a trilogy of enmity and death, for it begins with the revival of the dead king for revenge, follows with the performance of the murder on the stage and ends by the death of the hero, his mother and his uncle.

Comparing these two trilogies, we can see the difference

between the Chinese and English dramatic works is one between love and hate (or virtue and revenge), and another between the inner and the outer worlds. As to the characterization, the Chinese characters are simple while the English ones are complicated. As to the language, in Shakespeare, we find more play on words, while in the Chinese play more comparisons are used, for instance:

He leaned on the rock by lakeside,

I stood like a jade statue vivified.

He carried away his jade mate

Who might in warm sunlight evaporate.

In short, they may be compared in four aspects: plot, characterization, situation and language.

Frank M. Xu at OKC. USA.

DREAM IN PEONY PAVILION



ACT I



— Scene 1 Prelude —

(Enter the author Tang Xianzu.)

Tang (Singing to the tune of *Butterflies in Love with Flowers*):

No longer busy, I live at leisure,
 Thinking over where I can find pleasure.
 Writing heart-breaking verse by day,
 What of love can a lover say?
 Sitting in my hall day and night,
 The fair scene beautifies my verse
 Even in candlelight,
 For better or worse,
 If you are worthy of her love,
 You'd win a new life from above.

(Changing to the tune of *Spring in Han Palace*):

Governor Du Bao had a daughter fair,
 Fond of treading on the green here and there.
 She was lovesick of a young scholar she
 Dreamed of who'd break for her a twig off a willow tree.
 Leaving a portrait, she died,
 Buried lonely by mume flowers' side.
 After three years,
 The scholar dreaming of mume lowers appears
 And brings her back to life.
 They soon become man and wife.

DREAM IN PEONY PAVILION

He takes the court exam at the capital,
For honor first of all.
But rebels rise,
And take Governor Du's town by surprise.
The scholar coming to inquire
Is taken for a liar.
Fortunately the decree comes down:
He has won the laurel crown.

Epilogue of the Story

The fair maiden died, leaving her portrait fair.
Her father freed the town of rebels there.
The Dreamer won the fair coming to life again.
How could he not of unjust punishment complain?

— Scene 2 Liu Dreamer of Mume Flower —

(Enter Liu Dreamer of Mume Flower.)

Liu (Singing to the tune of *Pearl Screen*):

Born in a family nobler by far
Than those under a lucky star,
Poor now I still remain,
After cold wind and rain.

'Tis said books will bring wealth, beauty and gold,
I'm disappointed to have in vain grown old.
What can I be
But a man right and free?

(Changing to the tune of *Partridges in the Sky*):

I study hard till frost
On tortoise's back is lost.
Living from hand to mouth,
A poor scholar loves the south.
Relying on natural gifts better or worse,
I can read and write prose and verse.
Borrowing light and pricking my thigh,
I've learned the art of writing from on high.
I do not know if my arms can cut the tree down,
Till I have won the laurel crown.

I am Liu Dreamer of Mume Flower and Lover of Spring, descendent of
Liu Zongyuan, poet of the Tang Dynasty, and resident south of the Five