

有棱的玻璃杯 英文

买买提明·吾守尔 著

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The Angular Glass

Yangpigu Series of Translation

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Preface



Liu Bin

This work belongs to the Yangpigu Series of Translation publicized by the Xinjiang Juvenile Publishing House. The series consists of the translated productions of minority writers like Uygur, Kazakhstan, who wrote the originals in their native languages.

The Chinese nation includes more than 55 ethnic minorities besides the Hans. In the course of the formation of the Chinese nation, the minority groups have created splendid ancient cultures with unique styles and distinctive characters. The minority literature is an indispensable part of and contributes a great deal to the cultural heritage of the Chinese nation. Since ancient times, the forms of literature by various minority writers have been loosely grouped into two main categories: literary works written in Chinese and in their mother tongues. Bilingual writers have also emerged out of young people; they are few in number but exert a profound influence.

The proposition that Chinese literature is inclusive of the literature of different national minorities is widely accepted. We're getting much more familiar with the works written in Chinese by minority writers. However, for the Chinese reading public, as well as for critics and re-

searchers indulging in the history of minority literature, their acquaintance with literary works in minority languages is slight. Some of the excellent writings are even totally alien to them. The situation relates directly to the lags of minority literature translation.

Translation of minority works was booming during the 1950–mid–1960 Period and the 1980–mid–1990 Period respectively, and a great number of excellent ancient and contemporary minority literary works were translated into Chinese, making it possible for the great mass of average Chinese readers to appreciate these works. Some of the writings were then translated from Chinese into different languages for foreign readers. The minority writers’ dream of “letting their literature walk up to the world out of the small yurt” was fulfilled. However, it is very worrying to see the awkward situation of recent years due to the temporary shortage of literary translators and the new difficulties arising with the introduction of market economy.

Leadership of the Xinjiang League of Authors and the Xinjiang Juvenile Publishing House became acutely conscious of the problem and proposed some motions in the hope of doing something to promote the revival of minority literature translation. In the early summer of 1999, a meeting was convened by the Xinjiang League of Authors at a quiet mountain resort on the suburbs of Urumqi, where the translation of minority literature was put on the agenda. The attendance was limited, but senior translators from Beijing traveled a long distance to be present at the meeting. Motions proposed previously were discussed and were well spoken of by the participants. The series from which this book is selected is an outcome after the meeting.

Our efforts were ringed around with difficulties in the process of the compilation and publication of the series, but they were not wasted as our work is of boundless beneficence for a long long time to come. We hereby wish to pay tribute and express our deep sense of gratitude to all the writers, translators and editors who have been involved in the publication of the series. In the meantime, we appeal for more people in the literary circles to regard the translation of minority literature with grave concern and take an active interest in the splendid literature of West China—a wonderful land where a large proportion of minorities live and represent a long and brilliant civilization of minority culture.

May 25th, 2001



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The Luhua Rooster

After returning from a business trip, I saw a thick envelop bag lying on the desk in my office. I opened the envelope and found a manuscript of a fiction in it with the name “Luhua Rooster”. And there was a letter enclosed which read: Even keeping anonymous, I bet you can guess who I am through my handwriting. I am the author of the fiction *The Idiot*, and here again along with this letter I send you another fiction of mine. This time it is about chicken. I suppose that since you have published my fiction with “dog” as the subject, you might be interested in this “chicken-themed one” as well.

Though we have had association with each other for a long time, I found it a little weird that you had inquired few about my family life. I guess you might have noticed that with the increase in the number of “the new riches”, the number of widows will also be on a day-to-day rise. As far as I am concerned, I have married three times and divorced three times, after my first wife brought me a son.

Look, what nonsense I have been talking to you. I wish you good health. This fiction “The Luhua Rooster” is at your disposal. I should have named it “The Luhua Chicken”, because I myself have not figured out whether it is a rooster or a hen yet. So please make your own judgment on its gender after reading through the whole story.

“The Luhua Rooster” goes like this:

I myself could not call to my mind which month and what date the Luhua hen emerged in my courtyard. Anyway, the courtyard was always crowded with various kinds of chickens. Sometimes the hens of my neighbor came to the thatched henhouse in my yard to lay eggs, and sometimes vice versa. My wife was a little bit weird that she just collected all the eggs she could find for the hen to hatch when she noticed a hen clucked before it went in to incubate chickens. And that had made a multicoloured chicken flock in my yard. They were white, black, red, variegated, and they were from Turpan, Toksun, Hunan, Henan... Anyway, any breed of chicken from anywhere that you could ever come up with could be found in my yard.

Everyday the cocks crowed with their necks stretched out which was accompanied by those hens vying with each other to lay eggs. And this had made our courtyard a hilarious and vigorous place.

I had a neighbor who was named Emilkang. Once we got together we would bragged about our own chickens all day long just like the meeting of those gossip carters in the old days.

According to Emilkang, he had fed a white rooster which came from America — not the normal places we have been accustomed to, but a courtyard just beside the White House where the U.S. president dwelled in. Its original owner would give it a birthday party every year. And it would have the honor of the president's presence at the ceremony once in a while. And there had ever been a First Lady who had a sudden crush upon the rooster that she intended to feed it a handful of millet. Unfortunately, the poor lady stepped on her own skirt carelessly and tumbled right in front of the white rooster. That had triggered a blast of news coverage on the U.S. newspapers and magazines, whether large-sized or small-sized, with a picture of this unusual rooster under the title “A

Rooster Tumbling the First Lady"! From then on hundreds of admirers of the rooster swarmed to the White House just for a look of the magical creature. The throng had led to a mess-up outside the White House. As an acceptable solution, the president purchased the rooster at an attractive price. He did it just to throw it out of the sight of the public and send it into exile. A relative of Emilkang happened to do business in close proximity to the White House. He proposed to the president that "this rooster is so beautiful and that I would like to bring it to the courtyard of my relatives in China if it is to be exiled anyway". And he just handed the address of Emilkang to the president. Thus, the newsworthy white rooster had come to be in Emilkang's possession ever since.

"Emilkang," I inquired with a smile, "Don't tell me your relative was selling yogurt ice water in front of the White House."

"No, he was there nailing iron of shoes", Emilkang answered.

"Nailing iron of shoes? "

"You don't believe me, do you"? He continued to explain, "the White House was furnished with the most precious carpet in the world. People wearing shoes of ironed heels were not allowed to step in the House. My relative was seated in front of the White House every day with his hammers and pinchers, and he just pulled out the iron heel of those who were ignorant of the 'rule' of the House, blunted the nail and, when they came out, he just nailed back together the heel of each one. I myself have never been to that scene, but it was said that those heads of the leading powers would queue up in front of my relative for that 'special service'! "

Maybe it was due to the two or three more years of education he had received than me; anyway I could only stare at his gabbling mouth when he was talking big.

Let's cut it short. In my eyes, the Luhua hen was indeed somewhat unusual compared with the other chickens. Maybe it was the good care my wife had

taken of it—she had fed it with warm water for the whole winter which had fostered its strong capability of laying eggs. It never stopped laying eggs and never clucked before it gave birth to its offspring. And the eggs it laid were extraordinarily big. Sometimes when I was working in the yard it would come along to my side while pecking grain, slanting its neck and holding up its head to examine me. Looking back at its eyes reflecting a shade of yellow light, I sensed an intimacy welled up in my heart.

It went on like this for a period of time yet the hen stopped laying eggs one day all of a sudden. That didn't worry me because I was thinking about eating its flesh when it grew bigger. Beyond all my expectations the hen grew significantly in height as soon as it stopped laying eggs, changed into very shiny feather and started to bristle its crest. As a result, it turned on an image of a majestic-looking cock!

One day, my neighbor Emilkang came to my yard and said in a surprise at the sight of the Luhua hen which was pecking grain: "Kasemkang, the Luhua rooster is so unusual. How come I've never seen it before?" I, struck by his words into laughter, answered: "Take a good look. Isn't it the Luhua hen I boasted in front of you which has strong ability of incubation?"

"Oh, it's incredible! Do you mean it's a hen? ..." with a sense of curiosity, he continued: "It's stunningly beautiful if it is a rooster. And it would be worth at least four to five hundred yuan if not one thousand yuan!"

Indeed, the talons of the hen became more and more sturdy like the twig of trees; its bulk grew taller and taller, with its disposition changing day by day. It had become so courageous that crows, dogs and cats had become the objects of its chasing. And I even saw it fluttering its wings to the other hens. I was astonished to see it crowing like a cock!

On a dusk when I was watering the fruit trees, the Luhua hen was pecking grains nearby. After a while it came near to me and stretched out its neck,

seeming to have something to tell me, or to vomit something stuck in its throat. When I was pondering what the matter was, the hen crowed all of a sudden, making me turn pale with fright immediately. There was a popular saying around here that “a cock crowing in the dusk would mean a misfortune”. A cock’s crowing would signify a bad omen, let alone a hen’s crowing! With that whirling in my mind, I dashed like the clappers to the granny Roviha’s.

2

Granny Roviha was the eldest senior in our village, who lived alone in a yard on the edge of the village. She often treated patients with some old methods and told fortunes for people occasionally. The shiny and neat coil base made of clay and mud, the antique Aputuwa copper pot laid in front of the door, the copper basin to contain water, the printing blanket upon the straw mat, the antique dishes upon the niche shelf, the neatly laid cloth, rolling pin, over sleeve on the kneading board and the cat huddling up in the bedding clothes ... all these lent an antique flavor to the house of Granny Roviha. Granny Roviha, quite experienced, knowledgeable and conversable, stroke her Thaisbiha prayer beads while listening to my descriptions about the Luhua hen. “Is it true? Well, be seated. Do not stand, please.” she said, “Once upon a time there was a rich man named Ikem who owned all the land of the three counties. He has a son who was named Zollerton. The son did not grow any beard even in his twenties, and ended up with his chest growing bigger and turned into a woman.”

“Granny Roviha, you mean a man turned into a woman? I seemed to have heard this story told by some seniors.”

“Listen and see what kind of woman he finally turned into. He became a woman of full and round body, and of an attractive face that a sight of her would

sent the hearts of young chaps palpitating with excitement. When I was a young girl, I used to bathe with the other girls in some far-off river in the summer to avoid the crowd. The girl named Zora, who changed her name into this from Zollerton, went to bathe with us as well. We were so curious and eager to see her naked body, yet were always rejected by her unwillingness to take off all her clothes.

One day, we conspired together to hold her down. Two or three girls grasped her hands and one pulled down her trousers. Now in retrospection, we were really wild at that time. The poor girl may have foreseen our practical jokes, and have made some preparation—she wore three trousers in a hot summer like that! When two of the trousers were pulled down, she struggled her way out of our besiegement through a sudden stroke, and stopped playing around with us thereafter. Since then, she married a long-term hired hand at her house later and made herself an excellent daughter-in-law except that she did not bear any child for the family. Being such a caring wife to her husband, she shouldered all the laboring inside the house and far at the field. Unfortunately, she was run over by a cart to death one day when she was transferring wheat from the field.”

Upon this, Granny Rovihan stopped the telling as if being absorbed in some thought.

“And what is the matter with my Luhua hen turning into a cock, Granny? ” I asked.

“This is really something interesting”, the Granny said, “ Khudai is mighty with all kinds of tricks. Back at the time when our country was just established I heard there was a kind of injection which is able to turn people into some kind of in-between of men and women. Nowadays people went to the hospital to get their children an injection even if it is nothing serious. And thus it is difficult to distinguish men from women at their youth. You have not got any

injection for those chickens, have you? ”

“Are you kidding me, Granny? Who is so stupid to get chickens injection? ”

“Why not just kill the chicken for flesh? It will save you the trouble. Anyway it is a bad omen to have chicken crowing at dusk.” the Granny said.

3

Next morning I got up and began to hesitate. I remembered that Emilkang said that the Luhua hen would be worth at least four to five hundreds yuan if not one thousand if it was really a cock. And even 50 or 60 yuan would be a benefit. Thus I caught the Luhua hen, carried it under my arm and headed for the market.

Having no idea whether it was Sunday or some other special day, I saw a quite prosperous chicken market in front of me. Walking my way through those selling eggs, I got to the center of the market. The moment I laid down the Luhua hen on the ground several chicken dealers gathered around us. Without asking whether it was a cock or a hen, they just made clicks of praise: “ It’s indeed an unusual cock.” They stretched their neck, circling around the Luhua hen; one of them asked,

“Hey, Bro, is it for sale? ”

“If it can make a fair price.” I said.

“The size is Ok. Has it been in cockfighting? ” another guy asked.

“I’ve never been to a cockfighting spot up till now, dude.” I answered.

“We mean,” the guys insisted, “It has at least chased around with chickens of the neighbors, hasn’t it? ”

“I’m living far-off the crowd that there was no chicken for it to chase around.” I said so, thinking to myself, “It was still laying eggs yesterday. If it

really fights with the cocks, it would take flee immediately in less than one round and make a total fool of me! ”

“Well, forget it! What about the price? ” one asked.

“What about a hundred yuan? ” I said.

“A hundred yuan? What is he talking about! ” the dealers cried out, “A hundred yuan could exchange for a really nice chicken! You have to make a fair price if you really want it to be sold out.”

“In our village one hundred yuan can make a fair price.” I told a lie, “I couldn’t bear to see them buy it and bring it to cockfighting right in front of me, so I brought it to the market. I can sell it a bit cheaper if there’s someone who buys it just for flesh...”

I didn’t expect that the Luhua chicken, seeing several cocks pecking food nearby, dashed its way out of my hand and rushed to fight with the cocks. I was about to rush there to separate them when the dealers retained me, saying: “Let it be. It’s nothing serious for some fight.”

Those cocks besieged the Luhua chicken in the middle, standing side by side like a close family. To my surprise, my chicken combated the attack from various sides and fought even more courageously as the fight went on. How amazing! According to the spectators, there had never been a cockfighting as fierce as this one since the market opened. The Luhua rooster simply became one bearing striking resemblance to the hero who shot down dozens of enemies on the TV while still go on fighting even if it was shot a hundred times. Those attackers, as if they had been enthusiastic TV viewer, took up the position of the fallen one and rose to fight one after another, instead of rushing on like a swarm of hornets. The Luhua rooster pecked those rushing from the front, kicked those dashing from the side and left those attackers totally defeated and in a mess. When he stretched his wings and swunged the air, the wind could knock some feeble roosters down. Amidst the chaos, some roosters lying on the

ground bound by the legs also broke loose and joined the fighting gang. The dust and feathers raised in the fight were floating in the air that it was so hard to distinguish the attacker and the hero.

“Well, well, that’s enough.” I went there, trying to catch the Luhua hen back. But how come did those frenzied cocks pay a grain of attention to me? The Luhua rooster seemed to say “get away” to me. It just flapped its wings and I was brushed aside after staggering a little bit. I took off my coat in a rage, covered it on the Luhua rooster and clasped it in my arms. This action sent all the fighting cocks gathering around me and staring at me ferociously. When the dust was blown away, I saw that all the cocks were stained with blood; some were so heavily wounded that they were too weak to rise on their feet. I was about to turn around and go back, rejoicing in secret at such a stroke of luck that my Luhua rooster was without the slightest wound, when I heard some dealers crying out behind,

“Hey, Bro, stay here please. I offer you one hundred yuan.” someone called. The others followed him,

“All right, one hundred and fifty yuan! ”

“Two hundred yuan! ”

Finally I heard someone crying out “Five hundred yuan!”. At that time I’ve turned over the corner of the market but stopped to stand still, amazed in surprise and wondering whether it was true or not when a tall and slim young man ran along from behind nearly out of breath.

“Did you say five hundred yuan? ” I asked him.

“Yes, I did. Move away your clothes from the rooster, lest you should smother it to death.” he answered.

“Then show me the money—in cash, please. As you have seen, this is not a common rooster.”

“But I have only about two hundred yuan at hand. Why don’t you show

me where your house is, and I will send you home the money I owe you.”

“It’s indeed interesting that you, as the debtor, do not show me where your house is, and requests me to show you the location of my house instead. If you take away my rooster with only two hundred yuan, where could I find you? ”

That young guy, who I supposed was a vagrant without any fixed dwelling, grinned embarrassedly, sending out a strange laugh.

“All right, my friend. This is one hundred yuan as earnest money. I would like to go with you to see where your house is, and I’ll take the rooster with the left four hundred yuan. How do you think about it? ”

I accepted the one hundred yuan from him, put it into my pocket and showed the guy the location of my house.

4

The guy who paid me one hundred yuan as earnest money never showed up thereafter for a whole week. Ever after going through the ferocious fighting in the chicken market, the Luhua rooster was swollen with pride and became so reckless that it often caused trouble in my house. From time to time it was the stuff of our neighbors being spoiled by the chickens under the lead of the Luhua hen, and sometimes it was the kids playing around in our yard being chased around by it. Like people crying out “Hey, stop your dog! ” before entering yards breeding a ferocious dog, people shoved open the door before entering our yard and cried out “Hey, Is anybody there? Please check your rooster! ” One day, I heard a stirring sound from the henhouse and came out to find out what was happening, only to see that the Luhua rooster was having fun reeling the eggs of the other hens. The temper and the behavior of the creature threw me into constant panic and worry. The sight of its longer spur, its keen beak like the beak of the eagle and the shade of the grim light in its eyes all