

汉



朝花惜拾

英

A Retrospective
of
Chinese
Literature

中国文学

古代诗歌卷

外语教学与研究出版社
中国文学出版社

对

照

朝花惜拾

Cherished Dawn Blossoms

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《朝花惜拾》序

顾名思义，这是一束再放的花朵。它曾经绽开在大中学生的教材里，摇曳在中文老师的讲台上，灿烂在无数学子的诵读中。春光似水，十年过去，也许五年或十五年，甚而至于更多一些年头，昔日少年已是今天的白领阶层，抑或社会各个阶层各种角色的扮演者，对于曾经在课堂上读过的文章，至今余香在口，每能忆起，那同学少年，那花样季节，那响彻幽雅校园的琅琅之声，无一不令人心醉。于是有一天，我们这一套书的编者便作如是想，假使将那十年前读过的名篇重编一书，新加评注，让旧的读者以新的心境再读一遍，连同已逝的韶华一并温习，不亦乐乎？

朝花夕拾是一句美丽的名言，半个世纪以前，它被伟大的四十七岁的鲁迅擅作书名，从此脍炙人口，被人喻为对于旧事的收藏。其实鲁迅斯时尚未到夕，尚以壮年的身心与人奋战正酣，他之所谓朝花乃是儿时，“我有一时，曾经屡次忆起儿时在故乡所吃的蔬菜：菱角，罗汉豆，茭白，香瓜。凡这些，都是极其鲜美可口的；都曾是使我思乡的蛊惑。……惟独在记忆上，还有旧来的意味留存。他们也许要哄骗我一生，使我时时反顾。”我们这一套书的读者当然就更年轻了，虽然你们的“朝”，较之鲁迅那贪吃鲜美可口的罗汉豆的“儿时”略长了几岁，但是你们更是远未到“夕”，仍还处于氤氲而蓬勃的朝气中，因之我们决定变“夕”为“惜”，劝君惜取少年时，劝君惜读当年书，号召年轻的读书人重温学子的旧梦。“旧来的意味”如同初恋，那是要哄骗人的一生，使其时时反顾的，更何况被选入课本的文字，无论诗文小品，也无论古今朝代，大抵都是些大师名作，比罗汉豆们更有咀嚼和回味的价值，这便尤其有惜而拾之的必要了。

学而时习之，温故而知新，精通教育的孔子也是这样不倦地教诲着我们。

这是编者的第一思想。

几乎同时产生的第二思想乃是，将它们配上英文，以作对照，使其兼而成为学习外语的上佳读本，照亮第二类读者的眼睛。我们现在是站在二十一世纪的门口了，作为新世纪的主人，外语是其所必需的素质之一。然而我们是否淡忘，学习外语的初衷恰恰是为了交流，为了共享？有人说二十一世纪是东方的

世纪，是中国的世纪，“中国”无疑将是世界一个愈久弥深的话题，那么对世界解说中国，何尝不是埋在我们中国人胸怀的共同愿望。在过去的外语教材中，我们只是读莎士比亚，拜伦，雪莱，狄更斯，司各特，奥斯汀，勃朗特姐妹的《简·爱》和《呼啸山庄》，我们不约而同地忘记了自己的司马迁，屈原，李白，杜甫，苏轼，罗贯中，忘记了全世界最了不起的曹雪芹的《红楼梦》，还有空前绝后的鲁迅和他的天才著作。也未曾想到当我们把伤心的眼泪纷纷抛向英国少女简·爱的时候，大洋彼岸的有情人却正为“质本洁来还洁去”的中国的林妹妹恸哭流涕。假使能有一个聪明的主意，本书系的编者这样想，在学习他国文字的同时也学习了本国文学，即以学习外国语言为直接的目的，而以学习有关中国文化的外语表达为顺带的收获，好比乘坐帆船去一个新鲜的地方，船上却载上了自己故乡的所爱，那简直要叫做一石二鸟了。

但也许有人会这样地认为，学习英语当然还是读英文原著为好，由中文翻译而成的英文能算是地道的英文么？怀疑是大可不必的，本书系的英文译者恰恰大多是母语者，新中国近半个世纪以来，这些英、美等国的文化使者，为了研究神秘的东方文化，他们陆续以外籍语言专家的身份来到中国，在中国文学出版社的安排和中国学者的协同下，从“关关雎鸠，在河之洲”到“灌园叟晚逢仙女”，开始了有着几千年历史的中国文学的系统翻译。而领导这支翻译队伍从事这一伟大工程的，便是驰名中外的中国首席翻译家杨宪益先生和他的英国夫人戴乃迭女士。杨氏夫妇珠联璧合，携手共译的《红楼梦》、《阿Q正传》等中国古今名著，以无可挑剔的艺术水准征服了西方文坛，从此结束了“美文不可译”的神话。

本书系是由享誉海外的中国文学出版社和深受外语学习者信赖的外语教学与研究出版社分工合作、编辑出版的，两家同仁以各自最大的优势联合起来，使即将迈入新世纪的国内出版界有了可行的先例。其奇思异想和大胆设计，想必会得到诸位读者的喝采。

最后，除了喝采，我们还希望听到一些批评的意见，真诚地。

野 莽

1998年10月5日 匆于听风楼

Cherished Dawn Blossoms

Foreword

Ye Mang

The title of this bilingual collection, *Cherished Dawn Blossoms*, reminds one of a bouquet of reopened blossoms. These blossoms of Chinese literature were once in full bloom in much-read books, in teachers' curricula and on the lips of students. Time flows like water in a river. Ten or more years hence, those students would have grown up, but whatever positions they might hold in society today, they will never forget those beautiful pieces of prose, poetry and stories in their old school books. The sound of the classroom recital of those masterpieces still echo in their ears, making them nostalgic for those school days.

One day, an idea suddenly hit us, the editors of this series — wouldn't it be wonderful to pick up those cherished blossoms and arrange them into bouquets for our readers who would probably look at them again from a new perspective, a matured aesthetic judgment?

"Dawn blossoms plucked at dusk" is a beautifully evocative phrase so familiar to all Chinese people. This is mainly due to Lu Xun, the great man of letters of half a century ago, who published a collection of essays by this title. Since then, it has been used to refer to collections of things of the past. Lu Xun was 47 then and was by no means at the age of "dusk." By "dawn blossoms" he was referring to wonderful things he had seen or experienced when he was a child. He once wrote:

"For a period of time, I often recalled the foods I had eaten

when I was a boy, such as water chestnuts, *luohan* beans, *jiaobai*, and *xianggua*.^① All these were extremely delicious. They were the catalysts that triggered my homesickness... Only in the memory, do those old sensations still linger. Perhaps they will beguile me all my life, making me look back from time to time."

Most of the readers of this series will probably be much younger than Lu Xun when he wrote those enduring words. But when you were in school, you were maybe only a few years senior than Lu Xun when he savored those flavors of home. However, you may be far from the time of "dusk" — probably still in the prime of life. Therefore, we have decided to change the word "dusk" to "cherished," as their pronunciations are the same in Chinese (*xi*). We would like to remind readers to cherish childhood and cherish the books you read in schools.

The "old sensations" are like first love, which one recalls every now and again. Now that these masterpieces of the past were chosen for textbooks — be they a poem or an essay or a short story, from ancient times or of the present — they have given the mind more to chew on than chestnuts or beans. In this sense they are even more precious.

"Isn't it a pleasure to review what one has learned from time to time?" or "To learn something new from reviewing the old." — These are famous lines by Confucius who was an expert in education. This was our first inspiration for compiling this series of books.

The second reason, which arose in our minds almost at the same time as the first, was to include English translations. Reading the

① These are foods special to certain areas of China: *luohan* or "arhat" beans are a kind of broad bean, *jiaobai* is from the stem of a wild rice plant, and *xianggua* or fragrant melon is a fruit similar to a small honeydew melon.

Chinese masterpieces against the English translations, or vice versa, would be a very good way to learn English — or Chinese. As we are now already on the threshold of the twenty-first century, learning other languages is a must for a new generation entering the new century. However, perhaps some of us may have forgotten that the very aim of learning other languages is for communication, for sharing. Some say that the twenty-first century will be the century of the East, the century of China. China has clearly become a hot topic in the world today and will remain so in the future. Then to introduce China to the world and tell people overseas all about us is a common wish of the Chinese people. In the past, we may have read in English-language textbooks, literary works by Shakespeare, Byron, Shelley, Dickens, Scott, Austin, or the Brontë sisters' *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*. Maybe some Chinese youth have forgotten about our own Sima Qian, Qu Yuan, Li Bai, Du Fu, Luo Guanzhong, and even Cao Xueqin's *A Dream of Red Mansions*. And what about Lu Xun and his genius works? Perhaps we have not realized that, while we have shed our tears for *Jane Eyre*, people on the other side of the ocean are weeping over Lin Daiyu.

We are quite certain that reading translations of Chinese literary writings is an easy but effective way to learn another language. At the same time you will review these Chinese masterpieces once more, or learn something new about Chinese culture. This is, as they say, killing two birds with one stone.

English learners may argue that it is better to learn English by reading the works written by natives of Britain and North America. Can an English translation of a piece of Chinese writing be idiomatic? Don't worry — most of the translators of this series have English as their mother tongue. For almost half a century, many English-speaking men and women have come to China, fascinated by what they considered mys-

terious Eastern culture. Many of them have actually settled in China and joined the editors and translators of the Chinese Literature Press to produce translations of renowned classical to contemporary Chinese literary works. Among them are Yang Xianyi and his wife Gladys Yang who have made pioneering efforts in translation from Chinese into English and have won great admiration the world over. Their skillful translations of *A Dream of Red Mansions*, *The True Story of Ah Q* and other works have enjoyed high prestige in international literary circles.

This series has been jointly compiled and published by the Chinese Literature Press, known internationally for its literary translations of Chinese literature, and the Foreign Language Teaching and Research press, which is popular among foreign language learners for its quality publications throughout China. The two publishing houses have joined forces in publishing this landmark series, which will be doubtlessly beneficial to readers learning English or Chinese who are also interested in Chinese literature.

Finally, we are most grateful to authors of the works included in this series, whether they have long since passed away or are still alive, for giving us the opportunity to cherish this wealth of Chinese literature. We should also thank the translators for rendering them into such beautiful English readings.

October 5, 1998

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