



LYCHEE FRAGRANCE

The Selected Works of Chen Qing Shan
in Chinese with English Translation

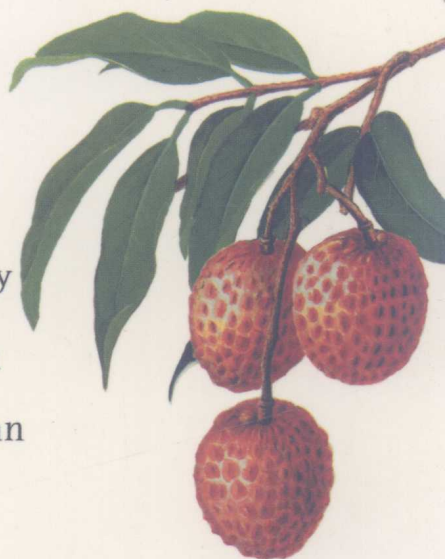
陳晴山文學作品選集

荔枝情

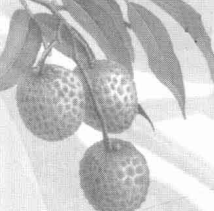
中文英译 Translated by

陳敏良 Peter Chen

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中英对照



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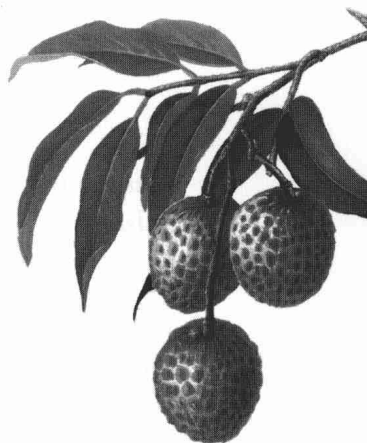
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荔子情 LYCHEE FRAGRANCE

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谨以此书献给

陈晴山，王义宋

我们已故 亲爱的父母亲，他们如还在世
必定会因此书之面世而高兴

李合意

敏良亡妻 生前曾不断地鼓励敏良完成此书之翻译
直到1998离世为止

Carol S. Tan

敏华夫人 常耐心默默地陪伴着敏华查考本书各作品
之背景及译辞的印证至三更

Dedicated
to

Our late parents, Chen Qing Shan and Wang Yi Song,
who would have been very happy
to see this book in print.

Peter's late wife Hup Ee, who was a faithful and constant
source of encouragement to him until most of the translation
work was completed during the year 1998.

Michael's wife Carol who patiently spent long evenings
by herself while her husband was consumed in researching
and debating a point in the translation.

序一

廿世纪初期新马的文人多数得从事教育谋生。《荔子情》的作者，陈晴山先生亦不例外。但读其文，如见其人，能感受到他对文学的热爱。这些作品，不但给他的学生、读者们带来深刻的印象，也启发他的两位公子，敏良与敏华，编译成书。

《荔子情》的面世，因此有双重意义：是项社会的文艺活动，也是陈家的纪念刊物。此书有中英双语对照，能把《荔子情》流传给更多读者。

陈先生以精炼、明晰而含蓄的文笔来描叙战争、穷困、热恋与对当时祖国的怀念。从相对富裕、快节奏、后殖民时代的今日的角度来看，这些故事，明显地是来自截然不同的背景，但也无疑地是半世纪前的真情实况。

陈先生的文笔与内容，引起我的共鸣。我这一代的人，读此书，就联想当年的情境与熟悉的人物。年青的一代，可把这文集当作半世纪前生活的片断。那时候，生活的节奏比较缓慢，人与人之间较多约制，但人的精神意识还是一样的顽强。

刘太格
新加坡国家艺术理事会主席
2002秋

Preface 1

In the early 20th century Chinese writers in Singapore or Malaysia often had to work as school teachers in order to earn a living. The author of *Lychee Fragrance*, Chen Qing Shan, was no exception. Reading his works is like meeting the man, leaving one with no doubt of his passion for literature. His writing has not only left an indelible impression on his former students and readers but has also inspired his two distinguished sons, Peter and Michael, to translate and compile his works into a book.

The publication of this book, therefore, is both a societal and a family affair. The bilingual format bespeaks a desire to spread the *Lychee Fragrance* further afield, to be enjoyed by many more people.

In his terse, lucid and understated voice, Chen's literary work takes the readers through war, poverty, unswerving love and nostalgia for the then northern homeland. While these stories are a stark contrast to today's affluent, fast moving, post colonial era, nevertheless they are fascinating snapshots of lives as they were lived over half a century ago.

I feel a sense of empathy with the literary style and the stories. To me and many people of my generation, this book brings us back in time, to familiar settings, with real characters. To younger readers, the book invites you to step into a past era, when lives moved at a slower tempo, and ruled by traditions, human relations existed on a more subdued level but the human spirit ran equally high and intense.

Liu Thai Ker
Chairman
National Arts Council Singapore
Autumn 2002

序二

陈晴山与马华新兴文学——节录

评介陈晴山，免不了要谈到20年代后期槟城的一个叫做《荔》的同人刊物，因为陈晴山前期的作品，大部分就是在这个刊物上发表的，他本人也是该刊的同人之一。《荔》是第一批附在当年新马报刊副刊中数一数二的、有分量、有特色的一个刊物，也是我国新兴文学运动初期的重要园地；那是当年第一个专为提倡新文学的刊物。陈晴山就是这新兴文学的一个先驱者。

陈晴山笔名山、晴、晴山、天白等，是《荔》副刊《南洋时报》的重要撰稿人之一。

马华新兴文学运动崛起于1925年至1931年之间，为期五年，副刊《荔》就是在这期间发刊。这一时期的作品，包括陈晴山的小说、散文，其中有些基本上持有着中国五四运动的特征，如反封建《五孙舍哥》、讽刺社会之冷酷《落花生》、感叹命运之不幸《新儿的生日》；有一些则含有新兴文学的倾向。

Preface 2

Chen Qing Shan and the New Literature by Singapore/Malayan Chinese Writers

In any discussion of the works of Chen Qing Shan, one inevitably has to talk about a Penang newspaper column called *Li* 荔 and its group of contributors. Qing Shan's early works were largely published in this column. He was a frequent contributor. *Li* was one of the first literary columns to be carried by the Singapore and Malayan newspapers that was devoted exclusively to the promotion of the themes and thinking of the emerging New Revolution Literature (新兴文学). It ranked the top one or two of its genre; the material were of substance and its quality distinctive. Moreover the column can be said to be the early breeding ground of China's New Revolution Literature Movement and Chen Qing Shan was indeed its distinctive Nanyang pioneer in Singapore and Malaya.

Chen Qing Shan wrote under several pen names: *Shan* 山, *Qing* 晴, *Qing Shan* 晴山, *Tian Bai* 天白, and was an important contributor and editor of the column *Li* in the daily supplement to the paper "Nanyang Shibao" 《南洋时报》 (Nanyang Times).

The New Revolution Literature Movement in Singapore and Malaya saw the beginning of its development during the five or six years 1925–1931 and the column *Li* commenced publication during this period. The literature of this period had basically the characteristics of those seen in the literary works of China's May 4th Movement, such as anti-feudalism ("Madam 5th Sun She"), exposing the harsh reality faced by the impoverished ("Peanuts"), lamenting the cruel twist of fate ("Xin-er's Birthday"). The subject matter, the form and language in these works by Chen Qing Shan are typical of New Revolution Literature.

我本来对陈晴山的生平知道得不多，只是在研究马华文学时，通过他的作品和他神交。我所收集的，大部分是他的初期著作，却不知道他在后期还创作了大量作品。这些后期的作品，大部分还未看过。但对于历史工作者来说，这是一批新发现的资料！

总之，这本《荔子情》里收集的作品，不但在马华文学史上占一极重要的地位之外，作品又充满了浓厚的南洋色彩，很有欣赏的价值。

今回，陈晴山的公子敏良及弟弟敏华，联手把父亲的一部分作品，诗词、小说、诗剧、书信等，以《荔子情》书名，用华、英双语出版单行本，这样可以使我国青年人进一步欣赏父辈、祖父辈的文化遗产，为一件很可称道的事！

本书以《荔子情》为书名，可谓适当，因为陈晴山之作品，大部分曾刊登于上述之文艺副刊《荔》版。此外，这“荔”字还有它一段小轶闻。北国名果荔枝和南洋的红毛丹极为相似，更有“南洋荔枝”之别称。听说“荔”刊同人爱吃红毛丹，为了表示该刊重视南洋色彩，故以为名。最近，我又从陈晴山令次郎敏华医生所写的一篇《先父陈晴山史略》，才知道陈晴山原籍福建莆田。有一位文友告诉我，莆田盛产荔枝，

I did not know Chen Qing Shan personally and not much about his life. I only knew him, as it were, through my contact with his literary works during my research into the New Literature by Chinese writers in Singapore and Malaya. His works that I have collected were all written in his early years of writing and I had no idea that he subsequently wrote a great deal more – most of which I had not seen before. To a researcher like me, these subsequent works are most invaluable material.

To sum it all up, the works comprised in this book not only occupy an important place in the development of Nanyang Chinese literature, they are also full of the local “Nanyang” flavour and colour. In this sense Qing Shan’s works are doubly significant.

His sons, Min-liang (Peter) and Min-hua (Michael), now collaborate in publishing some of his works in this book, comprising poems, a lyric-poem play, short stories and letters. They title the book “*Lychee Fragrance*” 《荔子情》 which is published bilingually in Chinese and English. I commend them for their enterprise, as the book will help our younger generation in understanding their forefathers and gain a deeper appreciation of their literary legacy.

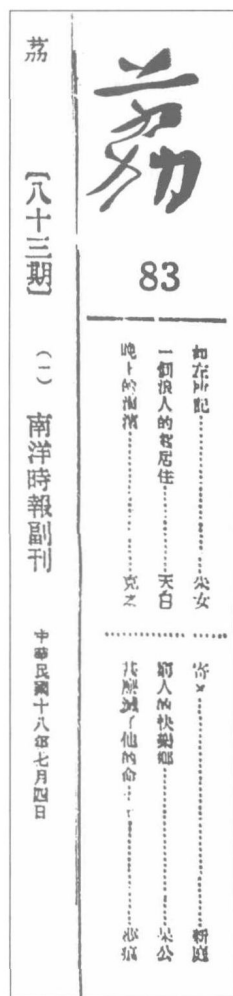
It is manifestly appropriate for this book to be titled “*Lychee Fragrance*” 《荔子情》. Most of Chen Qing Shan’s writings first appeared in the aforesaid literary column called *Li 荔* (meaning lychee). Apart from the word *Li 荔*, there is another interesting anecdote in this connection. The well-known Chinese fruit lychee looks much like the Nanyang tropical fruit rambutan. Indeed some have dubbed rambutans as “Nanyang lychees”. It is said that the contributors behind the column all loved the fruit rambutans. They therefore named their column after this tropical fruit to underscore the importance of the local “Nanyang” colour reflected in their own writings. From an article titled “A Brief Biography of Chen Qing Shan” written by his younger son Dr Michael Tan Min-hua, I learned that Chen Qing Shan’s home county was Putian, Fujian. A literary friend told me that Putian is well known for its lychees. Putian

有“荔城”之称，郭沫若曾留诗曰：“荔城无处不荔枝”，莆田人爱用“荔”字作为他们乡亲族群之标帜，我这才恍然大悟，觉得以此《荔子情》书名问世，倒是颇有诗意的。

方修

写于《荔子情》出版前夕

2002秋



1920年代后期檳城的《南洋时报》副刊第八十三期的刊首题字《荔》——刊于1929年7月4日(新加坡国立大学中文图书馆提供)

“《荔》是第一批附在当年新马报刊副刊中数一数二的，也是我国新兴文学运动初期的重要园地。”——方修

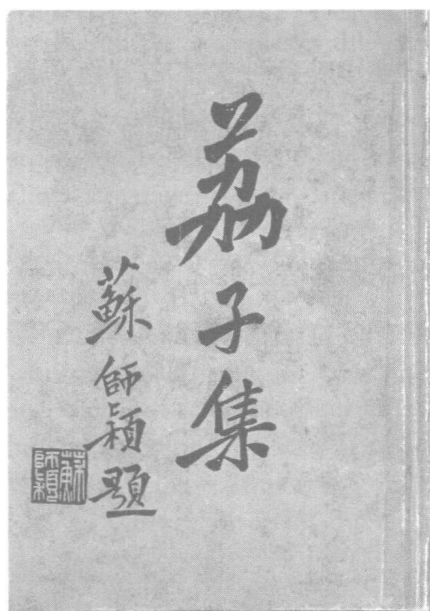
Masthead of Issue No. 83, dated 4 July 1929, of the literary column “Li” of the Penang paper “Nanyang Shihao” (By courtesy of The Chinese Library of The National University of Singapore)

“Li” was one of the first literary columns to be carried by the Singapore and Malayan newspapers and ranked the top one or two of its genre. It can be said to be an early breeding ground of China’s New Revolution Literature” in our country.” — Fang Xiu

has indeed been given the sobriquet *Li-chen* 荔城 meaning “Lychee City”. The well known modern Chinese writer Guo Morou 郭沫若 once wrote in a poem: “In the City of Lychee, branches of lychees everywhere” 荔城无处不荔枝. The people of Putian love to use the word *Li* as a symbol or icon representative of their native land. Only then did I realise the profound significance of the name *Li* 荔. The use of the title “Lychee Fragrance” 《荔子情》 for this book does indeed add a touch of poetic flavour to it.

Fang Xiu

Written on the eve of publication of
“Lychee Fragrance”
Autumn 2002



作者陈晴山1936年在故乡福建莆田出版的文集“荔子集”——本书内五篇短篇小说及一篇诗剧取自该集。

Book cover of “*Lizi Ji*”, published in Putian in 1936 comprising a selection of Qing Shan’s literary works. The five short stories and the lyric-poem play in “Lychee Fragrance” are taken from “*Lizi Ji*”.

序三

先父陈晴山先生，是廿世纪初期自中国移民新马的拓荒华侨，他的一生活跃于新马教育界及华文文坛，著作甚丰，体裁广泛，有散文、小说、诗词、短剧、家书等。同时也曾从事华文中学、师范的教科书编撰。我们兄弟两人，几年前就开始校阅其中一部分代表各类体裁的作品，译成英文。原本动机是想藉此英译，好让我们那些只懂英文的子侄们，也能有机会欣赏他们祖父之优美的文学著作。刚巧新加坡《联合早报》副刊开创双语栏，邀请我们选出先父的一些代表各种文体之著作，连同他写给当年在海外留学儿子的一些家书在该副刊发表，从1998年5月开始，一共连载7个多月。

自从《荔子情》见报后，颇得各界读者好评，读者无不欣赏先父之文笔。值得我们注意的是有多位来信的读者，是受英

Preface 3

Our late father Chen Qing Shan, was one of many Chinese immigrants who came to Singapore and the then Malaya in the early 1900s. He was a teacher most of his life right up to the time he died in June 1960 at the age of 66. He was very active in the literary circles throughout the region and wrote extensively. His range of subjects was wide and so too was the literary form in which he wrote. His literary works comprised prose, short stories, poems, plays and he had also annotated an anthology of works from Chinese classics used as a textbook in Chinese secondary schools and the Normal Teacher Training Course in Malaya.

We two brothers have from time to time selected some of the more representative examples of the various forms of his writings and translated them into English. The purpose of the English translation is to enable our own children, who do not understand enough Chinese, to know and enjoy the beauty of their grandfather's literary works. We should not allow language to be a barrier.

In 1998, we were invited to contribute our father's literary works together with their translation into English for publication in a new bilingual literary column of *Fukan*, the daily supplement of the Singapore Chinese paper *Lianhe Zaobao*. We selected a cross section of his writings and included some personal letters written to his elder son Peter while he was studying overseas. The selection appeared fortnightly under the bilingual column "*Lizi Qing*" in *Fukan* over a period of 7 months from May to November 1998.

"*Lizi Qing*" proved very popular with *Lianhe Zaobao*'s readers. Those from an "English language dominant" background, and even some

文教育的年轻朋友，他们都异口同声地指出，先父的著作，满足了他们多年来在觅寻早期移民及其父母的思想文化、哲学、人生观、生活写照的渴望，尤其是这些家书更引起了那些有子女在海外留学，身为父母的读者们无限的感动和共鸣。家书内容，正好说出了这般为人父母者的心声！

在各界读者之要求下，我们决定把这些中英对照的作品，重新整理，并增添了几篇未曾发表的散文以及一篇用一种较为罕见的、叫“诗剧”之文体所写的短剧——《洗耳溪》。这是一篇讽刺诗剧，但写法幽默讽刺时弊，想读者是会喜欢阅读的。

新加坡乃一多元民族的新兴独立国家，正在孕育其独特的文化，然而在此新文化形成的过程中，探索我们父母辈的思想、哲学、人生观念……等，是一件非常重要的事，我们可以吸收其优良传统，取长补短，而融汇灌注我们的新文化中。

younger readers among the “Chinese language dominant” group, found the English translation helpful in their understanding and appreciation of the original Chinese text. Curiously enough, even those strong in Chinese could not resist reading the English translation out of curiosity — “to see how it is said in English” or to evaluate their own English language skills.

The “Chinese language dominant” readers enjoyed the literary beauty of the writing. The readers could also identify with the observations, values, and culture expressed. Qing Shan’s letters to his son touched a chord with many readers. Amongst the readers were some parents who shared the same concerns and felt the same anxieties when their children studied overseas — even in this age of instant telecommunication and the Internet. The unexpected bonus came primarily from the “English language dominant” readers. They said that the bilingual “*Lizi Qing*” column of father’s writing had helped them fill a void which they had always felt in wanting an insight into the culture, values, aspirations and the everyday lives of their own immigrant forefathers. Many had asked for the bilingual “*Lizi Qing*” to be published as a book.

In the publication of “*Lizi Qing*” in book form under the English title “*Lychee Fragrance*”, we have included the addition of several pieces of work hitherto not published in the “*Lizi Qing*” column plus one example of an unusual type of literary form “*shi ju*” (loosely rendered into English as “lyric poem play”). Entitled *Xi Er Xi* (*Ear Cleansing Stream*), it is a short play full of humour and satire.

Singapore is a young nation comprising people of different ethnic origin and culture who have settled in the country in the last two centuries. It is a modern society which is still in the process of evolving a new culture and a people who are distinctively Singaporean, but drawing on only the best from the rich and varied cultural origins of its people. For this reason the country’s bilingual policy places great importance on the knowledge of one’s own mother tongue language and culture, even though English has pragmatically become the dominant language.

希望本书能激发读者对以下三个课题的兴趣:

(一)欣赏中华文学各种体裁,

(二)认识新马华裔早期移民之社会思想及家庭观念,

(三)推展双语教育。

今天, 虽然有不少海外出版的中英对照之书籍面市, 但大部分还是一些古典文学名著, 偶尔也有一两部散文、近代诗之出现, 然而属地道南洋色彩、本地人著作、又是中英对照的则如凤毛麟角, 因此本书的出版, 倘能抛砖引玉, 那就更有意义了。

陈敏良(新加坡)

陈敏华(美国)

2002年春