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賦心詩韻



**RHAPSODIC MIND
IN
POETIC MOOD**

LI DONGDONG

外语教学与研究出版社
FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS

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Translated by
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Preface

The classical-style poetry is an enduring Chinese tradition dating back to antiquity. According to the *Book of songs*, there are six principles in the poems: airs (*feng*), rhapsodies (*fu*), similes (*bi*), introductions (*xing*), odes (*ya*) and hymns (*song*). In *Literary mind and the carving of dragons · Chapter 8: Interpreting fu or rhyme-prose*, Liu Xie (c. 465-532) says: "The *Book of poetry* has six elements, the second being *fu* or rhyme-prose. The character for *fu* is related to 'unfold': It unfolds literary patterns and the art of language to describe scenery and human feeling." Moreover, the rhapsody is meant to be read aloud rather than sung.

In his "Literature: A rhapsody," the Western Jin litterateur Lu Ji (261-303) differentiates the poem from the rhapsody by saying, "The poem (*shi*) follows from the affections (*qing*) and is exquisitely ornate, whereas the poetic exposition (*fu*) gives the normative forms of things and is clear and bright." The rhapsody calls for straightforward diction to describe things and events, but there is no clear-cut divide between the poem and the rhapsody. The poem also describes things while conveying feeling, whereas

in the rhapsody the author unbosoms himself but never forgets to relate events and things.

The rhapsody emerged in the state of Chu during the Warring States period and had become all the rage by the Han dynasty. In the two thousand or so years thereafter, it flourished at one time and all but vanished at another. During the May Fourth New Culture Movement of 1919, classical Chinese was abolished to make way for vernacular speech. The rhapsody languished as a result, a languor which dragged on in the years that followed. The brilliant works of this genre that survive come mostly from ancient times.

The hallowed rhapsody tradition has somehow come back into its own over the last thirty or so reform and opening-up years, when national rejuvenation becomes a sacred mission for the entire populace. Quite a few people have picked up the rhapsody as a medium to eulogize what is happening in present-day China.

Professor Yu Dan, a renowned scholar in Chinese culture, says of the rhapsody: "This literary genre possesses a character of its own, a character that oftentimes has nothing to do with content but has everything to do with

the times. Minor ditties on trauma and twisted feelings could be produced in transient years of war or turmoil, but great rhapsodies inevitably come around in great epochs of peace and prosperity. This inevitability had been borne out as early as the two Han dynasties and Wei of the Three Kingdoms period.

“Compared with the poem, the rhapsody is more sanguine and extravert; compared with the prose, it is more romantic and more richly embellished. It is untrammelled by stereotyped verbal parallelism and metric and tonal patterns, nor is it simplified and freewheeling at the expense of rhythm and rhyme. The beauty of the rhapsody lies exactly in that it teeters between compliance to and eschewal of the rule of the literary game.

“In rhapsody writing it is challenging to tweak the subtleties to a nicety. The rhetoric must be grand and brilliant without being flashy and gaudy; the momentum must be majestic without being haughty. When literary patterning (*wen*) overshadows substance (*zhi*), it spawns pomposity; when substance overweighs patterning, passion is dampened. If one can avail oneself of the literary

mind to set off the dignity and self-confidence of the age one finds oneself in, it is one's temperament and mindset, rather than the artistry of four- or six-character couplets, that matters."

Quite a few *fu* writers have come to the fore in recent years, who have the needed temperament and mindset but who also work to inherit old verbal patterns of parallelism in creative ways. To celebrate the peaceful rise of China in this golden age, they have, either as professionals or as amateurs, come up with an impressive number of rhapsodies rich in subject matter and varied in style. Li Dongdong is one of them, and an outstanding one at that.

Li Dongdong was a member of the eleventh and twelfth national committees of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and vice-minister of the General Administration of Press and Publication. She is president of the China Media Culture Promotion Association, and vice-chair of the China Poetry, Calligraphy and Painting Research Society; she is also a member of the China Writers Association. After rounding up a decade-long career in journalism, she shifted from news writing to prose and

poetry composition. In the process she has developed a penchant for the *fu* and *ci* poetry. In between her official duties and heavy workload, she has penned quite a few rhapsodies over the last two decades. These include "Zhangjiajie rhapsody," "Ningxia rhapsody," "Central Party School rhapsody," "Beidaihe rhapsody," "August First rhapsody," "Tsinghua rhapsody," and "Military diplomacy rhapsody." Most of her rhapsodies have been carried in such national mouthpieces as *People's Daily*, *Guangming Daily* and *PLA Daily*, which has earned her considerable publicity and a large following. Requests for her new compositions come in a constant stream.

Li Dongdong's rhapsodies and poems are rooted in reality and focused on development, and her writing style is authentically classical. As she rhapsodizes and versifies along, her heart beats to the pulse of this great age under the reform and opening-up policy. Against the backdrop of growing international cultural exchange, we feel lucky having the opportunity to translate Li Dongdong's oeuvre into English and putting them together in this bilingual book for readers around the world.

The *Rhapsodic mind in poetic mood* comes in two parts. Part 1 features fifteen rhapsodies marked for their rich and varied subject matter. For instance, the “Ningxia rhapsody” celebrates the history, humanities, landscape and folklore of a Hui autonomous region in northwest China; the “Military diplomacy rhapsody” dwells on military and foreign affairs through extensive citations of past and present historical and literary sources; the “Union Hospital rhapsody” acclaims the humanitarian love of doctors of that particular hospital, who “hang out a drug gourd” to save lives. Part 2 presents twelve poems under eight titles, with the “Lyric poems on Guyuan” alone featuring five poems. Li Dongdong’s poems are short and succinct as a rule, and they sound more exquisite and nimble-minded as compared with her rhapsodies.

We have translated every rhapsody in this book into two English versions, first in prose and then in verse. The prose version gives full scope to the content without strictly complying to predetermined metric structure, rhyme and sentence length, though due attention is paid to recreating in English the original four- or six-character couplets and metric and rhyme patterns. The versified version is

offered in the hope that we could bring the poetic beauty of Li Dongdong's *fu* into bold relief without compromising fidelity to the originals.

Li Dongdong writes poems and rhapsodies with a deep sense of history. She often broaches a theme with historical events and anecdotes to make the past serve the present. Moreover, she has literary allusions, quotations and idioms at her fingertips, and her use of classic apothegms is well-conceived and a school in her own right. These historical and literary elements, coupled with Li Dongdong's classical writing style, make her rhapsodies a delight to read among well-read native Chinese-speakers. But ordinary Chinese readers may find her writings daunting, and this is even more the case with non-Chinese speaking readers the *Rhapsodic mind in poetic mood* is designed for. To help our foreign readers in this regard, our prose translation of every rhapsody has been elaborately annotated. The same is true with some of the poems. We researched the texts and dug into books and archives as we went along. At moments of bewilderment, we made a point of consulting the author, and were deeply impressed by her meticulous and decisive

style of work and her eagerness to help. When we put the manuscripts together, we were surprised to find that we had accumulated nearly four hundred footnotes to the entire text, which gave us a sense of fulfillment.

The lion's share of the translation was handled by Professor Ling Yuan. With his assistance, Zhong Zhilan 仲志兰 translated one of the rhapsodies into English in both prose and verse, and she also translated the last four poems; Fan Haixiang 范海祥, Yan Li 颜莉 and Duan Huixiang 段会香 each rendered one rhapsody into English in prose. Translating a book as recondite as the *Rhapsodic mind in poetic mood* was a difficult, at times tedious, undertaking, yet the translators were able to turn it into a fascinating journey of literary discovery as they deciphered, researched, annotated and edited down the stretch. In the meantime, Niu Qianqian 牛茜茜, Cai Man 蔡曼 and Gao Lei 高蕾 of the Design Department did what professional art designers are supposed to do; they rendered a willing ear to the author, and kept working on the cover design and the layout of the book until every requirement was met. When the project approached its last leg, Chief Editor Xu Jianzhong

徐建中 hand-picked some of the best FLTRP editors, including Zhang Lixin 张黎新, Zhang Xiaofang 张晓芳, Ma Yanxia 马艳霞, Lan Xiaoluan 蓝小婵, Ren Xiaomei 任小玫, Zhang Jinping 张锦平, Zhou Yixing 周懿行 and Tang Hui 唐辉, to give the English and Chinese texts a thorough and crucial check before the book went to press. The *Rhapsodic mind in poetic mood* is, indeed, a crystallization of the labor and collaboration of colleagues from different departments in our press.

As the Chinese adage goes, "Willing or not, the ugly bride cannot but present herself before her parents-in-law." It is high time we put the product of our year-long labor on the table. As a work of translation, the *Rhapsodic mind in poetic mood* is not without its errors and oversights. We shall be deeply grateful to readers who care to share their criticisms and suggestions for improvement.

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Cherishing Aspirations
High and Far-sighted

前言

中国古体诗词源远流长。诗有六义：一曰风，二曰赋，三曰比，四曰兴，五曰雅，六曰颂。刘勰《文心雕龙 诠赋第八》：“诗有六义，其二曰赋。赋者，铺也，铺采摘文，体物写志也。”由此看来，赋是从《诗经》中衍生出来的一种文体，讲究铺叙辞藻，不歌而诵，体察物象，抒写情志。

关于诗和赋的区别，晋代文学家陆机在《文赋》里曾说：诗缘情而绮靡，赋体物而浏亮。意指诗常为抒发主观感情，用词绮丽细腻，赋多用以描写客观事物，文章宜爽朗通畅。当然这不能割裂开来，诗也要描写事物，赋也有抒发感情的成分。

赋，兴于楚而盛于汉，两千多年来，时而异彩纷呈，时而迹近湮灭。在五四新文化运动中，废除文言，倡行白话，百年来赋作不兴。赋体文章存世名篇，大都是古代作品。

改革开放以来，伴随着中华民族走向复兴的伟大进程，今人又开始以古老的赋体形式描摹当下的时代，正如中国著名文化学者于丹教授所阐述的——

“文体这种形式本身是有气质的，很多时候无关于内容，而相关于时代。比如乱世流年可以出曲折小词，但恢宏大赋，自泱泱汉魏始，一定出在盛世。

较之于诗，赋更疏朗开放；较之于文，赋更浪漫华美。既不至于拘宥着对仗平仄，也不至于质实素朴到没了节律。赋的妙处，恰恰介乎规矩的遵循与破除之间。

……作赋的分寸极难拿捏，文采须壮美而不靡丽，气象要磅礴而不骄矜。文胜于质则流于浮夸，质重于文而不得风发扬厉。倘若以一介文心，铺排出一个时代的尊严与自信，能耐不在乎骈四俪六的对仗功夫，而在于心量性情的格局。”

近年来，不少具有这种心量性情又讲究骈四俪六的作者，或专业、或业余，写了许多不同题材的赋体文章，谱写中华崛起的盛世华章。李东东正是其中出类拔萃的一位。

李东东是全国政协第十一届、十二届委员，原新闻出版总署副署长，中国新闻文化促进会会长，中国诗书画研究会副会长，中国作家协会会员。在最初十年新闻工作经历之后，从新闻写作转为关注散文和词赋写作，特别于词赋情有独钟。二十余年时间，在紧张繁忙的公务之余，先后撰写《张家界赋》《宁夏赋》《中共中央党校小赋》《北戴河赋》《八一赋》《清华赋》《军事外交赋》等辞赋，在社会上广为传诵，有相当的社会知名度与美誉度。其作品多在《人民日报》《光明日报》《解放军报》等媒体上刊登，而上门求赋者更是络绎不绝。

李东东署长的词赋立足现实，关注发展，紧扣时代脉搏，运用古代文体讴歌改革发展的新时代。在当今文化走出去的大背景下，根据出版社策划安排，我们工作室有幸将李署长近来及从前的词赋作品悉数翻译出版，得成此书。本书分为两个部分，第一部分是十五篇赋，其题材颇为广泛。譬如《宁夏赋》是对宁夏

历史人文、山川风物的热情讴歌；《军事外交赋》涉及军事、外交，旁征博引，纵横捭阖；《协和赋》则是对协和医院悬壶济世、大爱无疆的生命礼赞。第二部分是八篇词曲，其中固原词一题五首。相比于赋，词曲则短小精悍，灵动了许多。

为了体现赋作为韵文和散文的综合体的特点，本书所收各赋的英译既有散文体，又有诗体。散文体方便充分展开内容，不受句长和韵律的束缚；诗体则适当照顾了这两方面因素。

李署长的词赋行文厚重，有历史纵深感，常常以史入题，古为今用。用事用典，信手拈来；熟句成语，浑然天成。对于母语如此娴熟的运用，于国人是阅读上的享受，外国读者有时却会因此而摸不着头脑。为了更好地向外国读者传递中国文化，我们此次借鉴国外汉学家的方法，在赋的散文版和一些诗词翻译中适当加注，对轶闻掌故、人物事件等加以适度的解释。不经意间，全书竟添加了近四百个注释，这是始料未及的，也是令人欣慰的。我们在工作中边翻译边考据，并不时向署长请教、确认。署长严谨细致、雷厉风行的工作作风给我们留下深刻的印象。

本书翻译工作由凌原老师担纲，仲志兰、范海祥、颜莉、段会香等几位同事参与其中。译事不易，但译者们乐在其中，感觉为这样的作品去字斟句酌、推敲修改的过程，本身就是一次次文化“微旅程”的累积。设计部的牛茜茜、蔡曼、高蕾对

封面和版式进行了精心的设计，并不厌其烦一改再改，直到大家满意为止。在付梓前夕，总编辑徐建中特意从社里调集一千精兵强将，包括张黎新、张晓芳、马艳霞、蓝小雯、任小玫、张锦平、周懿行和唐辉等，对全书进行了关键的一轮编校。《赋心诗韵》得以顺利出版，是来自我社各部门的同事们协力同心的结果。

经过近一年的打磨，丑媳妇终于要见公婆了。不足之处在所难免，望同好和广大读者批评斧正。

外语教学与研究出版社汉译英工作室

2013年10月15日