

《幽梦影》——林语堂译¹

读书与文学——之一

古今至文，皆血泪所成。

（吴）晴岩曰：山老《清泪痕》一书，细看皆是血泪。

含徵曰：古今恶文亦纯是血。

All literary masterpieces of the ancients and moderns were written with blood and tears.

Ching-ai: Even this book of enjoyment of life shows tears. Looked at more closely, sometimes they are tears of blood.

Hanchen: Bad literature is probably written all with blood and no tears. (All sex and violence.)

读书与文学——之二

文章是案头山水，山水是地上之文章。

圣许曰：文章必明秀方可作案头山水，山水必曲折乃可名地上之文章。

Literature is landscape on the desk; landscape is literature on the earth.

Shengshu: One necessary qualification for each. Writing must have sinuous grace before it can be compared with landscape, and a landscape must have pleasant turns and surprises before it can be compared with writing.

读书与文学——之三

善读书者无之而非书，山水亦书也，棋酒亦书也，花月亦书也。善游山水者无之而非山水，书史亦山水也，诗酒亦山水也，花月亦山水也。

奎山曰：此方是真善读书人，善游山水人。

含徵曰：五更卧被时，有无数山水书籍，在眼前胸中。

梅庵曰：山耶水耶书耶，一而二，二而三，三而一者也。

A good reader regards many things as books to read wherever he goes; a good landscape, chess and wine, and flowers and the moon are all books to be read. A good traveler also sees a landscape [a picture] in everything: in history, in poems and wining parties, and in flowers and the moon.

Hoshan: This well describes the secret of a good reader and good traveler.

Hanchen: Lying in bed at night, one can conjure up any number of beautiful scenes from real life and literature.

Huei-an: Books, hills, and water---they are all one and the same thing.

读书与文学——之四

读书最乐，若读史书则喜少怒多，究之，怒处亦乐处也。

竹坡曰：读到喜怒俱忘，是大乐境。

Generally, reading is a pleasure. But reading history, more often than not, grips one with sadness or anger. But even that feeling of sadness or anger is a luxury.

Chupo: The best is when you forget yourself entirely, and are even unaware that you are happy or maddened.

读书与文学——之五

读经宜冬，其神专也；读史宜夏，其时久也；读诸子宜秋，其致别也；读诸集宜春，其机畅也。

（庞）笔奴曰：读《幽梦影》，则春夏秋冬无时不宜。

Winter is good for reading the classics, for one's mind is more collected. Summer is good for reading history, for one has plenty of time. The autumn is good for reading the ancient philosophers, because of the great diversity of thought and ideas. Finally, spring is suitable for reading literary works, for in spring one's spirit expands.

Pinu: This Quiet Dream Shadows is good for reading for all seasons.

读书与文学——之六

经传宜独坐读，史鉴宜与友共读。

（王）景州曰：如无好友，即红友亦可。

The classics should be read by oneself while alone (for reflection). History should be read together with friends (for discussion of opinions).

Chingchou: Female friends will do also.

读书与文学——之七

少年读书如隙中窥月，中年读书如庭中望月，老年读书如台上玩月，皆以阅历之浅深为所得

之浅深耳。

竹坡曰：吾叔此论直置身广寒宫里，下视大千世界皆清光似水矣。

右万曰：吾以为学道亦有深浅之别。

The benefit of reading varies directly with one's experience in life. It is like looking at the moon. A young reader may be compared to one seeing the moon through a single crack, a middle-aged reader seems to see it from an enclosed courtyard, and an old man seems to see it from an open terrace, with a complete view of the entire world.

Chupo: My uncle's reflections upon life seem to be made from the crystal palace in the moon itself, looking down upon this world of human life as one sees to the bottom of a clear lake.

Yuwan: In my opinion, there is the same difference in one's understanding or religion.

读书与文学——之八

不独诵其诗读其书是尚友古人，即观其字画亦是尚友古人处。

It is not only through reading their poems and books that we make friends with ancient authors; we do so also when looking at their calligraphy and painting.

读书与文学——之九

著得一部新书便是千秋大业，注得一部古书允为万世宏功。

交三曰：世间难事，注书第一，大要于极寻常处，要看出作者苦心。

竹坡曰：注书无难，天使人得安居无累，有可以注书之时与地为难耳。

Next to the author of a good book is the man who makes a good commentary on it.

Chiaoshan: Writing commentaries is not an easy task. One has to bring out the author's meaning and implications even in his most common remarks.

Chupo: I do not think it is difficult. All one needs is the proper time and leisure to do it, plus peace of mind.

读书与文学——之十

廷名师讯子弟，入名山习举业，丐名士代捉刀，三者都无是处。

康畴曰：大抵名而已矣，好歹原未必着意。

日戒曰：况今日之所谓名乎。

To ask a famous scholar to be tutor for young children, to study for examinations at a mountain retreat, and to ask a famous writer to be the ghost for your compositions---these things are utterly wrong.

Kangchou: All this is probably done to gain fame. No thought is given to whether it is the right thing to do.

Jihchieh: And just consider what passes for fame nowadays.

读书与文学——之十一

大家之文，吾爱之慕之，吾愿学之；名家之文，吾爱之慕之，吾不敢学之。学大家而不得，所谓刻鹄不成尚类鹜也；学名家而不得，则是画虎不成反类犬矣。

（黄）旧樵曰：我则异于是，最恶世之貌为大家者。

日戒曰：彼不曾闻其藩篱，乌能窥其阃奥，只说得隔壁话耳。

竹坡曰：今人读得一两句名家，便自称大家矣。

One can admire and try to imitate the writing of great thinkers, but not that of a famous writer. One can fail and yet not make too bad a mistake in the first case, but the result may be disastrous in the second.

Chiuchiao: I beg to differ. What I hate most are those who pretend to be great thinkers.

Jihchieh: That is because he does not know what they are talking about.

Chupo: Many there are today who have read a few books and consider themselves forth with great thinkers.

读书与文学——之十二

方外不必戒酒，但须戒俗；红裙不必通文，但须得趣。

其恭曰：以不戒酒之方外遇不通文之红裙，必有可观。

Monks need not abstain from wine, but only from being vulgar; red skirts [women] need not master literature, but they should have good taste.

Chikung: I can imagine what will happen when a wine-drinking monk meets an illiterate red skirt.

读书与文学——之十三

能读无字之书，方可得惊人妙句；能会难通之解，方可参最上禅机。

One who can read the wordless book of life should be able to write striking lines; one who understands the truth which is difficult to express by words is qualified to grasp the highest Shan wisdom.

读书与文学——之十四

读书不难，能用为难；能用不难，能记为难。

（洪）去芜曰：心斋以能记次于能用之后，想亦苦记性不如耳，世固有能记不能用者。

竹坡曰：能记固难，能行尤难。

语堂曰：你们都误会了心斋的意思，他是说要记得应用所学。

（注：这一条的头两句没有译成英文）

The difficulty is not in reading books, but in applying the truths to life, and the greater difficulty is in remembering them.

Chuwu: Shintsai seems to place remembering above applying them. There are those who can

remember them, and cannot apply.

Chupo: It is indeed difficult to remember, but also to apply.

Yutang: You both misunderstand Shintsai. He means “to remember to apply them”.

读书与文学——之十五

《水浒传》是一部怒书，《西游记》是一部悟书，《金瓶梅》是一部哀书。

含徵曰：不会看《金瓶梅》而只学其淫，是爱东坡者但喜吃东坡肉耳。

日戒曰：《幽梦影》是一部快书。

其恭曰：余谓《幽梦影》是一部趣书。

Among the classics of fiction, the Shuihu [about a band of rebels in times of a bad government] is a book of anger, the Shiyuchi [a religious allegory and story of adventure] is a book of spiritual awakening, and the Chinpingmei [Hsimen Ching and His Six Wives], a book of sorrow.

Hanchen: Some say that the Chinpingmei is pornography. It is like those who eat “pork a la Tungpo” and imagine they can talk about Su Tungpo.

Jihchieh: This Quiet Dream Shadows is a book of enjoyment.

Chikung: I should rather say that it is a book of life's flavors.

读书与文学——之十六

貌有丑而可观者，有虽不丑而不足观者；文有不通而可爱者，有虽通而极可厌者。此未易与浅人道也。

若金曰：究竟可观者必有奇怪处，可爱者必无大不通。

（梅）雪坪曰：虽通而可厌，便可谓之不通。

There are faces that are ugly but interesting, and others that are pretty but dull. There are, too, books that are not well written, but utterly fascinating, and others that are well written, but extremely dull. This is difficult to explain to superficial critics.

Jochin: After all, a charming book must have something in it, and a fascinating one cannot be too badly written.

Shuehping: But when it is “well written” but dull, we can say it is badly written.

读书与文学——之十七

创新庵不若修古庙，读生书不若温旧业。

竹坡曰：是真会读书者，是真读过万卷书者，是真一书曾读过数遍者。

It is more profitable to reread some old books than to read new ones, just as it is better to repair and add to an old temple than to build one entirely new.

Chupo: This statement comes from one who really has read a great deal and read well, and has reread some old books.

读书与文学——之十八

作文之法，意之曲折者宜写之以显浅之词，理之显浅者宜运之以曲折之笔，题之熟者参之以新奇之想，题之庸者深之以关系之论，至于窘者舒之使长，缚者删之使简，俚者文之使雅，闹者摄之使静，皆所谓裁制也。

The secret of composition lies in this: Try to express difficult points clearly and avoid the obvious and superficial. Commonplace subjects must be illuminated with fresh thoughts, and commonplace themes must be shown to have deeper implications. As to amplifications, tightening up, weeding out overwriting and common, overused expressions, these are matters of revision.

读书与文学——之十九

先读经后读史，则论事不谬于圣贤；既读史复读经，则观书不徒为章句。

First study the classics, then history. Then one has a deeper central point of view. Then one can go back to the classics again, when one will not be satisfied with merely beautiful phrases.

读书与文学——之二十

古人云：“诗必穷而后工。”盖穷则语多感慨易于见长耳。若富贵中人，既不可忧贫叹贱，所谈者不过风云月露而已，诗安得佳？苟思所变，计惟有出游一法。即以所见之山川风土物产人情，或当疮痍兵燹(xian3)之余，或值旱潦灾祲(jin4)之后，无一不可寓之诗中。借他人之穷愁以供我之咏叹，则诗亦不必待穷而后工也。

慧庵曰：世之穷者多而工诗者少，诗亦不任受过也。

The ancient people say: "A man becomes a better poet after he has tasted poverty." That is because from poverty and hardships, one gains depth and experience. People who are rich and well-to-do do not taste all aspects of life, and they can only write about the winds and the clouds, and the moon and the dew. As a substitute for personal experience, they might go about and watch the sufferings of the common people, especially in times of war and famine and in that way acquire a vicarious experience of life.

Huei-an: But there are many poor people and few good poets. The circumstances do not account for everything.