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lost on the rangakusha, who took up military subjects; it made a deep impression on the ruling class, which later introduced science and technology for defense. In contrast to China, which only after defeat realized her weakness, Japan learned the facts of international life from the peaceful Hollander.

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That highly self-conscious practitioner, Henry James, described the novel as “the most independent, most elastic, most prodigious of literary forms.” He could hardly have had the Chinese tradition in mind, yet his attributes would apply there with no less force. The corpus of Chinese fiction is vast and varied, it contains works of true genius, and it exerts a special fascination on Westerners by furnishing their swiftest possible conveyance towards the very core of the Chinese imagination.

Recognition of the national tradition of fiction has been an important facet of cultural development in twentieth-century China. Knotty problems of literary history have begun to be unravelled. Texts have been established and affiliations of the Water Margin editions (pp. 77–80). Texts have been identified, authors and editors have been distinguished, interpolations recognized. Discoveries are frequent and advances in knowledge quite swift.

But criticism, prior to the publication of the work under review, had hardly begun its enormous task. To Prof. C. T. Hsia we are profoundly indebted, for with the present excellent volume he has ensured that the level on which critical discussion proceeds shall be a high one, sustained by both scholarship and insight.

Prof. Hsia’s introduction identifies certain general characteristics of Chinese fiction and clearly indicates what is to be his primary concern: the moral significance (or “ideological substance”) of the works under review. Though F. R. Leavis is nowhere mentioned, this is a critic whose preoccupations Prof. Hsia surely shares, and in fact his book defines a “great tradition” for Chinese fiction. He finds the essence of the tradition in six novels, to each of which he devotes a chapter: The Romance of the Three Kingdoms, The Water Margin, Journey to the West, Chin P’ing Mei, The Scholars and Dream of the Red Chamber. Appended is the earlier brilliant hua-pen study, “Society and Self in the Chinese Short Story.” Other works, uneven masterpieces like P’ing-yao-chuan, Hsing-shih yin-yüan chuan or Ching-hua-yüan must have urged their claims, but one recognizes the wisdom of Prof. Hsia’s selection as soon as one tries to decide which of his six might harmlessly have been discarded. Our best hope is for a second such volume from the same author, and there is a hopeful sign of such a possibility in his new article on “The Travels of Lao Ts’an: An Exploration of its Art and Meaning” (Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies, New Series VII, No. 2, August 1969).

Each chapter opens with a brief survey of the contributions of recent scholarship towards solving the problems of literary history surrounding the novel in question. These masterly surveys offer up-to-date and helpful guidance through thickets of controversy. Our guide himself comes closest to defeat in the attempt to summarize the affiliations of the Water Margin editions (pp. 77–80). Difficulty in following the argument here is partly due to the ambiguity of the term “shorter versions,” which in fact is used to mean “more heavily abridged” rather than “possessing fewer chapters.”

The critical evaluation of each work is in this way founded on consideration of its provenance. Even when we are most surprised by Prof. Hsia’s iconoclasm we remain impressed by his careful reading. He has extraordinary strengths: the sweep of the comparativist is allied with the ability to dissociate from modern predilections, to stand firm on the bedrock of traditional values. In a fascinating discussion of Journey to the West, for example, he presents on the one hand illuminating parallels (the Hamlet myth of the Crow-Cock Kingdom, p. 140, the Rabelaisian quality of the
attack on the Python, p. 153), and on the other a warning (p. 148) against that modern lust for emotional involvement which this great allegory so constantly and bafflingly disconcerts. And by this time he has already demonstrated his intrepidity of judgment by describing Wu Ch'eng-en as “one of the most skilled descriptive poets in all Chinese literature” (p. 120: recall that Waley, whose translation is an English masterpiece, omitted almost all of the innumerable illustrative verses).

It is surely these strengths of literary erudition and taste which in themselves pose obstacles to Prof. Hsia’s approach to certain works. He is unhappy, for example, about the “plausible theory” of pao-ying, “moral retribution.” Are we therefore to write off such a hua-pen classic as Ts’o chan Ts’ui Ning, wherein Liu’s widow’s sole—but perfectly credible—motive for informing on her bandit-husband is her fear of the retaliation of his victims in the next world? And if we accept that the author of the Red Chamber was “above that type of superstition” (p. 29), what then can we make of the contrasting fates of Ch’iao-chieh, say, and Miao-yü?

That mandarin literary taste that tends to prefer the elegant above the vital leads to the kind of judgment that would rank Jou-p’u-t’uan above Chin P’ing Mei (pp. 203–4). The former is a tastefully-told smutty story, of a piece with the Golden Ass of Apuleius; Chin P’ing Mei is a great novel. The reader will rightly be repelled by the illustrative passages quoted from this work; but the selection of these passages is itself much less than fair to a book which wins through, like Balzac, in spite of a coarse and clumsy style, to new heights of psychological perception (Hsi-men Ch’ing’s anguish over the death of Li P’ing-erh, or Yüeh-niang’s distress in the face of P’an Chin-lien’s self-humiliation). If pornography is in the eye of the beholder, then the reader must admit to promptings of desire towards Ch’in-lien—on first acquaintance. But whereas Fanny Hill re mains the lecher’s fantasy Playmate to the end, Chin-lien conducts us to a truly Shakespearian realm of sexual disgust, and in so doing elevates Chin P’ing Mei to a unique (and uniquely dis comforting) position in the world’s fiction.

Prof. Hsia’s condemnation of the “sadism and misogyny” of the Water Margin is a parallel case, and has been taken to task by Prof. James J. Y. Liu who still would rate Water Margin “the outstanding piece of chivalric literature in Chinese” (The Chinese Knight-Errant, p. 116). Prof. Hsia is less helpful when he speaks of sadism as a national characteristic (p. 96) than when he relates Water Margin (p. 107) to “the energy of the unconscious,” the “dark force” which “every civilization must hold in check if it is to survive.” We hold children in check with fairy-tales, as Djuna Barnes reminds us: “God, children know something they can’t tell; they like Red Riding Hood and the wolf in bed!” (Nightwood). The violence of Water Margin, like the sexuality of Chin P’ing Mei, sickens Prof. Hsia and leads him into surprising judgments. It is misleading, however one may wish to escape the conventional generalization, to state (p. 93) that the heroes forced into outlawry by official persecution are actually few in number, when that number includes Sung Chiang himself (kills a wanton who is blackmailing him), Shih Hsiu and Yang Hsiung (in similar case), Lu Ta (kills a bully), Lin Ch’ung (framed), the Juan brothers (robbed of their livelihood), and Wu Sung (denied justice for his brother’s murder). In concluding his discussion of Water Margin Prof. Hsia recognizes the “moment of true sublimity” in the conclusion of the novel itself. But he fails to accept the logical need for so much of the violence (the reader must be convinced of the necessity for the fraternal murder of Li K’uei), just as he fails to acknowledge the frustration (so vivid for example in ch. 110) responsible for the “gang morality” he deplores.

The above are more-or-less legitimate points of disagreement, heavily dependent on personal scales of value. There are occasional further instances, for example, of generalizations one would wish to disprove. The statement on p. 237 that “until modern times all Chinese fiction was written from the point of view of an omniscient third-person narrator” is true only in a very formalistic sense: one could cite examples to the contrary, e.g. the T’ang story Ch’iu-jan-k’o chuan in which Li Ching is used as a “focus of vision” in quite the Jamesian sense, or Ku-chin hsiao-shuo.

This latest addition to the relatively small number of books on Chinese jade covers the artistic development of this medium from the beginning of the 14th through the 18th centuries. The author, already known to many through her "Report from America," which appears regularly in the Quarterly Oriental Art, was introduced to Chinese art through her husband, who has a noted gallery of Oriental art in New York. Mrs. Hartman, an authority on Chinese Jade, organized a very distinguished exhibition of "Chinese Jade Through the Centuries," held at the China House Gallery in New York from October 24, 1968 to January 26, 1969. She also wrote the illustrated catalogue for this important exhibition.

Unlike Professor Howard Hansford's earlier and very thorough study, Chinese Jade Carving, which dealt with the historical development and various technical aspects of Chinese jade from the Shang to the Ming Dynasty, the present book by Mrs. Hartman is limited to jade of the Ming and Ch'ing Dynasties. In the Introduction, the author deals with various technical aspects of jade and seeks to find answers to general problems pertaining to the nature, origin and use of the material. Such matters as the geographic location of jade, the distinction between nephrite and jadeite, their mineral properties, how to verify genuine jade, the arduous and painstaking process of carving jade, and the difficult and complex problems encountered in dating jade are some of the major topics dealt with. Most of the problems will be of interest both to the amateur collector as well as to the specialist and scholar. For instance, so-called "pink" jade is correctly dismissed as non-existent, and any examples described as such, we are told, must be considered either "honest mistakes or extravagant fancy." Some useful hints are provided under the heading "How to verify Genuine Jade." The simple test of scratching the surface of the stone with a sharp blade to determine whether it is genuine jade is no longer considered reliable. Certain quartzes and types of serpentine are virtually as hard as jade and will not yield to a knife or razor blade. Moreover, the newer stainless steel razor blades will cut into genuine jade material, so the scratch test is not decisive, but must be supplemented by laboratory tests to determine the precise nature of the material.

The major portion of the book is taken up with the historical and artistic development of Ming and Ch'ing Dynasty jades. A brief introduction to the cultural and religious background of the Ming Dynasty is followed by illustrations, black-and-white and two colorplates (including frontispiece) of examples the author would assign to the Ming Dynasty. Each illustration is accompanied by a
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