

Editor's Page

After having most recently published a couple of special issues devoted exclusively to modern literature, *Renditions* with this number returns to presenting writings in a variety of genres from across a broad expanse of Chinese history and territory. We take special pleasure in being able to publish the translation of a stimulating analysis of the work of the late Qing poet and diplomat Huang Zunxian 黃遵憲 written by Cheng Yu-yu 鄭毓瑜, an important scholar from Taiwan, thereby insuring representation of all of the 'three areas' of mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Cheng's essay traces out the ways in which Huang attempted to make the new Japan comprehensible in terms of traditional Chinese poetic imagery, showing the power of the traditional poetic voice even in the face of modern challenges, as well as the complications arising from the effort to envision the new in terms of the old. Included with the essay are elegant translations by Jack Chen and Yunshuang Zhang of the poems by Huang that Cheng discusses.

The issue begins with Charles Saft's rendering of a short letter from the Han dynasty, which provides a sharp glimpse of everyday life (at least among the military elite) in the far Northwest some two millennia ago. This is followed by Wilt Idema's striking translation of 'Lament over My Poor Fate', a poem from the Song dynasty expressing the grief of a wife abandoned by a husband in thrall to new favourites written in a female persona, and one of the longest poems ever written in the long course of Chinese literary history.

David Hull's translation of the fourth and fifth chapters of Mao Dun's 茅盾 1927 *Waverings* (Dongyao 動搖), the second novella of the *Eclipse* (Shi 蝕) trilogy, continues our serialization of this important novel, while Shi Zhecun's 施蛰存 haunting 'The Yaksha' provides a wholly different vision of Republican China. Lin Bai's 林白 'The Time of Cat's Passion', a recent story, illustrates just how much broader the scope of fictional expression has become in China in recent years. We are also pleased to be able to publish a number of essays, one by the prominent Nanjing writer Su Tong 蘇童, two by the Hong Kong artist and writer Wong Yankwai 黃仁達 in Suyin Mak's vivid translation (along with two 'street poems' by the same author) and a nostalgic ode in prose by Charles Kwong 鄺龔子 to a long-gone bus in Hong Kong's New Territories. It is to be hoped that these samples testify to the continuing power and relevance of the Chinese essay form.

Forthcoming

The next issue, *Renditions* no. 80, to appear in November of 2013, will be another collection of writings in various genres and from different periods of Chinese history, including a Song dynasty tale of elopement and the resulting court case and an important preface to his commentary on the *Shuihu zhuan* 水滸傳 by the seventeenth century critic Jin Shengtān 金聖歎. Included also will be ‘The History of Humanity’, an important early essay by Lu Xun 魯迅, an inquiry into the human condition by the controversial writer and critic Hu Lancheng 胡蘭成, and ten contemporary poems by Chien Chengchen 簡政珍.

—Theodore Hutters