

<<围城>>

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作者：Chung-shu Chien

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内容概要

“ The besieged city is the most delightful and carefully wrought novel in modern chinese literature;it is perhaps also its greatest nove. ”

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作者简介

译者：(美国)凯利 茅国权 编者：钱钟书

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## 章节摘录

书摘 Shen-ming pressed down his pince-nez, cleared his throat, and said, "Mr. Fang, what was it you were asking me that time?" "When?" asked Hung-chien, bewildered. "Before Miss Su came." ——Hung-chien could not recall——" It seems you were asking me what philosophical questions I was studying, weren't you?" To this usual question, Ch'u Shen-ming had a pat answer. Since Miss Su had not yet arrived, he had waited until now to show off. "Oh, yes, yes." "Strictly speaking, your statement has a slight fallacy. When a philosopher encounters a question, his first step is to study the question. Is it a question or not? If it's not, then it's a pseudo-question which needn't and can't be solved. If it is a question, his second step is to study the solution. Is the traditional solution correct or should it be revised? You probably meant to ask not what question am I studying, but what question am I studying the solution of." Fang Hung-chien was astounded, Tung Hsieh-ch' an was bored, and Miss Su was confused. "Marvelous!" exclaimed Hsin-mei. "A truly thorough analysis! That's wonderful, wonderful! Hung-chien, you've studied philosophy, but you should be quite willing to take a back seat today. After such an excellent discussion, we should all have a glass." At Hsin-mei's insistence Hung-chien reluctantly took a couple of swallows, saying, "Hsin-mei, I just muddled my way through a year in the philosophy department by reading a few assigned reference books. Before Mr. Ch'u I can only humbly ask for instruction." Ch'u Shen-ming said, "I'm unworthy! From what you say, Mr. Fang, it seems you were taking the individual as a unit in reading philosophical works. That is only studying philosophers. At best it's studying the history of philosophy, not philosophy itself. At most such a person could be a philosophy professor, but never a philosopher. I like using my own mind, not other people's, to think. I read works of science and literature, but I never read works of philosophy unless I have to. A lot of so-called philosophers these days don't really study philosophy at all; they just study personalities of works in philosophy. Strictly speaking, they shouldn't be called philosophers, but rather 'philophilosophers.'" "Philophilosophers?" said Hung-chien. "Now that's an interesting term. Did you coin that yourself?" "It's a word someone saw in a book and told Bertie about, and Bertie told me." "Who's Bertie?" "Russell." THE RED SEA had long since been crossed, and the ship was now on its way over the Indian Ocean; but as always the sun mercilessly rose early and set late, encroaching upon the better part of the night. The night, like paper soaked in oil, had become translucent. Locked in the embrace of the sun, the night's own form was indiscernible. Perhaps it had become intoxicated by the sun, which would explain why the night sky remained flushed long after the gradual fading of the rosy sunset. By the time the ruddiness dissipated and the night itself awoke from its stupor, the passengers in their cabins had awakened, glistening with sweat; after bathing, they hurried out on deck to catch the ocean breeze. Another day had begun. It was toward the end of July, equivalent to the "san-fu" period of the lunar calendar——the hottest days of the year. In China the heat was even more oppressive than usual. Later everyone agreed the unusual heat was a portent of troops and arms, for it was the twenty-sixth year of the Republic (1937). The French liner, the Vicomte de Bragelonne, was on its way to China. Sometime after eight in the morning, the third-class deck, still damp from swabbing, was already filled with passengers standing and sitting about——the French, Jewish refugees from Germany, the Indians, the Vietnamese, and needless to say, the Chinese. The ocean breeze carried with it an arid heat; the scorching wind blew dry the bodies of fat people and covered them with a frosty layer of salt congealed with sweat, as though fresh from a bath in the Dead Sea in Palestine. Still, it was early morning, and people's high spirits had not yet withered or turned limp under the glare of the sun. They talked and bustled about with great zest. The Frenchmen, newly commissioned to serve as policemen in Vietnam or in the French Concession in China, had gathered around and were flirting with a coquettish young Jewish woman. Bismarck once remarked that what distinguished French ambassadors and ministers was that they couldn't speak a word of any foreign language, but these policemen, although they did not understand any German, managed to get their meaning across well enough to provoke giggles from the Jewish woman, thus proving themselves far superior to their diplomats. The woman's handsome husband, who was standing nearby, watched with pleasure, since for the last few days he had been enjoying the large quantities of cigarettes, beer, and lemonade that had been coming his way. Once the Red Sea was passed, no longer was there

fear of the intense heat igniting a fire, so, besides the usual fruit peelings, scraps of paper, bottle caps, and cigarette butts were everywhere. The French are famous for the clarity of their thought and the lucidness of their prose, yet in whatever they do, they never fail to bring chaos, filth, and hubbub, as witness the mess on board the ship. Relying on man's ingenuity and entrusted with his hopes, but loaded with his clutter, the ship sailed along amidst the noise and bustle; each minute it returned one small stretch of water, polluted with the smell of man, back to the indifferent, boundless, and never-ending ocean. Each summer as usual a batch of Chinese students were returning home after completing their studies abroad, and about a dozen of them were aboard. Most were young people who had not as yet found employment; they were hastening back to China at the start of the summer vacation to have more time to look for jobs. Those who had no worries about jobs would wait until the cool autumn before sailing leisurely toward home. Although some of those on board had been students in France, the others, who had been studying in England, Germany, and Belgium, had gone to Paris to gain more experience of night life before taking a French ship home. Meeting at a far corner of the earth, they became good friends at once, discussing the foreign threats and internal turmoil of their motherland, wishing they could return immediately to serve her. The ship moved ever so slowly, while homesickness welled up in everyone's heart and yearned for release. Then suddenly from heaven knows where appeared two sets of mahjong, the Chinese national pastime, said to be popular in America as well. Thus, playing mahjong not only had a downhome flavor to it but was also in tune with world trends. As luck would have it, there were more than enough people to set up two tables of mahjong. So, except for eating and sleeping, they spent their entire time gambling. Breakfast was no sooner over than down in the dining room the first round of mahjong was to begin. Up on deck were two Chinese women and one toddler, who didn't count as a full person—at least the ship's company did not consider him as one and had not made his parents buy a ticket for him. The younger woman, wearing sunglasses and with a novel spread on her lap, was elegantly dressed. Her skin would be considered fair among Orientals, but unfortunately it looked stale and dry; and even though she wore a light lipstick, her lips were a little too thin. When she removed her sunglasses, she exposed delicate eyes and eyebrows, and when she rose from the canvas lounge chair, one could see how slight she was. Moreover, the outline of her figure was perhaps too sharp, as if it had been drawn with a square-nibbed pen. She could be twenty-five or twenty-six, but then the age of modern women is like the birth dates traditional women used to list on their marriage cards, whose authentication required what the experts call external evidence, since they meant nothing in and by themselves. The toddler's mother, already in her thirties, was wearing an old black chiffon Chinese dress, a face marked by toil and weariness, her slanting downward eyebrows made her look even more miserable. Her son, not yet two years old, had a snub nose, two slanted slits for eyes, and eyebrows so high up and removed from the eyes that the eyebrows and the eyes must have pined for each other—a living replica of the Chinese face in newspaper caricatures. . . . .

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媒体关注与评论

Introduction Fortress Besieged , or Wei-ch ' eng , first serialzed in Literary Renaissance(Wen-i fu-hsing)and published in book form in 1947 , has been acclaimed as " one of modern China ' Stwo best novels , " or her" greatest novel;" it has been the subject of two

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