

Lao She and the Philosophy of Food

Yiu-nam Leung

SUMMARY

This paper begins by establishing that eating and drinking are important motifs in Western and Chinese literature, by reviewing examples from Western authors such as Homer, James Joyce, and Marcel Proust, and Chinese novels such as *The Dream of the Red Chamber*, *The Golden Lotus*, and (most important) *The Quest for Love of Lao Lee* by Lao She (pen name of Shu Ch'ing-ch'un). The author says that "throughout the novel food usually represents either an escape from unpleasant thoughts or compensation for a disagreeable situation. It seldom represents positive pleasure as it does in Lao She's English precursors Fielding and Dickens." The paper concludes that Lao She probably intended the characters in his novel to apparently not derive pleasure from eating as a reminder to his readers of the meaningless routine of the characters' lives in Peking.

KEY WORDS

Chinese cooking

naturalism

status

Proust

The Golden Lotus

ideology

Lao Lee

James Joyce

Dream of the Red Chamber

The Quest for Love of Lao Lee



Western literature is filled with the celebration of gustatory delights and the eccentricities or exploits of great eaters. Pantagruel and Gargantua are famous examples of superhuman achievements in the consumption of edibles and potables, and Shakespeare's mountain of a man Falstaff is equally familiar as a down-to-earth glutton, whose relish in food and wine seems in some manner to compensate for his cowardice and vainglory. Food in Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* reflects the personality of the characters, mirrors their psychological changes, presents scenes of different social class, and plays a crucial role in the development of plot.¹ In one of the most notable passages in modern fiction, Marcel Proust uses an article of food as the germinating force of his extended novel *Remembrance of Things Past*. The sampling of some madeleine cakes early in his narrative awakes in his memory the eating of the same delicacy as a childhood treat, and from that point he unfolds the story of his past experiences, psychological and sensual. This is common knowledge. It is less well known that Proust's monumental novel mentions at least 400 food items and includes recipes for several of them.²

A recent dictionary of literary themes and motifs explores some of the religious and mythical origins of common aspects of eating.³ The Old Testament is crammed with symbolic passages: Adam and Eve eat of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, widely regarded in the popular mind as the apple; Easau sells his birthright for a mess of potage; Pharaoh dreams of some years of famine and others of

bountiful harvest; and God provides manna for the sustenance of the wandering Israelites on the desert. In the New Testament, Christ provides loaves and fishes to feed the multitude, and his suffering and death are preceded by the Last Supper. In the Greek epics, eating belongs to both ritual and adventure. When Priam surrenders to Achilles in the *Iliad*, the two warriors sanctify their pact by a ceremonial dinner. In the *Odyssey*, Circe tampers with food to turn men into swine, some mariners succumb to the temptations of the lotus, and others are driven by hunger to slaughter forbidden cattle. The dramatic close of the adventures of Odysseus takes place at a banquet at which he slays the leading pretender to the hand of his waiting wife. No wonder that in the great eighteenth-century comic epic in prose, *Tom Jones*, Fielding refers to "that eating poem of the *Odyssey*." The twentieth-century up-date of Homer, James Joyce's *Ulysses*, also has eating as a permeating theme. The hero purchases food and cooks it for his wife's breakfast, downs a sandwich and a glass of wine at a tavern, and engages in a nocturnal pub-crawl with his friend Stephen Dedalus. As the humorous aspects of gluttony are portrayed in the characters of Gargantua and Falstaff, literature also probes the tragic consequences of the privation of food, from the gnawing pangs of hunger in the midst of plenty to the last desperate resort of cannibalism in the wilderness.

Similar extensive treatments of the ingestion of food and drink may be found in other major literatures of the world, including the Chinese. Eating is undoubtedly closely related to people's livelihood, and its activity occupies much of their time. There is a Chinese saying, "To the people foodstuff is all-important(民以食爲天)." China, with its long-standing history and civilization, is a nation known among other things for the delicacy of its food and cuisine. Chinese cooking, which is considered as a national treasure, has gained a world reputation for its "color, smell, taste, and form." A modern

scholarly treatise on food in Chinese culture observes

that the Chinese people are especially preoccupied with food, and that food is at the center of, or at least it accompanies or symbolizes, many social interactions. The Chinese recognize, in their social interactions, minute and precise distinctions, and nuances of distinctions, in regard to the relative statuses of the interacting parties and the nature of the interaction. Consequently, they inevitably use food--of which there are countless variations, many more subtle and more expressive than the tongue can convey--to help speak the language that constitutes a part of every social interaction. Within each subsegment of the Chinese food culture, food is used again differentially to express the precise social distinctions involved in the interaction.⁴

Generally speaking, it is not unreasonable to say that the subject matter of classical Chinese novels cannot do without drinking, eating, and sex. Kao Tzu, a noted ancient philosopher, once said, "Appetite for food and sex is nature."⁵ Three out of the four greatest classical Chinese novels contain scenes of lavish eating and drinking. Wine and food, for example, frequently enter into the narrative of *The Water Margin* (*Shui Hu Chuan* 水滸傳), a novel noted for its portrayal of heroism, friendship, anti-governmentalism, revolutionary ambition, and military arts.⁶ Scattered throughout the novel, things to eat and drink reflect the personalities of the characters. The exaggerated quantity of food and liquor and the characters' hearty appetite for them represent virility, generosity, and chivalry. Wu Sung, Lu Chih-shen, and Li K'uei are some of the greatest eaters and drinkers in the novel. As one critic points out, food and wine indicate the matchless energy and epicureanism of the characters in the novel.⁷ References to banqueting and drinking are also found in *The*

Golden Lotus (*Chin P'ing Mei* 金瓶梅), a novel which narrates the rise and fall of Hsi Men Ching's household and the uninhibited pornography which captures the attention of most of its readers. Seventy of its hundred chapters have scenes of food and drink.⁸ Many of them describe in detail Hsi Men Ching's prowess in eating and drinking. *Dream of the Red Chamber* (*Hung-lou Meng* 紅樓夢) is also pervaded with descriptions of eating, drinking and banqueting, on occasions in large measure ceremonial in character. Indeed nearly every major event in the plot is touched off by some gathering for the imbibing of wine or tea or the sampling of some specially-prepared delicacy. Frequently in this novel of manners and family life, ceremonial feasting or drinking is associated with the composing or reciting of poetry. Aristocratic forms of eating and drinking are depicted in variety and with delicacy. As the editors of *A Comprehensive View of Delicious Food in Dream of the Red Chamber* suggest, eating is also skillfully used to enrich the portrayal of characters.⁹

In modern times, the semi-autobiographical fiction of Lao She (pen name of Shu Ch'ing-ch'un 舒慶春) duplicates this attention to food as an accompaniment to social intercourse, but his portrayal of eating reveals little of the delicacy or refinement with which food and drink are treated in the great classic of the Ch'ing Dynasty. Lao She's characters treat food as either a fundamental necessity of life or a momentary robust pleasure, and they share the crude and pragmatic gusto of Falstaff rather than the dainty and fastidious manners of Bao-yue.

Although by birth a Manchurian, Lao She has an expert knowledge of Chinese popular culture, especially that of Peking. In his first novel--*Lao Chang Ti Che-hsueh* (老張的哲學), not yet translated into English, he draws our attention to a scene at the Chiu Ho Chu Restaurant.

Chinese people are tough and courageous. How do you

know? It is evidenced by their behavior in the restaurant. The instant you enter, you are greeted by a blast three-feet high and the shooting of oil droplets, which are as greasy as the judges. The kitchen servant is as malignant as an ominous deity. . . . While cooking, he shakes the oil-pan. A blast erupts directly from the pan. . . . This is the first checkpoint upon entering. When you walk a few steps further, a number of tall waiters greet you separately, "Sir! Come on in!" "Sir! Come on in!" Then a young waiter speaks in a shrill tone "Sit down!" This is the second checkpoint. . . . After the tune has been sung, they will order food and drink. Though the cheap dishes are good for health, they won't order them. Instead they order expensive ones When food and drink are served, they first play finger-guessing and wine-drinking games. . . . Thinking that food and drink already on the table are not ostentatious enough, the hosts keep on ordering. As guests, you toss off one glass after another until you are drunk. This is the fourth checkpoint. After taking jen tan (a kind of medicine), you are carried into a rickshaw. When the wind blows, you become partially sobered up. You once again groan the tunes of "Hsieh ti yeh" and "Huang piao ma" and prepare yourself to meet your table mates again at night. This is the fifth checkpoint.¹⁰

This sketch epitomizes the eating customs in Peking. Though not highly significant in the development of the plot of the novel, it not only highlights formalities between a host and his guest, but also reflects the author's keen observation of local manners and customs. In addition, it reveals the ludicrous eating habits in some Chinese circles: insanitary conditions are accompanied by hypocritical table manners, and overindulgence leads to physical and mental anesthesia.¹¹

T'ung Chia-huan 佟家桓 similarly observes that the avaricious restaurants in Lao She's novels portray Old Peking as an arena for Chinese conspicuous consumption and hedonistic enjoyment.¹²

In his second novel *Chao Tzu-yueh* (趙子曰), not yet translated into English, Lao She continues to use food as a symbol of a philosophical outlook upon life. The protagonist considers that life is dull without the thrill of liquor and that the development of world culture is but a by-product of a drinking bottle.¹³ In his third novel, *The Two Mas* (二馬), he weaves the action around three dinners that accentuate the psychological and social attitudes of Chinese and British characters engaged in social intercourse. C.T. Hsia has brilliantly traced these relationships.¹⁴ At the first dinner attended by two English couples and the Chinese Mas, the hostess by serving rice pudding as a dessert reveals the "missionary attitude toward the Chinese compounded of ignorance and patronage."¹⁵ The second dinner further illustrates the complexity of Anglo-Chinese relations. The younger Ma is bitterly disappointed when an English girl announces her engagement to another man, but his father is jubilant when her mother decides to marry him. At the third dinner which is the climax of the novel, a chauvinistic Chinese student leader taunts the younger Ma for eating out in a restaurant with a white girl, accusing him of showing her off as his whore in public. In Hsia's words, "The three dinner scenes, in their exploration of Anglo-Chinese relations, underscore Lao She's command of his complex material and his refusal to commit himself to a simple patriotism."¹⁶

Lao She most fully elaborates the connections between eating and social relationships in his realistic, satiric, and tragicomic *The Quest for Love of Lao Lee*, where he uses the unequal distribution of food as a symbol of the social evils of modern society. The original title in Chinese is *Li Hun* (離婚), which means *divorce*. The culinary contents of the novel

would justify a slight change in the title given by the English translator to *The Quest for Food of Lao Lee*. In essence, the author expands to all sectors of society Napoleon's universally-known dictum that the army marches on its stomach. In describing a market at the West Gate of Peking, Lao She declares, "Man's way of living was revealed here--the killing, the blood and the dirt. The stomach was everything--the stomach which swallowed all the world. No ideals could be found here."¹⁷ He devotes his descriptive talent to illustrating this grim principle that the stomach is everything: the market held "pork, mutton, beef, chicken, fish, alive and dead; and all kinds of vegetables. Pigs' blood and the skins of scallions froze on the ground. Eels and loaches crowded in pails of water with small lumps of ice sticking on their heads. The eyes of the loaches looked as if they had been hypnotized." [30] In the meditations of his protagonist, Lao Lee, the novelist repeats his philosophy of food: "This was life and life was to eat. Everything came back to eating. It was true that man lived by bread. The inequality in the distribution of bread was the basis of true inequality. What were poetic ideas? They were fools' talk. All that was really necessary was to protect your own bread, to starve others, or to go to war to fight for bread. This market was the world in miniature." [31] The men and women who came here "lived for their stomachs and nothing else."

In a sense there is nothing extraordinary in this passage. Apart from Marxist overtones, the literary ideology it embodies is that of nineteenth-century naturalism, the same view of life that is found in Frank Norris, Emile Zola, or Jack London. But Lao She was not a naturalist, but a comic-realist in the vein of his English forerunners Henry Fielding and Charles Dickens. Even his grim portrayal of the West Gate market contains elements of humor.¹⁸ And only in his depiction of the dominance of food as human motivation does he seem to accept the determinism of the extreme European realists. Actually, he presents the consumption of food as equally

important as philosophy about it. Eating and drinking permeate *The Quest for Love of Lao Lee*, but they are utilized to provide background, delineate characters and support the action except for the significant market passage quoted above in which philosophy dominates. Here and throughout, moreover, it is biological need and social behavior rather than sheer gluttony that are involved.

Idealistic and romantic, Lao Lee is an obscure clerk in a government bureau, whose rural origins make him shy and reticent. The author uses food and drink to point out his shyness. Lao Lee cannot even talk to a little waitress in a restaurant [7], and if offered a cup of tea in ordinary company, he invariably spills it over his host's clothes in an effort to be ultra polite. [9] His fellow employee, Big Brother Chang, although less qualified than Lao Lee for his government job, dominates Lao Lee by his sense of self-importance. But his office does not provide him enough work to occupy his time, and so he takes up the profession of marriage broker, his tie to the theme of love, the ostensible one portrayed in connection with Lao Lee in the title of the novel. When Chang learns that Lao Lee is contemplating divorce from his wife, who still lives out in the country, he invites him to dinner to persuade him to stay married. With Chang, an invitation has the force of a command. When Lao Lee arrives, his host is characteristically late and Lao Lee is welcomed by Mrs. Chang, who offers him tea, melon seeds and other tidbits, but his shyness prevents him from tasting them. When Chang finally arrives, he praises the mutton and shrimp that are promised for dinner and keeps the conversation from touching anything serious until the meal is under way. "Fill the stomach first, then talk marriages" is Chang's philosophy; "there would be peace in the world if there were full stomachs and happy marriages." [17] Chang has no difficulty in persuading Lao Lee to forget about divorce and instead to bring his wife to the city. Having eaten Chang's dinner, Lao Lee would have married a

water buffalo if Chang had asked him to. [24] He later rationalizes his decision as the triumph of realism over dreaming. Having decided on the realistic course, he has two further alternatives: "to get hold of bread for himself or to fight for bread for everybody." [32] Although this choice seems to be fraught with social and economic significance, Lao She does not develop the ideological thread. In the rest of the book, Lao Lee incessantly eats and drinks, but gives little or no thought to the rest of humanity.

After Lao Lee makes a trip to the country to bring back his wife and two children, he discovers that his wife cannot cope with city life. The preparing of tea is symbolic. When guests come to welcome her, she does not know that she should offer them the beverage, nor does she know where to procure water for her own family's tea. Lao Lee himself is forced to do the shopping for the first meal at home. He is temporarily pleased with the family circle until he realizes that the problem of obtaining water has still not been solved.

One of his first social obligations is to invite his co-workers to meet his family. After much discussion, he is persuaded to invite six of them along with his family for a European dinner at a restaurant. They all prefer this arrangement to having a dinner at home. [104] To illustrate character traits, the author describes the verbal fencing over ordering accompanying drinks. One of the guests complains of a slight dizziness, and Lao Lee is forced into ordering brandy, but Big Brother Chang comes to the rescue by saying that his own appetite is not up to hard liquor, thus offering Lao Lee an excuse to order a single glass instead of an entire bottle. But then a late-arriving guest takes upon himself to order a full bottle. [106-7] The waiter serves the hors d'oeuvres first to Mrs. Lee, who not acquainted with Western table manners, does not understand that she is expected to help herself and in her ignorance she tells the waiter to put the platter down on the table. Later she has troubles managing her knife and fork.

When one of the guests, Small Chao, wishes to drink with her, she believes it is necessary for her to stand and has to be corrected by Big Brother Chang. Lao Lee, to cover his embarrassment, gets completely drunk, and the whole family loses face. By means of an interior monologue, Lao She uses the episode to probe Lao Lee's character and delineate his milieu:

He blamed himself for having invited Small Chao and his friends to dinner. Was it in order to appease them? No, in order to save his wife from exposing herself. But she had exposed herself, to his shame--and all the money he had spent! He should have been tough with Small Chao, and refused to invite him and his cronies. . . . If his wife behaved that way, she would always behave that way. No need to hide her, or to avoid the others. . . . He was ashamed. He considered himself one of the new thinkers, and full of ideals. But what a coward he was actually. [113]

The next day at the office, Small Chao insists on returning the honor by inviting Lao Lee and his wife to meet the other wives. This time everything goes smoothly. Nobody drinks too much and everyone is cordial. The episode in the restaurant is one of the most rollicking in the entire novel. It also serves the structural purpose of bringing all of the major characters together in a single setting. In this regard the scene presents a parallel to a description of fourteen pages of a banquet in Ch'ien Chung-shu's *Fortress Besieged* 圍城.¹⁹

On another occasion, Lao Lee accidentally meets an old man, Second Master Ting, who lives with Big Brother Chang and invites him to a meal even though Lao Lee has previously disliked the old man. Second Master Ting gradually gets drunk and tells the story of the decline in his fortunes and his becoming a habitual drunkard because of a shrewish wife.

[142-143]

Although Lao Lee before long is reconciled to his own marital situation, he becomes infatuated with a young widow living across the way in his compound. During the celebrations for the New Year, he thinks of her so much that he cannot enjoy the pleasures of the table, hardly noticing what food he puts in his mouth. He tries to eat his wife's New Year cake, but it is without taste "like nothing in his stomach." [152] Soon after he becomes ill, and all his wife can say to comfort him is "I've kept some of the good food from the festival for you." [156]

Eventually Lao Lee is given a promotion and his superior, whom Lao Lee has never liked, sends him a dinner invitation. In a long talk before accepting, he finds they have considerable common ground. The superior tells him that they are actually "the same ingredients both cooked in the same pot," a metaphor for their lives as minor government officials and husbands. And Lao Lee is happy at the realization that through the conversation he has "cracked open another human egg." He goes home, sees his wife and children, and leaves again for a small restaurant where he consumes a bowl of soup and "thirty small steaming dumplings filled with meat and onions." [198] He cannot explain his happy mood.

Other metaphors connected with food appear throughout the novel.²⁰ Communists are compared to child-eaters; [201] Small Chao's eyeballs roll around "like beans in a frying-pan"; [231] and an easy woman is compared to "a ripe melon that breaks from its stalk the minute you touch it." [242] Comparing women to fruit is commonplace in all literatures, but Lao She does so in an ingenious and highly original manner. By entering Small Chao's thoughts, he develops an extended metaphor to delineate his character's lechery and avariciousness.

His attitude toward women had been to look upon them

as desirable fruit to be plucked only when ripe. They had to be ripe, even though they were stained in spots, grafted or transplanted from other soil. He had never intended to keep them for himself anyway. He was a greengrocer--a fruit merchant never ran the risk of having things go bad when they were in his care. Today he was about to pick a little peach which was just tinted with pink. . . . Should he keep this newly ripe little peach all to himself, or should he give her away later as a gift for which he would be well paid? A newly ripe peach is good to look at but not always good to taste . . . lack of experience was a shocking shortcoming in a woman. [221]

True to form, Small Chao undertakes his seduction in restaurants. He and his victim, Big Brother Chang's daughter, go first to a pavilion in a park, where he orders mineral water, sliced lotus stalk, and fresh peaches. At first the girl is too shy to eat, but eventually she nibbles a piece of sliced lotus stalk. He asks if she would like some pastry, but she declines. Next they go rowing on the lake, and he finishes his courtship with dinner. He is too wise to press his advantage further, but allows his quarry to go home alone. As she proceeds she feels thirsty and stops at a buffet to drink two bowlfuls of sweet and sour prune juice. Small Chao returns to the pavilion and orders two ice creams, his heat "as cool and sweetly pleasant to himself as the ice cream." [233]

At the end of the novel, Second Master Ting murders Small Chao in the park to frustrate the seduction and succeeds in his homicide without being detected. When he goes to Lao Lee's house to acquaint him with the deed, Mrs. Lee, who remains completely in the dark, prepares dumplings for them. The two men drink until they are intoxicated, but leave the dumplings untouched. The passage serves as a contrast to the previous one in which Lao Lee in a happy mood goes to a

restaurant and consumes thirty dumplings. This time the simple food is inadequate for the strong emotions evoked by the murder.

Throughout the novel food usually represents either an escape from unpleasant thoughts or compensation for a disagreeable situation. It seldom represents positive pleasure as it does in Lao She's English predecessors Fielding and Dickens. All three writers blend humor with their social criticism, but Lao She's humor seldom illustrates the good things in life. His use of food and drink, like his humor, serves mainly to reveal aspects of character and manners. It may not be said of all of his characters that they live "for their stomachs and nothing else," but Lao Lee at least finds little other abiding satisfaction in life.

As I have shown in the foregoing exposition, food is a concept of philosophical and metaphorical consequence to Lao She as the author of *The Quest of Love for Lao Lee* and to Lao Lee the protagonist of the novel, as an occupation and worldly concern. But despite the ubiquitousness of eating and drinking in the narrative, none of the characters seems to derive lasting pleasure from chewing and swallowing. The author probably intended this circumstance as a reminder to his readers of the meaningless routine of the characters' drab existence in Peking.

Notes

¹ Ku Shao-san 顧肇森, "Eating in *Madame Bovary* and Fan Hua's *Male and Female* 飲食：包法利夫人和范曄男女," *China Times* 18 April 1991 : 31.

² Ku Shao-san, "Eating and Literature 飲食與文學," in *Sentimental Values* 感傷的價值 (Taipei : Hann Colour Business Company, 1990) 136-7.

³ Manfred Weidhorn, "Eating," in Jean-Charles Seigneuret et al, eds., *Dictionary of Literary Themes and Motifs*, vol. 1 (New York:

Greenwood Press, 1988) 431-39.

⁴ Chang K. C., ed. *Food in Chinese Culture* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1977) 15-6.

⁵ Lau D. C., trans., *Mencius* (England: Penguin Books, 1970) 161.

⁶ Hsia C. T., *The Classic Chinese Novel: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1979) 75-114.

⁷ Sun Shu-yu 孫述宇, *The Source, Psychology, and Artistry of The Water Margin* 水滸傳的來歷, 心態與藝術 (Taipei: Times Publishing Company Ltd., 1981) 322.

⁸ For details, see *Chin P'ing Mei Chien Shen Tzu Din* 金瓶梅鑒賞辭典, edited by Association of *Dream of the Red Chamber*, Shanghai Municipal Branch (Shanghai: Shanghai Classical Text Printing Office, 1990) 853-97.

⁹ Chiang Yung-yung, Chu Pong-hua, and Chu Chia-chun 蔣榮榮, 朱邦華, 朱家鎮, eds. *Hung-lou Meng Mei Hsi Ta-kwan* 紅樓夢美食大觀 (Kwang-si: Kwang-si Science and Technology Publishing Company, 1989) 220. For a discussion of various kinds of food, drinks, and desserts in *Dream of the Red Chamber*, see also Chin I-min 秦一民, *Hung-lou Meng: Yin Shi Pu* 紅樓夢飲食譜 (Shi-an: Hua-yueh Wen-hua Ch'u-pan-she, 1988).

¹⁰ Lao She, *Lao Chang Ti Che-hsueh* 老張的哲學 (Hong Kong: Hui-tong Shu-tien, 1976) 59-60. Translation is mine.

¹¹ Sung Yung-yi 宋永毅, *Lao She yu Chung Kuo Wen-hua* 老舍與中國文化觀念 (Shanghai: Hsueh-lin Publishing Company, 1988) 154.

¹² T'ung Chia-huan 佟家桓, (Lao She ti Hsiao-shuo Yen-chiu 老舍小說研究 Ning Hsia: Ning Hsia Jen-Min Ch'u-pan-she, 1983) 121.

¹³ Lao She, *Chao Tzu-yueh* 趙子曰 (Shanghai: Commercial Printing Company, 1935) 79.

¹⁴ Hsia, C. T., *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1961) 174-6.

¹⁵ Hsia, *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction* 175.

¹⁶ Hsia, *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction* 176.

¹⁷ Helena Kuo, trans. *The Quest for Love of Lao Lee*, by Lao She (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock) 31. Subsequent references to the novel are from this translation and incorporated in brackets in the

text.

¹⁸ There are several articles discussing humor in *Divorce*. See Chao Hsiao-hou 趙少候, "A Study of Lao She's Humor and Realism: A Review of *Divorce* 論老舍幽默與寫實藝術：(評離婚)," in *Lao She Yen-chiu Chi-liao* 老舍研究資料, eds. Ts'ang Kwang-ts'an and Wu Huai-pin 曾廣傑, 吳懷斌, vol. 2 (Peking: Shi Yueh Wen-i Ch'u-pan-she, 1985) 755-65; Chang Tzu 長之, "Divorce 離婚," in *Lao She P'in-chuan* 老舍評傳, (Hopei: Fai Shan Wei-i Ch'u-pan-she, 1985) 99-105; and Chang Chung-liang 張中良, "A Discussion of Comic Characteristics in Lao She's *Divorce* 淺談老舍(離婚)的喜劇特色," *Chung-kuo Hsien-ta Wen-hsueh Yen-chiu Ts'ung K'an* 2 (1984): 299-307, 325.

¹⁹ Ch'ien Chung-shu 錢鍾書, *Fortress Besieged* 圍城, translated by Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1979) 82-96. For a discussion of this scene, see Wong Wai-leung 黃維樑, "Cultural Eating: A Meal in Ch'ien Chung-shu's *Fortress Besieged* 文化的吃—錢鍾書(圍城)的一頓飯的," *Chung-wai Literary Monthly* 19.9 (Feb., 1991) 4-9.

²⁰ For a detailed discussion of Lao She's use of metaphor in his fictions, see Chou Kuan-tung 周關東, *Lao She Hsiao Shuo Pi-yu Hsieh-ying* 老舍小說比喻擷英 (Shanghai: Hua-tung Normal University Press, 1987).