Ueda is also to be commended for providing a valuable and suggestive review of Western theories of humor and relating them to *senryū*. Ueda establishes that humor, whether for people or for scholars, is not just a diversion. Humor is a basic human response, a basic literary form, and also constitutive of social life and culture. Ueda deftly surveys a range of theories from Plato through Kant to Bakhtin. He links particular theories with particular types of *senryū*, as when he suggests that theories of humor as relieved tension, such as found in Freud, account for sexually oriented *senryū*. Ueda concludes his argument, however, by suggesting that Western theories cannot account for the nonaggressive types of humor found in *senryū*. In Japan, in other words, there is humor that involves laughing with rather than at. This is a misreading of Western theory and the so-called West. I offer my own *senryū* here: Japanese scholars/all of these years still looking/for something unique.

Makoto Ueda has done much to guide and nurture the study of Japanese literature and aesthetics over the years. This volume offers valuable suggestions for exploring the role of *senryū* and the comic in Japanese life and life itself.

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CHINA

CHEN DIEXIAN. *The Money Demon: An Autobiographical Romance.* Translated by Patrick Hanan. Fiction from Modern China. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1998. 294 pages. Frontispiece. Cloth US$42.00; ISBN 0-8248-2096-7. Paper US$19.95; ISBN 0-8248-2103-3.

Acknowledged in his own time as a master of "Mandarin Duck and Butterfly" romance stories, modern Chinese writer Chen Diexian (1879–1940) was as active an entrepreneur in the world of tea, bamboo, and tooth powder trading as he was a successful writer, editor, and newspaper publisher. His *The Money Demon* reads like an autobiographical novel, which is how Chen himself describes it, and it occasionally suffers from the weaknesses one finds in works of that genre. Particularly, while building a basis for deeper characterization and later plot turns, in the beginning (roughly the first third of the narrative) the narrator seems overly self-absorbed, and is plodding in pace and manner. For the first forty pages, a rambling, loosely structured tale bogged down with quotidian detail seems in the offing. This effect may be partly due to the work's publication history. As translator Patrick Hanan mentions in an informative eleven-page introduction, *The Money Demon* appeared in regular installments from June till October 1913 on the literary pages of an important Shanghai newspaper, the *Shen bao*. Its popularity led to its publication in full book form in 1914.

The autobiographical novel breaks free of its shaky foundations when the I-narrator ("Cousin Shan") begins to share increasingly incriminating detail with readers on his movements from adolescence to young adulthood. The engines that drive this aspect of the story forward most vividly are his relationships with two sisters, the older of whom is the love of his life and next door neighbor from childhood, named after a musical instrument Koto. Her enchanting younger sister, appropriately named Orchid, functions at times as a go-between for the would-be lovers, and at times as saucy temptress in her own right (133–34). Our unlikely hero seems blissfully unaware of any need for embarrassment as he revels in the charms of the one, who he knows he cannot marry, while flirting with the other. A key ingredient from early on here is the fact that he is, after all, already a husband, thanks to a tradi-

tional marriage arranged by his mother (93).

Ironically, as he confides to readers, Shan is not even unhappily married (209–11). His Susu is a beauty in all ways. Tender and willing as a lover, a model wife of the old style (191), she in time steps aside and offers to free him for a legitimate concubinary relationship with his beloved Koto in a long letter that is both matter of fact and poetic (156–59). To his credit, Shan speaks admiringly of her generosity of spirit, which is ultimately not acted on. As the title suggests, financial constraints keep Koto tied to a man she needs rather than loves, and her affair with Shan, though consummated (197), remains on the whole mostly emotionally satisfying (140). Readers are not likely to complain that the I-narrator's marriage vows do little to restrain his irrepressible sensibility and thirst for adventure.

As episode after episode unrolls, readers of *The Money Demon* are likely to fall into a peculiar sort of collective victimhood. We are put off by this self-centered, egotistical, romantically heavy-handed story-telling voice, and, at the same time, somehow sucked in. If we cannot admire him, we are drawn to him. His is an ever-present, exhibitionistic presence in a tale full of surprises, not all of which reflect badly on his character. He shows himself unflinchingly, warts and all, and, willy-nilly, we seem to be seduced into almost liking him.

One of the interesting features of the book is its regular portrayal of verbal intimacy with the one sister (in light-hearted but realistic banter), immediately followed by more serious intimacy with the other. Then, as if to remind us of his potential for both consciousness and conscience, the narrator offers unexpected access to thoughts of his wife. The following is one of many possible samples of this scenario:

> Orchid had been peeping at us through a chink in the door curtain. Now she touched a finger to her cheek as if to say "shame on you," so I tiptoed out of the cabin. The moonlight struck the side of the boat and lit up Orchid's face so that she looked gorgeous, as if her cheeks had been freshly rouged.
>
> "Why 'shame on me'?"
>
> At first she said nothing. "I was just thinking that, since you're so much in love with Koto, it's such a pity she's made of stone," she said at last.
>
> "If you were in her place, how would you behave?" ...She threw herself into my arms, looked up at me, and begged me for forgiveness, a pose that I found absolutely enchanting. But I had never felt any interest in Orchid, and my thoughts swung back to Koto. (134–35)

Two paragraphs, a mere four sentences, then elapse. Our narrator speaks of moonlight and flowers, and in terms tender, nearly haunting, pictures to himself other loves of his heart, a minor character, but beautiful young woman named Alcyon, and his wife, Susu.

> The music and singing had almost died away, but from somewhere far off there came the notes of a viol ascending alone to the heavens, plaintive, wistful for some lost love, evoking in me an infinite sadness. My thoughts turned to Susu on her lonely pillow, thinking of me as far away. She wouldn't be wistful over some lost love. Then suddenly I thought of another evening once before, in a situation just like this, when Alcyon and I were enjoying the moonlight here, and I began to see Koto as Alcyon. (135)

Only seconds later, he steps to the bedside of Koto, who "had a delicate charm about her that was calculated to melt the heart" (136). Now we are in the grip of another of the text's special characteristics, its knack for frank titillation. The technique is calculated, and tightly controlled.

Come closer now and take a look, the narrator seems to whisper, *I'll give you enough to make this interesting, but not as much as you'd like!* Koto invites her friend to sit on the edge of her bed. The tale continues:

> She pushed back the coverlet and began to get out of bed, but I stopped her. I glanced at her slender feet in their silk stockings, each one so small that it could be cupped in the hand, and my eyes were inevitably drawn back to them. She seemed to be aware of my fascination, for she pulled the silk hem of her dress down over her feet, and a faint flush spread from her cheeks to the corners of her eyes. As I observed her, my heart raced almost out of control... (136)

Space limitations prevent analysis of several other noteworthy qualities of this novel. The theme that money is evil and ultimately a source of inevitable sadness and corruption, for example, holds a philosophical umbrella over the work. Memorable wordings about the joys and curses of mammon are available on pages 53, 70, 98, and 114–15. Readers interested in late-Ching-era views of money and inheritances should see 90–93. Tomfoolery with deposit boxes in banks is noted on 127–28, in pawnshops on 222, and with graveyard tricks on 229. I found details on how to cover losses in account books during times of natural disaster fascinating (see the flooding of Shen's tea fields, 229–35), but wished for more than the brief overview of what it was like to run and finance a newspaper in a large Chinese city (240, 260–67). Historians may have a similar feeling about the brush over the Boxer Rebellion receives (265–67). I think students of popular Buddhism and beliefs related to self-sacrifice, suffering, and reincarnation will be more satisfied, however. Buddhist spirituality runs beneath the surface of many a spiritual or intellectual musing here. Of particular interest are references to customs linked to death (184–87), and to tombs, dreams, karma, and reincarnation (103, 226–28, and 105).

The benevolent side of Shan is evident in his telling of the story of Alian, a young tea-picker, whose death leaves both her mother and the narrator heart broken. This thread is important for its inclusion of added remarks on burials and beliefs about dreams of deceased loved ones (99–102, 223, 226).

This reviewer deeply regrets he simply cannot offer an adequate view of the vast quantity of poetry that appears in this work. One can only imagine what translator Patrick Hanan put himself through to share such an array of small jewels. A personal favorite:

> She wafts inside, but why so late?
> On her clothes a wisp of scent.
> Tiny slippers through the curtain pit-a-pat,
> Then underneath the flowers, suddenly, we meet. (247)

For other small triumphs, see 218, 181, and 211.

The Money Demon would probably not be a popular success in today's market. Its narrator demands a bit too much of his readers. But those interested in cultural studies, in literary games, and in the waning days of nineteenth-century China, will not be disappointed. This is a book worth all its translator gave it. It has its own life. It chuckles, it winks, it surprises. *The Money Demon* will do much to show Westerners just why "Mandarin Duck and Butterfly" fiction entertained so many Chinese for so long, and why as a genre, it attracted gifted writers such as Chen Diexian.

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