

## **Towards a Re-theatricalized Drama: Yu Shangyuan's Translation of J. M. Barrie's The Admirable Crichton**

**Authors :** Li Jiawei

**Abstract :** In the mid-1920s, Chinese dramatist Yu Shangyuan rallied a group of intellectuals and launched the National Theatre Movement to champion the incorporation of Chinese operatic resources into modern spoken drama. In 1927, the fluctuating milieu impelled Yu and most of his comrades to leave Beijing, rendering the movement a truncated undertaking. Offering to illuminate the influence or reverberation of the movement, this research examines Yu's translation of J. M. Barrie's *The Admirable Crichton*, the first play Yu published upon returning to Beijing in 1929. It unveils that Yu still espoused the value of Chinese opera on modern stage, but his perception of drama was more instructive and rooted in theatre's fundamental traditions, customs, and mechanics. Influenced by Sheldon Cheney's theatrical idea, Yu aligned Western realistic drama with "psychologic drama" and Chinese opera with "aesthetic drama" and argued for a "re-theatricalized drama" that could "present psychologic drama aesthetically." With such a perception, Yu chose to translate a psychologic drama and strove to imbue the play with an aesthetic spirit by inserting symbolic stage designs and employing poetic language. The exploration of Yu's translation of *The Admirable Crichton* sheds light on the new insights that translation studies might bring to theatre historiography.

**Keywords :** Yu Shangyuan, translation, drama, modern China

**Conference Title :** ICLLL 2023 : International Conference on Languages, Literature and Linguistics

**Conference Location :** Honolulu, United States

**Conference Dates :** May 11-12, 2023