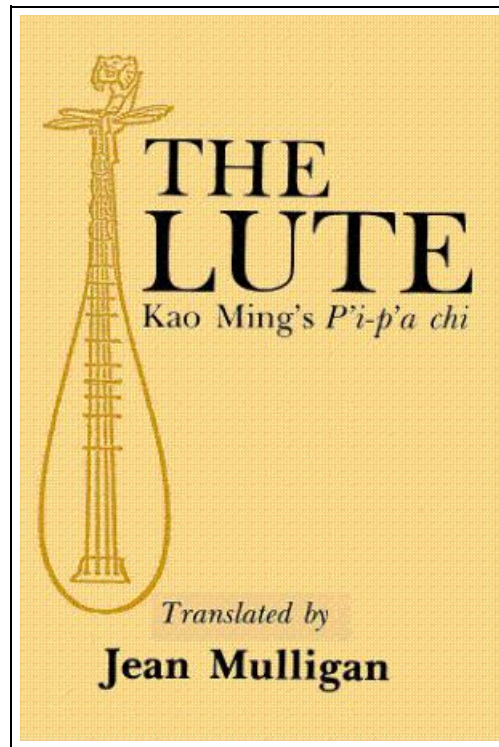


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THE LUTE: KAO MINGS PI-PA CHI



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iUniverse. Paperback. Condition: New. 336 pages. Dimensions: 9.0in. x 6.0in. x 0.9in. Kao Mings fourteenth-century play *The Lute* is among the greatest achievements of Chinese drama. Famed for the beautiful and imaginative poetry of its songs and the humor of its colloquial comic passages, *The Lute* stands among the first and finest plays in important chuan-chi genre. Now, with Jean Mulligans translation of this dramatic masterpiece, the English reader can appreciate the full impact of *The Lute*. Mulligan has not only rendered the multi-facted style of the play whose dialogue ranges from the colloquial speech of the time to passages of poetry and ornately stylized prose but has made the plays moral force and its importance as a literary model apparent as well. *The Lute* tells the story of a humble scholar, Tsas Po-chieh, who wins success in the civil service examinations. While he is coerced by the prime minister to remain in the capital and marry his daughter, Tsais parents and original wife, Wu-niang, suffer through a famine which results in the death of both parents. Perhaps the plays most moving scenes portray Wu-niags valiant struggles to support her dying parents-in-law, provide for their burial, and bring her husband back to their graveside. The title of the work drives from Wu-niangs playing the lute as she begs for alms along the difficult route to the capital, where she will seek her husband. For centuries, *The Lute* has been esteemed for exemplifying and exploring the traditional value of filial piety. In recent times it has been a topic of debate in the Peoples Republic of China, where it was analyzed for its social significance as a portrayal of traditional morality. And *The Lute* has been important in the history of Western appreciation of Chinese literature: in 1841 a French translation made it the...



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