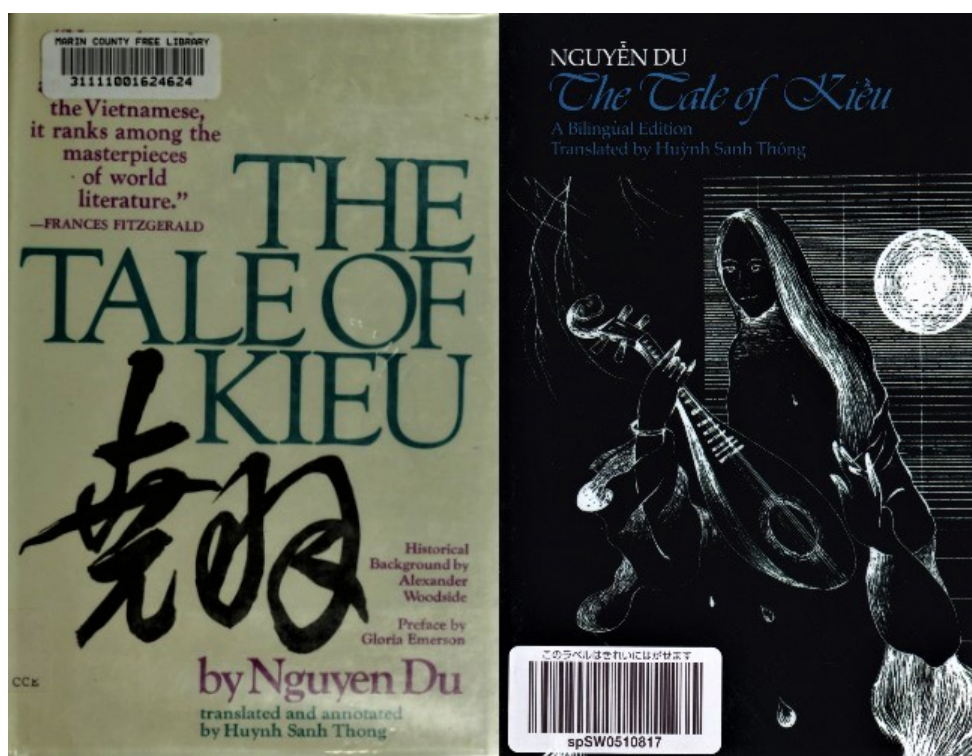


Bản dịch tiếng Anh Truyện Kiều của Dương Tường có đạo văn Huỳnh Sanh Thông không?

Nguyễn Chí Thành

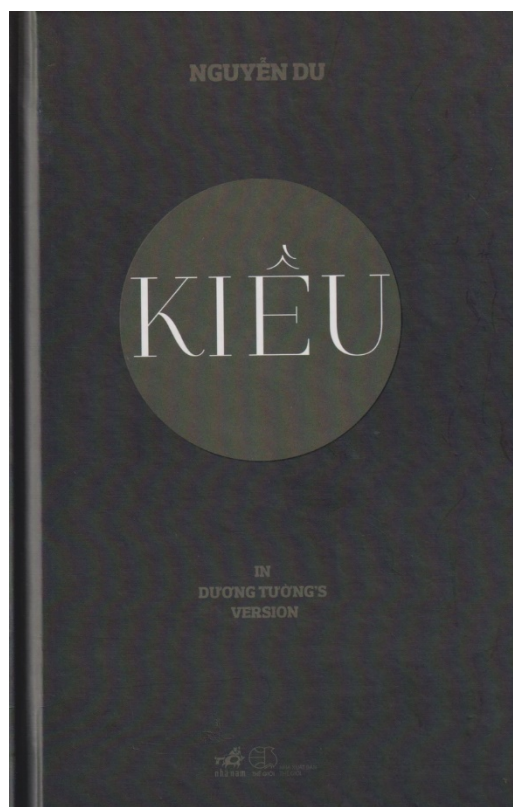
Truyện Kiều của Nguyễn Du (1765-1820), một kiệt tác văn học Việt Nam, một tác phẩm bằng thơ chữ Nôm với hơn ba ngàn câu lục bát, kể về cuộc đời trầm ái của một kỹ nữ lầu xanh tên là Thúy Kiều, bối cảnh của truyện ở thời nhà Minh bên Trung Quốc¹.

Truyện Kiều đã được hầu hết người dân Việt Nam biết đến. Không những nổi tiếng trong nước, truyện Kiều còn được dịch ra rất nhiều tiếng trên thế giới, bao gồm tiếng Pháp, Anh, Nga, Nhật, Tiệp...



The Tale of Kieu xuất bản năm 1973 (bên trái) và 1983 (bên phải)

Một trong những bản dịch tiếng Anh đầu tiên phải kể đến là cuốn “The Tale of Kieu” của dịch giả Huỳnh Sanh Thông, do Random House², Hoa Kỳ, xuất bản lần đầu tiên vào năm 1973. Huỳnh Sanh Thông sinh năm 1926 tại Hóc Môn, Gia Định, Việt Nam, học trung học tại trường Trương Vĩnh Ký ở Sài Gòn, sau đó sang Hoa Kỳ theo học tại Đại học Athens, tiểu bang Ohio, tiếp tục nghiên cứu tại Đại học Cornell tại New York, rồi giảng dạy tại Đại học Yale. Bản Kiều năm 1973 của Huỳnh Sanh Thông chỉ in phần tiếng Anh, nhưng đến bản The Tale of Kieu do Đại học Yale³ xuất bản năm 1983 thì in song ngữ Việt – Anh. Bản The Tale of Kieu của Huỳnh Sanh Thông xuất bản năm 1983 bổ sung phần chú thích (notes) rất đồ sộ, chi tiết và sâu sắc, tổng số tới 40 trang. Bản dịch tiếng Anh Truyện Kiều – The Tale of Kieu – của Huỳnh Sanh Thông đã được sử dụng làm sách giáo khoa (textbook) giảng dạy trong các trường Đại học hàng đầu trên thế giới chẳng hạn như Đại học Yale, Đại học California, Đại học Cornell và Đại học Rutgers.



Kiều, Dương Tường's version, xuất bản 2020

Nhà xuất bản Nhã Nam vừa mới xuất bản cuốn *Kiều, Dương Tường's version*⁴, do dịch giả Dương Tường dịch sang tiếng Anh. Phần chú thích (notes) bản *Kiều, Dương Tường's version* rất giống với phần chú thích trong các bản *The Tale of Kieu* của Huỳnh Sanh Thông. Tôi liệt kê theo các bảng dưới đây:

Bản của Dương Tường (<i>Kiều, Dương Tường's version</i>, Nhã Nam xuất bản năm 2020)	Bản của Huỳnh Sanh Thông (<i>The Tale of Kieu</i>, Random House Inc xuất bản lần đầu tiên năm 1973)	Tỷ lệ giống nhau giữa bản Dương Tường và Huỳnh Sanh Thông
Gia Tĩnh (Chia-ching): The reign title of the Ming emperor who ruled China from 1522 to 1560.	<i>Chia-ch'ing</i>] the reign title of the Ming emperor Shihsung who ruled China from 1522 to 1566.	88.2%
Ming China had two capitals: Peking and Nanking.	<i>both Capitals</i>] Ming China had two capitals: Peking (the Northern Capital) and the Nanking (the Southern Capital). Kieu's family lived in Peking - this fact will not be mentioned in the poem until much later.	75%
The "hair-pinnig" period: in old China, ritually, maidens, on reaching the age of fifteen, pinned up their hair, as a sign that they were ready for marriage.	<i>that time when maidens pinned their hair</i>] In old China, girls ritually pinned up their hair, when they reached the age of fifteen, as a sign that they were ready for marriage.	66.7%
The Feast of Light (pure and bright), a spring festival in China, when people tidy graves and make offerings to the dead.	<i>the Feast of Light</i>] Ch'ing-ming (Pure and Bright), a spring festival in China, when people put graves in order and make offerings to the dead.	77.3%

... nor passage for messenger birds: Tây Vương Mẫu (Hsi Wang Mu), the Queen Mother of the West, the highest goddess of the Chinese Pantheon, used bluebirds as messenger. In romantic literature, bluebird is metaphorically the forerunner of love.	<i>No passage for the bluebird to bear news!</i>] The Queen Mother of the West (Hsi Wang Mu), the highest goddess in the Chinese Taoist pantheon, used two bluebirds as messengers. In romantic literature, bluebird is the harbinger of love.	66.7%
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Bản của Dương Tường (Kiều, Dương Tường's version, Nhã Nam xuất bản năm 2020)	Bản của Huỳnh Sanh Thông (The Tale of Kiều, Đại học Yale xuất bản năm 1983)	Tỷ lệ giống nhau giữa bản Dương Tường và Huỳnh Sanh Thông
this season of new leaves (literally, season of guessing leaves): This may be a reference to the T'ang springtime game in which the participants broke off a branch and started to guess whether the number of leaves on it is even or odds as an omen of good or bad luck.	<i>this season of new leaves</i>] 'the period [when people] challenge [one another] to guess leaves" (<i>tuần đố lá</i>). This may be a reference to the T'ang springtime game of breaking off a branch at random and guessing whether the number of leaves on it was even or odds as an omen of good or bad luck.	72.5%
The Blue Bridge (Lam Kiều, or in Vietnamese, cầu Lam): According to Taoist lore, Bùi Hàng, an unsuccessful scholar, met Vân Anh near Lam Kiều and eventually married her. The Blue Bridge, thus, means a place where one might be blessed with love.	<i>her Blue Bridge</i>] According to Taoist lore, an unsuccessful T'ang scholar, P'ei Hang (Bùi Hàng) met a nymph-like-girl, Yun-ying (Vân Anh), near Lan-ch'iao (the "Blue Bridge") in Lan-t'ien, Shensi, and eventually wedded her. The Blue Bridge – in Vietnamese, <i>Lam Kiều</i> or <i>cầu Lam</i> – has come to mean a place where one encounters a beautiful girl whom one is to marry.	39.5%
Ban and Tạ (Pan and Hsieh): Allusion to the two famous Chinese women of letters. Lady Ban Chiêu (Pan Chao) or Ban-Thiếp-dư (Pan Chieh-yú) was for a long time a favorite consort of the Han emperor Ch'eng (33 - 7 B.C.). She received the title "Chieh-yú" as the imperial concubine who most distinguishes herself in literature.	<i>Pan</i>] This is an allusion to one of two famous Chinese women of letters. Lady Pan (Pan Chieh-yũ or Ban Thiệp-dư) was for a long time a favorite consort of the Han emperor Ch'eng (33-7 B.C.). She received the title "Chieh-yũ" as the imperial concubine who most distinguished herself in literature. In the first century A.D., under the Eastern Han dynasty, Pan Chao (Ban Chiêu) was such an accomplished scholar and writer that, upon the dead of her brother, the historian Pan Ku (Ban Cố), she could go on and bring to completion the great work in which she had assisted him during his life.	73.2%
Under the Tsin dynasty, Tạ Đạo Uẩn (Hsieh Tao-yun) knew her classics so	<i>Hsieh</i>] Under the Tsin dynasty, Hsieh Tao-yũn (Tạ Đạo Uẩn) knew her	91.7%

<p>well that her erudition impressed, even her uncle Tā An (Hsieh An - 320-385) the most famous member of a family of scholars.</p>	<p>classics so well that her erudition impressed even her uncle Hsieh An (Ta An, A.D. 320-85), the most famous member of a brilliant family of scholars.</p>	
<p>Since the pestle’s yet to pound on the Blue Bridge... In plain language: “Since I am not yet married to you”. Bù Hàng (see note 266), wishing to marry Vân Anh was told that he must first produce a mortar and a pestle made of jade for pounding some special ingredients. He managed to get the required implements and brought them to the old woman who asked him to pound some medicine which turned out to be an elixir of life. He and Vân Anh were allowed to marry, drink the elixir and achieve immortality.</p>	<p><i>The pestle’s yet to pound on the Blue Bridge]</i> In plain language, “I am not yet married to you”. P’ei Hang (see note 266), wishing to marry the beautiful Yün-ying, was told by her grandmother that he must first produce a mortar and a pestle made of jade that could be used for pounding special ingredients and preparing a magic drug. He managed to purchase those implements, brought them to the old woman, and was asked to pound some medicine for a hundred days: it became the elixir of life. He and the girl were allowed to wed, drink the elixir, and achieve immortality.</p>	<p>54.7%</p>
<p>Chung Kỳ : Chung Tử Kỳ (Chung tzu-ch’i). In the Spring and Autumn period of Chinese history, Bá Nha (Po Ya) was an exceptionally subtle lutanist. Chung Tử Kỳ was the only connoisseur who could appreciate each and every nuance of his playing. After Chung’s death, Bá Nha smashed his lute and never played again.</p>	<p><i>Chung Tzu-ch’ij</i> “Chung Ch’i” (Chung Kỳ). In the Spring and Autumn period of Chinese history, Po Ya (Bá Nha) was a subtle lutanist, and the only man who could appreciate each and every nuance of his playing was Chung Tzu-ch’i (Chung Tử Kỳ). Upon Chung’s death, Po smashed his lute and played no more, having lost the “friend who understood his music” (<i>bạn tri-âm</i>).</p>	<p>50.9%</p>
<p>Thôi Oanh Oanh (Ts’ui Ying-ying) and Trương Quân Thụy (Chang Chun-jui), two famous lovers in Chinese literature, are the protagonists in the semi-autobiographical tale in prose by the T’ang poet Yuan Chen (779-831), which was later turned by Wang Shuh-fu into the dramatic masterpiece Hsi Hsiang chi (Tây Sương ký – The Romance of the Western Chamber).</p>	<p><i>Ts’ui and Chang]</i> The two famous lovers in Chinese literature, Ts’ui Ying-ying (Thôi Oanh Oanh) and Chang Chun-jui (Trương Quân Thụy) are the heroine and hero of a bittersweet, semi-autobiographical tale in prose by the T’ang poet Yuan Chen (779-831). It was turned by Wang Shuh-fu (active at the end of the 13th century and beginning of te 14th) into the dramatic masterpiece, <i>Hsi Hsiang chi</i>. Both the play and the original tale can be found in S.I. Hsiung, trans., <i>The Romance of the Western Chamber</i> (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968). In the 19th century, Lý Văn Phức (1785-1849) or Nguyễn Lê Quang, or both, adapted the play into a tale in Vietnamese six-eight verse.</p>	<p>40.4%</p>
<p>Under Emperor Thuần Vu Y (Ch’un-yu I), a man without a son was sentenced to death. His daughter,</p>	<p><i>Ying]</i> Under the reign of the Han emperor Wen, Ch’un-yu I (Thuần Vu Ý), a man without a son, was</p>	<p>62.5%</p>

Đề Oanh (T’i-ying) threw herself at the emperor’s feet to present her petition, offering to become a public bond servant. This moved the emperor who then acquitted the heirless father.	sentenced to death. The condemned man’s daughter, T’i-ying (Đề Oanh), threw herself at the emperor’s feet to present her petition, offering to become a public bondservant. The ruler, moved by her filial piety, pardoned the father.	
Under the reign of the Han emperor Wu, the fearless Lý Ký (Li Chi), with a view to earning money for her indigent parent, sold herself to be used as a human sacrifice to a serpent demon. She killed the monster and her feat so impressed the king of Yueh that he made her his queen.	<i>Li]</i> Under the reign of the Han emperor Wu, a girl named Li Chi (Lý Ký) wanted to earn money for her poor parents. She sold herself to be used as a human sacrifice to a snake demon. She slew the monster and so impressed the king of Yueh with her feat that he made her his queen.	94.6%
...water’s muddy while mud’s pure... From the Chinese phrase “trọc thủy thanh trần”, meaning that innocent people are victimized by a corrupted society.	<i>water’s mud and dust’s soil-free]</i> “water is muddy and dust is clear” (<i>nước đục bụi trong</i>). This is a straight translation of the Chinese phrase <i>trọc thủy thanh trần</i> . It implies that innocent people are victimized by a corrupt society.	78.3%
in Lai’s yard... According to Chinese legend, old Lai was such a pious son that, at seventy, he’d act as a clown and dance to amuse his parents. As a metaphor, “Lai’s yard” means one’s home place is where one’s parents still live.	<i>The yard’s catalpa tree]</i> The yard is “Lai’s yard (<i>sân Lai</i>). According to Chinese legend, old Lai was such a filial son that, at seventy, he would still don funny clothes and dance in the yard to amuse his father and mother. As a metaphor, “Lai’s yard” means one’s home where one’s parents still live.	65.1%
The twenty-first, hour of the dog... The two Chinese characters (hsi yueh) can be broken down into others, (nien i jih hsu tsou), which means “flee on the twenty-first day, hour of the dog”. “The hour of the dog is between 7 and 9 p.m.. This equivocal wording caused Kiêu to misunderstand the message.	<i>The twenty-first, hour of the dog]</i> The two Chinese characters (hsi yueh) can be broken down into others, nien i jih hsũ tsou, which mean “flee on the twenty-first day, hour of the dog”. The “hour of the dog” is between 7 and 9 P.M.	83.3%
...knots grass....On his dead bed, Ngụy Vũ Tử (Wei Wu-tzu) of the kingdom of Tsin ordered that his childless concubine be killed and burried with him, but his son Wei K’o (Ngụy Khoa), ignoring the paternal injunction, let her live. Later, in a battle, he captured the famous Ch’in military commander Tu Hui whose horse was tripped by knots of grass. The same night, the old man who pulled that “grass-knotting” trick appeared to Wei K’o in a dream and	<i>knot grass]</i> To “knot grass” (<i>kết cỏ</i>) is to repay an act of kindness. On his deathbed, Wei Wu-tzu (Ngụy Vũ Tử) of the kingdom of Tsin gave the order that his childless concubine should be killed and burried with him. His son Wei K’o (Ngụy Khoa), disobeying the paternal injunction, let her live. Later, in a battle, he captured a Ch’in military commander, the famous Tu Hui (Đỗ Hồi), thanks to the help of an old man who tripped up the Ch’in officer’s horse with knots of grass.	51.9%

<p>said that he was the deceased father of the concubine whose life had been spared by Wei K'ò and now he did it so to repay that favor.</p>	<p>That night, the old man appeared to Wei K'ò in a dream and said that he was the dead father of the concubine whose life had been spared.</p>	
<p>offer jade rings... Dương Bảo (Yang Pao), at 9, saved a wounded goldfinch from ants and nursed it until it grew strong enough to fly away. One night, the bird came back as a boy dressed in yellow and bearing as gifts four white jade rings (or badges for high office). Indeed, four generations of Dương's descendants were trusted with important posts in government.</p>	<p><i>fetch jade rings</i>] To “fetch jade rings” (<i>ngậm vành</i> or, literally, to “carry rings in the mouth”) is another expression of gratitude. Yang Pao (Dương Bảo), at nine years of age, saved a wounded goldfinch from ants and nursed it until it grew strong enough to fly away. One night, the bird came back as a boy dressed in yellow and bearing as gifts four white jade rings (or badges of high office). Indeed, four generations of Yang's descendants rose to important posts in government.</p>	<p>75%</p>
<p>... lioness... The image of “lioness”, a jealous, shrewish wife, comes from ‘Ho-tung lioness” (<i>sư tử Hà Đông</i>), an epithet coined by the Sung writer Su Shih to jokingly describe a friend's wife.</p>	<p><i>I shall fall prey to her, your lioness.]</i> “A person [who is like] a rattan [or] a vine [will be] delivered before the jaws of a lioness.” A “rattan or vine” (<i>đăng la</i>) stands for a concubine in her position of dependence on the first-rank wife's goodwill and mercy. The image of the lioness (<i>sư-tử</i>), a jealous, shrewish wife, comes from ‘Ho-tung lioness” (<i>sư-tử Hà-đông</i>), an epithet jokingly coined by the Sung writer Su Shih (Tô Thúc) to describe a friend's wife who vocally objected to her husband's parties with singing girls.</p>	<p>69.7%</p>
<p>My hand has dipped into indigo: Indigo, from the Indigo plant, is a fast dye that doesn't dissolve in water and therefore is not easy to wash or scrub away. To have one's hand dipped into indigo is to have made something irrevocable or at least, difficult to put right.</p>	<p><i>my hand has dipped into indigo]</i> Indigo (<i>chàm</i>), from the indigo plant, is technically known as a “vat” dye, that is, a fast dye which does not dissolve in water and which is not easy to wash or scrub away. Hence, the proverbial phrase “the hand has dipped into indigo” (<i>tay đã nhuộm chàm</i>) means that one has made a mistake that is difficult or impossible to correct.</p>	<p>48%</p>
<p>The height of T'ang is thought to have lasted from 713 to 765, spanning the reign of Emperor Hsuan-tsung. It saw the flourishing of great poets like Li Po and Tu Fu.</p>	<p><i>the height of T'ang]</i> High T'ang (<i>Thịnh-Đường</i>). Usually thought to have lasted from 713 to 765, the period spanned the reign of Emperor Hsuan-tsung and saw the flowering of great poets like Li Po and Tu Fu.</p>	<p>81.3%</p>
<p>white clouds... Địch Nhân Kiệt (Ti jen-chieh), a trusted minister of Empress Wu, was reputed a pious son. One day, standing on Mount T'ai-hang, he saw a mass of white</p>	<p><i>those white clouds]</i> Under the T'ang, Ti Jen-chieh (Địch Nhân Kiệt), who became a trusted minister to Empress Wu, was celebrated as a filial son. One day, standing on Mount T'ai-hang, he</p>	<p>69.4%</p>

clouds in the distance. He said to those who accompanied him: “My parents’ home stands beneath those white clouds.”	saw a mass of white clouds in the distance. He said to those who were with him: “My parents’ home stands under those white clouds.”	
a crescent moon, three stars... This may suggest that Kiều was a think of Thúc: the crescent moon resemble the character (âm), a part of Thúc’s given name.	<i>a crescent moon, three stars]</i> This line may suggest that Kiều was thinking of young Thúc. The crescent moon (<i>nửa vầng trăng khuyết</i>) and the three stars (<i>ba sao</i>) seem to resemble the character (<i>Tâm</i> ; in Chinese, <i>Hsin</i>), a part of Thúc’s given name.	67.9%
As a boy, the Han emperor Wu (Hán Vũ Đế) admired a girl named Á Kiều (A-chiao) so much that he said: “If I could get her, I would build a golden house to keep her in.”	<i>she could have graced a place cast in gold]</i> As a boy, the Han emperor Wu (Hán Vũ-đế) admired a girl named A-chiao (A-kiều) so much that he said, “if I could get her, I would build a golden house to keep her in.” When he grew up to rule China, she became one of his consorts.	89.2%
...tall bo tree... It is believed that the Buddha attained enlightenment under a bo tree.	<i>tall bo tree]</i> “a tree that is a hundred feet tall” (<i>cây trăm thước</i>). The Buddha attained enlightenment (<i>bodhi</i>) under a bo (or budhi) tree or pipal (<i>cây bồ-đề</i>)	46.7%
ever blooming lotus: This is a reference to the lotus throne of a Buddha.	<i>everblooming lotus]</i> “four-season flowers” (<i>hoa bốn mùa</i>). This is a reference to the lotus throne of a Buddha.	78.6%
Three vows (or surrenders): Upon becoming a monk or nun, a Buddhist pledges surrender (<i>quy</i>) to the Three Treasures (<i>tam bảo</i>): surrender to the Buddha (<i>Phật</i>) as master, to the Dharma (<i>pháp</i>) as medicine, and to the Sang (<i>Tăng</i>) or the religious community.	<i>three vows]</i> tam-qui (Trisarana or “three surrenders”). Upon becoming a monk or nun, a Buddhist pledges surrender (<i>qui</i>) to the Three Treasures (<i>tam-bảo</i> or <i>Triratna</i>): surrender to the Buddha (<i>Phật</i>) as the master, to the Dharma (<i>Pháp</i>) or Law as medicine, and to the Sangha (<i>Tăng</i>) or the religious community as friends.	90.7%
five commands: the five commands binding on Buddhist laity are against killing, stealing, lechery, lying, and drinking alcohol.	<i>five commands]</i> <i>ngũ-giới</i> (<i>panca veramani</i>). Binding on Buddhist laity, male and female, as well as on monks and nuns, the five commands are against killing, stealing, lechery, lying, and drinking alcohol.	50%
Engravings of calligraphy from Lan-t’ing-hsu (Lan đình tự), a piece of prose written by Vương Hy Chi (Wang Hsi-chih, 321-379), its worth and fame as a calligraphic masterpiece even overshadowed its literary merit.	<i>Lan-t’ing engraving]</i> engravings of calligraphy from <i>Lan-t’ing-hsu</i> (<i>Lan-đình-tự</i>), a piece of prose written by Wang Hsi-chih (Vương Hy Chi; 321-79): its literary merit is overshadowed by its worth and fame as a calligraphic masterpiece. In the Chinese novel, Miss Huan praises Ts’ui-ch’iao’s brush strokes by comparing them to “Yen’s sinews and Liu’s bones” (<i>Nhan gân</i>	57.6%

	<i>Liểu cốt</i>), quoting a phrase coined by the Sung scholar-statesman Fan Chung-yen (Phạm Trọng Yên). Under the T'ang dynasty, both Yen Cheng ch'ing (Nhan Chân Khanh) and Liu Kung-ch'uan (Liểu Công Quyền) were celebrated as calligraphers.	
the tale of Prince Bình Nguyên. This refers to an important event in the life of Prince Bình Nguyên Quân (P'ing-yuan), the youngest brother of the king of Chao (Triệu). The circumstances showed how it is difficult to discern values among crowds and choose someone you can trust. When Hàm Đan (Han-tan), the capital, was besieged by troops from Ch'in (Tấn), the prince was charged with leading a mission to the state of Ch'u (Sở) to seek military assistance there. The delegation, however, was short of an experienced negotiator and the prince couldn't find anyone suitable. Finally, Mao Toại (Mao Sui) volunteered to go. In desperation, the prince took him along. To the general surprise, he who was thought a nonentity turned out to be such a diplomat that the king of Ch'u was persuaded to send relief troops to help to break the siege of the Chao.	<i>They call to mind the tale of Prince P'ing-yuan</i>] In a poem entitled "The Youth of Han-tan: A Song," the T'ang poet Kao Shih (Cao Thích, 702?-65) wrote: "Where can he entrust his heart and soul? / He is put in mind of Prince P'ing-yuan" (<i>Vị tri cam đảm hướng thù thị / Linh nhân khước ước Bình nguyên quân</i>). This is an allusion to an important event in the prince's life which showed how difficult it is to choose somebody one can trust. He was the youngest brother of the king of Chao (Triệu). When Han-tan (Hàm-đam), the capital, was besieged by troops from Ch'in (Tần), the prince was charged with leading a mission to the state of Ch'u (Sở) and seeking military assistance there. One more man was needed to complete the delegation, but the prince could not find a suitable person among the thousands of guests and retainers who were living at his home. Finally, one of them, Mao Sui (Mao Toại), who seems a perfect nonentity, volunteered to go. In desperation, the prince took him along. As it turned out, the unassuming man proved such a good diplomat that the king of Ch'u was persuaded to send relief troops and break the Ch'in siege of the Chao capital.	50.7%
Under the Sun dynasty, Li Yuan who was a commandant at Chin-yang (Tần Dương) in T'ai-yuan, had a four-year-old son, Li Shih-min, for whom physiognomies predicted an imperial career of extraordinary brilliance. Indeed, the boy grew up to rebel against the Sun and installed his father on the throne, the founder of the T'ang dynasty. He himself became emperor as T'ang T'ai-tsung. The prophecy about the Li family's future was then summed up in a saying: A dragon is flying over Chin-	<i>Chin-yang shall see a dragon in the clouds</i>] Under the Sui dynasty, Li Yuan, who was commandant at Chin-yang in T'ai-yuan, had a four-year-old son, Li Shih-min, for whom physiognomists predicted an imperial career of extraordinary brilliance. Indeed, the boy grew up to rebel against the Sui and succeeded in installing his father on the throne as the founder of the T'ang dynasty. He himself became emperor as T'ang T'ai-tsung. The prophecy about the Li family's imperial future was summed up in a	79.3%

yang.	saying: “A dragon is flying over Chin-yang” (<i>Long phi Tấn dương</i>).	
Mother Xiếu was the kindhearted old washerwoman who gave Hàn Tín (Han Hsin) a bowl of rice at the moment when the latter, then an indigent fishman, all but succumbed from hunger. Later, with his military genius, he helped Lưu Bang (Liu Pang) vanquish Hạng Vũ (hsiang Yu) and take the throne in 206 B.C. as Emperor Kao-tsu, founder of the Han dynasty. Now the most prestigious general of the empire, Hàn Tín repaid the washerwoman’s bowl of rice with gold.	<i>no gold can match the washerwoman’s heart</i>] When he still a poor, hungry fisherman, Han Hsin (Hàn Tín) was befriended by an old washerwoman who gave him a bowl of rice. Later, thanks to his military genius, he helped Liu Pang (Lưu Bang) triumph over Hsiang Yu (Hạng Vũ) and mount the throne in 206 B.C. as Emperor Kao-tsu, founder of the Han dynasty. Now the most prestigious general in the empire, Han Hsin repaid the washerwoman’s bowl of rice with gold. That grateful man, however, fell victim to political ingratitude: suspected of actual or potential treason, he was degraded and put to death by the emperor.	55.6%
Hoàng Sào (Huang Ch’ái): An unsuccessful scholar, Hoàng Sào chose rebellion. He led his fellow rebels to capture Ch’ang-an, the capital, and proclaimed himself emperor in 881. He was soon defeated and killed in 884.	<i>Huang Ch’ao</i>] An unsuccessful scholar, he led his fellow rebels to capture Ch’ang-an, the capital, in 881 and proclaimed himself emperor, but he was soon defeated and slain in 884. His revolt dealt the T’ang dynasty a blow from which it was not to recover.	68.6%
My heartstrings broke just like Tiểu Lân’s lute strings. After the collapse of Ch’i, Tiểu Lân (Hsiao-lin), a concubine of the king of that state, was forced to marry a warlord. One day, as she was playing the lute, the strings broke. She conveyed her agony in the following lines: “You want to know how my poor heart strings snapped? / Look at the strings of the lute on my knee.”	<i>My heartstrings broke just like Hsiao-lin’s lute strings.</i>] Hsiao-lin, concubine of the king Ch’i, was forced to marry a warlord upon collapse of that state. As she was playing the lute one day, its strings broke. She was moved to compose a poem with the following lines: “You want to know how my poor heartstrings snapped? / Look at the strings of the lute on my knees” (<i>Dục tri tâm đọa tuyệt / Ưng khán tất thượng huyền</i>).	73.2%
“The spring roster” here means the honor roll Examinations for “tiến sĩ”, the highest degree, the equivalent of a doctorate, were usually held in the spring.	<i>the honor roll</i>] “the spring roster” (<i>bảng xuân</i>). Examinations for the chin-shih or highest degree, the equivalent of a doctorate, were usually held in spring.	42.3%
amber and mustard, magnet and pin... Predestined, people are drawn together in love and marriage just as a mustard seed is attracted by amber or a pin by lodestone.	<i>Amber and mustard seed, lodestone and pin</i>] “[it’s] the lot of a mustard [seed], the fate of a pin” (<i>phận cải duyên kim</i>). Predestined, people are drawn together in love and marriage just as a mustard seed is attracted by amber and an iron pin or needle by lodestone.	69%
Under the T’ang dynasty, Lục-Châu	<i>Hsiao, a passerby ignored</i>] Under the	

<p>(Lu-chu, meaning Green Pearl), the beautiful wife of young Tiêu (Hsiao), was abducted and offered as a concubine to the powerful general Quách Tử Nghi (Kuo Tzu-i). Sometime later, she no longer recognized her quondam husband when she saw him in the street.</p>	<p>T'ang dynasty, young Hsiao (Tiêu-lang) had a beautiful wife named Lu-chu (Lục-châu, "Green Pearl"). She was abducted and offered as a concubine to the powerful general Kuo Tzu-i (Quách Tử Nghi). After that time, she no longer recognized her former husband and looked away when she saw him in the street. That incident as alluded to in a couplet by the T'ang poet Ts'ui Chiao (Thôi Giao). Forced by poverty to sell a beautiful and talented concubine into the household of a court official, he still loved her and wrote a poem for her: "Once you enter the gate of the great it's as deep as the sea / Since then young Hsiao has become a mere passerby in the street" (<i>Hầu môn nhất nhập thâm như hải / Tòng thử Tiêu lang thị lộ nhân</i>). According to tradition, the concubine's new master was so moved by the poet's devotion to her that he let her go back to him.</p>	<p>75%</p>
<p>The sovereign of Thục... Emperor Wang (Wang-ti or Vọng Đế) ruled the kingdom of Thục (Shu) as an exemplary sovereign until he fell in love with his minister's wife and had an affair with her. Discovered, he yielded the throne to the offended husband and fled into shamed seclusion in the mountains, died there and turned into the cuckoo.</p>	<p><i>And who poured forth this rhapsody of love? / The King of Shu or just a cuckoo-bird?</i> Emperor Wang (Wang-ti or Vọng-đế), who name was Tu Yu (Đỗ Vũ), ruled Shu (in modern Szechwan) as an exemplary sovereign until he fell in love with his minister's wife and had an affair with her. Discovered, he yielded the throne to the offended husband and fled into shamed seclusion in the mountains. He died there and turned into the cuckoo (or nightjar), whom mournful cry bemoans the double loss of his realm and his love.</p>	<p>81.4%</p>

Nhìn hai bảng so sánh trên, tôi có cảm tưởng, Dương Tường đã modifier bằng cách lấy nguyên bản của Huỳnh Sanh Thông, rồi cắt đi vài từ, hoặc thay một vài từ hay đổi lại trật tự câu chút ít. Nhưng có lẽ tôi sai, chắc chỉ là tư tưởng lớn gặp nhau mà thôi (?)

Lấy thí dụ câu này của Dương Tường giống hệt câu của Huỳnh Sanh Thông khi giải nghĩa chữ "ever blooming lotus" (trang 200):

Dương Tường	Huỳnh Sanh Thông
This is a reference to the lotus throne of a Buddha.	This is a reference to the lotus throne of a Buddha.

Câu dưới đây của Dương Tường so với Huỳnh Sanh Thông thì giống hoàn toàn, chỉ lược bớt một số từ mà thôi, đây là dòng bị cắt bỏ (trang 199): “When he grew up to rule China, she became one of his consorts.”:

Dương Tường	Huỳnh Sanh Thông
As a boy, the Han emperor Wu (Hán Vũ Đế) admired a girl named Á Kiêu (A-chiao) so much that he said: “If I could get her, I would build a golden house to keep her in.”	As a boy, the Han emperor Wu (Hán Vũ-đế) admired a girl named A-chiao (A-kiêu) so much that he said, “if I could get her, I would build a golden house to keep her in.” When he grew up to rule China, she became one of his consorts.

Tương tự, câu này Dương Tường cũng lược bỏ một số từ như “iron” và “needle” (trang 201):

Dương Tường	Huỳnh Sanh Thông
Predestined, people are drawn together in love and marriage just as a mustard seed is attracted by amber or a pin by lodestone.	Predestined, people are drawn together in love and marriage just as a mustard seed is attracted by amber and an iron pin or needle by lodestone.

Còn câu này thì chỉ thay động từ “put in order” trong câu của Huỳnh Sanh Thông bằng động từ “tidy” mà thôi (trang 195):

Dương Tường	Huỳnh Sanh Thông
a spring festival in China, when people tidy graves and make offerings to the dead.	a spring festival in China, when people put graves in order and make offerings to the dead.

Hay với câu này, Dương Tường chỉ thay “the chin-shih” (tiếng Việt có nghĩa là tiến sĩ) bằng “tiến sĩ” (trang 201):

Dương Tường	Huỳnh Sanh Thông
Examinations for “tiến sĩ” , the highest degree, the equivalent of a doctorate, were usually held in the spring.	Examinations for the chin-shih or highest degree, the equivalent of a doctorate, were usually held in spring.

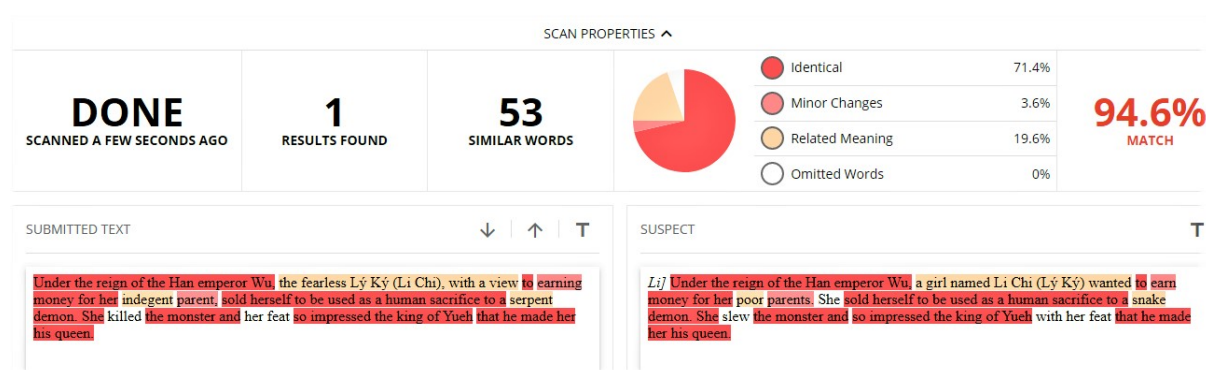
Với câu này thì câu của Dương Tường gần giống hoàn toàn câu của Huỳnh Sanh Thông, chỉ thay đổi trật tự cấu trúc câu, thay từ “girls” bằng từ “maidens” và chuyển từ “reached” sang “reaching” (trang 195):

Dương Tường	Huỳnh Sanh Thông
in old China, ritually, maidens , on reaching the age of fifteen, pinned up their hair, as a sign that they were ready for marriage.	In old China, girls ritually pinned up their hair, when they reached the age of fifteen, as a sign that they were ready for marriage.

Vậy, Dương Tường có đạo văn Huỳnh Sanh Thông không? Từ “đạo văn” – tiếng Anh là plagiarism - bao gồm chữ “đạo” có nghĩa là ăn cắp, chữ “văn” là từ ngữ, câu văn, bài viết... Nói giản đơn là lấy của người khác làm của mình. Một cách đạo văn thường gặp nhất đó là lấy bài của người khác, rồi không ghi rõ nguồn, làm cho người đọc cứ tưởng là của mình. Chữ plagiarism bắt nguồn từ chữ Latin, là chữ “plagium”, theo luật La Mã, có nghĩa là ăn cắp nô lệ hoặc trẻ em. Đạo văn được hiểu là hành động ăn cắp hoặc chuyển ý tưởng hoặc từ ngữ của người khác thành của mình⁵.

Để kiểm tra một bài viết có đạo văn không, người ta dùng nhiều cách, một trong những cách đó là dùng Turnitin. Mọi người có thể tìm hiểu thêm tại trang web của Turnitin là turnitin.com. Turnitin có thể kiểm tra hai bài viết giống nhau đến bao nhiêu phần trăm. Phần trăm càng cao thì khả năng đạo văn càng cao. Turnitin chia làm nhiều mức độ, từ 0% tức là hai bài không hề giống nhau, được phân loại Blue (xanh dương); từ 1% đến 24% là Green (xanh lá); từ 25% đến 49%: Yellow (vàng); từ 50% đến 74% là Orange (Da cam); từ 75% đến 100% là Red (Đỏ)⁶. Tùy từng trường sẽ có quy định phần trăm bao nhiêu là đạo văn. Nói chung từ màu vàng (Yellow) trở lên là các trường đã cảnh báo rồi. Ví dụ, Đại học Reading của Anh Quốc⁷, chỉ cho phép mức Green (tới 24%); còn từ Yellow đến Red (tức là từ 25% trở lên) thì khẳng định có thể do trích dịch trực tiếp hoặc cắt dán (copy and paste) từ nguồn tài liệu khác.

Tôi không có tài khoản Turnitin nên không kiểm tra bằng Turnitin được. Tuy nhiên, có rất nhiều các trang tương tự như Turnitin, chẳng hạn như Copyscape⁸ hay Copyleaks⁹. Tôi so sánh sự giống nhau giữa các đoạn notes của Dương Tường với các câu của Huỳnh Sanh Thông trực tiếp online bằng copyleaks.com. Tất cả kết quả đều từ Yellow (vàng) trở lên, có rất nhiều điểm Red (đỏ), thậm chí rất cao, cao đến 94.6% (xem bảng so sánh bên trên). Tôi thử phân tích tại sao câu này của Dương Tường lại giống câu của Huỳnh Sanh Thông đến 94.6%. Ồ, rõ ràng quá, cấu trúc câu như nhau, Dương Tường chỉ thay thế một số từ, chẳng hạn “poor” bằng “indegent” hay “snake” bằng “serpent” thôi, chuyển từ “earn” thành “earning” và thêm từ “fearless”, có vậy thôi:



Câu của Dương Tường giống câu Huỳnh Sanh Thông đến 94.6%

Trong tổng số 51 câu chú thích (notes) của Dương Tường thì đã có đến 35 câu giống Huỳnh Sanh Thông, chiếm đến gần 69%. Nếu Dương Tường là cậu học trò năm cuối làm bài luận tốt nghiệp thì có lẽ cậu học trò này chắc chắn sẽ bị thầy cô đánh rớt vì lý do plagiarism. Vậy là khả năng đạo văn khá cao? Hay có lẽ tôi vẫn sai? Đó chỉ là các tư tưởng lớn tình cờ gặp nhau như tôi đã nói ở trên?

Thôi, tôi xin dừng bút tại đây. Cũng lại chỉ mua vui một vài trống canh cho các bạn!

Nguồn:

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[3] The Tale of Kieu, Huỳnh Sanh Thông, Yale University, 1983.

[4] Kiều, Dương Tường’s version, Nhã Nam, 2020.

[5] Green, Stuart. (2002). Plagiarism, Norms, and the Limits of Theft Law: Some Observations on the Use of Criminal Sanctions in Enforcing Intellectual Property Rights. *Hastings Law Journal*. 54. 10.2139/ssrn.315562.

[6] Interpreting the Similarity Report, Turnitin.

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