This is primarily an analytical study of a mid-Qing novel -- *Flowers in the Mirror* (《镜花缘》).

The author of this novel, Li Ruzhen (李汝珍) was a phonetician by profession and a novelist by inclination. *Flowers in the Mirror* is one of the two works during his lifetime. Since its publication, the novel has attracted enthusiastic response among literary circles. However, the position of *Flowers in the Mirror* in contemporary Chinese literature is still a controversial issue.

In order to give a fair evaluation of this novel, an in-depth study and critical analysis of the novel with respect to its ideology and artistry are necessary. This Academic Exercise attempts to fulfill this task.

Structurally, it is divided into seven chapters. Chapter One introduces the novel and how it was received by the reading public. In addition, this Chapter also states the objectives of studying the novel. Chapter Two deals with the life and work of the author Li Ruzhen. Chapter Three is a discussion of the historical background of the story and the intentions of the author in writing this novel. Chapter Four consists of two parts -- part one delves into the different editions of *Flowers in the Mirror* and part two provides the findings and evaluation of the collation of various editions -- 1858, 1895 and 1987 which was printed based upon 1832's edition. Chapter Five examines the thematic significance of the novel and proves that it is glistened with progressive ideas. Chapter Six highlights the techniques and artistic accomplishments of the novel. Chapter Seven concludes the study by re-emphasizing the significant qualities of the novel.

The findings show that although there is didacticism in the novel that impedes the storyline, the writer manages to achieve creative artistry, without affecting the ideology and the theme of the novel.