UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
RIVERSIDE

The Emergence of the Modern Chinese Narrator: Studies of Lu Xun, Shi Zhecun, Sun Li, and Wang Zengqi

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Comparative Literature

by

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June 2022

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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In this dissertation, I examine the short stories written by four modern Chinese stylists whose works, I argue, represent the crucial transformation of Chinese writing in the twentieth century. Traditionally, most scholarship on the modernization of Chinese fiction has focused on the social-historical determinants found in the stories' narrative structures. I argue, however, that a narrative analysis independent of language cannot tell the difference of the voices sent out by different subjects in a story. Only through a linguistic analysis, then, can we conduct a reliable narrative analysis. I argue that Lu Xun, Shi Zhecun, Sun Li, and Wang Zengqi form a historical continuum of Foucault's discursive struggle, which maps out the route of modernization of Chinese writing in the twentieth century. In these authors' works, I examine the varying distances among author, narrator, and characters through the subtle differences in their voices. While the concept of distance among these voices hearkens to western narratives, we cannot

convincingly define the Chinese narratives as “modern” simply because they include western narrative techniques. What makes Lu Xun, Shi Zhecun, Sun Li, and Wang Zengqi pioneers of modern Chinese fiction is their creation of a new and distinctively Chinese style, inspired by western literature, through language. Their writing creates a Chinese narrative style whose essence relies on the linguistic elements of classical written Chinese and contemporary spoken dialects. The modernization of Chinese fiction cannot be simply regarded as a process of Westernization because Chinese language demands Western narrative techniques being Sinicized at the same time.

Introduction

Stylistic turns of Chinese fiction in the twentieth century

A concept of "twentieth-century Chinese literature" presented by Huang Ziping, Chen Pingyuan, and Qian Liqun in 1985 challenged the official history endorsed by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regime which distinguishes the "the Modern Era" with New Culture Movement in around 1918 as the beginning from "the Contemporary Era" with the establishment of People's Republic of China in 1949 as the beginning. Huang, Chen, and Qian consider the modernization of Chinese literature as,

> A process that modern (Chinese) national consciousness (including aesthetic consciousness) was constructed in the domain of literature (as well as in politics, morality, and other domains), under the impact of and through the communication with Western culture; a process related to the transition from an old to a new era in which the rebirth and revival of the Chinese nation and its soul were reflected and represented by the art of language.[1]

In my view, this definition is a breakthrough in several senses: First, it acknowledges the impact of Western culture as a primary dynamic driving the modernization of Chinese literature. Second, it concerns about not only what conveyed by literature but also how literature conveys meanings since it claims that literature is an "art of language". Last, it considers the twentieth century as a transitional era when Chinese literature becomes a part of world literature. In a word, this definition explains the modern Chinese literature as a transformative process in which both the values and the forms changed under the impact of external drives.

We can obtain a more direct comprehension of the transformative essence of the

[1] Huang Ziping 黄子平, Chen Pingyuan 陈平原, and Qian Liqun 钱理群, "Lun ershi shiji zhongguo wenxue" 论二十世纪中国文学 [On the twentieth-century Chinese literature] *Wenxue pinglun*, vol. 5 (1985), 3-13.

twentieth century Chinese literature by examining how the prefix “新-” (*xin-*; new) was frequently employed by literary critics to explain the emergence of new literary trends, values, and forms. From 1902 to 1911, Liang Qichao and his followers were dedicated to innovating the concept of fiction by introducing Western short story and novel as new literary genres. They endeavored to convince their readers that fiction was a serious genre being able to shape people’s mind and therefore reforming the society. The term “新小说” (*xinxiaoshuo*; new fiction) was therefore first used to refer to stories and novels written by them. From the late 1910s “新文学” (*xinwenxue*; new literature) was gradually used to refer to a more radical literary trend led by Hu Shi and other progressive intellectuals. This new trend is also known as “五四新文学” (*wusi xinwenxue*; May Fourth new literature) because the May Fourth Movement that occurred in 1918 greatly promoted the spread of the new literature. The most prominent characteristic of this trend is the prevalence of the new vernacular Chinese (*xin baihua* 新白话)[2] as the justified lingual medium of literature. May Fourth intellectuals fiercely criticized traditional literature for its adherence to banal *Confucian* ideology and classical Chinese (*wenyan* 文言) and radically reformed written Chinese by reference to the grammar of Indo-European languages. Therefore, a Europeanized (*ouhua* 欧化) tone became the prominent feature of the “新文学” in this era. However, after 1949, the term “新文学” turned to refer to the new literature advocated and approved by the CCP regime. Western scholars

[2] In later discussion, I will use *baihua* referring to the innovated written language used by the May Fourth writers from the late 1910s, traditional *baihua* to the language of traditional vernacular fiction, and *wenyan* to classical Chinese.

usually refer to the politicized literature from the 1950s to the late 1970s as Maoist literature, after the name of Mao Zedong, the founder of the communist regime. The Maoist literature was considered new because it swept out the values and the language of May Fourth literature just as what the May Fourth intellectuals and writers did to the traditional literature. After the death of Mao Zedong, critics in mainland China continued to use the prefix "新-" to refer to a depoliticized literary trend which was considered a sign of the revival of traditional literature and May Fourth literature once repressed by Maoist ideology and punished by the CCP regime. "新时期" (*xinshiqi*; new era) therefore became a common modifier when new literary genres, new literary thoughts, and new generation of writers were mentioned from the 1980s to the 1990s.

While the frequent presence of the prefix "新-" in literary criticism help us see the uneasiness of modern Chinese literature in a whole picture, it is inadequate to illustrate how each component of literature changed since the transformation of modern Chinese literature is concerned with many different fields from genre to value to medium. In a sense, discussion the modernization of Chinese literature is the curse of Sisyphus because the rebirth of the old Chinese nation and its culture is always open to debate. It is in vain to assess the modernization without choosing a specific component to analyze. Therefore, in this project, I choose short story as the subject of analysis because

> Fiction was the most important literary genre in the [twentieth] century. In the study of fiction, we must carefully make distinction among novel, novella, and short story…Short story always received extraordinary attention because of its conciseness, promptness, and flexibility in forms. [3]

[3] Huang Ziping, *et al.*, 12.

If we consider modern Chinese fiction as a response to the Western impact, examining formal features will be more efficient to illustrate the interaction of impact-response than interpreting meanings of individual works because it is easier to generalize the changes. The concept of style, so far left undefined, is an appropriate point, from which to begin the discussion of the transformation. The study of style of literature usually gets involved into an author's choice of diction, grammar, tone, narrative technique, and other ways of using language.

Roughly divided, there are three conspicuous stylistic turns of Chinese fiction in the twentieth century. The first turn is the New Culture Movement marked by publication of Lu Xun's short story "A Madman's Diary" (*Kuangren riji* 狂人日记) in 1918. Those who are known as May Fourth writers later abandoned *wenyan* that dominated Chinese writing for over two thousand years and the simulated storyteller tone which were prevalent in traditional vernacular novels and stories. For the purpose of enlightening Chinese readers with modern consciousness and sending out an unprecedented Enlightener's voice, they incorporated Europeanized grammar constructions, speech of Mandarin, their own regional speeches, and rhetorical devices they learned from Western fiction into a tone of the intellectual narrator. This was the rise of the May Fourth literature in the first two decades of the twentieth century. The second stylistic turn that occurred in the mid-1940s is a counteraction to the May Fourth literature. It is marked by Mao Zedong's "Talks on the Yan'an Forum of Literature and Art" (*Zai Yan'an wenyi zuotanhui shang de jianghua* 在延安文艺座谈会上的讲话) in 1942 and the establishment of CCP's national regime in 1949. Unlike the first turn led by progressive

intellectuals and writers, the second turn was the result of a top-down political movement. In a series of talks, essays, and movements, Mao Zedong and his literary assistants prescribed a set of writing norms and aggressively promoted them across the country. Zhao Shuli was first chosen as the model fiction writer of the Maoist style in the mid-1940s. Regarding the style, an earthy northern peasant tone took place of the intellectual tone because the peasant represented politically progressive class according to CCP's ideology. Later the northern variants of Mandarin Chinese gradually became base of the standard Chinese language after the movement of Promotion of Common Speech (*tuiguang putonghua* 推广普通话) in the 1950s. In the high Mao yeas from the 1960s to the late 1970s the narrator's voice was full of official propagandist vocabulary when Maoist ideology radically intervened on all aspects of Chinese society. The third stylistic turn that occurred in the late 1970s was the direct consequence of the political thaw after the death of Mao in 1976. Individual writers actively practiced different styles which had been banned. For instance, Wang Meng practiced the Western techniques such as stream-of-consciousness, Ah Cheng rehabilitated the tone of traditional vernacular story, and Wang Zengqi created a poetic language by taking advantage of the resource of *wenyan* prose and flexibility of Chinese grammar. However, they all wrote in a colloquial tone based on *putonghua* and unconsciously preserved many Maoist words in their writings since they just went through the dominance of Maoist ideology. The third stylistic turn style greatly diversified modern Chinese writing by sublating the elements generated in the previous two turns.

The chronological division of style discussed above can only be a rough one

based on a general impression because one individual writer may override two different eras and practice opposite styles and there are always some excellent writers who consciously resist the popular trend of style. Moreover, the prevalent stylistic features of the last era are inevitably inherited by writers who practice a new style, no matter how steadfast they claimed they opposed the old style. If we consider the hard-core concept of style as a way of how does an individual writer use language, the discussion will turn to be a more paradoxical one: can a writer really choose the language per one's own willingness? To answer this question, we can mention the troublesome term "discourse", which, although it has led contemporary critics on wild and exhilarating chase, is nevertheless useful.

Discourse as a sociohistorical power shaping the author

A crucial distinction between traditional literary criticism and contemporary critical theory is whether an author could determine the language at one's own will or, quite the opposite, a writer is subject to and determined by the language. Such distinction can be paraphrased in a briefer and more straightforward way: what is an author as Michel Foucault once pondered and elaborated. For Foucault,

> The author is not an indefinite source of significations which fill a work; the author does not precede the works; he is a certain functional principle, …by which one impedes the free circulation, the free manipulation, the free composition, decomposition, re-composition of fiction.[4]

[4] Michel Foucault, "What Is an Author?" *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 118-119.

The Foucauldian approach of literary criticism demands a historical frame in which an author is no longer a rational subject who somberly creates and controls his texts; instead, he becomes the aggregation of what imposed on him by certain sociohistorical determinants. For instance, in Foucault's view, what a doctor can prescribe in a clinical prescription is far more than the medical knowledge and diagnosis that he wants to present. The doctor is subject to a clinical discourse which gets involved with "relations between the doctor's therapeutic role, his pedagogic role, his role as an intermediary in the diffusion of medical knowledge, and his role as a responsible representative of public health in the social space." [5] In this sense, to understand a piece of clinical prescription, we must conduct a genealogical survey of the doctor who prescribed it, which, in Foucault's own word, we must "arrive at an analysis which can account for the constitution of the subject within a historical framework."[6]

When we apply Foucault's definition and explanations of author to the context of modern China, we will see how significantly sociohistorical determinants, what Foucault calls "discourse" or "discursive practice", influenced the style of a text. Let us examine a highly formatted writing before moving on to discuss fiction, the topic of this project. On February 21st, 1972, the first day of arrival in Beijing, U.S. President Richard Nixon and his entourage received an invitation to a state banquet sent in the name of Chinese

[5] Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 53.

[6] Michel Foucault, "Truth and Power*", The Foucault Reader*, 59.

premier Zhou Enlai. The Chinese version of this invitation, which is in an extremely plain style, reads: [7]

> 为美利坚合众国总统理查德·米尔豪斯·尼克松先生和夫人访华订于一九七二年二月二十一日（星期一）下午七时在人民大会堂宴会厅举行宴会
>
> 请出席
>
> 周恩来
>
> On the occasion of the visit of President Richard M. Nixon and Mrs. Nixon, (the Chinese government) hosts a banquet at 7:00 o'clock p.m. on February 21st (Monday) at the Banquet Hall of the Great Hall of the People.
>
> Please attend,
>
> Zhou Enlai

When in 2016 I first read this invitation in a newspaper article, some questions related to rhetoric jumped to my mind: did the interpreters of U.S diplomatic delegation feel offended when they read the straightforward expression of the invitation? How did they report and explain such a diplomatic document composed in undiplomatic language to the president, especially the imperative sentence "请出席" (please attend) in a harsh mood? Another thing probably puzzled them is that Zhou Enlai's bare signature without carrying any official tile. I believe Nixon's interpreters noticed these rhetorical issues and carefully discussed with their supervisors because several days later they sent back

[7] Yu Ruxin 余汝信, "Nikesong fanghua de yanhui caidan" 尼克松访华的宴会菜单 [The banquet menus of Nixon's visit to China], *Nanfang zhoumo* 南方周末 [The southern weekend], September 9th, 2016, www.infzm.com/content/119530.

another banquet invitation in a sharply opposite style. The Chinese version of American delegation's invitation reads:[8]

> 兹订于一九七二年二月二十五日（星期五）下午七时半假座人民大会堂敬备菲筵伫候
>
> 光临
>
> 美利坚合众国总统尼克松暨夫人谨订
>
> At the 7:30 p.m. on February 25th, 1972, (the American Delegation) humbly prepares a simple banquet and respectfully awaits your visit.
>
> The President of United States Nixon and Mrs. Nixon

The American's invitation in classical style is kind of difficult to read because of the use of a bunch of *wenyan* words like "假座" (to borrow the [host's] seats), "菲筵" (a humble banquet), and "伫候" (standing for a long time). The sharp contrast between the plain, if not rude, style and the decent but abstruse style will first remind us to think about different motivations of the authors. However, can we regard Zhou Enlai and Nixon's Chinese interpreters as the authors under such circumstance? For Michel Foucault, the answer is "no". Seen from Foucault's view, the signature of Zhou Enlai only represents a follower of certain prevalent discourse, and the rude words do not reflect his persona and intentions. In fact, contrary to the rude style, Zhou was an extremely considerate host being seated next to Nixon in the banquet, frequently proposing toasts and distributing food to his honored guest, which were permanently captured by photographers. Zhou even mobilized hundreds of thousands of Beijing residents to remove snow overnight

[8] Ibid. To compare the different styles, I translated the two invitations from Chinese to English on a word-for-word basis.

from the highway, on which Nixon's motorcade would head to the Great Wall the next morning. Apparently, Zhou Enlai intended to please the honorable guests.

Therefore, to decode the puzzling banquet invitation, we should take all social relationships of Zhou Enlai into consideration as what Foucault did in his reading of the doctor's medical note. Zhou's social role includes but not limited to a faithful implementer of Mao's domestic and foreign policies, a steadfast follower of Maoist ideology, and a pragmatist premier who was assigned to the mission by Mao himself to make communist China allied with an ideologically adversarial country. It was the dominant discourse prevalent in China during the 1970s that determine the wording, style, and bare signature of the invitation. Zhou Enlai was subjected to such dominant discourse. On the contrary, what Nixon's interpreters followed is a different set of social and lingual norms. It is the *Confucian* ritualism that urged them to compose a formal invitation in that way. These interpreters must had left mainland China before 1949 and therefore were free from the dominance of Maoist discourse. Consequently, we see the dramatic confrontation between the Maoist and the *Confucian* discourse.

Moving on to the thesis of my project, a study of the author's voice in fiction, the relationship between an individual writer and the dominant discourse of an era becomes more complicated. A writer could be influenced by different or even opposite discourses, especially when the society in which one lives is undergoing drastic change. The influence of different discourses may overlap, implicitly or explicitly, on the same writer, though the writer may be unaware of it. Under the theoretical frame of Foucauldian discourse analysis, we cannot presume a writer as a singular subject who behaves and

speaks willingly; Instead, we should recognize the plurality of an author. In the effort to objectify author, Foucault discovers two functions of author, First, the author's name "permits one to group together a certain number of texts, define them, differentiate them from and contrast them to others." Second, it "manifests the appearance of a certain discursive set and indicates the status of this discourse within a society and culture."[9] According to the author's functions, critics and readers can reestablish multiple subjectivities of an author based on their reading of the author's texts. As a result,

> It [the author function] does not refer purely and simply to a real individual, since it can give rise simultaneously to several selves, to several subjects—positions that can be occupied by different classes of individual.[10]

The classical definition of subject is known to the public as René Descartes's famous formula, *Cogito, ergo sum*. However, Sigmund Freud's epoch-making discovery of unconscious in the early twentieth century challenged the singularity of subject. For Freud, the Cartesian subject, -- the ego --, monitors, distorts, and prohibits the representation of consciousness. Inspired by Freud, post-structuralists propose that beneath consciousness and unconscious there is a linguistic nature. Jacque Lacan casts doubt on legitimacy of Cartesian subjectivity by arguing, "'I think', for us, certainly cannot be detached from the fact that he can formulate it only by saying it to us."[11] Therefore, the only possible way to probe into someone's mind is to obverse one's utterance. French structural linguist and semiotician Émile Benveniste argues, "it is in

[9] Michel Foucault, *The Foucault Reader*, 107-108.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Jacque Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis: The Seminar of Jacque Lacan Book 4*, ed. Jacque-Alain Millet, tans. Alan Sheridan (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 1978), 36.

and through language that man constitutes himself as a subject, because language alone establishes the concept of 'ego' in reality, in its reality which is that of the being."[12] He also expresses the same idea in a Cartesian way, "'Ego' is he who says 'ego'". [13] Like Foucault who reduces the subject of an author to an empty proper name, Benveniste reduces subject to the personal pronoun "I" and argues,

> There is no concept "I" that incorporates all the Is that are uttered at every moment in the mouths of all speakers, in the sense that there is a concept "tree" to which all the individual uses of *tree* refer. [14]

From discovering the emptiness of the pronoun "I", Benveniste differentiates the subject of enunciation form the subject of the statement. A human being, for him, is not only a thinking animal, the Cartesian man, but also an uttering machine, the Foucauldian man. I will discontinue the discussion of the plurality of subject from here on. After all, one of the purposes of this project is only aimed to investigate Chinese fiction through the lens of Foucauldian discourse but not but justify it. I borrow the term "discourse" from Michel Foucault as the sociohistorical power that determines the author and gives us a clue to relate an individual writer's works to the sociohistorical context. The term "Maoist discourse" and "*Confucian* discourse" mentioned above are therefore used in this sense.

However, in lieu of the twentieth-century China, there is another dominant discourse which greatly promoted the modernization that has not been discussed yet. A series of cultural and political events aimed to enlighten Chinese masses by introducing Western knowledge occurred from 1915, which was recognized as the New Cultural

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[12] Emile Benveniste, *Problems in General Linguistics*, trans. M.E.M (Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1971), 224.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid., 226.

Movement (*xin wenhua yundong* 新文化运动). These events include the establishment of the literary magazine *New Youth* (*Xinqingnian* 新青年) in 1915, the publication of Hu Shi's several articles discussing the issue of replacing *wenyan* with new *baihua* from 1917, and, the summit event, the anti-imperialist political movement, May Fourth Movement, that occurred in 1919. The cultural movement has so many different facets and meanings ranging from domestic politics to foreign relationship, from literary innovation to language reform, from party struggle to mass movement. Briefly speaking, it is first a cultural innovation led by progressive, either liberal or leftist, intellectuals, and the establishment of KMT administration in Nanjing in 1927 caused the movement to the end. While the movement only lasted over a decade, it did constitute a dominant discourse that deeply influenced Chinese society in the long term. Confucius, the nominal founder of *Confucian* discourse, fell prey to the primary target of criticism in this movement. Mao Zengdong, the founder of Maoist discourse, was greatly influenced by different Western ideologies and thoughts introduced by May Fourth leaders, though he finally endeavored to overturn the dominance of May Fourth discourse. Therefore, in this project, I consider May Fourth discourse as another dominant sociohistorical power as same as Confucian and Maoist discourse. The confrontation and competition among the three dominant discourses formed the utmost dynamic promoting the evolution of Chinese fiction and determining the author's voice.

I will use Lu Xun and Ding Ling as two examples to illustrate how the three dominant discourses shaped individual writers and their writings. According to Foucault's theory, the proper name Lu Xun, not the real author Lu Xun, determines the

acceptance of his works and these works constitute the author's many different selves. In the May Fourth era, when the name Lu Xun earned a national fame, it was first associated with an iconoclastic figure that inspired youths to fight against established institutional powers like Confucian ritualism, imperialism, and so on. However, in the Mao era, the new regime appropriated its cultural influence to construct the Maoist state ideology; therefore, before the declining of Maoism by the end of 1970s, the communist regime monopolized the right to use the proper name Lu Xun. Slight disrespect to the name Lu Xun or disagreement with the officially approved interpretations of Lu Xun's works in the Cultural Revolution would lead to juridical punishment. Then, after the late 1970s, the declined authority of Maoism allowed more room to "rediscover" Lu Xun, either the proper name or the real man. Beyond the image of the iconic May Fourth writer, he was gradually recognized as a literary young man who was obsessed with Western literature when studying abroad in Japan in first decade of the twentieth century, a government employee who secured economic safety in the turmoil warlord era from 1912 to 1925 , and an obedient son who stuck to the Confucian filial piety but a rebellious lover who escaped from an arranged marriage to marry a student of him. Correspondingly, many once omitted or censored articles and works of Lu Xun became publishable and open to discuss. This is how the proper name Lu Xun prescribed the acceptance, circulation, and interpretation of his texts under the impact of different discourses.

To understand the second author function, "manifesting the appearance of a

certain discursive set", it is necessary to introduce more theoretical and historical background. For Michel Foucault the birth of literary authors is related to publishment from institutional powers. He argues,

> There was a time when the texts that we today call 'literary' (narratives, stories, epics, tragedies, comedies) were accepted, put into circulation, and valorized without any question about the identity of their author; their anonymity caused no difficulties since their ancientness, whether real or imagined, was regarded as sufficient guarantee of their status.[15]

While Foucault does not mention when literary works were anonymously circulated, it is not an arbitrary to argue t that literature in all cultures did not require identifiable authors at the beginning, especially when it was still orally circulated. Foucault continues to propose that "texts, books, and discourses really began to have authors to the extent that authors became subject to punishment".[16] Without identifiable authors, juridical and other state agencies could not get the transgressive discourse under surveillance. Therefore, literature began to be associated with individual authors when human civilization advanced to the higher level. From the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, according to Foucault, "a system of ownership for texts came into being"[17] in Western culture. From then on, authors of literary discourse began to benefit from their works, which had no difference from the way that other owners made profits from the ownership of land, loan, and other properties and tied literary discourse tightly to identifiable authors. For Foucault, it was the "punishment-ownership" relationship that produce the literary author in the context of the Western culture.

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[15] Ibid.,109.
[16] Ibid.,108.
[17] Ibid.

When we discuss the birth of identifiable author under this assumption, we immediately notice two obvious differences between Chinese and Western culture. First, China in the imperial era had a more centralized autocratic government than European states, which suggests a set of harsher punishments on the transgressive discourse and author. Fiction as a repressed literary genre was always considered a transgressive discourse. Second, the legislation of intellectual property in China has not yet been fully established even nowadays, not to mention several centuries earlier. It was less likely for an author to make profit by writing fiction during the imperial era. Therefore, the authors of Chinese fiction remained unknown for a long time. The absence of their names can be verified by the following facts. First, usually, only those frustrated Confucian literati who failed to pass the civil service examinations chose to write or compile fiction. While few of them did make profit from publishing fictional works, in most cases fiction writing was a just a self-relief to escape from secular failures. Due to the undesirable reputation, most novels and stories were published in pseudonyms which makes the authors less identifiable. Second, there was a long-lasting rewriting period of Chinese fiction when the role played by fiction writers was no more than collecting and editing pre-existing stories.[18] A story could be rewritten and edited by different "authors". Therefore, individual writer's ownership of these rewritten texts was diluted by the collective work. Third, the authors of novels were constantly subordinate to *pingdian*-commentators who

[18] According to Henry Y. H. Zhao, this period ranges from the thirteenth to sixteenth century. See Henry Y. H. Zhao, *The Uneasy Narrator: Chinese Fiction from the Traditional to Modern* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 13.

had privileges not only to impose their own interpretations on the original texts but also to designate who was the authentic author of a novel. The most famous case is that Jin Shengtan (1608-1661) identified Shi Nai'an as the author of *Water Margin* instead of Luo Guanzhong. The undesirable situation of Chinese fiction and its writers did not change until the late nineteenth century.

Scholars credited the rise of fiction since the late Qing to the prevalence of newspaper and magazine and the development of modern publishing industry.[19] As an immediate result of such social changing, fiction writer's ownership of texts was universally confirmed by these newly emerging commercial institutions. For May Fourth writers, writing fiction became a profitable and respectable career as same as writing poems in the Tang dynasty and eight-legged essays in the late imperial period. However, accompanied by the increased benefits and freedom, fiction authors were also increasingly confronted with more direct punishment. While many May Fourth fiction writers still published their works in pseudonyms; but unlike their predecessors in the imperial era, they always voiced in the public sphere with the same pseudonyms, which increases the risk of being punished by institutional agencies. After 1927 when the KMT regime strengthened the centralized administration, more and more fiction writers, especially those from the leftist campaign who used fiction as an instrument of political struggle, were disciplined, persecuted, and even executed.

[19] See Chen Pingyuan 陈平原, *Zhonguo xiaoshuo xushi moshi de zhuanbian* 中国小说叙事模式的转变 [The transformation of narrative modes in Chinese novels] (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2003). Leo Ou-fan Lee, *The Romantic Generation of Modern Chinese Writers* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1973).

However, different writers could be exposed to punishment and benefit from the ownership of their works to different degree. What Lu Xun and Ding Ling experienced in the 1920s illustrates the difference between the leading May Fourth writers and the disadvantaged late-coming writers. In the 1920s, Lu Xun had become a cultural icon for publishing stories. While his fictional and non-fictional works were constantly confronted with accusation and denunciation, Lu Xun could still secure political safety and economic independence to continue his writing career. His moving to the Shanghai International Settlement in 1927 and the establishment of the autocratic KMT regime in the same year is not a coincidence. While May Fourth discourse having freedom, democracy, equity as its core values got little support from the state power, there were some fertile soils in semi-colonial China for a few of blessed elite writers to practice modernized literature.

Unfortunately, such suitable soils were inadequate to accommodate all May Fourth writers. Ding Ling's transformation from a May Fourth writer to a Maoist writer provides the best illustration of the impact of political and economic powers on an individual writer. Ding Ling, as well as her literary comrade Hu Yepin and Shen Congwen, belonged to the late-coming May Fourth writers who did not personally participate in but were significantly influenced by the New Cultural Movement. They came from common families in conservative inland China, received limited education, but harbored the ambition to succeed as professional writers after coming to big cities where they suffered from economic embarrassment and spiritual depression. Ding Ling, Hu Yepin and Shen Congwen lived together for a while, accompanying, and encouraging each other, but they parted ways soon in a dramatic way. As a leftist writer who actively

took part in political struggle, Hu Yepin was arrested and soon secretly executed by KMT in 1931 several years later after he married Ding Ling. On the contrary, Shen Congwen became as a successful "bourgeois" writer for the sake of his own literary talent and the recommendation of influential liberal intellectuals like Hu Shi and Xu Zhimo. Shen's success in fiction writing earned him a decent life as a college lecturer and an independent writer.

While Hu Yeping's death can be accounted for by his involvement in politics, what Ding Ling experienced provides a better case to illustrate how a May Fourth writer was stuck between reward and punishment. Right after winning a national fame as a feminist writer, Ding Ling witnessed the death of several intimates. First was her husband Hu Yepin, then her spiritual mentor Qu Qiubai, and then her mother's close friend Xiang Jingyu. They were all executed by KMT regime for the sake of participating in communist activities. It was the death of these intimates that speed up Ding Ling turning from a feminist writer who cared about petty bourgeois women's psychology to a leftist writer who cared about more grandiose topics like revolution, class struggle, and social reform. C. T. Hsia and Jaroslav Průšek had a famous debate on Ding Ling's transformation. While Hsia criticized Ding Ling's proletarian story "Water" (*shui* 水) published in 1931 as a "fraud"[20], Průšek spoke highly of the same story and considered

[20] C. T. Hsia, *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1971), 268.

Ding Ling as "the first of the young writers to realize the harmfulness of a superficial and sentimental approach to reality".[21]

While Hsia and Průšek's arguments are opposite to each other, they are both built upon the same presumption that Ding Ling's transformation from a petty-bourgeois writer to a proletarian writer is the result of a rational choice. However, in my view, Ding Ling's choice is an imposed one. Before settling down in the Shaan-Gan-Ning border region controlled by the CPC in 1936, Ding Ling never obtained enough personal and economic security to support her literary career. While her early feminine stories like "The Diary of Miss Sophie" (*Shafei nüshi de riji* 莎菲女士的日记) reflected the core values of May Fourth discourse such as self-emancipation and self-realization, she could not practice such a bourgeois lifestyle in front of the tough reality. Economic embarrassment, political persecution, and death of intimates pushed Ding Ling's writing to the leftist campaign. It was the CCP's border region allowed the real author Ding Ling a chance to practice a different literature which thoroughly changed her life and thoughts.

Right after Ding Ling arriving in the border region, Mao Zedong and highly-ranked people in the Communist Party hosted a banquet to welcome her because Ding Ling was the first cultural celebrity who openly converted to the communist campaign after a series of serious failures of CCP in the mid-1930s. Soon, Mao Zedong wrote a poem for Ding Ling, which was Mao's only piece written for a writer. The poem named "Meeting River Fairy: for Comrade Ding Ling" reads:

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[21] Jaroslav Průšek, *The Lyric and The Epic*, eds. Leo Ou-fan Lee *et al*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), 228.

壁上红旗飘落照，西风漫卷孤城。保安人物一时新。洞中开宴会，招待出牢人。纤笔一枝谁与似？三千毛瑟精兵。阵图开向陇山东。昨天文小姐，今日武将军。

On the wall the red flag flutters in setting sun,
The West Wind enveloping this solitary city.
For a moment, the people of Bao'an are renewed,
In a cave, banqueting,
And toasting the escaped.
For whom will that delicate pen ply?
Three thousand crack troops armed with Mausers.
The battle line unfolds east of Gansu Peak.
Yesterday's Miss *wen*
Has become General *wu*.[22]

Indeed, it is no doubt that Ding Ling enjoyed Mao's overt flattery and relied on the personal connection with Mao to survive in the later political persecutions, but the poem also illustrates that Mao intended to appropriate the name of Ding Ling to create a new discourse. In his lines, Mao Zedong compared the writer's pen to Mauser rifles and commanded Ding Ling's transformation from "文小姐" (*wen xiaojie*; a female writer) to "武将军" (*wu jiangjun*; a general). Behind the lines, Mao claimed himself as the founder of the discourse, in which he had an absolute power to appropriate cultural resources needed. The real author Ding Ling, the author's name, and her writing all became a kind of resources awaiting Mao's appropriation. Such an appropriation also occurred to Lu Xun when Mao complimented him as "the greatest and the most courageous standard-bearer of this [May Fourth] new cultural force."[23] However, the difference between Lu Xun and Ding Ling is that Lu Xun passed away in 1936 but Ding Ling was still alive and

[22] Charles J. Alber, *Enduring the Revolution: Ding Ling and the Politics of Literature in Guomingdang China* (Santa Barbara: Greenwood Publishing Group, Incorporated, 2001), 112.

[23] Mao Zedong, "On New Democracy", *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* vol.2 (Beijing, Foreign Language Press, 1965), 372.

continued to live through the whole Mao era. Therefore, when we apply Foucault's discourse theory to Ding Ling's case, we find that a puzzling entanglement of punishment and reward. On one hand, Ding Ling's political privileges, honor and other welfares affiliated seemingly came from the stories she wrote after 1936 and the role as a Maoist writer. On the other hand, Ding Ling also underwent long term political censorship and persecution because there were inerasable May Fourth elements existing in her writings, speech, and thoughts which were incompatible with Maoist discourse. Although her most renowned land-reform novel *The Sun Shines over the Sanggan River* (*Taiyang zhaozai Sangganhe shang* 太阳照在桑干河上), which strictly followed Mao's literary policy, won her the Stalin Prize in 1951, Ding Ling did not completely convert to Maoist discourse until the late 1970s after more than ten years in prison and labor camp. Ironically and heartbreakingly, when the Mao era ended and Ding Ling regained freedom in the late 1970s, she came back to the public as a purely enunciator of Maoist discourse. Her last story "Du Wanxiang" (杜晚香) published in 1979 is full of empty political slogans, which is diametrically opposite to "The Diary of Miss Sophie", her representative story in the May Fourth era. After precise analysis of the relation between Ding Ling and Maoist discourse, Li Tuo maintains that "once someone entered into a discourse, hardly could the one go out."[24]

The cases of Lu Xun and Ding Ling illustrate how the dominant discourses

[24] Li Tuo 李陀, "Ding Ling bu jiandan" 丁玲不简单 [Ding Ling is not simple], *Xuebeng hechu* 雪崩何处 [Where the avalanche began] (Beijing: China CITIC Press, 2015), 148.

competed with each other to exert influence on individual writers. In this project, I adopt the Foucauldian theory which considers certain sociohistorical powers shape "several selves" of an individual writer and then determine the formation and transformation of the writer's style. Although each individual writer's interaction with the dominant discourses varies from one another, someone actively harboring the new discourse, someone insisting on the old one, someone being stuck between two discourses, and so on, they are inevitably influenced by and subject to at least one dominant discourse in a specific period. When I use Confucian, May Fourth, and Maoist discourse in later discussion, I refer to such irresistible sociohistorical powers. When I mention individual writer's name in later chapters such as Enlightener Lu Xun or Maoist writer Sun Li, I mean one of the multi-subjectivities of an individual writer constructed by a dominant discourse in specific sociohistorical context. However, since the subject matter of this project is not individual writers but their works, the focus of my analysis is, therefore, not the dominant discourse or the sociohistorical context but the text. Narratology provides the second theoretical lens through which I will study the stylistic issues of modern Chinese fiction.

Discourse as narrative transmission of story

Seymour Chatman uses the term "discourse" to refer to "expression of narrative",

which is in opposite to "story" referring to "content of narrative".[25] Such dichotomy of "story/discourse" in was conceived and employed by preceding narratologists in different terms, such as *histoire*/*récit* by Gérard Genette or "*fabula*/*suzhet*" by Russian Formalists. While Chatman's terms are much easier to understand than others, it is still necessary to distinguish "narrative", "story", and "discourse" specifically defined from the conventional understandings. Usually, "story" is the synonym of "narrative", including both content and expression as in the case that a toddler asks the mother to tell a bedtime story. What the toddler asks from his mother not only include actualized events, characters, and settings but also an understandable way of narrating and a cozy voice from the mother. However, for Chatman, a story "is the continuum of events presupposing the total set of all conceivable details, that is, those that can be projected by the normal laws of the physical universe."[26] In this sense, the toddler's mother can only tell one actualized version of the story each time. Henry Y. H. Zhao calls "the continuum of events" "pre-narrated story" and maintains that "Since it [the pre-narrated story] is not yet presented in words, it has no narrator, though it is also dependent on the narrating instance in the sense that without its narrated versions it cannot claim to exist at all". [27] Although the pre-narrated or the underlying story is lack of a sensible form, the existence of it can be verified by the following instances. First, no matter how detailedly a story is narrated by a narrator, audience can always supplement to it by one's own inference,

[25] See Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell College Press, 1980), 19.

[26] Ibid., 28.

[27] Henry Y. H. Zhao, *The Uneasy Narrator: Chinese Fiction from the Traditional to Modern*, 53.

which proves the infinity of the underlying story. Second, a character from a fiction is recognizable whenever the same story is adapted to a movie, or a stage show because different mediums through which the story is projected do not change the essential elements of the story. Third, a story is recognizable whether it is narrated from the beginning, the middle, or the end if the main elements of the story keep unchanged.[28]

When an underlying story is being narrated, selection and transformation occur because the narrator has to choose meaningful components from the sea of trivial details of the story and decide the sequence, perspective, and voice of narrating to meet certain communicative purpose. This is how the narrative discourse works. Since narrating in the common sense is a way of using language, it is natural for us to associate the term "discourse" with a specific language. However, Chatman proposes narrative discourse as an abstract class independent of any specific mediums:

> Narrative discourse, the "how", in turn divides into two subcomponents, the narrative form itself—the surface of narrative transmission--and its manifestation—its appearance in a specific materializing medium, verbal, cinematic, balletic, musical, pantomimic, or whatever.[29]

According to Chatman, narrative discourse as the manifesting level of story has its own manifesting level. For a novel, the manifesting level is the natural language in which the novel was written. But, being taken off the materialized medium -- the language -- two conceptual categories remain as the essence of narrative discourse: "the relation of time of story to time of the recounting of story, [and] the source or authority of

[28] See, Seymour Chatman 26-31.
[29] Ibid., 22.

the story: narrative voice, 'point of view', and the like."[30] The initial motivation of this study is to examine the stylistic turn of Chinese fiction in the twentieth century; therefore, I am concerned more about the source of the story than the time issue. Put differently, I am concerned more about who actually voice in a story, how they voice, and relation among the subjects who got involved into the formation of the voice. Obviously, the narrator and the character send out voice in narrative, but as Wayne Booth pointed out, there is a "created second self" of the real author [31] who "chooses, consciously or unconsciously, what we read."[32] This "second self" named as "implied author" by Booth is different from the real author because "we infer him as an ideal, literary, created version of the real man; his is the sum of the his own choices". [33] Implied author is very similar to the author function conceptualized by Foucault because they both give us, either as scholars or readers, rights to create the author and therefore make the author objectified. Also, language and other possible transmission or media used by the author in actual communication provide us sensible or recognizable forms to rediscover the objectified author. The difference is that Foucault defines author function from an outside perspective of the historical context, but Booth from an inside perspective within the text. In later analysis of a specific story, when I mention an author's name without any specific clarification, I always mean the implied author, that is, the ideal, literary, and created

[30] Ibid.

[31] Wayne Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction (second edition)* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), 67-77.

[32] Ibid., 74.

[33] Ibid.,74-75.

second self of the real author. And the emphasis of my analysis of narrative discourse lies in the relationship among the implied author, the narrator, and the character.

After the necessary theoretical preparation, the issue of the modernization of Chinese fiction at this point can be paraphrased with the new terminologies as how the dominant discourse influenced the narrative discourse of Chinese fiction in the twentieth century. Above all, I would like to illustrate a general picture of how narrative discourse of Chinese fiction changed from the imperial China to the post-Mao era. In traditional Chinese fiction, there was always an uncharacterized storyteller-narrator who tightly controlled characters' actions and minds. The storyteller always imposed moral judgment on characters and preached moral teachings to the reader. While, occasionally, we can find implied authors who had somewhat modern thoughts like in several Feng Menglong's stories, the role of the storyteller-narrator was constantly confined within the *Confucian* values. In the May Fourth era, there was "an apparent downward movement of narrative subjectivity, in the process of which the control of meaning is decentralized and the narrator gradually hands over authority to other discursive subjects in the narrative, i.e., characters, thus creating more room for interpretative diversification."[34] As a result, we saw the prevalence of diary-style and correspondence-style story, characterized first-person narrator, and restricted third-person narrator. The May Fourth intellectuals took over the control of narrative from the *Confucian* literati who usually were moralists. However, in the Mao era, we witnessed the recentralization of the narrator' authority, but this time the authority of recounting was usually incarnated as a propogandist-narrator in

[34] Henry, Y. H. Zhao, 90.

those heavily politicalized stories. In the Mao era the third-person narration dominated again until the late 1970s. In the post-Mao era, the narrative mode, perspective, and voice of Chinese fiction highly diversified because the resurrected Confucian discourse and May Fourth discourse and the declined Maoist discourse began a new round of competition, and a new dominant discourse was forming.

Again, we can use Ding Ling as the example to illustrate how the dominant discourses impacted the narrative discourse of an individual writer's works. "The Diary of Miss Sophie", Ding Ling's first renowned story, adopts the diary-style because of the advantage of "recording and demonstrating sincere but cluttered minds of the subject".[35] In this story a young woman's sexual desire, longing for spiritual love, moral burdens, and anxiety caused by economic embarrassment are narrated in the voice of a first-person narrator. However, in the last entry of Sophie's diary, a somber voice of a third-person narrator jumps out intrusively:

> 莎菲生活在世上，要人们了解她体会她的心太热太恳切了，所以长远的沉溺在失望的苦恼中，但除了自己，谁能够知道她所流出的眼泪的分量？在这本日记里，与其说是莎菲生活的一段记录，不如直接算为莎菲眼泪的每一个点滴，是在莎菲心上，才觉得更切实。然而这本日记现在要收束了，因为莎菲已无需乎此。(SF 75)
>
> All her life Sophie has been too passionate and too sincere about wanting people to understand her and share her feelings. That's why she's been submerged in bitter disappointment for so long. But how else, apart from her, can know the weight of her tears? This diary is less a record of Sophie's life than simply every one of those tears. Only they seem true to her. But this diary is now coming to an end because Sophie no longer needs to give vent to her resentment and find consolation through tears.[36]

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[35] See Chen Pingyuan 陈平原, *Zhongguo xiaoshuo xushi moshi de zhuanbian* ,204. Chen's original comment is made on the shortcoming of the late-Qing diary-style stories. As a contrast, it is the progress of the May Fourth writers.

[36] Ding Ling, *Miss Sophie's Diary*, trans. W. J. F. Jenner (Beijing: Panda Books, 1985), 61.

C. T. Hsia attributed the sentimental and conflicted voice of the first-person character Sophie to the "youthful nihilistic candor" of Ding Ling because he presumed a single subjectivity without distinguishing the real author Ding Ling from the implied author in this story. [37] However, the presence of the somber voice at the end, which is neither youthful nor nihilistic, illustrates the narrative intervention of a more mature persona, intellectually and emotionally, on the sentimental character. It is the May Fourth discourse encouraging self-expression and self-dissection that causes the split of the two voices. The sentimental voice corresponds to a typical May Fourth school girl, but the somber voice a typical May Fourth intellectual. Aesthetically, the intrusive voice at the end enlarges the distance between the implied author and the character because the narrator ceases to recount from the perspective of the character. In this sense, we can argue that the implied author's strong motivation to rescue Sophie impairs the credibility of Sophie's self-statement in the previous entries.

However, from the late 1930s after Ding Ling arrived in Yan'an, there was a gradual process of enhancing the narrator's authority in Ding Ling's feminine stories. In the short story "When I was in *Xia* Village" (*Wo zaixiacun de shihou* 我在霞村的时候) published in 1941, the young female protagonist is not in charge of narrating; instead, there is a characterized narrator-I incarnated as a middle-aged female communist cadre who reveals the miserable experience of the protagonist. However, this story has to adopt a restricted third-person perspective because the female cadre as an outsider of the village

[37] C. T. Hsia, *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction*, 268.

cannot know what occurred to the pitiful girl before. It was impossible for Ding Ling to continue to write self-expressive stories like “The Diary of Miss Sophie” at Yan’an in the 1940s because the petty bourgeois’ sentiment and narcissism became the primary target of criticism in the Rectification Movement from 1942 to 1945. After the movement, in which Ding Ling was one of core figure to be “rectified”, we see a continuous withdrawal of the feminine voice in Ding Ling’s later stories. In *The Sanggan River* published in 1946, the narrator becomes an uncharacterized omniscient third-person narrator who will not expose the implied author’s idea directly.

The Sanggan River is a land reform novel to explain the CPC’s policy of emancipating poor peasants. The protagonist Heini is depicted as a taciturn girl in her conversations with other characters, though readers can feel that she has an outgoing character when she teaches the illiterate women peasants at the night school and asks the beloved young man Cheng Ren to date her. Very few conversations in this novel are reserved for Heini and her speeches in these limited conversations are extremely short. Moreover, most of Heini’s speech is presented in a mediated way, that is, the speech being put under quotation marks and led by introductory clauses like “she said”. In this way, the emotional world of the female character Heini is tightly locked down and controlled by the narrator.

The single female’s voice gives way to the collective peasants’ voice and the peasants’ voice is filtered by certain politically correct proletarian awareness. There is a very dramatic scene when these emancipated poor peasants are organized to share the counterrevolutionary landlord Qian Wengui’s property. The scene is dramatic because

Heini and her eldest uncle Qian Wenfu are taking some property from a relative of them. The class hatred overcomes the familial bond. The presentation of the inner struggle of Heini and Qian Wenfu completely gives ways to a pleasant conversation between them, and the boyfriend Cheng Ren witnesses the scene and eavesdrops the conversation by chance at the corner:

> 她高兴地跑了过去，把盔子举起来，在她大伯脸前晃。钱文富跟着她笑，点着头，边说："妮！你先把这个缸想个办法吧，咱以为是个小缸，也没带根绳来。" 黑妮答："咱来背，大伯，你拿盔子。" 于是她就去拿缸。 只听她又大声笑道："大伯！这缸是咱们家的啦，这缸咱就认识，是二伯（钱文贵）那年打县上买回的，是口好缸，你看着釉子多厚……" "嗯……妮，别多说，上到咱肩上吧。"不， 咱背" "嗯……让大伯背吧" "大伯背不起，还是让咱背……" 程仁呆了。(SGH 299)
>
> She had not seen him, and hurried happily over, lifting up a vase to show her uncle. Wenfu laughed with her, nodded and said: "Heini!" First think of a way to take this container. We thought it was a small one, so we didn't bring any rope." "I'll carry it on my back, Uncle," Heini answered. "You take the vase." So saying she picked up the container, laughed again heartily, and said: "This container's from our house, Uncle. I know it quite well, Uncle Qian bought it that year from the county town. It's a good container. See how thick the glaze is…"
> "Well, Heini, don't keep chattering, put it on my back."
> "No, I'll take it."
> "Come on…let me have it."
> "It's too heavy for you, Uncle, better let me…"
> Young Cheng stood dazed.[38]

Apparently, Heini and her eldest uncle do not demonstrate any interiority in depth in this piece of narration, because they are just happily taking the ceramic jug from the family of a landlord who is their uncle and brother, without any moral burden. The legitimacy of class struggle overcomes blood bond. However, the implied author may be aware of the

[38] Ding Ling, *The Sun Shines over the Sanggan River*, trans. Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1984), 348.

oddity of the plot. Therefore, there is a sentence "Cheng Ren stood dazed" at the end. Immediately, a justification is given by the quotation of Cheng Ren's thoughts:

> "为什么她不会快乐呢？她原来是一个孤儿，斗争了钱文贵，就是解放了被钱文贵压迫的人，她不正是一个被解放的么？她怎么会与钱文贵*同忧戚*呢？" (SGH 300)
>
> "Why shouldn't she be happy? She used to be a poor child. When Schemer Qian was attacked, the people had oppressed were liberated. Wasn't she one of the liberated? How could she be in the same boat with him? "[39]

Although the explanation is presented from Chen Ren's point of view, the italicized psychological phrase "*同忧戚*" (sympathize for) in the Chinese origin adumbrates the narrator's intervention. That phrase is too literary and elegant to belong to Cheng Ren's vocabulary. The translators must be aware of the inappropriateness of this word; therefore, they replaced it with more colloquial phrase "in the same boat with him" which is compatible with Cheng Ren's identity as a local peasant. The only reasonable explanation for the literary phrase "同忧戚" in Ding Ling's origin is that the implied author imposes the progressive political thoughts on the character. These features of narrative discourse such adoption of omniscient third-person narrator, removal of character inner struggle, presenting characters' speech and thoughts in a mediated way, plus the stylistically odd words like "同忧戚" confirm Ding Ling's transformation from a May Fourth writer to a Maoist writer.

Ding Ling's last story "Du Wanxiang" (杜晚香) published in 1979 can be viewed

[39] Ding Ling, *The Sun Shines over the Sanggan River*, 348.

as the autobiography of her late years, especially the years she spent in the labor camp in Northeastern China. The implied author maximizes the narrator' control of the female protagonist. At the beginning, after a piece of description of peaceful rural landscape, there is a summary of Wanxiang's early life:

> 杜家八岁的那个晚香闺女，在后母嫌厌的眼光，厉声的呵叱声和突然降临的耳光拳头中，已经*捱*过了三年，居然能担负许多家务劳动了，她也就在劳动里边*享受着劳动的乐趣*。 (DWX 289)
>
> Wangxiang, the daughter of the Du family, is eight years old. She has suffered three years from her stepmother's disgusted look, rebuke, and unpredictable physical punishments. However, she is able to do a lot of domestic works and she enjoys the fun of labor in doing these works.[40]

The uncharacterized omniscient narrator here completely takes over psychology of the character, even though there is a conspicuous logical contradiction. How could an eight-year-girl enjoy the fun of working when she is abused at the same time? It seems that the implied author cannot help projecting her own masochistic complex on the character via the narrator's voice. In "Du Wanxiang", the length and proportion of the character's speech continuously decrease and the narrator's intervention on character's thoughts and speech develops to an extreme degree that the character appears to be nothing but a human loudspeaker broadcasting the party's instructions emotionlessly. At the end of the story, there is banal and prolong politicalized speech. Again, it is a mediated quotation with heavy intervention.

> 杜晚香最后说道："我是一个普通人，做着人人都做的平凡的事。我能懂得一点道理，我能有今天，都是因为你们，辛勤劳动的同志们和有理想的人们启发我，鼓励我。我们全体又都受到党的教育和党的培养。我只希望永远在党的领导下，实事求是，老老实实按党的要求，为共产主义事业奋斗终身。 (DWX 313)

[40] I translated passages quoted from "Du Wanxiang" to Chinese.

> In the end, Du Wangxian said, "I'm an ordinary person. I just do common things same as everyone else. What I learned and got is because of you. It is the hardworking comrades and those harboring dreams inspired and encouraged me. And we're all educated by the party and trained by the party. I only wish I can forever follow the party's instructions, practically and honestly follow the party's requirements to fight for the communism throughout my life."

While, according to Seymour Chatman's definition, narrative discourse is independent of language and any other physical media, in the actual analysis of Chinese fiction we must rely on the language to examine narrative discourse. In the analysis of Ding Ling's narratives, we can tell the significant change of the female characters' voice because we can distinguish the petty bourgeois' tone in "The Diary of Miss Sophie" from the peasant's tone in *Sanggan River*, and from the highly politicized tone in "Du Wanxiang". In this sense, the analysis of narrative discourse in this project is also an analysis of language. It is the proper point to introduce the third level discourse -- a term used by linguists.

Discourse as a language segment in linguistic study

Zellig S. Harris presented the methodology of "discourse analysis" in 1952 because he was not satisfied with traditional descriptive linguistics which "stops at sentence boundaries". For him, discourse analysis is a "continuing descriptive linguistics beyond the limits of a single sentence at a time" and is able to find relations "not visible in sentence structure (in terms of what is subject, what is predicate, and the like)."[41] While Chinese is arguably an SVO language, linguists usually feel difficult to determine

[41] Zellig S. Harris, "Discourse Analysis", *Language*, vol. 28 (Jan. to March), (1952): 1-30.

how to divide a Chinese sentence because of the looseness of syntax. Chao Yuen Ren points out that "The grammatical meaning of subject and predicate in a Chinese sentence is topic and comment, rather than actor and action…Sometimes, ellipsis results in a looseness of subject-predicate relation which would be ungrammatical in another language"[42] While Chao still uses the terms "subject" and "predicate" in the practice of analyzing Chinese sentences, he initiates the "topic-comment" analysis conforming to the facts of Chinese language. Based on Chao's discovery, Charles N. Li and Sandra N. Thompson give a more detailed description of topic, which is "typically a noun phrase (or a verb phrase) that names what the sentence is about, is definite and generic, occurs in sentence-initial position, and may be followed by a pause or a pause particle."[43] In an essay advocating the application of Zellig Harris' discourse analysis to Chinese language, Shen Jiaxuan quotes a persuasive case from Lu Zhiwei:[44]

我们先读论语孟子。

We read *Analects* and *Mencius* first.

A Chinese native speaker, as Lu argues and Shen agrees, will be likely to pause after the verb phrase "先读" (read first) but not the pronoun "我们" (we) because the focus of attention here is what we read first but not who read the two books. Therefore, the topic that the speaker wants the audience to notice is "我们先读" (What we read first)

[42] Chao Yuen Ren, *A Grammar of Spoken Chinese* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968), 69-70.

[43] Charles N. Li and Sandra A. Thompson, *Mandarin Chinese: A Functional Reference Grammar* (Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981), 87.

[44] Shen Jiaxuan 沈家煊, "Halisi de huayu fenxi he zhongshi zhuweiju" 哈里斯的话语分析和中式主谓句 [Zellig Harris' discourse analysis and the Chinese subject-predicate sentence], *Modern Foreign language*, January 2022, vol.45, No.1, (2022): 1-16.

and the comment bringing the new information is “论语孟子” (*Analects* and *Mencius*). This sentence is extraordinarily pervasive and interesting because the “subject” is a verb phrase and the “predicate” a noun phrase. According to Li and Thompson’s definition, it does not matter for a verb phrase to serve as topic if it occupies the initial position of a sentence. Moreover, they also find that the topic of a preceding sentence can “determine the reference of a missing noun in the phrase that follows.”[45] Feng-fu Tsao develops this finding and maintains, “Topic is a superclausal notion; it may and often does, extend its semantic domain to more than one clause”.[46] The characteristic of topic in Chinese leads Tsao to the concept of “Chinese sentence”[47]:

> A sentence in Chinese can be roughly defined as a topic chain, which is a stretch of discourse composed of one or more comment clauses sharing a common topic, which heads the chain.

The beginning of Mao Zedong’s famous essay “In Memory of Norman Bethune” provides an excellent illustration of Tsao’s “Chinese sentence” as a topic chain. The passage excerpted from Mao’s essay reads:

> ［1］白求恩同志是加拿大共产党员，［2］五十多岁了，［3］为了帮助中国的抗日战争，［4］受加拿大共产党和美国共产党的派遣，[5]不远万里，[6]来到中国。[7]去年春上到延安，[8]后来到五台山工作，[9]不幸以身殉职。(JNBQE 659)
>
> Comrade Norman Bethune, a member of the Communist Party of Canada, was around fifty when he was sent by the Communist Parties of Canada and the United States to China; he made light of travelling thousands of miles to help us in our War of Resistance Against Japan. He arrived in Yan’an in the spring of

[45] Ibid., 102.

[46] Feng-fu Tsao, *Sentence and Clause Structure in Chinese: A Functional Perspective* (Taibei: Student Book Co., Ltd., 1990), 170.

[47] Ibid., 63.

last year, went to work in the Wutai Mountains, and to our great sorrow died a martyr at his post.[48]

In contrast to the English translation, Mao's original passage only uses one period at the end and mentions the subject "白求恩同志" (Comrade Bethune) once at the beginning. Also, he hardly uses conjunctions except for the preposition "为了" (in order to) in [3] and the temporal noun "后来" (later) in [8] which play an equivalent role as the conjunction in English. When the subject "白求恩同志" appears in the first clause, it introduces the referent, a Canadian doctor, to the discourse. The same referent is constantly mentioned from [2] to [8] without being referred by nouns, pronouns, or any perceivable anaphoric forms. Therefore, we can posit that ellipsis of subject occurs and the subject is represented by zero-form anaphors at the initial position of each following clause. It is he ellipsis and substitution that create a cohesive and coherent passage of narration. In addition, the verbs in the comment clauses such as "受…派遣" (be sent), "来到" (arrive), "到" (go to), and "殉职" (die in service) display in a chronological sequence which makes the use of conjunctions unnecessary. In the traditional Chinese rhetoric, this type of sentence is called "water flowing sentence" (*liushui ju* 流水句), but according to Tsao's definition, which is more precise, there is only one sentence, a topic chain.

While the "topic-comment" relation may be arguable for linguists who are concerned about linguistic theories, it provides us a practical referential grammar to explain the syntax of Chinese constructions in *wenyan*, traditional *baihua*, and spoken

[48] Mao Zedong, *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* vol.2 (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1960), 337.

Chinese. According to the concept of topic-chain, the beginning passage of Mao's "In Memorial of Norman Bethune" is syntactically homogeneous to the following passages respectively excerpted from *Records of the Grand Historian* (*Shiji* 史记) in *wenyan* and *The Scholars* (*Rulin waishi* 儒林外史) in traditional *baihua*.

> 项籍者, 下相人也, 字羽。初起时, 年二十四。
>
> Xiangji, whose polite name was Yü, was a native of Xiaxiang. He was twenty-four when he first took up arms.
>
> 这人姓王名冕, 在诸暨县乡村里住。七岁上死了父亲。
>
> His name was Wang Mian, and he lived in a village in Zhuji County in Zhejiang. When he was seven his father died.

It is worth noting that the punctuations, especially the periods, were added later by modern editors. For Sima Qian and Wu Jingzi, their intuitive understanding of the Chinese sentence is a topic chain carrying minimum anaphoric devices but not several SVO sentences having subject and connected by conjunctions. While from *wenyan* to traditional *baihua* the vocabulary changed significantly, some old syntactic constructions disappeared, and some new ones emerged, the topic-comment relation kept unchanged because it conforms to the habit of spoken Chinese, which is also economic and elliptical. For a today's Chinese reader, reading the narrative of *Records of the Grand Historian* and *The Scholars* is still a pleasant experience as long as he knows the meaning of each word. In other words, both Sima Qian and Wu Jingzi intuitively used a sayable language to communicate with the readers at their times and nowadays Chinese readers can still perceive and appreciate the "sayable-ness" after certain reading training. Mao Zedong was also dedicated to writing in a sayable language, but his essays written in the 1940s

like “In Memorial of Comrade Norman Bethune” were not a writing based on intuition; instead, they were driven by his ambition to create a new dominant discourse and his enemy was May Fourth discourse and its primary linguistic medium, the Europeanized Chinese.

For the activist intellectuals and writers in the May Fourth era, syntactic ellipsis of Chinese language represents an illogical and therefore a backward way of thinking and expressing. In an essay entitled “How to Write *baihua* Prose”, Fu Sinian asserts that it is necessary to find a “superior reference” to innovate Chinese language. He argues,

> What is the superior reference? For me, it is direct adoption of Western style, grammar, lexicon, syntax, textual composition, figure of speech, and all rhetoric devices, to create a Europeanized Chinese, which is superior to current national language, thereby, to create a Europeanized literature in such a national language.[49]

A superior Europeanized Chinese for the May Fourth intellectuals like Fu Sinian shouldbe a syntactically compete one. Therefore, for them, to convey the meaning that what we read first are *Analects* and *Mencius*, the construction “我们先读论语孟子” (We read *Analects* and *Mencius* first) is inferior to the Europeanized one “我们先读的是论语和孟子” (What we read first are *Analects* and *Mencius*). Here, the presence of modifying particles “的” (de), linking verb “是” (is) and conjunction “和” (and) marks the

[49] Fu Sinian 傅斯年, “Zenyang zuo baihua wen?” 怎样做白话文 [How to write *baihua* prose?], in *Guoyu de wenxue yu wenxue de Guoyu: wusi shiqi baihua wenxue wenxian shiliaoji* 国语的文学与文学的国语—五四时期白话文学文献史料辑 [Compendium of historiographical sources about vernacular literature in the May Fourth Era], eds. Zhu Defa and Zhao Dianqiang (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2013), 71.

Europeanization of Chinese sentences.[50] The vast adoption of Europeanized constructions by the May Fourth writer created a Europeanized tone in the twentieth century, especially in the field of fiction writing. Therefore, evaluation of individual writers' selection between the traditional topic-comment sentences and Europeanized constructions becomes the most detailed and concrete discourse analysis in this project.

My approach is highly related to the study of cohesion. According to M. A. K. Halliday, cohesion is "a set of lexicogrammatical systems that have evolved specifically as a resource for making it possible to transcend the boundaries of the clause".[51] Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan categorize cohesive resources in English into four types: (1) conjunction, (2) reference, (3) substitution and ellipsis, and (4) lexical cohesion.[52] To some extent, Edward Gunn transplants Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan's study of cohesion to his discussion of the style of modern Chinese writing. The "style" defined by him is composed by three categories of formal features, that is, "grammar, rhetoric, and sentence cohesion" and supplemented by "vocabulary and the pragmatic concept of coherence".[53] Gunn develops a detailed appendix summarizing the stylistic innovations of modern Chinese writing.

However, some innovations found by Gunn are less important than others for this

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[50] See Wang Li 王力, *Zhongguo xiandai yufa* 中国现代语法 [The grammar of modern Chinese] (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1985), 334-365. Wang Li discussed ten types of Europeanization in six sections of the last chapter entitled "Europeanized Grammar".

[51] M. A. K. Halliday, *An Introduction to Functional Grammar (third edition)* (London: Edward Arnold Ltd., 2004), 532.

[52] See M.A.K. Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan, *Cohesion in English* (London: Longman Group Ltd., 1976) and M. A. K Halliday, *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*, *third edition*.

[53] Edward Gunn, *Rewriting Chinese: Style and Innovation in Twentieth-Century Chinese Prose* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), 2.

project which is aimed to investigate the different voices of narrators and characters. Take *bei* passive constructions for example, their use "was limited by semantic constraints to afflictive meanings or situations in which a desired or intended action was blocked"[54] before the late Qing period, though there were rare exceptions. However, "by the 1940s the use of these constructions in the case of desirable action was acceptable even in text celebrated for departure from Europeanized usage".[55] Gunn uses a sentence composed by Zhao Shuli, a Maoist model writer, "闫家山就被称为模范村了" (Yanjia shan was declared a model village) to support his argument. Indeed, the expanded use of *bei* constructions is the result of Europeanization since the late-Qing period. However, Zhao Shuli's sentence does not bear a Europeanized tone because the changed usage was assimilated by Chinese language in either the context of speaking or writing when Zhao Shuli used it in the 1940s. In contrast, the following sentence, which is also from Gunn's appendix, composed by Xu Zhimo is a typical Europeanized construction conveying a Europeanized tone:[56]

> 他是一个画家，住在一个条老闻着鱼腥的小街底头一所老屋子的顶上一个A字式的尖阁里。
>
> He was a painter, living in a garret with an A-frame roof in an old house at the end of a small street that reeked of fish.

This sentence carrying a preposed attributive with multiple embedding is not sayable in Xu Zhimo's time and nowadays' *putonghua*, though it cannot be counted as a grammatically misused construction. The presence of this construction in a narrative

[54] Ibid., 219.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid., 226.

always indicates the identity of an intellectual narrator. If it is found in the speech of an uneducated character from the lower class, it is not doubt that narrative intervention occurs. In a word, the linguistic analysis in my project covering stylistic innovations ranging from lexical to discourse level is to serve the end of literary criticism but not linguistic itself. It explains the narrative discourse and then illustrates the competition among the three dominant discourses. I call it discourse analysis because it is different from traditional descriptive linguistics which "stops at sentence boundaries". In my analysis of individual writers, I always quote a passage from their stories but not a single sentence or a single word. While the focus of my analysis may be placed on one or two crucial sentences or words in a passage, I care more about how they influence the whole system -- the whole piece of narrative -- and how they illustrate the subjectivities of the implied author.

Narrative discourse, according to Chatman, is concerned with general principles of how a story being told regardless of specific medium. However, when we read short stories written in Chinese language through the lens of narrative discourse, the quality of language becomes an important criterion to examine whether a writer used certain narrative techniques successfully or not. In the twentieth century, Chinese writers learned and practiced many modernist narrative skills from Western fiction, such as stream-of-consciousness, interior-monologue, free direct speech, and so on. However, the actualization of these narrative techniques in Chinese language may be quite different from the in a European language. It is risky to label a specific writer as a pioneer of adopting a Western narrative technique without examining his texts carefully. Take

interior monologue for example, as a modernist technique to present a character's thoughts with the minimum intervention from the narrator, it is required, according to Seymour Chatman, three obligatory formal features, that is, "self-reference by first person pronoun, the present orientation verb tenses, and the deletion of quotation marks."[57] However, these features are summed upon the facts of English and other European languages. In the context of Chinese, there is not verb tense, pronoun can often be omitted, and the quotation marks were never an obligatory writing norm before the twentieth century. As a result, Chinese narrative depends more on fragmentary syntax and a credible tone consistent with the character's identity to transmit the unmediated thoughts of the character. Guided by the principle of reading Chinese stories through analyzing Chinese language, I found in Chapter 3 that the modernist writer Shi Zhecun was not that successful in transplanting interior monologue to Chinese writing than himself and some critics considered. Many asserted interior monologues in his psycho-historical stories written in the early 1930s are in fact narrative reports because of the narrator's insistence on complete syntax and the Europeanized tone. On the contrary, he achieved significant breakthrough in using interior monologue in other stories which are seemingly less related to modernist narratives. As I always attempted to argue in this section, analysis of language provides the sensible and then reliable lens through which we can assess the other two types of discourse.

A proposal of multilayer discourse analysis

[57] Seymour Chatman, 185.

In this project, the essence of style is considered in the broad sense as how a subject sends out one's voice. Therefore, the study of the stylistic shifts of modern Chinese fiction can be broken down into the following three questions: 1) How did the sociohistorical context of twentieth-century China shape an individual author's subjectivity or subjectivities? 2) How does the "second self" of the real author influence other subjects' voices in one's fictional works? 3) How are the voices transmitted by Chinese language. I will theorize these questions by reading modern Chinese short stories through the lenses of "discourse" respectively conceptualized in literary criticism, narratology, and linguistics. To differentiate these three similar terms, I call them Foucauldian or dominant discourse, narrative discourse, and linguistic discourse.

For Michel Foucault, discourse entails "a task of analysis that consist of not—of no longer—treating discourses as groups of 'signs' (signifying elements referring to contents or representations) but as practices that systematically form the object of which we speak."[58] This project is indebted to Foucault for his groundbreaking idea that releases close reading from mere textual analysis. A real author is therefore regarded as a one, for Foucault an objectified one, getting involved into certain discourse practice in specific sociohistorical surroundings. The determinant institutional powers in the context of the twentieth century China are therefore termed as Confucian, May Fourth, and Maoist discourse in this project. The competition among them determines how modern Chinese writers send out their voices.

However, for those who are interested in the structure of fiction, a real author can

[58] Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge*, 54

neither determine the meaning of story completely at one's own will nor actually send out one's voice in a story. It is the narrator who recounts a story, and a recounted story is a narrative. Seymour Chatman argues: "Each narrative has two parts: a story (*histories*), the content or chain of events (actions, happenings), plus what may be called the existences (characters, items of setting); and a discourse (*discours*), that is expression, the means by which the content is communicated." [59] The drastic social transformations in twentieth-century China undoubtedly influenced the way of recounting story after fiction was introduced from the West as an instrument to remodel Chinese mind since the late nineteenth century. In other words, in the field of narrative, dominant discourses competed to influence the implied author, the narrator, and then the character. This is how the dominant discourse, and the narrative discourse are related.

The word "discourse" used by linguists is an interchangeable term with "text", which refers to "any coherent succession of sentences"[60]. Discourse analysis in this sense is primary a study of the connections between sentences or clauses in relation to the beliefs of the speaker as Zellig Harris proposed and practiced. Chinese fiction is not only fiction written by Chinese or for Chinese but also in Chinese language, which also underwent significant shifts in the twentieth century as the medium of writing. Language is a perceptible form for us to investigate the transformation of dominant discourse and narrative discourse. For example, Europeanized Chinese is the weapon invented by May Fourth intellectuals to fight against the dominance of Confucian discourse. The

[59] Seymour Chatman, 19.

[60] P.H. Mathews, *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Linguistics (third edition)*, Oxford Reference Premium, (2014), Doi:10.1093/acref/9780191735240.001.0001.

campaigns launched by Mao Zedong against the Europeanized intellectual tone represent his effort to create a new discourse. The selection between Europeanized constructions and "water flowing" sentences not only determine the quality of the voice of narrator and character but also influence the distance between the implied author and other subjects of enunciation in narrative.

According to the reasons stated above, I propose a theoretic frame of discourse analysis as listed below.

Foucauldian discourse: how an author is constructed and interpreted in specific historical and cultural context.

Narrative discourse: how a story is narrated

Linguistic discourse: how a text is composed in Chinese language.

The exemplary stylists discussed

Stories discussed in the following chapters come from the writers who created exemplary styles and, at the same time, were conscious of the importance of the formal innovations of Chinese fiction. These writers are conventionally called stylists. There are more supplementary criteria to make a short list of the stylists whose works can represent the stylistic shifts in the twentieth century. First, the stylist must lead a new trend of writing caused by the rise of a new dominant discourse, though the elements of the old dominant discourse could also be found in one's writing. For instance, the exemplary Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies (*Yuanyang hudie pai* 鴛鴦蝴蝶派) writer Zhang Henshui is undoubtedly a stylist. While he did use the new grammar constructions and

words that appeared in the twentieth century and adopted certain Wester narrative skills, he cannot represent the May Fourth discourse because the narrative frame and voice of his novels still sticked to the old fashion. Second, an excellent stylist must be creative and independent, which means the stylist not only dares to challenge the old discourse but also refuses to follow the new discourse blindly. In other words, the style of the exemplary style must be significantly superior to that of a mediocre writer who only attempts to catch up with the fashionable trend. In this sense, Ding Ling is not a creative and independent stylist, though her writings provide the best illustration of how a fiction writer can be confined by the dominant discourse. Third, the exemplary stylist must significantly expand the techniques of Chinese narrative in one another domains. For instance, Lu Xun is an exemplary writer innovated irony of modern Chinese fiction. Patrick Hanan maintains, "Irony is the first, perhaps the most pronounced, element of Lu Xun's fiction".[61] While irony has existed in Chinese fiction long ago before Lu Xun, the irony in Lu Xun's stories is usually "conveyed by a more or less dramatized narrator outside the action", [62] which indicates a May Fourth narrator's critical attitude to the spiritually dumbed characters and, therefore, serves to the grand thesis of Lu Xun's fiction --criticism on Chinese character (*guomin xing pipan* 国民性批判). Moreover, the ironic voice from the characterized narrator suggests a new narrator-character relationship which seldom appeared before in other writer's fiction. In this sense, I argue,

[61] Patrick Hanan, *Chinese Fiction of the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries: Essays by Patrick Hanan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 233.

[62] Ibid., 234.

Lu Xun innovated Chinese narrative as a crucial stylist. Fourth, the stylist's language must significantly influence late-comers or the development of literary language of Chinese. Last, for a practical purpose, I only select those renowned for writing short stories to focus on the subgenre which represents the greatest achievement of twentieth-century Chinese literature.

According to the criteria mentioned above, I propose that Lu Xun, Shi Zhecun, Sun Li and Wang Zengqi form a spectrum of representative stylists whose short stories clearly suggest the ups and downs of dominant discourses, the crucial transformations of Chinese narrative, and the development of literary Chinese language in the twentieth century. Lu Xun was one of the leading figures who contributed most to the formation of May Fourth discourse. Influenced by Western fiction writers, especially some from eastern Europe, he wrote a series of psychology-centered stories, expanded the symbolic representation of Chinese prose, and expanded the irony of Chinese fiction. As for the language, he intentionally blended Japan-Europeanized constructions, conventions in both *wenyan* and traditional *baihua*, diction of his own mother tongue -- the *wu* regional speech -- into a medley style, which has rather distance from spoken Chinese nowadays. Investigation of these formal features of Lu Xun's stories helps us understand the tension between May Fourth discourse and the unshakable conventions of Chinese literature and language and deepen our understanding of modernization of Chinese fiction. She Zhecun can be categorized into the Anglo-American group of intellectuals, though he was also considering belonging to a smaller literary society associated with a modernist school of Japanese literature. Most of his stories were written between 1928 and 1937 and based on

the semi-colonial Shanghai. As a fiction writer from the right-wing --the campaign of liberal intellectuals-- Shi Zhecun voiced for the mild but fledgling Chinese middle class in his stories. Therefore, he represents the legacy of the May Fourth literature which must be uprooted by the Maoist regime after 1949. While Shi Zhecun experimented many modernist techniques, especially the stream-of-consciousness and interior monologue, he was also influenced by traditional vernacular fiction. Therefore, his stories maintained a subtle balance between innovative and conventional narrative. The Europeanized constructions used in Shi's stories represents the farthest distance that Europeanization of Chinese language can go. However, his conversion to "national form" after the Japanese invasion in the late 1930s suggests the decline of the May Fourth Europeanized tone and the termination of his writing career suggests the advent of a new dominant discourse. In this sense, Shi Zhecun can be regarded as a transitional figure between the May Fourth and Maoist discourse. From Sun Li, I turn to focus on the rise of the Maoist discourse. Sun Li's literary career began from 1938 in his home province Hebei where the CPC established a regional regime. Sun Li belonged to first generation of Maoist "literary-artistic workers" (*wenyi gongzuo zhe* 文艺工作者). His stories created after 1942 followed closely to the guidance in Mao's "Yan'an Talks", either in the content or in the form. While he is the representative writer of the Lotus Lake School (*hehuadian pai* 荷花淀派), which is known for vivid depiction of character's psychology, the techniques he used are an innovated traditional representation, which is different from the psychological representation adopted by May Fourth writers. His fame as a Maoist writer was not comparable to those boosted models like Zhao Shuli, Ding Ling, and Zhou Libo in the

Mao era, but the language used by him was in fact more influential than those model writers mentioned above. The Hebei regional speech spoken by Sun Li was codified as the primary lexical reference for *putonghua* after 1955 which endowed Hebei writers like Sun Li with a great advantage in communicating with the "people" conceived by Maoist discourse. In contrast, Zhao Shuli's Shanxi regional speech lost the privilege when the dominance of Maoist regime expanded from the Shaan-Gan-Ning border region in the northwestern corner to the whole mainland China after 1949. Moreover, the literary value of Sun Li's stories comes from his resistance to political propaganda, though the subject matters of his stories are often peasants and soldiers following Maoist discourse. Wang Zengqi, the last exemplary stylist discussed, grew up in southern China, but he was considered as a representative Beijing writer when his stories earned him a nation-wide fame in the early 1980s. Like the situation of Lu Xun, Wang Zengqi is also a master stylist who incorporated serval opposite styles into a mixed one. He was complimented by contemporary critics as "the last Confucian scholar (*shidafu*) in Chinese society" because of his embracement of the taste traditional prose. In the meanwhile, Wang Zengqi was deeply influenced by Shen Congwen's humanistic stance and lyrical inclination when he learned writing from Shen in the Republican era, which spiritually associates his stories to the May Fourth legacy. However, as far as the narrative frame and language is concerned, Wang Zengqi is a "conservative" writer. Most of his stories were narrated from the third-person perspective. He reduced the proportion of Europeanized constructions to the minimal degree and restored the flexibility by extensive use of traditional "water flowing" sentences. For Western scholars, Wang's

language appears to be too elusive[63], but for Chinese readers it is a colloquial but elegant style. Altogether, my discussion of the four exemplary writers serves to illustrate a big picture – the emergence of modern Chinese narrator and the competition among the dominant discourses in the twentieth-century China.

[63] For instance, Jeffery C. Kinkley argues that "illogical progressions, frequent changes in narrative voice, and incomplete sentences render Wang Zengqi's style difficult." See Jeffery C. Kinkley, "Shen Congwen's Legacy in Literature of the 1980s", *From May Fourth to June Fourth*: *Fiction and Film in Twentieth-century China,* eds. Ellen Wider and David Der-wei Wang (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 90.

Chapter 1: Lu Xun: An Enlightener Stylist Dedicated to Building Stylistic Maze

While Lu Xun's prestige in modern Chinese literature is primarily credited to his *baihua* stories written after 1918, his literary career began earlier in Japan as a translator of Western fiction. Therefore, to appreciate Lu Xun the stylist, we must first become familiar with Lu Xun the translator, as this early experience not only shaped his perspective of fiction but also determined the language in which he wrote his own stories. Lu Xun traveled to Japan in 1902 harboring the hope to rescue China from severe national crisis by learning scientific Western knowledge, as many Chinese elites did at that time. He quickly realized that it was more urgent to rescue his fellow Chinese's spirits instead of revitalizing the nation through practical knowledge, and for him, literature was the best means to this end. Such u is well known to his readers because of Lu Xun's statement of "destroying the iron house" made in the "Preface to *Call to Arms*" (*Nahan zixu* 吶喊自序) and other essays written in the May Fourth era. I argue that these textual examples give an account of the birth of who I call, Lu Xun the Enlightener, as he made an effort to enlighten the people in China of a Western, and therefore, humanistic literature. The issue that concerns this project is the linguistic media that Lu Xun the Enlightener used to communicate with his target audience, as they were confined by the traditional and pervasive Confucian discourse.

Lu Xun began his enlightening efforts early on in his career as a translator, and so we may refer to him in this period as Lu Xun the Enlightener-Translator. During this time, he experimented with two different strategies to introduce his fellow Chinese readers to Western knowledge and literature, because he did not have a worldly view of

literature until 1906. He translated four of Jules Verne's fictional texts from Japanese to Chinese in the years 1903 to 1905.[1] While the Verne's novels are translated into *baihua*, another short story "The Technology of Human Cloning" (*Zaorenshu* 造人术), which has similar scientific theme, is translated into *wenyan*. Such a contrast reminds us of the distinction between vernacular novels and classical stories, a difference which existed long before this moment. In Chinese tradition, classical stories have a kinship to literati prose, but vernacular novels come out of the imitation of professional storytelling and hence have wider readership and more colloquial language. Seemingly, the Verne novels are translated to satisfy common readers who read only to be entertained, but "*Zaorenshu*" targets educated readers through the story's more sophisticated language. "*Zaorenshu*" is notably more faithful to the Japanese translation than the original English story because Lu Xun translated from the Japanese texts and not the English originals. Kanda Itizos points out that the Japanese translation only writes half of "An Unscientific Story", and Lu Xun's translation stays faithful to this Japanese version.[2] In sharp contrast, however, Lu Xun utilizes *baihua* rhetoric in *Yuejie lüxing* 月界旅行, a translation of Jules Vern's *From the Earth to the Moon*, such a couplet titles for each chapter,

[1] These four translations are *Yuejie lūxing* 月界旅行, *Didi lüxing* 地底旅行, and *Beiji tanxian ji* 北极探险记 which are respectively translated from the Japanese translations of Jules Verne's novels, *From the Earth to the Moon, Journey to the Center of the Earth*, and *The Purchase of the North Pole*, and "Zaoren shu" 造人术 (the technology of human cloning), a short story also translated from a Japanese translation of Louise J. Strong's "An Unscientific Story". Among the manuscript of the unpublished *Beiji tanxian ji* was lost.

[2] Kanda Itizo 神田一三, "Lu Xun 'Zaoren shu' de yuan zuo" 鲁迅《造人术》的原作 [The origin of Lu Xun's translation 'Zaoren shu'], trans. Xu Changfu, *Lu Xun Research Monthly* 2001, 9 (2001): 36-46.

storyteller's stock phrases, and didactic poems; these devices are exclusive to this Chinese vernacular genre and therefore these elements exemplify what Lu Xun expect his reader. In other words, in his translation of Jules Verne's novels, Lu Xun prioritized the taste and reading habit of common Chinese readers over a faithful translation, which is apparently influenced by Liang Qichao's "*haoji yi*" 豪杰译 (free translation). The difference between Lu Xun's translation of "An Unscientific Story" and Jules Verne's novels suggests that *wenyan* was associated with close translation while *baihua* was used for a freer translation in Lu Xun's earliest translingual practice. Nevertheless, Lu Xun the Enlightener-Translator was still confined by the long-established Confucian conventions regarding both language and literary genre. While he was eager to stimulate the Chinese mind with a new tradition from the West, he ultimately translated "An Unscientific story" into the conventional classical literati prose and Jules Verne's science fiction into traditional vernacular novels.

Lu Xun resolutely chose *wenyan* and faithful translation over *baihua* after he quit Sendai Medical School and returned to Japan after the wedding of the marriage his mother arranged for him in 1906. In Lu Xun's own words, he became obsessed with "awkward sentences and archaic diction" (*guai juzi he guzi* 怪句子和古字)[3], which is an accurate summary of the style of his essays, translations, and his first published story "Looking back to the Past" (*Huaijiu* 怀旧) created in the late 1910s. While Lu Xun's

[3] See Lu Xun 鲁迅, "Tiji" 题记 [Preface to *The Grave*], *Lu Xun quanji* vol.1 (Beijing: Remin wenxue chubanshe, 2005), 3.

embracing of *wenyan* must be related to his interaction with Zhang Taiyan, who advocated "national essence" (*guocui*), especially to Lu Xun's learning philology from Zhang Taiyan, it is also a thoughtful choice made by a struggling Enlightener who was dedicated to sweeping out the long-established dominant Confucian discourse.

From 1907 to 1908, Lu Xun published five important essays, which are "The History of the [Evolution of] Humankind" (Ren zhi lishi 人之历史), "Lessons from the History of Science" (*Kexueshi jiaopian* 科学史教篇), "On Imbalanced Cultural Development" (*Wenhua pianzhi lun* 文化偏至论), "On the Power of Māra Poetry" (*Moluo shili shuo* 摩罗诗力说), and "Towards A Refutation of Malevolent Voices" (*Po'e sheng lun* 破恶声论). Besides the abstruse style, the themes of these essays "fit together as an integral whole to constitute a book, expressing Lu Xun's formative ideas on evolution, the history and philosophy of science, culture, politics, literature, and religion."[4] Regarding the style and ideology conveyed, these five essays are similar to the stories in *Anthology of Foreign Fiction* (*Yuwai xiaoshuo ji* 域外小说集) that Lu Xun and his brother Zhou Zuoren translated.[5] Therefore, in order to understand Lu Xun's later translations of fiction, it is important to examine the ideological and rhetorical elements of these five essays. They indicate to us the foundational translation technique of Lu Xun the Enlightener-Translator. After closing reading of one of the long essays, Wang Hui

[4] See Jon Eugene von Kowallis, "Translating Lu Xun's Māra": Determing the "Source" Text, the "Spirit" versus "Letter" Dilemma and Other Philosophical Conundrums, *Frontiers of Literary Study in China* vol. 7, issue 3 (2013): 423, Doi: 10.3868/s010-002-013-0024-3.

[5] Lu Xun translated three stories from German and Zhou Zuoren translated the rest stories from English. But Lu Xun polished the Chinese texts of all stories at last.

argues that it is necessary to actually distinguish Lu Xun's archaic style from *wenyan* because "some of the archaic vocabulary used [by Lu Xun] is seldom found in the post-Song dynasty classical language, most of it from pre-Qin (the time before 221 BCE), Han-Wei (206 BCE – 581 CE), and Sui-Tang (581 – 907 CE) period documents."[6] Therefore, Lu Xun's deliberate choice of archaic vocabulary rebels against *wenyan* and Confucian discourse, which still dominated most educated Chinese circles at the time. Lu Xun's favoring of archaic diction also illustrates that as an Enlightener-author, he dares to challenge or even irritate his readers by composing prose in a way that confronts their traditional literary expectations.

Undoubtedly, archaic diction contributes to the awkwardness of the sentences in these long essays; however, the awkwardness is also affected by the syntactic transformation Lu Xun learned in his literary translations from Western languages. After comparing the different translating strategies of Lu Xun and Zhou Zuoren in *Anthology of Foreign Fiction*, Wang Feng pointed out that in Lu Xun's translations, "[He] resolutely refused to break up the syntactic constructions in the origins, which, on the contrary, seems to twist the constructions in the translated [Chinese] texts."[7] Wang Feng continues to argue that such twisted style became Lu Xun's "lifelong habit of using language",[8]

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[6] Wang Hui, "The Voices of Good and Evil: What Is Enlightenment? Rereading Lu Xun's "Toward a Refutation of Malevolent Voices". trans. by Ted Huters and Yangyang Zong, *boundary 2* 38 (2) (2011): 76, Doi: https://doi.org/10.1215/01903659-1301276.

[7] Wang Feng 王风, "Zhou shi xiongdi zhuyi yu xiandai hanyu shuxie yuyan" 周氏兄弟著译与现代汉语书写语言[Lu Xun and Zhou Zuoren's early works and translations and modern Chinese written language], in *Lu Xun fanyi yanjiu lunwen ji* 鲁迅翻译研究论文集 [Anthology of studies on Lu Xun's translations], eds. Huang Qiaosheng *et al*. (Shenyang: Chunfeng wenyi chubanshe, 2013), 34.

[8] Ibid.

even under non-restrictive translation conditions. In this sense, the written Chinese used in *Anthology of Foreign Fiction* can be regarded as a kind of Europeanized *wenyan.* The passage quoted below is Wang Feng's comparison of Lu Xun's translation of Leonid Adreyev's "Silence" and the German text on which his translation is based:[9]

> 吾自愧——行途中自愧——立祭坛前自愧——面明神自愧——有女贱且忍，虽入泉下犹将追而狙之。
>
> *Ich schäme mich auf der Strasse, ——am Altar schäme ich mich——vor Gott schäme ich mich. Grausame, unwürdige Tochter! Zum Grabe sollte ich sie verfluchen…*
>
> I'm ashamed! I'm ashamed to go out into the street! I'm ashamed to come out of the chancel! I'm ashamed before God. Cruel, unworthy daughter! One could curse you in your grave.

While the repetition of the psychological verb "*zikui*" 自愧 (ashamed) brings somewhat redundance to the *wenyan* translation and the usage of dashes creates a new form of parallelism, Lu Xun did not create any new syntactic constructions as he did later after the Literature Revolution. In his translation, he deletes the nominative first-person pronoun "*ich*" from the second clause to the fourth clause, which conforms to the brevity of *wenyan* grammar. Thus, Europeanization in *Anthology of Foreign Fiction* stops at the level of rhetoric and punctuation and does not address syntactic innovation.

Nevertheless, the "awkward sentences and archaic diction" in the end announce the emergence of a modern narrator, who narrates in a tone different from the literati narrator in classical fiction and the simulated storyteller in vernacular fiction. For

[9] The Chinese and German texts are quoted from Wang Feng's article. English translation is Leonid Andreyev, *Silence and Other Stories*, trans. W. H. Lowe (London: Francis Griffiths Publisher, 1910). The following English translation quoted is from the same source.

example, in the passage of "Silence" written above, repetition of the psychological verb "*zikui*" and a reoccurrence of dashes that interrupt fluent narration divert the narrative focus from the report of an external event to the revelation of first-person narrator's interiority. It is the psychological, subjective, or lyrical turning of modern Chinese fiction discussed by previous scholars Jaroslav Průšek, Chen Pingyuan and so on. In this sense, word-for-word translation, for Lu Xun the Enlightener, is a way to preserve the individualized concept of humanity from the West; therefore, he must forsake and resist the institutionalized *wenyan* and *baihua*.

Lu Xun and his brother both translated *Yuwai xiaoshuo ji* and created a new literary magazine entitled *New Life (Xinsheng* 新生) within a few years of each other; however, both of these projects failed. Lu Xun insisted on writing with archaic words and awkward sentences aimed to innovate the conventional Chinese narrative. Despite his effort, his difficult style frustrated any potential readers from delving into a psychology-centered modern narrative. As a result, his literary career was dormant for a decade, from 1909 to 1918. For scholars who specialize in Lu Xun's fiction "Looking back to the Past", Lu Xun's first published story, is an interesting but puzzling text. No matter how many stylistic innovations scholars have found in "Looking back to the Past", they are still confronted by the question of why Lu Xun insisted on writing in *wenyan,* if it was his intention to create a new literature. After illustrating the undramatic plot and insignificant conversations in "", Průšek compares the story to the works of Western modern writers like Hemingway, Joyce, and Faulkner. Průšek argues that, "it is a work entirely of the

new modern literature."[10] At the same time, Průšek must propose a supplementary explanation that "the fundamental requirement for the emergence of a new literature is not language" to justify his major argument.[11] Zhang Lihua compares the plotless reminiscence narrated by the modern narrator with olden storytelling conducted by characters, which is frequently interrupted by the modern narrator; she argues that "Looking back to the Past" represents the end of old storytelling tradition and the advent of modern Chinese fiction.[12]

Different from either Průšek or Zhang Lihua, in this project I regard a short story – both what is told and how the story is told – and its language as an inseparable, which is the product of the ups and downs of Confucian, May Fourth, and Maoist discourse in the twentieth century China. I consider "Looking back to the Past" as a transitional product between the Confucian discourse and the May Fourth discourse. I do not consider it completely new literature, because the implied author imposes *wenyan* on the narrator and all characters – even those uneducated ones – and thereby on readers. I do not regard it as traditional literature, because either the Westernized narrative or the Westernized writing form or language is employed by Lu Xun to rebel against Confucian discourse. In my view, what keeps Lu Xun and other Enlighteners from embracing a new *baihua*

[10] Jaroslav Průšek, *The Lyrical and the Epic: Studies of Modern Chinese Literature*, trans. and eds. Leo Ou-fan Lee *et al*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), 103.

[11] Ibid.,108.

[12] See Zhang Lihua 张丽华, *Xiandai zhongguo duanpian xiaoshuo de xingqi: yi wenlei xinggou wei shijiao* 现代中国 "短篇小说" 的兴起—以文类形构为视角 [The rise of 'short story' in modern China: on the perspective of genre Formation], (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2011), 149-170.

before 1918 is the absence of institutional powers that could make this form influential through publication by magazines, active literary societies, state institutions, party lines, and so on.

History has shown us how the May Fourth discourse followed Confucian discourse. The literary magazine *New Youth* (*Xin qingnian* 新青年), with a group of elite scholars and writers gathered under its name, was the first influential institution of the May Fourth rhetoric. I do not intend to overstate the influence of a single magazine, but the *New Youth* editors and writers did indeed trigger an unprecedented struggle which fiercely shook the foundation of Confucian discourse in across many fields. Lu Xun the Enlightener-writer was therefore endowed with more intellectual authority to translate new words, create and use new grammatical constructions, and invent narrative forms. In such a struggle of discourse, "General" Hu Shi's advocacy of national language and justification for vernacular Chinese is usually interpreted as a set of guiding principles, and Lu Xun's literary writing is considered a response. In Lu Xun's own words, his first collection of stories *Call to Arms* is an assignment "obeying the general's order" (*ting jiangling*). Through these stories, Lu Xun encouraged young people by partially concealed the bitter loneliness he found when he was young.[13] And yet, if we consider the distinctive styles Hu Shi and Lu Xun use to communicate with their readers, we can acknowledge that they can hardly agree on how to enlighten the youth. For "General" Hu Shi, enlightenment is to illustrate common sense simply and in a plain style, and a writer

[13] See Lu Xun, "*Nahan* zi xu" 《吶喊》自序 [Preface to Call to Arms], *Lu Xun quanji* vol.2, 441.

should "say it in whatever way it needs to be said" (*hua [yinggai] zenme shuo jiu zenme shuo* 话怎么说就怎么说).[14] However, in the "soldier" Lu Xun's first *baihua* story, "Kuangren riji", "Lu Xun sends the reader into a stylistic maze."[15]

When we discuss the stylistic oddity of Lu Xun's writing after 1918, it is necessary to distinguish the narrator's language in his stories from the real man Lu Xun's language used in his daily life. According to Edward Gunn's analysis, one of the sources of the stylistic oddity in "Kuangren riji" is "grammatical constructions conforming to Wu regional speech".[16] In sharp contrast, the style of his letters to his mother, with whom he speaks in Wu regional speech, is a colloquial one conforming to northern Mandarin and tinged with a few *wenyan* honorifics. In these letters, we see a filial son who followed the established conventions of writing, still subject to Confucian discourse. After all, he would not lead his mother, a barely educated elderly woman, into a stylized maze of language, and we should therefore not doubt Lu Xun's competence in plain *baihua* style. In fact, as Edward Gunn astutely noticed, Lu Xun's second *baihua* story "Kong Yiji" written in 1919 is "a brief exercise in plain style" for the purpose of "derision of *wenyan* style."[17]

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[14] Hu Shi, "Jianshe de wenxue geming lu: guoyu de wenxue, wenxue de guoyu" 建设的文学革命论: 国语的文学一文学的国语 [Towards a constructive literary revolution: literature of national speech and a national language of literature], in *Guoyu de wenxue yu wenxue de guoyu: wusi shiqi baihua wenxue wenxian shiliao ji* 国语的文学与文学的国语一五四时期白话文学文献史料辑 [A historiographical compendium of May Fourth vernacular literature], eds. Zhu Defa and Zhao Dianqian (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2013), 45.

[15] Edward Gunn, *Rewriting Chinese: Style and Innovation in Twentieth-Century Chinese Prose* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), 96.

[16] See Edward Gunn, 96.

[17] Edward Gunn, 97.

Thus, my investigation of Lu Xun's style specifically focuses on fiction in which the implied author, the created second-self of the flesh-and-blood Lu Xun, manipulates his narrator's and characters' voices consciously or unconsciously. In the meanwhile, Foucauldian analysis of discourse requires us to return to the historical context in which Lu Xun the physical man was constructed. Followed by these two principles, my investigation is a historical close reading of the language of the Enlightener-translator of *Anthology of Foreign Fiction*, the *wenyan*-spoken narrator in "Looking back to the Past", and the Enlightener-narrator in Lu Xun's *baihua* stories after 1918. Beyond these detailed descriptions and interpretations, I intend to map out a larger picture of the struggle between the Confucian- and May Fourth discourses that materialized in the individual writer, Lu Xun.

1.1 Straightforward translation, archaic words, and "voices of the heart" in "Silence"

While *Anthology of Foreign fiction* indeed indicates Lu Xun's conversion to a word-for-word translation practice, scholars usually intend to overstate the rupture of Chinese syntax in Lu Xun's early translations by quoting the author's famous confession that his translation "would rather preserve fidelity at the expense of fluency" (*ning xin er bu shun* 宁信而不顺) made later in the 1930s.[18] Scholars have mostly notably seen this fidelity through comparing Lu Xun's translation of two stories in the anthology – Leonid

[18] Lu Xun 鲁迅, "Guanyu fanyi de tongxin" 关于翻译的通信 [Correspondence on translation], *Lu Xun quanji*, vol. 4, 391.

Andreyev's "The Lie" and "Silence" – with Lu Xun's collaborator, Zhou Zuoren. In contrast with Lu Xun's word-for-word translation, Zhou Zuoren's reflects a much more fluent translation and Sinicized style. The "sentence by sentence or even word by word" principle which Lu Xun confessed to after 1918 is, however, inappropriately applied by Wang Feng to Lu Xun's translation of Andreyev's "Silence".[19] Fluent narration or description is not difficult to find in Lu Xun's text. For example, the passage describing the protagonist Father Ignaty's gestures and appearance quoted below reads very concisely and smoothly in *wenyan*.

> 牧师微笑，渐起阖书，去目镜，收之匣内，入思颇深，黑髯丰厚，星星如杂银丝，垂胸次作波状，应息而动。(MO 200)[20]

> Father Ignaty gave a laugh and stood up. Closing his book, and he took off his spectacles, put them into their case, and fell into a brown study. His big black beard, shot with silver threads, lay in a graceful curve upon his chest, and rose and fell slowly under his deep breathing.

This passage consists of a "water flowing" sentence that lack formal links between each clause, to use a term from traditional Chinese rhetoric. If we follow Chao Yuen Ren's distinction between complete sentence and minor clause, except for the two leading clauses "*mushi weixiao*" 牧师微笑" (the priest laughed) and "*heiran fenghou*" 黑苒丰厚 (the black beard is thick), the others are minor clauses that do not carry a subject. If we follow Feng-fu Tsao' definition of topic chain, there are only two "Chinese sentences": one stating Father Ignaty's body movements, and the other describing his

[19] See Lu Xun, "'Hard Translation' and 'Class Character of Literature'", trans. *Yang Xianyi and Glady Yang, Lu Xun Selected Works* vol.3 (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1980), 82 and Wang Feng, "Zhoushi xiongdi zaoqi zhuyi yu hanyu xiandai shuxie yuyan", 33.

[20] While most of the Chinese originals of Lu Xun's stories are quoted from the 2005 edition of Complete Works of Lu Xun, "Silence" is from the 1973 edition because the 2005 edition does not include it.

beard. No matter what term is adopted, the examination of Lu Xun's translation on the syntactic level does not support Zhang Lihua's argument that in "Silence," Lu Xun "does not hesitate to distort or even tear up Chinese tones and conventions to be faith to the origin [in German]".[21] There is further proof found by Wang Feng, which disagrees with the argument that Lu Xun pursued strict word-for-word translation at the expense of fluency.[22] Wang points out that in most cases, Lu Xun and Zhou Zuoren had to put introductory clauses that mediate characters' speech and thought before the quotations because of the absence of quotation marks, though these clauses are transposed to the end in the German origin. For instance, "'Well, then, we will go!' Said he." must be translated as *"[Fu] yue nuoran ze xing yi*" [父]曰诺然则行矣 ([Father Ignaty said, "Well, then, we will go."]), which for Chinese readers is as fluent as those quotations of speech in the classical narrative.

The translation style of "Silence" is much less awkward and rigid than Lu Xun himself claimed and later scholars argued. The syntax of *wenyan* and the old writing form confine the narrator and characters from Andreyev's story into the *wenyan* community of traditional Chinese literati. Without a revolutionary language transformation, it is impossible for Lu Xun the Enlightener-Tanslator to completely break away from the dominance of *wenyan* and Confucian discourse, no matter how fervently he tried. When scholars fixate on the resolution of Lu Xun the idealist-reformer, they sometimes ignore the pragmatic characteristic of the same writer. When Lu Xun began to implement a

[21] Zhang Lihua, *Xiandai zhongguo duanpian xiaoshuo de xingqi: yi wenlei xinggou wei shijiao,* 134.

[22] See Wang Feng, 34-37.

faithful translation approach after 1905, he was conscious that the number of those who were willing to read serious literature and accept Western fiction would not be comparable to that of those reading popular fiction. Therefore, in the preface to *Yuwai xiaoshuo ji*, Lu Xun reminds readers that, "the rhetoric is unadorned, which is not comparable to those translated by the famous contemporary translator" (*cizhi pune, buzu fang jinshi mingren yi ben* 词致朴讷, 不足方近世名人译本).[23] He then claims that the readers he expected were "those excellent and unique ones who are not subject to conventions" (*youshi zhuote, bu wei changsu suo you* 有士卓特, 不为常俗所囿).[24] Since these stories are translated for a small group of elite readers, *wenyan* is the suitable medium, at which both Lu Xun and his target readers are adept. In fact, what frustrated Lu Xun's contemporary readers is not the awkwardness of sentences but the readers' unfamiliarity with a psychology-centered narrative that lacks dramatic conflict.

In my view, the stylistic breakthrough of Lu Xun's faithful translation of "Silence" comes from his innovative use of the *wenyan* words from Chinese poetic and philosophical texts to convey Andreyev's subtle description of the protagonist's psychological state. "Silence" begins with a hostile relationship between Father Ignaty, a stubborn and conservative priest, and his daughter Vyera, who attempted a new life in St. Petersburg but returns to her father broken in spirit and silent in her despair. For Vyera, this silence is the final way to resist her father's annoying interference. After Vyera

[23] Here the "famous contemporary translator" refers to Lin Shu who was known for translation of Western fiction in the late nineteenth century.

[24] Lu Xun 鲁迅, *Lu Xun quanji*, vol. 10, 168. The famous translator refers to Lin Shu, whose translation Lu Xun considers is not faithful to the origin.

eventually commits suicide, Father Ignaty internalizes the conflict, and the silence that the narrator attempts to illustrate develops into a deeper one. “It was not stillness, for that is the mere absence of noise, but it was *silence* which means that those who kept silence could, apparently, have spoken if they had pleased.”[25] Later, Father Ignaty’s internal struggle materializes as a metaphysical panic attack that strikes him whenever he stares at Vyera’s portrait, thinks about her dead body, or stands in front of her grave.

To distinguish the metaphysical silence from the physical one, Lu Xun creatively borrows an archaic word “*youmo*” 幽默 (dark silence) from a Qu Yuan poem to distinguish this silence from “*moran*” 默然 (silence), which refers to a mere absence of voice. However, in the German text, the two different types of silence are represented by the same signifier “*Schweigen*”. The word “*youmo*” does not appear until Father Ignaty falls into unstoppable grief in front of Vyera’s portrait after her death.

> 伊革那支欲去象弗视、而*幽默*之语、乃息息相从、其默又至昭明、几于入听。伊革那支际此、亦自信*幽默*为物、自能闻之矣。(MO 207)
>
> And wherever Father Ignaty placed the portrait, the eyes continually followed him, not speaking, but silent; and the silence was so clear, that it seemed possible to hear it. And by degrees Father Ignaty came to think that he did hear the silence.

Different from the original narration, in which it is Vyera’s eyesight that follows Father Ignaty, Lu Xun’s translation says that what follows Father Ignaty is a paradoxical “*youmo zhi yu*” 幽默之语 (the speech of silence). The sentence following, “*Qimo you zhi zhaoming*” 其默又至昭明, is a literal translation of “the silence is so clear”; however,

[25] Leonid Andreyev, *Silence and Other Stories*, 85.

there is also a subtle opposition between "darkness" and "brightness" which is conveyed by the connotations of "*youmo*" and "*zhaoming*" 昭明 (bright) in pre-Qin text. And again, in the second last sentence, "*Zi xin youmo wei wu*" 自信幽默为物 (he believes that the silence is a real thing), the opposition between "*zi*" 自 (self; subject) and "*wu*" 物 (thing; object) reminds readers of Zhuangzi's "Qiwu lun" (Discussion on making all things equal). Therefore, aesthetically, the use of archaic words definitely sparks an association with the dialectical wisdom of *Zhuangzi*. Led by such an association, Lu Xun the translator, who more or less appropriates the original text, urges his implied readers to read the story seriously and not just for entertainment – which is still a faithful introduction of the values that the original author Andreyev intended to convey.

The archaic word "*youmo*" has a direct etymological relation to Qu Yuan's poem "Thoughts before Drowning" (*Huaisha* 怀沙), which is considered arguably the last song written before his suicide. The first serval lines *of the poem* read:

滔滔孟夏兮，草木莽莽。
伤怀永哀兮，汩徂南土。
眴兮杳杳，孔静*幽默*。
郁结纡轸兮，离愍而长鞠。

In balmy early Summer Days,
When Trees and Grass teem,
With lonely and dejected Heart
I reach the southern Stream.
Now all around appears forlorn,
So silent and so still,
While sad and melancholy Thoughts
Upon me cast a Chill.[26]

[26] Qu Yuan, *Selected Elegies of The State of Chu*, trans. Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 2001), 99.

The intertextual relationship between “Silence” and “Thoughts before Drowning” is more than the common signifier “*youmo*”, though it gives us a clue to search for other commonalities. In both the poem and the story, there is a conspicuous contrast between the coldness and darkness inside the withering subjects and the hotness and brightness of their surroundings. While “Thoughts before Drowning” begins with flush trees and grass in early summer, “Silence” begins with “a moonlight night in May”; additionally, the first time that Father Ignaty heard the metaphysical silence “was a moonlight night in July, still warm, soundless.” It is very likely, I argue, that Andreyev’s subtle description of the contrast between Father Ignaty’s interiority and the surrounding inspired Lu Xun’s memory of Qu Yuan’s poem. This association moved Lu Xun to distinguish between the metaphysical silence associated with chillness, loneliness, despair, and death from the purely physical silence, by borrowing the signifier “*youmo*”. The archaic word “幽默” not only flaunts Lu Xun’s knowledge of philology, as the author once confessed, but also the implies the author’s expectation of his reader. In using this word, Lu Xun sincerely invites the audience to sympathize for Father Ignaty’s internal feeling instead of reading the dramatic misfortune occurred to his family.

While Lu Xun also borrowed other archaic words from the vocabulary of pre-Qin philosophical and poetic texts, the concept of silence remained a key motif within Lu Xun’s opus. Lu Xun employs words such as “*mingshen*” 明神 (surreal spirit), “*xiaosuo*” 萧索 (bleak and chilly), “*weileng*” 威稜 (power), “*haoqi*” 颢气 (noble spirit) to draw readers’ attention to the psychology-centered narrative of Andreyev’s story, as these signifiers all represent intangible concepts. Still, Lu Xun seemed to have been most

struck by the archaic idea of "*youmo*" (silence), as it is a central theme in his own writing. If we consider Lu Xun's entire oeuvre, we will find that breaking the silence and releasing a voice is constantly located in the center of his writing. This is easily exemplified through some of his titles, such as his first fiction collection, *Nahan* published in 1923, and his famous speech, "Silent China" (*Wusheng de zhongguo* 无声的中国) given in 1927, in addition to the famous aphorism, "Silence, silence! Unless we burst out, we shall perish in this silence" in his well-known essay, "In Memory of Miss Liu Hezhen" written in 1926. However, what conveyed by the archaic word "*youmo*" in the translated story is much more meaningful than that conveyed by other plainer notions such as "*wusheng*" 无声, "*chenmo*" 沉默 in his later *baihua* prose.

A close reading of Lu Xun's "Towards a Refutation of Malevolent Voices", one of his *wenyan* essays published in the same period as *Anthology of Foreign Fiction*, will deepen our understanding of the metaphysical silence in Andreyev's story and its great impact on the narrator's voice in Lu Xun's later stories. "Malevolent Voices" was written for *Henan* magazine in 1908, the same year Xun began to learn philology with Zhang Taiyan. This essay has a notoriously difficult style by excessive use of archaic diction; even well-trained scholar-readers cannot completely grasp its meaning without looking the help of a classical Chinese dictionary and a familiarity with pre-Qin philosophical texts. According to Wang Hui, the tone of this essay "is richly musical, with the charm of *Zhuangzi* and the flavor of the *sao* style and the *fu* poetry of the Han dynasty.[27] By

[27] Wang Hui, "The Voices of Good and Evil: What Is Enlightenment? Rereading Lu Xun's "Toward a Refutation of Malevolent Voices", 85.

relating Lu Xun's essay to Zhang Taiyan's advocacy of "national essence" to boost national confidence and accelerate anti-Manchu revolution, Wang Hui attributes Lu Xun's "awkward sentences" and "archaic words" to a linguistic rebellion, which "constituted an implicit critique of the contemporary classical style, that is, a fundamental negation of the then current linguistic system."[28]

In the first paragraph of the essay, Lu Xun describes early twentieth China as a collapsing society where "silence reigns and all channels are blocked" (*jimo wei zheng, tiandi bi yi* 寂漠为政, 天地闭矣).[29] Like in his "*youmo*" translation, Lu Xun's use of "*jimo*" 寂漠 (silence) appropriates an old notion from Qu Yuan's poem and of *Zhuangzi;* "*jimo*" refers to not merely a lack of sound but a kind of spiritual suffocation. Such metaphysical silence is always accompanied by disturbing malevolent voices, which make the silence even more perceptible:

> If everyone leans in the same direction and ten thousand mouths sing the same tune, this singing cannot come from the heart, it is mere chiming in with others, like the meshing of gears in a machine. Such a chorus is more disturbing to the ear than the groaning of threes or the clamorous cries of certain birds because it emphasizes the profound silence in the background. Yet China at present is an all-too-perfect example of just such a silence.[30]

Father Ignaty speaks with such a malevolent voice each time he asks his daughter. When his daughter silently returns, he constantly demands to know what happened on her journey to make her now so depressed. After she commits suicide, Father Ignaty once

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[28] Ibid., 79.

[29] Lu Xun, "Towards a Refutation of Malevolent Voices", trans. Jon Eugene von Kowallis, *Boundary 2* 2011 38 (2) (2011): 39.

[30] Ibid., 42.

again demands to know why she took her own life and left the physical world. As a pastor, he does not care for his parishioners' concerns and welfare while he provides them with useless and empty preaching, which is another malevolent voice. As a father and husband, he does not speak to his wife and daughter compassionately and instead imposes a strict discipline in the house. As an individual, he is not a true man, who Lu Xun defines in the essay as one who speaks in "voices of the heart" (*xinsheng* 心声), thinks with "illuminating thoughts" (*neiyao* 内耀), and thereby "becomes the master of one's own soul" (*zhen guiyu wo* 朕归于我).[31] Although Father Ignaty gradually perceives the existence of such metaphysical silence after his daughter's death, he does not know how to break it and thus rescue himself from it. Therefore, the story ends with, "*Ci huangliang xiaose zhi jia, ze youmo zhuzhi yi*" 此荒凉萧瑟之家, 则幽默主之矣 (It's a desolate house where the silence reins), which coincides with Lu Xun's diagnosis of the disease plaguing China in the early twentieth century.

Later, in Lu Xun's own stories we see similar characters who make silence-increasing noise as Father Ignaty does. For instance, in "Looking back to the Past", the noisemaker is the private tutor Mr. Baldhead, and in "Medicine," every customer who shows up in the tea house acts as a noisemaker. Even Xia Yu's mother in "Medicine", to whom Lu Xun shows certain sympathy, is depicted as a Father Ignaty-like parent because she is ignorant of the revolution that her son fought to promote at the expense of his own life. Therefore, the mother's defense of her son's wrongful treatment made at his

[31] Ibid.

graveside is also a noise – a malevolent voice. “Looking back to the Past”, “Medicine,” and many other Lu Xun stories all end with such a suffocating silence. Regardless of whether the word “silence” shows up or not, the aesthetical characteristic of such is called, by Lu Xun himself, “Andreyev’s somber chill” (*Antelaifushi de yinleng* 安特莱夫式的阴冷).[32] If we consider the correlation and interchangeability of the concepts of chillness, darkness, and silence, which indicate a space devoid of heat, light, and sound in Andreyev’s literary expression, we can also paraphrase the same characteristic of Lu Xun’s stories as “Andreyev’s expression of metaphysical silence”.

And so, who may stand in opposition to the noise or malevolent voice maker? In “Malevolent Voices”, Lu Xun declares that, “I cherish the hope that one or two scholars will take a stand, setting an example for the rest and affording the people a chance to escape oblivion.”[33] According to previous scholars’ interpretation of this plea, the concept of “one or two scholars” (*yi-er shi* 一二士) originates from Max Stirner’s “the Ego and his own,” Thomas Carlyle’s “hero”, Nietzsche’s “superman”, and Kierkegaard’s conception of the single individual.[34] Wang Hui’s reading of “Malevolent Voices” continuously illustrates that “one or two scholars” send out “voices of the heart” in a self-expressive way:[35]

> Lu Xun stressed that we should rely on such persons to inspire the public—not to awaken them but to stimulate them through self-expression…These scholars, then, were not to educate from the top down, but rather were to stimulate the realization of the selves of other people through self-creation and self-expression.

[32] Lu Xun 鲁迅, *Lu Xun quan ji* vol. 6, 247.
[33] Lu Xun, “Towards a Refutation of Malevolent Voices”, 40.
[34] See Wang Hui, 90.
[35] Ibid.

In this sense, Lu Xun ardently tried to preserve the voice of such self-expression of few Enlightener narrators through the inclusion of archaic Chinese and a word-for-word translation of "Silence." For him, Liang Qichao's plain style, which Lu Xun followed before 1906, is inadequate to convey "voices of the heart," as this style bends too far toward a traditional storyteller's tone and the narrative language that the reader masses have become accustomed to. Therefore, the introduction of a self-expressive narrator, or characters who have "illuminating thoughts," requires defamiliarization with the Chinese language. In the case of "Silence", which is narrated from a third-person perspective, the narrator is the only subject on the narrative level who is conscious of the subtle difference between metaphysical silence and physical silence; in contrast, all characters on the story level are unable to understand what causes the domestic tragedy. The cognitive gap between the narrator and the protagonist Father Ignaty does exist in Andreyev's original; however, Lu Xun makes it more prominent by redefining an old *wenyan* signifier "*youmo*" with meaningful modern associations by taking advantage of its intertextuality.

Indeed, from *Anthology of Foreign Fiction* to Lu Xun's first collection of *baihua* stories *Nahan,* there is a sudden and noticeable turn of language from archaic *wenyan* to modern *baihua*. There is also a consistent but less prominent principle of distinguishing language of fiction from commonly used, institutionalized, and well-established language. For fiction writing, Lu Xun does not hesitate to create and use awkward words and grammatical constructions. Such differentiated language in Lu Xun's later stories is actualized as the storyteller's narrative and linguistic privilege; the narrator is able to

enter the characters' minds freely and speak for them in an "awkward" tone. Although *wenyan* is replaced by *baihua* in *Nahan*, the narrator's privilege, which takes the form of Europeanized constructions, remains from *Anthology of Foreign Fiction*. "Voices of true heart" are still represented in an "awkward" way, which demands reader's painstaking effort to hear and understand. However, between *Anthology of Foreign Fiction* and *Nahan* there is a dormant decade from 1909 to1918, in which Lu Xun continued his stylistic innovations in a relatively low-key manner. Closing reading of his first published *wenyan* story "Looking back to the Past" will illustrate such innovations that fill in the gap between *Anthology of Foreign Fiction* and *Nahan*.

1.2 The tension between modernized and traditional narrative mode and language in "Looking back to the Past"

"Looking back to the Past" was published in *Short Story Monthly* (*Xiaoshuo yuebao* 小说月报) under the pseudonym Zhou Chou 周逴 in 1913. It seems to be a forgotten story for Lu Xun, as it was not included in any of the author's collections until two years after his death in 1936. While the historical significance of the *wenyan* story "Looking back to the Past" is not comparable to the groundbreaking *baihua* story, "A Madman's Diary" in Chinese literature, scholars have recognized certain innovative elements in "Looking back to the Past."

The story begins with a schoolboy's unpleasant reminiscence of a couplet-making class. His tutor is named Mr. Baldhead, whose instruction is dogmatic and boring. The schoolboy's attention is distracted when he hears the servants of his family, doorman Old

Wang and maid Nanny Li, gathering in the yard and telling stories. As Průšek mentions in his analysis, the beginning of the story barely narrates a plot, until the next day when the local rich man Yaozong rushes into the class to report the approaching of rebels. The continued narrative does not focus on the rebel chaos but on Mr. Baldhead and Yaozong's discussion of it, which works to satirize the hypocrisy and incompetence of the gentry class. Then, when the rebellion proves to be a simple rumor, the focus is redirected to the intradiegetic narrative,[36] in which the doorman Old Wang tells several horrifying stories of the past Taiping Rebellion. But Old Wang's narration is constantly interrupted by others. From the beginning of this section to the end, there is no coherent narration. The whole narrative is actually made up of the narrator's scattered reminiscence and the characters' frequently interrupting conversations. In this sense, Průšek reveals, "The greatest difference between this story and the traditional form of the Chinese story, however, is to be seen in this recording of insignificant conversation."[37] In his analysis of this story, Jaroslav Průšek maintains the argument that "Looking back to the Past" has shifted away from the plot-centered convention of Chinese fiction.[38]

Zhang Lihua continues to ponder Průšek's finding and asks, "Why did Lu Xun spend more than half of the entire story recording insignificant conversations, which seem irrelevant to the theme?"[39] Zhuang astutely notices the dual reminiscence of

[36] I use the terminologies extradiegetic, intradiegetic, and meta-diegetic coined by Gérard Genette, though he does not provide clear definitions. Here intradiegetic narrative refers to stories about Taiping rebels told Old Wang who is a character in the main story narrated by the schoolboy narrator.

[37] Ibid., 107-108.

[38] Jaroslav Průšek, 106.

[39] Zhang Lihua, 151.

"Looking back to the Past": the narrator's remembering an unusual summer day disturbed by the rumor of approaching rebels, along with Old Wang's recollection of when the Taiping rebels did actually arrive long before. According to Zhang, such difference corresponds to the contrast between modern fiction and traditional storytelling. The schoolboy plays the role of a modern narrator, while Old Wang represents a traditional storyteller. In this sense, the frequently interrupted narration of Old Wang suggests a "termination of the old tradition of storytelling."[40] This story exhibits how the modernized but fragmented main narrative of "Looking back to the Past" is "Lu Xun's earliest literary treatment to isolation and loneliness in a dark period of his life." [41] Therefore, the story focusing on narrator's self-expression, needless to say, must take the form of modern fiction, a new genre learned from the West.

Wang Feng's investigation of "Looking back to the Past" is a more detailed reading, which relates the transformation of narrative mode to the adoption of quotation marks. A traditional Chinese text is vertically composed, from the first word to the last, without punctuation to separate one sentence from another and without spatial division to separate one paragraph from another. Although a *judou* punctuation appeared in the twelfth century - especially in primer readings for educational purposes – this punctuation is not an integral part of the text that regulates writing. Instead, it is just noted by the editor or reader beside the original lines in order to facilitate comprehension. And we can see how such writing conventions have influenced quotations of speech. "*Zi yue xue er*

[40] Ibid.,155.
[41] Ibid., 162.

shi xi zhi bu yi yue hu?" 子曰学而时习之不亦说乎 (The Master said, "To learn something and timely practice it—it is a pleasure, isn't it?") is the only way to form this utterance. Further, since there are no quotation marks, no verb tense agreement, and no and subordinating conjunctions in Chinese syntax, it is difficult to tell the difference between direct and indirect speech. Therefore, in either classical short stories or traditional vernacular novels, character's speech is always subject to the narrative report due to the writing conventions and syntactic characteristics of Chinese language. The only way to distinguish a character's voice from the narrator's voice is to see whether one's tone of speech conform to one's identity.

Wang Feng notices that at the beginning of "Looking back to the Past," the conversation between the schoolboy and his tutor is represented in the traditional way; however, in the rest of the story, quotations of characters' speech convert to direct speech occupying independent lines and surrounded by quotation marks. Wang Feng uses the two passages below to illustrate the difference between the classical and modernized forms of quotation. The conversation between the private tutor and the schoolboy in the couplet-making class reads:

……久之久之°始作◎摇◎曳◎声◎曰◎来◎余健◎进◎便书◎绿◎草◎二◎字◎曰红◎平◎声◎花平◎声◎绿入◎声◎草上◎声◎去矣◎余弗◎遑◎听◎跃而◎出◎秃先生复做摇曳声°曰勿◎跳◎余则◎弗◎跳◎而◎出◎[42]

Hours passed and then he suddenly said to me: "come". I went toward him, and he wrote down on my paper the two characters "green grass", which was followed by an explanation. "'Red'", he said, "is a character of the first tone; 'flower', 'green', of the second tone; and 'grass', of the fourth tone. Do you understand? Now then, go." Without attempting to understand him, I ran away from him at once. "Don't run," shouted Mr. Baldhead from behind, in a long-drawn-out voice. I ceased to run and walked out of the room. [43]

In contrast, the narrative of Yaozong's visit uses the modernized quotation style for characters' speech.

"仰圣先生°！仰圣先生°！" 幸门外突作怪声°如见眚而呼救者°

"耀宗兄耶°……进可耳°" 先生止论语不讲举起头°出而启门°且作礼°

Luckily, there suddenly came from without a grunting voice to save the situation. "Mr. Yangsheng, Mr. Yangsheng," cried the voice, as if its owner had just seen a ghost, and was shouting for help.

"This is Brother Yaozong, I presume," murmured my tutor, "—well, come in please." My tutor laid aside his *Analects*, raised his head, and went to the door, greeting the visitor most respectfully.

Wang Feng maintains that the second passage of quotation indicates a decisive

[42] I quote this passage from *xiaoshuo yuebao* where "Huaijiu" was first published in 1913. The original text was displayed in traditional vertical writing and either circle mark or concentric circle mark was labelled on the right side. In my quotation, I change the original text into horizontal writing and move the *judou* marks to upper-right of each character. For some unknown reason, Wang Feng's quotation of the same passage is different from the original text. While in Wang Feng's quotation, *judou* marks clearly indicate the division between conversation and narration, does not the original text. It seems that neither the circle nor the concentric circle consistently suggests any syntactic division in the origin. See Lu Xun 鲁迅, "Huaijiu" 怀旧 [Looking back to the past], *Xiaoshuo yuebao* vol. 4, no.1 (1913): 7-14. The following passages of "Looking back to the Past" are quoted from the same source.

[43] Lu Xun, "Looking Back to the Past", trans. Feng Yu-sing, *T'ien Hsia Monthly* vol.vi, no. 2 (1938), 148-159. All the following quotations of the English translation of "Huaijiu" are from the same source, but I changed all Wide-Giles spellings of names to *pinyin* to have a consistency with my paper.

departure from the traditional narrative mode, because afterward, "progression of the major storyline relies on constant conversations, which, you could say, leads to a thorough change of narrative. The use of quotation marks, therefore, becomes indispensable."[44] For Wang Feng, this is an inadvertent change which "Lu Xun did not expect when he began to write".[45] Conversely, my reading of "Looking back to the Past" suggests that the change from the traditional to the modernized quotation is not unplanned. First, only the conversations between the schoolboy and Mr. Baldhead use the traditional form without quotation marks, because, in addition to his role of a character, the schoolboy is also the first-person narrator. Only he retains the privilege of reporting other characters' speech and thoughts. Therefore, those traditional quotations can be the first narrator's report which does not need to be separated from the narrative context. Second, the traditional quotation style appears again in the second half of the story, which Wang Feng argues Lu Xun has converted to the Western form. The passage reads:

> 秃先生踱良久云又须归慰其家人以明晨返。遂持其八铭塾钞去临去顾余曰一日不读明晨能熟背否。趣读书。勿恶作剧余大忧。目注王翁烟火不能答。

> Mr. Baldhead paced back and forth for some time, then he turned to us and said that he had to go home again and would be back the next day. This time he took with him his *Baming shuchao*. Before going he called me to him and said: "You've been playing the whole day without looking at your book. Will you be able to recite your lesson tomorrow morning? Go and prepare it and don't be naughty." I felt very sad, and my eyes stared at the spark in Old Wang's pipe. I did not know what to answer.

[44] Wang Feng, 41.
[45] Ibid., 43.

A comparison of the English translation and the Chinese original suggests that the translator Feng Yu-sing had no difficulty in distinguishing between direct and indirect speech, even though the quotation marks are absent in the Chinese original. He translated Mr. Baldhead's beginning remarks led by the speech verb 云 (say) to an indirect speech because of the presence of the third-person possessive particle "其" (his). But Feng Yu-sing translated the second remarks led by another speech verb "曰" (say) to a direct one. It is very likely that Lu Xun had the same intuition as his translator, since, in the second quotation, Lu Xun writes in a strong didactic tone that is conveyed by a string of interrogation, commands, and dissuasion, which is similar to what Mr. Baldhead actually said. Even so, Lu Xun still does not apply the Western form to Mr. Baldhead's speech to the schoolboy because it is the first-person narrator's purposeful satire against the annoying private tutor, and it is unnecessary to interrupt the fluent report by using new quotation form to separate Mr. Baldhead' speech from the narrative context.

Y. H. Zhao uses the terms "quoted form" and "free form" to refer to two different ways of reporting character's speech. He classifies leading tags, such as "he said," and quotation marks into "typographical markers" of quoted form. But he points out that "quotation marks are not reliable markers of the quoted form, because first there are no quotation marks in classical Chinese at all, and secondly, in many languages, including modern Chinese, direct quoted form can go without quotation marks."[46] When we return to the historical scene at the beginning of the twentieth century, we can see Lu

[46] Henry Y. H. Zhao, *The Uneasy Narrator: Chinese Fiction from the Traditional to the Modern* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 101.

Xun's effort to release characters' voices and consciousness from the narrator's control as they take on new forms. The adoption of quotation marks renders a speech verb, what Zhao calls a leading tag, no longer the only marker. The following dramatized conversation is separated from the narrative context to the highest degree.

"先生°闻今朝消息耶°"
"消息°！……未之闻°……甚消息耶°"
"长毛且至矣°！"
"长毛°……哈哈°安有是者°……"

"Sir, did you hear the news this morning?"
"News? — I never heard anything — What news?"
"The Long-hairs are coming."
"Long-hairs—Ha. Ha—How can there be any Long-hairs now?"[47]

In my view, assigning character's speech to independent lines is a more important innovation than using quotation marks to separate character's voices from the narrator's voice, because an introductory clause or leading tag can be completely omitted without causing confusion. In Lu Xun's mind – consciously or unconsciously – it is worth utilizing independent lines to mark the switch from "telling" to "showing", which allows characters the freedom to perform what they say. Mr. Baldhead and Yaozong's conversations belong to the "showing" portion of "Looking back to the Past". On the contrary, those that occur between Mr. Baldhead and the schoolboy remain as part of the narrator's "telling". Thus, I define the speech being put under quotation marks and

[47] Feng's translation here is not completely faithful to Lu Xun's original. He added three leading tags to clarify the speakers. I deleted them for the purpose of illustrating Lu Xun's innovation.

occupying independent a line as “foreground speech,” and the others that take the old form as “background speech”, which is a part of narrator’s voice.

By relating Lu Xun’s effort to rescue the Chinese mind to his persistent literary interest in representing voice and sound, we see how the two types of speech in “Looking back to the Past” may achieve his goal. Mr. Baldhead and Yongzong’s discussion about the approaching rebels corresponds to the official Chinese history as recorded by the gentry class – which is full of empty and hypocritical Confucian discourse, while Old Wang and Nanny Li’s recollection of scary scenes in the Taiping rebellion corresponds to the unofficial history remembered by the lower-class, which is full of violence and inhumanity. Both the insignificant conversation between the two gentlemen and the doorman’s interrupted storytelling are examples of a “malevolent voice”, which lacks interiority, or in Lu Xun’s own words, lacks “illuminating thoughts”. They are the Chinese masses waiting to be enlightened.

On the contrary, the background speech blended with narrative context can be considered part of the adult narrator’s voice. Milena Doleželová-Velingerová reveals that, besides the schoolboy narrator, there is another adult narrator whose consciousness can be detected in the hidden text.[48] Doleželová argues that “Lu Xun divides the ‘I’ in the story into two personas which complement each other. One is an adult who is endowed

[48] See Milena Doleželová-Velingerová 米列娜, “Chuangzao zhanxin de xiaoshuo shijie: zhongguo duanpian xiaoshuo (1906-1916)” 创造崭新的小说世界—中国短篇小说 (1906-1916) [Create a brand-new fictional world: Chinese short stories from 1906 to 1916], trans. Wu Hu, in *Wanming yu wanqing:lishi chuancheng yu wenhua chuangxin* 晚明与晚清: 历史传承与文化创新 [The late Ming and the late Qing: historical dynamic and cultural innovation], eds. Chen Pingyuan 陈平原 *at el*. (Wuhan: Hubei jiaoyu chubanshe, 2001), 482-502.

with authority as the creator of the fictional world…The other is the author's childhood persona, who takes a dual-responsibility as the first-person narrator and the protagonist."[49] Although Doleželová's interpretation of certain other texts is not convincing to me, I agree with her methodology of decoding Lu Xun's fiction – that "perception of 'ungrammatical phenomena' in the surface level of a text will lead readers to the second level"[50], especially when we consider Lu Xun's obsession with "awkward sentences" and "archaic words."

The ungrammatical phenomena in "Looking back to the Past" are born from purposefully created tension between *wenyan* and *baihua*. The following is a conversation between the tutor and the schoolboy, which constitutes background speech without quotation marks.

> 禿先生曰˚孔夫子说˚我倒六十便耳顺˚耳是◎耳◎朵◎到七十便从心所欲不逾◎这◎个◎矩◎了……余˚都˚不˚之解˚
>
> "Confucius says," Mr. Baldhead started to explain, "that when one is in one's sixtieth year, one is bound to have a good ear for everything. Here the word *ear* means ears."
> "So, Confucius says," he continued, "that when one reaches seventy, one can get everything one's heart desires. One must not depart from this rule." Practically nothing of the lesson he gave me could be understood.

This passage contains a number of "ungrammatical phenomena." The most flagrant stylistic anarchy comes from the contradiction between the *wenyan* speech verb "*yue*" 曰 (say) and its *baihua* counterpart "*shuo*" 说 (say). Mr. Baldhead explains one of Confucius' instructions in a very colloquial tone; however, this adage is already very easy

[49] Ibid., 492.

[50] Ibid. The word "ungrammatical" here refers to "self-contradictory texts on the surface level". See the same page of this citation.

to understand and so needs no linguistic mediation. Most ironically, Mr. Bald specifically explains what an ear is, by using colloquial words but refusing to explain the difficult phonological rule of making couplets to the confused schoolboy. These sections should not, therefore, be considered a realistic record of Mr. Baldhead's speech; instead, they should be understood as the adult narrator's satire of the fruitless education of Confucianism. For this reason, the narrator does not hand over narration to the character, and so quotations marks and independent lines become unnecessary here.

When Mr. Baldhead finally stops talking, Lu Xu uses an awkward *wenyan* sentence, "*Yu dou bu zhijie*" 余都不之解 (I understood nothing of what the tutor taught), to relate the schoolboy's feeling. Although the demonstrative pronoun "*zhi*" 之 (this) can be placed in front of the verb in *wenyan*, according to Wang Li, it is the rare case in a sentence having negative adverb "*bu*" 不 (not).[51] Moreover, placing an object pronoun before the dominating verb often evokes a classical tone because it is a syntactic characteristic of *wenyan* in the pre-Qin era; however, the appearance of the adverb "*dou*" 都 (all), which is rather new and colloquial, exacerbates the stylistic inconsistency. A more stylistically harmonious expression would be "*Yue jie bu jiezhi*" 余皆不解之 (I understood nothing). Hence, I argue that this is another ungrammatical phenomenon purposefully created. The same awkward construction appears again right after this one.

字为鼻影所遮余亦不之见

[51] See Wang Li 王力, *Wang Li wenji* 王力文集 [The collection of Wang Li] vol.11 (Jinan: Shangdong jiaoyu chubanshe, 1984), 286.

> Nor could I see the lines clearly myself, for they were all hidden away under the shade of his nose.

Mr. Baldhead not only confuses the schoolboy with an unnecessary explanation but also physically blocks his access to the written text. In this sense, the Confucian tutor completely embodies the obstacle of acquiring knowledge and deviates from a teacher's duty to impart knowledge to one's students. On the surface, it is the schoolboy narrator who makes complaints through his half-cooked *wenyan*. In the hidden text, though, it is the adult narrator who expresses his abhorrence toward Confucian discourse and its values. The adult narrator's voice can be considered the only "voice of the heart," which is in opposition to the malevolent voices of other characters in this story. In a broad sense, Wang Feng is correct by arguing that "the new writing forms bring great stylistic contradiction, which illustrates the consequence that *wenyan* could not survive in the new forms and predicts the irreparable death of *wenyan*."[52] However, regarding techniques of satire, it is also correct to argue that Lu Xun takes advantage of the stylistic tension between *wenyan* and *baihua* to fulfil his ambition as an Enlightener-author.

As a medium of fiction, *wenyan* is tightly bound with the identity of a male literati narrator, and for this reason *wenyan* always represents Confucian discourse in ancient China. The different voices of all the characters in classical fiction, regardless of social class and other social identities, are filtered by the voice or consciousness of the Confucian literati narrator. For instance, in Pu Songling's stories, even the voices of ghosts, fox spirits, and demons are filtered by the narrator's voice since they are all

[52] Wang Feng, 43.

conveyed by *wenyan*, the Confucian literati's language. This is a specific rule of classical Chinese fiction, which also accounts for why traditional vernacular fiction must abandon *wenyan* when its themes expand to the life of the lower class. As a general rule of the fiction narrative, a narrator is inclined to coordinate a character's voice to his or her social, gender, and self-identity; if the narrator does not speak through this filter, readers might doubt that the narrator is faithfully reporting a character's speech. In "Looking back to the Past", however, Lu Xun intentionally breaks both the specific and the general rule. We then witness how Lu Xun does not hesitate to insert highly colloquial interjections and onomatopoeias into *wenyan* constructions in characters' speech, which thus creates a stylistic inconsistency.[53]

> "长毛……*哈哈*安有是者"
>
> "Long-hairs—Ha. Ha—How can there be any Long-hairs now?"

> "八百……然安有是……*哦*殆山贼或近地之赤巾党耳"
>
> "Eight hundred" muttered Mr. Baldhead. "But how can there be so many? Oh, I see, they must be highwaymen, or perhaps, the Red-turbans in the vicinity."

> "夜渐深寂亦弥甚入耳绝无人声但有*吱吱！汪汪！汪*……"
>
> "The night gradually grew darker, and the silence became terrible. There was not a sound to be heard, except for a weird chirping and sizzling noise."

The first two excerpts are Mr. Baldhead's speech, in which the colloquial interjections and the ellipsis – another introduced form of Western writing form – greatly reduce the coherence of his analysis of the current situation and thereby satirize Mr.

[53] I italicized interjections and onomatopoeias in the Chinese origin.

Baldhead's feigned calm and confidence. The third passage is Old Wang's recollection of how he escaped the Taiping rebels' searching. The colloquial onomatopoeias that imitate the sounds of frogs and owls build suspense, thereby giving the schoolboy a chance to interrupt the narration by asking what these sounds are in the subsequent narrative. The translator must have noticed the stylistic inconsistency here and then replaced the onomatopoeias with an explanatory description in the English translation, which removes the "ungrammatical phenomenon" created by Lu Xun.

Indeed, the inextricable contradiction between *wenyan* and *baihua* suggests an incompatibility between *wenyan* and modern Chinese fiction; however, my close reading of "Looking back to the Past" illustrates Lu Xun's continuous interest in creating a modern narrator who is able to diagnose the mental disease of Chinese. Therefore, adult narrator who voices in the hidden text of "Looking back to the Past" sends out "voices of the heart" and the "one or two scholars" (*yi-er shi*).

1.3 Stylistic innovations, symbolic irony, and narrative distance in "Kuangren riji"

The Literature Revolution around 1918 completely releases Lu Xun the Enlightener from the dominance Confucian discourse and allows him unprecedented freedom to innovate Chinese writing. However, as briefly mentioned before, the language Lu Xun used to write his stories after 1918 is an unusual linguistic medium, which is intentionally created and preserved for fiction writing only. There is a wide gap between the *baihua* of Lu Xun's fiction from the "national speech of literature" proposed by Hu Shi. In 1931, the communist theorist Qu Qiubai criticized the abstruseness of May Fourth

baihua as a cultural privilege that only belonged to "the new intellectual class: the Europeanized intellectual class," because of its distance from the spoken habit of Chinese masses.[54] In spite of Lu Xun's sympathy to proletarian literature and his amiable personal relationship with Qu Qiubai, Lu Xun's *baihua* is undoubtedly among the targets of Qu Qiubai's criticism. Even for those scholars who are less concerned about the class difference, the gap between May Fourth *baihua* and spoken Chinese is still remarkable. In 1948, another May Fourth stylist Zhu Ziqing distinguished May Fourth *baihua* as a literary language from "national speech" (*guoyu*) as a spoken language:[55]

> May Fourth Movement promoted *baihua wen* as well as national speech. While *baihua wen* took the road of common speech, national speech primarily took the road of Peking dialect…*baihua wen* and national speech are surely different. *baihua wen* is rooted in different varieties of Mandarin and supplemented by Europeanized constructions, vernacular Chinese from colloquial-style prose and traditional fiction, and classical Chinese, which barely satisfies the [literary] use. However, it is too awkward to use in actual speech.

Zhu Ziqing's description of *baihua* is very similar to the "unsayable Chinese" that Chao Yuen Ren coined to describe Lu Xun and other May Fourth writers' written *baihua*, saying, "they never say in their own speech, nor intended to be sayable."[56] However, the first-person character-narrator and other characters in Lu Xun's stories do use such unsayable Chinese to communicate with each other within the fictional world and then communicate with the readers from the real world. Whether it is a coincidence or an

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[54] Qu Qiubai 瞿秋白, "Guimenguan yiwai de zhanzheng" 鬼门关以外的战争 [A battle outside the gate of hell], *Qu Qiubai wenji* (*wenxue bian*) vol.3 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1989), 147.

[55] Zhu Ziqing 朱自清, "Guoyu he putonghua" 国语和普通话 [National speech and common Speech], *Zhu Ziqing quanji* vol.4 (Changchun: Shidai wenyi chubanshe, 2000), 1677-1678.

[56] Chao Yuen Ren, *Readings in Sayable Chinese* vol. 1 (San Francisco: Asian Language Publications, 1969), p. *iv*.

intentional choice, the first character-narrator in Lu Xun's *baihua* stories is a madman. His speech is "most confused and incoherent and has many absurd statements," while the author claims in the prologue to "The Dairy of a Madman" to have faithfully transcribed the madman's words.[57] The madman narrator's absurd statements, as Edward Gunn illustrates, have three major sources: "grammatical constructions conforming to Wu regional speech, […] transposed clauses and modifiers after Euro-Japanese practice, [and] disjunctive non sequiturs and sentence fragments."[58]

Indeed, as many other southern writers, Lu Xun must rely on diction and syntax of his own dialect to supplement his inadequacy in Mandarin, especially in the first several years after the Literature Revolution. Still, Lu Xun's reliance on dialect is primarily concerned with diction but not syntax. In "Kuangren riji", words and expressions from the Wu dialect are not difficult to find:[59]

> 他们的牙齿，全是*白厉厉的*排着，这就是吃人的家伙。(KRRJ 446)
>
> Their teeth are white and glistening: they use these teeth to eat men.
>
> 吃了几筷，滑溜溜的不知是鱼是人，便把他*兜肚连肠*的吐出。(KRRJ 447)
>
> After a few mouthfuls I could not tell whether the slippery morels were fish or human flesh, so I brought it all up.

While these local words and expressions do add some stylistic oddities to the narrative, a linguistic analysis shows that these local expressions are still easily

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[57] Lu Xun 鲁迅, *Lu Xun quanji vol. 1*, 444.

[58] Edward Gunn, 96.

[59] The words and expression from Wu dialect are italicized. The English translations of Lu Xun's stories after 1918 are all from the same source. See Lu Xun, *Lu Xun Selected Works* trans. Yang Xianyi and Glady Yang (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1980).

understandable. These oddities are not unsayable even for Chinese readers not from the Wu dialect region. In fact, the two adverbial phrases quoted above make the descriptions more vivid and coherent. But some syntactic constructions from Wu dialect, which are fewer than the cases of using regional diction, can make the style odder:

> 老头子眼睛看着地，岂能*瞒得我过*。(KRRJ 450)
>
> The old man's eyes were cast down, but that did not deceive me.

In Mandarin, complement phrases are ones that follow verbs to provide additional information about the action. When a complement and an object co-occur after a verb phrase, the syntactic order should be "verb-complement-object" (VCO). And yet according to some Chinese linguists' surveys, in the Shaoxing variant of the Wu dialect - the mother tongue of Lu Xun - VOC is the dominant order, especially when the object is a pronoun.[60] Therefore, the construction in the Lu Xun sentence quoted above is VOC and not VCO, because the syntax is influenced by the author's mother tongue. And thus, the phrase "*mande wo guo*" 瞒得我过 is still a sayable one, at least for the real author Lu Xun and those who speak the Wu dialect. Moreover, it is not odd to those who are familiar with traditional vernacular fiction, because VOC constructions were once popular in pre-modern Chinese. Thus, the stylistic oddities caused by the Wu dialect do not belong to the "stylistic maze," where Lu Xun the Enlightener author "invites readers to infer truth in absurdity."[61] Only the last two linguistic oddities as declared by Edward

[60] See Sheng Yimin 盛益民 and Zhu Jialei 朱佳蕾, "Shaoxing fangyan gekaishi dongbu jiegou de jufa biaoxian yu yuyi xianzhi" 绍兴方言隔开式动补结构的句法表现与语义限制 [On the Syntax and Semantics of Split Resultatives of Shaoxing Dialect in Zhejiang Province], *Dialect* 2020 (03) (2020): 311-320.

[61] Edward Gunn, 96.

Gunn - Europeanized constructions and disjunctive non sequiturs - deserve a detailed analysis.

In “A Madman’ Diary”, a very prominent Europeanized practice is the extensive use of the particle “*de*” 的, that Chao Yuen Ren called the “marker of explicit modification.”[62] In my view, this particle contributes most to the tension between the innovated and conventional writing, which consequently leads readers into deeper thinking. While the particle *de* has existed in vernacular Chinese since the tenth century, *de* diversified into serval different written forms after the influence of English and other European languages in the May Fourth era. For instance, it is written as 底 for “of” or “-’s”, 地 for “-ly”, and 的 for other usage.[63] Although these particles are uniformly written as 的 in “Kuangren riji,” Lu Xun the Enlightener does creatively use them as a remedy for imprecise and illogical Chinese syntax, departing from spoken and written conventions. For instance, in the following case, the particle *de* marks an adverbial construction:

> 还有七八个人交头接耳*的*议论我。(KRRJ 445)
>
> There were seven or eight others who discussed me in a whisper.

As Wang Li has pointed out, it was unusual to use a verb phrase marked by *de* like

[62] Chao Yuen Ren, *A Grammar of Spoken Chinese*, 303.

[63] See Chao Yuen Ren, *A Grammar of Spoken Chinese*, 303 and Lü Shuxiang 吕叔湘, *Yufa xiuci jianghua* 语法修辞讲话 [Talks on grammar and rhetoric] (Shenyang: Liaoning jiaoyu chuban she, 2002), 69.

"*jiaotoujie'er de*" 交头接耳的 (whisper to each other) as an adverbial modifier in Chinese before the May Fourth era.[64] If we deleted the particle *de* and broke up the original sentence into two clauses as "*Haiyou qiba ge ren jiaotoujie'er, yilun zhe wo*" 还有七八个人交头接耳，议论着我 (Seven or eight others whisper to each other and discus me), it would be more sayable and less Europeanized. In more cases, the particle *de* marks nominal modifiers used as pre-posed attributives as:

> 那女人"咬你几口"*的*话，和一伙青面獠牙人*的*笑，和前几天佃户*的*话，明明全是暗号。(KRRJ 446)
>
> The woman's "eat you," the laughter of those long-toothed people with livid faces, and the tenant's story the other day are obviously secret signs.

While an attributive explicitly marked by "*de*" itself is not a new construction, the excessive use of "*de*" plus the conjunction "*he*" 和 (and), as seen in the case above, forms a lengthy subject which makes the whole sentence less sayable. However, the cases of Europeanized practice mentioned above do not break the rules of Chinese sentences, though these sentences are rather distanced from spoken habits. In other words, they are less sayable but not completely ungrammatical. Nowadays, Chinese readers have taken these Europeanized constructions for granted as a part of the Chinese language, though readers can intuitively perceive the literary tone of these constructions. As Wang Li has pointed out, "The Chinese language can enrich itself by borrowing foreign grammar constructions, because it's grammar allows the possibilities of generating such

[64] See Wang Li 王力, *Zhongguo xiandai yufa*, 350-351.

constructions. Such a borrowing absorbs [constructions from foreign languages] while not assimilating [to them]"[65]

In "A Madman's Diary", I find three stylistic extremes concerned with the particle "*de*". These peculiarities are so far from Chinese syntactic conventions, that these extremes cannot be understood linguistically and must be accounted for literarily. After the madman realizes that all the people around him wanted to eat him, and after he suddenly understands the cannibalistic nature of Chinese history at a midnight, the servant brings him a meal the next morning which frightens him. The passage reads:[66]

> (1) 早上，我静坐了一会。(2) 陈老五送进饭来，(3) 一碗菜，(4)一碗蒸鱼；**(5)这鱼的眼睛，(6)白而且硬，(7)张着嘴，(8)同那一伙想吃人的人一样。**(9)吃了几筷，(10)滑溜溜的不知是鱼是人，(11)便把他兜肚连肠的吐出。(KRRJ 447)
>
> In the morning I sat quietly for some time. Old Chen brough in lunch. One bowl of vegetable, one bowl of steamed fish. The eyes of the fish were white and hard, and its mouth was open just like those people who want to eat human beings. After a few mouthfuls I could not tell the slippery morsels were fish or human flesh, so I brought it all up.

Yang Xianyi and Glady Yang's translation eliminates semantic ambiguity from clause (5) to (8) in Lu Xun's original text and makes it a more coherent description. In Chinese, both the nominal phrase, "*zhe yu yanjing*" 这鱼眼睛, with implicit modification or the phrase, "*zhe yu de yanjin*" 这鱼的眼睛, with explicit modification can be translated as "the eyes of the fish". However, the one with implicit modification allows a loose

[65] See Wang Li 王力, *Wang Li wenji* 王力文集 [Anthology of Wang Li] vol. 16 (Jinan: Shangdong jiaoyu chubanshe, 1990), 289.

[66] For the convenience of analysis, I numbered each clause and bolded the ungrammatical ones.

subject-predicate relationship with the verb phrase that follows, which is known as a topic-comment structure in Chinese:

> 这鱼, 眼睛白而且硬。
>
> The fish, the eyes are white and hard.

In this topic-comment sentence, "*zheyu*" 这鱼 (the fish) is the subject being discussed while "*yanjing bai erqie ying*" 眼睛白而且硬 (eyes are white and hard) serves as the speaker's comment on the subject. Moreover, the topic noun "*zheyu*" can cast its dominance to more than one comment clause without showing up again. Therefore, the topic and the comment clauses that follow form a topic chain, which is a common construction in *wenyan* and in spoken Chinese. Thus, a fluent description of the fish in sayable Chinese should be:

> 这鱼, 眼睛白而且硬, 张着嘴, 同那一伙想吃人的人一样。
>
> The fish, the eyes are white and hard, with the mouth open, just like those people who want to eat human beings.

However, the addition of the particle *de* in Lu Xun's text makes the loose subject-predicate relationship or the topic-comment relationship impossible. Clause (5) and Clause (7) make an illogical statement:

> * 这鱼的眼睛, 张着嘴。
>
> * The eyes of the fish open its mouth.

While the use of *de* seemingly reinforces the relation of possession between "fish" and "eyes", it confuses the referents in the following statements. A remedy to such confusion, may be adopted by following May Fourth writers, is to designate a subject in each

following clause. A well-established Europeanized cluster of sentences should therefore be:

> 这鱼的眼睛白而且硬。它张着嘴。它同那伙想吃人的人一样。
>
> The eyes of the fish are white and hard. Its mouth is open. It looks like the people who want to eat human beings.

In summary, the stylistic jumble of "Kuangren riji" is not caused by a Europeanized practice alone. It is also significantly affected by the tension between Lu Xun's stylistic innovations in new *baihua* and adherence to traditional writing in *wenyan*. On the one hand, he extensively uses the particle *de* as the marker of explicit modification, suggesting the influence of European languages; on the other hand, he also uses a lot of subjectless clauses that conform to the loose *wenyan* syntax. It is this stylistic tension that makes the madman's words absurd and incoherent. Behind the madman, the first-person narrator, it is Lu Xun the Enlightener-Author who intentionally directs the reader's attention to "the eyes of the fish." By using the particle *de*, the eyes in the story are not a common detailed description but a recurrent imagery with nuanced meaning related to human-eating.

Without any pre-narration, the first entry of the madman's diary abruptly ends in two fragmented sentences: "Otherwise, why should the Zhao's dog have looked at me twice? I have reason for my fear." Zhang Lihua argues that,

> In "A Madman's Diary", the Zhao's dog is not merely an object passively depicted. It forms a reversable 'gazing/being gazed' relationship between the madman…and the madman's suspicion that he would be eaten grows with the increase of different gazes and is always concerned with the imagery of eyes.[67]

[67] Zhang Lihua 张丽华, 191-192.

Afterward, the descriptions of the eyes of Mr. Zhao, the passersby, the doctor-executioner, the hyena, and even the madman's brother all refer to the creepy gaze of different man-eaters, as well as that of the fish's eyes in the incoherent passage mentioned above. This intentionally created referential confusion, which is actualized by conflicting syntactic constructions, blurs the boundary between the fish being eaten and the madman eating the fish. As a result, the men who are eaten are identical to those who eat human beings. Edward Gunn uses the term "leitmotif" to refer to recurrent imagery. He argues that this leitmotif is Lu Xun's primary tool in "A Madman's Diary" to help readers to discover alternative inferences hiding in the author's stylistic maze.[68]

Another stylistic oddity with the particle *de* is the nominal phrase "*chiren de ren*" 吃 人的人 (people who eat human beings). It is not awkward syntactically but phonologically. The repetition of the word "*ren*" 人 (people) in this phrase makes it difficult to say aloud. Interestingly, in the 1925 essay "Some Notions Jotted down by Lamplight" (*Dengxia manbi* 灯下漫笔), which also discusses cannibalism, Lu Xun uses the phrase "*shirenzhe*" 食人者 (man-eater). While "*shirenzhe*" is a *wenyan* construction, it is more sayable than "*chiren de ren*" and becomes the common word that refers to man-eater in today's Chinese language. "*chiren de ren*" is another case of stylistic innovation of *baihua* reserved for fiction writing only. The phonological disharmony is exacerbated when the phrase "*chiren de ren*" is recursively used to modify another nominal phrase with particle *de,* as in the following case:

(1) 吃人的是我哥哥。

[68] See Edward Gunn, 96-97.

(2) 我是吃人的人的兄弟。
(3) 我自己被人吃了，可是仍然是吃人的人的兄弟。 (KRRJ 448)

The eater of human flesh is my elder brother!
I am the younger brother of an eater of human flesh!
I, who will be eaten by others, am the younger brother of an eater of human flesh!

Again, Lu Xun the Enlightener-Author does not hesitate to irritate his reader by using cumbersome sentences. He is pestering the audience to realize the horrible fact that each Chinese individual is the one who eats human beings and, at the same time, is the one eaten by others. Undoubtedly, the awkward phrase "*chiren de ren*", which uses the same word "*ren*" twice, emphasizes the fact that the doer of human-eating is identical to the undergoer of the same behavior.

The third stylistic oddity of the particle *de* in "A Madman's Diary" intensifies the tension between May Fourth *baihua* and *wenyan*. In arguing with his elder brother, the madman attempts to preach evolutionary theory to him. The madman says:

(1) 这吃人的人比不吃人的人, 何等惭愧。 (2) 怕比虫子的惭愧猴子, 还差得很远很远。(KRRJ 452)

When those who eat men compare themselves with those who don't, how ashamed they must be. Probably much more ashamed than the reptiles are before monkeys.

The phrase "chongzi de cankui houzi" 虫子的惭愧猴子 (the reptiles' shame in front of monkeys) in sentence (2) is almost incomprehensible, not to mention unsayable, because Lu Xun borrows a *wenyan* construction and replaces its words with *baihua* counterparts. The sound *wenyan* phrase should read, "*chongzi zhi kuiyu houzi*" 虫子之愧于猴子 (the reptiles' shame in front of monkeys), in which the insertion of particle "*zhi*" 之 according to Wang Li, relegates a complete sentence to a nominal phrase. However,

the particle *de* in *baihua* does not have the same grammatical function as the particle *zhi* in *wenyan*. Therefore, the simple replacement results in an incomprehensible sentence, which linguistically represents the madman's absurdity. However, in revisiting the scene where the madman attempts to convince his brother of the apparent evil and inhumanity of eating people, we find that the madman, the first-person character narrator, conveys the only "voice of the heart." This voice is in opposition to the "malevolent voices" conveyed through comprehensible sentences from the people around him. Like the archaic words in "Silence" and the awkward sentences in "Looking back to the Past", the unsayable or even ungrammatical sentences here are additional intentional oddities for the sake of the reader's enlightenment.

These stylistic innovations in "A Madman's Diary" lead us to consider a greater authorial purpose - that is, how they shape the art of Lu Xun's fiction. The contradiction between the truth of eating people uncovered by the madman, and the absurd language used to convey such truth, creates irony. As Patrick Hanan has astutely pointed out, "irony is the first, perhaps the most pronounced, feature of Lu Xun's fiction."[69] According to Hanan's definition, that "irony is the technique for raising or lowering something in audience's estimation,"[70] it is obvious that the madman himself, as the object of irony, is intellectually and morally raised over other spiritually numb characters

[69] Patrick Hanan, "The Technique of Lu Xun's Fiction", *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol. 34 (1974): 80.

[70] Ibid.,78.

and even most Chinese readers. Hanan says that in "A Madman's Diary", "a systematic symbolism is applied ironically".[71]

In my view, both the systematic symbolism and the irony is actualized through Lu Xun the Enlightener-Author's manipulation of the madman's voice. The madman talks about his experiences in a chaotic tone, full of conflicting syntactic constructions. The madman speaks neither *wenyan* nor *baihua*, nor any other regional speech of Chinese. In this sense, Lu Xun expels the narrator from all spoken Chinese language communities. What the madman presents to the readers is no longer grounded on realistic soil. For instance, the description of the steamed fish in a string of awkward clauses does not aim to tell readers what the madman actually ate for the breakfast. Instead, it symbolically refers to the fact that Chinese eat each other. While stylistic extremes like the description of the fish are numerical minorities, they greatly destroy the long-established agreement between the signified and the signifiers. In effect, even some daily conversations in "A Madman's Diary", which are completely represented in sayable Chinese, cannot be understood in the common way. For instance, the mother's curse on her son "*Laozi ya, wo yao yaoni jikou cai chuqi.*" 老子呀, 我要咬你几口才出气" (Little devil, I have to bite you a few times to relieve my anger) and the doctor's comfort to the madman "*Buyao luanxiang, jingjingde yang jitian, jiuhaole.*" 不要乱想, 静静的养几天, 就好了" (don't let the imagination run away with you. Rest a few days quietly, and you will be better) disturbingly allude to cannibalism. Everyone who seems to speak normally actually behaves abnormally, and the madman is the only one that reveals these facts, underlined

[71] Ibid., 80.

through an unsayable language. This is how the systematic symbolism is applied ironically.

The stylistic oddities also have a significant influence on the narrative distance in "A Madman's Diary". Wayne Booth has a simple but clear explanation of "distance" in fiction:[72]

> In any reading experience there is an implied dialogue among author, narrator, the other characters, and the reader. Each of the four can range, in relation to each of the others, from identification to complete opposition, on any axis of value, moral, intellectual, aesthetic and even physical.

The distance between the implied author and the readers in "A Madman's Diary" is rather complicated. For those readers who are willing to enter Lu Xun's stylistic maze, they consciously or unconsciously acknowledge the moral and intellectual superiority of the implied author who is incarnated through the first-person narrator. For the self-deprecating readers, reading "A Madman's Diary" certainly begins as an unpleasant experience due to the challenging style and language. It is worth noting that such uncomfortable reading is greatly, if not completely, diluted in any translations. Therefore, it is a unique experience only for Chinese-speaking readers, especially the readers during Lu Xun's time. Still, the distance they feel between themselves, and the implied author will rapidly decrease, as they find the astonishing cannibalistic truth beneath the twisted language. A moral or even aesthetic consonance aroused within them makes them feel sympathy for the madman, and then themselves, and then the entire Chinese nation. At the same time, intellectually, the distance between the implied author and the readers will

[72] Wayne Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, 155.

only increase, because the readers cannot help considering Lu Xun the Enlightener-Author to be a prophet-like figure as the story's moral is revealed. In fact, almost all thirteen entries of the diary end up with an epigram, which contributes to the same stylistic maze but in a different style than the unsayable constructions. For instance, the last sentence of the story "*Jiujiu haizi*" 救救孩子 (Save the children!), which has become an icon of modern Chinese literature, is a simple and straightforward appeal.

The unsayable sentences that appear in characters' conversations in "A Madman's Diary" also impact the distance among different characters, as well as the distance between the implied author and readers. Lu Xun prefers symbolism and therefore is not overly concerned about the credible quotation of characters. Right before the madman realizes that his elder brother is also a man-eater, they exchange a common greeting:

> 大哥说 "今天你仿佛很好。" 我说"是的。" 大哥说, "今天请何先生来给你诊一诊。" 我说 "可以！" (KRRJ 447)

> "You seem very well today," said my brother.
> "Yes," said I.
> "I have invited Mr. He here today to examine you."
> "All right," I replied.

In the Chinese original, "Jintian ni fangfu henghao" 今天你仿佛很好 (You seem very well today) is not sayable because of the linking verb "*fangfu*" (seem), which is excessively formal and literary between siblings. The stylistically conflicting sentence turns a simple greeting into a conspiracy that the elder brother is planning to eat his younger brother. The apparent emotional detachment between the siblings is reinforced when the madman reticently responds. Here, Lu Xun the Enlightener-Author does not intend to present a verisimilar conversation; instead, he wants to depict the elder brother

as a symbol of the heartless man-eater. Using unsayable words in small talk between family members can also be found in Lu Xun's other stories. In "Medicine", Old Shuang's wife's inquiry of her son's condition is presented in an unsayable sentence as well:

> 华大妈跟着他走，轻轻的问道，“小栓，你好些么？——你仍旧只是肚饿？”(YAO 468)
>
> His mother, hovering over him, asked softly.
> "Do you feel better, son? Still as hungry as ever?"

The adverb "*rengjiu*" 仍旧 (still), seldom used in spoken Chinese, causes a stylistic disharmony. Lu Xun inserts words of the intellectual class into the speech of lower-class characters, intervening as the intellectual narrator. As a result, the mother's inquiry about the dying son's condition turns out to be a satirized nonsense. The implied author wants to direct the reader's attention to the spiritual numbness of the mother but her maternal love. The brotherhood in "Kuangren riji" and the mother-child relationship in "Medicine" are estranged when the narrator imposes unsayable Chinese onto their conversations. In this way, Lu Xun the Enlightener-Author criticizes Confucian ethics and widens the distance between the implied author and his characters. This is how the so-called "criticism on Chinese national character" (*guomin xing pipan*) is actualized on the language level of Lu Xun's fiction.

Chapter 2: Shi Zhecun: A Modernist's Excursion and Return

2.1 Becoming a "Third Category Man" and "the return of the prodigal son"

In the *Complete Works of Shi Zhecun* published in 2010, there is a collection of short stories entitled *the Collection of Creative Writing in the Decade* (*Shinian chuangzuo ji* 十年创作集). "The decade" indicates the period when Shi Zhecun was dedicated to fiction writing from 1926 to 1935 known as a modernist writer. The beginning and termination of Shi Zhecun's fiction writing illustrates how the struggle among dominant discourses constructed and transformed an individual writer who belonged to the second generation of the May Fourth writers. Born in 1905 and raised in a well-to-do family in the outskirt of Shanghai, Shi Zhecun was immersed in education of both new culture and traditional literature from a very young age. He began to learn English, read new literary magazines like *New Youth* and *Short Story Monthly* (*Xiaoshuo yuebao* 小说月报), and get access to Western literature in middle school. In earlier years, he also received solid training in the field of classical literature and was obsessed with classical poems. As early as1922, he began to publish stories on *Saturday* (*Libailiu* 礼拜六), a literary magazine of the Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School (*yuanyang hudie pai*) considered continuation of the old vernacular fiction in the modern era.

He stopped sending manuscripts to *Saturday* because he became aware of the

insurmountable differences between the Butterfly School and new literature.[1] In 1926, he contributed the best short story in his early years, "Lanterns on Lantern Festival" (*Shangyuan deng* 上元灯), to a journal started by him with two classmates. In 1928, two years later, he published a collection of stories in the same name and claimed that it was his first monograph, though he had published two before.[2] At the same year, he felt that he was finally accepted by the society of new literature after publishing another short story "Juanzi" (娟子) on *Short Story Monthly* to which he had feared to submit manuscripts before. Apparently, Shi Zhecun was highly sensitive to the rapid rise of May Fourth discourse and cannot resist the temptation of joining the promising literary campaign, though he did not drastically reject either the moral or the taste of traditional Chinese literature, which is significantly different from Lu Xun. Compared to Lu Xun the Enlightener who held a nationalistic stance in front of the advanced West and the backward China, Shi Zhecun chose to become a cosmopolitan writer aiming to catch up the contemporary Western literature with less consideration of the backward China in reality.[3]

Leo Ou-fan Lee and Shu-mei Shih have astutely revealed how the semicolonial Shanghai shaped the subjectivity or interiority of the cosmopolitan Shanghainese writers like Shi Zhecun. Different from most cases of the colonized in other regions, Leo Lee

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[1] See Shi Zhecun 施蛰存, "Wode chuangzuo shenghuo zhi licheng" 我的创作生活之历程 [The journey of my writing career], *Shi Zhecun quanji* vol. 2 (Shanghai: Huadong shifan daxue chubanshe, 2010), 232.

[2] See Shi Zhecun 施蛰存, "Shangyuandeng zaiban zixu" 《上元灯》再版自序 [Self-preface to the revised version of lanterns on lantern festival], *Shi Zhecun quanji* vol. 1, 622.

[3] See Shu-mei Shih, *The Lure of the Modern: Writing Modernism in Semicolonial China 1917-1937* (Berkley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2001), 248.

argues, Shanghainese writers seldom conceived themselves "as serving in any way as the colonized 'other' to a real or imagined Western colonial master", though they were "among the most 'Westernized' in their lifestyle and intellectual predilections."[4] Shu-mei Shih continues to make distinction between "the metropolitan West (Western culture in the West) and the colonial West (the culture of Western colonizers in China)." Shi Zhecun's excellent proficiency in foreign languages, cultural immersion in serval missionary colleges, and extraordinary familiarity with Western literary texts, both Lee and Shih mentioned, formed the basis of his imagination of the metropolitan West and helped filter the undesirable realities from the semicolonial Shanghai in his fiction. Shu-mei Shih, therefore, describes what illustrated in Shi Zhecun's stories as "an intertextually mediated interiority" and argues, it "subverts the real and substitutes for the real".[5] Leo Lee also reveals the intertextual nature through a close reading of Shi's psychoanalysis story "Demonic Way" (*Modao* 魔道). In the story, there is a detailed list of supernatural Western books specifically made by the first-person character-narrator. For Leo Lee, making such list is "close to a postmodern view of literature's self-referentiality"[6], which differentiates Shi Zhecun the Modernist from the followers of May Fourth rationality who endeavored to represent realities through literature. Instead, titles of Western books constituted substance of Shi Zhecun's stories and the interiority of his characters and the therefore the writer himself.

[4] Leo Ou-fan Lee, *Shanghai Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 309.

[5] Shu-mei Shih, 339-340.

[6] Leo Lee, *Shanghai Modern*, 181.

Besides Westernized education and reading experience, semicolonial Shanghai also provided an appropriate material context which actualized Shi Zhecun's literary dream. From 1926 Shi Zhecun started several literary journals like *Trackless Train* (*Wugui dianche* 无轨电车), *La Nouvelle Littérature* (*Xinwenyi* 新文艺) in collaboration with his close friends Dai Wangshu and Liu Na'ou. Meanwhile, they also started serval bookstores one after another to publish collections of original stories, theoretical works, and translated Western-Japanese fiction. While these startups were constantly bothered by budget instability, political censorship, and finally devastated by Japanese bombardment in January 1932, they gathered a small group of Shanghainese intellectuals and writers who were dedicated to literature only for a literary end. Indeed, Shi Zhecun contributed his avant-garde stories with an emphasis on psychoanalysis to mainstream magazines like *Short Story Monthly*. The magazines and bookstores operated by Shi and his small circle allowed them freedom to introduce and practice foreign literature only following their own interest. Influenced by Feng Xuefeng, a communist critic, they wrote a series of essays introducing proletarian literature from Soviet Union. Inspired by Liu Na'ou, a Taiwan-born, Japan-educated avant-garde writer, they introduced the works of Japanese writers like Riichi Yokomitsu, Yasunari Kawabata, and Jun'ichirō Tanizaki and were therefore known as the school of Chinese Neo-Sensationism (*xinganjue pai*) for the practice of non-realistic and non-rational literature.

Finally, in May 1932 Shi Zhecun became the editor-in-chief of a much more influential literary magazine *Les Contemporaines* (*Xiandai* 现代), whose owner Zhang Jinglu "wanted to find an editor for his journal who had no pronounced ideological

sympathies."[7] In the "Inaugural Editorial" on the first issue, Shi Zhecun maintained that *Les Contemporaines* was not a magazine operated by any literary circle but a general literary magazine for "all who love literature".[8] As its title reveals, the magazine focused on introducing modernist literature and literary theories from the West. The magazine also published the experimental works of Chinese modernist writers, like Shi Zheyun. We now see this group of avant-garde authors who wrote for *Les Contemporaines* as the earliest Chinese modernists. Leo Lee argues, "more than any other literary journal, *Les Contemporaines* was a product of Shanghai's evolving urban culture"[9] which relied on physical environment and facilities like cinemas, bookstores, printing houses, shopping malls and so on. In this sense, Chinese modernism was rooted in a different literary soil from that of May Fourth Enlightenment. Like Lu Xun the Enlightener-translator who began his own literary revolution with translation, Shi Zhecun also attached importance to translation when editing his magazine. However, different from Lu Xun's "hard translation" aimed to innovate Chinese mind, literature, and language,

> For Shi and his friends, translation was indeed a creative act involving little concern for the possible "betrayal" of the meaning and worth of the original in order to set a new literary fashion with which to defy established conventions in Chinese literature, both past and present.[10]

Leo Lee astutely illustrates the ambitious literary enterprise of Shi Zhecun, which

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[7] Ibid., 131.

[8] Shi Zhecun 施蛰存, "Xiandai zayi" 《现代》杂忆 [Miscellaneous memories of *Les Contemporaines*], Shi Zhecun quanji vol. 2, 273.

[9] Leo Lee, *Shanghai Modern*,144.

[10] Ibid.,146.

was not only to challenge the "past" established convention, that is, Confucian discourse, but also the "present" established convention, that is, May Fourth discourse. As a result, Shi Zhecun and his fellow modernists inevitably got involved into the ideological dispute after being labelled as a literary circle, no matter how hard he tried to avoid. While the Western concessions in Shanghai provided an ideal soil for Chinese modernism to grow, from 1927 the modernists were confronted with increasing pressure from either the KMT regime which implemented a conservative cultural policy nationwide and took harsh repression against leftist intellectuals or the CCP-dominated "League of Left-Wing Writers" which, in effect, controlled the cultural affairs of Shanghai. Stuck between the two overwhelming powers, Shi Zhecun and his friends were therefore labelled as "Third Category Men" (*disanzhong ren*).

From October 1932 to October 1933, *Les Contemporaines* published a series of articles regarding a debate on purpose of literature from both sides – the modernists and the leftists. "Third Category Men" argued for pure literature free from political interference caused by bourgeoisie-proletariat confrontation. On the contrary, leftists denied the possibility of any literature that can transcend class. Lu Xun, the spiritual leader of leftists, criticized the naivete of the "Third Category" writers in a satirical tone,

> To live in a class society yet to be a writer who transcends classes, to live in a time of wars yet to leave the battlefield and stand alone, to live in the present yet to write for the future — this is sheer fantasy. There are no such men in real life. To try to be such a man is like trying to raise yourself from the ground by tugging your own hair — it can't be done.[11]

Qu Qiubai, who assumed the leadership of the League of Left-Wing Writers in the

[11] Lu Xun, "On the Third Category", *Lu Xun Selected Works*, vol. 3, 190.

early 1930s, reprimanded those claimed freedom of literature in a more assertive tone,

> In a class society, there is not real and substantial freedom. When proletariat demand literature as the instrument of struggle, those who jumped out to shout "don't intervene literature and art" inadvertently repeated "art first" as a phonograph for the hypocrite bourgeoisie.

While as the editor-in-chief Shi Zhecun stayed neutral in the debate and reserved space for criticism from the leftist campaign in his magazine, he seemed to be "deeply wounded by the adverse criticism from the left, which caused him eventually to abandon his fictional experiments with the Freudian unconscious."[12] In additional to financial problems, Shi Zhecun resigned from *Les Contemporaines* by the end of 1934 and the journal came to end the next year. The full-scale outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937 uprooted the vulnerable Chinese modernism from the soil of semicolonial Shanghai. Shi Zhecun migrated to Yunnan province and took a teaching position there. Although he still published several stories and wrote essays and poems, Shi Zhecun the Modernist never returned to the literary world. The stories he wrote from the late 1930s converted to the realistic and traditional stance regarding either theme or form, which in Shi Zhecun's own words was "the return of the prodigal son" (*langzi huitou* 浪子回头).[13] Later, the first generation of Chinese modernists were forgotten until the mid-1980s when China was reopened to the West.

Shi Zhecun's transformation from an imitator of Butterfly School to a follower of May Fourth Enlightenment, and then becoming a Shanghainese modernist and being forced to convert to realism and traditional writing undoubtedly had a significant impact

[12] Leo Lee, *Shanghai Modern*,148.
[13] See Shu-mei Shih, 347.

on the style of his stories. Regarding the stories written by Shi Zhecun the modernist, critics and scholars have noticed the modernist techniques that Shi Zhecun learned from Western predecessors. However, they do not always agree with each other on which specific techniques Shi Zhecun employed in his psychoanalysis stories. Shu-mei Shih argues that "Shi Zhecun refers to the formal practice of interior monologue and stream of consciousness by such diverse authors as Jean Cocteau, James Joyce, Colette, Raymond Radiguet, and Yokomitsu Riichi."[14] But, Leo Lee considers that "instead of employing Joyce's famous technique of stream of consciousness (of which he was aware), Shi experiments with two other devices: interior monologue and free indirect discourse."[15] However, according to my close reading of Shi Zhecun's stories, I found that I was very difficult to make such a general conclusion of how modernist techniques being used in his stories. Sometimes, even in one story, there is a subtle change of using modernist techniques because of the irreconcilable contradiction between modern interiority and what a Chinese character can think about. In other words, these are occasions that Shi Zhecun was stuck between Western modernism and Chinese realism. Therefore, we must be very cautious to discriminate what modernist techniques Shi Zhecun claimed that he used from what scholars argued that he used and from what he in fact used in his narratives. The actualization of these techniques was subject to Shi Zhecun's understanding and practice of Chinese language, which was formative and transformative

[14] Ibid., 359.
[15] Leo Lee, *Shanghai Modern*,164.

too as his conceptualization of literature. I will focus on analysis of the tension between these modernist techniques and Chinese language in the rest part of this chapter.

2.2 Interior monologue in Shi's historical tales

After 1928, Shi Zhecun published four historical tales in a short period: "Kumarajiva" (*Jiumoluoshi* 鸠摩罗什) in 1929, "The General's Head" (*Jiangjun di tou* 将军底头) in 1930, "Shi Xiu" (石秀) and "Princess Ah Lan" (*A Lan Gongzhu* 阿襤公主) in 1931, which were later complied into a collection entitled, *The General's Head*. While all four stories are adapted from preexisting historical records or fiction, they each emphasize the characters' psyche, rather than a dramatic plot. In the preface to the collection, Shi Zhecun reminds his contemporary reader of the psychanalytic features of the stories:

> "Kumarajiva" is depicting a conflict between [Buddhist] Dao and love; 'The General's Head' is a conflict between race and love'. As for 'Shi Xiu', I attempt to concentrate on showing the psychology of sexual desire. The last piece, 'Princess Ah Lan' is simply to recount a lovely story."[16]

Apparently, Shi Zhecun uses euphemisms to circumvent potential moral criticism against his erotic stories. Love in "Kumarajiva" and "The General's Head" is entangled with unquenchable sexual desire. And the psychology of sexual desire in "Shi Xiu" has an obvious sadistic and misogynistic tendency. While representation of abnormal psychology in "Princess Ah Lan" is less direct than in the previous stories, it is also

[16] Shi Zhecun 施蛰存, *Shi Zhecun quanji* vol.1, 623.

concerned with an irreconcilable inner conflict "between Eros and racial/national allegiance," as Shu-mei Shih indicates. [17]

On the one hand, representation of the characters' abnormal psychology in a historical setting can be viewed as a pragmatical compromise "to pursue the theme of eroticism without the need for verisimilitude or fear of moral censure," as Leo Ou-fan Lee points out.[18] After all, for readers and critics at that time in the 1930s, orthodox literature was supposed to artistically reflect reality, and open discussion of the perverted conscious and unconscious was not encouraged. On the other hand, Shi's psycho-historical stories can also be considered an ambitious form of experimental writing, aiming to discover modern interiority in well-known historical figures in traditional fiction and historical records. Shu-mei Shih argues, "History is here 'modernized' and made ahistorical…it brings the past to the present in present terms, thereby reviving the past but also negating the historicity of that past."[19] Indeed, male protagonists in Shi Zhecun's stories appear to have a much more sophisticated mind than their previous images in the original records. In other words, they speak, think, and behave like modern people, not ones from the past.

"Interior monologue" (IM) is frequently mentioned as a stylistic feature of Shi Zhecun's fiction by scholars such as Leo Lee, Shu-mei Shih, and William Schaefer. Shi Zhecun once stated that he had learned the narrative technique of interior monologue from Austrian novelist, Arthur Schnitzler, when he translated Schnitzler's fiction from

[17] Shu-mei Shih, 364.
[18] Leo Lee, 156.
[19] Shu-mei Shih, 362.

English and French to Chinese from the late 1920s to the early 1930s as Shi Zhecun was writing his own psychoanalytical stories.[20] Leo Lee maintains that, "the Schnitzlerian interior monologue in Shi's fiction incorporates dialogue, characterization, and plot into one sustained interior narration".[21] In Shu-mei Shih's analysis of "Kumarajiva", she argues that, "the bulk of Shi's story is rendered in indirect interior monologues." [22] However, neither Leo Lee nor Shu-mei Shih provides enough evidence to show how IMs are transmitted in Shi's stories. If we return to the concepts of IM defined by different narratologists, we will find most alleged IMs in these four stories are too heavily influenced by the narrator to be considered characters' monologues.

IM is defined by quoting characters' thoughts in fiction. There are four basic types of quotation: direct discourse (DD), indirect discourse (ID), free indirect discourse (FID), and free direct discourse (FDD).[23] DD or ID has an introductory clause like, "he thinks" preceding the quotation, which suggests the whole statement is a narrative report made by the narrator. But a narrator's intervention in characters' consciousness is stronger in an ID like "*John thought that he had been unfairly treated"* than in a DD, "*John thought 'I was unfairly treated.'* This is because an ID does not guarantee that it conveys John's exact and sincere thought. FID and FDD feel much less authorial intervention because of the lack of introductory clauses.

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[20] Shi acknowledged Schnitzler's influence on him without reservation and considered him as the precursor of modernist writers like Joyce and D. H. Lawrence. See Shu-mei Shi, 360.

[21] Leo Ou-fan Lee, 167.

[22] Shu-mei Shih, 363.

[23] The term "discourse" here is synonymous with "speech", "quotation", or "style" used by different scholars. I chose "discourse" because it can refer to either characters' spoken or unspoken words, and at the same time, it suggests the linguistic nature of thought.

IM as a modernist narrative technique is found in the frequent use of free discourses in the works of James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, and other modernist writers since the nineteenth century. Robert Humphrey makes a distinction between direct and indirect IM. He defines direct IM as "[a] type of interior monologue which is represented with negligible author interference and with no auditor assumed." [24] According to this definition, DD and ID are excluded from the representations of direct IM, because an introductory clause always suggests direct authorial interference. Seymour Chatman presents a stricter definition by creating an equation, "direct free style = interior monologue." [25] For him, the narrator's role in an IM is reduced to a stenographer and mind-reader, "but no more than that. There is no interpretation."[26] Chatman also provides three obligatory formal features to identify IM in English: 1) self-reference by first-person pronoun (if used); 2) present verb tense; 3) and deletion of quotation marks, and a supplementary feature: fragmentary syntax.[27] It is worth noting that due to the flexibility of Chinese syntax and the lack of verb tense in Chinese grammar, fragmentary syntax is more important to notice in identifying IM in Chinese than in European languages. Moreover, when Chinese writers learned IM from European modernist novels, they consciously imitated or unconsciously acquired a European tone. When this European tone is applied to Chinese characters' IMs, their monologues do not sound like their own

[24] Robert Humphrey, *Stream of Consciousness in the Modern Novel* (Berkeley and Los Angles: California University Press, 1958), 25.

[25] See, Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure of Fiction and Film*, 181.

[26] Ibid., 182.

[27] Ibid., 185.

voices, but something imposed by the author. Thus, the difficulty of actualizing IM in Chinese fiction is often underestimated by critics and the May Fourth modernist writers themselves. Without concrete syntactic and lexical analysis of a character's language and without relating the language to the character's social identity in the story, it is risky to argue whether an author successfully incorporates IMs in a narrative or not.

In indirect IM, as argued by Humphrey, "an omniscient author presents unspoken material as if it were directly from the consciousness of a character and, with commentary and description, guides the reader through it." [28] Seymour Chatman uses "narrated monologue" to refer to this type of IM and relates it to FID. The opening sentences of James Joyce's *Eveline* is considered an exemplary case of indirect IM by Chatman. I have italicized two phrases in the following passage to show the difference between narrator's and character's voice,

> [1] She sat at the window watching the *evening invade the avenue*. [2] Her head was leaned against the window curtains and in her nostrils was the odor of dusty cretonne.[3] She was tired. [4] Few people passed. [5] The man *out of* the last house passed on his way home…

Chatman argues that [5] is the protagonist Eveline's voice, though it seems to be said by the narrator from the third-person perspective. What leads Chatman to such argument is the prepositional phrase, "out of." For him, it is a class dialect form of *from*, which is a linguistic mark of the underprivileged character Eveline, who is from a poor worker's family in Dublin. The narrator who is able to say, "evening invades the avenue," is from a different social class. The James Joyce passage successfully blends the

[28] Robert Humphrey, 29-30.

character's colloquial language with a narrator's literary language. This creates a feeling of empathy, through which it seems that the narrator's consciousness slides into the character's consciousness. In this sense, it is a sound IM; however, when this story is translated to Chinese, FID will become unrecognizable because the past tense and the class dialectal tone conveyed by "out of," will be lost in translation. For the same reason, when we investigate IM in Shi Zhecun's stories, whether the IM is direct or indirect, we must rely on the Chinese originals and not the translated texts. William Schaefer's analysis of the IMs in"Shi Xiu", a story adapted from Chapter 45 and 46 of *Water Margin* (*Shuihu zhuan*) is therefore unreliable because it is founded on an English translation.

In Shi Zhecun's story, the brotherly righteousness between Shi Xiu and Yang Xiong in the original story is replaced by Shi Xiu's infatuation with Yang Xiong's wife and his manipulation of Yang Xiong. This eventually leads Yang to slaughter his wife in the end. Shi Zhecun does not change the main plot, but he makes some crucial changes to represent the modernized persona of the protagonist Shi Xiu. Shafer notices such changes and argues that Shi Zhecun uses IM to actualize these changes. The following is a passage taken from "Shi Xiu," which contains two cases of IM found by Schaefer.

> Shi Xiu said: "Well, brother, was I lying?"
> Yang Xiong's face reddened, and he said, "Don't hold it against me. I made a stupid
> mistake. It's my fault. I got drunk and let something slip, and she fooled me…She complained you were trying to fool around with her. I was looking for you today so that I could apologize."
> Shi Xiu mused to himself, "So actually you came to apologize, that's easy to say. Don't tell me you're really such a good-for-nothing."
> [1] ***Let me needle him a bit, and see what he does***; then he said:
> "I'm an unimportant fellow of no talent, but I'm an absolutely clean and honest good

> man…" As he said this, Shi Xiu brought out the clothing of the monk and the friar from underneath the *kang*, and set them in front of Yang Xiong, all the while carefully watching Yang Xiong's expression.
>
> Sure enough, Yang Xiong's eyes widened, he fared with rage, and he shouted, "Forgive me, brother. Tonight, if I don't pulverize that baggage, I will burst!"
>
> Shi Xiu laughed at him secretly,[2] ***if there really is such a stupid clod in the world as this, let me manipulate him a little more***. He mulled it over for a while, and then he said:
>
> "Listen to me brother, and I'll tell you how to behave like a real man."[29]

William Schaefer argues, "The dialogue here is essentially quoted verbatim from *Shuihu zhuan*, but Shi's additions represent Shi Xiu's contempt for Yang Xiong through interior monologues and make Shi Xiu's actions appear intense and conniving." [30] While I agree with Schaefer's argument on the rhetorical effect of Shi's additions, I do not find any IM here. Indeed, the sections [1] and [2] that I emphasized are IMs in FDD, but they are actually created by Schaefer in his English translation. In the Chinese original, it is problematic to identify them as IMs.

> ［1］石秀心中暗想：原来你是来请罪的，这倒说的容易，难道你简直这样的不中用么？待我来激他一激，看他怎生。
>
> …
>
> [2] 石秀肚里暗自好笑, 天下有这等鲁莽的人，益发待我来摆布了罢。 (SX 120)

In [1], although Shi Zhecun does not use quotation marks for the purpose of separating Shi Xiu's unspoken thoughts from his dialogue with Yang Xiong, the presence of the introductory clause "*Shi Xiu xinzhong anxiang*" 石秀心中暗想 (Shi Xiu mused to himself) renders the whole quotation a narrative report, i.e., the narrator's voice.

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[29] This is William Schaefer's translation. See, William Schaefer, "Kumarajiva's Foreign Tongue: Shi Zhecun's Modernist Historical Fiction", *Modern Chinese Literature*, vol. 10, no.1/2 (spring/fall 1998): 25-70.

[30] Ibid., 60.

However, in Schafer's translation, he attempts to cut off the syntactic connection between the introductory clause and the following quotation by placing the sentence, "let me needle him a bit and see what he does" into a separate line, which helps the sentence escape from the dominance of the introductory clause. In [2], while there is no such introductory clause, the sentences that convey Shi Xiu's thoughts simulate a storyteller's tone, a decisive feature that identifies them as the narrator's voice.[31] Therefore, the authorial interference is far from negligible, as Robert Humphrey defines direct IM.

Compared to the other three stories in *The General's Head* collection, the uniqueness of "Shi Xiu" is a rhetorical parody of *Shuihu zhuan*. However, like in the other stories, there is an inevitable May-Fourth-intellectual's tone, which conveys both the narrator's and characters' modern consciousness. Therefore, identifying IM in "Shi Xiu" becomes more difficult than in other stories. As Schaefer points out, there is "*Shuihu zhuan* rhetoric" and "Shi (Zhecun)'s own rhetoric" in "Shi Xiu". More accurately, the former is the simulated storyteller tone transmitted in traditional *baihua,* and the latter is the modernized voice of either the narrator or the protagonist Shi Xiu in Europeanized *baihua*. For instance, the narrator recounts the story with a banal beginning, "*Qushuo Shi Xiu zheyiwan zai Yang Xiong jia xiesu le, wuzi de fanlaifuqu shuibuzhao*" 却说石秀这一晚在杨雄家歇宿了, 兀自的翻来覆去睡不着" (Shi Xiu stayed at Yang Xiong's home this night, but he tossed and turned in the bed), as if it

[31] The traditional Chinese vernacular fiction has a close relation to professional storytelling. Therefore, Patrick Hanan calls narrator in this kind of fiction simulated storyteller. See Patrick Hanan, *The Chinese Vernacular Story* (Cambridge, MA): Harvard University Press, 1981.

follows the antecedent chapter in *Shuihu zhuan.* The narrator's description of the wife Pan Qiaoyun seducing Shi Xiu reads,

> "好妇人, 看着这样吃嫩的石秀，越发卖弄起风骚来, 石秀眼看她把眉头一轩, 秋波一转, 樱唇里又崩出戛玉的声音"。 (SX 107)
>
> What a woman! She stared at the innocent man and behaved even more flirtatiously. Shi Xiu saw the woman browning, casting an eye flirting, and then making a crispy voice from her rosebud mouth.

Stylistically, this description is no different from those depicting adulterous women in traditional vernacular fiction. The role that the protagonist Shi Xiu plays here is no more than a hollow-minded observer who lacks modern interiority. Therefore, I argue the "*Shuihu zhuan* rhetoric"- the simulated storyteller tone- is associated with the conventionally accepted Shi Xiu. On the contrary, when the narrator psychoanalyzes the modern figure Shi Xiu's sadistic and misogynistic desires, the Shi Zhecun's rhetoric- the Europeanized tone- emerges:

> 他所想追到得的潘巧云，只是一个使他眼睛觉得刺痛的活的美体的本身，是这样的充满着热力和欲望的一个可亲的精灵，是明知其含着剧毒而又自甘于被他的色泽和醇郁所魅惑的一盏鸩酒 (SX 104).
>
> The woman that he desired for is a living incarnation of beauty which could sting his eyes; It is an amiable elf full of enthusiasm and desires; it is a bottle of poisoned wine that people are willing to drink because of its charming color and taste, though they know it's toxic.

In this description of Shi Xiu's fantasy, Shi Zhecun uses three lengthy sentences with multi-layer attributes. These are Europeanized constructions, indicating the presence of a modern figure who maintains his historical body but is written with a sophisticated mind that dwells on the female body and his own desire.

The split personas and voices of Shi Xiu are more complicated when we consider

his connection to other characters. In Shi Zhecun's rewritten story, Shi Xiu is the only one who has modernized consciousness and desires; on the contrary, others are left as historical figures. Shi Xiu is therefore equipped with modernized interiority to gaze at Pan Qiaoyun's body or judge Yang Xiong's mind, but Pan and Yang lack the equally modern ability to respond. Shi Xiu is the only character who can speak both traditional and Europeanized *baihua*. He uses the former for routine interactions with others and the latter for mental masturbation and self-judgment. Shi Xiu behaves like a time traveler who trespasses to *Shuihu zhuan's* fictional world from the semi-colonial Shanghai. In this sense, Shi Zhecun brought new depth to Chinese fiction in the early 1930s by using psychoanalysis in fiction writing.

However, Shi Zhecun did not go far into the realm of innovating the modernist technique of the interior monologue in the early 1930s. In "Shi Xiu", Shi Zhecun relies too much on introductory clauses like, "Shi Xiu thought" or "he felt," which transform the tone from a narrator's report to a protagonist's monologue. As a result, the narrator intervenes much more in the character's mind and voice than those Europeanized modernist texts. Following Robert Humphrey and Seymour Chatman's definitions, I find only one true case of IM in this story. At the end of the narrative, Yang Xiong cuts off his wife's breasts and dismembers her limbs, and his sword-brother Shi Xiu obsessively describes it:

> [1] 接着杨雄一边骂，[2] 一边将那妇人又一刀从心窝里直割下去到小肚子，[3] 伸手，进去取出了心肝五脏。[4] 石秀一一的看着，[5] 每刻一刀，[6] 只觉得一阵爽快。[7] 只是看到杨雄破着潘巧云的肚子倒反而觉得有些厌恶起来：[8] ***蠢人***，[9] ***到底是刽子手出身***，[10] ***会做出这种事来***。[11] 随后看杨雄把潘巧云的四肢和两个乳房都割了下来，[12] 看着这最后的桃红色的肢体，[13] 石秀又觉得一阵满足的愉快了。

［14］***真是个奇观啊！***［15］***分析下来每一个肢体都是极美丽的。***［16］***如果这些肢体能合并拢来，能够再成为一个活着的女人，我是会得不顾着杨雄而抱持着她的呢。*** (SX 123)

> Then Yang Xiong cursed the woman and cut her body up from chest down through belly. He pulled out all her viscera. Shi Xiu watched attentively. He was affected with a burst of pleasurable sense by each cutting. However, he felt a bit disgusted when Yang Xiong cut up Pan Qiaoyun's belly. ***Idiot! He is such a slaughterer. It's what he is supposed to do.*** Afterwards, Shi Xiu saw Yang Xiong cutting off Pan's limbs and two breasts. He was stroke by another burst of pleasure when he saw the remaining limbs and torso in pink color. ***It's a marvel! Each part of the body is terrifically beautiful if appreciating rationally. If those separated limbs and torso can compose a living woman again, I dare to hug her without considering Yang Xiong's feeling.***

The emphasized sentences can be recognized as IMs in FDD for several reasons. First, the deictic form of address in [8] and exclamation in [14] and [16] break up the continuation of the narrative report. Secondly, there is a self-reference with a first-person pronoun in [16]. Most importantly, the disyllabic compounds like "*qiguan*" 奇观 (miracle), "*fenxi*" 分析 (analyze), and "*zhiti*" 肢体 (limb), which were coined in the twentieth century China to introduce modern/Western concepts, make these sentences identifiable as the interior voice of the modernized Shi Xiu. And lastly, these psychological descriptions are juxtaposed with the detailed gestures of the executioner with few cohesive devices. The sharp contrast between external and internal activities more obviously distinguishes the IMs. As Y. H. Zhao astutely points out, "Direct free style only appears to be exceptional and interesting when it is mixed with other narrative moods in narration."[32]

In fact, If Shi Zhecun removed the sentences marking the transition from external

[32] Y. H. Zhao 赵毅衡, *Dang shuozhe bei shuo de shihou* 当说者被说的时候 [When the teller is told about] (Chengdu: Sichuan wenyi chubanshe, 2013), 176.

to internal description, like [6], [7], and [13], and made the who passage more fragmentary, we would get perfect Joycean IMs in the Chinese language with negligible authorial intervention.

> 接着杨雄一边骂，一边将那妇人又一刀从心窝里直割下去到小肚子，伸手，进去取出了心肝五脏。石秀一一看着。***蠢人，到底是刽子手出身，会做出这种事来***。杨雄把潘巧云的四肢和两个乳房都割了下来，这最后的桃红色的肢体，***真是个奇观啊！分析下来每一个肢体都是极美丽的。分析下来每一个肢体都是极美丽的。如果这些肢体能合并拢来，能够再成为一个活着的女人，我是会得不顾着杨雄而抱持着她的呢。***
>
> Then Yang Xiong cursed the woman and cut her body up from chest down through belly. He pulled out all her viscera. Shi Xiu watched attentively. **Idiot! He is such a slaughterer. It's what he is supposed to do.** Then,Yang Xiong cut off Pan's limbs and two breasts. The pink torso remained. **It's a marvel! Each part of the body is terrifically beautiful if appreciating rationally. If those separated limbs and torso can compose a living woman again, I dare to hug her without considering Yang Xiong's feeling.**

The pliability of syntax and absence of verb tense in Chinese language should haveallowed more room to represent illogical statements and unconsciousness through IMs, and then freely splice them into the narrative report. However, this linguistic looseness was viewed as a shortcoming of the Chinese language by most May Fourth intellectuals and writers. Compared to contemporary novelists like Wang Meng and Bai Xianyong, who are adept at modernist narrative techniques, Shi Zhecun did not achieve a decisive breakthrough in representing IM in "Shi Xiu". "Shi Xiu" shocked Chinese readers in the early 1930s, because Shi Zhecun audaciously challenged the established social norms and satirized masculine heroes in *Shuihu zhuan*.

The other three narratives in this collection of historical stories do not reflect a similar contradiction between traditional and Europeanized *baihua,* because they were adapted from much more unreliable historical records, and even narrative poems in

wenyan. Therefore, the Europeanized tone become more prominent in the other three modernized historical stories. Europeanized constructions were considered by May Fourth writers to be more suitable in transmitting characters' sophisticated thoughts. But this unsayable tone has an obvious disadvantage – it does not sound like spoken Chinese. These three stories still manage to avoid such a disadvantage, because of the protagonists' non-Han Chinese identity and the geographical setting far away from the cultural center of China. Kumarajiva is a Buddhist monk from Inner Asia, General Hua in "The General's Head" is half- Tibetan and half-Han Chinese, and most characters in "Princess Ah Lan" are Mongols. As real historical figures, they were highly, if not completely, sinicized when their words and thoughts were recorded by *wenyan* in historiographical texts. However, in Shi Zhecun's rewritten stories, the Europeanized constructions used to convey characters' modern thoughts and desires appropriately fit the characters' non-Han Chinese identities. Therefore, Shi Zhecun has more freedom to represent these characters IMs in unsayable Chinese.

In contrast, while "Kumarajiva" excessively uses introductory clauses like "他觉得" (he felt), "他祈祷着" (he was praying), "他相信" (he believed), and "思量起来" (cannot help thinking) still brings too much authorial intervention, the IMs in this story become longer, more sophisticated, and further away from sayable Chinese than those in "Shi Xiu". The following passage illustrates Kumarajiva's inner struggle about whether he should sacrifice himself to the Buddha or indulge in secular desires:

> [1] 当他在那被封闭的密室里和她第一次有肉体关系的时候, [2] 他曾深深地**感觉到**她有一种沉重的苦闷。 [3] 为了爱恋的缘故, [4] 将灼热的肉身献呈给他, 是她心中的一种愉快; [5] 但明知因此他将被毁灭了法身和戒行, [6] 在

她是也颇感受着自己的罪过, [7] 她心中同时又有了对于或者**会得**降临给她的大刑的恐怖。 [8] 十几年来, 被这两重心绪相互啮蚀着她的灵魂, 人也变得忧郁又憔悴了。 (JMLS 70)

When he had the first sexual intercourse with her in the closed chamber, he deeply felt her sorrowful depression. For the sake of love, she contributed her fiery body. It was a pleasure in her heart. However, she was aware that that would ruin his "truth-body' and commandments. She felt guilty so much. At the same time, she had a fear in her heart that the great punishment perhaps would have to come to her. In the past ten more years, her soul was eroded by the conflicting thoughts. She became gloomy and haggard.

Sentences [2] to [8], conveying Kumarajiva's thoughts, are all subordinated to the matrix clause "*Ta ceng shenshen de ganjuedao*" 他曾深深地感觉到 (he deeply felt that). In other words, sentences [3] to [8] can be viewed as object clauses, though the matrix sentence does not need to appear. Therefore, these sentences make up a narrative report in ID. According to Shen Dan's explanation of ID in Chinese, these sentences can be counted as sort of indirect IMs. Shen Dan argues that native Chinese speakers' awareness of a subordinate clause is much weaker than that in Western languages. From the second clause, the matrix-subordination relation will become weaker and weaker.[33] As a result, in the passage quoted above, Kumarajiva's thoughts become more independent of the narrator's manipulation. We see this when the object clauses are located further from the matrix clause and therefore appear to be IMs. For Chinese readers, Kumarajiva's metaphysical self-reflection does not sound like the Chinese language. They read the ungrammatical use of "*huidei*" 会得 (will have to) in [7], that was coined by Shi Zhecun to convey the future tense and an inevitable tone at the same time. An aspectual particle

[33] See Shen Dan 申丹, *Xueshu xue yu xiaoshuo wenti xue yanjiu* 叙述学与小说文体学研究 (Narratology and stylistics of fiction) (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2001), 312.

"*hui*" 会 (will) and modal verb "*dei*" 得 (have to) cannot be used together like this in Chinese. The grammatical expression should be "*huibiran* 会必然 (will definitely) when the modal verb "*dei*" is replaced by a modal adverb. In summary, a lengthy Europeanized statement is the most prominent stylistic feature of IMs in "Kumarajiva".

Unlike "Shi Xiu," a Sadistic and voyeuristic bandit, Kumarajiva is not an ordinary man suffering mental abnormalities; instead, as a half-supernatural figure, he can diagnose his own and other characters' mental problems. However, in the story, he gradually loses the mind-reading ability when he crosses the Yellow River and enters the territory of China proper. Correspondingly, there is a stylistic and lingual shift. The Europeanized tone significantly wanes when Kumarajiva enters the capital city Chang'an. Therefore, Kumarajiva's trip to the heartland of China is also a translingual journey. The narrator specifically denotes and explains the transformation of Kumarajiva's language. Before entering China proper, he talks with his wife in a Kucha language, which could not be understood by the Chinese soldiers sent to escort the couple. After the death of his wife, Kumarajiva loses the only interlocutor with whom he can discuss metaphysical issues. Therefore, Kumarajiva switches to speaking Chinese with a Liangzhou accent. In Chang'an, his foreign accent makes his lecture on Buddhist sutras boring and hard to understand by local disciples. Later, when he finally becomes an ordinary Chinese man, his dialogues with the palace guard and a prostitute become more colloquial and shorter, and his interior monologues almost disappear.

In the title story, "The General's Head," language of both narrator and protagonist

becomes more colloquial than in “Kumarajiva”, partly because the protagonist Hua Jingding’s identity bears more “Chineseness”. General Hua is half-Tibetan and half Chinese, but he swears allegiance to the imperial court since his family had settled in China for three generations. This is also a story in journey, but General Hua’s direction is opposite to that of Kumarajiva’s. General Hua is commanded by the imperial court to march from inland China to the border region to fight against his fellow Tibetans, which leads to an inner conflict between his split identities.

The IMs in this story are more independent of the narrator’s control, and more direct and indirect IMs can be found. Increased cases of character’s direct communication with readers, such as exclamation, interrogation, and rhetorical questions, and self-reference suggest that Shi Zhecun has become more skillful in separating IMs from the narrative context in his third historical-psychoanalysis story. Like Kumarajiva, General Hua also likes conducting lengthy self-reflections. More often, Shi Zhecun wrote these reflections into independent paragraphs. Stylistically, General Hua’s thoughts are represented in a more colloquial tone, and he is primarily concerned with practical issues, such as how to discipline the corrupt Chinese soldiers, whether the Chinese girl he fell in love with loves him or not, and whether he should execute the solider who attempted to rape a girl. Grandiose words like “*linghun*” 灵魂 (soul), “*erchong renge*” 二重人格 (dual personalities), and “*guanghui*” 光辉 (splendor) that often appear in Kumarajiva’s metaphysical reflections seldom appear in General Hua’s practical reflections. There is only one exception, when he prays to the Tibetan god and king. His prayer verse reads:

> 羯羝之神啊，我岂肯带领着这样一群不成才的汉族的奴才来反叛我的祖国呢！我已是厌倦了流荡的生涯，想要奉着祖父的灵魂，来归还到祖国的大野的怀抱啊。崇高的大赞普啊，还能容许我这样的人作为吐蕃的子民吗？我虽然只要半个吐蕃的肉身，但是我却承受着全个吐蕃人的灵魂和力量。(JJDT 86)
>
> Holy god of scared sheep! How could I lead a mob of despicable Han Chinese to rebel against my motherland? I was tired of the life of turmoil. I dreamed of returning to the wide embrace of the motherland with my grandfather's soul. My sublime King! Could you accept a Tibetan offspring like me? Although I have only Tibetan heritage, inside me there are full of Tibetan spirit and power.

For Seymour Chatman, this is an actual speech, and he uses the term "soliloquy" to differentiate the passage from IM. As a concept deriving from drama, when delivering a soliloquy on stage, "the character does in fact speak…" and he or she can speak "in formal atmosphere, to someone not present." [34] When the concept is applied to fiction writing, there are two formal features, as Chatman points out, that identify soliloquy: first, there is a "he said" tag before the quotation, and second, the character's words are usually put within quotation marks.[35] Before General Hua's prayer verse, there is such a tag, "将军不觉长叹一声" (The general cannot help making a long sigh). Seen from the meaning alone, the verb "长叹" (sigh deeply) could be the simple behavior of exhaling air to express strong emotion and does not necessarily indicate that a speech will follow. But in traditional Chinese vernacular fiction, this action often indicates that the character will make an emotional speech. While Shi Zhecun includes a tag in the previous paragraph and the speech in the next one, he does use quotation marks. Therefore, the passage quoted above is a soliloquy- a passage of actual speech.

[34] Seymour Chatman, 179.
[35] See Seymour Chatman, 180.

The tone of soliloquy, according to Chatman, could be "non-naturalistic, or 'expressionistic,'"[36] because the speaker has a strong motivation to direct the audience's attention to his or her situation. Different from IMs, which are often fragmentary, intermittent, and unplanned, the prayer verse here sounds like a well-planned statement. The sophisticated European constructions with multi-layered attributes and grandiose words constitute an unsayable written Chinese used by the May Fourth intellectuals.

As analyzed above, from the late 1920s to the early 1930s, Shi Zhecun did increase depth of Chinese fiction by applying Freudian analysis to his characters. However, although he claimed that he learned interior monologue from the Austrian writer Arthur Schnitzler, and while previous critics also acknowledged Shi Zhecun as a representative Chinese modernist writer, my close reading indicates that he did not achieve a decisive breakthrough in using interior monologue in his first historical collection. Shi Zhecun's pursuit of completeness of syntax and the excessive use of Europeanized constructions on the one hand support his effort to instill modern consciousness and depth to his protagonists, but on the other hand, these constructions undermine the credibility of characters' voice. This is true especially when readers feel that the character's mind is not sophisticated enough to allow him or her to think like that.

2.2 Representation of plural subjectivities in Shi Zhecun's first-person stories set in modern Shanghai

[36] Ibid., 181.

When the settings of Shi's stories shift from border regions of ancient China to modern Shanghai, the difficulty in actualizing modernist techniques, such as interior monologue and stream-of-consciousness, greatly reduces. It is then unnecessary to consider the gap between the voice of the modern intellectual narrator and the ancient characters, especially when the narrator and the character merge into a single subject- the narrator-character-I. Six out of ten stories in Shi Zhecun's next collection, *The Evening of Spring Rain* (*Meiyu zhi xi* 梅雨之夕) take on the first-person perspective.[37] In some of these stories, as Leo Lee points out, "a sustained interior monologue is employed as the main narrative frame."[38] Indeed, in these first-person stories, the proportion and importance of psychological description exceed the narration of plots. The protagonists in these stories are all male urban Shanghainese, about whose identity and subjectivity Leo Lee and Shu-mei Shih have provided convincing analysis. Leo Lee maintains that these stories provide, "portraits of male desire and obsession as narrated by an intensely subjective male voice."[39] Shu-mei Shih argues that "the world of semicolonial capitalism leads to a weakened and heightened state of nerves—neurasthenia—for the urban man whose vision is confused, whose desire is frustrated, and whose masculinity is compromised".[40]

[37] The four exceptions taking third-person narration are "Li Shishi", "Inn" (*Lüshe*), "Walking at Night" (*Xiaoxing*) and "A Dancing Girl in the Twilight" (*Bomu de wunü*). "Li Shishi" is a continuation of psychoanalytic adoption of historical tale and the rest three are conspicuously shorter than and artistically inferior to those stories narrated from first-person perspective in the same collection.

[38] Leo Lee, 173.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Shu-mei Shih, 341.

However, Lee and Shih's arguments are both built on the premise that there exists only one unified male voice or subjectivity in these Shanghai stories. These critics also suggest more or less that Shi Zhecun deviates from the May Fourth realist stance, since he traveled so far down the road of modernist writing. Indeed, it is difficult to separate the character's mind from the narrator's mind in these stories, since they are both signified by the same "I". However, the distinction between "story-time" and "narrative-time" and between "point of view" and "voice," made by scholars who care more about the form than the content of fiction, will help us make a subtle distinction between the character-I and the narrator-I. Based on such distinction, I argue that the erotic and hypersensitive male subjectivity represented in these stories is consistently accompanied by and under surveillance of a rational Enlightener, indicating that Shi Zhecun never abdicates his Enlightener-writer role, as Lu Xun and other May Fourth writers did.

To distinguish character-I and narrator-I, we must distinguish story-time and narrative-time first. At the beginning of *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*, Gérard Genette calls our attention to the temporal duality by quoting Christian Metz's argument, "Narrative is a…doubly temporal sequence…: There is the time of the thing told and the time of the narrative (the time of the signified and the time of the signifier)."[41] Chatman further points out how story- and narrative-time are manifested through different tenses in English language, arguing, "Most narratives set their story-NOW at the…'past time;' verbal narratives usually show it by the preterit…Discourse-

[41] Gérard Genette, 33.

NOW is generally in the…'present time.'"[42] Therefore, in any story - whether narrated from the first-person or third-person perspective - "the narrator knows the outcome of the story, and it is evident that his present remains posterior to that of the characters."[43] In contrast, the temporal duality in Chinese is not manifested through different verb tenses but other linguistic features, such as temporal nouns, adverbs and aspectual particles.

In "The Evening of Spring Rain," the title story of the collection, we see the contrast between the neurasthenia-stricken character in the story-NOW and the sober narrator in the narrative-NOW. The protagonist of "The Evening of Spring Rain" is a married male clerk. Returning home at a rainy twilight, he encounters a beautiful young lady caught in the pouring rain on a street corner. Hesitating for a while, he decides to share his umbrella with the lady and walks her home. On the way, the protagonist's infatuation with the lady evolves in different stages. At first, he is unconsciously attracted by her grace and beauty after seeing her get off the tram. When they stand side-by-side at the street corner, he is besieged with an uncontrollable erotic fantasy of her body. Then, the male protagonist becomes paranoid when they walk together under the umbrella. The lady's mysterious identity reminds him of his first girlfriend, and his wife suddenly appears through the body of a shopgirl staring at them. Later, his gaze on the lady seems to be purified to an aesthetic affection, as he replaces all images of real women with a Japanese girl from a Suzuki Harunobu's painting. His infatuation and fantasy finally come to an end when he is told by the young lady that the rain has stopped.

[42] Seymour Chatman, 80.
[43] Ibid., 83.

Indeed, each interior monologue of the protagonist can be Freudally explained. Leo Lee notices the psychological transference in the protagonist's association of his wife and the strange shopgirl,[44] and Shu-mei Shih emphasizes how "the umbrella affords a temporary flight of erotic fantasy in masculine terms", which illustrates emasculation in relation to semicolonial urban context.[45] Their emphasis on the abnormal psychology of the protagonist is influenced by the presumption that Shi Zhecun transformed into a modernist writer and became the leading figure of the new-sensationism school in the early 1930s. However, if we put aside all preconceived notions, it is not difficult to find at least a lyrical and a rational subjectivity in the narrative, in which his sexual instinct is well repressed by the civilized ego.

The story-time of "The Evening of Spring Rain" begins at six o'clock p.m. when the protagonist leaves his office and arrives home two or three hours later. And yet, the narrative discourse begins with a "timeless" reference, by which the narrator recounts his general impression of rainy days and street landscape of Shanghai in a lyrical tone:

> 我常常在办公室里, 当公事空闲的时候, 凝望着窗外淡白的空中的雨丝。(MYZX 145)
>
> From my office, when I have some idle time, I *often* stare at the pale drizzle in half sky out of my window
>
> 我喜欢在滴沥的雨声中撑着伞回去。(MYZX 145)
>
> I like walking home with an umbrella surrounded by the sound of the drizzling rain.

[44] Leo Lee, 175.
[45] Shu-mei Shih, 354.

This general "timeless" narrative not only depicts a general persona of a Shanghainese *Flâneur,* but also sets a sentimental tone for the rest narrative. When he purposelessly wanders around the street at the story-NOW, the protagonist feels the streetscape in the rain "*menglong de po youxie shiyi*" 朦胧得颇有些诗意 (has a kind of vagueness tinged with poetic air). Even when he is overwhelmed with infatuation, the representation of erotic desire is filtered by the lyrical subjectivity. The most explicit description of abnormal psychology in this story reads:

> [1] 薄薄的绸衣， [2] 黑色也没有效用了， [3] 两只手臂已被画出了它们的圆润。 [4] 她屡次转过身去，侧立着， [4] 避免着轻薄的雨之侵袭她的前胸。 [5] 肩臂上受些雨，让衣裳贴着了肉倒不打紧吗？ [6] 我曾偶尔这样想。 (MYZX 147)
>
> The silk dress is very thin. Black color turns out to be futile (to cover her body). Her two arms have been delineated to be plump. She turns around several time, protecting the chest from the assault from the frivolous rain. Don't you mind the soaked sleeves stick to the flesh of your arms? I occasionally thought of that.

In this passage, the adjective "*qingbo*" 轻薄 (frivolous) in [4] certainly reminds Chinese readers of the lyrical tone in classical poetry or traditional fiction, felt in Du Fu's poetic verse "*Qingbo taohua zhuliu shui*" 轻薄桃花逐流水" (The frivolous peach blossoms raft in the flowing stream). Readers are also reminded of the emotional tone of "*qingbo gongzi*" 轻薄公子 (lecherous dandies) in traditional "talented and beauty" stories. Since the moral connotation of the word "轻薄" (frivolous) is poetized and romanticized in the context of Chinese literature, the expression "*qingbo de yu*" 轻薄的雨" (the frivolous rain) here makes the neurasthenia-stricken and hypersensitive Shanghainese man appear to be more normal than Shu-mei Shih considers. While [5],

which is an IM represented by a rhetoric question, reads like a straightforward erotic gaze, the adverb "*ou'er*" 偶尔 (occasionally, not always) in [6] suggests a subjective attempt to restrain such voyeuristic desire. In other words, "I occasionally thought of that" is a meta-thought of the narrator-I, made later than the uncontrolled utterance made by the character-I. The narrator-I is therefore a rational and somber subjectivity.

The existence of the rational subjectivity is more certain in the following passage when this subjectivity clearly draws a line between story-NOW and narrative-NOW. When the character-I emotionally indulges in the rainy streetscape, a voice of the narrator-I draws the wandering unconscious from the fictional world back to the real world:

> [1] 我且行且看着雨中的北四川路, [2] 觉得朦胧的颇有些诗意, [3] 但这里所说的 "觉得", 其实也并不是什么具体的思绪, [4] 除了 "我该在这里转弯" 之外, 心中一些也不意识着什么。 (MYZX 146)
>
> I walked on and looked at the Northern Sichuan Rd. in the rain, feeling a kind of vagueness tinged with somewhat poetic atmosphere. However, what I meant by "feeling" is not specific thoughts. Except for the consciousness that "I should make a turn here", I was aware of nothing in my mind.

Since the character-I was preoccupied by sentimental affection, it is impossible for the same subject to soberly analyze such affection at the same time. Therefore, [3] and [4] should be considered posterior reflections made by the narrator-I at a later narrative-NOW. Similarly, after the character-I recounts his first impression of the young lady's grace and beauty, the narrator-I supplements, "*Zhege yuzhong de shaonü, wo shihou juede ta shi wanquan shihe zhe jiduan de*." 这个雨中的少女, 我事后觉得她是完全适合这几端的 (Later, I feel that the maiden in the rain completely complies with these

criteria of beauty in my mind). Right after the delirium caused by the character-I's suspicion of the young lady's identity, the narrator-I jumps out to give a reasonable account of the embarrassing mental situation:

> [1] 这些思想的独白, 并不占有我多少时候。 [2] 它们是很迅速地翻舞过我心里, [3] 就在与这个好像有魅力的少女同行过一条马路的几分钟之内, 我的眼不常离开她, [4] 雨在这时已在小下来也没有觉得。 (MYZX 150)
>
> These interior monologues did not occupy my mind for quite a while. Instead, they quickly passed through my mind. In the serval minutes when I crossed the street with the seemingly charming girl, my eyesight barely moved away from her. I was not aware that the rain was getting lighter during this time.

If this passage can still be considered an interior monologue, it is an interior monologue that speculates about other interior monologues. From the perspective of narratology, it might be more acceptable to consider this passage as a narrative report made by the narrator-I, which is located on a different narrative level than the previous interior monologues when the character-I is suspicious of the young lady's identity. Seen from a linguistic perspective, this passage has the most unsayable style in the whole narrative because of the use of Europeanized constructions. In [2] there is a redundant linking verb "是" (is), which is a typical Europeanized construction. [3] has a verbose temporal clause with multi-layered attributive embeddings. Overall, in "The Evening of Spring Rain", the character-I's sexual unconscious, hypersensitive nerves, and his conversations with the girl are represented by an affective but sayable language. However, when the narrator-I goes to the foreground to make self-criticism or self-defense, the narrative style changes to a less sayable one. Thus, a Europeanized syntax or a non-colloquial style is purposefully utilized by Shi Zhecun to represent the voice of a rational subjectivity. The Europeanized tone in this story suggest higher-level interior

monologues which are intellectually and morally higher than the thoughts of the neurasthenia-stricken and hypersensitive Shanghainese man.

In another story of the same collection, "Business of Sixi" (*Sixizi de shengyi* 四喜子的生意), the difference between voices of the character-I and the narrator-I becomes more recognizable, because the protagonist comes from bottom social class. Although the entire story is narrated from the first-person perspective of Sixi, a rickshaw puller, Shi Zhecun manages to increase verisimilitude and credibility by adding a Shanghainese accent and low-class diction to the character-I's expressions. We can therefore still perceive the existence of another filtered voice which could hardly belong to Sixi as a rickshaw puller. As Chatman points out, "point of view is in the story (when it is the character's), but voice is always outside, in the discourse."[46] Keeping the consistent point of view is essay for an author, because he can manipulate the story from outside. On the contrary, maintaining a consistent style of voice is much harder, because an author often inadvertently reveals his own social class by using a class variety of language that one has been familiar. In the early 1930s, Shi Zhecun was confronted with the same problem that puzzled his contemporary writers—how could an intellectual author communicate a verisimilar and credible voice of the low-class, without giving up the Enlightener's stance, given there was not a cross-class common language at his disposal?

Like Shi's other Shanghai stories in the same collection, "Business of Sixi" is also a report of the male protagonist's intensive inner struggles and fragmentary reflections. The story begins at around six o'clock p.m., the same time as in "The Evening of Spring

[46] Seymour Chatman, 154.

Rain," when Sixi goes back home for supper in a short break. The story ends several hours later when he is thrown into the jail for harassing and assaulting a passenger of his rickshaw, a Russian prostitute. Again, the span of story-time is the same as that of "The Evening of Spring Rain." However, in this story Sixi is constantly frustrated by his environment. Unpleasant memories unconsciously overwhlem his mind, from the beginning of the story to the end. Structurally, interior monologue and stream-of-consciousness constitute the main narrative frame as in the other Shanghai stories. From the disjunct and illogical syntax and vulgar diction in protagonist Sixi's interior monologues and stream-of-consciousness, we can tell that he is a somewhat mentally disabled and poor migrant from the countryside. When he discovers that his wife Shuangxi did not prepare supper for him, he curses her with hateful expressions like, "*na jianren*" 那贱人 (that bitch), "*lan biaozi*" 烂婊子 (slut), "*shoutou mazi*" 寿头码子" (a Shanghai slang, means idiot), "*Cui ta yibainian de laozu zong*" 啐她一百年的老祖宗 (damn her ancestors in a century), "*Cai tanainai de fen*" 搽她奶奶的粉 (powder damning her face) and "*lan wu sishi*" 烂污死尸(disgusting dead body). These vulgar curses suggest that Sixi is completely ignorant of the reasons that make his life miserable; instead, he irrationally transfers his anger to his wife. However, right after these vicious curses, the narrator Sixi shows up to describe the subsequent actions of cooking supper for himself:

> 我心一横，站起来，钻进屋里去，摸了一块手巾，抹了个身，盛一碗冷饭，用洋瓷罐里的开水泡了，往竹篮里拣了一条干菜，从旁边的"仙女牌" 香烟盒子里抽了一双竹筷，走出来，坐在洋油箱上吃饭了。(SXZDSY 200)

> I make up my mind, standing up and walking into the room, grabbing a towel to wipe dry my (sweaty) body. I put cold cooked rice in a bowl and get some boiled water from an enamel mug to soak the rice. Then, I pick up a piece of pickle from the bamboo basket and take out a pair of chopsticks from the Fairy brand cigarette case next to the basket. Then, I walk outside, sitting down on an empty kerosene barrel and eating the rice.

Indeed, in this passage Shi Zhecun cautiously selects colloquial words to represent a credible description of an urban poor's life. However, this scene, which is composed of an uninterrupted "topic-chain", appears to be too smooth to be considered the narration of the character Sixi, who is caught up in an extreme fury. Moreover, the narrator tells readers that the chopsticks basket in Sixi's family is an empty case of "fairy" cigarettes, and that the bench in his kitchen is an empty kerosene barrel. Apparently, the narrator wants to denote the semicolonial background of the city where the character lives. Readers can infer that the character Sixi brought these junk items back to be used as utensils and furniture. However, it is not likely that the character would tell readers the brand of the used cigarette case and what the bench is made of. He is used to these objects, and he is equally unlikely to describe the shabby kitchen in detail while he is extremely angry and hungry. Thus, the description cited above is a voice out of the story, as Chatman points out. It is a voice imposed by a different subject - the Enlightener-author, though it is narrated from the same first-person perspective.

Similar contradictions between the representations of Sixi's mental disorder and the detailed descriptions of settings and actions are not rare cases in this story. It is reasonable to argue that the narrator Sixi is manipulated by a subject who is conscious of the economic and political disadvantages of the character Sixi in semicolonial Shanghai,

of which Sixi is too unaware of to speak about. This imposing subjectivity not only manipulates character Sixi's speech, but also other characters' voices heard and then reported by him. When Sixi lingers outside the show window of a photo studio, the doorman shouts at him, "*Paokaidian, paokaidian*." 跑开点, 跑开点" (Go away, go away). The Russian prostitute calls to him in a strange foreign accent, "*Huangboche, huangboche*." 黄卜车, 黄卜车" (Rickshaw, rickshaw), On the rickshaw, when she feels that Sixi is running slower, she urges him to speed up, "*Paokuaidian, paokuaidian*." 跑快点, 跑快点 (Hurry up, hurry up). Arriving at the destination, she complains that where she is dropped off is not close enough by yelling, "*Laguoqu, laguoqu, yidiandian lu*." 拉过去, 拉过去, 一点点路" (move over, move over, only a little distance left). Even her cry for help heard by Sixi is reported as "*Hai'er, hai'er*" 海而, 海而 (help! help!). Other's yelling at Sixi, which conveys their contempt for a rickshaw puller, is represented as a stylized repetition. It is, I argue, an intentionally created style to represent an intellectual author's awareness of injustice and his sympathy for the despised poor.

In my close reading of the two stories from the collection *the Evening of Spring Rain*, I find the existence of the narrator-I, who can be either a lyrical or a rational subject. I do not intend to deny Shi Zhecun's status as a pioneering modernist writer who reveals the interiority of the neurasthenia-stricken and hypersensitive urban men from semi-colonial Shanghai. However, the narrator-I, which speaks in complicated voices, also suggests the impact of the Chinese lyrical tradition and the May Fourth realistic tradition on Shi Zhecun. If there is a narrative frame of interior monologues in these

Shanghai stories narrated from the first-person perspective, the interior monologues can be divided into two different types: those of the mentally unstable character and those of the somber narrator.

2.3 Shi Zhecun's return to realistic stance and traditional narrative

Shi Zhecun published his last fiction collection, *Little Treasures* (*Xiaozhen ji* 小珍集), in 1936 and stopped writing fiction soon after that. This last collection, described in an interview in 1938 by the writer himself, is "a return to the orthodoxy method of realistic writing."[47] Since that interview was not far from Mao's era, it is likely that Shi Zhecun was still under some political pressure to venerate realistic writing and depreciate his modernist writing in 1930. After all, realistic writing is considered to be a Chinese tradition, and modernist writing a Western one. In the same interview, he says, "To create literature with rigorous vitality, (a writer) needs to absorb the essence of the 'imported goods', being influenced by them and then escaping from the influence. In this way, (he) can write something with novelty and national characteristics."[48] Contemporary critics who are free from such pressure usually explain Shi Zhecun's return to realistic writing as a forced choice. Both Leo Lee and Shu-mei Shih had face-to-face interviews with Shi Zhecun in his late years, and they sympathized with his suffering in the Mao era. Leo Lee argues, "It seems that Shi had yielded to the leftist pressure and made a compete turnabout from his early urban gothic direction."[49] Similarly, Shu-mei Shih associates

[47] Shi Zhecun, *Shi Zhecun quanji* vol.3, 728.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Leo Lee, 186.

Shi Zhecun's return to the "literary purge" (*wenyi douzheng*) that occurred around 1934 and 1935.[50]

However, we can date Shi Zhecun's return to realistic writing to the early1930s when he won nationwide fame for writing with Freudian psychoanalysis and Schnitzlerian interior monologues. The stories in *Exemplary Conduct of Virtuous Women* (*Shan nüren xingpin* 善女人行品) published in 1933, only half a year after *The Evening of Spring Rain*, have fewer modernist techniques than his historical stories and Shanghai stories narrated by the first-person male narrator. In a sense, Shi never gives up traditional writing techniques, even in the heyday of his avant-garde modernist writing.

Exemplary Conduct of Virtuous Women consists of twelve short stories published from 1930 to 1933. From the collection title, we can discern that these stories' protagonists are not erotic or psychologically abnormal urban male. Leo Lee accurately describes the commonality of these women, saying, "Shi's women characters, though urban and modern, are not liberated…It is as if, in reverse response to the 'emancipated Nora' syndrome of May Fourth fiction, Shi intentionally kept his could-be Nora at home."[51] Comparatively conservative narrative techniques – the realistic techniques – are therefore employed to narrate the stories of comparatively conservative female characters.

In terms of the overall narrative frame, except for two short stories narrated in

[50] Shu-mei Shih, 366.
[51] Leo Lee, 168.

first-person and two presented in the form of play script, most stories are narrated in the third-person perspective. Even with the two exceptions of first-person narration, interior monologue no longer serves as narrative frame. Instead, it serves only as a supplement to plot-centered narration. The length and proportion of dialogue increases in these women's stories, in which dialogue becomes the primary representation of the female characters' feelings and thoughts. Compared to interior monologue, which has the advantage of conveying repressed unconscious or abnormal psychology, dialogue tends to represent more socially acceptable ideas. For instance, in "Spring Sunshine" (*Chunyang* 春阳), when the protagonist Auntie Chan, a female version of male Shanghainese *Flâneur*, comes out of her hotel, she sees a decent middle-aged gentleman reading the newspaper. Immediately, an imagined dialogue is conjured in Auntie Chan's mind, but it is a romantic and gentle one, different from the voyeuristic gaze and erotic imagination in Shi Zhecun's other stories with male protagonists. After a detailed reading, we will find that it is not a real dialogue between two persons, though it takes the form of dialogue.

> [1] "先生, 借一张登载影戏广告的报纸, 可以吗?"
> [2] "哦, 可以的, 可以的, 小姐预备去看影戏吗?"
> [3] "小姐贵姓?"
> [4] "哦, 鄙姓张, 我是在上海银行做事的。……　　(CY259)
>
> "Sir, I would like to borrow the sheet with movie information, could I? "
> "Oh, certainly, certainly, Miss, are you going to watch a movie?"
> "Could I have your family name?"
> "Oh, my family name is Zhang. I am a clerk at Shanghai Bank."

Except for [1], which is Auntie Chan's speech, [2] to [4] are the male stranger's speech heard by the woman in her imagination. The woman's responses are erased, and her

fantasy of the man is therefore transferred to the man's greetings, inquiries, and self-introduction. The words which the protagonist does not articulate but only imagines, are very similar to stream-of-consciousness, which is another typical modernist technique, since they are random, unexpected, and disjunctive to each other. However, according to Seymour Chatman, they make up a "conceptual interior monologue," which refers to "the record of the actual words passing through a character's mind."[52] However, a strictly defined stream-of-consciousness should be "'sense of impressions', occurrent but not formulated into words by the character's mind."[53] Therefore, the passage quoted above is neither a traditional dialogue nor a strictly defined stream-of-consciousness. It is something in between that Shi Zhecun creates to represent the female protagonist's cognition. Her thoughts are filled with a sense of morality, though they are probably driven by some instinctual desire. Dialogue, whether articulated or imagined, in these women's stories is a basic way to dive into the character's mind. A character's thoughts, represented in dialogue, conform to the social norms the women are expected to obey, and the words are verisimilar to what they can speak. In this way, "The female psyche is portrayed as more delicate and fragile,"[54] and the implied author behind the narrative is more like a realist writer who takes the social realities that Chinese women were confronted with in the 1930s into consideration.

In terms of language, *The Exemplary Conduct of Virtuous Women* represents a

[52] Seymour Chatman, 188.
[53] Ibid., 187.
[54] Leo Lee, 169.

more conspicuous return to traditional writing. Europeanized syntax and tone significantly decrease, which makes the general style of the collection closer to Shi Zhecun's earliest fiction before 1928, when he was not yet influenced by the May Fourth literature. As discussed above, the Europeanized tone is always associated with an intellectual voice. When it is applied to common characters, especially those from a lower-class, it indicates the author's intervention in characters' minds. From the late 1920s, when Shi Zhecun started to publish stories in mainstream literary magazines, he abandoned the old style – the style learned from traditional vernacular fiction – and embraced a Europeanized tone and creatively used Europeanized constructions. However, in *The Exemplary Conduct of Virtuous Women*, both the narrator and female characters speak in a colloquial style, which differs from the mainstream May Fourth literature.

The following example best illustrates Shi Zhecun's linguistic return. The story "Fog" (*Wu* 雾) begins with an introduction of Miss Suzhen's background. "*Suzhen xiaojie congxiao jiu wanggu le muqin*." 素贞小姐从小就亡故了母亲，是在父亲的抚育和教导之下长成的 (Miss Suzhen's mother died in her childhood. She grows up under her father's nurture and teaching). For common Chinese readers, it is a well-composed sayable sentence. But for linguists, it is a syntactic puzzle because the construction of the first clause "*Suzhen wanggu le muqin*"[55] cannot be explained in an SVO order. In fact,

[55] The word-for-word translation of this sentence is "Suzhen died her mother". Its syntax is odd because "die" is apparent an intransitive verb, but it is not a problem at all for a Chinese reader to interpret this sentence as "Suzhen's mother died".

even nowadays this syntactic construction still puzzles structuralist linguists who attempt to explain the Chinese language using Noam Chomsky's Universal Grammar. For an activist May Fourth writer like Shi Zhecun, who is proficient in English and French and endeavors to modernize Chinese fiction, this sentence is usual. The alternative sentence, which can be well-explained by an SVO order, should be

> 素贞小姐的母亲在她小的时候就亡故了。(WU 230)
>
> Miss Suzhen's mother died when she was young.

Apparently, the sentence introducing Suzhen's family suggests a syntactic kinship with the traditional *baihua* fiction *Scholars* (*Rulin waishi* 儒林外史). The first sentence of *Scholars* reads,

> 这人姓王名冕, 在诸暨县乡村里住, 七岁上死了父亲。
>
> His name was Wang Mian, and he lived in a village in Zhuji. When he was seven, his father died.

In this sense, I argue, the narrator in "Fog" consciously restrains the May Forth intellectual tone by reducing the use of Europeanized constructions and embracing indigenous Chinese constructions. Such change not only reduces the distance between the author and his readers, but also the distance between the narrator and the female protagonist. Suzhen is not a May Fourth modern woman who is rid of the shackles of Confucian ethics. She lives with her father, a Catholic priest, in a conservative village. Although she is curious about urban life, she is ignorant of what she experienced in the railway journey to Shanghai. The tile "Fog" metaphorically refers to her ignorance of modernization and urban life. However, the implied author does not intend to enlighten the conservative woman, not to mention satirize her ignorance, because the implied

author commands the narrator to choose a “conservative” style close to the language of the female protagonist. Although the entire story is narrated from the third-person perspective, the narrator’s voice is well blended with the character’s voice, which indicates the implied author’s sympathy for the protagonist.

Shi Zhecun’s return to a traditional narrative mode and language does not suggest his abandonment of modernist writing. Instead, *The Exemplary Conduct of Virtuous Women* demonstrates the best modernist techniques in all of Shi Zhecun’s fiction. For the sake of a narrowed distance between the narrator and characters, the transition from narrative report to character’s interior monologues becomes more negligible. For instance, in “The Night of the Leonid” (*Shizizuo liuxing* 狮子座流星), the first story Shi wrote for *Les Contemporains*, the modernist literary magazine that he edited, the character’s interior monologues and the third-person narrator’s report are well blended. When Lady Zhuo comes back from seeing her doctor for infertility, the passage depicting her uneasiness reads:

> [1] 她一想起刚才吴医生替她诊治的情形, 脸上发烧得更凶了。 [2] 医生总有那么样一幅正经面孔， [3] 这倒反而难受。 [4] 当种种考察都施行过之后，他皱着眉头， [5] “很好，很好，一点没有毛病，完全健康。” [6] 他后来又说什么？ [7] 那是什么意思？ [8] “几时顶好请你们密斯特……” [9] 他还没有晓得他的姓， [10] 我告诉他， [11] “……哦，密斯特韩也来检查一下。” [12] 难道他会有什么？ [13] ……也许，也许……大块头有关系。 [13] 倒忘了， [14] 没有问，大块头有关系没有。 (SZZLX 223)
>
> When she recalled the situation that Doctor Wu had the physical check on her, her face burned more severely. Doctors always put on a serious face, which makes patient more uncomfortable. He frowns after all kinds of procedures. “Very good, very good, no problem at all, completely healthy.” What did he say after that? What did it mean? “It is better to have Mr….” He didn’t know his family name. I told him. “Well, Mr. Han also need a check.” Is it concerned with him? Perhaps…perhaps…his overweight? I forgot asking. I didn’t ask whether it was concerned with his overweight.

Shi Zhecun reduces the introductory clauses which denotes the character's action of speech to a minimal degree. Except for [1], which describes Lady Zhuo's reaction from the narrator's perspective, other sentences betray Lady Zhou's thoughts without designating who is speaking. Shi Zhecun takes advantage of the ellipsis in Chinese syntax to create an ambiguity that blurs the boundary between the narrator's and character's voice. For instance, in [3] a voice says "*Zhe dao faner nanshou*" 这倒反而难受" (It causes more discomfort). "nanshou" 难受 (uncomfortable, embarrassed) is a psychological verb in Chinese. If Shi Zhecun supplemented the third-person pronoun and made the sentence as "*Zhe fandao rang ta nanshou*" 这反倒让她难受" (It makes her more uncomfortable), the sentence would turn out to be a narrative report from the narrator. If the sentence were "*Zhe fandao rang wo geng nanshou*" 这反倒让我更难受" (It makes me more uncomfortable), it would be an interior monologue from the character's mind. However, Shi Zhecun keeps the subject of the feeling unknown, which allows for two different readings. In this way, the narrator's and the character's voice merge into a united one, which cannot be discerned from one other.

While [4] and [5] lean towards the narrator's voice because of the presence of the third-person pronoun and quotation marks, [6] and [7] become ambiguous again. They could be Lady Zhuo's self-interrogation, since the "omniscient" third-person narrator should have known what the doctor would say. It could also be a narrative report in which the narrator intends to focus on Lady Zhuo's uncertainty but not the doctor's diagnosis. The most innovative representation of interior monologue in this passage is [10], in which Shi Zhecun replaces "*Ta gaosu ta.*" 她告诉他" (She told him) with "*Wo*

gaosu ta.” 我告诉他 (I told him). In this way, the female character temporarily takes the narrator’s place in telling the story. It is a character’s intervention in the narrator’s voice, this time. At the end of the passage, rhetorical question, hesitation, fragmentary syntax, and redundant repetition are skillfully employed to reinforce the uncertainty of the voice. Thus, I argue that Shi Zhecun makes a decisive breakthrough in using modernist techniques in a collection not usually labelled a modernist masterpiece.

To conclude, Shi Zhecun behaves more like a skillful modernist writer when he becomes less radical in using Freudian psychanalysis, interior monologue, and Europeanized constructions, either through the choice of narrative mode or language. The comparatively conservative stance demonstrated in *The Exemplary Conduct of Virtuous Women* represents his effort to sinicize Western fiction and narrative techniques. However, political disputes and wars after the mid-1930s frustrated Shi’s continuous effort in innovating Chinese writing. Shi Zhecun only wrote few single stories after the Sino-Japanese war in the 1940s and completely gave up fiction writing in Mao’s era.

While Shi claimed in the 1983 interview that *Little Treasures* represented his return to an “orthodox method of realistic writing,” (*zhengtong de xianshi zhuyi chuangzuo fangfa* 正统的现实主义创作方法), there is a significant distance between these stories and the realistic stories officially approved by Mao’s critics, especially when realism was narrowed down to so-called “revolutionary realism” in the Cultural Revolution. Indeed, in *Little Treasures*, some stories like “Milk” (*Niunai* 牛奶), “The Highway” (*Qiche lu* 汽车路), “New Life” (*Xin shenghuo* 新生活) have a common theme of criticizing social injustice and illustrating the conflict between the ruling and the ruled.

Other stories like “Name Cards” (*Mingpian* 名片), “Seagull” (*Ou* 鸥), “Jobless” (*Shiye* 失业) focus on urban bourgeois’ economic difficulty.

However, the most excellent story in this collection, “Manifestation of the Pagoda” (*Ta de lingying* 塔的灵应), is not concerned with social issues and uses little realism techniques. While we know it is a modern story that occurred near Changzhou city in the Republican era, according to the scarce narration at the beginning, characters in this story do not behave and think like modern people. It seems that Shi Zhecun is only interested in composing an interesting story with an open ending and does not intend to delve into characters’ mind or reflect social realities. Stylistically, “Manifestation of the Pagoda” represents a return to traditional *baihua* fiction. First, there is a non-character narrator who speaks to readers directly. The only difference from traditional vernacular fiction is that the narrator does not call himself “*shuoshude*” 说书的 (me the storyteller) and the narratee “*gewei kanguan*” 各位看官 (my honor audience); instead, the narrator calls himself “*zhuzhe*” 著者 (the writer) and the readers “*duzhe*” 读者 (readers). Besides this difference, the narrator in “Manifestation of the Pagoda” is the same as the omniscient storyteller in traditional fiction. Secondly, there is an extradiegetic narrative preceding the main narrative, which parallels the prologue-story in traditional vernacular story. In the extradiegetic narrative, the narrator recounts the history of Yuanjue temple where the pagoda is located by quoting local gentlemen and literati’s words. It is an imitation of quoting classical poems and verses in traditional fiction, though the style of

Shi Zhecun's quotations are more colloquial. Moreover, he uses a couplet to state the prophecy that the pagoda would collapse.

"Manifestation of the Pagoda" should predicate Shi Zhecun's subsequent attempt at innovating Chinese fiction by utilizing traditional cultural legacy, if only he had been allowed to continue such an attempt after the mid-1940s. "Master Huangxin" (*Huangxin dashi* 黄心大师), one of Shi Zhecun's few stories published after the Sino-Japanese war, illustrates his interest in returning to a traditional Chinese narrative. "Master Huangxin" can be considered an expanded version of "Spiritual Manifestation of the Pagoda," since it is also a temple story with an explicit non-character narrator and a two-level narrative frame. In his response to the accusation that he fell back to outdated fiction writing, Shi argues, "in recent years, I attempted to create a purely Chinese *baihua* style…It is a fusion of professional storytelling (*pinghua*), Tang tales (*chuanqi*), and historical romance (*yanyi*)."[56] Therefore, the return of Shi Zhecun's fiction writing is a part of his project of innovative writing, but not completely an imposed change caused by political turmoil.

[56] Shi Zhecun, "Guanyu 'Huangxin Dashi'" 关于《黄心大师》 [about "Master Huangxin"], *Shi Zhecun quanji* vol.1, 626.

Chapter 3: A Maoist Pioneer or A Superfluous Man: Significance of Sun Li as a Stylist in the Twentieth Century

3.1 The relation of Sun Li's Stories to Maoist Discourse

Chronologically, Sun Li can be categorized into the third generation of modern Chinese writers, who dedicated himself to writing fiction in the new *baihua* ever since the New Culture Movement in the late 1910s. His stories became artistically mature and stylistically distinguishable in the 1940s, around a decade later than Shi Zhecun and two decades than Lu Xun. However, there is an easily perceived abyss that separates Sun Li's stories from antecedent May Fourth writers' because Sun adopted a subset of language significantly different from May Fourth *baihua.* This is not a stylistic variation consciously chosen by Sun Li; instead, it is the historical context that determined Sun Li's choice of style and language. The context is Maoist discourse and Sun belongs to the first generation of Maoist writers who inaugurated such discourse under the guidance and discipline of Mao Zedong. However, while I stress the difference between Maoist and May Fourth discourse and writers, I do not intend to consider the relationship of the two kinds of discourse and writers in simple opposition, as this would reduce the complexity and richness of modern Chinese history and literature. Therefore, when I investigate the transition from May Fourth discourse to Maoist discourse through Sun Li's short stories as examples, I want to consider to what extent he converted to Maoist discourse and to what extent he did not. The latter, that is, Sun's resistance to Maoist discourse, not only illustrates Sun's individuality as a literary writer but also reveals incessant competition among three dominant discourses even when one has achieved overwhelming triumphs.

The most conspicuous difference of Sun Li's stories from those of the May Fourth movement lies in the language. More precisely, it is his choice of syntax. There is not a Europeanized tone in his stories, which can be accounted for by his education and working experience before becoming a writer. While Sun received Western style education in 1920s in Anguo county and Baoding city of his home province Hebei, his access to foreign languages and literature is not comparable to Lu Xun or Shi Zhecun who were proficient in at least one foreign language. Sun Li's limited access to Western language and literature is understandable, if we consider the fact that he came from a well-off peasant family, his highest education only high school, and his father's expectation for his career only a postal clerk. After graduation, Sun spent most of his time in neighboring regions to his hometown Anping county working as lower-level governmental employee or elementary school teacher. Unlike those May Fourth intellectual celebrities and cosmopolitan writers, Sun Li represents a larger group of provincial intellectuals who received limited Western education in culturally and economically conservative inland regions. Sun's limited Western education soon turned to an advantage when he was recruited by communist troops as a propaganda cadre in 1937 when communist military forces took control of rural regions of central Hebei and turned them to anti-Japanese bases. On one hand, as an indigenous intellectual and writer, Sun Li was familiar with the local peasants' language which greatly facilitated the communist party's intent to communicate with the illiterate masses that the party wanted to mobilize. On the other hand, compared to those "petty-bourgeois" intellectuals who converted to communism in major cities, Sun Li's triple identity as a local intellectual, a

peasant offspring, and a guerilla soldier ideally fit into the concept of "*wenyi gongzuozhe*" 文艺工作者 (artistic and literary workers) prescribed by Mao Zedong in "Yan'an Talks" and other essays. Before becoming a professional writer, as a journalist and a journalistic theoretician, Sun Li was assigned to study how to efficiently write military correspondence. Therefore, writing in that style his language could not be a self-expressive literary language but rather colloquial, earthy, and pragmatic which could be easily understood by his readers. Then, in early 1944, Sun Li joined the Lu Xun Academy of Arts in Yan'an and from then on published his most representative stories in the supplement of *Jiefang Daily*, an official newspaper of the central committee of CCP. Therefore, his language became a more institutionalized Maoist *baihua* as his works acquired larger readership through the communist party's media. It is worth noting that Sun Li is not a passive learner of Maoist *baihua*; instead, he is among those who contributed most to the formation of the model writing of Maoist literature. Syntactically, Sun Li's stories are featured by "topic-comment" constructions and flexibility and ellipsis of Chinese syntax, which I will discuss in a detailed way in investigation of his specific works.

As for the "story" level in the narratological sense, events, characters, and settings in Sun Li's fictional world all suggest Sun Li's conversion to Maoist discourse. All his war-time stories are set in counter-Japanese bases (*kangri genju di*) or "liberated" areas (*jie fangqu*), which were administrated by the Communist regime. The implied author's empathy is always placed upon heroes and heroines who are poor tenant peasants, rustic women, soldiers, and communist cadres. In contrast, the enemy campaign

consists of Japanese aggressors, KMT officials, landlords, traitors, bandit, and others from affluent class. Such opposition between the eulogized and the criticized, between revolutionary and counter-revolutionary campaign continues in Sun's later stories written after 1949. In this sense, Sun Li's stories are a response to what Mao once reminded his comrades, "Who are our enemies? Who are our friends? This is a question of the first importance for the revolution".[1] Although Sun Li's stories are usually lyrically narrated, which was criticized for its petty bourgeois' limitation in the 1950s, they still constitute one of the important origins of the mainstream Maoist literature and have far-reaching influence on later-comers. Sun Li maintains that "Since politics is state's law and order, it necessarily exerts impact on people's real life, widely and profoundly. Literature should reflect reality, doesn't it? Naturally, it should reflect how politics exerts impact on life and the effect."[2]

While Sun himself was a victim of political persecution in the Mao era and he criticized excessive political interference in the post-Mao era, he also disagrees with the depoliticization of literature, which suggests his true color as a Maoist writer. After all, politicization or revolutionization of characters, events, and settings in his stories occurred from the very beginning. For instance, a woman peasant's class identity, awareness, and emotions are always mentioned, implicitly or explicitly, in a Sun Li's story, though he also endeavors to present a universal and eternal humanity. A village in his story is not merely a geographical site but a place full of military or class struggles. A

[1] Mao Zedong, *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* vol. 1, 13.

[2] Sun Li 孙犁, *Sun Li quanji* vol.5 孙犁全集(第五卷) [Complete works of Sun Li] (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 2004), 237.

conflict between family members always goes beyond the boundary of ethics and bears political implications. In a word, his fictional world is a politicalized one, though it is represented lyrically on the discourse level. Again, like the language, the content of his stories is determined by Maoist discourse and not the author's free will.

As for the narrative discourse, the way that a story is narrated, Sun Li also deviates from the May Fourth tradition. It can be immediately noted that Sun Li's short stories are shorter than most May Fourth stories. Narration, description, quotation of characters' speech, and commentary are conducted in an extremely economic way. Sun Li gives a practical explanation to brevity and efficiency of his war-time stories, "I wrote some short articles and published them in newspapers and periodicals which ran their business under difficult conditions. These stories are hasty records. Some are almost raw materials. I heard them and had some thoughts, and then I represented them. They are unprocessed and not well-cut jade".[3] It also reflects a Maoist literary worker's political awareness. The brevity of Sun Li's stories conforms to the principle of worker-peasant-soldier literature that Mao presented in the "Yan'an Talks". Mao argues, "For them (barely educated masses) the prime need is not 'more flowers on the brocade' but 'fuel in snowy weather'. In present conditions, therefore, popularization is the more pressing task. It is wrong to belittle or neglect popularization."[4] In a sense, a Maoist writer like Sun Li was confronted with more restrictions than his contemporary writers in the 1940s. It is unlikely to create full-length and delicately composed fiction. However, shortness

[3] Ibid., 12.
[4] Mao Zedong, *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, vol. 3, 82.

does not necessarily mean artistic inferiority. Sun Li and other talented Maoist literary and artistic workers managed to establish a Maoist aesthetics featured by shortness, straightforwardness, and lightness in the mid-1940s.

Another deviation of Sun Li's stories from May Fourth narrative tradition is the narrator's role. Although uncharacterized third-person reporter and characterized "I" stand an even chance of narrating, the degree of the characterization of the narrator-I is much less than that in most May Fourth fiction. In Sun Li' stories, the narrator-I is always an introvert communist cadre who only reports what he witnessed in his assigned missions tramping from one village to another, or he recalls someone he met before in a battle or a march. In most cases the role of the narrator-I is merely a calm observer, which is different from the self-expressive narrator-I in many May Fourth fiction. These narrator-Is are not fully characterized since they neither promote the progression of plot nor dedicate to self-expression. In a few stories, take "Nurse" (*Kanhu* 看护) as an example, the narrator-I, who is characterized as a wounded cadre in that story, does get involved into the conflict with the heroine Liu Lan, a barely educated nurse sent to take care of him; however, the characterized narrator-I is portrayed having a lack of empathy and patience in contrast to the heroine who possesses a lot of merits. Moreover, the characterized narrator-I thoughts and feelings are merely reported in sketchy summaries as "*Xin li hen fannao*" 心里很烦恼 (I was very troubled), "*Yi ting jiu huole*" 一听就火了 (I was angry right away when I heard that), and "*Wo hen aohui*" 我很懊悔 (I felt remorse). While Sun Li is labelled by critics as a lyrical writer, the lyrical tendency in his stories is not a May Fourth tendency caused by the need of self-realization and relying on

self-expression. It is interesting to compare Ding Ling and Sun Li's conversion to Maoist discourse. For Ding Ling, who was immersed in May Fourth discourse, it is a struggling process to reduce the proportion and degree of self-expression and abandon the May Fourth intellectual tone; but for Sun Li it seems to be a spontaneous choice because his familiarity with traditional tales, folk drama, local peasant language, and military life greatly reduces the friction between the individual writer and the dominant discourse imposed on him.

However, we cannot take Sun Li's conversion to Maoist discourse for granted if we consider historical contingency, Sun Li's humanistic stance, and his unworldly and forbearing attitude towards life. When we come back to the historical scene of the formation period of Maoist discourse in the mid-1940s, we will find some tolerant and inclusive characteristics different from its dominant period after 1949. While Mao published his guidance on revolutionary literature as early as the late 1930s, Maoist literature could not come out of thin air because neither Mao nor his theoretician subordinates were professional literary writers. Therefore, Maoist discourse needed considerable numbers of intellectual participants who could contribute to its formation and dominance. On one hand, they recruited and remodeled latecomers like Ding Ling and Wang Shiwei from the leftist campaign of May Fourth writers; on the other hand, Mao's propaganda assistant Zhou Yang was keener to find indigenous writers within the "liberated" regions who have much less or no connection to May Fourth literature. Zhao Shuli and Sun Li belong to the second group, who had comparative freedom and trust from the party, compared to the latecomers who underwent constant political review and

re-education. In later memoirs and interviews, Sun Li frequently mentions the difference of literary writing between wartime and the establishment of PRC. In a recollection written in 1978 entitled "Literary Career" (*Wenzi shengya* 文字生涯) Sun says,

> Seen in a retrospective view, writing during that time [the period of counter-Japanese war] was truly carefree and efficient. There was neither interference nor restriction. [For individual writers], there were no selfish thoughts. It [writing] was a pleasant job…After the national liberation, it was another situation. Struggle in the field of ideology was stressed. The inclinations of literary works were frequently associated with political struggles. Writers became dejected when they committed faults. In terms of writing, they turned to be hesitant and cautious. [5]

In another essay memorializing Zhao Shuli, Sun repeats the same opinion, "The nation-wide triumph (of the war) deserves a big celebration. But, for a writer, it is not a simple issue… [After 1949] Writers became fragile and supersensitive. He [Zhao Shuli] was cautious and always feared that any fault would bring him a catastrophe."[6] The comment on Zhao Shuli's split identity at two different stages of Maoist discourse can also apply to Sun's own case. While the sense of inclusion and energetic devotion during wartime are reinforced or to some extent reshaped in contrast to his later traumatic memories in the high Mao years after 1949, the brisk and lively tone of his wartime stories suggests the comparative freedom, respect, and glory he enjoyed as an orthodox Maoist writer in the formative period of Maoist discourse. In addition to the temporal variables of Maoist discourse, geographical variables provide another perspective from which to investigate Sun's conversion to and simultaneous alienation from Maoist discourse. Sun Li spent most of his time in the Shanxi-Chahar-Hebei border region

[5] Sun Li 孙犁, *Sun Li quanji* vol.5, 565-66.
[6] Ibid., 111.

except for a short-term training at Lu Xun Academy of Arts in Yan'an from 1944 to 1945. According to Yang Lianfen, Shanxi-Chahar-Hebei military regime was an organization of the united front, which was different from the CCP's centralized regime in Yan'an. "The culture of united front did not teach Sun Li the political lesson of class theory; on the contrary, it reinforced his humanistic stance. The origin [of Sun's literary career] determined Sun Li's idealistic attitude toward revolution through his whole life."[7] Yang's argument astutely reveals the difference of Maoist discourse's influence in its core region and peripheral regions in the 1940s. In addition to peasant family's background, familiarity with local peasants' language, and institutional identity in counter-Japanese troops, geographical distance far away from the Maoist core regime provided Sun Li's literary writing an extra screen from political interference. In this sense, the discipline of Maoist discourse that occurred to Ding Ling and Wang Shiwei in the 1940s is merely postponed to the 1950s in Sun Li's case but never absent. Nobody, except for Mao himself, could circumvent such discipline. Sun Li's seemingly smooth conversion to Maoist discourse was contingent on the specific historical context described above.

Sun Li's opposition to instrumental literature, which characterizes most Maoist literary works, is caused by his adherence to a humanistic stance. Sun asserts, "All great writers are humanitarians, with no exception…If taking humanism away from literature,

[7] Yang Lianfen 杨联芬, *Sun Li: geming wenxue zhong de duoyu ren* 孙犁革命文学中的"多余人"[Sun Li: a superfluous man in revolutionary literature], (Beijing: Zhongguo wenlian chubanshe, 2004), 11.

nothing would be left."[8] As same as Zhao Shuli's stories, Sun Li's stories are also nurtured by and rooted in folk literature and traditional vernacular fiction. However, what distinguishes Sun from Zhao is Sun's inheritance of the May Fourth literary legacy, which preceding critics had noticed. Yang Lianfen argues, "Sun Li's literary view and values are profoundly influenced by the May Fourth enlightenment. He insists on humanistic values and maintains literature for life throughout his life."[9] Li Jiefei and Yang Jie compare Zhao Shuli's stories to a "wildflower", which "neither comes from the culture of orthodox Confucian scholar-officials, nor relates to enlightenment culture since the May Fourth intellectuals" and maintain "Sun Li is not such a 'wildflower'. Although his stories are moistened by morning dew as wildflowers are, their genetics of valuable species can be easily perceived."[10] "Generics of valuable species" here is a metaphorical notation which refers to Sun Li's spiritual inheritance of May Fourth humanism, and "morning dew" is another metaphor suggesting his stylistic affinity to Chinese folk literature. Unlike many May Fourth humanitarian writers, Sun Li's concern about universal human nature is not expressed through ironic judgment on others' weakness, as Lu Xun's "The True Story of Ah Q", or self-compassion of the intellectual writers, as Yu Dafu's "Sinking", or condescending empathy to figures of lower class, as Mao Dun's "Spring Silkworms". Therefore, it is not an enlightening humanism prevalent in the May Fourth era. Instead, his humanism is primarily represented through eulogy of the

[8] Sun Li 孙犁, *Sun Li quanji vol. 5*, 242.

[9] Yang Lianfen 杨联芬, 11.

[10] Li Jiefei 李洁非 and Yang Jie 杨劼, *Jiedu Yan'an: wenxue, zhishifenzi he wenhua* 解读延安：文学、知识分子和文化 [Interpretation of Yan'an: literature, intellectual, and culture], (Beijing: Dangdai Zhongguo chubanshe, 2010), 283.

universal humanity of peasant-soldier heroes and heroines[11], which is sometimes accompanied by self-criticism of the first-person cadre narrator. In this sense, the conflict between Sun Li's humanism and Maoist class struggle theory is greatly moderated. However, in some lengthy works, like the unfished novella *The Blacksmith and the Carpenter* (*Tiemu qianzhuan* 铁木前传) and his only novel *The Beginning of the Changeable* (*Fengyun chuji* 风云初记), the conflict is exaggerated when the implied author's empathy is, explicitly or implicitly, expanded to conservative or even somewhat counterrevolutionary figures. In summary, it is his insistence on humanism that makes Sun Li a "superfluous man in revolutionary literature"[12] and endows his stories unique aesthetic values.

3.2 Lyrical or Realistic? Thematic and Formal Features of Sun Li's Wartime Stories

Sun Li published four collections of fiction in the formative period of Maoist discourse[13]. All the thirty-two stories in these collections have a consistent theme: peasants' and soldiers' life in the Counter-Japanese War from 1937 to 1945. Lyrical tone and Sun Li's favor of female characters as two prominent characteristics have been noted by readers and critics long ago. In more than twenty stories, female peasants, nurses,

[11] Since Sun Li's stories are all set in rural Heibei region, there are not worker figures.

[12] This is the title of Yan Lianfen's article on Sun Li.

[13] In this chapter, I divided Maoist discourse into three different eras: 1942-1949 is the formative era; 1950-1976 the dominant era; and after 1976 the post-Mao era. *Lotus Greek* (*Hehua dian* 荷花淀), *Marshes* (*Luhua dang* 芦花荡), and *Parting Advice* (*Zhufu* 嘱咐) were published before 1949. While *Caiputai* was published in 1950, half stories in this collection were written before 1949 and they are all concerned with life during wartime. In this sense, *Caiputai* (采蒲台) should be considered as continuation of the former three collections. Therefore, I call them wartime stories.

housewives, students, and communist cadres are protagonists or co-protagonists. Although some of these stories directly illustrate cruelty of the war, emphasis of his narratives often resides in the routine life and the peaceful time at intervals of battles. In addition, he never spares lines in depicting the beauty of natural landscape and his heroines' subtle feelings. In this way, war in his fictional world is lyrically rendered through his selection of characters, settings, and plots, which makes him unique in the campaign of Maoist writers. For those who adhere to orthodox Maoist literary policies, Sun Li's stories are "full of 'petty bourgeois sentiment' and lack the arduous atmosphere of the warfare behind the enemy lines".[14] For critics who applaud the writer's artistic talent and aesthetic taste, "Sun Li's language is a poetic and elegant one which aims to represent the beauty of humanity" and the mainstream Maoist discourse, at the other end, "pursues political effect, worships power (violence) and conflict (class struggle), and entails sociopolitical narrative".[15] However, Sun Li rejects either "petty bourgeois sentiment" or "lyricism" labelled on him and asserts, "The road that I passed is realistic. Formerly, critics said that my stories were 'petty bourgeoisie'. Now they consider them romantic. Neither is in line with reality."[16] In my view, all these arguments, including the author's self-defense, fail to consider the formative and transformative essence of Sun Li's fiction as well as Maoist discourse in the 1940s.

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[14] Yu Wuqun 余务群, "Women yaoqiu wenyi piping" 我们要求文艺批评 [We demand literary Criticism], *Chinese Communist Party Newspaper Archive Database*, *Jiefang ribao* 解放日报 [Liberation daily], June 4th,1945, hsbk.goosuudata.com/Home/Index/read/id/50.html#page/16.

[15] Yang Lianfen 杨联芬, 3.

[16] Sun Li 孙犁, "Wenji zixu" 文集自序 [Author's preface], in *Sun Li yanjiu zhuanji* 孙犁研究专辑 [The compilation of Sun Li study], eds. Liu jinyong and Fang Fuxian, (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chuban she, 1981), 183.

Close reading of Sun Li's most renowned story "Lotus Creek" (*Hehua dian* 荷花淀) will illustrate realistic, lyrical, and "petty bourgeoisie" elements that concurrently exist on different levels. On the level of story[17], "Lotus Creek" vividly reconstructs the images of new peasants and new countryside community under the administration of the Party. Shuisheng, the male protagonist, is a politically progressive peasant who serves as the chief of the counter-Japanese guerillas and the leader of the Party branch in his village. Shuisheng's Wife, the female protagonist whose name is untold, supports the family by plaiting reed mats and taking care of the child and the elderly at home while her husband engages with military actions outside. The wife's dexterity with plaiting reed mats, a variant of textile production, is commensurate with her husband's excellent military skills. Such family division of labor respectively corresponds to the Great Production Drive (*dashengchan yundong*) and guerrilla war lead by the Party. Shuisheng's Wife is neither a traditional virtuous housewife, who is victimized by Confucian patriarchy, nor a May Fourth woman, who is lacking economic independence after leaving home. Beyond the husband-wife relationship, there is a Party-masses relationship between Shuisheng and his wife. Before the husband's departure for a new battle, the wife asked, "What instructions have you got for me?" and the husband responded, "Mind you go on making progress while I'm away. Work hard and learn to read and write".[18] This conversation reflects how Party's policy reshaped local peasants'

[17] The word "story" here refers to the content which includes events, characters, and settings, according to Seymour Chatman's division of story/narrative. It is synonymous with Y. H. Zhao's "pre-narrated story".

[18] The quoted English transitions of "Lotus Creek" are from Sun Li, *Selected Stories of Sun Li*, trans. Gladys Yang, Sidney Shapiro, etc. (Beijing: Chinese Literature Press, 1999), 2-21.

daily life and domestic relations. Moreover, Shuisheng and his wife are not individualistic heroes, behind them Sun Li depicts a group of fellow guerrillas and wives, which reflects the Party's advocacy of collectivism in the anti-Japanese base area. The report of local peasants' political awareness and self-emancipation through military struggle and production not only illustrates the Party's remodel of Chinese society but also predicts what most Chinese people will experience after 1949. In this sense, "Lotus Creek" is a realistic story and consistent with Maoist discourse.

However, "Lotus Creek" also reports some realities which the Party would prefer not to appear in model writings. Shuisheng's engagement with military actions increases the wife's household burden and the contradictions between them. When Shuisheng told his wife that he voluntarily joined the district brigade convened to cope with the enemy's latest invasion, the wife said, "I won't try to stop you. But, what about us?" Although there were mutual-aid groups that can help counter-Japanese soldiers' dependents in the base area, Shuisheng confessed to his wife, "The main burden will fall on you." Another brutal reality illustrated in the story is that counter-Japanese guerrillas were incapable of providing security to the most vulnerable members such as women and children who are usually the target of the enemy's revenge. Shuisheng's last instruction to his wife reads "don't let Japanese devils and traitors take you alive" and the narrator tells us "This was the main thing he had to say." The wife, a representative of millions of peasants, would pay the price for the people's war lead by the Party. Sun Li puts these thorny issues on the table, which suggests his adherence to realism, but he chooses to revoke women's merits, their forbearance, optimism, and resilience, to cope with the tough realities.

Shuisheng's Wife "digested this in silence", "felt a lump in her throat but held back the tears", or "assented in tears" when conflicts between revolution and personal demands and desires became unsolvable. In this sense, lyricalization or romanticization is Sun Li's literary remedy to the mercilessness of violent revolution and his strategy to avoid direct confrontation between his concerns about humanity and Maoist policies. In contrast, so-called mainstream Maoist literature chooses to eulogize the sacred heroism at the expense of individual's appeals in reality. When the political effect of literature was unduly stressed, Sun Li's concern with individual's situations appeared to be "petty bourgeoise" and the mainstream literature became grandiose but empty.

While writers in the base areas were subject to more restrictions on the selection of fictional realities, that is, events, characters, and settings; as Maoist discourse increasingly gained overwhelming influence in the mid-1940s, what puzzled them more was how to tell stories without breaking political taboos while at the same time maintaining aesthetic value. Our discussion of Sun Li's lyrical and realistic inclination helps to answer why Sun Li's lyrical or "petty bourgeoise" tendency, say in "Lotus Creek", was more tolerated by Maoist literary policy in the 1940s than those who acquired fame as May Fourth writers before they came to the base areas controlled by the Party, such as Ding Ling, Xiao Jun, and so on; and why Sun Li's report of rural China and peasant-soldiers' life seems to be more verisimilar and reliable than the latter's. A brief answer is that the distance between author, narrator, characters, and readers is greatly narrowed in Sun Li's wartime stories, compared to most May Fourth stories. Wayne Booth defines "distance" in fiction as below,

> In any reading experience, there is an implied dialogue among author, narrator, the other characters, and the reader. Each of the four can range, in relation to each of the others, from identification to complete opposition, on an axis of value, moral, intellectual, aesthetic, and even physical.[19]

Since the communication between real author and reader must be transmitted by the voice of narrator and characters, our discussion on Sun Li's stories can be strategically limited to a smaller one—to what extent Sun Li narrows the distance between the narrator's and characters' voices.

While "Lotus Creek" is narrated from the third-person perspective and most characters' speech is led by introductory clauses and quoted with quotation marks, the narrator's voice and the heroine Shuisheng's Wife's voice are often harmoniously blended into one, which reduces or even erases the intervention of the narrator. At the beginning of the narrative, there is a piece of setting description:

> 月亮升起来，院子里凉爽得很，干净得很，白天破好的苇眉子潮润润的，正好编席。（HHD 31）
>
> It was a summer night in the year 1940. The moon had risen, and the little courtyard was delightfully fresh and clean. The rushes split during the day were damp and supple, just waiting to be woven into mats.

In terms of tone, this piece of description is either lyrical or colloquial. Brightness of the moon, comfort of the courtyard, and dampness of the rushes are enjoyable sensations filtered by the heroine's emotion and interest because they all benefit her labor, weaving reed mats. Moreover, the lyrical expressions of these sensations are compatible with the heroine's language. "*weimeizi*" 苇眉子 is an indigenous term used

[19] Wayne Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, 155.

by local peasants referring to processed reed rushes ready for weaving. "*zhenghao bianxi*" 正好编席 (good for weaving mats) is a minor clause without carrying a subject, which vividly conveys an instant and casual impression that flashes in the woman's mind. If it were replaced by a formal assertion like "*Zheshi yige bianxi de haoshihou*" 这是一个编席的好时候 (it is a good occasion to weave mats), the narrator's intervention would become more conspicuous because it sounds like a well-conceived statement for the narrator. Colloquial words and ellipsis syntax contribute most to the fusion of narrator's and characters' voice in Sun Li's stories. It is interesting to notice that in Gladys Yang's translation, she supplemented a summary of the historical context. Probably, she felt that Sun Li's beginning was too abrupt for English readers. But such a supplement increases the narrator's intervention, which Sun Li attempts to avoid. The description quoted above can be viewed as a free indirect discourse (FID) in which the heroine's sensations are reported in the narrator's voice, but the introductory clause "she saw" does not appeal. It can also be viewed as a free direct discourse (FDD) since there is neither verb tense nor personal noun to decide whether it is the third-person narrator's report in narrative-NOW or the heroine's interior monologue in the story-NOW. Different from Shi Zhecun's acquisition of FID and FDD from conscious imitation of Western modernism, Sun Li unconsciously adopts FID and FDD for political pressure to reduce the gap between the

narrator's language and peasant characters' language and aesthetic intuition of imitating the heroine's voice.[20]

In contrast to the beginning of "Lotus Creek", we can take the beginning of Lu Xun's "Medicine" as an opposite example to see how a description can enlarge the distance between the third-person narrator and the characters. "Medicine" (*Yao* 药) also begins with a description of night,

> 秋天的后半夜，月亮下去了，太阳还没有出，只剩下一片乌蓝的天；除了夜游的东西，什么都睡着。华老栓忽然坐起身，擦着火柴，点上遍身油腻的灯盏，茶馆的两间屋子里，便弥满了青白的光。(YAO 463)
>
> It was autumn, in the small hours of the morning. The moon had gone down, but the sun had not yet risen, and the sky appeared a sheet of darkling blue. Apart from night-prowlers, all was asleep. Old Shuan suddenly sat up in bed. He struck a match and lit the grease-covered oil-lamp, which shed a ghostly light over the two rooms of the teahouse.

Description of settings in the first half can only be told by the narrator because the character Old Shuang was still in his sleep. The second half is also the narrator's report because a person who just woke up is less likely to notice the grease that covers the oil-lamp, and it is impossible to see the light of two rooms at once. Unpleasant settings here are employed to illustrate the undesirable situation of the characters in the Hua family and metaphysically imply the decadence of Chinese society. Therefore, the description of settings is filtered by the consciousness of an intellectual narrator and a critical implied author behind him. In this sense, the third-person narrator is given a superior status to

[20] While Sun Li can also learn FID and FDD from May Fourth writers and Russian writers with whom he was obsessed in his early years, he never mentioned FID and FDD as a reflective stylist who wrote many articles on rhetoric of fiction. Moreover, his FID and FDD appeared to be exceptional skilled without an imitating period. Therefore, in my view it is safe to argue he learned them intuitively by the impulse to present verisimilar voice of characters and reduce his own voice under the pressure of Maoist discourse.

observe and judge his characters from a position of staying out the story, which gives a realistic impression to the reader. On the language level, Lu Xun's diction and syntax are typical "unsayable" Chinese which widens the gap between the narrator's voice and character Old Shuan's voice. For instance, "*Shenme dou shuizhao*" 什么都睡着 (Everything has fallen asleep) sounds like an incomplete statement because of missing of the aspectual particle "了" indicating the perfective aspect in Chinese. The conjunction "*bian*" 便 (therefore) in the last sentence is an elegant word exclusive to the lower urban civilians who appear later in the story. In this sense, Lu Xun's language, especially in cases of usage of syntax that contradicts conventions in spoken Chinese, also creates a tension between the narrator and the reader, which makes the narrator appear to be more aloof, morally, intellectually and aesthetically.

In contrast to Lu Xun's "unsayable" Chinese, we can define Sun Li's language as a chantable one, in which Sun Li squeezes out the elite narrator's aloofness and therefore makes his lyrical tone compatible with the so-called worker-peasant-soldier's language prescribed by Mao. This is why Sun Li's "petty bourgeoise" inclination is more tolerable than other late-comer writers. In "Lotus Creek", besides his accurate observation and imitation of the hero's and heroine's voice, Sun Li also creates a collective voice of unnamed characters, which further balances the individuals' and masses' weight in his narrative. In the second half of "Lotus Creek", Shuisheng Wife's speech is always situated into jabbers with her fellow housewives. After their husbands being called up to a proposed military action, the housewives gather to plan a visit to their husbands because they cannot help missing them. The housewives' jabber reads,

女人们到底有些藕断丝连。过了两天，四个青年妇女集在水生家里来，大家商量：
“听说他们还在这里没有走。我不拖尾巴，可是忘下了一件衣裳。”
“我有句要紧话得和他说说。”
水生的女人说：
“听他说鬼子要在同口安据点…… ”
“哪里碰得那么巧，我们快去快回来。”
“我本来不想去，可是俺婆婆非叫我再去看看他，有什么看头啊！”
于是这几个女人偷偷坐在一只小船上，划到对面马庄去了。（HHD 34-35）

But there must be something of the clinging vine about women. Two days after Shuisheng left, four young wives gathered in his house to talk things over.
“Apparently, they’re still here: they haven’t gone yet. I don’t want to cause problems, but there’s a jacket I forget to give him.”
“I’ve something important to say to him.”
Shuisheng’s wife said:
“I heard that the Japanese devils want to set up a base at Tongkou…”
“There is not a chance of our running into them, not if we pay a flying visit.”
“I didn’t mean to go, but my mother-in-law insists that I ought to see him. What for, I’d like to know?”
Without breathing a word to anyone, the four of them took a small boat and paddled to Ma village across the river.

While the housewives’ conversation is sandwiched with narrative reports, the narrator does not mention the four unnamed women when he quotes their speech. Moreover, their speech excellently fits into their identity, situation, and emotion. Therefore, it gives the reader the impression that the narrator occasionally eavesdrops into their dialogue and presents the exact words they spoke, though in terms of form, the whole dialogues are led by the introductory clause “*Tamen shangliang*” 她们商量 (they discuss). The women’s uneasy, candid, and a little bit cunning words make the record credible. In the meanwhile, it is a touching piece full of women’s concern for their husbands and the implied author’s empathy to the female characters. Also, it is a eulogy of heroism of local peasants in the

base areas. Thus, I argue Sun Li maintains a good balance among realism, lyrical tone, and Maoist literary policy because of his familiarity with peasants' life and language in "Lotus Creek".

If we view the pre-narrated story of "Lotus Creek" as a prototype story, which lies in the center of Sun Li's fictional world, there are many others in the four wartime collections that can be considered as re-narrated versions of the same story. A diachronic comparison of these related "Lotus Creek" stories will lead us to deeper understanding of the relation between Sun Li and Maoist discourse. "Parting Advice", written in 1946, can be considered a sequel to "Lotus Creek". In this story, the hero is also named as Shuisheng, but he has left home for eight years and become the vice political director in his battalion. Now his troop is redeployed from the mountainous areas back to plains areas where his home village is located. The counter-Japanese war is replaced by the civil war between CCP and KMT. This story is much less romanticized than "Lotus Creek" because the focus shifts to the heartbreaking facts caused by the constant wars. The child could not recognize the father because Shuisheng has been away from home too long, and his father passed away without seeing the final triumphs. On his way back home, Shuisheng witnesses the devastation of his hometown, "[T]he villages were badly scarred. Many of the houses burned by the enemy had not been rebuilt. All the gun towers on the edges of the villages had been demolished…" Therefore, "[h]ome didn't draw him, it only upset him."[21] When Shuisheng told his wife that he would only stay home for only one night, "she was speechless. She lowered her head, then listlessly lay

[21] The English translation is from *Selected Stories by Sun Li*.

down on the *kang*." In this sense, "Parting Advise" bears a more realistic tone for the greater portion of damages and hurts.

In terms of narrative, the third-person narrator's intervention on characters' thoughts increases, especially on the male character Shuisheng. Shuisheng was puzzled by homesickness in his troop, especially during leisure time. "Whenever he felt homesick, he would take up a book, or go out to the athlete field, or the vegetable garden, and exercise or work or study, until he had shaken it off." In contrast to the battle hero Shuisheng, who is energetic and optimistic in "Lotus Creek", this Shuisheng tends to be evasive and depressed in confrontation with difficulties. When he was on the way approaching to home village, "he ambled on slowly, wanting to savor all the joy that high excitement brings." Soon, the narrator realizes the danger of this petty bourgeoisie sentiment and imposes self-criticism on him, "*Ta juede zhezhong ganqing youxie zuozuo*" 他觉得这种感情有些做作 (He felt his emotions were a bit forced). The narrative report is the primary representation of male characters' thoughts in "Parting Advice", which is very different from the flexible and diverse representations of female's psychology in "Lotus Creek". Sun Li also discontinues the use of free style, FDD and FID, to present the wife's thoughts and speech. At the end of the story, the relation between the husband and the wife is reversed, compared to that in "Lotus Creek". This time the wife becomes the politically mature role and gives advice to her husband who has been vice political director, "The Kuomintang reactionaries are just like the Japanese. They want to drive us all to the graves…Keep moving forward. Don't let anything distract you…If only you stay at the front, I'll wait for you till I die." The wife's advice, which is saturated with

political encouragement, is represented in several comparatively lengthy paragraphs in direct discourse (DD). Apparently, it is inappropriate to blend the narrator's and the heroine's voice by adopting FDD or FID because these are no longer spontaneous and instant thoughts that flash in the wife's consciousness or unconscious; instead, they are well-conceived and cautiously selected political awareness. While "Parting Advice" was only written one year later than "Lotus Creek", the political situation for literary writing significantly changed. In the seventh national congress of the CCP convened in 1945, Maoism was confirmed as the only leading principle of the Party, which implies the advent of the dominant era of Maoist discourse. The thematic and formal differences between the two "lotus creek" stories are the effect of such change of Maoist discourse.

About one third Sun Li's wartime stories are narrated by first-person narrators who show up in the stories as characters. In the May Fourth era, lyricalization and romanticization of fiction writing was accompanied by the prevalence of first-person narrative as pointed out by Jaroslav Průšek, Chen Pingyuan and other scholars. However, lyrical tone in Sun Li's first-person stories is more restrained than his stories narrated by third-person non-characterized narrators. The most common identity of these first-person narrators is a war correspondent sent to fronts or villages to interview heroes and to report their legend. In some stories, the correspondent narrator does not meet the protagonist, therefore, the interviewee takes over the act of narrating from the first-person narrator, which increases the levels of narrative. For instance, in "Living a Week in the Guerrilla Region" (*Youjiqu shenghuo yi xingqi* 游击区生活一星期), Old Li from local peasants' association tells two stories about enemy's gun base and Sanhuai, a hero of

guerrilla warfare, recalling how the hero delt with a collaborationist troop by taking advantage of underground fortifications. In "A Small Struggle near the Lake Baiyangdian" (*Baiyangdian bian de yici xiao douzheng* 白洋淀边的一次小斗争), "I" come across an old fisherman on my way to send a letter. The fisherman tells the story about a young girl in his village who killed three Japanese soldiers with a grenade after leading them to a trap. In these stories, the role played by the narrator-I is merely to introduce third-person storytellers, therefore, they should be viewed as pseudo-first-person narration. The narrator-I does occasionally disclose his thoughts, but these reflections are usually limited to self-criticism. For instance, at the beginning of "Living a Week in the Guerrilla Region", the narrator-I confesses his ignorance about the life of tunnel war and local peasants' language by telling two anecdotes. In one time, he attempted to bring an oversized walking stick into the tunnel. In another time, his compliment to local people led to misunderstanding because his did not know "wheat" was a cursing word in local language. Before telling the stories heard from his interviewees, the narrator-I makes a confession, "Although I live close to the guerrilla region and heard many stories before, my knowledge about it (is limited) and my thoughts are rather subjective."[22] These stories, of course, not Sun Li's excellent ones, have no difference from the mainstream Maoist fiction in regard to either theme or narrative discourse.

There is another type of first-person stories, in which the conflict between the

[22] Sun Li 孙犁, *Sun Li quanji. Vol.1*, 40.

character-narrator-I and the heroine promotes the development of the plot. "Recollections of the Hill Country" (*Shandi huiyi* 山地回忆) is one of these cases. The character-I, a cadre of the Eight Rout Army temporarily stationing in a mountainous village, irritates the heroine, a village girl, when he washes his face at the upstream of the river where the girl is washing vegetable downstream. The girl protests "me" for polluting the water and then satirizes the hygienic habits of guerrilla troops in a playful tone when "I" attempt to argue with her. Soon, "I" find the girl is the daughter from the family where "I" am accommodated. After getting along for several days, "I" was deeply moved by the girl's sincerity, innocence, and enthusiasm. The relation between the character-I and the peasant girl reminds us of Mao Zedong's argument in "Yan'an Talks", "the workers and peasants were the cleanest people and, even though their hands were soiled and their feet smeared with cow-dung, they were really cleaner than the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois intellectuals."[23] "Recollections of the Hill Country" is permeated with a sentimental aura since it is a reminiscence of a piece of unforgettable life during the war ten more years ago. However, its sentiment is accompanied by the intellectual author's self-debasement and self-criticism. This is the only legitimate lyrical tone in the dominate period of Maoist discourse. After all, this story was written in 1949.

If we continue to examine several practice pieces written by Sun Li in 1941 and 1942, such as "After Leaving Home" (*Zouchu yihou* 走出以后), "Husband" (*Zhangfu* 丈夫), and "Women" (*Nürenmen* 女人们), it is not difficult to find evidence, regarding both

[23] Mao Zedong, *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* vol. 3, 71.

theme and style, that suggests Sun Li was deeply influenced by May Fourth literature before he became a Maoist writer later. Take “After Leaving Home” as an example, we can tell from the title it is Sun Li’s response to his spiritual and literary mentor Lu Xun’s famous essay “What Happens after Nora Leaves Home”. In this story, the female protagonist Wang Zhenzhong escapes from the arranged marriage and becomes a student at a nursing school held by the counter-Japanese united front regime. While Nora’s problem of lacking economic independence is resolved through participation in counter-Japanese work, which suggests the author’s conversion to Maoist discourse, close reading of the story and its narrative will reveal some inconsistencies with Maoist literary principle. First, the character-I, an intellectual cadre, plays a crucial role by writing a reference letter for Wang Zhenzhong, which recues her from the control of her parents-in-law. There is an apparent “Enlightener-Enlightened” relationship between the character-I and the local girl. Moreover, the narrator-I takes a critical attitude to depict political backward masses such as his landlady, the landlady’s daughter, Wang Zhenzhong’s mother-in-law, and a female schoolteacher who attempts to bring Wang Zhenzhong back home under the mother-in-law’s pressure. Similar stories which stress the enlightening mission of intellectuals were severely criticized as individualism, subjectivism, or “petty bourgeois fever” in and after the Rectification Movement in 1942 because they undermine the authority of the Party in mobilizing and emancipating the masses. Second, on the level of narrative discourse and language, there is much May Fourth influence. For instance, after Wang Zhengzhong joins the nursing school, “I” pay her visit and see,

她的脸更红，更圆，已经洗去了那层愁闷的阴暗：两个眉梢也不再那样神经质地跳动，两篇嘴唇微微张开，露着雪白的牙齿，睁着大眼睛望着台上讲话的程子华同志的脸，那信赖更深了。(ZCYH 340)

The last sentence in the passage "*Na xinlan geng shenle*" 那信赖更深了 (she becomes more faithful) preserves an intellectual author's privilege of freely reading and interpreting characters' mind. Literary diction like "*choumen*" 愁闷 (sorrowed), "*yinan*" 阴暗 (darkness), "*shenjingzhi*" 神经质 (nervously) and multiple attributive clause "*taishang jianghua de Cheng Zihua tongzhi de lian*" 台上讲话的程子华同志的脸 (The face to Comrade Cheng Zihua who is giving a speech on the stage), which hardly appeared in Sun Li's stories after 1942, suggests that Sun Li did not completely establish his own inventory of Maoist diction and syntax when he wrote this story.

The close reading of Sun Li's wartime stories illustrated diachronic changes of his lyrical tone and realistic stance from 1942 to 1949, which was also a crucial transformative period of Maoist discourse. Several conclusions can be drawn from the close reading: 1) The degree of lyrical inclination in his short stories decreased after 1946 when Sun Li returned to Heibei and was assigned to participate in land reform works there. The difference between "Lotus Creek" and "Parting Advice" suggests such a transformation. 2) His lyrical tone is tightly associated with female characters. Flexible representations are employed to report female characters' thoughts and speech, in which the distance between the lyrical narrator and those women is the closest. The lyrical tone decreases and the distance between the narrator and characters enlarges in male protagonist stories and stories having character-narrator-I. 3) Sun Li's familiarity with

local peasants' language greatly facilitates his reports of their stories. His wartime stories restored the flexibility of Chinese syntax, which makes most of these stories have a chantable language. However, in his early practicing stories, there are residues of Europeanized Chinese.

3.3 Lyrical voice in the dominant period of Maoist discourse: Sun Li's unfinished novella and novel

Although my discussion is focused on short stories, it is necessary to make an exception for Sun Li to discuss his only novella *The Blacksmith and the Carpenter* (*First Part)* (*Tiemu qianzhuan* 铁木前传) and the only novel *The Beginning of the Changeable* (*Fengyun chuji* 风云初记). Unlike Lu Xun and Shi Zhecun who allegedly had plans to write lengthy fictional works but for some reasons finally did not put into practice, Sun Li did publish two lengthy works, which are apparently a continuation of his previous short stories regarding either the theme or the style. However, from the titles of them, *qianzhuan* (former biography) of the novella and *chuji* (preliminary record) of the novel, it is not difficult to tell that they are partly finished works. As for the story-time, *The Blacksmith and the Carpenter* ends up at a time soon after the liberation of Tianjin in 1949, and *The Beginning of the Changeable* ends up earlier at the outbreak of the Hundred Regiments Offensive (*baituan dazhan*), the largest military action against Japanese army launched by CCP in 1940. However, as for the narrating-time, they are both narrated after 1949 since the narrator frequently mentions hardship of the old days with a reminiscent tone and implicit comparison of the peaceful days his implied readers

currently enjoyed. According to Gérard Genette, in subsequent narrating with classical third-person perspective, like these two stories, there is usually "a relative contemporaneity of story time and narrating time", through which "the length of the story gradually lessens the interval separating it from the moment of the narrating."[24] However, Sun Li's approach of revealing such final convergence is to confess that his stories are unfinished as in the last chapter of The *Beginning of the Changeable*,

> 我们的整个故事，好像并没有结束。但故事里的人物，将时时出现在我们的眼前，走在我们的身边。你尽可以按照你自己的学识和见地、阅历和体会、心性和理想，去判断他们每个人在将来的遭遇和结果。(FYCJ 444)
>
> The entire story seems unfinished. However, characters in the story will show up in front of us or walk alongside with us from time to time. You can predicate their experience and endings in the future according to your own knowledge, insight, experience, personalities, and ideals.

Previous criticism has provided convincing explanations which relate the incompleteness of Sun Li's lengthy stories to external determinants such as stricter literature censorship after 1949, deterioration of Sun Li's mental state, and his timid and submissive personality. Yang Lianfen has argued,

> When the mainstream politics (of Maoism) and humanism became two incompatible values, Sun Li's effort of mediating them led to narrative conflicts in his works. Finally, all of this resulted in the collapse of his mind. His last work *The Blacksmith and the Carpenter* which is featured by abstruse and self-contradictory narration represents his mental crisis in the mid-1950s…There are two different voices on the narrative level of this novel, which cannot be regarded as an intentional narrative skill, but narrative inconsistency caused by the conflict of the two values, which brings about discord of the plots.[25]

[24] Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*, 220-221.
[25] Yang Lianfen 杨联芬, 22.

Substantially, Yang's argument is correct. However, if we distinguish the real author Sun Li from the implied author constructed through reading the text and exclude the real author's experience in the real world from the text as many narratologists do, Yang seemingly overstates the conflicts between the values held by the implied author. In my view, the implied author or Sun Li's second self in the two lengthy works is less compromising than Yang argued. Seen from a positive perspective, his decision to leave the stories unfinished, to some extent, can be viewed as a resistance to Maoist discourse. Moreover, in the already narrated stories, we can also find evidence that he is less submissive to Maoist ideology as the real author himself once confessed and as critics usually consider. My close reading of *The Blacksmith and the Carpenter* will illustrate the implied author's implicit resistance and the complexity of the narrator's and characters' voices.

According to Maoist critics, "The struggle between the roads of socialism and capitalism is the master stream [of what literature should reflect], a historical and realistic one…Sun Li illustrates the inevitability of class differentiation in the countryside and the beginning of the struggle between the two roads through the change of the friendship between Old Fu, the blacksmith, and Old Li, the carpenter, in *The Blacksmith and the Carpenter*."[26] Indeed, the overall frame of the story gives us an impression that it is a revolutionary realistic story representing class differentiation through the conflicts

[26] Feng Jiannan 冯健男, "Sun Li de yishu: *Tiemu qianzhuan*" 孙犁的艺术(中): 《铁木前传》[Sun Li's art Ⅱ: on *The Blacksmith and the Carpenter*], in *Sun Li yanjiu zhuanji* 孙犁研究专辑 [The compilation of Sun Li study], eds. Liu Jinyong and Fang Fuxian (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 1983), 428-429.

between three contrastive pairs of major characters. The first contrastive pair is Old Li and Old Fu. They are both poor craftsmen before the land reform movement. Old Li is a local skilled carpenter and Old Fu is a skilled blacksmith from another village. Their mutual appreciation and friendship develop from their close cooperation. However, when Old Fu returns from his home village in the Nationalist area several years later as poor as before, Old Li has become a well-to-do craftsman because of the property he received in the land reform, the pension of his second son who died in the liberation war, the money sent from his oldest son who made a fortune in Tianjin as a businessman, and of course his own entrepreneurship. The huge economic gap ruins their friendship and Old Fu leaves Old Li's home angrily after Old Li refuses to pay Old Fu for the project of making a cart. After the breakup of the friendship, Old Fu gets more involved into public affairs like digging wells; while on the contrary, Old Li becomes more resistant to collectivization and more dedicated to accumulating personal fortune through logistics by using the cart they made together. The second contrastive pair is Old Li's sons Four and Six. Four is an active member of the Communist Youth League, who devotes himself to public education and welfare but is often scolded by his father for incompetence in domestic affairs. In contrast, Old Li's youngest son, Six has been spoiled and is obsessed with raising pigeons for fun. The third pair consists of two pretty girls. Nine is Old Fu's only daughter and had an oral engagement with Six since childhood and Man'er is a relative of Six's business partners who run a beef dumpling stand with him. They both love Six and Six has good impression of both, too. However, Nine finds that Six is getting closer to Man'er because of their common qualities of living by their own will

and resisting collective life, especially political gatherings. Besides the three major contrastive pairs, there is also contrast between progressive and backward masses in the background. It would not be difficult to predicate the fate of the backward figures if Sun Li continued to recount characters' experience in the 1950s. Sun Li has said that during the Cultural Revolution the red guards broke into his apartment at least three time under the pretext of looking for the sequel of *The Blacksmith and the Carpenter*.[27] Apparently, the red guards as well as other common readers wanted to know whether Old Fu, Six, and Man'er would have been remodeled to socialist new men or not.

The red guards would feel more justified to punish Sun Li if they knew how to measure the distance of the narrator from the progressive and backward characters by analyzing different voices. As I have pointed out in the discussion of Sun Li's wartime stories, the narrator's voice and characters' voice in most cases are well blended into a homogenous one, that is, the work-peasant-soldier language, which is different from the lingual gap that often distinguishes the narrator's voice from characters' voice in the May Fourth fiction. However, there is a bifurcation between political and ordinary language within Maoist discourse as Perry Link has pointed out,

> [After late 1950s] The bifurcation between official language and ordinary language in China grew much sharper and more pervasive than it had ever been before… It was now no longer just the officials but nearly everyone in society who had to learn to negotiate the official language.[28]

[27] Sun Li 孙犁, *Sun Li quanji vol.6,* 9.

[28] Perry Link, *An Anatomy of Chinese* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 235.

How could bifurcated official language and ordinary language compose a united voice in Sun Li's narrative? The bifurcation between official and ordinary language has existed long before in all societies, as Link has noted in his book. However, in imperial China they were used by different social groups and on different occasions. Official language is primarily used by the scholar-officials on formal occasions and ordinary language by commoners in daily life. However, in the Mao era, all social members universally and intensively use colloquialized official language and politicalized ordinary language, which are intertwined with each other. In *The Blacksmith and the Carpenter*, every character, including the most conservative figure Old Li, knows how to speak politicized language to protect one's own interest. The following is a typical dialogue in which we can find the Maoist official language was infused into the ordinary language of commoners who lived in liberated area.

> "年轻人进步是好事。" 傅老刚劝说着, "亲家, 要不是这个**世道,** 你的生活能过得这样好吗？"
>
> "你说的这话对。" 黎老东说, "**时代**是不断前进的, 可是我们过**日子**还得按照老理儿才行。" (TMQZ 107)
>
> It's good for young people to be progressive," Old said soothingly, "if it weren't for this **new society**, relative would you be getting along so well?"
>
> "True," Old Li concluded. "**The times** keep improving. But in our **private lives**, the old ways are still the best."

Before the conversation Old Li was irritated by his son who delightedly introduced his duty of education as a Youth League member and complained about fellow villagers' ignorance of public affairs to the guests, Old Fu and his daughter Nine. Old Li scolded Four in a vulgar tone, "*Jiushi tamade ni renshi qingchu…Ni shao zai waitou gei wo zheng*

ma ba!" 就是他妈的你认识清楚…你少在外头给我挣骂吧" (You are the goddamned genius who knows everything…Stop bringing down curses on me). Here, Old Fu intervenes in the dispute between them and in his effort to pacify Old Li's fury he used "*shidao*" 世道 (current society), an earthy word matching Old Li's value, which illustrates his empathy to his old friend. At the same time, he also states his true idea by using an official word "*jinbu*" 进步 (progressive). Old Li also demonstrates his competence of switching between the old and the new, the vulgar and the official languages, which we can tell from the contrast between "*Shidai shi buduan qianjin de*" 时代是不断前进的 (The times keep improving) and "*Guorizi haide anzhao laolir*" 过日子还得按照老理儿" (The old way is still the best in our private lives). For Old Li, the vulgar language, which reveals his true thought, maintains his authority at home, but the official language facilitates his interactions with others.

Official language not only appears in backward characters' well-conceived statements but also occurs to their silent reflections and unconscious responses. When Man'an recalls and ruminates on her past experience, she asks herself, "*Guoqu de lu shi zou cuole ba*?" 过去的路, 是走错了吧?" (Maybe, I walked on a wrong road before). In Sydney Shapiro's English translation, he translates this sentence into an FID as "had she chosen the right way?" However, in my view, it would be more appropriate to be viewed as a DD if translated as "Is the road that I chose wrong?" The metaphorical use of "*lu*" 路 (road) is an implicit or colloquialized official language which has long before been acquired by who lived in the liberated area. Since Man'er is the target of political

education in this village now and her home village before, she is inevitably influenced by such language. When Man'er is invited to the meeting of political education by the cadre sent to educate her, her concern blurts out, "*Tamen buhui douzheng wo ba*?" 他们不会斗争我吧 (Would they attack me at the meeting?) Very likely, Man'er was personally attacked before in such meetings. Definitely, she saw others being attacked in such meetings before. Therefore, she did everything possible to avoid attending any political gatherings to which she was invited. Whether she was personally attacked before, she learnt the official word "*douzheng*" 斗争(struggle) from the politicalized life.

Sun Li's implicit resistance to Maoist discourse in *The Blacksmith and the Carpenter*, I argue, lies in the lyrical tone, a petty-bourgeois language accused by Mao, which the narrator reserves to depict the backward female character Man'er. Critics have noticed the contrast between the well-rounded portrayal of Man'er and the stereotyped portrayal of Nine, the progressive counterpart to Man'er. Feng Jiannan astutely notices the different artistic appeal of the two female protagonists,

> "Man'er has a really complicated personality. It is even too complicated to tell whether she is shameless or innocent. In a word, she is a beautiful, enthusiastic, audacious, smart, sly and acrimonious character who is full of imagination, vitality, and inner contradiction…"[29]

> "As for the images of the progressive characters, they are not profound, vivid, rounded, and dynamical enough…The image of Nine is touching and portrayed distinctively in her childhood, however, later it becomes a mediocre one. In regard to distinctiveness of the image and profundity of the personality, Nine is not comparable to Man'er." [30]

[29] 439.
[30] Ibid., 447-448.

However, Feng has not pointed out what leads to such differences. In my view, the implied author manipulates the distance between the narrator and the two characters through deliberately selected diction and syntax, which causes the different artistic effect. While the united language, either politicized or colloquialized, permeates the whole narration, there is piece of lyrical description concerned with Man'er's psychology, which appears to be out of tune with the revolutionary realistic theme. When Man'er manages to sneak away from the political gatherings in which she is forced to participate, she always wanders mindlessly outside the village at night. The passage reads,

> 无论在娘家或是在姐姐家，她好一个人绕道村外去。夜晚，对于她，像对于那些喜欢在夜晚出来活动的飞禽走兽一样。炎夏的夜晚，她像萤火虫一样四处飘荡着，难以抑制那时时腾起的幻想和冲动。她拖着沉醉的身子在村庄的围墙外面，在离村很远的沙岗上的丛林徘徊着。 在夜里，她的胆子变得很大，常常有到沙岗上来觅食的狐狸，在她身边跑过，常常有小虫子扑倒她的脸上，爬到她的身上，她还是很喜欢地坐在那里，叫凉风吹拂着，叫身子下面的热沙熨帖着。在冬天，狂暴的风，鼓舞着她奔流的感情，雪片飘落在她的脸上就像是飘在烧热烧红的铁片上。(TMQZ 127)

> Whether living with her mother or with her sister, Man'er loved to go walking outside the village, alone. She was a night bird, reveling in the darkness. On hot summer evenings she flitted about like a firefly, engaging in wild flight of fancy. Intoxicated with nature, she would wander over the brambly dunes far from the village walls. She was quite fearless at night. Marauding foxes would run past her, insects would knock against her face or crawl over her body, but she would sit happily on a dark sand dune, letting the cool breezes caress her while the sunbaked sand warmed her beneath. In winter, the savage winds excited her. Whirling snowflakes, landing on her face, melted as if they had fallen on a slab of red-hot metal.

While the narrator asserts in an overt judgment later, "wasting her precious youth, she teetered constantly on the edge of a precipice"[31], here the same narrator apparently cannot help being affected by Man'er's indulgence in the darkness of night. Wayne

[31] Sun Li, *Selected Stories by Sun Li*, 254.

Booth maintains, “Whenever a fact, whenever a narrative summary, whenever a description must, or even might, serve as a clue to our interpretation of the character who provides it, it may very well lose some of its standing as fact, summary, or description.” In this sense, the passage quoted above is more a report of Man’er’s inner world than an objective setting description or a summary of her activities. “*yinhuochong*” 萤火虫 (fireflies), “*Lianfen*” 凉风 (cool winds) and “*xuepian*” 雪片” (snowflakes) are commonly employed imagery in traditional literati poems and essays, which suggest a romantic atmosphere and poetic comfortableness. Verbs like “*tengqi*” 腾起 (leap up rigorously), “*piaodang*” 飘荡 (drift), “*paihuai*” 徘徊 (wander), “*chuifu*” 吹拂 (breeze), “*yuntie*” 熨帖 (iron out wrinkles) and adjectives like “*chenzui*” 沉醉 (intoxicated), “*benliu*” 奔流 (torrential) are all literary diction associated with certain comforts or relaxation. Therefore, Man’er’s perception and sensation are filtered by the “petty bourgeois” narrator’s consciousness and narrated through his lyrical voice.

When such a lyrical voice is applied to the report of Nine’s feelings and thoughts, it bifurcates into two sub-categories, which respectively correspond to the interiority of the Youth League member Nine and the sentimental girl Nine. The narrator intentionally keeps a distance from Nine’s morally and politically elevated thoughts, which can be regarded an implicit resistance to Maoist discourse. After two chapters’ report of Man’er inner world, the narrator seeming feels necessary to switch to the report of Nine’s inner world as a counterbalance. When Youth League members are convened to produce iron instruments for the well-digging, Nine’s recollection brings readers to her childhood,

> 现在，当着清脆的锤声，又在她耳边响起的时候，她**可以**联想：在她的童年，在战争的岁月里，在平原纵横的道路上，响起大队战马的铿锵的蹄声里，也曾经包含着一个少女最初向国家献出的，金石一般的忠贞的心意。
>
> 当然，她**可以**想到更早一些的日子，她可以用今天的工作来纪念她那贫苦终身，中年丧命的母亲……当她同母亲还是同一个躯体的时候，母亲就带着她从事这种沉重的工作了。（TMQZ 133-134）
>
> Now the sharp raps of the hammer ringing in her ears recalled memories of her childhood: During those years of warfare, echoing in the hoofbeats of the battle chargers on the paths that crisscrossed the plain was the heart, pure as gold, of a little girl making her first contribution to her country!
>
> Of course, she could remember an even earlier period. Today's work could serve as a memorial to her mother, who had been poor all her life and died middle-aged…Even when Nine was still being carried within her mother's body, her mother had engaged in this heavy work.

In this passage, grandiose and affective words like "*zongheng*" 纵横 (crisscross), "*kengqiang*" 铿锵 (sonorous), "*zhongzhen*" 忠贞 (loyal), and "*quti*" 躯体 (body) belong to the narrator's voice, though they serve to illustrate the character Nine's revolutionary and class awareness. Compared to the blended voice and affective empathy in the description of Man'er's interiority, the narrator is not that empathetic to Nine because of the use of modal verb "*keyi*" 可以 (could). In the Chinese original, the appearance of the introductory clauses "*Ta keyi lianxian*" 她可以联想 (she could associate) and "*Ta keyi xiangdao*" 她可以想到 (she could remember) suggest the narrator's intervention on the thoughts of the character quoted later. However, the appearance of the modal verb "*keyi*", I argue, suggests that the narrator is not sure what in effect conjured up in Nine's mind at that moment. The narrator enlarges the distance from the female character and suspends his sympathy when he has to report political awareness of her. When the real author Sun Li selected the modal verb "*keyi*" from his lexical inventory, he might not be aware of the

rhetorical effect of it. But it is very likely that his intuitive preference to liberal mind makes the narrator stay in a position further away from politicized Nine than innocent Man'er, which gives readers and critics an impression that "Nine is not comparable to Man'er".

Since the image of Nine is prescribed as a prerequisite to be a progressive Youth League member, the sentimental side of the same character's mind, that is, the romantic love for Six, must be cautiously restrained and redirected to the expectation of the awakening of Six's political consciousness. Sun Li does apply the lyrical voice to represent Nine's sentimental thoughts as he does in the case of depicting Man'er. At the end of the Chapter 16, Nine sighs for the once intimate relationship between Six and herself in a metaphorical way of ruminating on the evanescent companionship between birds and fish as she takes a rest during the interval of the collective work. However, the narrator interrupts her reminiscence by commenting "such memories are painful, enervating"[32] Then, Nine abruptly stands up and says, "We've had plenty to eat and enough to drink. Let's get to work."[33] In this way, the complexity of Nine' interiority has to be sacrificed for the single-minded political pursuit. The contrast between Man'er and Nine is more than the contrast between a backward and a progressive girl. To some extent, it is the contrast between May Fourth and Maoist discourse. Man'er is a homeless Nora in this story who escapes from the arranged marriage and feels confused and helpless in the pursuit of individual freedom and happiness. On the contrary, Nine is a

[32] Sun Li, *Selected Stories by Sun Li*, 278.
[33] Ibid., 278-279.

new person equipped with socialist beliefs who consciously devotes herself to the collective liberation advocated by the Party. While in overt narration and commentary the narrator praises Nine and mildly criticizes Man'er, the close reading on the level of narrative discourse and language illustrates that the implied author lays much more empathy on Man'er and keeps rather distant from Nine, which, I argue, is Sun Li's implicit resistance to Maoist discourse.

The resistance becomes more conspicuous when Sun Li depicts male progressive figures. Four is the representative of the politically progressive male youth in the story. However, he is portrayed as an intellectually inferior figure in comparison to his little brother Four, who is handsome, smart, generous, carefree, and beloved by their father and all the young women in the village. Four is often the one who imparts political slogans to other characters and thereby to readers. However, his enthusiastic remarks full of political slogans are usually met by fellow Youth League member's mockery and his father's furious curse. If the image of Nine is not rounded enough, Four is almost portrayed as a boring simpleton who can hardly arouse sympathy from the reader. There is a "*gaoji ganbu*" 高级干部 (high-ranked officer) recommended to educate and rescue Man'er from the obsession of individualism. However, the official tends to have the teased and defeated role in his interactions with Man'er. He voluntarily lives in Man'er's household and attempts to persuade her to participate in political gatherings. However, after a heart-to-heart conversation with Man'er,

> 干部长久失眠。醒来的时候，天还很早，小满儿跑了进来。她好像正在洗脸，只穿一件红毛线衣，挽着领子和袖口，脸上脖子上都带着水珠，她俯

> 着身子在干部头起翻腾着，她的胸部时时摩贴在干部脸上，一阵阵发散着温暖的香气。（TMQZ 133-134）
>
> For a long time the provincial officer was unable to fall asleep. He awoke very early the next morning. Man'er came running in, dressed in a red woolen jersey. Her collar was open, and her sleeves were pushed up; her face and neck were wet. Evidently, she had just been washing. Looking for something on the end of the platform bed, she leaned over the provincial officer. Her breasts brushed against his face. He could smell her warm fragrance.

While it is the narrator who narrates the scene to the reader, it is from the provincial officer's perspective that Man'er's body is constantly gazed. Without explaining whether Man'er plans to seduce or embarrass the provincial officer on purpose, the narrator just presents some facts to the reader. However, the "seeming facts carry a heavy load of evaluation…They order in some way the importance of the parts. They work on the beliefs of the reader."[34] The implied author is molding beliefs inconsistent with the norms established by Maoist political propaganda. Therefore, this piece of narration can be viewed as further evidence that the implied author secretly betrays what he has overtly claimed to praise or criticize.

My close reading of *The Black Smith and the Carpenter* illustrates the complexity of the narrator, characters, and the implied authors of Sun Li's lengthy works written in the dominant period of Maoist discourse. On one hand, the united Maoist voice consisting of colloquialized official language and politicalized common language illustrates his conversion to Maoist discourse; on the other hand, the lyrical voice, and the reservation of such voice for the backward female character suggests Sun Li's implicit rebellion to Maoist discourse. In general, Sun Li was subject to the constraints of Maoist

[34] Wayne Booth, 177.

discourse in the heydays of its dominance as were all Chinese people. Chinese can hardly step away from Maoist discourse before the decline of its unprecedented dominance after Mao's death.

3.4 A stylistic recession or progression: *Yun Studio Stories* in Sun Li's late years

Like Lu Xun's *Old Stories Retold* and Shi Zhecun's *Little Treasure*, Sun Li's stories in the late years of his life are also characterized by a significant return to traditional Chinese narrative. Since Sun Li's earlier stories are much less influenced by Western fiction than most May Fourth writer's works regarding either narrative discourse or language, his return thereby appears to be reverse to the collective effort made by modern Chinese fictionists to modernize Chinese writing since the late nineteenth century. Indeed, at first glance the thirty-odd stories published as a monograph *Yun Studio Stories* (*Yunzhai xiaoshuo* 芸斋小说) are hardly distinguished from Sun Li's other non-fictional prose that recollects old friends, relatives, and personal history. It seems that *Yun Studio Stories* regress to the unofficial historiography from which Chinese fiction took centuries to evolve into an independent literary genre, because he blurs the distinction between truth and fabrication. Seen from the generic features, *Yun Studio Stories* can be viewed as *biji xiaoshuo*, which are translated by Western scholars in many different ways such as sketches, anecdotal fiction, random jottings and so on. While it is difficult to neatly ascribe *biji xiaoshuo* into either historiography or fiction, there are two basic features used by scholars to identify it in the history-fiction continuum of Chinese

narrative:[35] 1) it records private lives and miscellaneous events in contrast to public life and significant events documented in official historiography; 2) it takes *wenyan* as the primary register which distinguishes it from vernacular stories and the full-length novels in *baihua*. Besides, it is common that the narration of an anecdote ends ups with a piece of commentary by a commentator like the Historian of the Strange (*yishi shi*) in Pu Songling's strange tales.

These generic features of *biji xiaoshou* can be easily perceived in Sun Li's *Yun Studio Stories*. The thirty-three stories in the name of *Yun Studio* to large extent transmit facts of Sun Li's private life and anecdotes of those he knows. [36] For example, characters and events in "Anecdotes of My Dead Wife" (*Wangren yishi* 亡人轶事), "Illusion" (*Huanjue* 幻觉), "Return to Home" (*Huanxiang* 还乡), and "Remarry" (*Xuxian* 续弦) can be corroborated by Sun Li's two marriages recorded in his biography and other essays. "Be Cautious on Words" (*Yanjie* 言戒) recounts the humiliation he suffered in the Cultural Revolution that led to his first attempted suicide. Therefore, Sun Li has to argue for the fictionality of these stories in the epilogue to the collection, "All literature comes from selection of raw materials. Either settings or characters have origins. However, once they are processed (by writers), they are no longer the original ones. It is like flowers in a

[35] See Andrew Plaks, "Towards a Critical Theory of Chinese Narrative", in *Chinese Narrative: Critical and Theoretical Essays*, ed. by Andrew Plaks (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 316-326 and James Hargett, "Sketches", in *The Columbia History of Chinese Literature*, ed. by Victor Mair (New York: Columbia University, 2001), 560-565.

[36] While only twenty-three stories titled with Yun Studio are collected in *Sun Li qujia* published in 2004, there are several monograph versions titled with *Yunzhai xiaoshuo* which include more stories. I use the 2009 version which collects thirty-three stories and an epilogue. The original texts of *Yunzhai xiaoshuo* analyzed in this section all come from the 2009 version.

mirror and the moon in water. No matter how verisimilar they are, they are not the original flowers and moon."[37] However, he also admits that the "facts" transmitted in this story make some acquaintances feel offended and therefore become estranged.[38] Sun Li's self-defense and confession suggest that he is conscious of the contradiction between fact and imagination in these stories, but his ignorance of such contradiction suggests that he no longer confine his narratives within the conception of fiction in the modern sense.

Regarding formal features, *Yun Studio Stories* inherits the economical style and ellipsis of Chinese syntax in Sun Li's wartime stories. However, different from the plain Maoist language in his earlier works, the language of either the first-person narrator or characters in *Yun Studio Stories* is tinged with a *wenyan* flavor, which suggests the generic influence of *biji xiaoshuo*. The commentaries in the name of Yun Studio Master at the end of most stories are primarily conveyed in *wenyan* syntax, though they sometimes are stuffed with modern diction. The ending commentary in "Wang Wan" 王婉, a story based on the actual experience of Mao Zedong's niece Wang Mantian in and after the Cultural Revolution, illustrates an interesting mixture of *wenyan* and politicalized expressions prevalent in the Mao era. The commentary reads,

> 芸斋主人曰：使王婉当年卧轨而死，彼时虽可被骂为：自绝于人民。然后可得平反，定位受害者。时事推移，伊竟一步登天，红极一时，冰山既倒，床下丧命。名与恶帮相连，身与邪火俱灭。十年动乱，人生命运虽无奇不有，今日思之，实亦当时倒行逆施政治之牺牲品也。（WW 101）
>
> The Yun Studio Master comments, "If Wang Wan committed suicide on the railway in the year (during the Cultural Revolution), she would be accused of "alienating herself from people". Then, she would be rehabilitated and identified

[37] Sun Li, *Yuzhai xiaoshuo* 芸斋小说 [Yun Studio stories] (Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou guji chubanshe, 2009), 179.

[38] Ibid., 180.

> as a victim (after the Cultural Revolution). However, time and things changed. She unexpectedly rose to the supreme administration and enjoyed popularity in a time. When the iceberg collapsed, she committed suicide beside her bed. Her reputation was associated with the malicious The Gang of Four and her body annihilated as well as the evil. During the ten years of turmoil, a human's fate is unpredictable. Considering Wang's fate nowadays, (I think) she is a victim of the politics that went against the trend of history.

Besides being the register of the Yun Studio Master's commentaries, *wenyan* diction and syntax sometimes appear in the narrator's and character's voice in the major narration. In "A Female Fortune-teller" (*Nüxiangshi* 女相士), the character-I asks Yang Xiuyu, a fortune-teller assigned to the same section with him in the labor camp, to tell his fortune by reading his face. However, their supervisor suspects that they have a clandestine love affair. Then character-I makes mockery of his impotence in *wenyan*.

> 像我们这些人……虽有妙龄少女，横陈于前，尚不能勃然兴起，况与半百老妇，效桑间陌上之乐、谈情说爱于阴暗潮湿之菜窖中乎。不可能也。(NXS 9)
>
> For people like us, even if there were a pretty young girl lying down in front, we would be impotent. Can I have erotic pleasure and romantic love with a fifty-year-old lady in such a dark and humid basement? It's impossible.

Like the half-*wenyan* half-*baihua* ending commentary, this self-deprecating comment in a *wenyan* tone, which is embedded in the narration in a colloquial tone of modern Chinese, undoubtedly conveys a satire on the persecution imposed on intellectuals during the Cultural Revolution. In this sense, *biji xiaoshuo* and its *wenyan* register provide the narrator and then the implied author a generic and rhetorical instrument to rebel against Maoist discourse to which the real author Sun Li was subject since the 1940s. In addition to commentary tinged with *wenyan* tone, there is an implicit *wenyan* tone in the narration, which adopts syntactic constructions as economic as *wenyan* constructions, though having diction in *baihua*. In "Be Cautious on Words", the character-I recounts his

attempted suicide as "*Dangtian yeli, chudian zisha, weisui*" 当天夜里, 触电自杀, 未遂 (On that night, I attempted to commit suicide by electrocution, but it did not succeed). In "Anecdotes of My Dead Wife", the narrator describes how his mother urged the new bride to take over domestic works as "*Wo muqin hao xiadi laodong, youqi hao dazaoqi, maiqiu liangji, tingjian jijiao, jiu jiaota qilai zuofan*" 我母亲好下地劳动, 尤其好打早起, 麦秋两季, 听见鸡叫, 就叫她起来做饭" (My mother was obsessed with farm work and always got up early. In the sowing and harvest seasons, she got my wife up to prepare breakfast when she heard cocks crowing). Compared to his earlier works, in *Yun Studio Stories* Sun Li becomes more confident in using short clauses, especially four-character-expressions like "*chudian zisha*" 触电自杀 (suicide by electrocution), "*tingjian jijiao*" 听见鸡叫 (hear cock crowing), and so on. Moreover, nominal expressions like "*dangtian yeli*" 当天夜里 (that night) and "*maiqiu liangji*" 麦秋两季 (harvest seasons) are treated by Sun Li as independent temporal clauses but not temporal adverbs affiliated to clauses having verbs as heads. In this sense, Sun Li's conception of a Chinese sentence is closer to those who wrote in *wenyan* but not modern writers influenced by European languages since the late nineteenth century. Sun Li's return to traditional *biji xiaoshuo* is not only a generic return but also a syntactic return. Therefore, readers can perceive the *wenyan* flavor in *Yun Studio Stories*, though most parts of these stories are composed in a colloquial diction in *baihua*.

Some critics argue that Sun Li's return to traditional writing suggests a culturally

conservative stance in his late years and describe it as the revival of a Confucian persona rooted in his consciousness since his childhood. For instance, Yang Lianfen argues that "Confucian culture and spirit shape Sun Li's persona characterized by the supremacy of moral values, humble self-discipline, pursuit of perfect personality, and submission to authority and orthodoxy."[39] For Yang, Sun Li's prose writing in *wenyan* in his late years is a result of "his insightful understanding of the circular progression of Chinese history and fatalistic affection on the infinite sadness of human life".[40] Yang's argument is convincing when we consider Sun Li's poor mental health in his later years and read his many interviews, essays, and letters to friends. However, close reading of *Yun Studio Stories* will illustrate to readers a different implied author whose persona appears to be critical, satirical, and holding a more overt humanistic stance.

In traditional Chinese narrative, it is not difficult to find the inconsistent beliefs between the narrator and commentator's voice. For example, *in Records of the Grand Historian* (*Shiji* 史记), there is Sima Qian's empathetic and sentimental voice which is different from the official historian commentator's voice. In Feng Menglong's *Three Words* (*Sanyan* 三言), the implied author sometimes inadvertently expresses his true ideas through the voice of the narrator, which contradict to the moral lessons overtly stated through the storyteller-commentator's voice. It is also the case of Sun Li's *Yun Studio Stories*. In "Illusion", the most fictional story in the collection, a pretty fairy maiden comes to accompany the character-I, a lonely communist cadre whose wife

[39] Yang Lianfen, 26.
[40] Ibid. 34.

passed away not long ago, when he is partly rehabilitated in 1972 after several years' forced labor. The fairy gets more street smarts than the pedantic character-I and soon takes control of the economy of his household. However, when the fairy hears there will be new political turmoil adverse to old cadres, she leaves him without any hesitation. While the Yun Studio Master shows his consideration of the fairy's decision by commenting, "*Jin xianren yi nüshen er, zhi buze zhiji, qiu ziquan zhil, yu bude zeguai zhi ye*" 今仙人一女身尔, 值不测之机, 求自全之路, 余不得责怪之也 (The fairy is just a woman. She only finds a way to protect herself in the unpredictable situation. I have nothing to blame her). According to Yun Studio Master's comment, the character-I seemingly follows the principle of Confucian benevolence (*shu* 恕) in the relationship with the fairy. However, the narrator-I portrays the image of the fairy maiden with plenty of ironic rhetoric in the narration, which illustrates a different attitude toward the fairy's street smarts. The following is the first meeting of the fairy and the widower,

> 恢复了原来工资，饭食也好了，吃得也多了。身上的肉渐渐恢复原状了。于是又有了人生的欲望，感到单身一人的苦闷。夜晚失眠，胡思乱想，迷迷糊糊，忽然有一位女同志推门进来，对我深情含笑说：
> "你感到孤独吗？"
> "是的。"我回答。
> "你应该到群众中去呀！"
> "我刚从群众中回来，这些年，我一直在群众中间，不能也不敢稍离。"
> "他们可能不了解你，不知道你的价值。我是知道你的价值的。"
> "我价值几何？"我有些开玩笑地问。
> "你有多少稿费？"
> "还有七八千元。"我说。
> "不对，你应该有三万。" (HUANJ 32-33)

> I received the same salary as before and had food supply improved. Since I ate more, my body gradually recovered. Then, the human desires came back to me and I felt depressed as a single man. I can't fall asleep at night,

thought a lot and my mind became muddled. Suddenly, a female comrade broke in and spoke to me with an affectionate smile.
"Are you lonely?"
"Yes." I answered.
"You should stay with the masses!"
"I just come back from the masses. In past years, I always stayed with masses and can't
and dare not leave them for a moment."
"They probably don't know you. They have no idea of your value, but I know it."
"My value? How much it is?" I asked jokingly.
"How much you earned from writing?"
"Around seven to eight thousand", I said.
"No way. you should have thirty thousand."

Apparently, the fairy is portrayed as a calculating and hypocritical figure and becomes the object to satirize. The motivation of her appearance in the human world is to pursue wealth, which is different from the purposeless gratitude from most supernatural spirits in Pu Songling's stories. Their conversation becomes more ironic when the fairy gives advice by quoting Mao's mass line "*cong qunzhong zhong lai, dao qunzhong Zhong qu*" 从群众中来, 到群众中去" (from the masses; to the masses) and the character-I responds by using a parody "*Wo gang cong qunzhong zhong huilai*" 我刚从群众中回来" (I just come back from the masses). Living with the fairy for a while, the character-I feels unfair when he finds the fairy sells off his antique calligraphies and paintings without asking his permission. However, he "*sheyu xianwei, yinren yuhuai*" 摄于仙威, 隐忍与怀" (had to bear it because of the fear of the fairy's power). The fairy even quotes anecdotes of ancient celebrities to blame the character-I's stinginess, which is in fact a disguise of her action of transferring his property. Again, the narrator-I expresses his displeasure in an ironic way by saying "*Wo duita de yinjingjudian, zhenlongfakui,*

zhenshi peifu de wutitoudi le" 我对她的引经据典, 振聋发聩, 真是佩服得五体投地了" (The allusions she used are so awakening that I admire her without any reservation). The whole text of "Illusion" is full of this kind of ironic rhetoric, which undoubtedly conveys the implied author's sarcastic criticism against hypocritical relationships among Chinese during the Cultural Revolution, which is inconsistent with the overt commentary made by the Yun Studio Master.

Another characteristic of *Yun Studio Stories* usually mentioned by critics is the decline or even disappearance of the lyrical tone which features Sun Li's "Lotus Creek" stories. Sun Li himself also agrees and attributes this change of style to aging. Sun Li said in an interview in 1980, "In China, fiction writing is usually a career related to youth. When a person is young, he is full of passion, anticipation, and fantasy…Now, I often write *sanwen* (essays) and *zawen* (satirical essays). I think essay is suitable style for old people. It does not rely on emotion. It only needs reason. Young men like literature, but old men like philosophy."[41] In an essay discussing the art of fiction, Sun Li expressed the same idea metaphorically, "When a person is old, it seems that he has broken through the window paper (separating reality and fictionality). He has known all secrets of life…(therefore,) writing essay and miscellaneous articles is suitable for old writers, which is a method of extending life and keeping health."[42] However, close reading of *Yun Studio Stories* will illustrate that the passion the implied author devotes to his narrative is much more than the real author claimed. In other words, *Yun Studio Stories*

[41]Sun Li 孙犁, *Sun Li quanji vol*. 6, 9-10.
[42] Ibid., 275-276.

can be viewed a continuation of Sun Li's lyrical fiction writing, though it is influenced by the real author's emotion and deteriorating health.

Without exception, Stories in *Yun Studio Stories* have a narrator-I, who to some extent overlaps with a lyrical subject, the character-I. Although the narration appears to be indifferent, sketchy, and skippy, character-Is in different stories present more spontaneous feelings and thoughts than those in Sun Li's wartime stories, who are usually communist cadres, journalists, or soldiers. In his wartime stories, the only novella and novel, it is the female characters who provide the angle for lyricized narration and commentary and the third-person narrator who provides voice, though sometimes the female characters' and the narrator's voice harmoniously merge into a united one. In *Yun Studio Stories,* Sun Li feels very comfortable to express whatever he wants to say from the mouth of the character-I. In his fiction writing, he finally escapes from the dominance of Maoist discourse and converts to the tradition of May Fourth discourse. In "Anecdotes of my dead wife", the character-I confesses his sense of guilt for his wife, "In the forty years of our marriage, I did many things that hurt her, but she did nothing that hurt me. In our relationship, I behaved badly". In "Return to Home", when the character-I walks on the filed ridge back home, he lamented on his feebleness, "In my youth, on the same road, in front of enemy's gunfire, I bravely jumped over many trenches. Now, some of them are still recognizable. But I cannot climb over them any longer. I am so tired." In "The Issue of Mulberry Tree and Silkworm" (*Sangcan zhi shi* 桑蚕之事), the character-I says he has no interest in hearing more about a playmate in childhood, "Listening to these things, I have no affection in my heart, which is totally numb. Indeed, both of us are old.

We experienced enough and saw enough." The statement of his indifference is conveyed by affectionate words, which suggests the existence of the lyrical subject(s). Regarding the role of the lyrical subject, *Yun Studio Stories* differs from typical classical tales like Pu Songling's *Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio* but is closer to literati prose like Shen Fu's *Six Chapters of a Floating Life* (*Fusheng liuji* 浮生六记).

Sometimes, it is impossible to categorizes some stories in this collection into either traditional *bijiao xiaoshuo* or modern narrative influenced by May Fourth heritage because the generic features of these stories are so mixed. These stories with mixed generic features can be regarded as Sun Li's contribution to the progression of modern Chinese narrative and not a regression to traditional narrative. "Pomegranate" (*Shiliu* 石榴) as a representative of the progression of narrative deserves a detailed discussion. Considered from the perspective of meaning, "Pomegranate" is an anti-Maoist text. The narrator-I recalled a well-to-do middle peasant family living in a village of central Heibei where he was stationed as a member of the Land Reform Task Force in 1947. Unlike his early land reform stories, the hostess of that family does not welcome the Land Reform Task Force and the character-I as well as other villagers. The only reason the family treats him well is because they want to stay away from any trouble. When the character-I comes back to say goodbye to them, the hostess just leaves him a complaint "*Bieren buzhidao zenme shuo women ne*" 别人不知道怎么说我们呢!" (I don' know how others will judge us). Apparently, other villagers consider treatment of land reform cadres as a flattery and wish them could leave earlier. In addition, the character-I also recalled an inhumane torture against a landlord. However, this straightforward criticism against is

not the emphasis of the narration. What brings the narrator-I's memory back to a half century ago is the beauty of the daughter in that family. Before narrating the story, the narrator-I introduces his favorite of the pomegranate flower, which serves as a metaphorical representation of the young girl's beauty. The narrator-I's gaze at the girl and the character-I's description of her beauty can be regarded as an implicit criticism against Maoist discourse. As a communist cadre, he has no interest in eulogizing the liberation of the once repressed peasants; instead, he completely adheres to a humanistic stance since the focus of his narration is only concerned with an individual's aesthetic affection as aroused by another individual.

Regarding narrative discourse and language, "Pomegranate" is featured by a dualistic ending commentary, which seems to be the voices of two different subjects, one is passionate, and the other is rational. In the second to last paragraph, the voice of the narrator-I sounds like that in lyrical prose, or a poem written by a May Fourth writer,

> 老年人，回顾早年的事，就像清风明月，一切变得明净自然，任何感情的纠缠，也没有，什么迷惘和失望，也消失了。而当花被晨雾笼罩，月在云中穿度之时，它们的吸引力，是那样强烈，使人目不暇接，废寝忘食，甚至奋不顾身。(SL 154)

> In old men's memory, experiences in the early years are just like a gentle breeze and bright moon. All things become clear and natural. There is no emotional entanglement and all puzzlement and disappointment disappear. However, when flowers were covered by mist and the moon went through clouds, their attraction was so strong, so dazzling, it made people lose sleep and forget to eat, and even disregard danger.

In contrast to the straightforward outflow of emotion quoted above, the voice of the Yun Studio Master in the last paragraph cautiously preserves a deeper emotion in a sketchy narration of another seemingly irrelevant event.

> 芸斋主人曰：“城市所售石榴树苗，多为酸种。某年深秋，余游故宫，见御河桥上，陈列大石榴两排……时故宫博物院长为故人，很想向他要一枚，带回栽种。因念及宫禁，朋友又系洁身自好，一尘不染之君子，乃未启齿，至今以为憾事。”(SL 154)
>
> The Yun Studio Master comments, “Pomegranate trees sold in cities are an inferior
> Specie. It was a late autumn of certain year that I toured in the Forbidden City and saw two rows of pomegranate trees being laid on the river-crossing bridge…The curator of the Palace Museum was my old friend. I really wanted to ask for a tree from him and take it back to plant. However, considering the regulations of the Palace Museum and personality of my friend which is prudish and pure, I didn’t ask. I feel regret even nowadays.

Probably, the story retold in an anti-Maoist way, the plurality of the implied author’s subjectivities, and the mixed voice and language in “Pomegranate” most accurately portrays the image of Sun Li, a Maoist writer who finally escaped from the dominance of Maoist discourse in his later years.

Chapter 4 The Finale of An Old Century or The Herald of a New Century? : The Short Stories of Wang Zengqi

Being located at the end of the continuum of the representative stylists that I proposed, Wang Zengqi is different from the other three writers discussed before. It is more difficult to designate a single dominant discourse to him and describe a linear transformation of his stories from one discourse to another as I did for the other three. For instance, Lu Xun as a typical May Fourth writer and was devoted to overturning Confucian discourse in his entire life. However, after his death his literary and spiritual legacies were appropriated to build up Maoist discourse by the CCP regime. Shi Zhecun's avant-garde modernist stories represent an important branch of May Fourth discourse and his conversion to traditional narrative mode in the 1940s and forced withdrawal from fiction writing after the 1950s suggests the decline of May Fourth discourse and the rise of Maoist discourse. Sun Li was undoubtedly a Maoist writer, though I have specifically illustrated the heritage of May Fourth discourse in his early stories and his rebellion against Maoist discourse in his late years. Wang Zengqi is different because he was not a fiction writer, or at least not known as a fiction writer in the process that a dominant discourse shaped his subjectivity. He did not publish any influential story until he was over sixty years old in the 1980s when the influence of dominant discourses had sedimented and mixed in his mind for many years.

With only few exceptions, Wang's stories published in the early 1980s are far from the present life of the real writer. Usually, they are set in the past China before 1949, and geographically, in Wang's hometown, Gaoyou, Jiangsu province, where he has

been far away for over forty years. Therefore, the nostalgic aura permeated in these stories was first noticed by common readers and explained by critics as a return to Chinese cultural legacies. In a seminar on Wang Zengqi's fiction held in 1988, he was labelled as the last Confucian scholar (*shidafu*) in China.[1] Although Wang himself did not completely accept this label, he did admit the impact of Confucianism on his writings and said, "Comparatively, I received more influence from Confucianism. I accepted Confucianism in terms of its emotion but not reason. I think Confucianism emphasizes human emotions and it is a school of thought full of humanistic taste…I am probably a Chinese lyrical humanitarian."[2] Regarding narrative forms and linguistic features, these stories are featured by loose structure and syntax, which is also considered a revival of Confucian discourse and a counteraction to May Fourth discourse. Wang frequently mentions the indebtedness of his style to Gui Youguang's prose and Tongcheng School's (*tongcheng pai* 桐城派) approach of writing.[3] In addition, his vast interest in traditional painting, opera, calligraphy, and poetry and his modest personality reinforces the image of a Confucian scholar in his readers' impression. However, the core values represented in his stories undoubtedly challenge the Confucian ritualism and ethics. For instance, in his most renowned story "Buddhist Initiation" (*Shoujie* 受戒), The monks live a carefree

[1] See Ji Hongzhen 季红真, "Lun Wang Zengqi renwen jingshen de xuemai yuanliu" 论汪曾祺人文精神的血脉源流 [On bloodline of Wang Zengqi's humanistic spirit], *Zhongguo dangdai wenxue yanjiu* 2004 (10): 109.

[2] Wang Zengqi 汪曾祺, "Wo shi yige zhongguoren" 我是一个中国人 [I am a Chinese person], *Wang Zengqi quanji* vol. 3 (Beijing: Beijing shifan daxue chubanshe, 1998), 301.

[3] See Wang Zengqi, "Huidao xianshi zhuyi, huidao minzu chuantong" 回到现实主义，回到民族传统 [Return to realism and return to national tradition], *Wangzengqi quanji* vol.3, 289; "Zibao jiamen" 自报家门 [Self-introduction], *Wang Zengqi quanji* vol. 4, 285.

secular life in a Buddhist temple where they all eat meat, accumulate personal wealth, and gamble in leisure time. One of them even takes his wife to the temple. The innocent rural girl Xiao Yingzi professes her love to Minghai, a youth monk, without feeling any embarrassment. In Wang's later stories written in the 1990s, representation of and justification for sexual desire become a common theme. Wang even justifies a character's voyeuristic disorder in the "Bathhouse Voyeur" (*Kuiyu* 窥浴) written two years before his death. Apparently, social norms of Confucianism, which encourage individual obedience, are secondary to basic physical and psychological needs in Wang's stories. Moreover, regarding the medium of his stories, they are all written in modern *baihua* but not *wenyan*, though many traditional diction, constructions, and other rhetoric devices are creatively employed. Wang Zengqi's choice of old writing forms is only for an aesthetic need but not a moral one. Thus, Wang is not the "last Confucian scholar" and his stories cannot be simply understood as an effort to revive Confucian discourse.

When scholars' interest in Wang Zengqi is extended to his early experience and practice pieces written before 1949, the connection of his literary writings to May Fourth discourse increasingly drew scholarly attention. Two labels are usually attached to him, the student of Shen Congwen, the master nostalgic fictionist, and the successor of the Beijing School (*Jingpai*). *Jingpai* refers to a small group of liberal scholars and writers who actively advocated apolitical literature and eulogized the beauty of humanity in the 1930s when the political and cultural centers moved from Beijing to Southern China. Wang is considered a successor of *Jingpai* writers because of his connection with Shen Congwen. From 1939 and 1945, Wang took three creative writing courses instructed by

Shen at Southwest Associated University and developed a close mentor-disciple relationship with Shen in fiction writing. A thematic commonality between their stories intuitively perceived by Chinese readers and critics in the 1980s is "writing of the old society without condemning it".[4] However, Jeffery Kinkley attributes Wang's reverent mention of Shen as his literary mentor to a pragmatic intention because "Shen's rehabilitation [in the early 1980s] rehabilitated Wang Zengqi as well".[5] Moreover, Kinkley's comparative reading of Wang's "Buddhist Initiation" and "A Tale of Big Nur" (*Da'nao jishi* 大淖纪事) by reference to Shen's *Border Town* illustrates more evidence that Wang's fiction writing diverges from his teacher's in regard to either themes or forms, though he also lists several commonalities.[6] In my view, it is less important to discuss Wang's intention of mentioning his teacher frequently. As individual persons, both Wang Zengqi and Shen Congwen were subjugated by Maoist discourse after 1949, though the approach and degree were different. But as fiction writers, Shen belongs to the May Fourth generation and had to give up literary writing after 1949. Instead, Wang as a writer was deeply institutionalized by Maoist discourse especially during the Cultural Revolution when he was enlisted by Mao's wife Jiang Qing to write revolutionary model operas (*yangbanxi*), though the absence of Wang's political interest resisted the overwhelming political intervention from Maoist discourse. He was influenced by May Fourth discourse before 1949 but that influence did not impact his most literary writing

[4] Jeffery C. Kinkley, "Shen Congwen's Legacy in Chinese Literature of the 1980s," in *From May Fourth to June Fourth: Fiction and Film in Twentieth-Century China*, eds. Ellen Widmer and David Der-wei Wang (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 84.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid., 84-90.

immediately. The facet of Wang Zengqi as a Maoist writer especially in regard to language and aesthetics is inclined to be underestimated or even ignored when critics discuss the impact of Shen Congwen and other *Jingpai* writers like Fei Ming and Zhou Zuoren on Wang's literary writings. In this sense, categorizing Wang into *Jingpai* or labelling him as a neo-*Jingpai* will run a risk of reducing the plurality of Wang.

The impact of May Fourth discourse on Wang Zengqi is not limited to Shen Congwen and *Jingpai* writers, whose influence on public is not comparable to mainstream May Fourth writers like Lu Xun who advocated more radical public enlightenment and national salvation. In Ji Hongzhen's article "Wang Zengqi and the Spirits of May Fourth New Culture", she defines the May Fourth legacy in the broadest sense and argues, "The spirits of May Fourth are the light source of his [Wang Zengqi's] thought. Among them, humanism, the notion of national state, science and democracy, liberty and equity, emancipation of individuality, and even the ideals of the enlightenment appear in the themes of his works again and again."[7] Ji also points out a significant shift of Wang's temperament in the 1990s that "[Wang] became more and more critical in his late years…He encouraged young writers not to embrace moderation too early and encouraged them to express more uneasiness and anger in their works, which is close to the stance held by Lu Xun, with whom Wang did not always agree". [8] Another connection of Wang Zengqi to May Fourth discourse is his obsession with reading foreign fiction. Although his major was Chinese literature at Southwest

[7] Ji Hongzhen 季红真, "Wang Zengqi yu wusi xinwenhua jingshen" 汪曾祺与五四新文化精神 [Wang Zengqi and the spirit of May Fourth new culture], *Wenyi zhenming* 08 (2009): 129.

[8] Ibid., 131.

Associated University, he spent most time in reading translated Western stories. Those who shaped his view of modern fiction include André Gide, Jean-Paul Sartre, Anton Chekhov, Virginia Woolf, and Spanish writer Azorin.[9] His practice works published in the 1940s like "Revenge" (*Fuchou* 复仇), "Waiting for the Bus" (*Daiche* 待车), and "The Bell Rings in an Elementary School" (*Xiao xuexiao de zhongsheng* 小学校的钟声) illustrate his favor of stream-of-consciousness, which he learned from Western modernist. However, the literary soil that nurtured Shi Zhecun's modernist writings in the early 1930s no longer existed in and after the Resist-Japanese War. Therefore, Wang Zengqi's "modernist" stories incorporated a great proportion of "national forms" and Chinese flavor. Some stories written in this same period, such as "Old Lu" (*Lao Lu* 老鲁), appeared to be much less avant-garde.

Shen Congwen, *Jingpai* writers, Lu Xun, Western modernist writers, and ancient prose stylists all undoubtedly had impacted on Wang Zeng's literary view and practice. However, if we examine the real writer Wang Zengqi's personal history through the lens of Foucault's discourse theory, we will find what overwhelmingly dominated him from the early 1950s to late 1970s is Maoist discourse, which in fact cut off his connection to May Fourth and Confucian discourse through its irresistible institutional power. While Wang was accepted by public as an anti-establishment writer when he returned to literary writing in the early 1980s, the dominance of Maoist discourse tenaciously spread out to the end of his life. From 1945 to 1949, Wang lived a period of unrest and depressed life

[9] Wang Zengqi, "Zibao jiamen", 288.

in Shanghai and Beijing because of economic instability. Big cities at the time plagued with uncontrollable inflation and political turmoil could not provide a shelter for an unknown writer like Wang Zengqi to realize his literary ambition. His stories published in this period reflect this undesirable situation. To some extent, Wang's situation was worse than what Shen Congwen had to confront in the early1920s because the latter's literary pursuit was fortunately aided by some May Fourth cultural celebrities like Xu Zhimo and Hu Shi. In other words, Shen got some crucial patrons who led him to enter the small elite group of May Fourth discourse, but in the end of 1940s, Shen could not provide the similar assistance to Wang due to political and economic uncertainty. In a letter sent to Shen in 1947, Wang Zengqi complained about his helplessness and implied the idea of suicide, which was seriously criticized and sincerely comforted by Shen.[10] However, only two years later, Shen attempted to end his own life because of huge mental collapse while in the same year Wang joined a working group of the People's Liberation Amy to take over southern cities recently liberated. The drastic contrast illustrates two different situations in the advent of a new dominant discourse. As a known writer affiliated to May Fourth discourse, Shen Congwen had to go through a thorough and painful remodel. In contrast, Wang still reserved the chance to learn new ideology, literary concepts, and language because of the comparatively remote connection to May Fourth discourse as an old institutional power.

After coming back to Beijing in 1950, Wang edited several folk literature

[10] Wang Zengqi 汪曾祺, "Xingdou qiwen chizi qiren" 星斗其文，赤子其人 [Highflying his texts and innocent his persona], *Wang Zengqi quanji* vol.4, 252.

magazines and served as a playwright for Beijing Opera Troupe. Since then, he settled down in Beijing in the rest of his life, which greatly influenced the language of fiction and made him known as a Beijing writer. During the Anti-Rightist movement (1957-1961), he was sent down to labor at an agricultural science institution in Zhangjiakou. That experience inspired him to write three stories "One Night in a Shepherd's Cottage" (*Yangshe yixi* 羊舍一夕), "Keep a Close Watch on Flood" (*Kanshu*i 看水), and "Wang Quan" (王全)after he was rehabilitated in 1962. These stories, which differ from his 1940s' practice stories regarding either theme, or narration, or language, represent his conversion to Maoist literature. The four years spent with peasant workers allowed him to "authentically see the reality of rural China and Chinese peasant".[11] He now did not speak highly of the 1940s' stories and do not think it is necessary to republish them because "they are too far away from the hardship of people".[12] While Wang was educated by Shen Congwen that a writer should "remain in touch with the characters",[13] he did not overcome the intellectual writer's superiority over the underprivileged characters until the 1962's stories. In this sense, Wang consciously accepted the role as a Mao's literary worker (*wenyi gongzuo zhe*), who esteems literature as an instrument to intervene in social realities, though he did not sacrifice aesthetic pursuit. The forms of these 1962 stories, narrative perspective and voice, quotation of characters' speech, use of diction,

[11] Wang Zengqi 汪曾祺, "Zibao jiamen", 289.

[12] Ibid., 290.

[13] The teaching was expressed by Shen in his Hunan dialect as "*Yao tiedao renwu xie*" 要贴到人物写. Wang frequently mentioned and explained it when he was revered by younger generations as a model writer after the 1980s.

syntax, and other rhetoric, indicate a significant shift too. Although the language of Wang Zengqi's fiction had a colloquial tendency from the very beginning, he acquired a northern peasants' tone in the 1962 stories which made his colloquial style more diverse.

Wang Zengqi participated in the adaptation of revolutionary Peking opera *Sparkles in the Reed Marshes* (*Ludang huozhong* 芦荡火种) [14] in 1963 and one year later he was known by Jiang Qing who took in charge of the adaptation. [15] Due to Jiang Qing's appreciation, Wang lived a privileged life as a former rightist during the Cultural Revolution and therefore underwent two years of investigation after the collapse of the Gang of Four in 1976. While Wang Zengqi got involved into the political turbulence passively, he was inevitably more institutionalized by Maoist discourse, which thereby influenced his later writings. In a sense, his nostalgic and apolitical stories like "Buddhist Initiation" written in the 1980s cannot be considered as non-mainstream ones as he himself once commented,[16] because depoliticization became the core issue of the social reform at that time. In contrast, mainstream Maoist writers like Hao Ran whose works were prevalent during the Cultural Revolution were marginalized in the 1980s. Wang Zengqi became a lead writer revered by young generations from the mid-1980s and was elected to join the board of Chinese Writers Association in 1985. One year later, he joined the CCP. According to Ji Hongzhen, Wang Zengqi's self-identification as a

[14] The name of the opera was later changed to *Shajiabang* 沙家浜, which was Mao Zengdong's advice.

[15] See Ji Hongzhen 季红真, "Wang Zengqi he yangbanxi" 汪曾祺和样板戏 [Wang Zengqi and model operas], *Shuwu* 06 (2007): 74-75.

[16] Wang Zengqi 汪曾祺, "Guanyu shoujie" 关于《受戒》 (about "Buddhist Inititaion"), *Wang Zengqi quanji vol. 6*, 340.

"Chinese lyrical humanitarian" gets along well with the mainstream ideology in the 1980s when "Marxism was reinterpreted as a humanism".[17] In this sense, I argue, a reformed Maoist discourse continuously dominated Wang Zengqi and his writings, talks, and commentaries in the 1980s. His stories written in the post-Mao era have a stylistic and linguistic continuity of his 1962's stories, which is still not fully understood by critics. His participation in the edition of folk literature, creation of revolutionary Peking opera, and even forced labor in the high Mao years transformed the way he tells stories and composes sentences, which indicates his implicit connection to Maoist discourse as an institutional power.

Critics have long realized the difficulty of categorizing Wang Zengqi to a certain group of writers. For instance, Li Tuo metaphorically describes him as "a leading goose flying in front of a flock of geese rather coincidently", which locates Wang by reference to the avant-garde writers in the 1980s.[18] Jeffery Kinkley uses "neo-nostalgic" to summary Wang's connection to and distinction from his teacher Shen Congwen's nostalgic writings.[19] Sun Yu calls Wang "a Confucian scholar in the revolutionary era".[20] These comments point out a fact that the plurality of Wang Zengqi allows him to override at least two different categories simultaneously. In my project of multiple discourse

[17] Ji Hongzhen 季红真, "Wang Zengqi he wusi xinwenhua jingshen", 128.

[18] Li Tuo 李陀, "Wang Zengqi yu xiandai hanyu xiezuo—jian tan Mao wenti" 汪曾祺与现代汉语写作—兼谈毛文体 [Wang Zengqi and modern Chinese writing—a discussion of Maoist discourse], *Xuebeng hechu* 雪崩何处 [Where the avalanche occurs] (Beijing: China CITIC Press, 2015), 170.

[19] Jeffery Kinkley, 84.

[20] Sun Yu 孙郁, "Wang Zengqi: gemin shidai de shidafu" 汪曾祺：革命时代的士大夫 [Wang Zengqi: A Confucian scholar in the revolutionary era], *Wenhua xuekan* 04 (2018): 23.

analysis, I will not attempt to put Wang Zengqi into any category of writers; instead, I will describe the transformative forms of his 1940s', 1962's, and 1980s' and 1990s' stories under the influence of three dominant discourses in twentieth century China. Specially, my examination of Wang Zengqi's short stories consists of three parts: 1) characteristics of his three 1962's stories and its comparison to his earliest practice stories written in the Republican era; 2) characteristics of his most renowned stories published in the early 1980s and its comparison to Wang's earlier stories; 3) characteristics of the stories written in the last stage of his life represented by the rewritten *Liaozhai* stories and its comparison to the original texts and Lu Xun's *Old Stories Retold* (*Gushi xinbian* 故事新编). A common thesis underlying these comparative readings is an attempt to illustrate the significance of Wang Zengqi's fictional writing as the confluence of different branches of Chinese writings in the entire twentieth century.

4.1 Keeping in touch with the characters: the distance between the narrator and the characters in Wang Zengqi's 1962 stories

While from the early 1950s to the late 1970s is Wang Zengqi's hibernation as a fiction writer, 1962 makes an exception because in this year he published three stories in a row: "One Night in a Shepherd's Cottage", "Keep a Close Watch on Flood", and "Wang Quan". They all come from the fresh materials Wang collected at the Agricultural Science Institution in Zhangjiakou where he was set down to labor from 1958 to 1961 as a rightist. Different from his 1940s' stories with a student or petty-bourgeois narrator' s voice, the narrator's position in these stories has been lowered to the same level as that of

the children, peasants, and other commoner characters. Although Wang Zengqi never forgot Shen Congwen's teaching that a writer should "keep in touch with the characters", which he learned in Shen's creative writing class, Wang did not fully implement it until 1962 because his life experience as a student in his twenties limited his sympathy to commoner characters' life. In this sense, it was the compulsory force of Maoist discourse and Mao's guidance on "worker-peasant-solider" literature that enabled Wang to completely absorb what Shen Congwen taught him. When Wang Zengqi became a renowned fiction writer later, he elaborated his teacher's aphorism by integrating his own understanding of fiction writing, "the author should stand side by side with the characters and take an equal attitude to them. Except for satirical fiction, it is not appropriate for the author to take a condescending tone. He should keep his own heart in touch with the characters' hearts and replace his own sorrow and joy with the characters' sorrows and joys."[21] In another essay, he states a similar idea again, "The emotion and attitude that the author holds toward the characters determine a fiction's tone, which is also its style."[22]

"Keeping in touch with the characters" as a literary motif has been proclaimed and practiced by May Fourth and Maoist writers who want to show empathy for their characters. However, there is barrier of language which always frustrates their efforts to reduce the distance between the narrator and the characters. For May Fourth writers, the barrier is usually the class and regional dialects. For example, Shen Congwen was

[21] Wang Zengqi 汪曾祺, "Liangqi zashu" 两栖杂述 [Rambling narration of an amphibian], *Wang Zengqi quanji* vol.3, 199.

[22] Wang Zenggqi 汪曾祺, "Rou mian" 揉面 [Kneading dough], *Wang Zengqi quanji* vol.3, 194.

constantly troubled by the conflict among three different languages, that is, the dialect of his characters from West Hunan, his own literary language in *baihua* mixed with Europeanized constructions and dialectical diction, and the common language of the widest readership. In his stories set in his hometown West Hunan, the voice of the enlightener narrator who are conscious of the situations and destiny of all characters and the voice of the rustic characters who are blind to the changing social surroundings usually constitutes a class gap. Emotionally, Shen Congwen is a "rural man" as he once claimed, but intellectually, the narrator stands in a higher position to observe and recount his rural fellows' life. In other words, the narrator is an outsider to the community formed by the characters. Sometimes, the characters and Shen's own dialect show up in the narrative report which may add certain regional flavor, but simultaneously increases the difficulty of reading. For example, there is a sentence in his story "Xiaoxiao", "*Zhe yitian Xiaoxiao baole ziji de maomao*" 这一天潇潇抱了自己的月毛毛 (One day, Xiaoxiao held the infant baby in her arms). It may take a while for a non-Hunanese reader to relate the Hunan local word "*yue maomao*" 月毛毛 to "infant baby" according to the context. In this sense, the May Fourth writers' closeness to commoner characters are usually limited by the mission of enlightenment and the absence of the national language, though they are willing to keep in touch with these characters. For Maoist writers the barrier of class and regional dialects was cleared up because they had to bend their own language to the language used by the "worker-peasant-soldier" characters. However, over-politicization usually makes the narrator's reports and characters' speech empty and unreal, which greatly hurts the aesthetic effect.

Wang Zengqi's 1962 stories are distinctive because they resolved the barriers of language mentioned above. "One Night in a Shepherd's Cottage", "Wang Quan", and "Keep a Close Watch on Flood" are all set in rural Hebei where the language spoken was designated as the base dialect of the officially approved common speech (*putonghua*) in 1956[23]. Moreover, all characters in these stories are peasants living in the former liberated region (*jiefangqu*) controlled by the communist party since the early 1940s and the language used by northern peasants, especially those from Hebei and Shanxi, had acquired a political advantage after Mao's Yan'an Talks, which undoubtedly allows Wang Zengqi more confidence to increase the proportion of the characters' voice in the narration. Since the 1950s, those intellectuals known as "language workers" (*yuyan wenzi gongzuozhe*), which include schoolteachers, editors, broadcasters, actors, teachers, writers, and linguists, were conscious of their duty of promoting *putonghua*. For those southern intellectuals who settled down in Beijing, sometimes they had to learn correct speech from their children who were born in Beijing. Wang Zengqi was one of the southern language workers who dedicated to learning and promoting *putonghua* and its base dialect. From a recollective essay written by his daughter, we know it was common

[23] Chen Wangdao, "Xiandai hanyu guifan wenti xueshu huiyi zongjie" 现代汉语规范问题学术会议总结 [Conclusion of the academic conference on the norms of modern Chinese], in *Xiandai hanyu guifan wenti xueshu huiyi wenjian huibian* 现代汉语规范问题学术会议文件汇编 [A collection of documents of the academic conference on the norms of modern Chinese language], eds. the secretariat of the academic conference on the norms of modern Chinese (Beijing: Kexue chuban she, 1956), 219.

that Wang's children corrected his mispronounced Beijing accent.[24] Wang Zengqi also confessed his admiration of northern writers', like Lao She and Sun Li's, advantage in language and spoke highly of some southern writers', like Wen Yiduo and Zhu Ziqing's, effort in using authentic Beijing dialect to write.[25] Even in his later stories set in his hometown Gaoyou, Wang cautiously tailored those local diction by reference to northern dialects to guarantee comprehensibility. For example, he was hesitant to use the adjective "*gezhengzheng*" 格挣挣, a word from Gaoyou dialect to describe neatness, cleanliness, and trimness of clothes, in "Buddhist Initiation", but when he found the same usage in Shanxi dialect and Yuan songs (*Yuanqu*) he no longer hesitated.[26] In regard to the language used for fiction writing, Wang Zengqi is a northern writer who acknowledges the advantage of northern dialects and respects the authority and universality of *Putonghua* as the common language. Thus, Wang's intimacy to commoners and view of language that formed in the Mao era, I argue, actualize the teaching he learned from Shen Congwen in the May Fourth era and his 1962 stories mark the intimate distance between the narrator and the characters.

The closeness can be first perceived by the Wang Zengqi's effort to align the

[24] Wang Ming 汪明, "Zuihou yiri" 最后一日 [The last day], in *Laotour Wang Zengqi: women yanzhong de fuqin* 老头儿汪曾祺：我们眼中的父亲 [The old man Wang Zengqi: father in our eyes], eds. Wang Lang, Wang Ming, and Wang Chao (Beijing: Renmin daxue chubanshe, 2000), 380.

[25] Wang Zengqi 汪曾祺, "Xiaoshuo jiqiao changtan" 小说技巧常谈 [Common comments on the techniques of fiction], Wang Zengqi quanji vol. 3, 292-293.

[26] Ibid., 294.

narrator's voice in accordance with the major characters' social identity in "One Night in a Shepherd's Cottage". This story is about an ordinary night of four farm boys: Little Lü, an orchard apprentice, Nine, a current shepherd employed by the collective farm who will become a steelworker next month, Liuhai, a local boy who will take Nine's position as the new shepherd, and Ding Guijia, an eighteen-year-old farm worker who dreams of joining the army. Except for a beginning and a closing section, there are three independent primary sections reporting each protagonist's experience.[27] Although the story is narrated by a third-person narrator and includes some modernist techniques like stream-of-consciousness, it still gives readers the impression that each primary section could be narrated by the protagonist concerned. In other words, it can be perceived that the characters voice intervenes the narrative report. In Section Three—the shepherd Nine's section—there is a contrast between the language recounting Nine's regular life as a shepherd and that recounting his imaginary life as a steel worker. Nine enjoys shepherd's life because he can find a bunch of wild animals and fruits to eat in the mountains. The passage of about wild fruits reads:

> 山上有酸枣，有榛子，有橹林，有红姑蔫，有酸溜溜，有梭瓜瓜，有各色各样的野果。大北滩有一大片桑树林子，夏天结了满树的大桑葚，也没有人去采，落在地上，把地皮都染紫了。每回放羊回来经过，一定是"饱餐一顿"，吃得嘴唇、牙齿、舌头，都是紫的，真过瘾。（YSYX 218）
>
> In the mountain, there are sour jujube, hazelnut, *lulin*, bladder cherry, sorrel, saxaul root and all variety of wild fruits. There is a large stretch of mulberry trees in *Dabeitan*. The trees are full of mulberries in summer. No one goes there to pick them. They just fall on the ground and make the earth purple. Every time when I come back from shepherding, I must have a big meal. My lips, teeth, and tongue are all colored purple. It's so satisfying.

[27] Liuhai and Ding Guijia share the same section because Ding is Liuhai's foster brother.

Seen from the syntactic feature of the Chinese origin, the absence of the subject who sees and eats these wild fruits allows two different readings: it could be an FID in which Nine's enjoyable memory of iterative events is narrated by the narrator and so is suitable to be translated into past tense in English; it could also be read as an FDD in which the character Nine speaks to readers directly. When we consider the colloquial and weird names of the wild fruits such as "*honggunian*" 红姑蔫 (bladder cherry), "*suanliuliu*" 酸溜溜 (sorrel), and "*suoguagua*" 梭瓜瓜 (saxaul root), the presence of the character's voice immediately overshadows the narrator's voice. As an experienced shepherd who has walked on every inch of the mountains nearby, Nine is more likely to know the names of these local wild fruits and where were the fruit-bearing mulberry trees than the narrator. The fluency brought by the ellipsis syntax and simple juxtaposition of fruit names not only gives readers enjoyable reading, but also implies Nine's familiarity with the mountains, trees, and wild fruits. Probably, the only hint of the presence of the narrator is the sequence of listing out these fruit names. It begins with two common fruits sour jujube and hazelnut and then follows with a string of strange names of local fruits. In this way, the implied author tightly keeps in touch with his character and at the same time reduces the barrier of language between the character and readers. As a Maoist literature worker, Wang Zengqi only plays a humble role helping the communication between a fictional Maoist commoner and other Maoist readers by using a people's language endorsed by Maoist discourse. However, as a fiction stylist, Wang Zengqi creates an exemplary piece of narration by combining modernist techniques, such as FDD or FID, Shen Congwen's teaching, flexible Chinese constructions, and colloquial diction.

When Nine's imagined life as a steelworker is reported, the implied author takes a different strategy to maintain the closeness. Since Nine has not become a steelworker and never lived in a city before, his knowledge of steel industry should be significantly less than that of shepherding and mountainous life. Therefore, the implied author specifically limits the narrator's knowledge. The passage of the imagined steel factory reads:

> 他不知那是什么布，只觉得很厚，很粗，场子里有水泵，水泵上用的管子也是用布做的，也很厚，很粗，他以为工作服就是那种布——戴了很大很大的手套，拿着一个很长的后面有一个大圈的铁家伙…… (YSYX 220)
>
> He doesn't know what cloth it is. He just feels it's thick and coarse. There is a water pump in the place. The pipe of the water pump is also made of cloth. It's thick and coarse too. It's the same cloth of the working uniform, he thinks. He wears a pair of huge gloves and holds a long iron stuff with a big ring on the top.

The narrator has told readers before that Nine's rare knowledge about steel factories came from movies and posters. Therefore, the professional name "*gangqian*" 钢钎 (the steel poker used by steel smelters) is expressed in a circuitous way as "*Yige henchande houmian youyige daquan de jiahuo*" 一个很长的后面有一个大圈的铁家伙 (a long iron stuff with a big ring on the top end). However, Nine knows the word "*shuibeng*" 水泵 (water pump) because he must have seen how it works as an employee of the collective farm. The adjectives "thick" and "coarse" appear twice and make an impression of repetitiveness because Nine's inventory of industrial words becomes rare when he imagines producing steel but not talks about shepherding. Moreover, the narrator uses introductory clauses like "*Ta buzhidao*" 他不知道 (he does not know) and "*Ta yiwei*" 他以为 (he thinks) to represent Nine's imagination in indirect discourse, which increases the narrator's invention. In my view, the narrator's intervention here is a

defense for Nine's innocent curiosity because Nine's ignorance could be inappropriately emphasized if this part was represented in direct discourse without narrator's explanation.

Wang Zengqi also considerately selects proper language to describe other protagonists' life. For example, Little Lü knows names of fruits and tools in the orchard very well because he is dedicated to becoming an experienced orchard worker; the language which Liuhai uses to talk about the farm are less professional and covers many different divisions of the farm because he has not yet joined the farm; the part of Ding Guijia is less related to his profession because he dreams of joining the army and likes acting. When Wang Zengqi makes effort to keep in touch with his characters, he does care about their self-identification and their different connections to the community. Above the protagonists' concrete social identities, there are more ideological and symbolic ones. Little Lü and Liuhai represent the new peasants after the cooperative transformation, Nine represents the potential industrial worker who are peasants before, and Ding Guijia represents the potential soldiers who primarily come from peasants. Their friendship undoubtedly suggests the solidarity of the three major constituents of people officially acknowledged. There is almost no intellectual author's tone in this story. In this sense, the closeness in language suggests Wang is much more subtle and effective in writing of "workers, peasants, and soldiers" than Maoist discourse is.

However, there is another closeness that suggests Wang's resistance to Maoist discourse, that is, his preference in and affinity to children's perspective. He does highlight his heroes class identity, but he does not forget their dispositions that match their age. Even the oldest one Ding Guijia, who has been eighteen years old last month,

"is always carefree and seems slow-witted". Their inexhaustible energy in agricultural production and other public affairs are depicted as children's curiosity and nature without being elevated to the consciousness of class mission. Like Sun Li's preference in female characters, Wang Zengqi's preference in children characters preserves humanistic stance under the pressure of politicized literature. Hard labor in the collective farm for the four protagonists is like a game. Grafting scissors, farm chemicals, shepherd whip, and steel poker in imagination, are toys for them. Cattle and fruits are not things demanding a great labor to take care; instead, they grow robustly along with the protagonists. The narrator also spares lines to recount how they entertain themselves besides works. In Section Five when the rest three wait for Ding Guijia to come back from the rehearsals in the cosy cottage, Nine tells a ghost story about how a wolf spirit stole grapes and was finally killed by a farm worker. Liuhai tells another one about several night travelers who were warned by a ghost because they slept too close to his tomb. These embedded stories told by protagonists-narrators bring about the issue of stratification of narrative levels discussed by Gérard Genette and other narratologists. Putting aside the disputable classification of narrative levels and related terminological issue, "One Night in a Shepherd's Cottage" has two narrative levels: major stories about children in a farm told by an adult narrator and embedded stories told for children by protagonists-narrators. The major stories are primarily concerned with labor, but the embedded stories just for pleasure. In my view, Wang Zengqi's adoption of stratification here is not for a technical purpose but for a purpose to circumvent political intervention. These "superstitious"

stories are told by innocent children-narrators; therefore, it is unnecessary for the adult narrator to make any comments to reveal the social meanings beneath them.

While in the major narrative level, the narrator has reduced the commentary to the best of his ability, there are still a few moral judgements, which are obviously made by an adult commentator higher than the characters. In Nine's section, after the recounting of the hardship of Nine's shepherding, there is a passage illustrating its meaning:

> 他从这里得到多少有用的生活技能和知识，受了好多的陶冶和锻炼啊。这些，在他将来炼钢的时候，或者履行着别样的职务时，都还会在他的血液里涌狀，给予他持续的力量。(YSYX 220)
>
> How many useful life skills and knowledge he learned from these! And how much (his spirit) was cultivated and exercised. All of these will surge in his blood and give him constant strength when he smelts steel or fulfils other duties in the future.

Undoubtedly, moral judgements like the piece mentioned above enlarges the distance between the narrator and the characters because of the age gap and the corresponding cognitive gap, though they are not many in this story. Wang Zengqi invents another way of giving moral judgement without enlarging the gaps. The passage below is a judgement after recounting Liuhai's story:

> 留孩，你过两天就是这个场子里的一个农业工人了。就要每天和这两个老酋长，还有那四百只狗尾巴的羊做伴了，你觉得怎么样，好呢还是不好？——“好。” (YSYX 223)
>
> Liuhai, you will become a farm worker in this farm in a few days. You will accompany the two Tribal Chiefs and the four hundred sheep with dog tails. How do you feel? Good or not good? —"Good".

Only the last word put in the quotation marks is from Liuhai. The rest are the narrator's words. Apparently, Liuhai cannot fully understand the significance of becoming a farm

worker. He has not formally lived in the farm before and was not educated there. The narrator states the significance in a way that Liuhai can understand and the only thing Liuhai needs to do is to give a short, simple, but affirmative answer. Thus, this is a creative implicit moral judgment in which the narrator keeps in touch with the character regarding age and cognitive competence.

The two subsequent 1962 stories are sister stories to “One Night in a Shepherd’s Cottage”. The protagonists, the cattle breeder Wang Quan, and the orchard apprentice Little Lü, in the later stories both appeared in the first one. Wang Zengqi maintains the similar closeness in the other two stories. Although the protagonist in “Wang Quan” is a middle-aged man, he is portrayed simple and pure as a kid: illiterate, almost blind, speaking straightforwardly, and caring about people around him and cattle he raises. The story is told in a barely touched Wang Quan’s tone by using language matching his identity and cognition. ““Keep a Close Watch on Flood” has quite a few interior monologues depicting the ups and downs of Little Lü’s minds, which are represented in a language he can speak and well incorporated into the narrative report. While it is generally considered that “Buddhist Initiation”, “A Tale of Big Nur”, and “Special Gift” published in the early 1980s mark the maturity of Wang Zengqi’s fiction wring, I argue Wang has long before achieved such maturity in his 1962 stories when he actualized the teaching, he learned from Shen Congwen under the pressure of Maoist discourse.

4.2 Creating atmosphere is writing characters: The Wang Zengqi style in his stories written in the 1980s.

In 1980s, Wang Zengqi continuously practiced the teaching of closeness learned from Shen Congwen when the mandatory principles, through which Maoist discourse exerted influence on literature, gradually decreased. With less restrictions, Wang was able to keep in touch with characters who lived in the so-called "old society" before 1949 and came from different social classes. Protagonists in his most renowned stories by which he gained a quick fame all live in canal towns in southern China before 1949. Characters in "Buddhist Initiation" are well-off monks and peasants; the protagonist Wang'er in "Special Gift" is a shopkeeper who is getting richer; and those in "A Tale of Big Nur" are self-employed craftsmen and porters. Later, characters in Wang's stories expanded to intellectuals in "Loneliness and Warmth", (*Jimo yu wennuan* 寂寞与温暖), Confucian scholars in "Connoisseur" (*Jianshang jia* 鉴赏家), and street gangsters in "Pi Fengsan the House-Stretcher" (*Pi Fengsan xuan fangzi* 皮凤三楦房子). Although Wang Zengqi's preference of the life of commoners from lower classes entails an obvious similarity of his characters, different careers, ages, education, and historical contexts of these characters demand a more diversified narrating language to keep close to each of them. However, at the same time a highly recognizable Wang Zengqi style, which is featured by sketchy and elusive plots, affluent description of setting, short and ellipsis sentences, and well-balanced mixture of elegant and colloquial words, marked his breakthrough and maturity in fiction writing. Like Shen Congwen who left his students a meaningful aphorism about his insight of fiction writing, Wang has his own aphorism of fiction writing, that is, "atmosphere is the character" (qifen *ji renwu* 气氛即人物).

Wang's expression of his general view of fiction cannot be read as an assertive

statement in the epistemological sense because it is impossible to establish an equation between an animate human being (character) and inanimate surroundings (atmosphere) external to him. Instead, it should be interpreted as a Zen statement, in which Wang attempts to defend for his pursuit in the aesthetics of fiction. When he came back as a fiction writer in the 1980s, Wang was dedicated to writing essay-like stories, in which proportion and importance of description significantly overweigh those of narration. In his own words, "I am not good at telling story and I do not like stories that read like stories too much, i.e., stories with too much storiness."[28] In this sense, a good story in Wang Zengqi's mind does not depend on dramatic plots; instead, "a story should have its characters immersed between the lines. The style of the work is the personalities of its characters".[29] Wang's argument can be corroborated by readers' general impression of his stories. For instance, "A Tale of Big Nur" is tinged with more sentimental tone than another love story "Buddhist Initiation", which is jubilant and relaxing, because the young couple in the former story experiences much more traumatic sufferings. "Special Gift" is full of fine and smooth descriptions of food and daily errands, but the counterpart descriptions in "Seven Miles Teahouse" (*Qili chafang* 七里茶坊) appear to be coarse and bold. It is for the reason than characters in "Special Gift" are shopkeepers, craftsmen, and lower intellectuals who lived in a canal town in southern China, but those in "Seven Miles Teahouse" are peasants and caravan traders who lived in northern China right after

[28] Wang Zengqi 汪曾祺, "'Wang Zengqi duanpian xiaoshuo xuan' zixu", 《汪曾祺短篇小说选》自序 [Authorial preface to Selection of Wang Zengqi's short stories], *Wang Zengqi quanji* vol. 3, 165.

[29] Ibid., 166.

the Great Famine from 1959 to 1961. It is not difficult to reach a consensus that Wang Zengqi is the master of representing characters' historical, regional, gender, and other social and individual characteristics by coining appropriate styles or tones. However, such impressionistic comments cannot illustrate how such styles or tones are achieved. More detailed reading on the narrative and language level is needed.

Wang Zengqi has another statement "writing setting is writing characters" (*xiejing jiushi xieren* 写景就是写人). He argues, "descriptions of setting in a story are not only what the writer sees but also what the characters see. The feelings aroused by the setting should belong to the characters. It cannot be the writer's feelings without considering the characters. [30] As I have analyzed in last section, Wang Zengqi had practiced such idea in his 1962 stories. However, the descriptions in his stories written in the 1980s reached an unprecedented height because he became more skillful in composing "atmosphere" full of characters' consciousness. The following passage excerpted from "Buddhist Initiation" illustrates Wang's breakthrough:

> ［1］过了一个湖。［2］好大一个湖！［3］穿过一个县城。［4］县城真热闹：官盐店，税务局，肉铺里挂着成爿的猪肉，一个驴子在磨芝麻，满街都是小磨香油的味道，布店，卖茉莉粉、梳头油的什么斋，卖绒花的，卖丝线的，打把式卖膏药的，吹糖人的，耍蛇的，……［5］他什么都想看看。［6］舅舅一个劲地推他：“快走！快走”(SJ 323)

> They crossed a big lake—an immense lake! — and reached the county seat which was bustling with activity. In the main street there were an official salt shop, tax bureau, cloth store, butcher's and so on. A donkey was grinding sesame seeds in the oil workshop and the aroma filled with street. On both sides were various kinds of stalls selling cosmetics, velvet flowers, silk threads, sugar figures and other goods. In addition, there were also men selling quack remedies and snake performers. Mingzi was fascinated by these interesting sights and

[30] Wang Zengqi 汪曾祺, "Rou mian", 193.

> would have liked to take a good look at each of them. His uncle, however, urged him along, saying, "Don't dawdle! Hurry up! Be quick".[31]

It is on his way to the Buddhist temple that Mingzi sees the outside world for the first time. The passage reads rather smooth and jubilant which suitably matches Mingzi's excitement and curiosity. However, it is difficult to distinguish whether it is a passage that narrates Mingzi and his uncle's movement or is a passage of setting description in the Chinese origin. It is more difficult to count how many sentences and clauses used because Wang Zengqi intentionally breaks up the boundary among sentence, clause, phrase, and single word by juxtaposing them on the same syntactic level. Apparently, the translator Hu Zhihui manages to find a suitable syntactic position for the scattered names of shops and stalls in his translation and renders the whole passage as a narrator's report by adopting past tense. However, the aesthetic effect of the Wang Zengqi style loses in Hu's translation because of the syntactic completeness.

For the convenience of analysis, I numbered the sentences in the origin and allocated them into three independent narrative units. The first unit, [1] and [2], is concerned with the lake, the second, [3] and [4], is concerned with the prosperous county seat, and the last unit, [5] and [6], makes a transition to the following narration. The whole passage is filtered by and full of Mingzi's consciousness because of Wang Zengqi's deliberate selection of syntax and diction to underline Mingzi's presence. For instance, sentence [2] "*Haoda yige hu*" 好大一个湖 (what an immense lake) is Mingzi's impression. His uncle who has traveled across the lake many times is less likely to make

[31] Wang Zengqi, "Buddhist Initiation" trans. Hu Zhihui, *Selected Stories by Wang Zengqi* (Beijing: Zhongguo wenxue chubanshe, 1999), 55-56.

such a naïve exclamation. The unusually expanded sentence [4], which has a bunch of clauses and phrases loosely embedded, displays what Mingzi sees in the county seat. It is not a static enumeration as what it looks like; instead, the names of the shops and stalls juxtaposed here delineates the walking route, by which Mingzi goes across the main street. The business that less interests Mingzi, such as official salt shop and tax bureau, is represented in simple nouns; by contrast, what interests him more is represented in much more expanded sentences, such as "*Roupu li guazhe chenpan de zhu*" 肉铺里挂着成片的猪 (there are sliced pigs hung in the butcher's) and "*Yige lüzi zai mozhima*" 一个驴子在磨芝麻 (a donkey is grinding sesame seeds). It is the protagonist's attention that determines the weight of the shops and the forms to represent them. The most catching constituent here is "*Mai molifen, shuyoutou de shenme zhai*" 卖茉莉粉、梳油头的什么斋 (a shop selling jasmine powder and pomade), which is translated as "a stall of cosmetics" by Hu Zhihui. The cosmetics store may have a fancy name in difficult Chinese characters which Mingzi cannot recognize. If it were Yingzi, the female protagonist, who went across the street, she should know the name because she was likely to be a customer of that store. The omniscient narrator should also know the name of the shore, but he chooses to keep silent because he prioritizes the character's perspective and feelings than his own's. This passage provides a convincing demonstration of Wang Zengqi's aphorisms "atmosphere is the character" and "writing setting is writing characters".

What makes Wang Zengqi choose loosely composed sentences is more than

artistic intuition. He is conscious of the characteristics of Chinese language and its advantages in fiction writing. Wang considers his language as poetic fiction language and maintains, "It is different from the prose in traditional fiction. This language often entails a larger gap between sentences and often goes beyond logic and syntactic constructions that conform to general grammar."[32] Casual juxtaposition of nominal phrases and full sentences as the case of [4] in the passage quoted above reminds us of the similar loose composition in Chinese poems. For example, Ma Zhiyuan's *sanqu* poem "Autumn Thoughts" can be used as comparison to the "atmosphere" in Wang Zengqi's fiction:

> 枯藤老树昏鸦，小桥流水人家，古道西风瘦马。夕阳西下，断肠人在天涯。
>
> Over old trees wreathed with rotten vines fly evening crows.
> Under a small bridge near a cottage a stream flows.
> On ancient road in the west wind a lean horse goes.
> Westward declines the sun; Far, far from home is the heartbroken on.

Like Ma Zhiyuan's poem, the descriptive passage in "Buddhist Initiation" also invites readers to establish a temporal sequence of scattered constituents listed out and find a logic beneath them. Wang Zengqi credits the poetic language in fiction to Fei Ming, who "transfers the symbolic representations that transcend rationality and depict sensation directly from the late Tang poems to modern fiction".[33] He also considers the poetic fiction language as a suitable medium of stream-of-consciousness. Indeed, Mingzi's stroll in the main street can also be read as a sleepwalking in daytime, in which

[32] Wang Zengqi 汪曾祺, "Guanyu xiaoshuo de yuyan" 关于小说的语言 [About the language of Fiction], *Wang Zengqi quanji*, vol.4, 13-14.

[33] Wang Zengqi 汪曾祺, "Tan fengge" 谈风格 [On styles], *Wang Zengqi quanji* vol. 3, 339.

authenticity is secondary to imagination. Compared to the stream-of-consciousness, which May Fourth modernists claimed that they learned from foreign fiction, Wang Zengqi's stream-of-consciousness has much more fluidity because of smooth expressions. However, such a poetic language is still a medium of narrative. A significant difference between poetry and fiction lies in the fact that a poet usually just needs to consider what he wants to express, but a fiction writer needs to consider more complicated relationships among narrator, character, and readers. The narrator in Wang's passage is not a lyrical subject as that in Ma Zhiyuan's poem. Instead, he almost keeps himself invisible and silent behind the character. While Wang Zengqi emphasizes the importance of setting descriptions and advocate essay-like fiction and poetic language, he does not forget the primary duty of a fiction writer, telling story. As I pointed out, the story-time progresses when the scenes are laid out one after another. "Writing setting" or "rendering atmosphere" advocated in this sense can be considered as an implicit narration, in which plots and story-time move forward naturally behind the descriptions. As in the passage discussed above, when the enumeration of the shops and stalls comes to an end, Mingzi and his uncle have walked through the county seat.

The terminology "atmosphere" used by Wang Zengqi is not limited to what appears to be a stasis statement like the case of enumeration of shops and stalls quoted above. Sometimes, it also includes process statements.[34] In other words, Wang Zengqi's

[34] The distinction between stasis statement and process statement is borrowed from Seymour Chatman. For Chatman, the statements that depict events are process ones. On the contrary, those not in a chronological sequence are stasis statements. For example, "Peter fell ill" is a process statement, but "Peter had no friends" is a stasis statement. See Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse,* 43-44.

"atmosphere" is more than descriptions of setting and characters. In his stories written in the 1980s, there are a great number of short sentences without grammatical subjects.[35] Therefore, it is difficult to tell whether they are process statements having a character as the narrative subject or are stasis statements about other existents. Such ambiguity contributes most to uniqueness of the Wang Zengqi style. The following is a case from "Special Gift":

> 蒲包肉似乎是这个县里特有的。用一个三寸来长直径寸半的蒲包，里面衬上豆腐皮，塞满了加了粉子的碎肉，封了口，拦腰用一道麻绳系紧，成了一个葫芦形。煮熟以后，倒出来，也是一个带有蒲包印记的葫芦，切成片，很香。(YB 310-311)
>
> Cattail-bag meat seemed to be the specialty of the county. Each cattail bag was about three by one and half inches. It was lined with thin sheets of bean curd and filled quite full of small bits of meat mixed with water chestnut powder. Afterwards, the bag was tied in the middle with a hemp string, forming the shape of a gourd. When the bag was opened after being cooked, the meat was still in the shape of a gourd with a trace of the cattail bag on the surface. Cut into slices, it really whetted one's appetite.[36]

Taken away from the whole narrative, this piece of passage reads like an independent introduction of how to make "cattail bag meat", which is subordinated to the stasis statements of the local food and seems irrelevant to the protagonist Wang Er of the story. However, if we consider the location of this passage and its relationship to the whole narrative, we will find it could be read as a direct communication between the character Wang Er and readers. The first paragraph of "Special Gift" gives a short but

[35] Li Tuo and Carolyn Fitzgerald has compared the frequency of grammatical subjects in Wang Zengq's post-Mao stories and his earlier stories written in the 1940s. See Li Tuo, ""Wang Zengqi yu xiandai hanyu xiezuo—jian tan Mao wenti", 171-172. Carolyn Fitzgerald, "Imaginary Sites of Memory: Wang Zengqi and Post-Mao Reconstructions of Native Land", *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture*, spring, vol. 20, no.1 (2008): 98.

[36] Wang Zengqi, *Selected Stories by Wang Zengqi*, 8.

direct revelation of its topic, “Those who lived in the same street as Wang Er well knew how he had made his fortune”. The second paragraph, which is also very short, introduces his business, “a cooked meat stand”. Then the narrative follows by two expanded paragraphs: one is a detailed introduction of Wang Er’s family, and the other, from which this passage is taken, is a detailed introduction of his business. Therefore, readers always bear Wang Er in their minds when they read the description of making cattail bag meat. The passage below is another possible reading:

> **王二**用一个三寸来长直径寸半的蒲包，里面衬上豆腐皮，塞满了加了粉子的碎肉，**王二把蒲包**封了口，拦腰用一道麻绳系紧，成了一个葫芦形。煮熟以后，**王二把肉**倒出来，也是一个带有蒲包印记的葫芦，切成片，很香。[37]

However, in the revised version highlights the opposition between the narrator and the character. The narrator is the observer and reporter, and the character is the doer. Such opposition demands more explanatory narration. For example, where the narrator observed the process of making cattail bag meat since it can be inferred from the context that Wang Er made it in his kitchen before having the stand set up in the street? How can the narrator know exactly the size of the cattail bag? The passage with Wang Er as the grammatical subject reads like a plot-centered narrative which is what Wang Zengqi attempts to avoid.

Wang Zengqi’s subjectless passage also allows a third reading if readers place a personal pronoun “I” at the beginning.

> **我**用一个三寸来长直径寸半的蒲包，里面衬上豆腐皮，塞满了加了粉子的碎肉，封了口，拦腰用一道麻绳系紧，成了一个葫芦形。煮熟以后，倒出来，也是一个带有蒲包印记的葫芦，切成片，很香。

[37] The characters in bold are added by me.

This reading can be regarded as Wang Er's monologue because all syntactic constructions and words used are Wang Er's language. The fluent and exact introduction perfectly matches the dexterousness of Wang Er's cooking skill and the fast growth of his business. In this way, the narrative report unwittingly slides into a free direct speech in which the character Wang Er tells readers directly how he makes cattail bag meat, and the narrator becomes silent again. Or, we can say that the narrator's and Wang Er's subjectivity merge into one, which is represented by the same voice. In Wang Zengqi's origin, he manages to reduce the number of grammatical subjects to the minimal degree, which creates an ambiguity of the topic. Such ambiguity allows three different readings respectively with cattail meat bag, the character Wang Er, and the character-narrator "I" as the grammatical subjects. Therefore, on the surface, the original passage appears to be a description of an existent, that is, cattail bag meat, but on the deeper level, it is also an implicit narrative report of the character's actions and a representation of character's consciousness. Wang Zengqi's skillful use of ellipsis of Chinese syntax contributes to present the "atmosphere", which is simultaneously his way to tell stories and depict characters.

In the analysis of "Buddhist Initiation", Carolyn Fitzgerald points out that the lengthy introduction of the name "Anzhao village" at the beginning suggests the narrator's fascination with attempting to unearth etymological origins of geographical names.[38] Fitzgerald argues that the names mentioned in Wang Zengqi' stories function as

[38] Carolyn Fitzgerald, 91-92.

a “culture bearing medium”, through which “Wang interweaves personal and collective memories into an integrated vision of the past.”[39] Indeed, many of Wang’s readers are attracted by the culture immersed language in his stories. However, Wang Zengqi’s stories never give readers the impression that the narrator is showing off his knowledge of culture and history or he is too much obsessed with his personal memories. As being illustrated in the two cases of my analysis, Wang’s culture bearing language is also a character-centered and a reader-friendly language. Although readers realize that Mingzi and Wang Er lived in the past, they are still affected by the affinity between the characters and them. Although the narrator is telling something beyond readers’ range of knowledge, readers feel the recounting like an instant conversation between the narrator and them. Again, such affinity and humbleness are credited to the “sayable” sentences in his narratives. Take the introduction of the name of Anzhao Village in “Buddhist Initiation” for an example, the following sentences, I argue, reduce the distance between the narrator and his characters and readers:

> [1] 赵，是因为庄上大都姓赵。 (SJ 322)
>
> The word *Zhao* signified that the majority of the villagers had the same surname Zhao.
>
> [2] 庵，是因为有一个庵。 (SJ 322)
>
> As to the word *An*, that was easy to understand for there was a nunnery in this village.
>
> [3] 庵本来是住尼姑的，“和尚庙”，“尼姑庵” 嘛。 (SJ 322)
>
> *An* was the place for nuns to live. “Monks in the monasteries and nun in nunneries”, so, the saying goes.

[39] Ibid. 78.

The commas used in [1] and [2] are not to separate the subjects and the predicates, instead, it only suggests a phonetic pause between the topics and their comments. If the two sentences were literally translated into English, they would be hard to understand because topic-comment structures do not always covey complete propositions. The complete proposition of [1] should be "*Zhege cunzi Jiaozuo Zhao, shi yinwei zhuangshang dadou xing Zhao*" 这个村子叫做赵，是因为庄上大都姓赵（The village's name has the word *Zhao* is because the majority of villagers have the surname Zhao). The modal particle *ma* 嘛 in [3] exerts the similar function. The complete proposition should be expressed as "*An benlai shi zhu nigu de, yinwei renme changshuo 'heshangmiao' 'nigu'an*'" 庵本来是住尼姑的, 因为人们常说 '和尚庙', '尼姑庵' (*An* is the place for nuns to live because people usually say 'monks in monasteries and nuns in nunneries'). The modal particle *ma* not only provides an explanatory mood, but also creates an instant communication between the narrator and his readers. Apparently, well-established logic gives way to colloquialness in Wang's narrative. For him, it is "a language going beyond reason and appealing to intuition, which has been widely adopted in modern fiction."[40] He argues that the scattered and illogical sentences "are not author's trick of language…If they were represented logically and completely, they would not be loyal [to the life]."[41] In this sense, the "atmosphere" created in Wang Zengqi's stories also includes the consideration of the closeness between the narrator and its readers.

[40] Wang Zengqi 汪曾祺, "Guanyu xiaoshuo de yuyan", 14.
[41] Ibid.

The proportion of setting descriptions varies in Wang Zengqi's stories. The progression of plots in "Special Gift", "Buddhist Initiation", and "A Tale of Big Nur" can be clearly perceived, though there are a great number of descriptions of setting and introductions of local history and customs. However, some stories like "People in My Hometown" (*Guxiang ren* 故乡人), "The Children Who Like Pranking" (*Diaoren de haizi* 钓人的孩子), and "The Past of Several People I know" (*Guren wangshi* 故人往事) barely have any climax events since there are only descriptions of the natural and social surroundings of the characters' life and sketchy or summary reports of the reiterative errands in their daily life. The latter category is very close to non-fictional essays and can be considered as a return to traditional literati prose where Chinese fiction origins from.

4.3 Confluence of Western techniques and conventions of Chinese writing in Wang Zengqi's last decade

From around 1985, Wang Zengqi appeared to have more interest in exploring the depth of human mentality and desires in his stories, though he once stated, "What I pursue is not profundity but harmony."[42] The proportion of stories having sexual desires as themes increases. Moreover, some stories present forbidden desires with less consideration of commonly accepted social norms. For instance, "Aunt Xue" (*Xue daniang* 薛大娘) defends the infidelity of a middle-aged woman whose husband is impotent; "The Deer Well and Elixir Spring" (*Lujing danquan* 鹿井丹泉) depicts sexual

[42] Wang Zengqi, "Wang Zengqi zixuanji zixu" 汪曾祺自选集自序 [Authorial preface to Wang Zengqi's self-selected works], *Wang Zengqi quanji* vol.4, 95.

intercourse between a Buddhist monk and a doe as a matter of course; and "Bathhouse Voyeur" (*Kuiyu* 窥浴) affords sympathy to a talented clarinet player who seeks musical inspiration through peeping a female bathhouse. In accordance with the psychological shift in regard to theme, Wang Zengqi brushed up the modernist techniques that he had learned and practiced in the 1940s. Stream of consciousness, interior monologue, and free direct speech are among his inventory of psychological representations. However, compared to stories written by previous modernist writers like Shi Zhecun, Wang's psychological stories preserve an obvious Chinese taste by inheriting narrative features of traditional Chinese fiction, such as third-person omniscient narrator, plot-centered narration, and loose syntax. In other words, there is a stylistic harmony which marks the confluence of techniques of Western fiction and conventions of traditional Chinese prose writing in Wang Zengqi's stories written in his late years. A close reading of thirteen stories Wang has adapted from *Liaozhai zhiyi* (Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio) will provide us a comparative perspective to see Wang's dual effort to modify traditional Chinese fiction with Western techniques and modify Western techniques to satisfy Chinese taste.

The thirteen *Liaozhai* stories are put under the "Liaozhai xinyi" (the new meanings of *Liaozhai zhiyi*). According to Wang, the principle with which he complies in the rewriting project is "to make significant change with minor modifications" (*Xiaogai er dadong* 小改而大动), which is future elaborated as "preserving the plots in the original texts as much as possible and only changing several pivotal parts to instill

modern consciousness."[43] His approaches of instilling modern consciousness can be roughly divided into three categories: replacement, addition, and deletion. The following passage excerpted from "The Fighting Cricket" is a case in which three pieces of depiction of behaviors and existents are replaced by psychological representations.[44]

> 成名一愣，*赶紧追！*癞蛤蟆钻进了草丛，顺着方向，拨开草丛，一只蛐蛐在荆棘旁边伏着，*快扑！*蛐蛐跳进了石穴，用尖草撩它，不出来，用随身带着的竹筒里的水灌，这才出来。*好摸样！* (QQ 241)
>
> Cheng Ming was little startled. *Hurry up!* He immediately pursued the toad, which retreated into the bushes. He then saw one of the insects he wanted sitting at the root of a bramble. *Catch up with it!* The cricket ran into a hole, from which Cheng Ming was unable to move it by poking with a straw. The cricket finally came out after Cheng poured water into the hole. *How magnificent the cricket is!*[45]

Through the comparison with Pu Songling's original passage listed below, we can find that Wang keeps the structure of the whole passage almost unchanged, though all *wenyan* words are replaced by easily understandable counterparts in *baihua*.

> 成益愕，*急逐趁之*，蟆入草间。蹑迹披求，见有虫伏棘根。*遽扑之*，入石穴中, 捻以尖草，不出；以筒水灌之，始出，*状极俊健*。
>
> Cheng was little startled, but immediate pursued the toad, which retreated into the bushes. He then saw one of the insects he wanted sitting at the root of a bramble. But on making a grab at it, the cricket ran into a hole, from which he was unable to move it by poking with a straw. Then he poured in some water and little creature finally came out. It was a magnificent specimen, strong and handsome.

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[43] Wang Zengqi 汪曾祺, "*Liaozhai xinyi* houji" 《聊斋新义》后记 (Epilogue *to The New Meanings of Liaozhai zhiyi*], *Wang Zengqi quanji* vol. 4, 239.

[44] The title of Pu Songling's original story is "Cuzhi" 促织, which is an elegant name of cricket commonly used in classical pose and poems. In the rewritten story, Wang changes the title to "Ququ" 蛐蛐, which is a colloquial name referring to the same insect.

[45] I translated all excerpts from Pu Songling's origins and Wang Zengqi's rewritten stories by reference to Herbert Gilles's *Strange Stories from a Chinese Studio*. My translation is more syntactically faithful to the Chinese origin for the purpose of my analysis.

Wang strictly limits the addition of subjects and conjunctions which is common occurrence in the conversion from *wenyan* to *baihua* and considered making Chinese sentences Europeanized. Therefore, Wang's narration reads as smooth and concise as Pu Songling's original. However, the replacement occurring in the three italicized clauses makes the two passages greatly different. In PuSongling's original, declarative clauses "*ji zhu chen zhi*" 急逐趁之 (immediately pursue it), "*ju pu zhi*" 遽扑之 (pounce on it quickly) and "*zhuang ji jun jian*" 状极俊健 (it's strong and handsome) convey the observation of either Cheng Ming's actions or the cricket's physical features from an outsider's perspective. They are the narrator's voice external to the character. In contrast, after Wang Zengqi replaced them with two imperative sentences "*ganjin zhui*" 赶紧追 (hurry up) and "*kuaipu*" 快扑 (catch it up quickly) and an exclamatory sentence "*hao muyang*" 好模样 (how beautiful it is), Cheng Ming's nervousness, excitement, and ecstasy are represented through his own voice in the form of free direct discourse (FDD). In addition, Wang uses three exclamation marks to emphasize the illustration of Cheng Ming's consciousness or unconscious. For Chinese readers, they hardly notice that Wang Zengqi used FDD or interior monologue, a narrative technique from Western fiction, if not being specifically reminded. There two reasons why the character's interior monologues in these stories appear to be formally inconspicuous: First, characters' interior monologues are represented in a colloquial style as same as the narrative report, which blurs the distinction between characters and narrator' voice. Second, the interior monologues are usually represented in rather an economic way, such as subjectless clauses, stative phrases, or even single verbs, adjectives, or interjections. Therefore, they

appear to be transitions but not interruptions to the narrative report. Similar interior monologues are easily found in “The Cricket”:

> 顺着古坟走，蹲着伏着一块一块怪石，就跟梦里所见的一样，*是这儿？——像！*
>
> Cheng Ming walked along the old graves. There many jagged rocks standing or sitting there. The scene was as same as what he had seen in the dream. *Is this the right place? Yes!*
>
> 蛐蛐爱吃什么？栗子、菱角、螃蟹肉。*买！* (QQ 241)
>
> What would cricket like to eat? Chestnut, water chestnut, and crab meat. *Buy them!*

In this way, Wang Zengqi creates plenty of dispersing interior monologues around the narrative report to instill modern consciousness to an old Chinese story, which is different from the lengthy and sentimental interior monologues in Shi Zhecun’s historical stories adapted from existing texts. The innovative replacement in “The Fighting Cricket” not only serves to instill modern consciousness but also aims to instill modern consciousness into a tale written in *wenyan*, which is the medium of representing the high culture in Chinese tradition. Right after the passage of Cheng Ming capturing the cricket, Wang Zengqi replaces the description of the cricket’s appearance in the original with a piece of three-character verse:

> 蛐蛐蹦，成名追。罩住了，细细看：个头大，尾巴长，青脖子，金翅膀。(QQ 241)
>
> The cricket jumped and Cheng Ming pursued. He got it and observed carefully. Its size is big and tail long. Its neck is green but wings gold.

Unlike most couplets, poems, and versed songs in traditional vernacular fiction, the colloquial verse here neither shows off the writer’s literary talent nor makes a moral judgment nor provides an allegorical predication of character’ future. The half narration

and half depiction in verse created by Wang Zengqi is a part of the narrative report. It is not stylistically at odds with the adjacent texts before and after it. The jubilant rhythm of the versed piece indicates the narrator's empathy to Cheng Ming, who was free of the imposed duty after catching up with a competent fighting cricket. Either the FDD, a Western technique, or the three-character format, a Chinese convention, is a proper medium for Wang Zengqi as long as it fits into the situation of characters and facilitates the communication of narrator and characters with readers. Apparently, Wang Zengqi's adoption of verse in fiction writing is inspired by his experience of editing folk songs and writing Peking opera in the Mao era. In an essay on opera writing Wang Zengqi argued that it would be better to create opening verses, couplets, and poems in operas in a colloquial style, otherwise, they may fail to affect the audience.[46] In fiction writing, the colloquial style is also the guiding principle to revise and blend Western techniques and Chinese conventions.

What Wang Zengqi added to Pu Songling's origins to a large extent are characters' dialogues. Indeed, there are conversations in the origin, but they are direct speech led by speech act verbs like "*yue*" 曰 or "*dao*" 道 without exception. In contrast, in the dialogues added by Wang the introductory verbs are often limited to the minimum degree. As I discussed in the chapter on Lu Xun's stories, the direct speech without introductory clause was popular in the May Fourth era after punctuations and paragraphing were introduced. However, the new form does not necessarily guarantee

[46] See Wang Zengqi 汪曾祺, "Yong yunwen xiang" 用韵文想 [Thinking in rhyme], *Wang Zengqi quanji* vol.4, 3-4.

less authorial intervention let alone aesthetic superiority. In fact, the dialogues in Ba Jin's "Love" trilogy are not comparable to those in Eileen Chang's *Gold Cangue* in regard to either thinking depth or verisimilitude, though Ba Jin adopted new forms to represent dialogues and Eileen Chang adhered to the traditional one. The comparative reading of one episode of dialogue from Shi Zhecun's "Kumarajiva" and another from Wang Zengqi's "Courtesan Rui Yun" (*Rui Yun* 瑞云) below will illustrate two different strategies to use the imported form, that is, the direct speech without introductory clause.

The following is a conversation about the conflict between carnal desire and religious piety when Kumarajiva's cousin princess ran into his mediation at night.

> "表兄鸠摩罗什大智的僧人在这样的月夜也要做着严厉的功课吗？难道释迦牟尼佛连一点夜里的树叶的香气也不许他的弟子享受吗？"
>
> "树叶的香气也是一样能够引乱寂定的道心的。表妹，善女人，在这里，我是如同在沙漠里一样地没有看见什么，我相信我已经能够生活在这个华丽的大城里如在沙漠里一样的不经意，不被身外的魔鬼引诱了去，以致败坏了道行。但是，你，我劝你立刻就离开此地，否则，请让我立刻离开了你，因为，我怕，只有你会得破坏了我。"
>
> "大智的僧人，听了你的话，我赞美你！我怕我真的会破坏了你，因为我的确觉得有一股邪道的大力附着在身上。但是，表兄鸠摩罗什，你可以用你的崇高的教义，照耀在我心里，让我得到了一个纯正的解脱……" (JMLS 69)
>
> My cousin, the lord of wisdom, do you need to practice so hard in such a moonlight night? Buddha Shakyamuni allows his followers to enjoy the scent of three leaves at night, doesn't he?
>
> "The scent of tree leaves will also disturb the peaceful mind devoted to religion. My cousin, the good woman, I see nothing here as well as what I see in a desert. I believe that I can live inattentively in this prosperous city the same as if in a desert, without being seduced by demons and corrupting my Buddhist achievement. But you, I urge you to leave, otherwise, please allow me to leave you. Because I'm afraid that you're the only reason that would ruin my practice."

> "The lord of wisdom, I admire you after hearing those words. I'm also afraid that I will ruin you. Because I can feel there is an evil power adhering to me. But, my cousin Kumarajiva, you can enlighten my heart with the sublime doctrine and give me a complete emancipation…"

Their remarks are quite lengthy. In fact, I have excerpted only half of the cousin's response in the last episode since it is long enough to illustrate the stylistic feature. Moreover, the dialogue is composed by well-planned sentences with subjects, multilayer attributives, conjunctions, and well-selected words. The dialogue sounds like a melodramatic talk between two drama players who have memorized the lines on the script before standing in front of the audience. Although Shi Zhecun deleted the introductory clauses, the intention of the implied author is still quite straightforward: he wants to impart some Freudian discovery on the conflict between super ego and instinct. As a result, readers are no longer reading a story but being involved into a metaphysical discussion. In Shen Congwen's words, it is "a fight between two smart brains."[47]

In "Courtesan Rui Yun" Wang Zengqi adds a dialogue which is also concentrated on the conflict between super ego and instinct. Rui Yun, the once most popular courtesan, became imperfect after a guest with supernatural power left an inerasable inky mark on her face. However, the imperfectness allows Scholar He, whom Rui Yun chose as husband, to redeem her from the courtesan house with an affordable price. In their wedding night, Rui Yun talked to her husband about the imperfectness of her body before they went to bed. The dialogue added by Wang Zengqi reads:

> [1] 瑞云问： "你为什么娶我？"
> [2] "以前，我想娶你，不能。现在能把你娶回来，不好么？"
> [3] "我脸上有一块黑。"

[47] See Wang Zengqi 汪曾祺, "Rou mian", 192.

［4］*“我知道。”*
［5］*“难看么？”*
［6］*“难看。”*
［7］“你说了实话。”
［8］*“看看就会习惯的。”*
［9］“你是可怜我么？”
［10］“我疼你。”
［11］*“伸开你的手。”*
瑞云把手放在贺生手里。贺生想起那天在院里瑞云和他执手相看，就轻轻摸瑞云的手。
［12］瑞云说：“你说的是真话。” 接着叹了一口气，“我已经不是我了。”
［13］贺生轻轻咬了一下瑞云的手指：“你还是你。”
［14］*“总不那么齐全了！”*
［15］“你不是说过，愿意把身子给我吗？”
［16］*“你现在还要吗？”*
［17］*“要！”* (RY 232-233)

Rui Yun asked, “Why did you marry me?”
“In the past, I wanted to marry you, but I couldn’t. Now, I can marry you. It’s good, isn’t it?”
“I have an inky mark on my face.”
“I know.”
“Ugly?”
“Ugly.”
“You tell the truth.”
“I’ll get used to it soon.”
“Are you pitying me?”
“I love you.”
“Lay your palms open.”
Rui Yun put her hands in Scholar He’s palms. He remembered the day in the yard where they stared at each other with one’s hands holding others. He touched Rui Yun’s hands gently.
Rui Yun said, “you tell the truth.” And then sighed, “I’m not myself anymore.”
Scholar He bit one of her fingers slightly, “You’re still yourself.”
“Not perfect anymore.”
“You said you were willing to give yourself to me, didn’t you?”
“Do you still want me now?”
“Yes.”

Eight out of the seventeen sentences they spoke to each other are what Yuen Ren

Chao called “minor sentences”, which are those “not in the subject-predicate form.”[48] According to Chao, minor sentences are more primary in daily life whenever full sentences are not necessary.[49] Wang Zengqi took good advantage of minor sentences to present a convincing dialogue between the two traumatized persons. Rui Yun and Scholar He were talking about the last thing they wanted to mention. Therefore, it is reasonable for them to avoid mentioning the word “inky mark” or other words referring to Rui Yun’s imperfect body. In the italicized sentences [4], [6], [8], [14], [16], and [17], these words are the ellipted constituents. The ellipsis not only creates a more coherent and natural dialogue, but also preserves the female character’s dignity. These minor sentences also convey a subtle revelation of the characters’ mentality. Suppose that if Rui Yun’s interrogation “*Ni xianzai hai yao ma?*” 你现在还要吗 (Do you want [me] now?) were replaced by a full sentence “*Ni xianzai haiyao wode shenzi ma?*” 你现在还要我的身子吗 (Do you still want my body now?), her soft tone full of shyness, gratitude, and traumatized memory would lose. Again, the selection of syntactic constructions shows the narrator’s empathy and closeness to the character.

The comparison between “Kumarajiva” and “The Courtesan Rui Yun” illustrates an essential difference between most writers in the May Fourth era and the post-Mao era. The former aimed to renovate both Chinese fiction and language with Western resources, but the latter endeavored to moderate the tension between Western forms and Chinese

[48] Yuen Ren Chao, *A Grammar of Spoken Chinese*, 83. While [4] and [16] do have both subjects and predicates, but their predicates are not complete. Therefore, they are still not full sentences.

[49] Ibid.,106.

conventions of writing. In a sense, Wang Zengqi continuously fulfilled the returning to traditional writing which Shi Zhecun had been forced to give up after the, 1950s. The returning does not represent a culturally conservative position but a breakthrough of promoting the modernization of Chinese fiction. Wang Zengqi's hands are not tied up by Chinese conventions. He does not reject lengthy monologues, stream of consciousness, and full sentences when they are necessary. At the end of "The Cricket" Wang Zengqi added one page stream of consciousness to the six pages story, in which, Cheng Ming's son made a disjunctive self-statement. Sentences in the statement are as short as Wang's other ones, but most of them carry the first-person pronoun "*wo*" 我 (I) such as, "*Wo shi Heizi*" 我是黑子 (I'm your son Heizi), "*Xishuai shi wo*" 蟋蟀是我 (The cricket is me), "*Wo ai dajia*" 我爱打架 (I like fighting), "*Wo hen lihai*" 我很厉害 (I'm good [at fighting]), "*Wo xiang bian huilai*" 我想变回来 (I wish I could transform back to a human being) and "*Wo de Shijian daole*" 我的时间到了" (It's time for me to go). These "*wo"*s are different from redundant pronouns that make May Fourth writers' sentences far away from the oral habit of Chinese language. The appearance of each "*wo"* indicates an abrupt transition from one topic to another one and hence forms "free association", which, in Seymour Chatman's view, is the key feature to identify stream of consciousness.[50]

Stream of consciousness as a narrative technique practiced by Chinese modernists

[50] See Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*, 186.

from Shi Zhecun in the 1930s to Wang Meng in the 1980s is often accompanied by rejection of declarative sentence, which is the commonest type of sentence used in daily life because of its essential function of making statement. According to Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, stream of consciousness is "any presentation in literature of illogical, ungrammatical, mainly associative patterns of human thought."[51] However, it is unlikely to write a story with completely ungrammatical sentences, even though in occasions to represent characters' insanity. "Ungrammatical" in practice means making sentences appear to be unusual. Elly Hagenaar lists several syntactic features related to stream of consciousness in Chinese fiction, such as questions, exclamations, dots to indicates pause, and striking series of related words and expressions.[52] As a result, stream of consciousness in most cases is represented in a melodramatic tone and through less "sayable" Chinese, such as the passages from Shi Zhecun's "At the Paris Cinema" (*Zai Bali daxiyuan* 在巴黎大戏院) and Wang Meng's "Dream of the Sea" (*Hai de meng* 海的梦) listed below.

> ……我脸上热得很呢，大概脸色一定已经红得很了。这里没有镜子吗？不然倒可以自己照一下。……啊，这个人竟公然对我笑起来了！你敢这样的侮辱我吗？你难道没有看见她突然抢到卖票窗口去买票吗？这是我没有预防到的，谁想到会有这样的事情呢？啊，我受不了，我要回身走出这个门，让我到外面阶石上去站一会儿罢。(ZBLDXY 152)

> My face feels hot. I've probably gone as red as a beetroot. Isn't there a mirror around here? If there is one, I'll look at myself in it. Oh! This guy is actually laughing openly at me! How dare you mock me, sir? Surely you must have seen her suddenly lunge toward the ticket window. I couldn't stop her, how could I?

[51] Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, *The Nature of Narrative*, 177.

[52] See Elly Hagenaar,162. While Hegenaar mentioned these features in the conclusion of FID, they can apply to stream of consciousness too because she considers FID as one possible representation of stream of consciousness. In her discussion of Zhang Jie, Zhang Kangkang, and Wang Meng's stream of consciousness, she did use these features.

> Who would have expected a thing like this to happen? Oh! I don't think I can stand this any longer. I have an urge to turn and run out of the door. Oh, let me just stand outside on the steps for a while…

> 海，海！是高尔基的暴风雨前的海吗，是安徒生的绚烂多姿、光怪陆离的海吗？还是他亲自呕心沥血地翻译过的杰克·伦敦或者海明威所描绘的海呢？也许，那是李姆斯基·柯萨考夫的《谢赫拉萨达组曲》里的古老的、阿拉伯人的海吧？
> (HDM 488)

> The sea, the sea! Was it Gorki's sea before the storm? Was it Andersen's splendid, many-faced and bizarre sea? Or the sea as depicted by Jack London or Hemingway, which he had translated himself, working his heart out? Maybe it was the old sea of the Arabs in the Scheherazade suite by Rimsky Korsakov?

Neither Shi Zhecun nor Wang Meng's stream of consciousness is ungrammatical. Instead, they are represented by well-planned sentences with deliberately selected constructions and words. They read illogical only because they represent an irrational state of the protagonists' mind, but beneath the irrational state there is a clear logic of narration in each case. The neurasthenia-stricken Shanghainese in "At the Paris Cinema" expressed his unease in accordance with what he felt successively. The expert of foreign literature in "Dream of the Sea" enumerated famous literary works concerned with sea that jumped to his mind one by one. There are prerequisites to trigger free association in both cases. The one in "At the Paris Cinema" requires hypersensitive emotion and the one in "Dream of the Sea" requires professional knowledge of Western literature, which exclusively belong to intellectual characters and are inevitably coated in a melodramatic tone.

The last page that Wang Zengqi added to "The Cricket" is a breakthrough because Wang brilliantly created stream of consciousness for common people in the bottom who are arguably considered lack of interiority.

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List of the Chinese Originals for Text Analysis

1. Ding Ling 丁玲

SF 莎菲女士的日记 "The Diary of Miss Sophie"

SGH 太阳照在桑干河上 *The Sun Shines over the Sanggan River*

DWX 杜晚香 "Du Wanxiang"

2. Mao Zedong 毛泽东

JNBQE 纪念白求恩 “In Memory of Norman Bethune”

3. Lu Xun 鲁迅

MO 默 “Silence”

HJ 怀旧 “Looking back to the Past”

KRRJ 狂人日记 “A Madman’s Diary”

YAO 药 “Medicine”

4. Shi Zhecun 施蛰存

SX 石秀 “Shi Xiu”

JMLS 鸠摩罗什 “Kumarajiva”

JJDT 将军底头 “The General’s Head”

MYZX 梅雨之夕 “The Evening of Spring Rain”

SXZDSY 四喜子的生意 “The Business of Sixi”

CY 春阳 “Spring Sunshine”

WU 雾 “Fog”

SZZLX 狮子座流星 “The Night of Leoid”

ZBLDXY 在巴黎大戏院 “At the Paris Cinema”

5. Sun Li 孙犁

HHD 荷花淀 “Lotus Creek”

ZCYH 走出以后 “After Leaving Home”

TMQZ 铁木前传 *The Blacksmith and the Carpenter*

FYCJ 风云初记 *The Beginning of the Changeable*

WW 王婉 “Wang Wan”

NXS 女相士 “A Female Fortune-teller”

HUANJ 幻觉 “Illusion”

SL 石榴 “Pomegranate”

6. Wang Zengqi 汪曾祺

YSYX 羊舍一夕 “A Night in a Shepherd’s Cottage”

SJ 受戒 “Buddhist Initiation”

YB 异秉 “Special Gift”

QQ 蛐蛐 “The Fighting Cricket”

RY 瑞云 “Courtesan Ruiyun”

7. 王蒙

HDD 海的梦 “Dream of the Sea”