SHORT STORIES BY BAO TIANXIAO AND ZHOU SHOUJUAN
DURING THE EARLY YEARS OF THE REPUBLIC

by

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A Thesis Submitted in Conformity with the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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Abstract

Short Stories by Bao Tianxiao and Zhou Shoujuan during the Early Years of the Republic

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This thesis examines the structural, narratological, and stylistic innovations Bao Tianxiao (1876-1973) and Zhou Shoujuan (1895-1968) introduced in their short stories during the early years of the Republic. It begins with an outline of the attack by the May Fourth Reformers on the two writers and their colleagues, whom they derisively labeled as the "Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School," followed by the formation of an ideologically oriented canon of modern Chinese literature, from which their works were excluded. The thesis then surveys the literary milieu of the 1910s in Shanghai during a period of rapid development and social change with its accompanying tensions, which are reflected in some of Bao's and Zhou's stories. It describes their leading role as translators and editors of literary magazines, besides writers of fiction of their own. The rest of their careers is covered briefly.

In its further exploration, the thesis discusses in detail several Western narrative methods which Bao and Zhou introduced in their short stories, some of them new in China, thereby changing the very nature of traditional storytelling as well as characterization and aspects of structure. The last chapter investigates the controversial but basic subject of how Bao and Zhou in their stories strikingly modified the traditional norms of both the classical language and the vernacular: the classical language so that it
would fit the modern content and their contemporary readership; the vernacular for the sake of raising its aesthetic quality.

At the instigation of the May Fourth Movement, the Chinese Republican government passed in 1920 the act which replaced the classical language by the vernacular as the standard language. A major reason for this change was the need to make education universal in China. This development, however, was accompanied by the total rejection of the classical language as out of date. The thesis includes a short section on the Xue Heng scholars who during the 1920s presented, though in vain, well-reasoned arguments that the classical language needs to be preserved as a medium of thought and of beautiful expression. Bao's and Zhou's own experiments in language reform deserve to be remembered.
Acknowledgements

The subject of my thesis with its division in four chapters was first approved by Professor Milena Dolezelova. It was she who wisely counseled me not to attempt a much broader treatment of Mandarin Duck writers but to limit myself to a more thorough analysis of the short stories of Bao Tianxiao and Zhou Shoujuan.

For the writing of the thesis itself, my chief debt is to my supervisor, Professor Richard Lynn, who later generously assumed the supervision. He read all of my drafts with great care, drew my attention to numerous needed corrections, made many thoughtful suggestions for my consideration, and provided splendid help with translations into English of Chinese phrases and names of literary works. For his excellent guidance, I owe him deep gratitude.

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Introduction

This thesis investigates two of the most prominent writers in Shanghai during the early decades of the Republic which was established in 1911: Bao Tianxiao 包天笑 (1876-1973) and Zhou Shoujuan 周瘦鹃 (1895-1968). It concentrates on the first decade of their work, the 1910s. Inspired particularly by Lin Shu 林纾 (1852-1924), both writers continued energetically the task of translating Western novels and shorter works of fiction in a refined yet modernized classical style. But more important, both contributed a great deal to the revival of the short story, presenting this genre in new ways, several of which were influenced by Western examples; and they wrote their stories in both basic forms of the Chinese language, classical and vernacular, and in interesting modernized adaptations of the two. These stories and other writings by Bao and Zhou attracted a very large readership. Perhaps equally significant was their influence on fellow writers in their role as founders and editors of literary magazines and weeklies which appeared in Shanghai during the 1910s in much greater numbers than ever before in the past.

However, the ideological-minded New Culturalists who after 1919 participated in the May Fourth Reform Movement rejected outright the work of Bao, Zhou, and several other writers as that of mere popularizers at best, and reactionaries at worst; and although both Bao and Zhou continued to appeal to many readers during and somewhat beyond the 1920s, their writings were soon removed from the recognized canon of literature and after 1949 almost totally forgotten. The myth promulgated by the May Fourth Cultural Movement, namely, that their own writing with its ideological content represented the beginning of "modern" literature in China, and that all prior literature was "old," came to
be uniformly accepted from the 1930s until the late 1970s, and still has many adherents today.

Only after the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) did critical attention again begin to be paid to late Qing fiction (1900-1911, the final decade of the Qing dynasty), and as shown by Zhao Yiheng in The Uneasy Narrator,¹ the fiction of the early years of the Republic was then grouped with it as its last syllable, without its having any separate identity. Until recently, Perry Link's pioneering Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies (1981)² remained the only Western book-length study of Butterfly fiction from 1911 to the 1930s, other than a single more specialized doctoral dissertation (1982, see below).³ Only since 1990 has there been further critical attention to the fiction of the 1910s, and both Bao's and Zhou's innovative and often experimental styles and techniques in their short stories are still waiting for a full critical treatment. This thesis seeks to remedy this neglect and to do justice to the place these writers deserve in China's literary scene between the late Qing writers and those of the May Fourth Movement. It will argue that some of the credit for modernization customarily accorded to the May Fourth writers in truth belongs to Bao, Zhou, and their contemporaries.


A survey of the existing literature on the topic of this thesis can therefore be brief. Perry Link's *Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies* begins with a comment on the almost total neglect of his subject by scholars, which anticipates that cited above from Zhao Yiheng:

Existing accounts in Chinese, Japanese, and Western languages all tend to move from late Qing fiction to the May Fourth Movement, either skipping over the popular fiction of the 1910s or giving it brief treatment as a special category isolated from what came before and after.⁴

Link concentrated on the novels of the period, commenting only briefly on shorter fiction. One accomplishment of his book is its clear differentiation of the fiction of the early years of the Republic, the 1910s, from that of the late Qing in the preceding decade. He categorizes the works of Mandarin Duck and Butterfly writers as entertainment fiction, marked by both tradition and the influence of Western ideas and fiction. The chief contribution of Link's study is its detailed treatment of the historical, social, and economic background, supported by statistical information, and his discussion of how and why such writing came to flourish in Shanghai after the late Qing period. Covering as long a period as his study does, it is superficial on the literary qualities of individual writers.

One year later in 1982 came C. T. Hsia's erudite article "Hsu Chen-ya's Yü -li hun: An Essay in Literary History and Criticism."⁵ In it Hsia provided a thorough analysis of the highly successful novel by Xu Zhenya, *The Jade Pearl Spirit* (1914), discussing in great detail its sources and the influences on it by both Chinese tradition

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⁴ Perry Link, Jr., *Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies*, p. 7.

and Western literature. Hsia also examines the novel's uniqueness of language form, parallel prose, and the reason why it became a best seller in the early Republican era.

In the same year appeared a Toronto Ph. D dissertation, *Subjectivism in Xu Zhenya (1889 - 193?) and Su Manshu (1884 – 1918): Chinese Fiction in Transition*, by Gilbert Chee Fun Fong. Inspired by Jaroslav Prusek's article, "Subjectivism and Individualism in Modern Chinese Literature," which focuses on works by the May Fourth writers, Fong applies his ideas to the fiction of two writers who preceded the May Fourth group in the early Republic. He shows how Xu Zhenya and Su Manshu inherited certain modern themes as well as structural innovations from late Qing novels, and how they expanded them in new directions, anticipating therefore several modern features in fiction which the May Fourth writers claimed to have initiated themselves. However, Fong's approach is limited to subjectivism and individualism in Xu Zhenya's and Su Manshu's works. His study involves neither narrative methods nor the forms of language in which they wrote.

No further studies appeared in the West until Rey Chow's *Woman and Chinese Modernity*, which includes a chapter on the Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School. In a pointedly feminist approach, she argues that in Butterfly fiction (her term) "'woman' helps to reveal the deep-rooted problems in modern Chinese literary history." Within the hierarchy of Chinese letters, Butterfly literature occupies a feminized position that

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8 Ibid., p.52.
carries with it the irony of all feminized positions . . . "\nTherefore, Butterfly literature is itself "a reading of modern Chinese society and its ideologies".  

In August 1998, a conference organized by Milena Dolezelova entitled "Chinese Modernism: New Perspectives on Chinese Culture in the 1910s" was held at Prague in the Czech Republic. Concentrating on the literary journals of the time, the conference explored the modernization of Chinese culture in the 1910s, both in kind and in extent, from different perspectives, including educational reform and its relation to literature, urban life-style and the image of the West, the forms of language and style chosen as the medium for expressing the aura of modernity, and illustrations and other visual aspects of the literary journals of the time as a reflector of contemporary social developments and taste. I myself contributed a paper on "Visual Art and Visual Aspects of the Journals." The conference threw new light on the study of the fiction of the 1910s in terms of its broad cultural dimension. It is hoped that several of the papers will soon be published. 

Turning now to mainland China, since the 1980s there has been a growing interest in the fiction of the early Republic. Several anthologies of works by the Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School have been published, as well as a series of biographies of the

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9 Ibid., p. 55.  
10 Ibid., p. 54.  
11 This paper will appear this year (2000) as an article in volume 7 of East Asia Forum.  
Yu Runqi 于潤琦 ed., Qingmo Minchu xiaoshuo shuxi 清末民初小說書系 (A Book Series of Fiction in Late Qing and Early Republic), (Beijing: Zongguo wenlian chuban gongsi, 1997).  
school's leading writers. Three books devoted to the school have appeared, and others include the school in broader treatments of popular fiction during the early twentieth century. However, all these works have taken a very similar approach. Each provides useful historical and biographical data on individual writers. Each discusses the writers working within the social and economical parameters of their time. The books reach the common conclusion, strongly influenced by Perry Link's book, that the fiction of the Mandarin Duck School was a product of the commercialization and industrialization of early twentieth century Shanghai. However popular and entertaining the fiction was then, they assert, its value now consists of the vivid pictures of the time that its writers present. These studies are all prescriptive rather than critically analytic. They do not discuss the literary character or quality of Mandarin-Butterfly fiction.

Only the works of Chen Pingyuan are of real scholarly interest for our topic. Although he also groups early Republican and late Qing fiction together, he provides a systematic analysis of their shared features in genre, themes, language, and narrative structure, and sketches perceptively the contours of the development from late Qing to early Republican fiction. However, the sheer breadth of his subject meant that his study does not deal with the period of the 1910s in any depth.

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To conclude this brief survey: By comparison with the large number of critical studies on both late Qing and May Fourth fiction, those on the works of the early Republican period are few and inadequate, particularly on their literary characteristics and artistic qualities, but also on their place in the literary history of modern China.

The first chapter of my thesis begins by describing how the ideological label "Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School" was derisively applied by the New Culturalists to a group of dissimilar but highly popular writers in Shanghai, including Bao Tianxiao and Zhou Shoujuan, who insisted that literature should entertain as well as instruct. It shows that the hostility by the May Fourth Reformers towards these writers was a consequence of the Reformers' total rejection of China's age-old Confucian tradition, and with it of the classical as the standard language form and its replacement by the vernacular. This chapter then gives an account of how the scholars of the Xue Heng School during the 1920s rose to an intelligently though vainly argued defense of the values of tradition and earlier literature, in contrast to the methodology of the New Culturalists who set the "new" against the "old" in terms of a series of binary oppositions: Westernized modernity versus "national essence," science versus religion, the vernacular versus the classical language form. From the 1930s on, the Mandarin Duck School was totally excluded from the canon of modern literature. The rest of the chapter describes the rare and negative responses to the Mandarin Duck and Butterfly writers during the decades up to the end of the Cultural Revolution and the limited extent of their rehabilitation in recent times.
Chapter Two outlines the family and cultural backgrounds of Bao Tianxiao and Zhou Shoujuan, first at Suzhou, then in Shanghai. It surveys the literary milieu in Shanghai during the 1910s and the leading roles Bao and Zhou assumed among their contemporaries, and covers more briefly the remainder of their careers. The emphasis in this chapter is on the contribution made by the two writers to modern Chinese literature as translators and literary editors, and on the way in which their stories reflect the rapid modernization of urban China, with its accompanying tensions.

Chapter Three provides a detailed examination of novel narrative methods in Bao Tianxiao's and Zhou Shoujuan's short stories, showing that while several methods were imported from Western literature, others resulted from their interesting adaptation of devices found in traditional Chinese fiction. This thesis challenges the commonly accepted view which attributes the introduction of innovative "modern" narrative devices wholly to the May Fourth writers.

Chapter Four deals in a new analytic way with the controversial subject of the language forms which both Bao and Zhou used in their stories. Some of their stories are in the vernacular, others in various styles of the classical language, and still others in experimental combinations of the two. Since the time of the New Culturists, a prevalent criticism of the fiction of the early years of the Republic has been that many of its works were written in the classical language, which was totally out of date, and therefore unsuitable to the portrayal with vitality and accuracy of the feelings, emotions, and thoughts of people in modern China. In this treatment of Bao's and Zhou's innovations of language in their stories, I argue that the two basic Chinese language forms, classical and vernacular, ought not to be viewed, as the May Fourth Culturists did, as opposed to each
other like life and death. The type of hybrid language used by Bao and Zhou shows that the classical language is capable both of absorbing the new diction of modern life at the lexical level and of adjusting the rules of grammar at the syntactical level, while still retaining its qualities of conciseness and beauty. Their experiments pointed towards a new Chinese language form, the principles of which had been advocated since the beginning of the twentieth century by Liang Qichao 梁啓超 (1873-1929) and his colleagues, who began to apply them in their own prose writings. This language reform of fascinating potential was halted abruptly in the last years of the 1910s by the ideologically inclined Vernacular Language Movement of the New Culturists.

The short conclusion highlights what aims to be the chief contribution of this thesis to our knowledge of the two writers and their milieu in the 1910s. Without claiming that Bao and Zhou were authors of the very first rank, this thesis asserts that their pioneering role in the history of modern Chinese literature ought to be fully acknowledged. Because this thesis has confined itself to two leading writers of a period unusually prolific in fiction, the conclusion also provides some thoughts on how the study might be fruitfully extended, with some specific suggestions.15

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15 My treatment concentrates on a selection of stories from the very large output of Bao Tianxiao and Zhou Shoujuan, chiefly chosen from the 1910s but with a very few from the early 1920s. Since most of these stories appeared in various now scarce literary magazines of the period and only a few were later anthologized, I had to depend much on interlibrary loan and correspondence with helpful friends in China. They enabled me to read a sizeable portion of their works.
Chapter One

The Rejection of Bao’s and Zhou’s Fiction in the Canon

A. The Attack on "Mandarin Duck" Writers by the May Fourth Movement

The fictional works by Bao Tianxiao 包天笑, Zhou Shoujuan 周瘦鴻 and several of their contemporaries, which appeared in Shanghai magazines between 1909 and 1920, were within a few years mocked and summarily rejected by leaders of the May Fourth Cultural Movement, both for their subject matter and style. While this rejection could not immediately stop the great popularity among urban readers, which their short stories and longer works of fiction enjoyed, it began a period of several generations during which their works were gradually forgotten. For several decades, indeed until very recent times, textbooks of literary history for high school and university students and other critical writings in mainland China almost invariably either dismissed their works as representative of old-type fiction, backward by contrast with the "new literature", or they ignored them altogether. The leading writers were labelled as members of the so-called "Yuanyang hudie pai" 龔鴻蝴蝶派 (Mandarin and Butterfly School). Until very recently, the official critical line in mainland China was that the fictional works by Bao and Zhou deserve no place in modern Chinese literature and therefore should, in spite of their former popularity, be ignored.

The reasons for the rejection of the fiction of these writers were not always the same but changed somewhat in emphasis from time to time during the years dominated by
May Fourth writers with their ideology, and later under the Communist regime. Both the term "Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School" and the conception of what the School was like were interpreted according to changing political needs, whether they corresponded with reality or not.

The initial attack came in 1918-19 when the term "Mandarin and Butterfly School" was first applied to the writers as a group. One year after the start of the vernacular movement, the new culturalists felt the need to attack the literary works of writers who were not part of their own movement because of the great popularity which their writings enjoyed during the early years of the Republic. The May Fourth writers insisted that for the rebuilding of the nation and its culture, a new literature of a very different kind was needed that would break with tradition both in ideology and literary forms. In April 1918, Zhou Zuoren 周作人 stated in a lecture at Beijing University: "Most modern fiction uses the old forms. Its writers' views on life and literature remain the old ones". Among examples he listed "the Mandarin Duck and Butterfly style of the Jade Pear Spirit type of fiction". The reason why there was no "new" literature is that "Chinese [writers] were not willing to imitate or did not know how to imitate [Western literature]".  

Zhou Zuoren was referring to a kind of fiction which dealt with "love" subject matter and was composed in an elaborate style in the form of classical "parallel prose", that had been flourishing since the foundation of the Republic in 1911. But soon the meaning of the term became more inclusive. In 1919, Qian Xuantong 钱玄同 (1887-  

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1939) in his article "Heimu' shu" "黑幕" 著 (Books of "Black-Curtain")\(^7\) speaks not just of a type or style but of a "Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School", and includes "Black-Curtain" fiction in it as basically of the same kind, namely one that was poisoning young people with its depiction of gossip, licentiousness, and the corruption of officials.\(^8\) Since then May Fourth writers have applied the term to almost all fiction writers of the early Republic (except for those who anticipated their own doctrines), whether they wrote on love, knight-errants, detectives, black-screen, or other popular subjects. Whatever their literary quality or however innovative their fiction might be, their works were rejected as "the Other", irreconcilable with the program for a New Literature.

A few years later in 1921, after the May Fourth writers had achieved public recognition and their fiction gained a sizeable following, and especially after Mao Dun 茅盾 (1896-1981) and other May Fourth writers had taken over the Xiaoshuo yuebao 小說月報 (Fiction Monthly) from the "Mandarin Duck" writers, they renewed their attack. This time their attack concentrated not so much on subject matter as, more theoretically, on literary form and ideology. Representative was Mao Dun's article on "Naturalism and Modern Chinese Fiction" in the Fiction Monthly.\(^9\) In it he spoke of "Mandarin Duck" writers as of the old kind and negated any literary merits they might

\(^7\) "Black-Curtain" fiction refers to the subject matters of a type of fiction which became popular between 1916 and 1918. Its stories lashed out at "black" sides of contemporary society, such as politics, corruption, the media etc. It was called a branch of "Mandarin Duck" fiction by May Fourth culturists. In 1918, Zhonghua tushu jicheng gongsi 中華圖書俱樂部 published Zhongguo heimu daguan 中國黑幕大觀 (A Panorama of Chinese Black-Curtain Fiction).

\(^8\) Qian Xuantong 錢玄同, "Heimu' shu" "黑幕" 著 (Books of "Black-Screen"), Xinqingnian 新青年 (New Youth) vol.6 (Jan 9, 1919): 74-75.

\(^9\) Mao Dun 茅盾, "Ziran zhuyi he Zhongguo xiaodai xiaoshuo" 自然主義和中國現代小說 ("Naturalism and Modern Chinese Fiction"), Xiaoshuo yuebao 小說月報 (Fiction Monthly) 13 (1921) 7: 1-12.
have had, since they continued using traditional literary devices, either because they did not know Western ones or how to use them. He accused them of taking a wholly irresponsible stand towards literature, one of entertainment and playing games for the sake of making money, unlike the aim of May Fourth writers who paid attention to social problems and showed sympathy for those who had been maltreated and humiliated.

Unlike other literary schools that arose before or during the May Fourth period, where one can point to an inaugural date, a group of organizers, and a manifesto, as in the case of Nanshe 南社 (Southern Society, 1909), Wenzue yanjui hui 文學研究會 (Society for Literary Studies, 1921), Chuangzao she 創造社 (Creation Society, 1921), Xinyue she 新月社 (Crescent Moon Society, 1921), and Yusi she 語絲社 (Thread-of-Talk Society, 1924), this cannot be done for the Mandarin Duck and Butterfly school. Indeed, there has never been a consistent definition of the term. The period of its activities may be as short as the early years of the Republic up to 1917, or extend as long as from late Qing to the 1940s. At one time the arbitrary label might be applied to a certain writer, while at another time, he luckily escaped because of a change in political strategy. The so-called "School" of writers was not allowed to speak for itself, since it was assumed that they needed the May Fourth activists and later Communist critics to speak for them. The School was discussed, analyzed and dealt with by authoritative statements, never mind the lack of correspondence with the views and practice of the writers themselves. Whatever these critics might say was powerful enough to alter the status assigned to these writers in books on modern Chinese literature.

A typical example of the May Fourth account of these writers is Lu Xun's 魯迅 1931 lecture "Shanghai wenyi zhi yipie" 上海文藝之一瞥 (A Glance at Shanghai's
Literature and Art), which was to be cited frequently in later years as an authoritative analysis of the "School". After a brief and satirical description of a type of fiction he named "Caizi jiaren" (gifted scholars and beautiful women),\(^{20}\) Lu Xun continued:

At this time [1910-19], fiction about gifted scholars and beautiful women once more became popular. Only the beauties had become women of respectable families. They fell in love with students and could not be separated. In the shade of blossoming willow-trees, the lovers resembled a pair of mandarin ducks or butterflies. But sometimes because of the strict morality of their family or because they had been born unlucky, they ended tragically and no longer became immortals in the world beyond. We cannot deny that these stories represent a great progress. When the monthly magazine *Meiyu* (Eyebrow Signals)\(^{21}\) appeared, edited by Mr. Tianxu Wosheng 天虚我生, who is now making toothpowder that can also be used for cleaning one's face, it was the peak period of the mandarin duck and butterfly type of literature.\(^{22}\)

Clearly, Lu Xun focused his mockery on the subject matter of the stories. He traced the generic source of Mandarin Duck and Butterfly fiction to the pure entertainment literature of the late Qing period, called "Caizi jiaren" (gifted scholars and beautiful women) fiction. However, in his detailed references he was imprecise and

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\(^{21}\) Perry Link's translation.

critically negligent. The magazine *Meiyu*, which began in October 1914 and continued until March 1916, was not a leading journal of the times, nor was Tianxu Wosheng its editor. Lu Xun evidently had no clear idea as to when the so-called Mandarin School began and ended, which magazines had been publishing the literary works of the School, and who the editors were. In fact no one then provided a precise and convincing definition of the School, but only rejected it with contempt.

Bao Tianxiao himself comments on this situation in an article he wrote for a Hongkong paper in 1960:

I have learned that several recent review articles on books of Chinese literary history speak of me as a member of the Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School. Some even refer to me as a chief figure of the School. Whenever they talk about the Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School, my name is always on top of the list. I have not read these journals but have been told this by friends, who feel that injustice is being done to me. I told them: "Since this cap has been placed on me who would allow me to explain? When a man moves closer and closer to his coffin, who after his death will be able to control right and wrong?" So I just respond to these statements with a bitter smile. . . . What I do not understand is why I have no idea which of my books belong to the works of the Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School.  

Two years before these lines appeared, Zhou Shoujuan wrote in an article on *Libai liu 拜六*, the *Saturday magazine* he had edited:

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As for the Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School and those who wrote in four and six parallel style, they belong to the followers of Xu Zhenya 徐枕亚 who became well-known for his novel, *Yuli hun* 玉梨魂 (*The Spirit of Jade Pear*). The writers for the *Saturday* magazine would never write in their style.  

However, hardly any questions were raised after Bao's and Zhou's assertions appeared. If they denied having been the leaders of the School, how had it come about that they were identified with it? Still in 1990, Wei Shaochang 魏紹昌 repeated what had for long become the standard attitude, in *Wo kan Yuanyang hudie pai* 我看鸳鸯蝴蝶派 (*The Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School in my View*):

> It is after all an objective fact as to who belongs to the Mandarin School and who does not. This is not decided by self-admission or self-negation. Nor is it decided by whether people put on one cap or another. However, it is true that the possibilities involved are problematical and need to be cleared up.  

Yet though he admits that the answer to the question is problematical, he nevertheless tries to show that the May Fourth writers' preconception of the School and its members was sound. Commenting on the similarities of the forewords to several of the magazines of that era, he concludes by citing three of the most prominent May Fourth writers, Mao Dun (Shen Yanbing 沈雁冰), Zheng Zhenduo 郑振铎, and Lu Xun, to the effect that the literary aims of the Mandarin Duck School were "playing games, providing a pleasant

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pastime, and making money."\textsuperscript{26} Wei's conclusion obviously was not well-grounded since it was based not on an examination of the facts but merely on what May Fourth leaders said.

It is clear that for judging literature, the May Fourth culturalists simply set up a series of binary oppositions: new versus old literature, in vernacular or classical language, close to spoken language or the old written one, supporting the new cultural movement or traditional values. Only the first member of each pair could guarantee contemporary relevance; the second member was summarily rejected. As Terry Eagleton comments on such an attitude in general: "Ideologies like to draw rigid boundaries between what is acceptable and what is not, between self and nonself, truth and falsity, sense and nonsense, reason and madness, central and marginal, surface and depth."\textsuperscript{27}

Thus, the writers of the "Mandarin Duck School" were inevitably doomed, for they did not participate in the new literary revolution, but rather believed in traditional standards and often (though by no means always) wrote in the classical language. Hence the new literary histories also reflected the new ideology. Historical facts were altered, twisted, and erased, and elements were invented to fit overall ideological reasons.

The strong ideological orientation of the May Fourth Movement originated in part in the craving for Chinese national identity by intellectuals at the turn of the nineteenth century. The Opium Wars (1840-1842) had shattered the age-old illusion that China was the centre of the world. Intellectual leaders regarded the enlightenment of their country and the rebuilding of the nation and its culture as their specific mission. When Sun Yatsen

Sun Zhongshan (1866-1925) proclaimed the end of the Qing dynasty and the establishment of the Republic, a large part of this dream seemed fulfilled. However, when within a few years disillusionment arose again over China's weakness towards the Western powers, its lack of unity, and the persevering corruption of officials, it caused renewed public protests and soon led to a genuine cultural revolution. Progressive intellectuals began publishing their ideas in 1917 and in 1919 adopted the name "May Fourth" for their movement. This was the date of a major protest by students of Beijing University against political corruption, ignorance, and incompetence that had resulted in the acquiescence to the Japanese demand at the Versailles Peace Conference to take over the former German privileges in Shandong province.28

The May Fourth intellectuals adopted and further developed the view promoted at the turn of the century by Liang Qichao 梁启超 that literature, especially fiction, was the best means to enlighten the Chinese people, a view with which Lu Xun wholeheartedly agreed. When he was a student of medicine in Japan during the 1910s, Lu Xun had seen a photographic slide showing how some of his own people apathetically watched the execution of a Chinese by the Japanese military during the Russo-Japanese War. He realized, as he himself later described it, that "the people of a weak and backward country, however strong and healthy they might be, could only serve to be made examples of or as witnesses of such futile spectacles."29

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Lu Xun was so upset that he abandoned his medical vocation for one of literature, for he believed that the need to treat spiritual apathy was greater than the need to cure the physically sick. In the process of building a stronger nation and culture, literature must bear the task of transforming the Chinese mentality from low to high, from the old to the new.\textsuperscript{30} Lu Xun's reaction was typical of young Chinese intellectuals of the 1910s.

In the growing discourse on rebuilding China and its culture, Confucianism was seen as a burden. The May Fourth advocates saw it as the major culprit for the nation's deterioration, and responsible for the fall from its earlier greatness. If Confucianism could be rooted out, the chief obstacles to modernization in China should disappear. This interpretation of Confucianism as the representative of the old tradition that needed to be completely revolutionized was, of course, an oversimplification. Anything which was in the least associated with Confucianism was seen as impeding the task of modernizing the nation and its culture. Indeed, even the classical language in which Confucius wrote was rejected as "dead", and as a result, all literary works in the classical language were likewise dead.

What did the May Fourth writers mean by the spirit of modernity, and what persuaded them that only a revolution against tradition in language and literature would ensure a climate in which modernity could thrive? Their inspiration came from the West, chiefly Europe. Only after 1870 had the process begun in China of translating works of thought and of fiction from European languages (including Russian), and only a small

\textsuperscript{30} The proclamation of this view ironically echoed the Confucian tradition of "Literature should convey Dao" (Wen yi zai dao 文以載道).
number of translations appeared before 1896\textsuperscript{31}. Now the leaders of the New Cultural Movement were urging that the process be speeded up. Furthermore, they argued that there were examples in European history for the kind of revolution in literature and politics they advocated. Chen Duxiu 陈独秀 (1879-1942) begins his early article "Lun Wenxue Gemin" 論文學革命 (On Literary Revolution, 1917) as follows:

From whence arose the awesome and brilliant Europe of today? I say it is from the legacy of revolution. In European languages, 'revolution' means the elimination of the old and the changeover to the new, which was not at all the same as the so-called dynastic cycles of our Middle Kingdom. Since the Renaissance [in Europe], therefore, there have been a revolution in politics, a revolution in religion, and a revolution in morality and ethics. Literary art as well has not been without revolution: there is no literary art that does not renew itself and advance itself with revolution. The history of contemporary European modernization can simply be called the history of revolutions. So I say that the awesome and brilliant Europe of today is the legacy of revolution.\textsuperscript{32}

To explain why native literature had become "dead", Chen Duxiu blamed particularly the "fiendish" masters of the Ming and early Qing dynasties, who advocated the imitation of ancient classics. The May Fourth leaders used Chen Duxiu's reasoning to bolster their insistence that a modern literature in China could only be achieved by a

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\textsuperscript{31} The only exceptions are different translations of Aesop's Fables in 1625, 1794, and 1840, according to Chen Pingyuan 陈平原 in Ershi shiji Zhongguo xiaoshuoshi: 1897-1916 二十世紀中國小說史: 1897-1916 (A History of Twentieth Century Chinese Fiction), (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1989), pp. 29-39.

revolution against literary tradition. Therefore, they asserted that modern Chinese literature began with their movement; all earlier native literature was old and "dead". Yet there was really no precedent in Europe (or anywhere else) for the sudden dramatic change in the standard language that was advocated and effected by the May Fourth movement in China. The evidence of European precedent which Chen Duxiu cites from the "literary Renaissance" and later periods is highly debatable. Moreover, the timing of his article (1917) is ironic in view of the devastating destruction of Europe during World War I, with the Bolshevik revolution in Russia imminent.

B. Critical Responses to the May Fourth Revolution: the Xue Heng School.

From the very start of the May Fourth new cultural movement, critical voices rose expressing dissatisfaction with its virulently iconoclastic stance against traditional ideas and values. Many were especially critical of the manner of thinking in terms of binary oppositions. From the "Guocui" 国粹 (National Heritage) School of Peking University to the School that published the Xue Heng 学衡 (Critical Review) journal in the twenties; from Yan Fu 嚴復 (1854-1921) and Lin Shu 林纾 (1852-1924) to Zhang Shizhao 章士釗 (1882-1973); and from Liang Qichao 梁啓超 (1873-1929) and Liang Shuming 梁漱溟 (1893-1988) to Liang Shiqiu 梁實秋 (1902-1987), a number of groups of scholars and individuals

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33 The Renaissance humanists from Petrarch on advocated the revival of classical culture, not merely the rejection of much medieval culture; but the process was very gradual, from circa 1350 to 1500 and later. It is absurd to call all this a "revolution".
opposed the radical rejection of Chinese tradition. Among them, the Xue Heng School was the most solidly grounded in its arguments and the most active and lasting in its opposition.

The journal *Xue Heng* was launched in 1922 by a group of Chinese scholars who had been studying at American universities. The journal's founder Mei Guangdi 梅光迪 (1890-1945) studied under Irving Babbitt (1865-1933) at Harvard from 1915-19. After returning to China, he wrote to Wu Mi 吳宓 (1894-1978) in 1921, then another student of Babbitt's, urging him to become the chief editor of the new monthly journal. Though Wu Mi had financial support for a further year at Harvard, and a contract for a teaching position at Beijing Normal University, he returned to China immediately after receiving Mei's letter, and accepted a position as professor at the South-Eastern University in Nanjing, where he began preparations for the journal.

The first issue of *Xue Heng* appeared in January 1922, with seventy-eight issues following over the next eleven years. They contained systematic and comprehensive criticism of the May Fourth theories of Chinese culture and national identity, language and literature. Especially questioned by the Xue Heng School were the concepts of binary opposition between Westernized modernity and "national essence", science and religion, and the vernacular and classical language forms.

The academic background of the chief members of the new School was similar to that of the leaders of the May Fourth movement. Besides having been well-educated in traditional Chinese learning, most of them had continued their studies in the United States, Japan, Britain, or France. Furthermore, they shared common views on several basic issues. For instance, they all regarded the rebuilding of the nation and its culture as a matter of great urgency, and with it the need to import much from Western civilization. But they
parted company when it came to how to rebuild the country and what parts and aspects of Western civilization should be adopted.

The most vigorous criticisms of the May Fourth cultural movement were made by three Harvard-trained scholars: Wu Mi, Hu Xiansu 胡先骕 (1893-?), and Mei Guangdi. They were under the influence of Irving Babbitt's neo-humanist theories, which opposed the effects of the rapidly developing science and industrialization that resulted in the growth of utilitarian philosophy and materialism and a decay in morals. Promoting instead a revival of humanism derived from Greek philosophy, religion, and Confucianism, they developed a set of critical criteria to reexamine China's culture and her traditional ideas and values. They were distressed by what they regarded as the May Fourth movement's confused and erroneous views of culture, its total denial of traditional values, and its obsession with wholesale Westernization, and by what seemed to them a new culture built on a rickety political premise that was oppressive and exclusively onesided. Their general aim was to clear up the confusion of ideas, to correct the misinterpretation of Western civilization by the new culturalists, and to reassert what they regarded as the essence of Chinese culture. In the manifesto of their journal they proclaimed: "Our goal is to engage in learning and scholarship, in the pursuit of truth, in the promotion of [China's] national essence, and in the integration of new knowledge."^34

Their defence of aspects of their own cultural tradition by no means meant that they ignored the need for the introduction of much from the West, not only in science but also in philosophy and literature. Indeed, the Xue Heng School ceaselessly advocated the

translation of certain representative works of Western culture, including Greek and Roman philosophy and literature, and the works of Dante, Shakespeare, Cervantes, Fielding, Rousseau, Goethe, Keats, Byron, Poe, Balzac, Hugo, and Kant and J. S. Mill.

There are in particular three subjects about which the Xue Heng School argued against the May Fourth culturalists: modernization and tradition, science versus religion, and language.

1. Modernization and Tradition.

The Xue Heng School criticized particularly the dichotomy promoted by the May Fourth cultural movement of "modernity versus the national essence". The May Fourth activists regarded the process of modernization as essentially Westernization supplanting Chinese tradition, and they took Western modernity as the standard by which Confucian-dominated Chinese culture should be reevaluated. In his manifesto of enlightenment, "Jinggao qingnian" 敬告青年 (A Notice to Youth), which appeared in the opening volume of New Youth in 1915, Chen Duxiu summarized the differences between Eastern and Western culture as enslavement versus independence, conservatism versus progressiveness, retreat versus aggression, empty formalism versus actual utilization, imagination versus science, etc. In his view, Confucianism was the chief source of the old ideology and the crucial reason for the obstruction of modernization in China:

Between the new and the old, there definitely is no room for compromise. . . . I am not saying that Confucianism is worthless, only that its fundamental moral outlook runs counter to Westernization. These two are certainly irreconcilable. If I believe
that the new imported Westernization is right, I have to regard the old Confucianism as wrong. \(^3^5\)

Chen's concept of "destroying the old and establishing the new" was to represent the mainstream of thought for the May Fourth intellectuals. Most of them, like their Xue Heng opponents, had been brought up in traditional Chinese learning, so that it is all the more startling to see how indignantly and stubbornly they rejected this tradition as devilishly evil. For instance, Qian Xuantong wrote in a published letter to Chen Daqi 陳大奇:

I, Xuantong, did not possess an ounce of new learning or new knowledge. From the time I was twelve to twenty-nine, I bumped eastwards and groped westward. ... It was during the Hongxian 洪憲 year (1916) that I began to realize, as if the sound of a thunderbolt awoke me from my dreams, that the national essence absolutely ought not to be preserved. \(^3^6\)

Strongly disagreeing with such views, the Xue Heng School advocated instead a positive relationship between modernity and tradition.

Yet because the Xue Heng scholars too regarded the development of a new culture in China as essential and were as eager as the May Fourth advocates to learn from Western civilization, they claimed in their writings that they were not fighting against the new cultural movement as such, but only against the one-sided ideological epistemology and methodology that were distorting the movement itself. Mei Guangdi for instance wrote:

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\(^{3^6}\) *New Youth*, 5.6 (Dec. 15, 1918): 627.
When they talk about political economy, they make use of only Russian and Marxist theories; when they talk about philosophy, they only make use of empiricism; and when they talk about Western literature, they only talk about recent short stories, one-act plays, and works by decadent groups. As for the history of development and change in the artistic theories of different schools and their comparative merits and demerits, they know nothing about them. 37

Wu Mi wrote in a similar spirit:

What I dislike in the New Cultural Movement is not its novelty but the arguments its advocates have promoted and the materials they have imported. Most of them are onesided and harmful to the Chinese. 38

In the same article he set forth his own views on what a new culture should be like:

Today's advocates call their movement the New Culture Movement. They regard wenhua 文化 as 'Culture'. But Matthew Arnold defined it this way: "Culture is [the acquainting ourselves with] the best that has been known and said in the World". According to this definition, if we wish to create a new Chinese culture, we need to absorb and even master the essence of both Chinese and Western civilizations. Chinese culture has Confucianism as its centre, with Buddhism


assisting. Western culture was given birth by the combination of Greco-Roman
literature and philosophy with Christianity.39

In Wu's view, the right way to rebuild a culture is to provide what is new with a solid
foundation by assimilating the essence of the past. The Xue Heng scholars thus focused
their criticism on two aspects of May Fourth views: its theory of literary revolution and its
view of the relation between the new and the old.

Among May Fourth culturalists, Hu Shi 胡適 (1891-1962) was strongly influenced
by Darwinian and other theories of biological and human evolution and by Herbert
Spencer's philosophical attempts to synthesize them. One of his assumptions was that the
basic state of human life changes over periods of time; therefore, literature provides a
record of these changes. In period after period, it reflects the ways in which people were
living. From this observation Hu Shi deduced, not altogether logically: "Therefore,
literature should also change following changes in time, and each time has its own
literature."40 He concluded that his own time required a literary revolution. Although he
admitted that there was a certain kind of continuation in literature from earlier times, he
rejected the elements from the past as "useless souvenirs":

These elements were useful in an earlier, immature time. Now people cannot make
use of them anymore. It is only because of their conservative inertia that they retain
these souvenirs from the past. Sociologists call such souvenirs "vestiges or

40 "Wenxue jinhua guannian yu xiju gailiang," 文學進化觀念與戲劇改良 (A Concept of Literary
Evolution and the Reform of Drama) in Hu Shi, ed., Jianshe litun ji 建設理論集 (A Collection of
Constructive Theory), vol I of Compendium of the New Chinese Literature, ed. Zhao Jiabi (Shanghai:
rudiments”; like men’s breasts whose forms remain though they have lost their function, they could have been abandoned but have not done so.41

One of the Xue Heng scholars, Yi Jun 易峻 criticised Hu Shi’s interpretation of literary history as lacking a solid historical basis and called it a purely subjective assertion. In his article "Ping wenxue gumin yu wenxue zhuanzhi" 評文學革命與文學專制 (On Literary Revolution and Literary Autocracy), he asserted:

Literature does not develop like a history of literary evolution, in which what comes later replaces the former; nor is it a history of technical innovations and improvements. It is instead a record of how literary territory expanded at different times. . . . Literature is a product of human feeling, emotion, and artistry. It itself is not subject to any evolutionary pressure. It is merely that certain times offer it opportunities to develop. Animals are subject to evolutionary pressures so that they can survive by adapting to environmental changes. Literature, based on the heritage of the emotional and creative impulses of writers of different times, is more elastic in its development.42

Yi Jun likewise refuted what he called Hu Shi’s "strained" and "far-fetched" interpretation of the major changes some literary genres underwent between one historical period and the next. Hu Shi claimed that six revolutions had occurred in previous Chinese literary history: (i) from shijing 詩經 (Books of Odes) to sao 鵞 (elegiac poetry) in the state of Chu; (ii) from sao style to the five to seven characters form; (iii) from fu 賦 (prose

41 Ibid., p. 380.

42 Yi Jun, "Ping wenxue gumin yu wenxue zhuanzhi" 評文學革命與文學專制 (On Literary Revolution and Literary Autocracy), Xue Heng 79 (1933): 5.
poetry) to pianwen 驢文 (parallel prose); (iv) from gushi 古詩 (old style-poetry) to lushi 律詩 (regulated verse); (v) from shi 詩 (poetry) to ci 詞 (lyric or 'songwords'); (vi) and from ci to qu 曲 (aria) and ju 剧 (drama). But the way in which genres or literary forms changed in the past, Yi Jun argued, was neither one of revolution nor evolution. Literary forms rose and fell during different times because of the changing fashions favoured by writers. Nor did the changes that occurred mean that later genres were superior to earlier ones, and therefore could or should replace them. On the contrary, peaks of past literary achievements remain unsurpassable, and are the cause of the rich variety in literature. Modern writers can only add colour to this variety and expand it by contributing further new forms and by achieving new peaks. A revolution, by contrast, can only prevent such a development. Several years earlier, Wu Mi had argued similarly, that while science develops in a straight line of advancement, development in the arts does not follow such a track; the achievement of the great classics is not necessarily superseded by that of later works.

Turning next to the relationship between the new and the old, the Xue Heng scholars devoted many articles to this topic. Unlike the May Fourth advocates who believed that the rebuilding of the nation and its culture must be based on a thorough criticism of tradition and abandonment of the old culture, Xue Heng scholars emphasized that culture should not be divorced from history. For the old and the new are not exclusively separated from each other. On the contrary, there is no clear boundary between

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43 See Hu Shi, "Bishang Liangshan" 遇上梁山 (Forced to go to the Liang Mountain) in Compendium of the New Chinese Literature, 1: 40.
the two, and indeed the new is conceived in the womb of the old. Wu Mi argued it this way:

What is new and what is old? This is most difficult to judge. The laws of nature, human emotions and phenomena of matter do not change over time, from past to present. Though their outer forms are of every hue and infinite variety . . . the basic inner laws remain always the same . . . Unchangeability thus co-exists with change. Change and unchangeability need to be recognized together. The so-called new is always the changed appearance, but not the essence, of the old. Ordinary people regard it as new, but those who really understand do not think so.\footnote{Wu Mi, "On the New Cultural Movement," 4 (1922): 3.}

The Xue Heng scholars thought of the relation between the new and the old as both inclusive and relative. What was new yesterday becomes old today. What was old yesterday becomes new today through a process of reform and transformation. 'Newness' ought, therefore, never be used as a standard for judging literary works.

In his article, "On that there is no Disparity between the New and Old in Literature", Cao Muguan 曹慕管 cites first from "A Biography of Liu Hong" included in the seventh-century compilation \textit{Zhoushu} \textit{周書} (History of the Zhou Dynasty) by Linghu Defen 令狐德棻 (583-666), "People of our time speak of differences between ancient and present-day genres. I [Hong] believe that there is a difference in time between past and present, but not in literature",\footnote{Linghu Defen 令狐德棻, \textit{Zhoushu} \textit{周書} (History of the Zhou Dynasty), vol.1 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1971), p. 681.} and then from the preface by Yao Nai 姚鼐 (1731-1815) to his compilation, \textit{Gwenczi leizuan} 古文辭類纂 (A Classified Compendium of Ancient-Style
Prose and Verse, 1799), "Literature cannot be called ancient or present-day. Only its pertinence matters." Cao Muguan continues: "I infer that they mean that literature cannot be called new or old. Only the truth matters. But what is this truth? It is how appropriate the literary essence [of a work] appears to us."\(^{46}\)

Wu Fangji (1896-1932) used the expression *wenxin* 文心 (literary mind) as a standard for judging literary works. If a work has the depth of a 'literary mind', evoking its marvel, it will last beyond time. By 'literary mind,' Wu Fangji appears to have meant something like the high aesthetic quality of a literary work that achieves what traditional Western critics call 'universality', and the quality of genius in the writer who creates such a work. But he never clearly defined the image in general terms, since what he wished to emphasize was how works that possess a literary mind exercise an enduring appeal that lasts over many generations, because of their emotional and artistic profundity, and how in different times, regions, literary forms, and individual writers, works of such greatness have appeared in a variety of shapes. By this reasoning, he countered the argument that the old must be rejected and replaced by the new.

Wu Fangji illustrates some of this variety to be found in works of lasting greatness in his article, "San lun wuren yanzhong zhi xinjiu wenxue guan" 三論吾人眼中之新舊文學觀 (The Old Literature versus the New: A Third Statement of Our Views):

The movement of narrative by Zuo Qiuming 左丘明 (c. 50 B.C-50 A.D.)\(^{47}\) is slow and unhurried, while that by Sima Qian 司馬遷 (c. 145-c. 85 B.C.) is concise. Both

\(^{46}\) Cao Muguan 曹慕管, “Lun wenxue wu xinjiu zhi yi” 論文學無新舊之異 (On that there is no Disparity between the New and Old in Literature), *Xue Heng* 32 (1924): 1-2.

\(^{47}\) Little is known about the author who lived about the time of Christ.
styles are justified. Yu Xin's 庚信 (513-581) poems are graceful and Du Fu's 杜甫 (712-779) are strong and stern. Both kinds are justified. The shapes of their literary minds are different because different personalities produced them. Before the Qin dynasty, literary writing was dominated by the gu 骨 (bone) style. Gu 骨 is decided by li 理 (the pattern or structure of a work). After the Han dynasty, it was dominated by qi 氣 (vital force) which is decided by qing 情 (emotion). But this does not mean that writings dominated by bone do not possess vital force. In them the vital force is restrained by the bone. Therefore one should not only discuss outer forms. On the other hand, writings dominated by vital force need not lack bone: in them the bone is restrained by the vital force. Therefore, small pieces about trivial things can yet also be marvellous. This is because in different times literary mind has been produced in different forms. 48

In the same article Wu Fangji illustrates how in different geographical areas works showing a literary mind appeared in different literary forms. They are like the views of a lofty mountain from different sides and perspectives. The variety of such works is as limitless as human creativity. Wu concludes that the standard by which literature should be judged is whether it possesses a literary mind, not by whether it is 'new' or 'old'.

2. Science versus Religion

'Science' was essential to 'modernity', the central theme of the May Fourth

cultural movement, which contrasted it with 'religion'. Sai Xiansheng 賽先生 (Mr. Science) and De Xiansheng 德先生 (Mr. Democracy) would save China from decadent feudalistic dictatorship and fatal decline. To this point, the Xue Heng scholars took no exception. What they did oppose was the way in which the May Fourth culturalists set science against religion, oversimplifying religion as mere superstition, as shown in this statement by Chen Duxiu: "In the future, when humans seek to explain and prove truth, science must be followed as the right path. All religions are listed to be discarded."49 Qian Yuantong wrote in a similar spirit:

To be able to drive out the slave morality of the three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues,50 the abandonment of Confucianism is certainly for us the only way. To be able to drive out evil spirits, ghosts and demons, and the barbarous notions of alchemy and incantations, the only way is to wipe out Daoism, that is to say, the Dao of Daoism, not the Dao of the Laozi 老子 and Zhuangzi 莊子.51

About the time of the May Fourth cultural movement, there appeared an influential polemic against science and philosophical positivism, and a defence of metaphysics. After his trip to Europe near the end of 1918, shortly after the end of World War I, Liang Qichao in his "Ouyou xinying lu" 歐遊心影錄 (Impressions of a European Journey) strongly undermined the concept of the omnipotence of science held by the May Fourth

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50 The three cardinal guides are the ruler who guides his subjects, the father who guides his sons, and the husband who guides his wife; and the five constant virtues are benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and fidelity, as specified in the feudal ethical code.

51 New Youth 4 (April 15, 1918): 351. Contrasted here are the Daoist religion with the two fundamental works of philosophical Daoism.
intellectuals:

Those who previously praised science hoped that as soon as science succeeded, the golden age would immediately appear. Now science is indeed successful. Material progress in the West during the last hundred years has greatly surpassed the achievements of the prior three thousand years. Yet we human beings have not secured happiness. On the contrary, science has brought catastrophes upon us. We are like travelers who lose their way in the desert. They see a big black shadow (大黑影) ahead, and desperately run towards it, thinking that it may lead them somewhere. But after running a long way, they no longer see the shadow and fall into the slough of despond. What is that shadow? It is this 'Mr. Science'. The Europeans have had a vast dream of the omnipotence of science; now they decry its bankruptcy. This is a major turning point in current world thought. 

One of Liang Qichao's companions on his European journey was Zhang Junmai 張君勛 (1886-1969), a student of Bergson, who later became professor at Qinghua University in Beijing. In a lecture in 1923 entitled "Rensheng guan" 人生觀 (My View of Life), he reinforced Liang's argument, stating that science could never solve all of humanity's problems, as the May Fourth culturalists had claimed. Zhang stressed the subjectivity and intuitive nature of human beings, which set the limits of their scientific rationality. His speech ignited a long debate over this issue between the May Fourth culturalists and those they accused of being "conservatives".

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As Chow Tse-tsung comments convincingly in his book on *The May Fourth Movement*,

After examining the controversial literature, one realizes that the arguments of Carsun Chang and his companions were based largely on the theories of Encken, Bergson, Driesch, and Urwick, and those propagated by W. K. Ting, Hu Shih, and their partners were for the most part obtained from Dewey, James, Huxley, and Karl Pearson . . . . This dispute between these philosophical schools might also have been understood, in the final analysis, as an issue between the arguments for free will and determinism, an issue that could hardly have been settled in this kind of polemic. 53

The Xue Heng scholars did not participate directly in this debate but expressed their views in their journal. Interestingly enough, they drew attention to the limitations of both sides of the debate. In his article "Lun junren zhi wenhua yanjiu" 論近人之文化研究 (On Recent Cultural Studies), Tang Yongtong 湯用彤 (1893-1964), historian of philosophy and of Buddhism, pointed out that those who were on the side of science thought that the Chinese had not developed it because they did not attach importance to both experimentation and practical application. However, he argued, the facts run contrary to such a belief:

Aristotle brought the scientific achievements of his age to their highest level. His writings show that his purpose was philosophical discussion. Today's science likewise emphasizes rationality. For instance, the theory of relativity was developed

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53 Chow Tse-tsun, *The May Fourth Movement*, p. 335. Some of the thinkers are now unknown. However, it is clear that the first group are vitalists, like Bergson, and the second materialists, like Dewey.
from ideas that shocked the entire scientific community. Mathematics forms the
basis of the various sciences, but its system comes from pure theory.54

On the other hand, he argued, the Chinese had always stressed the need for a sound
philosophy of the good life and also skills in practical fields such as politics and business,
while they were deficient in mathematics, theoretical physics, and logic. They showed little
interest in either epistemology or ontology, and this lack explains why science had not
advanced in China. If the Chinese were now to pay attention merely to the West's practical
applications of science and ignore its deep interest in theory based on inductive and
deductive reasoning, it would result in a crucial misunderstanding.

Thus Tang Yongtong was as convinced as the May Fourth culturalists of the need
for scientific development in China. He did not emphasize, as did Liang Qichao and Zhang
Junmai, the destructive effects of scientific development in Europe, vividly evident during
World War I. What he criticized in the attitude of the May Fourth culturalists was their
mistaken tenet that science amounts merely to practical applications in mechanics and
engineering, their singleminded and radically pragmatic emphasis, and their blind conviction
that supposedly omnipotent science could solve all the country's basic problems. For real
progress in China, creative thinking and theory based on reasoning were equally essential.
As for the traditional Chinese interest in metaphysics, which the May Fourth culturalists
opposed as an obstacle to scientific development, Tang Yongtong saw reason-based
science and experimentation as creatively interacting with metaphysics. Scientific

54 Tang Yongtong 湯用彤, “Ping jinren zhi wenhua yanjiu” 論近人之文化研究 (On Recent Cultural
Studies), Xue Heng, 12 (1922): 2.
reasoning would, as it had done in the West, weaken the forces of superstition; astrology would develop into astronomy, and alchemy would give way to chemistry.

Nonetheless, on the whole the views on the relationship between science and religion held by the Xue Heng scholars were similar to those of Liang Qichao and Zhang Junmai. Influenced by Irving Babbitt's humanistic theories, they believed that China must learn lessons from Western experience. There, scientific progress had brought about advances in material civilization but had also produced the weapons of World War I. In the process of its own modernization, China should rely on Confucian humanism and Buddhist tradition to reconcile science with morality.

As a disciple of Irving Babbitt, Wu Mi distinguished between three basic views of life: religious, moral, and naturalistic. The religious sees heaven as the great governing principle; humanism consists of moral views; materialism reflects naturalistic views. He also proposed the long familiar concept that human nature is divided between reason and desire. Materialism appeals to desire, while reason is governed by religion and morality. The opposition between these two forces he called "the bridle and the spur". Reason helps one decide whether the bridle needs to be used and when the spur should not be applied. In other words, religion and humanism can, as science cannot, provide humans with inner principles that prevent unbridled indulgence of desire, even while science achieves material progress.\(^{55}\)

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\(^{55}\) Wu Mi. "Wo zhi renshengguan," 我之人生觀 (My Philosophy of Life), Xue Heng 16 (1923): 1-5.
3. Language.

The New Cultural Movement began in 1917 with journal articles urging that the vernacular be made the standard language form in every kind of writing. Using the journal *New Youth* as a front, Hu Shi, Chen Duxiu, Qian Xuantong, and others published essays in it in which they attacked classical Chinese as a dead language. They asserted that national and cultural rebuilding must begin with a revolution in language, because a dead language cannot produce living thought and literature and thus can only be an obstacle to China's modernization. Other May Fourth writers proposed that character based-writing be replaced by romanized spelling and that the vernacular be made more orderly by the adaptation of grammar from European languages.

The Xue Heng School attacked these views in several articles. In his essay, "Ping Hu Shi Wushinian lai Zhongguo zhi wenxue" 評五十年來中國之文學 (On Hu Shi's Chinese Literature of the Past Fifty Years), Hu Xiansu argued that Hu Shi's views on language reveal his ignorance of the fundamental differences between the Chinese and Indo-European languages. In written form, European languages are phonetically transcribed and therefore tend to be closer to speech than Chinese which is written in characters that do not represent phonetic symbols. Major changes in speech in European

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56 "The literary works written during the last two thousand years by literati are all dead, because they were written in a dead language. A dead language absolutely cannot produce any living literature".  

57 Hu Xiansu 胡先骕, "Ping Hu Shi Wushinian lai Zhongguo zhi wenxue" 評五十年來中國之文學 (On Hu Shi's Chinese Literature of the Past Fifty Years), *Xue Heng* 18 (June 1923): 1-26.
languages usually are followed by reforms in spelling, though sometimes this occurred only after some delay.\textsuperscript{58}

By contrast, Chinese character-writing has remained the same however much the spoken language changed, retaining a stability over the ages that cannot be equalled by any European language. "For instance, the character we know as ming 明 (bright) was in early times pronounced \textit{mang}; in today's Beijing dialect, it is pronounced \textit{ming}, but \textit{miang} in Nanchang, and \textit{min} in the region of Jiangnan. Yet the written character has everywhere remained the same since long ago."\textsuperscript{59}

This stability of written Chinese, Hu Xiansu continued, is a quality which Western languages do not possess. Thus, when we read essays and other prose works from the Song and Yuan dynasties, we do not feel them to be different from those written by our contemporaries, while Chaucer's English writings cannot be understood by people who have not been trained in his language.\textsuperscript{60} In other words, the classical language has been a carrier of China's cultural heritage for more than two thousand years, which can be accessed by anyone who can read. But in the West, students require special training to be able to read writings from a few centuries before. Why, then, should we abandon this incomparable feature of our language and heritage, and instead copy the pattern of Western languages? In the Chinese idiom, this would be \textit{xuezu shilü} 削足適履 (cutting the feet to fit the shoes.)

\textsuperscript{58} This is least true of English among European languages, where pronunciation changed dramatically between 1400 and 1600, but spelling much less; and it has changed little since.


\textsuperscript{60} Ibid.
Hu Shi had found support for replacing the classical by the vernacular as China's standard language by citing European precedents, how Dante used Tuscan dialect to establish the new Italian literature, replacing Latin, and Chaucer established the East Midland dialect as the new standard for literature in England. However, as Hu Xiansu points out, in this comparison he was grossly mistaken, for each case is fundamentally different. Chaucer replaced neither Latin nor Norman French. The English language had developed in its Old English form since the Saxon invasion about 600, and gradually changed into Middle-English from 1100 on as the standard language of the common people. When Chaucer was writing in the late fourteenth century, he did so in the East Midland dialect that had become standard in London, and thus he replaced neither Norman French nor Latin. As for Hu Shi's Dante parallel, it is unsound for two basic reasons in addition to his view of the relative instability of Western languages. Many centuries prior to Dante, Italy had been conquered by other nations and Roman culture had, after long deterioration, come to an end. Moreover, poets before Dante had been writing in mixtures of medievalised Latin and Italian dialects. Dante's aim was to develop and refine an Italian dialect for poetry that was relatively purer and as such closer in spirit to ancient classical Latin. By contrast, Chinese literature enjoyed a continuity of several thousand years in the classical language. Its usage was never interrupted by foreign conquerors nor by the influence of other cultures. The Chinese did import certain foreign nouns but without ever changing either the character or grammar of the language.

This unique continuity of China's classical language needs to be preserved, not abandoned, Wu Mi, Hu Xiansu's close associate, argued in his essay "Lun jinri wenxue
... The creation and progress of literature usually depends on carrying on a
tradition, and builds upon historical sources. Literature develops and enriches the
achievements of the past. It weeds out the old to bring forth the new. It moves
forward a yard for the sake of reaching further and further. Though every writer
makes his own contribution, each certainly draws much from his sources. If the
inherited written language of a country is destroyed and replaced by a new kind of
language, the very source and root of literature will be immediately cut off. . . .

Such a tremendous loss cannot be adequately expressed in words.61

Nor was it the case that the classical language was "dead":

The difference between the Chinese classical language and vernacular is not the
difference between an ancient and a present-day language, but between an elegant
and a popular one. Which language in any country does not have this kind of
difference between an elegant and a popular form?62

By the time the Xue Heng journal began publication in 1922, legislation had already
been passed making the vernacular language the national standard for writing; it alone was
allowed to be taught in primary schools. Yet the members of the Xue Heng School spared
no effort in their fight against the abandonment of the classical language. They objected to
the assumption that classical and vernacular were opposed to each other. They argued that

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61 Wu Mi. "Lun jinri wenxue chuangzao zhi zhengfa" 論今日文學創造之正法(On Sound Methods in Contemporary

62 Ibid., p. 25.
over many centuries the two language forms had existed side by side, influencing and interacting with each other. The two forms had long ago been assigned to basically different uses: classical to poetry and historical, philosophical, and epistolary writings; vernacular, besides being the language of common speech, to works of fiction. Indeed, they themselves wrote not only in the classical but sometimes in the vernacular in their own journal, as for instance in Wu Mi’s translation of W. M. Thackeray’s novel The Newcomes.

But because the two forms interacted, elements of one form often appeared in the other. The two language forms had therefore never been completely separate, completely exclusive of each other.

On the subject of the suitability of the two language forms, Mei Guangdi, another member of the Xue Heng school, wrote this in his article "Ping tichang xinwenhua zhe" (On the Promoters of the New Culture):

The fact that the classical and vernacular language forms developed side by side explains how the number of literary genres came to expand. Indeed, that kind of progress never occurs because of a change in language, especially not a revolutionary one.63

Shao Zuping 邵祖平 summarized the views of the Xue Heng school: "The vernacular existed long ago. It is suitable for recorded conversations, family letters, novels, and both descriptions of actions and the spoken parts in drama".64 And in the final issue of Xue Heng, Yi Jun once more stated the school’s position:

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64 Shao Zuping 邵祖平, "Lun xinjiu daode yu wenyi," 論新舊道德與文藝 (On New and Old Morality and the Arts), Xue Heng 7 (July 1922): 5.
Generally speaking, the vernacular is suited to writings on the natural sciences, to dialogues and descriptions of characters and actions in novels and plays, and to reporting. But when writing about feelings and desires, only a purely classical language can achieve proper artistic and literary refinement.  

Since the two language forms have different functions and are used for different genres, there are strong reasons for continuing their existence side by side. From an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the two forms, the Xue Heng scholars concluded that fundamentally, it cannot be said that one written language is superior to the other. What matters is whether it is suitable for literary creation or not. The potential power of a written language is limitless, depending wholly on whether a writer masters it or not.

As a fully developed language, the classical, on the one hand, is rich and artistically refined; on the other, its rules and regulations sometimes fetter a writer's creativity. Derived as it is from the spoken language, the vernacular has the virtues of vigour, freedom, and liveliness of expression; yet it can be wordy, overly plain and direct in expression. One should therefore make use of the strengths of both language forms to counter these weaknesses. As Wu Mi states it in a note on his translation of The Newcomes:

No matter whether one uses the classical or the vernacular, it must have style that expresses a literary mind. Great effort is needed to achieve conciseness. Only that way can one hope to attain simplicity and clarity. Generally, the writer in the

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classical language must first of all aim at lucidity. He must avoid all obscurity and the stringing together of overly ornate phrases, while the writer in the vernacular needs above all to aim at immaculate refinement, the avoidance of redundancy and all tediousness of style.\(^6^7\)

Similarly, Yi Jun wrote on the desirability to combine the merits of the two language forms:

If in one's writing in the classical language one avoids rigid imitation of ancient prose, and in one's vernacular writing does not merely follow speech, but mediates some cooperation of the two language forms, it will no longer be pitifully difficult to reason things out in classical Chinese, and the vernacular will avoid the various weaknesses described above. Thus, a new path of a blended language would be opened up, especially for literature. Such new production would be an epoch-making development in literature.\(^6^8\)

Xue Heng school writers earnestly practised what they preached. In their writings they used a vernacular that was "familiar but not coarse", a classical that was "elegant without being ostentatious". They often strove for a harmonious mixture of the two language forms in articles, which became notable for their eloquence in argument, lucidity, and artistry of style. On the other hand, they were sharply critical of how the May Fourth activists practised the vernacular. They found their writings wordy, repetitive, and full of "modern" cliches. Furthermore, the adaptation of Western syntax made their writings even more difficult for ordinary readers to understand.

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\(^6^7\) Wu Mi. *Xue Heng* 8 (1922): 16.

In their view, the very way in which May Fourth advocates practised writing showed how wrong it was to judge a language form as either living or dead, when what matters is how writers use it:

An evaluation of a literary work as dead or living should be based only on its quality and never just on the language the author used, whether ancient or modern. We call Homer's epics living literature because they are immortal and continue to speak to us today. Likewise, we call Chaucer's poetry, Sophocles' plays, Cicero's orations, and Plutarch's Lives living literature, because they are all immortal and ever-lasting. 69

Hu Shi's experiment in vernacular poetry was a dismal failure, they asserted, because of his ignorance of the true essence of poetry, and therefore his inability to make use of poetic forms and devices to convey his thought and feelings. Since Hu Shi regarded basic poetic rules and forms as "fetters," his theory of poetic reform could be no more than superficial talk. Indeed, if his theory were sound, it would mean that no literary work could last more than two or three hundred years, for it would die as soon as a change in language occurred. His own vernacular poems were not real poems at all. Turning Hu Shi's own phrase against him, Hu Xiansu called his an "experiment" in dead literature.

The Xue Heng scholars were aware that language by its very nature constantly undergoes change but stressed its fundamental stability. Irreconcilable as these two characteristics may seem to be, they complement each other. As Wu Mi put it, "A change in a written language occurs naturally. The process is so slow that people are hardly aware

of it". This is so because the basic system of a written language continues to develop through time, and every literate member of society participates in its development. Therefore, the continuity of a language is absolute, while its changes are relative. "In history, there has never been a case when suddenly two or three people decided to erect a new language system, and forced the people of the whole country to use it".⁷⁰ That could only result in a short-lived and malnourished language.

Wu Mi's words by coincidence seem to echo Saussure's theory of language. According to Saussure, language is always the inheritor of historical precedent. Time guarantees the continuation of a language, and, at the same time, it brings into language an opposite effect that results, more or less, in a change in language signs. Yet the basic nature of a language does not alter in the process of change, and the negation of the past is only relative.⁷¹

One of the arguments for the urgency of language reform by the May Fourth culturalists was that by the beginning of the twentieth century the written language had become even more separate from the vernacular than in earlier times, though there was great need for a simple form of language in education, politics, and religion. However while excessive complication is obviously undesirable, the natural tendency of a language's development is not towards simplicity. In the past, China's written and spoken languages had sometimes drawn closer to each other, at other times moved further apart, but in the


main they had developed in parallel and interacted a great deal. They had never merged, but neither had they ever become completely divorced. As soon as one moved away from the other beyond a certain limit, it would move back.

When Hu Shi advocated that one should "write what you want to say and write according to how one speaks," he expressed a view of language similar to the western one of "phonocentrism" or "logocentrism" which Derrida criticized. Derrida's attack has been summarized aptly by Raman Selden and Peter Widdowson as follows:

Phonocentrism treats writing as a contaminated form of speech. Speech seems nearer to original thought. . . . When we hear speech, we attribute to it a 'presence,' which we take to be lacking in writing. . . . Writing seems relatively impure and obtrudes its own system in physical marks which have a relative permanence; writing can be repeated . . . [and] invites interpretation and reinterpretation. . . . However, [some of the] very features of elaboration in writing which threaten to cloud the purity of thought were originally cultivated [by orators] for speech. This coupling of 'writing' and 'speech' is an example of what Derrida calls a 'violent hierarchy.' Speech has full presence, while writing is secondary and threatens to contaminate speech with its materiality.

However, they continue, we can reverse this hierarchy and call speech "a species of writing," in "the first stage of a Derridean deconstruction."\(^{73}\)

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\(^{72}\) Hu Shi, "On Constructive Literary Revolution", p. 128.

Interestingly enough, Wu Mi almost half a century before Derrida applied in Xue Heng to the Chinese language a similar conception of speech as a species of writing: "Our Chinese language gives the first place to writing on paper, and to the spoken language a subsidiary place." However, his argument against phonocentrism is from a different angle from Derrida's. Wu Mi argued that "while the forms of characters are the same in the whole country, yet pronunciation often changes in the different regions." In other words, he contrasted the steadfastness of characters with the changeability of pronunciation and from this derived a relationship between writing and speech that is similar to Derrida's. To cite one more paragraph from Selden and Widdowson:

Derrida proceeds to deconstruct the hierarchy by, for example, pointing out that when we interpret oral signs, we have to recognize certain stable and identical forms (signifiers), whatever accent, tone, or distortion may be involved in the utterance. It appears that we have to exclude the accidental phonic (sound) substance and recover a pure form. This form is the repeatable signifier, which we had thought characteristic of writing. Once again, we conclude that speech is a species of writing."

To summarize the Xue Heng scholars' views on language reform: they were not opposed in principle to the idea that for modernization China needed language reform. Yet when they applied both linguistic and artistic standards, they found the new culturalists ignorant of the basic nature of the two language forms. The Xue Heng scholars were

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75 Ibid.

convinced that the development of a language needs to evolve from its past roots and that imposed revolutionary changes can only damage the language itself and never produce a living new language. As Yi Jun expressed it: "Our reason for assailing the vernacular movement is not to oppose the vernacular as such. We only oppose the revolutionary action by these people towards literature."\(^77\)

The Xue Heng scholars regarded their opposition to this development as a sacred duty because to them the classical language was the embodiment of China's rich cultural heritage -- "the sustenance of the nation's distinctive characteristics and life."\(^78\) To defend the classical language was to defend China's great cultural tradition and to ensure continuity from tradition to modernity, while rebuilding the nation and its culture. They asserted that once the vernacular had totally replaced the classical and had been romanized in the Western manner, the very identity of their nation would have been destroyed. This would be China's greatest misfortune.\(^79\)

C. From the 1930s to the Present

About the middle of the 1930s, the vast *Zhongguo xinwenxue daxi* 中國新文學大系 (Compendium of Chinese New Literature), compiled by Zhao Jiabi 趙家璧 (1908--), was published. The success of this young editor's ambitious project to assemble the important

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works of the May Fourth writers far exceeded his own expectations when it was received as the literary canon of the New Literature. While working on the compilation, Zhao Jiabi received all-out support from leading May Fourth culturists including Zheng Zhengduo, A Ying (Qian Xingcun 錢杏村 1900-1977), and Mao Dun, who not only participated in the planning of the project but also edited individual volumes. Other volumes were edited by Hu Shi, Lu Xun, Zhou Zuoren, and Yu Dafu 郁達夫, all prominent figure in the May Fourth movement. The subjects of the Compendium's ten volumes are: "Constructive Theory," "Literary Polemics," Fiction (three volumes.), Prose (two volumes.), Drama, and Historical Data and Index. As chief editor, Zhao Jiabi stated that the compilation's purpose was to summarize the achievements of the May Fourth new literary movement from 1917 to 1927.80

By the time when the idea of the compilation was conceived, however, the new literary movement was in danger of fragmenting. The works of writers outside the May Fourth group were drawing more attention, and parts of the May Fourth ideology were being undermined by other cultural groups. In 1929-30 Zhang Henshi 張恨水 (1895-1967), one of the prominent writers of the so-called "Mandarin Duck" school, published his novel, Tixiao yinyuan 喃笑姻缘 (Fate in Tears and Laughter), in serialized form.81 It enjoyed great popularity, was reprinted several times, and adapted as a movie. Works of fiction by other "Mandarin Duck" writers and magazines run by them were also welcomed by urban readers. The May Fourth writers were publishing much less, since they were busy


81 It was published as a book in 1931 by Sanyou chubanshe.
with their ideological struggles against other literary groups. Lu Xun, the idol of the New Literature, stopped writing fiction altogether, and instead concentrated on writing essays against the government and others who held different views on political, cultural, and literary issues.

When a new wave of "Mandarin Duck" fiction reached a peak with Zhang's *Fate in Tears and Laughter*, the May Fourth writers took sharp notice. Lu Xun stated in an address at the inauguration of the League of Leftwing Writers in 1931:

Last year and the year before, the scope of the literary war really has been too narrow. None of the old-style literature and ideology has received notice from the new culturalists. Quite the contrary: we have a situation where the writers of the new literature are off in one corner fighting among themselves, leaving the people of the old style free to stand comfortably by as spectators to the struggle.⁸²

As Perry Link points out, "What fundamentally disturbed Lu Xun was not, of course, that Butterfly writers were free to be spectators, but that they were free to continue spreading 'feudal' ideas."⁸³

Some of the May Fourth writers were also troubled by the thought that as they became older they were being forgotten. They were now "three generations older," as one of them remarked with bitter humour, and were hardly noticed any longer by their

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⁸² "Duiyu zuoyi zuoja lianmeng de yijian" 对于左翼作家联盟的意见 (Suggestions to the League of Leftwing Writers) in *Meng ya yuekan* 1.4 (April 1, 1930) x; reprt. in *Lu Xun quanji* 鲁迅全集 (The Complete Works of Lu Xun), vols., 10 (1981; Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2nd ed. 1984), 4: 236.

contemporaries. Though their movement was less than twenty years old, their literary works from the May Fourth period had become difficult to find.  

Anxiety soon inspired attack. In 1932, the May Fourth scholar A Ying in his article, "Shanghai shibian yu Yuanyang hudiepai wenyi" (The Shanghai Incident and the Literature and Art of the Mandarin and Butterfly School) referred to Zhang Henshui and others as "writers of left-over feudal evil," who were welcomed by town-dwellers of the lower middle classes. Recognizing how prolific their writings were, he criticized how their thought was based on feudalism. Although the main theme of their works seemed patriotic, they still could not provide direction for China's future. 

About the same time, a new debate on the classical and vernacular language forms arose within the new culturalist camp. Some May Fourth members criticized the kind of vernacular writing that had appeared in recent years in what they derogatorily called the "new eight-leg essay style," full of European mannerisms, syntax, and vocabulary, but scarcely understandable by ordinary people. The new vernacular had become wordy and obscure. On the other hand, the classical language with its conciseness was regaining widespread favour. In Wunan, Guangdong, and other provinces, textbooks of classic writings were introduced into primary and high schools, and newspaper articles campaigned enthusiastically for the use of the classical language in education.


85 Qian Xingcun's article has been reprinted in Xiandai Zhongguo wenxue lun 現代中國文學論 (On Modern Chinese Literature) (n.p.: Caihua Shulin Press, n.d.), pp. 113-37.
Therefore, when Zhao Jiabi met some of the prominent May Fourth culturalists with his proposal for compiling the *Compendium*, they gave him strong support. According to Zhao's later recollection, A Ying (Qian Xingcun) was very enthusiastic about his plan, commenting that the "*Compendium* will have immediate significance in the present political struggle and also be of long-term historical and scholarly value." A Ying himself contributed his unusually rich collection of materials to the project, which formed the basis of his own edition of *Zhongguo xinwenxue yundong shiliao* (Historical Materials of the Chinese New Literature Movement), that appeared a year before the *Compendium* itself.

In practice, the *Compendium* served well the need of the new culturalists to fight any desire to restore the Confucian tradition and the classical language. Indeed, it established the literary canon for the first decade (1917-27) of the modern era in China. After 1949, textbooks of modern literary history in mainland China written for university students followed in the same track which the *Compendium* had prepared. Later on, the canon was further restricted by communist ideology, which lasted until the Cultural Revolution was over.

The *Compendium* itself has a strong ideological orientation. Labelling those views as "feudalistic reactionary ideology" which differed from their own on the relation between modernity and cultural tradition, and between the classical and vernacular language forms, the authors and editors of the *Compendium* set themselves up as guides as to how the new culture should be rebuilt. Volume One, "Jianshe lilun ji" 建設理論集 (Constructive Theory), does not include a single essay by other literary or scholarly groups but only a

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86 Zhao Jiabi, "Talking about *A Compendium*", p.166.
short story by Lin Shu 林紓 and a letter by him to Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培, then President of Beijing University, and these are relegated to an appendix. Volume Two, "Wenxue lunzheng ji" 文學論爭集 (Literary Polemics), contains a few essays by other literary scholars, but these authors are treated as "the Other" (to use a modern critical term), reactionaries against the new literary and cultural movement. Most of these essays are followed by one or several articles by May Fourth writers criticizing them. The section of this volume headed "Xue Heng pai de fangong" 學衡派的反攻 (The Xue Heng School's Counterattack) includes only one article and part of another by Xue Heng scholars, while the remaining four essays are negative criticisms of them. No article by the school's key figure, Wu Mi, was selected for inclusion. It hardly needs saying that no justice is done to the overall views of the school.

As far as the members of the so-called Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School are concerned, they are not even treated as opponents in the Compendium but are simply ostracized, for not a single place is assigned to them. The justification for the total omission of their names presumably was that they never argued openly with the new culturalists about modernity and tradition nor did they even protest against the abandonment of the classical language. Some of them had actually promoted the vernacular years before the new culturalists had even begun the vernacular movement. As early as 1900, Bao Tianxiao had initiated the Suzhou baihuabao 蘇州白話報 (Suzhou Vernacular Newspaper). What was wrong with the "Mandarin Duck and Butterfly" writers -- besides their continuing successful appeal to large numbers of readers, a fact deliberately not even mentioned in the Compendium -- was their persistent attachment to traditional values, the fact that they wrote in classical language, and not only in the vernacular, and
then sometimes in the manner of old fiction. The compilers therefore treated them not as real opponents but as mere "spectators" to their ideological struggle between modernity and tradition and as a marginal literary group that deserved no place near the centre of modern Chinese literature.

The habit by literary historians of ignoring the "Mandarin Duck" writers altogether continued during the early and middle 1950s, when, of course, their fiction could no longer be published. Three representative literary histories for use as university textbooks, by Wang Yao王瑶 (1914-1989), Liu Shousong 劉松松 (1912-1969), and Ding Yi 丁易 (1913-1954), contain no mention of them at all. They evidently were regarded as not worthy of discussion.87

After a further tightening of ideological authority, the Chinese Department of Beijing University published in 1959 two textbooks, Zhongguo wenxueshi 中國文學史 (A Chinese Literary History) and Zhongguo xiaoshuoshi 中國小說史 (A History of Chinese Fiction).88 The former does include several pages on the "Mandarin and Butterfly School", but the treatment is largely pejorative. The section begins:

When the surge of the revolution was decreasing during the first seven or eight years of the Republic, the mainstream of late Qing critical realistic fiction, too, was


slowing down temporarily. Overflowing the literary arena at the time was a momentary countercurrent -- "Mandarin Duck and Butterfly" and "Black-Curtain fiction."

The Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School became so powerful that it almost controlled the entire literary arena. Most of its members came from Suzhou, but their center of activity was Shanghai. From early on and continuing for a while, they set up many magazines . . . each with a group of common writers. The more famous among these were Bao Tianxiao, Zhou Shoujian, Bannong, Lin Shu, Tieqiao, Dungen, Li Tingyi, Xu Zhenya, Wu Shuangren, Zhuoai, Juemin, and others. Each of them was not only an editor but also himself a writer. Bao Tianxiao was actually the leader of this school . . . Zhou Shoujuan was most active among the younger writers of the time.

From 1959 on, a vicious political identity was imposed upon them. A Chinese Literary History states:

The Mandarin and Butterfly School is a reactionary current in Chinese literary history. During its day it played a bad role of poisoning and corrupting urban dwellers and young intellectuals.

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89 Zhendi 隘地, literally = frontline.

90 "Xiaoshu nilaiu – Yuanyang hudiepai he heimu xiaoshuo" 小說逆流 - 鴛鴦蝴蝶派和黑幕小說 (A Counterstream of Fiction – the Mandarin Duck and Butterfly and Black Screen Fiction), Zhongguo wenxue shi 中國文學史 (A Chinese Literary History) (Beijing, Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1959), part 9, chap. 6, sec. 4: 384-390.

91 Ibid., p. 390.
This section does include a brief description of the group's artistic merits and admits that their writing, influenced as it was by Western works, brought some fresh air into the development of Chinese fiction, which included psychological depiction, new use of dialogue, interspersion of flashbacks and bringing characters alive through select revealing episodes, instead of telling the story chronologically from beginning to end. Yet the hostile political label imposed on these writers meant that no credit was due to them for any innovation or contribution to modern literature. Textbook literary histories published by other universities took the same track and accepted only the May Fourth writers as modern and progressive. The book produced by Shangdong Normal University dismissed the literary qualities of the Mandarin and Black Curtain writers altogether.

The appearance in 1962 of Yuanyang hudiepai yanjiu ziliao 鴛鴦蝴蝶派研究資料 (Research Materials on the Mandarin and Butterfly School), edited by Wei Shaochang, and forming a part of Zhongguo xiandai wenxueshi ziliao congshu, Jiazhong 中國現代文學史資料叢書, 甲種 (Materials on Modern Chinese Literary History, Section A)92, may then seem surprising until one realizes that the work's purpose was merely to provide references for polemical criticism. The attitude towards the writers is totally negative.

The end of the Cultural Revolution was followed by a wave of new books on Chinese literary history, yet in them this negative attitude remained basically unchanged. There is no mention of the Mandarin Duck writers in the Xiandai Zhongguo wenxueshi 中國現代文學史 (History of Modern Chinese Literature, 1979, reprinted 1992), edited by Tang Tao 唐弢, Liu Shousong, Wang Yao, and others.93 And the Xiandai Zhongguo

92 Shanghai: Shanghai wenxue yishu chubanshe, 1962
xiaoshuo 中国现代小说史 (History of Modern Chinese Fiction, 1984) by Zhao Xiaqiu
趙遐秋 and Zeng Qingrui 曾慶瑞 labels the "Mandarin Duck School", like the earlier
Beijing University History of Chinese Fiction, "an adverse current of counter-realism in the
fictional composition." Similar views are expressed in volume I of the Zhongguo
xiaoshuoshi 中国小说史 (History of Chinese Fiction, 1991) by Ye Siming 葉子銘, Zou
Tian 鄭恬, and Xu Zhiying 許志英. The May Fourth attack on the "Mandarin Duck
School" is regarded as politically essential to the new literary movement and its rebuilding
of Chinese culture.

However, since the middle of the 1980s, there have been quiet signs of re-
evaluation of the Mandarin Duck writers. Zhongguo xiandai xiaoshuoshi 中國現代小說史
(History of Modern Chinese Fiction, 1986) by Yang Yi 楊義, a work highly praised in
North America by C.T. Hsia, includes a substantial analysis of the social and historical
background of the "Mandarin Duck School", as well as its artistic achievements and
ideology. Yang approved the innovative experiments made by its writers in fictional
structure, narrator's point of view, and techniques of narration that, as he puts it, "shook
up" the whole format of the traditional novel and short stories as well as reflecting the
good use of the models from Western fiction. He points out that some of their stories are
especially worthy of attention for how they depart from the methods of traditional biji
fiction, and can therefore be regarded as new fiction.96

95 Ye Siming 葉子銘, Zou Tian 鄭恬, Xu Zhiying 許志英, Zhongguo xiandai xiaoshuoshi. Nanjing:
When it comes to political analysis, however, Yan Yi is negative. He criticizes the feudal morality and taste of Mandarin writers, since in subject matter, their fiction hearkens back to the late Qing novels set in brothels and their central characters deplorably value love above everything else. Still, he does not reject their works totally but allows them a marginal place in modern Chinese fiction. He describes their fiction as dealing with educated characters who have been shaken from their feudal heritage by the new Western "colonial" culture, thus are prone to departure from tradition. Yet unable to identify themselves with this Western culture, they are drawn back to tradition from time to time. In such fiction the theme of destroying or rejecting the values of the past looms large, but a constructive vision of what is needed to replace it is absent.

In 1984 a further advance in partially rehabilitating the Mandarin writers was made by Fan Boqun 范伯群, a professor at the University of Suzhou, Bao Tianxiao's and Zhou Shoujuan's native city. In that year, together with Rui Heshi 芮和師 Fan Boqun edited *Yuanyang hudie pai wenxue ziliao* 鴯鶶蝴蝶派文學資料 (Literary Materials on the Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School). Next, in 1989, he published *Libai liu de hedi meng* 禮拜六的蝴蝶夢 (A Butterfly Dream of the Saturday School), an anthology which was reprinted the following year as *Minguo tongsu xiaoshuo: Yuanyang hedie pai* 民國通俗小說: 鴯鶶蝴蝶派 (Popular Fiction of the Mandarin and Butterfly School in the Republic).

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98 Beijing: Renming chubanshe, 1989. The 1990 reprint was by Taiwan Guowen tiandi zhazhi she.
More recently, Fan Boqun directed two series as chief editor: Zhongguo jinxiandai tongsu zuojia pingzhuang congshu 集現代通俗作家評傳叢書 (Series of Critical Biographies of Modern Chinese Popular Writers, including Bao) and Minchu dushi tongsu xiaoshu 民初都市通俗小說 (Urban Popular Fiction during the Early Republic, including Bao's and Zhou's). 99

As Fan Boqun admitted in his Preface to Popular Fiction of the Mandarin and Butterfly School in the Republic (1990), it was not easy for him to conclude that Mandarin Duck writers should be approved as forming a distinct literary school, one that contributed at least in part to the new literature. In his earlier articles, he too had used an ideological approach when he criticized this school for its lack of enlightening function and its emphasis on entertainment, even though he kept reminding himself of the need for scholarly objectivity. He compared his new book to a pair of bound feet that has been liberated, commenting that such unbound feet can certainly not walk as firmly as those that had always been free, an image that conveys Fan's struggle to free himself from the political biases in which he had been trained.

That Fan Boqun did succeed is seen a few years later when in 1996 he concluded after a more thorough examination of the "Mandarin Duck School", that some of their works do deserve a place in the modern Chinese literary canon:

I declare that if we put Bao Tianxiao's Cangzhou dao zhong 滄州道中 (On Passing through Cangzhou), Zai jiaceng li 在夾層裏 (In the Mezzanine), Yampeng 烟蓬

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(Under a Canvas Roof), and other masterly short stories together with those of the New literature and art, we see that they are not inferior in the least.  

It was the first time in mainland China that a scholar ever stated a conviction that some works by the "Mandarin Duck School" should be recognized as forming a constructive part of modern Chinese Literature.

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Chapter Two

The literary careers of Bao Tianxiao and Zhou Shoujuan in the context of their time

曾子曰: 君子以文會友，以友輔仁。

<<論語·顏淵篇第十二>>

Master Zeng says: "By his literary writings the gentleman collects friends about him, and through these friends promotes virtue."

*Analects. Book XII. Yanyuan*

1. How Bao and Zhou first met: Their origins in the cultural city of Suzhou.

When Bao Tianxiao and Zhou Shoujuan first met in 1914 at the office of *Xiaoshuo Shibao* 小說時報 (The Fiction Times) in Shanghai, Bao was one of the magazine's two chief editors, while Zhou was just a young free-lance writer. Neither guessed that soon they would become equally famous as leaders of what later came to be called the Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School, not only for their own fiction but above all for their role as literary editors.

Zhou was not the only young writer who, after his work had become popular, received Bao's support when he set out to edit his own magazine. Nor was their relationship confined to their literary careers; a close friendship soon developed between the two notwithstanding their difference in age. A few years later, Bao Tianxiao, in fact, was best man and chief witness at Zhou Shoujuan's wedding ceremony.\(^{100}\)

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\(^{100}\) See Zhou Shoujuan's short story "Jiuhua zhangli" 九華帳裏 (Inside the Jiuhua Bed-Curtain) in *Xiaoshuo huabao* 小說畫報 (Fiction Pictorial), issue 6, (1917).
The forces that brought these two men so close together can be traced, in part at least, to their similar cultural backgrounds. The hometown of both was Suzhou, a city at the centre of a fertile agricultural area in Jiangsu province, a little over a hundred kilometers west of Shanghai. Bao Tianxiao was born and lived there until about 1906 when he moved to Shanghai to begin his career as editor and writer. Although Zhou Shoujuan was not born in Suzhou, his parents came from there, and he later chose to return to Suzhou when he ended his successful career as writer and editor in Shanghai.

Suzhou enjoyed a long cultural tradition. For many centuries and until the rise of Shanghai to prominence after the mid-nineteenth century, it was predominant economically, politically, and culturally in the Jiangnan area. According to legend, as long as two thousand five hundred years ago, Wu Zixu 伍子胥, prime minister of the Wu state, under orders of his king and after a long careful search, chose the Suzhou area as the place for building this state's capital. It was a wise choice, because its rivers and the generally attractive scenery, its productive soil, and its pleasant climate, all assured that it would become prosperous. Later during the Song dynasty, the saying arose: "Shangyou Tiantang, xiayou Su Hang" 上有天堂, 下有蘇杭 (As there is heaven above, there are Suzhou and Hangzhou on earth.) In the thirteenth century, Marco Polo admired Suzhou as one of the world's most splendid large cities. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, it was famous above all for its active and independent scholars. Both Bao and Zhou were inheritors of this a long and noble cultural tradition.
2. Bao's names; his life and activities during his first thirty years; his publication of major Western and Japanese works in translation.

Bao Tianxiao 包天笑 (1876-1973) was born on February 26, 1876 at Xihuaqiao 西花橋 (the Bridge of Western Flowers) in Suzhou. His original name was Bao Qingzhu 包清柱 which he changed to Bao Gongyi 包公毅. His sobriquet became Langsun 朗孫. His pseudonym Tianxiao was derived from various classical sources: the saying *Dian wei tianxiao* 電為天笑 (Thunder is Heaven's laughter); lines from a poem by Du Fu 杜甫 (712-770): *Mei meng tian yixiao, fu shi wu jie chun* 每蒙天一笑，復似物皆春 (Whenever blessed by Heaven's smile, again it seems everything has become Spring); a line by Gong Dingan 龔定庵 (1792-1841): *Wuwa zijing tian xixiao* 烏瓦自警天自笑 (Whenever Heaven laughs, the tiles of eaves react with shock); and the line by Tan Sitong 譚嗣同 (1865-1898), *Wo zi hengdao xiang tianxiao* 我自橫刀向天笑 (I draw my sword, as I laugh towards Heaven). These different quotations point to a variety of meanings of what "Heaven's laughter" means. It can refer to thunder, or to sunlight and spring. It can symbolize a person's heroic spirit or his serene and fertile creativity. Applied to Bao, the name suggests that his work could shock one with surprise like lightning and thunder, yet make one rejoice with the rebirth of spring.

Bao came from a merchant family ambitious for their son to be successful at the imperial examinations. Therefore, at age 4, they sent him to a private school to learn the classics. Bao, however, was attracted more by such artistic entertainment as variety and one-man shows and other forms of drama, public story telling, and local operas. At Suzhou, there was a strong tradition of such performances year round as well as at
numerous seasonal festivals and family celebrations, to which Bao responded with great enthusiasm.

When Bao was very young, the Confucian tradition, paramount in education, rejected fiction as a proper literary genre, and it was a common practice for parents to keep novels and short stories away from children. This tradition was only challenged about 1900 when Liang Qichao and his followers proclaimed the Xin xiaoshuo (New Fiction) movement as an essential factor in the modernization of China and thereby radically altered the position of fiction in the literary hierarchy. Therefore, when young Bao first took to the reading of fiction, he did so surreptitiously. While paying a visit to his grandfather, he was excited to find a shelf full of historical novels in the library and soon immersed himself in these stories with their fascinating characters and plots. He was subsequently pleasantly surprised when his father, having discovered his secret, did not stop him but, on the contrary, urged him to mark his readings for sentences and passages of special significance. Thus from very early on, Bao Tianxiao benefited from the freedom to read historical fiction in developing his own critical thinking and practice.

When Bao was seventeen his father died, and the heavy task of supporting his family fell on his young shoulders. He had to leave his private school to become himself a private tutor. Only after passing the customary mourning period of three years for his father did he take and pass the imperial examination at the county level. By then, however, Bao had lost interest in studying for the more advanced imperial examinations, for China was then undergoing dramatic changes, beginning to transform itself from an ancient traditional into a more modern society.
These changes were first widely evident in Shanghai, whose rapid development since about 1850 was turning it into the most international city of China. As the closest other large city, Suzhou received Shanghai's reformist newspapers within a day and with them the latest social and political thought. Bao and his friends formed a small study group in which they discussed ideas relating to science and modernization, current political problems, and their own literary compositions. They opened a bookshop named "Tonglai shuzhuang" 東來書莊 (Eastern Bookshop), which sold the latest books, magazines, and newspapers published in Shanghai, as well as books from Japan, including magazines that were being published there by Chinese students. Bao was chosen to be the shop's manager. When the business became more prosperous, the group could afford to publish first a magazine of their own, and then, every ten days an eight-page local newspaper, Suzhou baihuabao 蘇州白話報 (Suzhou Vernacular Times). During these years, Bao also engaged in a more systematic study of Western civilization, including mathematics and science, and the Japanese, English, and French languages. However, he never pursued his foreign language studies very far, although eventually he translated some literary works from Japanese.

In 1900, Bao accepted an invitation by Kuai Guangdian 劉光典 (1857-1910), a leading schoolmaster in Nanjing who also became president of the short-lived university there, to become private tutor to his children. Living in Kuai's home, Bao greatly enjoyed and benefited from intellectual discussions there. A year later, Bao now twenty-six years old was sent by Kuai to Shanghai. There, after first gaining experience as a copy editor for a publishing house, he established a firm for Kuai, named Jinsuzhai 金粟齋 (Studio of Golden Millet).
Kuai had acquired the manuscripts of seven books translated from English by Yan Fu, an influential thinker of the time and first translator of T. H. Huxley's work on evolution. These included Adam Smith's famous economic classic *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* and John Stuart Mill's *Logic*. Now Kuai gave these works as well as some translations of Japanese books by Ye Haowu 葉浩吾 to Bao for publication, after which they exercised a strong impact on Chinese thought and culture. Through his publishing venture and editorial work, Bao became acquainted with Yan Fu himself, the famous Chinese nationalist Zhang Taiyan 章太炎 (1868-1936), and other influential scholars. His cultural circle widened and with it his knowledge and outlook.

In 1906 Bao became one of the main editors of a newspaper, *Shibao* (The Eastern Times) and a fiction magazine *Xiaoshuo lin* 小説林 (Grove of Fiction). He was to remain in Shanghai pursuing his career there until 1946. By 1911 when the Qing dynasty came to its end and Sun Yatsen established the Republic, Bao had become a professional and well-respected literary editor and had begun his own career as a writer. It was then that he first came to know the much younger Zhou Shoujuan, to whose early years I now turn.

3. Zhou's names and early life up to 1911. His translations from English and first publications

Compared to Bao, Zhou Shoujuan's early life was much less colourful. He came from a Suzhou family of office workers who had moved to Shanghai, where he
was born on June 30, 1895. His given name was Zufu 祖福, and his style name Guoxian 国賢. He invested his pseudonym (Shoujuan) with appropriate significances:

Among my names, the one with the two characters 'Shoujuan' (a skinny cuckoo) has the most wretched significance. For cuckoos are miserable birds between heaven and earth, which often caw and spit blood in the middle of the night. In my name, the character denoting 'skinny' describes this poor bird. 101

This interpretation of his pen name fittingly reflects both his early life and the dominant subject matter and mood of his fictional writing.

Shoujuan lost his father at the early age of six. This misfortune ended his family's basic income. Bearing immense hardships, his mother worked unremittingly so that for her sons could have an education. Shoujuan did not let her down. His persistent hard study resulted in his being awarded a fee waiver, which enabled him to graduate from both primary and middle school. At primary school, he began reading Honglou meng 紅樓夢 (The Dream of the Red Chamber) by Cao Xueqin 曹雪芹 (1715-1763), Xixiang ji 西厢記 (The West Chamber Story) by Wang Shifu 王實甫 (fl. thirteenth century), and other classical masterpieces. From an early age on he also learned English, so that at middle school he began reading major works of English and other European literatures in English translation. Evidently he was particularly inspired by an English version of the love tragedy of a French officer, when in 1911 at age sixteen he translated and adapted it into an eight-scene play he named Ai zhi hua 愛之花 (The Flower of Love). It appeared in serialized form in Xiaoshuo yuebao 小說月報 (The Short Story Monthly, 1911), four months after Bao Tianxiao had printed Zhou's first publication in the opening issue of the

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101 Zhou Shoujuan, "Biehao de yanjiu," 別號的研究 (Study of Aliases), Saturday, 105 (1921): 41.

In subsequent years, Shoujuan translated several other works of fiction from English into Chinese which were published by Bao Tianxiao in *Fiction Times*. After graduating from middle school, he decided to become, like Bao, a professional literary editor and writer in Shanghai. A close friendship developed between the two. When Bao learned how impoverished Shoujuan's family was, he paid him for his translations and stories in advance of publication.

4. What attracted the two men to Shanghai: its economic and cultural role in China at the time

The 1910s were the years of greatest creativity in the lives of both men. By being located in Shanghai, which was in the forefront of the development of Westernization, they were able to seize the opportunity for abundant literary experimentation offered during the early years of the Republic.

Shanghai, as previously indicated, had developed within a few decades from a small unimportant town into a major cosmopolitan centre. Under the Nanjing Treaty of 1843, which opened up five treaty-port cities to foreign trade, Shanghai was the last of the five on the list, but by 1890, it had become the most developed city and port of all of them. The economic development that resulted from its international trade attracted a large influx from other parts of China, especially from the provinces of Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Guangdong, and Fujian. The resulting mix of population may help to explain both
Shanghai's greater tolerance of foreigners than in other Chinese cities and also its great attractiveness for foreign investment. The city became a magnet that drew adventurers in business. As a place of new ideas and relative freedom, it became a refuge for those who clashed with authority during the late Qing dynasty -- politicians, reformers, artists, writers, journalists, and intellectuals in general. For these, the Shanghai of the early twentieth century was the most liberal and stimulating place to be in all of China.

It was also the Chinese city with by far the highest literacy. Its rapidly increasing educated population led to a growing cultural entertainment industry, and its large readership precipitated the rise of several publishing houses, as well as, after 1910, the appearance of a large number of literary journals. Before that time literary journals had had only a brief history in China, but from the beginning Shanghai had played a dominant role in their development. The very first Chinese literary magazine appeared in Shanghai in 1872. It lasted only until 1875 but by 1900 was followed by four others. During the next decade, the last of the Qing dynasty, twenty-six new literary magazines appeared in China, fifteen of which were published in Shanghai. The early years of the Republic, from 1911 to 1919 and the period of Bao's and Zhou's greatest activity both as writers and editors, saw a startling increase: sixty new magazines, of which no fewer than fifty-five were published in Shanghai. Thus in spite of Suzhou's long and rich cultural tradition, both Bao and Zhou succumbed to the appeal of the new city with all its vitality in a rapidly changing modern world.

5. Changes in Fiction from the late Qing to the early Republic

In some ways, the literature of the early Republic continued traditions of the late Qing period, but in others it strikingly departed from them, and it is this mixture of continuation and innovation that characterizes the fiction of this time. Only in recent years have some literary historians turned their attention to this period, because ever since the May Fourth scholars rejected the literature of the 1910s completely as backward and merely cheap and popular, its fictional works have been overshadowed by those of the preceding decade. These came to be praised highly for their energetic spirit of lashing out at corruption and decadence, while by contrast the novels and short stories which followed in the 1910s seemed irresponsibly uncritical, merely entertaining their readers rather than alerting them to the urgent need for reform and motivating them to participate in the struggle to liberate and modernize China.

There was certainly a marked change in the basic purpose of leading fictional writers in China, especially in Shanghai, during the early 1910s, which is partly, though only partly, explained by the successful Xinhai 辛亥 (1911) revolution, which overthrew the Qing dynasty with its backward traditionalism and corruption, and its replacement by Sun Yatsen's Republic. This dramatic development reduced the need, for some years at least, for literature to devote itself to social criticism and reform. Another earlier cause of change was the abolition by the Qing government of the imperial examinations in 1905. Until then, many ambitious people in China spent their lifetimes attempting to pass different levels of these examinations in order to gain secure employment and social advancement. When this way of climbing the social ladder was removed, many educated
people were compelled by economic reasons to discover new ways of establishing themselves. At the very time when Bao and Zhou were beginning their careers in Shanghai, large numbers of the educated, especially from Jiangsu and Zhejiang, areas that traditionally had produced many successful candidates in the highest imperial examinations, also migrated to the same city. There they became a main force among the editors of and contributors to literary and cultural magazines as well as to literary supplements to newspapers.

Under such changing circumstances, it is not surprising that Republican writers showed less political orientation than had their late Qing predecessors, that is until the May Fourth reformists began to respond to China's continued weakness and renewed political instability. However, the need for criticism of society and officialdom having been reduced during the first years of the Republic, romantic love in conflict with traditional marriage arrangements now became a favourite subject in fiction.

Therefore a considerable number of writers began to make their living from literature, and literary production in large measure came to be market-oriented. What these writers wrote about and the way they wrote had to appeal to a wider readership. Their work had to be popular. During the early Republic, it had become impractical to spend "ten years on a literary work and five years on additions and deletions", as supposedly Cao Xueqin 曹雪芹 had done103. Essays and stories had to be finished quickly. For newspaper supplements and weeklies or monthlies, there were deadlines to be met, and since writers had to make a living one deadline was followed by another.

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103 So he says in chapter one of the novel. See Zhiyanzhai chongping shitou ji 脂砚斋重评石头記 (Commenting again on The Story of the Stone by 'Red Inkstone'), (Shanghai: Guji kanxingshe, 1955), p. 5.
Since appealing to the reader was a primary concern, the writers wrote about the chief issues that occupied Shanghai's citizens at the time.

Late Qing writers were different from their early Republic successors because of the very nature of their profession. With few exceptions such as Wu Jianren 吳趼人, most of the late Qing writers that became famous in their time were politicians, reformists, or people in officialdom. Among their literary works, they received extra pay only for their fiction104. By contrast, the most active writers of the early Republic were professional authors and editors, who were rapidly writing piece after piece to satisfy the need of the market and ensure a good income. This new situation may also explain the notable revival of short-story writing during the 1910s, and the development of this genre in more ways than it had for centuries. Writers found in the short story a quick and effective form for fictional composition that was suited to the tempo of life in modern Shanghai.

To this change in the basic situation of literary writers between the first decade of the twentieth century and the first of the Republic, what Terry Eagleton has called the moment of modernity appears pertinent:

It [art] became autonomous . . . curiously enough by being integrated into the capitalist mode of production. When art becomes a commodity, it is released

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104 Bao Tianxiao writes in his Chuanyinglou huiyilu 釧影樓回憶錄 (Reminiscences of the Bracelet Shadow Chamber): “At that time, there was no remuneration for any kind of literature except for fiction. Yet writers were motivated by their own interest and did not think of asking for it.” 2 vols. (Hongkong: Ta-hua chubanshe, 1971), 1: 349.

The ordinances of Shenbao's opening edition read: “Literary writers who are willing to contribute works, such as zhuzhi ci 竹枝詞 (Bamboo branch songs) from various areas, narrative long poems and so on will not get remuneration . . . . If writings are printed, such as celebrated dicta and outspoken criticisms which are important to the national economy and the people's livelihood, to agricultural productivity and irrigation works, to the economic needs of the Imperial court and about the hardship of workers and farmers, they will not be paid.”
from its traditional social function within church, court and state into the anonymous freedom of the market place. Now it exists, not for any specific audience, but just for anybody with the taste to appreciate it and the money to buy it. And in so far as it exists for nothing and nobody in particular, it can be said to exist for itself. It is independent because it has been swallowed up by commodity production.  

An examination of the literary magazines of the early years of the Republic reveals that the writers who enjoyed greatest popularity at the time were those who were later dubbed by May Fourth critics as members of the Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School. Some writers who did not accept the label simply called themselves "the School of Old Style Literature."  

6. Xu Zhenya's novel Yulihun 玉梨魂 (Jade Pear Spirit, 1912) as a typical work of the time

The works of these so-called "Mandarin Duck" writers, however, were remarkable in their variety and show an interesting mixture of tradition and innovation in literary form. The first major work of fiction of the time was Xu Zhenya's 徐枕亚 novel Yulihun 玉梨魂 (The Jade Pear Spirit), published in book form after it had been

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serialized in the magazine *Minquanbao* 民權報 (People's Rights) beginning in 1912. This novel is composed in classical language -- during the late Qing era all novels that appeared were written in the vernacular except for those translated from Western originals -- and strikingly in pairs of four-and-six character sentences. This is adapted from a euphuistic kind of style that had been cultivated for prose writings in ancient China during the Six Dynasties (222-589), and is characterized by a parallel construction of pairs of sentences and a counterbalancing of tonal patterns with the use of rhyme. Xu's novel reflects the strong influence of Chinese poetic tradition, and it makes abundant use of the storehouse of sentimental erotic subject matter and lyrical imagery in traditional Chinese literature. Yet it also introduces from Western novels the epistolary form, and lays emphasis on the depiction of characters' inner states of mind, which shows the influence of *La Dame aux Camélias* by the French writer Alexandre Dumas fils (1824-95).107 *The Jade Pear Spirit* was reprinted many times and sold over a million copies.

Only two precedents are known of adaptations of this euphuistic parallel prose style to fiction, and these occurred long ago and are unlike that in *The Jade Pear Spirit*. The first is a very simple story by Zhang Wencheng 張文成 (657-730) called *Yuxian ku* 游仙窟 (*The Dwelling of Playful Goddesses*), which was transmitted to Japan during the Tang dynasty and rediscovered in China only early in the twentieth century108. The second is a short novel of the early nineteenth century, *Yanshan waishi* 燕山外史 (*The

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Unofficial History of a Yanshan Scholar) by Chen Qiu 陈球 (fl. 1808) which he based on a tale told by the Ming writer Feng Mengzhen 馮夢楨 (1546-1605).

The Jade Pear Spirit differs from these precedents in being a full-length novel and a product wholly of its author's invention, making use of his own experiences. Its great success set off a wave of fictional works in parallel prose as had never occurred heretofore in Chinese literary history. However, this experimentation in a unique genre was doomed to be short-lived. The vernacular language movement which began in 1917 stopped any further development.

While novels in parallel prose were becoming the fashion, several novels in the vernacular were also published in an age characterized by the abundance of fiction in both language forms. Another novel reprinted a record number of times was Li Hanqiu's 李涵秋 long novel Guangling chao 廣陵潮 (Tides of Yangzhou),109 serialized over a ten-year period (1909-19). This novel focuses on how Yunling and his family and relatives react to social and political events from the time of the first Opium War (1839-42) to that of the final years of the Qing dynasty, and shows how their lives changed during seventy years of struggle and unrest. The story's plots are artistically linked by a constellation of characters grouped around the central figure of Yunling. The novel's popularity prompted more than ten successors in the vernacular, each with the word "Tides" in its title. Amazingly, Hu Shi, the leading May Forth culturalist, made an exception of Tides of Yangzhou, when he rejected most fictional works of the early Republic in his

109 "Guanglin" is an old name of Yangzhou 揚州.
7. The flourishing of the short story during the 1910s

The short stories of the time also reveal interesting experimentation both in the classical and vernacular language forms. Late Qing writers had been writing few short stories. By contrast the years after 1910 witnessed a remarkable blooming of the short fiction form, and especially of stories written in classical language.

Traditionally there were four basic types of short story in China: the zhiguai and the chuanqi derived from them, and the very short "note-form" biji tales, all written in classical language, and the very different huaben stories in vernacular. Both the chuanqi and huaben forms were revived during the 1910s but in a remarkable transformation in which language played a major part. The new "classical" stories, while making use of traditional devices from poetic tradition also introduced new narratological methods from Western fiction. Especially striking is the variety of language forms in which they were written, especially the Qin-Han, Wei-Jin, and Tang-Song guwen 古文 styles, as in Duanhong lingyan ji 断鸿零雁记 (The Lone Swan) by Su Manshu 蘇曼殊 (1884-1918) and the short stories by Bao Tianxiao and Zhou Shoujuan. Noteworthy too is that some of the stories in classical language developed the narrative features of huaben stories in novel ways, while vernacular stories elaborated their heritage from traditional chuanqi tales. This impressive transformation of the two basic types of traditional short stories

into new forms, marking the interaction between new and traditional, was achieved under the influence of examples of Western narrative. The following two chapters will return to this subject with more detailed analysis and discussion.

8. Bao Tianxiao's and Zhou Shoujuan's role among contemporary writers

Although regarded as leading writers of the "Mandarin and Butterfly School", neither Bao nor Zhou wrote novels during the 1910s, and Zhou as a matter of fact never wrote a novel in his life. The early Republican reader was still overwhelmed by the great success of the late Qing novel, and thus, not surprisingly, there was a continuing demand for new novels in the early Republic. However, the fact that Bao and Zhou did not join this fashion did not exclude them from being notable figures on the literary scene. Their role among contemporary writers was versatile: as translators introducing Western literature; as chief editors of magazines who brought writers together; and as writers of short stories themselves with their innovations in subject matter, style, and techniques that came to be representative of the achievements of the group. Their success and prominence in these three different but related activities made the place of the two writers unique among their peers. It is true that during the first years of the Republic at least, other writers, foremost among them Xu Zhenya and Li Hanqiu, were more famous as novelists. But while they too became editors of several magazines, they did not contribute to the process of translating foreign literature. Yun Tiegiao 楊鐵樵 (1878-1935), chief editor of The Short Story Monthly, and Chen Jinghan 陳景韓 (1877-1965), co-chief editor of The Fiction Times, were engaged in both translating and writing short
stories, but on a much more limited scale. When within a few years Yun realized that he could not make a living from his literary career, he changed to medicine and became a doctor.

The editorial profession presented both Bao and Zhou with the opportunity to befriend writers and editors of other magazines. Many young writers, including Zhou himself, began their writing career under Bao's patronage. When the Eastern Times, Shen Newspaper, and Saturday, in which Bao and Zhou had leading positions, were enjoying great popularity, large groups of writers and editors formed around these papers and magazines. Fashionable banquets were the social occasions when these editors and writers met and shared their similar views on literary purpose and artistic expectations, as summarized in Bao Tianxiao's "promoting a new political system and preserving traditional morality" and Zhou Shoujuan's "combining education with recreation." Besides establishing new magazines and planning the contents of coming issues, these gatherings exchanged witty poetic compositions, participated with one another in the writing of serial stories, and relaxed while being served by singing girls. Several of the participants became chief editors of the new popular magazines that were mushrooming. Later, most of them joined two so-called Mandarin Duck societies: Qingshe 青社 (the Green Society, 1922) and Xingshe 星社 (the Star Society, 1922-37).

As shown in the previous chapter, the attack by the May Fourth new cultural movement on the writers of the so-called Mandarin Duck school hardly reduced their popularity. Their novels and stories and magazines continued to appeal, especially in Shanghai; indeed a new wave of magazines was launched in the late 1920s. When some

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111 Bao Tianxiao, Reminiscences, 1:391; Zhou Shoujuan, "Kuahuo zhuci" 快活祝詞 (Congratulations to the Happy Magazine), Kuahuo 快活 (The Happy Magazine) (1923) 1: i.

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of their most famous colleagues, including Xu Zhenya and Li Hanqiu, died young or stopped writing, Bao and Zhou became the leading figures of the group, however much they rejected the label "Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School." Especially Bao's reputation increased after he published several novels, and when younger writers rose to prominence in the 1930s, Bao and Zhou continued writing as their respected elders.

9. Lin Shu's, Bao's and Zhou's translations of western literature

Only after 1840 did a number of Western and Japanese literary works begin to be translated into Chinese, and only a few such translations appeared before 1896, but then the pace accelerated. These works were to make a strong impact. By the turn of the century, some Chinese writers and critics had learned to their surprise that in the West fiction occupied a high position in the hierarchy of literary forms. Chuqing (Di Baoxian 狄葆賢, 1873-1921) describes his shock when he came into contact with

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112 See Chapter One, p. 10 and note 15.

113 The ultimate origin of the traditionally low place of fiction in the hierarchy of literary writing is Confucius, according to Ban Gu 袁固 (A.D. 32-92) in "Yiwen zhi" 艺文志 (Bibliographic Treatise) in the Hanshu 漢書 (History of the [Former] Han): "Confucius once said: 'Although a petty path, there is surely something to be seen in it. But if pursued too far, one could get bogged down; hence the gentleman does not do so.'" (Cited from Kenneth J. DeWoskin's translation of Lu Xun, Zhongguo xiaoshuo shilue 中國小說史略 [Hongkong, 1965] by Laura Hua Wu, "From Xiaoshuo to Fiction: Hu Yinglin's Genre Study of Xiaoshuo," Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, vol. 55 [1995] 2:340). However, in the Analects themselves, the words are spoken by Confucius' student Zixia子夏. See Lunyu, Zizhang 論語, 子張 (Analects, Zizhang), vol. 19.

During the seventeenth century, several literati edited with commentaries The Romance of the Three Kingdoms, The Water Margin, Journey to the West, and The Golden Lotus, and praised some of them as highly as Li suo 離騷 (Encountering Sorrow) by Quyuan, Records of the Grand Historian by Sima Qian, and Du Fu’s poetry. Nevertheless, their effort did not result in real change in the acceptance at court of any works of fiction as great literature. For instance, candidates of official examinations were never allowed to cite from any of even the best novels.
Western views in his "Lun wenxue shang xiaoshuo zhi weizhi" (On Fiction's Position in Literature):

At first I was astonished that literary critics from countries east and west regarded fiction as the highest among literary genres. I was also astonished when I saw a Japanese book, *Biography of one Hundred Outstanding Persons*, treating Shi Naian [the author of *The Water Margin*] as an equal to Sakyamuni, Confucius, Washington, and Napoleon. And I was even more astonished when I saw that text books on *The Water Margin* and *The West Chamber Story* form part of the liberal arts program in Japanese schools. When I thought the matter over, however, I realized that I had little reason to be astonished, that fiction should indeed occupy a high position in the literary hierarchy.114

When his contemporary Liang Qichao came upon the Western attitude towards fiction, he was less upset, but on the contrary inspired to make use of it in his program to enlighten his Chinese contemporaries. To help reject the traditional low view of fiction, he went so far as to create a Western legend: "A celebrated scholar in England once remarked that fiction is the very soul of the people."115 It was a real achievement of the late Qing reformers that they promoted fiction from an illegitimate or marginal genre to a central place in literature.


115 Liang Qichao 梁启超, "Yi yin zhengzhi xiaoshuo xu" 言印政治小說序 (Foreword to the Publication of Political Novels in Translation), *Qing yi bao* 1 (1898), rpt. in idem, p.22.
The initial reaction of Chinese writers to Western novels had been negative – they appeared to them far inferior to their own. But gradually they came to realize that the opposite was true. Lin Shu, for instance, found narrative skills and devices in the novels of Dickens and other Western writers that reminded him of those in Sima Qian's Records of the Grand Historian and Cao Xueqin's Dream of the Red Chamber and that seemed to him equal or even superior.\(^{116}\)

Lin Shu became by far the foremost translator during the late Qing and the early Republican periods. Altogether he translated 163 works of foreign fiction, despite his astonishingly minimal knowledge of foreign languages. What he did was listen to assistants more expert in the language who told him a novel's story in vernacular Chinese before he himself rewrote it in wényán wén 文言文 (classical Chinese). This he did in a highly elegant classical language which aroused such admiration that it became a model for imitation by the young, and stimulated the wave of fiction in classical and parallel prose forms, described above, which came to enjoy a popularity equal to that of fiction in the vernacular.

While translating, Lin Shu also published critical analyses that compared Western and Chinese fiction. While he acknowledged the didactic or educational function of fictional writing that was emphasized by the Confucian tradition, he paid more attention to the artistic merits of Western works and himself wrote some novels in which he experimented with Western narrative devices. Yet his inability to read Western fiction in

\(^{116}\) Lin Shu 林纾, "Kuairou yusheng shu qianbian xu" 塊肉余生述前編序 (Preface to Part One of David Copperfield.) in Kuairou yusheng shu (Shanghai: Shangwu, 1908).

———, "Xiaonu neier zhuan xu" 孝女耐兒傳序 (Preface to The Old Curiosity Shop,) in Xiaonu neier zhuan (Shanghai: Shangwu, 1907).
the original resulted in a major limitation: only the minority of his translations are from the best Western writers.

Both Bao Tianxiao and Zhou Shoujuan began their literary career by translating works of Western literature, mainly fiction, in Bao's case often from Japanese intermediaries. Both of them became well-known for their translations before they achieved fame from their own creative writings. Bao and Zhou were among many who were strongly influenced by Lin Shu's writings and translations. They followed Lin Shu's model classical style so well that Lin Shu himself was amazed by the resemblance to his own.

Bao's first work of translation was the second part of a novel by the English writer H. Ryder Haggard, Jiayin xiaozhuan 迦因小傳 (Joan Haste) in 1901. Its success was far beyond Bao's expectation. Yan Fu was so moved by the novel that he wrote a poem expressing the feelings it had aroused in him. Liang Qichao in his famous literary commentary Yinbingshi shihua 飄冰室詩話 (Remarks on Poetry from the Yinbing Library) placed Bao's Joan Haste on a par with Lin Shu's translation of La Dame aux Camélia s (1899). And after Lin Shu himself read Bao's version, he found the first part and translated the novel as a whole. The handsome payment Bao received for his translation aroused his enthusiasm for further translations. This was the first step in Bao's development as a professional writer.

117 "Yinbing" literally means drinking icy water.

118 See Bao Tianxiao, Reminiscences of the Bracelet Shadow Chamber, 1: 174: "From that time on my fascination with translating fiction steadily increased. It was a delightfully open and free job, and my thoughts of stipends from the academies came to be replaced . . . by thoughts of selling translations. The one hundred yuan I had received from wenming shuju 文明書局 (the Civilization Book Co.), for example, was enough for the family to live on for several months, not counting my travelling expenses to Shanghai. What could possibly keep me from pursuing this?"
Bao's motivation was quite different from that of his senior contemporaries, for instance Liang Qichao, who called for translations that would contribute to political reform, or Liu Shu himself who translated Western fiction for artistic reasons and his own enjoyment. Bao was primarily concerned with making a living, and it is thus not surprising that his choice of works for translations was affected by the tastes and wishes of Shanghai's populace.

After Bao had moved to Shanghai and become an editor, he translated in succession three novels for young teenagers that were published by the Commercial Press in its Jiaoyu zazhi 教育雑志 (Education Magazine). The rapid development of middle schools during the early 1910s produced a great demand for fiction that suited their students in content and writing style. The three books were Xiner jiusxueji 薦兒就學記 (Little Xin Goes to School, 1909-10), Maishi qishiji 埋石弃石記 (A Story of Burying and Abandoning a Stone, 1911-12), and Kuer liulangji 苦兒流浪記 (A Story of a Bitter Waif, 1912-14). All three translations were from the Japanese, though one of the original stories was French and another Italian. The translations were so highly successful that Bao was awarded a certificate of merit by the Ministry of Education. Throughout the 1910s the novels were distributed widely as Chinese language textbooks for the so-called "new-style" schools. 119

The basic process of these translations is of interest. Since Bao was able to translate directly only from Japanese works which were themselves translations of Western fiction, it was not possible for him to be true to the original. He noticed how the Japanese translators had often "Japanized" characters' names, cultural objects, the

country's customs, etc. Following their example, he regarded translation as a kind of re-creation. First he sinified the Japanese translation, and then added or deleted as he considered desirable. For instance, in Little Xin Goes to School, Bao gave the story's young character the name of his own son Xin 設, and included detailed descriptions based on his own family's experience that had no connection with the original.

The rewriting and adapting of existing earlier stories had a long history in China, especially during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but Bao's rewriting was a different task since he was sinifying Western (and sometimes Japanese) cultural content. By doing so, he made access to his story world much easier for his readers. He bridged the gap of customary expectation between Eastern and Western readers. Moreover, differences in grammar and syntax between Chinese and foreign languages largely dissolved in the process of sinification. Bao used a simple classical language close to the vernacular, lucid and smooth, attractive to readers of different cultural backgrounds and levels of education. That is why Bao's translations were much more successful than, for instance, those of Lu Xun and his brother Zhou Zuoren in Yuwai xiaoshuo ji 域外小說集 (Anthology of Foreign Fiction, 1909). The brothers chose their materials carefully for their excellence and strove in their translations to be true to the original. But their anthology sold poorly because readers at the time were not yet prepared for literature in such an alien form. Bao Tianxiao's manner of rewriting and adaptation suited an age when foreign literature was only beginning to be exposed to a large readership. It helped his readers gradually to accept Western literature.

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120 See Bao Tianxiao, Reminiscences, 1: 386.
Bao produced more translations than original fiction. *Fiction Times* (1909-21), of which he was one of the two chief editors, alone contains forty-nine of his translations, besides many more published in other magazines. The total was second only to Lin Shu's translations. Among Bao's early and major translations are Chekhov's *Liuhao shi* 六號室 (The Sixth Ward in *Fiction Times*, 1910), Victor Hugo's *Tiechuang honglei* 鐵窗紅泪 (Le Dernier Jour D'un Condamné by *Qunxue she*, 1910), and Shakespeare's *Weinisi shangren* 威尼斯商人 (The Merchant of Venice, in *Nü xuesheng* 女學生 Female Students, 1911).

Zhou Shoujuan was also a prolific translator. By 1919 he had translated 161 works of fiction although the majority of these were short stories. Unlike Lin Shu and Bao Tianxiao, whose choice of works largely depended on advice from others or the availability of a Japanese translation, Zhou chose the Western works independently. To his Chinese audiences he introduced fiction by Defoe, Dickens, Stevenson, Goethe, Turgenev, Tolstoy, Washington Irving, Harriet Stowe, Mark Twain, and others. His first translation, however, was an adaptation of a novel from English into a play, *Ai zhi hua* 愛之花 (Flowers of Love). Serialized in *The Short Story Monthly* in 1911, it was three years later directed on stage by Zheng Zhengqiu 鄭正秋 and eventually adapted into a film.

Most of Zhou's translations were short stories, some of them of high literary quality. He often made attractive use of idiomatic phrases and literary allusions. Yet, unlike Bao, he never imposed on the translation a scene or a detail of his own invention. In both classical and vernacular language forms, he wrote with graceful ease, expressively and suggestively.
Like Bao, Zhou Shoujuan was honoured by the Ministry of Education for his work as translator, specifically for his three-volume anthology, *Ou Mei mingjia duanpian xiaoshuo congkan* (A Collection of Short Stories by Famous European and American Writers, Shanghai, 1917). This anthology contains fifty stories written by a larger number and a greater variety of authors from different countries than in any earlier collection. Each story is introduced by a brief biography of its author. Zhou's award was recommended by Lu Xun, who was then serving in the Ministry of Education as head of a section devoted to fiction in its Research Institute for Popular Education. In his citation he praised Zhou for the insight shown in the selection of translations, some from countries that were represented for the first time in China. He called the publication of the book a great achievement in the field of translation, an event that deserved to be honoured.

The honours which Bao and Zhou received show how much their contemporaries were aware of their major role in the introduction of Western literature to China. They were among the first who perceived the artistic appeal of Western novels and shorter works of fiction. Their practice of translation made them closely familiar with the nature and form of both romantic and realistic Western fiction which inevitably influenced their own fictional writing. In the third chapter of this thesis I will analyze in detail Bao's and Zhou's innovative experimentation with narrative devices in their short stories under Western influence.

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121 3 vols. (Shanghai: Chunghua shuju, 1917).
10. The role of Bao and Zhou as editors of literary magazines

Bao's and Zhou's editorial activity played as important a role as did their own writings. During the first years of the Republic, the three magazines that enjoyed the biggest circulation were *Xiaoshuo shibao* 小説時報 (*Fiction Times*, 1909-17), edited jointly by Chen Jinhan 陳景韓 and Bao Tianxiao; *Xiaoshuo yuebao* 小説月報 (*The Short Story Monthly*, 1910-31), edited by Yun Tieqiao 悲鐵樵 and Wang Yunzhang 王雲章; and *Libailiu* 禮拜六 (*Saturday*, 1914-23), whose chief editors were Wang Dungen 王鈺根 and Sun Jianqiu 孫劍秋, assisted by Zhou Shoujuan, who later himself took over the chief editorship.¹²³

In spite of their competition, the editors of the three magazine were close friends and supported one another. Bao and Zhou not only devoted themselves to the magazines they were working for but also contributed writings to *The Short Story Monthly*. Yet each of the three magazine had its own distinct character. While working for these magazines, Bao and Zhou accumulated valuable experience that prepared them for their more independent editing in the future. They played an important role in the modern history of Chinese literary magazines in that they both provided innovative models for others to follow.

¹²³ Lu Xun, Zhou Zuoren. "Ouméi mingjia duanpian xiaoshuo congke pingyu" 歐美名家短篇小說選刻評語 (Comments on *A Collection of Short Stories by Famous European and American writers*), in *Jiaoyu gongbao*. 4th year, no. 15, (1917).
a) Bao's Editorial Career

Bao Tianxiao's professional editorial career began in 1906 when he was appointed editor of *Shibao* (The Eastern Times). Di Baoxian, its founder and patron, a student of Liang Qichao, was an enthusiastic follower of the late Qing reform. The innovations which Di Baoxian introduced had helped his paper to become a challenging competitor of the two largest newspapers of the time, *Shen bao* (The Shen Newspaper) and *Xinwen bao* (The Times Newspaper). For instance, *The Eastern Times* was the first to include despatches by its own special correspondents in Beijing. Among them was the famous journalist Huang Yuanyong (1885-1915). From early on also, this paper introduced on the front page advertisements of lists of books by different publishing houses. This feature made good economic sense, for the publishers paid well for their advertisements, and new readers were attracted to the paper by its emphasis on education and culture, not just on commerce. A significant new development begun by *The Eastern Times* was its inclusion of serialized columns of fiction. It was this creative spirit of the newspaper that first attracted Bao's attention. He sent some of his fictional writing to it even before his editorial appointment in 1906.

As editor-in-chief, Bao made further innovations. He introduced first a literary column, then a supplement. Previously, no Chinese newspaper had ever had a special literary column, let alone a supplement for essays, poetry, or fiction. Di Baoxian immediately accepted Bao Tianxiao's proposal and placed him in charge of the literary

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123 Of the three, one, *The Short Story Monthly*, was in 1921 taken over by May Fourth writers.

124 "Shen" is an old name of the Shanghai district.
column, which was named *Yuxing* (Lingering Diversion). The venture was so successful that two rival papers soon copied it: *The Shen Newspaper* in its *Ziyou tan* 自由談 (Unfettered Talk) and *The Times Newspaper* in its *Kuaihuo lin* 快活林 (Grove of Happiness). *Yuxing* thus became the prototype of the popular literary columns and supplements in the newspapers of the 1910s and 1920s.

In 1909, Di Baoxian, the owner of *The Eastern Times*, set up a monthly literary magazine, *The Fiction Times*, to which he appointed Bao Tianxiao and Chen Jinghan 陈景韩 as joint editors. Now Bao had ample scope for his new ideas in editorial policy. In his solicitation for contributions, he asked for novels and short stories both in the classical and vernacular language forms. But unlike other literary magazines, *The Fiction Times* under Bao demanded that works appear in larger sections, novelle in single installments, novels in two or three, novelle in single issues, so that readers would not have to wait for months or years to find out what happened next. Another wholesome effect was that authors were pushed to complete their novels within much shorter periods, thereby achieving a tighter plot construction than typical of most serial publishing. *The Fiction Times* marks a turning point in late Qing literary magazines which had traditionally favoured instruction and aimed at the education of the masses. More emphasis was placed on delight and entertainment, because Bao believed in combining education with recreation, and in catering to his readers' tastes.

The success of *The Fiction Times* encouraged Bao a year later, in 1911, to publish a magazine for and about women, *Fumii shibao* 婦女時報 (*The Women's Times*, 1911 - 1917). Its content was comprehensive, including literary works, discussions on women's

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125 See Bao, *Reminiscences*, 1:349-350. Perry Link translates *yuxing* as "surplus spirit".
problems, family, marriage and children, besides a variety of useful information. Bao conceived the idea for such a magazine at a time when women's education had become a popular subject and women's schools were mushrooming -- Bao himself had been a part-time teacher in more than one such school. Naturally he encouraged women to contribute, but as most good writing by women tended to be classical poems by descendants of literary families, he also included articles by men on various topics, in his desire to enlarge the knowledge of women readers and to ensure both quality and variety of content for the magazine.


Bao Tianxiao's reputation having become well established in literary circles, he was chosen in 1915 by Shen Zifang 沈子方, patron of Shanghai's Wenming shuju 文明書局 (Wenming Book Co.), to set up, for the first time, a large quarterly fictional magazine, *Xiaoshuo daguan* 小說大觀 (*The Grand Magazine*, 1915 – 1921). Bao stated his editorial policy in its opening issue. He would select works of fiction for it with great care. He would choose only those that were morally correct and beneficial for society. However, the work's artistic quality was of equal importance. It needed to be in good taste and of interest to the magazine's readers. Dry, dull, slow-moving and tediously wordy writing would not be accepted.126

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126 See *The Grand Magazine*, 1 (1915): i.
Bao's most innovative editorial activity, however, involved his fourth magazine, *Xiaoshuo huabao* 小説畫報 (*The Fiction Pictorial*, 1917-1920), which he conceived in 1917 as a brand new kind of magazine. It was unique in several respects. It published only original fiction, no translations, and all of its fiction had to be in the vernacular. Each story was illustrated. The whole magazine was printed not with the customary lead type, but more artistically by stone lithography.

After having been involved with translations for over ten years, Bao evidently felt that the period of learning from Western literature had gone on long enough, and that now Chinese writers should be encouraged to concentrate on their own creations. Imitation of themes and devices from Western literature should be rejected in favour of drawing on materials from contemporary life. And only by respecting the essence of Chinese tradition and by adapting modern materials and Western methods to it could one expect to achieve truly creative literary works.127

Bao's view was clearly opposed to that of Hu Shi, one of the leading figures of the May Fourth cultural movement, who at the same time was publishing his article "On Constructive Literary Revolution" in *New Youth*. Hu there asserted the urgent need to translate more and more Western literature, rejecting traditional Chinese literature as inferior and therefore unsuitable as a model.128 The difference in attitudes as to how China would benefit best from Westernization in these writings was to mark the sharp clash in views between the May Fourth culturalists and Bao himself and his colleagues: whether to reject the Chinese literary tradition wholesale, or whether to aim at a creative

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127 See *Fiction Pictorial*, vol. 1 (1917).
adaptation that transforms native tradition by modernizing it, under the inspiration of what is best in Western literature.

In my view, the most interesting aspect of Fiction Pictorial is its illustrations. History of book illustration of fiction, plays, and other literary works is many centuries old, yet the type of illustration in Fiction Pictorial has hardly any precedent. Earlier illustrations were from printer's blocks based on drawings. The literary magazines of the first decade of the twentieth century used blocks only as decorative fillers at the end of stories. Their illustrations were photographs, and only a small number of these, of portraits of famous writers like Tolstoy and of French actresses and fashion models, and of a few postcard-like scenes of European and Japanese places and occasional Chinese ones. The only precedent for having illustrations for every story was a magazine of the very last years of the Qing dynasty, Xiuxiang xiaooshuo (Illustrative Fiction).\(^{129}\)

Notably and fitting the emphasis on stories dealing with subject matter based on contemporary life, many of the illustrations in Fiction Pictorial also deliver a message of modernization; for instance a railway station or a woman in Western dress in a room with a Western picture on the wall. These pictures mark the strong influence of contemporary Western magazines. Most of them are from contemporary life, conveyed with photographic realism or only slight stylization, just as in Bao's Fiction Pictorial.

Two years later in 1919, Bao Tianxiao resigned his position as chief editor of The Eastern Times, so that he could concentrate on writing a novel. In 1921 he did accept the

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\(^{129}\) The literal meaning of the title is "Pictorial Embroideries of Fiction". The term xiuxiang was used for several famous novels, for instance, Xinke xiuxiang Jin Ping Mei (Newly Block-printed Pictorial Embroideries of Golden Lotus) (1621-1627).
invitation to edit a journal, *Xingqi 星期* (The Weekly). For it he set up two columns under the headings of "A Hundred Social Problems" and "Weekly Discussion", to which he invited his readers to contribute. Yet he also resigned this editorship after a year, for he wanted more time for his own writing.

b) Zhou Shoujuan's Editorial Career

Zhou Shoujuan's formal editorial career began only in 1921, when he revived the weekly magazine *Saturday*, although, as we have seen, he did contribute much to literary magazines from 1914 on and evidently discussed with Bao his ideas on editorial policy and innovation. *Saturday* has been regarded as a representative magazine of what the May Fourth critics were to call the Mandarin Duck School. And in recent years, some scholars in mainland China, especially Professor Fan Boqun 管伯群 of Suzhou University, who has published several books by and on the Mandarin writers, have suggested that "Saturday School" would be a more appropriate name for the group, since the aim of the *Saturday* magazine mirrors best the ideas of the group that guided their literary writing.

When in 1914, Wang Dungen 王鈺根, the initiator of the literary supplement *Unfettered Talk of The Shen Newspaper*, was planning a new fiction magazine, he consulted his friends on what name he should give to it. Among the various suggestions, he found that Zhou Shuojuan's "Saturday" fitted his own thoughts best and so adopted it. Zhou had got the idea from the American *Saturday Review*. In his introduction to the opening issue, Wang explains why he chose the name:
Some posed the question: "You have entitled your weekly magazine Saturday. Why did you not name it Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday?"

I replied, "On Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, people are preoccupied with their work. Only on Saturdays and Sundays can they rest and enjoy their leisure to read fiction."

"Then why not name it Sunday rather than Saturday?"

I said, "On Saturdays most businesses are closed. The magazines are for distribution on Saturday afternoon so that we could afford our readers earlier enjoyment."

"But there are so many other pleasures available on Saturday afternoon. Do people not want to enjoy music and songs at the theaters, to intoxicate themselves in the taverns, or to revel in the pleasure quarters? Or would they rather take to joyless solitude, idling their way alone to purchase and then read your fiction?"

To which I replied, "Not so. Pleasure quarters are costly, drinking is unhealthy, and music and songs can be clamorous, unlike reading stories, which is economical and relaxing. . . ."

This is a kind of manifesto. When the May Fourth culturists and more recent scholars in mainland China criticized the Mandarin School's literary orientation, they almost always cited Wang's words, elaborating on the meaning of "pleasure". They ignored the clear implication that reading fiction can be a relaxing and healthy

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pleasurable activity, and that an important function of fiction is to exert a beneficial
influence on the reader's temperament and character.

Zhou Shoujuan worked hard as Wang's helpmate in editing Saturday as well as
writing for it. From 1915 to 1919, he was associated with the publishing house
Zhonghua shuju, and then with The Times Newspaper and The Shen Newspaper, writing
translations, editing others, and contributing essays. The following year he became the
editor of Unfettered Talk, a literary column of The Shen Newspaper, which position he
held for twelve years. From then on, his editorial career became very active. While
working for Ziyou tan, Zhou also revived Saturday and edited several other literary
magazines, including Youxi shijie 游戏世界 (World of Recreation), Banyue 半月
(Fortnightly), Ziluolan huapian 紫罗兰花片 (Violet Petals), Ziputao 紫葡萄 (Violet
Grapes), and others.

In 1916 Saturday had stopped publication after a hundred issues in 1916. When
Zhou took pains to revive it in 1921, he decided that it should now not be purely devoted
to fiction but become a kind of miscellany, whose contents would also include bits of
humour, pen jottings, maxims, pieces of news, etc. to cater best to the manifold tastes of
readers. To ensure quality and stability for the magazine, he attracted several other
writers and editors to it, who became regular contributors. But fundamentally the
magazine continued its founder's (Wang's) policies and aims.

Saturday's editorial ideas were developed further by Zhou in yet another new
literary magazine begun by him in June 1921, Youxi shijie 游戏世界 (World of
Recreation), which he coedited with Zhao Tiakuang 趙苕䊂. In the preface to its
opening issue, he explicates the meaning of the two characters that make up the word
youxi 游戲 (recreation): you 游 is derived from a phrase in Confucius’ Analects, "you yu yi" 游于藝 (Let relaxation and enjoyment be found in the arts), and xi 戏 from a passage in Master Mao's edition of Classics of Poetry, "shanxi xuexi, buwei nuexi" 善戲誚兮，不为虐兮 (how cleverly he chaffed and joked, and yet was never rude)\(^\text{131}\). He continues by pointing out that those who regard recreation as lacking in seriousness and therefore undesirable (indeed as a "scourge") fail to see that the word youyi 游戲 is associated with mental and moral cultivation, and that shanxi xuexi means that instruction should be in a manner that is delightful. The ultimate purpose of his magazine was to make a positive contribution to society and help alleviate or cure some of its problems. But literature is not propaganda. It exercises its influence on its readers imperceptibly by its artistic enchantment. Because the views which Zhou Shoujuan expressed here appear to answer those of his May Fourth critics, and apply to most of the magazines he edited, they will be discussed in more detail later after the survey of his editorial career is completed.

Both Saturday and World of Recreation were highly successful. Early every Saturday morning, large numbers of people were waiting at the Zhonghua Book Co. to obtain their copy when it opened. This encouraged Zhou to start yet another literary magazine which he called Banyue (Fortnightly). It lasted from September 1921 to 1933, though it changed its name to Ziluolan 紫羅蘭 (Violet) in 1925, and to Xin jiating 新家庭 (New Family) in 1930. One novel feature was its front cover printed from copperplate in three colours, another the smaller but more elegant format in thirty-two mo, which soon became a model followed by other magazines. Striking to the eye were special issues

entitled "Spring," "Summer," "Children," etc. Then in 1922, he again tried something different, a personal monthly that he called Zuluolan huapian 紫罗兰花片 (Violet Petals, 1922-24). It printed only his own works with coloured illustrations. Zhou took great care to make the magazine look attractive. The name "violet petal" was derived from his first love while he was a high-school student. The magazine's publication caused a stir in literary circles. Several men and women writers sent inscribed poems to Zhou as congratulations.

Several further magazines edited by Zhou from the mid-twenties on include Shanghai huabao 上海画报 (The Shanghai Pictorial), Liangyou huabao 良友画报 (The Liangyou Pictorial), Zipotao huabao 紫罗兰画报 (Pictorial of Violet Grapes), a literary supplement of Shenbao called Chunqiu 春秋 (Spring and Autumn), weekly magazines for Shenbao, including one for children, Ertong 兒童, etc. His career continued until 1949 when he resigned from The Shen Newspaper after thirty years.

c) Bao's and Zhou's Contribution as Literary Editors summarized

This survey of Bao's and Zhou's editorial careers shows the important role they played in the remarkable development of literary magazines during the 1910s and early 20s, and their substantial contribution to the flourishing of literature and culture. The many reforms they introduced in magazine size, page layout, type-setting, pictures, colour illustrations, advertisements, etc. endowed literary magazines with physical attractiveness and vitality. At the same time the two editors were a boon to Shanghai's young writers. In their magazines they encouraged without bias a variety of individual
literary styles, language forms, genres, and subject matter. Both Bao and Zhou used their editorships to foster and train new amateur writers, recalling how the young Zhou Shoujuan himself during his early teens received guidance and strong support from Bao. They developed a large circle of friends among writers and other editors who shared their basic literary ideas and in turn supported their initiatives. The competition that arose between them was creative. When Bao and Zhou later came to be called leading members of the Mandarin Duck School, one obvious reason was that they printed so many works by other "Mandarin Duck" writers, and that their own works were printed in "Mandarin Duck" magazines by their literary friends.

Their aim was not to advocate any ideology but to delight and instruct by delighting, or to use Zhou's own term, by "recreation". In entertaining their readers, they never compromised traditional moral principles at a time when the great impact and attraction of Western mores and values encouraged excessive liberality among some of their contemporaries. When May Fourth culturists began attacking them for not devoting their magazines to the cause of serious reform but only to "recreation" and "delight", Bao and Zhou did not react, because they knew that their market of readers was not especially desirous of ideology. (As we saw, Bao withdrew from his editorial career for other reasons, while Zhou continued successfully for decades longer).

In practice the magazines which Bao and Zhou edited were highly successful, enjoying a large circulation. It became more and more obvious that readers favoured them far more than those by the May Fourth culturalists. Eventually it became clear even to some of the latter that in their eagerness to educate readers they had ignored to such an extent the need to make their magazines and stories artistically attractive that their
readers turned away from them. From the mid-twenties on, some leading May Fourth writers started to worry about this shortcoming. Lu Xun, for instance, wrote in the postscript of his Benliu 奔流 (Current): "Speaking of 'delight', it has become a kind of accusation. But art should give delight to every kind of human being and class. I hope some day the ban [for 'delight'] will be lifted". 132

It evidently took another well-known May Fourth writer, Zhu Ziqing 朱自清 (1898-1948), much longer (until 1947) to raise the same problem, in his essay "On Seriousness", where he emphasized the need for literature to "delight". Interestingly enough, there he no longer attacked Mandarin writers:

The purpose of Mandarin School fiction has been to provide pastime after tea and drink. This purpose it actually shares with orthodox Chinese fiction. From very early on, Chinese fiction gave first place to zhiguai 志怪 (recording anomalies) and chuanqi 傳奇 (tales of the marvellous). The content of neither guai 怪 (anomalies) nor qi 奇 (strange, wonderous) is serious. Collections of short stories by Ming writers have for their titles Sanyan erpai 三言二拍 (Three Collections of "Words" and Two of "Striking the Table")133 . . . It is obvious that the emphasis in the Erpai collections is on "strange". Although the entire work Sanyan emphasizes quansu 勸俗 (instruction of ordinary people), yet it begins by surprising its readers before turning to instruction . . . The basic content and aim of Sanyan is "strange". And "strange" is for people's pastime after tea and wine.

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At present, all sorts of yellow and pink magazines are being driven like scudding clouds by gusts of wind across the sky. This is of course a decadent trend during a disturbed time. However, if writers in their works pay attention only to seriousness, ignore artistry, and are concerned only with ideology, their stiff drawn-out faces will not be loved by readers. . . .

What Zhu here calls yellow and pink magazines does obviously not apply to those edited by Zhou Shoujuan and his close literary friends. Although Bao and Zhou have been called "masters of sentimental fiction," in moral matters they were always serious. What they wrote about prostitutes never included anything that smacked of pornography. One may find salacious sexual descriptions in Chinese classical novels and short stories but never in Bao's or Zhou's magazines or their own stories.

11. Bao's and Zhou's own Fiction

Having surveyed Bao's and Zhou's work as translators and editors, I now turn to their own fiction, mainly short stories but also some novels. This will be again a broad survey, concentrating on subject matter and themes, since the following two chapters will discuss aspects of their artistry in detail.

The 1910s was the period when Bao and Zhou, except for their translations of novels, concentrated on writing short stories, both in the vernacular and classical

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133 *Sanyan erpai* is actually the title of five combined collections of stories, which were edited separately by Feng Menglong 馮夢麟 (*c.* 1620-27) and Ling Mengchu 凌蒙初 (1628, 1632).

language forms. As for their subject matter and style of writing, Bao Tianxiao came to be called the master of *kuqing xiaoshuo* 唐情小说 (bitterly sentimental fiction), while Zhou Shoujuan was the master of *aiqing xiaoshuo* 抱情小说 (sadly sentimental fiction). The majority of both Bao's and Zhou's stories have love for their subject matter, but their treatment is quite different in that Bao wrote objectively, usually employing a story teller or omniscient narrator, while in Zhou Shoujuan's stories the point of view tends to be subjective, conveying his own feelings as he experienced unfulfilled love. That is why he often uses a first-person narrator. However, love was not the only subject chosen by the two. Several of Bao's stories deal with moral and contemporary social problems and some of Zhou's with patriotism. Both continued writing short stories well beyond the twenties. The large number of short stories both Bao and Zhou wrote are scattered throughout the issues of a variety of magazines. Only selections appeared during the 1910s in anthologies.\(^{135}\)

a) Bao's Fiction

The first of Bao's short stories to arouse attention was *Yilun* 一缕麻 (A Thread of Linen), which appeared in 1909 in the second issue of *The Fiction Times*. It is a short

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\(^{135}\) Zhou's *Shoujuan duanpian xiaoshuo* 瘦鰍短篇小說 (A Collection of Shoujuan's Short Stories, 1918) was followed in the early twenties by several books of his short stories and essays: *Ziluolan ji* 紫羅蘭集 (A Collection of Violets, Shanghai: Dadong shuju, 2 vols, 1922), *Yuehen* 月痕 (Scars of the Moon, Shanghai: Dadong shuju, 2 vols, 1924), and *Ziluolan waiji* 紫羅蘭外集 (A Continuation of the Collection of Violets, Shanghai: Dadong shuju, 2 vols, 1924). These were followed in 1935 by *Ziluolan yanying congkan* 紫羅蘭言情叢刊 (A Collection of Violet Love Stories, Shanghai: Shi huan shuju, 2 vols, 1935). He also edited collections of short stories by other writers. According to Yuan Jin in *Yuanyang hudiepai*, there was also an early volume of Bao Tianxiao's short stories and one containing stories by both Bao and Zhou. But he provides no date nor publication data and I was not able to find any record of them in North American libraries.
story of only 1500 characters. Written in classical language, its style is beautifully
smooth, elegant and vivid. The story deals with the relationship of three characters, the
heroine, her fiancé by family arrangement, and a university student. The setting is
contemporary, a time when under the influence of Western ideas, young people in
China's cities were longing to free themselves from traditional marriage arrangements by
their families. Bao's readers found a deep cultural significance in the story's characters.
They saw the university student as typifying modern westernized civilization, while the
heroine's fiancé represented tradition, and they identified themselves with the young
woman who after studying both Chinese and Western culture was wavering between the
two. At the story's end, the heroine sides, not easily, with the Chinese tradition. Bao
was writing about a hot issue. The ending reflects the perplexing choice between
Chinese and Western culture which contemporary people were facing. How could one
integrate the best from both? At the time, a dominant idea among intellectuals was
Zhongxue weiti, xixue weiyong 中學為體, 西學為用 (Chinese learning for essence,
Western learning for utility).\textsuperscript{136} Bao's story was to remain popular for many years. Ten
years later, in 1919, Mei Lanfang 梅蘭芳, the famous actor and producer, adapted the
story to Beijing opera, and another decade later, Yuan Xuefen 袁雪芬, the popular star,
adapted it to Yue ju 越劇 (Shaoxing opera).

Bao's longer short story or novella, \textit{Bu guo} 補過 (Remedying a Fault), published
in the \textit{Grand Magazine} in 1914\textsuperscript{137}, was inspired by Tolstoy's \textit{Resurrection}. The story's
central character, Liu Jiren 柳吉人, is vice-president of a hospital. The president has

\textsuperscript{136} An influential concept proposed by Zhang Zhidong 張之洞 (1837-1909), famous educator of the late
Qing dynasty, in his \textit{Quanxue pian} 勤學篇 (On Encouraging Learning, 1898).

been planning to marry his daughter to him and to send him to Germany for further
studies. However, by accident Liu Jiren runs into his former love who five years earlier
bore a child by him after he had left her. Her pregnancy caused her to lose her job and
she became so destitute that she entered a brothel, though now she is working in a silk
factory. Learning about all her suffering Liu is in a state of moral shock. In order to
remedy his fault, he withdraws the marriage proposal and declines the offer to study in
Germany. But by correcting one fault he produces another. The president's daughter
falls into despair and enters a nunnery. Bao's novella was one of the first works of fiction
in the vernacular language that abandoned zhanghuiti 章回體 (serial-style), that is the
tradition of heading each chapter of a novel or novella with a couplet that conveys the
gist of its content. He also applied narrative devices such as flashback and time reverse
which he had learned from Western fiction.

Several of Bao's short stories convey a vivid picture of the lives of ordinary
people in the Shanghai of the time; for instance: Zai jiacengli 在夾層裏 (In the
Mezzanine), Youren zhi qi 友人之妻 (Wives of Friends), and Qinian gongzhai piao
七年公債票 (Seven Years Saving Bonds), the last two published in Fiction Pictorial.138

Of interest, too, is that a number of Bao's stories deal with the position of women
in society, their fate, their rights, their desire for independence. In a series in the Grand
Magazine which he called Qingyan 情騐 (Tests of Love)139, Bao treats the subject from
different angles. The first story shows how a love test causes the loss of love in the end.
A woman conceals her feelings towards a man whom she loves and who loves her in

order to test his love. But she does this for so long that she loses him. The moral is that women should actively treasure and protect what they possess; they should not just passively wait for the man's decision. The second story of the series has the opposite outcome. Feeling insecure of her love quest, an engaged girl devises a plan to test her fiancé. She then discovers his true love for her and happily marries him.

As will be discussed in detail in the following chapter, many of Bao's stories are interesting for their application of narrative techniques and devices which Bao learned from the Western works of fiction that he helped to translate. Bao was one of the earliest Chinese writers to use these devices, in some cases the first. For instance though the occasional use of letters contributing to the development of a story was a familiar age-old tradition in the Chinese novel, Bao's short story Minghong 冥鸿 (Letters to the Nether World), which appeared in 1914 in the Grand Magazine, was the first one to apply the epistolary method throughout: the whole story is told in eleven letters. Bao was also second in China only to Wu Jianren in writing whole stories in dialogue form. Except for a few lines at the beginning, he applies this method in his story Dianhua 電話 (Telephone). In Xiaoxue jiaoshi zhi qi 小學教師之妻 (The Wife of a Primary School Teacher), written cooperatively with Xu Zhuoai in 1911, Bao to the best of my knowledge for the first time in China conveys the whole story from the point of view of a third-person narrator. It is true that third-person perspective was used by Lin Shu in parts of his late Qing novels written in classical language. But the claim by critics that it

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was May Fourth writers who first made conscious use of the technique of third person limited perspective, or character-focalization, is clearly mistaken.\(^\text{143}\)

After 1920, Bao turned from editing and short story writing to longer fiction. Much earlier in his life, in 1907, inspired by Zeng Pu's 曾樞 (1872-1935) late Qing novel Niehaihua 蛟海花 (A Flower in the Sea of Sins), he had attempted to write a novel called Bixuehua 碧血花 (A Flower Soaked in the Blood of Martyrs) with the first modern woman revolutionist Qiu Jin 秋瑾 (1879-1907) as heroine. But only its first four chapters ever appeared in print.\(^\text{144}\) Bao was evidently not yet ready for such a long work. Qiu Jin's actual activities were too local to make her a suitable character for linking uprisings in different parts of China against the Qing dynasty.

The novel conceived by Bao in 1920, Liufangji 留芳記 (The Story of Lanfang) was to develop a similar basic idea, but this time Bao prepared himself for it with a full year's research and worked out a sound overall plot. The novel's central character is based on a famous Beijing opera singer, Mei Lanfang. In this historical novel, his life reflects the great social and political changes of the last years of the Qing dynasty and the first years of the Republic. However, its most successfully delineated characters are not the protagonist but rather certain key figures of the early Republic, especially Yuan Shikai 袁世凱 (1852-1916), Wu Peifu 吳佩孚 (1878-1939), and Tang Shaoyi 唐紹儀 (1860-1934). Composed in twenty chapters in the style of zhanghui ti, The Story of Lanfang 留芳記 was published in 1922. It has been regarded as one of the greatest historical novels of modern China.


\(^{144}\) Serialized in Xiao shuo lin 小說林 (Grove of Fiction), issues 6 to 9 (1907).
Another successful novel by Bao was *Shanghai Chunqiu* 上海春秋 (Shanghai Spring and Autumn, 1926). This time the inspiration came from another master of the late Qing novel, Wu Jianren's *Ershinian mudu zhi guaixianzhuang* 二十年目睹之怪現狀 (Eyewitness Reports on Strange Things from the Past Twenty Years, 1910). Unlike *Liufangji* which focussed on characters of the upper classes, this one deals with ordinary people in their daily lives. As the title indicates, the novel provides a rich genre painting of metropolitan Shanghai in the early twentieth century. While the novel lacks a unified structure, its depiction of characters of different ages, professions, positions, and gender is detailed and lively. Bao's knowledge of the city and its people helped him create a social study of great value. The novel received high praise from Lin Shu and from Hsia Chi-an 夏濟安 (1916-1965) in America. Much later, during the war with Japan, Bao wrote several further novels. These were designed to strengthen the resolve not to surrender to the Japanese, but artistically they are of less interest.

b) Zhou Shoujuan's Fiction

Both in content and style Zhou Shoujuan's short stories are different from Bao's. His first story that aroused critical attention was *Xingxiang zaijian* 行相再見 (Good Bye), published in 1914.\(^{145}\) It is about a young woman whose mind is torn by a deep conflict which ends tragically. She needs to decide whether to kill her lover, a secretary in the British consulate in Shanghai, because he killed her father years ago, or whether to continue to love him and thus betray her father's memory. Finally she revenges her father.

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by poisoning the man but follows this act by committing suicide. The story shows the strong influence of Western literature, especially in the detailed depiction of the heroine's struggle with her dilemma.

Passionate love that is frustrated and ends in tragedy is the subject matter of the majority of Zhou Shoujuan's short stories. This is why he came to be called a master of sentimental fiction. Zhou's contemporary Xu Jinfu 許塵父 (dates unknown) described this way the meaning of "sentimental fiction" that prevailed during the 1910s:

This is a kind of sentimental fiction in which neither hero nor heroine are able to achieve fulfillment in their love. A writer becomes a master of this kind of fiction if he is able to make his readers cry with his stories. 146

In Zhou's case the primary inspiration for this kind of subject matter and mood came from his own unfulfilled love experience. His sincere passionate love for a girl while still at high school was thwarted by the girl's family who arranged a forced marriage for her. Other stories by Zhou also come close to depicting their author's personal experience and feelings; and he continued to express the sentiment of unfulfilled love in his stories for many years. Closest perhaps to recording Zhou's own experience and feelings is a story he published in 1915, Wuye juansheng 午夜鴿聲 (The Cuckoo's Call at Midnight). 147 When in this story the young woman character pleads with her former lover not to write such sentimental fiction anymore because it makes her so very sad, her lover answers that he does not do so because he likes this kind of fiction, but because his whole mind is filled with sadness. Therefore, whenever he holds his pen,

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146 Xu Jinfu 許塵父, "Yangqing xiaoshuo tan" 言情小說談 (On Sentimental Fiction), in Xiaoshuo ribao 小說日報 (Fiction Daily), February 16, 1923.
"naturally, the pages will be filled with wailing wind and weeping rain. In this I am utterly helpless".\textsuperscript{148}

At this point one has reason to ask whether Zhou is writing biography or fiction, whether the power of his own emotion left him "utterly helpless" and hence not always capable of the detachment which art requires. If it were true that the majority of Zhou's stories carry sentimentality to such an extreme, the attack on them by the May Fourth culturists as "Yanlei biti xiaoshuo" 眼泪鼻涕小说 (tears and snivels fiction)\textsuperscript{149} would appear justified. Fortunately many move deeply yet are under firm artistic control.

A good example is the story 	extit{Jiuhua zhangli} 九華帳裏 (Inside the Jiuhua Bed-Curtain),\textsuperscript{150} which at the same time serves well to illustrate how far removed Zhou's stories were from cheap sexy fiction. The description of a wedding night, based on his own experience, is accompanied by an illustration which shows the new couple in formal wedding dress sitting face to face in their warm and beautiful bridal chamber. Behind them stands an ornamental bed surrounded by a radiant silk bed-curtain. Yet while the story is full of passion and sentiment, sex and love-making are left entirely to the reader's imagination. The real subject of the story is Zhou's deep feeling even during his wedding night for his mother and grandmother who, after his father had died at a very young age had borne great hardship in raising their family. It is a truly moving story, reminiscent of Chekhov.

\textsuperscript{148} Ibid. p.15.

\textsuperscript{149} Fan Boqun, \textit{Libaitiu de hudiemeng} (A Butterfly Dream of the Saturday School) (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1989). p.165.

\textsuperscript{150} Zhou Shoujuan, \textit{Inside the Jiuhua Bed-Curtain}, The Fiction Pictorial 6 (1917).
Zhou found that the first-person narrator was the most effective narrative mode to generate the intimacy of such feelings and to intensify the story's emotional impact on the reader. Other examples of its effective use include, besides *The Cuckoo's Call at Midnight*, *Cihen mianmian wujuqi* (This Regret Goes on and on Forever), 

151 *Jiutu zhi qi* 酒徒之妻 (The Winebibber's Wife),

152 and *Inside the Jiuhua Bed-curtain*. Focussing in these stories on the protagonist's states of mind, as Zhou did, his use of the classical language was well suited (as will be discussed further in chapter Four).

Direct depiction of the psychological inner world is not a tradition in Chinese fiction. Characters' states of mind were customarily indicated by their actions, facial expressions, dialogue, and surrounding scenery. During the late Qing era, psychological depiction was barely beginning to be used. But during the early Republic, it became favoured by those writers who later were dubbed the Mandarin School. Among those who experimented with this new method of characterization, Su Manshu and Xu Zhenya as well as Zhou himself were impressively successful. An interesting experiment was the use throughout of a second-person addressee in Zhou's short story, *Siyuan 私愿* (A Secret Wish).

Equally notable is Zhou's use of other narrative devices from Western models. He was a great admirer of the artistic skills displayed in de Maupassant's short stories,

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151 ______. *This Regret Goes on, Saturday* 16 (1914): 1-9.


and paid particular attention to their structure. The structure of traditional Chinese short stories tended to resemble that of a mini-novel. But Zhou, inspired by de Maupassant, sometimes gives us a cross section of a character's life, as in *Chouchang* (Disconsolate),\(^{155}\) sometimes highlights a theme by juxtaposing two opposite scenes, as in *Yanxia* (Under the Eaves),\(^{156}\) and sometimes contrasts the behaviour of two characters on the same occasion, as in *Zhenjia aiqing* (True and False Love).\(^{157}\)

In other short stories he applies the method of a diary form. Examples are *Wangguon zhi riji* 亡國奴之日記 (Diary of a Slave in a Conquered Country),\(^{158}\) *Duanchang riji* 斷腸日 記 (Diary of a Heartbroken Person),\(^{159}\) *Zhuzhu riji* 珠珠日記 (Diary of Zhuzhu),\(^{160}\) and *Maiguonu zhi riji* 賣國奴之日記 (Diary of a Traitor).\(^{161}\)

As will be shown in the following chapter, Zhou Shoujuan’s imitation of Western narrative devices and techniques was far from absolute. He adapted them considerably so as to make them acceptable to his readers. In this he was so successful that his short stories enjoyed an enthusiastic reception, unlike the later ones by May Fourth writers who aimed at more complete westernization. Some May Fourth writers indeed, for instance Mao Dun 茅盾 (Shen Yanbing), attacked Zhou Shoujuan and his companions for their too limited or partial adoption of Western models in the short story, and for continuing to

\(^{155}\) ZHOU SHOUJUAN. *Under the Eaves, Fiction Pictorial* 1 (1917).

\(^{156}\) ZHOU SHOUJUAN. *True and False Love, Saturday* 5-6 (1914).


\(^{159}\) ZHOU SHOUJUAN. *Diary of Zhuzhu, Saturday* 73 (1915):1-13.

\(^{160}\) ZHOU SHOUJUAN. *Diary of a Traitor to his Country* (Shanghai: Zilan bianyishe, 1919).
write in the tradition of *The Dream of the Red Chamber, The Water Margin, and The Romance of the Three Kingdoms.* On the contrary, Zhou deserves great credit for his experiments of integrating Western narrative modes and devices with China's own tradition in fiction.

Besides love stories, Zhou Shoujuan wrote a number of patriotic stories, two of which in diary form have already been mentioned: *Diary of a Slave in a Conquered Land and Diary of a Traitor.* Others are *Zuguo zhong yan* (My Motherland is More Important than Anything), *Wei guo xisheng* (To Die for one's Country), *Zuguo zhi hui* (The National Emblem), *Aiguo zhi mu* (A Patriotic Mother). These stories express Zhou's hope that China will no longer be bullied and humiliated by other countries, that it will become both strong and democratic. Not surprisingly, May Fourth critics responded to them much more favourably than to his love stories. Artistically, however, they are inferior. They read more like documents than stories.

### 12. Bao Tianxiao and Zhou Shoujuan in Later Life

After the end of World War II both Bao and Zhou continued to publish some

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164 ______, *To Die for one's Country, Saturday 56*.


prose and poetry but little fiction. In 1946, Bao Tianxiao left Shanghai for Taiwan, and in 1950 he moved to Hongkong where he lived until 1973. There he did publish a novel in 1953, *Xin baishe zhuang* 新白蛇傳 (A New Story of the White Snake). Much later, in 1971 when he was 96, he published the first volume of his reminiscences, *Chuanyinglou huiyi lu* 釧影樓回憶錄 (Reminiscences of the Bracelet Shadow Chamber), followed by the second volume which came out shortly before his death in 1973. While focussing on his own earlier life, these books are an important record of the cultural transformation that occurred especially during the first decades of the twentieth century. Because of the political suppression of the so-called Mandarin Duck School, its members left little authentic record of their editorial policies and literary practice. Bao's recollections are therefore a basic source for literary and historical researchers of the period. Bao's publisher, Ke Rongxin 柯榮欣, commented on these volumes in the Preface:

> We think that these recollections in three hundred thousand characters contain indeed the most valuable materials we have on the social, economic, and especially the cultural history of the late Qing and early Republican periods.  

Amazingly enough, Bao wrote another book during the last six months of his long life, *Yishizhuxing de bainian bianqian* 衣食住行的百年變遷 (Changes in Clothing, Food, Shelter, and Transportation during the last Hundred Years). Written in beautiful prose, this is a collection of essays with interesting accounts of folk customs.

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167 The title alludes to Bao's mother who by giving her golden bracelets to a close friend saved his life.


169 Bao, *Yishizhuxing de bainian bianqian* 衣食住行的百年變遷 (Changes of Clothing, Food, Shelter and Transportation), (Hongkong: Dahua chubanshe, 1974).
The remainder of Zhou's life was quite different. He moved to Suzhou in 1932, though from there he regularly commuted to Shanghai to continue editing Shenbao. When Mao established the People's Republic in 1949, Zhou resigned his position, ending his editorial career. From then on he concentrated on his favourite hobby, horticulture, and published several collections of essays on it, among them Huaqian suoji 花前琐記 (Trivial Notes on Flowers),\(^{170}\) and Huahua caocao 花花草草 (Flowers and Plants),\(^{171}\) as well as Xianyun ji 行雲記 (A Book of Random Travels).\(^{172}\) Some of these were published in book form only after the end of the Cultural Revolution: Suzhou youzong 蘇州游踪 (Footsteps in Suzhou),\(^{173}\) Huamu congzhong 花木叢中 (Among Thickets of Blossoming Trees),\(^{174}\) and Nianhua ji 把花記 (Toying with Flowers).\(^{175}\)

Not being able to endure political persecution, in 1968, the third year of the Cultural Revolution, he drowned himself in the well from which he had been watering his famous garden.


\(^{171}\) _____, *Flowers and Plants* (Shanghai: Wenhua chubanshe, 1958).

\(^{172}\) _____, *A Book of Random Travels* (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 1962).


\(^{175}\) _____, *Toying with Flowers* (Shanghai: Wenhua chubanshe, 1983).
Chapter Three

Narrative Devices

This chapter will examine some of the narrative techniques and devices which Bao Tianxiao and Zhou Shoujuan applied in their short stories, especially those they learned from western fiction, and the ways in which they integrated them with traditional forms and practices.

During a thousand years of development, Chinese narrative discourse had accumulated a variety of artistic devices, methods, and techniques, through the process of individual and collective creation. The composition of such Chinese masterpieces of fiction as Sanguozhi yanyi 三國志演義 (Romance of the Three Kingdom), Jinpingmei 金瓶梅 (The Golden Lotus), The Dream of the Red Chamber, Laiozhai zhiyi 聊齋志異 (Strange Stories from the Leisure Studio), and many others marked not only new developments in traditional methods but also remarkable innovations and breakthroughs. Patterns developed of certain narrative devices and methods that were passed on from generation to generation, patterns which not surprisingly later came to be regarded as basic characteristics of traditional fiction. Most notable among these are the story-telling mode, the omniscient narrator, and the zhanghuiti 章回體 (serial-style).

With the exception of chuanqi tales, early Chinese fiction had always been narrated by a story-teller. It retained several basic characteristics, both narratological and stylistic, of oral story-telling, including of course the omniscient story-teller himself and the arrangement of the episodes of the plot in a simple chronological time-frame. The
story-teller mode brought with it a set of stereotype usages. In the novel, the serial style is usually used as a frame for each major unit or chapter. The title of each chapter is in the form of a poetic couplet that conveys the chapter's theme. Then follows a poem of four or more lines which indicates the chief happenings in the chapter, and the chapter ends with another poem. Although from the Ming dynasty on writers aimed their fictional works at readers, and great efforts were made to personalize the narrator, or to vary the monologue of the story-teller, the convention of simulating oral performance was so strong in China that it lasted for many centuries. Thus Zhao Yiheng 趙穀衡 comments in his *The Uneasy Narrator*: "Despite . . . brilliant efforts, the narratological homogeneity of Chinese traditional fiction remained oppressively stable, and radical change in the cultural strata of Chinese fiction did not occur until after the late Qing period, when a narratological revolution finally took place."176

If one applies Zhao's statement to the short story, it requires at least some change in emphasis, for some basic developments occurred before 1910,177 although total abandonment of tradition took place only later. Relevant to this issue is the revival of the short story in China under Western influence. Though translations of Western short stories appeared in large numbers only after the beginning of the Republic in 1911, already in 1908 the literary magazine *Fiction Monthly* in its notice soliciting contributions particularly asked for short stories (1908), and the *Grove of Fiction* magazine set up a special column for short stories in the same year. From 1909 on,

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several other magazines began preferring short stories to novels.

At the same time the late Qing writer Wu Jianren 吴趼人 experimented in his short stories with combinations of traditional and Western narrative methods. The promotion of the short story paved the way for further reforms during the early years of the Republic, when a group of new young writers advanced further the process of literary modernization. Prominent among them were first Bao Tianxiao and a few years later Zhou Shoujuan, who stood out for their bold experimentation. Some of their short stories appeared in a hybrid form of the traditional chuanqi and huaben; others show a complete break from tradition; and still others combine traditional with Western narrative methods in interesting ways. In this chapter, I will analyze Bao and Zhou's short stories from two aspects: first the position of the narrator; secondly structure and narrative time.

1. Perspectives: the Position of the Narrator

The following basic differentiation provides a start in discussing this subject:

"The two chief narrative perspectives in space, within the story or outside it, take their names from the grammatical stance employed by the narrator: first-person narration for a narrative perspective inside the story, third-person narration for one outside." In traditional third-person narratives, the narrator is usually omniscient: he or she knows all the characters and can anticipate events because of knowing the story's outcome from the beginning. The narrator knows whether any of the characters are hiding something

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important. However, in some stories the narrator's knowledge is more limited, to that of one of the characters or in other ways. The narrator in first person narratives being inside the story, one would normally expect his or her knowledge and thus perspective to be more confined.

The word "narrator" derives from the Latin word for story teller, and according to recent standard works that define terms of literary criticism, like *The Harper Handbook to Literature*, the narrator in a work of fiction is the teller of its story. However in practice, "narrator" and "story-teller" (or "teller of a story") have not always been used synonymously, and therefore some simple distinction is desirable.

The marked majority of traditional Chinese vernacular fiction until after 1900, both short stories and novels, are told by a professional story-teller. This teller is endowed with a clear story-teller mode and voice, that remind Western readers of the tellers of ancient epic and of more recent oral narratives in parts of the world isolated from the effects of modern civilization; with the difference that the original oral mode had been adapted in China centuries ago by literary writers. The teller of these stories, far from participating in them himself, from time to time exercises authorial intrusion, "authorial" since he becomes more and more closely identified with the story's author or reviser. His comments are consistently serious, never consciously or unconsciously ironic. His position is at the level of "extradiegetic-heterodiegetic," Genette's terms for defining the narrator's status in Homer.180

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179 Ibid., p. 302.

By contrast, the term "narrator" is a much broader one that includes besides the story teller, as described, Genette's other "statuses" of narrator, such as the one who tells his own story, as in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, and those who recount what they see from a limited and perhaps prejudiced point of view, as in Henry James and later twentieth-century writers. Whether old or more modern like the latter, these other methods of narration are absent in most traditional Chinese vernacular fiction.

In earlier centuries in China, the basic forms of the short story in classical language, the *chuanqi* tale and the briefer *biji* story, are often told by an omniscient third-person narrator, though one who is not, as in *huaben* stories, a traditional story-teller, nor one who necessarily represents the author's point of view. In some instances, however, the first-person narrative mode was applied. Examples are *Zhou Qin xingji* (Travels in Zhou Qin) by Wei Guan 章煥 (*fl.* 800) and *Xie Xiaoe zhuang* 謝小娥傳 (Story of Xie Xiaoe) by Li Gongzuo 李公佐 (ca. 770-ca. 848) from the Tang dynasty, in which the narrator relates what he saw, what he experienced, or what he was told. The much later Qing work *Fusheng liujj* 浮生六記 (Six Sketches from My Floating Life) by Shen Fu (1762-1803) employs the first-person narrator in what is a kind of fictional autobiography. A few stories also use a narrator with limited knowledge and perspective. In those instances he relates what he witnesses rather than what he experiences.

The vernacular *huaben* stories were always narrated by a professional and, by his very nature, omniscient story-teller, even when in later times they were addressed to readers rather than listeners. The only qualification that is needed here is that in some cases, the story-telling narrator himself chooses from time to time to change narrative

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modes and switch perspectives for the sake of creating an intimate relationship with the reader and vivifying the narrative discourse. For brief periods he then applies limited third-person perspective. But the narrator of course remains in total control.

When the vernacular novel developed in China from the *huaben* story tradition, it took over from it the omniscient narrator but with interesting variations. Already in *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms* by Luo Guanzhong 羅貫中 (fl.1350; earliest extant edition 1522), the narrator several times describes a scene or incident from a single character's point of view. The early seventeenth century critic Jin Shentan 金聖嘆 (1610-1661) in his commentary on another early novel, Shi Naian's 施耐庵 *Shuihu zhuan* 水滸傳 (The Water Margin, ca.1330), praised how sometimes episodes in this novel are presented from the point of view of one of the characters, and much later Zhiyan Zhai 脂硯齋 (Red Inkstone) in the eighteenth century commented in a similar way in his edition of *The Dream of the Red Chamber*. But what is most indicative of the important place which early critics assigned to devices of perspective in the art of fiction is the way Jin in his own edition of *The Water Margin* purposefully adjusted perspectives.

The following example shows how Jin changed from omniscient narration to one by a third person with a limited perspective. A passage from chapter twenty-one of *The Water Margin* in the earlier Rongyutang 容與堂 edition reads:

> When [Yan Poxi 閻婆惜] was talking to herself upstairs, she heard the

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182 In chapter three, Zhiyan Zhai admired how the writer described three characters from Daiyu's point of view. Zhiyan Zhai, *Zhiyan Zhai Honglou meng ji ping* 脂硯齋紅樓夢辯評 (The Commentaries on *The Dream of the Red Chamber* by Zhiyan Zhai), comp., Yu Pingbo 俞平伯 (Shanghai: Wenyi lianhe chubanshe, 1954), p. 75.
sound of the door opening below. The old woman asked: "Who is it?" Song Jiang
宋江 answered: "It's me." The old woman said: "I told you it was too early but
you would not believe me. Now it is too early after all, and yet you are
back! Now pray return and sleep with your sister until it is dawn." Song Jiang
did not answer and had already come straight up the stairs.

Hearing it was Song Jiang who had come back, the woman Poxi in great
haste wrapped the tinkling girdle, the knife and the purse all up together, hid them
in the quilt, turned herself to the wall and pretended to snore loudly. . . . 183

In Jin's edition of the work, which he called the Fifth Book of Talent, the paragraph
appears in chapter twenty with the following modifications and interruptions by his own
comments, here presented in parentheses:

Even as she [Poxi] was upstairs talking back and forth to herself she heard
(Wonderful! Here the focus is not on Song Jiang's coming back, but on how the
woman hears it. Marvelous writing! ) a loud squeak of a door opening below and
the old woman calling from her bed, "Who is that?" and from the front of the door
came a voice, "It's me." From the bed a voice came again, "I told you it was too
early but you would not believe me. Now it is too early after all, and yet you are
back! Now pray return and sleep with your sister until it is dawn." But there was
no answer from the other. He had already come straight up the stairs.
(Everything that happened was heard [by the woman] This is marvellous; it is like
'covering the lamp so as to let in a beam of moonlight').

183 Shi Naian 施耐庵, Rongyutang Shuihuzhuan 榮與堂水浒傳 (Water Margin), vol. 1 (Shanghai: Guji
The woman Poxi, hearing it was Song Jiang...  

A comment on the phrase contrasting the light of the lamp with the beam of moonlight is desirable. If the lamp that lights up a whole room is lowered or switched off, and only a little moonlight is allowed to enter it, one will see only what the moonlight illuminates. The lamplight is an image of the omniscient narrator's perspective, while the beam of moonlight suggests another person's limited perspective, here Po Xi's. Jin's use of this image shows how aware he was of the shift in perspective when it changes to the limited one of the story's characters, though in practice the shift is applied only to a brief episode, within the frame of an omniscient narration.

a) First-Person Narrators

It was not until the turn of the twentieth century that some fundamental changes in narratology occurred in Chinese fiction. As M. Dolezelová has shown, both third-person rhetorical and first-person modes were used by late Qing novelists. Noticeable changes were introduced in third-person narration, the dominant tradition in the novel, but the most marked innovation at the time was the use of the more personal first-person mode in the vernacular novel. An example is Wu Jianren's Ershinian mudu zhi guai

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185 In The Uneasy Narrator, Henry Zhao points out that his answer to the question why traditional Chinese fiction adopted the narratological characteristics of oral performance is that "these seemingly 'oral' conventions were the product of the four-century-long rewriting period of Chinese vernacular fiction and of its low stratum in the generic hierarchy of Chinese culture." (Pp. 43-44)

186 Dolezelova. "Narrative Modes in Late Qing Novels," The Chinese Novel, pp. 57-74.
Strange Events Witnessed in the Last Twenty Years, 1905), in which much of the action is seen through the eyes of the protagonist. The novel's structure is unified by the protagonist's life experience and by what he witnesses. As a result of applying first-person narrative, some of the stereotype usages of the storytelling mode have been abandoned. There was obviously no need for phrases like *you shi wei zheng* (as the poem proves . . .). Yet the influence of the traditional narrative mode remained so strong as sometimes to pull the author back to the omniscient narrator mode. In those passages, the narrator does not merely report what he sees and experiences but assumes the capacity of narrating happenings at another place or time. Obviously, then, first-person narrative is not used consistently throughout the novel. The first novelist who applied it consistently was Fu Lin 符霖 (fl. 1900) in a fictionalization of his own life story. His *Qinhai shi* 青海石 (The Bird Filling the Sea with Stones), published by Qunxueshe 群學社 in 1906, uses only a first-person narrator without switching to other modes.

While translations of Western novels were the chief influence on this innovation by Fu Lin and his successors in the Chinese novel, the discovery and publication at the time of the lyrical autobiography *Six Sketches from my Floating Life* probably also played a role. Fu Lin's pioneering but traditionally chapter-divided novel narrating the writer's own life, *The Bird Filling the Sea with Stones*, was followed by Su Manshu's *The Lone Swan* (1912), a landmark in autobiographical fiction which began a vogue that reached its climax among May Fourth writers in the 1920s. Zhou Shoujuan greatly admired Su's

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187 In *Taipingyang bao* 太平洋報 (Pacific Daily) (Shanghai, 1912).
style and was strongly influenced by him. Both were active in the *Nanshe* 南社 literary society (1908-23). Like Su, Zhou had had a deep and bitter love experience in his youth which he could not forget, and the tragic style of Su's fiction appealed to him strongly, influencing both the lyrical style and the sentimental content of his own short stories. After Su's death, Zhou edited and brought out two of his books: *Manshu yiji* 曼殊遺記 (Manshu's Posthumous Works) and *Yanzikan cangao* 燕子罈藏稿 (Manuscripts Preserved in a Swallow's Niche).

As already intimated, the rise of the autobiographical novel beginning about 1906 also exercised a fundamental influence on the short story, notably that in vernacular language, during the early years of the Republic. For the first time in Chinese history, the method of first-person narration was applied in vernacular short stories, and in this innovation Bao Tianxiao and Zhou Shoujuan played an important role. What is especially significant, however, is that both applied the method in various ways, not only to autobiographical writing. Only Zhou of the two writers used the "I" narrator to tell stories based immediately on his personal experience, and then only in some cases. In other of their stories the first person narrator may act as a witness of events; as a protagonist; as a subordinate character in the story; or as the author of a diary; as a person writing letters to someone. They used these innovative narrative methods both in their classical and vernacular stories. As a result, these stories are neither in the *chuanqi* or *biji* fiction style, nor in the *huaben* style, but combine some of the features of both traditional genres with others from Western fiction. However, all of these stories using an "I" type narrator have in common that, as Genette states, he or she "is -- by the very fact of his oneness with the hero -- more 'naturally' authorized to speak in his own name than is the
narrator of a 'third-person' narrative'.\textsuperscript{188}

Let me now examine some of the types of first-person narrators in their stories in greater detail.

i) "I" as a Persona of the Author who Narrates his Personal Experience

In a few of his short stories, Zhou Shoujuan projects his own literary personality into the first-person narrator and through him narrates his own personal experience. In other words, the narrator is a persona of himself. Examples among his short stories are 
\textit{The Cuckoo's Call at Midnight} (1915), \textit{Inside the Jiuhua Bed-Curtain} (1917) and \textit{Xianfu de Yixiang} (A Photograph of the Late Father, 1923).\textsuperscript{189}

\textit{The Cuckoo's Call at Midnight} dramatizes Zhou's own experience of unfulfilled love, which left a permanent wound in his mind, became a lifelong inspiration for his literary creations on which his reputation as "the master of the sentimental love story" was based. The story's narrator Henhen sheng (Mr. Double Regrets) explains the meaning of his name near the end of the story: "I , a person born without regret, have a great matter to regret in my life." He adds that he had intended to keep this matter hidden deep in his mind, to be buried with him at his death. Yet he felt like one "who has a fishbone in his throat and cannot rest until he has managed to spit it out." Following Su Manshu's example, Zhou transformed his private life into a story. Though its plot is

\textsuperscript{188} Genette, \textit{Narrative Discourse}, p. 199.

\textsuperscript{189} Zhou Shoujuan, \textit{A Photograph of the Late Father}, \textit{Fortnightly}, 2 (1923)11: 1-7.
much less complicated than Su's, the feelings and emotions expressed in it are intense. They are poured out by the narrator in rhetorical and lyrical monologue paragraph after paragraph.

In *Inside the Jiuhua Bed-Curtain*, which appeared two years later (1917), Zhou no longer disguises himself as someone else. As the narrator, he uses his own name and even provides factual data such as names of places and of his own friends and relatives. Here the literary translation of reality is much less dramatized. In a simple and straightforward way, Zhou tells his bride about how full of hardship his past life was, and about how deeply his mother and grandmother loved him. In this reconstruction of real life, Zhou naturally relates events that made the deepest impression on him. The reader is moved by the story's simplicity and genuineness.

In *A Photograph of the Deceased*, Zhou recounts how much he cherished the memory of his father, who had died twenty-two years earlier, when Zhou was six. With local customs of seasonal mourning ceremonies as background, Zhou's description of family memorials on such occasions reveals how from a very young age a man missed the love of his father.

Bao Tianxiao's *Yanpeng* (Smoky Awning, 1911), though likewise relating a private experience of the writer, is very different from Zhou's story. Neither here nor anywhere else did Bao in his fiction ever reveal that he was recounting an experience of his own. *Smoky Awning* begins with the protagonist, Mr. Zuo 左, attending a party. During the party, the atmosphere prompts his memory, and so he relates a story of his

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190 *The Short Story Monthly*, issue 7 (1911).
encounters with a girl many years ago. At this time, a switch occurs from omniscient to
first-person narration, until he ends his recollection. At the end, the omniscient narrator
comments: "The way Mr. Zuo told his story was as if he were telling something very
ordinary, nothing abnormal or special. Yet everybody in the room felt a deep regret that
Mr. Zuo could not see A Jin from the Xiange family again."\(^{191}\)

We can see how Bao successfully disguised himself as Mr. Zuo, screening his
inner self from being exposed. The "I" here hardly shares his feelings for the girl with
the reader. We can only sense his restrained passion from what "I" did, not from the
way the "I" narrator is speaking. The real power of the fiction is rooted in the
concealment of the author's emotion. It was only when Bao reached the age of seventy
that in his autobiographical work, *Reminiscences of the Bracelet Shadow Chamber*, he
recalled this experience in some detail and commented that it was his first love.
Although the love was unrequited, he could not entirely dismiss it from his mind.

ii) "I" as Witness

Another group of stories has much less to do with the author's private life. When
the first-person narrator is used as a witness or an observer, "I" is "a character without
essential function except to observe and record, sometimes developed fully as an
individual with a name, history, and personality, sometimes almost nonexistent except for
the 'I' that appears occasionally as a reminder of the individual's personal relation to the

\(^{191}\) Bao Tianxiao, "Smoky Awning" in Fan Boqun 范伯群 ed, *Tongsu Mengzhu Bao Tianxiao* 通俗盟主
包天笑 (The Leader of Popular Fiction—Bao Tianxiao), *Urban Popular Fiction in the Early Republic*
story. [Sometimes] the 'I' narrator carries no marks of individuality except for a more or less distinctive narrative voice.\textsuperscript{192}

Bao Tianxiao's short story "Cangzhou daozhong" 沧州道中 (On Passing Through Cangzhou, 1922)\textsuperscript{193} is a record of observations by a first-person narrator, who was on a train when it arrived at the Cangzhou station and stopped there for about half an hour. Before this story is discussed, however, one more general point needs to be made. In Chinese short stories and similar writings, the first person pronoun "I" is frequently omitted, as it is in this story from beginning to end, yet it is clearly understood. The reader knows that what he is reading is a first-person narration. Bao's story begins: "One year, in the early winter, [I] was taking a train on the Jin-Pu route. The train arrived at Cangzhou at dust." And the story ends: "Our train started wriggling ahead. The young refugees [on the platform] cried out in unison. [I] wanted to take another look at the man without legs, but he was out of view."\textsuperscript{194}

As the story unfolds, the first-person narrator relates what he observes while the train is standing in the station. There is really no plot, but the narration operates as a panoramic camera might, with close-ups. Several scenes are depicted which, like colourful paintings, fill the space of the station. Two of these will serve as examples:

1. It was early winter. Having been frightened by the siren of the entering train, a flock of crows were circling above, as if unable to find a place of rest. Golden willows were swaying in the glow of the setting sun. Fatigued passengers in the


\textsuperscript{193} Bao Tianxiao, \textit{Xingqi 星期 (The Weekly)} 10 (1922): 1-5.

\textsuperscript{194} Ibid., p.5.
train were roused by the uproar and voices from the station platform. Rubbing their eyes, they popped their heads out of windows and looked around. They realized they had arrived at Cangzhou station . . .

2. In the first-class carriages, quite a few foreign ladies and gentlemen were leaning on the window frames, looking at the landscape. Their light yellow hair was waving in the breeze. Their high noses were covered with snow-white towels, as if they were afraid of bad smells. Suddenly they began throwing out pennies. No one knew whether they did so out of charity or sheer whim or curiosity. Barefoot and with dishevelled hair, a group of kids desperately scrambled for them. Having not been able to prevent the kids from snatching them up, some older refugees yet could not help picking up one or two pennies close by, and put them into their torn pockets.

Objective as these descriptions are, the narrator is "almost nonexistent" except that his voice is heard at the beginning and end of the story, telling the reader how he arrived by train at the station and how the train left with him. Yet the objective scenes are endowed with vividness because they are perceived by subjective eyes. The first-person narrator shortens the distance and creates intimacy between writer and reader. If we replaced the first person narrator with a third person, the living power of the scenes would be weakened.

Zhou Shoujuang's story Wushinian hou zhi chongfeng 五十年后之重逢 (Meeting

195 Ibid., p. 1
196 Ibid., p. 1
Again Fifty Years Later, 1916\(^{197}\) also uses the first-person narrator as a witness, but in a very different way. The story opens with a self-introduction, which freely conveyed reads: "I" am the moon who has witnessed the rise and fall of nations and the joys and sorrows of life on earth for thousands of years. The story is conveyed in a series of scenes, each of which is watched and described by the moon, that take place on mid-autumn festival days fifty years apart. Zhou may well have got the hint for his choice of the moon as story-teller from the fact that the moon is full on the night of this festival. The first two scenes show the bride in endless tears on her wedding night, because she has been forced to marry a man she does not love, and thus has been separated from her beloved; and meanwhile, in a house near by, her beloved is spending a difficult night alone in the dark. The last scene shows how the woman, now aged, runs accidentally into her beloved whom she has not seen for fifty years. They discover that neither has ceased to love the other over the years, that their unfulfilled love still remains the same. In real life, the festival marks an annual occasion of family reunion on a night lit by the full moon. In Zhou's story, by contrast, the moon itself tells a story of separation.

The use of the first-person narrator in this story differs also markedly from that in Bao's *On Passing Through Cangzhou* where the narrator "I" seems almost nonexistent. In Zhou's story the narrator exists everywhere, unifying the three scenes into a whole. The narrator's status as moon entrusts the "I" with a superior power to mediate time and space in a way a human "I" could not do. Thus the first two scenes juxtapose the bride and her beloved grieving over their "fate" at the same time but in different places. The

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jump in time over a period of fifty years is also best conveyed by a narrator endowed with supernatural powers. It is clear that the very choice of the moon as narrator meant that it had to be omniscient and also had to be a first-person narrator. Moreover, Zhou made the moon intrusive. In the story, the " I " (moon) comments continually on the characters' actions, judges them, and expresses his personal feelings about and sympathy for them. By making the moon as first-person narrator so subjective, so involved in the story, Zhou made it both more dramatic and more movingly intimate than Bao's more objective narrator.

iii) First-person Narrator as Protagonist

In another group of stories to which I am now turning the narrator-protagonist is decidedly a different person from the author. Yet in Zhou's case, the stories he wrote with narrators of this kind are similar to his autobiographical fiction in mood and in the ways the narrators relate their stories emotionally. Two of Zhou's stories which will serve as examples are This Regret Goes on and on Forever and The Wife of a Winebibber. In both, the protagonists from whose viewpoint the story is told are women who have lost their husbands and whose story ends in tragedy, though in different ways. Like the autobiographical stories, these too are full of passion in the way in which their heroines express their suffering.

In This Regret Goes on, the story is told in the first person by a woman whose husband returns from the battlefield of the Xinhai revolution. He has an incurable
wound. Her story begins about four years later, but then in a flashback she recalls how extremely happy she was to have him back, however much his own happiness had been subdued by the awareness that he did not have long to live. Then the story returns to their final year together. The woman describes her feelings as they live out the year together, their love mixed with an increasing apprehension of their inevitable parting. It ends with the husband's death and her mourning.

In *The Wife of a Winebibber*, likewise told by a wife as first-person narrator, the story's equally pathetic ending is caused not by natural forces but by the weakness of the woman's husband. The story begins with the wife recalling the happy days when she had first married her husband, a successful business man who came from a loving family. It continues with her observing how his love of wine gradually develops into an addiction. She becomes more and more frightened as she helplessly witnesses her husband sliding further down the abyss, while he continues to insist that he is not harming himself, until finally he drinks himself to death. His fate is doomed by his ignorance and his inability to control his indulgence. In neither of these stories is the focus on the husband but on the wife's (narrator's) feelings while she watches her husband walk towards his inevitable death. The rhythms of both this story and *This Regret Goes on* are dictated by their narrators' moods, emotions, and subconscious trains of thought. The effect is somewhat like an "interior monologue". As we read each story, we seem to be overhearing what the women are saying to themselves.

One characteristic of both stories is the non-traditional way in which they present pathetic -- or in popular language "tragic" -- happenings; at any rate, few parallel instances can be found in earlier Chinese fiction. In traditional fiction, tragedy is almost
always caused either by morally evil villains or by the "fate" of characters who are victims of social or supernatural forces. For instance, in The Dream of the Red Chamber the tragic ending of the love between Jia Baoyu and Lin Daiyu is determined by conventional social morality, as practised by the Jia family, which dictated how marriage arrangements for the younger generation were to be made. According to the system of "narrative grammar" based on the concept of four different modalities, devised by Lubomir Dolezel, the pattern of such tragic or pathetic narratives fits the second of these modalities, the deontic one. It governs the action in most traditional Chinese fiction.

In Zhou's This Regret Goes on, it is not a social prohibition that causes the tragedy but a natural event which no human effort is able to prevent: the death of the beloved. In this story the action is governed by what these critics call the alethic modality, examples of which in traditional fiction are confined to stories that emphasize the supernatural. On the other hand, Zhou's The Wife of a Winebibber, which shows how human weakness causes suffering and death, exemplifies what Hintikka (1962) calls the fourth or epistemic modality, likewise seldom found in classical Chinese fiction.

In his Zhongguo xiaoshuo xushi moshi de zhuang bian 中國小說敘事模式的轉變

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198 For much of this system, Dolezel followed works by Georg H. von Wright, Nicolas Rescher, and Jaakko Hintikka. According to von Wright, "the deontic modality is formed by the concepts of permission, prohibition and obligation." Lubomir Dolezel, "Towards a Typology of Fictional Words", in Tamkang Review 14 (1985), pp. 261-276.

199 The alethic system consists of the concepts of possibility, impossibility and necessity. Ibid., pp. 266-267.

200 The fourth modality is the epistemic, presented by concepts of knowledge, ignorance, and belief. See Jaakko Hintikka, Knowledge and Belief: An Introduction to the Logic of the Two Notions (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962).
(Changes of Narrative Modes in Chinese Fiction), Chen Pingyuan 陈平原 expressed a much lower opinion of Zhou's *This Regret Goes on* than of some of the autobiographical fiction of the time, especially that by Su Manshu and Yu Dafu 都達夫 (1896-1945), whom he admired for "expressing their own subjective feelings."\(^{201}\) Zhou's invention of the widow who reveals her feelings seemed to Chen much less genuine. Chen even assumed that Zhou used her just for the convenience of narrating a heartbreaking story.

Chen's criticism seems mistaken. Without implying that any of Zhou's highly sentimental stories are among his best, his method and practice can be defended. Chen is right in his assertion that the fictional autobiographical works of Su Manshu, Yu Dafu and others represent a breakthrough from traditional fiction in projecting a subjective perspective by describing in careful detail their authors' personal emotions. Yet open to question is his accompanying devaluation of fiction in which the " I " perspective and the emotions exhibited are those of another person. What is involved here is the old debate between the insight and skills needed for presenting real happenings truthfully and perceptively, as found in historical writing and in autobiography; and those needed for literature whose world and characters are more completely invented or imagined.

Jin Shengtan contrasted the artistic processes involved in these two kinds of literature as *yiwen yunshi* 以文運事 (words are used to carry events) and *yinwen shengshi* 因文生事 (events are produced from the words):

> When you use words to carry events, you first have events that have taken place in such-and-such a way, and then you must figure out a piece of narrative for

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\(^{201}\) Chen Pingyuan. *Zhongguo xiaoshuo xushi moshi de zhuanbian* 中國小說敘事模式的轉變 (Changes of Narrative Modes in Chinese Fiction), (Shanghai: Renmin chubanshe, 1988), p.79.
them. To use words to produce events, on the other hand, is quite different. All you have to do is follow where your pen leads.202

Mao Zonggang (fl. 1660), Jin's contemporary, posed two similar concepts in his comparison of *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms* to the *Water Margin, wuzhong shengyou* [de] *jiangxin* 無中生有的匠心 (the artistry of imaginatively creating out of nothing) and *xu yiding zhi shi* [de] *jiangxin* 叙一定之事的匠心 (the artistry of narrating factual events):

The realism of the *Shui-hu chuan* [Water Margin] is to be preferred to the fantasy of the *His-yu chi* [The Journey to the West]. Nevertheless, because the author was free to create his material ex nihilo and to manipulate his plot at will, as a feat of literary craftsmanship his achievement was not as difficult as that of the author of *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, who succeeded in giving artistic form to predetermined material that would not admit of alteration.203

Each of these critics favored one kind of fiction, Jin Shengtan that based on imaginative invention, Mao Zonggang factually based historical fiction. The two concepts apply similarly to the two types of fiction I am discussing here: the fictive first-person narrative (in which the narrator is the principal invented character inside his narrative) and the autobiographic (in which the narrator is the author's persona).


Chen's judgment has its historical justification: as mentioned earlier, from the last years of the Qing era, the tendency of authorial self-dramatization by writers such as Su Manshu, Xu Zhenya, and Bi Yihong 鳳倚虹 (1892-1926) became a vogue. The fashion of autobiographic fiction by the "romantic generation" came to a climax during the twenties, and has since been highly praised for its characteristic of subjectivism and individualism.204

It is however regrettable that because of Chen's bias, such stories as the two by Zhou under discussion have been wholly neglected. They deserve critical attention for their very artistic diversity, for being so different from current fashion. Fictive composition of events, whether external or internal, that are not based on real happenings demands a rich imagination and, in instances of first- person narration particularly, an acute understanding of the narrator's character. In both of Zhou's stories, the use of the first-person narrator helps to make the depiction of the heroine's mental state direct and expressive. In this way both are very different from and emotionally more powerful than most traditional fiction. Zhou wrote This Regret Goes on in classical language, but The Wife of a Winebibber in vernacular. But in each, Zhou's skill and subtlety in the handling of language contributes crucially to the story's effect, as will be shown in the next chapter. For their very experimentation with a new way of story-telling, these and similar stories by Zhou, Bao, and their contemporaries deserve our attention.

204 Jaroslav Průšek points out that modern Chinese literature is characterized by its subjectivism and individualism, which he defines as the "emphasis on the creator's personality in art and a concentration of attention on the artist's own life." See his "Subjectivism and Individualism in Modern Chinese Literature". Archiv Orientali, 25 (1957): 261-286.
Turning now to Bao Tianxiao, he too wrote several short stories told by a first-person narrator yet distanced himself as writer from the narrator by beginning his stories with a brief authorial introduction. In using these introductions, he adopted a traditional feature. If they were removed, the narrative would be consistently from a first-person perspective. In the introduction, Bao tells his readers that he is reporting a story based on someone's else's life experience because it provides support for what he himself has asserted. As a result, the story's author seems much less close to the protagonist-narrator than in some of Zhou's stories. The overall perspective is less subjective. The impact of Bao's stories is generally less sentimental than that of Zhou's. Examples of such stories by Bao are *Niuqeng xuyu* 牛棚絮语 (Prattle in a Cowshed, 1915)\(^{205}\), *Qimeng* 奇夢 (Strange Dreams, 1917)\(^{206}\), *Luidian* 汲點 (Drops of Tears, 1917)\(^{207}\), and *Hugong lingmeng ji* 湖宮鈴夢記 (Remembering a Dream of a Palace in a Lake, 1918)\(^{208}\).

iv) "I" as a subordinate character

A few of Bao Tianxiao's and Zhou Shoujuan's stories are told by a first-person narrator who is involved in the events but as a character in a subordinate role. He is neither the protagonist nor merely a "witness" or observer. Bao's *Prattle in a Cowshed*...
and *Qingyan II* 情驗 (二) (*Test of Love, Part Two, 1916)*\(^{209}\), and Zhou's *Yunying* 雲影 (*Shadows of Clouds, 1915)*\(^{210}\) are examples of this type.

In both of Bao's stories, the relationship between the first-person narrator and the protagonist is close. In *Prattle in a Cowshed*, the "I" is a male narrator who during a train journey to Suzhou encounters Biwu 碧梧, a woman with whom he had been acquainted three years earlier. She is accompanied by an old man. After their arrival in Suzhou, he runs into her twice again. Curious as he is, he slowly gleans an account of her life during the past three years and the identity of the old man. At the beginning of the story the narrator is largely ignorant, and the reader learns with him as the story moves forward.

In *Test of Love, Part Two*, the female narrator is one of the closest friends of Fuqiu 芙秋, the protagonist. A week before Fuqiu's planned marriage, the narrator is horrified to see Fuqiu's face all bandaged and to learn that she burnt her face so badly in an accident that she was now afraid that her lover would abandon her. The narrator shows great concern and tries her best to help rescue the marriage. Only the night before the wedding does she find out that she was mistaken, that the so-called "accident" was a scheme designed by Fuqiu to test her fiancé. The story ends happily and the two women remain friends.

In both stories the narrator lacks, at least at the beginning, certain knowledge about the protagonist, but in the second story her lack receives particular emphasis in that it makes her vulnerable to deception. When in a crucial episode the narrator, who is a

\(^{209}\) ibid. 7 (1916): 1-7.

nurse, ask Fuqiu to let her examine the wound and Fuqiu refuses, the reader is given a hint. When the nurse learns the truth, she realizes how ironic her actions have been. For the reader, however, they have provoked only light amusement, since the story ends happily for both women. Such an ironic effect is seldom found in Bao's other stories.

The narrator "I" in Zhou Shoujuan's *Shadows of Clouds* is a doctor of a clinic. The story concerns a couple who are his patients and their complicated partings and reunions over half a year through the doctor's mediation. Without the doctor's role there would be no plot, and yet he is not the protagonist.

The use of first-person narrator as a subsidiary character was an import. During the late Qing era and the early Republic, Arthur Conan Doyle's detective stories of Sherlock Holmes were among the most influential translations from Western Literature. It was not only the kind of detective story that was imitated but also its narrative mode. Watson as first-person narrator in the Sherlock Holmes stories acts as assistant to the detective himself. Since both Bao and Zhou were among the translators of these stories and their close friend, Cheng Xiaoqing 程小青 imitated them, one may assume that Bao and Zhou learned from Watson's role how to place a first-person narrator into a participating part in a story, and not as a mere observer.

v) "I" in the form of letter or diary writer

There was an age-old tradition of letter and diary writing in China, and letters and diary

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211 Cheng Xiaoqing came to be known as the the Conan Doyle of China for his creation of a Chinese Sherlock Holmes, Huo Sang 霍桑.
entries were sometimes included in novels. But not before the 1910s, and then directly
inspired by Western works of fiction, did Chinese writers use the diary and epistolary
forms of fiction.

In 1906 Bao translated Edmond de Amicis' Cuore, a novelette in diary form,
from its English version, An Italian Schoolboy's Journal. A few years later, in 1911,
appeared Bao's translation of an American piece of short fiction, Feixing riji 飛行日記
(Diary of Flight). Then in 1912, Xu Zhenya, who called himself the "Eastern Dumas",
東方仲馬 brought out his novel in parallel prose, Yuli Hun 玉梨魂 (Jade Pear Spirit), an
imitation of La Dame aux Camellias, which includes near its end letters and bits of a diary
that contribute to the revelation of characters' inner thoughts and feelings. In 1915
followed the publication of the first Chinese novel in diary form, Xu Zhenya's Xuehong
leishi 雪鴻泪史 (A Tearful Story of a Snow Goose), as a serial in eighteen issues. About the same time, Zhou Shoujuan published his short story Duan chang riji
斷腸日記 (Diary of Being Heart Broken), and Bao Tianxiao the first Chinese
epistolary short story, Minghong 冥鴻 (Letters from the Nether World).

The story of Letters from the Nether World is told in eleven letters by a wife to
her husband, who died during the Revolution of 1911. Ming means the underworld, and
hong, literally a swan goose, here is an image of letters. Before the husband went to the
battlefield, they arranged to write each other once a week. After he died, the wife

\[\begin{align*}
\text{212} & \text{ Bao Tianxiao, Diary of Flight, The Woman Times, issue 4 (1911).} \\
\text{213} & \text{ Xu Zhenya, A Tearful Story, serialized in Xiaoshuo congbao (1915).} \\
\text{214} & \text{ Zhou Shoujuan, Diary of Being Heart Broken, Saturday Magazine 52 (1915):1-48.} \\
\end{align*}\]
continued to write to him, telling him how much she longed for him, what was happening to their son, how the political situation was going into reverse, and how ordinary people's lives were getting still worse than before. She then burned the letter every time in front of his picture. Since they are weekly reports of happenings in her life, there is no thematic centre which links the eleven letters. It is obvious that they are not artistically organized, and the wife's monologue sometimes sounds trivial. However, Bao's small pioneer work opened up the path for a wave of epistolary fiction by the May Fourth writers.

Zhou Shoujuan's *Yinte 隱劇 (A Secret Vice, 1917)*\(^\text{216}\) is an interesting piece of semi-epistolary fiction. On the main level of the narrative, it is in the form of a letter by a husband to his wife, written just before he died. The story begins with the wife reading the letter, as she sits in front of her husband's body. Different from Bao's story, there is only one letter in Zhou's, which reveals an astonishing secret.

The husband, "I", hid the secret for twenty years, because he lacked the courage to reveal it. He hopes his wife will forgive a dead man. Twenty years earlier, he had fallen onesidedly in love with the girl who later became his wife, when suddenly his best friend appeared from abroad, and soon became engaged to the girl. The narrator was invited to be his friend's best man. When the groom-to-be by accident fell from a cliff, strong jealousy prevented him from trying to save his friend's life. After the incident, the girl and he grew closer and closer until they eventually married. The confession of jealousy, the mixture of his feelings of love and hatred towards his friend, his deep remorse for not

having tried hard enough to save his best friend's life, and his begging for his wife's forgiveness, all these emotions are depicted in vivid detail.

In fiction the letter form is well suited for conveying a confession of this kind, especially when, as in this case, the confessor does not have the courage to confront the person face to face. Although the opening and the end are told by the wife in third-person narrative, the story itself, told in the first-person narrative of the husband's letter, conveys his innermost feelings effectively.

Perhaps instead of semi-epistolary, this method of narration should be called epistolary with a frame, in which the story's perspective briefly switches to that of the person to whom the epistle is addressed. Unlike Bao, Zhou was making use of the letter form to tell an interesting story rather than a record of private and public events. Zhou's story is therefore more readable.

Let me now turn to two examples where Zhou Shoujuan used the diary form in a short story. *A Diary of Being Heart Broken* consists of nineteen diary entries over a period of three months by a girl who fell in love with a man whom she could not marry. The diary records the times when the two young people met, began to write to each other, and fell mutually in love. But most of the diary's lines dwell on her anxiety while waiting for his letter, her deep disappointment at not seeing him for many days, her great joy of exchanging glances with him on the street, and her pain and misery of not being able to marry him. The girl tells how she suffers while counting the days which close upon her lover's wedding. The story is a sister piece to Zhou's *The Cuckoo's Call at Midnight* on a similar theme, in which the position of the lovers is reversed.
In the same year Zhou published another story with an introduction, a large part of which is a diary, *Zhuzhu riji* 珠珠日記 (Diaries of Zhuzhu). From the introduction, we learn that the diary was sent to Zhou by a twelve-year-old girl called Zhuzhu, who was an admirer of his short stories. In the eight entries of her diary, she innocently records her observations and impressions of various happenings and encounters in her daily life, including her mother's selfless love, her own sympathy for orphans and the homeless, and her dreams. After the diary, Zhou adds a letter he sent to Zhuzhu, in which he praises her talents and urges her to use them for the benefit of society, quoting a report that the English novelist George Meredith (1828-1909) sent a similar response to a woman correspondent. While the story is not one of Zhou's better ones, it shows how seriously he regarded his responsibility as a writer to his society, *pace* his May Fourth attackers.

During and after the May Fourth movement, there was a wave of diary and epistolary fiction, some of which is impressive in both form and content, such as Lu Xun's *Kuangren riji* 狂人日記 (Diary of a Mad Man), Bing Xin's *Yishu 遺書* (A Letter from the Deceased), and several other works. Bao Tianxiao and Zhou Shoujuan played vanguard roles in the application of these forms without equalling the achievement of some of their successors.

vi) First person Narrator directly addressing another person, a "you"

The last story to be discussed in this section is Zhou Shoujuan's *Si Yuan 私願* (A

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It is a first-person discourse in the form of a monologue addressed by a dead man to a "you", a living young woman, his neighbour's daughter. He had never expressed his love to her when he was alive. The story begins:

It's getting very late at night. Why are you, Tan Ying 涓影, still standing at the [window of your] house, and not turning in? The west wind is blowing hard. You don't feel cold with your dress being tossed about! You are fragile like a young oriole. How can you endure it?219

The monologue continues through the entire story, and of course there is no reply by the woman, the "you". The focus most of the time is on her, although when the narrator evokes memories from the past, it sometimes switches briefly to himself, telling us how he was affected by something she did or by overhearing her say something to someone else. Both content and effect are different from that of a fictional letter addressed to a "you", for here the narrator describes the "you" both physically and psychologically. He observes her every action and perceives her state of mind. The monologue ends: "Tan Ying, you should not feel sad. The night is not yet spent, so I will now sing a new love song by Zhou Shoujuan for you: [Followed by the words of the song]."220

The narrative mode of this story, a monologue addressed directly to a silent "you", is, I think, without precedent in Chinese and rare even in Western fiction. It is fundamentally different also from the poet Browning's dramatic monologues and T. S.

219 Ibid., p.2
220 Ibid., p.7.
Eliot's *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*, because Zhou's story involves no irony and his speaker is dead and thus cannot be heard or seen by the young woman.

**b) Third-person limited narrators**

Since the third-person omniscient narrative mode was the standard one in traditional Chinese fiction, it need not be discussed here. As mentioned earlier, in traditional fiction the perspective sometimes shifts for a few paragraphs from that of the omniscient narrator to the limited one of a character in the story. It was, however, not before some of the late Qing writers that a breakthrough occurred from the traditional dominant omniscient narrative mode. This was a pioneering development in the history of Chinese fiction. Writers like Wu Jianren, Lin Shu, Zhang Shizhao consciously tried to use limited perspective narration consistently in large parts of their novels and shorter fictional works. Yet none of them successfully focused on a third-person limited narrative from beginning to the end in any of their works.

Cheng Pingyuan, Zhao Yiheng, and other critics have claimed that consistent application of limited third-person narrative began only with the May Fourth writers.²²¹ This claim requires modification as the following example will show. It is a story

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entitled *The Wife of a Primary School Teacher*, written cooperatively by Bao Tianxiao and Xu Zhuoai.

The story is told step by step by the teacher, as he experiences it. It begins when he wakes up early one winter morning with the cock crowing and an alarm clock going off. Feeling sleepy, he lies down on his bed again for two or three minutes. But unable to sleep any more, he lights a cigarette and lets his thoughts wander randomly. Suddenly a bad smell assails his nose. He turns around and sees his wife, who always sleeps badly, push their daughter to the edge of the bed. The wife's long hair is in a mess, its smell mixed with that from the daughter's diaper.

The whole story focuses on the responses of the teacher with its plot is developed through his perspective. The readers knows only what he feels and does, how he quarrels severely with the wife about trivial matters before he leaves, and what follows. After he leaves for his school, there is a lapse in time. He returns home late in the evening; why so late is revealed in his interior monologue of regret when he is given a warm welcome by his wife, who kept waiting for him with his dinner. Because he was angry with his wife, he had gone to a restaurant after school, and then visited a friend and had a dinner with him. But having listened to his wife's apology and words of deep concern for him, he sat down with her for his third dinner. He found her as shy and charming as when he married her.

To the best of my knowledge, this is the first short story in the vernacular language, which uses continuously the limited point of view of a third-person narrator.

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and is therefore without any authorial intrusion. The teacher's minute observations of his wife's behaviour, movements, and facial expressions coordinate the inner reactions passing through his mind. *The Wife of a Primary School Teacher* is one of Bao Tianxiao's best stories, even better than his *On Passing Through Cangzhou, Smoky Awning*, and *In the Mezzanine* which Fan Boqun regards as equal in artistic quality to the best by the May Fourth writers.²²³

Zhou Shoujuan's *Huakai hualuo* 花開花落 (*The Flower Blooms and Dies, 1914*)²²⁴ is another early example of a short story written from a third-person limited perspective. It records observations made by a writer over a month and a half of a woman living in the building opposite to his, whom he sees from his window. The narration is in the form of direct speech addressed to a painter who visits the writer on fifteen days during the period. The latter describes impression by impression how she looks to him from the day she moves into her room to the final day of her life. His impressions are noted in painstaking detail, focusing on the woman's changing mood, as her happiness rises to a seeming climax but is followed by a gradual decline which ends in her destruction. Since the writer does not know the woman, his comments are limited and onesided, leaving a great deal to the reader's imagination. Zhou Shoujuan continued to apply third-person limited perspective in some of his short stories written in the early 1920s, of which *Jiuyue* 舊約 (*A Old Appointment, 1921*)²²⁵, and *Shitan* 試探 (*Sounding Out*) are examples.

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²²³ Fan Boqun, "Preface" to *The Leader of the Alliance for Popular Fiction*, p. iii.


At least one Chinese critic, Chengzhi 成之, commented early in 1914 on the new kinds of perspective in fiction that were being introduced to China at the time, first in translations of Western works of fiction, then in the kinds of novels and short stories I have discussed. In the article "Xiaoshuo conghua" 小說叢話 (A Series of Remarks on Fiction) Chengzhi explained:

One needs to distinguish between the subjective and objective in fictional narrative. In subjective fiction, the happenings are narrated by the protagonist. The author is either the protagonist or, as an observer, he records the events in which the protagonist is involved. Many Western works of fiction are of this kind. (More than half of the recent translations from the West belong to this type.) In objective fiction, the author is an outsider. He observes the protagonist and narrates his actions. Most Chinese fiction belongs to this category. In subjective fiction, the writer is inside the story, while in objective fiction the writer is outside of it. Therefore, we can call the former autobiographic and the latter biographic fiction. 226

Cheng Zhi continues that "autobiographic fiction is suitable for expressing one's emotions and reasoning things out, and biographic fiction for narrating action." 227

Although he did not use the terms of "first-person narrator," "third-person narrator," and


227 Ibid.
"perspective" (these came to be used in the twenties\textsuperscript{228}), he was aware of what they signify. However imperfect in his critical expression, he was responding to the fundamental innovations during the early teens in fictional techniques, especially narrative modes, to which, as I have shown, Bao Tianxiao and Zhou Shoujuan made significant contributions.

2. Structure and Narrative Time

Narrative time involves a "doubly temporal sequence," that is the "story time" (the amount of time involved in the events of the story) and the time of the narrative itself (the time it takes to read the story).\textsuperscript{229} In the process of narration, the temporal sequence arranged by the author is artificial. Narrative time can move in several directions. In early classical fiction, especially before The Golden Lotus (1602), narrative time was generally in chronological order, which corresponded to the order of the story's events. The only exception is that short anachronies in a few works of fiction were used, reaching into the past or future, as in analepse/retrospection or flashback, and rolepsdanticipation. For these the narrator usually guides the reader in a few words, as in huakai liangzi, gebiao yiduo 花開兩枝, 各表一朵 (because two sprays of flowers are blooming, I am

\textsuperscript{228} Later Sun Lianggong 孫良工, in Xiaoshuo zuofa jiangyi 小說作文講義 (Art of Fiction) (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1923) used the terms of "first-person" and "third-person narrator". Xia Gaizun 夏丐尊 and Liu Xunyu 劉薰宇 in Wenzhang zuofa 文章作文 (Art of Essays) (Shanghai: Kaiming shudian, 1926) discussed the use of "perspective". Xia Gaizun 夏丐尊 in another article, "Lun jixuwen zhong zuozhe de diewei bing ping xianjin xiaoshuo jie zhi wenzi" 論記敘文中作者的地位並評現今小說界之文字 (On the Position of the Writer in Narrative Discourse and Recent Language in the Fiction Circle), discussed "inside and outside perspective" and "limited and unlimited narrating." Lida jikan 立達季刊, issue 1 (1925).

telling you about one at a time), or "this was told by so and so"; or a character in the story

remarks: yuanlai . . . 原来 . . . (this actually was so and so, who . . .). By contrast, the

order of events in modern fiction is often unchronological, producing a greater discord

between story time and narrative time, for the purpose of characterization, suspense,
rhythm, etc.

Another important aspect of narrative time is "duration," duration of the narrative

versus duration of the story. The narrative duration can be expanded or shortened,
accelerated or decelerated in tempo, adjusted by ellipsis (jumps in time), descriptive
pause, scenes in dialogue, summary (as in pieces of background and connective tissue
between scenes), and stretch (the opposite to summary). 230

Interestingly enough, when Luo Ye 羅烨 near the end of the Song dynasty (in the
thirteenth century) discussed narrative devices of contemporary huaben fiction, he stated
a similar view though in a very simple way in his "Shegeng xuyin" 舌耕叙引 (An
Introduction to Plowing with the Tongue) 231 in Zuiweng tanlu 醉翁談錄 (Notes of the
Drunken Old Man):

When giving account [of a background of a story or a character], one should be
neat and concise. When narrating [a scene], one should elaborate. When little of
interest happens, one should be brief. When describing an important scene, one
should narrate at length. 232

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University Press, 1978), Seymour Chatman added "stretch" to the four elements of duration proposed by
Genette.

231 The meaning of shegeng is making a living out of language.

232 Luo Ye. Zuiweng tanlu 醉翁談錄 (Notes of the Drunken Old Man), (Shanghai: Guji chubanshe, 1957),
p. 4
This way Luo already commented on how in story-telling the narrative is speeded up or slowed down by such devices as *bu xufan* 不絮煩, *you guimo*, *you shoushi* 有規模, 有收拾, *you jiashu* 有家數 and *jiuchang* 久長, terms which approximately but not precisely correspond to Genette’s "summary," "pause," "ellipsis," and "stretch." By elaborating a "scene," he obviously meant a scene of action, since he was writing about *huaben* stories.

Traditional Chinese fiction often begins with a summary of a family’s or character’s background, or the historical background of an event; and it often uses ellipsis with clear indications. For instance, in *huaben* fiction the following phrases appear frequently: *Dangri wuhua. Dao ciri* ... 當日無話. 到次日... (This day nothing happened. On the following day ...) or *guangyin rujian, bujue zhounian yidao* 光陰如箭, 不覺周年已到 (Time flies like an arrow, before one knew an entire year had passed.), or *guangyin renran, bujue you aiguo le liangnian* 光陰荏苒, 不覺又捱過了兩年 (Little by little time slipped away, and before one noticed another two more years had passed.) These two features illustrate how Luo Ye's views were applied in practice in *huaben* stories. What is absent in these stories by contrast with modern ones is any elaboration of descriptive scenes of surroundings, not to speak of elaboration on a character's mental state. For that, a kind of story was needed whose emphasis was not on action.

Late Qing fiction displays some remarkable changes from tradition in the organization of narrative time, and particularly in the way stories begin. That the story of a novel or shorter work of fiction could begin in *medias res*, temporally close to the climax of the plot, fascinated the late Qing writers. *Zhixinshi Zhuren* 知新室主人 (The Master of the Library of New Knowledge) comments in his "*Dushequen* yizhe shiyu"
The fictional works of our country always first introduce the protagonist's name, background, and only then start telling his story in detail. Also at the beginning there are a prologue, introductory words, poems, comments etc. . . . This novel was written by a famous French novelist. It opens with a dialogue between father and daughter, as if coming out of a void, like a spectacular and lofty peak suddenly towering in the sky . . . 233

After the beginning of the twentieth century, several fictional works appeared that began non-chronologically, among them Xin Zhongguo weilai ji 新中國未來記 (A Story of New China's Future, 1902-03) 234 by Liang Qichao and Jiuming qiyuan 九命奇冤 (The Strange Case of Ninefold Muder, 1905) 235 by Wu Jianren. Wu Jianren was the most innovative writer of the late Qing era. His twelve short stories became basic experimental models for the writers of the next decade.

During the 1910s, beginning a story in the middle followed later by flashbacks became common. Furthermore, writers used displacement of time several times in the course of their stories, thus increasing the discord between narrative time and story time. The following section will show in some detail how this is done in some of Bao Tianxiao's and Zhou Shoujuan's short stories, how narrative speed is varied in them, and how their stories are in basic ways different from traditional ones.

234 Liang Qichao. A Story of New China's Future, New Fiction 1, 2, 3, and 7 (1902-03).
a) Displacement in Narrative Time

Following in the late Qing writers' footsteps, Bao and Zhou were particular about the openings of their stories. They plunge directly into the story, without "summaries" of background and other materials, breaking the customary narrative order.

Bao Tianxiao's *Remedying a Fault* (1916), for example, begins with the protagonist Liu Jiren's sudden encounter of his former girl friend Yunying. Both are stunned by meeting each other. We learn that Liu is a doctor of great promise, deputy president of a hospital. He is engaged to the daughter of the hospital's president, who is planning to send him to Germany for further studies. A flashback conveys how Liu's mind moves back to the time five years earlier when he first met Yunying. The following day she visits the hospital, and in a second flashback of the narrative he learns from her how at the time he left her she had been pregnant and how miserably Yunying suffered during the past years. This revelation causes a moral crisis in Liu, pressed as he is by two irreconcilable obligations. His inward struggle forms the story's centre. Finally he resigns his hospital position and marries Yunying. However he later discovers that while he mended one mistake, he has caused another "regret", for his fiancee has sworn an oath of celibacy as a Buddhist nun. Bao was inspired to write the story by Leo Tolstoy's novel *Resurrection*, which had appeared in translation two years earlier (1914).

Zhou Shoujuan's *Yi! Shiwang* 嚴！失望 (Alas! What a Disappointment, 1915)\(^{236}\) begins with the first-person narrator-protagonist returning home to see his beloved, after

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\(^{236}\) Zhou, *Alas! What a Disappointment*, *Saturday* 63 (1915): 29-34.
having been away for five years. The story then flashes back to the time when he
proposed to the girl, Chen Suzh 陳素珠, but was rejected by her family because as a
schoolteacher he was poor. In search of wealth, the protagonist left the country for a
South-Asian island. Now, having earned a lot of money and become an engineer by
profession, he has come back to make his second proposal. Yet when he enters the house
of his beloved, he encounters a loving and warm scene: Chen Suzhu, her husband with
their baby son, a family of three, sitting harmoniously together in their living room. A
bright light from the ceiling is projecting their shadows on the wall, where two paintings
are hanging, "Love as Cloud and Mist" by a well-known British artist, and "Blooming
Flowers in the Full Moon" by a famous French one.

The flashback brings into sharp contrast the difference in the protagonist's social
status between the past and present, as poor schoolteacher and rich engineer. However,
the change in status cannot alter his fate. When he returns to his beloved with happy
expectations, he meets only deep disappointment.

While in Bao's Remedying a Fault and Zhou's Alas! What a Disappointment, the
flashback occurs early in the narrative, in Prattle in a Cowshed, it is introduced near the
middle. Since this story has been discussed already, it will be recalled here only briefly.
On his journey to Suzhou, the first-person narrator runs into Biwu, a young woman, three
times. By chance they are visiting the same town and places nearby. Their first
encounter reminds the narrator of his past acquaintance with her. Their second meeting
is very brief: they only see each other at a distance. It is during their third meeting, that
in an extended flashback the narrator learns from her how she has fared during the last
three years. Her narration continues until close to the story's end. It satisfies not only the
protagonist's but also the reader's curiosity.

In *A Wife of a Primary School Teacher*, also previously discussed, the flashback occurs near the end of the story, after the protagonist has returned home to his wife late in the day. Only then we learn, in a flashback, how, still angry, he had gone to a restaurant for dinner to enjoy himself, and then had a second meal with a friend. His wife's warm reception, the lovely dinner she has cooked for him, and her apologies for the fight they had in the morning make the protagonist feel ashamed at the selfishness and narrowmindedness of his conduct. Here the effect of the flashback on the reader is one of amused contrast, near the end of the story. It forms the story's climax.

In Zhou's *Yunying* 雲影 (Shadow of Clouds, 1914)\(^{237}\) the flashback method is applied several times. At the beginning of the story, the first-person protagonist, a doctor, is visited by a mysterious woman patient, Wang Shunhua 汪舜華, whose face is covered by a veil. She tells him about her husband's blindness and asks whether there is any hope of having his sight restored. When the doctor tells her "no" she surprises him by seeming greatly relieved. After he rebukes her for her reaction to his negative news, she reveals to him at last in a flashback that she has been hiding her face because of an event that happened two years earlier. During the 1911 revolution, a bomb she and her brother were making exploded, killing him and disfiguring her face. Soon after, her brother's friend Lin Zhitian 林芝田 returned from his studies in Germany, but having overworked his eyes, he became blind. They married happily, yet as Wang confesses to the doctor, she was not keen that a way might be found for her husband to recover his

sight, because he had no idea of what had happened to her disfigured face, and might be repelled.

Soon after their meeting, the doctor learns that a famous German ophthalmologist, who is a specialist in Lin's eye disease is visiting China. When he tells her this, she begs him, though with mixed feelings, to accompany her husband to Beijing to see the ophthalmologist. The two men go to Beijing. The operation is successful. But they lose contact with her for she has disappeared from Shanghai. Bit by bit, in a series of flashbacks, news reaches them from others who have seen her. Meanwhile the husband is in great danger of losing his sight again because of his anxiety about his wife. At last, the doctor learns (in another flashback) that a few days earlier, the wife had a face-lift at the American hospital in Suzhou. Each flashback in the narrative reveals one side of Mrs. Lin's torn state of mind, how she longs for her husband yet is determined to run away, how she worries about great his disappointment would be when for the first time he could see her face, and so on. Through most of the narrative, present and past become tightly interwoven in this suspenseful story.

b) Duration in Narrative Time

We have seen how the fundamental changes in the narrative structure of fiction that were introduced in China after 1900 included in particular the way stories begin. In the traditional opening summary of family background or history of a character or of events, the narrative tempo is decidedly rapid. By comparison, the various ways in which modern stories begin are necessarily slower. With Bao and Zhou, this is especially the
case in those stories which begin with a brief introduction in which the author
tells the reader why he wrote the story, comments on its theme and, in some cases, on the
source which inspired him. Brief as these introductions are, they obviously delay the
narrative.

However, in Bao's stories, it is usually not Bao directly but a persona in the shape
of a gentleman named "Yiying sheng" 愫英生 (Mr. Yiying), or a woman called "Hehe
nü shi" 洮荷女士 (Miss Hehe) who introduces the story. Sometimes, the content of the
introduction is conveyed through the device of an interview between the author himself
and Yiying sheng or Hehe nü shi. By such means Bao sought to make the opening
commentaries in his stories seem more objective.

By contrast, when Zhou wishes to express his reason for telling a certain story, he
begins it himself with a monologue, describing his own emotion, which corresponds to
that of the main theme of the story he is about to tell. Thus his commentary is highly
subjective.

Yet Bao and Zhou used such introductory commentaries only in some of their
stories. The majority begin with descriptions of surroundings or physical appearance, or,
as we have seen, dialogue, letter, or diary. For instance, Bao Tianxiao's Remedying a
Fault opens with a scene at a textile factory. It is closing time for the women workers.
Yunying is walking out of the factory alone, unlike the groups of other women, making
the reader wonder why. From early on, Zhou Shoujuan also began several of his stories
with a descriptive scene. What is still more interesting, however is that he often started a
story with a character revealing his state of mind in a monologue. The Cuckoo's Call at
Midnight is an example:
Good heavens! When I examine myself I find that in all my life I have never done wrong to anybody. Besides, there aren't any bitter, deep-seated hatreds or old scores between us. Why do you only choose me to make fool of me and turn my mind upside down, and thus make me suffer miserably? If you want me to die, why not just straightforwardly kill me? Instead you stretch your all-powerful hand holding a shining knife and cut up my heart and intestine slice by slice . . .

Here, the narrator is giving vent to his frustration to the god on high, suggesting that it is beyond his ability to change the doom that has been decided for him above. This kind of opening also appears in The Wife of a Winebibber, This Regret Goes on, Yi! Chiyi 嘿！歎矣 (Alas! It's too Late, 1915)239 and other of Zhou's short stories. Opening a story by plunging into the midst of a dialogue was another experiment Zhou attempted, as in Huali zhenzhen 畫裏真真 (A Painting [of a Girl] True to Life, 1914)240 and Liuyue . . . liunian 六月. . . 六年 (Six Months . . . Six Years, 1918)241.

Unlike the short stories of the past with their action plots, which were like mini-novels, many of Bao and Zhou's stories aim at depicting one or more psychologically revealing slices in the life of a central character. Consequently, the way narrative time moves and changes is different. Descriptions of surroundings in their stories which

238 Zhou, The Cuckoo's Call, p. 9
239 Zhou, Alas! It's too Late, Saturday 63 (1915): 21-24.
240 ________. A Painting True to Life, Saturday 29 (1914): 13-27.
correspond in mood to a character's mental state are used far more frequently and with greater elaboration than in traditional fiction. Implicit ellipsis usually replaces explicit one, in such ways that sometimes readers are hardly aware of it. Pauses are often used, stretching narrative time for the sake of depicting the inner world of characters. The centre of their stories is seldom the turning point of an action.

For instance, Bao Tianxiao's *On Passing through Cangzhou* consists of several oil-painting-like scenes which the narrator observes from a train. The duration of story time is only half an hour, but the narrative or reading time is longer. The story hardly has a plot, and the narrative time is stretched by the description of the scenes at the train station, the colours, foreground and background, still life and movements in between, the contrast between the rich and the poor. In a kind of miniature these scenes reflect parts of life in China during the 1910s.

In Bao's *The Wife of a Primary School Teacher* there are only two episodes, the first in the morning, the other in the evening. In the morning scene, the story's duration is about forty minutes, in the evening scene two hours. The first part ends when the teacher leaves home in anger, the narrator commenting: "Xiaomei 小梅 knows that he has a weak case, so he leaves in silence." The second part begins: "On the day, Xiaomei comes home much later than usual. It is nine o'clock. He returns listlessly, and tries again and again to open the door but does not succeed."\(^{242}\)

Here, no word alerts the reader to ellipsis between morning and evening. The jump over time results in the juxtaposition of two episodes from ordinary life showing

husband and wife in contrasting moods. They are not characterized by their role in a plot full of action but by their reaction to each other and their solution to their conflict.

Zhou Shoujuan's *Leng ye re* 冷與熱 (*The Cold and the Hot*, 1914)\(^{243}\) tells what happened in the course of three hours one evening. The story is narrated in three scenes. The first one takes place before dinnertime: the chief character, Wang Zhongping 王仲平, returns home with a "cold face". His wife Hu Jingzhu 胡静珠 has dressed up and prepared a lovely dinner for the celebration of their wedding anniversary. But his mind is occupied with his plan to meet a young woman at a restaurant for the evening. In the second scene, at dinner time in a restaurant, he meets the woman, and presents her with a diamond ring as a birthday gift, whereupon she shows him a larger one, and tells him that it is her engagement ring from her neighbour, who has just returned to the city with a Master's degree from Harvard University. In the final scene, Wang returns home with a "warm face," and presents the same ring to his wife. But she rejects the gift, and tells him that her love for him is dead.

The warmth and coldness of the two people in the first scene are reversed in the third one. The simple story is tightly constructed. The three scenes are conveyed in nine pages. The first is headed "cold," the second, in the restaurant, "hot," and the third "cold and hot." Zhou has chosen the most dramatic moments in the story for narration, and his protagonist uses extreme images to describe the changes in mood from passion "as hot as a volcano," and betrayal and disappointment "as cold as the snow on top of the Himalayas." His dramatization seems ironic in view of the selfish shallowness of his

character. That the duration of story is only three hours, marked by references to the
clock in the three episodes (from 6 to 9 p.m.), contributes further to the dramatic effect.

I mentioned earlier that Zhou Shoujuan opened some of his stories with dialogue, for instance his early *A Painting [of a Girl] True to Life*. Assigning a large role to
dialogue in fiction, so that it makes its very form more like drama, was first experimented
with by Wu Jianren in his short story *Cha gongke* 查功课 (Checking Schoolwork, 1907), though he also included pieces of description in it, both at the beginning and at
several other places in the story. Then, however, in 1914 Bao Tianxiao wrote the short
story *Telephone* wholly in dialogue form except for a few lines at the beginning, and
Zhou's *Six Months . . . Six Years* (1918) contains no description but is wholly in dialogue.

The dialogue of Zhou's story is between a husband and wife and is in two parts
interrupted by a large gap in time. The first part occurs six months after their marriage.
In it they express their passionate love and affection for each other. The dialogue is full
of sweet words, their care for each other, their celebration of their eternal love. The
second dialogue occurs six years later. No indication however is given in the text that
several years have passed: only the story's title gives the reader a hint. Now the husband
and wife are quarrelling. They find every possible excuse for attacking each other. Their
affection has turned into utter dislike.

Different from Bao's "A Wife of a Primary School Teacher", which ends in
understanding, forgiveness, reconciliation, and growing love between the couple, Zhou's
couple engage in a battle of words throughout their second exchange. Even though the

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244 Wu Jianren, *Cha gongke* 查功课 (Checking Schoolwork), *Yueyue xiaoshuo* 月月小说 (The All-Story Monthly) 8 (1907): 169-172.
husband wants to stop, the wife persists in her hot pursuit. Note how in the following extract there are neither speech headings nor quotation marks. We only know that the speaker changes whenever a line stops before its full length. In these omissions my translation follows the Chinese original:

It's already twelve. It's time for the three kids to go to bed. I still want to read a little. I don't have time to be plagued with unreasonable demands.

I'm taking care of the children bedtime. It's none of your business.

Good night, Lady!

I'm overwhelmed. But I'm not qualified to be a lady [since you are not of high rank].

The hits and ironic innuendos of their dialogue contrast sharply with the harmony of their exchange six years earlier. All that happened in their family life in the interim is omitted.

The dialogue also shows Zhou's superb mastery of language. The husband and wife are characterized by the way they speak to each other. We learn how bored she is by her housework and having to be all day long with their three children, and how much she longs for some attention from her husband but receives only mockery instead. Zhou has succeeded equally well in portraying the husband, who is tired from his daily work and longs to relax in a peaceful environment, but finds himself constantly annoyed by his wife. The characters are well individualized in a kind of situation that is unfortunately familiar to many couples.

245 Zhou, Shoujuan's Short Stories, pp. 39-40.
In the stories by Bao and Zhou selected for discussion I have noted fundamental differences in structure, including ways of handling of narrative time, from those characteristic of traditional Chinese fiction. The chief reason for these differences lies of course in the basic nature of the story material. Traditional short stories and novels usually narrate a plot of action whose events are told chronologically, and which are structured accordingly. The action passes through the stages first of the beginning, then the development to a climax which is the action's turning point, and finally to the denouement. Most of Bao's and Zhou's stories, on the other hand, contain much less plot, and the events are often narrated in non-chronological order. Instead of beginning with a "summary", that is a character's or his family's background and history of relations, the story begins with a description of the setting, or still more directly, *in medias res*, except sometimes for a very brief introduction in which the author explains his motive for writing the story. Perhaps the most telling difference, however, is the emphasis on depth- -psychological revelation of characters through their mental states and inner thoughts, contrasting with the stress on action found in traditional fiction. It was this, in China, new kind of interest imported from Western fiction, that largely motivated the experimentation with new narrative techniques shown in many of Bao's and Zhou's stories. (They were also attracted by the more dramatic methods of openings in modern Western fiction and ways of establishing more intimate contact between narrator and reader.)

The greatest shift, then, is that from the outer world to the inner one of characters. It is exemplified again by the final story to be discussed in this chapter: Bao Tianxiao's
Qimeng 奇夢 (Strange Dreams, 1916). This story focuses on the psychological revelation through dreams of the protagonist's suppressed conscience. It shows the influence of Western post-romantic dream literature and of pre-Freudian dream theory.

Dreams play a large role in the various genres of earlier Chinese literature, poetry, fiction, drama, history, and biography, and are often quite similar to the dream visions in medieval and later works of Western literature. In some works of Chinese fiction and drama, dreams convey a message of Buddhist and Taoist teaching concerning the illusory nature of life and the vanity of striving after worldly gain, as in Zhenzhongji 枕中記 (The World Inside a Pillow), by Shen Jiji 沈既濟 (ca. 740-ca.800), and Nanke taishou chuan 南柯太守傳 (The Prefect of South Branch), by Li Gongzuo 李公佐 (ca. 770-ca.848), where the main story takes the form of dream. In other works the dream is a supernatural power which conveys a message to a character about justice, as in Shiwu guan 十五貫 (Fifteen Strings of Cash), a chuanqi 傳奇 (play) by Zhu Suchen 朱素臣 (fl. ca. 1644); or about a person's life before he/she was born and his/her next life in another world, as in The Dream of the Red Chamber, where the dream appears in the form of revelation and prophesy, and as also in some Western works.

The dreams in Bao's Strange Dreams, however, are of a totally different kind. Three times in the course of six years, the narrator-protagonist has a "strange" dream. The first two occur after he has been drinking wine. In the first dream he meets a pretty girl. She makes such an impression on him that after waking up, it takes him two weeks to forget her. The second dream occurs two years later. In it he marries the same girl.

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When he then sleeps beside his bride, their old maidservant wakes him up and asks him to leave. He cries out in his dream that he does not want to. At this point he really wakes up and learns that it was his wife sleeping beside him who has awakened him up. When she asks why he cried out, he feels ashamed because he loves and respects her.

Another two years pass, during which their lovely three-year-old daughter has died. Both his wife and he have been grieving deeply. Then the protagonist has a third strange dream. The woman in the dream looks as beautiful as before but seems deeply upset. He hears a baby girl crying in the next room. When he awakes, he hears his own baby son crying in the next room.

Quite different from traditional fiction, dreams and reality in *Strange Dreams* interlock and take turns. The protagonist's mental activity is involved in both worlds. The dreams reveal some inner world deep in his mind, which he refuses to admit and has tried hard to suppress; for instance, longing for a pretty girl and for his wife to be the way she was when she was young. In the last dream, his beautiful dream-wife actually merges with his real, though idealized, wife. The extreme sadness of the dream-wife's expression represents his real wife's grief. The baby girl signifies his deep sense of loss over his daughter's death, whose life he wishes he could have saved.

The stories by Bao and Zhou discussed in this chapter are representative of the literary scene in the 1910s which is one of the most fascinating decades in the history of Chinese literature. Their literary writings were both rooted in Chinese tradition, and branded with Shanghai's rapid modernization at the time. It has been shown that their short stories are innovative in many ways. In them, elements of China's cultural heritage
are integrated with modern content and techniques learned from Western models onto what are individual creations of their own. For contrast both with their predecessors, the late Qing writers, and with their immediate successors, the May Fourth writers, Bao and Zhou were not motivated by the desire to promote a certain ideology. With unusual sensibility, they wrote about the changes and conflicts between the old and the new in the daily life of modern Shanghai during the 1910s. In the genre of the short story, both found an effective medium.
Chapter Four

The Language

Confúcius says: . . . If one's language is not refined, he cannot go far.

The Spring and Autumn Annals—the Twenty-fifth Year of Duke Xiang

Bao Tianxiao and Zhou Shoujuan belong to the last generation of writers in China who wrote fiction in both the classical and vernacular language forms. The skill of writing in both forms has largely died out during the last fifty years. The classical language, which had been the standard form of writing through millennia of Chinese history has become unfamiliar to the large majority of the younger generations in urban China. Today, while a number of famous classical texts are available in reprint, their sales are necessarily quite limited.

The abandonment of the classical language in education, in official forms of communication, and in literary writing was first advocated around 1917 by the New Cultural movement and effected in practice by the early 1920s. It happened to be the very period when Bao, Zhou, and fellow writers were writing many of their works of fiction with unusual skill and remarkable innovation. The May Fourth movement halted abruptly a promising attempt at reforming the classical language, started by the late Qing reformers and literati and carried further by the so-called Mandarin writers of the 1910s. This chapter will trace what happened to language, particularly classical language, in short stories that appeared during the years immediately before the vernacular language
revolution. This subject involves consideration of the different origins and qualities of the two language forms and the ways in which these forms affected the literary fiction of the time.

Major changes in language have always had an inevitable impact on literature, whether in China or elsewhere. Such changes occur for different reasons, as was the case in two instances during the Tang dynasty. One was the *guwen yundong* 古文運動 (Ancient-style prose Movement) which, reacting against contemporary literary style, sought inspiration from that of earlier philosophical and historical writings from the pre-Qin, Qin, and Han dynasties. This movement resulted in the blooming of Tang *chuanqi* fiction. The other major language change occurred as a consequence of the introduction of Buddhism from India. For the first time, there appeared a type of story composed in a hybrid language, a mixture of classical and vernacular, the so-called *bianwen* 變文 (transformation texts) story.

These two language changes during the Tang dynasty exemplify how changes can be motivated by different causes, the first one reacting against the present by reviving a style of the past, the second resulting from foreign influence and pointing to the future. Both directions characterize the language reform instigated at the turn of the twentieth century by Liang Qichao and others, which was committed to enlightenment policies and modernization, only twenty years before the May Fourth revolution. These reformers also pointed to earlier styles of writing even while they were advocating modern forms of literature inspired by Western models, both in content and in narrative devices and techniques, and also by an adaptation of the elements of grammar that characterize European languages. This development even led to the first book, *Mashi wentong,*
published in 1898,\textsuperscript{247} which applied the grammatical system of Western languages to Chinese, though it was much criticized at the time for ignoring the peculiarities of the Chinese language itself.

This reform further stimulated the growing amount of translation of Western literature and philosophical and scientific thought that had begun only a few decades earlier. It provided inspiration to Chinese thinkers and writers of fiction, and resulted in the importation of much new vocabulary. Yet remarkably enough, most of these translations were made in the classical language, even though most traditional Chinese novels, unlike other literature, had been written in the vernacular. The reason is that scholars had been persuaded by Western example that fiction should occupy a high place in literature, and that therefore great novels should also be written in the classical language.

At the same time, writers of fiction began experimenting in various earlier language forms, including different styles of \textit{guwen} 古文 (from \textit{Qin-Han} 秦汉, \textit{Wei-Jin} 魏晋, and \textit{Tang-Song} 唐宋 models to those of the \textit{Tongcheng} 桐城 school of the late Qing), parallel prose, and earlier kinds of vernacular texts. The boundaries between \textit{wenyan} 文言 and \textit{baihua} 白话 became less strict; indeed sometimes they coalesced in such work. Therefore, the fiction of the first two decades of the twentieth century shows considerable flexibility and experimentation, variety and innovation in the kinds of vernacular and classical language used and the way they interacted. In the best works, as I will argue, the Chinese language became both lively and flexible. Writers were discovering fresh ways of integrating the linguistic features of different forms of both the

\textsuperscript{247} Ma Jianzhong (1844-1900) 马建忠, \textit{Mashi wentong} 马氏文通 (Ma's Comprehensive Grammar), (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1898).
classical and the vernacular. They were moving towards a new language that would retain the artistic qualities of classical Chinese but be infused with the lively vigour of the vernacular and some grammatical elements of Western languages. The first of the twentieth century language reforms inspired a resurgence of excellence in fiction in China after a long decline in the previous century.

As stated in the first chapter, this development was however brought to an abrupt halt by the May Fourth movement, which rejected outright the classical as a dead language unsuitable for modern China and thus all literature written in it, including many works published during the immediately preceding years. In the first article promoting the vernacular movement, Hu Shi's Wenxue gai-liang chu-i 文學改良芻議 (Some Modest Proposals for the Reform of Literature, 1917), he particularly attacked writers in classical language for relying on old idiomatic phrases and literary or historical allusions, for overusing parallel sentence structure, and for preferring circumlocutions to direct expression. Hu Shi rejected their idioms and allusions as mere cliches.\(^{248}\)

Now, it was true that many writers, both earlier and more recent, had been merely showing off their knowledge when they packed their stories with old phrases and allusions, whose stereotypical forms and frequent repetition had robbed them of all meaning. Already in the seventeenth century, Li Yu 李漁 (1611-1689) had used the same contemptuous phrase when he lamented the tendency of overburdening stories with cliches, as if the practice was a widespread sickness. But as I will show, when we turn to

Bao's and Zhou's short stories, we see that their ways of using old idiomatic phrases and allusions can be defended.

Traditional classical language has by its very nature some basic weaknesses, which in the context of the modern world have become more marked, but so does the vernacular, though in different ways. The weaknesses of the classical language do not justify its complete abandonment. In chapter one, I discussed the view of the Xue Heng School of the classical language which saw it as the carrier of a rich heritage of ancient culture. In this chapter, the focus will be on the language itself, its system of signs as a conveyer of the thought patterns of earlier Chinese thinkers, and as a literary medium in the early twentieth century.

The most serious weakness of the classical language is its great difference from the language of ordinary speech. Because of this disparity, only educated people in the past had access to the classical language. When about 1900 the majority of Chinese were still illiterate and reformers faced the urgent need to educate them, the difficulty of learning the classical language posed an ongoing serious problem. Yet from a long-term viewpoint, the merits of the classical language outweigh this hindrance.

Many scholars believe that in very early times, the classical language was close to that of speech, though this cannot be proven; it can only be a hypothesis. Confucius’ Lunyu 論語 (Analects) is a record of how he talked with his disciples. Today his words are far removed from speech, but they appear to have been in the language of his contemporaries. Beginning in the Zhanguo 戰國 era (the Warring States, 475-221 B.C.), through to the Qin and Han (221 B.C.- 220 A.D.) dynasties, the classical language was gradually standardized. Its basic grammatical system and syntax were formed during this
Thus when Sima Qian 司馬遷 (c. 145-c. 85 B.C.) during the Han dynasty wrote

*Shiji* 史記 (Records of the Grand Historian), he changed words when he quoted from the very early *Shangshu* 尚書 (Book of Documents),

but followed *The Analects*, *Zuozhuang* 左傳 (Zuo Documentary), and *Zhanguoce* 戰國策 (Intrigues of the Warring States) almost to the letter. Several centuries later, the proclamation by the *Guwen yundong* 古文運動 (Ancient Style Prose Movement) during the Tang dynasty, *wen bi Qin Han* 文必秦漢 (Literary writing must follow the Qin and Han style) became a standard for future language reformers. When more than once in later periods, reformers reacted against the increasing artificiality of the classical language of their time, they called for a revival of the ancient style formed during the Qin and Han dynasties.

Yet, as the vernacular changed over the centuries, the process of formalization of the classical language resulted in its increasing distance from the spoken language, and this distance ensured its very stability. When the classical language was standardized, it also became stable. For more than three thousand years, it has retained basically the same system of grammar and syntax. Educated people in different areas and periods have been able to read writings of long ago, like *chu ci* 楚辭 (Songs of Chu, between 300 B.C. and 200 A.D.), *shijing* 詩經 (The Book of Odes, between 1200 and 700 B.C.) and *shiji* 史記, to Zhang Taiyan's 章太炎 and Wang Guowei's 王國維 writings of the early twentieth century. It is this stability of the classical language that preserves the rich heritage of Chinese culture.

By contrast, spoken languages differ from area to area and time to time. A record from the time of Confucius' *Analects* reads: "Confucius would speak about the *Odes*, the

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249 According to a widespread legend, Confucius compiled the work.
History, and the practice of Record of Rites, with attention to the correct enunciation of the characters. This "correct enunciation" was then official and in common usage on formal occasions, and it was certainly not Qufuhua, the accent of the dialect of Confucius' home town. Most early writings that have been preserved are in the written classical language with its stable idiom and syntax. It made sense to record whatever one wished to preserve for posterity in classical because of the variety of vernacular dialects and their alteration over time.

Written vernacular is derived from spoken language and remains closer to common speech both in grammar and vocabulary. It adapts fairly quickly to changes in the spoken language. But for reasons mentioned, few vernacular writings prior to the Tang dynasty are extant, except for yuefu 楷府 poems from the Han dynasty. Their ancient vernacular is of course completely unlike that of today. As for the vernacular language in a few extant stories from the Song and more from the Yuan and Ming dynasties, it differs considerably from that in late Qing fiction and still more from that of the May Fourth writers, not to mention current fiction. Many of the words and phrases in traditional vernacular fiction have become inaccessible to modern readers without special training.

When in the past the classical and the vernacular language forms existed side by side, they influenced each other. Generally speaking, the vernacular borrowed more from the classical for more than one reason. An extreme case was the custom of quoting longer classical poems in works of vernacular fiction. More often, writers of fiction mixed the vernacular with classical phrasing. On the other hand, poets often incorporated

bits of vernacular in their writings, imitating the yuefu folk style. Late Ming and early Qing scholars such as Li Zhi 李贄 (1527-1602), Jin Shengtai, and Li Yu sometimes mixed vernacular phrases with their classical prose, because they thought this would help them express their thoughts and feelings more clearly.

There is abundant evidence that the late Ming writers of vernacular fiction were well trained in the classical language. The language of the earliest huaben stories seems much rougher and therefore probably closer to the spoken one of the time than that in the versions by the late Ming literati who sought to refine their vernacular. For instance, the language of the stories in Qingping shantang huaben 清平山堂話本 (Vernacular Short Stories from the Clear and Peaceful Studio), compiled by Hong Bian 洪便 in 1541-1551, appears quite close to that of oral performances and "urban folklore", since Hong Bian did not do much editorial work. By contrast, the language in Gujin xiaoshuo 古今小說 (Stories Old and New, ca. 1620), compiled by Feng Menglong (1574-1646), appears much more refined and incorporates many classical phrases, the result of Feng Menglong's own involvement in editing, rewriting, and composing. For example, the following excerpt comes from a huaben story entitled Jiezhi ji 戒指記 (A Story of a Ring) in Hong Bian's earlier version:

太常曰: "我做到極貴之臣, 家財受用的, 穿的, 吃的, 不可勝數, 止生得這個

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251 Patric Hanan, after describing some of the characteristics of the earlier huaben stories, continues:
Of course, these traits might be attributable to the earlier stories' greater reliance on the subject matter of folklore and professional oral fiction. But the writing itself indicates that they have also to do with authorship. Quotation is on the lower level of accuracy than in later authors, allusion is more limited and, more predictable, and the quantity of narrative and linguistic convention is much greater.
女兒，況兼有這般才貌，我若不尋個才貌相當的兒郎，枉做了朝中大臣。"252

(Taichang says: "Since I have become the highest honorable official, my family's means for clothing, food, and other expenses are unlimited. I only have this one daughter. Besides she is endowed with such gifts and beauty. If I don't find a man who matches her gifts and handsomeness, my being a minister at the court will have been wasted.")

In Feng Menglong's later version, the text reads:

那陳太常常與夫人說: "我位至大臣, 家私萬貫, 止生得這個女兒, 况有才貌,若不尋個名目相稱的對頭, 枉居朝中大臣之位。"253

(Chen Taichang often speaks to his wife: "Because my official position reaches high, my family has become very wealthy. I only have this one daughter. Besides, she is endowed with gifts and beauty. If I don't find a man who matches our social status, occupying such a high position at the court will have been wasted.")

While the meaning in the two versions is close, as conveyed in the similar English translations, the vocabulary is quite different. It appears to be much closer to ordinary speech in the earlier version than in the later rewritten one.

As the vernacular language was developing, it continued to absorb sustenance from the classical while nourishing it in turn. There are many borderline cases where there is no clear distinction between the two language forms. As Hanan states:


Since grammar is, in essence, constant, and since there are no inflections in the proper sense, Classical and vernacular may easily be allowed to interpenetrate on the written page. They are, to a large extent, grammatically compatible systems with different sets of interchangeable parts. It is therefore possible to design a language constructed of both Classical and vernacular elements.\textsuperscript{254}

When Hu Shi claimed in his \textit{A History of Vernacular Literature} 白話文學史 (1928) that all worthy literary works were in the vernacular form, he perhaps realized that no one would agree, for he wrote in his preface: "I set up a wide range of 'vernacular literature.' Therefore it includes works which are explicit and clear from the old literature."\textsuperscript{255} The examples he provides are from classical works whose language is fairly close to the vernacular. Indeed it is generally true that when the writing is not purely in either form, the two can be very close. The coexistence of the two language forms provided the possibility for writers to choose either one for different applications, though in practice it was usually established tradition that regulated the choice.

For a very long time, it was universally held in China that not only all poetry, prose, and historical and philosophical writing, but also public documents had to be in the classical language. The vernacular was used for folk songs, ballads, collections of proverbs and jokes, some translations of Buddhist texts and in \textit{bianwen} stories, records of sayings of Neo-Confucianists (especially in the Song, Yuan and Ming dynasties), \textit{huaben}


stories, *zhanghui xiaoshuo* (serial-novels), scripts of *tanci* 彈詞 (plucking rhymes) performances, drama, etc. The prestige of the classical language was determined by its application. Fiction had always been traditionally excluded from the Confucian hierarchy. Except for the *zhiguai* (describing anomalies), *biji* (note-form literature) and *chuanqi* (transmission of the remarkable) tales, which are composed in the classical language form, hardly any attempt was made to write works of fiction in it. *Yanshan waishi* 燕山外史 (*The Tale of a Yanshan Scholar*) by Chen Qiu 陳球 (*fl.* 1808) is probably the only exception which employs *pianwen* 駢文 (parallel prose) style.

It was not until the end of the nineteenth century when Liang Qichao and other late Qing reformers broke with an age-old tradition that denigrated fiction and promoted it as the most important genre in the literary hierarchy, that writers began to translate novels from the West and to write fiction of their own in the classical language. Writers were responding with enthusiasm to Liang's promotion, benefiting as they did from a dramatic change in attitude. Pushed by the social and political reformers and stimulated by economical developments that included a marked growth in the printing industry, late Qing and early Republic fiction flourished.

Once it became recognized that fiction could be a serious kind of literature of great social value, it seemed natural for a leading writer of the time to take the further step of presenting it in the refined and more prestigious garb of the classical language. In the process of escalating the position of fiction in the literary hierarchy, the role of Lin Shu 林紳 (1852-1924) was pre-eminent. It was he who first used the classical language in translating novels from the West (where the prestige of fiction was assumed), and he

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256 Zhang Zu's (657-730) *Youxian ku* 游仙窟 (*The Dwelling of Playful Goddesses*) is also in parallel prose but is a *chuanqi* tale from the Tang dynasty.
followed these with classical fictional writing of his own. His enormous achievement and contribution to the blossoming forth of contemporary fiction in the classical language should never be underestimated.

Inspired by Lin Shu, writers of the early Republic practised almost every style of the classical language in their fictional works, as pointed out by Qian Jibo 钱基博 (1887-1957) in his *A History of Modern Chinese Literature:*

After the Republic was established, writings developed various styles. Academic circles did not value the style of elaborate parallel prose. Yet the styles of the Wei 魏, Jin 晋, Tang 唐 and Song 宋 eras were galloping in the literary form side by side, competing for power. Generally speaking, those who adored the Wei-Jin 魏-晋 style called Taiyan 太炎 their master, while those who adored the Tang-Song 唐-宋 style chose Lin Shu as their leader.257

However, although scholars did not admire the parallel prose style, readers were happy with it, since writers of early Republican fiction so adapted this classical language style that it became closer to the vernacular. An example is Xu Zhenya's 徐枕亚 novel *Yuli hun* 玉梨魂 (*Jade Pear Spirit*, 1914) whose parallel prose is easily read. The fact that *Yuli hun* enjoyed a circulation of over one million258 shows that its language did not prevent it from being well understood and popular. Likewise, the classical language in the fiction of Lin Shu, Su Manshu, Bao Tianxiao, Zhou Shoujuan, and others is subtle and refined yet clear to readers.

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257 Qian Jibo 钱基博, *Xiantai Zhongguo wenxueshi* 现代中国文学史 (Shanghai: Shijie shuju, 1933), p.137.

For Bao and Zhou, as for other writers, Lin Shu was the great master of their time in the classical language form, and they followed his style so well that Lin himself once remarked how struck he was by the "familiarity" of their writing. He is supposed to have admitted that he himself mistook their writing as his own. Lin Shu was a writer of such prestige and influence that several leading May Fourth writers including Lu Xun, Zhou Zuoren, Qian Xuantong, Guo Moruo, Xie Bingxin, and Shen Congwen all acknowledged their debt to him, although in their case it was to the content of his translations, which helped them to learn about Western culture, whereas Bao and Zhou also benefited from his style.

When speaking of Lin Shu as a master of the Chinese classical language (guwen-jia 古文家), what is meant is not the classical language in general but the specific guwen 古文 style. The systematic development of this style, conventionally formulated in Chinese literary history, was begun by Sima Qian, Ban Gu in the Han dynasty, carried on by Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824), Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007-1072) and other masters in the Tang and Song dynasties, and followed by Gui Youguan 歸有光 (1507-1571) in the Ming dynasty and the Tongcheng School during the Qing dynasty. Many scholars speak of Lin Shu's style as that of the Tongcheng School, because he learned from the school's last master, Wu Rulun 吳汝倫 (1840-1903), and because Lin's own philosophical outlook was similar. Such a view, however, ignores the innovational significance of Lin Shu's form of language or style. While it is true that Lin Shu's language has the charm and some of the characteristics of the Tongcheng School, it is by no means in pure Tongcheng style. As Qian Zhongshu 錢鐘書 (1910-1998) comments:
The style which Lin Shu used in his translations is a kind of classical language form that, he believed, was relatively easy to understand, casual, and rich in flexibility. Though it retains some elements of guwen 古文, it is much freer than guwen. It is not strict in rules of vocabulary, syntax and grammar. Its capacity is very large.\textsuperscript{259}

What Lin Shu strove for and accomplished was to bring out the strengths and virtues of the classical language and alleviate its weakness by incorporating vernacular idioms and new vocabulary borrowed from the West. Therefore, his language is not only artistically refined but also infused with vigour of expression. Moreover, he sometimes mixed Chinese syntax with Western, after making sure that usage suited content, without worrying whether he violated the rules of classical grammar. Thus he opened the classical language to linguistic innovation.

When examining Bao's and Zhou's classical fiction, we find the same features in their language. The two writers, however, went still further in their innovations. By vernacularizing the classical language, they moved towards a more modern style. Bao Tianxiao's and Zhou Shoujuan's language will now be analyzed from the aspects of (1) modern vocabulary, (2) innovations in grammar and syntax, and (3) use of poetic idiomatic phrasing, in order to show how in their short stories the two language forms tended to merge, with the positive elements of each enriching the other; how they made descriptions of human features and scenery stylistically more interesting; and how through their innovations each writer formed his own individual style.

1) Vocabulary

One of the arguments which the May Fourth culturalists used in their attack on the classical language was that its vocabulary was out of date and thus unsuitable for descriptions of life in modern society. Even if this argument were entirely true, it surely did not justify the inference that it should abandoned altogether as a language form. As social life changes from one period to another, there will always be need for new words while old phrases will fall out of familiar usage. The vernacular language form thus also has its variant vocabulary in different periods. That is why we need dictionaries for certain words that are no longer used when reading huaben fiction and novels from the past. While over the years the basic grammatical order and rules remain largely the same, changing only very slowly, any language, including the classical language form, is capable of absorbing new words for which need arises in a changing world. When new developments in transportation and communication occurred during the nineteenth century, such as the railway and the telephone, terms for these naturally found a place in the classical and not just in vernacular writings. Many people might find the vernacular easier to learn than the classical, but the argument that classical vocabulary is necessarily out of date rests on no solid basis.

In their short stories, both Bao and Zhou sought to modernize the classical language by an infusion of new words. Their new vocabulary involved a wide range of subjects, including not only science and technology but also economics, politics, education, literature, and other aspects of cultural and social life. Many of these words they simply adopted from vernacular precedents, but others they adapted from foreign,
chiefly Japanese, translations. In the following examples, the new terms are underlined. They are organized by broad subject matter:

時上海時報，方載有姜命薄之短篇小說。


The literary term "short story" was borrowed from Western literature only in the early twentieth century. Before that, only specific genre terms were used in China, like *zhigua*, *chuanqi, huaben, biji*, etc. 小說 in earlier times meant fiction. In this example Bao used the new name "short story" in the classical language without any problem.

予乃出一小說周刊曰: <<禮拜六>>者 . . .

I then took out a weekly magazine of fiction: this issue of *Saturday* . . .

(Zhou Shoujuan, *This Regret Goes on and on Forever, Saturday* 16, 1914, p.3).

The phrase *libai* 禮拜 is borrowed from Christianity. Although the Western calendar was introduced officially by the government of the Republic, when Zhou wrote the story many Chinese were still following the traditional calendar, which did not use the seven-
day week but half-monthly periods of fifteen days each as a time division.\footnote{260} For the
days of the week, some people used luminary names, Sun, Moon, Fire, Water, Wood,
Metal, and Earth.

雲秦氏，蘇人。父為報館主筆。

Yunqin is of Suzhou origin. His father is a chief editor of a newspaper.

(Zhou Shoujuan, A Painting [of a Girl] True to Life, Saturday 29, 1914,
p.14)

"Chief editor of a newspaper" was a modern term. It appears in the sentence as naturally
as 唐張守信為余杭太守 (In the Tang dynasty, Zhang Shouxin was a magistrate of
Yuhang). The difference is only in the title of the profession which has been changed.

是實以人家女子為玩具，尚有一絲人權也耶？

They do regard women as toys. Do they have even the slightest sense of
human rights? (Bao Tianxiao, A Thread of Linen, p.3)

"Renjia" means others. Here Bao uses vocabulary similar even to post-modern: men
regarding women as the other, as if they were toys. The protagonist asks angrily whether
women have any rights.

\footnote{260 See J Bredon, and I Mitrophanow, The Moon Year (Shanghai: Kelly & Walsh, Limited, 1927), p.18. Sometimes it was a ten-day rather than a half-monthly time division}
Besides, we have the free right to conduct correspondence. Wouldn't we rather make use of the 'blue bird' [a conventional metaphor for letters]? (Bao Tianxiao, *A Thread of Linen*, p.3)

The new term "right of freedom" and the classical conventional metaphor "blue bird" are juxtaposed in this sentence.

Impressive, he wanted to hang down the black curtain of autocracy. (Zhou Shoujuan, *The Cold and the Hot, Saturday* 13, 1914, p.1)

In the three examples above, the vocabulary involves terms for freedom and human rights, including emancipation from family-arranged marriage, women's position in society, and independence from male domination in a family. These matters were priorities of the May Fourth movement.

Yet I also did not donate one penny for charitable causes. (Bao Tianxiao, *Pratter in a Cowshed, The Grand Magazine* 3, 1915, p.8)
New, regional and national charitable organizations appeared in the earlier twentieth century under the influence of Western missionaries.

Do primary teachers nowadays know the fundamentals of teaching? (Bao Tianxiao, *Letters from the Nether World, The Grand Magazine* 4, 1914, p.1)

At the turn of the century, a basic reform in the educational system preceded literary reform. Moreover, educational institutions changed not only in system but in terms for them. For instance, *da xuetang* 大學堂 (university) replaced *shuyuan* 書院 (academy), and *xiaoxue* 小學 (primary school) replaced *guan* 館 and *shu* 墟, terms for local schools. During the Qing dynasty, there were no primary school teachers in the modern sense. Primary teaching was done by *xiansheng* 先生 (private tutors). Only after pupils had passed an elementary examination did they continue to be taught in some local or state schools by *jiaoshou* 教授 (instructor of Confucian schools at the prefecture level), 261 *boshi* 博士 (teacher at state school usually in the capital), 262 *xueyu* 學諭 (instructor in various schools administered by the Directorate of Education), 263 *xueguan* 學官


262 Ibid., p. 389.

263 Ibid., p. 253.
(educational official in Confucian schools in local government units), \textsuperscript{264} xu\textsuperscript{zheng} 學正 (instructor in Confucian schools), \textsuperscript{265} etc.

余既畢業於醫學校，即服役於病院。

After I graduated from a medical school, I started working in a hospital.


Different from \textit{taiyishu} 太醫署 (Imperial medical office during Sui and Tang dynasty, after c. 605, becoming a teaching and certifying agency for professional physicians in government service)\textsuperscript{266} and \textit{taiyiyuan} 太醫院 (Imperial Academy of Medicine), \textsuperscript{267} \textit{yixuexiao} 醫學校 (medical school) was a new term in which Western rather than traditional Chinese medicine was taught. \textsuperscript{268}

君以電話召醫生至乎?

Did you phone the doctor to come? (Bao Tianxiao, \textit{Test of Love}, p.5).

\textsuperscript{264} Ibid., p. 252.

\textsuperscript{265} Ibid., p. 252.

\textsuperscript{266} Ibid., 479.

\textsuperscript{267} Ibid., 479.

\textsuperscript{268} See Wang Zhimin and Huang Xinxian, \textit{Zhongguo gudai xuexiao jiaoyu zhidu kaolue} 中國古代學校教育制度考略 (A Brief Examination of the Ancient School and Education System of China), (Beijing: Shoudu shifan daxue, 1996), pp.197-208.

彼此消息都在郵筒中遞傳其一二。

News from each other was delivered to mail boxes only a few times.
(Zhou Shoujuan, *Seeming to Recognize the Returning Swallow, Saturday* 21, 1914, p.5).

但見新聞欄中乃載有中國實業家朱良才君歸國結婚事。

Suddenly she saw a piece of news in the news column about the Chinese industrialist Zhu Liangcai, who was going to return China to get married.

而連片面的愛情已熱於維蘇維亞火山噴出之熱燄。

But Lian's one-sided love was hotter than a cinder erupting from a volcano. (Zhou Shoujuan, *Pointing at My Home, the Red Building in the Distance, Saturday* 13, 1914, p.12).
Infatuated, he stared at her for a long time, as if he saw an angel from heaven flying down to earth. (Zhou Shoujuan, *Grieving not to have met his Lover Before*, Saturday 9, 1914, p.2).

Anqir is a transliteration of "angel".

Her feet are not smaller than a German naval cruiser, . . . . (Zhou Shoujuan, *A Painting [of a Girl] True to Life*, p.17).

These words are uttered by students commenting on a picture of a beautiful girl in an exhibition at an art gallery. Shuangfu 雙趺 (two feet) is a classical term for feet, but xunyang jian 巡洋艦 (cruiser) is a modern word. The students insult the girl in the picture because her feet are large and thus not bound, with an extra witty innuendo that a bound foot has the shape of a cruiser.

By using these new words, the two writers made a constructive innovation of word building on the lexical level of the classical language.

One basic characteristic of the classical language before 1900 is the preponderance of monosyllabic words. According to Zhao Keqin 趙克勤, there are
210,000 words in *Lunheng* 論衡 (Critical Essays) by Wang Chong 王充 (c.27-c.91 A.D.). Among them there are only 2300 disyllabic words, including special names. Zhao Keqin continues: in Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824) and Liu Zongyuan's 柳宗元 (773-819) prose writings, disyllabic characters are twice as frequent than in the early *Zuozhuan* 左傳 (Zuo Documentary). Yet they still compose a small proportion. 269 In the short story *Yingning* 偃寧 by Pu Songlin 蒲松齡 (1640-1715), 270 there are about 175 disyllabics among a total of 3056 words, according to my own calculation.

On the other hand, disyllabization was an important element in the development of the vernacular ever since the Tang dynasty, and this development also influenced the classical language, although very slowly. Modern vernacular is dominated by disyllabic and polysyllabic words. It would often be true to say that the more one uses monosyllabic words, the closer one's language is to classical, the more disyllabic and polysyllabic, the closer to vernacular. This is why the length becomes much greater when a piece of writing is translated from classical to modern Chinese.

Jakobson describes the nature and function of linguistic signs this way:

> Every linguistic sign is a unit of sound and meaning, or in other words, of signifier, and signified.

> It is rightly said that the two components are intimately related, that they call for each other, . . . 271

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270 Included in his *Liaozhai zhiyi* 聊齋志異 (Strange Stories from the Leisure Studio), (ms. 1707, printed 1766; Shanghai: Guji chubanshe, 1979), pp. 62-67.

Jakobson's statement applies clearly to European and other alphabetical languages in which usually, though with some exceptions, the graphic form of a word indicates to at least some extent how the word is pronounced. Once a person has familiarized himself with the rules of pronunciation of a certain language, he will be able to pronounce, though often imperfectly, words which he has not seen before. In the Chinese language, however, the situation is fundamentally different because its written signs are characters whose graphic form is not related to sound. They signify mainly by form. This fact caused over the centuries the pronunciation to vary so largely in different regions of the country that a word pronounced in one region is often incomprehensible to people in other parts: the example of Mandarin versus Cantonese is familiar, where the difference is still much greater than that between any dialect and a standard European language.

Yet throughout her history, China made attempts to relate sound more to meaning. Especially noteworthy was the endeavour, continuing from early on, to reduce the number of homophones in speech. The large number of monosyllabic words in the classical language with different meanings but identical or closely similar sounds was a basic cause of misunderstanding. A practical and frequently adopted solution to the problem was disyllabization. Moreover, this morphological development was necessary to allow for the merging of the two language forms.

Chinese is an non-inflected language and its monosyllabic words, which dominate the classical language, are by their very nature invariant single morphemes. When other characters are attached to monosyllables, their meanings are rendered flexible, becoming contextual variants in the form of disyllabic or polysyllabic words, as happened first in the vernacular language. As Robert Ramsey points out, "All the grammatical resources
of the language are available for compounding.  

He distinguishes between three basically ways of disyllabization:

a) **Compounds.** Common are combinations of two synonyms that reinforce each other's meaning, or of two coordinate words or morphemes of opposite meaning. For instance: *juda* 巨大 (giant), *weixiao* 微小 (small), *xingzou* 行走 (walk), *zhanli* 站立 (stand), *daoli* 道理 (reason), *daxiao* 大小 (size), *zuoyou* 左右 (thereabouts), *maimai* 買買 (business). A compound also can consist of a subject and predicate, an adjective and a noun, a verb plus an object, and a verb plus a complement in syntactic construction, as in *toufeng* 头疼 (headache), *daren* 大人 (adult), *chifan* 吃飯 (eat), *gailiang* 改良 (improve).

b) **Reduplicated words.** Word, or morpheme, of this category are repeated, for instance: *dengdeng* 等等 (wait a bit), *changchang* 嗤嗤 (taste), *tiantian* 天天 (everyday), *renren* 人人 (everybody).

c) **Morpheme plus Suffix.** The most common combinations of this kind are with *-zi* 子 and *-tou* 頭, such as *haizi* 孩子 (child), *naozi* 腦子 (brain), *zhuozi* 桌子 (table), *shitou* 石頭 (stone), *niantou* 念頭 (thought, idea), *gutou* 骨頭 (bone).  

By attaching one or two extra syllables to a word, its meaning become specified and thus confusion of homonyms prevented, especially in oral speech.

It is true that many disyllabic words in modern Chinese are derived from the classical language. Yet a large number of these classical words consist of two monosyllabic ones and function in both grammar and meaning differently from the same words in modern Chinese. One example is *wenhua* 文化 (culture, in modern Chinese).

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Lydia Liu in her *Translingual Practice* interprets:

In classical Chinese, *wenhua* denoted the state of refinement or artistic cultivation as opposed to *wu* or military prowess, carrying none of the ethnographic connotations of "culture" commonly associated with the two-character compound in today's usage.²⁷⁴

A further comment is needed here. In the classical language, *wenhua* is two separate words, meaning *wenzhi* 文治 (civil administration) and *jiaohua* 教化 (enlighten by education). *Wen* is the instrument or agency by which the verb *hua* operates; while in modern Chinese, *wenhua* is one word, functioning as a noun. Another example is *kexue* 科學 (science, in modern Chinese). In Appendix D of her *Translingual Practice*, Lydia Liu provides the source of the word and an explanation: *wei keju zhi xue* 謂科舉之學 (It is called "study for imperial examinations").²⁷⁵ Here, *kexue* is a compound of two monosyllabic nouns, consisting of a modifier and the word it modifies. There are many other compound words made up of monosyllables in Lydia Liu's list of classical Chinese expressions, that were used by the Japanese during the nineteenth and early twentieth century to translate Western terms that were then imported back into Chinese with a radical change in meaning.

In the examples listed above, it can be seen how Bao and Zhou in their short stories applied the device of di- and polysyllabization to the classical language. They did so to such an extent that at times longer or compound words become dominant in some of their sentences. These di- and polysyllablic words are not confined to new nouns but also

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²⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 336.
include verbs, such as *dichuan* 遞傳 (deliver), *juanzhu* 捐助 (donate), *zhuzong* 追踪 (trace), *jiaoxue* 教學 (teach), *jiehun* 結婚 (get married), and *pengchu* 喷出 (erupt).

The changes Bao and Zhou made show the flexibility of the classical language to absorb new vocabulary and, more important, to adapt new word formations, or word building on the lexical level, without altering grammatical meaning on the syntactic level. Most of the terms of modern technology, such as *dianhua* 電話 telephone, *dianpeng* 電燈 electric light, *dianche* 電車 street car, *qiche* 汽車 car, *motuoch* 摩托車 motorcycle, *tielu* 鐵路 railway, *huoche* 火車 train, *feiji* 飛機 plane, appear in Bao's and Zhou's fiction in the classical language, enabling their descriptions to be true to the life of metropolitan Shanghai in the early twentieth century. Equipped with new vocabulary, Bao and Zhou's classical stories succeeded well in adapting their language in such a way as to suit the flavour of modern life.

2) Morphology and Syntax

While, as I emphasized, their incorporation of new vocabulary, including many disyllabic words, was carried out without in any way compromising the grammar or syntax of the classical language, Bao and Zhou did also introduce some innovations in both morphology and syntax.

Because of the difficult writing tools and materials in use during the early period of writing and its method of designing characters with multiple strokes, the classical language developed a remarkably succinct style of grammatical morphemes and syntactic constructions, and even more so as it was refined from the time of Confucius on.
Sentences are concise, with the meaning tending to ellipsis and not seldom polysemy. For example, the subject or other parts of a sentence, when obvious from the context, were often omitted. Because of its very succinctness, however, the morphemes and syntax of the classical language are open to modification, a fact which Bao and Zhou made use of. One change they made was to enlarge single sentences, not only by replacing conventionally omitted components, but also by adding extra grammatical elements, for instance, compound predicates, adjectives, adverbs, and whole clauses, for the sake of more detailed descriptions and greater explicitness. This is shown in the following two examples:

Example 1: 此背微駄耳 微聴手微顫之老嫗...

This old woman who is slightly humpbacked and rather deaf, and whose hands are shaking a little... (Bao Tianxiao, Strange Dreams, The Grand Magazine 9, 1916, p.3).

Example 2: 兩人心意發達之軌道...

The tracks along which the two develop their feelings, ... (Bao, A Thread of Linen, p.17).

The three compound adjectival clauses in the Chinese of the first example are placed before the subject "the old woman" to describe her physical appearance. Similarly in the
second example, the subject "the track" (literally: rail-track) is modified by an adjectival clause. In example one, the subject clause alone in the traditional classical language, would probably be an independent sentence whose subject is followed by a predicate:

彼老嫗也，背癱，耳聾，手亦顚

(This old woman is humpbacked and deaf, and her hands are shaking.)

The behaviour of the old woman would have been the matter of a second sentence with a new topic. By transforming the syntax into a subject with adjectival clauses followed by the new verb, Bao combines the subject and the predicate into a single topic.

This change amounts to a significant semantic innovation since, first of all, in the traditional classical language, sentences usually are very brief. What we are told about the subject is often confined to what it does; that is, by the predicate in the form of a verb that is sometimes qualified by a single adverb; or of an adjective or a noun which is used as a verb. Secondly, in the classical language the subject is seldom modified by any adjective, and there are no adjectival clauses before a subject. The relationship between a subject and a predicate is conveyed in a normal word order SV(O) or S(O)V: the former precedes the latter, and the latter states what the former is and does, so that the two form a complete sentence unit, and each unit generates a separate single topic. However, when an emphasis is needed, the position of a subject and a predicate is reversed VS(O).
When, as in Example 1, Bao altered the syntax and added clauses, the relation of subject and predicate was relativized, since both are more clearly specified. The traditional unit is broken, as it becomes open to more possibilities both of action and description. Yet while the sentence is extended, the focus becomes more concentrated on the subject. Thus several sentences devoted to the same topic can be unified into one. The same applies to the second example cited, except for its having only one adjectival clause.

This change in the relation of predicate to subject and with it the basic structure of sentences shows the influence of Western syntax on Bao. When he was translating large works of foreign literature, he could hardly have avoided being affected by its word order and syntax.

It is well-known that the way meaning is conveyed in Chinese character writing often depends as much on context as on syntactical organization. The sentences are so constructed and follow one another in an order that is often not logical and lacking in focus. They make an appeal to the reader's imagination with polysemous meanings – most so in poetry to which classical Chinese is by its very nature well-suited – instead of following a grammatical principle that aims at conveying a single unambiguous meaning.\(^{276}\) By contrast, in Western languages the grammatical relationships are analytical. The main sentence and attached clauses are arranged according to syntactical

\(^{276}\) In his Zhongguojuxingwenhua 中國句型文化 (The Chinese Syntactical Culture), Shen Xiaolong 申小龍 points out that the effect of the syntax of the Chinese language is like that of 三點透視 (scattered perspectives) or, he puts it, 流水句 (floating water syntax). He notes a parallel in traditional Chinese painting, which applies psychological time-perspective to a series of scenes, not physical space-perspective. (Changchun: Dongbei shifan daxue chubanshe, 1988), pp. 445-451.
rules. The subject is normally fixed to the chief stem and cannot be replaced by any noun from its branches. Thus the focus is clear and fixed.

The following examples show how Bao in his classical stories sometimes combined several sentences and clauses in attempting to reduce the frequency of scattered focuses. Consequently, the sentences became longer, with additional and more developed clauses. Similarly, in his classical stories Zhou sometimes lengthened predicates by combining and enlarging sentence units.

Example 1: 億今晚不alk廍往大舞尝觀劇去。

"Tonight I cannot go with you to the Great Stage to watch a play." (Zhou Shoujuan, *The Cold and the Hot*, Saturday 13, 1914, p.6)

S+Neg.+ Conj.+Pronoun+Prep.+Noun+(V2+O2)+V1

This sentence shows the combination of the classical and the vernacular on both lexical and syntactic levels. *Nong* (I) and *ru* (you) are classical pronouns and *ke* (can, be able to) is a classical verb. They retain the same meanings and grammatical function here. However in their classical origin, *cong* 從 (follow), *wang* 往 (go), and *guan* 視 (watch) would likewise be verbs. Yet one sentence could obviously not accommodate all three as well as the vernacular verb *qu* 去 (go), which in the classical language would require as many as three sentences. The basic change that marks the quoted sentence is

277 In this as well as in several examples below I am applying a very simple notation of the order of the components of sentences. Here the order is: subject, negative, conjunction, pronoun, preposition, noun, second verb with its object (O2), and first verb.
the grammaticalization of the classic verbs "從" and "往" into a conjunction and preposition,\(^{278}\) that link the parts of the sentence together. The last sentence unit "去" becomes an adverbial phrase which specifies the purpose of "去". The resulting new sentence actually combines the syntax of the two different language forms:

a) 于是即將雌劍, 往見楚王. \textit{(Sou shen ji 搜神記)}

[He] then immediately takes the female sword and goes to see the Prince of Chu.

(In Search of the Supernature)

[S] V+O1, V2+V3+O2\(^{279}\)

b) 秋菱收拾了東西跟我來 (紅樓夢)

Qiuling, prepare (your) things and come with me. \textit{(The Dream of Red Chamber)}\(^{280}\)

V+O1, Conj.+Pronoun+V

\(^{278}\) Zhao Yuanren's \textit{A Grammar of Spoken Chinese} contains a section devoted to "prepositions", in which he points out that, depending on their grammatical functions, some Chinese prepositions can be regarded as "coverbs", while others are pure prepositions. (Berkeley and Los. Angeles: University of California Press, 1968), pp. 622-636.

\(^{279}\) See preceding footnote. S= subject, V= verb, O= object.

\(^{280}\) According to Alain Peyraube: "The first instances of \textit{gen} 跟 used as a preposition are attested in the \textit{Hong lou meng} ... the verb \textit{gen} was first grammaticalized into a preposition in the 18\textsuperscript{th} century and afterwards a new grammaticalization took place to transform the preposition into a conjunction." ("Recent Issues in Chinese Historical Syntax", \textit{New Horizons in Chinese Linguistics}, eds. C.-T. James Huang and Y.-H. Audrey Li, [Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1996], p. 191.)
In *Search of the Supernature*, "往" and "見" are two independent actions, but in Zhou's sentence, "往" and "覲" serve the action "去", which has the same function as "來" in *The Dream of Red Chamber*. "來" changes the classical verb "跟" into a conjunction, as "去" does to "從". The result of the combination of the two sentences is

...跟我往見楚王來

Conj.+Pron.+Prep.+(V2+O2)+V

The formula shows the resemblance of the syntax to that of Zhou's sentence, except that in the latter the preposition wang 往 is followed by a noun da wutai 大舞臺 (Great Stage), which is a new term.

The grammaticalization achieved by transforming a verb into a preposition or a conjunction evolved diachronically in the Chinese vernacular. Noticeably, classical verbs like 用, 跟, 和, and 了 became prepositions or conjunctions. Here Zhou Shoujuan applies this development to his classical writing, while at the same time mixing it with new vocabulary. As a result, sentences appear in a hybrid form of language, part vernacular and part classical.

Example 2: 為今之計, 我敢請以第一事即用電話告史特華先生.

For today's plan, the first thing I dare ask is to phone Mr. Shitehua'. (Bao Tianxiao, *Test of Love*, p.4)
In this sentence, Bao uses the classical coverb 以 to lead the subject 事, and changes the classical verb 用 into a preposition to link the copulative verb 即 with its demonstrative object. Thus the sentence is composed in two parts, the subject part in classical and the predicate part in vernacular syntax. One can sense the change of the tone in the heroine's speech. The urgency of the event (her friend's face burned by an accident) is conveyed by her shifting to the vernacular, indeed to its spoken form.

In the next example, the predicate part has been lengthened by adding an adjectival clause that specifies the object.

Example 3: 斗見新聞欄中乃載有中國實業家朱良材君歸國結婚事。

Suddenly [she] saw in the news column the report that the Chinese industrialist Mr. Zhu Liangcai was returning to China to get married. (Zhou Shuojuan, *Seeming to Have Met the Returning Swallow Before, Saturday 21, 1914*, p.12)

Although the short story is written in the classical language, the grammatical structure of this sentence is almost the same as in its English translation: [S]+V+PW\(^{281}\)+O. In classical language, the sentence structure would be: (S)+V+O+PW, that is

斗見...結婚事于新聞欄.

The setting of the story begins in New York City where the Chinese industrialist

\(^{281}\) PL= place word.
had been a university student a few years earlier. While there, he fell in love with an American girl. After he became successful in China, he returned to New York in the hope of finding his sweetheart again. But she had been married. The similarity to English syntax in the writing promotes an exotic atmosphere that suits the content of the story.

Example 4: 吾今自誓當吾祖國文字語言緬滅之最后一剎那頃, . . .

"I vow now that at the last second when my country's characters and language will be destroyed, . . . ." (Zhou Shoujuan, Diary of a Slave in a Conquered Country, 1915, rpt. in Shoujuan's Short Stories, 1918, p.74).

In terms of grammar, this lengthened and unfinished sentence can be regarded as vernacular. Even on the lexical level, the characters are mainly disyllabic; only the pronoun and particles remaining in the classical form. When strong emotion needs to be aired, one may feel, like Zhou, that observance of the rules of language would fetter one's expression. Here Zhou ranges five adjective units on top of one another to produce the effect of passionate urgency. One feels the rapid rhythm while reading it. That kind of writing is rare even in the vernacular of the time.

Example 5: 斗至彼異囊日遙指紅樓是妾家處。
Suddenly [he] arrived at the place where the other day the pretty girl pointed out a red building far away, [saying] "That is my home". (Zhou Shoujuan, "Yaozhi honglou shi qiejia", Saturday 13, 1914, p.12).

This example shows a long adjectival clause of the object 處 (the place). The clause combines what in classical would be two sentences, one stating what the girl did, and the other quoting her words. The switch from description to speech is salient, showing how the protagonist's memory flows from the girl's gesture to what she said. His memory is aroused by the place. The girl's movement 遁指 has created an image of a dreamy red house far away from immediate reality. What really made an impression on the protagonist was the way she spoke, which evoked an intimate feeling in him for the place. As Barzun points out, "The complex form gives and withholds information, subordinates some ideas to others more important, coordinates those of equal weight, and ties into a neat package as many suggestions, modifiers, and asides as the mind can attend to in one stretch."\(^{282}\)

The syntax of Zhou's complex sentence resembles modern vernacular, but the words are classical. The function of the modern syntax is to tie the sentences into "a neat package", as Barzun describes. The classical vocabulary infuses the image with a poetic flavor, for which the classical language is well-suited.

In this final example the syntax is strikingly foreign:

其一種端莊凝靜之態度與前之手持球拍微擊駝蝎之背者，其活潑流麗之狀，
正堪作反比例也。

Her sedate and calm manner, compared with her lively vivacity when, however
slightly, she hit the back of the old hunchbacked woman with her racket, can be
regarded as strikingly opposite. (Bao Tianxiao, *Strange Dreams*, 9, p. 3).

This unusually long and complex sentence includes both coordinate and subordinate
clauses. The coordinate one, "compared with her lively vivacity", evokes an image that
contrasts with that of the subject, while the subordinate one, "when however slightly, she
hit the back of the old hunchbacked woman with her racket", provides a background for
the comparison: how lively the girl was before. Thus the two pictures of the girl are
sketched within one sentence, indicating two sides of her character. Each clause in the
sentence also includes adjectives as modifiers. Making abundant use of complex
grammatical components like this is of course totally non-traditional. Nor is the grammar
that of the vernacular. Yet it is close to modern Chinese grammar, since the latter has
been further influenced by that of European languages since the 1910s, and subordinate
clauses have become common grammatical components. The only signs which remind
us of the classical origin are the particles.

The innovation by Bao and Zhou in classical grammar and syntax resulted in the
enlargement of sentences on the lexical level, and concentration on fewer focuses on the
semantic level. The grammatical change of classical verbs into prepositions or coverbs
made disyllabization possible in the classical language, rendering it more flexible and
thus able to absorb new vocabulary. It also paved the way for further changes in syntax, because prepositions play a very important role in linking syntactical segments. One can subjectivize or objectivize the mood of a sentence by complicating its structure with relative clauses or with adjectival and adverbial phrases inserted before subjects, objects, and verbs. The emphasis on highlighting, foregrounding, backgrounding, anticipating, encoding, and decoding can be adjusted by applying different syntactic techniques, as is common in Western languages.

However, while the various examples cited from the short stories of the two writers show the greater complexity of syntax under the influence of Western languages, this does not mean that their language was Westernized in general, for such complex sentences constitute only a small portion of their writing. They were making use of Western morphology and syntax in adapting the Chinese language in their search for a rhetorical way of expression that could reflect and describe the rapidly changing life in the urban China of their time. But at the same time they strove to enhance the quality of their own language and civilization.

Thus in their experimentation Bao and Zhou reformed classical grammar on the one hand, yet on the other hand re-enforced classical features, especially such artistic ones as emotive rhythm, implicit rather than direct expression, and connotative and allusive idiomatic phrases. This last usage will now be discussed in some detail.

3) Allusive Idiomatic Phrasing

One of the riches of the classical language is its abundant use of idiomatic phrases
full of historical and cultural connotations, some of which can be traced as far back as three thousand years ago. Many of these phrases allude to stories from historical, religious, and literary classics, including legends and myths. This wealth of idioms was used in various kinds of writing, enriching the cultural implication and background on the one hand, and resulting sometimes in circumlocutory games on the other. While the poetic tradition of Western countries is marked by similar phrases and allusions to ancient stories, biblical, classical, or medieval, their unusual richness and widespread use is a basic characteristic of the classical Chinese language. Idiomatic phrases of this kind are most often composed of four characters, but others consisting of more or only of two characters are not uncommon.

From the Song dynasty on, allusory idiomatic phrases were often adopted from classical into vernacular fictional writings, including Yuan zaju 禪劇 (drama) and chuanqi plays, and in edited versions of huaben stories and masterpieces like The Romance of the Three Kingdom, The Water Margin, and The Dream of the Red Chamber, in which, it needs to be stressed, such allusions are used judiciously. They are much less abundant in these works than in classical ones but numerous enough to show that idiomatic phrases had already become an intrinsic component of vernacular literature several centuries ago. In Edward Gunn's Rewriting Chinese, he refers to Lu Zhiwei's study on four-character idiomatic phrases,

Lu found that traditional vernacular fiction employed patterned idioms as no more than 4 percent of the text; that is one four-character phrase per 100 characters.

Even this rate was unusually high, and major novels used considerably fewer:
*Shuihu zhaun* only 1.9 percent, and *Honglou meng* between 2.7 percent in the first 40 chapters, and 1.8 percent in the last 40 chapters.\(^{(283)}\)

Writing in 1956, Lu makes "four per cent of the text" seem less than it actually is. He felt he needed to explain the immense popularity of these novels in view of his general negative attitude towards patterned allusions and his insistence that most readers lack the knowledge of many idiomatic phrases and therefore do not understand them. But there is an obvious reason why in 1956 they no longer did.

The tradition of applying idiomatic allusions was continued by the writers in the 1910s, but gradually reduced after the May Fourth cultural movement. Since then the wealthy storehouse of classical allusions has been almost completely abandoned. Only a very small portion survives today in active usage.\(^{(284)}\) This loss of part of the richness of the Chinese language has significantly affected neither the spoken language nor scientific and other writings where simple clarity of communication is desirable, but it has had a devastating effect on literature. In the rest of the twentieth century, there has been nothing like the sheer variety of literary styles which prospered during the 1910s.

As early as 1934, Lin Yutang 林語堂 realized that total abandonment of idiomatic phrases in favour of pure simple directness was likely to impoverish literary style. He advised: "When writers become tired of repeatedly using 'your wife, my wife', they certainly will want to go back to 'furen' 夫人, 'qi' 妻, 'neizi' 内子, 'zhuojing' 拙荆."\(^{(285)}\)


\(^{(284)}\) Dictionaries of Chinese allusions and idioms continue to show the rich warehouse of this tradition. Yet only a small proportion is used in practice.

All these terms mean wife in the classical language, but each has different cultural associations. It is true that writers of Lin's generation, including Lu Xun and other May Fourth writers, continued to use idiomatic allusions from time to time, though to a much lesser extent. But the following generations regarded idiomatic allusions not only as mere cliches, but also as a distraction from and hindrance to useful learning.

Without strong qualification, this biased attitude has caused a great loss to Chinese language and literature. Far more sensible and constructive are James Liu's suggestions in *The Art of Chinese Poetry* regarding criteria that should be applied in practice whether such allusions are justified or not:

Does this allusion add anything to the total poetic effect or does it simply show off the poet's learning? Is there any reason for using allusions here, or could the poet have expressed what is embodied in the allusions just as well without using them? Such, I suggest, should be the criteria for judging the merits of allusions as pedantic and artificial, as some critics have done. All we need to consider is how an allusion is used, so as to find out if it is justified or necessitated by any reason.\(^{286}\)

Turning now to Bao's and Zhou's own practice, I will examine several of their stories in order to show how and why their use of idiomatic and allusory phrases can in most, if not all instances, be justified, and that indeed these phrases not only enhance the poetic effect of their fiction but also enrich its characterization and its cultural background and associations. When looking first at their classical stories, we note that

they do abound in phrases with historical or literary allusions, but that each is carefully chosen for its meaning. None is merely slick or glib. We certainly do not get the impression that they are simply stacked one upon another and bereft of meaning, as some May Fourth culturalists argued. On the contrary, these allusions form an essential part of the two writers' literary style and narrative art.

For instance, when early in Bao's story, *A Thread of White Linen*, we are told that the central character, a young woman, is learning about Western culture and customs and that she is striving to free herself from a family-arranged marriage, Bao introduces, seemingly incongruously, the phrase *abi diyu* 阿鼻地獄 (the Buddhist Avici hell).\(^{287}\) Some, though probably not all, readers will sense how this phrase evokes the power of the traditional world in which the woman has been raised. When reinforced by other allusions as the story develops, it anticipates the ending when, after her husband's self-sacrifice to her and his death, her wilfulness is crushed by events. She rejects the letters from her lover and enters a Buddhist nunnery.

In the same story, Bao uses the phrase *Muhou er guan* 沐猴面冠 to describe the behaviour of the heroine's fiancé, when he visits her family to join them in mourning her mother's death. The idiomatic allusion which comes from *Records of the Grand Historian* refers to a monkey with a hat. The fiancé is mentally slow, the opposite to the heroine's quickness of mind. In order to disguise his stupidity, his family has trained and made him practise for four days before his visit. Yet when he arrives his actions exactly fit the image which the idiom evokes. It confirms how unworthy he is of the heroine.

\(^{287}\) *Diyu* by itself is "hell" in modern Chinese. It is the addition of *abi* that alludes to the last and deepest of the eight hot hells in Buddhism, the Avici Hell, where the condemned go through endless cycles of suffering, death, and rebirth without intermission.
The most distinctive characteristic of *A Thread of Linen* is its use of poetic devices which enrich its descriptive passages and help vivify the characterization. The abundant use of idiomatic allusions and phrases at a rate of 5% distances its language from that suitable for representational or realistic writing. Bao's story is only about 1500 characters long. If we were to turn the story into the vernacular, the number of characters would triple, and the style become very different. Since the story does not have much action, most of it being taken up by dialogue and descriptions of the heroine's state of mind, the idiomatic phrases play an important role in making the writing subtly suggestive and the meaning ambiguous, even polysemous, encouraging a variety of interpretations of the story. Such an effect could not have been achieved if the story had been written in the vernacular. When "沐猴而冠" becomes 一只猴子戴一顶帽子, one still can sense the image of being funny, but the underlining meaning of worthlessness is missing. When Bao introduces the environment where the young woman grew up, he does not name the city of Suzhou but speaks of "mitai luyuan" (fields where elks and deer frolic) (p.1), suggestive of the beauty and peace of the place. When the father speaks of Western women sometimes enduring as great hardship as their Chinese counterparts, he uses the image of "rutu yinbo" (吃[ing] the bitter *tu* plant and drink[ing] *bo* medical soup) to convey his thought. (p.3)

Such enrichment of description with imagery and allusions serves to enlarge the cultural connotation of the story. Every selected image has its code, and by the equally carefully arranged combination of images, their cultural meaning is generated. For example, 阿鼻地獄 is the hottest of the eight hells in Buddhism, 阿鼻 meaning "constant [suffering] without a pause", and 掩口胡盧 comes from the "Biography of Ying-shao" in
"Houhan shu 后漢書: "A silly man in the state of Song treasured also Yan-stone. He wrapped up a piece in ten pieces of colourful cloth. Those who saw this were holding their mouths choking with laughter." The important allusions and metaphors in Bao's story all come from the Confucian classics, early poetry, and Buddhist tales, but there is none from the Zhuangzi or Daoist writings. The author's cultural orientation in this story thus seems clear.

Zhou uses classical allusions in a similar way in his story entitled *Grieving Not to Have Met His Lover Before*. Xin Ti, a painter, suddenly hears a woman, whom he fell in love with when he saw her walking on the street, shouting to her brother in the yard of her home: "Bring me a fan! Let's catch this Liang Shanbo, so it won't fly over the wall!" Zhou could count on his readers' acquaintance with the old story of Liang Shanbo and his beloved who, when unable to fulfil their passion in life, were transformed into butterflies after their death. Xin the painter is enchanted by the idyllic scene he overhears. However, readers become aware of the full extent of the allusion only when the story ends without hope for the painter and his love because her marriage had already been arranged.

Since because of their origin idiomatic allusions are usually in the classical language form, they fit well in the context of classical narratives. When they occur, as they quite often do, in Bao's and Zhou's vernacular stories, they become stylistic devices of lexical, syntactic, and semantic significance. By employing such allusions in the vernacular stories, the two writers not only achieved poetic effect and cultural

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connotation as they did in their classical stories, but they also avoided the tedious repetitiveness and redundancy to which works in the vernacular are prone.

In his vernacular story entitled *Alas! What a Disappointment!*, Zhou begins the narrative directly by describing its central character's state of mind when he returned to his home-town after a five-year absence. After three or four sentences which describe the man's complex feelings, Zhou introduces a classical allusion to a famous Daoist mythological tale. The tale is about a man who left home to study Daoism in the mountains. A thousand years later, after having been transformed into a crane, he returns home. But when a young man there catches sight of the crane, he attempts to shoot it down with arrows. The bird escapes by flying up high, sighing that though the city walls remained the same as a thousand years ago, the people have changed.

The old tale is not told, only briefly alluded to. Its meaning is conveyed in a few words. It reflects the protagonist's mixed feelings when he returns home, and at the same time foreshadows how his mood will change when after longing to return home, he finds that he no longer belongs.

Another of Zhou's stories in the vernacular that makes significant use of idiomatic phrases, *Inside the Jiuhua Bed-Curtain*, was previously discussed. It is one of his most personal stories since in it he narrates how during his wedding night, after sharing with his bride in a few poetic sentences his high expectations of their marriage, he tells her his family's history, emphasizing his gratitude to his mother who endured immense sufferings after the early death of his father in bringing up four young children in great poverty. Zhou wrote the story only a few days after his own wedding, urged to do so by his friends who attended it, yet surprising them with its content, not exactly one of
passionate union. Zhou called it a short story though it is hardly a story at all, since there is no plot, nor even any interchange between characters, only a monologue in which the groom expresses his feelings and reminiscences. The bride listens silently. We do not even know what she looks like. The husband's recollections and reflections are really meant for the reader.

Because of the absence of plot and any dramatic interest, and because Zhou is so emotionally expressive, he faced the problem of how to exercise sufficient artistic control so that the story can become truly moving and not just highly sentimental, merely personal, and thus boring. Mere lengthy description would have been inadequate to convey the depth of his mother's suffering. Therefore, Zhou infused the story from time to time with poetic imagery and lyrical expression, for instance in the story's opening sentences, and he applied the ancient method of Xushi xiangjian 虚實相間 (literally: fictional alternating with factual; that is, idiomatic phrases alternating with pieces of factual description.) As such, he made the discourse more universal and at the same time less wordy.

For instance, when the speaker of the narrative, Zhou himself, attempts to grasp and convey his mother's hardship in raising four children after her husband's death, he uses the phrase zhuixin qixue 植心泣血 (beating one's heart and shedding tears of blood), which comes from Li Shangyin's 李商隱 prose "祭裴氏姊文" (A Memorial for my Sister Mrs. Pei). The phrase that is vividly suggestive of Li's sister's immeasurable suffering here stimulates the reader to imagine the extent and depth of Zhou's own mother's sufferings: "Who was there to whom she could tell [of her innermost suffering]?" Better than any direct description, the poetic phrase 植心泣血 suggests the
feelings Zhou wishes to evoke in us for her sufferings, before following it with factual detail.

When later in the story Zhou narrates how hard he worked in pursuit of his literary career, he uses the idiomatic phrase *bigeng monou* (ploughing with a pen and weeding with ink), meaning making a living by writing instead of farming. 周耕 comes from Ren Fang's 任昉 (460-508) "Wei Xiao Yangzhou jianshi biao" 为萧扬州荐士表 (Memorial on Behalf of Scholars for Xiao Yangzhou). Zhou added the synonym 墨耕 which parallels 周耕 in a V+O pattern. It turns the phrase into a perfect idiom, an image of how writing is as hard as working on a farm. The only difference is in the tools farmers and writers employ. Every harvest is earned by hard labour, no matter whether physical or mental.

Similarly economic is the phrase *muguang shuying* (in the gleam of my eyes, books cast shadows) when Zhou describes how hard he had to study when he was very young. Here the idiom evokes an image that is both visual and mental. It suggests how the student's shining eyes were travelling among his books and at the same time his mental activity which in turn brightens and makes his sight blaze forth. The word "shadow" matches "bright", indicating how the books are the ultimate source of the "light" from the eyes, as well as the object of the "blazing light" itself. The poetic image thus connotes the mutual relationship between the writer and his books. If 周耕墨耕 refers to the physical labour involved in the process of creative composition, 目光書影 associates it with the mental effort that is part of it. Together the two idioms suggest the

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289 Ibid., p. 1678.
two aspects of the writer's hard work in his literary pursuit. One could not replace these idioms by vernacular words without complete loss of the poetic effect.

The narrative ends on a happier note. The narrator's success as a writer enables him to provide his mother with a more cheerful evening of her life. That way he will repay her for her selfless loving kindness. At this point, Zhou uses the idiom *sangyu wanjing* 桑榆晚景 (the sunset of life); though late in her life, it at least will have the glow of a beautiful sunset. 桑榆晚景 here echoes 植心泣血. The allusive echoing reveals his countless gratitude. The effect is movingly poetic. Detailed depiction of what he is going to do for her could hardly have been equally effective.

Fewer idiomatic phrases are used by Bao Tianxiao in his vernacular novella *Remedying a Fault*. As was shown in chapter three, Bao in this story uses novel narrative devices in rearranging the temporal sequence of episodes and also in characterization. Yet these devices become largely ineffective in the first half of the story because wordy writing slows down the narrative. Idioms are absent on whole pages. That, however, is not the case in the story's second half which moves much more smoothly. There Bao makes use of idioms, especially in the summary sections. For instance, he uses *zunjie* 捐節 (to be sparing in one's expenses), which comes from *Liji* 禮記 (The Record of Rites), to outline the situation which the protagonist's mother is in. Later the writer uses *jieqiang* 結檻 (stick together the painted leather pieces carriages, so that no air comes through). This idiom, which is derived from Mei Cheng's 枚乘 (d. 141 B.C.) *Qi fa七發* (The Seven Stimuli), refers to a gloomy, depressed state of mind. Bao uses it in

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290 *Liji* 禮記 (The Record of Rites), in *The Thirteen Classics*, (Reprint., Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1997), ch. 1, p. 3.

his psychological description of Liu Jiren, the protagonist.

To recall the story briefly: Liu Jiren has a very promising future, engaged as he is to Di Yunqiu, the daughter of the head of a hospital where he is working. Suddenly, however, he encounters his formal girl friend of lower-class background, Yunying, from whom he learns how much she has suffered after he had left her five years ago. After a long mental struggle as to whether he should abandon his plan and marry Yunying in order to "remedy his mistake", he does marry her. Yet though his conscience is at peace, he is not happy. Whenever he finds a weakness in Yunying, his mind returns to the image of Yunqiu. However hard he tries to rebuild the love between him and his wife, he does not succeed. Meanwhile his mother, who was strongly against his decision to marry Yunying, also becomes involved in the family problem, a complication which does not help. Bao describes Liu Jiren's state of mind in a summary, but it is chiefly the idiom 胸中结榼 that with great economy powerfully evokes the reader's imagination for his situation.

In chapter 3 it was shown that Bao Tianxiao's *On Passing through Cangzhou*, which is likewise in the vernacular, consists of several scenes that are observed by the story's narrator during a half hour stop at a train station. The story's succinct and stern style is marked from time to time by idioms that provide sharp contrasts in the scenes. For instance, after narrating how the rich foreign and Chinese couples were throwing food out of the windows of the train, Bao uses the phrase qi yi li liu (choking breath and shedding tears) to describe a group of refugee children struggling for and hurriedly filling their mouths with food covered with dust, and getting choked as a result. This scene is contrasted with the smiling rich couples, who are thoroughly enjoying the
spectacle. In another paragraph, Bao uses *Yubang xiangzheng*, *yuweng deli* （鴨蚌相爭, 漁翁得利）（When the snipe and the clam grapple, it's the fisher-man who stands to benefit）from *Yan ce er* 燕策二 (Intrigues of the Yan State) in *Guoce* 國策 (Intrigues of the Warring States) to describe all the details of a fight among the dogs for bones of a smoked chicken from the kitchen of the train. But to this episode Bao adds in the following paragraph a beggar who too would love to be a fisherman. Having lost his legs, he moves with his hands and buttocks and, envying the dogs' agility, waits in vain for a chance to get at the food. In the final paragraph of the story, Bao uses the idiomatic phrases *yuxiao zhuxiang* （jade-like beauties laughing and pearls like ladies fragrant）and *jiuhen huaqi* （wine stains and the odour of flowers）to describe the excitement and luxury of the first-class carriages, in contrast with the outside scene from which the train is departing: the scattered groups of refugees on the bleak and desolate fields.

Although the story's narrative structure is Western, the way Bao uses idioms in it resembles the method of traditional Chinese painting, one most conspicuous characteristic of which is the mixture on the canvas of objects lightly sketched and others drawn in great detail, so that in a painting areas of greater density alternate with lighter spaces. Similarly in Bao's story, longer passages of detailed depiction are followed by idioms which present briefly the essence of a situation, sometimes in a sharp concise phrase, sometimes in an image. Only about half the idioms which Bao uses here are based on classical allusions; many are phrases of habitual usage. The story is written in

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292 Ibid., p. 1576.
a simple, clear style. The carefully chosen idiomatic phrases assist in the coolly
dispassionate depiction of the scenes.

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This section on Bao Tianxiao's and Zhou Shoujuan's application of traditional
idioms and literary allusions in their fiction has sought to justify them both in terms of
language use and in literary content. Over thousands of years, these idioms or idiomatic
phrases have become an almost unlimited source of enrichment for the Chinese language.
Bao and Zhou benefited from utilizing this warehouse of expression in developing their
own literary style. I fully agree with James Liu's statement that "Chinese poets often use
conventional phrases, images, and symbols as Byzantine artists used bits of coloured
glass and stones for mosaics: their originality lies not in the material used but in the final
result achieved."293 The same analogy could be said to apply to Bao's and Zhou's
classical and vernacular fiction. They and several of their contemporaries integrated
historical and literary allusions into their contemporary stories to enrich their expression
and enlarge their theme, setting, and characterization. Such usage can be creative if the
context evoked of age-old connotations contributes to the immediate meaning. As long
as a writer does not pile up idioms one upon the other merely for the sake of showing his
or her erudition, there is no justification for rejecting them as mere cliches. Idiomatic
phrases can add a large variety of poetic expression. Without them, the vocabulary of the
Chinese language is greatly impoverished. A simple example is the one quoted above
from Lin Yutang on idiomatic phrases suggestive of "wife". As Roman Jakobson says
in his Language in Literature: "... we must consistently draw all inferences from the

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293 James Liu, p.145.
obvious fact that on every level of language the essence of poetic artifice consists in recurrent returns." Moreover, some age-old idiomatic phrases have over time lost their allusory association, changed their meaning, and as such become integrated into the vernacular language, invigorating it by their density of expression.

It is true that when reading Bao's and Zhou's stories, written more than eighty years ago, young readers do have a problem understanding the idiomatic allusions. The reason lies in the rejection of all traditional idiomatic usage by the vernacular movement, and the resulting system of language education. But if students consult a dictionary, they will not only understand the usage but also learn about history, religion, philosophy, and literature. Therefore, idiomatic allusions can serve as an important means of carrying on the heritage of Chinese culture.

**Literary Style**

Having discussed Bao Tianxiao's and Zhou Shoujuan's innovations of the language, I now turn to more general characteristics of their respective literary style, with emphasis on aesthetic qualities. Their contemporaries granted Bao the title "the master of bitter love fiction" and Zhou that of "the master of melancholy fiction." These not only indicate the subject matter of their fiction but also the styles of their writing. As was discussed earlier in this chapter, the two writers bear a resemblance to the style of Lin Shu. In fact they were influenced by Lin but in different ways and thus each developed

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an individual style, although, unlike Lin Shu, Bao Tianxiao and Zhou Shoujuan were not disciples of the Tongcheng school.

Lin Shu's own style largely derived from early guwen, noticeably the Qin-Han and Tang-Song styles, and it was his adaptation of these that influenced Bao Tianxiao and Zhou Shoujuan. One work that made a deep impression on Lin was Records of the Grand Historian, which he studied from his early youth. Later he also came to admire Han Yu's essays which he studied with great thoroughness. Lin Shu's writings reveal the great benefit he drew from the two great masters, Sima Qian and Han Yu. His essays on literary styles lay a strong emphasis on the two, especially the application of the qi concept in their writings. Lin's highest commendation for Western works of fiction was to compare them with Sima Qian's writing. For instance, in his preface to Ivanhoe, Lin writes: "... In a talk when we were ranging widely over English literature, both of us highly praised Scott and associated him with our historian Qian. He commented similarly on Dickens. Wu Rulun, the last master of the Tongcheng School, remarked that Lin Shu's distinguishing feature of writing was that he was '[good at] holding and


screening; therefore he is able to restrain the bright *qi* (rhythmic breath). Restraining *qi* had been an artistic aim of prose writers in the past, such as Han Yu (768-824), as it also was Lin's. It demands that one's style have verve yet be under firm control, so that *qi* will be accumulated to the maximum. Although the writer restrains himself in the expression of his feelings, the reader senses the power of his words.

Because when one is reading, the rhythm of sentences corresponds to breathing, writers long ago emphasized the relationship between *qi* and sentence units. According to some early critics, *qi* also refers to style. For instance, Cao Pi (187-226) states in his *Dianlun: lunwen* (Authoritative Discourses: Discourse on Literature):

"气之清濁有體." (*Qi* has its normative forms - clear and murky.) Later on, much emphasis was laid on "vital spirit", a kind of creative mental and physical energy of the writer as it shows itself in the rhythm and structure of the piece of writing as a whole. Han Yu states in "Da Li Yi shu" （答李翊書）(An Answer to Li Yi's letter): "Qi is water, and words are floating things. When water is abundant, both large and tiny things will all float on water. *Qi* and words are just like this. When *qi* is plentiful it will be suitable no matter whether the words are short or long, and their sound high or low." When Wu Rulun refers to Lin's *qi*, he means more than just sound and vitality. Its energy and restraint involve the writer's mental activity in the process of composing and designing his literary work. Lin's readers sense how *qi* affects the construction itself,

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298 Lin Shu. "Zeng Ma Tongbo xiansheng xu" 賀馬通伯先生序 (Preface Presented to Mr. Ma Tongbo) in *Research Materials on Lin Shu*, p.78.


300 Guo Shaoyu 郭紹虞, ed., *Zhongguo lidai wenlun xuan* 中國歷代文論選 (Selection of Chinese Literary Discourse through Past Dynasties), (Shanghai: guji, 1979), p.152.
the way words are chosen, sentences are formed, and the whole work is organized. In Lin's works of fiction, qi informs the very rhythm of the narrative and plot.

One is aware that Bao Tianxiao's writings are informed by a similar qi. At first glance, they seem to be entirely unemotional and objective in tone, as in A Thread of Linen, The Wife of a Primary School Teacher, Prattle in a Cowshed and On Passing through Cangzhou. Yet Bao's subjective emotion does appear in the end. It is achieved by the restraining qi, which holds the emotion back until the story's climax is reached, making a strong impact on the reader.

An analysis of the classical short story A Thread of Linen will serve to illustrate this point in detail. The story is written in what seems to be the Qin-han style, given its conciseness, clarity, and rich suggestiveness. The plot involves a young woman and two men both of whom love her deeply, though she returns only the love of one. The central character is the young woman, and the men are developed only with respect to their relationship with her. Any conflict or competition between them for the woman's affection is ignored, and only the woman's step-by-step reaction and choice are involved.

When the young woman grows up to marriageable age, she cannot choose the young man she has fallen in love with because of a traditional marriage arrangement made by her father, even though by this time Western influence had begun to shake the old system. By elaborating on the absurd mismatch between the young girl, beautiful, intelligent, and splendidly talented, and the dim-witted, her fiancé to the extreme, Bao highlights the injustice and stupidity of the traditional arrangement and attracts sympathy for the woman in such a predicament. The contrast is further heightened by the other
young man, a student who befriends the girl and is a good match for her both because of
his literary interests and excellent manners.

Since the heroine has no choice but to accept the hated marriage, she resorts to
more than one subterfuge to escape the consequences. With her husband's money, she
says, she will procure several concubines for him so that she can free herself for the man
she loves. By thinking of her marriage only in nominal terms, she shows a free mind that
contrasts with the stereotyped purity of the chaste woman.

But this is not the end of the story. Up to now, Bao has been carefully slowing
down the plot development. Now he makes the story more complex, as he moves
towards the climax. When it comes, it surprises and shocks the reader with its dramatic
suddenness. The reader then becomes aware how skilfully Bao has constrained his
writing, holding back information in such a way that tension builds up from paragraph to
paragraph until close to the end.

The woman's fate is suddenly altered by an act of nature. When she becomes
dangerously ill with the plague, her husband sacrifices himself by nursing her and dies of
the infection. Her realization of his devotion transforms her conduct from one that is
offensive in the eyes of tradition to one that is a model for it. The sacrifice makes her
now see her husband differently for the first time: as a man of impressive morality. She
evidently acts not from a sudden feeling of love but out of respect, which however comes
too late.

A passage close to the beginning of the story that refers to her education prepares
us for this extraordinary change in her attitude near the end. We are told that she was
"already proficient in the classics" when she "was now acquiring modern knowledge."
During her early youth, the classics had sown in her mind the seeds of a stereotyped virtue of chastity and of suppressed female individuality. Later her modern studies implanted in her much more liberal notions. Thus a conflict develops in her when she grows up, between classical precepts and the new view of Western culture and science. The latter dominates her outlook until the moment in the story when she learns of her husband's death. By it her latent Confucian consciousness is awakened, and so she reconciles herself to the social code for widows and becomes a convert to Buddhism.

The ending of the story further displays Bao's artistic control of qi. When the story reaches its sudden climactic turn, Bao does not present the heroine's decision as one of simple finality. He reveals her state of mind in a monologue: "If my aim is to become a still water without ripples, how can I countenance anything that causes even the slightest eddy!" The image suggests her continuing internal struggle as to whether to permit any contact with her lover. It avoids a direct contradiction between the heroine's previous behaviour and her current determination to follow the model of the traditionally chaste widow but leaves a subtle suspense, for we are not told and can only reflect how she may react when in future she faces again a larger "eddy". The qi is best revealed in the sudden turns of the plot, the heroine's complex character, and in the restraint the writer shows in the portrayal of passion in the highly suggestive ending.

In several of his other short stories, Bao controls qi in a similar way to his use of it in *A Thread of Linen*, presenting protagonists who express and even suppress their feelings and passions with notable restraint. We saw in Bao's *Remedy a Fault*, how Liu Jiren struggled against his true passion for a woman and marries another for the sake of appeasing conscience, only to create another "regret". In the *Test of Love* series, both
protagonists suppress their passion for the beloved, and pretend to distance themselves in order to test their love. As a result, one loses her lover forever. In *On Passing through Cangzhou*, the narrator seems completely unemotional. Yet the scene he narrates is powerfully shocking. The endings of Bao's stories thus often leave an aftertaste of bitterness.

Zhou Shoujuan's different kind of fiction was influenced by another aspect of Lin's style. Qian Jibo comments in his *A History of Modern Chinese Literature*: "Shu's writing is well-versed in narrating and conveying emotion, with eloquence and humor. Its gentle and enchanting style is indeed unprecedented."\(^301\) Especially in his translations of Western literature, the moving way in which he narrates tragic stories is one of his distinguishing features, though by no means the only one. It is, however, to these of Lin Shu's works that Zhou's stories, most of which are very sentimental or tragic, show a likeness in style. Death and unfulfilled love are favourite themes in Zhou's short stories. Zhou often chose the first person narrative mode, in which he could pour out his own emotions directly. The classical language in which he wrote most of these stories lends itself well to Zhou's sentimental style.

Lin Shu states in his *Chunjuezhai lunwen* 春覺齋論文 (*Discourse on Literature from the Awareness of Spring Studio*): "There is a genuine kind of emotion which produces a strong appeal. When the reader feels it, he knows that it comes from the writer's own true feeling, and that its pathos is purely natural [without any artifice]. This can be called true emotional appeal."\(^302\) The best of Zhou's stories have this emotional

\(^301\) Qian Jibo, *History*, p.143.

appeal, such as *This Regret Goes on and on Forever, Inside the Jiuhua Bed-Curtain, The Cuckoo’s Call at Midnight, Grieving not to Have Met his Lover Before, A Painting [of a Girl] True to Life* and others.

Let me show how in the first of these, *This Regret Goes on*, Zhou uses the classical language to depict and lyricize emotional feeling, producing an atmosphere of sadness that runs through the whole story. Renfang 闵芳, the narrator, is the wife of a soldier called Zongxiong 宗雄, who was fatally wounded during the battle of the Xinhai 辛亥 Revolution (1911). The entire narrative is a record of her passion for her husband as she recalls her emotional experiences from the time he returned from the battle to the last minute of his life. The story starts with the fact that Zonglang is going to die soon, and then flashes back to their honeymoon, when Zonglang joined the army. Months after, Renfang is thrilled by the unexpected return of her husband from the front but then shocked to learn the reason.

Disabled as he is and deadly wounded, Renfang’s husband hopes that his young wife will leave him and marry Qiutang, his best friend. Qiutang, however, hardly needs his encouragement, since he finds himself falling in love with Renfang. Observing that her husband’s health is deteriorating, Renfang, however, cannot help concentrating all her care on him. Believing that she is not returning his love, Qiutang bids her farewell and disappears. After he has left, Renfang discovers that her husband has died.

While the plot itself is simple, the story’s interest is informed by its poetic intonation and inward drama. With his exquisite use of the classical language, Zhou conveys not just Renfang’s direct expression of her feelings but also the tiny and subtle emotional ripples that are aroused in her mind. Therefore, Renfang’s painful feelings are
revealed on two levels. On the surface level, she is saddened by the fact that her husband cannot live longer. Beneath the surface, she does not admit to herself her feelings for Qiutang, though these betray themselves from time to time in the course of her narration.

Renfang's admiration for Qiutang comes through clearly. He is always full of vitality: as, when he comes to visit them on horseback, drops by while on an outing, tells her about his travels, and organizes a big party where he plays the piano. The following passage illustrates the complex process that goes on in her mind. It is the day of Qiutang's party to which Renfang and her husband are invited. While Renfang is changing in her room, Qiutang arrives as an escort, as she recalls:

Suddenly I heard the sound of heavy steps coming towards my room. Realizing that it was Qiutang, my heart unexpectedly beat a little harder, but I don't know why. When I raised my head, Qiutang walked in with a huge bunch of red roses. I became almost drunk when assailed by their fragrance. With a smile on his lips, Qiutang said: "You remind people of a white rose. That's why I am bringing you a red one to make you even prettier". He then handed me a flower. Holding the rose, I stood there dumb like a piece of wood, not knowing how to reply. Qiutang looked at me somewhat askance and asked abruptly: "Renfang, are you angry at
me?" He had been used to calling me sister-in-law, but recently began addressing me directly by my name, because my husband wanted him to do so. Standing there silently, I at last answered him respectfully, "I am deeply moved. How could I be angry?" Then I picked up two of the roses and attached them to the front of my dress . . . .

The carefully chosen classical words in these lines record the encounter objectively, yet convey the character's -- here the narrator's -- anxiety to negate the actual turmoil in her mind. Renfang returns Qiutang's love but does not allow herself to be aware of it. This fact causes her pain on the subconscious level and deepens the sentimental melody of the story. The story ends with her collapse over the successive loss of the two persons dearest to her.

Zhou's writing is also informed by qi but it is evidently quite different in kind from that in Bao's stories. The way in which Zhou often cultivates qi in his stories is by beginning with a hopeless quest for love and then gradually elaborating the process of suffering up to the ending in despair. It is the development of a tragically unfulfilled love-quest in many of Zhou's stories that produces their emotional appeal. Sadness is the prevailing tone in most, as suffering is revealed in its different facets. When the stories end, the agonizing torture of doomed love is complete. For example, in Good Bye, 304 upon learning that her lover, a British Embassy Secretary, is responsible for her father's death during the Boxing War, the Chinese girl Guifang is torn between the urge to revenge her father and her love attachment. She finally poisons her lover and commits

303 Zhou, This Regret Goes on, 16:5.
suicide. Both *The Cuckoo's Call at Midnight* and *Diary of Being Heart Broken* record the
torment of their protagonists, who cannot marry the one they love. In both *A Painting [of]*
a Girl] True to Life* and *Pointing at My Home*, the two protagonists die of the quest for
love.

In summary, Bao's style is informed by a virile tone, Zhou's conveys a
melancholy one. Bao's leave a bitter aftertaste; Zhou's, by contrast, have a strong
sentimental appeal.
Conclusion

Do Bao Tianxiao and Zhou Shoujuan belong to the old type of writers, as has often been asserted, in contrast with the May Fourth writers? The strong evidence presented in this thesis shows that Bao and Zhou should be regarded as modern writers. In several pervasive characteristics their short stories anticipate the further developments of May Fourth fiction: their themes, their modernized language, their characterization with an emphasis on psychological depiction, their use of different narrative perspectives, and the new ways in which they constructed their stories, inspired by Western examples. Without Bao's, Zhou's, and their contemporaries' pioneering contribution and experimentation, it is difficult to see how what has been called the May Fourth New Literature could have happened. Yet my claim that Bao and Zhou should rightly be included among modern writers does not mean a denial of the traditional elements in their stories. On the contrary, tradition plays as large a role in their fiction as modern subject matter and innovation.

In his famous essay on "Tradition and the Individual Talent", T. S. Eliot discusses the relation of poets and other literary writers to past and present:

He [the poet] must be quite aware of the obvious fact that art never improves, but that the material of art is never quite the same. He must be aware that the mind of Europe – the mind of his own country – a mind which he learns in time to be much more important than his own private mind – is a mind which changes, and that this change is a development which abandons nothing en route, which does not superannuate either Shakespeare, or Homer, or the rock drawing of the
Magdalenian draughtsmen. That this development, refinement perhaps, complication certainly, is not, from the point of view of the artist, any improvement.305

The views Eliot stated in this essay in 1919 are strikingly similar to those which the scholars of the Xue Heng School expressed when, only a few years later, they refuted the fallacious notion of literary evolution held by the May Fourth culturalists. Like Eliot, these scholars argued that while new creative works would contribute to the variety of literature, they could never replace the masterpieces of the past. As Eliot said, "the past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past."306

As this thesis has shown, Bao Tianxiao's and Zhou Shoujuan's short stories exemplify this interactive and creative relationship of past and present. The reciprocal relation informs many aspects of their short stories: their basic genre or kind, their motifs, narrative devices, the language form in which they are written, as well as their moral content.

The New Culturalists accused Bao and Zhou of continuing to manifest the values of feudal morality in their writings, and specifically of not following the lines of May Fourth ideology. Bao Tianxiao had announced clearly in his editorial introduction to The Grand Magazine that his principles of selecting fiction were: its benefit to society and observance of the principles of morality. By the latter, he especially meant that he would accept no writing that might stimulate sexual freedom or violence. Some years later, the New Culturalists found it convenient to distort the intent of Bao's statement, interpreting


306 Ibid., p. 15.
his "principles of morality" as Confucian, and insisting that Mandarin literature aimed purely at entertainment. This thesis shows that while Bao and Zhou believed entertainment to be one of the functions of literature, their stories observe general moral principles, and that thus their writing never merely catered to or was governed by considerations of the commercial market.

The moral messages conveyed in the stories by the two writers display a mixture of traditional and modern views, which are not simply juxtaposed. Ancient and modern values are shown in some of their stories as being in sharp conflict but in others as reconciled in a common purpose. For example, as was shown in Chapter Four, *A Thread of Linen* presents the clash between the traditional marriage arrangement in China and the Western freedom of choice of one's partner, and between the Confucian attitude toward female virtue and the modern view of the independent woman. By contrast, Zhou Shoujuan's *Inside the Jiuhua Bed-Curtain* projects an atmosphere of traditional and Western values in harmony. When the husband-narrator tells his bride what he expects of her, he describes three model women to her, one from ancient China and two from the West: Liang Hongyu 梁紅玉, a heroine of Song dynasty, "who helped her husband kill the country's enemies", Mrs. Tolstoy, "who helped her husband write books and form ideas," and Mrs. Gladstone, "who helped her husband enrich his country and benefit its people." The images of all three women point in one direction: calling for the wife's participation in her husband's career; only the different kinds of help show how the times have changed. Physical "help" was foremost in the Chinese tradition, the wife serving her husband, her in-laws, and her children, and when necessary, assisting in the fight against the country's enemies. When, however, "help" came to involve mental
participation in the husband's work, the wife's role changed from servant to partner. The wife's obligation to help continued, but the manner in which she helps has altered, signifying her rising position in the family.

The far more ideologically oriented literature of the May Fourth new culturalists was decidedly less popular during the late 1910s and the 1920's than the fiction of the Mandarin Duck writers, except among university students and political-minded intellectuals. Moreover, because of their very nature these ideological writings were forgotten as soon as their political purposes had been fulfilled. By contrast, many of the fictional works of the Mandarin Duck writers remain interesting because they paint true and lively pictures of the everyday life of the time, and also because they present with great sensibility the common human problems which chiefly middle-class people were facing in China, particularly Shanghai, at a time of rapid modernization and change.

That Bao's and Zhou's and other short stories have value as historical documents has, as was noted, been pointed out by several scholars. If, however, these writers were read and studied today only for this reason, one would ignore their unique role in twentieth-century literary history. Bao's and Zhou's chief contribution to modern Chinese fiction lies in their creative innovation of narrative devices and language forms. In both narratology and language, Bao and Zhou were steeped in their own country's tradition but also strongly attracted by what they found in foreign writers. In both areas, they further expanded the achievements of late Qing writers and explored new devices imported from Western literature.

One of Bao's particular contributions was his use for the first time in short stories of what in Europe had been known since the seventeenth century as the epistolary form.
Zhou Shoujuan carried on Bao's experimentation in this form further and with greater skill, as for instance in *A Secret Vice*, which in the form of a letter relates a husband's confession of the deep turmoil in his conscience that was caused by a crime he committed a long time ago. The narrator's psychological self-analysis reveals a tortured mind which deeply regrets having caused the death of his best friend in a fit of jealousy. Zhou was among the very first to explore in depth in his fiction the narrator's inner world, which late Qing writers had done only on a very small scale.

Bao Tianxiao was also in the vanguard of writers who first applied the limited third-person perspective to vernacular fiction. Its use resulted in the abandonment of the traditional story-telling mode and led to further structural modernization. A story no longer told an event or a person's life from beginning to end but in different sections, some of which narrate developments of the action or describe scenes, while others focus on characterization. Still another structural innovation was beginning a story with scenic depiction, as in several of Zhou's short stories. However, the chief importance of the two writers' introduction of different kinds of first-person and third-person limited perspectives in narration was that they lend themselves well to psychological characterization, especially self-revelation.

Of great interest is the variety of language forms in which Bao and Zhou wrote their short stories. Neither their classical nor their vernacular stories are written in the pure traditional language norm. Instead, they experimented with different hybrid forms; only, they generally incorporated rather more features of the vernacular language in their

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classical stories than classical idiomatic phrases in their vernacular ones. Because the classical language form is more concise in expression than vernacular can be, and because it is richly suggestive and connotative of meaning, it lends itself well to writing in an artistic style. Yet Bao and Zhou modernized it by partly westernizing its grammar and infusing it with terms from the vernacular. In their modified language, their classical stories show how well the medium is suited to psychological description.

However, the ways in which Bao, Zhou, and other so-called Mandarin Duck writers experimented in their writings was abruptly ended by the May Fourth reformers who instigated the drastic language reform of 1921. They were not alone in their conviction of the urgent need for universal education, if China was to be able to catch up to the modern world. For this, they were convinced, it was highly desirable for the standard language to be simple and close to speech, unlike the classical language. What is far more doubtful, however, is whether for this reason the vehicle of what had been the language of China's greatest thinkers and poets had to be totally abandoned; since this meant lowering the general quality of China's language and thus the very ability of expression. It went contrary to the aim expressed so well by the Xue Heng scholars in their Critical Review: "To create a modern Chinese prose style, capable of expressing new ideas and sentiments, yet retaining the traditional usage and inherent beauty of the language."308 The need to universalize education, they argued, should not be at the expense of the classical language. Otherwise the source and root of Chinese literature

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would be cut off. It would be like *yinyi feishi* 因噎废食 (giving up eating for fear of choking).³⁰⁹

In practice, several historians and other scholars continued to write during the 1920s and even later in a modernized kind of classical or semi-classical language, as did university professors in their classrooms. Even the prominent New Culturalist Lu Xun wrote his *History of Chinese Fiction* (1923) as well as some historical fiction and prose-poetry in the 1920s in a semi-classical language, though his short stories and political essays after 1917 all appeared in the vernacular. However, those who wrote anything in classical prose after 1930 were very few, and such writing ceased almost completely on the mainland after 1949.

Since then only a single scholarly book in the classical language has been published in mainland China, a few years after the end of the Cultural Revolution: an erudite collection of essays on the early Chinese classics by Qian Zhongshu 錢鍾書, *Guanzhui bian* 管锥编 (Limited Views: Pipe-Awl Collection)³¹⁰. Welcomed though it was by many scholars, yet it appears to have been the last work in the classical language. Since its publication, there has been a kind of revival, although a very limited one. Some scholarly and other writers have striven to refine their style by using more classical phrases and idioms. Headlines in newspapers sometimes take the form of a line from a classical poem instead of the usual slogan. Yet Qian's book occupies an isolated place,


and few young scholars today have the ability to write in a semi-classical language, even if they wished.

At the end of this thesis, readers may welcome suggestions how the study of its subject might be fruitfully extended. The thesis having confined itself to two Mandarin Duck writers of the 1910s, there is obviously room for examining the works of others, both for how they reflect their contemporary world and for their innovations in narrative techniques and language. Of these subjects, the latter is of particular interest because of the rich variety of styles that are found in the works not only of Bao and Zhou but also of some of their contemporaries. A study would be highly desirable of how in their fiction several early twentieth-century writers developed their own individual styles under different influences, for instance Lin Shu under that of the Qin-Han style, both Lu Xun and Zhou Zuoren that of the Wei-Jin style, and Su Manshu that of the Tang-Song style.
Glossary

Part One: List of Terms

*a bi diyu* 阿鼻地獄
*aqiong xiaoshuo* 哀情小说
*baihua* 白话
*bianwen* 變文
*bigeng monou* 筆耕墨耨
*biji* 筆記
*boshi* 博士
*bu xufen* 不疎煩
*caizi jiaren* 才子佳人
*chouchang* 惆怅
*chuangqi* 傳奇
*chuci* 楚辭
*ci* 詞
*da xuetang* 大學堂
*De xiansheng* 德先生
*fu* 賦
*furen* 夫人
*gu* 骨
*guan* 館
*guwen* 古文
*guwen yundong* 古文運動
*huakai liangshi. gebiao yiduo* 花開兩枝，各表一朵
*huaben* 話本
*jiaoshou* 教授
*jieqiang* 結棈
*jiuchang* 久長
*jiuhun huaqi* 酒痕花氣
ju 剧
kuqing xiaoshuo 苦情小说
li 理
libai 禮拜
liushui ju 流水句
Mei meng tian yixiao, fu shi wu jie chun 每蒙天一笑，復似物皆春
neizi 内子
mitai luyuan 麟臺鹿苑
muguang shuying 目光書影
Nü xuesheng 女學生
pianwen 驅文
qi 氣
qiyi leiliu 氣噎泪流
qi zhi qingzhuo you ti 氣之清濁有體
Qin-Han 秦漢
qing 情
qu 曲
quansu 勸俗
rutu yinbo 茹荼飲藥
sao 嘈
Sai xianshen 賽先生
sandian toushi 散點透視
sangyu wanying 桑榆晚景
Shangyou Tiantang, xiayou Su Hang 上有天堂, 下有蘇杭
shi 詩
shu 墾
shuyuan 書院
taiyiju 太醫局
taiyishu 太醫署
tanci 彈詞
Tang-Song 唐宋
Tongcheng 桐城
Wei-Jin 魏晋
wen bi Qin Han 文必秦漢
wenhua 文化
wenxin 文心
wenyan 文言
wo zi hengdao xiang tianxiao 我自横刀向天笑
wuwa zijing tian zixiao 屋瓦自警天自笑
wu zhong shengyou [de] jiangxin 無中生有的匠心
xiansheng 先生
xiaoxue 小學
xu yiding zhi shi [de] jiangxin 叙一定之事的匠心
xushi xiangjian 虚實相間
xuedao 學道
xueguan 學官
xuezheng 學正
yinwen shengshi 因文生事
yinyi feishi 因噎廢食
yiwen yunshi 以文运事
yixuexiao 醫學校
you guimo 有規模
you jiashu 有家數
you shi wei zheng 有詩為證
you shoushi 有收拾
you yu yi 游于藝
Yuanyang hudie pai 鴛鴦蝴蝶派
Yubang xiangzheng, yuweng deli 鴛蚌相争, 漁翁得利
yuefu 樂府
yuxiao zhuxiang 玉笑珠香
yuxing 余興
zaju 雜劇
Part Two: List of proper nouns

A Ying 阿英

Ai zhi hua 愛之花

Bao Gongyi 包公毅

Bao Qingzhu 包清柱

Bao Tianxiao 包天笑

Banyue 半月

Benliu 奔流

Bi Yihong 畢倚虹

Bixuehua 碧血花

Bu guo 補過

Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培

Cangzhou daozhong 滄州道中

Cao Muguan 曹慕管

Cao Pi 曹丕

Cao Xueqin 曹雪芹

Cha gongke 查功課

Chen Daqi 陳大奇

Chen Duxiu 陳獨秀

Chen Pingyuan 陳平原

Chen Qiu 陳球

Chen Suzhu 陳素珠

Cheng Xiaoying 程小青

Cheng Zhi 成之
Chu Qing 楚卿
Chuangzao she 創造社
Cihen mianmian wujuqi 此恨綿綿無盡期
Daode jing 道德经
Di Baoxian 狄葆賢
Dianhua 電話
Ding Yi 丁易
Donglai shuzhuang 東來書莊
Du Fu 杜甫
Duanchang riji 斷腸日記
Dun'gen 鈍根
Dushequan yizhe shiyu 毒蛇圈譯者議語
Ershinian mudu zhi guaixianzhuang 二十年目睹之怪現狀
Fan Boqun 范伯群
Fan Yaqiao 范堯橋
Feng Mengzhen 梁夢楨
Feng Menglong 梁夢龍
Fu Lin 符霖
Fumi shi tao 婦女時報
Fumi zazhi 婦女雜志
Fusheng liuji 浮生六記
Gao Boyu 高伯雨
Gong Ding'an 龔定庵
Gujin xiaoshuo 古今小說
Guoxian 國賢
Guwenzi leiuzan 古文辭類纂
Han Yu 韓愈
Hehe nü shi 荷荷女士
Hen bu xiangfeng weijiashi 恨不相見未嫁時
Henhen sheng 恨恨生
Hong Bian 洪便
Hongxian  洪憲
Houhan shu  后漢書
Hu Shi  胡適
Hu Xiansu  胡先骕
Huakai hualuo  花開花落
Huali zhenzhen  畫裏真真
Huo Sang  霍桑
Jiaoyu gongbao  教育公報
Jiaoyu zazhi  教育雑志
Jiezhi ji  戒指記
Jinpingmei  金瓶梅
Jin Shengtai  金聖太
Jin'gu qiguan  今古奇觀
Jiuhua zhangli  九華帳裏
Jiuming qiyuan  九命奇冤
Jintu zhi qi  酒徒之妻
Ke Rongxin  柯榮欣
Kuai Guangdian  剱光典
kuaihuo lin  快活林
Kuer liulangji  苦兒流浪記
Langsun  朗孫
Lao Zhuang  老莊
Leng yu re  冷與熱
Li Gongzuo  李公佐
Li Hanqiu  李涵秋
Li Shangyin  李商隱
Li Tingyi  李定夷
Liang Qichao  梁啓超
Liang Shiqiu  梁實秋
Liang Shuming  梁漱溟
Liaozhai zhiyi  聊齋志異
Libai liu  礼拜六
Lin Shu 林纾 (Lin Qinnan 林琴南)
Lin Yutang 林语堂
Lin Zhitian 林芝田
Ling Mengchu 林蒙初
Liu Jiren 柳吉人
Liu Shousong 劉授松
Liu Xunyu 劉熏宇
Liuyue ... liunian 六月...六年
Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元
Lu Xun 鲁迅
Lunheng 論衡
Lunyu 論語
Luo Ye 羅烱
Ma Jianzhong 马建中
Maishiqishiji 埋石弃石記
Manshu yiji 曼殊遺記
Mei Cheng 枚乗
Mei Guangdi 梅光迪
Meiyu 眉語
Minquanbao 民權報
Minghong 冥鸿
Nanke taishou chuan 南柯太守傳
Nanshe 南社
Niehaihua 嫱海棠
Niu peng xinyu 牛棚絮語
Nuzu shijie 女子世界
On Mei mingjia duanpian xiaoshuo congke 歐美名家短篇小說叢刊
Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修
Pu Songlin 蒲松齡
Qifa 七發
Qimeng  奇夢
Qian Jibo  錢基博
Qian Zhongshu  錢鐘書
Qian Xuantong  錢玄同
Qinhai shi  禽海石
Qinian gongzhai piao  七年公債票
Qingping shantang huaben  清平山堂話本
Qingyan  情詐
Qunxue she  群學社
Ren Fang  任舫
Ruan Yuan  阮元
Rui Heshi  芮和師
Shanghai Chunqiu  上海春秋
Shanghai huabao  上海畫報
Shangshu  尚書
Shao Zuping  邵祖平
Shen Congwen  沈從文
Shen Jiji  沈既濟
Shen Yanbing  沈雁冰 (Mao Dun 茅盾)
Shenbao  申報
Shi Neian  施耐庵
Shibao  時報
Shiji  史記
Shijing  詩經
Shi ceng xiangshi yan guilai  似曾相識燕歸來
Shiwu guan  十五貫
Sima Qian  司馬遷
Siyuan  私愿
Shou shen ji  梭神記
Su Mansu  蘇曼殊
Suzhou baihuabao  蘇州白話報
Sun Lianggong 孫良工
Sun Zhongshan 孫中山
Taipingyang bao 太平洋報
Tan Sitong 謝嗣同
Tang Tao 唐弢
Tang Yongtong 湯用彤
Tianxu Wosheng 天虛我生
Tieqiao 鐵樵
Wang Chong 王充
Wangguonu zhi riji 亡國奴之日記
Wang Shunhua 汪舜華
Wang Yao 王瑤
Wang Yunzhang 王白章
Wei Shaochang 魏紹昌
Wenxue yanjiu hui 文學研究會
Wu Fangji 吳芳吉
Wu Mi 吳宓
Wu Rulun 吳汝倫
Wushinhian hou zhi chongfeng 五十年后之重逢
Wu Shuangre 吳雙熱
Wuyue juansheng 午夜鶴聲
Wuxian dianhua 無線電話
Wu Zixu 伍子胥
Xia Gaizun 夏丏尊
Xianfu de yixiang 先父的遺像
Xiangyan zashi 香飄雜志
Xiaoshuo conghua 小說叢話
Xiaoshuo daguan 小說大觀
Xiaoshuo huabao 小說畫報
Xiaoshuo lin 小說林
Xiaoshuo shibao 小說時報
Xiaoshuo Yuebao  小說月報
Xiaoxue jiaoshi zhi qi  小學教師 之妻
Xie Xiaoe chuan  謝小娥傳
Xihuaqiao  西花橋
Xiner jiuxueji  磐兒就學記
Xinhai  辛亥
Xin jiating  新家庭
Xin qingnian  新青年
Xin xiaoshuo  新小說
Xin Zhongguo weilai ji  新中國未來記
Xingqi  星期
Xingxiang zaijian  行相再見
Xinwen bao  新聞報
Xinyue she  新月社
Xixiang xiaoshuo  紡像小說
Xu Zhenya  徐枕亞
Xu Zhiying  許志英
Xue Heng  學衡
Yan Fu  嚴復
Yang Yi  楊義
Yanshan waishi  燕山外史
Yanpeng  煙篷
Yanxia  橋下
Yanzikan cangao  燕子甕藏稿
Yao Nai  姚鼐
Yaozhi honglou shi qiejia  遥指紅樓是妾家
Ye Haowu  葉浩吾
Ye Siming  葉子銘
Yi! Chiyi  唔！遲矣
Yi Jun  易峻
Yi! Shiwang  唔！失望
Zheng Zhenduo  鄭振鐸
Zheng Zhengqiu  鄭正秋
Zhengzhongji  枕中記
Zhixinshi zhuren  知新室主人
Zhiyan  指嚴
Zhiyanzhai  指嚴齋
Zhonghua xiaoshuo jie  中華小說界
Zhou Qin xingji  周秦行記
Zhou Shoujuan  周瘦鴻
Zhou Zuoren  周作人
Zhu Suchen  朱素臣
Zhu Ziqing  朱自清
Zhu zhu riji  珠珠日記
Zhuoai  卓呆
Zidiaoqiu  紫貂裘
Zituolanshuapian  紫羅蘭花片
Ziputao  紫葡萄
Ziputao huabao  紫葡萄畫報
Zhiyanzhai  脂硯齋
Ziyou tan  自由談
Zufu  祖福
Zuiweng tanlu  醉翁談錄
Zuo Qiuming  左丘明
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