BOOK REVIEW

Li, Jikai 李继凯， *Shaan-Gan-Ning Wen Yi Tong Lun* 《陕甘寧文藝通論》（ *The General Study of Shaan-Gan-Ning Literature and Art*）, Beijing: People's Publishing House, China, 2024. ISBN: 9787010270609.

The General Study of Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Literature and Art (People's Publishing House, December 2024 edition), a significant achievement of the National Social Science Fund project led by Professor Li Jikai, has been selected for the National Achievements Library of Philosophy and Social Sciences. The book is grounded in extensive archival materials. It conducts in-depth research on the origins, production mechanisms, theoretical criticism, and aesthetic characteristics of literature and art from Shaanxi, Gansu, and Ningxia.

The emergence of any literature or art is inseparable from the interplay between artistic theory and social practice. As a pivotal component of Chinese literature and art, especially the literature and art of the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia literature and art represent the profound integration of the era's ideology with China's socio-political and historical context. Its emergence was not only a convergence of contemporary thought and practical demands, but also rooted in the intrinsic principles of literature and art itself, namely, its autonomy, the cultivation of aesthetic consciousness, and the tension and fusion among diverse artistic forms.

As a vibrant and widely popular form of artistic expression in modern China, Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia literature and art encompass a diverse range of genres, including literature, folk songs, painting, drama, dance, and calligraphy. It must be examined and studied within a broader socio-cultural context to recognize its richness, complexity, and exemplarity.

The book by Professor Li Jikai reveals that Marxist-Leninist literary theories, China's modern revolutionary development, and social conditions collectively shaped the emergence, evolution, and dissemination of Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia literature and art. It also notes that the fundamental question of Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia literature and art is "for whom," which determined its core direction. Meanwhile, the author emphasizes that Mao Zedong's "Speech at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art" offers profound insights into Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia literature and art, proposing a series of significant and unique revolutionary ideas on literary and artistic ideas. Moreover, this article also provides a solid theoretical foundation for the systematic theoretical construction and practical application of Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia literary and arts; Furthermore, this book also gives the reader a sight that, the reason Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Literature and Art became the mainstream art form during the war era, was closely tied to the great mission of national and class liberation in China's modern historical process, as well as the essential nature of literary and artistic engagement with social reality; The another view of the book is the following: the more crucial reason why the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Literature and Art became a typical example in modern Chinese literature and art, influencing the mainstream of literary and arts in both the Nationalist-controlled areas and the occupied zones, lies in its alignment with the social realities of the time.

Regarding the book's structure, it is primarily divided into eight chapters. Chapters One through Four mainly focus on the "theory and practice research" of the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Literature and Art, while the latter four chapters emphasize "text and historical material analysis." The author maintains that the process of socializing Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia literature and art inevitably depended on the operation of the underlying literary and artistic system. With this in mind, adhering to the principle of staying close to historical reality and drawing on rich historical materials, the author systematically traces the formation

trajectory of the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia literary and artistic system in the first four chapters, deeply analyzing how this system regulated and guided the direction of literary and artistic creation in the region. Simultaneously, the author explores in detail the various components within the cultural system—such as cultural activities, cultural associations, cultural publishing and media, and cultural education—and their crucial roles in advancing the development of cultural practices in the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia region. This reveals the interactive relationship between the region's cultural activities and social realities, presenting readers with a rich and diverse panorama of the cultural ecosystem in Shaanxi, Gansu, and Ningxia. At the same time, the author emphasizes that， as literary and artistic works constitute the core medium of Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia culture, research on this cultural sphere must be grounded in textual analysis. So, the final four chapters focus on specific works, examining plays like *Liu Qiaoer*《劉巧兒》）, *Forced onto Liangshan*（《逼上梁山》）, *The White-Haired Girl*（《白毛女》）, the Yangge opera *Brother and Sister Cultivating the Land*（《兄妹開荒》）, the novel *The Story of Planting Grain*（《種谷記》）, folk songs, calligraphy, and the poetry and prose of Xiao San（蕭三） and Wu Boxiao（吳伯簫）. By examining the factors such as social transformation, political movements, and cultural inheritance, and analyzing the creation, adaptation, and thematic evolution of these texts, the book specifies the complex connections between Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia literature and art. This interplay not only reflects how Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia literature and art as products of a specific era profoundly responded to social realities but also highlights their role in cultural transmission and historical continuity.

Overall, this book incorporates distinctive problem awareness, in-depth theoretical analysis, and rigorous close reading of texts. Integrity, depth, and a cutting-edge approach are its defining features, and this book stands as a major contribution to the current research on Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia literature and art.

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