Chen,Sihe 陈思和、Gao,Yuanbao 郜元宝：*Centennial Chinese Literature and Regional Culture Series*（《百年中国文学与区域文化》丛书），Hunan Education Press（湖南教育出版社），China,2025. ISBN: 978-7-5754-0859-2.

In 1994, the *Twentieth-Century Chinese Literature and Regional Culture Series*, planned and published by Hunan Education Press and edited by Mr. Yan Jiayan, had a profound impact on the academic community. The *Centennial Chinese Literature and Regional Culture Series,* edited by Mr. Chen Sihe and Mr. Gao Yuanbao, is a revision and supplement of the former series and will continue to introduce research by new scholars in later stages, aiming to present a more comprehensive and dynamic academic landscape. The re-planning and re-publishing of the series from *Twentieth-Century Chinese Literature and Regional Culture* to *Centennial Chinese Literature and Regional Culture* represents the relay and inheritance of scholars in the field of modern Chinese literature and regional culture research, as well as a solid effort to advance centennial Chinese literature into deeper and more comprehensive areas from a new research perspective and method based on the development of the times. In November 2025, the first volume of the *Centennial Chinese Literature and Regional Culture Series*, consisting of five books, was published by Hunan Education Press. They are: Li Yi's *An Interpretation of Modern Sichuan Literature from the Perspective of Ba-Shu Culture*, Li Jikai's *Qin Region Novels and Sanqin Culture*, Zhu Xiaojin's *The Shanyaodan School and Sanjin Culture*, Fei Zhenzhong's *The Scholarly Style of Jiangnan and Jiangsu Writer*s, and *Pang Zengyu's Black Soil Culture and Northeast Writers Group*. These books explore the literary characteristics of various regions and their relationships with centennial Chinese literature, using Ba-Shu culture, Shaanxi-Qin culture, Sanjin culture, Jiangsu-Zhejiang culture, and Black Soil culture as breakthrough points.

The five academic works published this time, with their distinctively argued logic and cultural consciousness, have minimized the mechanical integration of literary achievements influenced by "regions". While adhering to the historical commonalities of their respective regional cultures and preserving the authentic forms of culture, they have once again updated the regional characteristics of Chinese literature over the past century with a cautious and innovative academic attitude. In *An Interpretation of Ba-Shu Culture in Modern Sichuan Literature* by Li Yi, the author attempts to provide new answers to established regional literature research by analyzing theoretical concepts, clarifying the origins of theoretical construction, and demonstrating the progressive development of the new concept of "local path". The proposal of "local path" does not deny that the modern transformation of Ba-Shu culture was inspired by foreign cultures; instead, it emphasizes the subjectivity and endogenous nature of Chinese culture. Therefore, the author uses the "local path" to explore the evolution of modernity in modern Chinese literature, considering how different "places" form, adjust, and adapt to the whole. This is a timely reflection on the previous emphasis on globality and on confidence in the Chinese experience in this era. The "local path" is not just a method of literary criticism; it examines the process of literary emergence in a flexible manner, reversing the fixed trajectory from the West to the East to some extent. By examining the inheritance, transformation, adaptation, and even re-examination of Ba-Shu culture by modern Sichuan writers such as Guo Moruo, Ba Jin, Li Jieren, Sha Ting, and Ai Wu, the author captures the unique temperament and overall characteristics of modern Sichuan literature, thereby examining the issue of the "local path" in the evolution of modern Chinese literature.

In the face of the grand proposition of centennial Chinese literature and regional culture, Li Jikai's *QinDi Novels and Sanqin Culture* integrates profound cultural insights into QinDi novels, a typical carrier of Sanqin culture. It boldly outlines the

cultural trajectory of Qin Di novels in the
20th century, from the initial coldness and silence to the large-scale radiation of three literary phenomena: Yan'an literature, the Poplar School, and the Shaanxi Army. The author finds important coordinates for QinDi novels in the 20th century through the reflection and reconstruction of regional history and culture, while emphasizing the diachronic connections and spiritual lineage between these coordinates. *QinDi Novels and Sanqin Culture* anchors the cultural pattern, theme, and mentality of Qin Di novels in the 20th century from a macro perspective. It is worth noting that exploring the regional characteristics of the QinDi novel world through three cultural keywords is not a parallel structure that exists independently. Instead, it divides the cultural elements of QinDi novels under each keyword, based on case studies of specific writers and works, to converge into the rich and prominent regional characteristics of QinDi novels. For example, in "township and city," "local and foreign," "ancient and modern," and "male and female," Qin Di novels favor a cultural pattern dominated by rural, local, ancient, and male culture. It can be said that the cultural pattern of "township", "local", "ancient", and "male" in Qin Di novels, the cultural themes of "survival and entrepreneurship", "rebellion and revolution", "sexual love and Love", and "liberation and belief", as well as the cultural mentality of seeking truth and change, nostalgia for hometown, and abandonment of the old and the new, are all commonalities of QinDi novels and cultural spirit. As QinDi novels become a strong northwest wind sweeping through the literary world, their position in literary history has also become an urgent topic of discussion. The important role of Qin Di novels in the literature of the northwest is undeniable. At the same time, the author also acutely perceives the awkward situation that QinDi writers find themselves in due to the "compatibility" of regional culture, as well as the historical opportunity for "compatibility and Reinvention". When the vision expands to QinDi novels in the literary landscape of 20th-century China, this compatibility has instead become the personality and confidence that enable QinDi novels to complete three eastward expeditions.

So, under the influence of the compatibility and affinity of regional culture, how can we distinguish the differences between each other and accurately position the individuality of literature? Zhu Xiaojin's *Shanyaodan School and Sanjin Culture* are pioneers in elucidating the subjective value of the "Shanyaodan School" within the context of the close Qin and Jin cultures. As a school of literature, the "Shanyaodan School" is characterized by nationalization, popularization, literature from liberated areas, and peasant literature. This categorization is indeed reasonable given the historical context, but it also limits the expression of this literary school's unique regional cultural characteristics. To trace and locate the distinctive flavor of the "Shanyaodan School", the author did not focus his research on the entire Sanjin culture. Instead, he consciously tailored his analysis to the parts of Sanjin culture directly related to the "Shanyaodan School", focusing on how writers of the "Shanyaodan School" handle themes, writing perspectives, and aesthetic tastes. He observed elements such as cultural spirit, cultural value, and aesthetic orientation that align with the times and the fate of this school. Throughout this process, the author was always guided by a problem-solving mindset and empirical research, striving to realize the literary issues and cultural value of the "Shanyaodan School. As he emphasized in the *Postscript to the Second Edition*, "a solid bridge must be built between the Shanyaodan School and Sanjin culture." Through solid, well-supported argumentation and research, the author demonstrated the specific influence of Sanjin culture on the Shanyaodan

School across various aspects, including natural geography, folk customs, local culture, and regional cultural spirit, offering an objective and perceptible evaluation of the creative roots and spiritual essence of the Shanyaodan School. It is noteworthy that, while promoting textual analysis with empirical evidence, the author also specifically elaborated on the characteristics of regional culture and the fate of literary movements, indicating that Sanjin's regional characteristics are closely related to the emergence and even the disappearance of the "Shanyaodan School". In addition to Shanxi's important political and military status during the Anti-Japanese War, the perseverance, simplicity, frugality, and pragmatic spirit of Shanxi's regional culture are compatible with the national spirit, spiritual character, and the popularization of liberated-area literature advocated during the war. The Shanyaodan School was also highly praised by the cultural circles at that time. However, with the variation and dissolution of Sanjin's regional culture, the "second generation" and "third generation" writers of the Shanyaodan School failed to continue the original artistic style of the old writers. Overall, the author provided a comprehensive and groundbreaking evaluation of the regional cultural characteristics and cultural value of the Shanyaodan School, and the pragmatism of Sanjin culture resonated with the author's pragmatic scholarly character.

If we consider that Ba-Shu and Qin-Jin cultures have long formed distinct, relatively stable regional cultural systems, the regional identification of Northeast culture came later. Correspondingly, the regional characteristics and relationships of Northeast literature and culture have rarely been systematically studied. Pang Zengyu's *Black Soil Culture and Northeast Writers* have accomplished this task, and in its latest edition, further additions and deepening have been made, with timely updates on relevant research trends from the 1995 edition to 2023. The main supplementary content of Pang's work is reflected in three chapters: *Ethnic Background, National Sentiment, and the Shaping of National Characters*, *The Legendary Narration and Regional Culture in DuanMuhongliang's Novel Creation*, and *Historical and Cultural Context and the Melancholic Tendency in Northeast Exile Literature*, as well as an appendix containing reviews of relevant research from both domestic and international sources after the 1990s. The new edition of Pang's work retains the profound connection between the spirit of black soil culture, such as the spirit of Chinese sun god, bird totem worship, "beard spirit," shamanism, and "cultural Oedipus complex", and the creative mindset of Northeast writers, characterized by extroversion, wandering, concealment of evil and promotion of good, as well as the passionate and ecstatic narrative perspective, and literary themes of "Oedipus complex" and "seeking roots". It reveals the complex process by which profound and long-standing regional culture shapes the creative style and aesthetic characteristics of the Northeast writers' group. At the same time, Pang's work particularly focuses on several keywords such as ethnic background, legendary narrative, and melancholic tendency, either starting from the writing of Duan Muhongliang, Li Huiying, Shu Qun, and other writers transcending ethnic identity to depict the common anti-Japanese struggle history of various ethnic groups in Northeast China, or taking the legendary narrative intertwined with autobiography, family history, local customs and folklore in DuanMuhongliang's novel creation as the argument, or focusing on the melancholic tendency of Northeast exile literature as the main line, fully demonstrating the strong regional style of Northeast literature represented by the Northeast writers' group and emphasizing its non-negligible position in the history of Chinese literature over the past century.

A writer's cultural background influences the formation of their creative style. Similarly, researchers are deeply influenced by the culture of the region where they grow and live. The research style of Fei Zhenzhong's *The Scholarly Style of Jiangnan and Jiangsu Writers* also carries a strong implication of the scholarly style of Jiangnan. This reprinted work is a revision of the 1995 edition of *The Scholarly Style of Jiangnan*

and Jiangsu Literature. It can be observed that the change in title from "Jiangsu Literature" to "Jiangsu Writers" also indicates that the author has adjusted and refined his methodology in narrating the research object from a cultural perspective. Fei Zhenzhong adopted the traditional concept of "Jiangnan Literature" instead of "Jiangsu Literature". The reason is that the former possesses cultural completeness, avoiding ambiguity and misunderstandings caused by administrative divisions. This is scientifically feasible for observing the integrity and continuity of Jiangsu writers' creations from a scholarly perspective. To fulfill the proposition of 20th-century Jiangsu writers and the scholarly style of Jiangnan, the author first defined "the scholarly style of Jiangnan" as "the core and form of Jiangnan culture expressed during the Six Dynasties, it can also be said to be the classical model of Jiangnan culture." The "scholarly style of Jiangnan" of the literati in the late Ming Dynasty is a ruplication of Jiangnan literati culture after its historical submersion, and the expression of aestheticism also shifted from natural aesthetics to secular aesthetics in the late Ming Dynasty. Among them, this spirit of Jiangnan literati is sustained by a common intelligence, and the literary personality presented by 20th-century Jiangsu writers is similar. In demonstrating the degree of compatibility between 20th-century Jiangsu writers and the spirit of literati in Jiangnan, Fei is skilled in two aspects: firstly, conducting empirical analysis of literary texts; secondly, treating both the writers' texts and the works' texts as objects of narration and interpretation, with a focus on emphasizing the role of literary aesthetics and cultural spirit.

In this revision, the author has devoted considerable effort to chapters four and seven, tracing the literati spirit tradition of a typical writer like Wang Zengqi and examining the formal construction of Jiangsu writers' creations through classical literary theory, effectively highlighting the author's solid and meticulous textual analysis skills. For instance, in the chapter *Emotion and Literary Expression: Formalist Artistic Construction*, the author argues that the pursuit of rhetorical experience and "beautiful prose" by Jiangsu writers originates in the Six Dynasties literary trend, which emphasized beautiful words and deep emotional expression. This includes the retro language experiments of the Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School, Zhu Ziqing's preference for rhetoric in his scenic and lyrical essays, and the artistic conception creation in Wang Zengqi's novels. Overall, the commonalities embodied in the works of Jiangsu writers in the 20th century, such as aesthetic spirit, cultural orientation, formal pursuit, and creative motifs, stem from the spiritual and cultural hometown of the Jiangnan scholarly style. However, the return to the tradition of Jiangnan literati seems to lean more towards a fun, formal aspect, which, to some extent, hinders writers' ability to transform life experiences into grand creations.

The five regional literature research works launched in the *Century Chinese Literature and Regional Culture Series* basically cover the four directions of the Century Chinese literature map. A comprehensive review of the volumes reveals that Bashu culture, which inhabits the southwest; Qin-Jin culture, which borders the central region; black soil culture, which takes root in the northeast; and Jiangnan scholarly style, which stretches across the southeast, have all nurtured splendid literary flowers in their rich soil. With rigorous, pragmatic scholarly attitudes and unique regional academic styles, the five scholars once again used the region as a lens to search for and illuminate the rich roots hidden underground. In the process of deeply exploring the literary vitality embedded in local areas, they jointly emphasized the subjectivity and uniqueness of regional literature, marking new coordinates on the century Chinese literary map and also annotating irreducibly cultural coordinates for Chinese literature

in the diverse landscape of world literature.

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