GUEST EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Jikai Li*

Modern Chinese (现代汉语), shaped by foreign modern cultures, including linguistic cultures, stands in an exceptionally close relationship of mutual interaction and co-constitution with modern literature, which likewise took shape within the context of global cultural exchange. As a pivotal cultural product of China's modernization, modern Chinese constitutes a remarkable achievement in linguistic and cultural history. Its functions and roles are multiple, most notably its function as the primary medium of literary creation and as a vehicle through which Chinese culture has engaged with the wider world. As the global outlook of Chinese communities, both within China and overseas, has continued to expand, diverse lived experiences and intellectual resources have contributed to the emergence of a rich and varied body of modern Chinese literature. Within this literary field, two Chinese-language writers, Gao Xingjian and Mo Yan, have been awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, while many others have received Nobel nominations or other major international literary honors. This rich and complex literary landscape circulates across mainland China and numerous global locations, forming a significant phenomenon within both Eastern and Western humanistic spheres and within the broader framework of "Cultural China". As such, it warrants sustained and systematic scholarly investigation.

In keeping with the *Journal of East-West Thought*'s mission to explore cutting-edge issues in Eastern and Western thought and to foster cultural exchange between East and West, this special issue sets a deliberately modest objective: to examine the arduous journey and the lessons learned in the ongoing globalization of modern Chinese literature since the modern era. Under the theme "Modern Chinese Literature Going to the World", it explores a range of topics within the framework of world cultural exchange and comparative inquiry, including Enlightenment literature, Left Wing literature, War of Resistance literature, feminine literature, overseas Chinese literature, folk literature, and children's literature. It also examines the intrinsic connections between "grand modern literature" and the modern Chinese language, between "grand modern literature" and cross-cultural communication, and between "grand modern literature" and academic history and global Sinology. Particular attention is given to the deep-seated relationships between representative authors or canonical works of modern Chinese literature that have attained a certain degree of global influence and the cultural traditions of both East and West. Furthermore, specific issues such as the translation and dissemination of modern Chinese literature are also explored. Grand modern literature

Among the contributors to this special issue are internationally renowned sinologists and experienced senior scholars, as well as several outstanding young academics appointed by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China as National-level Talents (Young Changjiang Scholars). The issue also brings together middle-aged and early-career scholars with distinctive perspectives, as well as a number of dynamic young PhD researchers. With broad intellectual horizons and keen analytical insight, the contributors have identified significant themes within their respective fields of research and developed them into carefully conceived studies. The articles collected here represent original scholarly work and offer a range of genuinely new insights.

The special issue opens with an essay by Professor Zhu Shoutong of Shenzhen University of Advanced Technology, a leading scholar in modern Chinese literary studies. His contribution provides a scholarly and comprehensive re-examination of New Literature in Chinese, situating its formation within a world-literary framework. While acknowledging the roles of the

* Dr. JIKAI LI, Professor at the School of Chinese Language and Literature, Lead Expert of the Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences, Shaanxi Normal University; State Council Special Allowance Expert. Email: jk571220@163.com.

vernacular and the New Culture Movement, Professor Zhu foregrounds the dynamic interplay of linguistic modes—classical literary language, spoken vernacular, written vernacular, and translational register—as constitutive forces in shaping modern literary forms.

By tracing the circulation and adaptation of realism from French, Japanese, and Russian literary traditions into the Chinese context, the essay demonstrates how global literary engagement informed writers' linguistic choices and aesthetic strategies. In doing so, it establishes a methodological perspective that repositions modern Chinese literature within transnational literary networks and offers a conceptual framework that resonates with the broader concerns of this special issue.

Professor Emeritus Park Jae Woo of Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, in his paper *"*Distinctive Features and Major Achievements of Lu Xun Reception in South Korea in the 2010s*"*, provides a concise and authoritative overview of the dissemination and influence of Lu Xun—the founder of modern Chinese fiction—in Korea. He argues that since the 2010s, the transmission and reception of Lu Xun in Korea have entered a new phase, and he further elucidates the social factors underlying Lu Xun's sustained popularity and esteem in Korea and across East Asia, as well as the enduring artistic appeal of his works.

The collaborative paper by Professor Li Yueli and Dr. Ren Jie of Shaanxi Normal University, "A Comparative Study of the Research on Lu Xun by Leo Ou-Fan Lee and Liu Zaifu", offers a comprehensive and in-depth comparative analysis of the Lu Xun studies conducted by Leo Ou-fan Lee and Liu Zaifu, two influential scholars whose work has had global significance in modern literary and cultural studies. The authors demonstrate that, despite their markedly different research methodologies, both scholars are committed to transcending ideological interpretations of Lu Xun. They contend that these approaches possess substantial methodological and intellectual-historical value, illustrating the diverse possibilities and profound significance of contemporary Lu Xun studies, and thereby underscoring both the modernity and the global relevance of Lu Xun and Lu Xun scholarship.

In the paper "The Value 'Axis' in Chinese Cultural Communication and Its Focal Points", Yu Xiaozhi of Beijing Language and Culture University offers a theoretical interpretation of the value axis and priority areas of Chinese cultural dissemination from the perspectives of modern communication studies and cultural philosophy. The article highlights the importance of establishing clear dissemination priorities centered on this core value axis, including Zen and Daoist cultures.

The collaborative paper by Associate Professor He Feifei, Professor Zou Zan, and Professor An Ling of Xinjiang University, entitled "The Adaptation of English Professional Dramas in Modern China", adopts a distinctive global perspective. Focusing on the adaptation and performance practices of modern English professional drama in China, the study points out that modern Chinese drama developed through the adaptation and staging of Western dramas, and that such practices played a positive role in promoting China's social development and in shaping and enhancing audience aesthetics.

Professor Yi Bin of Central South University, in his paper "Towards a Bidirectional Framework: Dialogue and Fusion Between Chinese and Dutch Literature", undertakes a pioneering exploration of the century-long dialogue and integration between Chinese and Dutch literature, a topic that has received scant attention in academic research. Drawing on both micro-level case studies and macro-level analysis, the article elucidates the deep and sustained connections that have already taken shape between the two literary traditions.

Professor Wu Xiangyu of Zhejiang Normal University, in his paper "Insights into Civilizational Mutual Learning from the Overseas Dissemination of Chinese Folk Tales", examines patterns and insights into civilizational mutual learning through the overseas transmission of Chinese folk tales. He argues that the translation of Chinese folk tales into

foreign languages constitutes a form of their "going to the world" and represents a process of cross-linguistic knowledge reproduction. The influence of this process on the development of Chinese folk tales is indirect and latent, yet it generates multiple civilizational meanings and cultural implications.

In "Writers Heading South and the National Revolution", Professor Zhang Wujun of Southwest University retraces the experiences of Chinese writers who relocated southward during the first half of the twentieth century and analyzes the impact of this movement on the Chinese National Revolution. The study is marked by a strong historical sensibility and exhibits the characteristics of "literary geography," focusing on the cultural implications of southward migration. As a native of Shaanxi who resided in Chongqing for many years, the author also infuses the work with his own humanistic reflections.

Dr. Zhang Yihua of Xi'an University of Finance and Economics presents a close analysis in her paper "Literary Representation and Historical Resonance of the Qiankun Bend of the Yellow River: A Review of Wu Kejing's New Novel *Qiankun Dao*". Through a detailed examination of the novel Qiankun Dao by Wu Kejing, a Lu Xun Literary Prize laureate, she illuminates profound cultural themes, thereby contributing to discussions of the symbolic significance of Yellow River civilization.

Dr. Usha Chandran is an Assistant Professor at the Centre for Chinese and Southeast Asian Studies in the Department of Language, Literature, and Cultural Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University, a prestigious institution in India. She is also an Honorary Research Fellow at the China Institute in New Delhi. Her primary research focus is transnational comparative literature. She has conducted a highly insightful and original comparative analysis of Lu Xun's "Diary of a Madman" and Virginia Woolf's "Mrs. Dalloway," which not only highlights the similarities and differences between Chinese and British literatures but also offers profound reflections on the fates of men and women and issues of survival. Indian Sinologists' academic innovations are often less visible; however, this author's achievements are certainly worth attention.

Dr. Gao Yeyan of Xi'an Technological University, in her paper "Beyond Assimilation and Antagonism: A Framework of Cultural Crossvergence in Liu Ying's Fictions", offers a distinctive analysis of Liu Ying's novels. This study may be regarded as a representative case of overseas Chinese writers "going to the world's depths". It reveals the possibilities of cultural accommodation achievable through cross-cultural interaction that transcends both assimilation and confrontation.

Liu Lu of Fudan University, in the paper "The Narrative Subject Construction and Narrative Effects in the 'The Liang Zhuang Trilogy'", offers a formal-poetic analysis of the trilogy, examining how literary form mediates the writer's understanding of the world. The study identifies a threefold differentiation of the narrative subject—the narrating self, the experiencing self, and the researching self—and demonstrates how their interaction produces distinctive narrative effects that combine personal experience, critical reflection, and ethical awareness.

The concluding contributions to this special issue include four book reviews that engage with recent developments in modern Chinese literary studies. The first review, by Dr. Zhao Yiyang of Tianjin Polytechnic University, provides a perceptive assessment of *An Analysis of Chinese Literary Phenomena from the Perspective of Modern Culture*, a recently published book by People's Publishing House. The review notes that the book employs the theoretical framework of "cultural crossvergence" to offer a focused analysis of the works of "phenomenon-level" writers in modern Chinese literature, and it recognizes this as a noteworthy contribution to contemporary Chinese literary and cultural studies with considerable academic value.

The second review, contributed by Ran Siyao of Yulin University, turns to the study of wartime literary institutions by examining *The Yellow River: A Study of a Major Literary Journal During the Period of China's War of Resistance against Japan*. Focusing on wartime literary journals in the KMT-controlled Northwest, the review highlights the book's a multi-layered macro–meso–micro analytical framework and its contribution to rethinking the regional

diversity, internal dynamics, and methodological approaches of 1940s Chinese literature and literary historiography.

The third review, by Dr. Gao Yeyan and Professor Li Jikai, engages with Professor Wang Jixia's *A Study of Chinese Muslim Patriotic Periodical Literature (1906–1949)*, highlighting its contribution to the recovery and contextualization of a relatively neglected corpus in modern multi-ethnic Chinese literary history. Focusing on Muslim patriotic periodicals from the late Qing to the end of the Republican era, the study combines extensive archival research with interdisciplinary analysis, integrating literary criticism, ethnology, history, and communication studies. The review highlights the book's meticulous documentary foundation, its reconstruction of publication and readership networks, and its exploration of how Muslim writers articulated religious ethics, ethnic identity, and national commitment during times of crisis. By situating minority literary production within broader processes of nation-building and cultural modernization, the monograph contributes both new primary materials and a valuable methodological model for future research in ethnic minority literature and modern Chinese literary historiography.

The fourth book review was written by Dr. Bai Ruofan, focusing on five monographs from the first batch of the 'Century of Chinese Literature and Regional Culture Series' edited by Chen Sihe and Gao Yuanbao. These five books are all excellent works in the study of regional literature and culture. Through an analysis of the series' overall characteristics and evaluations of the distinctive features of each monograph, the review concludes that the five scholars, with a rigorous and pragmatic academic attitude, use 'regional culture' as a lens to uncover and illuminate the rich underground roots. In the process of deeply exploring the literary vitality of local areas, they collectively emphasize the subjectivity and uniqueness of regional literature and culture, marking new coordinates on the map of a century of Chinese literature and annotating recognizable cultural coordinates for Chinese literature's integration into the diverse landscape of world literature.

It is my view that the theme of this collection of essays is distinctive and clearly defined. Although the authors focus on specific aspects and cannot cover every dimension, they all engage rigorously with modern Chinese literature that is intrinsically connected to global literary contexts. Historically, Chinese communities have long been part of the wider world, and overseas Chinese have gradually become global citizens in their adopted countries. Outstanding writers, proficient in modern Chinese literary creation, have already made significant contributions to world literature. Even when certain perspectives, constrained by a centralized or narrow framework, may overlook aspects of modern Chinese literature, the field is poised to assert its global relevance through empirical evidence and rigorous scholarly interpretation.

I would like to thank Professor Ding Zijang, Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of East-West Thought*, for extending this invitation once more. I am also grateful for the opportunity to co-edit this volume alongside Professor Li Yueli, Dean of the School of Chinese Language and Literature at Shaanxi Normal University. I extend my sincere thanks to all contributors to this special issue, with particular appreciation to Dr. Gao Yeyan for her careful assistance with formatting and minor textual revisions.

As the Year of the Horse approaches, I would like to extend my best wishes to all scholars and readers engaged with Modern Chinese language and literature.