

# Study on the Contemporary Hui Writers' Literary View of Tradition and Modern Hodgepodge\*

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**Abstract**—This paper summarizes the literature views of contemporary Hui writers' traditions and modern essays through the study of contemporary Hui literature. Contemporary Hui writers write traditions in the local time painting and present modernity in urban construction. The contemporary creation and unique aesthetic paradigm of contemporary Hui literature is a practice that is guided by the traditional and modern multidimensional co-construction of literature. The tradition and modern hodgepodge reveals the continuation and adjustment of the literary view, highlights the national character in the persistence, adapts to the development of modernity in adaptation, and expresses the literary vision and strong feelings of the patriotism that actively constructs the new dimension of the motherland literature. Therefore, it not only enhances the appearance and status of Hui literature, but also provides creative experience and aesthetic reference for minority literature and even Chinese literature.

**Keywords**—tradition; modern; contemporary Hui writers; literature view

## I. INTRODUCTION

Fei Xiaotong said in "Earthbound China": "From the bottom up, Chinese society is vernacular." [1] In China, the primary sign of traditional social structure is the vernacular character. However, the modernity of "an unfinished program"[2] has undergone nearly 200 years of development in China, which has brought about profound changes in China's political economy and culture. Its remarkable representation is modernization, industrialization, urbanization, and informatization has advanced by leaps and bounds in China. At the same time, it has also brought China into an unprecedented social transformation context. Therefore, since the May Fourth Movement, Chinese literature has written and portrayed the local world, such as Lu Xun, Shen Congwen, Xiao Hong, Lu Yao, Mo Yan and other writers; there are also descriptions and expressions of urban life, such as the writing of Lao She, Zhang Ailing, Wang Anyi, Wang Shuo and other writers; and there are the

disclosure and disclosure of contradictions and conflicts in social transformation, such as Cao Yu, Ba Jin, Jia Ping'ao, Liu Zhenyun and other writers. It can be seen that the literature views of tradition and modern hodgepodge run through the whole process of Chinese modern and contemporary literature. In this way, the situation of minority literature as an important part of Chinese literature is the same. Contemporary minority writers also show the traditional and modern mixed literary ideas in their creations, such as the Tibetan writer Alai, the Mongolian writer Maraqinfu, and the Yi writer Jidimajia, which are powerful examples. Therefore, it is not difficult to find the literature reviews and thinking of tradition and modern hodgepodge of the Hui nationality writers when reviewing contemporary Hui literature.

## II. TRADITIONAL WRITING IN THE LOCAL TIME PAINTING

As far as the traditional local architecture in the literature views is concerned, writers of contemporary Hui nationality writers who are born in rural areas have devoted themselves to constructing their own familiar local world. It is true that writers born in cities like Zhang Chengzhi, along with their own destiny and life experience, have also successfully written the underlying local society in their creations. From Zhang Chengzhi's creations, his writings on the local world mainly focused on the herdsman's life in the Inner Mongolian grasslands; the lives of the Kazakhs and Uighurs in Xinjiang; and the lives of the Hui people on the Loess Plateau. Although the life of Spanish and Palestine refugees written in prose writing in recent years has the characteristics of the bottom, it is no longer the "local world" in the concept and scope of the local world discussed in this article. Zhang Chengzhi mainly strengthened and sublimated the literary view written on the underlying local world through Xihaigu writing. It is also the depiction of this bottom-level local world that gives him a unique and distinct "people's or underlying position" in the literary world.

Zha Shun is a writer who pays more attention to life experience and growth experience. Shi Shuqing is a more sensitive and delicate writer. Regardless of whether Zha Shun used his hometown as the "base" of his creation, or Shi Shuqing's "No novel is written in Yinchuan"[3] discourse, they are both confirming their determination and consistent

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attitude towards scribing the local world with all their heart. Therefore, traditional local writing constitutes the core of their literature, and not only makes their works classic, but also lays their status in the history of literature, such as, "Sons and Daughters of Muslims", "Knife in the Clear Water."

In the study of the local time writing, whether it is from the Hui ethnic literature, or from the post-80s creation ecology, Ma Jinlian is a writer that has to be discussed. Reading Ma Jinlian's writings, whether it is excellent works such as "Father's Snow", "Broken Wife", "Embroidered Mandarin Duck", "Long River", etc., or the "Seriflux and Chinese Sauerkraut in 1987" of the Lu Xun Literature Award, all write and reflect the rural world. From these works, it is possible to confirm the characteristics of the traditional local world and its ethical landscape in the writer's literary thoughts. In addition, Ma Jinlian has repeatedly expressed the literary thoughts of traditional rural social writing in many interviews. She wrote in an article entitled "Staying in the Peaceful Beauty":

"I stubbornly write about the villages and people and things that I am familiar with, which I will never abandon. All the words are always around the Xihaigu, around the village I know.

Therefore, when I have time, I will go to the countryside and use all opportunities to return to my family, my husband's family, and my relatives. I don't want to, can't and don't dare to stay away from life. Fresh materials are in real life." [4]

It can be seen that Ma Jinlian regards her familiar rural world as the object of her own writing, and presents it to the readers with the background of Xihaigu. At the same time, in order to get the material for writing, she rushed all the time to the country because she "don't want, can't, don't dare" away from life. In this regard, she along with Zha Shun and Shi Shuqing is in the same continuous line. When many people asked about the sense of distance between Ma Jinlian's works and the current life, she once again said that Xihaigu was the base and foothold of her own creation, and deeply analyzed the characteristics and origin of the heavy feeling of her work. She wrote:

"I explained it over and over again, it all lies in the base and foothold of my life and writing, and I can't help but mention a title that has been said on many occasions: Xihaigu... The cold and hardship in life, has inscribed in my memory as deep as a birthmark. This memory is more like blood. It has long penetrated into the bottom plate of my literature and soaked it... What is poverty, what is the hardship at the bottom, and this is what I first thought about when I started writing. The real bottom-level survival is heavy and arduous. It is bloody and laughing, and it is happiness and pain. With such a background as a reference, my words have never been light, and there is always a heavy thing in my heart, permeating the lines between words." [4]

In the postscript of the first collection, "Father's Snow," Ma Jinlian carefully wrote the happiness that writing brought to her with nervous mind. At the same time, she also frankly

wrote the object of rural writing that she had established at the beginning, and firmly believed that the creation of the traditional rural world is never exhausted. She said:

"It's all about the village. The source of writing inspiration is that the village where I first lived, the future writing will be still around the village. As long as the village stands on the ground, and life is not exhausted, the inspiration for writing will not be exhausted." [5]

In the citation, Ma Jinlian has already explained her literary thoughts written in the local world. It shows that the writer has always regarded Xihaigu as the base and foothold of creation, and expressed her persistent dedication and firm belief in writing the local land. Judging from this, Ma Jinlian will continue on the path of Neo-vernacular novels, and use this to highlight the meaning and value of writing, even if the later creation involves the city to open up the broadness of writing, the background of personnel setting will not lose the foundation and support of the local world.

Tolstoy once said: "When you write your village, you write the world." [6] Mauriac also said: "If I wrote my village well, then I wrote all the villages in the world." [7] In this sense, Zha Shun, Shi Shuqing, Ma Jinlian and other writers' literary views and writing attitudes that will always insist on writing the village. They are the same with Lu Xun, Shen Congwen, Xiao Hong, Mo Yan, Jia Ping'ao and even Faulkner and Marquez, through the depiction of familiar villages, they are telling a common truth: "As the basic cell of the world, as the source of the subject's perception and the foundation of existence, the villages provide the basic schema for our perception of the world and become the primary basis for our imagining the world." [6]

### III. PRESENTATION OF MODERNITY IN URBAN CONSTRUCTION

In contemporary Hui literature, the urban dimension construction as an important indicator of modernity is relatively weak. Although it has been well written in the "Muslim Funeral", it is not the same as the traditional local world construction of contemporary Hui literature. Writers such as Zha Shun, Shi Shuqing, and Ma Jinlian have little or no involvement, so they don't have the typical meaning of research and interpretation. Zhang Chengzhi's creation is the most complicated among the Hui writers in terms of content. In China alone, his creation involves Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang, the Loess Plateau and the land of the south of the Yangtze River. In the international dimension, it is far away to Japan, Spain, and Palestine, etc. Therefore, in Zhang Chengzhi's creation, there are also works involving the city, but he is more likely to understand and express the city on the basis of ecological protection and cultural heritage rescue. His literary thoughts expressed to the city are concentrated in a preface entitled "Fragile City." In this article, the writer first made a serious criticism culturally of the ethos and behaviors of changing the cities that spread throughout the country. In the second part, through the example of Granada, the analysis points out the tradition that Chinese planning is the ritual system, which forms the plane thought of the nine lengthwise and nine crosswise avenues. At the same time, it

also expounds the cheapness and restrictions of civil and building materials, which breeds speculation and short-sightedness in urban construction. Then it came the fact that "such building, the city that has been filled up with such buildings, its indescribable charm, its historical legacy, has long been like the dangerous piling-up eggs." [8] In the last part, the writer quoted Braudel's view of the city in the "History of the Mediterranean" and analyzed the traffic factors of cancer in the city, pointing out the violent industry real estate that breeds the corruption and scheme in the meantime. The writer wrote: "The city is fragile: just an excuse for traffic, you can turn every intersection of Beijing Hutong into an interchange monster. People in the city are even more vulnerable: behind the engineering team and the developers are the 'irresistibility', and people can only accept the sentence to leave from their home. Shelter piles, iron fences, for the traffic, 70-year-olds are climbing high-rise pedestrian bridges, but the automobiles are still crazy crowding in the city like locusts." [8] At the same time, the writer points out the different ideological orientations of China and Morocco in urban construction with the example of the Fès City of Morocco as a United Nations cultural heritage: "The key is that in the urban construction there, the cherishment of culture is absolute, as taboo, no one dares to move a single hair in the ancient city. In the lack of social supervision and dissent expression, there is no taboo, only hegemony." [8] At the end of the preface, the writer hated and reluctantly raised the facts of the disappearance that the eyelids saw — "The old scene of ancient city area in Zhengzhou disappeared instantly, the old streets made of wood in Kunming were demolished one after another and the Tiemubadan of Kashgar was besieged." In reluctantly accusing, conscience should always be supported. The writer borrowed the facts of Feng Jicai and his friend Li Jiangshu to encourage himself and make himself and everyone tough in the triumph of the distressed bulldozer.

Zhang Chengzhi's above criticism of the city reflects his loss and disappointment with the modern civilization with the city as the carrier. Therefore, in the specific creation, the city is rarely praised and yearned for emotional expression. It more reflects the ideas of ecological protection and cultural heritage protection from the perspective of criticism. For example, the "Salvation Plans of Cranes" is the best text for such ideas. In this essay, Zhang Chengzhi clearly expressed his understanding of the protection and the actual actions taken for this purpose of cultural heritage as an intellectual. In the essay "Expressions of the City", writers wrote Beijing, Tokyo and Yili with pity. The writer showed a feeling of love for Tokyo's "culture like beauty and deep pool", but because of its "historical experience of bloodthirsty aggression", the writer fell into an "unclear" situation. Compared with the current situation, the writer has fixed the former Yili "people of all religions smiling, shaking hands, and the random peace air of drinking and drinking around the city" as the most relaxed and peaceful look of Yili. Zhang Chengzhi, who grew up in Beijing's barren district, intends to control the use of Beijing dialect in his creations, and does not allow Jingyouzi's slang verbs to enter his own works. He regards language as a reflection of temperament and draws the conclusion that "the choice of thoughts and

positions, in the final analysis, is actually determined by temperament." [9] The writer assimilated the crowds in the night with bus stops to the city sculptures in Beijing and regarded them as the basic expressions of Beijing. From this, it can also draw the author's cognition:

"If the key to the small city of Yili lies in the nation, the key to the capital of Beijing is in the civilian.

Greater China — this is a culture in which the post-wave pushes forward waves and today's culture denies yesterday's culture. It is a culture that lacks fixed etiquette, or whose etiquette has completely decayed, and has been exhausted by children and grandchildren. So it is also a culture without aristocrats. Then, the civilian society is the mother of everything; the righteous and simple civilian spirit has always been a preservative in Beijing, and it should be its soul." [9]

Since the new century, female writers such as Ping Yuan, Cao Haiying and Ma Lihua have been more typical and unique in urban writing. Their creative achievements under the influence of feminist literary and artistic thoughts have novel reference significance in creation and research. Therefore, their creation is a unique and beautiful landscape of Hui literature. It not only expands the world of literature views of Hui writers from the perspective of urban dimension construction, but also promotes the development and progress of Hui literature from the perspective of pluralistic symbiosis literature views. In a nutshell, Ping Yuan and Cao Haiying mostly write cities through several dimensions such as love, marriage, and family. The Ping Yuan are famous for shaping urban female intellectual. Cao Haiying is mainly concerned with the emotional crisis and mental dilemma of marriage and the strong rendering of dreams is an important feature of Cao Haiying's urban writing. Ma Lihua's most brilliant works on urban writing are concentrated on her familiar hospital subjects, such as "In the ICU ward" and "Long Night Like a Song". It is worth noting that Ma Lihua regards her Islamic cultural background as the basis of urban writing. Her works such as "First Assistant" and "Bath of the Wind" are integrated into the Islamic "two-generations happiness" and "life-guarding concept" to highlight the distinct national implication. As Li Jinxiang said, "Ma Lihua always sticks to her beliefs. It is the belief that makes her work deep and high, and has a holy brilliance." [10]

The value of social transformation writing is to reveal that "in the battle between agricultural civilization and industrial civilization, those vulnerable groups at the bottom of society are at a loss of mental state of weightlessness in the gap between the body and the spirit, and the suffering of the soul without dwelling." [11] From this perspective, Li Jinxiang's creation is more representative. He used the transformation of rural society as a broad background to create such things as "Changing Water", "The Home of Heaven", "The Butcher", "Hanging Lamp", "The Dog Village Head", "Scorpions All-over", "Killing Cattles" and other series of excellent short stories. The novel "Savior" has carried out a more concentrated and in-depth presentation, scribing and expression of social transformation. In an article



entitled "The Novel Should Be Written About What Might Happen", the writer concentrates on the ins and outs of the creation. He writes:

"My literary ideals have not changed. The work sets an extreme environment that reflects many of the problems of society. It is not to attribute the mistakes to whom, nor to tell people who are our saviors, but to explore human performance in extreme situations, human self-redemptive psychology and the redemptive function of literature. Literature can be redeemed, and literature needs to bring brightness to people." [12]

Li Jinxiang is good at thinking about problems from the broad context of globalization and modernity. In the context of social transformation, he pays attention to society, pays attention to the bottom, and portrays groups of different life and spiritual dilemmas. In "Fast Life and Slow Literature", Li Jinxiang reviewed the realities and literary images of the villages in different periods in the history of new literature through the three writers Lu Xun, Shen Congwen and Lu Yao, and pointed out the current village dilemmas with pity, sadness and helplessness in the context of transformation.

Qin Xiao said: "The 'contemporary China issue' can be expressed as China's social transformation, that is, from a pre-modern (traditional) society to a modern society. This transformation has been going through more than 100 years since the late Qing Dynasty... Today it is still an 'unfinished plan' (Habermas). Re-provisioning this issue and advancing this process in an orderly manner is related to the future and destiny of the Chinese nation. It is a call for the sense of responsibility of politicians, social elites and civil society." [13] The contemporary Hui writers, including Li Jinxiang, wrote about the social transformation of modernity and its representation. It is not only the labeling and practice of the modernity dimension of the contemporary Hui writers' literature view, but also highlights the writers' strong sense of national mission and historical responsibility. It also reveals the fact that "the true, good and beautiful qualities of farming civilization, together with its various ignorance and malpractices, are exposed in front of urban civilization; likewise, the progress of urban civilization, together with its various evils, ugliness and coldness and imperfections also presented in front of the ancient and poetic farming civilization." [14]

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Tradition can only inspire vigor and vitality in the march of modernity. Modernity can only forge the meaning of the richness in the traditional soil. Therefore, the tradition and modern writing of contemporary Hui writers is not an absolute binary opposition, that is, this is a relative proposition, which is mainly reflected in two aspects. One is the combination of the two in the writer's creation, such as Zhang Chengzhi, Li Jinxiang, Ma Lihua, A Hui and so on. And the other is the combination of the two in the specific text, such as "Muslim Funeral", "Sons and Daughters of Muslims", "Hui Family", "Savior" and so on. Therefore, when people examine and consider contemporary Hui literature from the broad context of modernity, they not only

better grasp and understand the literary views of contemporary Hui writers' traditional and modern hodgepodge, but also help to make more objective and accurate judgments on specific works. Tradition and modernity are important dimensions that constitute the connotation of contemporary Hui writers' literature views. The hodgepodge of the two shows the writers' artistic philosophies about the dilemma of literature in globalization. Including the creative achievements and the aesthetic paradigm under the guidance of traditional and modern multi-dimensional co-constructed literary views, the re-effort on the road of literary dreams, not only enhances the appearance and status of Hui literature, but also realizes the literary ideals of writers to a certain extent, as well as providing creative experience and aesthetic reference for minority literature and even Chinese literature.

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