

33 *ibid.*, p.174.

34 *ibid.*

35 Bonnie S. McDougall, *Mao Zedong's "Talks at the Yan'an Conference on Literature and Art": A Translation of the 1943 Text with Commentary*, University of Michigan, 1980, p. 57.

36 *ibid.*, p.78.

37 From "The answer" in Bei Dao, *The August Sleepwalker*, trans. by Bonnie S. McDougall, London: Anvil Press, 1988, p. 33.

Nation and locality in the writing of Zhou Zuoren

Susan Daruvala

Chinese literature this century has been virtually inextricable from the project of nation-building, in other words, the construction in discourse of an imagined or desired ideal vision of the nation. Although writers over the last decade have turned their backs on an explicit concern with the nation, cultural anxieties, as displayed in the TV series *Heshang*, run deep and are of course inseparable from questions of national identity.

The Chinese discourse on the nation had its origins in the late Qing with Yan Fu's discovery of the people as the raw material of nationhood.¹ As W.K Cheng has argued, this discovery was predicated on a refusal to believe in the continued viability of the Chinese tradition in solving China's problems. One result of the turn to the people was the reformers' promotion of the idea of a new fiction which would inculcate in the people the requisite qualities and knowledge for modern citizenship. The dominant discourse of the May Fourth New Culture movement built on and enlarged this project, making explicit the inferiority of Chinese civilization, which it rejected with harsh iconoclasm. At the same time it made enlightenment the precondition for national salvation and linked both to the demand for a literary revolution.

The paradigmatic May Fourth intellectual is, of course, Lu Xun, whose fiction and prose brilliantly expressed anger and despair at China's condition. Lu Xun depicted Chinese culture as a cannibal banquet and the Chinese as a nation of Ah Qs devoid of self-knowledge, but bravely implicated himself in his castigations. Lu Xun's Nietzschean insistence on "self-overcoming" gave him his moral authority. In the end, he saw it as his duty to support the possibility for change represented by social revolution and the Soviet Union, winning Mao's accolade as modern China's greatest revolutionary intellectual.² In this respect too Lu Xun was paradigmatic, for the logical outcome of the discourse on the nation was to choose whichever

force would be most capable of imposing a "self-overcoming" on the people, thus enabling the new China to be constituted and a new Chinese subjectivity, totally unlike that of Ah Q, to come into being.

The strength of this dominant discourse does not signify the complete absence of attempts to articulate alternatives. Zhou Zuoren, who was Lu Xun's younger brother, arrived at a construction of the nation radically at odds with the one I have just described. One unfortunate biographical fact about Zhou has always confounded assessments of him, and that is that he collaborated with the Japanese occupiers of Peking from 1939, eventually serving in Wang Jingwei's puppet government. There is not the time to go into the issue very thoroughly. I do not believe that collaboration represented the logical outcome of Zhou's thinking. Zhou never hid his admiration for many aspects of Japanese culture, particularly those that could be identified with Tang and pre-Tang China. He held that Chinese and Japanese literature and art had, in their separate ways, drawn on a shared Confucian-Buddhist heritage. This heritage he posited against the Neo-Confucian Cheng-Zhu orthodoxy which, in his view, had blighted Chinese intellectual and cultural life in later centuries. Zhou's writing, however, never served Japanese imperial ambitions, and in fact during the occupation his attempt to construct a Confucian identity which could not be co-opted led to his being publicly attacked by the Japanese authorities.³ If his collaboration does point to one thing, it is perhaps his resistance to the demands of a modern national identity.

Lu Xun and Zhou Zuoren had both studied in Japan and were both working at National Beijing University at the time of the May Fourth movement. Zhou never wrote fiction, but he contributed theoretical articles about the direction literature should take. He shared the general perception that China was sick and in need of some fundamental changes, and he was one of the first to begin publishing translations in vernacular Chinese. His starting point however differed significantly from that of Chen Duxiu or Hu Shi. Rather than being preoccupied with the intrinsic inferiority of Chinese culture which was supposedly reflected in the literary language, *guwen*, he thought writing in the vernacular was important as a way of bringing in new ideas, particularly as the favoured Tongcheng style of *guwen* in use at that time was very ideological.⁴ On the other hand, Zhou did share the idea that people could be shaped by literature and his prescription was for a Literature of Man that would promote humanistic values.⁵ At the time he was deeply influenced by the Tolstoy-inspired utopian-socialist New Village movement in Japan.⁶ However, the didacticism of this stance conflicted with that of respect for the individual and led Zhou to an intellectual crisis.

In 1921 Zhou concluded that it was impossible to synthesize all the different ideas he found attractive into an all-inclusive programme. There was no one formula or 'ism' that would be the solution to everything.⁷ At around the same time he wrote an article promoting the essay form. "There

are many thoughts which, since they cannot be turned into fiction and are not easy to put into poetry, can be put into the essay form," he wrote. The only thing a writer needed, was "genuine simplicity and clarity".⁸ With these two ideas he was moving away from the May Fourth dominant discourse, rejecting the search for one way that would save China and choosing a different literary form from the realist short story or the emotion-laden romantic poem.

In 1922 Zhou started his own weekly column in a newspaper under the title "In My Own Garden". From then on, he announced, his garden was literature and he was going to grow what he liked in it, regardless of whether or not it benefited anyone else. He was not going to put literature in the service of any cause but preferred to write only about what interested him.⁹ This Zhou proceeded to do, drawing on his wide-ranging interests in ancient Greece, Japanese culture, mythology, anthropology and writers like Havelock Ellis. He did not withdraw from current debates. His essays laid the groundwork for his reputation as an outspoken critic and supporter of individual rights, including the rights of women and children.

Through the 1920s and 1930s Zhou consolidated his position as one of the foremost essayists of his time. He claimed to orient himself by values which he put into the context of a broadminded Confucianism quite remote from traditional orthodoxy. In fact Zhou drew a lot on the late Ming Neo-Confucian counter-tradition associated with thinkers like Li Zhi (1527-1602) and Jiao Hong (1540-1620) which stressed that the individual had an innate capacity for making moral judgements and need not depend on received opinion to know what was right and wrong.¹⁰

An important event which throws some light on Zhou's mode of thinking was his opposition to the nation-wide anti-religion movement which sprang up in 1922 after the World Students' Christian Federation announced plans to hold a conference in Peking. Many public figures and intellectuals came out in support of the anti-religionists' manifesto, which swore to eradicate the "poison of religion" from human society. To Zhou the manifesto sounded just like a traditional imperial decree condemning heterodoxy. He publicly opposed the movement and advocated complete freedom of religious belief within the limits of the constitution, and he was severely attacked for this. Prophetically Zhou warned that even if the interference with religious belief had taken place only on paper, in days to come "thought would be banned".¹¹ This incident was one of many which reinforced his belief that the 20th century was not qualitatively different from earlier times.¹² He was tireless in pointing to the similarities between the new orthodox discourse on the nation and the supposedly discredited Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucian one.

Zhou arrived at his alternative construction of the nation in three more or less related ways. First, by drawing on and promoting certain

traditional aesthetic categories which valorized the individual; secondly by making the locality, not the nation, the salient part of a writer's self-representation; and thirdly by formulating a literary history in which periods of openness and individualism are equated with cultural confidence and periods of strong central control over art and ideology are seen as disastrous for creativity.

Zhou's uses of the multivalent aesthetic term *quwei*, which suggests flavour, piquancy or interest, and *bense*, literally the "true colours" or inherent qualities of a writer which show in the writer's work, are crucial to his attempt to distance literature from the domain of the state. In invoking them Zhou was also drawing on a debate over the relationship of the artist to tradition which went back at least to the Song and which continued into the Qing.¹³ It did not require a very great shift in the frame of reference to be able to draw conclusions from them about the relationship of the individual to the state. *Quwei* referred originally to the intangible something that remains with a reader after the words of a poem have been left behind. It shares in Buddhist and Daoist ideas that words can only express part of reality. However, it also depends on the image that sparks the insight in the writer in the first place and the skill of the writer in getting both the image and insight across in words.

With time, as poetry came to be seen as a repository of cultural models, the emphasis slipped away from the individual writer's personal insight and meaning, to which the reader responded, to studying the poetry of the past and emulating it as a way of self-improvement. With the late Ming counter-tradition I referred to earlier the sphere of *quwei*, flavour, was widened again away from texts and into the material world. *Quwei* came to mean "the ineffable essence at the heart of things" in keeping with the philosophical position that the Way existed everywhere in ordinary life and was to be found in what was called "the daily uses of the people".¹⁴ These included food, drink and human relationships. In other words, human society and material culture became capable of triggering insight. As Chaves notes, another point to be made about *quwei* or flavour is that, like many Chinese aesthetic terms, it operates on two levels, referring to a quality in the external world and to the same quality in the mind of the perceiver. A writer had "flavour" to the extent that he could perceive "flavour".

For Zhou the locus of *quwei* was the locality, and the writer was worthy of respect to the extent that he was able to perceive and manifest the intrinsic value of human life and its "daily uses". In his writing, local customs and material culture are often vividly evoked and highly valued. One of Zhou's most famous lyrical essays is about the sweetmeats available in his hometown.¹⁵ Another was about customs marking the different seasons, which Zhou claimed were interesting because they "make up the tiny changes in our ordinary lives", and that in fact the history of peoples was just "the succession of daily human activities".¹⁶ What Zhou called

"daily human activities" is synonymous with the "daily uses of the people". So he was giving the artefacts and customs of everyday life a significance which went beyond their material use or their ideological value.

Another aesthetic concept which was very important in Zhou's work was *bense*, which can be translated as "native hue" or "true colours" and refers to the authentic, inherent quality of the writer which shows in the writer's work.¹⁷ Particularly since the Ming it was related to the idea of independence of style or viewpoint, which was manifested in simplicity of language.¹⁸ Everybody had, at least potentially, his own "imperishable native hue". In the 17th century it became closely linked to the notion of self-attainment, which referred to the ideas one had attained for oneself.¹⁹ It depended on perception, but this type of perception was not as diffuse or passive and intuitive as "flavour". *Bense* refers more to intellectual perception and use of language. It depends on a critical attitude, an active use of judgement in how we read and write. As Zhou discussed it, this extended to never being tied down by one school of thinking or tradition.

What is crucial about this concept is that everybody's attainment is different, and this makes diversity of thought inevitable and desirable. In this sense *bense* becomes a peculiarly democratic concept. Because it is related to ideas of critical judgement and attainment, Zhou's concept of *bense* serves to arm the writer against the demands of the nation-building project. The practice of simplicity and clarity of language becomes a method of maintaining one's integrity and intellectual alertness.

If the locality is the space in which *quwei* can operate, what is the relationship between the writer and the locality? Zhou assumed that writers, like everybody else, are shaped in some way by their environment. The word he uses for environment in this context, *fengtu*, includes the idea of both social customs and natural geographical conditions. Zhou further assumed that this relationship between a writer and his environment will manifest itself in literature, both at the national and the sub-national levels, and that this accounted for regional variations in literature. He invoked the idea of *fengtu* in ways which were sometimes quite abstract, for instance by referring to intellectual styles and aesthetic traditions as characteristic of a place.²⁰

At other times he provided a much more concrete list of requirements: an author writing about his hometown should have included more about his dreams, the colour of the lake and the noise of the markets, he once commented.²¹ With dreams we enter the subconscious life of a community, including its myths, while the lake and the noise of the markets suggest both the natural and social world. The most celebrated writer whose work reflects Zhou's prescriptions is undoubtedly Shen Congwen, whose mentor Zhou was.

In a major article written in the early 1920s Zhou complained that Chinese literature as it was developing then was unsatisfactory because it was "too abstract, worked to a prescribed concept and did not express the writer's individuality". The remedy was to "get rid of these self-imposed shackles and freely express the individuality which has grown from the soil".²² Although Zhou relates the writer's individuality to the soil, to place, he took pains to ensure that the individual should in no way be subordinate to a collectivist local identity. He stressed that creativity depended on the individual being able to "sing out the emotions and write whatever he pleased in whatever mode". Locality was not to be something static which constrained the individual but rather something supporting individuality.

Zhou made it clear that he was not referring to locality in provincial terms or political terms, and he didn't just mean writing that described local life. Neither did he mean that one could only write about one's place of origin. *Fengtu* was not meant to stand for what the cultural conservatives called "national essence", which included traditional beliefs and practices they felt should be sacrosanct. Zhou denied that there was any national essence that could be quantified or preserved or got rid of. The living part of the national essence that no one had to worry about doing anything about because it was just there was the "flavour" or *quwei*, expressed in everyone's speech and actions which bore the imprint of local culture and environment.

Under these circumstances the locality could not function as the place for discovering some emanation of the folk or of a particular class. It became what mediated the writer and the nation and served to connect them in a meaningful way. Genuine literature could be produced only by writing as someone connected to a place, not by relying on the empty, doctrinaire dreams centred on the nation. Thus locality becomes, in effect, a buffer both for the writer and literature against the nation-state's demands that literature should serve its interests. At the same time the local identity changes the individual's relation to the state. The individual is not conceptualized as a monad bereft of all other ties and now ready to be inscribed with meanings by the state.

Locality served Zhou not only as a source of inspiration but as a repository of intellectual and cultural resources. The conviction that he had been shaped by and was rooted in a specific cultural tradition played an important part in his self-representation and led him to focus much of his research on his own east Zhejiang area. He quoted extensively from the writings of Qing literati in his own work. In his thinking the intellectual seems to be embedded in the locality rather than becoming the alienated outsider of much May Fourth writing (for example Lu Xun), for whom the locality marks the rupture between past and present. Here I think Zhou may have owed something to the view of the people in history of the anti-Manchu revolutionary Zhang Binglin. For Zhang the people embodied a national past which could come into full cultural flower once the Manchus were removed,

and this past was to be apprehended in the localities through the study of customs and institutions.²³ Intellectual and common people were both contained in the locality. By contrast, for those for whom tradition had failed the localities contained nothing of interest, for the nation could only come into being when the people realized their modernity through the outside agency of either state or intellectuals. I am not suggesting that Zhou shared Zhang's view of the people, but that he shared the conviction that Chinese civilization was still viable.

As to the relationship between the locality and the nation, the locality was articulated within the wider area of China, not in opposition to it. Rather than seeing Chinese identity as formed into a homogenous whole at the national level out of lots of disparate pieces, like the patches on a patchwork quilt, Zhou saw it as the irreducible shared minimum, a "plain background" against which the localities produce infinite variation and difference.²⁴ The irreducible minimum boiled down to two things: intersubjective relationships - that is, the ways people in the localities related to each other in the cultural and environmental matrix of *fengtu*, and also, language. The living part of the language (which he also identified with a heritage of "flavour" or *quwei*) included linguistic features such as the visual aspects of the written characters and the tone system, or the freight of associations which went with words and images.

These features served as a shared resource for users of the language and in themselves were beyond good and bad. For example, the tone system and visual aspects of the characters were exploited in the eight-legged essay, universally condemned this century for epitomizing a cultural habit of substituting word-play for creative thinking. As Zhou pointed out, however, the same features of the language could also be found in folk riddles, opera and in elite poetry.²⁵ It was not those features themselves which were bad but the uses to which they were put. These uses, in the modern age, ought to depend on the individual. This brings us again to the concept of *bense*. Having represented language also as beyond good and bad and so beyond the reach of language reformers, Zhou welcomed foreign influence on Chinese. The key question was not whether an idea or a style was Chinese or foreign but whether its use involved imitation or influence. Imitation of anyone, ancient or modern, Chinese or foreign, was slavery, but influence was beneficial.

Zhou's view of Chinese literary history undergirded his aesthetic choices. He rejected the May Fourth idea that Chinese literature had been moving gradually towards the use of the vernacular but this movement had always been suppressed by reactionary feudal tradition. For Zhou there was no historical, linear progression towards the use of the vernacular but a very complex, organic relationship between elite and popular uses of both the literary language and the vernacular.²⁶

Zhou saw literature as historically oscillating between two poles: didacticism and individual expressionism. When the pendulum swung to didacticism, literature became hypocritical and boring. When it swung the other way, the premium was on the writer being able to express not just "feelings" but the thrust of his being, to the benefit of culture.²⁷ Zhou correlated didacticism with times when the imperial government had been strong and able to push orthodoxy, and individual expressionism with times when the government had been weak.²⁸ A high point in Chinese cultural history, according to him, had been in the Wei-Jin period (220-419) which was a time of political chaos but also of the massive influx of Buddhism. He hoped that Western knowledge would prove similarly stimulating.²⁹

In the cycle between didacticism and self-expression Zhou identified two great didactic "moments". One occurred in the 8th century, towards the end of the Tang dynasty when Han Yu and likeminded thinkers undertook to redefine Chinese cultural identity in exclusivist terms and advocated the creation of a powerful, new, didactic literary style.³⁰ Zhou's criticism of Han Yu was aimed among other things at the notion that there is a homogeneous definition of what it means to be Chinese. The second "moment" occurred in the 18th and 19th centuries with the emergence of the Tongcheng literary school. Tongcheng theorists wanted to combine philosophical orthodoxy and literary style in all writing, the goal being to ensure that whatever the content of a work, the ideas and feelings a writer expressed in it would not go against Confucian and Neo-Confucian principles. In other words, the medium would become the message. These ideas were given a new lease of life in the 19th century when various reformers followed the Tongcheng School style in their translations introducing Western science and thinking.

In Zhou's view, the May Fourth movement itself had inherited the super-didacticism of the Tongcheng school through Chen Duxiu and Hu Shi and this contradicted the demand for individual expression which was also made during the May Fourth.³¹ Clearly, with this assertion Zhou was criticizing the nation-building project in modern Chinese literature. To sum up, the ideal vision of China which emerges from his writing depends on the diversity of individuals and localities and is not threatened by outside influences but welcomes them. Moreover, Zhou's literary practice, through his aesthetics, fostered the construction of a space free from dogma.

Over the last decade Zhou's work has been re-examined in China and is now seen as important for its position on human sexuality and individual freedom.³² However, for both Chinese and Western scholars, it still seems impossible to fit him into the narrative of modern Chinese history except as an anachronism and a failure. Even if we agree that the construction of national identity involves negotiation between many competing visions and narratives of the nation, Zhou's attitude to the nation-state undercuts the attempt to picture his as an alternative nationalism.

I have suggested that the nation-building project started from the premise of Chinese inferiority to the West. This perception of inferiority was undoubtedly responsible for the intensity of the rejection of tradition, the totalistic iconoclasm, of the May Fourth. In the narratives of modern Chinese history most familiar to us, as in most of the social science literature on nation-building, these inherently problematical beginnings and their consequences are glossed over and subordinated to the ultimate goal of a strong, united, modern China. Recently however, Liah Greenfeld has asserted that feelings of inferiority and status anxiety among elites are the catalysts of nationalism and further that nationalism is constitutive of modernity.³³

On these grounds, Chinese nationalism would seem to be right on course. Greenfeld's arguments implicating modernity are certainly an advance over previous accounts which blamed the irrational, pathological face of nationalism on unenlightened remnants of a pre-modern cultural era surviving into the present. But she is not forced to reject nationalism or modernity as ultimate goods because she manages to separate a benign, Anglo-Saxon civic nationalism from the pernicious European versions. Also, because it is sociological, her account does not take colonialism or imperialism into account. Consequently it does not address the relations of power involved in the spread of the concept of the nation-state which discourse theorists like Edward Said and Partha Chatterjee have made commonplace.³⁴ We are all familiar with the idea that the construction of national identity is doubly problematic in the non-West because of the burden of orientalist frameworks of knowledge.

I would argue, however, that we cannot account for the work of Zhou Zuoren even in this framework, for discourse theory accepts as the bottom line that other civilizations were unable to compete with the superior cultural vitality of the modern West. What made Zhou Zuoren such an unusual and seminal thinker is that he did not accept the premise of Chinese civilizational inferiority and throw the baby out with the bathwater. Instead he demonstrated that Chinese culture did have the resources to critique itself. Not only that, he showed it had the philosophical resources for dealing with the modern condition. Perhaps most importantly, he maintained a view of the individual as a moral agent against modernity's propensity to negate and foreclose all other philosophical options and to see moral consequences as secondary to rational ones.

My reading of Zhou has been enabled by the insight of the Indian scholar Ashis Nandy, that all civilizations possess the resources for self-criticism and for producing alternative visions of themselves. Despite modernity's tremendous capacity to displace other civilizations, this displacement has not been complete or irrevocable. Nor, of course, does modernity represent the sum total of Western civilization.³⁵

For Chinese cultural criticism today the problem is still seen as how to synthesize Chinese and Western culture, how to transform Chinese culture creatively by understanding it and sorting out the good from the bad.³⁶ However, this scenario is still built on the premise of inferiority and needs some watch-dog mechanism to do the sorting. Zhou's assertion that the enduring parts of civilization are beyond good and bad shifts the exercise of judgement about what is acceptable away from pre-assigned categories to concrete instances and thus valorizes the individual, not as a building block for a nation but as a moral being. It seems clear to me that Zhou's example opens up many fruitful ways of looking at the issue of nation and nationality both in China and in the modern world.

Notes

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- 3 Edward M. Gunn, *Unwelcome Muse: Chinese Literature in Shanghai and Peking 1937-1945*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1980, pp. 151-171.
- 4 Zhou Zuoren, "Cai Juemin: er" (Cai Juemin [Yuanpei]: two), *Zhitang huixianglu* (Zhitang's Memoirs), Hong Kong: San Yu Stationery and Publishing Co., 1970, 1:332-335.
- 5 Zhou Zuoren, "Ren de wenxue" (A literature of man), *Yishu yu shenghuo* in *Zhou Zuoren Quanji* (Complete Works), 5 vols., Taipei: Landeng wenhua chuban shiye fuwu youxian gongsi, 1982, 3:564-571.
- 6 Cheng Ch'ing-mao, "Zhou Zuoren di Riben jingyan" (Zhou Zuoren's Japanese Experience), in *Zhongyang yanjiu yuan di'erjie guoji hanxue huiyi lunwen ji* (Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Sinology, Taipei, 29-31 December, 1986), by the Academia Sinica, Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiu yuan, 1989, pp. 878-884.
- 7 Zhou Zuoren, "Shan zhong za xin" (Miscellaneous letters from the mountains), *Yu tian di shu* (The Rainy Day Book), *Zhou Zuoren Quanji*, 2:348.
- 8 Zhou Zuoren, "Meiwen" (Belles-Lettres), *Tan hu ji* (Talking of Tigers), *Zhou Zuoren Quanji*, 1:201.
- 9 Zhou Zuoren, "Ziji de yuandi" (In my own garden), *Zhou Zuoren Quanji*, 2:5-6.
- 10 Susan Daruvala, "Zhou Zuoren (1885-1967) and an Alternative Chinese Response to Modernity", Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1993, pp. 164-243.
- 11 Shu Wu, "Ziwo, kuanrong, youhuan: liangtiao lu" (Self, tolerance, suffering: Two roads), *Dushu*, 1989, 3:65-73.
- 12 Zhou Zuoren, "Bihu dushu lun" (Reading behind closed doors), *Yongri ji* (Everlasting Days Collection), *Zhou Zuoren Quanji*, 1:524.
- 13 Richard John Lynn, "Orthodoxy and enlightenment: Wang Shih-chen's theory of poetry and its antecedents", in Wm Theodore de Bary et al. (eds), *The Unfolding of Neo-Confucianism*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1975, p. 219.
- 14 Jonathan Chaves, "The panoply of images: A reconsideration of the literary theories of the Kung-an school", in Susan Bush and Christian Murck (eds), *Theories of the Arts in China*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983, p. 345; Edward Ch'ien, *Chiao Hung and the Restructuring of Neo-Confucianism in the Late Ming*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1986, p. 77.
- 15 Zhou Zuoren, "Mai tang" (Selling sweets), *Yao wei ji* (Taste of Medicine Collection), *Zhou Zuoren Quanji*, 4:319-321.
- 16 Zhou Zuoren, "Qing jia lu" (Qing Jia records), *Ye du chao* (Notes from Night Reading), *Zhou Zuoren Quanji*, 2:524-525.
- 17 Zhou Zuoren, "Bense", *Feng yu tan* (Talks in wind and rain), *Zhou Zuoren Quanji*, 3:277-279. I am citing Pollard's translation of the term. See David E. Pollard, *A Chinese Look at Literature: The Literary Values of Chou Tso-jen in Relation to the Tradition*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973, p. 62.
- 18 Gong Pengcheng, *Shixue bense yu miaowu* (Bense and Marvellous Enlightenment in Poetics), Taipei: Xuesheng shuju, 1986, p. 110-111.
- 19 Daruvala, "Zhou Zuoren", p. 224-237; Ch'ien, *Chiao Hung*, pp. 180-194.
- 20 Zhou Zuoren, "Difang yu wenyi" (Place and literature), *Tan long ji* (Talking about Dragons), *Zhou Zuoren Quanji*, 1:9.
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- 22 Zhou Zuoren, "Difang yu wenyi", p. 10.
- 23 Shimada Kenji, *Pioneer of the Chinese Revolution: Zhang Binglin and Confucianism*, Joshua Vogel (trans), Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990, p. 61.
- 24 Zhou Zuoren, "Guocui yu ouhua" (National essence and Europeanization), *Ziji de yuandi*, *Zhou Zuoren Quanji*, 2:9.
- 25 Zhou Zuoren, "Fulu yi: Lun bagu wen" (Appendix One: On Bagu Wen), *Zhongguo xin wenxue de yuanliu*, (The Origins of China's New Literature), *Zhou Zuoren Quanji*, 5:362-364.
- 26 Zhou Zuoren, "Guizudi yu pingmindi" (Élite and popular), *Ziji de yuandi*, *Zhou Zuoren Quanji*, 2:11-12.
- 27 For the idea that the classical expressionist formulation "shi yan zhi" refers to "the whole thrust of one's being," see Steven Van Zoeran, *Poetry and Personality: Reading, Exegesis and Hermeneutics in Traditional China*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991, 7-8.
- 28 Zhou Zuoren, "Di'er jiang: Zhongguo wenxue de bianqian" (Second lecture: Changes in Chinese literature), *Yuanliu*, pp. 327-330.
- 29 Zhou Zuoren, "Zhongguo xin wenxue daxi: sanwen yi ji' daoyan" (Preface to Compendium of New Chinese Literature: Essays - first collection) in Yu Shusen (ed.), *Xiandai zuojiatan sanwen* (Modern Writers on the Essay), Tianjin: Baihua wenyi chubanshe, 1986, p. 252.
- 30 Zhou Zuoren, "Di'er jiang", p. 330.

- 31 Zhou Zuoren, "Disi jiang: Qingdai wenxue de fandong (xia): Tongcheng pai" (Fourth lecture: The Qing literary reaction: Part two - the Tongcheng school), *Yuanliu*, p. 345.
- 32 See for example, Shu Wu, "Zhou Zuoren gaiguan" (Survey of Zhou Zuoren), two-part series, *Zhongguo shehui kexue*, 1986, 4:89-115 and 5:187-214.
- 33 Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992.
- 34 Edward Said, *Orientalism*, New York: Vintage Books, 1979; Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?* London: Zed Books, 1986.
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The place of vernacular in a national movement: Cantonese literature in the late Qing and early Republic

Ching May-bo

Introduction

Did vernacular have a place in the national movement in modern China? Vernacular had a place, or at least its promoters saw an opportunity to win it greater prominence, in the late Qing national movement. Vernacular was regarded as an effective means of mass education, and mass education was considered an important part of strengthening the nation. Vernacular did not have a place, or was able to achieve only secondary importance, in the early Republican national movement. The emergence of the new standard national language displaced all regional vernaculars for the sake of national unity.

I shall elaborate on this by reviewing the history of Cantonese vernacular literature from the late Ming to the early Republic. First, I shall demonstrate how a vernacular like Cantonese was able to develop into a written language; this will be illustrated with slides, as I would like to show you what written Cantonese looks like, and how different it is from written standard Chinese. Second, I shall indicate how by the end of the Qing dynasty promoters of vernacular literature saw an opportunity, even if limited, to give it greater prominence. Finally, I shall describe how any possible further development of regional vernaculars was thwarted by the emergence of the new national language, and what status regional vernaculars subsequently were able to attain in early Republican China.

Cantonese as a written language

There are plenty of indications that written Cantonese vernacular first appeared as isolated lines blended into classical texts rather than in the form of independent compositions. Such texts would have been read aloud on