

Ideological and poetological tensions : inventing modern Chinese poetry through British Romanticism, 1917-1933

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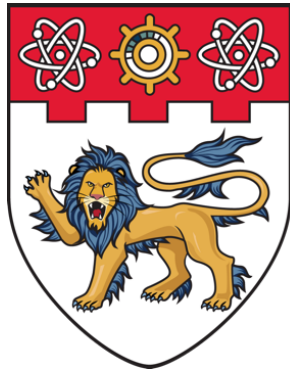
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**Ideological and Poetological Tensions:
Inventing Modern Chinese Poetry through British Romanticism,
1917-1933**

**YAN HANJIN
SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES
2019**

**Ideological and Poetological Tensions:
Inventing Modern Chinese Poetry through British Romanticism,
1917-1933**

YAN HANJIN

School of Humanities

A thesis submitted to the Nanyang Technological University
in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

2019

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Abstract

This study examines the rewriting of British Romanticism by prominent Chinese poets in the early republican era as part of their effort to construct or invent modern Chinese poetry, i.e. William Blake (1757-1827) by Zhou Zuoren (1885-1967), George Gordon Byron (1788-1824) by Wu Mi (1894-1978), Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822) by Guo Moruo (1892-1978), and John Keats (1795-1821) by Wen Yiduo (1899-1946). It reveals the ideological and poetological tensions behind the appropriation of British Romanticism as well as the borrowings from British Romanticism as shown in the poetics and poetry of major modern Chinese poets. In doing so, it sheds light on the transformation of Western aesthetic modernity relocated to the Chinese context and problematizes the existing debate on the modernity of Chinese poetry, which tends to overlook the Western origin of modernity and to generalize foreign poetic influence. Concurrently, this study aspires to push back the boundaries of translation studies by scrutinizing not only the translation of British Romantic poetry but also its imitation and assimilation, two types of rewriting absent from André Lefevere's theory but indicative of the British Romantic poetics and poetry crystallized into the traditions of modern Chinese poetry.

Introduction

The conventional view of modern Chinese poetry pinpoints the literary revolution of 1917 as the genesis of a modern poetics in China, which, as Michelle Yeh argues, not only differs from classical Chinese poetics in “formal and linguistic” matters, but also substitutes the age-old poetics with “new philosophical premises and artistic approaches” (3). One implicit assumption of this theory is that only the new poetry initiating or reflecting such poetic changes constitutes the proper object of study in the realm of modern Chinese poetry. A recently developed view contends that “both old-style and new-style poetry” composed in the twentieth century should be included in an accurate and balanced history of modern Chinese poetry (Tian 8). Rejecting the conventional perspective as an ideological construct of the May Fourth discourse, the central argument of this new theory is that old-style poetry, despite its classical form, remains a powerful vehicle for the engagement with modern life. Shengqing Wu shows that old lyrical forms were innovated to negotiate the social turbulence of the late imperial and early republican eras. Haosheng Yang further demonstrates even May Fourth iconoclasts would turn to classical-style poetry when they grappled with the tumultuous events of the twentieth-century China.

Fundamental to the controversy is the idea of modernity, which one side perceives as a radical departure from tradition and the other side deems appropriate to include the continuity of tradition. Neither party, however, seems to be interested in a critical examination of the Western origin of the concept and its transformation in the Chinese context. Both issues command close scrutiny before delving deeper into the question of modern Chinese poetry. The notion of modernity, as Matei Călinescu states, is conceived within the framework of a particular time consciousness of the West, i.e. the sense of “linear and irreversible” historical time, which is entrenched in “the Judeo-Christian eschatological view of history” (12). Modernity, as a period of Western history succeeding the classical antiquity and the Middle Ages, “was conceived of as a time of emergence from darkness, a time of awakening and ‘renascence,’ heralding a luminous future” (20). “Man was therefore to participate consciously in the creation of the future: a high premium was put on being with one’s time (and not against it), and on becoming an agent of change in an incessantly dynamic world” (22).

Modernity, however, as Călinescu argues, split into two mutually hostile concepts sometime during the first half of the nineteenth century: one is “modernity as a stage in the history of Western civilization – a product of scientific and technological progress, of the industrial revolution, of the sweeping economic and social changes brought about by capitalism”; the other is “modernity as an aesthetic concept” (41). Aesthetic modernity is “involved in a threefold dialectical opposition to tradition, to the modernity of bourgeois civilization (with its ideals of rationality, utility, progress), and, finally, to itself, insofar as it perceives itself as a new tradition or form of authority” (10). In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, aesthetic modernity, under the cover of romanticism, first announced itself as a revolt against classicism (3). From the 1830s and 1840s onward, aesthetic modernity, represented by romantic radicals and Bohemian artists, voiced its fierce opposition to the expanding bourgeois modernity by flaunting extreme aestheticism, such as “*l’art pour l’art*, or the later *décadentisme* and *symbolisme*” (44). In the 1890s the word modernism was first used in the Hispanic world as an umbrella term for a variety of literary schools, movements, or sects that asserted themselves in the late nineteenth-century France, including “*décadisme*” and “*symbolisme*” (69-70). As these conflicting assertions are typical of aesthetic modernity’s reaction against itself, modernism became a term that could describe aesthetic modernity’s self-refutation without losing its other connotations (78). During the first two decades of the twentieth century, modernism finally acquired its present-day literary significance in the English-speaking countries (80-82).

Informed of Călinescu’s theory, Leo Ou-fan Lee convincingly demonstrates that most Chinese intellectuals in the late Qing and early republican eras were preoccupied with “a mode of consciousness of time and history as unilinear progress” (“Search” 122) comparable and, indeed, indebted to the historical or bourgeois modernity of the West. This newly developed time consciousness in China valorized “the present as a new ‘epoch’”, surpassing the previous eras and promising “a purposeful future” (122). Chinese literature in the 1920s and 1930s, Lee writes, was haunted by a similar awareness of time, which was expressed in the claim that “each epoch had its own literature” and the slogan that “literature must reflect its own time” (123). As a result, Lee argues, there was “no discernible split” between historical modernity and aesthetic modernity in the Chinese literary scene, which set it apart from its European counterpart (125). Lee’s generalizations can serve as a useful

starting point for the exploration of modern Chinese poetry, but, if Chinese poets could straddle two conflicting modernities, the question remains, how did they come to terms with modern Western poetry which is inherently opposed to bourgeois modernity? Did modern Chinese poetry conform to or diverge from Western aesthetic modernity's antagonism to tradition?

To complicate matters further, Călinescu argues that it is doubtful whether aesthetic modernity could be completely sundered from the bourgeois modernity of reason, progress, and science, whose efforts to "assimilate and promote" aesthetic modernity contribute to the formal recognition of "the heritage of modernism and even the most extreme manifestations of the avantgarde" (90).¹ The avant-garde, a military notion, was employed by the moderns as a metaphor for the concept of modernity in the domains of the arts, literature, and politics (94). It is, however, "a radicalized and strongly utopianized version of modernity" (94), even though it shares with modernity a unilinear sense of time. In the wake of the French Revolution, the term avant-garde "acquired undisputed political overtones" and held wide appeal for "revolutionary, and therefore future-oriented, philosophies" (101). Following its usage in the radical political thought, the notion of avant-garde was then applied to the literary-artistic context in 1825 in a dialogue commonly attributed to the utopian socialist Henri de Saint-Simon (1760-1825) (101).²

Saint-Simon assigned the artist, who foresees and creates the future, to the avant-garde role in the utopian state, which paradoxically made the supposedly free artist "a disciplined soldier or militant" (103). Accordingly, "[to] be a member of the avant-garde is to be part of an elite" devoted to an antielitist program, since their "final utopian aim is the equal sharing by all people of all the benefits of life" (104). "This basically elitist-antielitist approach to the problem of the avant-garde has been preserved," Călinescu claims, "in the Marxist-Leninist theory of the [communist] party as the revolutionary avantgarde of the proletariat" (104), which would only consider realism or socialist realism as the avant-garde. In contrast to this political avant-garde subservient to a

¹ To Anglo-American literary critics, avant-garde is, Călinescu stresses, synonymous with modernism, thereby encompassing almost every artistic and literary movement launched in the first half of the twentieth century (139-140). However, in the Continent, avant-garde is reserved for "the most extreme form of artistic negativism" (140), such as futurism, dadaism, constructivism, and surrealism.

² The dialogue was, in fact, Călinescu notes, a collaborative effort by Saint-Simon and his disciples (101).

narrow revolutionary philosophy, the artistic avant-garde, by the 1920s, had come to designate all the new literary schools scornful of the past and avid for the new, though their novelty was often achieved “in the sheer process of the destruction of tradition” (117). “The main difference between the political and the artistic avant-gardes,” Călinescu observes, “consists in the latter’s insistence on the independently revolutionary potential of art” and the former’s submission to “the requirements and needs of the political revolutionists” (104). Nevertheless, “both start from the same premise: life should be radically changed”; and both have “utopian anarchy” as their goal (104).

It should be noted at this juncture that Călinescu perceives “a specifically romantic ring” in Saint-Simon’s conception of “the mission of the artist”, because “[the] myth of the poet as a prophet had been revived and developed since the early days of romanticism” (105). “[Almost] all the progressive-minded romantics upheld the belief in the avant-garde role of poetry,” Călinescu maintains, “even if they did not use the term ‘avant-garde’ and even if they did not embrace a didactic-utilitarian philosophy of art” (105). An illuminating example given by Călinescu is the English Romantic Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822), who, in *A Defence of Poetry* written in 1821, eulogizes the poet as “a harbinger of the future” (105). While “Saint-Simon tends to favor a pedagogical and topical view of the artist’s mission, Shelley seems to think that this same mission is carried out more naturally, and even unconsciously” (106). This distinction, Călinescu suggests, “can be reduced to that between authoritarianism and libertarianism,” which “is important for the understanding of the subsequent evolution of the idea of avant-garde both in the arts and in politics” (106).

Whereas Călinescu is consistent in his demonstration of aesthetic modernity’s opposition to bourgeois modernity, without slighting their bond shown in the notion of avant-garde, Marshall Berman, another enormously influential theorist of Western modernity, ebulliently advertises the experience of modernity as a coherent whole, a vision shared by Karl Marx (1818-1883) and some of his notable nineteenth-century contemporaries. Berman divides the history of modernity into three sequential phases: the first phase, when “people are just beginning to experience modern life” (16-17), starts from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century; the second phase, when “the ideas of modernization and modernism emerge and unfold”, “begins with the great revolutionary wave of the 1790s” and continues down through the nineteenth century (17); and the third phase

overlaps with the twentieth century when, despite the expanding “process of modernization” and the burgeoning “culture of modernism”, the notion of modernity has become so fragmented that it “loses its capacity to organize and give meaning to people’s lives” (17). Conscious of the devastating effect of modernization, Berman is nonetheless confident that “the fullest and deepest critique of modernity may come from those who ardently embrace its adventure and romance” (86). What Berman has in mind is the dialectical nineteenth-century modernism articulated by Marx and some other great spirits, who denounce the serious consequences of modernity but endorse its promise of a better future in a never-ending state of flux (23).

Both Berman and Călinescu formulate their theories of modernity by drawing on the traditions of the West. Berman’s distinction between modernization and modernism, for all other connotations of the two terms, is roughly comparable with Călinescu’s separation of aesthetic modernity from bourgeois modernity. Berman’s highly prized nineteenth-century modernism is also somewhat analogous to, or constitutive of, the artistic criteria prescribed by Călinescu’s political avant-garde. Călinescu does not pretend that his Western theory should extend to the rest of the world, but Berman presumes that the Western process of modernization is to be repeated by the backward part of the world and that the dialectical nineteenth-century modernism is to be reinvigorated for the treatment of modernity in our times. Consequently, Berman’s theory of modernity, as Sanjay Seth incisively argues, tends to foreclose other possibilities of modernity and to establish the modernity in the rest of the world as a belated version of the West. Therefore, this study will only measure early modern Chinese poetry against the central tenets of Călinescu’s more inclusive and more comprehensive theory of Western modernity.

Modern Chinese literature is traditionally framed in the dominant May Fourth discourse, which describes Chinese literary modernity in terms of its determined renunciation of the native heritage and its belated re-enactment of the Western archetype.³ However, since the 1980s, a growing body of research has attempted to challenge the reigning May Fourth paradigm, affording fascinating insights into the possibilities of Chinese

³ Belated modernity is first proposed by Gregory Jusdanis in his study of Greek literature. Traditional writings on modern Chinese literature is characterized by a sense of belatedness, but to my knowledge “belated modernity” has not been formerly advanced to describe modern Chinese literature.

literary modernity unshackled by a preconceived Western model. David Der-wei Wang's groundbreaking study of late Qing fiction is extremely influential in this respect. Dismissing the linear narrative as the hegemonic Western discourse of modernity, Wang compellingly argues that late Qing writers brought significant changes to Chinese fiction by "[renewing] their [literary] heritage with the help of foreign models" (19). Such innovations become the "repressed modernities" of Chinese literature, because they were, Wang contends, "denied, displaced, diminished, or derided" by May Fourth forerunners and subsequent literary histories in favor of "the master narrative of a singular, predictable evolutionary path" (9).

David Wang's pioneering work on Chinese literary modernity can be carried on by conducting some follow-up research into Chinese literature in the late Qing and early republican eras. First, the innovations of late Qing fiction were, Wang notes, inextricably affected by various forms of fiction translations, which, as Wang's sources reveal, outnumber original Chinese works by a huge margin (3-4). Wang does not delve deeper into the translated fiction or the practice of translation, but an inquiry into the issue of translation would certainly broaden our understanding of Chinese literary modernity. Second, the focus of Wang's undertaking is fiction, whose only "representational practice" (10) promoted by the May Fourth paradigm is, we are told, "nineteenth-century European realism" (19). Granted that Wang's judgement on May Fourth fiction is not ill-founded, it can hardly be applied, as Michel Hockx's and Xiaobing Tang's reviews of Wang's work shrewdly observe, to other categories of May Fourth literature, especially poetry. Third, major genres of late Qing fiction were, Wang maintains, suppressed by some dominant values of Western modernity in the aftermath of the May Fourth movement (52). However, as Hockx points out in his review, "[the] constellation and amalgamation of symbolic values and literary fields during the 1920s and 1930s is much too complex a process to be described in terms of one literature 'crushing' or 'repressing' another" (503).

Susan Daruvala's impressive examination of Zhou Zuoren's 周作人 (1885-1867) alternative response to modernity shows that the May Fourth discourse is less monolithic than is commonly assumed, thereby giving a partial answer to the third question raised by the above survey of David Wang's venture. Seeing the nation-state

as “the distinguishing feature of modernity” (14), Daruvala explores Zhou Zuoren’s distinctive way of “constructing the notion of the individual and affirming the individual’s importance” (11) in relation to the nation.⁴ Zhou’s endeavor stands, Daruvala contends, in stark contrast to the dominant response to modernity, namely “the discourse on the people-as-nation” concretized in the May Fourth period and recoverable “in paradigmatic form” from the writings of Lu Xun 鲁迅 (1881-1936) (40). Daruvala cogently argues that Zhou’s alternative response was constructed in three interconnected ways, i.e. the utilization of traditional aesthetic concepts, the emphasis on locality for “a writer’s identity and self-representation”, and the writing of a nonlinear Chinese literary history (11-12). Somewhat surprisingly, Daruvala does not make inquiries into possible foreign inspiration for Zhou’s alternative response, even though she notices that Zhou’s diverse interests cultivated during his study in Japan are conducive to his peculiar pursuit (42).

Lydia H. Liu’s meritorious study of the translingual practice in early modern Chinese literature, pre-dating both David Wang’s and Susan Daruvala’s enterprises, probes into “the *legitimation of the ‘modern’ and the ‘West’* in Chinese literary discourse as well as the *ambivalence of Chinese agency* in these mediated processes of legitimation” (xviii). Translation or translingual practice is, for Liu, “the process by which new words, meanings, discourses, and modes of representation arise, circulate, and acquire legitimacy within the host language due to, or in spite of, the latter’s contact/ collision with the guest language” (26). Liu’s conception of translated modernity, therefore, enables her to “identify and interpret those contingent moments and processes” (xix) that are unfortunately explained away by the tradition-modernity model and the impact-response paradigm. Liu’s approach promises to foreground the agency of Chinese intellectuals “in the meaning-making process of translation” (29) as well as the “confrontations” (32) occurred between China and the guest language in that process. It is to be regretted that the new perspective opened by Liu’s notion of translated modernity has not been fully exploited in the study of early modern Chinese poetry.

⁴ Daruvala heuristically distinguishes between first- and second-order modernities. The former refers to the process of socioeconomic changes that gave rise to “higher levels of global economic integration”, whereas the later means the “historical contingencies that saw the simultaneous emergence of the modern nation-state and the establishment of colonial empires” (15). The focal point for Daruvala is the second-order modernity, which is associated with nation-building and the “notions of rationality and linear progress” (28).

Inspired by Miriam Hansen's idea of vernacular modernism, Zhen Zhang ingeniously formulates a theory of "vernacular modernity" that not only connects early film culture with the vernacular movement in China, but also creates "new perceptions of the body, gender, and sexuality" (30) in mass cultures. The vernacular movement promoted by the May Fourth writers, Zhang argues, failed to fulfil its promise of engaging and enlightening the masses, because its loan words and foreignized grammars estranged its intended readers (24). Meanwhile, an unofficial vernacular language, exemplified in the urban film culture, became truly "polyphonic" by synthesizing "the classical, the vernacular, and the foreign, as well as different media" (25). Zhang's vernacular is, therefore, "a cultural (linguistic, visual, sensory, and material) 'processor' that blends foreign and local, premodern and modern, high and low, cinematic and other cultural ingredients to create a domestic product with cosmopolitan appeal" (30). This instructive notion of vernacular modernity is, however, predicated upon Hansen's hypothesized "global vernacular" (17) originated in the Hollywood. Zhang stresses that the global vernacular was also transformed by other film cultures (2), but one may still wonder, as Lydia Liu would certainly do, what are the power struggles involved in the process of circulation.

Discussions about aesthetic or literary modernity in the scholarship of modern Chinese literature have generated a number of informative concepts: belated modernity, repressed modernities, alternative response to modernity, translated modernity, and vernacular modernity. Although no consensus has been reached about the best conception, these notions nonetheless call attention to some issues that should be addressed in the study of modern Chinese poetry. First, the innovations by old-style poets, like repressed modernities, should be excavated, as the May Fourth discourse can no longer reign over modern Chinese literature. Second, because May Fourth writers are not a monolithic whole, their different responses to new poetry is worthy of analysis. Third, the role of translation merits careful investigation, since the development of modern Chinese poetry was inextricably bound up with the import of foreign works. In view of the heterogeneity of Chinese literary scene, the heuristic term "competing modernities" may be expediently employed to describe the various visions of Chinese literary modernity. Rather than an idea conceived in a vacuum, the term summarizes what has already been suggested in the existing studies of Chinese literary modernity. Specifically, David Wang remarks on "a fierce competition of

new possibilities” (7), Susan Daruvala on dominant and alternative responses to modernity, Lydia Liu on potent agents’ “imaginary / imaginative construction” (xvi) of modernity, and Zhen Zhang on “competing articulations and practices” fueling cinematic modernity (xxxix).

To gain an intimate knowledge of modern Chinese poetry, it is imperative to examine not only the localization of the Western concept of modernity but also the acculturation of variants of accompanying Western modern poetry, particularly romanticism, in early republican China. Romantic influence on the development of modern Chinese poetry in this period cannot be underestimated. Reviewing Chinese new literature since the literary revolution of 1917, Liang Shiqiu 梁实秋 (1903-1987), once a devoted new poet, wrote in 1926 that modern Chinese literature, poetry included, showed an unmistakable tendency toward Western romanticism (1-39). About half a century later, reflecting on the dominant position of European romanticism in early republican China, Leo Ou-fan Lee was inclined to “brand the entire May Fourth generation of Chinese men of letters as a romantic generation and the decade of the 1920s as a romantic decade” (*Romantic Generation* 295).

British romanticism stands out from other strains of romanticism, insofar as foreign influence on modern Chinese poetry is concerned. Su Manshu 苏曼殊 (1884-1918), a revolutionist turned self-styled poet, inspired the May Fourth generation of Chinese writers with his translations of George Gordon Byron’s (1788-1824) poetry and his Byron-inspired romantic temper, works, and lifestyle (Lee, *Romantic Generation* 58-78). Hu Shi 胡适 (1891-1962), the initiator of vernacular new poetry in China, invoked William Wordsworth (1770-1850) to back up his argument in his three most important essays calling for new poetry (*Changshi* 136; “Lao Luobo” 323-324; “Tan xinshi” 134). Guo Moruo 郭沫若 (1892-1978), the most acclaimed new poet of the 1920s, passionately identified himself with Percy Bysshe Shelley when he produced the first extensive translations of the English Romantic in China (“Xuelai de shi” 19). Wen Yiduo 闻一多 (1899-1946) and Xu Zhimo 徐志摩 (1897-1931), the two other most accomplished new poets of the period, counted Shelley and John Keats (1795-1821) among their favorites. A group of lesser new poets gathered at West Lake in 1922, unashamedly fashioning themselves as Chinese “Lake Poets” in an act of homage to their English romantic idols Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge

(1772-1834), and Robert Southey (1774-1843) (Lee, *Romantic Generation* 294). Even Wu Mi 吴宓 (1894-1978), a staunch defender of old-style poetry, would rank Byron first among the Western poets he admired and composed lengthy poems in imitation of the English poet (*Wu Mi shiji*).

Given Chinese poets' enthusiasm for British Romanticism in this period, it comes as a surprise to find that the relationship between modern Chinese poetry and British Romanticism in early republican China has escaped serious scholarly attention. This study, therefore, intends to fill the lacuna by exploring the appropriation of British Romanticism by prominent Chinese poets in their effort to construct modern Chinese poetry, which would problematize the existing debate on the modernity of Chinese poetry and shed light on the metamorphosis of Western aesthetic modernity transferred to the Chinese context. Concurrently, as the appropriation of British Romanticism manifested itself notably not only in translation proper but also in imitation and assimilation, among other things, this study aspires to push back the boundaries of translation studies by considering the wider implications of different approaches to British Romantic poets.

A full picture of British Romanticism appropriated in the early republican era requires a balanced representation of committed poet-translators from different literary groups that had a stake in shaping modern Chinese poetry. The *Xin qingnian* 新青年 [New youth] group and the *Wenxue yanjiu hui* 文学研究会 [Chinese literary association], as the so-called orthodox style of modern Chinese literature, are entitled to claim one such poet. Zhou Zuoren, a leading figure of the former and a founding member of the later, could fulfill the role, since he was among not only the first to write new poetry but also the most attentive to its development. The *Chuangzao she* 创造社 [Creation society], the dissenting voice within the supposed mainstream style, deserves a place of its own. Guo Moruo, as a key player of the circle and the most celebrated new poet of the period, is well qualified for the job. The *Xinyu pai* 新月派 [Crescent moon school], comprised of younger new poets, boasts Wen Yiduo and Xu Zhimo, whose poetic achievement is generally considered to be second only to Guo Moruo. Wen Yiduo is chosen to represent these younger aspirants because he, as their true leader, furnished them with distinctive poetic theory (Wong). When new poets were capturing literary territories in this period, the *Xueheng*

学衡 [Critical review] group, adherents of old-style poetry, took it upon themselves to counter the influence of new poetry. Wu Mi, who single-handedly maintained the group's magazine, is ideally suited to the role of their representative.

Of the four selected poets, Zhou Zuoren and Guo Moruo received their training in Japan, whereas Wen Yiduo and Wu Mi were educated in the United States. The even distribution of their educational backgrounds can stand for the two primary channels through which aspiring Chinese poets acquainted themselves with British Romanticism. Even though they were conversant with most Romantics, the four Chinese poets, as it turned out, each affiliated himself more readily with a different major British Romantic poet: Zhou with Blake, Guo with Shelley, Wen with Keats, and Wu with Byron. Such deliberate choices are indicative of their divergence in poetical taste and non-poetical concerns, which reminds one to be mindful of the transformation of the Western aesthetic modernity in the context of early republican China.

André Lefevere's rewriting theory will be taken as the framework of this study, partly because it is specially formulated to examine literary exchanges, and partly because it is compatible with Călinescu's conception of modernity. Lefevere conceives of translation, editing, criticism, historiography, and anthologization, as different types of rewriting "produced in the service, under the constraints, of certain ideological and/ or poetological currents" (5). Rewritings, as Lefevere argues, can determine the image of writers and works in a different literature, introduce new literary devices, and promote changes in the role of literature (38). The literary system in which rewritings function is controlled by the professionals within the system and the patronage outside the system. The professionals are the critics, reviewers, teachers, and translators, who rewrite literary works according to certain ideology and poetics. Patronage means powerful persons, groups of people, or institutions "that can further or hinder the reading, writing, and rewriting of literature" (15). Patronage, normally more concerned with the ideology of literary works, often authorizes the professionals to manage the poetics. Comprised of three interactive elements, i.e. the ideological, the economic, and the status, patronage is

differentiated, if the three components are independent of each other, and undifferentiated, if the three components are “dispensed by one and the same patron” (17).

Lefevere’s accentuation of ideology and poetics largely fits in with Călinescu’s conception of aesthetic modernity’s threefold opposition to tradition, to bourgeois modernity, and to itself as a new tradition. Lefevere’s ideology is “that grillwork of form, convention, and belief which orders our actions” (16), a definition not restricted to the political sense of the word. Lefevere’s poetics, as “the dominant concept of what literature should (be allowed to) be” (14), consists of two components: “one is an inventory of literary devices, genres, motifs, prototypical characters and situations, and symbols” (26), and the other, bound up with ideology, is “the role of literature” (26) in the social system. Călinescu’s aesthetic modernity as a concept, though cherishing the present and the new, is inclusive of the toolkit of a writer and the function of literature, thereby reminiscent of Lefevere’s poetics. The object of aesthetic modernity’s attack, bourgeois modernity, can be counted as Lefevere’s ideological forces, whereas tradition, old or new, is akin to Lefevere’s poetics. The major difference between Lefevere and Călinescu lies in the former’s unwitting emphasis on the constraining power of ideology and poetics and the latter’s consistent interest in the subversive power of poetics. Taken together, they have the added advantage of offsetting Lefevere’s overindulgence, as Theo Hermans laments (129), in the submissive role of translation in his case studies.

Ideology and poetics, two key terms of the rewriting theory, are given due prominence in the title of this project, respectively in the form of “Ideological” and “Poetological”. Their incorporation into the title is intended to accent the two dominant factors that were at play when Chinese poets appropriated British Romanticism in the early republican era. The word “Tensions” following the two adjectives in the title is employed to underscore that both ideology and poetics were frequently involved in conflicts when Chinese poets capitalized on British Romantics. There were, first of all, tensions between the ideology and poetics of every Chinese poet and those of his preferred British model, considering the temporal and spatial differences. The ideological and poetical agendas of every Chinese poet were also avowedly in conflict with those of his fellow poetic aspirants. Finally, an individual Chinese poet would often have to come to grips with the clashes between his own ideology and poetics,

which were exacerbated by contemporary social turbulence. All these tensions caution against a hasty definition of the modernity of Chinese poetry in the early republican era, even though the Chinese poets all claimed or aspired to be modern. It is more appropriate to perceive their works as their competing visions or imaginations of modern poetry, hence the term “Inventing” in the thesis title.

One special advantage of Lefevere’s theory is his idea of rewriting, which empowers the scholars to gain insight into the interaction between ideological and poetical forces by scrutinizing the interconnections between diverse forms of text processing. Chinese poets in the early republican era often performed multiple roles of Lefevere’s literary professionals, such as the translator, the editor, the reviewer, the critic, and the university professor. They would accordingly produce various forms of texts rewriting British Romanticism, all are indispensable to an informed understanding of their visions of modern Chinese poetry. Wu Mi, who took on many different roles, is a classic example to illustrate this point: as a poet, he imitated Byron’s poem; as a translator, he rendered some British Romantic poems; as an editor, he annotated and published a translation of Byron’s poem in his journal; as a reviewer, he commented on his student’s translation of Byron; as a critic, he absorbed his foreign mentor’s evaluation of Byron; as a professor, he imparted his reading of Byron to his students at Tsinghua University. These different roles accordingly produced different types of rewriting that helped to shape Byron’s literary image in China. These diverse forms of texts could also reveal Wu’s poetological and ideological motivations as well as the tensions between his poetics and ideology. Lefevere’s concept of patronage is especially instrumental in assessing cases where Chinese poets, because of their ideological and poetological concerns, delegated the job of rewriting British Romantic poetry to their subordinates. Wu Mi, for instance, often instructed his students to render British Romantic poetry into classical-style Chinese poetry. The translations and explanatory notes, based on Wu’s reading, were then published in Wu’s journal, with Wu’s annotations and introductions, if not also his unacknowledged corrections. The notion of patronage allows us to discern the poetics and ideologies of Wu, the patron, by examining the rewritings of his students.

While making the most of various forms of rewriting suggested by Lefevere, this study will foreground translation because in translation, as Lefevere observes, “the manipulation of texts can be most clearly

documented” (58). Apart from translation proper, this project will highlight imitation and assimilation, two types of rewriting absent from Lefevere’s exposition of his theory, because they crystalize what Chinese poets valued most in their British Romantic masters and contribute what they imagined most conducive to the construction of modern Chinese poetry. Unlike translation, which tends to foreground the presence of foreign poetry, imitation and assimilation place a premium on the creative expression of Chinese poets. Imitation means that a poet, with or without acknowledgement, models a poem after a foreign poet’s works or copies the motifs, tropes, images, symbols, structures, or techniques of foreign poetry. Assimilation signifies that a poet, overtly or covertly, proposes a poetics that incorporates part of a foreign poet’s poetics or composes a poem that substitutes foreign tropes, images, symbols, and characters with similar or corresponding native ones. The distinction between the two terms does not have to be clear-cut, since in practice it is common for a poet to combine the two methods. In this study the two terms are employed to describe an overall tendency, without ruling out exceptional cases.

The year 1917 marked the beginning of the New Literature Movement in China, of which the promotion of vernacular new poetry is an integral part. In a sense the rewritings of British Romanticism by the four Chinese poets examined in this study were all responses to this far-reaching literary revolution: Zhou Zuoren set out to nurture it, Wu Mi to challenge it, Guo Moruo to exploit it, and Wen Yiduo to rectify it. The eventful year of 1917 is, therefore, chosen as the starting point for this study, which covers the period until 1933 because that is the year when Wu Mi finally relinquished his grip on his negligible magazine and withdrew from a long-fought battle against new poetry. Before Wu Mi’s withdrawal, Guo Moruo had suspended his writing of poetry after he went into exile in 1928; Wen Yiduo had abandoned his poetic aspirations after the publication of his second collection in 1928; and Zhou Zuoren had concluded his career as a new poet with his only sole-authored anthology in 1929. By the early 1930s the craze for British Romanticism had passed its heyday, as Chinese poets increasingly turned their attention to the latest trends of Western poetry. What follows is an outline of the four chapters of this study, each handling the rewriting of one British Romantic by one Chinese poet.

The opening chapter deals with Zhou Zuoren’s selective translation and secret imitation of William Blake’s poetry, which, as this study reveals, were informed by his acquaintance with Japanese mania for Blake

and by his careful perusal of the English scholarly account of Blake. No obedient follower of Japanese and Western authorities, Zhou freely appropriated his foreign sources and Blake's poetry to engage with what he perceived as the most pressing issues pestering contemporary China, namely gender, children, and peace. Zhou's translation and imitation of Blake were consequently a sort of exegeses of his Blake-inspired conception of humane literature. With an eye to molding modern Chinese poetry, Zhou also tampered with Blake's distinctive poetic device, i.e. mystical symbolism, which was discovered by the Irish poet William Butler Yeats (1865-1939) in part to disseminate French Symbolism. However, because of his belief in science and reason, Zhou deliberately purged Blake's symbolism of its religious and supernatural overtones. Taken together, Zhou's tactical translation and extensive imitation of Blake's poetry produced a modern Chinese poet that is essentially a humanist preoccupied with contemporary issues.

The second chapter concentrates on the rewriting of George Gordon Byron by Wu Mi, who not only composed lengthy poems in ostentatious imitation of Byron's work, but also commissioned his student to translate the same work by Byron. In contrast to the rebellious or sentimental Byron imagined by contemporary Chinese people, Wu Mi, with the assistance of his protégé, portrayed Byron as a self-righteous poet-exile like Qu Yuan 屈原 (c. 340-278 BC) and Du Fu 杜甫 (712-770), who were paragons of moral virtue and poetic attainment in pre-modern China. In order to invigorate, or rather legitimize, classical Chinese poetry in modern China, Wu Mi further contended that his documentation of his quasi-exiles in the classical verse form resembles Byron's record of his self-inflicted exile in the existing Spenserian stanza. Wu's rewritings surrounding Byron's work, however, painted the British Romantic as one complimentary about Confucian political ideals and moral doctrines and as one critical of the romantic traits condemned by Wu's mentor Irving Babbitt (1865-1933). By appealing to Byron's authority, Wu Mi intended to modernize classical Chinese poetics and induce his audience to embrace China's cultural traditions and Babbitt's New Humanism.

The third chapter revolves around Guo Moruo's approach to Percy Bysshe Shelley, who, this study argues, laid the foundations of Guo's poetics and provided the inspiration for Guo's poetry. Guo passionately identified

himself with Shelley when he translated Shelley's lyric poems, but he never cared to admit his debt to Shelley's poetry and poetics. However, Guo's inspirational view of poetry, always expressed in Shelley's tropes and terms, is an unmistakable borrowing from Shelley. Guo's other borrowings, e.g. a generalized definition of poetry, the valorization of the poet, a two-fold function of poetry, an interpretive view of translating poetry, and an emphasis on the social effect of drama, though stealthy, also left indelible traces of Shelley's theory. Profiting from Shelley's poetics and poetry, Guo experimented with choral poetry, the technique of personification, flexible verse forms, and dramatic adaptations of Chinese myths and legends, which empowered him to write poems of both aesthetic appeal and political significance, be it nonresistant, feminist, or socialist. Guo's Shelley-inspired vision of a modern Chinese poet is effectively an inspired poet-creator actively involved in the revolutionary changes of the world.

The final chapter inquires into Wen Yiduo's fascination with John Keats, who guided Wen to an aesthetic line of modern Chinese poetry in an age when most Chinese intellectuals were inclined toward the utilitarian function of literature. Cognizant of the Victorian and Imagist cult of Keats, Wen appointed himself to disseminate Keatsian aesthetic values, though he could hardly rid himself of the burden of cultural nationalism. Even as he modelled himself on Keats, Wen was anxious to find Chinese predecessors comparable to Keats and to invent images of a Keatsian poet-martyr anchored in Chinese culture. Bearing in mind the first two stages of Keats's conception of beauty, Wen meticulously imitated Keats's verbal painting of objects, lavish use of colors, and imagination of the world of the past. Wen assimilated many passages from Keats's poems, but he was careful to ensure that his expressions, images, and stories were rooted in Chinese culture. Later in his poetic career Wen made the move to present the bleak side of life, which, wittingly or not, coincided with the last stage of poetic beauty envisioned but only cursorily touched upon by Keats.

Chapter One: National Agendas and New Poetics: Zhou Zuoren's Translation and Imitation of William Blake

William Blake's (1857-1827) impact on modern Chinese literature, though not widely recognized, cannot be underestimated, if one considers that Zhou Zuoren's 周作人 (1885-1867) seminal essay "Ren de wenxue" 人的文学 [Humane literature], "the most important manifesto on the reform of the content of [Chinese new] literature"⁵ (Hu Shi, Daoyan 29), relies heavily on a passage from Blake to support the gist of its argument. Zhou's choice of Blake's passage is by no means unintentional, for he also foregrounded the same excerpt from *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (hereafter *Marriage*) on two other occasions, i.e. *Ouzhou wenxue shi* 欧洲文学史 [History of European literature] (168) and "Ai de chengnian" 爱的成年 [Love's coming-of-age] (Zhong Shuhe 2: 66). As the first to introduce Blake to the Chinese audience, Zhou summed up his reading of the British Romantic in the essay "Yingguo shiren Bolaike de sixiang" 英国诗人勃来克的思想 [Thought of the English poet Blake], which, when anthologized in 1931, was retitled "Bolaike de shi" 勃来克的诗 [Blake's poetry]. The change of title certainly shows the shift in Zhou's focus, but it also reveals that both the thought and poetry of Blake hold the clue to Zhou's penchant for the English poet.

The essay in question contains many of Blake's poems rendered into Chinese for the first time, including stanzas from "Auguries of Innocence", "The Little Boy Lost", two versions of "To My Myrtle", lines from "The Little Girl Lost", stanzas from "Gnomic Verses", and "Thou Hast a Lap Full of Seed". Zhou Zuoren's liking for Blake is also manifested in many other of his works written in the late 1910s and early 1920s: "Ribin jin sanshinian xiaoshuo zhi fada" 日本近三十年小说之发达 [The development of Japanese novels in the past thirty years], "Shanzhong zaxin er" 山中杂信二 [Miscellaneous letters from the mountain residence II], "Shanzhong zaxin si" 山中杂信四 [Miscellaneous letters from the mountain residence IV], "Shiren Xilie de bainianji" 诗人席

⁵ All translations from Chinese and Japanese sources are done by myself, unless otherwise indicated.

烈的百年忌 [Centenary of the death of the poet Shelley], “Shenme shi budaode de wenxue” 什么是不道德的文学 [What is immoral literature], “Yutian de shu xu er” 《雨天的书》序二 [Second preface to *Book Written on Rainy Days*], and “Chuanqun yu bu chuanqun” 穿裙与不穿裙 [Dressing skirts and not dressing skirts]. Zhou’s lasting attachment to Blake is evidenced by his reference to the English poet in his essay “Yukuai de gongzuo” 愉快的工作 [A satisfying job] written just a few years before his death.

Zhou Zuoren’s fascination with William Blake raises an intriguing question as to why he felt the need to import Blake, more than any other English Romantics, such as Byron, Wordsworth, or Shelley, who were more well-known and popular in both China and the West at that time. To put it simply, what is it in Blake’s thought and poetry that captured Zhou’s imagination? Furthermore, and pertinent to this question, what are the foreign sources that informed Zhou’s approach to Blake, and how did Zhou come to terms with his foreign material? One is also tempted to ask, given Zhou’s passion for Blake’s poetry, if Blake’s poetic works had any bearing on Zhou’s poetic endeavor. Most of the existing scholarship on Zhou Zuoren, however, seems to neglect his keen interest in Blake’s thought and poetry. Qian Liqun’s celebrated biography of Zhou Zuoren, for example, performs an admirable reassessment of Zhou’s standing in modern Chinese literature but does not attempt to explore the role of Blake in Zhou’s poetic career and intellectual development. Haoming Liu’s meritorious article on Zhou’s “romanticist impulses” around 1920, perhaps the only study that discerns Blake’s stamp on Zhou’s poetic endeavor, calls attention to Zhou’s debt to Blake’s symbolism and Blake’s treatment of such themes as children and mysticism. However, confining his findings to a limited number of Zhou’s poems, Liu does not delve deeper into Zhou’s appropriation of Blake’s poetry and its wider implications for modern Chinese poetry. Still less explored by Liu is Zhou’s translation of Blake’s poems and Zhou’s utilization of foreign writings on Blake.

THE ISSUE OF GENDER

Gender is an issue that haunted Chinese intellectuals of late imperial and early republican eras, since they

tended to see “gender hierarchy and gender division” as indicative of “colonial cultural hierarchy” (Zhu 160). New Culture radicals further ascribed most of China’s problems to the traditional Confucian family ideal, which, they contended, prevented Chinese people from devoting themselves to society and suppressed the healthy growth of young people (Glosser 120-144). As one concerned with China’s future, Zhou Zuoren was naturally preoccupied with the issue of gender, producing two essays arguing for women’s suffrage as early as 1907, i.e. “Funü xuanjuquan wenti” 妇女选举权问题 [The question of women’s suffrage] and “Funü xuanjuquan wenti xu” 妇女选举权问题续 [A sequel to the question of women’s suffrage] (Zhong Shuhe 1: 55-61). Endorsing sexuality, free love, and women’s emancipation, Zhou became even more vocal during the New Culture Movement and proposed a number of remedies for the traditional patriarchal institution. Blake features prominently in Zhou’s gender agenda, as evidenced by Zhou’s employment of Blake’s words to advocate a “humane literature”, which places a high value on “the love between the two sexes” (Zhong Shuhe 2: 90). An insightful analysis of Zhou’s approach to Blake’s thought and poetry warrants close scrutiny of Zhou’s appropriation of the British Romantic’s supposed teachings on the issue of gender.

Blake and Sex

Blake lived in obscurity for the better part of his life and was often considered insane by his contemporaries. He was saved from oblivion after his death largely due to the efforts of Alexander Gilchrist (1828-1861), Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882), William Michael Rossetti (1829-1919), Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837-1909), Edwin John Ellis (1848-1916), and William Butler Yeats (1865-1939), who helped to shape Blake’s reputation in the second half of the nineteenth century. Critics up to the mid-nineteenth century deemed Blake a mystic, a madman, and a seer, a view that persisted down to later periods (Dorfman 34-36). However, Gilchrist’s biography of Blake presented a moralistic image of the poet as an innocent child “who grew into the unworldly artist, devoted husband and kindly father-figure to his disciples” (Ward 19). The Rossettis,

after the sudden death of Gilchrist, assisted Gilchrist's wife in finishing his incomplete biography of Blake and saw Blake as "a Pre-Raphaelite artist-poet, medieval, sensuous, and spiritual" (Dorfman 6). Swinburne's *William Blake: A Critical Essay*, a review of Blake's life and works, interpreted Blake as "a rebel artist" (Dorfman 90) and "prophet of sexual liberation" (Ward 19). Ellis and Yeats compiled the comprehensive three-volume *The Works of William Blake* and conducted the first extensive study of Blake's complex symbolic system.

The eighteenth-century British Enlightenment prompted a "growing interest in women as distinct and influential social members" (O'Brien 1), and in the end of the century, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, Mary Wollstonecraft's (1759-1797) pioneering work arguing for women's fundamental rights, exerted considerable influence on people's thoughts on women and sexuality. Blake displayed a strong interest in sexuality in most of his works, and his knowledge of Wollstonecraft's views probably stimulated his bold presentation of "the state of the relations between the sexes" in *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* (Beer 45). Blake's attitudes towards sexuality or gender relations can be grouped into four sets: the first set celebrates sexual life and criticizes its repression; corollary to that, the second set portrays sexuality as the two sexes' complementarity and interdependency; the third set depicts sexual love as confinement rather than liberation; and as a corollary, the fourth set conceives of women's subordination to men (Ostriker). Average readers of Blake are generally most familiar with his advocacy of sexuality but may not be aware of the second set of his attitudes mainly expressed in his mystical prophecies. The last two sets of Blake's views are inconsistent with the first two sets, and the fourth set's conception of women's subordinate role shows that Blake was not immune to "the prejudices of his contemporaries" (Beer 51). Nevertheless, despite the complexity and contradictions inherent in Blake's conception of sexuality, his championing of sexual love was taken up by apostles of free love like Swinburne in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Advocates of free love in the late Victorian and Edwardian eras condemned the double standard of Victorian morality that demands chastity only on the women's part and the "institution of marriage" that represses women's sexual desire (Robb). They called for, among others, "unfettered sexuality" and "free love over traditional marriage" (Robb 590, 593). Blake became of a favorite of free love advocates because of his supposed

espousal of sexuality and his assumed attacks on its repression by Church and State. Swinburne, a disciple of free love, was the first to read Blake as a preacher of sexual freedom and to highlight the poet's animosity toward ascetic laws and organized religion (122-184, 300). Echoing Swinburne, Irene Langridge (dates unknown) noted Blake's insistence on "the doctrine of free love" (11) in his poetry, and P. Berger (dates unknown) delineated Blake's embrace of free love and his disapproval of Christian virtues and marriage laws in the works written in his thirties (184-190). In brief, Blake's work demonstrates his complicated and sometimes inconsistent thinking on the issue of sexuality, but because of their own political agenda, proponents of free love tended to focus on Blake as the forerunner of sexual liberation.

Blake's writings were introduced to Japan in the last decade of the nineteenth century, but his most devoted Japanese admirers were a group of writers surrounding the magazine *Shira kaba* 白樺 [White birch], which published a series of essays explicating Blake's writings and ideas in 1914 (Sangu Makoto 169-193). The most committed disciple of Blake in this group was Yanagi Sōetsu 柳宗悦 (1889-1961), whose long essay on Blake highlighted the poet's belief in the unity of body and soul, as summarized in "The Voice of the Devil" from *Marriage* (30-31). Acknowledging his knowledge of Swinburne's reading of Blake, Yanagi not only translated the passage at issue, but also praised Blake's celebration of love and sexuality, as expressed in *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* and "Soft Snow", among others. Riichi リーチ [Bernard Leach] (1887-1979), who introduced Yanagi to Blake by lending him Yeats's version of Blake's works, also published an essay in *White Birch*, underlining Blake's affirmation of sexuality and Blake's faith in the unity of body and soul (462-471). Zhou Zuoren's diary entry records his reading of the Blake issue of *White Birch* in 1914 (Zhou Zuoren 497), but it was not until late 1917, when he became involved in the New Culture Movement and the New Literature Movement, that he started to consciously absorb Blake's thought and poetry.

Reforming Gender Relations in China

Cognizant of the liberating power of Blake's works, Zhou Zuoren, as his diary shows, earnestly purchased anthologies of Blake's poetry and scholarly writings on Blake in 1917 and 1918, including Laurence Housman's (1865-1959) *Selections from the Writings of William Blake*, John Sampson's (1861-1931) *The Poetical Works of William Blake*, Caroline F. E. Spurgeon's (1869-1942) *Mysticism in English Literature*, and Basil de Sélincourt's (1877-1966) *William Blake* (Zhou Zuoren 722, 727, 794, 796).⁶ His earliest observation on Blake, a brief passage summarizing the features and significance of the poet's work, notes Blake's detestation of state and religious repression. Moreover, the passage highlights that Blake offers the best elaboration on the unity of body and soul in "The Voice of the Devil" from *Marriage*. The unity of body and soul, in Zhou's understanding, is the principle of new gender relations in China, since he makes it explicit that the principle entails an affirmation of sexuality, free love, and women's liberation. That is why he translated Blake's defiant propositions in "The Voice of the Devil" three times, though not always in their entirety, namely in *History of European literature*, in "Humane Literature", and in "Love's Coming-of-Age".

The connection between new gender relations in China and the principle of the unity of body and soul is clearly made in Zhou Zuoren's article "Zhencao lun" 贞操论 [On chastity] published in *New Youth* on 15 May 1918. It is a translation of the essay "Teisō wa dōtoku ijiō ni sonkei de aru" 贞操は道德以上に尊貴である [Chastity is nobler than morality] by the Japanese feminist writer Yosano Akiko 与謝野晶子 (1878-1942). The essay argues that chastity should not be forced upon others like morality, in part because chastity is incompatible with the principle of the unity of body and soul. Zhou did the translation, as his note admits, because the call for articles on "the issue of women" in *Xin qingnian* 新青年 [New youth] received scant response. He intends to give Chinese people "a glimpse of the situation of the gender issue", of which the issue of women is "a major issue in need of practical research" (Zhong Shuhe 2: 31). Therefore, to Zhou, chastity or sexuality, the topic of his

⁶ Zhou's diary does not specify that the two collections are compiled respectively by Housman and Sampson. However, because Zhou states that one of the collections is *shixuan* 诗选 [a selection of poetry] (722), it can be deduced that this collection is Housman's version, the only one that bears the word "Selections" in its title by the time of Zhou's purchase. Zhou's actual translations of Blake's poems suggest that the other collection is Sampson's version, which Yanagi Sōetsu counts as the best collection of Blake's works (132). For analysis of Zhou's debt to Sampson, see footnotes 7 and 8.

translation, is part of the issue of women, which, in turn, is part of the issue of gender. Zhou's rendering triggered public sentiments and passionate responses from other major literary figures of the day, including Hu Shi 胡适 (1891-1962) and Lu Xun 鲁迅 (1881-1936), who grasped the gist of Zhou's translation and responded with a fierce attack on the traditional Chinese value of women's chastity (Qian Liqun 216-217).

An unequivocal link between Blake and gender relations in China is established in "Love's Coming-of-Age", which was contributed to *New Youth* on 15 October 1918. The article is a review of *Love's Coming-of-Age*, a monograph by the English free-love exponent Edward Carpenter (1844-1929). It commends Carpenter's affirmation of sexuality and his proposals to achieve women's emancipation. To support Carpenter's endorsement of sexuality, Zhou translated the following passage from Caroline F. E. Spurgeon's *Mysticism in English Literature*, which is Spurgeon's reading of Blake's defense of sexual desire:

Once a man's desire is in the right direction, the more he gratifies it the better;

Abstinence sows sand all over

The ruddy limbs & flaming hair,

But Desire Gratified

Plants fruits of life & beauty there.

Only an extraordinarily pure nature or a singularly abandoned one could confidently proclaim such a dangerous doctrine. But in Blake's creed, as Swinburne has said, "the one thing unclean is the belief in uncleanness." (137)

Spurgeon's passage justifies the gratification of sexual desire by considering it a rewarding experience and dismisses the notion of uncleanness associated with sexuality by giving Swinburne's interpretation of Blake's creed. To underline the detrimental effect of asceticism, Zhou's essay adds the English word "Abstinence" in brackets to his Chinese rendering of the term. The article also pays special attention to women's emancipation, as it explains in detail Carpenter's suggestions for ways of achieving women's independence, freedom, and liberation. It also draws on Ellis's assault on the traditional view of women as "the symbol of sex" and women's

touch as being “contaminating” (Zhong Shuhe 2: 65; Ellis, *New Spirit* 127). It is worth noting that, to affirm sexuality, the second to last paragraph of this article includes a translation of Blake’s exposition of the unity of body and soul in “The Voice of the Devil”.

The relationship between Blake and the principle of the unity of body and soul is fully elucidated in “Humane Literature”, which was published in *New Youth* on 15 December 1918. The essay argues that, because humanity evolves from the animal, man’s life instincts are not different from those of the animal, but man’s inner life may transcend an animal’s life. Zhou considers this dualism the body-soul duality of man’s life. “The bodily element is that which had come down from man’s original animal nature,” whereas “[the] spiritual was seen as the beginning of man’s divine nature” (Zhong Shuhe 2: 87; Zhou 153). Dismissing the emphasis on either of the two aspects at the expense of the other, the essay contends that body and soul are the two facets of one thing. In other words, “[the] animal nature and the divine nature jointly constitute man’s nature” (Zhong Shuhe 2: 87; Zhou 153). Zhou believes that the following passage from Blake’s *Marriage* best explains this unity of body and soul:

1. Man has no Body distinct from his Soul; for that call’d Body is a portion of Soul discern’d by the five Senses.
2. Energy is the only life, and is from the Body; and Reason is the bound or outward circumference of Energy.
3. Energy is Eternal Delight. (Sampson 248)

An ideal life for humanity, as Zhou Zuoren perceives it, features the unity of body and soul, so he proposes a humane literature that might help to usher in such a life. A humane literature, Zhou argues, should be based on human morality, but what captures his interest is the love between the two sexes and that between parents and children. Zhou’s stress on the love between the two sexes shows his consistent concern for the reform of gender relations in China. He advances two propositions: one is equality between men and women, and the other marriage based on love. His examples illustrating the two propositions are all foreign dramas and novels with female protagonists. He asserts that “True love and the life of the two sexes has therefore also this unison of the spiritual and the physical” (Zhong Shuhe 2: 90; Zhou 157). He condemns any doctrine of love that deviates

from this principle, be it ancient Chinese pornographic literature, old Christian asceticism, or the custom of forcing a woman to die or maintain chastity after her husband's death in India and China.

Translating Blake's Conception of Gender Relations

Zhou Zuoren's appropriation of Blake's conception of gender relations culminates in his essay "Blake's Poetry", which, capitalizing on a wide range of foreign sources, summarizes what Zhou cherishes most in Blake. A significant portion of "Blake's Poetry" comes from Spurgeon's *Mysticism in English Literature*, in the form of translation and paraphrase, though not always acknowledged. Focusing on mysticism in English literature, Spurgeon delineates English writers who have the roots of their innermost principle in mysticism or whose work is imbued with mystical thought, including Blake (11-12). Spurgeon's exposition covers various aspects of Blake, including his mystical thought, his use of symbolism, and his stress on imagination. Zhou's extract from Spurgeon, however, lays an emphasis on Blake's affirmation of sexuality. Considering Zhou's agenda for gender relations, his choice of the extract is by no means accidental.

A deliberate manipulation can be discerned from Zhou Zuoren's translation of Spurgeon's sentences dealing with love or desire. Spurgeon's original English text, Zhou's Chinese translation, and the back translation of Zhou's rendering are compared as follows.

In Blake's view the qualities most sorely needed by men are not restraint and discipline, obedience or a sense of duty, but love and understanding. "Men are admitted into heaven, not because they have curbed and governed their passions, or have no passions, but because they have cultivated their understandings." (135-136)

在勃来克看来，人类最切要的性质，并非节制约束，服从或义务，乃是在爱与理解。他说，“人被许可入天国去，并不因为他们能检束他们的情欲，或没有情欲，但是他们能培养他们的理解的缘故。” (Zhong Shuhe 2: 221)

[In Blake's view, men's most important qualities are not temperance, discipline, obedience, or [a sense of] duty, but love and understanding. He said, "Men are allowed to enter heaven, not because they can control their sexual desire, or have no sexual desire, but because they can cultivate their understandings.]

Zhou's manipulation centers on the translation of a quote in Spurgeon's passage. Zhou not only adds *Ta shuo* 他说 [He said] to the beginning of the quote, but also renders two "passions" in the quote both as *qingyu* 情欲 [sexual desire]. Spurgeon does not identify the source or the speaker of the quote, so the reader, without prior knowledge, cannot deduce who the speaker is. Zhou's addition of *Ta shuo* 他说 [He said] indicates that he wants to call the reader's attention to the speaker of the quote, i.e. Blake. Zhou's intention becomes apparent when the term *qingyu* 情欲 [sexual desire] in his translated text is checked against the word "passions" in Spurgeon's source text. The English word "passions" may refer to "any strong, controlling, or overpowering emotion", such as "desire, hate, [and] fear", not necessarily sexual desire ("Passion"). Zhou's translation, however, pinpoints its meaning to "sexual desire", an alteration suggestive of Zhou's intent to associate Blake's words with the issue of sexuality. Following Zhou's rendering of the term, the reader naturally deduces that the speaker of the quote does not view sexual desire as something to be controlled. The reader would have no difficulty in perceiving Blake's endorsement of sexuality, since Zhou has already added *Ta shuo* 他说 [He said] to reveal the quote's speaker being Blake.

Zhou Zuoren's adding of *Ta shuo* 他说 [He said] might be seen as his attempt to clarify the source of the quote, and his distortion of the meaning of "passions" might be excused on account of his misreading. However, Zhou's translation of Spurgeon's other sentences suggests that, where necessary, he is ready to make bolder changes to underscore Blake's advocacy of sexuality. The example below shows how Zhou omits certain words to achieve his purpose.

What mattered to Blake, and the only thing that mattered, was the purity of his soul, the direction of his will or desire, as Law and Boehme would have put it. (136-137)

勃来克所最重的，只是心的洁净，便是劳（Law）与贝美（Boehme）二人所说的欲求的方向。

(Zhong Shuhe 2: 221)

[What matters most to Blake was only the purity of heart, that is, as Law and Boehme put it, the direction of desire.]

There are two possessive pronouns “his” respectively before “soul” and “will or desire” in Spurgeon’s original text. The possessive pronouns serve to indicate that, in Spurgeon’s view, Blake was concerned with his own soul, will, or desire, rather than that of anyone else. However, by omitting the two possessive pronouns, Zhou’s translation comes to indicate that Blake was concerned with the affairs of humanity in general, which certainly has wider implications. Zhou’s omission of possessive pronouns here is by no means accidental. His treatment of possessive pronouns in the previous example shows that he is well aware of their importance to the meaning of a sentence. Zhou retained the two possessive pronouns “their” in his rendering of the quote in the previous example, even if the retention makes his translation sound slightly awkward in Chinese. A more striking change made by Zhou is his deletion of “will or” in his translated sentence. Spurgeon gives equal weight to “will” and “desire”, but by deleting “will or” Zhou places the emphasis solely on “desire”. Zhou’s translation accordingly conveys the unmistakable idea that Blake was most interested in the issue of sexuality.

Zhou Zuoren’s manipulation is manifested not only in his appropriation of Spurgeon’s text but also in his choice of Blake’s poems to translate. Ruling out Blake’s “most well-known poems” as “not easy to translate” (Zhong Shuhe 2: 223), Zhou proceeds to translate two of Blake’s poems on the theme of free love, i.e. “To my Myrtle” and “Soft Snow”. He also takes great pains to see to it that the reader gets the gist of Blake’s poems. The following is “To my Myrtle” by Blake.

To a lovely Myrtle bound,
Blossoms show’ring all around,
O how sick and weary I
Underneath my Myrtle lie!
Why should I be bound to thee,
O my lovely Myrtle-tree? (Sampson 119)

Zhou's translation closely follows Blake's wording and needs not be reproduced here. To an average reader of either Blake's original or Zhou's translation, the poem expresses the narrator's frustration of being bound to a lovely myrtle. Without prior knowledge, a reader may not see the myrtle as a person with whom the narrator is in love. To facilitate the reader's understanding of the poem, Zhou takes the trouble to translate Blake's draft of the poem in its entirety.⁷

What immediately arrests the reader's attention in Zhou Zuoren's translation of Blake's draft poem is its third line, which is much longer than other lines because of its commas and dashes. It naturally draws the reader's attention to the term between the punctuations, i.e. *ziyoude lianai* 自由的恋爱 [free love], which communicates the unequivocal idea that Blake's draft poem is an advocacy of free love. The narrator's resentment at being bound to a feminine myrtle, therefore, becomes a protest against a fixed relationship. Since Blake's final version is a re-arrangement of lines selected from the draft, his final version can also be read as his espousal of free love, even though the term "free love" does not appear in the final version. Zhou's comment on the two versions also encourages such a reading. After praising Blake's ingenuity in trimming his poem, Zhou claims that "To my Myrtle" is Blake's declaration of free love (Zhong Shuhe 2: 224).

To further illustrate Blake's support for free love, Zhou Zuoren then translates Blake's following poem "Soft Snow":

I walked abroad on a snowy day:
I ask'd the soft Snow with me to play:
She play'd and she melted in all her prime;
And the Winter call'd it a dreadful crime. (Sampson 195)

The first three lines of Blake's quatrain are about the narrator's play with a feminine character Soft Snow and the death of Soft Snow. The closing line is an abrupt accusation of the narrator's play with Soft Snow or Soft Snow's play and demise by an authoritative character Winter. Zhou's translation follows the phraseology of the original

⁷ As John Sampson notes, all other collections of Blake's works retain the deleted lines 3 and 4 of Blake's poem and print the poem as two quatrains (119). Zhou's translation of Blake's poem and its draft reveals that he made use of Sampson's collection of Blake's works.

closely and needs not be reproduced here. However, without additional information, a reader may not be able to associate the poem with the theme of love or work out the figurative meaning of the word “it” in the final line.

To assist the reader with the grasp of “Soft Snow”, Zhou Zuoren translates Blake’s draft of the closing line: “Oh, that sweet love should be thought a crime!” (Sampson 195).⁸ This lucid draft line unmistakably conveys that love is seen as crime, and the modal verb “should” expresses Blake’s revolt against the charge. The draft line makes clear that the word “it” in the final line of “Soft Snow” refers to “sweet love”. It follows that the first three lines of “Soft Snow” can be interpreted as two lovers’ embrace of love or a woman’s indulgence in love in the prime of her life. The tyrannical Winter in the last line, therefore, becomes the external forces, be they institutions or conventions, that forbid the lovers’ or the woman’s pursuit of love. Rather than elaborating on the draft line of “Soft Snow”, Zhou Zuoren informs the reader of a similar view expressed in the introductory quatrain to “A Little Girl Lost” by Blake. It is a prophecy of what future children will learn from a furious poem, that is, as Zhou’s translated closing line suggests, “Sweet love was thought a crime” (Sampson 224). It parallels the draft line of “Soft Snow”, thereby reiterating Blake’s indignation at the criminalization of love. Zhou’s translation is, therefore, an appeal to the Chinese reader to confront similar repressive forces that criminalize free love in the contemporary Chinese context.

Love Poems and Gender Relations

Zhou Zuoren’s translation of Blake’s conception of gender relations is clearly informed by his concern for the issue of gender in China. However, produced against the backdrop of China’s new poetry movement, it is also intended to lend weight to his agenda for China’s new poetics. In particular, Zhou demonstrates that Blake’s poetry on gender is of relevance to one specific type of new poetry, i.e. love poems. Before examining Zhou’s

⁸ Sampson gives the draft line of “Soft Snow” in its note and invites the reader to compare it with the introductory quatrain of “A Little Girl Lost” (195). Zhou’s translation of the draft line and the introductory quatrain in question is therefore inspired by Sampson’s note. It also confirms that Zhou utilized Sampson’s collection of Blake’s works.

promotion of love poems, it is necessary to summarize a momentous event that prompted Zhou's reflections on this type of poetry. In August 1922, Wang Jingzhi 汪静之 (1902-1996), a student of Zhejiang Provincial First Normal School, published an anthology of mostly love poems. Obscure as he was, Wang managed to persuade some senior literary figures to stand for his work. Zhou Zuoren, Zhu Ziqing 朱自清 (1898-1948), Hu Shi, and Liu Yanling 刘延陵 (1894-1988), four established new poets, each contributed a preface to Wang's collection, though Zhou's was not included in the publication. With the support of these luminaries, Wang's anthology became an instant success. However, on 24 October the same year, Hu Menghua 胡梦华 (1903-1983), a student from Dongnan University, voiced his protest against Wang's love poems on suspicion of inciting sexual desire and "immoral behavior" (108), thereby triggering a heated debate over the relationship between arts and morality.

Even before Hu Menghua's criticism, both Hu Shi and Zhou Zuoren had foreseen possible attacks on Wang's love poems on moral grounds. Hu Shi's preface to Wang's anthology surmises that some people may have misgivings about Wang's love poems "on suspicion of immorality" (628), but it cautions readers against such prejudices. Zhou Zuoren, after reading Wang's collection, published an article titled "Qingshi" 情诗 [Love poems] on 12 October 1922. Zhou's essay establishes a link between love poems and sexuality, with the aim of affirming both sexuality and love poems. However, Zhou places the moral attitudes of love poems above their artistic merit. In accordance with such standards, Zhou contends that, even if Wang's love poems are "different in their artistic value", i.e. not of high quality, they should not be criticized "on suspicion of immorality" (Zhong Shuhe 2: 584). Here lies the difference between Zhou's notion of morality and that of Wang's detractors. Zhou sees Wang's celebration of love as a brave move of moral liberation, whereas the detractors consider Wang's unrestrained presentation of love his moral degeradation. Wang's anthology, Zhou continues, should be perceived as "a voice of liberation in the poetry arena" (584). Zhou's term "liberation" here has two senses: one is the advocacy of sexual emancipation and proper gender relations; and the other the writing of love poems as an innovative practice in new poetry.

Soon after Hu Menghua's condemnation of Wang, Zhou responded with an article titled "What Is Immoral

Literature” on 1 November 1922. The article claims that Hu’s accusation of immorality against Wang is based on the description of sexuality in Wang’s love poems. It then raises doubts about making sexuality a taboo subject and asks if words like “kiss” and “embrace” are forbidden in literatures from any part of the world. Zhou answers the question himself by giving examples from literatures around the world, but his reply begins with a pretended concession: “All right, the words of Anglo-American [poets] Blake and Whitman will not be quoted because they are ‘degenerates’” (Zhong Shuhe 2: 792). Zhou certainly does not view Blake and Walt Whitman (1819-1892) as degenerate poets, since his statement takes an impatient concessive tone and the quotation marks placed around degenerates give a hint of negation and sarcasm. Zhou’s pretended concession suggests that Blake and Whitman are better, if more radical, examples of poets expressing sexuality.

In response to the connection between Wang’s poetry and pornography made by some critics, Zhou Zuoren’s article implies that such an association springs from their own impure thoughts, i.e. their hypocritical concealment of sexual desire. Zhou indicates that only those who have unclean thoughts would think love poems immoral. To illustrate this point, Zhou quotes Swinburne’s reading of Blake’s creed: “the one thing unclean is the belief in uncleanness” (Zhong Shuhe 2: 793). It is significant that these words of Swinburne’s come from Spurgeon’s passage on Blake’s endorsement of sexuality, which had twice been translated by Zhou, first in an essay arguing for sexuality and women’s emancipation and then in “Blake’s Poetry”.

Zhou Zuoren’s reference to Blake in defense of love poems echoes his earlier appropriation of Blake’s ideas and poetry. It shows that, to Zhou, writing love poems was relevant to his agenda for gender relations in China. Before the controversy over Wang’s love poems in late 1922, Zhou produced no love poems. However, in the year following the controversy, he suddenly composed a number of love poems. His postscript to his first two love poems reveals the motivation behind his endeavor:

I have always supported the writing of love poems by young people, but this is the first time that I wrote love poems. I’m not afraid of being criticized by moralists “on suspicion of immorality”, though I’m a little worried that [my love poems] may be included in the love poem anthologies of the profiteers in Shanghai. However, since I have seen words in my defense, there is no harm in copying them here.

[Havelock] Ellis once said in “On Casanova”, “It is a very ancient observation: the least chaste poems are written by the chastest poets; those who wrote the cleanest [poems] are the least clean in their life.” I think at least the second half of the statement is always correct. (Wang Zhongsan 393; Ellis, *Affirmations* 115-116)

The postscript expresses Zhou Zuoren’s support for the composition of love poems, defying accusation of its “immorality”. Because “on suspicion of immorality” is a key term in the controversy over love poems, it is clear that Zhou is making a reference to that controversy. Zhou’s words also reveal that his love poems were in large measure prompted by the debate. The second part of the postscript defends the writing of love poetry by citing Havelock Ellis. The translated quote indicates that a poet’s or a person’s chastity or cleanness is often the opposite to that of his or her poems or words. It follows that the unclean and immoral ones are the moralists condemning love poems, rather than the poets producing such poems. Zhou’s quote from Ellis also makes a connection between chastity and love poems, which reminds one of Zhou’s association of sexuality and gender relations with love poems. Therefore, Zhou’s attempt at writing love poems is not only an espousal of their composition, but also an effort to disseminate his views on gender relations.

Zhou Zuoren places an emphasis on the truthfulness of the second half of Ellis’s statement, which is a satire on self-proclaimed moral guardians, whose attack on love poems proves nothing but their own uncleanness. To Zhou, such people are those who, because of their own unclean lives, hold beliefs about the uncleanness of love poems and hypocritically censor the writing of love poems. Zhou’s implicit judgement on these moralists is redolent of his understanding of Blake’s creed that “the one thing unclean is the belief in uncleanness”. The resemblance between Ellis’s statement and Blake’s supposed creed further corroborates that Zhou’s presentation of Blake is informed by his agenda for both love poems and gender relations.

Zhou Zuoren’s first two love poems, i.e. “They” 她们 [They] and 高楼 [A tall building], are confessions of his unrequited love in his youthful years. Considering the postscript, the two poems’ description of youth and love is a clear endorsement of the young poet Wang Jingzhi’s writing of love poems. The stamp of Blake’s poems, in particular, can be found in “A Tall Building”. The following are “A Tall Building” and its translation.

那高楼上的半年，	[During the half year in the tall building,
她给我的多少烦恼。	She caused me so many sorrows.
只如无心的春风，	Like the unwitting spring wind
吹过一棵青青的小草，	Blowing over the green grass,
她飘然的过去了，	She gracefully passed by.
却吹开了我的花朵。	But her blow opened my flower.
我不怨她的无情，——	I don't complain of her indifference –
长怀抱着她那神秘的痴笑。	I will always cherish her mystical and innocent smiles.]

(*Guoqude shengming* 94-95)

There is no single model for this poem, but Zhou's trope, image, and expression show traces of Blake's influence. Zhou's second and third couplets compare the subtle influence of love to "the unwitting spring wind". The wind trope brings to mind Blake's simile in *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*: "I cry: Love! Love! Love! happy happy Love! free as the mountain wind!" (Sampson 291), which, as both Yanagi Sōetsu (40) and Basil de Sélincourt (49) note, is Blake's eulogy of love. Similar wind tropes are employed in many other of Blake's poems, for example in "Fair Elenor" Blake writes: "My lord was like the opening eyes of day / When western winds creep softly o'er the flowers" (Sampson 7). The "western winds" is, like Zhou's "unwitting spring wind", indicative of the intangible influence of love. Zhou was likely to be familiar with Blake's lines, since they were quoted by Laurence Housman in his introduction to his collection of Blake's works (xii). The third couplet of "A Tall Building" likens the awakening of Zhou's consciousness of love to the flower blown open by the spring wind. It evokes an image akin to the one presented by Blake's words "western winds creep softly o'er the flowers", given that the mildest spring wind in China is equivalent to the gentlest west wind in England. The adjective *shenmide* 神秘的 [mystical] in the last line of "A Tall Building" also shows the impression of Blake. Both Yanagi and Spurgeon, two major sources of Zhou's knowledge of Blake, examine Blake's mysticism in great detail. Zhou's own references to Blake almost always note that the English poet was a mystic, and his

pretext for translating “To my Myrtle” and “Soft Snow” is that they contain Blake’s mystical ideas (Zhong Shuhe 2: 223). Moreover, Zhou’s essay “Love Poems” points out the connection between love and mysticism after summarizing Edward Carpenter’s exposition of sexual love (Zhong Shuhe 2: 582). Zhou suggests that mysticism, intrinsic to religion, is also part of love, since the state of a person in love is similar to that of a religious devotee. He further argues that love, coupling, and reproduction, common as they are, are at the same time mystical, to be explored by modern science (Zhong Shuhe 2: 582-583). Zhou’s association of love with mysticism is partly inspired by Edward Carpenter, who foregrounds the inextricable connection between sex worship and religion in the early stages of human history (131-138). Carpenter’s work, with its emphasis on the contrast between inner energy and external constraints, is grounded in Western mystical tradition, and his infatuation with Blake the mystic is duly recognized by later scholarship (Rowbotham 145). Zhou’s review of Carpenter’s work also has the good sense to perceive Carpenter’s debt or connection to Blake’s mysticism. In this sense, Zhou’s use of the term *shenmide* in the love poem “A Tall Building” is informed by his reception of Blake.

While “A Tall Building” is partially influenced by Blake, Zhou Zuoren’s love poem “Hua” 花 [Flowers], also written in 1923, is likely patterned after one specific poem by Blake. “Flowers” and its English translation are as follows.

我爱这百合花，	[I love the lily.
她的香气薰的使人醉了，	Her perfume is intoxicating.
我愿双手捧住了她，	I want to hold her in cupped hands,
便在这里睡了。	And fall asleep right here.
我爱这蔷薇花，	I love the rose.
爱她那酴酒似的滋味，	Her flavor is like the mellow wine.
我便埋头在中间，	I will bury my head in her,
让我就此死罢。 (Guoqude shengming 102-103)	And die an instant death.]

The narrator in “Flowers” compares his lover respectively to the lily and the rose in two parallel stanzas.

He declares his obsession with his lover's charms and his readiness to immerse himself in her companion. Zhou's note to "Flowers" discloses that it was written in imitation of a certain poem, but the note does not reveal the source of his inspiration. Nevertheless, the symbols, structure, and theme of "Flowers" suggest that the following poem "The Lily" by Blake is its likely model:

The modest Rose puts forth a thorn,
The humble Sheep a threat'ning horn;
While the Lily white shall in love delight,
Nor a thorn, nor a threat, stain her beauty bright. (Sampson 98)

Both the Rose and the Lily in Blake's quatrain are symbolic of a maiden in love, and the couplet of the Rose runs parallel to that of the Lily. Blake's poem contrasts two types of attitudes towards love and sexuality, represented respectively by the Rose and the Lily. The Rose, shy to openly acknowledge sexuality, hypocritically affects an appearance of modesty, whereas the Lily, not concealing her delight in love, is truly modest and pure (Hirsch 256-257). "The Lily" is therefore a poem that calls for the bold expression of delight in love and sexuality. The resemblance between "Flowers" and "The Lily" is hardly coincidental, given that Zhou drew heavily on Blake to defend love poems and reform gender relations in China. It is worth noting that Yanagi Sōetsu praises "The Lily" for its profundity and quotes the quatrain in its entirety (24-25). Zhou's knowledge of Yanagi's admiration for "The Lily" must also give him a nudge to appropriate Blake's poem.

THE ISSUE OF CHILDREN

In late Qing period, Chinese intellectuals, e.g. Liang Qichao 梁启超 (1873-1929) and Lin Shu 林纾 (1852-1924), were preoccupied with the issue of children, because they deemed traditional Chinese education inadequate for children's development, which, in turn, would be detrimental to China's struggle in the face of foreign aggression (Bai). Connecting children's growth with China's future, May Fourth intellectuals, especially

Zhou Zuoren and his brother Lu Xun, contributed to “the figure of the child” as “a ubiquitous emblem of the nation and its developmental hopes” (Jones 23). Informed of the late Victorian and Edwardian theory of recapitulationism, Zhou Zuoren contended that the child should be seen as “an autonomous individual” whose development “from infancy to maturity” resembles “the evolutionary progress of civilization” (Jones 24). Zhou was quick to detect Blake’s relevance to his agenda for children, as his earliest remark on Blake highlighted the English poet’s love of children and his poems portraying innocent children (*Ouzhou* 167). To reveal Blake’s significance to Zhou’s agenda for children requires a close examination of Blake’s conception of children, Zhou’s appropriation of foreign sources, and Zhou’s rewriting of Blake’s poetry on children.

Blake’s Conception of Children

In eighteenth-century Britain, many books of songs were produced for children’s moral and religious education, the most influential ones including Isaac Watts’s (1674-1748) *Divine and Moral Songs for Children* and Anna Laetitia Barbauld’s (1743-1825) *Hymns in Prose for Children*. Both Watts’s and Barbauld’s books exerted a significant influence on Blake’s *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience* (Pinto; Hirsch 28-39). The writings of all kinds in the British Romantic period showed a pervasive concern with children’s education (Richardson 2-8), and Blake’s two sets of poems were part of this cultural obsession that characterized the Romantic-era writing in Britain (Glen 8-32). Most critics in the nineteenth century, including Gilchrist, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and Swinburne, stressed the simplicity of those two sets of Blake’s poems and treated them as songs for children or poems of or about childhood (Dorfman 121-134). They also contrasted the innocent world of childhood portrayed in the *Songs of Innocence* and the corrupt world of adulthood presented in the *Songs of Experience*.

Today scholars perceive the metrical sophistication of Blake’s *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience* and the complexity of ideas expressed in the two sets of poems (Hilton 198; Beer 54-56; Glen 110-223). They note that the *Songs of Innocence* was targeted at the “market of parents from the polite classes” (Glen

9) or those interested in “the education of children” (Hilton 198). While there is a close correspondence between the poems in the *Songs of Innocence* and the *Songs of Experience*, the “echoing harmony” in the former changes into the “enigmatic irony” in the later (Glen 165, 166). Blake’s poetic works express his opposition to contemporary methods and technologies for educating children (Richardson 5). Contrary to the straightforward didacticism that prevailed in the children’s books of his day, Blake’s *Songs of Innocence and Experience* is marked by deliberate “inclusiveness and ambiguity” (Glen 110).

There are four major paradigms of representing childhood in the English Romantic period, though different paradigms may merge or co-exist in a specific writer’s work (Richardson 10-18). The environmentalist view, derived from John Locke (1632-1704), sees the child as a blank slate to be formed by experience (11); the organic view, associated with Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), argues that the child is originally innocent but can “be fostered or distorted by socialization” (11); the traditional Christian view considers the child a born sinner “in mortal need of discipline” (11); and the transcendental view perceives the child as “a prophet or angel” (11) superior to the adult. The organic view, in particular, likens the child to “a member of ‘a primitive society’” or “a growing plant” (11). Some twentieth-century scholars consider Blake’s vision of childhood similar to Rousseau’s view of original innocence or a Calvinistic belief that a devil is hidden behind the child’s innocence (20). However, the latest scholarship holds that, to Blake, naïve innocence and experience represent two necessary oppositional states of human existence and should be subsumed into an advanced state of organized innocence (20).

Blake’s attentiveness to children is outlined in Yanagi Sōetsu’s essay “William Blake”, which, published in the April issue of *White Birch* in 1914, underscores Blake’s songs in praise of children’s innocence and Blake’s aversion to the corporal punishment of children (19-49). Zhou Zuoren’s reading of the essay can be deduced from his diary entry that records his perusal of the *White Birch* issue in question (Zhou Zuoren 497). Zhou also profited from Stopford A. Brooke’s (1832-1916) summary of Blake’s ideas and poetry in *English Literature*, which Zhou acquired in June 1914, about two months after his reading of Yanagi’s article. Zhou’s *History of European Literature* accentuates Blake’s “love of poetry, sympathy for living things, and description of ordinary events”,

which “are representative of the new ideas” of the time (167). It is a loose paraphrase of Brooke’s approval of Blake’s “love of animals”, “love of children”, and “poetry of home” (223). Just as Brooke praises Blake’s poems in *Songs of Innocence* as “without rival” in the English language “for [their] simplicity, tenderness, and joy” (223), Zhou’s history celebrates Blake’s *Songs of Innocence* as “an unmatched work” (167) describing the innocence of children. However, Zhou’s history refrains from introducing Blake’s equally well-known *Songs of Experience*, which, in Brooke’s words, “see[s] the evil of the world as a child with a man’s heart would see it” (223). Given Zhou’s belief in the original innocence of children, it may not be a surprise that *Songs of Experience* was absent from Zhou’s history.

The Agenda for China’s Children

Zhou Zuoren showed an intense interest in the issue of children, as he, between 1912 and 1917, conducted extensive research on the topic and frequently purchased Japanese and English writings on children (Liu, “Little Savages” 121-122). The issue of children accordingly occupies a prominent position in Zhou’s writings and translations of the 1910s and the first half of the 1920s. His seminal essay “Humane Literature”, for example, highlights children’s development as one of the two major issues that needs to be addressed. He also published a series of translations of fairy tales in the supplement of *Morning Post* in July, 1923. His writings and translations on children cover a wide range of topics, including family education, fairy tales, games, nursery rhymes, toys, children’s fights, and children’s literature.

As early as 1910 when he was still a student in Tokyo, Zhou Zuoren had written an article introducing H. C. Andersen (1805-1875), the Danish writer of fairy tales. The essay articulates for the first time some of Zhou’s fundamental views on children and children’s literature. It argues that children share the innocence of savages and are therefore fond of fairy tales, the literature of the primitive society (Zhong Shuhe 1: 201). Acknowledging his debt to the English anthropologist Andrews Lang (1844-1912), Zhou made every effort to impart Lang’s ideas of children and children’s literature (1: 256-257, 278; 2: 563-564). Armed with Lang’s evolutionary anthropology,

Zhou sees a parallel between the growth of a child and the development of a civilization (1: 290). Because of the similarity between children and savages in spiritual life, Zhou maintains, children's literature, i.e. nursery rhymes and fairy tales, like the literature of a primitive society, may contain savage or absurd ideas, though it is necessary to provide children with proper literature (2: 274). Zhou's evolutionary view of children's development echoes the organic view of childhood in the English Romantic era. Indeed, Zhou traces the view of children as savages back to Rousseau's educational ideas, which stress compliance with children's natural instincts, and to Friedrich Froebel's (1782-1852) Rousseauian metaphor, which compares the education of a child to the planting of a tree (1: 288-290).

Zhou Zuoren's concern for the issue of children was driven by a barely veiled national agenda. His essay "Ertong wenti zhi chujie" 儿童问题之初解 [An initial exposition of the issue of children], first published in 1912 and then in 1914, clearly states that, because children are future citizens of a nation, the rise and decline of a nation is bound up with its attitudes toward children (Zhong Shuhe 1: 246). It laments the negligence of children and children's education in China and, anxious about China's rejuvenation and transformation, entreats Chinese educators to ponder over the issue of children (247). The connection between children's growth and China's national development is reiterated in many other of Zhou's articles and translations, including "Jiating jiaoyu yilun" 家庭教育一论 [An essay on family education], "Minzhong gailiang zhi jiaoyu" 民种改良之教育 [Eugenic education], and "Ertong yanjiu daoyan" 儿童研究导言 [An introduction to the study of children].

Translating Blake's Conception of Children

Zhou Zuoren's rewriting of Blake's ideas of children is best exemplified in his translation of "The Little Boy Lost" from Blake's *Songs of Innocence*. Blake's poem consists of two stanzas. The first stanza, written in the first person, is a boy's desperate cry for his father's attention. The second stanza, a third-person narrative, describes the distress of the neglected boy. Zhou considers the poem "a pure nursery thyme" (Zhong Shuhe 2:

222) but suggests that it might also be seen as “the cry of a lost soul” (222). Zhou substantiates the second reading by referring to Blake’s corresponding poem titled “The Little Boy Found”, which, he claims, “shows the course of the soul’s return” (222). The meaning of Zhou’s term “soul” here, unclear at first sight, may have to be interpreted in the context of “Blake’s Poetry”, the essay that contains Zhou’s translation of the poem in question.

The first paragraph of “Blake’s Poetry” offers a summary of the ancient philosopher Plotinus’s (204?-270) elucidation of the concept “soul”, which is actually an unacknowledged paraphrase from Spurgeon’s *Mysticism in English Literature* (18-21). Zhou Zuoren’s summary suggests that, to Plotinus,

[T]he universe originates in the One. The One throws out the Mind, and the Mind throws out the Soul, i.e. the Universe Soul. The individual soul proceeds from this [Universe Soul] and splits into three parts: the animal, the logical, and the divinely intellectual. Only because the [individual] soul is clogged with external constraints and forgets its origin, [its three parts] gradually detach themselves from each other ... To get rid of [loneliness, the source of all misfortunes], [one] must ... be restored to unity with the Universe Soul and return to the One. (Zhong Shuhe 2: 220)

Zhou’s exposition, however, distorts Spurgeon’s version of Plotinus. To Spurgeon’s Plotinus, the One is “the Heart of God” (19), and the Mind is “God as thought” (19). To return to the One, therefore, is to be in “union with God” (20). Zhou’s paraphrase secretly removes the religious elements immanent in Spurgeon’s exposition of Plotinus. By ruling out religious undertones, Zhou makes the One the abstract concept of Taoist classics. His passage comes to indicate that one must unify the three parts of the individual soul in order to be one with an abstract Universe Soul and live a desirable life, a view, Zhou asserts, shared by Blake. Accordingly, “The Little Boy Lost” becomes an allegory of an individual soul that lost its way to union with the Universe Soul. Because the key to the individual soul’s return lies in the unity of its three parts, one must, Zhou implies, strive to unify the animal, the logical, and the divinely intellectual parts of the soul.

Zhou’s emphasis on the unity of the three parts of the individual soul reminds one of his belief in the animal-divine duality of man’s nature and his argument for the unity of body and soul best illustrated by Blake’s words. The discrepancy between Zhou’s two explanations for Blake’s view is the added logical human part of an

individual soul. Nevertheless, what remains unchanged is a belief in the unity of a descending aspect and an ascending aspect in the ideal state of humanity. This belief is at the core of Zhou's "humane literature", which gives prominence to the issue of gender and the issue of children. In this sense, Zhou's translation of "The Little Boy Lost" is related, albeit indirectly, to his concern for the issue of children in China.

The above analysis reveals what might lurk behind Zhou's second reading of "The Little Boy Lost". However, an average reader is not likely to delve so deeply into Zhou's second reading of the poem. The reader is more likely to be content with following Zhou's first reading of the poem as a nursery rhyme and discerning the literal meaning of the translated poem, which is more directly related to Zhou's agenda for children. Zhou's changes to Blake's poem in the process of translation also encourage readers to take the poem as a nursery rhyme. Blake's original poem, Zhou's translation, and my back translation are as follows.

'Father! father! where are you going?

O do not walk so fast.

Speak, father, speak to your little boy,

Or else I shall be lost.'

The night was dark, no father was there;

The child was wet with dew;

The mire was deep, and the child did weep,

And away the vapour flew. (Sampson 79)

“父亲，父亲，你到哪里去？

你不要走的那样快。

父亲你说，对你的小孩说！

不然我快要迷失了。”

夜色黑暗，也没有父亲；

小孩著露湿透了；

['Father, father, where are you going?

Do not walk so fast.

Father, you speak, speak to your child!

Or else I will soon be lost.'

The night was dark, and there was no father;

The little child was wet through with dew;

泥泞很深；小孩哭了。

The mire was deep; the little child cried.

水气四面飞散了。(Zhong Shuhe 2: 222)

The vapor flew away.]

“The Little Boy Lost” may be seen as an allegory of the relationship between God and humanity or a description of the father-son relationship (Benziman 73). Zhou’s explanation for the poem gives no hint of the relationship between God and humanity. Considering Zhou’s removal of religious undertones from Spurgeon’s exposition of Plotinus, his failure to mention the allegorical reading must be a conscious choice. This also explains why Zhou did not translate “The Little Boy Found”, in which God appears as the boy’s father and leads him to his mother. Yet Zhou does not confine the poem to the reading of a father-son relationship. He rendered Blake’s gender-specific term “little boy” into the gender-neutral Chinese word *xiaohai* 小孩 [child]. Zhou also made a similar change in his translation of the title of “The Little Boy Found”. Zhou’s change makes the translated poem a portrayal of the parent-child relationship. The little boy’s cry for his father in Blake’s poem becomes a child’s call for the parent’s attention, and the distress of the neglected boy becomes the suffering of a deserted child. Accordingly, the translated poem becomes a depiction of a parent’s neglect of the child.

Parents’ or adults’ disregard for children or failure to attend to children’s needs in the course of their development is a phenomenon Zhou repeatedly criticized in his prose writings. “An Introduction to the Study of Children”, for instance, dismisses the common view that “took children to be miniature adults”, ignoring the different stages of children’s development (Zhong Shuhe 1: 287). “Humane Literature” condemns parents who see children as personal possessions, raise children as they raise livestock, and think they could dictate to children after they reach adulthood (2: 91). Therefore, it is clear that Zhou’s shift of emphasis on the parent-child relationship, by rendering “little boy” into *xiaohai*, is motivated by his agenda for children. Zhou made no secret of his alterations, since he added the English titles of Blake’s poems in the brackets behind the translated Chinese titles. Such an overt manipulation of texts indicates that Zhou was not shy of revealing his intention to raise Chinese readers’ awareness of the issue of children.

A good number of Zhou Zuoren's poems collected in his only anthology of poetry centers on children. Most of them bear traces of influence from Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience* (hereafter *Songs*) with regard to their title, structure, language, imagery, symbols, and motifs. Of Zhou's six poems on children, three share the same title "Xiaohai" 小孩 [A child] and the other three are respectively titled "Jingji" 荆棘 [The thorns], "Erge" 儿歌 [A nursery rhyme], and "Duiyu xiaohai de qidao" 对于小孩的祈祷 [Prayers for children]. Zhou's choice of the same term, i.e. *xiaohai* 小孩 [a child], to title different poems in one anthology is uncommon among Chinese new poets or foreign poets, except for Blake. In Blake's *Songs*, titles like "Nurse's Song", "Holy Thursday", and "The Chimney Sweeper" are all shared by two poems.

The titles of many other poems in the *Songs*, though different, bear striking resemblance to each other. For instance, "The Little Boy Lost", "The Little Boy Found", "The Little Girl Lost", "The Little Girl Found", "A Little Boy Lost", and "A Little Girl Lost". Some of these titles are different only in their choice of articles. They can be seen poems of the same title because articles are often omitted in Chinese translations of English titles, e.g. Zhou's renderings of "The Little Boy Lost" and "The Little Boy Found". Because of Zhou's concern for the issue of children, he prefers the gender-neutral term *xiaohai* to gender-specific expressions like "little boy" and "little girl" and even translated "Little Boy" into *xiaohai*. Seen in this light, these titles are more or less the same, at least to Zhou. The title of Zhou's poem "Prayers for Children", which contains the term *xiaohai*, may be seen as an extension of his imitation of the titles of Blake's poems. The titles of Zhou's two other poems on children also resemble the poems in the *Songs*. Zhou's title "A Nursery Rhyme" is similar to Blake's poem "A Cradle Song". Zhou's "The thorns" is titled in the same way as Blake's "The Blossom" and "The Lily". In brief, similarity between the titles of Zhou's and Blake's poems suggests that Zhou drew his inspiration from Blake's way of titling.

Blake's *Songs* presents two oppositional but necessary states of human existence, i.e. the naïve innocence

of childhood and the harsh experience of adulthood. Zhou Zuoren was familiar with Blake's *Songs* and the two contrasting worlds therein portrayed. Zhou's Rousseauian view of children's original innocence is similar to Blake's idea of naïve innocence. Attentive to children's development, Zhou is cognizant of an adult world in stark contrast with the child's world. Zhou naturally finds a parallel between Blake's and his own understanding of human existence, though he was unaware of Blake's advanced state of organized innocence described in other works. In imitation of Blake Zhou makes a conscious effort to compare the two worlds in his poems concerning children. However, unlike Blake, who often contrasts the two worlds in corresponding poems, Zhou compares the two worlds in the same poems. In fact, apart from those solely devoted to children, all of Zhou's poems related to children seem to feature the coexistence of the worlds of children and adults.

“Suojian” 所见 [The sights], which describes two contrasting sights, can be used to illustrate Zhou Zuoren's perception of the two worlds. One of the two sights is a world of adulthood where one man is enslaved by the other, though the two men share a similar external appearance. The other is the sight of a world of childhood where children have a harmonious relationship with each other, though in their games they play the rider and the horse. The world of adults depicted here is apparently not an ideal one, considering Zhou Zuoren's fierce attack on slavery in “Humane Literature”. After comparing the two worlds portrayed in the poem, the reader would naturally come to wonder what will happen to the children in the second sight when they grow up and whether they could avoid the fate of the adults in the first sight. By presenting two contrasting sights Zhou tempts, it seems, the reader to think over the issue of children or even take measures to facilitate children's development.

In addition to Blake's titling and structuring, Zhou Zuoren also profits from Blake's language and imagery. Zhou's poem “The Thorns”, for instance, tells the story of a weeping child who wants to plant additional thorns around an orchard but was punished by an old man. The poem seems to be deliberately ambiguous: it does not make explicit the reason why the child wants to plant additional thorns; nor does it reveal the relationship between the child and the old man. The term *tianzhong* 添种 [to plant additional] in the poem indicates that,

before the child's attempt to plant thorns, thorns had already been planted around the orchard, presumably to protect the orchard. So the child's endeavor might be an effort to copy the act of others, a naïve way of protecting the orchard, or a combination of both. Yet the child was punished without any inquiries about his intentions and, indeed, before he even planted any thorns. The child's relationship to the old man is open to interpretations. Given the old man's advanced age, he is not likely to be the child's father. He might be the child's elder family member or, more likely, an orchard owner not connected to the child by blood. If so, the poem is a description of a penalty imposed on a child by an adult not attending to the child's ideas. It is also possible to consider the old man a symbol of social conventions. In that case, the poem becomes a portrayal of social conventions that are hostile to children and their needs. In any case, the child's parents are absent. They are also to blame because of their neglect of their child's distress and acquiescence in the punishment of their child. No matter how the poem is interpreted, one thing is for sure – it is a poem decrying child neglect.

Corresponding to "The Thorns" is Blake's poem "A Little Boy Lost" where a child was immolated by the priest for his innocent words. In Blake's first two quatrains, while listening to a sermon, a boy privately asks his father an innocent question that unwittingly challenges the Church's teachings. The boy's naïve but thorny question to the preachment corresponds to the child's hope to plant additional thorns in "The Thorns". Blake's next two quatrains describe the enraged priest's accusation of the boy. It is redolent of the old man's anger at the child in "The Thorns". Blake's last two stanzas are about the punishment inflicted on the little boy. It echoes the old man's beating of the child in Zhou Zuoren's poem. In addition to the narrative structure, some of the images in "The Thorns" may also be indebted to "A Little Boy Lost". Zhou's portrayal of a weeping child who has no voice is similar to the image created by the opening line of Blake's fifth quatrain: "The weeping child could not be heard". The old man in "The Thorns" stripped the child before beating him with thorn twigs. This image is likely to be inspired by Blake's description of the little boy before he was burned: "They stripp'd him to his little shirt". Although the boy's parents do appear in Blake's poem, they did nothing to save their child and may even be, as some suggests, accomplices in the priest's crime against their child, for they might "weep for their son's guilt rather than for his punishment" (Benziman 74). In this sense, the parents in "A Little Boy Lost", like their

counterparts in “The Thorns”, should also take the blame for their child’s suffering. Whereas Blake’s poem denounces the callous institutional religion, Zhou’s poem condemns the uncaring social conventions in China. Nevertheless, both Blake and Zhou deal with the issue of child neglect and attack the forces that repress children’s distinct perspective. Given the close correspondence between “A Little Boy Lost” and “The Thorns”, it may be said that “The Thorns” is a Chinese version of Blake’s story rid of its religious elements.

Some of Zhou Zuoren’s poems on children show the impression of more than one of Blake’s poems. “A child”, composed on 4 May 1921, for example, bears traces of influence from “On Another’s Sorrow” in the *Songs of Innocence* and “The Fly”, “Holy Thursday”, and “The Schoolboy” in the *Songs of Experience*. The first three triplets of “A Child” describe the narrator’s feelings, presumably upon seeing the sufferings of a child: he feels greedy, because being wealthy means he could help the child; he feels angry, so he becomes attracted by various doctrines, because they offer solutions to the child’s plight; and he feels sad, so his heart sheds tears (*Guoqude shengming* 70-71). The triplets are redolent of the first three stanzas of “On Another’s Sorrow”, which suggests that one would “be in sorrow” upon seeing “another’s woe”, “seek for kind relief” upon seeing “another’s grief”, and feel sad upon seeing “a falling tear” (Sampson 78). The emphasis of Blake’s stanzas is also the misfortune of the child, since he proceeds to state that a father would feel sad upon seeing his child crying and that a mother cannot bear to hear an infant’s groan and fear (78).

The quatrain succeeding the triplets in “A Child” expresses the narrator’s feelings for those who come to the child’s rescue, including the wealthy and those holding different doctrines. It diverges from Blake’s following stanzas in “On Another’s Sorrow”, which portray God as the savior of the child. Considering his disbelief in religion, it is not at all surprising that Zhou Zuoren replaces God with secular people in “A Child”. Zhou’s aversion to religious beliefs also prevents him from imitating the remaining stanzas of Blake’s poem. As a remedy, the second part of “A Child” explores the ways to remove children’s misery in a symbolic manner. It compares children to little flowers and their appalling living conditions to a land of thorns. Zhou’s “little flowers”, as a metaphor for children, however, has its source of inspiration in Blake’s verse lines from “The Schoolboy”. The schoolboy in Blake’s poem likens himself to nipped “buds”, to “blossoms blown away”, and to “tender

plants” stripped of their joy (Sampson 101), all of which offer a ready model for Zhou’s symbol. Zhou’s metaphor for children’s appalling conditions, i.e. a land of thorns, is indebted to Blake’s “Holy Thursday”, which equates a country of many miserable children to “a land of poverty” (93). Blake’s poem further laments that “their fields are bleak and bare” and that “their ways are fill’d with thorns” (93). Zhou’s trope is, therefore, a synthesis of Blake’s extended metaphor.

“A Child” ends with two parallel suppositions to stress Zhou Zuoren’s sense of incapability when confronted with children’s suffering: “If I have a pot! / If I have a hoe!” (*Guoqude shengming* 72). Zhou’s parallel suppositions are clearly modelled after the closing stanza of “The Fly”, as the fly in Blake’s poem claims:

Then am I
A happy fly,
If I live
Or if I die. (85)

Blake’s verse lines express the fly’s nonchalance or helplessness in the face of life’s vicissitudes, whereas Zhou’s imitation shows his feeling of powerlessness when he attempts to relieve children of their grief.

THE ISSUE OF PEACE

It seems a little presumptuous to speak about peace in an age when China’s very survival was threatened, but Chinese intellectuals were not unsusceptible to the horror of the First World War. That is why Zhou Zuoren, after reading an anti-war play by a *White Birch* writer, started to ponder over the issue of peace. Zhou was attracted by the *White Birch* group’s experiment in communal living, which, as a reaction to the Great War, was intended to find a non-violent way to lasting peace. To support this peace initiative, Zhou not only earnestly disseminated its ideals, but also personally visited the place where the group cultivated crops. At the same time, Zhou portrayed Blake as a lover of agricultural peace, a reading that hinges upon some of Blake’s poems employing agricultural metaphors. Zhou’s own poems also profit from Blake’s agricultural symbols, whereas his

prose writings speak in favor of peasants and agriculture. The way Zhou connects his peace initiative with Blake's agricultural metaphors is in need of exploration.

Blake and War

The American Revolution (1765-1783) and the French Revolution (1789-1799) that occurred during Blake's lifetime exerted a significant influence on the English Romantic. Many of Blake's works were responses to the two revolutions. His early prophetic books, i.e. *Tiriel*, *The Book of Thel*, *The French Revolution*, and *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, were prompted by his "revolutionary hopes" (Kovel 10). His continental prophecies, i.e. *America a Prophecy*, *Europe a Prophecy*, and *The Songs of Los*, produced a decade after the ending of the American Revolution, depict "a continental movement of revolutionary energy through an intertwining of biblical and secular history" (Baulch 279). The first two of the continental prophecies, as their titles suggest, deal with America and Europe. The last one has one section on Africa, which is a prequel to *America*, and another section on Asia, which is a sequel to *Europe* and the conclusion of the political revolution. Blake's last three prophetic books, i.e. *Vala, or the Four Zoas*, *Milton*, and *Jerusalem*, are considered "unparalleled as a study of war" (Kovel 9).

It is generally agreed that Blake, like his romantic contemporaries, initially had high hopes for the American and French Revolutions, which promised the fulfillment of the millenarian dream of peace and happiness. However, views diverge as to Blake's attitudes toward wars and revolutions when the revolutionary wars in France turned from hope and change to horror and bloodshed. M. H. Abrams argues that, shocked by the terrors of the French Revolution, Blake, like other major Romantics, began to compose his works "in the later mood of revolutionary disillusionment or despair" (53). By contrast, David V. Erdman contends that Blake remained firm in his commitment to millenarian ideals and clothed his liberal views in a unique symbol system in his later works, often to evade censorship. In his reading of *America*, McCord takes an intermediate stance on Blake's belief. McCord maintains that Blake was sensible of both "the horrors of war" and certain defects of "the

dreams we hold about the millennium” (385). McCord goes on to remark that, in his later works, Blake further expressed his conviction that “revolution is part of a repetitive cycle of tyranny that includes reaction as well as revolt” (390). Baulch’s interpretation of Blake’s vision of revolution seems to be a combination of Erdman and MaCord. Baulch perceives, in *The Songs of Los*, an early prophetic work, “a vision of revolution as eschatological finality” (279) and as the realization of revolutionary ideas. However, Baulch finds in *Jerusalem*, Blake’s last prophetic book, a prospect of revolutionary change, not in “an eschatological narrative”, but as “the glimpse of a potential future freed from ossifying determinations” (284).

Blake lived in a period unprecedented in world history, when Britain underwent the Industrial Revolution (1760-1840). Blake’s description of the sufferings of child labor in the *Songs of Innocence and Experience* shows that he was acutely aware of the negative effects of industrialism. He also associated industrialism with military production. There is a famous term “dark Satanic Mills” in *Milton*, which means “mills that produce dark metal, iron and steel, for diabolic purposes” (Erdman 396). Blake used it as a symbol of London, which “was a war arsenal and the hub of the machinery war” (396).

Embracing the New Village Movement

When the ending of the First World War (1914-1918) seemed imminent in early 1918, Zhou Zuoren became interested in the issue of peace after reading a four-act anti-war play by the *White Birch* writer Saneatsu Mushanokōji 武者小路実篤 (1885-1976). Mushanokōji’s play, produced against the backdrop of the Great War, was intended to provoke the pursuit of peace by exposing the horror and meaninglessness of war. Mindful of the many problems pestering contemporary China, Zhou was not optimistic about Chinese people’s capability to pursue peace. Nevertheless, he wrote down his reflections on Mushanokōji’s play, in the hope of awakening young people to the issue of peace. After the ending of the First World War, Mushanokōji and fellow idealists established *Atarashiki-mura* 新しき村 [New village] on 15 November 1918, experimenting communal living as a

peaceful alternative for changing the world. Convinced that the New Village experiment would lead to a proper life of man and lasting peace among nations, Zhou made every effort to learn about and publicize the New Village in 1919 and 1920: he paid a visit to its headquarters and branches, established its Beijing branch, and wrote many essays to defend its practices and ideals.

The New Village is a practicable ideal, Zhou Zuoren argues, because its communal living ensures both cooperation and individuality (Zhong Shuhe 2: 134). It reflects “the common will of humanity” (135) and proposes a proper life of man that can be achieved in a non-violent way. Zhou quotes extensively from Mushanokōji to explain the motives behind the New Village initiative. His main arguments and reasoning can be summarized as follows. Many people lead an inhuman life because the current world is not always fair and just. Such a world is bound to change in the future. If people are not prepared for the change, the new era will come by way of worldwide violent revolution. To avoid revolution, a proper life of man should be gradually popularized. Such a life means that everyone should work in cooperation with others and have free time to do what they like. Such a life will prove that the interests of different individuals and different nations are all the same. If humanity could live a proper life, social inequality and bloody wars will be eliminated. The New Village, Zhou reiterates, aims to “achieve in a peaceful way what could only be achieved by way of violence in the past” (Zhong Shuhe 2: 181, 202, 212).

Cooperation, comprised of both manual and intellectual work, is one major principle of the New Village’s proper life of man (Zhong Shuhe 2: 196-198). However, partly because agriculture was then the only industry in the New Village, Zhou Zuoren, after his visit there, associated peasants and agriculture, more than any other occupations and industries, with peace. Zhou’s record of his trip to the village dismisses Japanese bureaucrats and politicians as invaders, and considers small traders, craftsmen, and workers as obedient citizens. However, it asserts:

... as for peasants, they love peace ardently. They would be very satisfied with seeing a good harvest in the rice field, without any greed for the land of the whole China or the whole Siberia. (191)

The record also quotes a Russian poet’s favorable description of Japanese peasants:

Once I saw the beauty of peasants toiling in the paddy field, I couldn't help shedding tears. Their attitudes toward both labor and nature are religious. (193)

As if this was not enough, the record further cites a Chinese writer's praise for Japanese peasants:

Only [Japanese] peasants from the countryside are very lovely. Their peaceful disposition, tolerant personality, simple custom, and thrifty habits are not only not different from those of Chinese peasants but also much better than the conventions in the rural areas of Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces in China. (193)

Zhou confirms that his own impression of Japanese peasants was much the same during his visit to the New Village, but he views the peasants of Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces on equal terms with their Japanese counterparts. When he "sees men and women plowing and weeding" (193) in Jiangsu and Zhejiang, Zhou claims, he would often "feel that China has not lost its vitality" (193). Zhou's confidence in Chinese peasants reveals that his association of peasants and agriculture with peace is imbued with his expectations for China.

Translating Blake's Peaceful Agriculture

Blake's reflections on war are mostly expressed in his prophetic books, but most critics in the nineteenth century never ventured into any of Blake's often occult prophecies, except for *Marriage* (Dorfman 190). Although Zhou Zuoren's prose writings sometimes refer to Blake's prophetic books, there is no evidence that he read through any of Blake's prophecies other than the *Marriage* and some bits that appear in his secondary sources. Zhou's interest in *Marriage* was confined to the passage on the unity of body and soul, since he never attempted to link the book with Blake's ideas about war. However, Zhou could confidently claim that Blake "hates war and loves peaceful agriculture" (Zhong Shuhe 2: 225). Zhou's conviction rests on the fourteenth and the fifteenth poems in Blake's "Gnomic Verses", whose motif, Zhou claims, is the same as John Ruskin's (1819-1900) "wish for soldiers guiding plows to replace soldiers carrying swords" (224).

Both Zhou Zuoren's appropriation of "Gnomic Verses" and his reference to Ruskin reveal his debt to Basil de Sélincourt's *William Blake*, which Zhou acquired in December 1918 (*Zhou Zuoren* 812). De Sélincourt

observes:

A few more sentences from other sources complete the outline of Blake's idea of art in this relation. His natural predilection for agricultural and pastoral metaphor makes many of his expressions a singular anticipation of the maturer utterances of Ruskin. Ruskin's "Soldiers of the Ploughshare instead of Soldiers of the Sword" is prettily forestalled by a couplet in *Auguries of Innocence*,

When gold and gems adorn the plough

To peaceful arts shall envy bow.

and with a more poetical elusiveness in the following quatrain:

The sword sang on the barren heath,

The sickle in the fruitful field;

The sword he sang a song of death

But could not make the sickle yield. (143-144)

The passage is part of de Sélincourt's analysis of Blake's "conception of art in its relation to society" (141), of which, in line with the dismissive tone of his book, de Sélincourt thinks poorly. The quoted quatrain, the fourteenth poem of "Gnomic Verses", and the quoted couplet, de Sélincourt argues, have an anti-war motif and anticipate Ruskin's words. However, Blake's agricultural or pastoral metaphors, de Sélincourt maintains, make his expressions of his idea of art to society less mature than Ruskin's utterances.

While de Sélincourt's passage is intended to diminish the significance of Blake's artistic achievements, Zhou Zuoren perceives in it Blake's affirmation of peaceful agriculture (Zhong Shuhe 2: 225). De Sélincourt states that Blake uses agricultural and pastoral metaphors to convey his idea. Therefore, just as the sword is a metaphor for weaponry and war, Zhou hints, the plough and sickle should be symbolic of agricultural tools and peace. It is of interest to note that Zhou contrasts the term "war", not with its usual antonym "peace", but with the phrase "peaceful agriculture". Zhou's choice of the phrase "peaceful agriculture" serves to stress the paramount importance of agriculture in the peace cause. It was not chosen by accident, given that, from early 1918 to the end of 1920, Zhou ardently advocated the New Village and deliberately associated peasants and agriculture with

peace.

The quatrain quoted in de Sélincourt's passage is translated in "Blake's Poetry" to illustrate Blake's love of "peaceful agriculture". The quatrain portrays a struggle between sword and sickle, which symbolizes the conflict between war and peace. Because terms like "sickle" and "field" readily call to mind agriculture, the quatrain may fittingly lend itself to Zhou Zuoren's accentuation of agriculture. However, Zhou did not translate the couplet quoted in de Sélincourt's passage, though it is more closely related to Ruskin's tenor in de Sélincourt's eyes. This is perhaps because the couplet reveals that Blake does not give prominence to agriculture. The first line of the couplet describes the decoration of "the plough" with "gold and gems", which may be read as the worship of peace or agriculture. However, the adverb "When" in the beginning of the line suggests that the emphasis of the couplet is laid on the second line, which highlights "peaceful arts". Put together, the two lines foreground "peaceful arts" rather than "peaceful agriculture". If Zhou's purpose was simply to explain Blake's love for peace, he would have no misgivings about rendering the couplet. It is because of Zhou's agenda for the New Village that, by not translating the couplet, he intentionally underlines the centrality of agriculture in peace.

Driven by his agenda for the New Village, Zhou Zuoren not only omits Blake's couplet in de Sélincourt's passage, but also translates two of Blake's poems not mentioned by de Sélincourt. One of the two is the fifteenth poem in "Gnomic Verses". The following are the original poem, Zhou's translation, and my back translation.

O lapwing! thou fliest around the heath,

Nor seest the net that is spread beneath.

Why dost thou not fly among the corn fields?

They cannot spread nets where a harvest yields. (196)

野鸭呵，你在荒地上飞，

不见下面张著的网。

你为什么不飞到稻田里去？

收成的地方他们不能张网。(225)

[O wild duck! you fly above the heath,

And do not see the net spread beneath.

Why don't you fly to the paddy fields?

They cannot spread nets in the harvest fields.]

Blake's poem cautions a lapwing against flying around the heath, where people set a net to catch it, and advises the bird to fly among the corn fields because nets cannot be spread there. For an average reader, it might not be easy to establish a link between peace and agriculture in the poem. Yet Zhou Zuoren asserts that the poem shares the motif of the fourteenth poem in "Gnomic Verses", i.e. love of peaceful agriculture. Zhou seems to indicate that the fields where the lapwing could fly safely is a symbol of peace. Zhou also induces the reader to reach such a conclusion by placing translations of the two poems from "Gnomic Verses" side by side. However, Zhou's translation replaces "the corn fields" in Blake's poem with the Chinese term *daotian* 稻田 [the paddy fields]. In British English, "corn" refers to "[a] seed of the cereals, as of wheat, rye, barley, etc." ("Corn"). If Zhou intends to stress the centrality of agriculture in peace, "the corn fields" could serve his purpose fairly well. So why did he take the trouble to render "the corn fields" into "the paddy fields"?

The agenda behind Zhou Zuoren's manipulation of the crop name can be discerned from his essay recording his visit to the New Village in Japan, which associates Japanese peasants and agriculture with peace. Zhou's impressions of agriculture and peasants in Japan, the essay suggests, bring to mind the farming scenes he saw in Jiangsu and Zhejiang, China, which often make him feel that the hope of China lies in the poor peasants (Zhong Shuhe 2: 193-194). However, the essay laments that the scene of a man

... lazily growing several *corn plants* in loess soil could not evoke the same feeling, partly because the dull scenery has little poetic flavor and partly because the work is less laborious than toiling in *the paddy fields* (emphasis added). (194)

It shows that, to Zhou, scenes of the corn fields, unlike scenes of the paddy fields common in Jiangsu and Zhejiang, may not help readers to associate agriculture with peace. It now becomes obvious that Zhou's substitution of "the corn fields" with "the paddy fields" is intended to assist readers in making the connection between agriculture and peace, thereby serving his agenda for the New Village Movement.

Alongside the two translated poems in question is Zhou Zuoren's rendering of Blake's two-stanza "Thou Hast a Lap Full of Seed". The first stanza raises a question about the handling of the seed, and the second stanza gives a tentative answer. The reply indicates that the seed owner thinks about casting the seed on the sand because

other grounds are overgrown with weeds. Reading the poem together with Blake's other poems on sexuality, John Beer believes that the poem shows that "Blake was haunted by a sense of human failure and restriction, particularly in sexual relations, of potentialities of fulfilment" (66). Zhou does not give any explanation for the translated poem, but, by placing it alongside Blake's supposed anti-war poems, Zhou apparently sees it as a further proof of the poet's love for peaceful agriculture. However, if Zhou's agenda for the New Village Movement is considered, the poem becomes symbolic of his mixed feelings about the cause of peace.

Uncertain of Chinese people's ability to deal with the issue of peace, Zhou Zuoren had refrained from thinking over the issue for some time. However, after reading Mushanokōji's anti-war play, Zhou felt the need to address the issue, because:

Even if it is futile now, [my effort] could still *sow a seed* for the future; even if, *sown* on a gravel path, *the seed* does not sprout, it could still break through the oppressive status quo, making one feel a little warmth in the cold and lonely life and encouraging him (sic) to live on (emphasis added). (Zhong Shuhe 2: 27)

The passage anticipates Zhou's endorsement of the New Village Movement, which promises to achieve lasting peace in a non-violent way. Zhou was to some extent aware of the utopian nature of the New Village, but he chose to embrace the movement because, at worst, the experiment could "build new moral foundations" (Zhong Shuhe 2: 202) and because other approaches are violent revolutions.

Given Zhou's use of "the seed" as a metaphor for his effort to achieve peace, "the seed" in "Thou Hast a Lap Full of Seed" can be read as the idea of pursuing peace. The question about the handling of the seed in the first stanza is a question about the treatment of the idea of achieving peace. In the second stanza, a reply to the question, the seed owner thinks about casting the seed on the sand because "stinking weed" has to be torn up to sow the seed on other grounds. This is exactly the logic behind Zhou's choice. He opts to promote the New Village movement because other roads to lasting peace entail violent revolutions. However, the reply in the second stanza is less than firm determination as the expression "Shall I" that starts the answer shows that the seed owner is uncertain about the choice. This uncertainty corresponds to Zhou's misgivings about the promotion of the New Village Movement in China. Therefore, the poem as a whole is a fitting allegory of Zhou's advocacy of

the movement in an attempt to address the issue of peace.

Imitating Blake's Agricultural Metaphors

Because of his concern for the issue of peace, Zhou Zuoren composed many poems dedicated to the cause by drawing on Blake's language, symbols, and imagery. One example is "Beiqiang de ren" 背枪的人 [The gun carrier], which describes a gun carrier who helped to maintain public order in the street (*Guoqude Shengming* 13-15). Although the gun carrier is obviously a soldier, throughout the poem, Zhou deliberately avoided the term "soldier", addressing him as "the gun carrier", "our friend", or "our brother". However, in "Jing Feng chezhong" 京奉车中 [In the Train from Beijing to Fengtian], a poem published together with "The Gun Carrier", Zhou has no qualms about calling two fare evaders *bing* 兵 [soldiers]. The fact that "soldier" calls to mind war may account for Zhou's aversion to the word. Zhou thinks highly of the soldier who helped to maintain order and, by calling him a gun carrier, attempts to rid him of his soldier identity.

"The Gun Carrier" contains two lines that show the stamp of Blake: "I hope one 'to sell swords to buy cattle and to sell sabers to buy calves', / Being scared of seeing fierce weapons" (14). "[T]o sell swords to buy cattle and to sell sabers to buy calves", contrasting swords and sabers with cattle and calves, symbolizes the end of war and the beginning of peace. Because cattle are traditionally used to draw plows in agriculture, Zhou's expression establishes a link between peace and agriculture. It brings to mind Zhou's reference to Ruskin's "Soldiers of the Ploughshare instead of Soldiers of the Sword". It also echoes Zhou's translation of the fourteenth poem in Blake's "Gnomic Verses", which describes a struggle between the sword and the sickle.

A second example is "A Painter", which contains two scenes that Zhou Zuoren witnessed along the road in Hyūga, where the New Village was located. The second scene of men and women toiling in the paddy fields is pertinent to the issue of peace. Because the New Village's agenda for peace and Zhou's association of peace with agriculture, especially rice cultivation, the farming scene is undoubtedly symbolic of peace and of the New

Village's prospect. Zhou's record of his trip along the prefectural road in Hyūga also supports such a reading. While riding the coach in Hyūga, Zhou records, he was delighted with what he saw in the unknown country because it is "a peaceful and beautiful land" (Zhong Shufe 2: 176). The interconnection between peace, agriculture, and the New Village in the farming scene of "A Painter", therefore, echoes the agricultural metaphors in Blake's poems translated by Zhou.

Some of Zhou Zuoren's poems take advantage of Blake's agricultural metaphors that do not appear in his translations of Blake. The two-stanza "Ai yu zeng" 爱与憎 [Love and hate] is a case in point. Its first stanza describes a dilemma faced by the narrator: he is taught to love indiscriminately, but he finds it hard to love all hateful things. To illustrate or complicate the issue, the second stanza invites the reader to think about the proper attitude toward the caterpillar and the grasshopper, two common agricultural pests that respectively eat rose leaves and rice shoots. The two pests are apparently symbolic images of two different kinds of hateful things. Zhou's symbols, including rose, caterpillar, and butterfly, have their precedents in Blake. Zhou's image of a caterpillar on the rose, portrayed in the second stanza, indicates that the caterpillar, feeding on the leaves of the rose, is an enemy of the rose. The image of a caterpillar as an enemy of the rose shows the impression of Blake's poem "The Sick Rose", which tells the story of an invisible worm destroying a sick rose (Sampson 95).

The caterpillar in "Love and Hate" seems to be hateful because it looks ugly and because it eats rose leaves. However, its shortcomings are forgivable because the larva will turn into a beautiful butterfly and no longer live on the leaves of the rosebush. By contrast, while the grasshopper is "dressed in lovable green clothes" (*Guoqude shengming* 24), the narrator could not love it because it only feeds on rice shoots. The closing couplet of the second stanza summarizes the narrator's awkward position. He loves the rose and can also love the butterfly that has rose leaves as food in its larval stage. Yet the narrator is uncertain about what attitude he should have towards the grasshopper. This is perhaps because the case of the grasshopper is different from that of the caterpillar in two respects. First, the caterpillar no longer eats rose leaves when it transforms into a butterfly, but the grasshopper always feeds on rice shoots. Second, rice shoots are more important to Zhou Zuoren than the rose.

As demonstrated earlier, to Zhou Zuoren, the paddy field is an agricultural symbol of peace, whereas rice

cultivation is symbolic of the New Village's non-violent way to peace. The image of "rice shoots" is, therefore, inextricably bound up with Zhou's New Village agenda for peace. In the context of "Love and Hate", "rice shoots" may be understood as a metaphor for the New Village's peace initiative or the greater cause of peace. It follows that the grasshopper in the poem represents those who are always inimical to the New Village or lasting peace. Zhou's writings on the New Village repeatedly mention the hostility toward the peaceful New Village as well as those who believe in invasionism (Zhong Shuhe 2: 145, 186, 191). As one who advocates impartial love for all humanity, Zhou must find it difficult to love "the grasshopper", which represents those who are determinedly antagonistic to the New Village or the cause of peace.

Zhou Zuoren had to think about his attitude toward not only those who are opposed to peace but also those who take different roads to peace. During 1919 and 1920 when his passion for the New Village was at its height, Zhou was convinced that the New Village's non-violent experiment was the best possible approach to peace. However, by 1921 when his enthusiasm for the experiment waned, Zhou seemed to have become, at least for a time, more tolerant of violent revolutions. This change of attitude, temporary or not, is exemplified in his poem "Qilu" 歧路 [Divergent paths], which suggests that both peaceful and violent approaches may lead to peace. In the poem Zhou compares these different approaches to divergent paths in the *huangye* 荒野 [heath] that lead to the same destination. The word *huangye* is, therefore, symbolic of Zhou's contemporary world plagued by war. The imagery of *huangye* also calls to mind Zhou's earlier translations of "barren heath" and "heath", two terms from Blake's *Gnomic Verses*. Zhou translated both terms into *huangdi* 荒地, a synonym for *huangye* in Chinese. The word *huangdi* in Zhou's translation of Blake is an agricultural metaphor for the world marked by war. Therefore, it is quite possible that Zhou's term *huangye*, as a symbol of the war-torn world, in "Divergent Paths", is indebted to Blake.

MYSTICAL SYMBOLISM

As Zhou Zuoren was an ardent supporter of Hu Shi's call for new poetics, his appropriation of Blake's poetry should be considered in the context of China's new poetry movement. Zhou's most distinctive contribution to the traditions of modern Chinese poetry is his introduction of symbolism, a poetic device that he derives from Blake. However, Zhou's symbolism is not a simple duplicate of Blake's mystical symbolism discovered or invented by British writers, though he was well-informed of their exegesis. His translation of Blake's symbolist poems reveals that he deliberately purges Blake's mystical symbolism of its religious and supernatural overtones. His explanation of Blake's imagination, the key to interpreting Blake's symbols, shows that he circumvents Blake's rejection of reason. His imitation of Blake's symbolist poems shows that his belief in science and reason prevented him from fully submitting himself to Blake's poetic device.

Blake's Mystical Symbolism

Blake's employment of symbolism to express his ideas has been widely recognized by Blakean scholars since the late nineteenth century. However, how Blake creates his symbolic system is still in dispute, since there are three different approaches to Blake's symbolism. The first line of interpretation, initiated by Edwin John Ellis and William Butler Yeats, traces Blake's symbolism to the traditions of occult literature (vii-xiii). The second line of interpretation, represented by David V. Erdman, believes that Blake clothed his radical views on contemporary events in a symbolic system to avoid political prosecution. Unsatisfied with these two readings of Blake, W. H. Stevenson proposes that Blake's symbolism is the result of "the consistency of his personal emotions, and the literary habits that he developed" (445). The last two versions of Blake's symbolism, though illuminating, are not the ways Blake's symbolism was read in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Therefore, this section shall focus only on the mystical view of Blake's symbolism.

Ellis and Yeats, the first to call attention to Blake's symbolism, link it to religion and mysticism. Yeats's interpretation was motivated by his own interest in religious and occult symbolism and his intention to make symbolism "a wide-spread, accepted and conventional mode of artistic behaviour" (Lenoski 98). Ellis and Yeats

briefly explain the importance of nature, imagination, religion, mysticism, and symbolism in Blake's poetry (vii-xiii), but, building on Ellis and Yeats's reading, Spurgeon meticulously examines Blake's mystical symbolism. Seeing Blake as a devotional and religious mystic, she indicates that symbolism and mythology are essential to his mysticism and that the source of his mysticism is Plotinus, who believes that God is present in all things. She also shows that Blake's symbolism is closely intertwined with his religious doctrine and that, for Blake, everything may become a symbol signifying "a still greater thing behind it" (138). Imagination, Spurgeon suggests, is what makes it possible for Blake to see divinity in all natural things, be it plants, insects, animals, colors, emotions, or heaven and hell (10-11, 138-139). Blake's imagination seems to contain "sympathy, insight, idealism, and vision", which entail the preclusion of "logical argument" and "scientific fact" (135). Blake's mysticism, Spurgeon argues, perceives a unity in opposites, which is best exemplified in *Marriage*. To Blake, "God is the origin of Good and Evil" (141), and "evil must be embodied or experienced before it can be rejected" (144).

Ellis and Yeats's reading of Blake's mystical symbolism was also examined by Arthur Symons and Basil de Sélincourt. A "disciple, friend, and teacher" (Lenoski 8) of Yeats, Symons shares Yeats's aim to promote symbolism. He recognizes Blake's mysticism and highlights Blake's extensive use of natural symbols to illustrate "the divine attributes" (80) in his earlier and more lucid poetry. He notes that Blake's natural symbols may show contrary characters and that Blake believes in the coexistence of contraries. He also points out "the supremacy of the imagination" (154) in Blake's poetics and Blake's hostility to reason. Sélincourt sets out to refute Blake's poetics but, nonetheless, confirms the poet's "predilection for agricultural and pastoral metaphor" (143), his desire to reconcile imagination and mysticism, and his scorn for and rejection of reason.

Importing Blake's Symbolism

In support of Hu Shi's call for new poetics, Zhou Zuoren not only composed vernacular new poems, but also translated numerous poems from different literatures. The new poetics that Zhou imagined or invented, though not always consistent, centers on language, rhyme scheme, forms, and techniques. However, what

distinguishes Zhou's poetics from that of his fellow new poets is his appropriation of Blake's symbolism, which Zhou extensively imitated in his own poetry. Zhou's views on the language and rhyme scheme of new poetry are not uncommon among early new poets. His earliest response to the call for new poetics, an apology for his vernacular translation of ancient Greek poems, dictates that new poetry should use vernacular language and free verse form, which necessarily invalidates any rhyme scheme (12). It is a repetition of the basic tenets of new poetics, which Zhou, like other early new poets, conscientiously applied in his new poetry.

Zhou Zuoren's introduction of Japanese haiku prompted the birth of Chinese *xiaoshi* 小诗 [short poetry] in 1921, and his writings also supported the so-called "short poetry movement" popular from 1921 to 1925. However, none of Zhou's poems in his anthology meet his own definition of short poetry, i.e. "the new poetry of one to four lines" (Zhong Shuhe 2: 553). Zhou introduced Baudelaire's prose poetry in around the turn of 1922, but he did not compose any prose poems around this period. Zhou's first new poem "Xiaohe" 小河 [A rivulet] is a prose poem, but, published in January 1919, it was likely inspired by the prose poems contained in Blake's *Marriage*, with which Zhou was conversant. Traces of Blake's "Earth's Answer" on "the poetic conceit and imagery" of "A Rivulet" is also perceptible (Liu, "Little Savages" 137).

While the vernacular language, rhyme scheme, and verse forms of his new poetics are not distinctive, Zhou Zuoren's infatuation with one particular poetic technique, i.e. symbolism, is truly remarkable. His extensive use of symbolism is exceptional because his endeavor was well before the publication of *Weiyu* 微雨 [The drizzle] and *Shike yu xiongnian* 食客与凶年 [The visitor and hard times] respectively in 1925 and 1927, which makes their author Li Jinfa 李金发 (1900-1976) the first Chinese symbolist poet and the founder of symbolist poetry in China.

Zhou Zuoren's understanding of symbolism, summed up in "Blake's Poetry", is an unacknowledged and incomplete quote from Spurgeon. The following are Zhou's Chinese translation and Spurgeon's English original.

这想象的言语，便是艺术。艺术用了象征去表现意义，所以幽闭在我执里面的人，因此能时时提醒，知道自然本体也不过是个象征。我们能将一切物质现象作象征观，那时他们的意义，也自

广大深远。(Zhong Shuhe 2: 222)

The language of Imagination is Art, for it speaks through symbols, so that men shut up in their selfhoods are thus ever reminded that nature herself is a symbol. ... If we consider all material things as symbols, their suggestiveness ... is continually expanding. (135)

The passage suggests that Blake's art, or rather poetry, employs symbols to convey meaning and that all natural things can be viewed as symbols of profound meaning. Blake's works, both the lyrics and the prophetic books, Zhou concludes, have a meaning beyond the literal words (222). Impatient with the transparency of new poetry, Zhou late openly declares that the proper road of new poetry is Romanticism and that "symbolism is really its essence" (Zhong Shuhe 4: 637). He also equates symbolism, albeit wrongly, with *xing* 兴 [the stimulating image], a poetic technique widely used in classical Chinese poetry.

Translating Blake's Mystical Symbolism

Zhou Zuoren's reading of Blake's mystical symbolism shows some key points of the Yeatsian interpretation: the employment of natural symbols, the symbolic significance of natural things, and imagination as the prerequisite for the perception of symbolic meanings. However, Zhou's understanding differs from the Yeatsian exegesis in that he casts off Blake's religious implication and circumvents Blake's aversion to reason. Zhou's selective translations of Blake's symbolic poems also tend to present such a reduced version of Blake's mystical symbolism. Zhou's manipulation of Blake's mystical symbolism is, by and large, a compromise between his hope to develop new poetics and his identification with the call for the standard of science in the ongoing New Culture Movement.

It is not clear whether Zhou Zuoren had read Yeats's explication of Blake's mystical symbolism or not, but there is no doubt that Zhou was acquainted with Japanese writers' elucidation of Yeats's Blake and the Yeatsian reading of Blake's mystical symbolism by Spurgeon, Symons, and Sélincourt. While Zhou recognizes

Blake's mysticism and symbolism, his presentation of Blake's mystical symbolism is slightly different from the one described by Yeats and his followers. For one thing, Zhou carefully purges Blake's symbolism of its religious connotations. His paraphrase of Spurgeon's summary of Plotinus's idea, the assumed source of Blake's mysticism, for example, avoids mentioning the omnipresent God that is indispensable to Plotinus's concept. For another, Zhou's explanation of Blake's imagination eschews the poet's refusal of reason, which is crucial for Blake's perception of the greater truth behind natural symbols. He copies Spurgeon's interpretation of Blake's imagination but refrains from including Spurgeon's explanation that Blake's imagination requires the rejection of "logical argument" and "scientific fact" (Zhong Shuhe 2: 220; Spurgeon 135).

Zhou Zuoren's translation of the opening quatrain and the first ten couplets of Blake's "Auguries of Innocence" evinces some salient features of his version of Blake's mystical symbolism. It is apparent from the translated quatrain and couplets that natural symbols are commonly used in Blake's symbolist poetry. The quatrain contains two natural symbols, i.e. "a grain of sand" and "a wild flower", whereas the couplets each have at least one such symbol, including robin, deer, dog, horse, and wolf, to name just a few. Although Zhou claims that the poem captures the quintessence of Blake's thoughts, he offers no explanation for the poem's symbolic meaning, except for the fifth and sixth couplets, upon which he happens to touch elsewhere. Zhou's understanding of the two couplets can be picked to show the symbolic meaning of Blake's natural symbols.

Zhou Zuoren's interpretation of the two couplets is not completely his own conjecture but a borrowing from Spurgeon. Spurgeon, explaining Blake's stress on the qualities of love and understanding, cites the two couplets to illustrate how imagination functions in the process of understanding. Zhou provides an almost verbatim translation of the following passage from Spurgeon's elucidation:

Until we can feel for all that lives, Blake says in effect, until we can respond to the joys and sorrows of others as quickly as to our own, our imagination is dull and incomplete:

Each outcry of the hunted Hare
A fibre from the Brain does tear.
A Skylark wounded in the wing

A Cherubim does cease to sing.

Auguries of innocence.

When we feel like this, we will go forth to help, not because we are prompted by duty or religion or reason, but because the cry of the weak and ignorant so wrings our heart that we cannot leave it unanswered. (136)

The passage suggests that Blake's imagination, in its fullest sense, entails empathy with all living things and, in particular, compassion for the suffering of the disadvantaged. This quality of imagination renders it possible for one to take in the symbolic meaning of Blake's couplets. Because of the sympathetic imagination, one feels the pain of the hunted hare upon hearing its squeal, and the cherub feels the misery of the skylark upon seeing its wounded wing. The distress of the hare and the skylark is, as Spurgeon's indicates, symbolic of the suffering of "the weak and ignorant". The readers of Blake's poetry are, therefore, induced to see the couplets as an appeal to them to feel sympathy for the misfortunes not only of living creatures but also of the underprivileged. Indeed, readers are called upon to come to their assistance.

Elsewhere, Zhou Zuoren's own explanation of the two couplets goes a little further. Denouncing people carrying birdcages, Zhou claims that Blake's couplets express the same idea as the Buddhist view of the equality of life, which he considers to be "true and beautiful" (Zhong Shuhe 2: 348). Zhou's statement suggests that, to him, the greater truth behind Blake's couplets is to see all living things as man's equals. However, even when he shows his respect for ordinary living creatures, Zhou is still conscious of the idea of reason. He is averse to people carrying birdcages because they do evil, i.e. caging birds, not out of necessity. If they simply eat bird meat, Zhou concedes, he would be less hostile toward them. For the same reason, he has tolerance for people who kill animals because they have no alternative. Such practical concerns, reasonable as they are, would have no place in Blake's mystical symbolism.

Zhou Zuoren's erasure of the religious undertones inherent in Blake's mystical symbolism is revealed less by what he translated than by what he chose not to translate. His translation of "Auguries of Innocence" stops at the tenth couplet. It may be no accident that he opts not to render the following eleventh and twelfth couplets:

The bat that flits at close of eve
Has left the brain that won't believe.
The owl that calls upon the night
Speaks the unbeliever's fright. (171)

The eleventh couplet suggests that a person without beliefs will lose something, whereas the twelfth couplet indicates that an unbeliever has fears. Taken together, the two couplets warn people against having no beliefs. Because the term "unbeliever" usually refers to a person without religious beliefs, the couplets are, in fact, trying to persuade people to have faith in God. Such blatant preachment would certainly lose favor with Zhou. Zhou does not translate the concluding quatrain of "Auguries of Innocence", either. The concluding quatrain, to some extent, summarizes the idea of the whole poem. It is curious that Zhou should desist from translating a quatrain that may give the reader a glimpse into the poem's gist, given that he declines to explain the motif of the poem himself. A quick look at the quatrain discloses Zhou's misgivings:

God appears, and God is Light,
To those poor souls who dwell in Night;
But does a Human Form display
To those who dwell in realms of Day. (175)

Here Blake's religious purpose is more than plain to see. It also reveals the religious implication of Blake's mystical symbolism. Small wonder that Zhou would refrain from expounding on the motif of the poem or offering the reader a translation of the quatrain.

Imitating Blake's Symbolist Poetry

Zhou Zuoren's partiality for Blake's mystical symbolism is shown not only in his borrowings from Blake's natural symbols, but also in his endeavor to write symbolic poetry in imitation of Blake's style. However, Zhou often assigns Blake's natural symbols with new meanings, and his symbolic poems diverge significantly from the

Yeatsian line of Blake's mystical symbolism. The previous sections have demonstrated that natural symbols in Zhou's poetry on gender, children, and peace profit from Blake's works. Many other of Zhou natural symbols, though not examined in the previous sections, also have parallels in Blake's poetry, e.g. *laogua* 老鸱 [crow or raven], *wuya* 乌鸦 [crow or raven], *maque* 麻雀 [sparrow], and *huayuan* 花园 [garden].

Blake's natural symbols, when appropriated by Zhou Zuoren, are restricted by the latter's faith in reason and science. It can be illustrated by Zhou's approach to Blake's symbol of "the fly", since Zhou was not only acquainted with Blake's poem "The Fly", but also composed two poems centering on the same insect. "The Fly" is an address to an insect accidentally killed by the narrator, who, on reflection, sees a parallel between the fly and the man, either in their carefree play or in their vulnerability. The poem concludes that, if thought is what distinguishes life from death, the narrator will remain happy, dead or alive. Despite the poem's seeming simplicity, there is no consensus about its implication. It may be read as a call for kindness to ordinary living creatures, a meditation on human-nature relations, a reflection on the meaning of life, an affirmation of the human thought as an expression of the divinity, or a presentation of different kinds of thinking on life for the reader to identify with (Beer 57-59; Glen 182-184; Hirsch 236-241; Hutchings 82-83; Ostriker 69-71). Zhou believes that the poem "compares [the life of] the fly and the uncertainties of man's life" (Zhong Shuhe 2: 342), a reading falling into the category of traditional interpretations.

However, Zhou Zuoren has mixed feelings about the fly, even though he likes Blake's poem and admires writings showing care for the insect. He could see the insect as his equal among all living creatures, but he could not look with favor upon such a pest. It is, Zhou claims, an irreconcilable "conflict between emotion and reason" (Zhong Shuhe 2: 342). Elsewhere, Zhou admits that he detests the insect because, "after being baptized by science," he learned that "the fly can spread bacteria" (Zhong Shuhe 3: 448). This belief in science explains why, in a poem describing the struggle of a fly stuck on flypaper, the narrator speaks to the trapped insect: "I'd better stick both wings of yours" (*Guoqude shengming* 80). Partly because of his scientific knowledge, Zhou Zuoren's poem titled "Cangying" 苍蝇 [The flies] curses the insects, wishing them to become extinct (*Guoqude shengming*

61-63). It stands in sharp contrast to Zhou's attitude toward *lang* 狼 [wolf] and *dashe* 大蛇 [serpent], two other Blakean symbols appearing in the same poem. Both the wolf and the serpent are fierce animals, but Zhou could love them nonetheless, apparently because they are not denounced by his scientific knowledge.

Some of Zhou Zuoren's poems are patterned after Blake's use of mystical symbolism, particularly the set of poems subsumed under the title "Shanju zashi" 山居杂诗 [Miscellaneous poems written while living in the mountains], composed during his sojourn in the mountains in 1921. It shows a marked difference between Zhou's conception of mystical symbolism and the Yeatsian interpretation. The fifth poem of the set, where Blake's stamp is most distinct, may serve the purpose of illustrating the point. Zhou's poem and its English translation are as follows.

一片槐树的碧绿的叶，	A dark green leaf of the pagoda tree
现出一切的世界的神秘，	Showed the mystery of the whole world,
空中飞过的一个白翅膀的白蛉子，	A white-winged sand-fly flying overhead
又牵动了我的惊异。	Also stirred up my amazement.
我仿佛会悟了这神秘的奥义，	I seemed to see the profound meaning of the mystery,
却又实在未曾了知。	Yet really did not understand it.
但我已经很是满足，	But I am already very satisfied
因为我得见了这个神秘了。(Guoqude shengming 73)	Because I have seen the mystery.

This poem readily brings to mind the opening quatrain of Blake's "Auguries of Innocence":

To see a World in a grain of sand,
And a Heaven in a wild flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand,
And Eternity in an hour. (Sampson 171)

A causal glance at the two poems reveals that the first four lines of Zhou's poem are modelled after Blake's

quatrain, though Zhou only touches upon the spatial dimension of Blake's spatial-temporal dyad. The term *shenmi* 神秘 [mystery] in Zhou's second line also seems to make explicit the mysticism connoted in Blake's poem. If Zhou's poem stops at its fourth line, it may reasonably pass for a poem in the spirit of Blakean mystical symbolism. However, Zhou's following lines and his explanation of the term *shenmi* elsewhere discourage such a reading.

The third couplet of the poem is key to discerning the difference between Zhou Zuoren's and Blake's mystical symbolism. The fifth line suggests that the narrator derives an understanding of "the profound meaning of the mystery" from what is depicted in the first part of the poem. Yet the word *fangfu* 仿佛 [seemed] in the same line indicates that the narrator is uncertain about this understanding. The sixth line more plainly acknowledges the falsehood of the understanding. Taken together, the couplet reveals that the narrator does not grasp "the profound meaning of the mystery". This admission of ignorance disqualifies Zhou as a Blakean mystic. For, as Spurgeon says, a mystic like Blake "has direct knowledge of a truth which for him is absolute" (11). Simply put, a true mystic knows something "because he has felt it" (11), which does not stand to the judgment of reason. The narrator's revocation of his understanding, apparently a result of his faith in reason and science, suggests that Zhou's *shenmi* departs from Blake's mysticism.

The narrator confidently declares in the closing couplet that he is satisfied to have seen *shenmi*. So what is one to make of Zhou Zuoren's *shenmi*? Zhou's explanation of the term *shenmizhuyi* 神秘主义 [mysticism] gives a clue about his understanding of *shenmi*:

神秘只是说不可思议，并不是神怪，二者区别自明，如生殖的事是神秘，说生殖由神灵主持是神怪了。(Zhong Shuhe 2: 582)

Mystery only means that it is beyond logic and above reason rather than that of gods and spirits. The difference between the two is self-evident. For example, reproduction is a mystery, but to say that reproduction is presided over by deities is [to fall into the category of] gods and spirits.

It shows that Zhou was trying to rid the term of its connection to the supernatural and the religious. This further

affirms that his understanding of *shenmi* is incompatible with Blake's mysticism, which has a religious undertone. Zhou's *shenmi*, instead, denotes something that has not been fully explained by science, hence "beyond logic and above reason". The context of Zhou's explanation also supports such a reading. Reproduction is a common but mysterious activity, Zhou observes, but people start to treat it seriously because of the increase of modern scientific knowledge of sex and sexuality (582-583). Zhou's *shenmi* is, therefore, an incredible phenomenon or a wonderful realm awaiting the advance of science.

This reading of Zhou Zuoren's term *shenmi* fits in well with the poem in question. If mystery means something "beyond logic and above reason", it is reasonable that Zhou could enjoy seeing it without grasping its profound meaning or finding the scientific truth behind it. The poem as a whole can be read as Zhou's wonderment upon seeing mysterious, or rather marvelous, phenomena embodied in two natural symbols. Such a reading also justifies Zhou's employment of the term *jingyi* 惊异 [amazement] in the fourth line as a word corresponding to *shenmi* in the second line. Otherwise, Zhou would have to find a term to the effect of faith or belief to indicate a religious or transcendental experience.

Other poems from Zhou Zuoren's set of miscellaneous poems also reject the religious implication inherent in Blakean mystical symbolism. Take the second poem of the set for example. Its opening triplet describes the flaming blossoms put forth by pomegranates, whereas the closing couplet indifferently states that the plants keep blooming after the monk caring for them was detained. The adjective *huoyanshide* 火焰似的 [flaming] in the poem is an obvious borrowing from Blake's "Gnomic Verses". However, Zhou's narrative logic in no way resembles that of Blake. In "Auguries of Innocence" Blake adopts a prophetic model of observation: "If you go on So / the result is So" (Rix 24). This formula suggests that a natural phenomenon forecasts some other event. The opening couplet of "Auguries of Innocence" illustrates this point well: "A robin redbreast in a cage / Put all Heaven in a rage." It indicates that the suffering of the bird "offends the divine benevolence of the universe" (24). However, Zhou's poem shows no causal link between the state of the pomegranates and the welfare of the monk. Indeed, it discourages any attempt to connect the fate of the plants to that of their gardener. Zhou's belief in

reason, without doubt, precludes him from establishing a connection between the fortunes of the two parties involved.

Chapter Two: Cultural Agendas and Classical Poetics: Wu Mi's Enterprise of Imitating and Translating George Gordon Byron

George Gordon Byron (1788-1824) was arguably the most popular and celebrated English Romantic in late imperial and early republican China. Even before the New Literature Movement started in 1917, many of the most influential literati, like Liang Qichao 梁启超 (1873-1929) and Su Manshu 苏曼殊 (1884-1918), or would-be political or literary leaders, e.g. Ma Junwu 马君武 (1881-1940) and Hu Shi 胡适 (1891-1962), had already translated some of Byron's poems or elucidated the poet's life and works for the Chinese audience (Chu 7-43). Byron's fame in China reached an all-time height in 1924 when two widely circulated literary journals of the new poetry camp, i.e. *Xiaoshuo yuebao* 小说月报 [Fiction monthly] and the supplement of *Chenbao* 晨报 [Morning post], devoted special issues in commemoration of the centenary of the Romantic's death. Wu Mi's 吴宓 (1894-1978) *Xizheng zashi* 西征杂诗 [Miscellaneous poems of the travel to Xi'an], an imitation of the third canto of Byron's long narrative poem *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, appeared relatively late in 1927, and Yang Baochang's 杨葆昌 (dates unknown) translation of the canto, patronized by Wu Mi, came out still later in 1930. Wu Mi's *Ouyou zashi* 欧游杂诗 [Miscellaneous poems of the travel to Europe], a second but looser imitation of the same canto, was composed during 1930 and 1931. Wu's endeavors stood out as the most intensive imitation of Byron's poetry in the period, and Yang's work was one of the only two attempts to render Byron's long poems into Chinese. In the foreword to his only anthology of poetry published during his lifetime, Wu Mi even ranked Byron first among the three Western poets he admired most and aspired to imitate (*Wu Mi shiji*).

Wu Mi's elevation of Byron to the very top rung of the ladder of foreign poetic models had no parallel in major new vernacular poets. His lengthy imitations of Byron's poetry dwarfed any new poet's composition modelled after or inspired by Byron. His commission of his student Yang Baochang's translation was intended to produce the first rendering of Byron's long poetry into Chinese (Yang Baochang 1). Wu's intense interest and

heavy investment in Byron's poetry, therefore, intrigue one into inquiring about the motivation behind his approach to Byron. One is also tempted to ask, given his unstinting praise for Byron, why should Wu be content with the imitation and translation of only the semi-autobiographical *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, especially its third canto, rather than embracing any other work from Byron's oeuvre. In the past, scholars surveying Byron's literary fortunes in the early twentieth-century China tended to neglect Wu's contribution altogether. Only Shengqing Wu has now noted Byron's bearing on Wu's poetic work and suggested its intertextual relationships with Western literary traditions (*Modern Archaics* 378). Her observation is true and commendable, but remains too generalized to reveal the contemporary relevance of Byron's work as perceived by Wu Mi as well as the historical and poetical contexts conditioning Wu's appropriation of Byron.

BYRON'S POETICS AND THE BYRONIC HERO

English Romantic poetry is conventionally defined against the eighteenth-century poetic decorum as exemplified by the works of Alexander Pope (1688-1744). Byron, the most famous European Romantic of his day, however, seems to defy such a definition, for he flaunted his veneration for Pope's neo-classical poetry and openly declared his contempt for contemporary poetic experiments (Beatty 236-238; Tozer 19). Scholars have dealt with this apparent discrepancy between the received interpretation of Romanticism and Byron's alleged poetical allegiance. It has been argued that Byron's poetic practice usually does not tally with his taste in the meter, style, and genre of poetry (Fischer). In other words, Byron favored "strict and even difficult verse forms and rhyme schemes" (223), but detested the idiosyncratic styles and fashionable genres of his time. However, Byron often sacrificed his preference for versification to other concerns and, against his own poetic convictions, wrote many immensely popular poems in the style and genres valued by his contemporaries, for example his oriental romances (223-227). Byron did make a few attempts to compose poetry according to classical standards, but such efforts generally ended in failure (228-230). What he could really follow in his poetic pursuit were passion and reflection, two core premises of Romantic poetry (228-230). In short, Byron's seemingly inconsistent

poetics could largely be explained by his admiration for classicism in theory and his return to romanticism in practice. Nonetheless, Byron had a liking for his *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, a typical romantic work, because he deemed it his most original poetic work (228).

Childe Harold's Pilgrimage is the work that cemented Byron's poetic reputation during his lifetime and for the most part of the nineteenth century (Thorslev 13, 144). The four-canto poem as a whole is traditionally seen as a meditation on "the transience of human glory and the decline of civilized values" (Garrett 56) and a rumination about Byron's personal life and contemporary politics. The poem is based on Byron's three journeys on the Continent, each corresponding to a different historical period of Europe. The first pilgrimage, lasting from 1809 to 1811, gave birth to the first two cantos that relate Harold's Grand Tour from Newstead, Portugal to Athens, Greece in the midst of the Napoleonic wars. The two cantos center on the conundrum between "scepticism about the purposes of war and rhetorical idealism about freedom that can (presumably) be won only by means of it" (Lansdown 74). The second pilgrimage, made in 1816, furnished material for the third canto that recounts Harold's trip from the battlefield of Waterloo to Lake Geneva in the wake of Napoleon's defeat. The canto reflects on the "cycle of power and decline" (75), wars for freedom and aggression, and the illusion of rationalism (76). The third pilgrimage, from late 1816 to early 1817, brought about the fourth canto that describes Harold's travel from Venice to Rome. This last canto revolves around an intellectual quest for answers that can "realize humane ideals or consistently illuminate the course of history" (77).

Childe Harold's Pilgrimage adopts the Spenserian stanza, a traditional verse form invented by the English poet Edmund Spenser (1552/1553-1599) for his magnum opus *The Faerie Queene*. The Spenserian stanza consists of eight lines in iambic pentameter and a ninth line in iambic hexameter (also known as the Alexandrine), their rhyme scheme being ABABBCBCC. Spenser's invention was mainly intended to avoid "isolation and disjunction" (Addison 12) within the stanza by making lines 4-5 and lines 8-9 operate in a circling movement. However, in Byron's poem the whole stanza usually powerfully progresses forward without the interruption of the circling movement (12-13). Spenser's stanza fosters "a sense of authorial presence" by demanding the development of large narrative units, but Byron's stanza often maintains the authorial presence by progressing

from “description into meditation and personal commentary” (13). The last two cantos of Byron’s poem are generally considered to be more mature than the first two. Yet Byron’s employment of the Spenserian stanza in the later cantos deviates more significantly from Spenser’s use than in the earlier ones (13). In the later cantos Byron frequently overrides the fifth line in the middle couplet (lines 4-5) of the stanza by way of enjambment, whereas Spenser’s own couplet often resists such a progressive movement (13-14). Byron also has a propensity for the “climatic use of the final Alexandrine” (14), but such a use rarely appears in Spenser’s own stanza. In addition, Byron tends to use less syntactic inversions, which are common in Spenser’s epic poem (13).

The protagonist of *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* is the eponymous Childe Harold, an imaginary young aristocrat with negative personality traits and a dark mysterious past. Given the similarities between the background and experience of Harold and Byron, both critics and average readers (since Byron’s time) have commonly taken Childe Harold to be Byron the poet (Thorslev 128). Byron was at pains to distinguish Childe Harold from himself, but his protestations were generally ignored. There are, in fact, three distinct poetic characters in Byron’s poem, namely the minstrel-narrator, Childe Harold, and Byron’s own persona (127-132). The minstrel-narrator, an auxiliary voice in the tradition of English romances, deserves no consideration as it appears only occasionally in the first canto. Childe Harold and Byron’s own persona are central to the poem. The distinction between the two characters is sometimes suggested in the first two cantos, rarely maintained in the third canto, and completely abandoned in the fourth canto (132). “Childe Harold is the first important Byronic Hero, and the prototype of all the rest” (128). In the first two cantos Childe Harold assumes the characteristics of three types of heroes, i.e. the Child of Nature, the Gothic Villain, and the Hero of Sensibility, but in the last two instalments he becomes in large measure the Hero of Sensibility (132-140). The defining characteristics of this Hero of Sensibility are his habitual passivity, obsessive self-analysis, and customary projection of personal boredom and suffering on the world, most of which derive from the tension between his contradictory desires for the total commitment to the absolute truth and a skeptical self-assertion in an alien and impersonal world (141-144). The Hero of Sensibility became Byron’s main literary legacy and recurred in the works of both English and Continental poets of the succeeding age (144-145).

The third canto of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* is the focus of Wu Mi's appropriation, and therefore, commands further elaboration. The literary, personal, and historical contexts surrounding the composition of the canto are the first things worthy of note. First, the canto marked the beginning of a major change in Byron's poetic production, i.e. the desertion of "the vision of extreme human suffering" (Rawes 118), a theme that had governed his works since 1812. Second, Byron's pilgrimage in 1816 that informed the canto was a self-imposed exile in the face of his broken marriage and the public animosity toward him concerning the matter (118-119). Third, in the canto Byron was mindful that his personal crisis following his failed domestic life coincided with the historical moment of Europe in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars (119). Therefore, the canto reflects Byron's poetic enterprise and constitutes his efforts to come to terms with both personal and historical predicaments.

Departing from the emphasis on human suffering that dominates his previous poetic works, in the third canto Byron explores the "capacity for forgetfulness" by testing his ability to immerse himself in "imaginative creativity" and "the natural world" (Rawes 119), which, as it turns out, could only temporarily distract him from painful personal and historical memories. The influence of private life in the canto is epitomized by Byron's frequent treatments of familial love: introductory and closing stanzas delivered to his daughter, some stanzas addressing his half-sister, and some stanzas on the legendary priestess Julia Alpinula's (dates unknown) filial devotion. Byron's responses to the historical context are shown in his involvement with the landscape and culture of Europe, including the field of Waterloo, Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821), Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), and Lake Geneva. Byron's attitudes toward some historical events and figures, in particular, are extremely equivocal. He distinguishes between wars for freedom and those for aggression, declining to praise the winners of the Battle of Waterloo (Cheeke 70; Kelsall 52; Lansdown 76). He views Napoleon and Rousseau both as Byronic heroes in their respective realms, both as flawed heroes possessing antithetical attributes, and both as "type and victim" of the uncontrolled desire (Garrett 204-205, 242; Hodgson 365-366).

The complexities of Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* III deserve careful attention. It is true that the canto adopts a traditional verse form, i.e. the Spenserian stanza, but Byron frequently transgresses the norms of Spenser's stanza, particularly the movement of lines. The protagonist Childe Harold, a Byronic Hero of

Sensibility conveniently identified with Byron, has the drive toward commitment to the absolute and the conflicting drive toward a skeptical self-assertion in an indifferent world. The stanzas on familial love are a reaction to his separation from his newborn daughter and his half-sister following the collapse of his marriage. European historical events and figures are woven into the canto, but Byron's inherently ambivalent attitudes elude a fixed reading of the work.

PERFORMING SELF-RIGHTEOUS POET-EXILES

Byron's transgression of Spenser's poetic rules in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* III cautions against taking his Spenserian stanzas at face value. The protagonist Childe Harold's conflicting desires, for the commitment to the absolute truth and for a skeptical assertion of the self in an external world, resist a facile generalization of his character. The equivocal nature of Byron's attitudes toward historical events and figures oppose a simplistic reading of his reflections in the instalment. However, Wu Mi and Yang Baochang's prologues and annotations to their imitations and translation suggest that they purposely guide their readers to lean toward a reading of Byron's poetics and perspectives that reinforces their vision of modern Chinese poetry and culture. More precisely, they intend to vindicate China's classical poetics and traditional culture by making Byron an English Qu Yuan 屈原 (c. 340-278 BC) or Du Fu 杜甫 (712-770), a model poet who self-assuredly held on to his ideals and perfected his poetic techniques when he was in exile.

As a devoted student of Wu Mi, Yang Baochang admitted that his reading of Byron's canto was based on a reader compiled by Wu Mi (Yang Baochang 4). Yang's translation, prefaced and sometimes annotated by Wu, was published in the *Critical Review*, a magazine solely edited by Wu. Besides, when Wu Mi, during his travel to Europe, paid homage to the site where Byron had composed the canto, he even regretted that Yang was not there in his company (*Wu Mi shiji* 250), apparently because Yang shared his understanding of Byron. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that Yang's own prologue and annotations to his translation are in line with Wu's

standpoints.

In his prologue to Yang Baochang's translation of Byron, Wu Mi reveals that he was fully aware of the background of Byron's composition of the canto. Byron was compelled to leave England in 1816, Wu observes, partly because of the collapse of his marriage, and partly because of the slanders of his enemies. Byron wrote the highly acclaimed canto, Wu notes, on the basis of his following journey across the post-Napoleonic Europe (Yang Baochang 1-2). Wu was, as he claims, sincerely impressed by Byron's canto when he taught the poem in late 1926 ("Xizheng" 1). So he consciously imitated Byron's experience of composing poetry in exile during his trip to visit his father and friend in Xi'an in early 1927, when the siege of the city had just been lifted. When his own marriage collapsed in 1930, Wu Mi went on a long journey through Europe, a sort of voluntary exile, and made another effort to emulate his Romantic idol by recording his travel experience in poetry.

Convinced of the affinity between his and Byron's hard lot and bitter experience (*Wu Mi shiji* 213), Wu Mi models himself on Byron in the hope that he may produce similarly admired poetry, which may in turn justify and revitalize classical poetics in modern China. In the prologues to his imitations and in his diary recording his writing, Wu Mi takes great pains to show that his titling, verse form, structure, and organization are all patterned after Byron's canto ("Xizheng" 1; *Wu Mi shiji* 213; *Wu Mi riji* 3: 277). Wu claims that he learned a lot from his teaching of Byron's canto and that the meanings of some scattered phrases in his imitation were the *same* with Byron's original ("Xizheng" 1). However, Wu does not explicitly explicate what he had learned and what are the points common to him and Byron. A probe into the resemblance between the experiences of writing poetry in exile shared by Byron and Wu Mi's other poetic exemplars may reveal Wu Mi's hidden agendas.

In addition to Byron, Wu Mi has long regarded Qu Yuan and Du Fu, two canonical ancient Chinese poets, as models for his contemporary poets ("Lun" 15; "Shixue" 3-4). Wu Mi's emphasis on the connection between Byron's ordeal and poetic output shows that he deliberately draws a parallel between Byron's experience as a self-righteous poet-exile and that of Qu Yuan and Du Fu, Chinese paragons of moral virtue and poetic attainment. Qu Yuan was banished from the king's court because of the slanders of evil cliques, so the story goes, but he remained loyal to his values and expressed his feelings in poetry (Schneider 2-4). His *Li sao* 离骚 [Encountering

sorrow] later became the forerunner of the *fu* 賦 [rhapsody] poetry that revolves around the disillusionment theme, which is characterized by a frustrated scholar who lives in exile, literally or figuratively, because his virtues are not appreciated by the ruler (Pankenier 434-435; Wilhelm 311). Throughout the ages, Qu Yuan's legend contributed to the "development of the exile theme in [Chinese] poetry" (Schneider 7) and inspired the intelligentsia to devote themselves to the ruler, the country, "moral integrity", "artistic expression", or "solitary isolation" (204) during times of frustration. Du Fu was the most accomplished of those poet-exiles who drew inspiration from Qu Yuan's experience (Mc Craw 45-80). Du Fu was forced to flee the capital because of the disastrous rebellion against the emperor instigated by a local general. Despite the hardships he endured, as underscored by traditional readings, Du Fu maintained loyalty to the sovereign and expressed sympathy for the sufferings of the common people in his poetry (Chou 11-13). His moral integrity and poetic achievement in times of turmoil won him the accolades of "poet-historian" and "poet-sage" (Chou 26-27). Over the centuries, Du Fu became "the supreme poet" (Chou 20) in Chinese poetic tradition, and his poetry became "the standard" (22) against which the attainments of other poets were measured. It should be noted, however, that such interpretations of both Qu Yuan and Du Fu are shaped by Confucian thought in pre-modern China (Chou; Schneider).

Wu Mi's perception of the similarities between Byron and his Chinese counterparts, Qu Yuan and Du Fu, in their experiences of exile, self-righteousness, and poetic achievements is more clearly suggested in Yang Baochang's prologue:

And Byron's poetry is not simply ruminations about the present, laments for the past, or indulgence in the landscape. Its comments on the ancients are no different from his self-identification. Its descriptions of mountains and rivers are also his self-analysis. *He detests the whole world that is muddied* and loves the natural world that is close to the self. Moreover, he writes his great talent in the poetry, which is elegant, flowery, and majestic, beyond the description of words. *The flight to the south added to the depression of Duling [the pen-name of Du Fu]*. The move to the north caused the desolation of Zishan [the courtesy name of Yu Xin]. That is the reason why this poetry [of Byron] touches one so deeply. ... Human nature is essentially evil, and prevalent custom can be loathsome. If one does not join the filthy, one is accused of

being arrogant and abnormal. Byron is dignified and dauntless. His writing of the literary work is nothing more than his expression of solitary indignation (emphasis added). (Yang Baochang 3)

The statement that “the whole world is muddied” in the passage is a common literary allusion to Qu Yuan, which could not be missed by any Chinese person of moderate classical training. As recorded in Qu Yuan’s biography from *Shiji* 史记 [*The Grand Scribe’s Records*], Qu Yuan told a fisherman that he was banished because he was alone pure when “[the] whole world is muddied” (Ssu-ma 299). By stressing Byron’s detestation of the muddied world, the passage indicates that Byron is a self-righteous poet-exile like Qu Yuan. Offering effusive praise for Byron’s poetic achievement, the passage asserts that Byron’s accomplishment is bound up with his experience of isolation and exile. It comes to suggest that Byron is an English version of Qu Yuan, who also maintained moral integrity and achieved poetic excellence when he was in exile. Alluding to Du Fu’s experience of exile, the passage claims that this experience accounts for the depressed mood that characterizes Du Fu. Here the name “Du Fu” is, in effect, a metonym for “Du Fu’s poetry”. What is implied is that the gloomy mood that distinguishes Du Fu’s work derives from his unwavering concern for the war-torn state and the distressed people when he was in exile, evidence of his exceptional moral integrity. It shows that Byron’s experience as a self-righteous and accomplished poet-exile is shared not only by Qu Yuan but also by Du Fu, traditionally considered the greatest poet in Chinese history.

On the surface, Wu Mi and Yang Baochang reveal a similar path to distinction taken by pre-eminent Chinese and Western poets, i.e. adherence to moral values and devotion to poetic expression when one is in exile. On a more profound level, however, they intend to confirm traditional Chinese poetics and culture by displaying the affinity between Chinese and Western poetic traditions. Just as the great poets from both China and the West value traditional verse forms and moral integrity, they hint, so must China’s modern poets retain classic verse forms and attend to moral values in their poetry. Since traditional verse forms are adopted by both the great Romantic Byron and the supreme Chinese poet Du Fu, then by analogy contemporary Chinese poets should embrace classical verse forms. Since moral cultivation is accentuated by such canonical poets as Byron, Du Fu, and Qu Yuan, then, by inference, contemporary Chinese poets should also highlight moral values in China’s

programs of modernizing poetry and culture. From this vantage point, Wu Mi's composition of poetry during his self-inflicted quasi-exiles to both Xi'an and Europe is not merely an attempt to invoke his Muse and flaunt his self-righteousness following the exemplary role of Byron, but also a desperate bid to raise public awareness of the importance attached to verse forms and moral values by traditional poetics and cultures in both China and the West.

INVIGORATING CLASSICAL CHINESE POETRY

A most persistent detractor of new poetry, Wu Mi made every effort to revitalize his beloved classical Chinese poetics. The unpopularity of contemporary classical-style Chinese poetry, as Wu perceives it, can be attributed to its lack of new poetic material, rather than its employment of classical verse forms. The reform of Chinese poetry, Wu maintains, should aim at "putting new material in old metrical patterns" ("Lun" 14-15). Wu was acutely aware that proponents of new poetry capitalized on British Romanticism to vindicate their claim and that many new poets fervently modeled themselves on British Romantics ("Weizhiweisi" 14; Yang Baochang 1). To counter new poetry's monopoly on British Romanticism, Wu was anxious to offer alternative readings of British Romantic poets. Byron is an ideal candidate for the examination of Wu's appropriation, not only because Wu devoted the most of his energy to Byron, but also because, as Wu certainly knew it, Byron was the most popular British Romantic in late imperial and early republican China.

Retaining Old Metrical Patterns

To Wu Mi, any doubt about the validity of old metrical patterns, i.e. classical verse forms, is out of the question. He believes that Byron's utilization of the Spenserian stanza, an existing verse form, could lend credence to his adherence to classical verse forms. In the prologue to his first imitation of Byron's canto, Wu Mi

painstakingly demonstrates that his choice of *qilü* 七律, a classical form of regulated verse that has eight seven-character lines, corresponds to Byron's use of the Spenserian stanza. Here is Wu Mi's line of reasoning:

This collection [i.e. *Miscellaneous Poems of the Travel to Xi'an*] contains altogether 105 poems, slightly less than the 118 stanzas in Byron's original but similar to them in being a coherent and organic whole. And the entire collection are *qilü* poetry because the *qilü* form most closely resembles the Spenserian Stanza of Byron's original. First, the former has eight lines, and the latter has nine. Second, both contain couplets that weave a medley of things into a regulated form. Third, the poems of the former each has four or five rhymed characters, and the stanzas of the latter each has up to five rhymed words. (However, the stanzas of the latter each has more than one rhyme. This definitely cannot be duplicated in Chinese.) Fourth, every poem in both collections stands on its own but connects smoothly with the preceding and following poems. ("Xizheng" 1)

Wu Mi argues that *qilü* and the Spenserian stanza are comparable verse forms because of their similarities in formal rules, i.e. the number of verse lines, the number of rhymed characters or words, and the inclusion of couplets. Wu reaches such a conclusion despite his awareness of some subtle differences between the two verse forms. This is because Wu's concern is the legitimacy of using classical verse forms in the modern context of China, rather than the similarities between Chinese and Western verse forms. It also explains why Wu Mi sanctions Yang Baochang's employment of a different classical verse form in his translation of Byron's canto.

Yang Baochang's translation adopts the verse form of *wugu* 五古, an ancient style of Chinese poetry that has multiple five-character lines. Yang reasons that this poetic form shares the features of Byron's work:

Byron's poetry [i.e. the third canto] features the ancient form and the new spirit. Now, in accord with its characteristics, it is translated in the style of *wugu* and every effort has been made to make the lines simple. (4)

Wu Mi later acknowledges that the *wugu* verse form proposed by Yang corresponds well with Byron's form and proceeds to adopt it for his new imitation (*Wu Mi shiji* 213). Wu's recognition of two classical verse forms

corresponding to the Spenserian stanza clearly shows that what really matters to him is the license for classical verse forms in the modern context. However, what Wu fails to realize or, if he does not, fails to inform his readers of is Byron's violation of Spenser's rules and its implications for the use of classical verse forms in modern China.

Miscellaneous Poems of the Travel to Xi'an, a collection of 105 *qilü* poems, records Wu Mi's encounters, thoughts, and feelings during his travels from Beijing to Xi'an and then back again. In the note to the seventeenth poem in the collection, Wu Mi invites readers to consult Byron's stanzas 59-61 on the Rhine. The following are Wu Mi's poem and its translation.

穷阴浑不辨西东。	Heavy overcast made it utterly impossible to discern west and east.
依谷回环一径通。	Along the valley a path wound and extended.
峻壁崇墉凭险势。	Difficult terrain relied on precipitous cliffs and towering walls.
飞楼尖塔矗虚空。	High buildings and pointed towers stood erect in the void.
光明自异莱茵岸。	The glories certainly differed from the banks of the Rhine,
封建如存中世风。	Which seemed to retain the scene of Middle Ages feudalism.
凿室因山仍穴处。	Digging rooms in the hills people continued living in caves.
太行千里想尧功。(“Xizheng” 4)	The thousand-li Taihang Mountains reminded me of Yao's feats.

The poem, like other poems in Wu Mi's collection, adopts the regulated form of *qilü* poetry and adheres closely to its formal rules, including eight seven-character lines, rhymed even lines, consistent use of one level-tone rhyme, and two middle couplets featuring internal parallelism.

Wu Mi's choice of *qilü* verse form, as his prologue to the collection states, is a deliberate imitation of Byron's employment of the Spenserian stanza. By asking readers to refer to Byron's stanzas on the Rhine, Wu Mi implicitly requests them to investigate Byron's use of a traditional verse form and its resemblance to China's *qilü* verse form, which might corroborate the legitimacy of classical verse forms in modern China. However, Wu Mi seems to take Byron's Spenserian stanza at face value. He contents himself with discovering Byron's use of a

traditional verse form but overlooks Byron's breach of the rules of Spenser's stanza.

Spenser's stanza demands a circling movement of lines 4-5 and lines 8-9 (Addison 12), but Byron's three stanzas on the Rhine all violate Spenser's norms. The sixtieth stanza of Byron's canto may illustrate this point.

Adieu to thee again! a vain adieu!
There can be no farewell to scene like thine;
The mind is colour'd by thy every hue;
And if reluctantly the eyes resign
Their cherish'd gaze upon thee, lovely Rhine!
'T is with the thankful heart of parting praise;
More mighty spots may rise, more glaring shine,
But none unite in one attaching maze
The brilliant, fair, and soft, – the glories of old days, (Tozer 124)

In a typical stanza from Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, the first four lines would comprise a quatrain and the fifth line would form a couplet with its preceding line, though the fifth line is merely ancillary to the meaning or sentence structure of the couplet (Addison 12). Yet in the above quoted stanza, the main semantic divisions occur between lines 3 and 4 and between lines 6 and 7, which means lines 4-6 should be treated as a whole. As a result, it is impossible to see lines 1-4 as a quatrain or lines 4-5 as an independent couplet. In short, the circling movement of lines 4-5 in Spenser's stanza is replaced by a progressive movement of lines 4-6 in Byron's stanza. What is more striking is that Byron's stanza ends with a comma, rather than a punctuation mark that normally could signify the ending of a sentence or a stanza. The comma indicates that the stanza is incomplete, which disrupts the audience's expectations of reading a self-contained poem. Even if Wu Mi's ignorance of the progressive movement of lines in Byron's stanza could be excused on the pretext of his unfamiliarity with the subtle rules of Spenser's stanza, his blindness to Byron's use of a comma to end a stanza could hardly be justified. Nonetheless, Wu Mi remains reticent about Byron's transgression of Spenser's rules and its implications for the use of classical verse forms in modern context.

Classical poetry loses favor with contemporary Chinese, Wu Mi insists, because there is a lack of new material to invigorate it (“Lun” 14). To Wu, new material means “what one sees, hears, thinks, or feels here and now” (14). It encompasses a wide range of subjects, including natural conditions and social customs across the globe, scholarly works and heroic deeds of the West, changing society and displaced people in China, and individual experiences and feelings, to name just a few (15). Du Fu’s poetry composed in times of chaos, Wu Mi claims, is a supreme example of putting new material in old metrical patterns (15). Wu Mi certainly sees Byron’s *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* III as another example, as his own poems produced during journeys to Xi’an and Europe are professed to be modeled after Byron. Following in the footsteps of Byron, and implicitly, also of Du Fu, Wu Mi takes it upon himself to revitalize classical poetry by incorporating new material collected during his quasi-exiles. *Miscellaneous Poems of the Travel to Xi’an*, the imitation more carefully patterned after Byron’s canto, examined alongside Byron’s stanzas where necessary, may best illustrate how Wu Mi appropriates Byron for his own poetic agenda.

Wu Mi’s main purpose of invoking Byron in the poem just discussed is to demonstrate how new material may revitalize classical poetry in the modern context. The first half of Wu Mi’s poem describes the sublime natural and artificial landscape he witnessed along the way: overcast weather, the valley, the path, cliffs, walls, buildings, and towers, which are new material gathered on site. Wu’s following couplet, as his note indicates, is a reference to Byron’s portrayal of the Rhine, which may be counted as new material from the West. Byron’s stanzas describe the “brilliant, fair, and soft” scene of the Rhine and suggest that it evokes “the glories of old days” (Tozer 124), which Wu Mi identifies as “the scene of Middle Ages feudalism”. Byron’s sixty-first stanza enumerates objects recalling past glories, including the white city, the gloomy precipice, Gothic walls, and wild rocks in the shape of turrets (124), which are apparently what Wu Mi intends his readers to compare with his own scene. In imitation of Byron’s flashback to old glories, Wu Mi, upon seeing the house caves that remain in use over the centuries in Taihang Mountains, is tempted to recall the feats of Yao, a legendary Chinese sage-king, in

the closing couplet. Wu Mi's meditation on the legendary ruler can also be seen as new material derived from individual feelings. In short, by appealing to the authority of Byron, Wu Mi parades the variety of new material he has employed, from the present to the past, China to the West, natural scenery to artificial constructions, his personal feelings to Byron's Romantic poetry.

Almost immediately after the poem alluding to Byron, Wu Mi, in the nineteenth poem of his collection, directs the reader's attention to the use of new material. The latter half of the poem and its translation are as follows.

丧乱干戈怀杜老。	I thought of Du Lao [i.e. Du Fu] because of the deadly and devastating wars.
苍凉丝管爱秦声。	I love the Qin tune featuring forlorn notes of stringed and wind instruments.
万山深雪朦胧月。	Ten thousand mountains were in deep snow and under the dim moon,
却照旅人诗思清。(4)	Which paradoxically lit up the traveler's clear poetic thinking.

The first line invokes Byron's Chinese counterpart Du Fu, the poet-exile whose utilization of new material in poetry Wu Mi particularly commends. Wu Mi's association of Du Fu with disastrous wars in the line is a clear reminder of Du's extraordinary incorporation of new material obtained in his exile ("Lun" 15). The third line describes a natural scene that Wu Mi saw in his quasi-exile following the example of Byron. To Wu Mi, this scene featuring the snow and the moon in a mountainous terrain is undoubtedly a kind of new material. Wu Mi claims in the last line that the hazy moonlight scene inspired his *shisi* 诗思 [poetic thinking], a term reaffirming that the scene is new material. Put together, the closing couplet comes to indicate that Wu Mi's quasi-exile in imitation of Byron offers him new material to invigorate classical poetry. By placing his Byron-inspired quasi-exile alongside Du Fu's experience, Wu Mi obviously intends to reassure his contemporary audience that collecting new material is a feasible or even universal way to revive classical poetry.

Wu Mi's agenda for poetry becomes conspicuous when the character *shi* 诗, meaning poem or poetry, appears in *Miscellaneous Poems of the Travel to Xi'an*. The character occurs altogether sixteen times in the anthology, in addition to numerous direct and indirect references to the names or works of various poets. What is

more striking is that, as in the word *shisi* 诗思 [poetic thinking], the character *shi* 诗 often appears in combination with other characters to highlight its relevance to new material. In the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth poems, for instance, Wu Mi shows how his journey following the example of Byron furnishes him with new material by using the term *shixing* 诗兴 [poetic inspiration].

马迹车尘诗兴加。(5) The horse's traces and the carriage's dust added to my poetic inspiration.

不道旅情随日减。 I don't care if my enthusiasm for the travel decreases every day.

但愁诗兴出山无。(5) I only worry that there is no poetic inspiration after leaving the mountain.

In the first example Wu Mi asserts that he was poetically inspired by the traces of horse hooves and the clouds of dust sent up by the carriage, which are a convenient metonym for his journey to Xi'an, or rather, the new material collected during the journey. In the second example, by expressing his worries about losing poetic inspiration after leaving the mountain, Wu Mi indicates that his trip in the mountain furnished him with new material. The fact that here Wu Mi cares less about his passion for the journey than about his poetic inspiration also betrays the true purpose of his quasi-exile in imitation of Byron, i.e. to invigorate classical poetry by seeking new material.

Both *shisi* 诗思 [poetic thinking] and *shixing* 诗兴 [poetic inspiration] could readily bring to mind their source or stimulus, i.e. the new material Wu Mi expects his audience to perceive. However, the later part of Wu's anthology goes so far as to raise the thin veil that separates these two terms from new material. That is to say, Wu directly calls the reader's attention to the collection of new material by substituting the word *shiliao* 诗料 [poetic material] for those two terms. The following are examples taken from the sixty-seventh and eighty-eighth poems in Wu Mi's anthology.

到处行踪添诗料。 Everywhere the traces of my movements added to poetic material.

杜陵千载意如何。(11) What would Duling [i.e. Du Fu] of a thousand year ago think about it?

更从何处寻诗料。 Where could I further seek poetic material?

风物山川悉旧经。(14) I have passed all the mountain and river scenery before.

The first couplet was composed when Wu Mi had arrived in Xi'an and visited some scenic spots as well as relatives and friends (*Wu Mi riji* 3: 294-303). The first line of the couplet plainly states that he collected plenty of poetic material during his visits. In the second line Wu Mi pretends to invite Du Fu to assess the poetic material he had collected in the latest stage of his Byron-inspired journey, a question not only evoking Du Fu's exemplary use of new material but also evincing Wu Mi's confidence in the richness and variety of his newly collected poetic material. The couplet shows that Wu Mi is optimistic that his new poetic material would contribute to the revitalization of classical poetry. The second couplet was written when Wu Mi had started his trip back to Beijing. Because the return journey would offer him no new scenery, Wu Mi wonders where he could get new poetic material. The couplet expresses Wu Mi's concern for new sources of poetic material not only in the remaining half of his journey but also after the ending of the present quasi-exile.

Wu Mi's composition of *Miscellaneous Poems of the Travel to Xi'an* during his trip to Xi'an is openly acknowledged to be an imitation of Byron's production of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* III in his self-imposed exile. Having ruled out the possibility of non-classical verse forms and turned a blind eye to Byron's sometimes conspicuous transgression of Spenser's rules, Wu Mi concentrates on the experimentation with new material in old metrical patterns. He not only alludes to Byron's stanzas to showcase the variety of his new material, but also invokes Du Fu's precedent to validate his collection of new material. His choices of words, from *shisi* 诗思 [poetic thought] to *shixing* 诗兴 [poetic inspiration] to *shiliao* 诗料 [poetic material], as his journey progressed, increasingly make explicit his intention to invigorate classical poetry by putting new material in old metrical patterns.

VINDICATING CHINA'S TRADITIONAL CULTURE

Wu Mi's writing of poetry in his self-inflicted quasi-exiles is patterned after Byron, Qu Yuan, and Du Fu, exemplary poet-exiles who supposedly maintained moral integrity and achieved poetic excellence in times of

frustration. Wu's emphasis on the relationship between moral excellence and poetic attainment is evident in the prologues surrounding the translation and imitation of Byron's canto. The prologues do not specify what are the ideals cherished by Wu Mi, but the canonization of Qu Yuan and Du Fu in pre-modern China was shaped by Confucian thought, which seems to indicate that Wu Mi has Confucianism in mind. This might be true, but it remains unclear how Confucianism can be related to Byron's ideals in Wu Mi's understanding. To better understand Wu Mi's approach to Byron, a number of questions have to be answered: What are the values that Wu Mi resolves to defend? How does he intend to achieve his aim through his enterprise of translating and imitating Byron? And how well does Byron's poetry serve Wu Mi's purpose?

Confucian Political Ideals

The seventeenth poem of Wu Mi's anthology harks back to the feats achieved by the legendary sage-king Yao. Wu also urges his audience to compare his poem with Byron's stanzas on the Rhine, which, as it turns out, suggest that the Rhine exhibits "the glories of old days" (Tozer 124). It shows that Wu expects his reader to see a parallel between his recall of Yao's feats upon seeing the Taihang Mountains and Byron's imagination of glorious old days upon seeing the Rhine. Wu seems to indicate that Byron's recognition of the glories of the past warrants his praise for Yao, one legendary ruler of ancient China. Because, as emphasized by the traditional Confucian school, Yao was the first of the three sage-kings in ancient China and a paragon of "personal virtue and wise rule" (Taylor and Choy 707), Wu Mi's regard for Yao's achievements reveals his hope to revive the teachings of Confucianism or even China's cultural traditions.

However, Wu Mi's call for attention to Byron's admission of past glories is a covert manipulation of the reading of Byron's stanzas. Byron's stanzas are his farewell to the Rhine before departing for the next stop of his journey, and his main purpose is to express his admiration for the beautiful natural scenery of the Rhine. Byron's reference to past glories is his affirmation of nature's connection to the past, rather than an advocacy of the revival of the past. In fact, in the last line of the stanzas in question, Byron even contrasts the durability of the Rhine's

natural scenes with the transience of the empires near the river (Tozer 124).

Wu Mi's true intention to vindicate Confucianism and cultural traditions in China's modern context by appealing to Byron's authority becomes more apparent in the thirty-first poem of his anthology. The poem is full of praise for Yu, the last of the three legendary sage-kings highly commended by the Confucian school. The first half of the poem relates Yu's assumed achievement of flood control and the continuous sacrifices offered to him over the millennia by Chinese people. The second half rebuts the doubts about the authenticity of Yu's existence raised by a historian from the iconoclastic camp of New Culturalists and, by drawing on Byron, endorses two major sacrifices carried out in ancient China:

不明国史成欺罔。

Ignorance of national history gives rise to deception.

竟说前王等獭虫。

Some should equate the past king [i.e. Yu] with otters and worms.

封禅莫讥方士技。

Scorn not the *feng* and *shan* sacrifices as the *fangshi*'s trick.

诗人浪漫亦推崇。(6)

The Romantic poet also holds such rituals in high regard.

The first couplet attacks the hypothesis about the origin of Yu formulated by Gu Jiegang 顾颉刚 (1893-1980), an apostle of the New Culturalist Hu Shi. Based on the records of some Chinese classics and the structure of the character *yu* 禹, Gu Jiegang surmises that Yu might originally be the image of a lizard-like worm pressed on bronze vessels, rather than a truly historical figure (62-64). Gu's conjecture calls into question Yu's historicity and, by inference, the validity of Confucian ideals and even China's cultural traditions. As a passionate defender of China's traditional culture, Wu Mi is understandably infuriated by such an unorthodox theory. His poem denounces Gu's view as deception, though he furnishes no concrete evidence to refute Gu's argument. Instead, in the following couplet Wu Mi alludes to a Romantic poet, whom Wu's explanatory note identifies as Byron. Wu seems to indicate that Byron as an authority would come to his support, though his couplet moves on to another issue capturing the interest of Confucian scholars: the *feng* and *shan* rites.

The couplet claims that the traditional *feng* and *shan* sacrifices in China are applauded by the Romantic poet Byron. Wu Mi's note to the poem also bids the reader refer to the ninety-first stanza in Byron's canto,

presumably to check his statement about Byron. The *feng* and *shan* sacrifices were usually performed at the peak and foot of Mount Tai, respectively to Heaven and Earth, by ancient Chinese rulers, in the hope of legitimatizing their reign and sometimes achieving immortality (Taylor and Choy 182-183; Yao 212-213). Mount Tai is chosen for the sacrifices because it is deemed the axis where Heavenly and Earthly deities might meet and because its association with “the east, spring, and new growth” is suitable for inaugurating a new dynasty (Bokenkamp 252). Although there is no textual basis for the *feng* and *shan* rites in the classics, Confucians generally have confidence in their antiquity and significance (Yao 212). The rites are believed to be conducted by the legendary rulers of China, including Yu, but only six verifiable sacrifices were performed in imperial China (Bokenkamp 250; Taylor and Choy 183). While the first two *feng* and *shan* sacrifices in imperial China were advised by *fangshi* 方士 [method masters], later performances of such religious rituals were increasingly organized under the direction of Confucians (Bokenkamp 252; Taylor and Choy 183). Therefore, the *feng* and *shan* rites held on Mountain Tai are in many ways symbolic of the role of Confucianism and China’s cultural traditions.

Wu Mi’s affirmation of the *feng* and *shan* sacrifices by invoking Byron is evidently an attempt to vindicate Confucianism and China’s cultural traditions. However, how could Byron, one may wonder, express his support for the religious practice of a remote nation? An examination of Byron’s ninety-first stanza will help to clarify the situation:

Not vainly did the early Persian make
His altar the high places, and the peak
Of earth-o’ergazing mountains, and thus take
A fit and unwall’d temple, there to seek
The Spirit, in whose honour shrines are weak,
Uprear’d of human hands. Come, and compare
Columns and idol-dwellings, Goth or Greek,
With Nature’s realms of worship, earth and air,
Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy pray’r! (Tozer 131)

Rather than making any direct mention of China's *feng* and *shan* rites, Byron's stanza states that high places in "Nature's realms" are more appropriate sites for worship than man-made shrines and temples. What Byron stresses is the suitability of high mountains in nature for worship, rather than the propriety or impropriety of religious devotion. Byron's stanzas preceding and succeeding the stanza in question are a detailed description of the beautiful nature he encountered in Lake Geneva. It is therefore fitting that Byron should think of nature as a better place for worship than artificial structures. Byron's lengthy note to the stanza further argues that Christian doctrines were better delivered on the mountain or in the fields, that orations were more effectual when given to the assemblies or in the forum, that emotions are perceived differently when the *Iliad* is read in a natural setting or in a library, and that the devotion of Muslims is more sincere, if erroneous, than other religious peoples because they could perform their religious rite anywhere at specified times (74-76). In brief, the idea conveyed by Byron is that the natural setting is more conducive to our understanding of the message imparted to us, be it religious, oratorical, or poetical.

Sitting Byron's stanza in its context and considering Byron's own note, one could plainly see that Byron intends to show the wonder of nature and the power of the natural setting to facilitate our understanding. Wu Mi's assertion that Byron lauds China's *feng* and *shan* rites, however, completely ignores Byron's accentuation of the wonder and power of nature. In fact, Byron is not concerned with the propriety or impropriety of religious devotion per se and may even be averse to non-Christian beliefs, for his note describes Muslim devotion as erroneous and Negro religious practices as pagan and disagreeable (75-76). It follows that, even if he is informed of China's *feng* and *shan* sacrifices, Byron is more likely to dismiss China's religious rites as non-Christian, rather than taking the trouble to prove their appropriateness.

Wu Mi not only neglects Byron's primary interest in nature and Byron's suspicion of non-Christian faiths, but also foregrounds Byron's belief in nature's power to enhance religious understanding. In this way Wu Mi guilefully reaches the conclusion that Byron would support China's *feng* and *shan* sacrifices simply because they are performed on Mount Tai, a natural setting. Wu Mi's distorted reading of Byron's stanza serves to justify Confucianism and China's cultural traditions embodied in the *feng* and *shan* rites. In the following part of his

collection, Wu Mi proceeds to overtly stress the necessity to turn to Confucianism and China's cultural traditions. He argues for the revival of *jiufeng* 旧风 [old custom], *jiuci* 旧祠 [old temples], and *jiuli* 旧礼 [old rites] in poems 33, 40, and 75. He contends in poems 36, 38, 60, 61, and 82 that *renshu* 仁术 [Confucian tactic of benevolence], *lijiao* 礼教 [Confucian rites and ethics], and *gangji* 纲纪 [Confucian mainstays and guidelines] could enlighten the common people and address China's social ills.

Confucian Moral Values

Apart from alluding to Byron to endorse Yao's feats and the *feng* and *shan* rites, Wu Mi subtly manipulates Byron's canto to foreground two essential Confucian tenets, i.e. the doctrine of the mean and the principle of filial piety. The thirtieth poem of Wu's anthology sings the praises of the reign of Yao and Shun, two legendary sage-kings commended by the Confucians, and pinpoints two Confucian doctrines that account for the peace and prosperity under their rule:

执中已判国民性。 National character has been decided on holding to the mean.

教孝端为政术枢。 (“Xizheng” 6) Teaching filial piety is indeed the pivot of political tactics.

The two tenets are none other than the Confucian doctrine of the mean and the Confucian principle of filial piety. The term *guomin xing* 国民性 [national character] in the quoted couplet reveals that Wu Mi's stress on the two Confucian tenets is informed by his concern for the contemporary intellectual obsession with the issue of Chinese national character. In the late Qing and early republican period, Chinese intellectuals, borrowing the Japanese neologism of the European concept of national character, attributed the backwardness of China to the weaknesses of its national character and campaigned against China's traditional culture, particularly Confucianism, as the presumed cause of China's flawed national character (Liu, *Translingual Practice* 45-51). Wu Mi's affirmation of the two Confucian tenets is, therefore, an attempt to counterbalance the attack on Confucianism and China's traditional culture launched by those iconoclasts.

In Confucian discourse the term *zhong* 中 [middle, medium, or mean] means that the individual discovers the point of centrality within the self and in relation to Heaven (Taylor and Choy 127). It often appears in the compound *zhongyong* 中庸 [the doctrine of the mean], which may refer to a crucial Confucian doctrine or the title of a Confucian classic. The compound denotes the practice of the ideal of equilibrium in Confucian self-cultivation, including filial devotion, mourning rites, and benevolent governance (Yao 831-832). The word *zhong* also frequently appears in Confucian expressions like *zhizhong* 执中 [holding to the mean] and *yun zhi jue zhong* 允执厥中 [sincerely holding to the mean], both underscoring the application of the principle of *zhong* or *zhongyong*. Whereas the former expression does not restrict its application to any specific circumstances, the later expression, originating in the advice to the legendary sage-king Yu offered by his predecessor Shun, bears overt political overtones (Legge 60-63).

Wu Mi's intention to confirm the Confucian doctrine *zhizhong* 执中 [holding to the mean] by resorting to Byron's authority is best exemplified in Yang Baochang's translation of the thirty-sixth stanza of Byron's canto. Byron's stanza, Yang's translation, and the back translation are as follows.

There sunk the greatest, nor the worst of men,
 Whose spirit, antithetically mixt,
 One moment of the mightiest, and again
 On little objects with like firmness fixt;
 Extreme in all things! hadst thou been betwixt,
 Thy throne had still been thine, or never been;
 For daring made thy rise as fall: thou seek'st
 Even now to re-assume the imperial mien,
 And shake again the world, the Thunderer of the scene! (Tozer 117)

失势第一人。亦自非元恶。
 惟其真精神。正反极综错。

六合与纤芥。瞬息易结讧。
苟能执厥中。万事加量度。
天位或莫跻。得跻莫能掠。
乃因敢作为。倏忽逢起落。
天子旧威仪。尚思重整作。
一举震大千。来与雷霆若。(13)

[He was the greatest of the disgraced and not the chief criminal himself.
Just because of his true spirit, positive and negative traits intricately mixed,
From six directions to the grass, he abruptly changed his association and reliance.
If he could hold to the mean and measure up ten-thousand things,
He might not ascend the heavenly throne, but once ascends none could seize it.
It was because of his daring deeds that he suddenly met with rise and fall.
The old awe-inspiring mien of the Son of Heaven, he still hopes to re-assume
And shake the boundless universe with one move, returning like a thunderbolt.]

Byron's stanza is his ruminations about the imperfect hero Napoleon, one year after the French emperor's final defeat in the battle of Waterloo. Byron has extremely ambivalent feelings toward the flawed French hero, admiring him for his astounding achievements but blaming him for abandoning revolutionary ideals (Garrett 204-205, 225-226). Byron's stanza as a whole hinges upon his belief that Napoleon's "antithetically mixt" spirit accounts for both his success and his failure. Lines 5-6 describes the implications of Napoleon's inclination for extremes: if he had a moderate disposition, he would not have been dethroned and would not have been enthroned in the first place. Byron's emphasis is Napoleon's stunning mixed qualities rather than the pros and cons of his propensity, still less the necessity to cultivate a moderate disposition. Yang Baochang's translation of the couplet, however, induces readers to embrace the Confucian doctrine of holding to the mean.

First of all, Yang Baochang's lines 7-8, corresponding to Byron's line 5, offer no translation of the first

half of Byron's line, i.e. "Extreme in all things", which is Byron's exclamation upon seeing Napoleon's "antithetically mixt" spirit. Byron's phrase accentuates Napoleon's proclivity for extremes, and its absence in the translated couplet significantly reduces the emphatic effect. Given Wu Mi's call for the Confucian doctrine of the mean, Yang's omission may not be accidental. Furthermore, Yang's expression *zhi jue zhong* 执厥中 [holding to the mean], a rendering of Byron's "been betwixt", alludes to *zhizhong* 执中 [holding to the mean] and *yun zhi jue zhong* 允执厥中 [sincerely holding to the mean], two Confucian expressions of putting into practice the doctrine of the mean. Yang's rendering also connects Byron's poem with the affirmation of *zhizhong* 执中 in Wu Mi's poem. Third, Yang's line 8, "measure up ten-thousand things", though a further elaboration on *zhi jue zhong* 执厥中, has no basis in Byron's original. Yang's added explanation only serves to foreground the Confucian doctrine. Finally, Yang's lines 9-10, corresponding to Byron's line 6, reverse the order of the two parts of Byron's line. Yang's inversion of Byron's clause order performs the function of accenting Byron's first clause, which in Yang's translation becomes "once [he] ascends [the throne] none could seize it [from him]". Because the precondition for this result is that, as suggested in Yang's line 7, Napoleon held to the mean, Yang's translation comes to indicate that holding to the mean would have ensured Napoleon's lasting success. Therefore, Yang's manipulation of Byron's verse lines has the effect of suggesting Byron's endorsement of the Confucian doctrine of the mean and corroborating the affirmation of the doctrine in Wu Mi's poem.

For Confucius, *xiao* 孝 [filial piety] means that one respectfully serves the parents during their lifetime and, after their death, conducts a proper funeral and offers sacrifices (Taylor and Choy 223; Yao 680). Confucians in general underscore that the performance of filial piety should be "a natural expression of human feeling" (Taylor and Choy 224). As a central virtue in Confucian thought, filial piety was almost universally celebrated as a virtue in ancient China, sometimes even as a criterion for assuming government office (Yao 680-681). Extreme acts of filial devotion, e.g. sacrificing oneself for a parent's health or wish, reasonable or not, were commended in artistic works and historical records and sometimes rewarded by the government (Taylor and Choy 224; Yao 680-681). In the Confucian classic *Xiao jing* 孝经 [The book of filial piety], filial piety is even considered the root of

all Confucian virtues and teachings and, accordingly, the fundamental principle of governing the world (Taylor and Choy 225; Yao 680).

Wu Mi's recourse to Byron's authority to justify the Confucian virtue of filial piety is first shown in his imitation of the arrangement of the theme of filial devotion in Byron's canto. Byron's opening stanza and concluding stanzas address his infant daughter, and stanzas 65-67 in the middle of the canto concentrate on the filial devotion of a legendary Swiss priestess. Wu Mi's collection of 105 poems arranges the motif of filial piety in a similar way. Wu starts his collection with a poem describing his prolonged separation from his adoptive father and in poem 100, one of the closing poems, laments that he could not wait upon his father. The middle part of Wu's collection is scattered with a few poems on the topic of filial affection, including poems 49, 54, 71, and 85.

Appropriation of Byron to confirm the Confucian doctrine is more evident in Yang Baochang's translation of Byron's sixty-sixth stanza. The following are Byron's stanza, Yang's translation, and the back translation.

And there – oh! sweet and sacred be the name! –
Julia – the daughter, the devoted – gave
Her youth to Heaven; her heart, beneath a claim
Nearest to Heaven's, broke o'er a father's grave.
Justice is sworn 'gainst tears, and hers would crave
The life she lived in; but the judge was just,
And then she died on him she could not save.
Their tomb was simple, and without a bust,
And held within their urn one mind, one heart, one dust.
呜呼孝女名。芬芳而神圣。
华年不自惜。还天惟一命。
存心尽至情。殆与天心并。

慈父孤坟头。断肠悲无竟。
执法誓无私。那惜珠泪迸。
父死我何生。判言独公正。
无成救父功。殉死见真性。
草草留荒莹。父女同一穿。

[Alas and alack, the name of the devoted daughter was sweet and sacred.
Treasuring not her prime years, she had only her life to return to Heaven.
To her most genuine feeling she devoted her heart, which verged on Heaven's.
On her kind father's lone tumulus, she was heartbroken with untold sorrow.
Law enforcement, vowed to be impartial, pitied not the gush of pearl-like tears.
How could I live if my father is dead? The judge's words were arbitrarily just.
Her effort to save father was in vain, and her sacrifice of life showed her true nature.
Hastily left was a desolate grave, where father and daughter shared the same pit.]

Byron's stanza recounts the story of the Swiss priestess Julia Alpinula, whose father, one chief man in the nation, was sentenced to death by a Roman general for inciting resistance to the Roman army (Tozer 274). Julia entreated the general in vain to spare her father's life and died soon after her father's execution, presumably because of her grief at her father's death (*Childe* 73; Lardner 27). Byron's stanza and its note commend Julia on her filial devotion in general terms, but Julia's image in Yang's translation is indicative of a Confucian filial daughter.

Two words describing Julia's filial affection in Yang Baochang's translation have no basis in Byron's original, i.e. *zhiqing* 至情 [most genuine feeling] and *zhenxing* 真性 [true nature]. Both words stress that Julia's attachment to her father is a natural feeling, which is essentially a Confucian ideal of filial piety (Taylor and Choy 224). Byron's expressions like "gave Her youth to Heaven" and "she died on him" are a general description of Julia's death in the prime of life because of her distress at the loss of her father. Corresponding to these two expressions are the third and eleventh lines in Yang's translation, i.e. "Treasuring not her prime years" and "How

could I live if my father is dead?” Yang’s translated lines indicate that Julia intended to give up her life upon her father’s demise. Yang’s term *xunsi* 殉死 [sacrifice her life] in the fourteenth line more plainly states that Julia deliberately sacrificed her life because of her father’s death, a point reiterated in Yang’s explanatory note to the line in question. In short, while Byron’s stanza shows Julia’s filial piety by stressing the intensity of her grief, Yang’s manipulation pushes Julia’s filial devotion to the extreme by claiming that the heroine intentionally sacrificed her life. Such an extreme performance of filial obligation portrayed in Yang’s translation, though groundless in Byron’s original, is in line with the Confucian expectation of dutiful children in pre-modern China.

REAFFIRMING NEW HUMANISM

Wu Mi’s agenda for Confucianism and China’s traditional culture is bound up with his advocacy of Irving Babbitt’s (1865-1933) New Humanism, which dismisses sentimental naturalism as one of the two types of humanitarianism that is the root of the problem in the modern world (*Literature* 32-71). Sentimental naturalism, Babbitt argues, is “an important element, if not the most important element, in the so-called romantic movement” (33). It follows that Babbitt’s New Humanism is critical of all strains of romanticism and romantic poetry. So how does Wu Mi, an avowed disciple of Babbitt, come to terms with the tensions between Byron’s romantic poem and Babbitt’s neo-humanistic theory? Does Wu’s reading of Byron, as an admirer of cultural traditions, consonant with Babbitt’s perception of the British Romantic poet? And should any discrepancy between Byron’s poem and Babbitt’s teachings arise, with whom does Wu lie his loyalties?

Contrasting New Humanism with Romanticism

The closing part of Wu Mi’s anthology records his journey back to Beijing from Xi’an, but just after a couple of poems that mark the beginning of his return journey, Wu Mi inserts seven poems reflecting on his

intellectual pursuit, or rather, intellectual frustration. One of the inserted reflective poems, the one recollecting his Harvard mentor Irving Babbitt, makes explicit Wu Mi's wider agenda for culture. The poem and its translation are as follows.

喜从沧海遇名师。	I was happy to meet a renowned teacher when I was overseas.
白发苍颜鸾鹤姿。	He has grey hairs, a hoary look, and the graceful bearing of a phoenix or crane.
悲智双修同耶佛。	He cultivates both compassion and wisdom like Christ and Buddha,
人文化世慕宣尼。	Civilizes the world with humanism, and reveres Xuan Ni.
本源有自绝歧路。	I have the source [of knowledge] to eliminate wrong roads.
新说夙闻证旧知。	The many new doctrines I have learned confirm my old knowledge.
步武苏俄成党治。	Treading in the footsteps of Soviet Russia leads to the rule of party.
自持和璧赠伊谁。(14)	I hold the He's jade disc by myself, but to whom could I present it?

The term *Xuan Ni* 宣尼 in the fourth line is a convenient way of referring to Confucius, for it is an abbreviation of the first honorific title conferred upon Confucius in imperial China. The poem captures Wu Mi's fundamental views of culture and the dilemma he faced in his effort to disseminate his ideas. Wu Mi is fully convinced of Babbitt's New Humanism, which opposes extremes and draws a parallel between Eastern and Western cultural traditions. Babbitt distinguishes three levels of human experience: the religious, the humanistic, and the naturalistic. He believes that, in terms of religious experience, the good results of Buddhism in the Far East confirm Christianity in the Occident, and that, in terms of humanistic experience, the great ethical teachings of Confucius echo that of Aristotle and ancient Greeks who upheld "decorum and the law of measure" (*Rousseau* xix). What Babbitt sets out to repudiate is the scientific and emotional naturalism prevailing in the West (*Literature* 32-71). In particular, Babbitt maintains that the emotional naturalistic movement, of which romanticism is a part, has its Oriental equivalent in China's Taoism (*Rousseau* xix). Babbitt's neo-humanistic doctrines, as new Western knowledge, reinforce Wu Mi's belief in China's cultural traditions governed by Confucianism. However, to his dismay, Wu Mi finds that his contemporary audience are indoctrinated with the

iconoclasm of New Cultural radicals. Wu Mi laments that he could not put his neo-humanistic ideas into play, since the nationalist party's rule, with its overt dismissal of *shiren lijiao* 食人礼教 [cannibalistic Confucian ritual religion] ("Xizheng" 13), is a further move away from neo-humanistic doctrines.

Given that Babbitt is never reticent about his distaste for romanticists and romantic poetry, what should we make of the tensions between Babbitt's New Humanism and Wu Mi's exaltation of the third canto of Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, a typical romantic poem? Byron's canto includes a number of stanzas contemplating Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), the father of European romanticism, and Voltaire (1694-1778), a key figure of the French Enlightenment. Both Rousseau and Voltaire, however, are under fierce attack in Babbitt's writings. This apparent contradiction raises further questions about Wu Mi's approach to Byron's canto. In Yang Baochang's translation of the canto, the explanatory notes for the two French thinkers urge the reader to consult the editorial comments in the beginning of two translated essays published in the eighteenth issue of the *Critical Review*. The editorial comments, as it turns out, are two lengthy essays on their own, both covering about ten pages. Since Wu Mi is the only editor of the journal, both the explanatory notes and the editorial comments could have been written by none other than Wu Mi himself. The extended editorial comments, therefore, offer an easy access to Wu Mi's intended interpretation of Byron's stanzas on Rousseau and Voltaire.

The two editorial comments prove to be a clear vindication of New Humanism following Babbitt's line of reasoning. Babbitt ascribes the obscurity of neo-humanistic doctrines among his contemporaries to the domination of scientific naturalism represented by Francis Bacon (1561-1626) and the emotional naturalism originating in Rousseau. Accordingly, in his writings he takes great pains to demonstrate the fallacy of their ideas and their denial or corruption of traditional values, both religious and humanistic (*Literature* 32-71; *Rousseau*). Paraphrasing Babbitt, Wu Mi asserts that the turmoil of his contemporary world is caused by the dominance of science and emotional romanticism, respectively represented by Bacon and Rousseau (Xu Zhen'e 1). Wu Mi, however, opts to elaborate on Rousseau and Voltaire because the two thinkers contributed most to the rise of science and emotional romanticism in France, which, Wu stresses, is the source of new thoughts, theories, and trends rampant in the modern world (Chen Jun 1-4). Because Rousseau is the main target of Babbitt's attack and

because Rousseau is most influential in the development of romantic poetry, a probe into Wu Mi's commentary on Rousseau and Byron's stanzas on Rousseau may best illustrate how Wu Mi's approach to Byron's canto is informed by his agenda for New Humanism.

Wu Mi believes that Rousseau's preaching and practice are in urgent need of critical examination because contemporary discussions about art, literature, morality, and reforms are all on the wrong track initiated by the French thinker (Xu Zhen'e 1). Wu Mi's commentary on Rousseau focuses on the philosopher's autobiography *Confessions*, which, Wu observes, though laudable as a revolt against the artificiality of the eighteenth century, runs counter to the humanism of the ancients and the doctrines of Christianity, two pillars of European civilization to which Babbitt's New Humanism holds fast (Xu Zhen'e 7-8). Wu Mi considers *Confessions* a major spring of romanticism because it betrays ten negative traits that anticipate the nature and conduct of later romanticists (Xu Zhen'e 9). The key points of those traits include overconfidence in one's own genius, pursuit of strangeness, indulgence in emotions, rejection of reason, lapse into melancholic fits, isolation from the human world, worship of nature, immersion in the dream world, proneness to unrestrained behavior, spontaneous composition of literary works, and proclivity for fanciful ideas of saving the world (Xu Zhen'e 9). Such derogatory characterization of romanticists is, in effect, a loose recapitulation of Babbitt's erudite arguments against romantic genius, imagination, morality, love, irony, cult of nature, and melancholy, especially in *Rousseau and Romanticism*.

Invoking a Romantic to Reject Romanticism

Wu Mi's intentions become plain to see when Byron's stanzas on Rousseau are checked against Babbitt's refutation of Rousseau and romanticism. In his criticism of Rousseau and romanticism, despite his distrust of Byron's critical abilities (*Masters* 64-65), Babbitt often draws on Byron's verse lines and capitalizes on expressions similar or identical to Byron's portrayal of Rousseau. Indeed, Babbitt acknowledges that he often quotes randomly from the third canto of Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, which contains what he terms "important passages" (*Rousseau* 399) on Rousseau.

Byron's stanzas 76-81 on Rousseau all reveal characteristics of the romanticists disparaged by Babbitt. The seventy-seventh stanza, in particular, lays bare multiple such characteristics and is therefore cited in its entirety here.

Here the self-torturing sophist, wild Rousseau,
The apostle of affliction, he who threw
Enchantment over passion, and from woe
Wrung overwhelming eloquence, first drew
The breath which made him wretched; yet he knew
How to make madness beautiful, and cast
O'er erring deeds and thoughts a heavenly hue
Of words, like sunbeams, dazzling as they past
The eyes, which o'er them shed tears feelingly and fast. (Tozer 128)

Byron's first line categorizes Rousseau as a sophist, a skilled rhetorician who reasons with specious arguments. This characterization of Rousseau is supported by the following account of the thinker as one who could wring eloquence from woe, "make madness beautiful," and give "a heavenly hue" to wrongdoing. Babbitt adopts the term "sophist" when he compares the difference between Socrates (c. 470 – 399 BC) and Rousseau to that "between a sage and a sophist" (*Literature* 23), a comparison intended to show that Rousseau could not attain harmony between his thought and feeling like Socrates. Babbitt quotes Byron's lines 6-7 to demonstrate that Rousseau's romantic imagination or illusion was used to cover the aberrations of his senses, which depart from any rational purpose (*New Laokoon* 103-105). Byron's description of Rousseau as one "who threw / Enchantment over passion" anticipates Babbitt's attack on Rousseau's cult of vertigo and intoxication and his related romantic morality that rests virtue and conscience on changeable passion and emotion rather than reason (*Rousseau* 179-181). In much the same spirit, Babbitt appropriates Byron's expression "make madness beautiful" to condemn Rousseauistic art that places emotional intoxication over proper moral discrimination (*Rousseau* 360-361). Byron's remarks about Rousseau's "passion," "madness," and "erring deeds and thoughts" remind one of

Babbitt's repudiation of Rousseauistic romantic genius, who rejects reason, form, and the "idea of an ethical centre" (*Rousseau* 53), among other humanistic doctrines. Byron's stanza uses a number of similar expressions to highlight Rousseau's prolonged experience of misery, including "self-torturing," "apostle of affliction," "woe," and "wretched." To Babbitt, Rousseau's grief is typical of the romantic melancholy resulting from the vain pursuit of happiness in unrestrained emotions (*Rousseau* 306-352). Indeed, alluding to Byron's verse line, Babbitt calls Rousseau's followers, preoccupied with personal and private sorrow, "apostles of affliction" (*Rousseau* 311).

Byron's other stanzas on Rousseau also disclose the French thinker's romantic traits condemned by Babbitt. For example, Byron's eightieth stanza describes Rousseau's strained relationship with "self-sought foes" (Tozer 129), self-banished friends, and even the whole human race. To Babbitt, such misanthropy is closely related to romantic irony, which features emotional disillusion with people who could not correspond to the ideal man existing only in the romanticist's dream world (*Rousseau* 265-267). Byron's eighty-first stanza relates how Rousseau's radical political ideas, i.e. the natural equality of humanity and unjust institutions of society, profoundly influenced the French Revolution. The subversive power of Rousseau's ideas is connected with a second type of romantic melancholy denounced by Babbitt. Many romanticists, Babbitt claims, Rousseau apparently included, when losing their faith in traditional communions, either classical or religious, would succumb to forlornness and hope to establish "the new religion of human brotherhood" (*Rousseau* 324) to revolt against the traditions and institutions (322-326).

Byron's canto includes a cluster of stanzas on the Swiss village of Clarens, the scenic setting of Rousseau's immensely popular epistolary novel *Julie, or the New Heloise*. Byron's reference to the theme of love and the cult of nature in Rousseau's novel evokes Babbitt's criticism of some Rousseauistic elements often associated with the cult of nature. Babbitt enumerates three elements of Rousseauism, i.e. "Arcadian longing, the pursuit of the dream woman, [and] the aspiration towards the 'infinite'" (*Rousseau* 278-279). He suggests that these elements, though sometimes appearing independently, are almost always mixed with each other and with the worship of nature. Byron's description that the love in Rousseau's novel sought "a refuge from the worldly shocks" (Tozer 133) in the picturesque Clarens is certainly redolent of Babbitt's condemnation of Rousseau's

exaltation of natural beauties in *Julie, or the New Heloise* (Rousseau 276).

In brief, Byron's stanzas commenting on or alluding to Rousseau disclose a number of romantic traits castigated by Babbitt, including romantic genius, imagination, morality, irony, cult of nature, and melancholy. It now becomes clear that Wu Mi intends to affirm Babbitt's New Humanism by invoking Byron's authority to repudiate Rousseau's romantic attributes and, by extension, the emotional romanticism inspired by the French thinker.

Connecting Confucianism and New Humanism

Since Byron's portrayal of Rousseau could largely serve Wu Mi's purpose, Yang Baochang's translation could easily expose the assumed negative traits of romanticists by simply following Byron's wording. Nonetheless, Yang's translation still contains some conspicuous manipulations of Byron's text. For example, Byron's seventy-sixth stanza observes that Rousseau sacrificed everything to satisfy his desire "to be glorious" (Tozer 128). Yang renders the term "glorious" into *xianhe* 显赫 [illustrious or eminent]. While both "glorious" and *xianhe* 显赫 mean enjoying great fame, the Chinese word *xinhe* 显赫 is often associated with the possession of great power. So Yang's translated verse comes to indicate that Rousseau had no scruples about pursuing power, which reinforces Babbitt's accusation that Rousseau's romantic morality, blending the cult of power with the pretended will to brotherhood, is in effect egoism (Rousseau 192-196).

The most striking manipulation of Byron's text, however, is the appearance of the character *li* 礼 [rituals, etiquette, or propriety] in Yang Baochang's rendering of Byron's seventy-ninth stanza. The following are Byron's relevant lines, Yang's translation, and the back translation.

This [Rousseau's love] hallow'd, too, the memorable kiss
Which every morn his fever'd lip would greet,
From hers, who but with friendship his would greet; (128)

更将难忘事。书来极神圣。

朝朝情怀烈。亲口接芳唇。

彼姝非有意。常礼不妨频。(24)

[He even recorded an unforgettable affair in extremely hallowed words.

Every morning his feelings were intense as his mouth touched the fragrant lips.

The beauty, though not affectionate, minded not the frequency of common etiquette.]

Byron's lines refer to an episode recorded in Rousseau's *Confessions*: when Rousseau lived at the estate of Madame d'Epinau (1726-1783) in 1757, he became infatuated with Madame d'Houdetot (1730-1813), the hostess's sister-in-law, and would take a long morning walk just for the customary French salutation, which involved a kiss, from her. The word "friendship" is used by Byron to describe Madame d'Houdetot's response to Rousseau's passion, a description that has its factual basis in Rousseau's phraseology in *Confessions* (88-126). However, in Yang's translation there is no expression corresponding to Byron's term in meaning. What comes in the place of Byron's word is the phrase *chang li* 常礼 [customary or common etiquette] in Yang's version. Yang's note takes the trouble to explain, or rather stress that, for the French people, the morning kiss is *chang li* [customary or common etiquette] (24). Yang's repetition of the term *chang li*, together with his omission of Byron's word "friendship", has the obvious effect of giving prominence to *chang li*. Because *li* 礼 is one of the five *chang* 常 [Constants] of Confucian ethics, Yang's expression *chang li* 常礼 induces readers to approve of the five constant Confucian virtues, thus betraying Wu Mi and Yang Baochang's true intention to reaffirm Confucianism and, by extension, Babbitt's New Humanism that encompasses Confucianism.

Wu Mi and Yang Baochang's agenda becomes even more evident when the character *li* 礼 comes under closer scrutiny. Although the semantic and grammatical contexts necessitate an expedient back translation of the character as "etiquette", the Chinese term *li* actually has multiple connotations that could better suit Wu and Yang's purpose. The etymology of *li* could be traced back to the ritual or religious practices of offering sacrifices to the spirits in the Shang dynasty (c. 1600 – c. 1046 BC) (Taylor and Choy 367). The term then expands to mean

the ritual attitude of reverence for the differences between things and the possible religious attitude toward the interpersonal relationships embodied in the ritual (Taylor and Choy 367). As a key Confucian concept, *li* loses most, if not all, of its religious overtones and has been variously translated as rites, ritual, regulations, ceremonies, etiquette, propriety, decorum, and codes of conduct, among others (Radice; Taylor and Choy 367-370; Yao 356-358). The host of translations can be grouped into two categories corresponding to the two different usages of the term in the ancient Chinese context. One group highlights the actual performance of the ritual, as represented by rites and ritual. The other, including propriety and decorum, foregrounds the proper attitude toward the ritual.

Confucius's account of *li* 礼 stresses that the ritual performance, as an outer form revealing the moral cultivation of individuals and the order and harmony of the world, is significant only as manifestation of inner feelings (Taylor and Choy 368). Mencius (372 BC - 289 BC), less concerned with the ritual performance, tends to focus on *li* as propriety, reflective of a proper moral character, a view that becomes the orthodoxy of later neo-Confucians (Taylor and Choy 369). Xunzi (c. 313 BC - c. 238 BC), however, conceives the performance of rites as a way for individuals to control and properly express desires and for the world to achieve order and harmony, a view that dominates the classical period of Confucianism (Taylor and Choy 369). Therefore, depending on one's interpretation and the context, the Chinese character *li* can convey not only the message of social etiquette but also the sense of propriety, moral cultivation, and proper expression of desires, among other things. Meanings like propriety and moral cultivation apparently resonate with Babbitt's emphasis on discipline and self-cultivation in his definition of New Humanism (*Literature* 1-31).

In point of fact, Wu Mi intends his readers to grasp the correspondence between the Confucian virtue *li* 礼 and the essence of Babbitt's New Humanism. In the comment preceding a translated essay on Rousseau in the eighteenth issue of the *Critical Review*, the editor observes,

The humanism of the ancients attaches the greatest importance to *li* 礼, that is, Decorum. *Li* 礼 means propriety and nothing in excess. It is the standards of the mind, rather than ostentatious or superficial rituals and ceremonies. (Xu Zhen'e 8)

This commentary effectively equates Babbitt's neo-humanistic virtue of decorum with the Confucian ethical concept *li* 礼, though the emphasis is laid on *li* as a proper moral attitude rather than the performance of rituals. The note to Yang Baochang's translation of Byron's stanzas on Rousseau recommends the reader to refer to this editorial comment. As suggested earlier, both the note to Yang's translation and the editorial comment in question were written by none other than Wu Mi himself. Therefore, it is obvious that Wu Mi attempts to get the message across to his Chinese audience that *li*, or decorum, is a guiding principle shared by Confucianism and New Humanism. The correspondence between Confucian and neo-humanistic doctrines, Wu Mi indicates or hopes, could prove the validity of both.

Wu Mi's equation of the neo-humanistic decorum with a Confucian virtue, however, is not completely his own invention. Babbitt, after a study of Confucius, concludes that Confucianism agrees to "decorum and the law of measure" (*Rousseau* xix), the two doctrines that characterize Western humanists. He also maintains that decorum is "the supreme virtue of the humanist" (*Rousseau* 380) and that "the law of measure is the supreme law of life" (*Literature* 23). Babbitt's statements show that his doctrine of decorum closely resembles Mencius's interpretation of *li* 礼 as propriety. Nonetheless, Babbitt does not explicitly state that decorum is the English equivalent of Confucian *li*. In fact, *li* is never rendered into decorum in James Legge's (1815-1897) translations of Confucian classics, which are most probably the version Babbitt consulted. What Babbitt does suggest is that under certain conditions decorum runs the risk of deteriorating into perfunctory actions, as evidenced by the artificiality of French neo-classicism and the decorum of some Confucians (*Rousseau* 380). This explication indicates that Babbitt's doctrine of decorum, when put into practice, may be compatible with rituals, provided that they are not mere artificiality or formalism. In this sense, Wu Mi's translation of Babbitt's decorum into Confucian *li* can be justified, though he has to caution readers against "ostentatious or superficial rituals and ceremonies" (Xu Zhen'e 8) that might be associated with the Chinese character in common parlance.

The imitation, translation, note, prologue, annotation, and commentary surrounding Byron's canto, by Wu Mi or Yang Baochang, are all intended to confirm Babbitt's New Humanism. However, an array of questions may pop up, given that Byron and his canto are commonly perceived to be romantic in nature: Is there any gap between Byron's portrait of Rousseau and Babbitt's understanding of the philosopher? Does Byron himself, as a Romantic, fare well in Babbitt's program of new humanism? Are Byron's stanzas on Rousseau composed for the purpose of denigrating the French thinker and the Romantic Movement inspired by him? And, above all, should any discrepancy arise, how does Wu Mi come to terms with it?

Of all Byron's major comments on Rousseau in the canto, only one does not seem to find favor with Babbitt. Byron's seventy-eighth stanza suggests that Rousseau's love is for "ideal beauty" (Tozer 128), but Babbitt contends that "Rousseau's love even when most ideal is [not] really exalted above the fleshly level" (*Rousseau* 220). In fact, Babbitt repeatedly argues that the essence of Rousseau's love is the confusion or blending of the ideal and real loves, which might be the most salient feature of romantic love (*New Laokoon* 98-100; *Rousseau* 220-221). The reason why the romanticists confuse two planes of love, Babbitt maintains, is that they do not want to overcome their own egoism, despite their wishes to indulge themselves in the ecstasy of ideal love (*Rousseau* 225). Yang Baochang's translation does not seriously distort Byron's verse lines to suit Wu Mi's needs. Nor does Wu Mi bother to rectify Byron's interpretation of Rousseau's love. This perhaps could be explained by the fact that Byron's following stanza 79, from the perspective of Babbitt, actually shows how Rousseau blended his heavenly and earthly loves in the epistolary novel *Julie, or the New Heloise*. The inspiration for the novel's heroine, i.e. Madame d'Houdetot, as Babbitt elsewhere indicates, blends with Rousseau's love of sylphs, a symbol of ideal love (*Rousseau* 227).

While Babbitt frequently takes advantage of Byron's poetry to attack Rousseau and romanticism, Byron as a Romantic is not immune from Babbitt's criticism. Throughout *Rousseau and Romanticism* and sometimes in Babbitt's other works, Byron as a disciple of Rousseau is time and again pushed forward to demonstrate all the

negative traits of romanticists. Byron is especially censured for his worship of nature (*Rousseau* 269-280). Overall, keenly aware of the contradiction between Byron's theory and practice, Babbitt perceives Byron as a Rousseauist revolting against "authority and tradition" (*Masters* 60). Nonetheless, Wu Mi's enterprise of imitating and translating the third canto of Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* could perhaps be justified by the fact that, despite his frequent reference to the canto, Babbitt hardly ever draws on the canto to denounce Byron's romantic traits. The one occasion where Babbitt does cite the canto to criticize Byron is the chapter on romanticism and nature in *Rousseau and Romanticism*. Here Babbitt quotes a few lines from Byron's seventy-second stanza to illustrate the Romantic's cult of nature by partaking of its infinitude (*Rousseau* 280). The following are Byron's verse lines, Yang Baochang's translation, and the back translation.

I live not in myself, but I become
Portion of that around me; and to me
High mountains are a feeling, but the hum
Of human cities torture ... (Tozer 127)

冥然合造化。此身非我有。

息息能相通。高山亦良友。

城市极喧嚣。在我不堪受。(Yang Baochang 23)

[Merged in an abstruse way with nature, this body does not belong to myself.

High mountains, with which I can be closely linked, are also a good friend.

Cities, extremely noisy, are to me not bearable.]

Byron's lines show that he evinces the infinitude of nature, which, Babbitt stresses, is "an infinitude [...] of feeling" (*Rousseau* 280). However, the term "feeling" in Byron's poem is replaced by *liangyou* 良友 [a good friend] in Yang Baochang's translation. Yang's manipulation not only deviates from Babbitt's emphasis on "feeling" but also keeps Byron separate from nature, thus downplaying the poet's romantic trait criticized by Babbitt. As a result, Babbitt's only direct attack on Byron's third canto is purged, which certainly works to Wu

Mi's advantage.

Byron's comprehensive portrayal of Rousseau is intrinsically ambivalent. On the one hand, his passages on Rousseau capture the variety of charges, though biased, pressed against Rousseau by conventional English opinions, e.g. egoism, sophistry, insanity, paranoia, sensibility, and radical ideas (Duffy 72-73). On the other hand, Byron's stanzas highlight Rousseau's passionate love of "ideal beauty" and his contribution to the toppling of old beliefs and oppressive regimes (Duffy 73). The equivocal attributes that characterize Byron's portrait of Rousseau make the French writer his "first *literary* Byronic hero" (McGann 43). While Byron deliberately dissociated himself from Rousseau, his contemporaries readily discerned the strong resemblance between the two personages' work, character, and life: both impressed personal marks on their works, both showed egoism, sensibility, and misanthropy, and both experienced isolation from the public (Duffy 74-75). By inducing the audience to engage with his editorial comment on Rousseau, Wu Mi intentionally highlights Byron's portrayal of Rousseau's romantic traits deplorable in the eyes of traditional English prejudices and Babbitt's New Humanism. Meanwhile, Wu Mi and Yang Baochang's prologues, annotations, and commentary give no hint of Byron's striking similarity to Rousseau. Instead, they make Byron an English version of Qu Yuan or Du Fu, which serves to indicate Byron's moral virtue and distance Byron from the heavily criticized Rousseau.

While Wu Mi's appropriation of Byron seems to serve his purpose, one may still wonder if Wu Mi is cognizant of Babbitt's negative attitude toward Byron as a Romantic. According to Wu Mi's diary and chronicle, during his three-year study at Harvard University, his adviser had always been Babbitt, and he took all of Babbitt's courses, some of which were directly related to romanticism, e.g. *Rousseau and His Influences*, *Literary Criticism Since the Sixteenth Century*, and *The Romantic Movement in the Nineteenth Century* (*Wu Mi zhibian* 178-197; *Wu Mi riji* 2: 14, 76). Moreover, from 1918 to 1920, Wu Mi, as he claims, read through all of Babbitt's monographs and pamphlets, including the latest ones (*Wu Mi zhibian* 181-198). Numerous translations of Babbitt's works and elucidations of his theories in the *Critical Review* also testify to Wu Mi's familiarity with Babbitt's ideas. Therefore, it is hardly imaginable that Wu Mi should be ill-informed of Babbitt's criticism of Byron. Wu Mi gives away his true, if temporary, conception of Byron in an entry to his diary written in late 1926. The entry

expresses Wu Mi's worry that, frustrated at the futility of his cultural endeavors, he might, against his own will, sink into depression and, like the Romantic Byron, compose poetry voicing "discontent and indignation" (*Wu Mi riji* 3: 252). It is of interest to note that the entry was written just less than two months before his ambitious project to imitate Byron's lengthy canto (*Wu Mi riji* 3: 277-278). It reveals that Wu Mi opts to approach the English poet despite his knowledge of Byron's romantic traits. Nevertheless, the significance of Wu Mi's appropriation of Byron is perhaps best understood in the contemporary Chinese context, which is now examined.

SITUATING WU MI'S ENTERPRISE IN CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT

As he was conscious of the craze for Byron in contemporary China, Wu Mi's portrayal of Byron enters into a direct dialogue with the received image of the British Romantic poet. Wu's voice, however, has long been silenced in the history of modern Chinese literature because of his endorsement of classical poetics and cultural traditions. It is, therefore, worthwhile to examine Wu's presentation of Byron against the image of Byron recognized by the dominant May Fourth discourse. The established image of Byron in the late imperial and early era initially pivoted on Chinese translations of Byron's poem "The Isle of Greece". Byron's profile was further raised by his admirer Su Manshu, whose Byronic temperament, lifestyle, and works inspired a whole generation of Chinese writers. Byron's influence in China reached a climax in 1924 when leading magazines devoted special issues in memory of the centenary of the British Romantic poet's death.

Byron's Profile in Late Imperial and Early Republican China

Byron was immensely popular in early twentieth-century China, mostly as a Satanic freedom fighter and sometimes as a sentimental Romantic poet. Byron's reception in this period can be divided into two phases, demarcated by the literary reform initiated by Hu Shi in 1917. Before 1917, some of the most influential literati,

e.g. Liang Qichao and Su Manshu, and some budding political or literary leaders, e.g. Ma Junwu and Hu Shi, had translated some of Byron's poems and introduced his life and works for Chinese readers. What captivated Chinese men of letters most were Byron's supposedly heroic involvement in the Greek War of Independence and his set of poems commonly titled "The Isles of Greece" and believed to be the epitome of his revolutionary spirit. Such fascination with Byron in China was largely informed by the prevalence of revolutionary thought toward the end of the Qing dynasty (Chu 79; Lu Xun 204). Translation of Byron in this phase is marked by the use of classical Chinese language and variations of classical Chinese verse forms.

"The Isles of Greece" is a lyric sung by "a sad trimmer" (184) in the third canto of Byron's satirical poem *Don Juan*. The song appeals to the Greeks to fight for their freedom by contrasting their country's glorious past with its present subjugation to Ottoman Turks, though, sung by a trimmer poet, it has a trace of irony (Garrett 153; Stabler, *Byron* 197). The four men of letters mentioned above all translated this song, but, wittingly or not, they all missed the touch of sarcasm in Byron's work (Chu 91). By contrast, they highlighted the song's political message. Liang Qichao, a late Qing reformist, translated two stanzas from the song in his political novel *Xin Zhongguo weilai ji* 新中国未来记 [The future of new China]. The characters' comments surrounding the translated stanzas in Liang's novel commend Byron's love for freedom and his participation in the Greek Revolution and overtly suggest the song's relevance to contemporary China. Ma Junwu, a founding member of the unified anti-Manchu revolutionary society headed by Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925), produced the first complete translation of the song in 1905. Ma's version flaunts his political agenda by rewriting Byron's verse lines scornful of the Greeks and Byron's couplet favoring a native tyrant, a lesser evil compared with foreign rule (Chu 85-87). Hu Shi's preface to his version states the song's intention to foster the patriotism of Greeks and relates Byron's assistance to the Greek liberation movement. Hu's emphasis on the song's political overtones is also evidenced by his deletion of a passage from his preface revealing Byron's dissolute life in subsequent publications of his translation (*Changshi* 94).

Of the four literati in question, only Su Manshu, "a frustrated revolutionist" and "self-styled wandering poet" (Lee, *Romantic Generation* 73), read and translated Byron relatively extensively. Su's reading of Byron

pivots on the themes of wanderings, love, and liberty, and he was attracted to the English Romantic precisely because of his own preoccupation with such issues (72-76). Accordingly, he translated not only “The Isles of Greece,” a song suggestive of Byron’s fight for the liberty of Greeks, but also “To a Lady”, a poem on Byron’s youthful love, “The Oceans” and “My Native Land, Good Night,” two long passages describing the feeling of wandering at sea abstracted from *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*. Su’s obsession with Byron’s wandering spirit, sentimental love, and heroic pose is of utmost importance, not only because they characterize Su’s own art and life, but also because his temperament, lifestyle, and works shaped Byron’s legend in China and inspired a younger generation of Chinese writers (62-76).

After 1917, translations of Byron were mainly conducted in vernacular language and free verse form, and extensive expositions of the Romantic’s life and works became a common sight. Byron’s freedom fighter profile persisted into this stage but was endowed with new meanings. His sentimental side was further expanded, though rarely critically examined. “The Isles of Greece” continued to enjoy popularity, but many other of Byron’s poems were translated. Byron’s reception in China reached a peak in 1924, the centenary year of his death, when *Fiction Monthly* and the supplement of the *Morning Post*, two magazines of the new literature camp, published special issues devoted to the memory of the English Romantic.

Zheng Zhenduo 郑振铎 (1898-1958), the editor of the *Fiction Monthly*, under the pseudonym of Xidi 西谛, made it explicit that they exalted Byron more for his rebellious heroic deeds than for his poetic works (2). Slightly different from the previous phase’s emphasis on Byron’s role as a revolutionist, Zheng stressed Byron’s fight for the freedom of oppressed individuals and nations (2-4), which was clearly informed by the attack on traditional ethics in the New Culture Movement and the concern for China’s fate in the face of foreign imperial powers (Chow 300-313). Zheng’s intention to lend weight to the New Culture Movement, in particular, is evidenced by his accentuation of Byron’s revolt against hypocritical *lijiao* 礼教 [rites and ethics] and *lisu* 礼俗 [rites and custom] (2), terms used by the New Culture radicals to disparage Confucianism and China’s traditional culture. A number of the articles published in the journal do come to Zheng’s support. For example, Tang

Chengbo's 汤澄波 (dates unknown) article underlines Byron's revolt against hypocritical society and repressive moral values (3-4), and Shen Yanbing's 沈雁冰 (1896-1981) essay foregrounds Byron's devotion to the independent cause of Greece, a small nation oppressed by Turkey (1-2). Many pieces in the journal also offer accounts of Byron's personality, life, works, and influence, more detailed than the often scattered comments that characterize the first phase of Byron's fortunes in China. Most of the essays in the two journals, though not always acknowledged and faithful, are often loose translations or paraphrases of foreign scholarly writings and English literary histories (Chu 45-64).

Prioritizing the theme of rebellion, literary, ethical, religious, or political, in Byron's works, some essays in the two journals nonetheless bring to light Byron's sentimentality and lyrical poetry. For instance, Xihe's 希和 (dates unknown) essay informs the reader of Byron's resentment, despondency, and stoicism in the wake of the collapse of his marriage (3), though he hardly attempts to associate such sentimental feelings with Byron's poetic works. Wang Tongzhao's 王统照 (1897-1957) article explicates a variety of Byron's lyric poems with reference to the poet's romances, disclosing the Romantic's passionate nature (7-15). Many essays also reveal details about Byron's impetuous passion, but, like Wang Tongzhao, they all tend to circumvent, idealize, or justify their Romantic hero's dissipated life recorded in their foreign sources.

As a departure from Byron's image of freedom fighter intentionally projected by the memorial essays, over a dozen translations of Byron's poems in the two journals unveil more about Byron's sentimental feelings. Many of these translated poems center on the theme of love, e.g. "She Walks in Beauty" and "I Saw Thee Weep", but some reveal the mood of melancholy that descended on Byron, e.g. "Stanzas for Music" (There's not a joy) and "Stanzas to Augusta". Fu Donghua's 傅东华 (1893-1971) version of *Manfred: A Dramatic Poem*, the first complete rendering of Byron's long poem in China, merits particular attention, for the poem's eponymous protagonist exhibits characteristics typical of almost all types of Byronic heroes, some of which were hitherto not revealed to Chinese audience. Put simply, Manfred is a Hero of Sensibility because of his lonely solitude, superior sensitivity, and overactive imagination, a Gothic Villain because of his secret sin and agonized remorse, a Child

of Nature because of his fondness for the wilderness in his youth, a Wandering Jew because of his agonized repentance, trials of death, and curse of eternal wandering, a Faust because of his frustrated search for knowledge and direct communion with supernatural beings, and a Satan-Prometheus because of his assertion of individual independence and values in defiance of society and God (Thorslev 165-175). Fu's translation, without doubt, significantly expands the sentimental side of Byron and his work, but, without further elucidation, it remains unclear to what extent contemporary Chinese readers could grasp the profundity of the dramatic poem.

Wu Mi's Alternative Profile of Byron

Despite Byron's popularity in late imperial and early republican China, the third canto of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* was never translated into Chinese or imitated by Chinese poets. Wu Mi's enterprise of imitating and translating the canto is therefore unique in this respect. His project is informed not only by his endeavor to revive classical poetics, as a counter to the vernacular new poetry, but also by his program to preserve China's cultural traditions and integrate Babbitt's New Humanism, as a counterbalance to the iconoclasm of the New Culture Movement.

Setting out to reform China's classical poetics by "putting new materials in old metrical patterns", Wu Mi believes that Byron's canto might lend weight to his agenda for Chinese poetry. He demonstrates in great detail the similarities between Byron's Spenserian stanza and China's *qilü* verse form. He then concludes the correspondence between the two verse forms despite his consciousness of their subtle differences. On the surface, Wu Mi's reasoning is to justify his employment of the *qilü* verse form in his imitation of Byron's canto. However, Wu's underlying message is that Byron's utilization of an existing English verse form warrants the use of old metrical patterns in China's modern context. The fact that Yang Baochang's translation and Wu Mi's second imitation of Byron's canto adopt *wugu*, a different classical Chinese verse form, rather than *qilü*, also testifies to Wu Mi's true intention to legitimize old metrical patterns in China. Wu Mi's prologue to Yang Baochang's translation refers to the four versions of "The Isles of Greece" produced by Liang Qichao, Ma Junwu, Su Mansu,

and Hu Shi rather than any other translations of Byron. Wu's choices might not be accidental because the four renowned translators all made use of China's classical verse forms. Wu Mi's allusion to their utilization of old metrical patterns is, it seems, also a challenge to the free verse form of new poetry.

Attributing the unpopularity of classical poetry in his contemporary China to the dearth of new material, Wu Mi intends to invigorate classical poetry by showcasing the use of new material in old metrical patterns. He perceives Byron as a paragon of self-righteous poet-exiles who maintain moral integrity and achieve poetic excellence during times of frustration, just like canonical Chinese poets Qu Yuan and Du Fu. Following in the footsteps of Byron and his Chinese counterparts, Wu Mi experiments with the new material that he collected during his voluntary quasi-exile, the end product of which is *Miscellaneous Poems of the Travel to Xi'an*. Wu Mi's note to a poem in the collection encourages the reader to read his poem alongside Byron's certain stanzas. Wu's poem describes the natural and artificial landscape he witnessed in the Taihang Mountains, and Byron's stanzas, as it turns out, depict the natural scenery and artificial constructions along the Rhine. In Wu's poem the sight of house caves recalls the feats of Yao, a legendary sage-king, just as the scene of the Rhine in Byron's stanzas evokes the glories of the past. By calling the reader's attention to the parallel between his and Byron's poems, Wu Mi lays bare his intention to justify his use of new material by appealing to Byron's authority.

As the most persistent and outspoken member of the *Critical Review* group, Wu Mi naturally takes "preserving national essence and integrating new knowledge" as his cultural agendas. The national essence is China's cultural traditions, particularly Confucianism. Wu Mi's recall of Yao's feats in a poem alluding to Byron's imagination of past glories is implicitly meant to affirm the Confucian school that exalted the legendary sage-ruler, though Byron's stanzas gave no hint of the necessity to revive traditional culture. Taking advantage of Byron's suggestion that the natural setting might be more suitable for worship than shrines and temples, Wu Mi claims that Byron supports the *feng* and *shan* sacrifices performed in ancient China. Since the *feng* and *shan* rites were highly commended and often organized by Confucians in imperial China, Wu Mi indicates that Byron would be in favor of Confucianism. Yang Baochang's translation of Byron's canto highlights the doctrine of the mean and the principle of filial piety, thereby echoing Wu Mi's accentuation of the two central tenets of Confucianism

in his imitation of Byron's canto. It is worth noting that Wu Mi's verse lines vindicating Confucianism with reference to Byron's canto often appear in company with his rejection of the views held by the New Culturalists. For example, Wu's lines affirming the *feng* and *shan* rites are preceded by his criticism of a New Culturalist's doubt about the historicity of the legendary sage-king Yu, whereas his line praising the Confucian doctrine of the mean includes a rebuttal of the New Culturalists' belief in the weakness of China's national character. It is not clear if Wu Mi is cognizant of Byron's role as a rebel challenging *lijiao* 礼教 [rites and ethics] in the *Fiction Monthly*, but his profile of Byron apparently lends support to Confucianism and China's traditional culture.

The new knowledge that Wu Mi has in mind is Irving Babbitt's New Humanism, which stands in opposition to Rousseau's ideas and the romanticism he inspired. Wu Mi calls attention to Byron's stanzas on Rousseau and urges readers to peruse his lengthy commentary on the French thinker. Wu's commentary, a recapitulation of Babbitt's arguments, condemns the romantic traits inherent in Rousseau's work. It turns out that Byron's stanzas on Rousseau also reveals the philosopher's romantic traits criticized by Babbitt. Wu Mi not only appropriates Byron's stanzas to dismiss Rousseau and romanticism, but also takes advantage of Byron's text to reiterate the correspondence between Confucian *li* 礼 [rites or propriety] and decorum, the supreme doctrine of Babbitt's new humanism. Although Byron as a Romantic and disciple of Rousseau is not immune from Babbitt's criticism, Wu Mi avoids mentioning Babbitt's remarks about Byron and obliterates the close resemblance between Byron and Rousseau that is commonly understood.

Chapter Three: Rebellious Spirit and Inspired Expression: Guo Moruo's Translation and Assimilation of Percy Bysshe Shelley

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822) garnered some attention in China before and after China's regime change in 1911, as a rebellious Satanic poet, a philosopher of love, or a reformer in the realm of poetry (Zhang 2012: 31-49). Knowledge of Shelley's name, however, was restricted to a small number of pioneering literati in this period. Shelley's sphere of influence in China was greatly expanded around the year 1922 when two leading Chinese literary groups, the Literary Association and the Creation Society, prepared special issues of their magazines to commemorate the centenary of his death. What distinguishes Guo Moruo's 郭沫若 (1892-1978) approach to Shelley is that, as part of the Creation Society's memorial, he produced the largest number of translations of Shelley's poems and the only detailed chronology of Shelley's life and works. Guo's encounter with Shelley could be traced to at least as early as February and March 1920 when, as his letters reveal, he quoted Shelley's words to express his views on the writing of poetry and translated Shelley's "To a Skylark" to convey his emotional identification with the English Romantic. If Guo's memory can be trusted, then his reading of Shelley must precede his contact with Walt Whitman (1819-1892) in September 1919 (*Guo Moruo* 12: 67; *Guo Moru* 19: 408; Meng 40). If Guo's words can be trusted, then he must have read most, if not all, of Shelley's longer poems by 1923 ("Xuelai nianpu" 56). Guo unabashedly took Shelley as one of his favorite poets ("Xuelai de shi" 19), and claimed that his reading of Shelley, together with Whitman, happened when he was at the height of his lyrical powers and before he turned to the writing of drama (*Guo Moruo* 13: 300).

However, despite wide recognition of Guo Moruo's borrowings of Shelley's remarks on poetry, no study has attempted to explore the way Guo appropriated Shelley's poetic convictions as well as its implications for our understanding of Guo's own poetics. What is more surprising is that questions about Shelley's possible influence on Guo's poetry, lyric or dramatic, aesthetic or political, have never been asked. The present chapter, therefore, intends to scrutinize Guo's interpretation of Shelley's poetic theory and chart its manifestations over the course of

Guo's poetic career, especially in the 1920s. It also aims to unveil Shelley's impression on Guo's poetry by examining Guo's works against Shelley's poetic oeuvre, with due attention to Guo's translation of Shelley, utilization of Japanese and English sources, and reaction to contemporary sociopolitical events.

SHELLEY'S POETICS AND RECEPTIONS

Shelley's theory of poetry is marked by his belief in the importance of inspiration and imagination and by his perception of poetry as something bound up with the abstract eternal order. His view of the function of poetry may be confusing at first glance, as he not only stresses its connection with pleasure but also recognizes its significance for moral good. He singularly places poetry and poets above everything else, maintaining that poetry comprises all science and that poets are "the unacknowledged legislators of the world" (*Defence* 90). During his lifetime, Shelley was notorious in England for his radical writings, though he claimed only a small readership and produced many lyric poems. After his death, there was a growing tendency to paint him as an ethereal lyricist, which was counterbalanced by a strong inclination to portray him as a rebellious political poet. Shelley's practice of vegetarianism and obsession with ideal women, among other things, also captured the interest of later audiences.

Shelley's poetics is powerfully argued in *A Defence of Poetry*, a widely acclaimed essay set out to rebut Thomas Love Peacock's (1785-1866) attack on Romantic poetry in *The Four Ages of Poetry*. In his essay Shelley proposes an "inspirational view of poetry" (King-Hele 292), which suggests that poets, in their inspired moments, "alone pierce the barrier of reality to display the underlying eternal archetypes" (288). It is derived from Plato's idea that "poets are possessed by a divine madness and in their moments of inspiration are the gods' interpreters" (287-288). Accordingly, Shelley highlights the importance of inspiration and sidelines the role of effort in the development of a poem, a view succinctly summarized in his declaration: "A man cannot say, 'I will compose poetry'" (*Defence* 77). To illustrate the operation of inspiration, Shelley likens "the mind in creation" to "a fading coal" that is brought to transient "brightness" by "an inconstant wind" (77). The wind is Shelley's favorite trope

for inspiration. Elsewhere, Shelley employs the wind trope to suggest that “poetry is connate with the origin of man” (12-13). Man’s subjection to internal and external influences, Shelley reasons, is like “an Aeolian lyre” moved to “ever-changing melody” by “the alternations of an ever-changing wind” (13).

The wind-lyre motif goes so far as to see human responses to exciting impressions as something poetical. This enlarged view of poetry is anchored in Shelley’s generalized understanding of poetry and poets. He defines poetry as “the expression of the imagination” (*Defence* 12), and, throughout his essay, he keeps in mind poetry in this most general sense, which encompasses all conceivable types of art. Poets, therefore, are “those who imagine and express [the] indestructible order” (19). Shelley is cognizant that poetry in the narrow sense means the use of metrical language and that traditional verse forms are convenient and sometimes desired (21-25). However, he contends that “every great poet must inevitably innovate upon” (25) traditional forms. Moreover, to Shelley, versification is not essential to poetry, as Plato’s poetical prose readily makes the philosopher a poet (25). Shelley goes on to claim that, even if a composition is not a poem as a whole, its separate parts, individual sentences, or even single words could still be poetical, so much so that all great historians could be counted as poets (28-29). Indeed, poets may assume many other roles than historians, as they can also be authors of music and architecture, institutors of laws, and teachers of religion, to name a few (19).

In line with his inspirational theory and his generalized definition, Shelley conceives a two-fold function for poetry, which explain its effects upon society. First, poetry is always in company with pleasure (*Defence* 29). Shelley deploys a beautiful simile to describe how the poet’s work may be a delight to the readers:

A poet is a nightingale, who sits in darkness and sings to cheer its own solitude with sweet sounds; his auditors are as men entranced by the melody of unseen musician, who feel that they are moved and softened, yet know not whence or why. (30)

Shelley also believes that poetry can benefit humanity, not by directly imparting moral values to the people, but by enlarging the mind and by glamorizing familiar objects (*Defence* 33-34; King-Hele 289). In other words, poetry does good by enlarging “the circumference of the imagination”, which is “[the] great instrument of moral good” (*Defence* 34). For this reason, Shelley objects to any poet who would blatantly preach “his own

conceptions of right and wrong” (35). Shelley himself, however, does not always comply with this principle, for, as has been noted, he saturates *Queen Mab* and *The Revolt of Islam* with his own moral and political precepts (King-Hele 294).

Poetry assumes the supremacy in Shelley’s conception, not only because it manifests the eternal order, but also because it, as the expression of the imagination, comprises all science, whose application of reason is predicated upon the exertion of the imagination (King-Hele 291). Poets are similarly deified by Shelley. Following Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586), Shelley celebrates poets as “the best moral teacher” (King-Hele 288). He concludes *A Defence of Poetry* with most exuberant glorification of poets:

Poets are the hierophants of an unapprehended inspiration; the mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present; the words which express what they understand not; the trumpets which sing to battle, and feel not what they inspire; the influence which is moved not, but moves. Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world. (90)

Shelley’s acclamation of poets is in agreement with his perception of the social function of poetry. In this respect one idea that he holds dear is that “poetry flourishes most at times of political and social awakening”, which boosts his confidence in the promise of reforms, as he is convinced that his is “a great age of poetry” (King-Hele 294).

By the time of his death in 1822 Shelley the man had become disreputable for his radical writings, though his poems were by no means widely circulated. When the news of his tragic death in Italy reached Britain, one obituary in a London newspaper smugly announced: “Shelley, the writer of some infidel poetry, has been drowned; *now* he knows whether there is a God or no” (qtd. in Norman 3). The sales of Shelley’s works, as his publisher revealed after the poet’s death, had been extremely limited in every instance (Cronin 611). Shelley’s poems that attracted considerable critical notice during his lifetime were those laden with patent religious and political agendas. His *Queen Mab*, for instance, launched a fierce attack on religious hypocrisy, monarchial rule, and marriage laws. Shelley’s lyric poems that were brought to critical attention did not come to change his poetic profile. His *Alastor*, a volume including his first major lyric poetry, was highly praised by Leigh Hunt (1874-

1859), the leader of the so-called Cockney School derided by the conservatives for their presumed low birth and liberal values. His *Adonais*, a pastoral elegy lamenting the premature death of John Keats (1795-1821), a poet also of the Cockney School, included a preface attributing Keats's death to hostile conservative reviews. Shelley's association with the Cockney School only served to obliterate his lyrical achievement, thereby reinforcing his image as a polemical poet in his lifetime (Stabler, "Shelley" 658).

After Shelley's death, there was a contest for the interpretation of his poetry throughout the nineteenth century and even down through the twentieth century. Generally speaking, it is a tension between the inclination to depict him as an ethereal lyricist and the desire to present him as a passionate political poet, though there are times when the two trends converge (Morton 36). The depoliticization of Shelley's works started shortly after the poet's death. William Hazlitt (1778-1830), for example, in his *Select British Poets*, defined the feature of Shelley's poetry as the poet's "fervour of philosophical speculation" (Barcus 334) and, in his review of Shelley's *Posthumous Poems*, deprecated the poet's disrespect for the "authority" and "established opinions" (338). By contrast, because of his sympathy with Shelley's politics, Henry Crabb Robinson (1775-1867), noting in his diary entry of December 1824, believed that "the enthusiasm of virtue and benevolence" was inherent even in the poet's worst works (Barcus 347; Morton 37). Standing somewhere in-between, Mary Shelley (1797-1851), the poet's widowed wife and editor of *Posthumous Poems*, betrayed, in her prefaces to the volume, her interest in "preserving the political Shelley" (Morton 36), albeit rather secretively.

Shelley's fame as an idealistic lyricist was strongly enhanced by the rewriting efforts of a number of prominent figures. Mary Shelley's 1839 edition of Shelley's works portrayed the poet as "a perpetual child" (Stabler "Shelley" 663) and established his reputation for idealism (657). Francis Turner Palgrave's (1824-1897) *Golden Treasury*, the most influential poetry anthology of the nineteenth century, selectively represented Shelley's poems in a way that corroborates the poet's prestige as "the nation's supreme lyric poet" (Cronin 615). The view of an ethereal and lyrical Shelley was summarized in Matthew Arnold's oft-quoted judgement: Shelley is "a beautiful *and ineffectual* angel, beating in the void his luminous wings in vain" (408). Shelley's image as a dreamy lyricist persisted well into the early twentieth century. Arthur Symonds (1865-1945), for example, in *The*

Romantic Movement in English Poetry, maintained that Shelley's disembodied imagination "[filled] mortal things with unearthly essences or [veiled] them with unearthly raiment" (275). Symons also confidently observed that the poet is "best remembered" (284) for his lyrical works. Indeed, from about 1895 to 1920, there was a critical consensus that Shelley distinguished himself as "England's greatest lyric poet" (Pottle 371).

Shelley's reputation as a radical poet addressing the interests of the oppressed multitudes was continuously boosted by those concerned with various political issues. *Queen Mab*, which overtly expressed Shelley's revolt against various repressive forces, was widely circulated in pirate editions by the radical underground and later became the "Chartist's Bible" because of its popularity with Chartism, a far-reaching working-class movement that campaigned for parliamentary reforms in the mid-nineteenth century (Cronin 613; Morton 40). *The Masque of Anarchy*, a political poem written by Shelley in response to the Peterloo Massacre, was published by Leigh Hunt in 1832 when there was a bitter struggle for political reform. Shelley's subversive precepts found many other admiring sympathizers: "his revolutionary commitments" were embraced by Thomas Lovell Beddoes (1803-1849), "his republicanism and atheism" by James Thomson (1834-1882), and "his atheism and objection to marriage" by Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) (Cronin 617). Shelley was also a favorite of socialist activists. Edward and Eleanor Marx-Aveling claimed Shelley as a socialist after delineating the correspondence between the teachings of Shelley and those of socialism. They quoted Karl Marx (1818-1883) as saying: "[Shelley] was essentially a revolutionist, and he would always have been one of the advanced guard of Socialism" (183).

Some other aspects of Shelley, though less prominent than the two dominant readings, merit mentioning here, because they, too, attracted considerable attention and sometimes substantiated either of the two claims. Shelley kept a vegetarian diet and promoted vegetarianism in a number of his essays and poems. Robert Browning (1812-1889) was inspired, albeit briefly, to practice vegetarianism after reading Shelley, whereas George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) quoted from Shelley's *Laon and Cythna* to justify the vegetarian diet (Cronin 622; Morton 41). Somewhat related to his depoliticization, Shelley was seen as a predecessor of the Aesthetic Movement. Aesthetes of the late nineteenth century, like Walter Pater (1839-1894), admired Shelley's "accuracy of idealist perception" (Stabler "Shelley" 668). Shelley's treatment of sexuality in his writings and his relationships with women were

also focus of attention. He was interested in writing about both homosexual and heterosexual relationships as well as incestuous relationships, and women are often transfigured in his works (Morton 38; Crook 70-74). His conduct toward women, especially Harriet Shelley (1795-1816), his first wife, was idealized or demonized by different biographical accounts (Crook 66-69). There had always been a debate over Shelley's attitude and behavior toward women: a pro-feminist male writer or a self-deceiving male dominator (Crook 65).

INSPIRED EXPRESSION AND REBELLIOUS SPIRIT

Guo Moruo excels himself as the most accomplished new poet of the early twentieth-century China. His approach to poetry, at least before his conversion to Marxism in 1924, representative of the Creation Society, is commonly seen as a contrast to the undisguised utilitarian stand taken by members of the Literary Association, a contrast often conveniently summarized in the contradiction between "literature for art" and "literature for life". However, while Guo did show interest in aestheticism in the early 1920s, it is improper to say that he had ever been a wholehearted devotee of "art for art's sake", in the strict sense of the term. Guo himself objects to being called a disciple of "art for art's sake", even though he flatly dismisses the utilitarian motives in art (*Guo Moruo* 15: 228). His own works are not devoid of practical concerns. The introductory poem to *Nüshen* 女神 [The goddesses], his first anthology of poetry, for example, explicitly expresses his intention to enlighten the mind of kindred spirits. What Guo proposes is that art and life are two sides of the same coin (228). So how does he unite the two seemingly incompatible factors in his poetics, and how does his turn to Marxism affect his thinking on the relationship between the two factors?

Inspired Expression

One view of poetry that Guo Moruo upholds to the last is the inspirational theory, which he almost always

expresses in the words of Shelley, with or without acknowledgement. Based on his own experience of writing poetry and his knowledge of Shelley's verdict on this matter, in a 1920 letter to Zong Baihua (1897-1986), Guo contends that inspiration, rather than composition (i.e. effort), is essential to the development of a poem (*Guo Moruo* 15: 14). To stress this point, he quotes Shelley's words in their entirety: "A man cannot say, I will compose Poetry" (sic) (14). Expanding on Shelley's statement, Guo observes: Poetry is not "composed" but "written" (14). It follows that, to Guo, the poet's task is to simply write down what comes to him or her in the inspired moments. Guo proceeds to employ an extended metaphor to illustrate how inspiration functions in the process of producing poetry:

I think the mind of a poet is like the clear seawater in a bay. When there is no wind, it is as still as a bright mirror, reflecting the static images of all things in the universe; when the wind rises, it starts seething, reflecting the dynamic images of all things in the universe. The wind is the so-called intuition, i.e. Inspiration. The breaking waves are the surging emotions. The dynamic images are the active imagination. These things, I think, are the true content of poetry. Write them down and a poem assumes both its content and form. Billows contribute to powerful poems ...; ripples contribute to placid poems ... (14-15)

The extended metaphor not only stresses that "the wind" or inspiration is crucial to the development of a poem, but also suggests that poetry is the expression of "dynamic images" or active imagination, thereby capturing two salient features of Shelley's inspirational theory.

The tropes used in Guo Moruo's extended metaphor are indebted to Shelley. Guo's wind as a symbol of inspiration has its precedent in *A Defence of Poetry*, in which Shelley compares inspiration to "an inconstant wind" bringing "a fading coal" to momentary brightness (77) and to "an ever-changing wind" creating ever-changing melody by moving through "an Aeolian lyre" (13). Guo's seawater disturbed by the wind, as a trope for the poet's mind in creation, is different from Shelley's "fading coal" and "Aeolian lyre" subject to the influence of the wind. Yet in *A Defence of Poetry* Shelley does employ the image of "a wind over the sea" (80) to illustrate the unpredictability and transience of poetic feelings, which is akin to the visitations of inspiration. A similar image of the sea disturbed by the wind can be found in the third stanza of Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind", a poem

that can be read as Shelley's allegory of poetic inspiration (Blank 194).

Elsewhere, Guo Moruo does seem to play on Shelley's lyre motif to explain the poet's mind in creation. In the same letter to Zong Baihua, Guo states that true poetry is like the melody that comes from "the lyre of heart" (*Guo Moruo* 15: 13), which is likely an adaptation of Shelley's "Aeolian lyre". Guo seems to be fascinated by Shelley's wind-lyre motif, though he is careful to avoid a simple duplication of Shelley's expressions. In the preface to his translation of Shelley's poems, he replaces the lyre with a piano to demonstrate Shelley's mind in creation ("Xuelai de shi" 19), an understandable substitution as Shelley also uses other musical instruments like harp and lute to describe the poet's mind (Blank 194-200). In the same preface, probably capitalizing on Shelley's wind motif, Guo relates Shelley's changing styles to winds of various intensities and indicates that the winds are metaphors for the poet's sources of inspiration.

Over the course of his poetic career, Guo Moruo maintains his belief in the Shelley-inspired inspirational theory of poetry. Recollecting the decade of his involvement with the Creation Society in 1932, Guo emphasized that his early statement that "poetry is written rather than composed" was his real experience of writing poetry at the turn of 1920 (*Guo Moruo* 12: 68). Commenting on his own poetry respectively in 1936 and 1944, Guo repeated that his writing of poetry is reliant upon inspiration and that he is distrustful of "composing poetry" (*Guo Moruo* 16: 221; *Guo Moruo* 19: 409). On all these occasions Guo explains his inspirational theory by building on Shelley's idea, as evidenced by his consistent appropriation of Shelley's term "compose". However, Guo never cares to admit his debt to Shelley. It seems that Shelley's inspirational theory has become part of Guo's poetic conviction, to the extent that he is oblivious of the source of his conception. It is equally possible that, in an effort to highlight his originality, Guo carefully avoids any indication of his conscious borrowing from Shelley.

Guo Moruo not only accepts Shelley's inspirational view of poetry, but also, without acknowledgement, borrows Shelley's generalized definition of poetry. After explaining the working of inspiration in his extended metaphor, Guo presents a formula of poetry:

Poem = (Intuition + Emotions + Imagination) + (Proper Words)

Content

Form

(*Guo Moruo* 15: 16)

The formula shows that, to Guo, although a concrete poem requires words to take form, the content of poetry has nothing to do with language. Because Guo identifies intuition with inspiration, his content of poetry is dependent upon inspiration, emotions, and imagination. This is not to say that Guo's content of poetry consists of three distinctive parts. Instead, they are three sequential steps of the poet's mind in creation. According to Guo's extended metaphor, the wind generates the waves of the sea, which in turn bring dynamic images on the surface of the sea. Because Guo equates the wind with inspiration, the waves with emotions, and dynamic images with active imagination, Guo's content of poetry is effectively active imagination. Indeed, Guo is emphatic that dynamic images on the surface of the sea, i.e. active imagination, are "the true content of poetry" (14). Express the imagination in words, Guo reasons, and poetry will assume both its content and form (14). It readily calls to mind Shelley's definition of poetry as "the expression of the imagination" (*Defence* 12). It should be noted, however, to Guo, a specific poem assuming both its content and form is only poetry in its common or narrow sense.

Active imagination is, by contrast, Guo Moruo's poetry in its true and most general sense. It is similar to Shelley's poetry in its most universal sense, which is a manifestation of the indestructible order. The implication of such a broad definition is that poetry may include all kinds of writings and even all types of art, so long as they embody the eternal order. Guo fully understands Shelley's argument, but he does not choose to dwell upon Shelley's abstract eternal order. In his letter to Zong Baihua, Guo only hints, in a figurative expression, that the content of poetry is the inspired reflection of "all things in the universe" (*Guo Moruo* 15: 14). In the preface to his translation of Shelley's poems, Guo more plainly states that poems, Shelley's included, are manifestations of "the will of the great universe" ("Xuelai de shi" 19), which is an apparent rewording of Shelley's belief in the Platonic ideal of an eternal order. Guo never bothers to elaborate on "the will of the great universe" or his understanding of poetry in its most general sense. Nevertheless, he retains his broad definition of poetry at least as late as 1944. After differentiating his understanding of poetry from other new poets, theorists of new poetry, and classical-styled poets, Guo remarks:

Then, are my past writings really poetry or not? In the general sense, a good number of my dramas,

novels, and essays are really poetry, but some of my “poems” undoubtedly contain prose or verse in separate lines. (*Guo Moruo* 19: 409)

The passage determines poetry on the basis of some unexplained abstract ideal, rather than concrete external forms. It is an unequivocal borrowing from Shelley. Yet, like Guo’s other writings, the passage refrains from giving Shelley credit for the idea.

Having inherited Shelley’s inspirational theory and generalized definition of poetry, Guo Moruo naturally takes “expression” as a major issue to be dealt with in the practical level. After all, while poetry in the general sense is “the expression of the imagination”, imagination has to be expressed in words before it can be presented before the readers. Because form, or proper words, is secondary to his Shelley-inspired formula of poetry, Guo, like Shelley, is unimpressed by any fixed forms of poetry:

The job of poetry is the expression of emotions. Words expressing emotions, even if they adopt no poetic forms, are still poetry. (*Guo Moruo* 15: 47)

The term “emotions” here is typical of Guo’s reference to imagination. He often uses inspiration, emotions, and imagination interchangeably, though his extended metaphor and formula of poetry clearly show that they are different steps of the poet’s mind in creation. It suggests that in practice Guo tends to view the three steps as an integral entity. Nonetheless, the above quote reveals that Guo is more concerned with what is expressed, i.e. poetry in the general sense, than with how it is expressed, i.e. poetic forms. That is why, echoing Shelley, Guo calls for “absolute freedom” (49) in the choice of poetic forms, as long as “poetry” is preserved.

With the development of his understanding of poetry, Guo Moruo would often use the term “self-expression” to describe poetry. The word “self-expression” obviously serves to stress the poet’s creativity. It also points to one issue that Guo does not seem to settle well: where does the poet’s inspiration come from, the poet’s mind or the will of the universe? At different times Guo attributes it to either of them, without explaining how he reaches the conclusion, as shown in the preface to his translation of Shelley’s poems (“Xuelai de shi” 19). So what is one to make of this seeming contradiction? The answer is that, as a result of his creed in pantheism, Guo sees the poet as an integral part of the universe. In other words, to Guo, the poet’s mind and the will of the

universe are one and the same. That is why he exclaims: “I eulogize self-expression, the essence of the whole universe” (*Guo Moruo* 15: 137). This belief in the oneness of the self and the universe sets Guo apart from Shelley, who cherishes an abstract eternal order. However, in Guo’s understanding, Shelley is also a pantheist and, therefore, a kindred spirit of his (“Xuelai de shi” 19). That being so, Guo’s use of the word “self-expression” does not subvert his overall view of poetry. Indeed, he continues using the term “expression” alongside “self-expression”. He would later also incorporate German Expressionism into his interpretation of “expression”. Nevertheless, Shelley’s poetics, if somewhat modified or distorted, remains the foundation of Guo’s view of poetry.

Rebellious Spirit

“Literature for life” and “literature for art” are labels respectively used to describe two major competing literary groups of Chinese new literature, i.e. the Literary Association and the Creation Society. As a key member of the Creation Society, Guo Moruo, before his turn to Marxism, is commonly perceived as a proponent of “art for art’s sake”. His essays on arts and literature, however, resist such a simplistic reading. To be sure, he does argue that, with regard to the production of literature, the principle of aestheticism should be upheld (*Guo Moruo* 15: 276). He also introduces Walter Pater, a leading figure of Aestheticism, to the Chinese audience, in the hope of arousing intellectual interest in the aesthete’s theories (255). He is undoubtedly dismissive of “shallow preaching” (339) in poetry or literature, but he also maintains that a utilitarian attitude is required for the evaluation of literary works (15: 276). He even asserts that “[arts] and literature are a declaration of war on established morality and social institutions” (318). It is, therefore, apparent that he fiddles with two opposing notions of literature: one is self-sufficient, and the other utilitarian.

Before assessing Guo Moruo’s justification for his conflicting arguments, it is necessary to trace how he conceived the two divergent views in the first place. His earliest remarks on the appraisal of literature can be found in his 1920 letter to Zong Baihua, the very letter that draws on Shelley’s inspirational theory and definition

of poetry. Guo expresses his view of good poetry in a highly metaphorical language:

... our poetry, as long as it is the innocent expression of the poetic quality and poetic realm in our heart, the strain overflowing from the fountain of life, the melody played on the lyre of heart, the beat of life, and the cry of the spirit, is true poetry, good poetry, the fountain overflowing with the delight of humanity, the good wine intoxicating humanity, the paradise consoling humanity. (*Guo Moruo* 15: 13)

The adverbial clause of this long sentence is a rephrasing of Shelley's inspirational view of poetry. The lyre trope, with its accompanying tropes, "strain" and "melody", immediately brings to mind Shelley's lyre motif and musical terms used in his description of inspiration, thereby revealing Guo's debt to Shelley. The main clause, a eulogy of the effects of poetry, also profits from Shelley's metaphors for good poetry.

In the main clause Guo Moruo compares good poetry to "the fountain" and "the paradise". It is strikingly similar to Shelley's celebration of the poetry of sexual love. Because of such poetry, Shelley enthuses, "a paradise was created of the wrecks of Eden" (*Defence* 59). This paradise itself, Shelley continues, "is poetry" (59). Guo's analogy between poetry and paradise is, therefore, a direct borrowing of Shelley's idea. Shelley further observes that Petrarch's (1304-1374) love poetry is like the spells that "unseal the inmost enchanted fountains of the delight which is in the grief of love" (59). It offers a ready inspiration for Guo's equation of poetry with a fountain overflowing with delight. Even if Guo is not impressed by this expression, he could not have missed Shelley's more direct blending of poetry and fountain: "A great poem is a fountain for ever (sic) overflowing with the waters of wisdom and delight" (67). The close affinity between Shelley's sentence and Guo's statement cannot be explained by sheer coincidence. It seems that Guo paraphrases or translates Shelley's words from memory. In addition, Guo's fondness for the fountain motif may be enhanced by his acquaintance with Shelley's "To a Skylark", in which the narrator asks the bird: "What objects are the fountains / Of thy happy strain?" (*Poetical Works* 472).

Shelley's tropes for good poetry are part of his argument for the social effects of poetry in *A Defence of Poetry*. Guo Moruo's appropriation of Shelley's tropes lays bare his familiarity with Shelley's two-fold function of poetry. Shelley argues that poetry always gives pleasure unobtrusively and does good inconspicuously

(*Defence* 29-34). Shelley's insistence on the unobtrusiveness of poetry, allied with his accentuation of the poet's expression, verges on a self-sufficient view of poetry. His emphasis on the effects of poetry upon society is akin to a utilitarian view of poetry. He resolves the conflict between the two views by appealing to the poet's imagination of the indestructible order. While the poet is solely concerned with the imagination of the eternal order, poetry, as the manifestation of the eternal truth, can push the reader's boundaries of imagination. Imagination, to Shelley, is "[the] great instrument of moral good" (34), because a man, to be good, requires imagination to identify with others. Therefore, poetry does good by enlarging the circumference of the reader's imagination, rather than by directly preaching the poet's moral precepts (34-35). In brief, the poet is without ulterior motives in the process of the creation, but poetry, the end product, has the effect of improving humanity and society.

Guo Moruo's opposing notions of literature bear a strong resemblance to Shelley's conflicting views of poetry. To Guo, the writer in the process of the creation should be guided by aestheticism, whereas the evaluation of the effects of literary works should be ruled by utilitarianism (*Guo Moruo* 15: 276). "Literature for art" and "literature for life", therefore, respectively refers to art in the making and art coming into effect (201). Guo's arguments are, in essence, a summary of Shelley's distinction between poetry in creation and poetry taking effect, even if Guo's terms may have other connotations. Governed by the same logic as Shelley's, Guo further contends that the artist's role is compatible with that of the revolutionist, as long as the revolutionary propaganda has artistic merit (192). Highlighting the social function of art, Guo boldly claims that "all passionate artists devoted to social reforms are also true revolutionists" (192). This daring statement seems a recasting of Shelley's idea that "[all] the authors of revolutions in opinion are ... necessarily poets" (12). Guo's artists are also poets, given that he has accepted Shelley's generalized definition of poetry. Therefore, both Shelley and Guo are emphatic that poets participate in revolutionary changes.

This enthusiasm for the poet's revolutionary role springs from Shelley's conviction that poetry is "[the] most unflinching herald, companion, and follower" of great changes "in opinion or institution" (*Defence* 89), an idea that Guo Moruo has learnt by heart. In *A Defence of Poetry*, Shelley lists as examples a good number of poets

who helped to stage a revolt against established beliefs and institutions, especially Dante Alighieri (c. 1265-1321) and John Milton (1608-1674), both of whom claim plenty of space in Shelley's essay (60-67). Following Shelley's association of poetry with revolution, Guo proclaims that "literature is symbolic of the rebellious spirit" and that literature is "revolution" (*Guo Moruo* 15: 321). He not only cites, as Shelley does, Dante's writing of *Divine Comedy* and Milton's writing of *Paradise Lost* as examples, but also applies Shelley's principle to writers living in other repressive times, ancient and modern, China and the West. Guo's examples include Qu Yuan banished by the fatuous king of Chu, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) born in a declining Germany, and Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910) writing under Russian autocracy (321). Moreover, Guo considers recent literary prosperity in China a protest against military rule and foreign aggression (321).

With his conversion to Marxism and the surge of his revolutionary passions, Guo Moruo further accentuates Shelley's view of poetry as the forerunner of revolution. An age of revolution, Guo asserts, is necessarily preceded by a golden age of arts and literature – witness the galaxy of writers before the French Revolution in 1789 and before the Russian Revolution in 1917 (*Guo Moruo* 16: 25, 33). The latest age of revolution, Guo argues, is that of the ongoing proletarian revolution, whose literary and artistic forerunners comprise Marx, Shelley, and Vladimir Lenin (1870-1924), the only three names listed by Guo (26). Guo's argument here poses two interesting questions, and the answers to both questions corroborate his borrowing of Shelley's idea. First, why does he see Marx and Lenin as literary and artistic figures? Guo explains that Marx intended to be a poet in his youthful days and that Lenin was well versed in arts and literature. This uncommon stress on Marx's and Lenin's devotion to arts and literature is, it seems, only meant to ensure that the two politicians tally with Shelley's conception of the poet's role. Second, why does he place Shelley, more than anyone else, between Marx and Lenin, literally and figuratively? It not only reveals Shelley's supreme position in his perception of poetry, but also implicitly justifies his subtle move away from Shelley's avowed approach to revolution.

The rebellious spirit that Guo Moruo derives from Shelley's view of poetry and revolution is essentially non-violent resistance or even at times an escape from reality. With this rebellious spirit, Guo could, like Shelley,

immerse himself in inspired expression and concurrently mount an attack on repressive forces. However, Guo's conversion to Marx and Lenin means that he had to speak from the viewpoint of the proletariat, not himself, at least theoretically, and that he had to embrace violent revolution, not passive resistance. That is why, around 1926, in his essays on arts and literature, while he agitated for the revolutionary role of literature, he ceased to boast of his self-expression. This updated view of literature and revolution, though still rebellious in spirit, is slightly different from Shelley's original nonresistant creed. Yet, by placing Shelley between Marx and Lenin, Guo flaunts Marx's judgement on Shelley's anticipated turn to socialism cut short by his early death. Guo twice quotes Marx as saying that Shelley is "a friend" of the socialist cause and "a forerunner of the proletarian revolution" (*Guo Moruo* 12: 209; *Guo Moruo* 16: 26). In this way Guo convinces himself that his modified view of literature and revolution, though more radical, is the fulfillment of Shelley's unfulfilled promise.

THE POET-CREATOR

It seems a daunting task to summarize Guo Moruo's conception of the modern poet in a succinct expression. To come up with the right words, one has to weigh up not only Guo's Shelley-inspired inspirational theory, generalized definition, and two-fold function of poetry, but also his diverse poetical writings, lyric and dramatic, expressive and political, nonresistant and revolutionary. At different times in his poetic works, Guo identifies himself with the hero, the proletariat, the communist, the worshipper, the iconoclast, the rebel, the pantheist, the misanthrope, and so on. Each of these terms captures one aspect of Guo's intended poetic personality, but none is inclusive enough to cover them all. However, even as he assumed different poetical roles, Guo is definite about the most proper title of the poet, i.e. the creator. It is a title bound up with the Creation Society, the name of his literary group, but the inspiration for his conception of the epithet is, without doubt, Shelley. Guo's forewords, or rather poems, respective to the first issues of *Creation Quarterly* and *Creation Weekly*, the official organs of the society, reveal that his choice of the term is rooted in his sympathy with Shelley's poetics.

The Creation Society was established in early June 1921 when a group of aspiring Japanese-educated Chinese students gathered in Tokyo and decided to publish a quarterly magazine called *Creation* (*Guo Moruo* 12: 119), hence the name *Creation Quarterly*. The name of the magazine was, in fact, proposed by Guo and endorsed by his fellows. Before the founding of the society, it was Guo that travelled between Kyoto and Tokyo to liaise with fellow literary aspirants. After the agreement to publish the magazine had been reached, it was also Guo that was mainly in charge of collecting the contributions of group members. When the long-delayed first issue of the magazine came into being on 1 May 1922, it had Guo's poem "Chuangzaozhe" 创造者 [The creator] as its foreword. When the first issue of *Creation Weekly* appeared on 1 May 1923, it carried Guo's poem "Chuangshi gongcheng zhi diqiri" 创世工程之第七日 [The seventh day of the world-creating project] as its foreword. Both Guo's vital role in the Creation Society and his attachment to the term *chuang* 创 [to create] warrant a close examination of his two forewords.

"The Creator" is, in essence, a recapitulation of Guo Moruo's appropriation of Shelley's poetics in poetic language. The title of the poem has a double meaning. It literally means a person who "creates or brings something into existence", but it is also another name for "God" ("Creator"). In the four-stanza poem, Guo's first-person narrator extols the poet as a creator and describes the process of the poet's creation in metaphorical language. The third stanza of the poem, in particular, imagines the creation of the world by Pangu, the first god in Chinese mythology. The imagery of the waving laurel in the separate last line of the stanza makes it clear that the stanza as a whole is a metaphor for the poet's creation of poetry, thereby betraying Guo's identification of the poet with God. The double meaning of Guo's title, therefore, echoes, or rather borrows, Shelley's highest praise for the poet. Citing the Italian poet Torquato Tasso (1544-1595), Shelley exclaims, "Only God and the poet deserve the name of creator" (*Defence* 83; King-Hele 292-293). In *A Defence of Poetry*, Shelley not only plainly compares the poet's participation in the eternal truth to that of "the Creator" (27) or "providence" (46), but also frequently employs the word "creation" to describe the poet's work (27, 59, 65, 69).

Guo Moruo's debt to Shelley in "The Creator" is more than the glorious equation of the poet with God. In

the first stanza of the poem, taking advantage of Shelley's wind motif, Guo describes a poet gathering inspiration before starting creation:

In the sea rise the ripples.
In the sky hang no light clouds.
The rising morning sun
Illuminates my poetic mind.
The autumn wind blows,
Blows the laurel in the courtyard.
Its branches are swaying,
As if smiling to me.
Blow, blow, autumn wind!
Wield, wield, my brush!
I know the inspiration has come.
I will exert myself to create! (*Guo Moruo* 5: 402)

The first quatrain, with its image of ripples in the sea, reminds one of Guo's favorite Shelley-inspired trope for the visitation of poetic inspiration, i.e. a sea disturbed by the wind. The image's connection with poetic inspiration is confirmed by the last term of the quatrain, i.e. *shixin* 诗心 [poetic heart or poetic mind], an explicit reference to the poet's mind. The second quatrain further plays on the Shelleyan wind trope. The word *yuegui* 月桂 [laurel], a mark of honor in poetry, suggests that poetry remains the subject of the quatrain. The autumn wind blowing the laurel tree in the quatrain, then, is again indicative of poetic inspiration. In the first couplet of the last quatrain, the first-person narrator directly appeals to "autumn wind" and "my brush", suggesting that inspiration and writing poetry are inextricable. In the last couplet, having gathered inspiration, the narrator makes a resolution to create poetry. The whole stanza is, therefore, a synopsis of the Shelleyan inspirational view of poetry.

In the second stanza, the narrator moves on to invoke great poets of the past, both Chinese and foreign:

I invoke the elders of court hymns in the Zhou dynasty;

I invoke the giants of verses in the state of Chu;

I invoke the masters of poems in the Tang dynasty;

I invoke the officials of lyrics in the Yuan dynasty.

The ancient Indian poet who wrote the *Vedas*!

Dante who wrote *Divine Comedy*!

Milton who wrote *Paradise Lost*!

Goethe who wrote the tragedy *Faust*!

You know the aloofness of the creator;

You know the worries of the creator;

You know the ecstasy of the creator;

You know the glory of the creator.

Accumulated snow of the Kunlun Mountains, icy waves of the Northern Seas,

Volcanos about to erupt, the universe about to whirl;

Like a sweet dream, like intoxication,

Gods drift before the supreme ultimate.

Great flock of stars!

You are the indestructible sun

Forever illuminating the ocean of time.

In the history of humanity, but for your brilliance,

Are there any other things of worth? (*Guo Moruo* 5: 402-403)

Poets enumerated here are undoubtedly the ones that Guo Moruo looks on with favor. His reference to Dante and Milton, in particular, reminds one of his Shelley-inspired view of literature as a symbol of the rebellious spirit, which is also supported by Shelley's examples, i.e. Dante and Milton (*Guo Moruo* 15: 321; *Defence* 60-67).

Guo's list of model poets also reveals his interest in dramatic poetry. The lyrics in the Yuan dynasty are actually

dramas, in which Guo perceives “rebellious spirit” and “revolution” (*Guo Moruo* 15: 322). Goethe’s *Faust*, also a drama, is, in Guo’s view, symbolic of the rebellious spirit (*Guo Moruo* 15: 321). It is, therefore, no coincidence that Guo concludes both quatrains with dramas. Guo’s accentuation of drama is likely attributable to Shelley’s belief that the link between poetry and social good is more evident in drama than other poetic forms (*Defence* 45).

Exemplary poets cited in the stanza are, in the closing quintet, likened to a “flock of stars” and the sun “illuminating the ocean of time”, which again show the imprint of Shelley. Highlighting Dante’s eminence above great contemporary spirits, Shelley observes that he was “the Lucifer of that starry flock which in the thirteenth century shone forth from republican Italy, as from a heaven, into the darkness of the benighted world” (*Defence* 66). Here Shelley compares great figures in the thirteenth-century Italy to a “starry flock” shining forth from heaven into the darkness. Shelley employs a similar image in praise of Milton, who, Shelly says, “stood alone illuminating an age unworthy of him” (44). The word “illuminating”, accompanied by “alone”, indicates that Milton was like the sun or the moon, and the expression “an age” can be readily associated with time, which Shelley is wont to call “Ocean of Time” (*Poetical Works* 507). Shelley’s image of a starry flock shining into the darkness and his image of the sun or the moon illuminating an age, therefore, anticipate Guo Moruo’s “flock of stars” or sun illuminating the “ocean of time”. Guo’s fondness for Shelley’s interpretation of Dante and Milton, in addition, lends credence to this conjecture.

The third stanza of “The Creator” imagines the Chinese god Pangu’s creation of the world, which, as noted above, is a metaphor for the poet’s creation of poetry, thereby revealing Guo Moruo’s debt to Shelley’s equation of the poet with God. The stanza stresses that Pangu “created a bright world” and that, by the end of his creation, light appeared (*Guo Moruo* 5: 404). This emphasis on the light motif is reminiscent of Shelley’s belief that poetry should “ascend to bring light and fire” (*Defence* 77). The closing line of the stanza plays on the laurel motif, a symbol of poetic achievement: “O laurel, for whom are you waving?” (*Guo Moruo* 5: 404). It not only corroborates that Pangu’s creation of the world is symbolic of the poet’s creation of poetry, but also echoes the image of the wind blowing the laurel tree in the first stanza.

Focusing on the birth of the poem created in the third stanza, the concluding stanza continues to capitalize

on Shelley:

An infant came into the world with a cry.

Where is the basin?

Where is the hot water?

The drips of blood

Stained a patch with rouge.

O red agate!

O blood crystal!

The wind is singing its praises; the bird is singing its praises;

White clouds gather to celebrate.

O ceaseless surging clouds,

You're moving everywhere over the boundless clear sky!

Who produced you? I have long since known.

The canna swaying outside the window!

Your flaming blood-red

Flower-bearing pen,

Please lend it to me to draft "The Creator" eulogy.

I will sing high praises of the newborn infant.

I will sing high praises of the greater self creating the world. (*Guo Moruo* 5: 404-405)

The birth of a poem is compared to the birth of an infant in this stanza, and the opening septet hinges upon the infant motif. Guo Moruo's infant motif probably has its origin in Shelley's following words: "a great statute or picture grows under the power of the artist as a child in the mother's womb" (*Defence* 79). Shelley draws an analogy between the development of an art object and the growth of a fetus in the womb. Building on Shelley's simile, Guo likens the completion of a poem to an infant coming into the world. Another possible source of Guo's inspiration is Shelley's poem "The Cloud", whose closing quatrain compares the cloud formed by the watery

vapor of rain to “a child from the womb” (*Poetical Works* 518).

As the infant, or the poem, entered the world, the wind, the bird, and the cloud come to congratulate it in the following quintet. Guo Moruo’s choice of the three images may not be accidental, for they happen to be the subjects of Shelley’s most popular lyric poems extolling natural objects, i.e. “Ode to the West Wind”, “To a Skylark”, and “The Cloud”. The quintet does not explain how the wind and the bird may congratulate a newly created poem. It seems that Guo has in mind Shelley’s west wind as “The trumpet of prophecy” (*Poetical Works* 454) and Shelley’s skylark “Like a Poet hidden / In the light of thought, / Singing hymns unbidden” (472). The image of moving clouds in the quintet is followed by a question about its creator. The narrator claims to know the answer but does not care to share it with the reader. The answer, however, seems to lie in the concluding quatrain of “The Cloud”, where Shelley’s personified cloud claims that “out of the caverns of rain, / Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the tomb, / I arise” (518). It not only suggests that the cloud was born out of its liquid form, i.e. “caverns of rain”, but also associates the formation of the cloud to the creation of a poem, which, like the world born out of the god’s own body described in the third stanza, springs from the poet-creator’s inspired mind.

Whereas Guo Moruo equates the poet with the Chinese god of creation in “The Creator”, he measures the poet against the Christian god in “The Seventh Day of the World-Creating Project”, the foreword to *Creation Weekly*. The first-person narrator of the poem relates a certain ancient poet’s account of God’s creation of the world in six days and God’s rest in the seventh day, which, though not made explicit in the poem, is obviously the story of God’s creation of the world recorded in the Bible, a record traditionally attributed to the prophet Moses. The narrator then blames the ills forever pestering humanity on God’s indolence in the seventh day. Contemptuous of the irresponsible God and impatient with a flawed life, the narrator expresses the fierce determination to re-create the self, thereby launching a new “creation project”. The narrator, by taking over a task that is commonly reserved for God, effectively becomes God.

Shelley’s impression on the poem can be found in the parallel between the poet’s and God’s creation drawn by the narrator of the poem. Disappointed at the ills plaguing humanity, Guo Moruo’s narrator puts an

awkward question to God: “Why did you stop work for the seventh day so early, / And not carefully refine your final draft?” (“Chuangshi” 2). The word *caogao* 草稿 [draft] in the question is a term readily associated with a writer’s or a poet’s creative work. That Guo has the poet, not any writer, in mind is revealed by his description of Moses’s occupation. In the poem Guo observes that the story of God’s creation of the world was narrated by a poet, rather than a prophet, as Moses is commonly known. Guo’s uncommon title for Moses is an unmistakable borrowing from *A Defence of Poetry*, where Shelley suggests that Moses’s work is poetry (54). Shelley’s view is anchored in his generalized definition of poetry, which Guo accepts without reservation. Guo’s debt to Shelley’s theory, therefore, indicates that his writing of the poem is still informed by Shelley’s equation of the poet with the Creator God. Yet, the accusation of God’s laziness in Guo’s poem is a direct challenge to God’s authority. Guo’s rebellious narrator is redolent of Milton’s defiant Satan, who, Shelley contends, “as a moral being is ... far superior to his God” (63). Guo’s narrator, as a poet, therefore, aspires to surpass God even as he or she takes on the Creator’s role.

THE LYRICIST

Taking great delight in Shelley’s lyrics, Guo Moruo translated more of Shelley’s lyric poems than any other contemporary Chinese writer. Guo’s translations not only show his partiality for lyrics in praise of the natural world and those expressive of the poet’s feelings, but also reveal his thinking on various issues concerning modern Chinese poetry, including inspiration and expression, translation and creation, and form and language. Guo also benefits from some of Shelley’s lyrical works and poetic techniques in his own lyric poems.

Translating the Lyrical Shelley

In the preface to his translations of Shelley’s poems, Guo Moruo flaunts his knowledge of different

interpretations of Shelley by calling the British romantic “a favorite of nature, a believer in pantheism, a fighter of revolutionary thoughts”, and a perpetual youth (“Xuelai de shi” 19). Guo’s translations, however, tend to concentrate on poems that make Shelley a supreme lyric poet. He chooses to translate poems that are either a eulogy to nature, e.g. “Ode to the West Wind” and “To a Skylark”, or an expression of the poet’s sentiment, e.g. “Death” and “Invocation to Misery”. Guo’s liking for Shelley’s treatment of nature and expression of feelings also marks his early contact with the English poet. He translated “To a Skylark” in 1920 because the lyric could express the pleasure that he derived from nature when he and his friend heard the chirps of unseen birds in an outdoor walk (*Guo Moruo* 15: 128-134).

Guo Moruo’s choice of Shelley’s lyric poems accords closely with his affinity for pantheism and his embrace of Shelley’s inspirational view of poetry. Partly because of his predilection for the writings of Goethe and Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), and partly because of his own disposition toward pantheism, Guo converted to pantheism and widely read pantheist works from India, China, and the West (*Guo Moruo* 12: 66). Guo could hardly fail to note the importance of nature in Shelley’s poetry after his reading of Seiichi Uchida’s 内多精一 *Sheri no omokage* シエリーの面影 [The image of Shelley], which sees Shelley as a poet of nature and an adherent of pantheism (197-264). It is, therefore, unsurprising that Guo opts to translate two of Shelley’s most well-known poems on nature. Guo reiterates Shelley’s inspirational theory in the preface to his translations of Shelley’s lyrics. Echoing Shelley’s wind-lyre motif, the preface employs wind and piano to show that the style of a poem is dependent upon the poet’s inspiration. Appropriating Shelley’s inspirational theory, Guo foregrounds the poet’s expression of emotions, which is the intermediate stage between inspiration and imagination in his Shelley-inspired formula of poetry (*Guo Moruo* 15: 14-16, 47-49). Accordingly, Guo’s translations are Shelley’s lyrics that either have feelings as the subject, e.g. “Stanzas, Written in Dejection, near Naples”, or readily evoke feelings, e.g. “Mutability”.

Informed of Shelley’s distrust of translation and Seiichi Uchida’s reading of Shelley, Guo Moruo’s adopts a strategy of translation that effectively equates translation with creation and interpretation. Reflecting on his

translation of “To a Skylark”, Guo observes that “poetry cannot be translated” and that a forced translation would lose the “color and odor” of the original (*Guo Moruo* 15: 134). It is a view probably indebted to Shelley’s belief in the futility of translating poetry:

... it were as wise to cast a violet into a crucible that you might discover the formal principle of its colour and odour, as seek to transfuse from one language into another the creations of a poet. The plant must spring again from its seed, or it will bear no flower ... (*Defence* 24)

The context of Shelley’s words suggests that he attaches importance to both the sounds and thoughts of poetry, which cannot be directly transfused into another language. Guo grasps Shelley’s idea of untranslatability and retains Shelley’s “colour and odour” metaphor. Shelley’s plant trope indicates that translation should develop from the original like a new plant growing from the seed of the mother plant. Shelley does not make explicit what a translator should do, but his metaphor suggests that a translator should initiate a process of creation parallel to the poet’s creation of the original poem. Moreover, one poem should allow multiple translations, each an interpretation on its own, since one mother plant usually produces multiple seeds, from which will grow multiple new plants, each an independent organism.

It is not clear if Guo Moruo ever attempts to decipher Shelley’s trope, but it is of interest to note that Guo’s conception of translation matches up with the implications of Shelley’s trope. “When I translated his [i.e. Shelley’s] poetry,” Guo claims, “it was as if I was creating my own work” (“Xuelai de shi” 20). It is a statement that sees translation as creation. Guo also states, “To translate Shelley’s poetry is to identify myself with Shelley and to identify Shelley with me” (19). It is an emphasis on the translator’s sympathy with the poet, which necessitates translation as the translator’s subjective interpretation. Guo’s equation of translation with interpretation is only hinted here, but, elsewhere, explaining his renderings of *Shijing* 诗经 [Book of songs] and *Also sprach Zarathustra* [Thus spoke Zarathustra], he unambiguously states that his translations are his “interpretation” (*Guo Moruo* 5: 157; 15: 189). In addition, Guo’s idea of the translator’s identification with the poet is reminiscent of Seiichi Uchida’s stress on Shelley’s identification with nature, especially Uchida’s following words: “Shelley identified with the west wind, and the west wind identified with Shelley” (264). Guo

might profit from Uchida's words, but, long before his encounter with Uchida, Guo had expressed his belief in the unity between the poet and nature (*Guo Moruo* 15: 135), which was entrenched in his pantheism.

That Guo Moruo sees translation as creation and interpretation is evidenced by his explanation about his translation of "To a Skylark". Take stanzas four and five of the poem for example.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of Heaven,
In the broad day-light
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight,
Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there. (*Poetical Works* 471)

The word "even" in stanza four is a literary term for "evening". Guo perceives it as "twilight", but he boldly, if incorrectly, brackets the expression with "dawn", instead of "dusk" ("Xuelai de shi" 35). His unorthodox reading hinges upon his mistaken belief that "the skylark sings in the morning, rather than in the evening" (35). The fifth stanza has always been a focus of debate because the meaning of "silver sphere" is somewhat obscure. It is often taken to be the moon (King-Hele 228-229). Against the conventional critical reading, Guo rightly points out that "keen", "arrow", and "intense" in the stanza are ill-suited for the description of the moon ("Xuelai de shi" 36). He also notes that reading the "silver sphere" as the moon would clash with the imagery of stanza six (36), which likens the omnipresence of the lark's song to the overflowing moonbeams through one lonely cloud in the clear night sky. He then interprets the "silver sphere" as the sun, which, though plausible to himself, is different from the reading of later scholarship. Guo's fearless rewriting of Shelley's most celebrated lyric shows how far he could go with his view of translation as creation and interpretation, regardless of whether his reading conforms to

scholarly explanations or not.

Unlike other early advocates of new poetry, who are averse to any regular verse forms, particularly classical Chinese verse forms, and the use of classical Chinese in poetry, Guo Moruo contends that the poet has “absolute freedom” in the choice of verse forms, free or regulated, and language, classical or vernacular (“Xuelai de shi” 20). It is a view passionately expressed in the preface to his translation of Shelley’s lyrics. It is also a view that has its roots in Shelley’s generalized definition of poetry. Building on Shelley’s idea that poetry is “the expression of the imagination” (*Defence* 12), Guo argues that proper words, i.e. expression, are the form of poetry (*Guo Moruo* 15: 14-16), which actually consists of both language and verse form. In so far as the words could express poetry, Guo reasons, they are acceptable. Therefore, just as Shelley finds poetry in the language throughout the ages and in both free and conventional verse forms (*Defence* 13-26), Guo is receptive to classical Chinese language and classical Chinese verse forms, both of which are rejected by his contemporary new poets.

Guo Moruo’s openness to classical Chinese language and classical Chinese verse forms is backed by his translations of Shelley’s lyrics. Of the eight poems translated by Guo, four make use of vernacular Chinese and free verse forms, i.e. “Ode to the West Wind”, “Song” (Rarely, rarely, comest thou), “Stanzas, Written in Dejection, near Naples”, and “Death” (The pale, the cold, and the moony smile). The other four translations employ classical Chinese language. One of them, “Invocation to Misery”, uses the classical verse form unique to *Chu ci* 楚辞 [Verses of Chu], an anthology of poetry from the state of Chu in the Warring States period (475 BC – 221 BC). The other three, “To a Skylark”, “Mutability” (We are as clouds that veil the midnight moon), and “Mutability” (The flower that smiles to-day), all adopt *wugu* 五古, the pentasyllabic ancient style.

Assimilating the Lyrical Shelley

As one who worships inspired expression, Guo Moruo is not expected to consciously model his poems after those of others. However, there are times when Shelley’s lyrical expressions and poetic technique find their

way to Guo's lyric poems. Corresponding to Guo's partiality for Shelley's treatment of nature and sentiments in lyric poems, two types of borrowings from Shelley can be identified in Guo's lyrical works. One is Guo's conception of a lyric poem that cloaks his fluctuating emotions in Shelleyan poetic language. The other is Guo's attempt at the personification of non-living things, especially natural forces, a poetic technique that characterizes Shelley's lyrics.

Of Guo Moruo's poetic oeuvre, one poem that has drawn much admiration is "Misangsuoluopu zhi yege" 蜜桑索罗普之夜歌 [Night song of a misanthrope] (hereafter "Night Song"), whose mode of expression is markedly different from the vigorous style commonly associated with Guo. The following are Guo's "Night Song" and its translation.

无边天海呀！	Boundless heaven and ocean!
一个水银的浮沤！	One mercurial bobbing bubble!
上有星汉湛波，	Above are the clear waves of the starry Galaxy.
下有融晶泛流，	Below is the sparkling flow of the crystal stream.
正是有生之伦睡眠时候。	It is a time when all the living things are asleep.
我独披着件白孔雀的羽衣，	I alone, draped around the plumage of a white peacock,
遥遥地，遥遥地，	Far away, far away,
在一只象牙舟上翘首。	In an ivory bark raised my head and look.
啊，我与其学做个泪珠的鲛人，	O rather than imitate a merman shedding tears of pearls,
返向那沉黑的海底流泪偷生，	Leading an ignoble life back in the dark bottom of the sea,
宁在这缥缈的银辉之中，	I would, in the ethereal silver beams,
就好象那个坠落了星辰，	Like the fallen star,
曳着带幻灭的美光，	Dragging a streak of beautiful vanishing light,
向着“无穷”长殒！	Fall into the Eternal!

前进！……前进！

Forward! Forward!

莫辜负了前面的那轮月明！ (*Guo Moruo* 1: 144) Disappoint not the bright moon ahead!

The first stanza portrays a first-person narrator as a solitary figure blended in with a scene of ethereal beauty, and the second stanza spotlights the narrator's determination to pursue the transitory yet eternal beauty, even if the pursuit is self-destructive. The poem's idealization of beauty brings to mind Guo's embrace of aestheticism, or art for art's sake, in the process of the poet's creation. The word *xiangya zhou* 象牙舟 [ivory bark] in the first stanza lends weight to such a reading, for "ivory" is Guo's trope for aestheticism (*Guo Moruo* 12: 182; 15: 191; 16: 8). The poem's exaltation of aestheticism is also confirmed by its subtitle, which states that "the poem is dedicated to the author of *Salomé* and Shouchang" (1: 145). The author of *Salomé* is Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), the icon of the Aesthetic Movement, and Shouchang is the courtesy name of Tian Han 田汉 (1898-1968), to whose translation of *Salomé* Guo's poem serves as a preface.

Shelley's impression on the poem can be seen in line four of the first stanza, where Guo Moruo depicts the moving seawater under the moon as *rong jing fan liu* 融晶泛流 [the sparkling flow of the crystal stream]. The four characters respectively means bright, crystal, flow, and stream, which together evoke an image redolent of Shelley's verse line that the skylark's notes "flow in such a crystal stream" (*Poetical Works* 472), an expression that Guo translated into *liu jing* 流晶 [flowing crystal] (*Guo Moruo* 15: 133).

However, Guo Moruo's poem, as a whole, is more akin to the concluding stanza of *Adonais*, which is Shelley's elegy for the untimely death of John Keats, the most celebrated forerunner of the Aesthetic Movement. Shelley's stanza is as follows.

The breath whose might I have invoked in song
Descends on me; my spirit's bark is driven,
Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng
Whose sails were never to the tempest given;
The massy earth and sphered skies are riven!

I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar;
Whilst burning through the inmost veil of Heaven,
The soul of Adonais, like a star,
Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are. (Abernethy 46)

The stanza presents two pictures: one is the poet-narrator alone in a bark far away from the human world; the other is the poet-narrator looking up to the soul of Adonais, or Keats, which illumines the narrator like a star burning through the veil of Heaven. The first picture corresponds to Guo's scene of the narrator alone in a bark drifting from afar. The second picture is analogous to the imagery of the star shining through the ethereal veil in Guo's second stanza. Even the poet-narrator's distant birthplace, dark and fearful, auxiliary to Shelley's second picture, invites comparison with "the dark bottom of the sea", the weeping merman's habitation, in Guo's poem. Shelley's narrator is illuminated by the star-like soul of the deceased Keats, whereas Guo's narrator makes a resolution to follow the example of a fallen star. Both the star-like soul in Shelley's stanza and the fallen star in Guo's poem find their dwelling place in eternity.

Both Shelley and Guo Moruo look forward with optimism in their poems. However, the beautiful scenes depicted in their poems are no real experience, because both poets were weighed down with profound sadness at the time of their writing. Shelley's expression "my spirit's bark" indicates that the scene in his stanza springs from his imagination. His poem is, in fact, an elegy for Keats's premature death, which, Shelley believes, was prompted by the harsh reviews of conservative magazines. During his lifetime, Shelley's own poetry suffered no less severe attacks, and *Adonais* is also seen as Shelley's elegy for himself, a fact, probably quoting Seiichi Uchida, Guo notes in his chronology of Shelley's life (Uchida 194; "Xuelai nianpu" 54). Guo's recollection of his writing of the poem reveals that his exquisite scene is "a hallucination caused by the burden of life" (*Guo Moruo* 12: 69). His poem was conceived on the night of 13 November 1920 when, after a whole day's watch, he and his family still stayed in a hospital ward attending to their gravely ill infant, fearing for his death (*Guo Moruo* 12: 69; Meng 69). By that time Guo must have read *Adonais*, which is included in *The Skylark and Adonais, with Other Poems*, a collection of Shelley's poetry from which Guo translated "To a Skylark" in March 1920.

Guo Moruo's familiarity with *Adonais*, especially its concluding stanza in question, is supported by his chronology of Shelley's life, which relies heavily on Seiichi Uchida's *The Image of Shelley*. Guo's note to the poem adds an unacknowledged translation of the closing couplet of Shelley's concluding stanza, which is not mentioned in Uchida's work. Guo's note renders Shelley's term "the Eternal" as *wuji* 无际, which brings to mind its variation *wuqiong* 无穷 in Guo's "Night Song". Many other terms in Shelley's stanza find their corresponding or synonymous expressions in Guo's poem, including "bark", "far from", "skies", "darkly", "afar", "veil", "Heaven", and "star". Some other lines from *Adonais* also possibly inform Guo Moruo's poem, e.g. "Which frozen tears instead of pearls begem" and "And, as a dying meteor stains a wreath / Of moonlight vapor, which the cold night clips" (Abernethy 33, 34).

The expression *wuqiong* [Eternity or the Eternal] in Guo Moruo's poem, as a borrowing from Shelley, is the personification of an abstract idea. It not only implies that Guo shares Shelley's aspiration for lasting poetic fame, but also reveals that Guo profits from a poetic technique characterizing Shelley's works. Shelley is known for his propensity for the personification of non-living things, e.g. abstract concepts and natural forces, which is recorded in *The Image of Shelley* (105-106, 263) and *Halleck's New English Literature* (Halleck 423-424), two books on Guo's reading list. A number of Guo's poems take advantage of this technique of Shelley's, and some of them even build on the personification employed in Shelley's lyric poems.

Two of Guo Moruo's poems that extensively utilize the Shelleyan poetic technique of personification are "Fenghuang niepan" 凤凰涅槃 [The nirvana of the phoenix] and "Shi he shuimian de zhengxi" 诗和睡眠的争夕 [The struggle between poetry and sleep]. The former features a congregation of real and mythical birds singing songs, including the phoenix, the eagle, the peacock, the owl, the pigeon, the parrot, the white crane, and the chicken. It relies on the mythology that the phoenix, after living for 500 years, burns itself on a pyre and rises from its ashes. It expresses Guo's wishes for the regeneration of China and himself (*Guo Moruo* 16: 217). It may be no coincidence that rebirth is a recurrent theme in Shelley's lyric poems. For instance, Shelley pleads with the west wind to sweep out his dead thoughts "to quicken a new birth" and to spread his poetry as "Ashes and sparks"

from the hearth (*Poetical Works* 454). Shelley's personified cloud also declares that "I change, but I cannot die" and that "I arise" "like a ghost from the tomb" (518). The latter poem of Guo's is a quarrel between Sleep and Poetry, which compete for the control of the poet. Sleep's argument that it can distract the sick poet's attention from the cares of the day is redolent of Shelley's praise for Sleep in beginning of *Queen Mab* (2).

One of Shelley's poems personifying natural forces that captivates Guo Moruo most is "The Cloud", which plays on the cyclic transformation of the cloud and its accompanying natural phenomena. "I," Shelley's personified cloud announces, "'bring fresh showers ... [from] the seas and the streams', 'wield the flail of the lashing hail', 'laugh as I pass in thunder', 'sift the snow on the mountains', and have lightning as my pilot" (*Poetical Works* 517). Guided by lightning, the cloud passes "earth and ocean" as well as rills, crags, hills, lakes, and plains. "I change, but I cannot die," the cloud declares, because after the rain it will arise again "out of the caverns of rain" (518). Guo Moruo is also certainly conscious of the description of similar natural phenomena in Shelley's note to "Ode to the West Wind", since the note is included in two anthologies of Shelley's poetry that Guo possessed. The poem was produced, Shelley's note records, "on a day when that tempestuous wind ... was collecting the vapours which pour down the autumnal rains" (Abernethy 26; *Poetical Works* 453). The rains, Shelley continues, started "with a violent tempest of hail and rain, attended by that magnificent thunder and lightning" (Abernethy 26; *Poetical Works* 453).

Inspired by the metamorphosis of Shelley's cloud or water, Guo Moruo wrote "Huanghe yu Yangzi Jiang duihua" 黄河与扬子江对话 [A conversation between the Yellow River and the Yangtze River] in December 1922, a time when he was preparing for the Shelley Memorial issue of the *Creation Quarterly*. Meeting in the Yellow Sea, the two rivers in Guo's poem communicate to each other the chaos that they witnessed as they wind through China. Resolved to rouse the Chinese people to action, the two rivers merge with each other. Half of their water evaporates and enters the sky. Like Shelley's protean cloud, the water vapor turns into snow, hail, cloud, and rain, and brings lightning and thunder. All these natural forces urge, directly or indirectly, the Chinese people to take action. The other half of the water remaining in the Yellow Sea sings a song of surging waves, whose sound travels along the two rivers and their tributaries and resonates across China.

In his essay, or rather prose poem, “Women de wenxue xin yundong” 我们的文学新运动 [Our new movement in literature], Guo Moruo once again capitalizes on the transformation of the Yellow River and the Yangtze River, highlighting its implications for a literature of rebellion. Guo wrote a second poem titled “A Conversation between the Yellow River and the Yangtze River” in early 1928 when he was wanted by the Kuomintang government because of his participation in the communist uprising. Informed by Guo’s Marxist doctrine, the conversation of the two personified rivers conveys Guo’s belief that Chinese people should unite with small nations and the proletariat in their struggle against internal warlords and imperial powers.

THE DRAMATIST

Guo Moruo’s penchant for the dramatic poetry is clearly suggested in his poem “The Creator”, whose poet-narrator calls on past dramatists for inspiration. His very first anthology of poetry, *The Goddesses*, derives its title from his dramatic poem “Nüshen zhi zaisheng” 女神之再生 [The regeneration of the goddesses], and initially bore *Xiqu shige ji* 戏曲诗歌集 [An anthology of drama and poetry] as its subordinate title. The opening section of the anthology is also saved for his dramatic poems. He produced altogether ten dramatic poems in the 1920s and seven in the 1930s and the 1940s, and continued to write acclaimed dramas after 1949. Guo himself attributes the genesis of his interest in the writing of drama mostly to his translation of the first part of Goethe’s *Faust* in the summer of 1920, a claim that is both inaccurate and misleading (“Guzhu Jun 2-3; *Sange* 23-24; *Guo Moruo* 12: 76-77). Guo’s diverse writings unwittingly reveal that, in addition to classical Chinese dramas, he read the plays of many foreign dramatists other than Goethe, including Emile Verhaeren (1855-1916), Ernst Toller (1893-1939), Georg Kaiser (1878-1945), Henrik Johan Ibsen (1828-1906), Gerhart Hauptmann (1862-1946), John Galsworthy (1867-1933), John Millington Synge (1871-1909), William Shakespeare, and, of course, Shelley, some of whose contribution to his dramatic work Guo occasionally admitted (*Guo Moruo* 6: 272-273; 12: 77, 85, 234; *Sange* 26; “Xuelai nianpu” 56).

To ascribe Guo Moruo's dramatic undertaking to his translation of Goethe would also fail to account for Guo's dramatic poems produced or conceived before the summer of 1920 and Guo's continued devotion to dramatic writing after he demarcated himself from Goethe in 1926. Guo alleged that his first drama was "Tangdi zhihua" 棠棣之花 [Twin flowers], a story about the assassin Nie Zheng in the Warring States period (475 BC - 221 BC), and that its writing was constrained by his translation of Goethe (*Guo Moruo* 12: 77; *Sange* 26). However, Guo later observed that he had been thinking about dramatizing Nie Zheng's story in the spring of 1920 (*Guo Moruo* 6: 272), which invalidates Goethe as the chief source of influence on his dramatic enterprise. Moreover, Guo's first dramatic poem is not "Twin Flowers", but "The Nirvana of the Phoenix", which was originally subtitled "Feinikesi de kemeiti" 菲尼克司的科美体 [A comedy of the phoenix]. The word "comedy" in the qualifying subtitle, strange as it may seem, dictates that the work is a dramatic poem. The drama was written and published in January 1920, half a year before Guo's translation of Goethe.

When Tian Han communicated his aspiration to become a dramatist and critic in March 1920, Guo Moruo responded that he had no intention of becoming a critic, but he did not rule out the dramatist (*Guo Moruo* 15: 112). Guo's production and conception of dramas in the commencement of 1920 is, therefore, not accidental. He was never frank about the true motivation behind his lasting commitment to drama started in early 1920, but a number of facts pinpoint Shelley's theory of poetry as the cause of his devotion. Guo's letter dated 18 January 1920 draws heavily on Shelley's inspirational theory of poetry and Shelley's view of poetry as the expression of imagination (13-16), suggesting that he was meticulously reading, if not re-reading, *A Defence of Poetry*. In the same letter Guo expressed remorse for his bad personality traits and wished for a rebirth like a phoenix burning itself on a pyre and rising from its ashes (16-19). Two days later Guo drafted "The Nirvana of the Phoenix", though he insisted that the dramatic poem "is symbolic of China's regeneration" (*Guo Moruo* 12: 73; 16: 217).

Shelley's stamp on "The Nirvana of the Phoenix" is palpable, even though Guo Moruo purports to have written the poem when he was under the spell of Walt Whitman and Richard Wagner (1813-1883) (*Guo Moruo* 12: 67; 16: 216-217). The imagery of the mythical bird reborn from its ashes, central to the drama, is anticipated

by Shelley's praise of Dante's supreme role in "the resurrection of learning" (*Defence* 66):

His [Dante's] every words are instinct with spirit; each is as a spark, a burning atom of inextinguishable thought; and many yet lie covered in the ashes of their birth, and pregnant with the lightning which has yet found no conductor. (66-67)

Similar association of ashes with rebirth can be found in many other of Shelley's writings, including "Ode to the West Wind". The original version of "The Nirvana of the Phoenix" concludes with the phoenix's chorus of rebirth, which starts with praise for light and fire, thereby echoing Shelley's argument that poetry should "ascend to bring light and fire" (77).

The employment of the chorus in "The Nirvana of the Phoenix" and many other of Guo Moruo's dramas further corroborate Guo's debt to *A Defence of Poetry*. "The modern practice of blending comedy with tragedy," Shelley maintains, "is undoubtedly an extension of the dramatic circle" (39). Shelley qualifies the statement by arguing that "the comedy should be as in *King Lear*, universal, ideal, and sublime" (39). It is the application of this principle, Shelley contends, that makes Shakespeare's *King Lear* a greater drama than Sophocles' (c. 497/496 – 406/405 BC) *Oedipus Tyrannus* and Aeschylus' (c. 525/524 – c. 456/455 BC) trilogy of tragedies. It is for this reason that Shelley values *King Lear* as "the most perfect specimen of the dramatic art" (40). However, Shelley concedes that "the intense power of the choral poetry" in Sophocles' and Aeschylus' dramas may make them equals of *King Lear*. Guo Moruo must have learned Shelley's exaltation of the Shakespearean comedy and the choral poetry by heart, for more than two decades later, commenting on his own drama, Guo could still quote Shelley's verdict on the supremacy of *King Lear* (*Guo Moruo* 6: 407). It also explains why Guo would bizarrely call "The Nirvana of the Phoenix" a comedy.

Guo Moruo's adoption of the chorus, alongside other artistic forms, is in line with Shelley's celebration of drama's capacity to do social good by combining diverse modes of expression. Shelley observes in *A Defence of Poetry*:

The drama being that form under which a greater number of modes of expression of poetry are susceptible of being combined than any other, the connexion of poetry and social good is more observable in the

drama than in whatever other form. And it is indisputable that the highest perfection of human society has ever corresponded with the highest dramatic excellence; and that the corruption or the extinction of the drama in a nation where it has once flourished, is a mark of a corruption of manners, and an extinction of the energies which sustain the soul of social life. (45-46)

Shelley's accentuation of the drama's prominent role in promoting social good, ensuing from the art form's potential for coalescing different modes of expression, offers a plausible explanation for Guo Moruo's consistent commitment to the dramatic poetry throughout his poetic career.

Shelley's stress on the social function of drama could explain why Guo Moruo avows that "The Nirvana of the Phoenix" symbolizes the regeneration of China, despite the fact that his conception of the dramatic poem was driven by his desire to extricate himself from his personal plight. In fact, all of Guo's dramas, unlike his lyric poems which sometimes could escape overt utilitarian motives, are in a sense his engagement with social issues haunting contemporary Chinese intellectuals. His dramas in the 1920s deal with such issues as civil wars, foreign aggression, women's liberation, and class struggle. Those in the 1930s and the 1940s are mostly pertinent to the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945). And those produced after 1949 unabashedly serve various agendas of the communist regime. Guo's acceptance of Shelley's view of dramatic poetry, however, moves beyond drama as a piece of writing. He is cognizant of Shelley's perception of poetry in the dramatic events of history, which is grounded in Shelley's generalized definition of poetry.

Poetry, in the Shelleyan sense, is the expression of the eternal order. Because the greatness of Roman institutions sprang from that order, Shelley argues, "[the] true poetry of Rome lived in its institutions" (*Defence* 52). It follows that, to Shelley, Roman senators, statesmen, and generals, who performed heroic deeds reflecting that order amid the shows of historical events, "were at once the poets and the actors of [those] immortal dramas" (52). Shelley literally views the people participating in grand historical events, as if in a way conforming to the eternal order, as poets and actors of the dramatic poetry. Guo Moruo certainly understands the gist of Shelley's argument, for he sees the life of Shelley, who persisted in fighting against established traditions and institutions, as "a magnificent poem" ("Xuelai de shi" 19). Whether he was consciously practicing Shelley's principle of

dramatic poetry or not, the trajectory of Guo's life coincided extraordinarily with the dramatic image of the poet-actor predicated by Shelley, as witnessed by Guo's active involvement in major historical events in modern China: the Northern Expedition (1926-1928), the communists' Nanchang Uprising (1927), the Second Sino-Japanese War, and finally the succession of political campaigns after the founding of the People's Republic of China.

Returning to Guo Moruo's dramatic writings, one could discern numerous traces of Shelley's influence. The one drama of Guo's that profits most extensively from Shelley's works is "The Regeneration of the Goddesses", which can serve to illustrate Guo's debt to Shelley's dramatic poetry. Guo's much lauded poem is patterned after Shelley's lyrical drama *Hellas*, which expresses Shelley's hopes for the revival of Greece. In the prologue to *Hellas*, Shelley notes that Western "civilization rising as it were from the ashes of their [Greeks'] ruin" (*Poetical Works* 336). The ashes motif echoes, if not informs, Guo's phoenix rising from the ashes in "The Nirvana of the Phoenix" and Guo's exploitation of the theme of regeneration. Since Guo was, like his contemporaries, wont to see a parallel between the Greek cause of independence and China's struggle for national salvation (*Guo Moruo* 1: 122), it comes as no surprise that he should be attracted by Shelley's commitment to the Greek cause in *Hellas*.

The affinity between "The Regeneration of the Goddesses" and *Hellas* lies, first of all, in the plot of their stories. Shelley's drama imagines the war between Ottoman Turkey and the uprising Greece, represented respectively by the Turkish sultan and the insurgent Greeks. Similarly, Guo Moruo's drama recounts the fight to claim the throne between Zhuanxu and Gonggong, two mythological chiefs of ancient China, respectively standing for the two sides of the ongoing civil war between northern and southern China (*Guo Moruo* 12: 79). Both dramas have a more important third party: the enslaved Greek women in *Hellas* and the enshrined goddesses in "The Regeneration of the Goddesses". Shelley's drama begins and concludes with choruses of Greek captive women, supplemented with two extra choruses punctuating the action of the poem. Guo's drama, in similar fashion, starts and ends with choruses of the goddesses. Neither enslaved Greek women nor enshrined goddesses are directly involved in the struggle between rival parties, but both Shelley and Guo, through the chorus, pin their

hopes on the seemingly powerless third party. Shelley is undoubtedly sympathetic to the Greek cause, but he does not assign victory to the insurgent Greeks, apparently because he disapproves of war as a solution to the issue. Likewise, Guo is impressed with neither side of Chinese civil war, since both Zhuanxu and Gonggong are doomed to death in his drama (79-80).

That Guo Moruo has *Hellas* in mind is more plainly revealed by his bold adaptation of Chinese mythology to invent a third party equivalent to the Greek captive women in Shelley's dramatic poem. The prototype of the goddesses in Guo's drama is, as his note admits, the goddess Nüwa, who, according to ancient Chinese mythology, repaired the pillar of heaven after Gonggong lost the war with Zhuanxu and, in a fit of pique, damaged one mountain propping up the heaven. In all versions of Chinese mythology Nüwa is one singular mother deity, powerful and unsubdued, but in Guo's drama the mother goddess becomes a plethora of debilitated goddesses, enshrined, or rather imprisoned, in the niches. The goddesses walked out of their niches when Zhuanxu and Gonggong were preoccupied with their fight, indicating that they had been suppressed by the domineering male chiefs. By the end of the drama when Zhuanxu and Gonggong perished together, the goddesses, seeing the remains of the male chiefs and their henchmen, decided to place the dead bodies in the now vacant niches, confirming that the niches are effectively prisons. Guo's enshrined goddesses are, therefore, in a situation comparable to that of enslaved Greek women in *Hellas*.

Pluralized goddesses in Guo Moruo's drama serve a more useful purpose, since it enables Guo to practice choral poetry, a dramatic technique prized by Shelley and employed in *Hellas*. Guo is particularly partial to the concluding chorus of *Hellas*, for in "A Chronology of Shelley's Life", he notes that *Hellas* "predicts the return of the golden age and the revival of Athens" ("Xuelai nianpu" 54), which is virtually a literal translation of two lines from the chorus (*Poetical Works* 358-359). He further and rightly observes that the chorus, like "The Isles of Greece" by Byron, conveys the hopes for Greece. Guo's profound understanding of *Hellas* must have been the result of his careful reading of the drama, because *The Image of Shelley*, a major source of his chronology, does not mention "the return of the golden age" or encourage a comparison with Byron's poem (Seiichi Uchida 112-114, 129-131, 419).

Guo Moruo's own final chorus also shows the imprint of Shelley's closing chorus. The chorus of the goddesses in Guo's drama welcomes a new sun soon to rise from the sea while outshining the star Sirius. The imagery is akin to the one projected by Shelley's following lines:

A brighter Hellas rears its mountains

From waves serener far;

A new Peneus rolls his fountains

Against the morning star; (*Poetical Works* 359)

The word "brighter" in the first line invites one to see Hellas, the personification of Greece, as something that radiates light, presumably a sun, because it is the fittest shining object to rear the mountains against the backdrop of "waves serener". The comparative form of "brighter" further implies that this sun is a renewed, and better, version of its previous existence. A similar image of a new sun can be found in two lines from the opening chorus of *Hellas*: "A second sun arrayed in flame, / To burn, to kindle, to illumine" (338). Shelley's image of a renewed sun, therefore, anticipates the "newly created sun" ("Nüshen" 11) in the final chorus of Guo's drama. The morning star in Shelley's chorus is a common name for the planet Venus when it is visible in the eastern sky before sunrise, but it can also refer to Sirius, which, during the dog days, appears in the sky before sunrise. Therefore, Guo's choice of Sirius in the final chorus is again indicative of the connection between his drama and Shelley's *Hellas*.

THE POLITICAL POET

As one emphatic about the social function of poetry and attentive to contemporary sociopolitical events, Guo Moruo, like Shelley, was a political poet through and through. Major issues that preoccupied Guo in the 1920s include civil war, foreign aggression, women's oppression, and class struggle. Guo was only too willing to address these issues in his poetry, but his approaches to such issues were not fixed and unchangeable. On grounds

of the different motifs constantly presented in his poetical works, three principal profiles of Guo Moruo can be identified: the self-righteous nonresistant, the passionate feminist, and the revolutionary socialist, which may be in conflict or in concord with each other. The shadow of Shelley's life and works haunts much of Guo's poetry that contributes to his multiple images as a political poet.

The Nonresistant

Guo Moruo was perhaps closest to the political Shelley when he held on to an essentially nonresistant credo in the early 1920s. He was undeniably opposed to established traditions and institutions in this period, but his hesitancy with respect to violent war set him apart from his later standing as a convinced socialist embracing sanguinary revolutions. He was well informed of Shelley's revolt against repressive moral values, religious institutions, and political systems, which is clearly delineated in *The Image of Shelley* and numerous other contemporary writings. However, he was acutely aware that Shelley was a staunch advocate of "revolutionary thoughts" ("Xuelai de shi" 19), rather than a revolutionary in the strict sense of the term. He fully understood that Shelley was skeptical of war as a solution to social and political issues. That is why he condemns both Zhuanxu and Gonggong to destruction in "The Regeneration of the Goddesses", just as Shelley, in *Hellas*, proclaims the failure of insurgent Greeks and predicts the fall of the Ottoman Empire. The heroines in both poems, as the hope of both poets, refrain from any direct resistance to their oppressors.

A similar tendency toward nonresistance can be found in many of Guo Moruo's poems written in the early 1920s, particularly "Xianglei" 湘累 [The one drowned in the Xiang River] and "Guzhujun zhi erzi" 孤竹君之二子 [Two sons of the Ruling Lord of Guzhu], whose Shelleyan nonresistant protagonists Guo avowedly identifies himself with (*Guo Moruo* 12: 79, 141, 149-150). The former poem is based on the legend of the self-righteous poet Qu Yuan, who, though banished by the king of Chu, maintained his integrity and later drowned himself in the Xiang River. The ancient Chinese poet becomes a Chinese Shelley in Guo's dramatic poem. "My poetry,"

Guo's Qu Yuan exclaims, "is my life" ("Xianglei" 7). It is a statement identical with Guo's judgement on Shelley, whose poetry, Guo extols, "is his life" ("Xuelai de shi" 19). Guo's Qu Yuan further claims:

I model myself on the spirit of the Creator. I freely create and freely express myself. I create stately mountains and magnificent seas. I create the sun, the moon, and the stars. I dash with the wind, the cloud, the thunder, and the rain. When I shrink, I fill only my own body, but when I expand, I can permeate the universe. ("Xianglei" 7)

The passage, as Qu Yuan's soliloquy, captures the essential features of Guo's Shelley-inspired conception of the poet-creator, thereby validating Guo's identification of Qu Yuan with Shelley.

Qu Yuan's banishment from the capital of the state of Chu is akin to Shelley's exile from England. Qu Yuan's discontent with "the political circles" and "the muddied world" ("Xianglei" 5-6) in Guo Moruo's drama is comparable to Shelley's resentment at established traditions and institutions. The thwarted Qu Yuan resigned himself to the southern regions of the state and finally to the Xiang River. It is analogous to Shelley's indulgence in the natural world as an escape from the frustrations of real life. Shelley's death by drowning was not a suicide, but, as his wife Mary Shelley first notes, the closing stanza of Shelley's *Adonais* seems to have prophesied his drowning in the sea (Shelley, "Note" 235-236). In short, Qu Yuan's return to nature, rather than resort to violence, bears a close resemblance to Shelley's non-violent resistance. As Qu Yuan is merely Guo's dramatic persona, the debt of Guo, as a self-righteous nonresistant, to Shelley, becomes plain to see.

The principles of Guo Moruo's Shelleyan nonresistance are more clearly presented in "Two Sons of the Ruling Lord of Guzhu", a dramatic poem built upon the story of Boyi and Shuqi, two brothers who ran away from the state of Guzhu to avoid their succession to the rulership. Boyi and Shuqi later tried in vain to dissuade the ruler of Zhou from waging war on his suzerain, the Shang. After the Zhou conquered the Shang, the two brothers, refusing to eat the produce of Zhou, fed on fiddlehead ferns and finally died of starvation. Guo Moruo dismisses the explanation that the two brothers attempted to stop the Zhou ruler because they were against regicide. Instead, Guo argues that the two brothers objected to "the war that replaces one tyranny by another" ("Guzhu Jun" 3). They were opposed to, Guo continues, "unjust war", private ownership, and hereditary monarchy (3). Indeed, Guo

asserts that the two brothers are ancient “pacifists” and “anarchists”, thereby agreeing with the spirit of modern people (4).

“Two Sons of the Ruling Lord of Guzhu” was produced at a time when Guo Moruo was preparing for the Shelley memorial issue of the *Creation Quarterly* in late 1922. Many of Shelley’s ideas, as explained in Guo’s foreign sources, particularly *The Image of Shelley*, find their way to Guo’s drama. One of Boyi’s songs in the drama, for example, condemns hereditary monarchy, ritual religion, private ownership, and idol worship (12), which is redolent of Shelley’s challenge to the monarchy, religion, moral values, and propertied class, as delineated in Seiichi Uchida’s book (63-119). Boyi preaches “a self-righteous doctrine” of returning to nature and proceeds to sing praises of “the triumph of humanity” (13-14). It brings to mind Uchida’s view of Shelley as a poet of nature and a singer of revolutionary ideas, as shown in Shelley’s last work “The Triumph of Life”, among others (233-236, 302-303). Boyi wishes a fisherman’s infant to remain “a perpetual child” (14), which is actually the dominant image of the lyrical Shelley. In the drama Shuqi compares his lover Mengjiang and his brother Boyi, two most important people in his life, respectively to the moon and the sun. It again evokes Uchida’s analysis of Shelley’s personification of the moon and the sun (256).

Boyi and Shuqi’s retreat to nature is suggestive of a self-righteous nonresistant approach. The drama’s borrowings from Shelley again show how Guo Moruo benefits from the English poet’s nonresistance. Guo’s Shelleyan self-righteous nonresistance, however, did not survive his conversion to Marxism. He became disillusioned with the nonresistant approach in 1924 and wrote an allegorical short novel titled “San shiren zhi si” 三诗人之死 [The death of three poets], which tells the tragic ending of three rabbits reared by a household. The rabbits are respectively nicknamed Byron, Shelley, and Keats, who constitute the Satanic School of English Romanticism. When one rabbit gets eaten by a nearby black cat, the narrator, Guo’s persona, is struck by the helplessness of the nonresistant rabbit, as he asks, “Even if the nonresistant silently sacrificed its own life, who can guarantee that the black cat will not prey on our rabbits any longer?” (*Guo Moruo* 9: 350).

Women feature prominently in Guo Moruo's poetry, as they are often symbolic of his high ideals. Guo himself borrows Goethe's term *das Ewig-Weibliche*, or eternal feminine, to convey his faith in and worship of women ("Nüshen" 1). Remarking on his dramatization of rebellious female figures, Guo would later claim to be a feminist (*Sange* 4). Shelley is similarly obsessed with women in his life and works, and he is, to some people, "one of the most pro-feminist of male writers" (Crook 65). Shelley was, as Seiichi Uchida notes, wont to project his ideals on to the women that he met in his real life, such as Emilia Viviani, Harriet Westbrook (1795-1816), and Elizabeth Hitchener (1782-1822), only to be disappointed (171-172). Shelley's ideal women, be they Beatrice, Cythna, Helen, Asia, or Emilia, Uchida points out, are one and the same "innocent and passionate woman", who has "a pure soul and a beautiful body" (104). Shelley's imagination of the ideal women, Uchida states, is akin to Goethe's symbolization of "eternal feminine" (171-172).

The resemblance between Guo Moruo's female figures and Shelley's ideal women is shown in Guo's dramas impressed with the stamp of Shelley. The enshrined goddesses in "The Regeneration of the Goddesses" by Guo, like the enslaved Greek women in Shelley's *Hellas*, through their choruses, offer hope of creating a better future. They stand in total contrast to the action of the dramas' male characters, who were engaged in a self-destructive war. "The One Drowned in the Xiang River" spotlights two water spirits, Ehuang and Nüying, wives of the legendary sage-king Shun, whose final resting place is said to be near the waters where Qu Yuan drowned himself. Blending the two legends, Guo's drama has the Shelley-inspired Qu Yuan identify himself with the legendary ruler, who was, in one version of the story, similarly banished to the southern regions of China. When Ehuang and Nüying sang touching songs, yearning for their husband's return, Qu Yuan took it to be their call for his reunion with them and, after expressing his frustration in the real world, jumped into the water. Qu Yuan's pursuit of elusive water spirits resembles Shelley's craving for illusory ideal women first conveyed in his long poem *Alastor*, which is, Guo notes, "a self-portrait of Shelley's life" ("Xuelai nianpu" 46).

Shelleyan ideal women in Guo Moruo's poetic works are not always characterized as elusive spirits or

passive goddesses. They can also be dauntless fighters rising up against male dominators and repressive moral values. Such are the female characters in “Zhuo Wenjun” 卓文君 and “Wang Zhaojun” 王昭君, two feminist dramas written after Guo had just finished his contributions for the Shelley memorial issue of the *Creation Quarterly*. “Zhuo Wenjun” is based on the story of the eponymous widow, who eloped with the poet Sima Xiangru (c.179 – 117 BC) after the latter attended a banquet hosted by her family. The focus of Guo’s drama is Zhuo Wenjun’s revolt against traditional Chinese moral values, which prescribe that a woman should preserve chastity after her husband’s death and show unquestioning obedience to her father. Guo’s purpose, as he openly flaunts, is to reverse the conventional verdict against Zhuo Wenjun (*Sange* 12-13). It calls to mind Shelley’s tragedy *The Cenci*, whose virtuous heroine, Beatrice, was involved in the murder of her despicable father Count Cenci, an act, Uchida says, affirming resistance to “the established morality” (95).

Guo Moruo has Zhuo Wenjun speak of “a depraved family” and “the shackles of old rituals” (“Zhuo Wenjun” 29) in her letter to Sima Xiangru, which resonates with Beatrice’s appeal to the guests to rescue her from the tyranny of her father. Guo’s debt to Shelley is further revealed by his invention of one character, traceable, not to the conventional account of Zhuo Wenjun’s story, but to *The Cenci*. The character is Cheng Zheng, Wenjun’s father-in-law, who plotted to possess the widowed Wenjun. It is an incest theme redolent of Count Cenci’s scheme to rape his daughter Beatrice in Shelley’s work. Guo also creates a young manservant in love with Wenjun’s maidservant. The manservant promised to send Wenjun’s secret letter to Sima Xiangru, but ended up reporting Wenjun’s escape plan and bringing the letter to her father. Wenjun was consequently, in the middle of her flight, cornered by her father, in the company of the manservant. Wenjun’s maidservant, disappointed in the manservant, stabbed him to death before committing suicide, an act comparable to Beatrice’s patricide as a challenge to repressive morality, if outshining the heroine Wenjun.

“Wang Zhaojun” is grounded in the legend of the eponymous concubine of Emperor Yuan (75 BC – 33 BC) in the Western Han dynasty (206 BC – 8 AD). Wang Zhaojun was overlooked by the emperor when she was in the harem, as the emperor would only visit those whose portraits look beautiful. Zhaojun’s portrait presented before the emperor was unimpressive because she, unlike other maids, refused to bribe the imperial painter Mao

Yanshou. When the emperor wanted to make peace with the nomadic Xiongnu by marrying one woman to its chief, Zhaojun volunteered. The emperor was stunned by Zhaojun's beauty when he saw her departing for Xiongnu. Too late to press her to stay, the emperor, in a fit of rage, had the deceitful painter executed. Dissatisfied with the traditional reading of the story, which attributes Zhaojun's tragedy to fate, Guo Moruo perceives the tragedy as the result of Zhaojun's unyielding personality (*Sange* 16-18). He sets out to portray Zhaojun as an unswerving rebel against "monarchical power" and an exemplar who, against traditional Chinese morality, shows no obedience to her nominal husband, Emperor Yuan ("Wang Zhaojun" 18-19).

It is apparent that Wang Zhaojun's challenge to hereditary monarchy and traditional morality, as presented in Guo Moruo's drama, has an affinity with Shelley's ideal women struggling against similar oppressive forces. Traces of Shelley's influence can also be found in the plot and characters of Guo's drama. Guo invents a character Gong Kuan, who serves as the pupil of Mao Yanshou and the lover of Mao Shuji, the invented daughter of the imperial painter. In the drama Gong Kuan offered to help Mao Shuji prevent her father from forcing Wang Zhaojun into submission. However, it was later revealed that Gong Kuan was a married man and that he had also made advances to Wang Zhaojun. His offer of help, therefore, was part of his scheme to capture the heart of Mao Shuji and even of Wang Zhaojun, as he knew the imperial painter Mao Yanshou was in his way. The dishonest and lustful Gong Kuan is equivalent to Shelley's cunning Orsino, who, believing that he had to remove Count Cenci before he could win Beatrice, conspired with her against her tyrannical father but carefully avoided putting himself in jeopardy. The autocratic emperor in Guo's drama had a sick and perverted mind. He would, while looking at the portrait of Wang Zhaojun, kiss the beheaded Mao Yanshou on both cheeks, because the painter's face had been slapped by Wang Zhaojun. The emperor's morbid fascination is reminiscent of the abnormal behavior of Count Cenci, who "takes an artistic pleasure in torturing the minds of his victims" (King-Hele 131).

In "Wang Zhaojun" Guo Moruo also broaches, albeit tentatively, the subject of incest, a motif that appears frequently in Shelley's poetry, e.g. *Laon and Cythna*, *Rosalind and Helen*, and "Invocation to Misery". Guo's drama has Wang Zhaojun's widowed mother adopt a son when the heroine was three years old. The family lived a peaceful life until fifteen years later when Wang Zhaojun was selected to be the emperor's concubine. Unable to

bear the news, Wang Zhaojun's brother, who was one year older than her, drowned himself, hinting that his affection for her exceeded sibling love ("Wang Zhaojun" 8). Wang Zhaojun was equally attached to her brother, as she had lost the power of love after the death of her brother, who, she said, had taken her happiness with him (21). Shelley's fondness for the incest theme was influenced by its popularity in his day and enhanced by his assent to William Godwin's (1756-1836) free-love theory (King-Hele 135-136). Guo's Chinese context did not encourage the exploitation of the incest theme, and he could not have read the writings that informed Shelley's practice. Guo's experimentation with the theme in his feminist dramas, therefore, gives away his debt to Shelley.

The Socialist

Never reticent about his sympathies, Guo Moruo, in the preface to *The Goddesses*, proclaims himself "a proletarian" and wishes to become "a communist" (*Guo Moruo* 1: 3). In his poems Guo eulogizes workers, peasants, and the proletarian revolution while denouncing private ownership. However, despite his inclination toward the socialist cause in the early 1920s, Guo had only a superficial understanding of the basic concepts of socialism (12: 147, 184). His writings in this period, as represented by "Two Sons of the Ruling Lord of Guzhu", were dominated by an overarching sense of self-righteousness and pure escapism (12: 147-150). He acquired an extensive knowledge of Marxist doctrines and became a socialist in the true sense of the term in mid-1924, after his translation of Hajime Kawakami's 河上肇 (1879-1946) *Shakai soshiki to shakai kakumei ni kansuru jakkan no kōsatsu* 社会組織と社会革命に関する若干の考察 [Some reflections on social organization and social revolution] (12: 202-207). Shelley maintains a strong presence in Guo's pro-socialist writings, both before and after his real and informed conversion to Marxism.

One Shelleyan image that Guo Moruo consistently associates with the socialist cause is the Greek mythological figure Prometheus, the Titan who stole fire from heaven and gave it to the human race. Because his transgression infuriated the supreme god Zeus, Prometheus was permanently chained to a rock in the Caucasus

Mountains where, as an eternal torment, an eagle would come daily to devour his liver. Prometheus, in the hands of Romantic writers, however, became a rebellious figure defying all kinds of tyrannical powers. Goethe's Prometheus, for example, is a misotheist. Shelley's Prometheus, perhaps the most well-known Romantic version, furnishes more than one interpretation, particularly the triumph of political reform (King-Hele 198-199), which can be most readily connected with Guo Moruo's pro-socialist agenda. Guo first appropriated the image in his poem "Diqiu, wo de muqin!" 地球，我的母亲！ [Earth, my mother!], which, playing on coal as a fossil fuel, praises workers laboring in the coal mine as "the Prometheus of humanity" (1: 80). Guo's socialist orientation is further substantiated by the following stanza's assertion that only peasants and workers are the worthy children of Mother Earth (1: 81, 83).

In "A Chronology of Shelley's Life", Guo Moruo, after a brief summary of Shelley's masterpiece *Prometheus Unbound*, highlights that the year Shelley completed the lyrical drama is the same year when the Utopian socialist Robert Owen (1771-1858) pushed through the 1819 Cotton Mills and Factories Act, which was intended to protect workers and regulate their working hours (51). When the revolutionary socialist Vladimir Lenin died in early 1924, Guo responded with the elegy "Taiyang mole" 太阳没了 [The sun has set], which perceives Lenin as one who "stole the flaming sacred fire of heaven" and gave it to "destitute brothers without clothes or jobs" (1: 331), an obvious allusion to the Shelleyan Prometheus. Guo's only poem consciously referring to Prometheus without overtly preaching socialism is "Juliu zai jianyisuo zhong" 拘留在检疫所中 [Detained at the quarantine station], which draws a parallel between Napoleon confined to St. Helena and Prometheus bound to the Caucasus. Nevertheless, Guo's socialist inclination can still be deduced from the poem's affirmation of Napoleon, since Guo used to see the Russian Revolution in 1917 as the continuation of the French Revolution in 1789 (16: 33; *Qianmao* 10).

Guo Moruo became a convinced and informed socialist after his translation of Hajime Kawakami in 1924, but he was dissatisfied with Kawakami's resistance to political revolution (12: 205-206). However, despite his embrace of violent revolution, Guo did not completely sever his ties with the nonresistant Shelley, even as he later

openly detached himself from Goethe and Byron (13: 304; *Sange* 25). Guo's own justification for his continued attachment to Shelley is Marx's verdict that Shelley is "a friend" of the socialist cause and "a forerunner of the proletarian revolution" (16: 26; 12: 209). Indeed, Shelley is on the highest rungs of Guo's literary and artistic ladder, as he views Shelley, together with Marx and Lenin, as the forerunner of thoughts on class struggle (16: 26). Guo would continue to borrow from Shelley's poetry, but he carefully rewrites Shelley's nonresistant principle to fit in with the proletarian revolution in China.

"A Conversation between the Yellow River and the Yangtze River", written in December 1922, is a poem that intends to rouse the Chinese people to follow in the footsteps of the American Revolutionary War, the French Revolution, and the Russian Revolution. The poem's personification of natural forces and its exploitation of the transformation of water speak of its debt to "The Cloud" and "Ode to the West Wind" by Shelley. Guo Moruo's pro-socialist agenda is expressed in the poem's praise for "the proletarian dictatorship" in Russia, but, apart from chanting empty slogans, it gives no concrete methods for starting a proletarian revolution. Guo Moruo wrote a second poem bearing the same title in early 1928, after he survived the failed communist uprising launched in the previous year. This second poem, while retaining Shelley's technique of personification, does not make use of the metamorphosis of water. In the poem Guo's mouthpiece, the Yangtze River, in whose valley the communist uprising had taken place, calls for the Chinese people to ally with "small and weak nations" and "the proletariat" in the world (*Qianmao* 39). It prophesies that "over 320 million indigent peasants" and "five million emergent industrial workers" in China are the most powerful "bomb" bound to shake the whole world (39).

While Guo Moruo refrains from translating Shelley's overt political poems, his chronology of Shelley's life does include a rendering of the well-known closing stanza of *The Masque of Anarchy*. The poem, Guo notes, gives expression to Shelley's righteous indignation at the massacre of laborers and radical partisans demonstrating against the Corn Laws and in favor of parliamentary reform at St. Peter's Field, Manchester in 1819 (50). The poem calls ministers of the incumbent English government Murder, Fraud, and Hypocrisy, who, under the leadership of Anarchy, a symbol of God, King, and Law, are on a march to take over England. A maid named Hope, a typical Shelleyan ideal woman, lies down in the street before the march of repressive forces. A

mysterious figure arises from the mist between Hope and her enemies and butchers the parade of oppressive forces. Hope then delivers a rousing speech to the English people, appealing to them to rise up against oppression. The gist of Hope's speech is shown in the final stanza of the poem:

“Rise like lions after slumber
In unvanquishable NUMBER!
Shake your chains to earth, like dew
Which in sleep had fall'n on you:
YE ARE MANY – THEY ARE FEW.” (*Poetical Works* 434)

The stanza expresses Shelley's belief in the collective power of the people by comparing them to lions and the repressive forces to chains as light as dew. Guo Moruo's translation of the stanza and its back translation are as follows.

“起哟，结起成必胜的大群
如像是无数的睡狮醒了！
睡眠中落在你们头上的枷锁
你们摆摆头儿如像露珠一般摇掉：
你们人数多——他们人数少”。 (“Xuelai nianpu” 50-51)
[“Rise, gather to form the invincible multitude
Like the awakening of countless sleeping lions!
The chains that in sleep had fallen on your heads
You cast them off like dew by shaking your heads
You are many – they are few”.]

Guo's translation conveys the main idea of Shelley's stanza, but, by using the adjective *wushude* 无数的 [countless] to modify the lions, Guo stresses the large number of the people. Guo also has the chains fall on the “heads” rather than, as indicated in Shelley's stanza, the whole bodies, a change that makes the chains easier to

break. Guo's minor modifications serve to affirm the strength of the people while belittling the power of oppressive forces.

The method of resistance advocated by *The Masque of Anarchy* is non-violent, since the heroine Hope calls on people to meet slaughter with equanimity, rather than taking up arms. However, when Guo Moruo became convinced of violent revolution, he appropriated Shelley's verse line to serve his new purpose. He completed an allegorical short novel in October 1927, two months after the failed communist uprising. Titled "Yi zhi shou – xiangei xinshidai de xiao pengyou men" 一只手——献给新时代的小朋友们 [One hand: To children of the new age], Guo's short novel tells of an imagined proletarian revolution led by the communists in an imagined place, which culminates in the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. It includes a passage undisguisedly propagandizing his socialist faith:

... as long as we [i.e. the proletariat] can organize ourselves, sacrifice ourselves, and struggle against our enemies to the last, because *we are many, they are few*, whatever happens, the capitalist class has to submissively hand over the political power to us (emphasis added). (10: 29)

The italicized words are almost a word-for-word duplicate of the concluding line of Shelley's final stanza. Guo only replaces Shelley's second-person plural pronoun "Ye" with the first-person plural pronoun "We", a meaningful substitution as Guo considered himself a member of the proletariat and personally participated in the communist uprising. If some of Guo's fictional works are, as he claims, poetry (19: 409), then his rewriting of Shelley's closing verse line must be one of those moments where his intended poetic quality rises to the surface.

Chapter Four: Cultural Nationalism and Aesthetic Values: Wen Yiduo's Exaltation and Assimilation of John Keats

Of the major British Romantic poets John Keats (1795-1821) was the one that attracted the least attention of Chinese literary men in the early period of republican China. There was scant mention of this English poet in the writings of Chinese literati, especially before the late 1920s. The few writings that broached Keats did so often as part of their attempt to give a broad description of English literature, e.g. Zeng Xubai's 曾虚白 (1895-1994) *Yingguo wenxue ABC* 英国文学 ABC [*ABC of English literature*], or as a supplement to their elaboration on other English Romantics, e.g. Xu Zuzheng's 徐祖正 (1895-1978) "Yingguo Langman Pai san shiren: Bailun, Xuelai, Jici" 英国浪漫派三诗人: 拜伦, 雪莱, 箕茨 [Three English Romantic poets: Byron, Shelley, and Keats] published in a special issue commemorating Shelley. The number of articles devoted to Keats or his works was even smaller. Before 1925, the only noticeable pieces that bear the name of Keats were three brief messages informing Chinese audience of the 1921 celebrations of the centenary of Keats's death held in the West, though one of them did include a succinct account of the English poet's life, work, and influence (Shen Yanbing; Yanbing; Yuzhi).

In contrast to contemporary Chinese audience's lukewarm response to Keats, Wen Yiduo's 闻一多 (1899-1946) approach to the English Romantic was more than enthusiastic. He quoted Keats to support his argument in his very first commentary on new poetry, i.e. "Ping ben xuenian Zhoukan li de xinshi 评本学年《周刊》里的新诗 [On the new poems in the *Weekly* of this academic year], which came out around the time the news of the Keats centenary reached China. In the following years Wen turned more frequently to Keats in his essays, letters, and poems, always as an authority on his poetic convictions. For example, he took two lines from Keats's "Human Seasons" as the epigraph to his first vernacular poem "Xi'an" 西岸 [The western bank] when it was collected in his first anthology *Hongzhu* 红烛 [Red candle]. Wen's poem "Leiyu" 泪雨 [Tear rain], anthologized in his second collection of poetry *Sishui* 死水 [Stagnant waters], was modeled on the same poem by Keats.

Significantly, in a letter to his fellow poetic aspirant dated 26 December 1922, Wen proposed that, as advocates for “beauty as the core of art”, they should worship Keats from the West, together with the classical Chinese poet Li Shangyin 李商隐 (c. 813-858) from the East (12: 128).

Wen Yiduo’s exaltation of Keats is exceptional among his contemporary poets, who were more receptive to other major English Romantics. So what is it in Keats that attracted Wen and how is Wen’s poetry related to that of Keats? While celebrating Keats as the supreme model of his poetical creed, Wen accorded the same high status to the Chinese poet Li Shangyin. The problem is that, in his first commentary on new poems, Wen had dismissed Li Shangyin as a decadent poet (2: 46). So what is the motivation behind Wen’s change of attitude? Moreover, Wen’s poems, letters, and essays show that, aside from John Keats and Li Shangyin, he was open to many other Chinese and English poets, whose styles are by no means uniform. So how did Wen manage to bring these diverse poets under the same umbrella? Finally, Wen’s two anthologies of poetry are noted for the stark contrast between their styles, but the influence of Keats can be traced in both collections. So how did Keats fare in the development of Wen’s poetic career? Most scholars recognize the strong influence of Keats and Li Shangyin on Wen’s *Red Candle* as well as Wen’s interest in classical Chinese poetry and other English poets, particularly Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892) and John Gould Fletcher (1886-1950). However, apart from some general remarks on the sources of Wen’s inspiration and on Wen’s poems bearing obvious marks of external influence (Hsu; Meng), little attempt has been made to reveal Wen’s less apparent borrowings from Keats and other poets as well as the way Wen assimilated so many distinct poets. Still less explored is Keats’s role in Wen’s later poetic works. Last but not the least, no study has tried to associate Wen’s reading of Keats with the development of the Romantic’s reputation in Britain and the United States.

THE MYTH, ARTISTRY, AND INFLUENCE OF KEATS

To provide insights into Wen Yiduo’s rewriting of Keats, it is necessary to survey the image of Keats that

Wen had access to. The popular image of Keats in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was grounded in some myths about his birth, schooling, temperament, and premature death. Keats's ascending poetic fame, however, was rooted in his distinctive artistic style, i.e. sensuous imagery and suggestive overtones. The openness of Keats's poetical works has sustained the interest of succeeding generations. Just as he drew on mostly from the English literary traditions, Keats, after his death, became a rich source of inspiration for his Anglo-American poetic successors.

The reputation of John Keats as a person and a poet is inextricably linked with several myths about him. These myths are somewhat connected, though not always compatible, with each other. The first myth, the "malicious invention" of conservative Tory journals, derides him as a stupid and unlearned poet of the low-born Cockney school (MacGillivray xii). The second, the well-intentioned embellishment of his friends, projects him as an excessively sensitive and delicate genius who, obsessed with beauty but not masculine enough to bear the harsh reviews of his poetry, died at a young age before he could fulfil his promise (xii-xiii). This second myth is typified by Shelley's *Adonais*, a pastoral elegy lamenting Keats's untimely death and portraying him as a fainting flower nipped in the bud by hostile reviewers (xiii). Adding a further touch of sentiment to this myth was Keats's dying request for the epitaph to be inscribed on his tombstone: "Here lies one whose name was writ in water". The two opposing myths sustained an image of Keats in Britain for about thirty years after the poet's death in 1821, though to the general public he remained essentially obscure.

The two myths were largely disproved by the first biography of Keats, i.e. the two-volume *Life, Letter, and Literary Remains of John Keats* written by Richard Monckton Milnes (1809-1885) (MacGillivray xii-xiv, 1-liv; Stillinger 246-251). Milnes suggested that Keats came from a respectable middle-class background, received proper education, reacted to bad reviews with nonchalance, and displayed masculinity, bravery, "sense of humour", "emotional restraint", and "intellectual energy and subtlety" (MacGillivray xiii). Widely and favorably reviewed, Milnes's biography stimulated public interest in the poetic works of Keats and marked the beginning of Keats's rise to fame. However, despite Milnes's clarification, the two myths, particularly the misconception about Keats's martyrdom derived from the second myth, persisted even into the early twentieth century, for they fit in

with popular imagination of a martyred genius (xiii), which in turn fostered the third myth.

The third myth is effectively the history of Keats criticism and scholarship after the poet entered the literary canon. Keats rose to canonicity because of the publication of his biography and remains in the canon because of “the complexity and open-endedness of his writings” (Stillinger 246-247). He has been highly commended by commentators for some cardinal stylistic features he shared with William Shakespeare: rich language, concrete and exact descriptions, and harmonious and varied sounds and rhythms of verse lines (251). Like Shakespeare, Keats has also been the subject of various critical and theoretical approaches: his dexterity in producing sensuous imagery made him a model of the Pre-Raphaelites; his cult of beauty made him a forerunner of the Aesthetic Movement; his absorption of great English poets made him an exemplar of intertextual analysis; his allegiance to the liberal side drew attention to the politics in his poems; and the list goes on (251-253). Keats’s openness to different interpretations is the result of the “ambiguities and contradictions” (252) inherent in his authorial character and writings, a quality which Keats famously termed “negative capability” and attributed to Shakespeare. Such uncertainties and contradictions in Keats’s works, therefore, explain their enduring appeal to succeeding generations (252).

The first thing in Keats’s art that arrests the attention of his readers is undoubtedly his cult of beauty, which is potently declared in a chiasmus: “‘Beauty is truth, truth beauty,’ – that is all / Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know” (Keats 135). Keats’s theory of poetic beauty, however, is more profound than the two short lines could suggest. It involves three possible stages, which do not develop in sequence as Keats’s views changed several times during his poetical career (Ford 27-32). In the first phase, Keats holds that the suitable subject of poetry is the sensuousness in the bright aspects of nature, which excludes “any form of thought” or “the tragic sides of nature” (28). In the second phase, Keats believes that the poet should create an air of suggestiveness that will bring the reader to an imaginative world. This second phase is closely connected with the first. In the third phase, Keats claims that “the materials of great poetry must be all life” (29), which means that the poet must be conscious of the evil forces of the natural world and the agonies and strife of the human world. Keats’s conception of poetic beauty in the third phase remained essentially a theory, but traces of his movement toward this final

stance could be found in his epic poem *The Fall of Hyperion*, which accounts largely for Keats's attractiveness to readers of the mid-twentieth century. However, the Victorian readers were oblivious of this final position taken by the maturing Keats. They were content with appreciating the sensuous imagery and suggestive overtones in Keats's poetry, which are a manifestation of the first two stages of the poet's view of beauty.

Bound up with Keats's emphasis on sensuousness and suggestiveness is a poetic technique that characterizes his presentation of beauty: *ekphrasis*, "an extended and detailed literary description of any object, real or imaginary" (Roberts). Keats's penchant for ekphrasis is shown not only in his many poems on art objects, e.g. "On Seeing the Elgin Marbles" and "Ode on a Grecian Urn", but also in his recurring picturesque depiction of nature, e.g. the exuberant landscapes in "To Autumn", and in his frequent portrayal of characters verging on works of art, e.g. the pictorial heroine Madeline in *The Eve of St. Agnes* and the sculptural fallen Titans Saturn and Thea in *Hyperion*. Keats's fondness for ekphrasis is partly the result of his intention to master Shakespeare's skill in creating concentrated imagery, and partly the result of his fascination with artworks and his close association with a sizeable number of painters and art lovers (MaGillivray lx; Ford 107). The poetics of ekphrasis is tied up with the "rivalry between the verbal and the visual arts", which can be conveniently summarized as the conception of "poetry as a speaking picture and painting as silent poetry" (Kelley 171). Keats's commitment to ekphrasis, therefore, endows his poetry with the distinctive qualities of painting, particularly the employment of lavish colors, and for this reason he has been fittingly called a "poet-painter" (Wilde 145) or "the painters' poet" (Lafourcade 27).

Keats finds beauty not only in art pieces and natural spectacles but also in the world of the past. In fact, his beautiful art objects, pictorial and sculptural characters, and picturesque natural scenery are often connected with or set in the world of the past, i.e. medieval romances and Greek mythologies. Keats's predilection for the past accordingly takes the form of two masks, through which he gives expression to his self and achieves his eminence in poetry (McFarland 18). The first is the Mask of Camelot, which denotes Keats's commitment to Romantic medievalism or medieval imagining in his poetry. The second is the Mask of Hellas, which involves Keats's concentration on Romantic Hellenism or ancient Greek myths, "the very origins of Western cultural history"

(Evert 14). Of Keats's major poetic works, *The Eve of St. Agnes*, "The Eve of St. Mark", and "La Belle Dame sans Merci" are utterances from the first mask, whereas "Ode on a Grecian Urn", *Endymion*, *Hyperion*, "To Autumn", "Ode to Psyche", "Ode to a Nightingale", among others, are a direct or indirect realization of the second mask. While both masks make possible Keats's poetical presentation of a transcendental world, as opposed to the quotidian world of his everyday life, they perform largely different functions in Keats's poetic output (McFarland 86-87). The primary function of the Mask of Camelot is the utterance of eroticism or the theme of love. The Mask of Hellas can utter various themes, but its foremost function is the expression of "a theme of light in opposition to the gloomy reality of Keats's doom-laden existence" (87).

Keats's devotion to medievalism and Hellenism was the combined effect of several factors (McFarland 1-26). First, medieval and Hellenic imagining saturated the cultural ambience of his age. Second, he was influenced by the medieval sensibility of his day, and he received a common education that has a focus on the classical world of Greece. Third, he had direct and stimulating experiences with artefacts of antiquity, e.g. his visits to medieval buildings during his tour of England and to Greek marble sculptures when they were exhibited in the British Museum. Lastly, his partiality for Edmund Spenser's medieval imagining opened the way for his entry into the world of Romantic medievalism, and his reading of George Chapman's (c. 1559 – 1634) translation of Homer inspired him to immerse himself in the world of Romantic Hellenism.

Keats's debt to Spenser and Chapman, two Elizabethan authors, points to a distinctive attribute of his poetic production, that is, his fixation with English poets. Although he read avidly and extensively great poets from different historical periods and different literary traditions, Keats opted to incorporate mostly English poets into his own poetry, especially those of the Renaissance and earlier periods (Kucich 187). His preoccupation with native poets was informed not only by his national basis, but also by his attentiveness to "contemporary debates about the cultural urgency and political significance of reviving England's literary tradition" (187), which was commonly believed to have reached its zenith in the Renaissance. Because of the importance that he attached to the inheritance of English poetry, Keats's poems, lines, and expressions often resonate with or allude to those of his English forebears. The poetic predecessors that Keats conversed with encompass, but are not limited to,

literary giants like Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1343 – 1400), Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton, senior contemporaries like Wordsworth and Leigh Hunt (1784-1859), and minor poets like James Beattie (1735-1803) and Mary Tighe (1772-1810) (186-202). Keats was particularly fond of Thomas Chatterton (1752-1770), a precocious poet who tragically ended his life at a young age, because he considered this poetic prodigy, who used “no French idiom” but “genuine English idiom in English words”, “the purest writer in the English language” (Kucich 200-201; Scott 345).

Just as Keats drew his inspiration from the poetic traditions established by his English predecessors, after his death his own poetry became a rich source of inspiration for his poetic successors. In effect, to varying extents, all major poets of the Victorian era profited from Keats, and he had been “the poet’s poet” since the 1820s (Ford 170). The first of such a succession of poets who attempted to capitalize on Keats’s poetry was Thomas Hood (1799-1845), whose poems produced from 1822 to 1830 bear obvious marks of Keats’s influence, though his popularity as an author was not grounded in his imitations of Keats’s verse (Ford 7-10). The first of the leading Victorian poets who came to recognize Keats’s poetic accomplishments was Robert Browning (1812-1889), who became an avid reader of Keats as early as 1826 and retained his appreciation of the earlier poet to the very end (Ford 10). In his later years Browning even considered that Keats and Milton constitute “the superhuman poet-pair” (Browning 61). Browning’s poem “Popularity”, a homage to Keats composed in the early 1850s, describes how various imitators derived benefit from “the world of colour” (Ford 11) unfolded by Keats. Browning’s stress on color in his own poetry was likewise indebted to Keats, though, as the most original Victorian poet, he showed little other signs of Keats’s influence (Ford 11-12).

The most renowned Victorian disciple of Keats’s poetry was Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892), through whose well-received poetry many readers became acquainted with Keats’s works, especially after Tennyson was appointed Poet Laureate in 1850 (Ford 17-21). When Tennyson’s *Poems, Chiefly Lyrical* was published in 1830, reviewers were quick to point out the resemblance between the two poets (17). Keats’s influence is also predominant in Tennyson’s anthology published in 1832 and still balanced against other factors when its revised edition came into being in 1842. Keats remained Tennyson’s favorite poet of the nineteenth century, and the

names of the two poets were inextricably linked with each other (18-20). What binds them together is Tennyson's inclination for Keats's cult of beauty (32-43). On the one hand, the practice of this credo entailed a minimal interest in human affairs and the exclusion of political or philosophical subjects from their poetry. On the other hand, "it involved an emphasis on the pictorial beauties of the past or of landscape, on vivid sensation, on suggestiveness, on art itself" (32). Tennyson's debt to Keats may take the form of a direct imitation of his predecessor's lines and expressions or a similar approach to medieval tales, classical mythology, the natural world, and the issue of art. However, Tennyson gradually grew beyond Keats's influence after 1842, partly because he was sensitive to the accusation of his imitation of Keats, and partly because his bent for philosophizing began to hold sway (43-48).

While Tennyson gradually moved away from Keats, his imitation of Keats was passed on to other more willing Victorian followers of the younger poet, the most important one being the painter and poet Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882). Rossetti counted Keats, together with Dante, his favorite poet, not only because Keats's pictorial narratives and medieval themes offered him the joy of beauty, but also because Keats's poetry promised a realm where he could dispense with middle-class asceticism, political theories, scientific standards, or any other exhortations and disputations (Ford 107-120). It is worth mentioning that, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, an art group which Rossetti co-founded in 1848, took their appreciation of Keats almost as "a badge of membership" (107) and drew many subjects of their paintings from Keats's poetry. Keats and the Pre-Raphaelites have since become bound up with each other, and literary historians usually perceive Pre-Raphaelitism as "Rossettiism" (108). As a poet Rossetti was determined to be original and wary of any direct borrowings from others, but, immersed in Keats's work, he nevertheless succumbed to the general influence of his predecessor's penchant for medieval themes and lavish colors and to the specific influence of certain distinctive scenes and phrases described or used by Keats (121-145).

Rossetti was considered to be the father of the Aesthetic Movement that rejected the didactic function of art and preached "art for art's sake". The aesthetes valued Keats's poetry of sensuous beauty as their bible and, from 1870 on, helped to raise Keats's fame to an unprecedented height. Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), the icon of the

Aesthetic School, saw Keats as the primary cause of English aestheticism and blatantly borrowed from this predecessor in his own poetry (Ford 172). Wilde's aesthetic values were fostered by Walter Pater (1839-1894), an influential literary critic who advocated aestheticism and praised Keats as one of the small number of "disinterested servants of literature" (qtd. in Ford 174) in England. It should be noted, however, that in the last decades of the Victorian era Keats's influence was "inextricably blended with strains of Tennyson, Rossetti and many others" (172).

Keats's fame as a poet was at its highest from the publication of his biography by Sidney Colvin (1845-1927) in 1887 to the celebrations of the centenary of Keats's death in 1921 (MacGillivray lxix). In the early twentieth century notable poets who profited from Keats's poetry include Rupert Brooke (1887-1915) and some Imagists. Amy Lowell (1874-1925), who later assumed leadership of Imagism, was an early devotee of Keats. Her first anthology, *A Dome of Many-Coloured Glass*, derived its title from a line in Shelley's elegy for Keats's death, and her last book was a two-volume biography of Keats. Lowell's understanding of poetry and Imagism are both in the Keatsian line. She maintained that the only thing that matters to poetry is "its beauty as a work of art" and that Imagism is "a re-birth of the spirit of truth and beauty" (*Tendencies* vi, 237). Concentration, one cardinal principle of Imagism laid down in the preface of an Imagist collection edited by Lowell (*Some Imagist Poets* vii), is also a poetic technique to which Keats committed.

AESTHETIC CONVICTIONS AND UTILITARIAN CONCERNS

Unlike other early new poets whose vision of new poetry was often stained with overt utilitarian concerns, Wen Yiduo singularly contended that beauty should be "the core of art". Unlike other early new poets whose banner was the abandonment of Chinese literary traditions, Wen Yiduo distinctly maintained that new poetry should reap the benefits of both Chinese and Western literature. In the years between his preparation for his first anthology of poetry and the publication of his second anthology, Wen Yiduo repeatedly voiced his conviction that the ultimate principle of poetry is pure art for art's sake or extreme aestheticism, which naturally excludes any

national or cultural concerns. Curiously, in the same period Wen Yiduo also frequently proclaimed his belief that Chinese new poetry should be grounded in China's traditional culture and composed quite a number of poems uttering his anxiety over its fate in the face of Western aggression. So what is one to make of Wen Yiduo's apparently contradictory call for aestheticism and Chinese cultural traditions? A close examination of the evolution of Wen's poetic convictions as well as his utilitarian concerns is necessary for the clarification of the issue.

Aesthetic Values

Wen Yiduo was converted to vernacular new poetry around late 1920, three years after Hu Shi's call for literary reform. For a brief period Wen seemed a blind follower of the initiators of new poetry, as he, in early 1921, taunting old-style poets as backward, advised them to consult the writings of Hu Shi and his acolyte (2: 37-38). However, Wen soon diverged from the free verse practiced by Hu Shi and his votaries. As his first commentary on new poetry reveals, Wen had a penchant for rhyme and rhythm and had respect for classical Chinese poetry (40-53), neither of which is compatible with Hu Shi's teachings. By the end of the year, Wen's own poetic taste began to hold sway. He argued for rhythm and rhyme in a report titled "A Study of Rhythm in Poetry", which draws heavily on classical and contemporary English writings on poetry and art (54-61). The purpose of Wen's report is fairly apparent, since its second to last section is an attack on the free verse initiated by Hu Shi. Wen proceeded to conduct a study of the regulated verse of classical Chinese poetry in the following year. After delineating the merits of Chinese regulated verse, he proposed a new poetics that draws on both Chinese and Western poetic traditions (10: 131-169).

As he grew independent of early new poets, Wen Yiduo established his own principles of new poetry. His theory is formulated on the basis of mostly English writings on poetry and art as well as the assumed merits of classical Chinese poetics. Key elements of interest to Wen are imagery, emotion, sound, and color, which he first articulated in mid-1921 and continued to develop over the course of his poetic career. One distinctive feature of

Wen's new poetics is that it attempts to capture the beauty common to different artistic forms, especially poetry and painting.

Imagery, the most important element of Wen Yiduo's poetics, is often tied up with intensity and concentration, which are respectively the effect of imagery and the technique to create imagery. True poetry, Wen argues, springs from vivid imagery, which creates the effect of ecstasy and intensity (2: 40-41, 50-51). It is a succinct, though inexact, summary of a view presented in William Allan Neilson's *Essentials of Poetry*. "[The] appropriate effect of poetry on the reader" is, Neilson quotes another scholar as saying, "a kind of ecstasy" (171). Ecstasy is, Neilson continues, the effect of intensity, "the fundamental and essential quality" (172) of poetry. Wen's English example of vivid imagery is Keats's following lines: "– Then on the shore / Of the wide world I stand alone, and think / Till love and fame to nothingness do sink" (2: 41).

Keats's idea of "making the reader breathless, instead of content", Wen argues, is the view of creating the effect of intensity (2: 50). The imagery that Wen looks for is "sensuous, condensed, and concrete" (2: 69), which calls to mind the sensuous Keats popular with the Victorian audience. Wen also quotes from the classical Chinese poet Li Shangyin to illustrate his conception of the imagery. Wen's encounter with American Imagism in August 1922 consolidated his belief in imagery and intensity. He discovered with delight that Hu Shi's suggestions for new poetry are a diluted version of the credo of Imagism (12: 55-56). What Hu Shi failed to impart to the Chinese audience, Wen contends, are the Imagists' stress on the presentation of an image and on the technique of "intense concentration" (12: 56).

Emotion, the second element of Wen Yiduo's poetics, is not always consistently explained. He discourages poets from dealing with the sentiment of ordinary life, e.g. the feeling of compassion for the poor (2: 47). In his eagerness to poke fun at a follower of Hu Shi, Wen goes so far as to exclude almost all feelings from the proper realm of poetry. He quotes Neilson as saying that such are secondary sentiments or emotions: "friendship, the love of home and country, the sense of honor, a kindly attitude towards the lower animals, with the other emotions generally called 'humanitarian'" (2: 88-89; Neilson 205). What Wen guilefully leaves out is Neilson's condition for the above statement. In fact, Neilson would only include those emotions in a sentiment

“when they do not exist with such intensity as to be called passion” (205).

Rather than the purge of ordinary emotions from poetry, Wen Yiduo’s true intention is the rejection of humanitarianism flooding early new poetry, since humanitarianism is indicative of the subjugation of emotions by reason (2: 89). He also cautions against didacticism or philosophical preaching, which, he believes, readily kills emotions (2: 86-89). To support his argument, Wen cites Keats’s dismissal of philosophy: “All charms fly / At the mere touch of philosophy” (2: 87). Even if his poems are beneficial to humanity, Wen claims, it is an unintentional by-product (12: 159-160). However, sometimes Wen would contradict himself by acknowledging the necessity to cultivate the capacity for “human sympathy” (12: 160). To justify his patriotic and homesick poems, Wen even reasons that such poems, if composed with earnest sincerity, are highly valuable (12: 162).

The rhythm, or rather form, of poetry, is the third element that preoccupies Wen Yiduo. In reaction to early new poets’ disregard for rhythm, Wen takes great pains to demonstrate the utilitarian and aesthetic functions of rhythm as well as the physiological and aesthetic bases of rhythm (2: 54-55). He shows that rhythm was not only omnipresent in the natural world, but also common to different art forms, including music, dancing, poetry, and plastic arts (55-56). Summarizing Bliss Perry’s discussion about the controversy over the formal elements of poetry, Wen validates the use of meter, rhyme, and stanza in poetry (2: 56; Perry 182-185). Recapitulating Raymond Macdonald Allen’s words, Wen further delineates the functions performed by rhythm in poetry, namely, “as a means of beauty”, “as expressive of emotion”, and “as a means of imaginative idealization” (Alden 193-200; 2: 58).

It is worth noting at this juncture that Wen Yiduo’s word “rhythm” here is an umbrella term for meter, rhyme, and stanza, though rhythm and meter are somewhat synonymous in English poetics. A more proper term for Wen’s rhythm is, therefore, form. Wen himself later also emphatically equates his rhythm with form in “Shi de gelü” 诗的格律 [The form of poetry], the seminal essay that announced the advent of “new regulated verse” in the history of modern Chinese poetry. This essay argues for the formal rules of poetry by resorting to the authority of Oscar Wilde, the symbol of the Aesthetic Movement. Wen adorns his craving for form with its promise of musical beauty, pictorial beauty, and architectural beauty, terms suggestive of his submission to aestheticism. The

so-called musical beauty and architectural beauty, however, are none other than meter, rhyme, and stanza in fanciful guises. The one truly ingenious invention of Wen's formula is his encouragement to flexibly develop regulated forms, instead of sticking to existing verse forms.

The last element that captivates Wen Yiduo is color, which should be understood as the use of lavish colors or the attention to visual details, rather than a metaphor for ornate language. Wen's early writings occasionally included *se* 色 [color] or *zaohui* 藻绘 [rich and bright colors] as a key element of poetry, but he never endeavored to expound on this element. The American Imagist John Gould Fletcher (1886-1950), Wen exclaims, "aroused [his] feeling for color" (12: 118). Fletcher inspired Wen to passionately practice word-painting in his own poetry. The end product of this endeavor includes some poems that Wen is particularly proud of, e.g. *Yiju* 忆菊 [Remembering chrysanthemums], even though some acquaintances charged him with overelaboration (12: 124). However, Wen attributes his sensuous and elaborate pictorial poems, not to the relatively unknown Fletcher, but to the classical Chinese poet Li Shangyin and the English Romantic John Keats. Wen further declares that he and his fellow aspirants, as advocates for "beauty as the core of art", should worship Li Shangyin from the East and John Keats from the West (12: 128). Wen is also infatuated with other English poets known for their word-painting, particularly Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Rupert Brooke, both of whom were indebted to Keats (2: 151-163).

Wen Yiduo's conception of imagery, emotion, form, and color reveals some salient features of his vision of modern Chinese poetry. First, Wen displays a strong tendency to concentrate on the aesthetic qualities of poetry, which necessarily expel humanitarian concerns and philosophical preaching. Second, Wen is inclined to view poetry alongside other forms of art, notably music, painting, and architecture, which contribute to his theory of verse form and his practice of word-painting. Third, Wen's poetic ideals in many ways coincide with, or profit from, a poetic and aesthetic tradition established by Keats and his disciples, and Wen has the sense to elevate Keats to the most exalted position within the realm of art. Therefore, in principle it is not improper to call Wen an extreme aesthete or a devotee of art for art's sake, as he professes himself to be. However, there are occasions

when Wen feels compelled to give way to his sympathy for humanity and his sense of patriotism, which seem to subvert his alleged aesthetic allegiance.

Cultural Nationalism

Wen Yiduo's attitude toward foreign poetry and art is marked by his concern for the position and future of Chinese poetry, art, and culture in the modern world. Unlike the New Culturalists who willingly discard Chinese literary and cultural traditions, Wen has strong faith in the value and beauty of traditional Chinese literature, art, and culture. Wen admits that, to secure their position in the modern world, Chinese poetry and art should be reformed. However, Wen maintains that the renewed modern Chinese poetry and art should be rooted in China's cultural traditions, rather than simple duplications of their Western counterparts. Wen's anxiety over the prospects of Chinese culture culminated in 1925 when he and a group of overseas students were actively engaged in the Great River Society under the banner of cultural nationalism. Although Wen's open cry for cultural nationalism was short-lived, it nevertheless left an indelible imprint on his poetry and betrayed the real cause that prevented his wholehearted devotion to aestheticism.

Wen Yiduo's cultural nationalism is first exhibited in his proposal for the modernization of Chinese art. He distinguishes between concrete art and abstract art, which respectively acts upon the material and spiritual aspects of a civilization (2: 3). In China, abstract art was highly prized in the past, so Wen argues, but concrete art was stubbornly repressed, which accounts for the backwardness of China's industrial arts (3). However, Wen adds that China's art and industrial arts only started to fall behind in the later part of the Qing dynasty (4). He believes that China's art was most advanced in the prosperous periods of Song, Ming, and Qing dynasties when various industrial arts made remarkable achievements, e.g. pottery, porcelain, silk, embroidery, carving, and lacquerware (4). Confident in the artistic skills of Chinese people, Wen contends that, armed with the study of theories, the future of China's industrial arts could not be underestimated, thereby rejecting the prevailing tendency to follow in Western footsteps (6). The new and ideal art, Wen proclaims, is "neither existing Western art nor degenerate

and ossified Chinese art, but a crystallization of the cream of the two parties involved” (15).

Just as he habitually sees poetry as a type of art, Wen Yiduo’s vision of modern Chinese poetry bears a close resemblance to his ideal art and, therefore, displays a similar stamp of cultural nationalism. Take Wen’s arguments for the form of new poetry for example. While Hu Shi rejects the rhythms of classical Chinese poetry, Wen insists that such rhythms are “no contraband in the realm of new poetry, provided that they are screened” (2: 64-65). Wen also demonstrates that many well-known poets and critics, Chinese or Western, ancient or modern, give consent to the use of rhyme and rhythm (2: 137-139). Wen’s following words clearly show that his reference to classical Chinese poets and poetry is motivated by his cultural nationalism:

... I cannot agree more that the current reform of verse form with the aid of Western poetics is an excellent idea. However, whatever changes you make, it is still a reform, rather than replacing Chinese poetry with Western poetry. So what needs to be amended should be amended, but the distinctive quality of Chinese art should not be lost. (10: 166).

Wen’s stress on “the distinctive quality of Chinese art” reveals his worry about the independence of Chinese culture. Indeed, in the same essay Wen argues himself into believing that regulated verse is representative of the Chinese nation.

The cultural nationalism that haunted Wen Yiduo is most apparent when he was involved in the Great River Society, which was scheming to publish its own magazine in early 1925. The tentative contents of the magazine’s first four issues, as recorded in Wen’s letter, show how his nationalist sentiments were grounded in his attachment to Chinese culture. The four issues intended to praise a Japanese painter devoted to the revival of traditional Japanese painting. They were also scheduled to introduce some Western people who appreciated Japanese culture or drew inspiration from Japanese art. This is, Wen reasons, an indirect way of complimenting China, the source of Japanese art (12: 215). The first issue planned to focus on a Chinese painter, Chinese calligraphy, Chinese opera, porcelain, Li Shangyin, and the influence of Chinese painting in the West. This is because, Wen confesses, he was determined to promote Chinese culture after returning to China (12: 215). The logic behind Wen’s pursuit of cultural nationalism is, in his own words, as follows:

The future of our nation is in danger of being subjugated not only politically and economically, but also culturally. Cultural subjugation is hundreds of times worse than other kinds of subjugation. The responsibility to shield [Chinese culture] from gradual encroachments lies in none other than people of our group! (12: 215)

THE POET-MARTYR

Partly because he was dissatisfied with contemporary new poetry, and partly because he had misgivings about open declaration of his poetic convictions, Wen Yiduo was somewhat obsessed with defining the personality of poets in his poetry. The introductory poems of his two anthologies, for example, are effectively his reflection on the ideal poet's persona. Many other poems in Wen's anthologies can also be counted as explicit or implicit discussions about the poet's identity, e.g. "Li Bai zhi si" 李白之死 [The death of Li Bai], "Jian xia" 剑匣 [The sword sheath], and "Huochai" 火柴 [Matches]. Since John Keats is the one who most readily captures Wen's imagination of an ideal poet, it would be of interest to explore how the British Romantic fares in Wen's poems, particularly as regards the tensions between Wen's extreme aestheticism and cultural nationalism. It would also be of interest to examine how Wen's perception of Keats's image informs or negotiates his conception of the persona of poets at large.

Elevating and Relegating John Keats

Wen Yiduo's exaltation of Keats is exuberantly expressed in his poem "Yishu di zhongchen" 艺术底忠臣 [The loyal minister of art], which encapsulates the popular myth surrounding Keats, the artistic feature of Keats's work, and the poetic influence exerted by Keats. Wen's perception of Keats as "a martyr to art" (1: 72) is in line with the widespread story that Keats was a delicate and sensitive genius killed by the malicious reviews of his

poetry. Wen's citation of "Beauty is truth, truth beauty" (71), often taken as the manifesto of Keats's poetic credo, is indicative of his passion for the most salient feature of Keats's art. Wen's claim that Keats's name was "not writ in water, / But cast on the precious cauldron of the sagely dynasty" (72), a rewriting of Keats's bitter epitaph, records the prominent position held by Keats in the realm of English poetry and art. In the poem Wen is unstinting in his praise of Keats's supposed dedication to art. He likens other poets to pearls decorating the royal dragon robe of the king of art, but equates Keats with the outshining *huozhu* 火珠 [rosy gem] surrounded by the dragons on the robe. He regards other poets as famous ministers of art, but confers the title "loyal minister" only upon Keats, "the poet's poet" (71). In brief, Wen assigns the badge of the most esteemed servant of art to Keats, who becomes a model poet in pursuit of the aesthetic values upheld by Wen.

However, throughout the poem, the images employed by Wen Yiduo are rooted in Chinese culture, be it *huozhu*, royal dragon robe, sagely dynasty, or precious cauldron. Wen even quotes from Zhuge Liang 诸葛亮 (181-234), the most celebrated loyal minister in Chinese history, to praise Keats's commitment to art. Given his unwavering cultural nationalism, Wen's choice of only Chinese images in a poem paying homage to a foreign poet is by no means accidental. The motivation behind Wen's practice becomes more apparent when his poem is examined against Amy Lowell's hymn to Keats, which is likely the inspiration for Wen's composition. The following is "To John Keats" by Lowell.

Great master! Boyish, sympathetic man!
Whose orb'd and ripened genius lightly hung
From life's slim, twisted tendril and there swung
In crimson-sphered completeness; guardian
Of crystal portals through whose openings fan
The spiced winds which blew when earth was young,
Scattering wreaths of stars, as Jove once flung
A golden shower from heights cerulean.

Crumbled before thy majesty we bow.
Forget thy empurpled state, thy panoply
Of greatness, and be merciful and near;
A youth who trudged the highroad we tread now
Singing the miles behind him; so may we
Faint throbbings of thy music overhear. (*Dome* 111)

Lowell's sonnet contrasts the fragility of Keats's life with the height of his standing in the realm of poetry, alluding to the myth of Keats's martyrdom and the rise of his posthumous fame. Yet Lowell's metaphors for the greatness of Keats's genius and achievement diverge considerably from Wen's rhetoric. Lowell describes Keats's genius as "orbed", which calls to mind a sphere topped with a cross, an emblem of royal power in the West. She deems Keats as the "guardian" of poetry, a role she equates with "Jove" or Jupiter, the king of gods in the mythology of ancient Roman Empire. She called Keats's domain an "empurpled state", which plays on purple, a color representative of royalty since the times of the Roman Empire. She addresses Keats as "thy majesty", a title of respect reserved for the monarch.

In Lowell's poem, Keats's elevation to the ruler of poetry is signified by a number of images derived from the traditions of Western culture, which also allude to Keats's preference for the imaginative world of Greek mythology. Wen Yiduo's poem, on the other hand, while eulogizing Keats's exceptional personality and attainment, not only deprives Keats of his cultural origin and poetic inspiration, but also relegates the Romantic to the rank of a minister. The throne of the sovereign is reserved for art, which, in Wen's doctrine informed by cultural nationalism, transcends the boundary between cultures and prospers by assimilating the cream of both Eastern and Western art. Therefore, by presenting Keats as one among many other ministers of the sovereign art, Wen Yiduo implicitly places Chinese poetry on an equal footing with its Western counterpart in the realm of art.

The Poet-Martyr to the Moon

The image of Keats as a poet-martyr is entrenched in Wen Yiduo's imagination of the personality of dedicated poets. However, as one who has a sense of mission to safeguard China's national culture, Wen would never be content with relinquishing the paragon of his aesthetic values to Western poets, no matter how bewitched he was by Keats. He is anxious to find Chinese poets whose commitment to art rivals that of Keats. One classical Chinese poet that suites Wen's cultural agenda is Li Bai (701-762), whose legend becomes the material for Wen's poem "The Death of Li Bai". The poem centers on the legend that Li Bai drowned after he got drunk and attempted to catch the reflection of the moon in the water, supplemented with paraphrases of Li's verse lines and other fanciful stories about him. Wen portrays Li Bai as one who would not bow to a powerful official and an ambitious prince, but would only pay tribute to an accomplished poet of the past. In Wen's poem, the drunken Li Bai lost his life because he jumped into the water to save the goddess of the moon, whose reflection in the water misled Li into believing that she was drowned.

The goddess of the moon is the central image in "The Death of Li Bai". Throughout the poem, Li Bai is pouring out his heart to the goddess, who is his love and who, together with wine, is his only solace in life. The moon goddess is, therefore, symbolic of the ideal that Li Bai is after. The fact that Li Bai died because of his devotion to the moon, his ideal, points to the poem's theme, which, Wen admits, is to "depict the personality of the poet" (1: 10). It suggests that Wen's aim is to present Li Bai as an exemplary poet martyred for his ideal, which is poetry and, by extension, art or aesthetic values. Li Bai literally becomes a poet-martyr like Keats, and the moon becomes a symbol of poetry.

The moon is not customarily taken as a metaphor for poetry in China, though it is common to imagine the moon as a beautiful female figure in classical Chinese poetry. Wen Yiduo's choice of the moon as the symbol of poetry reveals his debt to Keats, whose poetry is permeated with the image of the moon, often in the name of Cynthia, Diana, Luna, or Hecate, the goddess of the moon in ancient Greek or Roman mythologies. Keats's penchant for the moon is widely acknowledged by later poets and critics. "The mythology and poetry of the moon," one editor of Keats's writings observes, "were perhaps longer uppermost in his [i.e. Keats's] thoughts than in any other poet's" (Forman xxi). So pronounced is the moon in Keats's poetry that the same editor has no

qualms about saving a substantial portion of his preface for the delineation of lunar traces in Keats's work as well as citing D. G. Rossetti's and Robert Browning's verdict on that matter. A classic case of Keats's lunar fever is his first longer poetic endeavor *Endymion*, which narrates the shepherd Endymion's pursuit of the moon goddess Cynthia. Arthur Symonds, whose writing on Keats Wen Yiduo relied heavily on, quotes from this long narrative poem to demonstrate that Keats's feeling "for the ideal ... went out to the moon" (309). "[It] is to the moon, always," he notes, "that he [i.e. Keats] looks for the closest symbols of poetry" (309). By cloaking Keats's symbol of poetry in the veil of a Chinese legend, Wen Yiduo intends, it seems, to promote his aesthetic values without losing one stronghold of Chinese culture.

Other affinities between "The Death of Li Bai" and *Endymion* also testify to Wen Yiduo's borrowings from Keats. Whereas Keats reworks the Greek myth of Endymion, Wen elaborates on the Chinese legend of Li Bai. The poems of both Keats and Wen revolve around a mortal's pursuit of an immortal moon goddess, who possesses two different personae, one heavenly and one earthly. While the celestial Cynthia in *Endymion* takes on the terrestrial persona of an Indian maiden, the moon in the sky of "The Death of Li Bai" has a reflection in the water. Just as Endymion's love for Cynthia was distracted by his fascination with the Indian maiden, Li Bai's yearning for the moon was bewildered by her reflection in the water. Endymion later learned that the Indian maiden was Cynthia in disguise and eventually reunited with the moon goddess; Li Bai ended with the belief that he had rescued the moon from drowning and remained devoted to the moon in the sky. Endymion's final union with Cynthia is traditionally seen as an allegory of the poet's embrace of ideal beauty; Li Bai's ultimate faith in the moon in the sky evidently affords a similar reading. Incidentally, both poems have a femme fatale: the sorceress Circe who enchanted and imprisoned a sea-god in *Endymion*, and the consort Yang Yuhuan who seduced and biased the emperor in "The Death of Li Bai".

The Candle as the Poet-Martyr

Wen Yiduo finds his poetic ideal in the poetry of John Keats, but he would not allow this English

Romantic to overshadow Chinese poets. When he expresses admiration for Keats, Wen often puts the English poet next to the classical Chinese poet Li Shangyin, the Chinese ideal of Wen's aesthetic values. Wen perceives, among other things, a similarity in the sensuous qualities of their poetry. He even envisions an aesthetic line of Chinese new poetry that takes John Keats and Li Shangyin as its exemplars. "I think we, the advocates of 'beauty as the core of art'," Wen confides to his best friend and fellow poetic aspirant, "cannot opt not to worship Yishan [Li Shangyin's courtesy name] from the East and Keats from the West" (12: 128). Wen proceeds to entertain the possibility of writing a treatise comparing the two poets (129). The treatise that Wen toyed with never materialized, but, *Red Candle*, his first anthology of poetry, produced when his zeal for Keats was at its height, holds clues to the reason why he pairs Li Shangyin and John Keats.

The term Red Candle not only serves as the title of Wen Yiduo's first anthology, but also acts as the title of the collection's introductory poem. The epigraph to the introductory poem, a verse line from Li Shangyin, reveals that Wen derives his title from the Tang poet. Wen also places Li's name behind the quoted line to ensure that readers are informed of the source of his epigraph. The following are Li Shangyin's line and its translation.

蜡炬成灰泪始干。

The candle will not dry its tears until it turns to ashes. (Liu, *Poetry* 66)

This is the fourth line of Li's well-known poem "Wuti" 无题 [Without title], which describes the poet's passion for a woman with whom he cannot be in open contact, and is sometimes seen as Li's concealed appeal to an estranged but now high-ranking friend (66). The quoted line, alongside its preceding line, is conventionally cited to show the intensity of one's love for his or her beloved. It can be interpreted in this way: "just as the candle is consumed by its own heat, so is the poet by his own passion" (66-67). The fourth character of the line, *hui* 灰 [ashes], can also mean "gray", which builds on the gloomy mood of the poem (67). It may also be connected with the word 灰心 *huixin* [ash-hearted], which means despair (67).

An epithet "red" is applied to the word "candle" in Wen Yiduo's titles. It shows that Wen intends his audience to associate his poetry with love, since red candles are commonly used in traditional Chinese wedding

ceremonies. The twenty-sixth stanza of his poem “Hongdou” 红豆 [Red beans], for instance, compares himself and his newly-wed bride to a pair of red candles burning in their wedding ceremony (115). Wen’s choice of title is therefore linked with his recognition of love as a marked theme of poetry, which is also a prominent feature of Keats’s poetry. However, Wen’s title is more readily connected with his fascination with the poet’s image as a martyr derived from Keats. The opening stanza of Wen’s introductory poem exclaims:

红烛啊！	Oh Red Candle!
这样红的烛！	So red a candle!
诗人啊！	Oh Poet!
吐出你的心来比比，	Spit out your heart and compare
可是一般颜色？ (1: 7)	Can the colour be the same? (Sanders 57)

The stanza likens a poet to a red candle, which, as Wen’s succeeding stanzas suggest, burns to ashes as it gives off light to the world. A poet, by analogy, martyrs himself or herself as he or she creates beauty to enlighten the world. Just as the candle in Li Shangyin’s poem will not dry its tears until it turns to ashes, a poet in Wen’s conception will not stop sacrificing himself or herself until he or she becomes a martyr. In short, Wen conceptualizes Li’s candle as a metaphor for the poet-martyr. The color “red” then signifies the poet’s wholehearted devotion to a self-appointed mission. The light emitted by the candle comes to mean beauty, poetry, art, and aesthetic values, to which a poet-martyr commits himself or herself.

The invention of a red candle, as a symbol of the poet-martyr’s dedication to an aesthetic ideal, is also indicative of Wen Yiduo’s debt to Keats. Keats’s beauty as an ideal thing, Arthur Symons states, “was sometimes that fatal desire of the moth for the candle-flame” (303). Symons’s metaphor, the moth’s innate desire for the candle-flame, captures Keats’s inborn aspiration for beauty. The adjective “fatal” modifying “desire” suggests that Keats’s aspiration for beauty is bound to end in self-destruction or martyrdom. Taken together, Symons portrays Keats as a poet consumed by his commitment to beauty, which anticipates Wen’s conception of a poet-martyr. Symons plays with the word “candle-flame”, which is also an inspiration for Wen’s choice of “red

candle” as a symbol of the poet-martyr.

Despite his debt to Symons’s reading of Keats, Wen Yiduo’s “red candle” symbol is an invention anchored in Li Shangyin’s poetry and, by extension, Chinese culture. It bears evidence of Wen’s anxiety to come up with a Chinese symbol of ideal poets that could rival the Western symbol. Wen’s elaboration on the “red candle” symbol further betrays that his aesthetic values are eclipsed by utilitarian concerns. Although his red candle will not cease burning until it turns to ashes, Wen stresses that its flame will save people’s souls, that its wax will bear fruit in the human world, and that its tears will illuminate humanity (1: 8-9). Keats, as a martyr to beauty, in Symons’s view, is preoccupied only with beauty itself. Wen, by contrast, cannot loosen his grip on beauty’s beneficial effect, though he lauds an ideal poet martyred to beauty.

Building on the candle-flame image, Wen Yiduo conceives another symbol of the poet-martyr. His poem “Matches” compares matches to the child singers serving a king: some could sing out a shining star, but others, unable to make it, will become two bones (1: 84). The child singers, as the personification of matches, are symbolic of poets. The king is none other than art, the final arbiter of poets. Just as matches that could not light a fire will be broken into two pieces, poets who produce no beautiful works will be punished by art. “Matches” does not specify what will happen to child singers who could sing out a bright star, or rather, what will happen to matches that could light a fire. Common sense tells us that those matches will be consumed by their own flame, thereby symbolic of poet-martyrs. However, like the red candle, matches perform a utilitarian function, which once again reveals that Wen’s aesthetic values are overshadowed by his non-aesthetic concerns.

POETRY AS VERBAL PAINTING

Keats’s poetry, as perceived by readers of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, is characterized by its sensuous imagery and suggestive overtones. The artistic technique employed by Keats to achieve poetic beauty is ekphrasis, which is exemplified in his visual presentation of art objects, his picturesque description of nature, and his pictorial and sculptural portrayal of characters. Keats’s poetics of ekphrasis can be distilled into the

conception of “poetry as verbal painting”, and the most salient feature of his commitment to verbal painting is his lavish use of colors in his poetry. Wen Yiduo professes to be a devotee of the aesthetic values that have Keats as the supreme model. So how does Wen approach Keats’s artistic technique of ekphrasis and Keats’s employment of lavish colors, the means to achieve beauty in poetry? Could Wen loosen his hold on the cultural nationalism that haunts his aesthetic convictions?

The Artistic Technique of Ekphrasis

As one trained in art with an emphasis on painting, Wen Yiduo not only views poetry as a form of art like painting, but also enthuses about the idea of painting in words. He is fond of the classical Chinese poet Lu You 陆游 (1125-1209) who, Wen notes, was also a painter, and whose poetry is “rich in the distinct quality suggestive of painting” (12: 36-37). He compares the fusion of painting and poetry practiced by the Pre-Raphaelites and the classical Chinese poet Wang Wei 王维 (699-761) (2: 151-163). He admits that he was irresistibly drawn to the word-painting poems composed by Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Rupert Brooke (2: 157-163), both of whom were followers of Keats. He is quite clear how Rossetti and other Pre-Raphaelites drew their inspiration for word-painting from Keats (2: 151-154). To reveal Wen’s appropriation of Keats’s technique of ekphrasis, it is necessary to examine Wen’s handling of art objects, natural scenes, and poetic characters.

Visual Presentation of Artworks

Wen Yiduo’s most impressive poem depicting an art object is “The Sword Sheath”, whose “sensuous and exuberant style” (12: 124), Wen admits, is inspired by Li Shangyin and John Keats. It tells the imaginative story of a first-person narrator’s decoration of his sword sheath with dazzling objects. The narrator, once a valiant general in the fierce battle of life that ended in a debacle, retreats to an isolated island where he would regain his

health and forget his enemies. He imagines that he would respectively assume the work of a peasant, a fisherman, and a woodcutter, each time gathering something precious but not intended by his occupation, e.g. flowers, coral, and colorful stones. He would then, following his dreams, ornament his sword sheath with his collection. Three different pictures would be inlaid into the sword sheath: the Daoist god Taiyi lying in a lotus flower, a Buddhist god riding on an elephant, and a blind musician playing the zither on a bamboo raft. Decorative strips would also be added to the edges of the sword sheath.

After finishing the decoration, the narrator would purge his treasured sword of its rust, blood stains, sins, and bloody memories. He would then put his sword into its sheath and urge it to sleep in this “palace of art” (1: 26). He claims that his purpose is to find a resting place for his sword, rather than, like other people, keeping its sharpness. He would not use his sword to dispel his sorrows or to eradicate the wicked. Nor would he use his sword to seize the power of the secular world, for he has a world of his own: the “bohemian world” (26) of art, where he rules like a sage-king. He would, immersing himself in the fantastic designs of his sword sheath, forget himself, thereby, figuratively speaking, killing himself with his sword sheath.

The theme of celebrating a self-sufficient world of art becomes evident in the later part of “The Sword of Sheath”, where the narrator enthuses about not only a “palace of art”, but also a “bohemian world” of art, which is commonly associated with the Pre-Raphaelites and the Aesthetic Movement. The poem is, therefore, a barely veiled declaration of Wen Yiduo’s aesthetic values. However, to announce one’s aesthetic credo in an ekphrastic poem has no precedents in Chinese poetry. Wen’s acknowledgment of his debt to Keats induces us to examine Keats’s treatment of beauty and art in his ekphrastic poems. When it comes to Keats’s ekphrastic poems, the one that immediately springs to mind is his “Ode on a Grecian Urn”, the poem that famously declares his belief in beauty and truth. Keats’s poem describes a succession of pictures on a Grecian urn and inquires about the stories behind the scenes engraved on the urn. It contrasts the transience of the human world with the eternity of the world of art, though the timelessness of art is not without its paradox: the human figures on the urn remain forever young but can never fulfill their desire. Although he might be unaware of Keats’s paradox, Wen’s glorification of the world of art in “The Sword Sheath” echoes Keats’s exaltation of beauty and art in “Ode on a Grecian Urn”.

Wen's imagination of beautiful pictures inlaid into the sword sheath also evokes Keats's portrayal of undying scenes engraved on the Grecian urn. In addition, Wen's sword sheath, like Keats's Grecian urn, is a three-dimensional work of art.

The narrator in "The Sword Sheath" imagines that, enthralled by the designs on his sword sheath, he would, metaphorically speaking, commit suicide, as his lungs, blood, and eyes would stop performing their function. It is a vivid depiction of the overwhelming effect of art on its viewer, an effect so intense that it verges on the experience of death. Wen Yiduo's comparison of art's overbearing effect to the attack of death follows the example of another ekphrastic poem by Keats, i.e. "On Seeing the Elgin Marbles". Keats's poem accounts how, upon seeing the wonders of Grecian marbles, he was struck by the feeling of death:

My spirit is too weak – mortality
Weighs heavily on me like unwilling sleep,
And each imagin'd pinnacle and steep
Of godlike hardship tells me I must die
Like a sick eagle looking at the sky. (Keats 36)

The epigraph to "The Sword Sheath" is excerpted from Alfred Tennyson's poem "The Palace of Art", a fact suggestive of Wen Yiduo's borrowings from the Poet Laureate, the most celebrated Victorian disciple of Keats. Indeed, Wen's narrator also calls the sword sheath adorned with precious objects a "palace of art". Tennyson's narrator builds a palace of art for his soul so that she may "make merry and carouse" and reign like a king (136). The rooms of the palace open into all sorts of beauty, e.g. natural scenery, mythical and religious stories, and cultural giants. The soul, engrossed in her mansion of art, becomes "Lord over Nature, Lord of the visible earth, / Lord of the senses five" (147). Wen's poem progresses in much the same way. It opens with impressive scenes of the plain, sea, and mountain, and moves on to fantastic pictures of mythical, religious, and cultural figures. The narrator then considers himself a sage-king in the bohemian world of art and absorbs himself in the beauty of his sword sheath. There is a marked difference between the two poems, though. Tennyson's soul, after three years of happy life in the palace of art, was struck with a sense of guilt. She then decided that she may

purge her sins before returning to her palace with others. Wen's narrator has no such qualms. He is happy to the very end. In this sense, Wen's poem is more in line with the Pre-Raphaelites and the Aesthetic Movement as well contemporary reading of Keats.

Reviewing "The Sword Sheath", one may find with surprise that the poem is almost completely rooted in Chinese culture. The only foreign image that Wen Yiduo employs is Venus, the goddess of love and beauty in Roman mythology. The goddess, however, does not have a picture of her own on the sword sheath. She is mentioned simply because she resembles a beautiful figure on the sword sheath. The only foreign term in the poem is "bohemian", which is commonly associated with the Pre-Raphaelites and the Aesthetic Movement. Wen's almost exclusive use of Chinese images and expressions is obviously bound up with his attachment to Chinese culture. Perhaps because of his anxiety over Chinese culture in the face of Western aggression, Wen would, it seems, only slightly give way to some well-established Western symbols of love, beauty, and art, rather than the host of possibilities promised by Western culture.

It is worth noting that Wen Yiduo's choice of the sword sheath may have something to do with his knowledge of the Western tradition of ekphrastic poetry. The first known ekphrastic poem in ancient Greece is Homer's delineation of the designs on the shield of Achilles, which inspired the description of shields by some of the greatest poets in Western history, notably Virgil's portrayal of the shield of Aeneas. Wen's sword sheath, like Homer's shield, is carried by a valorous warrior to protect himself from the sharp weapon. Wen's description of the sword sheath, like Homer's description of the shield, starts from the center and moves toward the outer layer. The designs on Wen's sword sheath, like the images on Homer's shield, cover various aspects of human life and afford allegorical interpretations. Therefore, Wen's choice of the sword sheath is also indicative of his hope to counterbalance Western culture.

Another example of Wen Yiduo's visual presentation of an artwork is "Ai zhi shen – tihua" 爱之神 —— 题画 [Goddess of Love: Inscribed on a painting]. Its topic bears a resemblance to Keats's "Ode to Psyche", a poem on a goddess from Roman mythology. Its structure and expression, however, are similar to those of "Ode on

a Grecian Urn”. Wen’s description of the goddess of love centers on her facial features, i.e. eyes, brows, nose, lips, and teeth. Like Keats’s description of the scenes on the Grecian urn, Wen often directs questions at what he sees on the painting. Just as Keats, after reviewing the pictures on the urn, declares his creed in the final stanza, Wen concludes his delineation of the goddess’s facial features with his belief in the attractiveness of love and beauty:

啊！莫非是绮甸之乐园？	Oh are they the Garden of Eden?
还是美底家宅，爱底祭坛？	Or home of beauty, altar of love?
呸！不是，都不是哦！	Pooh, no, none of them!
是死魔盘据着的一座迷宫！	They are a maze occupied by Death! (1: 68)

The passage equates the charm of beauty and love with death, which is again redolent of Keats’s description of the overwhelming effect of art.

However, like his portrayal of the sword sheath, Wen Yiduo’s description of the goddess of love is saturated with images from traditional Chinese culture. He likens her eyes to *tan* 潭 [pools], brows to *zhensou* 榛藪 [bushes], lips to *zhufei* 朱扉 [red door panels], and teeth to *bei di pingfeng* [a screen made of shells]. All these are common, if hackneyed, metaphors in classical Chinese literature. He compares her nose to “a pyramidal mound” (1: 67), an image with an exotic flavor, but the pyramid comes from Egyptian culture rather than Western culture. The only image from Western culture in the poem is “the Garden of Eden”, a place of love, beauty, and happiness. This imagery, as it happens, is like Venus in “The Sword Sheath”, a symbol of love and beauty firmly established in Western culture. Wen’s selective use of only one Western image is therefore indicative of his attempt to assert Chinese culture. The subtitle of Wen’s poem also reveals such a cultural concern, since *tihua* 题画 [inscribed on a painting] is a common genre of classical Chinese poetry.

Visual Presentation of Nature

Following Keats, Wen Yiduo exercises the technique of ekphrasis when he describes the natural world. His most exhilarating description of a thing in the natural world, i.e. “Huang niao” 黄鸟 [The yellow bird], bears obvious traces of Keats’s influence. His yellow bird sings melodious songs, which readily brings to mind Keats’s nightingale entrancing the narrator with music. Wen’s narrator in “The Yellow Bird” hails the songbird as “the foster-child of forest” (1: 70), which is akin to “Dryad of the trees” (Keats 144), Keats’s appellation of the nightingale. Wen’s term “foster-child”, however, is an unashamed borrowing from Keats’s “Ode on a Grecian Urn”, in which the narrator addresses the Grecian urn as “Thou foster-child of Silence and slow Time” (Keats 135). Wen’s narrator also calls the yellow bird “the descendant of heaven” (1: 70), which endows the bird with a divine quality. It is reminiscent of Keats’s second designation of the Grecian urn: “thy shape / Of deities or mortals” (Keats 135).

The third stanza of “The Yellow Bird” is a description of the bird’s mellifluous song. Wen Yiduo’s narrator enthuses that the bird’s melody,

像一块雕镂的水晶，	Like a carved crystal,
艺术纵未完成，	The art [work], even if unfinished,
却永映着上天底光彩——	Forever reflects the radiance of heaven – (1: 70)

The bird’s song is compared to a crystal, which constitutes part of an artwork in the process of being made. This crystal, albeit part of an artwork, the narrator contends, has its eternal heavenly glamor. Wen’s conception of a piece of music as a part of a sculptural artwork with transcendental beauty is patterned after Keats’s portrayal of a sculptured scene on the Grecian urn. Keats’s narrator plays with the music suggested by the pipes on the sculptured scene:

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
 Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
 Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear’d,
 Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone: (Keats 135)

Keats's narrator moves from a sculptured scene to unheard melodies and associates the sweeter unheard music with divinity. Wen's poem, following Keats's model, plays with two forms of art, i.e. music and sculpture, but reverses the direction of Keats's connection. Moreover, following Keats's appreciation of both heard and unheard music, Wen values the heavenly beauty of an unfinished artwork's constituent. In addition, the epithet "Grecian" used by Wen to describe the yellow bird's song is indicative of his debt to Keats's Grecian urn.

The fourth stanza of "The Yellow Bird" uses a metaphor to describe the bird's irrepressible urge to sing:

我知道你喉咙里的	I know, in your throat,
太丰富的歌儿	Too profuse strains
快要饴死你了:	Are about to stifle you: (1: 70)

This imagery of a bird stifled by its profuse strains brings to mind Keats's description of the heroine's heart palpitations in *The Eve of St. Agnes*:

But to her heart, her heart was voluble,
Paining with eloquence her balmy side;
As though a tongueless nightingale should swell
Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in her dell. (Keats 131)

Keats likens the pounding of the heroine's heart to a tongueless nightingale's urge to swell her throat. Just as the tongueless nightingale would be stifled by her compulsion, the heroine's heart might be suffocated by its palpitations. Wen Yiduo ingeniously reworks Keats's simile and uses it to describe the yellow bird's irresistible impulse to sing.

In the final stanza of "The Yellow Bird" the narrator entreats the songbird to pour out melodies, symbols of crystals, so that a crystal "palace of art" (1: 71) may be built. This reference to the "palace of art" points to Wen Yiduo's aesthetic values epitomized by Keats. However, despite Wen's extensive imitation of Keats, except for the word "Grecian", no traces of foreign imagery can be detected in the poem. Wen's conscious effort to substitute Western images in his imitation of Keats's ekphrastic poem is again indicative of his cultural concerns.

Wen Yiduo's imitation of Keats's description of the natural world is not restricted to "The Yellow Bird". Keats's description of a picturesque moonlight scene, in particular, so enchanted Wen that he emulated it time and again in his own poems, always making sure that his imitations are cloaked in Chinese cultural context. The moonlight scene comes from Keats's poem *The Eve of St. Agnes*, which centers on what happened between Madeline and Porphyro on the night before the feast of St. Agnes. The two were in love with each other without the other side's knowledge. Madeline, the heroine, learned that young virgins could meet their future husbands in their dreams if they perform certain rituals on the eve of St. Agnes. Eager to see her love in a dream, Madeline left in the middle of the revelry held in the castle of her family and retired to her chamber to perform the rites. When she entered her bedroom, the taper went out. It was followed by a description of the moonlight scene in her chamber. Porphyro, the hero, who had stolen into Madeline's chamber under the cover the revelry, witnessed the scene:

A casement high and triple-arch'd there was,
All garlanded with carven imag'ries
Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,
And diamonded with panes of quaint device,
Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings;
And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,
A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of queens and kings. (Keats 131)

The passage is a vivid description of the effect of the moonlight on the casement window of a medieval castle chamber. The details delineated here are "the play of colours from the moonlight passing through stained glass" (Ford 128). The two verse lines following this stanza make it very clear: "Full on this casement shone the wintry moon, / And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast" (Keats 131). After Madeline performed the ritual and retired to her bed, there is another description of the moonlight in her boudoir: "Then by the bed-side, where the

faded moon / Made a dim, silver twilight” (132).

In “Wo shi yige liuqiu” 我是一个流囚 [I am a banished prisoner], Wen Yiduo describes a scene of light passing through the window at midnight when the sounds of revelry could be heard:

卍字格的窗棂里	Through the swastika-like window lattice
泻出醺人的灯光，黄酒一般地酽；	Poured the intoxicating lamplight, as thick as yellow wine;
哀宕淫热的笙歌，	The mournful, passionate music of flute and song
被激愤的檀板催窘了，	Made restless by the pursuing hardwood clappers
螺旋似地锤进我的心房：(1: 86)	Screwed itself like a gimlet into my heart: ⁹

Whereas Keats describes the scene of moonlight passing through stained glass, Wen describes the scene of lamplight passing through “swastika-like window lattice”. Although Wen substitutes Keats’s moonlight with lamplight, Keats’s account provides a ready model for Wen’s imagery. The sounds of revelry in Wen’s poem also reminds one of the revelry from which Madeline withdrew. Wen’s description of the sounds, in fact, profits from Keats’s account of the sounds of revelry heard by Porphyro in Madeline’s chamber: “The boisterous, midnight, festive clarion, / The kettle-drum, and far-heard clarinet, / Affray his ears” (Keats 132). While the noise of revelry rings in Porphyro’s ears, it spikes the heart of Wen’s narrator. Instead of copying Keats’s metaphor for light and Keats’s terms for windowpanes and instruments, Wen adopts expressions like “yellow wine”, “swastika-like”, “flute and song”, and “hardwood clappers”, all entrenched in Chinese culture.

Most of the time Wen Yiduo does not substitute Keats’s moonlight. He would simply portray a scene of moonlight passing through the window and shining on a person in the room. Here are some of the examples:

灯儿灭了，人儿在床；	The lamp went out, my lovely lay in bed;
月儿底银潮	The silver tide of the moon
沥过了叶缝，冲进了洞窗，	Trickled though foliage openings, rushed in through the cave window,

⁹ Adapted from Sanders’s translation, see Tao Tao Sanders, trans., *Red Candle: Selected Poems by Wen I-to* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1972), 71.

射到睡觉的双靥上， (1: 35)	Shone on the two dimples of the sleeper,
比方有一屑月光，	Suppose that a ray of moonlight
偷来匍匐在你枕上，	Secretly crawls up your pillow,
刺着你的倦眼， (108)	Shines on your tired eyes,
灯光灭了；	The lamplight went out;
月娥把银潮放进窗子里，	The moon goddess poured the silver tide through the window,
射到睡觉的人的双靥上。(173)	Shining on the two dimples of the sleeper.

None of these scenes contain foreign images. By contrast, terms like *dongchuang* 洞窗 [the cave window] and *yue'e* 月娥 [the moon goddess] show that the poems are rooted in Chinese culture.

Visual Presentation of Characters

Keats often presents the characters of his poems as though they were works of art. “The Death of Li Bai” contains one passage that is closest to what may be called Keats’s mode of visual characterization. The following is Wen Yiduo’s description of the drunken Li Bai after a banquet broke up.

只那醉得最很，醉得如泥的李青莲	Only Li the Blue Lotus, the most drunken, like a pile of mud,
(全身底骨架如同脱了榫的一般)	(As if all the bones of his body are out of joint)
还歪倒倒的在花园底椅上堆着，	Still lies huddled up on the bench of the garden,
口里喃喃地，不知到底说些什么。	Murmuring something unintelligible.
声音听不见了，嘴唇还喋着不止；	The voice turns inaudible, the lips still move ceaselessly;
忽地那络着密密红丝网的眼珠子，	Suddenly, his eyeballs, grained with dense red webs,
(他自身也便像一个微小的醉汉)	(They each look like a miniature drunken man)

对着那怯懦的烛焰瞪了半天：(1: 11) Stare at the timid candle flame for quite a while:¹⁰

Wen's expressions like "like a pile of mud", "out of joint", and "grained with dense red webs" are all redolent of physical objects. Wen's portrayal of Li Bai curling up and murmuring on a bench brings to mind a picture or a sculpture. So does his image of Li Bai staring steadily at the candle flame. All this shows that this is a passage utilizing the technique of ekphrasis.

Wen Yiduo's visual characterization of the drunken Li Bai is somewhat reminiscent of Keats's portrayal of the old beadsman in the opening stanzas of *The Eve of St. Agnes*. Keats's lines are as follows.

Numb were the Beadsman's fingers, while he told
His rosary, and while his frosted breath,
Like pious incense from a censer old,
Seem'd taking flight for heaven, without a death,
Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer he saith.

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy man;
Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his knees,
And back returneth, meagre, barefoot, wan,
Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees: (127)

Keats describes an almost immobile figure akin to Wen's drunken Li Bai. Keats's beadsman, like a stationary sculpture, mechanically says his prayer and recites his rosary, his fingers numb with cold. Similarly, Wen's Li Bai, like a pile of mud, unconsciously curls up on the bench and murmurs indiscernible words, his body immovable due to his drunkenness. The beadsman says his prayer and then takes his lamp; Li Bai mumbles inaudible words and then stares at the candle flame. The affinities between the two characters lie not only in their almost motionless posture, but also in their sudden movement related to a light source. The most striking resemblance is that the utterance of the character in both poems ends the first stanza and starts the second stanza.

¹⁰ Adapted from Sanders's translation, see Tao Tao Sanders, trans., *Red Candle: Selected Poems by Wen I-to* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1972), 59.

These similarities all point to Wen's borrowings from Keats, but Wen's expressions rooted in Chinese culture speak of his intention to counter Western culture.

Layers of Color

Alongside his exercise of ekphrasis, Keats's disposition toward visual presentation is distinguished by his lavish use of colors, a quality that inspired many of his poetic disciples. As one trained in art, particularly painting, Wen Yiduo was interested in color from the beginning of his poetic career. His passion for color was enhanced by his encounter with John Gould Fletcher, an Imagist known for his use of rich color in poetry. However, Wen also employs the term "color" on other occasions. He urges his fellow aspirants, together with himself, to maintain their "special color", which he identifies as the writer's "personality" (12: 81). He contends that Chinese new poetry should preserve its "local color", which entails "a faith in old literature" and "an understanding of Eastern culture" (2: 123). So, how should one interpret Wen's penchant for the use of colors in poetry, and how is Wen's understanding of color related to his aesthetic values and cultural concerns?

Employing Lavish Colors

To Wen Yiduo, the stress on color means, first of all, the lavish use of color words in a poem, i.e. "to paint a picture in words" (12: 110). His "feeling for color" (18), Wen admits, was aroused by the American Imagist John Gould Fletcher, who inspired Wen to compose a long poem titled "Qiulin" 秋林 ["Autumn woods"] (118). One section of the poem later became a poem on its own and was titled "Secai" 色彩 [Colors] when it was revised and anthologized in *Red Candle*. "Autumn Woods" was also included in the anthology, but it assumed the new title of "Qiuse – Zhijiage Jiegesen Gongyuan li" 秋色——芝加哥洁阁森公园里 ["Autumn colors: In Chicago's Jackson Park] (hereafter "Autumn Colors"). However, Wen later professed that the inspiration for this long poem

was Li Shangyin and John Keats (124-129).

“Colors” is Wen Yiduo’s painting of life in color words. It compares life to a sheet of white paper and different aspects of life to different colors. It is a miniature version of Fletcher’s symphonies in different colors, though Wen’s colors by no means always share the same meanings with Fletcher’s colors. Fletcher’s symphonies are a number of poems that each have “a certain colour, or combination of colours” (xviii) as part of the title. These symphonies, Fletcher states, are intended “to narrate certain important phases of the emotional and intellectual development – in short, the life – of an artist” (xviii) with whom he was most in sympathy. Every color, or every combination of colors, “is emotionally akin to” (xviii) a phase of the artist’s life. Fletcher’s “White Symphony”, for example, aims “to describe the artist’s struggle to attain unutterable and superhuman perfection” (xxi). The color, or combination of colors, that Fletcher worked on includes green, golden, white, white and blue, orange, red, violet, grey, and scarlet.

A glimpse into “Colors” will reveal how Wen Yiduo paints a picture of life in color words and how he borrows from Fletcher. The following is Wen’s poem.

生命是张没价值的白纸，	Life was a sheet of valueless white paper;
自从绿给了我发展，	Since green gave me growth,
红给了我热情，	Red gave me passion,
黄教我以忠义，	Yellow taught me loyalty,
蓝教我以高洁，	Blue taught me virtue,
粉红赐我以希望，	Pink awarded me hope,
灰白赠我以悲哀；	Grey granted me sorrow;
再完成这帧彩图，	To complete this colorful painting,
黑还要加我以死。	Black will bring death to me.
从此以后，	From now on,

我便溺爱于我的生命，

I will pamper my life,

因为我爱他的色彩。(1: 105-106)

For I love its colors.¹¹

The poem assigns a person's emotions, traits, and growth to different colors, thus producing a colorful picture of life. With a couple of exceptions, Wen's choices of colors fall into Fletcher's category. While Fletcher links his colors with an artist's emotional and intellectual growth, Wen connects his colors with a person's emotions, qualities, and development. In particular, Wen's black color, associated with death, brings to mind his conception of the poet-martyr. It suggests that the life in Wen's poem, just like that in Fletcher's work, is the life of an artist.

Wen Yiduo's use of lavish colors is also exemplified in "Autumn Colors". One stanza from the poem will illustrate the point. After using various color words to describe different species of autumn trees, the poem proceeds:

哦，这些树不是树了，

Ah, these are no longer trees,

是些绚纒的祥云——

But tinted clouds –

琥珀的云，玛瑙的云，

Of amber, of agate,

灵风扇着，旭日射着的云。

Fanned by the spiritual wind and kindled by the sun.

哦！这些树不是树了，

Ah, these are no longer trees,

是百宝玲珑的祥云。(1: 100)

But exquisite, bejeweled clouds.¹²

The stanza does not contain one color word in the strict sense, but its impression on the audience is no less imposing, as many expressions in the stanza are suggestive of dazzling colors: "amber", "agate", and "bejeweled" evoke the splendor of gems; "tinted clouds" calls to mind clouds rimed by faint colors; and "kindled by the sun" conjures up images of clouds glowing with the radiance of sun.

Wen Yiduo's imitation of Fletcher's symphonies in colors reveals that Fletcher was a source of inspiration

¹¹ Adapted from Sanders's translation, see Tao Tao Sanders, trans., *Red Candle: Selected Poems by Wen I-to* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1972), 76.

¹² Adapted from Hsu's translation, see Kai-yu Hsu, *Wen I-to* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1980), 59.

for “Autumn Woods” or “Autumn Colors”. It suggests that “Yellow Symphony”, a long poem on autumn scenes that Wen planned but never produced, is the precedent for “Autumn Woods”. The affinity between the concluding couplets of “Colors” and “Autumn Colors” also bears witness to Wen’s debt to Fletcher. Wen expressed his enthusiasm for a life of colors in the concluding couplet of “Colors”. A similar zeal is conveyed in the closing couplet of “Autumn Colors”: “Ah, how I long to lead a life of colors, / As dazzling as these autumn trees” (1: 101; Hsu 60). However, when he introduced “Autumn Colors” to his best friend, Wen claimed that the poem was patterned after the exuberant style of Li Shangyin and John Keats (12: 124-129).

To be sure, both Li Shangyin and Keats leave their imprint on “Autumn Colors”. The term *lingfeng* 灵风 [the spiritual wind] in the quoted stanza is a borrowing from Li Shangyin’s poem “Chongguo Shengnü Ci” 重过圣女祠 [Revisiting the Holy Lady’s Temple]. In the second to last stanza, Wen Yiduo talks about pressing autumn colors “from grapes, tangerines, and sorghum” (1: 101). It is obviously modeled after Keats’s description of pressing apple juice in “To Autumn”: “Or by a cyder-press, with patient look, / Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours” (Keats 213). Indeed, Wen even invokes the two poets to extol autumn colors: “I will borrow the poems of Yishan [Li Shangyin’s courtesy name] and Keats / To sing praises of your colors” (1: 101). However, there is no doubt that Wen’s conception of “Autumn Colors” was inspired by Fletcher. So why does Wen take the trouble to highlight Li Shangyin and Keats? The key to the answer lies in the second level of Wen’s understanding of color.

Maintaining the Poetic Personality

Wen Yiduo’s cult of color is, more importantly, bound up with his resolution to assert his poetic personality, i.e. the uniqueness and independence of his aesthetic values. He is not content with exchanging views with the literary circles of China, since his burning ambition is “to lead a literary trend or school” (12: 80). Confident of “the independent value” (80) of the literary views shared by him and his fellow aspirants, he was

eager to start a publication to disseminate their aesthetic values and literary works. Despite his appreciation of Guo Moruo, Wen did not perceive Guo as “an extreme aesthete” (81) like his Qinghua literary circle. He was concerned that his circle might lose their “special color”, i.e. “personality” (81), if they publish their writings in the magazines of Guo’s group or any other groups.

The “special color” or poetic personality that Wen Yiduo maintains is grounded in his aesthetic values, which he variously describes as extreme aestheticism (12: 81), “art for art’s sake” (95), “beauty as the core of art” (128), “pure art for art’s sake” (159-160), and “pure artistic ism” (160). All of these terms point to Wen’s assumed allegiance to the Aesthetic Movement prominent in the late nineteenth century. While a host of poets, both Chinese and Western, left their marks on his poetry, the supreme models of Wen’s aesthetic ideal are Li Shangyin from the East and John Keats from the West. *Red Candle*, the very title of Wen’s first anthology of poetry, is based on his understanding of the Keatsean poet-martyr and his reworking of a verse line from Li Shangyin. The anthology is not only characterized by an exuberant style exemplified by the two poets, but also saturated with expressions adapted from the two poets.

The interconnection between the poetic personality and the employment of lavish colors can be found in Wen Yiduo’s “Colors” and “Autumn Colors”, whose debt to Li Shangyin and Keats was openly acknowledged and whose conception were originally inspired by John Gould Fletcher’s symphonic poems. Fletcher’s symphonies in different colors seek to portray “the emotional and intellectual development” (xviii) or life of an artist. Wen’s “Colors”, a small replica of Fletcher’s work, affords a similar reading. Unlike Fletcher, whose work ends with the symphony in scarlet, a symbol of war plaguing humanity as seen by the artist (xxii), Wen ends his painting of an artist’s life with the black color, the symbol of death. It calls to mind Wen’s obsession with the image of the poet-martyr exemplified by Keats, or rather, the poetic personality that holds Wen spellbound. The concluding couplet of the poem expresses the narrator’s devotion to this artistic life of colors: “I will pamper my life, / For I love its colors”¹³ (1: 106). It is a reiteration of Wen’s consistent approach to poetry and art and, by

¹³ Adapted from Sanders’s translation, see Tao Tao Sanders, trans., *Red Candle: Selected Poems by Wen I-to* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1972), 76.

implication, his consistent dedication to his poetic personality.

A parallel commitment is declared in the end of “Autumn Colors”: “Ah, how I long to lead a life of colors, / As dazzling as these autumn trees” (1: 101; Hsu 60). The life of colors here is also the life of an artist devoted to aestheticism, as one stanza of the poem extols:

啊！斑斓的秋树啊！	Ah, dazzling autumn trees!
我羡慕你们这浪漫的世界，	I envy your romantic world,
这波希米亚的生活！	Your bohemian life!
我羡慕你们的色彩！ (1: 100-101)	I envy your colors! (Hsu 60)

The stanza equates the dazzling colors of autumn trees with the romantic world and the bohemian life. Both “romantic world” and “bohemian life” bring to mind Keats, who was not only a major British Romantic, but also the exemplar of a bohemian artist idealized by the Pre-Raphaelites and the Aesthetic Movement. The dazzling colors are, therefore, not only what people visually perceive, but also a metaphor for the aesthetic values represented by Keats. Wen’s following couplet unequivocally connects the two expressions with Keats and Li Shangyin: “I will borrow the poems of Yishan and Keats / To sing praises of your colors” (1: 101). It becomes evident that the dazzling colors are synonymous with Wen’s ideal poetic personality, whose essence is the aesthetic values typified by both Li Shangyin and Keats.

Preserving National Culture

One key feature that distinguishes Wen Yiduo from his contemporary new poets is his attachment to Chinese culture, which is pronounced in his seminal essay “*Nüshen de difang secai*” 《女神》的地方色彩 [The local color of *The Goddesses*]. Challenging the prevailing tendency toward Europeanization or Westernization, Wen contends that Chinese new poetry should not only “absorb the good qualities of foreign poetry”, but also “preserve its local color” (2: 118). The local color accentuated by Wen is Chinese culture. Because art is rooted in

the life of a particular time and place, Wen argues, artists, new poets included, can only achieve originality by reflecting both their times and their locality. Wen is not impressed by the idea of a uniform world literature, which, he reasons, with its disregard for local color, is neither desirable nor practicable. Likening different national literatures to different pigments, Wen maintains that a uniform world literature is like a sketch drawn in black, since black is the color of all kinds of pigments blended together (123). An ideal world literature, Wen contends, is like a multicolor painting grounded on the different local colors of various national literatures (123).

As a remedy for the Europeanization or Westernization badgering Chinese new poetry, Wen Yiduo appeals for a renewed faith in traditional Chinese literature and Eastern culture. His love of Chinese culture verges on fanaticism, as he proclaims:

Eastern culture is absolutely beautiful. It is elegant. Eastern culture is also the most refined culture of humanity. Oh, we should not be frightened of clamorous and barbaric Westerners! (2: 123)

Wen's lavish use of colors in poetry is bound up with this zeal for Chinese culture or Chinese local color. His penchant for dazzling colors was intensified by John Gould Fletcher, though he later stressed his debt to Li Shangyin and John Keats.

Fletcher's employment of lavish colors, Wen claims, saturates his poetry with "sensuous Eastern color" (12: 118). Wen's statement is based on his acquaintance with Fletcher's preface to *Goblins and Pagodas*, which he acquired in late 1922. Drawing on Ernest F. Fenollosa (1853-1908), an American scholar of Japanese art, Fletcher acknowledges that his symphonies in different colors rely on a method rarely used in the Occident, but "universally employed by the Chinese artists and poets of the Sung period in the eleventh century A. D." (xvii). This method, Fletcher explains, again paraphrasing Fenollosa, is "the cardinal doctrine of Zen Buddhism", which was developed "from the still earlier Taoist philosophy" (xvii) that inspired many great Chinese poets, including Li Bai. In short, Fletcher admits that his method is sourced from classical Chinese poetry and culture. Therefore, when Wen claims that he worships Fletcher's use of colors, what he really means is his appreciation of Fletcher's respect for traditional Chinese poetry and culture. So entranced was Wen by Fletcher's admiration for Chinese poetry and culture that he spent months in Chicago searching the complete works of this Imagist (12: 118).

Wen Yiduo was even more exhilarated when he came upon Fletcher's poem "Chinese Poet among Barbarians", which seems to indicate that the American poet places Chinese culture above its Western counterpart. The poem describes a Chinese poet trapped in the modern context, presumably the United States, and besieged by its bleak industrial landscape. The poet laments that he is unable to complain about industrialization or flee from this "barbarian country", where he could not find a kindred spirit to "lift a cool jade winecup" or share his "human thought" (12: 117-118). The term "jade winecup" is a metaphor for Chinese poetry and culture. Whatever Fletcher's intended meaning, Wen certainly identifies himself with the Chinese poet in the poem and sees it as an affirmation of Chinese culture.

To lend weight to his ideal poetic personality, Wen Yiduo chooses to extol not the obscure Fletcher, but the well-known Li Shangyin and Keats. That is why he attributes the sensuousness of "Remembering Chrysanthemums" to the influence of Li Shangyin and Keats. The poem openly connects Wen's employment of lavish colors with his passion for Chinese culture. The first part of the ten-stanza poem is an elaborate description of chrysanthemums in different colors. The second stanza, for instance, paints pink chrysanthemums, crimson chrysanthemums with golden rims, purple chrysanthemums with yellow stamens, and white chrysanthemums with golden stamens (1: 95). The second part of the poem is an exuberant eulogy of Chinese culture represented by the dazzling chrysanthemums. The fifth stanza, for example, eulogizes chrysanthemums as "the flowers of the East" and as the avatar of Eastern poet Tao Yuanming 陶渊明 (365?-427) (1: 96; Hsu 62).

Wen Yiduo's intention to assert Chinese culture in the face of Western culture is thinly disguised in the sixth stanza:

你不像这里的热欲的蔷薇，	You resemble not the roses here, those blooms of carnal desire;
那微贱的紫罗兰更比不上你。	The humble violets can compare with you even less.
你是有历史，有风俗的话。	You are flowers with a history, with a tradition.
啊！四千年华胄底名花呀！	Oh, famous flowers of 4000-year Chinese heritage!

你有高超的历史，你有逸雅的风俗！ (1: 96) You have a superb history, you have a civilized tradition!¹⁴

Both “roses” and “violets” are a metaphor for Western culture. The expression “famous flowers of 4000-year Chinese heritage”, as Wen’s best friend Liang Shiqiu notes, is symbolic of the 4000-year history of Wen’s beloved Chinese culture (Qiu 22). That is why, lamenting the lack of local color in Guo Moruo’s poetry, Wen raises the question: “where is the 4000-year Chinese heritage?” (2: 119).

THE IMAGINATIVE WORLD OF THE PAST

The beauty that John Keats presented is often set in, or at least connected with, the imaginative world of the past, i.e. medieval romances and Greek mythologies. In Keats’s poetry, the former mostly centers on the theme of love, whereas the later chiefly portrays the bright side of life as opposed to the gloomy picture of his real life. Keats’s commitment to medievalism and Hellenism was influenced by a number of factors, including contemporary cultural atmosphere, his classical education, his experiences with artefacts of antiquity, and his reading of Edmund Spenser and George Chapman. How does Wen Yiduo understand Keats’s attachment to the imaginative world of the past? How does Wen’s perception of Keats’s dialogue with the past inform his composition of Chinese new poetry?

It is not clear if Wen Yiduo is aware of the various factors that informed John Keats’s fixation with medieval romances and Greek mythologies. However, it can be certain that Wen is cognizant of Keats’s penchant for the imaginative world of the past. It is also apparent that Wen understands that Keats’s reworking of the imaginary past is indispensable to the beauty presented in his poetry. Wen is even, as it happens, conscious of the implications of legends and mythologies for the revival of Chinese poetry and Chinese culture. It is for these reasons that Wen not only frequently refers to Chinese legends and mythologies in his poems, but also sets up grand projects to compose long narrative poems based on Chinese legends and mythologies, though not all of

¹⁴ Adapted from Hsu’s translation, see Kai-yu Hsu, *Wen I-to* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1980), 62.

them came to see the light of the day. Wen's debt to Keats in this respect cannot be underestimated, as his adaptations of Chinese legends and mythologies are stamped with the mark of Keats's approach to medievalism and Hellenism.

The imprint of Keats on Wen Yiduo's attempts at long narrative poems, or even epic poems, is evident in "The Death of Li Bai", which is anchored in the Chinese legend that Li Bai the poet died after he got drunk and tried to seize the moon mirrored in the water. Wen reworks the legend to show that Li Bai lost his life because he strived to save the moon from drowning. Wen's poem resembles Keats's first long narrative poem *Endymion*, a reworking of the Greek myth of Endymion's love affair with the moon goddess. The affinities between the two poems have been enumerated in third section of this chapter and need not to be repeated. One point of concern to the present discussion is the symbolic meaning of the moon. The moon in Wen's poem, following the model in Keats's poem, is a symbol of beauty, poetry, or art. It suggests that Wen is alive to the inextricable connection between beauty and the imaginative world in Keats's poetry.

"The Death of Li Bai", as a long poetic output placed in the beginning of his first anthology, is charged with Wen Yiduo's intention to develop narrative poetry, or even epic poetry, in China. Probably following the classification of Raymond Macdonald Alden and Francis B. Gummere, Wen divides poetry into three major categories: the epic, the lyric, and the dramatic. "As for the Epic," he notes, "[China] only has some inferior to those of the West" (10: 153). One example of the epic given by Wen is "Kongque dongnan fei" 孔雀东南飞 [Peacock flies southeast], the longest narrative poem in ancient China. Wen's explanation of epic poetry in China shows that his epic is not an epic proper but a long narrative poem. An epic in its strict sense would involve legends or mythologies of heroic characters performing extraordinary deeds (Alden 41-43; Gummere 7-14). It can be the communal composition of a nation over a long historical period, e.g. *Illiad* and *Beowulf*, or the conscious work of an individual poet in imitation of that national tradition, e.g. Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Neither of them exists in ancient China. While his explanation of epic poetry is inaccurate, in practice Wen seems to hold on to the adaptation of legends and mythologies. He translates the epic into *xushishi* 叙事诗 [literally, narrative poetry]

(10:153), indicating that he does not clearly differentiate between epic poetry and narrative poetry.

Wen Yiduo's anxiety to develop epic or narrative poetry in China is shown in his eagerness to include a long narrative poem in the initial issue of a magazine planned by his literary group. The following is excerpted from Wen's letter to his fellow members of the group.

Is "Lüzhu zhi si" 绿珠之死 [The death of Green Pearl] by Shiqiu completed or not? It is a long piece of *xushishi* [narrative or epic poetry]. It is another type [of poetry] and absolutely indispensable. I'm not very satisfied with "The Death of Li Bai" by myself and will send it to you after revision. Although Shiqiu's love poems, "Fallen Flowers", and "Spring Painting" are valuable, it would be better to get "The Death of Green Pearl" published in the first issue and save other poems for later issues. (12: 82)

"The Death of Green Pearl", as its title suggests, is a poem based on the legend of Green Pearl, the beautiful concubine of a dissolute high-ranking official of the Western Jin dynasty (266-316). Wen's words suggest that he wants to include "The Death of Green Pearl" in the initial issue mainly because, according to his understanding, it is an epic or long narrative poem. Wen's stress on the epic or narrative poetry here is not accidental. His first anthology of poetry begins with "The Death of Li Bai", which, in his own words, "resembles the epic" (177).

Wen Yiduo's interest in developing Chinese epic poetry is also evident in his grand projects of composing epics in imitation of Keats. Zhu Xiang 朱湘 (1904-1933), a core member of Wen's literary group, reveals in a letter that Wen planned to write an epic as a eulogy to the love affair between Sima Xiangru (c. 179-117 BC) and Zhuo Wenjun (dates unknown) in the Western Han dynasty (206 BC-9 AD) (*Zhu Xiang* 206). The Chinese legend bears a close resemblance to Keats's story of *The Eve of St. Agnes*. Porphyro in Keats's poem played the lute to express his love for Madeline, whereas Sima played the zither to convey his love to Zhuo. Porphyro and Madeline eloped together in the midst of the night when the banquet in the castle of Madeline's family was over, whereas Sima eloped with Zhuo after the banquet held at the house of Zhuo's father.

Wen Yiduo's other epic project is even closer to Keats's epic attempt. Zhu Xiang's letter records that, around August 1923, Wen was composing an epic titled "Shouyang shanxia de epiao" 首阳山下的饿莩 [The

starving men on the foot of Shouyang Mountain] (Zhu Xiang 206). It is based on the legend of Boyi and Shuqi, who, seeing themselves as subjects of the Shang dynasty (c. 1600 – 1046 BC), starved themselves to death when its rule was overthrown by the Zhou dynasty (c. 1046 – 256 BC). Wen did complete the so-called epic and changed its title to “Boyi” 伯夷 [Boyi]. However, unfortunately, except for a passage quoted in Zhu Xiang’s essay, Wen’s long narrative poem did not survive. Nevertheless, the similarity between the plots of the “Boyi” legend and *Hyperion*, Keats’s unfinished epic poem, suggests that Wen’s endeavor was patterned after Keats.

Hyperion is based on the change of ruling gods in Greek mythology. The Titans, the second generation of deities, are destined to be replaced by the Olympians, the third generation of divine beings. In the beginning of Keats’s poem, all the Titans have lost their power, except for Hyperion, the god of the sun, who is going to be overtaken by Apollo, the new god of the sun. Keats’s poem revolves around Hyperion’s imminent fall from power. Wen Yiduo’s poem, like Keats’s *Hyperion*, is titled after the eponymous hero Boyi. Like the sun god Hyperion, Boyi is stuck in the chain of the change of reign and affiliated with the second generation of rulers, since the legendary Xia dynasty (c. 2070 – 1600 BC) before Shang is traditionally seen as the first dynasty in Chinese history. Just as Hyperion is the only Titan that is still in power, Boyi and his brother Shuqi are the only Shang aristocrats who do not submit themselves to the Zhou sovereign. In addition, the sun god Hyperion is associated with music and poetry in Greek mythology, a role akin to Boyi who, together with Shuyi, is known as the author of the poem “Cai wei ge” 采薇歌 [Plucking fiddlehead ferns].

Scattered allusions to Chinese legends and mythologies are numerous in Wen Yiduo’s poetry, e.g. the imagery of the Daoist god Taiyi in “The Sword Sheath”, the mythical goddess of the moon Chang’e in “Mei yu ai” 美与爱 [Beauty and love], the legend of Zhuangzi’s butterfly dream in “Chun zhi mozhang” 春之末章 [The last movement of spring], and the mythical golden crow in “Taiyang yin” 太阳吟 [“Ode to the sun]. The cultural significance of these legends and mythologies becomes apparent when one considers Wen’s accusation of the lack of local color in Guo Moruo’s poetry. One example given by Wen to support his allegation is that Guo used too many Western mythological allusions (2: 119). Wen’s epic projects based on Chinese legends are an obvious

attempt to rectify the trend epitomized by Guo. “The Elegy under the Great Wall”, a poem written about the time when Wen was planning his epics, contains a line that summarizes Wen’s cultural agenda: “Oh, Great Wall! Can you defend your culture” (1: 225).

AN ALL-INCLUSIVE PICTURE OF THE WORLD

Keats’s theory of poetic beauty involves three possible stages. The first two stages concentrate on the bright aspects of nature and the imaginative world of the past, which account for the sensuous imagery and suggestive overtones in his poetry. In the third stage, Keats believes that the poet should be conscious of the evil forces of the world and the suffering of humanity. Keats’s third stage of beauty remained largely a theory, though traces of his movement toward this phase could be found in his epic poem *The Fall of Hyperion*. To the Victorians and readers of the first two decades of the twentieth century, Keats is essentially a poet of beauty who excelled at creating sensuous imagery and suggestive overtones. It was from the mid-twentieth century on that readers began to recognize and appreciate Keats’s final stance revealed in *The Fall of Hyperion*. Was Wen Yiduo aware of Keats’s conception of beauty in the third stage? Is it in any way related to the development of Wen’s poetic style?

While Keats’s exploration of the dark side of the world is only made in *The Fall of the Hyperion*, Keats expresses his intention to move on to the tragic side of life on many occasions. “Sleep and Poetry”, for example, reveals the three-stage poetic career that he aspires to pursue:

First the realm I’ll pass
Of Flora, and old Pan: sleep in the grass,
Feed upon apples red, and strawberries,
And choose each pleasure that my fancy sees;
Catch the white-handed nymphs in shady places,
To woo sweet kisses from averted faces,—

.....
And can I ever bid these joys farewell?

Yes, I must pass them for a nobler life,

Where I may find the agonies, the strife

Of human hearts: (Keats 19)

The realm of “Flora, and old Pan” corresponds to the first two stages of beauty in Keats’s conception, which are fully represented in Keats’s poetry. Keats was aware of, and prepared to look into, the agonies and strife of “human hearts”, the third stage of poetic beauty. A similar three-stage view is conveyed in his famous passage that likens life to a mansion of many apartments. Keats formulates that people will step chronologically into three different chambers of life, i.e. the first chamber of thoughtlessness, the second chamber of wonders and delights, and the third chamber of darkness or mystery. People will eventually enter the last chamber when they realize that “the World is full of misery and Heartbreak, Pain, sickness and oppression” (Scott 124).

The styles of Wen Yiduo’s two anthologies of poetry are markedly different. The first anthology deals mostly with youthful worries, sorrows, passions, and aspirations. The second anthology, i.e. *Stagnant Waters*, concentrates on the misery, pain, and suffering in the world of man. Its scenes tend to be bleak, and its stories are usually sobering and pensive. Take the issue of death for example. Both anthologies frequently dwell on the topic, but their approaches to it diverge significantly. In the earlier anthology, “death” is either emphatically stated or thinly coated in a symbolic poem, e.g. “The Death of Li Bai”, “The Sword Sheath”, “Si” 死 [Death], and “The Matches”. Although death is a forbidding thing, the narrators in these poems betray no signs of fear or anxiety. Indeed, they enthusiastically embrace their imagined doom, as “death” is seen as an artist’s ultimate devotion to the aesthetic ideal. By contrast, in the later anthology, “death” is often only hinted or casually mentioned, e.g. “Wangdiao ta” 忘掉她 [Let her be forgotten], “Wo yao huilai” 我要回来 [I must come back], “Tian’an Men” 天安门 [The Gate of Heavenly Peace], and “Feimaotui” 飞毛腿 [The Mercury-footed]. The deaths in these poems are undoubtedly real happenings, but the narrators decline to state them outright. Instead, they either mournfully

fancy alternative possibilities open to them or indifferently talk about tragic events as an onlooker.

Considering Keats's conception of the three stages of beauty or life, one is amazed at the striking similarity between Keats's intended poetic career and Wen Yiduo's actual poetic development. It seems that Wen had lived to pursue the third stage of poetic beauty that Keats could only cursorily touch upon before his premature death. There is evidence that Wen was sensible, if tentatively, of the last stage of poetic beauty formulated by Keats. Wen's insight hinges upon Keats's poem "The Human Seasons":

Four Seasons fill the measure of the year;
There are four seasons in the mind of man:
He has his lusty Spring, when fancy clear
Takes in all beauty with an easy span:
He has his Summer, when luxuriously
Spring's honied cud of youthful thought he loves
To ruminate, and by such dreaming high
Is nearest unto heaven: quiet coves
His soul has in its Autumn, when his wings
He furleth close; contented so to look
On mists in idleness—to let fair things
Pass by unheeded as a threshold brook.
He has his Winter too of pale misfeature,
Or else he would forego his mortal nature. (Keats 44)

The poem compares the intellectual states of the human mind to the four seasons of a year. In the first state, the mind avidly devours beauty without giving it any thought. In the second state, the mind indulges in meditating on the beauty ingested in the previous state. In the third state, the mind distracts its attention from beautiful things and casually watches the indefinite scenes of life. In the final state, the mind reaches a feeble state, thereby completing its cycle. The poem does not specify why the mind has "pale misfeature", but the shift of the mind's

attention from beauty to uncertainty suggests that it is bound to encounter something unpleasant in the final state.

The four states of mind described in “The Human Seasons” resembles Keats’s formulation of the three stages of beauty or life. The first two states of mind, with their thoughtlessness and pure delight in beauty, match seamlessly with the first two stages of beauty or life. The last two states of mind, with their attention to uncertainty and unpleasantness, resonate with the agonies and strife of the world stressed in Keats’s third stage of beauty or life. In particular, “to look / On mists” (Keats 44), which describes the third state of mind in “The Human seasons”, is reminiscent of “in a Mist” (Scott 124), which is Keats’s metaphor for a person living in the third stage of life.

“The Human Seasons” is a poem that Wen Yiduo learnt by heart and cherished without reserve. When his first vernacular poem, “The Western Bank”, was included in *Red Candle*, Wen took two verse lines from “The Human Seasons” as the epigraph to his own poem: “He has his lusty Spring, when fancy clear / Takes in all beauty with an easy span” (1: 28). The couplet is Keats’s description of spring or the first state of mind, which corresponds to Keats’s conception of the first stage of life and poetic beauty. Wen’s choice of the couplet as the epigraph to his very first vernacular poem, therefore, suggests that he shares Keats’s perception of the progressive states of mind. When he compiled his first anthology of poetry, Wen was cognizant of the advanced stage of poetic beauty. It shows that he probably deliberately pursued a poetic career that progresses along the path envisioned by Keats.

It seems that Wen Yiduo resolved to move toward the final stage of Keats’s poetic beauty in early 1925 when his cultural nationalism reached its climax. The most compelling evidence of Wen’s decision to take this turn is his writing of “Tear Rain”, which, as his poetic comrade Zhu Xiang shrewdly notes, is redolent of “The Human Seasons” by Keats (Wen Yiduo, “Leiyu” 12). Zhu Xiang also praises the poem as one that “could only be written by Keats” (12), obviously because he was informed about Wen’s devotion to Keats’s poetics. Following the example of “The Human Seasons”, Wen Yiduo’s four-stanza “Tear Rain” compares the tears shed in the four stages of life to the rain of the four seasons. The four stages of life in “Tear Rain” are infancy, adolescence, middle age, and old age, each taking one stanza. The first two stanzas recollect the past, whereas the last two

stanzas look to the future. The division of the poem into the past and the future indicates that Wen Yiduo was about to enter the new stages of his life.

The new stages, as it happens, are in tune with the last stage of Keats's conception of life and poetic beauty. Just as Keats expects one's realization of the sorrows and strife of the world in the final stage, Wen Yiduo imagines that one would shed more bitter tears in the middle age and that all of one's sorrows would be subsumed under the tears shed in the old age (1: 144-145). While Keats did not live to paint an all-inclusive picture of the world as he had planned, Wen did proceed to describe the agonies and strife of the world of men, thereby drawing the all-inclusive picture that Keats could only imagine. It is a telling fact that "Tear Rain" was anthologized in Wen's *Stagnant Waters*, a collection of mostly tales of woe. In this sense, Wen might be closer to Keats's conception of beauty than the Romantic's Victorian disciples, who did not move beyond Keats's sensuous imagery and suggestive overtones.

Conclusion

An unexpected finding of this study is that, contrary to popular belief, major Chinese poets in the early republican era each assiduously modelled himself on one particular British Romantic poet, even though they were not unresponsive to other foreign poets. Zhou Zuoren not only translated William Blake's poems supposed to address issues of gender, children, and peace, but also, taking advantage of Blake's works and symbolism, composed mostly poems voicing similar humanitarian concerns. Wu Mi was impatient to parade his enterprise of translating and imitating George Gordon Byron, highlighting Byron's employment of an existing verse form, allusion to traditional culture, and comments on romantic personality traits. Guo Moruo implicitly based his whole theory of poetry upon Percy Bysshe Shelley's formulations, and, benefiting from Shelley's poetic works and techniques, produced both lyric and dramatic poems, for aesthetic or political purposes. Finally, Wen Yiduo, enchanted by the Keatsian image of a poet-martyr and by the artistry distinguishing John Keats, pursued a poetic career that was patterned after Keats's conception of the three stages of beauty.

Such a close affinity between modern Chinese poets and their British Romantic masters, however, should not blind one to the independence of Chinese poetic aspirants. Indeed, each poet's affiliation with one specific British Romantic poet is itself indicative of their deliberate choice. Moreover, their rewriting of their respective idols was conditioned by their own ideological and poetological motives, rather than a duplicate of Japanese or Western verdict on British Romanticism. Zhou Zuoren's approach to Blake was prompted by his concern with humanitarian issues plaguing contemporary China and by his attentiveness to the development of the fledgling vernacular new poetry. Wu Mi's project of translating and imitating Byron had the thinly veiled intention of affirming classical Chinese poetics and traditional Chinese culture. Guo Moruo's appropriation of Shelley was driven by his desire to express himself in poetry and by his intent to grapple with civil war, women's liberation, and class struggle. Wen Yiduo's exploitation of Keats's poetry and poetics was torn between his conflicting commitments to self-sufficient aesthetic values and to the autonomy of Chinese culture.

Because a full century lies between the British Romantic era and China's early republican era, the version

of British Romanticism passed to modern Chinese poets was inevitably shaped by the literary histories of the West and sometimes of Japan. Zhou Zuoren became acquainted with Blake through the intermediary of Japanese *White Birch* writers, but proceeded to peruse English scholarly accounts informed by Algernon Charles Swinburne, William Butler Yeats, and other admirers of Blake. Wu Mi acquired a good knowledge of Byron by taking courses in romanticism at Harvard University and by diligently reading Irving Babbitt's New Humanist writings. Guo Moruo devoured Shelley's defense of poetry, English anthologies of Shelley's poetical works, one Japanese monograph on Shelley, and the socialist reading of Shelley, to name but a few. Wen Yiduo was irredeemably attracted to the Keats imagined by his English and American disciples: Alfred Tennyson, a Poet Laureate, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, the father of the Aesthetic Movement, Oscar Wilde, the icon of the Aesthetic Movement, and Amy Lowell, a later leader of Imagism, among others.

It is of interest to note that modern Chinese poets, by virtue of their rewriting of British Romantic poets, wittingly or unwittingly, became engaged in Western literary movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Zhou Zuoren, through his meddling with Blake's mystical symbolism, was involved in the domestication of French symbolism, since Blake's symbolism was discovered or invented by Yeats as part of his effort to spread French symbolism. Wu Mi, appropriating Byron, questioned romanticism from the perspective of Babbitt's New Humanism, thereby echoing the attack on romanticism launched by T. S. Eliot (1888-1965), a prominent student of Babbitt and a pre-eminent figure of literary modernism. Guo Moruo, tapping into the lyrical Shelley, became close to Walter Pater and Aestheticism, and, endorsing the political Shelley, became a member of the avant-garde, who were often associated with aestheticism and symbolism (Călinescu 106-107). Wen Yiduo, modeling himself on Keats, was an avowed advocate of Aestheticism and a fellow-traveler of Imagism.

When a conflict arose between their ambitious agendas and British Romanticism, however, modern Chinese poets would not hesitate to rewrite British Romantic poets. Zhou Zuoren sidelined Blake's religious piety and cleansed Blake's mystical symbolism of its religious and supernatural connotations, since neither religion nor superstition had a place in his program to modernize China. Wu Mi invoked Byron, a typical Romantic, to condemn romantic personality traits exemplified by Rousseau, despite his knowledge of Byron's romantic

persona and Babbitt's criticism of Byron for that matter. Guo Moruo, after his conversion to Marxism, unashamedly labelled Shelley as a socialist revolutionary, even though he was well-informed of Shelley's disposition toward escapism and Shelley's disapproval of violence. Wen Yiduo, convinced of his mission to safeguard Chinese culture against Western encroachments, was anxious to find or invent Chinese equivalents to Keats, though Wen's Keats-inspired aesthetic values discourage such blatant cultural nationalism.

An informed assessment of modernity within Chinese poetry in the early republican era could ill afford to overlook the complexities surrounding the rewriting of British Romanticism by devoted Chinese poets. The Western concept of modernity, relocated to the context of early republican China, while retaining some of its salient features, underwent a dazzling transformation. First, with respect to aesthetic modernity's rebellion against tradition, the four Chinese poets examined in this study are in a sense all against traditional poetics. It is apparent from their writing of new poetry that Zhou Zuoren, Guo Moruo, and Wen Yiduo departed from classical Chinese poetry. Wu Mi, though clinging to classical Chinese poetics, justified it on grounds of its similarity with Western poetics, an argument that would have been unthinkable in pre-modern China. However, it would be too hasty to consider modern Chinese poetry a complete break with the past. While Wu Mi's attachment to tradition is widely known, the other three did not reject outright any classical poetics. Zhou analogized Blake's symbolism, albeit wrongly, with the technique of *xing* [the stimulating image] used in *The Book of Songs*; Guo not only recognized both classical and free verse forms in the preface to his translation of Shelley, but also wrote poems taking advantage of both archaic verse forms and classical Chinese language; Wen habitually looked for poetic images and styles corresponding to Keats's artistry in Chinese poetic traditions.

Second, with regard to aesthetic modernity's resistance to the "ideals of rationality, utility, [and] progress" (Călinescu: 10), to claim that Chinese intellectuals in the early republican era submitted themselves to the linear mode of time consciousness is far too simplistic. It is true that the four Chinese poets scrutinized in this study, to various extents, all showed an interest in the principles of reason, utility, and progress, but they did not always bow to these ideals in their poetry. Zhou Zuoren's exercise of mystical symbolism, though devoid of Blake's religious and supernatural overtones, is a long way from an overt call for science and reason or a direct

engagement with worldly affairs. Though Wu Mi believed in reason and morality, by equating Byron with classical Chinese poets, he categorically rejected the application of the evolutionary theory to poetry. Guo Moruo was fervently involved in the revolutionary changes of the world, but he also translated and imitated Shelley's poems expressive of emotional turbulence. Wen Yiduo, unable to rid himself of utilitarian concerns as he was, purposefully pursued the assumed self-sufficient poetics of Keats.

Third, apropos of aesthetic modernity's revolt against itself as a new tradition, modern Chinese poetry in the early republican era does bear a striking resemblance to its Western counterpart. It is an affinity that has less to do with various Western literary trends unevenly imported to China, than with the heterogeneity of the poetry scene in the early republican era. If the so-called orthodox style of modern Chinese poetry, nurtured by Zhou Zuoren, fashions itself as a new tradition, then later strains of modern Chinese poetry are an uprising against this self-styled authority. In other words, Wu Mi's classical style, Guo Moruo's dissenting style, and Wen Yiduo's aesthetic style, as later strains of modern Chinese poetry, all struggled against the self-appointed orthodox style. In fact, Wen, who developed his style relatively later than Guo, also consciously competed against Guo's style. In this sense modern Chinese poetry is in opposition to itself, thereby resembling the aesthetic modernity of the West.

As for Călinescu's concept of avant-garde, where aesthetic modernity and bourgeois modernity seem to converge, two Chinese poets respectively match up to the two variants of this radicalized version of modernity. Guo Moruo is a perfect example of the political avant-garde because he not only submitted to Shelley's belief in the poet's leading role in the revolutionary changes of world, but also converted to the Marxist doctrine of arts and literature at the service of the socialist cause. In this sense, Guo would also make an archetypal modernist from the angle of Marshall Berman's theory of modernity, which trumpets the critique of modernization and the optimism for modernism in an endless cycle of experience, as envisioned by Karl Marx. By contrast, despite his imitation of the progressive-minded romantic Blake and his faith in enlightenment through literature, Zhou Zuoren could only be counted as a lesser member of the avant-garde, as he never yielded literature to the demands of political revolutions. At the other end of the spectrum, Wen Yiduo is unequivocally a leading exemplar of the

artistic avant-garde because of his relentless pursuit of extreme aestheticism, though his endeavor was somewhat thwarted by contemporary social upheavals. Perhaps only Wu Mi could be saved from the tag “the avant-garde”, as his new humanism prevented him from looking forward to a utopian future.

It now becomes clear that the various notions of modernity conceived by scholars to describe modern Chinese literature could only tell a partial truth. All the four Chinese poets examined here drew their inspiration from major British Romantics, but their effort is far from a duplicate British Romantic poetry. So there is no belatedness to speak of. It is true that Wu Mi’s classical-style work and Wen Yiduo’s aesthetic venture are repressed by May Fourth literary histories, but that does not necessarily make them better versions of modern poetry than the May Fourth one. Besides, none of the four poets were guided by the realism or socialist realism that, according to the theory of “repressed modernities”, dictates May Fourth literature. While there are many responses to modernity in the May Fourth period, there is no such a thing as the dominant May Fourth response. Zhou, Guo, and Wen are all undoubtedly May Fourth writers, but there is a world of difference between their responses. Whose response is then the dominant one? The ideological and poetological tensions badgering the four poets’ appropriation of British Romanticism testify to the insights of the idea of translated modernity, but “translated” is a trouble-ridden term, since it tends to prioritize the originality of the guest literature and to obscure the agency of the host literature. The four poets, despite their best intentions or as they had intended, all detached themselves from the masses, whether they employed the vernacular or not. Indeed, it is hardly imaginable that poetry could engage the masses like the cinematic culture had done. As all the Chinese poets claimed or aspired to be modern, it may be more practicable and more productive to treat their poetic output as they are and to measure their work against their competing claims, rather than privilege one poet over another or hasten to conceive an exclusive concept of modernity. Seen in this light, the diverse versions of poetry produced by Chinese poets are different inventions of modernity competing for attention or dominance in their contemporary literary scene and, in the care of critical partisans, in Chinese literary histories, hence the tentative term competing modernities.

Taking advantage of André Lefevere’s theory, this study demonstrates how modern Chinese poets, driven

by their ideological and poetological motives, rewrote the images of British Romanticism, exercised new poetic devices, and revised the function of poetry. Lefevere's concept of rewriting, particularly in the form of translation, proves to be instrumental in analyzing the appropriation of British Romanticism. However, Lefevere's major types of rewriting tend to foreground the presence of foreign poetry, at least to average readers, and turn out ineffective in revealing concrete evidence of the British Romantic stamp on modern Chinese poetry. This study, spotlighting imitation and assimilation, alongside translation, advances two types of rewriting that not only accent the creative endeavor of modern Chinese poets, but also unearth specific borrowings from British Romanticism in modern Chinese poetry. Imitation, when openly flaunted, as in Wu Mi's case, lays bare the rewriter's artistic vision as well as ideological motivations. Imitation and assimilation, when carefully concealed, as Zhou Zuoren, Guo Moruo, and Wen Yiduo had done, demands discernment on the part of the reader and the researcher, but promises to illuminate what the rewriter treasures most in foreign literature. Both imitation and assimilation, overt or covert, are emblematic of how a writer or work from the guest literature has become part of the literary traditions of the host literature.

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