

*China Perspectives*

# KEYWORDS IN WESTERN LITERARY CRITICISM AND CONTEMPORARY CHINA

VOLUME 2

Edited by  
Hu Yamin

Translated by Fang Xingfu et al.



# Keywords in Western Literary Criticism and Contemporary China

Since the reform and opening up of China in 1978, Western literary criticism has begun to flourish and gain in popularity within the country's academic literature community. These two volumes meticulously select and examine nine of the most influential keywords from Western literary theory while identifying the intricate historical sources of these terms and analyzing their relevance to other disciplines and ideas. The result shows how these words function as heterogeneous cultural contexts in the complexity of experience but also how they function within the context of Chinese culture as well as Chinese literature and criticism.

In this volume, the editors focus on metaphor, the other, ideology and the body from the perspectives of etymology, documentation, meanings and other core factors.

Students of literature and languages, and especially Chinese literature, will benefit from this two-volume set.

**Hu Yamin** is professor and former dean of the School of Chinese Language and Literature at Central China Normal University, president of the journal *Foreign Literature Studies*, vice president of Writers Association of Hubei Province, a member on the Advisory Board for Chinese Literature and Language Teaching of the Ministry of Education of China and a member of Reviewing Expertise Group of the National Social Science Fund of China. She is the author of *Between China and the West: The Road of Literary Criticism*, *Narratology*, *Comparative Literature*.

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FANG XINGFU ET AL.



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# Contents

<i>List of contributors</i>	vii
<b>Introduction</b> HU YAMIN	1
<b>1 Metaphor</b> WRITTEN BY GUO LIN, TRANSLATED BY FANG XINGFU	8
<b>2 The Other</b> WRITTEN BY XIAO XIANG, TRANSLATED BY LIU FANG	56
<b>3 Ideology</b> WRITTEN BY WAN NA, TRANSLATED BY CHENG XIN	86
<b>4 Body</b> WRITTEN BY LIU FANG, TRANSLATED BY LIU FANG	112
<i>Afterword</i> HU YAMIN	161
<i>Index</i>	165



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# Contributors

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# Introduction

*Hu Yamin*

Concepts lay the foundation for literary criticism, while core concepts or keywords mark the distinctive features and contributions of theories. As the prefix “key” in “keyword” indicates, keywords are both the keys to and the core or essence of esoteric theories. By investigating the production and derivation, in different times and spaces, of some keywords in Western literary criticism, this book will be conducive to the comprehension and application of these keywords in Western literary criticism for Chinese readers, to the integration of Chinese and Western literary criticism, and to the construction of contemporary Chinese literary criticism.

## 1

Since the 1850s, the construction and development of modern Chinese literary criticism has been intertwined with the spread and influence of Western literary criticism in China. With their introduction and application, some keywords from Western literary criticism have gradually been absorbed and adapted into Chinese literary criticism, becoming indispensable ingredients of its contemporary forms. Nevertheless, many problems in the translation, comprehension and application of the terms from the West exist in Chinese academia, due to linguistic discrepancy, vague interpretation, lack of scrutiny, and even worse when they are used in different disciplines. “Those in the dark are in no position to light the way for others”: As the Chinese saying implies, the above-mentioned problems frustrate the construction and development of contemporary Chinese literary criticism. To clarify and explore the origins of the keywords from Western literary criticism has long been on the agenda in Chinese academia.

Some Chinese and foreign scholars have already realized the existence of the problem. In the second half of the 20th century, discussions on the core concepts or keywords have become rather popular. The British scholar Raymond Williams pioneers such study with his book *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (1976). He traces the evolution of the meanings of the keywords but also reveals the implicit cultural and political reasons for this. Henceforth, research of this type flourishes, both at home and abroad, with

successive publications of books about literary and cultural keywords, or book series with a single word in each. Taking into consideration the changing Western contexts, these works are the academic frontiers with a detailed classification, introduction and review of keywords.

However, there remains much scope for more work on the issue. First, because of the space limit, it is impossible for a book to cover many keywords with a historical and systematic presentation of their development in detail. It is difficult as well for a book about one single keyword to provide the readers with its position in the genealogy of literary criticism or its relationship with other terms. Second, with different purposes and academic backgrounds, the editors mainly focus on the interpretation of keywords in Western literary criticism, but fail to further examine their acceptance and variation in China. Third, studies on the relationship between keywords from the West and Chinese literary criticism are inadequate. For these reasons, we have compiled this book *Keywords in Western Literary Criticism and Contemporary China* (hereafter *Keywords*).

Based on relevant studies at home and abroad, the book has the following three aims. First, with the exploration and discrimination of their historical origins and their relevance to other disciplines and thoughts, the book seeks to fully present the complexity of the chosen keywords in Western literary criticism as a product of heterogeneous cultural contexts and experiences. Second, based on their original meanings and subsequent changes, we further investigate their interpretations in the Chinese cultural context and measure the appropriateness of their applications in Chinese literary criticism, to further explore the sources of corresponding Chinese literary theories and encourage a dialogue between the Chinese and Western literary criticism. Third, with the investigation and elucidation of the chosen keywords, the book digs into some new materials and reinterprets some old ones, in order to refine some valuable theoretical and critical views and to offer constructive references for contemporary Chinese literary criticism.

## 2

This book selects and elaborates on nine keywords—discourse, text, narrative, literariness, irony, metaphor, the other, ideology and body—which travel to China after 1978 from Western literary criticism. They are chosen first for their representativeness but also their underestimated academic value in Western literary criticism in the 20th century, and second for their profound influence on Chinese literary criticism. That is to say, they are not only accepted and applied in China but also have exerted academic impacts on contemporary Chinese literary criticism. The careful selection is to ensure the quality and creativeness of the book.

Each chapter in the book mainly consists of four parts. The first part explores the origins of the term in the West from etymological and philological perspectives. The second part analyzes its various meanings and core

elements, including the extension of its connotations in different cultural contexts, and summarizes their distinctive features. The third part studies the acceptance, application and transformation of the word travelling to China to explore its variation brought out by Chinese culture and language. The fourth part discusses the relationship between the keyword and the reconstruction of Chinese literary criticism, probes into the relevance of the word from the West to traditional Chinese culture, and makes some theoretical reflections. Of course, not all the chapters follow this frame rigidly. The study of keywords has the following three targets. First, to be informative: The book provides as much relevant information as possible, especially on the important views of the representative figures who put forward and lead the study of the specific keyword. Second, to be scholarly: We have made a detailed and in-depth analysis of the keywords and strive to discover and extract the meaningful theoretical viewpoints. As a result, this is not only a reference book but also a theoretical work. Third, to be concise: Although some keywords are rather esoteric, plain language is used for the elucidation of the words' travelling. The readers may read from the beginning or start with any chapter. In addition, the bibliography provides the readers with a guidance and reference for further reading and research.

Although each keyword has its own pedigree, they are not isolated but exist in the same system of literary theory as an "other". In fact, with their own features, the nine keywords—discourse, text, narrative, literary, irony, metaphor, the other, ideology, and body—permeate and refer to one another. Some keywords have been used by various schools of theorists and critics, thus forming a field of criticism in which they both differ from and echo one another. On the one hand, they manifest the internal connection and the development of Western literary criticism in the 20th century. On the other hand, different viewpoints help shed light on different sides of literature. With the polygon prism of keywords, we can enjoy the rich meanings and the hidden brilliance of literary texts.

### 3

*Keywords* absorbs a historical and an overall view of contemporary Marxist literary criticism and moves forward on that basis. Breaking the linear historical view, we regard the keyword as a dynamic, multidimensional and even heterogeneous process, and strive to explore and interpret the diverse meanings in its historical course. At the same time, with open nationalism as the basic standpoint, we adopt a cross-cultural perspective to explore the variation of the keyword in different nations with different cultural contexts and to investigate and summarize their spread, change and reconstruction in Chinese literary criticism.

Every concept is generated in history, thus their having different meanings with a specific historical background. The focus of the study is not to define the keyword, but to make a historical survey. On the one hand, we

attempt to trace the origins, outline the changes and construct the genealogy historically. On the other hand, we examine the relationship between the keywords and the Western cultural tradition with the societies in which they survive, to ascertain the philosophy and modes of thinking of the Western scholars who create and use them, to make clear the formulation of the scholars in the relevant disciplines, and to reveal the transformation of their meanings in different contexts. In that process, we try not to take each keyword as unified or homogeneous, but as gradually constructed, in order to highlight their diverse and heterogeneous features and to fully comprehend their complex meanings from different perspectives. In the collection and examination of relevant historical documents, the theoretical sources of the critics and theorists who have been relatively ignored in the previous studies are rediscovered to help the readers have a more comprehensive understanding of the multi-layered meanings of the keywords with implied semantic tension. Of course, while emphasizing the diversity and heterogeneity of the keywords, this book also pays much attention to the internal logic within the evolution of the individual keywords. Although the meanings of each keyword are enriched in the historical context, the core elements remain. In other words, each keyword is in a dynamic process, containing and breeding a variety of meanings, but restricted by its basic rules at the same time to keep them from random signification.

After historical clarification and examination of the keywords in the West, *Keywords* turns back to the Chinese counterpart to clarify and sum up, from the recipients' perspective, their translation, misunderstanding and integration in the Chinese context. To some extent, a historical interpretation of the keywords is for the purpose of a better application in contemporary China. We put the keywords under the overall contemporary Chinese cultural context, collect the materials in terms of their translation and spread in China, so as to summarize the relevant theories and practices of contemporary Chinese literary criticism and analyze their variations with contextual transformation and cultural filtration. By so doing, we not only discriminate clearly the displacement and creative misunderstanding of the Chinese scholars in their acceptance and application (such as the different understandings of "ideology" in different periods of China), but also discover the discrepancy of the cultures and academic traditions between Chinese and Western literary criticism. In addition, the keywords, as "others", are compared with similar theories in ancient Chinese literary criticism to activate the ignored traditional sources (such as the correspondence between the notions of "being beyond the actual words" and "a positive statement appearing like the opposite" in ancient Chinese literary criticism and irony in the West), and to achieve the goal of their smooth transformation in China and their two-way communication.

From a cross-cultural perspective, *Keywords* seeks to discover the relationship between the keywords in Western literary criticism and the reconstruction of Chinese literary criticism. It shows how those Western keywords

can inject heterogeneous vigour into Chinese contemporary literary criticism and how they can help inspire the practices and solve the problems of Chinese literary creation and criticism. The construction of contemporary Chinese literary criticism is inseparable from its integration within a heterogeneous culture. A systematic survey and a critical study are conducted to reveal how the keywords are absorbed by local critical theories, or how they could be integrated into the practice of Chinese literary criticism. Moreover, the keywords are so reflective and exploratory that they enlighten Chinese literary criticism, mount a challenge to Chinese literary traditions and promote the openness of literary ideas and the diversity of research methods. The book has done some ‘ground-laying’ work for a dialogue between Chinese and Western literary criticism. We look forward to a literary criticism that can absorb different cultures and study and solve local issues with a deep national consciousness and distinctive national characteristics. To study and reveal the significance and value of the keywords from the West for contemporary Chinese literary criticism is conducive to future research, which makes this book distinctive from others on keywords.

#### 4

One of the theoretical contributions made by *Keywords* is the transplantation of and elaboration on what we call the “history field” (or *champ*, a concept put forward by Bourdieu), which mainly refers to the different but relatively independent spaces in our social life and the inner relationship among them. Bourdieu pointed out: “We may think of a field as a space... any object that traverses this space cannot be explained solely by the intrinsic properties of the object in the question” (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992:100). We borrow this concept, inject historical content into it and transform it into the plural form “history fields” floating in various time-spaces, taking it as an important paradigm for the exploration of the evolution of keywords.

Although any keyword emerges in a specific historical period, no concept or trend is created rootlessly or without its predecessor and successor. They connote differently in different cultural and historical contexts. In the study of keywords, we expand “historical fields” into four interrelated stages: the initial field, the generation field, the extended field and the native field. The initial field is the place where they first appear, mainly referring to the Western cultural traditions since ancient Greece or even ancient Hebrew in which the study of “irony”, “metaphor”, “narrative” or “body” begins to delve into their primeval meanings. The generation field is the specific social and cultural environment in which the keywords become terminologies in literary criticism. Some keywords enjoyed a long history as common words, but they did not become terms of literary criticism until the 20th century. Therefore, in the generation field, their specific meanings as terms of literary criticism are explored. In the extended field, these meanings extend as time goes on. This type of field can be viewed from two aspects: the development and

evolution of meanings within the field of literary criticism with the varying understandings of different literary critical schools, and their development and evolution after being introduced to other disciplines. Regarding the first, for example, with the appearance of the concept “ideology” in Marxist literary criticism, Western Marxist critics as Lukács, Gramsci, Althusser and Jameson supplement its connotations. Regarding the second, the concept of “discourse” evolves and develops beyond literary criticism in the work of scholars such as Levi-Strauss, Althusser and Foucault. The fourth is the native field, or the recipient field, which mainly deals with the relationship between Western literary criticism and the contemporary Chinese counterpart. Compared to the previous three fields, the fourth changes with regard to space and subject. The emergence of the keywords is related to politics, culture, philosophy and literary trends in the Western society, which reflects their theoretical construction and practices to solve their own problems. When these keywords are introduced to China, tension may arise between these extraterritorial keywords and the Chinese reality. Therefore, attention should be paid to the differences when they are in the different fields of China and the West. At the same time, restrictions from the recipients’ own “context” (such as the realistic needs of contemporary society and the subject’s academic background) are to be taken seriously. In addition, we must consider issues such as the ambiguity that occur in the process of translation, interpretation and application in the native field.

As a paradigm, “history fields” is an exploration and integration of research methods. Based on language analysis and consideration of the external conditions, it has achieved the integration not only of history and space, but also of the internal and the external. Morphologically, “history fields” provides *Keywords* with theoretical and practical values. It should be admitted that such an in-depth exploration of keywords from the West is a pioneer in the domestic study of keywords.

## 5

In the study of the keywords travelling to China, we not only experience various histories and cultures but also conduct a reflection on literary criticism, which is of revolutionary significance for the discipline.

First, the interdisciplinary perspective provides a novel understanding of the nature of literary criticism. In the travelling of concepts, free circulation among different disciplines and languages has been normalized. Some keywords that originally belonged to other disciplines were later borrowed by literary criticism, with the result that their heterogeneity constituted a challenge to traditional literary criticism. Some keywords from literary criticism circulated to other disciplines and thoughts. For example, the concept “narrative” has been adopted in various fields and shared by different disciplines. There are still some terms that are not restricted to a fixed field. They wander freely among philosophy, literary criticism, politics, psychology and

other disciplines. For instance, the term “other” locates itself in philosophy, psychoanalysis, gender studies, post-colonialism, postmodernism and so on. The concept “metaphor” even breaks the boundary between humanities and science and becomes an interdisciplinary concept, while “body” directly inhabits our daily life. The free migration of keywords in different disciplines promotes interactions among the disciplines, which leads to the expansion or elimination of the boundaries of literary criticism, philosophy and history. Perhaps literary criticism is never a completely independent discipline, and its boundary is so vague that it is destined to interrelate and overlap with many other disciplines.

Another reflection from *Keywords* is that to define is to probe only into the limited part of the nature, and the pursuit of a perfect definition may be a trap. The meaning of a keyword can never be fixed or static. Since a keyword can only be defined within a certain scope, the meaning, which is open to the changing time and space, will remain unfinished through time. In this sense, as Engels proposes:

Our definition of life is naturally very inadequate...From a scientific standpoint all definitions are of little value. In order to gain an exhaustive knowledge of what life is, we should have to go through all the forms in which it appears, from the lowest to the highest.

(Engels, 1947:51)

The definition of each keyword exists in its specific context (i.e. usage). Therefore, the research is just a dynamic “narrative” based on the context, not aiming at the integrity of the system or the accuracy of the definition, but at a historical understanding of the process of continuous practice in which the meaning is enriched and extended. What we can do is to understand the past and the present of the keywords to foretell a clearer prospect.

Every keyword has its own destiny. Deleuze claims: “Obviously, every concept has a history” (Deleuze, 1994:17). The study of keywords endows us a deeper understanding of this statement. The history of any concept will live on in our reading. The internal and external conflicts will leave its meaning open to various possible interpretations.

HU Yamin

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# 1 Metaphor

*Written by Guo Lin, Translated by Fang Xingfu*

Metaphor is an ancient concept of literary theory, which has been considered in a rhetorical and poetic sense for over two thousand years in the West. In the 20th century, it gradually extended to the fields of philosophy, linguistics, cognitive science, and even natural science and computer science, evolving into a widely used theoretical conception. The 21st century has witnessed, both abroad and at home, the mushrooming of academic works related to metaphor, which continue to enrich its connotation and expand its outreach. In classical Chinese literary theory, there is no concept that corresponds exactly to metaphor either in categorical or semantic terms. The fact that the Chinese word “隐喻” (*yinyu*) was chosen as the counterpart of “metaphor” is yet another evidence of the exchange and fusion of literary theories between China and the West. Based on the above understanding, the following analysis starts from the origin of metaphor in the Western context and traces its evolution and dissemination in the Chinese literary discourse.

## **Western classical metaphor theory**

Etymologically, the word “metaphor” in English is derived from the Greek word “*metaphora*,” which in turn originates from “*meta*”<sup>1</sup> (meaning to connect, to span) and “*pherein*” (meaning to carry, to transport). The combination of the two constitutes the original literal meaning of the word metaphor, suggesting its metaphorical feature from its birth.

While in conceptual terms, metaphor has been primarily a concept of literary criticism—for the next two thousand years. The history of metaphor study over the past two thousand years is first and foremost a history of literary metaphor studies. In a nutshell, diachronically, the study of metaphor as a concept of literary criticism has a beginning, two threads, and three main stages in the West; and synchronically, the study of metaphor since the 20th century can be divided into three different aspects: rhetoric, text, and thinking.

### *The beginning and two lines of the study of metaphor*

The study of metaphor originates from ancient Greek rhetoric. Aristotle is not the first theorist to study metaphor, but he is the first who systematically

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defines and interprets metaphor in his work *Rhetoric* and *Poetics*. His theory on metaphor, usually called comparison theory or the comparison theory of metaphor, has influenced the study of metaphor in the West significantly for more than two thousand years. Therefore, Aristotle's theory should be considered as the beginning of metaphor study, in terms of both its systematic nature and profound influence.

Aristotle's discussion of metaphor is mainly found in Chapters 21–25 of his *Poetics* and in Volume 3 of his *Rhetoric*. In *Poetics*, he classifies words into eight types: prevalent, foreign, a metaphor, embellished, made up, lengthened, shortened, altered. On this basis, he concludes “[a] metaphor is a carrying over of a word belonging to something else, from genus to species, from species to genus, from species to species, or by analogy” (Aristotle, 2006:52). He points out that metaphor is applicable to prose and poetry, especially iambic poems, and the mixed use of metaphors with other words avoids insipidness in style. Aristotle also emphasizes that:

While it is a great thing to use each of the forms mentioned in an appropriate way, as well as double and foreign word, much the greatest form of wording is the metaphorical. For this alone cannot be grasped from anyone else and is a sign of natural gifts, since to use metaphors well is to have insight into what is alike.

(Aristotle, 2006:56)

This idea is also emphasized in *Rhetoric*, in which Aristotle argues that metaphor stems from the similarity between things, a view that has been carried forward as the basic idea of comparison theory to this day. Aristotle's theory on metaphor has been followed by numerous researchers, taking similarity as an important feature of metaphor between the tenor and the vehicle.

Aristotle mentions metaphor again when he discusses style in Chapter 22 of *Poetics*. He posits that the formation of style depends on the use of various unfamiliar words. “By unfamiliar I mean foreign, metaphoric, lengthened, and everything besides what is prevalent” (Aristotle, 2006:54–55). He particularly stresses the use of metaphor in a measured manner; if a poem is replete with metaphors, it is no longer a poem, but a riddle. In *Rhetoric*, Aristotle also highlights the significance of metaphor in prose and in shaping the narrative style, arguing that metaphor adds to the clarity of style (Aristotle, 2009:18), functioning inadvertently through the conversion of potential meanings and keeping the writing from being either plain narrative or pretentious expression. Additionally, Aristotle points out that everyone employs metaphor in their conversation, and although metaphor may bring things to life at the first use, the abuse of metaphor would lead to the loss of its expressive vitality. On these points, Aristotle has actually noticed the pervasiveness of metaphor in language, while also underlining the significance of metaphor for language development and literary creation.

Aristotle has not only initiated the study of metaphor, but proposed and elaborated on two main theoretical threads of metaphor study in *Poetics* and *Rhetoric*. This is largely a result of the divergent theoretical perspectives of his elaboration of the metaphor in the two works mentioned above. Aristotle argues that metaphor is widespread in both general discourse and literary expressions, and has different connotations and categories in rhetoric and poetics because of the differences between these two disciplines. . Although he has not drawn an obvious line between these differences, his delineation of the objects of study of poetics and rhetoric and their categories is sufficient to show the commonalities and disparities between metaphor in ordinary language and in literary language.

Aristotle first divides language art in terms of generality and particularity, distinguishing dialectical and rhetorical categories under general language arts, while special language arts were subsumed under separate disciplines, of which poetics was the discipline devoted to the study of literary language arts. In *Poetics*, Aristotle emphasizes that metaphor is a kind of meaning association based on similarity,, a substitution of words for other words; while in *Rhetoric*, he discusses the function of metaphor in language primarily in terms of rhetorical effect, and in particular, the role of metaphor in shaping language style.

Aristotle's definition of poetics and rhetoric not only links closely the two disciplines from the beginning, but also clarifies their distinctions in theoretical discourse, research object, methodology, and purpose. Todorov argues that Aristotle's study of semantic transferring in a language is carried out in the context of rhetoric, but his analysis of this phenomenon is within the realm of logic. Paul Rico says:

It is he who actually defined metaphor for the entire subsequent history of Western thought, on the basis of a semantics that takes the word or the name as its basic unit. Furthermore, his analysis is situated at the crossroads of two disciplines – rhetoric and poetics – with distinct goals: ‘persuasion’ in oral discourse and the mimêsis of human action in tragic poetry.

(Ricoeur, 2003:1)

Despite the distinctions of these specific viewpoints, they all contain an identification with the relevance of the two disciplines of poetics and rhetoric, and take this relevance as a major premise for the study of metaphor. Later studies of metaphor tend to emphasize that Aristotle defines and addresses the concept of metaphor in the rhetorical sense, a tendency that may have been influenced by the linguistic turn, such as the inclusion of poetics in the theory of Jakobson et al.

### ***Historical development of classical metaphor theory***

The development of classical metaphor theory failed to break through the scope and depth of Aristotle's research for a long time. From the ancient

Roman period to the medieval ages, a theoretical path of metaphorical study was constructed.

In the ancient Roman period, the major theoretical view of metaphorical research was Substitution Theory, whose fundamental idea was that metaphorical meaning arose from the change of word meaning, and the substitution of words with each other produced metaphorical meaning. This point of view was also addressed in Cicero's *On the Sublime*, Horatius's *The Art of Poetry*, and other masterpieces. While Cicero regarded metaphor as a vital means to make speeches effective, Horatius deemed that metaphor should serve to better represent the true relationships in the language style and make it more appropriate. The Roman rhetorician Quintilian believed that as a kind of rhetoric, metaphor had the function of artistic refinement implying the power to transform a word from its original meaning to another. On this basis, Quintilian also distinguished four forms of metaphorical transformation. On account of his integrative research on many ideas and issues in rhetorical study, Hawkes called Quintilian a representative figure of metaphorical study of this period, believing that "Quintilian is rightly considered representative of the ideas about metaphor that had been accumulated by the rhetoricians that preceded him, and his considerable influence on theorists and artists in the Renaissance makes his account of great interest" (Hawkes, 2018:13).

Metaphor was seen as a simplified rhetorical alternative in Quintilian's Substitution Theory, which, to some extent, reflected the trajectory of the development of classical rhetoric, that is, the transition of rhetoric discourse from speech form based on oral expression to a form based on word and text. Hence, the rhetorical forms and purposes such as eloquence and persuasion gradually gave way to the goal of decorative expression of language.

In the Middle Ages, Hebrew culture left the Bible with numerous metaphors for later literary creations. Exegesis in the theological and literary sense inspired contemporary hermeneutical study of metaphor; more importantly, the Hebrew cultural tradition, as a source of deep influence on Western literature outside the Greek tradition, established another historical development path for metaphorical research beyond Aristotle. Meanwhile, the study of metaphor in the rhetorical sense gradually retreated to the study of rhetoric during this period. British scholar Hawkes once pointed out that metaphorical research didn't progress much in the Middle Ages.

The Middle Ages were not notable for the development of literary theory, but they showed an interest in the process of formalizing and prescription that derived from the classical approach to metaphor, though it had a different end in view.

(Hawkes, 2018:16)

Scholars in the Middle Ages highly praised *The Rhetorica ad Herennium*, which incorporated metaphor into decorative writing techniques and obsessed over the complexity and trivialities of rhetoric, including its definition,

classification, and description. Compared to the Greek period, the medieval view of metaphor was more focused on collective experience, and mostly belonged to the interpretation of meaning within a theological framework.

The metaphorical study of the Renaissance period did not show obvious revival or substantial theoretical progress. The rhetorical theory of this period used rhetoric as the ornamentation of language, stressing the refinement and multiplicity of classifications; and the emphasis on the creativity of metaphor was gradually supplanted by a flaunting of ingenuity, the consequence of which was that literary creation became a game with merely a hollow form. Following the study of rhetoric as a practical art, classical rhetoric declined. As a part of it, metaphor therefore was on the stereotypical and flamboyant list of rhetoric.

Vico's research on human poetic faculty is the most valuable part of the theoretical study of metaphor in the 17th century. He holds the view that metaphor has existed and played a prominent role in language ever since the birth of philosophy. Vico's theoretical revelation and contribution to metaphorical research lies in the fact that his overall theoretical thinking of metaphor is different from previous literary and rhetorical study of it, which manifests his theoretical creation in the main trend of philosophy dominated by Cartesianism in the 17th and 18th centuries. Although Vico's enormous influence on the exploration of human knowledge did not emerge until the 19th century, it is this theoretical thinking mode represented by him that foreshadowed and ushered in the new research direction of metaphor in the 20th century.

Nietzsche is another outstanding figure who connects classical metaphorical research with modern metaphor theory, having explored the relationship between rhetoric, language, and literature. Nietzsche believes that language is the result of human impulse to present and express feelings, and that literary works are often the most important object of study in rhetoric as a vehicle having the most affinity with language. In Nietzsche's view, "The second form of the tropus is the metaphor. It does not produce new words, but gives a new meaning to them" (Gilman et al., 1989:23). The change of meaning in language is first derived from the shortage of expression, and then from people's focus on linguistic modifiability. That is why metaphor is taken as the modifier of a language.

The rise of symbolism in the late 19th century is the last major link in the history of classical metaphor study. Empathy, one of the main expressive techniques of symbolism, is considered as a form of metaphor in contemporary metaphor theory. In addition, the poetic theory of symbolism has exerted a profound influence on the development of modernist literature in the 20th century and has served as a bridge connecting traditional metaphor theory and contemporary metaphorical research.

### **Western metaphor theory in the 20th century**

Synchronically, the metaphor theory of the 20th century can be divided into three aspects: rhetoric, text, and thinking. The division tries to achieve a

certain balance between study of literary theory and the historical development of the concept of metaphor. First of all, literature is an aesthetic text originated from thinking and expressed in the form of language. The only literary attribute in general sense, which is not emphasized here, is aesthetics, but this only means that aesthetics is not the research focus in metaphor theory. However, one theoretical premise needs to be clarified here: the division of rhetoric from text is grounded on rhetoric in ordinary language and metaphor in literary text based on aesthetics. The rhetorical study of metaphor in terms of language is different from the study of aesthetic text, with the former's research basis being language rather than literature. The study itself is of practical significance and should be distinguished from the non-utilitarian nature of aesthetic study. Second, the development of the concept of metaphor in the history of literary theory is a process from rhetoric to text to thinking. Therefore, the analysis of metaphor as a theoretical concept of literary criticism from these three aspects not only fits in with the several elements of literature from outside to inside synchronically, but also aligns with the development of the concept of metaphor diachronically.

However, it should be noted that the division of the three aspects is only a relative one. Today, the connotations of many theoretical concepts of literary criticism have changed more or less, and they have been immensely expanded, as is exemplified by rhetoric, metaphor, aesthetics, and thinking. Therefore, there will inevitably be an overlapping or intersection with the viewpoints of the critics or theorists in terms of the three aspects, which are based here not on a purely diachronical development of literary criticism in the 20th century but also on the travelling of the concept of metaphor as well.

### *From rhetoric to discourse—rhetoric and metaphor*

Rhetoric is not only an innate ability of human beings but also one of the oldest disciplines in Western humanities. Classical rhetoric theory began in ancient Greece. There have been many different views on its origin. It is generally accepted that Corax and Tisias, according to Aristotle, are the first to practice this skill, while some scholars believe that Empedocles or Plato is the founder of rhetoric. Regardless of these arguments, Plato is indeed an early theorist of rhetoric, and his account of rhetoric can be found in his dialogues with Socrates on philosophy and ethics. In *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus*, he focused more on rhetoric or the technique of speech than other aspects. The systematic study of rhetoric as a special subject began with Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. As the first systematic and comprehensive work on rhetoric, *Rhetoric* began the tradition of Western classical rhetoric research. Aristotle defined rhetoric as the ability to find and use the means of persuasion and divided all kinds of figures of speech in detail, expounding them respectively. Metaphor was one of them.

After Aristotle, the Roman theorists Cicero and Quintilian et al. further structuralized rhetoric, but on the whole, the basic framework of classical rhetoric history of more than ten centuries was still constructed on the basis

of Aristotle's rhetoric theory. Classical rhetoric's increasingly elaborate regulation and definition of the rhetorical frame narrowed its scope of study, and thus the vitality of the discipline gradually faded. . It was the arrival of the linguistic turn that brought a new theoretical context and research path to the study of rhetoric.

Since the early twentieth century, new rhetoric, under the influence of the linguistic turn and represented by the neo-Aristotelianism and Liege School, has gradually enlarged the research scope of classical rhetoric. It was no longer confined to speech and rhetoric; instead, it embraced the study of discourse in a broad sense, based on symbols.

New rhetoric thus opens up new possibilities for the study of metaphor. In contemporary times, the connotation and denotation of rhetoric and metaphor have changed. The concept of metaphor in contemporary theory is no longer limited to a form or means of rhetoric, but regarded as the nature of language and even the essential feature of thinking. However, metaphor is still an essential part of contemporary rhetoric theory due to the complicated historical connection between the two. Correspondingly, theoretical research undertaken from the perspective of metaphor still needs to consider the rhetorical aspect. The following discussion involves theories of I. A. Richards, Max Black, and Wayne C. Booth.

#### *Richards's interactional view of metaphor*

As one of the pioneers of the new criticism, Richards also makes contributions to the development of new rhetoric. In *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, he redefines the discipline by questioning the scope, function, and purpose of classical rhetoric. Richards's definition of rhetoric is, to a certain degree, an inheritance and development of the views of the 18th-century rhetoricians such as Campbell and Wheatley. In his view, rhetoric is a discipline about the basic laws of language use; rhetorical research should not only embrace the discussion of the general laws and practical skills of language art, but also delve into the operation mechanism behind words. Moreover, he holds that the study of rhetoric should be conducted at the philosophical level.

Richards's early theoretical research focuses on the exploration of meaning. In *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, his exploration of the meaning of language directs to metaphor through context. Richards criticizes the view of considering metaphor as a decorative form. According to him,

Throughout the history of Rhetoric, metaphor has been treated as a sort of happy extra trick with words, an opportunity to exploit the accidents of their versatility, something in place occasionally but requiring unusual skill and caution. In brief, a grace or ornament or added power of language, not its constitutive form.

(Richards, 1965:90)

Richards thinks metaphor is essentially “a borrowing between and intercourse of thoughts, a transaction between contexts” (Richards, 1965:94). His rhetoric and literary studies are not only relevant at the level of meaning, but the study of these two fields encompasses his concern of and attention to issues of human thinking and cognition. In his view, “[i]n asking how language works we ask about how thought and feeling and all the other modes of the mind’s activity proceed” (Richards, 1965:95).

In the fifth chapter of *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, Richards puts forward the Interaction Theory. Further developed by Black, this theory has been considered by researchers as a prominent theoretical breakthrough that changed the landscape of metaphorical research since Aristotle. Richards is therefore regarded as a theoretical pioneer of the metaphorical research boom that has taken place since the 1970s.

Richards believes that in a metaphor, there is a semantic connection between tenor and vehicle, and it is the interaction of meaning between the two that produces a metaphor. The meaning of a metaphor thus relies on the interaction of such association. By associating tenor and vehicle, the respective meanings of the two are extended and expanded through the metaphor, and the metaphor thus formed gains meaning at various levels.

In terms of the category of metaphor, Richards thinks the view that only a genius can master metaphor has limited further exploration of metaphor.

That metaphor is the omnipresent principle of language can be shown by mere observation. We cannot get through three sentences of ordinary fluid discourse without it, as you will be noticing throughout this lecture. Even in the rigid language of the settled sciences we do not eliminate or prevent it without great difficulty.

(Richards, 1965:92)

In Richards’s eyes, the biggest problem with metaphor is not to discover its existence, but to explore how we use it, and how the literal meaning changes through metaphor. As far as the laws of metaphor are concerned, Richards holds that metaphor does not arise simply from the comparison or substitution of words. Instead, he thinks that “in the simplest formulation, when we use a metaphor we have two thoughts of different things active together and supported by a single word, or phrase, whose meaning is a resultant of their interaction” (Richards, 1965:93).

The value of Richards’s metaphorical research primarily lies in the following three aspects. First, he expands the scope of metaphor, pointing out that metaphor is ubiquitous and widely exists in daily language and human thinking. Inarguably, the fundamental framework of metaphorical research in the whole 20th century is constructed on the theoretical basis of Richard. Second, in addition to redefining the nature of metaphor in general, Richards also elaborates on some specific points, including the different levels

of metaphorical analysis from form to structure to rule, his disapproval of some traditional ideas, such as the metaphorical genius theory, the basis of metaphorical similarity, and the relationship between metaphor and language. On this basis, he puts forward his own views. Third, Richards makes a pioneering contribution to the subsequent theoretical development concerning the terminology of metaphorical research. He borrows from Dr. Johnson the concepts of “tenor” and “vehicle” to describe metaphor, which has become the most basic pair of concepts in metaphorical studies. Besides, he has also coined some terms by himself. Richards’s metaphorical research and ideas have directly influenced scholars such as Abrams and Black. As a student of Richards, Abrams argues, in his representative book *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition*, that the way of thinking for literary criticism and literary creation is metaphorical, either in the writing of critical theory or in the transmission of creative ideas.

#### *Black’s development of the interaction theory*

Black’s development of Richards’s metaphor interaction theory is largely embodied in his writings on the topic of metaphor for decades. Based on the research of Richards, Black raises a series of questions that need to be clarified: how to divide and define metaphor, what standards should be followed, whether metaphor should be interpreted and translated literally, whether it is merely a modification of language, and at what level is metaphor creative? In terms of research scope, Black holds different opinions from Richards. He argues that the studies of metaphor should be subsumed under the rubric of pragmatics, instead of being confined to semantic studies.

Black makes an in-depth analysis of the “substitution theory,” “comparison theory,” and “interaction theory” of metaphor. He considers the substitution theory, to a large extent, a phenomenon of meaning substitution in terms of words or sentences. According to him, the biggest problem of substitution theory resides not only in its argument, but also in its deeply-rooted stereotype as a metaphorical concept, which already impeding the progress of the concept itself. Black takes the comparison theory (comparison view) a special case of the substitution theory (substitution view). “For it holds that the metaphorical statement might be replaced by an equivalent literal comparison” (Black, 1962:35).

In Black’s view, “interaction theory” avoids the major shortcomings of “substitution theory” and “comparison theory” and possesses significant theoretical value in clarifying the functions and limitations of metaphor. Black has analysed part of Richards’s views. For example, Richards argues that the common feature of tenor and vehicle is fundamental to the generation of metaphor, which in the eyes of Black is where Richards’s analysis falls short. “In its metaphorical use a word or expression must connote only a selection from the characteristics connoted in its literal uses. This, however, seems a rare lapse into the older and less sophisticated analyses

he is trying to supersede” (Black, 1962:39). The focus of Black’s attention is not on issues such as the ambiguity of metaphor or the interpretation of metaphor. For him, the former is a prerequisite, and the latter, the futile behaviour that cannot be exhausted. Hence, his research focuses mainly on the relationships between tenor and vehicle, and metaphor creation and understanding.

*Booth’s literary rhetoric and his research on metaphor*

The American scholar Booth is a theorist of the late period of the new rhetoric. For him, the theory of literary criticism is closely related to rhetoric and these two disciplines should develop together in the process of fusion and mutual penetration. Booth therefore attempts to revive the theory of rhetoric and art criticism in a broad sense through the study of major rhetorical forms such as metaphor and irony, which he calls “literary rhetoric”. For Booth, the essence of literary rhetoric is a study of the art of discourse, a rhetorical criticism based on communication. In such an exchange, the readers can make rhetorical choices and do not need to avoid the author’s creative intention. They interpret the text by integrating their own experience, thus obtaining a more diverse understanding, judgment, and position. Booth’s view of literature is arguably a combination of dynamic understanding of literature and a series of flexible principles on the basis of rhetoric.

In terms of metaphorical classification, Booth distinguishes between general and special metaphors. But this simple classification does not explain the rhetorical utility of metaphor, so Booth further pushes the issue to the concern of rhetorical intention. In his eyes, exploring the role of metaphor through an accurate and clear understanding of its purpose is the key to solving this problem. He further points out that there can be multiple criteria for the classification of metaphor. According to him,

Whether or not we finally decide that the various species of what we call metaphor belong to a single genus or simply bear family resemblances to each other will not matter much for our various special inquiries into quality, though it will of course continue to matter to us in our philosophical endeavors.

(Booth, 1978:53)

Regarding the complexity of metaphor classification, Booth says that:

We may all want to legislate against certain uses of the word in order to distinguish what true metaphor is. But in fact people will go on calling these disparate things metaphor, and we should not use the word without acknowledging its inescapable indeterminacy.

(Booth, 1978:53)

While it is human instinct to master metaphors, creating good metaphors is not an innate ability. Thus, Booth compares interpretation of metaphors to a process of “puzzle-solving”:

Find your own metaphoric tool for what one does when specific metaphors are isolated from daily life and literary culture and probed for what or how they mean... study of metaphor can be the solving of a puzzle, taking literally Aristotle’s statement that metaphors are like enigmas or riddles.

(Booth, 1978:64)

Booth also discusses the distinction between metaphor and simile. He thinks that the difference between the two is of vital significance in some areas of metaphorical studies, but is insignificant in ordinary language. That is to say, the use of metaphor and simile in ordinary language differs only in rhetorical effect, and is not different in nature.

At the level of theoretical constructs, Booth takes metaphorical study as a component of cultural criticism in a multilevel sense.

There is one important fact about our society that makes metaphor an even more important part of such criticism for us than for any previous culture. For the first time in history, a society finds itself offering immense rewards to a vast number of hired metaphorists, hired to make metaphors that will accomplish a predetermined end regardless of what they say about our character or do to it.

(Booth, 1978:69)

Here, Booth does not hide his critical attitude, emphasizing that the concept of rhetoric represented by metaphor is no longer just a kind of knowledge that is gradually solidified through teaching.

Metaphor in this view is not a means to other ends but one of the main ends of life; sharing metaphors becomes one of the experiences we live for. The great plays and narratives, like the great lyric poems, are themselves metaphors for what life is or can be; and they are thus a further great resource of criticism of what life is and of what other poets’ metaphors say it is.

(Booth, 1978:69)

Metaphor, originally marginal to mainstream theoretical discourse, moved to the theoretical centre in interpreting human understanding in the 1970s. As for the boom of metaphorical research, Booth believes that one cannot simply judge it by its apparent prosperity because numerous studies do not imply a corresponding academic value.

*Semantics, structure and interpretation—text and metaphor*

The scope of metaphorical research has expanded considerably since the 20th century. This change is reflected on research objects, which extend from words to sentences and even to texts. Therefore, the study of metaphor in the early 20th century was no longer confined to the study of rhetoric but focuses on the function of meaning generation. For literary theory, text is the basic research object and category, and any literary text itself is a metaphorical being. The exploration of textual metaphor in this section unfolds on the basis that the modern text itself has become a kind of metaphor, as have literary works and theoretical texts.

The concept of metaphor in the textual sense encompasses three main levels: semantics, structure, and interpretation. Specifically, the concept of metaphor in textual sense is related to semantics in the first place. Modern poetry theory pays special attention to metaphor for it is more concerned with semantic tension than

*The concept of metaphor in new criticism*

Metaphor for new criticism is a text-based concept. This can be illustrated in two ways. First of all, it means the transition of metaphorical study from words to texts. From words to sentences and then to texts, the scope of metaphorical research is gradually expanded, but new criticism does not ignore the study of words while attaching importance to texts. Second, the concept of metaphor in the textual sense is a form of text-based meaning-making. New criticism links text with meaning, and metaphor fills the gap of text through the transformation of meaning and provides an opportunity for creative reading. Meanwhile, metaphor itself creates meaning. With tenor and vehicle, whether it is similarity to evoke comparison and contrast or substitution to direct to new images, this kind of creativity is the essence of metaphor. For this reason, we regard “metaphor” of new criticism as an open concept that leads to meaning through text, words, and structure. As far as the whole school is concerned, the literary structure of new criticism is complicated, and each viewpoint tends to change with the passage of time. While Richards’s theory of metaphor is unique and influential, many theorists of the school, from Empson to Wellek, mostly discuss metaphor in their respective theoretical frameworks.

W.K. Wimsatt’s “Symbol and Metaphor” is a book review of *Symbol and Metaphor in Human Experience* (1949) by Martin Foss. Wimsatt points out that “Metaphor for Mr. Foss is not only a problem of language but the throbbing heart of all knowledge and reality” (1950:280). What he recognizes is W.B. Stanford’s definition of metaphor in *Greek Metaphor: Studies in Theory and Practice* (1936) (Wimsatt, 1950: 288). That is, the meaning of a metaphor does not lie in the description of tenor by vehicle, but in the

meaning that arises when the two are put together and compared with each other. According to Wimsatt, this kind of meaning is not conveyed by the concept, but a “third category” produced by the interaction of the vehicle and the tenor, whose meaning can only be understood through metaphor. As a structure based on lexical meaning, literary text itself is the context which enables metaphor to exist and hold water. At the same time, the structure of the text also influences and intervenes in the connotation of metaphor. When a metaphor is used repeatedly out of context, it is caught in the literal meaning and is reduced to a cliché. This view is the continuation and inheritance of Richards’s discourse theory. In *Literary Criticism: A Short History* (1957), Wimsatt discussed metaphor many times, analyzing Aristotle’s idea of metaphor in detail in the fourth chapter. In Chapter 12, when discussing rhetoric and neoclassicism, he goes beyond the scope of classical metaphorical research. In extending the metaphorical similarity to internal and external similarities of literature, he discusses the metaphorical nature of literature from the structure of text or even thinking. Wimsatt points out that art works, as an expression of reality, tend to reflect categories or implications beyond the text, thus making the whole text a metaphor or symbol. In this sense, metaphor cannot be a closed concept confined to the category of rhetoric, but a key factor connecting things and forming semantic tension, in which poetry can fully express the scene or experience derived from reality. Therefore, Wimsatt regards metaphor as the principle of all poetry and an important bridge connecting poetry and reality.

Wellek’s discussion on metaphor is mainly found in the fifteenth chapter of *Theory of Literature*. He uses “Image, Metaphor, Symbol, Myth” to explain the structure of literary text represented by poetry and calls it “image-metaphor-symbol” process theory of text structure. Starting from the origin of metaphor, Wellek focuses on the impact of historical and cultural contexts on the changes of metaphor. In his eyes, the discussion of this issue belongs to the study of literary history, while the exploration of metaphorical images should, to a large extent, fall within the realm of literary criticism. Image, metaphor, symbol, and myth constitute the main structure of poetry in Wellek’s view. These four elements in turn represent the convergence of two lines illustrated below:

One is sensuous particularity, or the sensuous and aesthetic continuum, which connects poetry with music and painting and disconnects it from philosophy and science; the other is ‘figuration’ or ‘tropology’—the ‘oblique’ discourse which speaks in metonyms and metaphors, partially comparing worlds, precisizing its themes by giving them translations into other idioms.

(Wellek and Warren, 1949:190)

The meaning of “image” here is relatively broad. According to Wellek, image can be both descriptive and metaphorical. He distinguishes between the

two concepts of “symbol” and “metaphor.” “Symbol” is seen as a concept with repetitive and continuous meaning, and an “image” may be converted into a “metaphor” through literary and artistic creation. If this “metaphor” is continually presented or repeated in subsequent cultural forms, it will form a “symbol” and be incorporated into the mythology of cultural symbol system. According to Wellek, these four concepts encompass the main components of literary text at the level of meaning. They combine the two aspects of “form” and “content” that were often separated in the past, and connect the text itself with the external world. Wellek points out that previous researches on literary theory are mostly carried out externally and separated from text, and insufficient attention has been paid to the deep connection between the two. In his view, the meaning and function of literature are mainly presented in metaphor and myth, as a result of the metaphorical and mythical thinking in the human mind. This kind of thinking is enacted by means of metaphor and poetic narration and description. This view of Wellek’s evidently bears the imprint of Vico’s thought. It can be noted from Wellek’s distinction between different dimensions of textual analysis that the new criticist closing reading is not confined to text, as has been criticized in some previous assertions. Wellek divides the text into sound level, meaning level, image and metaphor, and myth, among others. He considers image and metaphor to be the core of poetry of all styles, holding that the connection between text and the external world is produced at the most essential and complex level. In this sense, text is not an isolated existence, but is metaphorically correlated with the external world, and thus reflects it in a harmonious aesthetic form.

### *Structuralists’ research on metaphor*

Focus on structure, form and language is the most basic and common feature of all structuralist theories. Structuralists generally agree that there is always a dichotomous structural pattern in all symbolic systems, including language. When it comes to literary studies, whether a single text or a literary system in general sense, there exists an intrinsic structure from which certain patterns and laws can be drawn. For structural linguistics, literary texts are more like a ready-made paradigm that proves its theory; for structural semantics, the exploration of textual meaning can be attributed to a process of encoding and decoding. Hence, it is not difficult to understand why Greimas’s view of metaphor is consistent with Jakobson’s, while Culler shows a broader theoretical horizon than the early structuralists because of his later shift in theoretical position.

Jakobson discusses poetics primarily from the perspective of linguistics. He is concerned to find the relationship between language system and literary language, so as to derive the corresponding structure and laws, and to validate his theoretical assumption through the analysis of the literary text. Jakobson believes that language has six functions, poetic function being one

of them. This division is based on the inclusion of poetics as a component of linguistics, which is the foundation of Jakobson's literary research. Jakobson further proposes a mode of metaphor and metonymy in literary development, which is used not only to analyze single literary work, but also to summarize the characteristics of literary genre, style, or trend of thought in various historical periods (Jakobson, 2003:41–47).

Jakobson regards metaphor and metonymy as the primary rhetorical forms of language, which play their respective roles in the expression of meaning. Expression itself is a process of choice, consisting of two forms, metaphor and metonymy, which combine to form meaningful sentences or generate texts. Jakobson defines metaphor as the mutual substitution of words based on similarity, while metonymy is a combination and substitution of words based on proximity in the referential sense. These two together constitute the three-dimensional structure of language system. It can be seen from Jakobson's analysis of metaphor and metonymy that his understanding of metaphor is first based on Aristotle's definition of it as a rhetoric that is grounded on similarity. At the same time, Jakobson's creative use of the concept of metaphor has given it an important place in linguistic studies that distinguishes it from classical rhetoric, that is, as one of the basic operation mechanisms of language, metaphor, along with metonymy, becomes the essential factors in the process of meaning formation and expression.

According to Culler, the linguistic research model provides a structural metaphor for critical theory. "Although linguistic concepts play little role in the analysis itself, the linguistic model does offer a structural metaphor for the organization of the work" (Culler, 2002:115). The easiest way to apply linguistic methods to literary studies is to study the language of literary texts using linguistic classification criteria. Compared to linguistic study which regards daily language as object and aims to study its functions and laws, the poetic function of language exerts greater impact on constructing language expression and promoting the overall development of language. Culler also stresses,

If one uses linguistics as a critical tool in this way, how does that affect the definition of the poetic function? No longer the key to a method of analysis, it becomes a hypothesis about the conventions of poetry as an institution and in particular about the kind of attention to language which poets and readers are allowed to assume.

(Culler, 2002:81)

Culler comments on Jakobson's poetic theory that "Jakobson's misinterpretation is quite instructive because it shows clearly how a mistaken assumption vitiates the application of his theory" (Culler, 2002:86). Jakobson's elaboration of the poetic function of language, limited to the grammatical level of linguistic research, is simply the result of a linguistic analysis that lacks explanatory value. Jakobson's problem lies in his belief that linguistics can provide a universal automatic program for poetic study.

Jakobson has made an important contribution to literary studies in drawing attention to the varieties of grammatical figures and their potential functions, but his own analyses are vitiated by the belief that linguistics provides an automatic discovery procedure for poetic patterns and by his failure to perceive that the central task is to explain how poetic structures emerge from the multiplicity of potential linguistic structures.

(Culler, 2002:86)

A similar point of view also appears in Culler's analysis of Greimas's *Sémantique structurale*:

The critic would prefer a more ambitious theory, even if it be less systematic; and therefore it is surprising that A. J. Greimas's *Sémantique structurale* has received so little attention, for it attempts to account for verbal meaning of all kinds, including that of metaphors, of sentences in connected discourse and even the 'totalité de signification' of a text or set of texts.

(Culler, 2002:88)

With words or vocabulary as units in an attempt to find the source of meaning formed in sentences and texts, Greimas's structural semantics research is based on the premise of the certainty of meaning, according to which, he explores the construction of metaphor and textual meaning. Culler believes that the problem with Greimas lies in an excessive expectation on his semantic analysis to be applied effectively in the field of literary criticism, in an attempt to construct a theory that can perfectly explain the meaning of the text. However, in Culler's view, semantic theory at this stage can only elucidate metaphorical meanings at the lexical level, while the meaning of poetic language cannot be fully incorporated into the logic of linguistics.

The case of poetic language, however, would seem to indicate both the futility of trying to incorporate in a lexicon all possible metaphorical meanings (since new metaphors are always being produced) and the unnecessary character of such a procedure (since new metaphors can be understood).

(Culler, 2002:91–92)

As new metaphorical meanings are still emerging, we cannot incorporate all possible metaphorical meanings into existing expressions. Culler holds the view that the scope and boundaries of metaphor in contemporary theory have changed, making it difficult to define whether it is a poetic or rhetorical concept. "Metaphor has been treated as basic to language and the imagination because it is cognitively respectable, not inherently frivolous or ornamental. Its literary force, though, may depend on its incongruity" (Culler, 1997:71). In addition, "Because a metaphor can carry an elaborate

proposition, even a theory, it is the rhetorical figure most easily justified” (Culler, 1997:71). More importantly,

[t]he semantic features which are added to each item in the process of metaphorical interpretation do not suppress the old, which they contradict, but coexist with them, producing a tension between the animate and inanimate within each lexical item which is the source of whatever piquancy the metaphor has.

(Culler, 2002:100–101)

Culler has also mentioned in *Literary Theory* that Derrida argues in his article “White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy” that the theoretical interpretation of metaphor inevitably relies on metaphor itself. Culler is not opposed to this point of view, but he also points out the statement that language is fundamentally metaphorical is paradoxical because

[t]he ability of readers to find metaphorical readings for the most surprising collocations indicates the futility of trying to account for metaphors at the level of lexicon and suggests, rather, that one should attempt to define the semantic operations which metaphorical interpretation involves.

(Culler, 2002:100)

Regarding this point of view, Culler does not elaborate on it. He approves of the idea that metaphor as a basic cognitive means constructs human beings’ way of thinking about the world, which can be seen in Chapter Five of *Structuralist Poetics*— “The Linguistic Metaphor in Criticism.” He also points out that Hayden White’s use of metaphor and other four main figurative devices to analyze historical narrative is an attempt to understand human experience from the perspective of rhetorical structure.

#### *Ricoeur’s conception of metaphorical hermeneutics*

Ricoeur’s metaphorical study is first and foremost an important part of his hermeneutic philosophy. Metaphor is a very important concept in his series of related writings. As a hermeneutist, Ricoeur’s thinking on linguistic issues involves both understanding and interpretation. In his view, the meaning of a language exactly resides in the complex circular process of understanding and interpretation, and misreading and regeneration of meaning, with metaphor being a key factor of this process. In *La Métaphore Vive*, Ricoeur conducts an in-depth study of metaphor from various perspectives such as rhetoric, semantics, semiotics, and hermeneutics. This book is considered to be Ricoeur’s most important work in this period and a masterpiece of contemporary metaphorical study. Later, Ricoeur further elaborates on the importance of this concept in hermeneutics from the perspective of epistemology.

In *La Métaphore Vive*, Ricoeur's account of the development of metaphor theory is not only diachronic, but also corresponds to the domain of linguistic research, from words to sentences to texts. Metaphor is not only an updating activity of semantics, but also a process of meaning generation in a specific context. It is also the pivot connecting text, meaning, readers, and interpretation. On the issue of the relationship between metaphor and context, Ricoeur agrees with Richards and Black, believing that metaphor is contextual, and the change of context affects the meaning of words. In emphasizing the importance of context, Ricoeur further explains what a "living metaphor" means, and how this concept is related to the central issue of hermeneutics. The new meanings produced in metaphorical statements exist only in specific contexts. However, since the metaphor may be repeated, it also enters new and different contexts and is gradually absorbed into the everyday language system. "At this final stage, when the meaningful effect that we call metaphor has rejoined the change of meaning which augments polysemy, the metaphor is no longer living but dead" (Ricoeur, 2016:132). In other words, in any language, the meaning of a word depends on its inherent rules, which determine a range of possibilities for the construction, operation, and generation of meaning in everyday language system. The everyday language system inevitably excludes and intervenes in the new meaning structure that emerges in new contexts. In most cases, these new metaphors are incorporated into the daily discourse system and become a regular part of it. This process is not only the birth and death of a metaphor, but also reveals the contradiction between the creative process of metaphor and the non-creative aspect of language. In Ricoeur's view, the construction of meaning depends on metaphor, and the understanding itself also has an overall metaphorical meaning. Interpretation means starting from understanding a text as a metaphorical statement to making more sense of it by grasping the clues embedded in a literary work as a whole.

The theoretical value of Ricoeur's metaphorical research is mainly reflected in two aspects. First, he makes a comprehensive survey of the theoretical research on metaphor in the history of Western theory. He starts from classical rhetoric, through structural semantics and semiotics, finally gets to his own metaphorical hermeneutics. Ricoeur takes an inclusive attitude towards metaphorical theory in modern times, with reasonable absorption as well as straightforward and pertinent critique. Ricoeur puts forward his own ideas about metaphorical hermeneutics based on the general research on metaphor. The interpretation of literary phenomena and texts is a very important aspect of literary criticism. Moreover, Ricoeur's judgment on Aristotle involves a reflection and re-evaluation of some theoretical thoughts of contemporary metaphorical research. Ricoeur thinks that there is an implicit connection between imitation and metaphor in *Poetics*. In his words, "Mimesis, as we have seen, makes human actions appear higher than they are in reality; and the function of metaphor is to transpose the meanings of ordinary language by way of unusual uses" (Ricoeur, 2016:142).

Ricoeur believes that the relationship between these two concepts reflects the deep connection between reality and literature. In his view, “Indeed we may say that the Aristotelian concept of mimesis already encompasses all of the paradoxes of reference” (Ricoeur, 2016:141). Imitation is not a rewriting of reality, but a creation.

Aristotle gives at least two indications of this creative dimension of mimesis. First, the fable is an original, coherent construction which attests to the creative genius of the artist. Second, tragedy is an imitation of human actions which makes them appear better, higher, more noble than they are in reality.

(Ricoeur, 2016:141–142)

Thus, Ricoeur believes that the power of metaphor stems from its deep connection to the characteristics of poetry, especially in “[w]ith its intention to represent human actions as higher than they are in reality—and therein lies the mimesis. In this sense, the power of the metaphor arises from the power of the poem as a totality” (Ricoeur, 2016:142).

However, Ricoeur’s metaphorical research also has shortcomings, which is the main reason for the title “Ricoeur’s conception of metaphorical hermeneutics” in this section. In the last part of *Metaphor and the Central Problem of Hermeneutics*, Ricoeur leaves us an unresolved questions, that is, while the power of metaphor is related to imagination and is conveyed through the meaning that emerges in our language, how a metaphor operates, and how it reaches language and conveys meaning through imagination? Ricoeur makes little theoretical presuppositions on those issues; he leaves only a metaphor, “We shall, for the time being, refrain from entering this half-open door” (Ricoeur, 2016:143).

### ***Reconstructing the basepoint of human thinking—thinking and metaphor***

Since the linguistic turn in the first half of the 20th century, the relationship between language and thinking has been brought back into the focus among language issues. Analytical philosophy, verbal behaviourism, brain science, and computer science are gradually integrated in the era of interdisciplinarity. Under such circumstance, cognitive science and language research become more concerned with metaphor. However, historically speaking, linking thinking with metaphor is not a creation of contemporary theory. There have been similar views in the study of primitive thinking from Vico’s research to contemporary cultural anthropology. From the perspective of philosophy, Derrida uses metaphor to deconstruct the metaphysical tradition inherited by modern times. The rise and development of cognitive linguistics further contributes to the flourishing of metaphor research in the 21st century.

*The study of metaphor from anthropology to archetypal criticism*

The theoretical exploration of cultural anthropology, which links thinking to metaphor, is an important theoretical vein of contemporary metaphorical research. As early as the first half of the 18th century, Vico's discussion of the poetic faculty of primitive human in *The First New Science* was closely related to metaphor. In Vico's view, metaphor was an important part of poetic faculty and played an extremely important role in the formation of human thinking and culture. The so-called poetic faculty was the earliest way of thinking in human history. Vico pointed out that the ways of thinking varied at different stages of human history. Poetry and philosophy were not separated, and abstract concepts were not yet produced in the ancient times. The main feature of human thinking in this period was to make sense of the world with creative imagination. In Vico's view, the primitive humans' response to and understanding of the objective world was not a form of ignorance and barbarism, but an instinctively poetic one. This poetic interpretation of the objective world was a metaphor, and each metaphor demonstrated a simple but concrete story that gradually merged into myth. Vico believed that concrete perceptual images were the source of metaphors. The original poet named objects with the image he perceived, and then a commonality was generated, and it was in this process of substitution that metaphor was formed. He argues that the original metaphor reflected human being's intent to use their bodies to perceive the world.

Idolatry and divination were discoveries of a poetry that was, and had to be, wholly imagined, both arising from this metaphor, the first to be conceived by the human civil mind and more sublime than anything formed later: that the world and the whole of nature is a vast, intelligent body, which speaks in real words and, with such extraordinary sounds, warns men of that which, through further worship, it wants them to understand.

(Vico, 2002:75)

The list of the natural world can be expanded to include things such as "knife handle," "needle eye," "clock hand," "mineral vein," and so on. Vico's view was widely adopted in the metaphorical boom in of the 20th century, which led to some specialized studies such as "body metaphor," "space metaphor," among others.

Vico's theoretical approach of associating primitive thinking to metaphor not only lays an important theoretical foundation for the shift of metaphorical research from rhetoric to cognition, but also determines the main research direction of metaphor in the 20th century, that is, to reconstruct the basics of human thinking. This influence is reflected in the theoretical research of scholars such as Cassirer, Levi-Strauss, and Frye. They have all made their respective theoretical elucidations on the basis of Vico's "poetic

faculty,” either by discussing the concept of metaphor, or by associating metaphor in their theoretical construction. Although the general thinking mode of Cassirer and Levi-Strauss is roughly the same, the difference between their specific viewpoints still needs to be discerned. In Vico’s “poetic faculty,” metaphor originates from the combination of primitive people’s emotions and desires to express themselves. Since human expression of the objective world in the primitive period is an intuitive rather than an empirical or logical one, metaphor is manifested as an internalized analogy. Cassirer believes that myth is a way of thinking that is contrary to logical thinking, and he calls it “the law of the leveling and extinction of specific differences” (Cassirer, 1946:91). The basic principle is “pars pro toto” (Cassirer, 1946:92), which means a part as a substitute for the whole. Levi-Strauss thinks that wild thinking is no inferior to rational thinking, but merely a different perspective of observation. Frye is heavily influenced by Vico and Cassirer. In his specific analysis of the language and imagery of the Bible, Frye uses Vico’s method of classification and Cassirer’s concepts such as “root metaphor” to link the archetype with human culture through metaphors. On this basis, he constructs his own myth-archetypal criticism.

In *Language and Myth*, Cassirer explores the relationship among mythology, language, and metaphor from the perspective of “the power of metaphor.” He holds that myth and language share common root and are subject to similar laws of evolution, and the principles by which they exert their functions have common characteristics. Having examined their origins, Cassirer believes that there exists “the same form of mental conception” between them, that is, metaphorical thinking. He points out that “The nature and meaning of metaphor is what we must start with if we want to find, on the one hand, the unity of the verbal and the mythical worlds and, on the other, their difference” (Cassirer, 1946:84). Cassirer thinks metaphor is the intellectual link between language and myth:

The real source of metaphor is sought now in the construction of language, now in mythic imagination; sometimes it is supposed to be speech, which by its originally metaphorical nature begets myth, and is its eternal source; sometimes, on the contrary, the metaphorical character of words is regarded as a legacy which language has received from myth and holds in fee.

(Cassirer, 1946:84)

The power of metaphor lies in its common root in thinking as a form of human expression (mythology and language) from ancient times to the present. From the above point of view, Cassirer continues Vico’s theory, and his further development of metaphorical research is reflected in the concept of “root metaphor”

Cassirer thinks “[t]he ‘root metaphor’ underlying all mythic formulations was regarded as an essentially verbal phenomenon” (Cassirer, 1946:85–86).

But people's understanding of its basic characteristics is still insufficient. As a direct reflection of mythical thinking, metaphor is not the outcome of language, but one of the basic conditions of speech. That is, the understanding of metaphorical function is a process of shaping language from thinking, for things without names cannot be found in language. In this process, the parts replace the whole and then become the whole.

And at the same time one can see how such lingual 'metaphors' react in their turn on mythic, metaphor and prove to be an ever-fertile source for the latter. Every characteristic property which once gave a point of departure to qualifying conceptions and qualifying appellations may now serve to merge and identify the objects denoted by these names.

(Cassirer, 1946:96)

This is also the precipitation of "root metaphor" in language.

Cassirer believes that metaphor dominates human language. There is no purely abstract reference in thinking, and any impression formed by perception will be transformed into a concrete image. For example, the image of the gods in mythology, whether vague or clear, as long as it is solidified and preserved in the language and cultural system, will be condensed from the original concrete image into "a starting point for the conception and denotation of a god" (Cassirer, 1946:97). In this sense, the interaction and mutual penetration of myth and language not only constructs the identity of their thinking principles, but also inevitably turns the two into the concept or symbol with a fixed meaning in the development of language. Logic and metaphor all manifest their own power in the process from the specific undifferentiated unity to the gradual decomposition into their own independent thinking forms. Therefore, Cassirer emphasizes that the creativity of metaphor revives the vitality of language.

Like Cassirer, Levi-Strauss also starts from the relationship between myth and language, and then extends to the study of metaphor as an important concept in constructing his own cultural theory.

A basic idea of Levi-Strauss's anthropological study is that poetic faculty can create myth, and inspire primitive human's instinctive response to the world. Leonard Bloomfield points out in *Language* that this idea is deeply influenced by Vico. Although the two scholars have different theoretical concerns, they both tend to regard language as the main aspect and factor in anthropological studies. Levi-Strauss's systematic analysis of cultural phenomena such as mythology and primitive thinking is not a sheer empirical research, but reflects the transformation of his theoretical focus from structural linguistics to anthropology, from which he tries to find out the structural foundation of human society based on language and various cultural phenomena.

Levi-Strauss takes myth as the thinking mode of human beings and uses language as the vehicle or tool of such thinking. On this basis, he explores

the relationship among mythology, metaphor, and language. Mythology exists both in and beyond language. The latter is reflected in the fact that mythical thinking cannot be incorporated into the synchronic and diachronic analysis of language studies. Therefore, based on Saussure's division of language and speech, Levi-Strauss further proposes that in addition to the two above-mentioned characteristics of being synchronic and diachronic, language has a third characteristic, that is, mythical. The meaning of mythology lies in the combination of its linguistic components, and the essence of primitive thinking is revealed in the structure of mythology and primitive language. Metaphor is composed of variants of mythology. Mythology is integrated into everyday language as discourse, or becomes image and symbol, and is repeated in various cultural forms. The process itself constitutes a metaphor, and the structure of mythology represents a metaphorical way of thinking.

The comprehensiveness of mythology and the lack of logicity and coherence as well as the striking similarities in mythologies in various civilizations negate its arbitrariness and contingency as a primitive way of thinking. Levi-Strauss intends to find out a transformation rule with wider applicability from the study of mythology, and then to create a science with a universal meaning about human beings. In his opinion, mythology is neither a language game in ancient times, nor a philosophical speculation with an incondite form, but a basic form of human emotion, a reflection of human history. The exploration and interpretation of mythology and the metaphorical thinking behind it will have a universal elucidative effect on the human thinking formed on this basis.

The Canadian theorist Frye's metaphorical study is also similar to that of the above scholars. Frye's interest in the concept of "metaphor" stems from his study of the Bible. In the books *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature* and *Words with Power: Being a Second Study of the Bible and Literature*, Frye suspends some complex issues such as the authenticity of the Bible as the original Christian canon. He studies it as a literary text, and systematically explores the metaphorical nature of the Bible as a text and the metaphorical nature of its language and imagery. In *Anatomy of Criticism* and *Myth and Metaphor: Selected Essays*, Frye touches upon the concept of metaphor as well.

From the perspective of literary criticism, Frye's systematic study of the Bible and its metaphor is an important theoretical cornerstone of its myth-archetypal criticism. He believes that mythology and metaphor derive from the source of literary experience and are two aspects of one thing. Mythology is both a world of an overall metaphor and the framework and context of all thinking. The various literary genres that have gradually developed since then can be regarded as extensions, developments or variants of mythology, and mythology has thus become the most important research object of literary criticism.

In general, metaphor is a bond in Frye's literary criticism. As an important link in the construction of myth-archetypal criticism, metaphor not only connects concepts such as mythology, archetype and culture but also reflects the value of his overall cultural perspective in the construction of critical theory. The connection between archetype and metaphor is that the latter is the way to reveal the cultural connotation of the former. Frye believes that the imagery in Bible is not just associated with the ordered imagery in the story, but with all others in metaphorical sense. The repetition of these images is the formation of the archetype, and behind this process is the manifestation of metaphorical thinking. The mythical meaning loaded in the archetype is not its literal meaning or the transmission of the primordial image, but in the production of new meaning through such transmission in a metaphorical way. In the early days of literary development, especially in the period of oral communication, the repetition of archetypes as a customary expression mode is the simplest channel and means to make the meaning clearer and easier to spread. It is metaphor that helps to make a connection between the archetype and the literary reality as well as its future. It is also metaphor that enables the symbolic system of literature to generate new meanings through transformation, thus gaining constant renewal and development.

Frye's understanding of metaphor not only synthesizes the viewpoints in literary theory since ancient Greece, but also reflects his absorption and integration of cultural anthropology and contemporary metaphor theory. His multiple understandings and applications of this concept develop and deepen cultural anthropological metaphorical study. Frye emphasizes the exploration of cultural archetypes as well as the creativity of metaphor. He not only exemplifies the study of metaphor from the perspective of literary criticism, but also presents a theoretical dimension beyond cognition for contemporary study of metaphor with his overall cultural vision.

### *Deconstruction and metaphorical thinking in philosophy*

Philosophy is associated with metaphor at almost all levels. The premise of this statement is that we first acknowledge the existence of metaphor in philosophy. Under this premise, metaphors in all texts in the long production process of philosophical discourse naturally become an integral part of later philosophical studies, no matter at the level of language or thinking. According to the view of modern linguistic philosophy, philosophical language is the product of language system and its structure. Before deconstruction, philosophical thinking is closely related to the concepts of objectivity, absoluteness, and truth.

Deconstruction has played an important role in the shift of contemporary metaphorical study from rhetoric to cognition, and metaphor has thus become a key concept to understand deconstruction. It is not only the

starting point of Derrida's deconstruction strategy, but also the key to the subversion of metaphysics. In Paul de Man's rhetorical criticism, the metaphorical concept has formed a category shift due to the transformation of the two scholars' research focus from philosophy to literary criticism. In summary, the impact of deconstruction on metaphorical study lies in two main aspects. The first is the influence on academic perceptions. Since the 1960s, deconstruction's subversion of metaphysics has profoundly shaken the foundation of contemporary Western academic research, changed the pattern and direction of theoretical research, and prepared for the shift of the concept of metaphor to the focus of cognitive theory. The second is the achievements of the deconstructive theorists in the study of metaphor. Both Derrida and de Man have devoted themselves to metaphorical concept. The former has discussed the metaphor in philosophical texts, deconstructed metaphysical traditions with metaphor; the latter has rediscovered and described the metaphorical concept in the sense of literary criticism.

Derrida's deconstruction theory itself is very metaphorical. His theory can be regarded as a collection of metaphors. However, his association with metaphor is not limited to this, but also his expansion of the scope of its concept and his application of this concept. In Derrida's opinion, metaphor is a common feature of all languages, and philosophical texts are no different from poetry, both of which are metaphorical texts. On this basis, he has not only tried to deconstruct metaphysics with metaphor, but also intended to bridge the binary opposition between philosophy and poetry.

Derrida's interest in metaphor first stems from his study of linguistic philosophy. On the origin of language, Derrida agrees that metaphor is the original attribute of language, and the metaphor of language originates from subjective emotion. The original language of human beings is metaphorical, the corresponding expression of which is metaphor. Derrida believes that what we see as literal expression is still a metaphor, and there is nothing in experience or language that precedes metaphor. In metaphysical traditions, philosophical language obtains accuracy and rigor only by negating and concealing its metaphorical nature. Therefore, "Metaphor must therefore be understood as the process of the idea or meaning (of the signified, if one wishes) before being understood as the play of signifiers" (Derrida, 1997:275).

The attention to this issue leads to the relationship between the two concepts of logic and rhetoric. Derrida believes that metaphysics tries to obtain a transparent and ideal language by reducing the rhetoric of discourse, thus forming a concept of certainty, and even a theoretical concept system with the same nature. As for the concepts of rhetoric and logic, in the tradition of metaphysical concepts, the former is the shell of the latter, and accordingly, the opposition between the metaphorical meaning and the literal meaning of language comes into being. Derrida holds that logic itself is rhetorical, and the key to the deconstruction of the opposition between the two concepts is to examine the metaphorical nature of philosophical texts. Thus,

Derrida integrates the two oppositional concepts of logic and rhetoric into metaphor. That is the essence of his strategy of deconstruction.

Starting from linguistics, Derrida introduces metaphor into philosophy. In *White Mythology*, Derrida asks the following question, "Is there metaphor in the text of philosophy? In what form? To what extent? Is it necessary or incidental? and so on" (Derrida, 1974:6). He first points out that such problems may cause people to lose a position of certainty, and then puts forward clearly his own view. "[M]etaphor seems to bring into play the use of philosophical language in its entirety, nothing less than the use of what is called ordinary language in philosophical discourse, that is to say, of ordinary language as philosophical language" (Derrida, 1974:6). In Derrida's opinion, that a book is called philosophical work in the usual sense seems to mean the determinacy of its meaning rather than its productivity. In fact, this kind of thinking is philosophical destruction of the power of metaphor. "It constitutes the very history and structure of philosophical metaphor" (Derrida, 1974:6). Derrida does not discuss metaphor as a linguistic phenomenon, but tries to reconstruct the foundation of philosophical thinking through metaphor in philosophical texts. In Derrida's eyes, metaphor hides and is obscured behind the cycle of philosophical ideas until it is erased. From the perspective of etymology, any theoretical concept has its original meaning as an expression erased by conventional thinking; likewise, any theoretical concept is included in the framework, of philosophical tradition, from primitive thinking to metaphysics. In his view, this is one of the two limitations of philosophy in thinking about metaphor; another limitation is concept's destruction of the creative value of the perception-based imagination. Thus, Derrida believes that the entire history of metaphysics can be rewritten by decoding metaphors.

Metaphor thus becomes a crucial concept in Derrida's rewriting of the history of metaphysics. In his hypothesis, human vocabulary comes from perception and imagination, and a similar process also exists in metaphysics. Philosophers will unconsciously use metaphor, but at the same time they will try to "erase" unconsciously the existence of metaphor in their philosophical discourse. Therefore, Derrida believes that philosophy is no more truthful than literature, and they are equally affected by the *différance* of meaning. Derrida's creation of "*différance*," which is closely related to the concept of metaphor, is deeply influenced by Nietzsche. Nietzsche regards metaphor as the absolute existence of non-logicality. He believes reason restricts the living reality with concepts, the result of which is the elimination of fluidity, but contingency and variability of history are solidified, and people's understanding of the world is therefore filled with rigid illusions. In Derrida's view, all writing including philosophical text is based on metaphor, with traces of *différance*. Thus, Derrida deconstructs not only metaphysics with metaphor, but also the binary opposition between philosophy and literature.

Derrida provides philosophical support for the prevalence of deconstruction, but he does not attempt to establish a systematic and operational mode of criticism, in which the practice of criticism is mainly to verify its philosophical thoughts. De Man, by advocating deconstruction in literary criticism, extends Derrida's obscure ideas into a broader field. Compared with Derrida's focus on philosophy, de Man's concept of metaphor has always been closely related to his literary criticism. Literary criticism, deconstruction, and rhetoric, as well as texts, are always intertwined with metaphor. Deconstruction has influenced and changed literary criticism, and literary criticism has updated the concept of text on this basis; metaphor as rhetoric in texts further changes or generates meaning, which is the complex ecology of literary criticism in de Man's eyes.

De Man's rhetoric is a textual rhetoric. It is not only a figure of speech, but also different from rhetoric in the sense of contemporary discourse. What corresponds to rhetoric is reading. Language is rhetorical, and metaphor is the most important factor. Metaphor makes meaning vague and ambiguous, so de Man advocates a kind of "rhetorical reading." The premise is to recognize the characteristics of language, that is, to acknowledge the metaphorical nature of language and text. On this basis, reading is not to figure out a fixed meaning, but to realize the interaction between metaphor as rhetoric and metaphor at the semantic level, which is de Man's annotation on Derrida's viewpoints. What constitutes literature is the polysemous metaphorical language. The flow of meaning is not only generated from the grammatical attribute of language, but also based on the rhetorical nature of it. It can also be reflected in the metaphorical nature of text itself, and then connected with the world outside the text through rhetorical reading. This is the unique semantic field of tension presented by literature, in which metaphor is present all the time.

De Man believes that "[m]etaphors, tropes, and figural languages" (De Man, 1978:13) exist in philosophical discourse for a long term, and widely in history and literary criticism. This viewpoint reveals the relationship between philosophy and metaphor. He holds that "[i]t appears that philosophy either has to give up its own constitutive claim to rigor in order to come to terms with the figurality of its language or that it has to free itself from figuration altogether" (De Man, 1978:13). If the latter cannot be achieved, then philosophy should at least limit the possible influence of metaphor on epistemology by determining its category. In de Man's opinion,

[t]he relationship and the distinction between literature and philosophy cannot be made in terms of a distinction between aesthetic and epistemological categories. All philosophy is condemned, to the extent that it is dependent upon figuration, to be literary and, as the depository of this very problem, all literature is to some extent philosophical.

(De Man, 1978:30)

The symmetry of the statement is not absolute but relative, and can trigger the blending of different styles. The blending leads to a problem that cannot be ignored:

The consequences of this lead to the difficult question whether the entire semantic, sociological, and performative field of language can be said to be covered by tropological models, a question which can only be raised after the proliferating and disruptive power of figural language has been fully recognized.

(De Man, 1978:30)

What makes language so obscure? De Man believes in a broad sense, it is the metaphorical power of language. He advocates equating the rhetoric potential of language with literature itself, that is, literature is rhetoric. For literature, metaphorical meaning, potential meaning, implicational meaning, rhetorical meaning, or some other appellations, are a concept corresponding to clear literal meaning. They not only constitute literature, but also carry its real value.

De Man's retrospection and analysis of the concept of metaphor in romantic literary criticism are also his important theoretical contributions. Culler has written an article on de Man's contribution to the theory of literary criticism. In the article "Paul de Man's Contribution to Literary Criticism and Theory," the first point he mentions is de Man's reappraisal of metaphor. De Man believes that it is generally believed that the study of traditional rhetoric has been declining since the 19th century, but in many critical theories constructed after the mid-20th century, the theoretical research relating to rhetoric shows the sign of revival. Though different from classical rhetoric, both focus on the concepts like "imitation," "metaphor," "allegory," and "irony." In this kind of research, the boundary between rhetoric and value judgment is obscured or covered, and subject to the theoretical premise of traditional rhetorical research. In de Man's view, the studies of French theorists Barthes, Genette, and Foucault fall into this category, combining structural linguistics and traditional rhetoric; German theorists tend to rediscover and interpret theoretical concepts such as "allegory" and "symbol"; at the same time, there is a similar academic trend from new criticism to Frye's theory of criticism in North America.

### *Rediscovery of metaphorical thinking in cognitive philosophy*

After deconstructive philosophy deconstructs the category, limit, and utility of metaphysics, a theory can no longer be reconstructed on the ruins of metaphysics. The theoretical reconstruction in the post-metaphysical era tries to circumvent metaphysics to explore new approaches and discourses. It is in such theoretical context that the study of cognitive metaphor arises.

In the 1970s, study of cognitive metaphor once provoked a theoretical upsurge in the West, an academic phenomenon called “metaphor mania,” which was a theoretical consequence of linguistic turn, deconstruction, and neo-pragmatism. The linguistic turn made the focus of philosophical research in the 20th century turn to language and related issues, which laid an important foundation for the emerging of this academic field. Deconstruction and neo-pragmatism provided ideas and methods respectively for the new area. By emphasizing the relationship between literature and cognition, imagination and experience, the study of cognitive metaphor attempts to bridge the dichotomy of “human” with scientism and empiricism, and to explore the operation mechanism of human thinking from language.

Taking the construction of cognitive linguistics by scholars such as Lakoff as the starting point, study of cognitive metaphor has been going on for more than 30 years since the 1980s. Although it is not long enough to divide its stages, a general line from language to psychology to behaviourism can be sketched out. The early studies of Lakoff and Johnson belonged to linguistics, and gradually expanded to the area of psychology after the 1990s. In this process, the boundary between thinking and body was constantly broken and fused, and they were interrelated in a metaphorical way.

As the founder of epistemological metaphorical study, Lakoff integrated cognitive study with metaphorical study, and began a new discipline, cognitive linguistics. Lakoff’s early research was deeply influenced by Chomsky. In the early 1970s, he began to analyze transformational generative grammar proposed by the latter. In 1980, Lakoff and Johnson co-authored *Metaphors We Live By*, which laid the theoretical foundation of cognitive linguistics, and changed significantly the position of metaphor in contemporary theoretical studies. In 1999, the book *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought* co-authored by Lakoff and Turner was published, which was regarded as an exploration of the philosophical foundation of cognitive semantics. It turned the theory of metaphor gradually into an interdisciplinary study beyond the boundary of humanities and science.

In the preface to *Metaphors We Live By*, Lakoff wrote that the book came from the concern for and reflection on how people understood their own experience and language. Metaphor not only touches upon language, truth, and understanding, but also is closely linked with all daily experience. In Lakoff’s view, it is metaphor that bridges the gap between these two categories. Metaphor plays a significant role in a series of important processes and fields in which human thinking is involved, such as individual’s concrete experience, the formation of thinking, the expression of language, the construction and expression of concept, category and logic.

Lakoff summarized his own basic ideas in *Metaphors We Live By* as follows:

- ① Metaphors are fundamentally conceptual in nature; metaphorical language is secondary.

- ② Conceptual metaphors are grounded in everyday experience. Abstract thought is largely, though not entirely, metaphorical.
- ③ Metaphorical thought is unavoidable, ubiquitous, and mostly unconscious.
- ④ Abstract concepts have a literal core but are extended by metaphors, often by many mutually inconsistent metaphors.
- ⑤ Abstract concepts are not complete without metaphors. We live our lives on the basis of inferences we derive via metaphor.

(Lakoff and Johnsen, 2003:273)

“Conceptual metaphor” is a theoretical viewpoint put forward in *Metaphors We Live by*, which Lakoff called the most important weapon against old ideas. From the perspective of cognition, conceptual metaphor summarizes and classifies metaphors according to the inertia of everyday language, and tries to find out patterns to further establish structural metaphor. Lakoff said:

If conceptual metaphors are real, then all literalist and objectivist views of meaning and knowledge are false. We can no longer pretend to build an account of concepts and knowledge on objective, literal foundations. This constitutes a profound challenge to many of the traditional ways of thinking about what it means to be human, about how the mind works, and about our nature as social and cultural creatures.

(Lakoff and Johnsen, 2003:274)

By putting forward “embodied philosophy,” Lakoff attempts to connect human mind with human body, which not only reflects the attention paid by cognitive approach to brain science and neuroscience but also further links thinking with experience and human behaviour. Lakoff puts forward the embodied mind, the cognitive unconsciousness, and the metaphorical thought as the basic viewpoints of embodied philosophy, and thus divides the development of cognitive concepts into two stages (Lakoff and Johnsen, 2003:3). In the first stage, cognitive science holds that meaning relates to the symbols as the representation of the external world. Meaning does not lie in the symbol itself. The referential relationship between symbols is the source of meaning (Lakoff and Johnsen, 2003:75). In the second stage, cognitive study is no longer based on established theoretical assumptions or attempts to seek support from objective experience such as language. Instead, it takes a fresh look at the starting point and possible factors involved in meaning, and attributes it to human experience in the overall sense. In order to distinguish the concept of experience from the specific experience, Lakoff describes the relationship between meaning and experience as: the generation and people’s understanding of meaning depend on the interaction between factors such as body, imagination and behaviour, which form an extremely complex experience process (Lakoff and Johnsen, 2003:77). In this process,

metaphor is not only the way to convey experience and perception, but also the key to constructing conceptual system and thinking frame. Therefore, it can be seen from its development that the core concept in Lakoff's theory has gradually shifted from "metaphor" to "metaphorical." In *Metaphors We Live by*, he emphasizes the universal existence of metaphor in human language and thinking, and is committed to the exploration and interpretation of the most important structural metaphors in language. In the later period, Lakoff gradually realizes the limitations of this research method and its generalization of the concept of metaphor, and takes "metaphorical" as an important attribute of human thinking.

In general, Lakoff's expansion of metaphorical study has laid a foundation for the development of cognition-related disciplines. From rhetoric theory and linguistic theory to the combination of everyday language and thinking, it can be said that it is another new stage and an important field of linguistic research since the linguistic turn. At the same time, language study is further extended to daily language and blends with the development of philosophy and natural science. In the view of cognitive metaphorical researchers, modern Western philosophical tradition since Descartes needs to be questioned and changed in its development in the 20th century. The combination of philosophy of science and philosophy of mind, technology and postmodern theory exactly meet such theoretical demand.

Metaphorical study in the field of philosophy of mind can be regarded as a further extension of cognitive metaphorical study. The study has its own theoretical premise and route, not a copy or application of those of cognitive metaphor. In *The Act of Thinking* (2004), the American theorist Melser put forward the "Metaphorical-Origin Theory" (Melser, 2004:181) to explain the origin and the operation mechanism of human thoughts and ideas. His basic ideas are as the following:

- ① Human thinking is based on action. Thus, metaphor is not a transformation or substitution of meaning in the category of "noun", but a transformation and generation of meaning based on the category of "verb".
- ② People grasp the characteristics of things through the use of metaphor.
- ③ Metaphor has a special and complex referential association of its meaning.
- ④ In terms of the meaning and value of literature, dead metaphor is no longer a metaphor.
- ⑤ The development and transformation of human thoughts and concepts stem from continuous generation of new metaphors. The metaphorical nature of thinking is reflected in this running process, rather than in static metaphors that have been confined in existing languages.

(Melser, 2004:167,168,172,183)

Where does our thoughts and ideas come from? For this question, Melser does not simply regard metaphor as the answer, but clarifies his partial recognition of cognitive metaphor. He agrees with Lakoff that metaphor is omnipresent, and also emphasizes that to prove the metaphorical nature of thinking, the first thing is to clarify the working mechanism of metaphor. Melser believes that people grasp the characteristics of things in a metaphorical way, "Because it is a referring technique, metaphor is an interpersonal transaction. However, we also use the word metaphor to name the verbal expression, the form of words, that prompts a particular metaphor transaction" (Melser, 2004:167). Metaphor cannot be formed by literal meaning, but the similarities between things that make them interrelated. Metaphor is not isolated vocabulary or reference to fixed meanings. Mercer believes that when people use metaphor to refer to features of things, "Metaphor is more complicated than ordinary absent-referent referring. There are three distinct stages in metaphor, and sometimes four."

Stage One: Establishing the General Referent X

Stage Two: The Mock Referral to Y

Stage Three: Picking Out F in X.

(Melser, 2004:168–170)

Melser pointed out that repeated use in everyday language will make metaphor "idiomatized" (Melser, 2004:171), and the constant reinforcement of idiomatic expressions will lead metaphor to specific reference and stop the possibility of generating new meanings. Such metaphors, which are ubiquitous in everyday language, are often called "dead metaphors," that is, a given idiomatic expression that has no hidden representational reference. Melser emphasizes that, literarily, a dead metaphor that has become a word or morpheme with a fixed meaning should no longer be counted as a metaphor, but it still contains a metaphorical thinking process.

Melser raises a question based on the study of Lakoff, "Why We Depend on Metaphors for Talking about Thinking?" (Melser, 2004:215). He believes that metaphor can provide a broader signifying space for thinking. As Susan Haack says, metaphor is the forerunner of theory. We often neglect the fact that the development of metaphor will promote the development of thinking. Even in thinking that is confined by ideas or concepts, a metaphor can bring possibilities of new meanings to thinking due to its ambiguous semantic references. Thinking about the above questions, Melser sums up the characteristics of metaphor:

First, their use is more or less subliminal: the expressions are so familiar, we use them so frequently, that we are hardly aware of using them at all, let alone aware that they are metaphors and not to be taken at face value. Second, the repetition that comes with frequent use of certain metaphors tends to give the messages the metaphors carry a cultural

acceptability that we come to rely on psychologically and mistake for literal credibility. Third, the variations on a theme that some of the mind metaphors exhibit—with the posited non-physical entity inside the head portrayed in several different ways—add to the impression that the metaphors are true, and true of something (the mind). Finally, the importance of the subject matter is a factor. Despite our ignorance of it, thinking is very important in our daily lives, both practically and as an expression of our togetherness.

(Melser, 2004:216–217)

In terms of theoretical basis, Melser thinks that his viewpoint on the relationship between thinking and metaphor is very close to that of Lakoff and Johnson, but there are some differences in some points. Melser points out that Lakoff and Johnson emphasize that there is an established general referent “target domain” in the metaphor of everyday language, which results in a fixed semantic reference for metaphor. David Cooper calls dead metaphors “established metaphors.” He thinks that the establishment of the meaning of a metaphor depends on whether it affects the generation and establishment of new ideas or concepts. According to Lakoff and Johnson, most concepts are metaphorical and are incorporated into our ideas in an indirect way. They also assert that metaphor is the main mechanism for understanding abstract concepts and logical thinking. In this regard, Melser believes that understanding metaphorical thinking needs to break through the influence of metaphors in existing languages. The viewpoint of Lakoff and Johnson helps us to notice the dependence of abstract concepts on metaphorical expressions, but the interpretation of metaphor relies too much on the metaphor itself, thus forming a hermeneutic circle, which is undoubtedly the defect of this theory. Nevertheless, in his theory of the origin of metaphor, Melser emphasizes that we should recognize the importance of metaphorical thinking. The study of metaphor helps to reveal various characteristics of thinking. More importantly, new metaphors will gradually change human thinking, and this ongoing process in turn reflects the metaphorical nature of thinking.

### **Metaphor as a literary theory in China**

To explore the history, development, and variation of metaphor as a literary theory in China means, in the first place, a perspective in which the native and the West mirror each other. On this premise, Western metaphor theory is used as a reference to explore the corresponding concepts or categories in the classics of Chinese literary theories. At the same time, it also means that the writing of the track of metaphor and its theoretical research in China requires the study of the dissemination and vicissitude of Western metaphor theory. The influence of Western metaphor theory on Chinese metaphorical research needs to be discussed through sorting out the process of its

reception in China. On this basis, the subsequent section further analyzes the changes of the concept of metaphor in its dissemination, including how various factors, such as the context of the times, the research field, and the difference in thinking mode, affect the concept and the research on metaphor, and what kind of theoretical forms, phenomena, and problems are generated.

### *The origin of Chinese metaphor theory*

Before the introduction of the Western metaphor theory into China, its corresponding concepts and discourse have widely existed in ancient Chinese literary theory since the Qin and Han Dynasties. To be exact, there was no theoretical equivalent to metaphor in ancient Chinese literary theory. Therefore, the first thing to be discussed here is the terms or categories related to Western metaphor theory. And the second is the theory or the way of thinking that correspond to Western metaphor theory at a certain level.

From the perspective of the relevance of concept, “譬如” (*piru*, analogy) is the closest to the connotation of contemporary Western metaphor concept. The idea of “drawing analogy to nearby reference” (“取譬不远”, *qipibuyuan*) in “Great Odes: Yi” in *The Book of Poetry* (《诗经·大雅·抑》, *shijing daya yi*), a collection of poems from 11th century BC to 6th century BC) and “judging other people’s feelings by one’s own” (“能近取譬”, *nengjinqip*) in “Yong Ye” (雍也, *yongye*) in *The Analects* (《论语·雍也》, *lunyu yongye*, a record of views of Confucius and his disciples) are all about the resemblance of this rhetoric device in its application. From the perspective of the metaphorical language, text or thinking of the classical literary theory, the theories corresponding to Western metaphorical theory are abundant. Chen Kui (1128–1203) said in *The Guidelines for Essay Writing* (《文则·丙一》, *wenze.bingyi*):

*The Book of Changes* uses images to give the fullest of the concepts; *The Book of Poetry* uses comparison to give the fullness of what is true and false in a situation. How can there be no analogy in the article?

(Chen Kui, 1960:12)

What illustrated in the quotation is the general problem of metaphor as a way of thinking. It also reflects the origin of metaphorical thinking in Chinese cultural tradition. In a broader sense, the “image” (“象”, *xiang*) in *The Book of Changes* (a collection of Chinese philosophy from ancient times to Han Dynasty), the “comparison” (“比”, *bi*) and “affective image” (“兴”, *xing*) in *The Book of Songs*, the various analogies in *The Songs of Chu* (《楚辞》, *chuci*, by Qu Yuan, who was born and died between 340–278 BC and was a famous poet living in the Chinese Chu Kingdom) and the metaphorical characteristics of Zhuangzi’s (about 369–286 BC) language and text, as well as the speech, image, and idea derived from it, are all theories and ideas that can be integrated with Western metaphor theory.

In the Spring and Autumn period (770–221 BC), many scholars also discussed metaphor. For example, the third volume of *Xun Zi*—“Feixiang” (《荀子·卷3·非相》, *xunzi juansan feixiang*) discussed “the art of talking”, and it suggested to “use metaphor and analysis to make one understand” (Wang Xianqian, 1988:86). It was stated in *Mo Zi*—“Xiaoqu” (《墨子·小取》) that “the analogy is to compare with other things to make one understand,” which elaborated on metaphor from the perspectives of rhetorical standpoint, approach, and norm.

Scholars in the Han Dynasty (202 BC–8 AD, 25–220) had plenty of interpretation of analogy. In “Shanshuo” of *The Garden of Stories* (说苑·善说), Liu Xiang (about 77–6 BC) used the words of Huishi (390–317 BC) to talk about the function of metaphor as a rhetoric device. And in the preface of “the Biography of *Biantong*” in the book *The Biographies of Noted Women* (《列女传·辩通传题序》), he took the idea that “using examples with resemblance to illustrate things” (“连类引譬”, *lianlei yipi*) as the basis of eloquence and diction. In Huan Tan’s (about 40 BC–32 AD) *New Theory* (《新论》, *xinlun*), the fables written by Zhuangzi and the myths by Huainanzi (living in the Western Han Dynasty, 202 BC–8 AD) were cited to prove the importance of analogy in literary creation. Wong Chong (27-about 97) said in the chapter “Wushi” in *Discourse on Literature* (《论衡·物势篇》, *lunheng wushipian*) that “if an analogy does not correspond to the facts, it cannot be called an analogy” (Huang Hui, 1990:145), referring to the relationship between tenor and vehicle. He also suggested in the chapter “Ziji” in *Discourse on Literature* (《论衡·自纪篇》) that “how to be eloquent? To use simple words to imply profound meaning; and what is wisdom? To use something simple to describe something complex” (Huang Hui, 1990:1194). These questions and answers all involved the characteristics and functions of metaphor, suggesting delivering profound meaning in simple words. In *The Annotated Songs of the South: Preface to Li Sao* (《楚辞章句·离骚经序》), the author Wang Yi (living in the Eastern Han Dynasty, which lasted from 25 to 220) pointed out in the preface of *The Songs of Chu*, that Qu Yuan’s works “developed the tradition of comparison an affective image in *The Book of Songs*, among which analogy was the most prominent.” The scholar Wang Fu (about 85–163) wrote in the volume “Wuben” (to focus on the most important) in *Qian Fu Lun* (《潜夫论·务本》, *A Hermit’s Commentary*) that “poets are to eulogize the virtues of the good and criticize the evil, and to express the feelings of sadness and joy, so analogy is used to convey meaning” (Wang and Zhang, 2002: 159). The work explored the importance of metaphor and other rhetorical devices in literary creation from the text or a macroscopic perspective.

Liu Xie’s and Chen Kui’s studies are relatively more systematic. Liu Xie (about 465–520) touched upon analogy in many chapters in *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons* (《文心雕龙》) from different perspectives. For example, in “Comparison and Affective Image,” he explained the characteristics of analogy and its difference from affective image by the idea that “comparison is overt while affective image is covert.” He proposed that

“the principle of comparison has no constant in the way it makes categorical analogies. Comparisons might be made by sound, by appearance, by mind, or by event,” based on which he classified analogies and analyzed their functions. “Comparison and Affective Image” is called “the first treatise on metaphorical studies in China” by later scholars. In *Wenze*, Chen Kui divided metaphor into ten categories (simile, metaphor, analogy, interrogative metaphor, paired metaphor, mega metaphor, simple metaphor, detailed metaphor, citation metaphor, and abstract metaphor), and illustrated each’s characteristics with various examples.

Since the Song Dynasty, metaphors have been widely discussed in various literary works, mostly relying on or elucidating previous ideas. Works such as *A Companion to Rhetoric* (《修辞指南》) compiled by Pu Nanjin in Ming Dynasty, *Zhushi Wentong* (《朱氏文通》), *Grammar by the Zhu Family* by Zhu Quanzai, and *Yulin* (《喻林》, *A Collection of Analogies*) by Xu Yuantai, are all involved. Lai Yuxun in Qing Dynasty also listed ten types of metaphors in the third chapter “Wenji” in *Han Wendian* (《汉文典·文基》, *Ancient Chinese Books and Records*). Grounded on Chen Kui’s classification of metaphor, Lai borrowed nine of Chen’s phrases, discarded “paired metaphor,” and added “integrated metaphor” to the group. Wu Zengqi analyzed analogy in his work *A Discussion about Articles on the Han Fen Tower* (《涵芬楼文谈·设喻第十九》) and found sources of metaphor as a figure of speech from both “Yaoci” (爻辞, remarks appended to the lines) in *The Book of Changes* and the rhetorical mode of “bi” (比, comparison) in *The Book of Songs*, and the emergence of metaphor was because “when the meaning cannot be delivered smoothly, we need to use other expressions to make it understood”. Lai also talked about the diversity of metaphors and the problems that might arise in its application:

It is said that there are several causes to the failure of metaphor. The first is too extensive to be appropriate, inclining to use gorgeous words which is irrelevant to the actual meaning; the second is too rigid on the facts and unable to express the intended meaning; the third is the lack of freshness, borrowing from the old ideas with no originality; the last one is vulgarity, the miscellaneous use of slang is harmful to elegance. Knowing these four causes means that one has already thought much about metaphor.

(Wu Zengqi, 1993:37)

Before the introduction of modern Western metaphor theory into Chinese academia, the concept of metaphor could be said to take the definition in Chen Daowang’s *An Introduction to Rhetoric* (《修辞学发凡》) as the norm, which took analogy as one kind of metaphor, a figure of speech opposing to simile. “Metaphor is more profound than simile because the relation of the text with metaphor is closer than that of simile” (Chen Wangdao, 1997:77). The classification and definition of rhetoric devices in *An Introduction to*

*Rhetoric* has exerted a profound influence on the rhetoric study in China since modern times. Its main manifestation is the trisection of the categories of analogy, which makes a strict distinction among simile, metaphor, and metonymy. While adhering to the traditional approach of rhetoric study, the categories under this classification are inevitably reduced and simplified, and a stereotypical thinking is formed at a broader level beyond rhetoric study. After the upsurge of metaphorical research, rhetoric study is also facing the problem of transition from rhetoric to discourse, and the study of metaphor in a purely rhetorical sense has gradually declined.

If all the above analyses are to be examined in the context of Western metaphor theory, it is inevitable that before tracing history and discussing issues, one will get caught up in arguments of practical application, and various opinions will arise due to differences in theoretical logic or positions. Therefore, in discussing the origin and development of Chinese metaphor theory, it is necessary to make it clear that in the study of traditional Chinese literary theory in modern contexts, the theoretical concepts and the thought system of Western literary theory are inevitably drawn upon.

Regardless of the theoretical stance and attitude taken, comparison has become a theoretical vision before the researcher himself. Since the 1990s, such a theoretical context has gradually made “modern transformation” an important issue and approach in the study of traditional literary theories. This also means that, like other Western ideas introduced into China since modern times, the integration of Western metaphor theory into Chinese indigenous theory offers the possibility of multidimensional thinking and coexistence for the current study of Chinese literary theory.

### *The dissemination of Western metaphor theory in China*

The introduction of Western metaphor theory could be traced back to the late 1920s and the early 1930s when Richards, a theorist of new criticism, taught at Tsinghua University and Peking University. In 1937, Richards recommended Empson to teach at Peking University. New criticism had a profound influence on modern Chinese scholars. As for the specific field of metaphor theory, some scholars who had direct or indirect communication with the new critics were influenced to varying degrees and could consciously integrate their theoretical ideas into the practice of Chinese literary criticism.

In the second chapter of *On Poetry*, “Poetry and comical analogy,” Zhu Guangqian explored riddles and poems from the perspective of metaphor. He pointed out that

riddles are not only the ancestor of Chinese descriptive poetry, but also the basis of analogy. When A is used to allude to B, the two are very likely to have something similar so as to cultivate analogy. When A and

B are used to allude to each other simultaneously, it is simile; when B is used to imply A, it is metaphor.

(Zhu Guangqian, 1984:32)

Zhu Ziqing also discussed “metaphor” in *An Analysis of the Statement “Poetry Express the Intent”* (《诗言志辩》, 1947), and compared it with “comparison” and “affective image.” Qian Zhongshu’s understanding of metaphor was mostly influenced by new criticism and hermeneutics. For example, his theory of metaphor was largely consistent with the idea of tension from new criticism.

Chinese scholars began to pay attention to Western metaphor theory around the 1980, a period during which metaphor research was characterized by a predominance of translations and quotations. The boom of contemporary metaphor theory in the West was from the 1970s to the 1980s. A few Chinese scholars noticed the latest trend in Western metaphorical studies, but the only introductory articles were almost submerged in the tide of methodological research of the mid-1980s. The translation and introduction of contemporary Western metaphor theory were mainly initiated by linguistics and scholars of foreign languages, while the study of metaphor in literary theory was relatively rare. Since the study of metaphor was mainly influenced by traditional rhetoric theory, scholars paid little attention to the contemporary or latest development of Western metaphor theory. A few papers related to metaphor were published in the mid-1980s, covering the definition, category, nature, and other aspects of metaphor. Meanwhile, during this period, the study of metaphor as a figure of speech coexisted both in the study of literature and that of rhetoric. The study of textual metaphor was often carried out within the scope of thematology in literary criticism. The study of metaphor in comparative study of Chinese and Western poetics as well as critical studies was mostly a parallel study to other theoretical concepts. In terms of works, Yuan Hui’s *Metaphor* (1982) discussed the definition, types, and functions of metaphor from the perspective of traditional rhetoric.

In the mid-1990s, a large number of linguistics and scholars of foreign languages, of whom Lin Shuwu and Zhao Yanfang were two of the earliest, introduced contemporary Western metaphor theory to China, and it soon became a hot topic in linguistic research. Lin Shuwu, a scholar engaged in metaphorical research, paid much attention to and introduced the latest theoretical trends of cognitive metaphorical research in the West for many years following the 1990s. Zhao Yanfang wrote an article to introduce *Metaphors We Live By*, a representative work of cognitive metaphorical research. Her *Introduction to Cognitive Linguistics* published in 2001 was known as the first monograph systematically introducing the achievements of cognitive linguistics in China. Li Fuyin compiled the first index of metaphorical study in China and invited many scholars like Lakoff to China to offer relevant

courses or give lectures. In “Metaphoric and Cognitive Studies within 25 Years (1980–2004): Achievements, Problems and Current Trends,” based on the index, he analyzed the situation of metaphorical research in China since 1980. In his opinion, the study of metaphor in mainland China remained in the realm of traditional rhetoric and literary appreciation throughout the 1980s, shifting to cognitive studies in the mid-1990s.

During this period, the imbalance between the translation of metaphor theories and their application was very obvious. The study of metaphor in the new era in China mainly focused on the introduction of Western cognitive metaphor theory, which formed an upsurge of the latter’s application. After the mid-1990s, attention to the development of contemporary Western metaphor theory became increasingly timely, and the introduction and application of new theoretical ideas, concepts, and terminology became more rapid, but the translation of valuable books on metaphor theory was always in short supply. Even though most researchers in the field of foreign language studies have the ability to read the original materials, translation is still an effective way to popularize new theoretical ideas on the wide possible scale. The lack of the translation of important works is undoubtedly one of the vital reasons why metaphor theory has not attracted widespread attention beyond the field of foreign language studies.

In terms of theories of literary criticism, *The Charm of T’ang Poetry—Structural Criticism of Poetry* (1989) co-authored by Chinese American scholars Yu-kung Kao and Mei Zulin,<sup>2</sup> *Metaphor* (1993) by Geng Zhanchun, and *Poetic Tradition in the Perspective of Metaphor* (1998) by Ji Guangmao can be regarded as the most valuable achievements of this period. The originality of these works lies not only in their understanding and application of Western metaphor theory, but also in their mutual elucidation with Chinese classical poetics, or in their in-depth exploration of the constructive function of metaphor in human thinking and cultural system from the perspective of metaphor.

*The Charm of T’ang Poetry* is composed of three papers. The third one, “Meaning, Metaphor, and Allusion in T’ang Poetry,” originally published in the 38th issue of *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* in 1978, mainly explores the evolution of the basic meaning to the extended meaning of poetry through the analysis of metaphors and allusions. The authors use Jakobson’s principle of semantic equivalence as a starting point for their research. Based on this principle, they explain how meaning beyond the original comes about. They hold that metaphor and allusion are subordinate to the general process of producing new meanings. The principle of equivalence gives rise to new metaphorical meanings. The authors substitute the concept of “metaphor” with a coined term “metaphorical relation,” “because the former in ordinary usage leans too much towards similarity” (Kao and Tsu-lin, 1978:350). However, the authors argue that the formation of metaphor in poetry is caused not only by semantic similarities, but also by dissimilarities. Metaphor and metaphorical relation combine to reinforce the

various characteristics of things. “Metaphorical relation is a special case of the principle of equivalence, namely, the principle restricted to the domain of meaning” (Kao and Tsu-lin, 1978:290). Based on the classification method proposed by Brook-Ross in *Grammar of Metaphor*, the authors divide metaphors in Tang poetry into three categories—noun metaphor, verb metaphor and mixed metaphor—and within each category there are specific classifications. The authors state that this practice aims to examine the applicability and deficiency of the structuralist approach through the analysis of Tang poetry. The theoretical divergence between the authors and Jakobson lies in the fact that Jakobson distinguishes poetic language from ordinary language, while the authors believe that there are two kinds of poetic language, metaphorical and analytical. The boundary between the two is different from that between poetic language and ordinary language, for the reasons that the metaphorical language and analytical language of poetry are intertwined with each other. “Analytical relation operates in ordinary language. It also operates in the language of poetry, the only difference being that the analytical relation must now cooperate with and compete with the metaphorical relation, its polar opposite” (Kao and Tsu-lin, 1978:350). The authors hold that both languages are associated with a basic mode of thinking. Metaphorical language is analogous to mythic thinking, and analytical language is related to rational thinking. The two are functionally complementary, and rational thinking is subordinate to and in the service of mythic thinking. Only when the equivalence of meaning in metaphor can be explained logically can rational thinking gain the upper hand.

Geng Zhanchun’s *Metaphor*, published in 1993, is not only the first academic monograph on metaphorical research in China, but also a rare poetic work of theory since the new era. Combining Saussure’s linguistic theory, Heidegger’s main viewpoints on thinking and poetry, and cultural anthropology’s reflections on the relevance of metaphor to primitive thinking, Geng has explored the universality and significance of metaphor in terms of the relationship between language, poetry, and thinking.

Geng’s understanding and interpretation of metaphor and metaphorical thinking have theoretical depth and breadth. His theoretical ideas and ways of discourse are heavily influenced by Heidegger, whose theoretical framework incorporates the ideas of Vico and Saussure, with culture as the body, language as the axis, and metaphor as the thread. Geng regards metaphor as a basic form and manifestation of all human cultures, and holds that metaphor is not only a feature of poetry but also of language and the embodiment of human nature. Metaphor, as a way for human to create culture, symbolizes the world through association, which is not only a connection between human and nature in the most primitive sense, but also contains poetry and truth. The metaphorical nature of poetry also means creativity, that is, the poet tries to maintain or restore the connection between man and the world with his power, and creation means the real experience, that is, “man and the universe are two symbolic systems, mutually named, interpreted

and metaphorized” (Geng, 1993:63). Metaphor transcends linguistic norms, and poetic language transcends everyday language norms. Both make the inexpressible representable by breaking the self-explanatory nature of grammar and logic and attach importance to the creative function of language. “Without metaphor, language becomes a rigid concept. Once the language of poetry restores its metaphorical nature, the language returns to its origin” (Geng, 1993:121). Metaphors, whose formation depends on a wide range of archetypes, exist in various cultural systems and follow the principle of proximity. Archetypes are the structural elements that make up the spiritual existence of human beings. They are the unconscious background of human spirit. They, along with the symbolic systems of other cultural forms, constitute “intertextuality and the existence of mutual allusion” (Geng, 1993:160). So does the metaphorical system of literature. The metaphorical nature of archetypes lies in that these images or signs can always be connected to reality through artistic reproduction outside the original context, and this connection is metaphorical. In addition to the above viewpoints, Geng also proposes that metaphor has a structural effect on the formation of philosophy, and that philosophy is fundamentally a “metaphorical structure” or “metaphoric structure.” That is, metaphor is an intrinsic structural element of philosophical thinking, and the universal primitive metaphor originates from “an abstraction of the basic forms of human life” (Geng, 1993:277).

In terms of the translation of the important works of Western metaphor theory, the publication of the Chinese version of Hawks’s *On Metaphor* (1992) laid a foundation for a deeper understanding of metaphor at the literary level. *La Métaphore vive* (2004) by Ricoeur was the last major link in the spread of Western metaphor theory in China, which provided important theoretical sources for the development of metaphorical research in China.

Since the 21st century, a large number of achievements have been made in the study of metaphor in China. The academic trend of metaphorical study in this period mainly include the following three aspects: first, the introduction and application of contemporary Western metaphor theory; second, the study of cognitive metaphor theory; third, the study of metaphor in literary criticism, mainly including metaphor in poetry, metaphor in literary language, structural metaphor in texts and so on. In addition, there are also some works on metaphor from an ontological perspective. Such as Shu Dingfang’s *Studies in Metaphor* (2000), Zhang Pei’s *The Life of Metaphor* (2004), Chen Qingxun’s *T.S. Eliot: Towards a Metaphorical Poetics* (2008), Zhu Quanguo’s *A Study of Literary Metaphors* (2011) and so on. In general, this period has seen an increasing number of studies, with results increasing geometrically from year to year. Apart from the aforementioned masterpieces, thousands of papers from this period collectively constructed a metaphorical research boom that, to a certain extent, formed a “boom of metaphorical research” that was slightly different in time from Western metaphorical research.

Among them, what is worth mentioning is the study of metaphor in the ontological sense, exemplified by Shu Dingfang's *Studies in Metaphor* and Zhang Pei's *Life of Metaphor*. The so-called ontological study of metaphor began with "the boom of metaphor" in the West in the 1970s, which started with the rise of cognitive linguistics. Metaphorical concepts have become the ontological turning point (?) of contemporary metaphorical studies in a wide range of fields such as linguistics, behavioural science, computer science, poetry, culture, and philosophy. In this trend, the metaphorical concept is magnified to the extreme and even becomes an expression and symbol of ontology, that is, the conception of metaphor and the construction of a new set of disciplines center on it.

As an essentialist study based on the theory of cognitive linguistics, Shu Dingfang's *Studies in Metaphor* proposes to establish modern metaphorical study with the goal of in-depth study of the nature, types, characteristics, functions, operation mechanism of metaphor on this basis. . The book also deals with the poetic function of metaphor from a cognitive perspective. It argues that the study of the poetic function of metaphor in cognitive linguistics is mainly aimed at elucidating the understanding of everyday metaphors, largely because one of the basic theoretical positions of cognitive linguistics is to erase the boundary and difference between poetic language and ordinary language. The book concludes with a discussion of the linguistic and philosophical significance of metaphorical research

Zhang Pei's *Life of Metaphor* can also be regarded as a metaphorical study with ontological significance. By integrating the Chinese and Western cultures, he proposes a dialectical life form of metaphor, with metaphor as the basic human way of life. This work is not only a study of literary theory, but also a study not limited to linguistics, rhetoric or semiotics. It constructs the ontological study of metaphor in a way that is closer to Richelle's thinking.

### ***The variants of metaphorical study in contemporary Chinese literary theory***

In the latter half of the 20th century in the West, metaphor increasingly became an important theoretical concept describing the nature of thinking, which first emerged as a result of human inquiry and thinking about themselves. Meanwhile, the development of modern science and technology in recent decades has brought a wealth of possibilities to social culture, and has made many issues in spiritual life and value system more complex. In the past 40 years since 1978, Chinese academia has had to face not only the common social context of humanity, but also many historical circumstances and its own special problems. It is also for this reason that we should see the mutations in the acceptance and evolution of Western metaphor theories during this period. The process not only involves the absorption and reinvention of Western theories, but also constructs the trajectory of Chinese metaphorical research.

*The time difference of epistemological turn in Western metaphorical studies*

Unlike the study of metaphor by Western scholars, who focus on the concept of metaphor in search of new opportunities for theoretical development, the focus on metaphor by Chinese scholars can be said to stem entirely from the pursuit of Western thought. In the 1990s, the boom of metaphor in China could be regarded to a large extent as a delayed theoretical transplant of contemporary metaphorical studies in the West. However, the consequence of this horizontal transplant of Western theory is that the form of blind following cannot hide the fact that theoretical innovation is insufficient. From a phenomenological point of view, this is a phenomenon of theoretical time difference, fundamentally caused by a lack of theoretical innovation capacity. In terms of research practice, scholars tend to comment on the latest theories in contemporary Western metaphorical studies. Subsequently, some Chinese researchers followed blindly, which led to many problems, such as repeated references and incorrect literal interpretation. In the process of parroting the theory, the scope and connotations of some concepts are likely to be distorted or simplified. "Sameness" no longer serves as a metaphor for this phenomenon. Compared to linguistic studies, the research on metaphor in literary theory is more complicated in the theoretical context of the 1990s. During this period, various theoretical ideas such as a variety of post-isms and cultural studies were introduced to the Chinese literary and artistic theoretical community, so the influence of contemporary Western metaphorical studies on the Chinese literary and artistic theoretical community during this period was relatively weak. The reason for this is that contemporary Western theory is rooted in the development of the general knowledge over the last hundred years and has gradually developed its own unique depth and breadth of research in the context of its own time. In the case of China, what we have done in the last three decades has been largely limited to the accumulation and updating of theory. Therefore, there is a long way to go to theoretically explore the connotation of metaphor itself and its important role in the development of human knowledge in China in the new century.

*The expansion and concealment of metaphor in contemporary theoretical research*

In the 1980s, most domestic research on metaphor involved the concepts of metaphor in rhetoric and new criticism. On the one hand, traditional literary criticism originally contained elements of rhetoric research; on the other hand, it was also due to the importance attached to the concept of metaphor by the relevant theoretical schools. Since the 1990s, the presence of metaphor in literary criticism has become relatively complex, which can be summarized as the expansion of criticism as opposed to the concealment of theory.

Theoretical expansion is not only a major trend in contemporary metaphorical research, but also a complex issue that needs to be explored and is difficult to conclude. Cognitive metaphorical researchers generally agree that their theoretical concepts break through the limitations of instrumentalism and linguistic arbitrariness. Building on the framework of linguistics, metaphorical studies can break through the boundaries and barriers of humanities and science. On this basis, the cognitive discipline, with metaphorical thinking as its philosophical basis and interdisciplinarity as its main orientation, can form an integrated theory that includes philosophy, science, and human experience. In fact, so far, cognitive metaphor studies have mostly remained in the empirical realm, with a distinctly pragmatic tendency. Moreover, driven by the “boom of metaphor,” the pursuit of new theoretical concepts and the construction of new theoretical framework have almost become a norm. It is worth pondering where pragmatism and scientism can lead this fever and how far it can go in the study of ideas that filter out humanistic concerns and aesthetic appreciation.

The study of poetic metaphor, both in China and in the West, has shown a tendency to invisibility and decentralization. Most of the research is placed on the margins of cognitive metaphor studies, and the few works on poetic metaphor are not from the perspective of literary criticism. At the same time, the theoretical updating of metaphorical research in literature has lagged behind the pace of metaphorical research in a broad sense. In the study of metaphor in contemporary Chinese literary criticism, it is necessary to combine the updated development of contemporary Western metaphor theory with literary criticism. Metaphor in the poetic sense has existed as far back as ancient Greece, and corresponding literary concepts abounded in ancient Chinese literary theory. Although there are also relevant studies of metaphor and concepts such as “comparison” and “emotional imagery” in comparative literature, they do not deepen from parallel comparisons but rather build on the foundations of Chinese and Western poetics. Therefore, there is still much room for theoretical exploration for us.

### *Theorization of metaphor and metaphorization of theory*

The so-called theorization of metaphor is a trend of contemporary metaphorical research. Since the study of metaphor in ancient Greece, the broad concept of metaphor has undergone a gradual process of theorizing from rhetoric to discourse to the way of thinking.

The so-called metaphorization of theory, that is, critical theory in the modern and postmodern sense, makes the theory itself a huge metaphor through pluralistic positions and continuous, self-contained production. Theoretical research also becomes a field and network for the production of metaphors (both conceptual metaphors and theories as metaphors themselves). Such descriptions are also metaphorical in themselves. For example, what lies behind the use of vocabulary such as production and the web are

implication, stance, and preference embedded in the comparison of theory to material production. In this manner, metaphor provide us with ways of expressing ideas.

The theorizing of metaphor implies that there is an essentialist tendency in the study of metaphor. The practice of linguistics under the cover of metaphor theory does not give us a clearer picture. Corpus analysis and classification should be just one practical aspect of metaphorical research. Ultimately, if a theory lacks real creativity, it can only maintain a rigid research model. The metaphorization of theory has led to an awareness and gradual realization that that philosophy and science are closely related to metaphor. This is undoubtedly the result of deconstruction. The tension between the metaphorization of theory and the theorization of metaphorical research is not only a conceptual paradox that is difficult to balance, but also provides new theoretical possibilities. There are three variants of Chinese metaphor study in the new era. The first is thought to be a mirror image of the temporal differences in the cognitive turn of Western metaphorical research, which can be attributed to the differences between Chinese and Western theoretical contexts. The second is that the new period has seen two opposite trends in its theoretical research, namely expansion and concealment, which result from differences in theoretical research in literary criticism and linguistics. The third is the interrelated problems of the theorization of metaphor and the metaphorization of theory. The reason involved are more complex and include both the factors mentioned in the first two points and the common consequences of the particular historical context and disciplinary of the new period.

From the development of the concept of metaphor in Western literary theory, we can clearly see that there are three major differences between contemporary metaphorical studies and classical metaphor theory. One is the extension of the concept of metaphor, based on the gradual deepening and complicating of the understanding of metaphor. Classical metaphor theory mainly regards metaphor as a figure of speech subordinate to rhetoric. And in contemporary metaphorical studies, metaphor has expanded to include a variety of rhetorical devices, and even studying images, symbols, synaesthesia, and other figures of speech. Abrams once pointed out,

[b]ut after twenty-five centuries of attention to metaphors by rhetoricians, grammarians, and literary critics—in which during the last half-century they have been joined by many philosophers—there is no general agreement about the way we identify metaphors, how we are able to understand them, and what (if anything) they serve to tell us.

(Abrams, 1999:155)

For this reason, in *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, the term metaphor is not defined precisely, but is replaced by a historical review of the concept of metaphor. Abrams has summarized four major perspectives on metaphor

studies, namely, comparative theory, alternative theory, the pragmatic view, and the cognitive view of metaphor studies. His classification and summary have been widely recognized and cited in later studies.

The second is the shift in the theoretical foundation, that is, the shift from methodology to ontology. In the history of metaphorical research, the traditional theoretical foundation that has lasted for more than two thousand years is rhetoric. The linguistic turn has gradually led to the study of metaphor as a linguistic phenomenon from the empirical level, including its generation, mechanism of operation, function, and value. The most significant difference between classical metaphor theory and contemporary metaphorical research lies in the shift from methodology to ontology. In addition, scholars, both in the West and in China, have raised the idea of studying metaphor as a new discipline. Cognitive linguistics as a discipline emerged in the United States in the 1980s, with metaphor as its initial core theoretical concept. By the 1990s, the theory of cognitive poetics was derived from the study of cognitive metaphors. Lakoff and other scholars gradually deepened the theoretical basis of their research and proposed the embodied philosophy. Thus, metaphor has become a deep theoretical foundation for cognitive poetics.

The third is the change of disciplinary boundaries. After more than two thousand years of development, metaphorical studies have attracted the attention of more scholars in various fields since the first half of the 20th century, in addition to rhetoric, grammar, and literary criticism. The study of metaphor covers almost all the areas of the humanities, from rhetoric and poetics to linguistics, as well as natural science and computer science. As Earl Miner puts it, “future understandings of metaphor will be all the richer because they will spring from and advance dialogue between heretofore intellectually separated traditions and cultures” (Horowitz, 2005:1433).

Concepts and theories are faced with the possibility of constant transformation and renewal in the context in which they occur, as is the process of dissemination and reception, which necessarily influences the emergence, connotation, and direction of development of concepts and theories. The study of metaphorical concept cannot replace metaphor to create or extend new meaning, but can only reveal the complexity of the concept and related theoretical research. Metaphor should be a core concept that is closely related to the human spirit. Whether it is the creation of metaphor in literature and art or the application of metaphor in discourse rhetoric, metaphor reflects the history and reality of human beings in its unique way. . The widespread focus on metaphor in contemporary literary criticism is based precisely on a relentless exploration of one’s own way of thinking and its possibilities. It also shows that people hope to have a better understanding of themselves and the world they live in through such efforts. From this point of view, metaphor is a concept based on communication. At the same time, we can see that much of the practical research on cognitive metaphor has been done from a rhetorical perspective, grounded on Aristotle’s study

of pragmatic metaphor, while his study of poetic metaphor, that is, the aesthetic and creative metaphor studies, has been marginalized. However, the study of metaphor in literature is not complementary to the study of cognitive metaphor, but should be regarded as a theoretical existence outside the latter. The two mirror each other, so that the development of theory tends to be more orderly and balanced.

Finally, it is possible to attempt a multidimensional definition of the concept of metaphor, although this definition still needs to be limited. First, metaphor in literary criticism is a way of thinking based on associative imagination. Second, metaphor is a rhetorical device in literature and discourse. Lastly, metaphor is a way we relate to the objective world, and a form of expression of the nature of the human mind. Metaphor makes us realize that thinking is a process of moving from the known to the unknown and a search for meaning as well. In this process, we grasp not only the aesthetic meaning created by human beings in literature and art but also our own thinking and language by means of metaphor.

## Notes

- 1 Meta is mainly used as a preposition in Greek with a complex meaning, mainly equivalent to modern English words: with, among, between, after, behind, change of place, etc. There are seven taxonomic terms listed in *A Greek-English Lexicon* in total. See Scott Liddell, *A Greek-English Lexicon*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996, pp.1108–1109.
- 2 The three articles were translated into Chinese by Li Shiyao, and came out in a Chinese book with the present title by Shanghai Classics Publishing House in 1989.

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## 2 The Other

*Written by Xiao Xiang, Translated by Liu Fang*

The word “other”, along with the Indo-European corresponding words like “ander” in German, “autre” in French, “alter” in Latin, “ταλλα” in Greek, has the meaning of “difference” (*The Oxford English Dictionary* (2nd edition), 1989:982). However, the effort to pin down a fixed definition runs counter to its basic meaning of difference and diversity. A better way is to make a historical review of the changes of this concept in the history of Western thoughts and its specific usages in different fields and cultures. Hence, its richness and diversity can be fully clarified.

### **“The Other” in Philosophical Context**

The Other is a modern concept. Only after Edmund Husserl explores the relation between the subject and the other does this concept arouse wide concern in the Western academia. However, various Western philosophical debates have paved the way for its emergence.

#### *The philosophical origins of “the Other”*

The philosophical origin of the other can be traced back to the discussion of being and non-being in ancient Greek philosophy. Opposing the polytheistic system of Homer and Hesiod’s mythology, Xenophanes advocates the existence of “the one”, a single, eternal and immobile god beyond our phenomenal world. And thence Parmenides proposes that “being” is “the one”. For Parmenides, “being” is eternal, immobile essence of substance and the “one” of wholeness that can only be grasped by thinking while “non-being” is a real phenomenal world of specific individual matters which can only be perceived by the senses. The central task of philosophy is to understand the permanent “being”.

Following Parmenides’ thoughts about “being”, “the one” and “non-being”, Plato makes an early and intensive discussion of the other (ταλλα, talla) in *Parmenides*. However, Plato does not strictly preserve Parmenides’ equation of the one with being and division between being and non-being. He explains being in a narrow sense and as well as in an

unqualified sense, and divides non-being into the absolute and relative categories. Being in the unqualified sense includes both being in the narrow sense and the relative non-being. The relative non-being, which is characterized by opposing and diverse qualities, is the different existence from being. Thus, matters of a lower rank can be considered as non-being of those of a higher rank.

In Plato's discussion about the relation between the one and the other, being and non-being, he sheds some light on "the other". On the one hand, Plato defines "the other" as the opposition of the one, referring to concrete and individual matters. On the other hand, the concept refers to non-being which is the antithesis of being. No matter what it is in relation to, the other takes subordinate status. In this sense, Plato's discussion of the other breeds its modern usage which is characterized by subordination.

In the 19th century, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel made a more detailed discussion about the other in his dialectics. Hegel stressed that "to be different belongs to identity not externally, but within it, in its nature" (Hegel, 2010:358) and "the truth is complete only in the unity of identity and difference" (Hegel, 2010:358). The emphasis on the dialectic relation between identity and difference becomes the touchstone that "distinguishes all bad philosophy from what alone deserves the name" (Hegel, 1991:181) of contemporary philosophy and accounts for the elevated status of the other in Western philosophy.

While addressing the dialectic relation between "something and other", Hegel defines the other as otherness that "appears as a determination alien to the existence thus pointed at, or the other existence as outside this one existence" (Hegel, 2010:91). Meanwhile, something is just as much as the other. Only "in virtue of not being the other one" (Hegel, 1991:185) can something and the other define and manifest themselves. Though both of something and the other are "*other* in the same way" (Hegel, 2010:91), they are not equal in their relationship. In fact, something that is "taken in the affirmative sense" (Hegel, 2010:91) has privilege.

Hegel also applies the binary opposition of something and the other to the relation between the self and the other in his fantastic exposition of the master-slave dialectics. The self can only become aware of itself through the consciousness of the other which it establishes as non-being and obtain its own independence through the recognition of the other. In this condition, both the self and the other are involved in a desperate fight for recognition. Both desire recognition from the opposite side and identify their object as non-being. Their life-and-death struggle results in two different and opposed types of consciousness. "One is the independent consciousness whose essential nature is to be for itself, the other is the dependent consciousness whose essential nature is simply to live or to be for another. The former is lord, the other is bondsman" (Hegel, 1977:115). Hegel goes further to posit that the status of the self and the other, or the master and the slave, can be reversed under certain conditions. The lord is not free from its relation with

the bondsman if he is to be the power. Therefore, its dependence on the other is formed for its being-for-self. However, the bondsman “rids himself of his attachment to natural existence” (Hegel, 1977:117) in his service and realizes what he truly is through his work.

To sum up, Hegel sees what the other is in relation to either the one/identity or self/subject. The second relationship between the self and the other is the embodiment of the first relationship between the one and the other. In either of the relationship, the other is considered as the opposed side of subordination on which the one or subject is dependent. Under certain conditions, the status of the two sides will be transformed dialectically. Hegel’s ideas and discussions about the dialectic between the two pairs form an enlightening source for modern and contemporary theories of the other.

### ***The other in phenomenology and existentialism***

As mentioned above, Hegel opens up possibilities to modern exploration into the other. But it is Edmund Husserl who practically triggers its discussion and leaves a far-fetching influence on the successors.

According to Husserl’s phenomenological reduction, the existence of the other is suspended and the other’s self is constructed by the transcendental self. In order to moderate the solipsistic tone of the transcendental self, Husserl puts forward the theory of intersubjectivity which is forcefully explained in *Cartesian Meditation: An Introduction to Phenomenology*. In his discussion of intersubjectivity, the gap between the other and my self is bridged via empathy (Einfühlung). The other is my reflection (Spiegelung) and is built through a connected pairing of the other with my subjectivity. Husserl’s effort never completely relieves him of the charges of solipsism. As Jean-Paul Sartre comments, Husserl’s concept of the other “would be a kind of supplementary category which would allow a world to be constituted, not a real being existing beyond this world” (Sartre, 1978:234) and “cannot escape solipsism any more than Kant could” (Sartre, 1978:235). Despite the failed refutation of solipsism, Husserl’s exploration of “intersubjectivity” does lead to more heated discussions about the other, especially from a deconstructive perspective.

To some degree, Martin Heidegger’s discussion about the other reads slightly deconstructive. Turning away from phenomenological epistemology and transcendental self, Martin Heidegger proposes “Dasein” which distinguishes human beings in daily life from the subject in traditional philosophy. For Heidegger, coexistence with the other constitutes the essential structure of Dasein. Here, “‘The others’ does not mean everybody else but me—those from whom the I distinguishes itself. They are, rather, those from whom one mostly does *not* distinguish oneself, those among whom one is, too” (Heidegger, 1996:118). Thus, Heidegger challenges the conventional thinking mode that considers the self and the other as binary oppositions and makes the other subordinate. What’s more, “everyone is the other,

and no one is himself. The *They*, which supplies the answer to the *who* of everyday Da-seni, is the *nobody* to whom every Da-sein has always already surrendered itself, in its being-among-one-another" (Heidegger, 1996:128). One's subject coexists with the other and is constructed by the latter. At the same time, the subject unconsciously consolidates the power of the other. In this sense, Heidegger goes further than Hegel. The other is no longer Hegel's concept, which is related to self-identity. The emphasis on coexistence not only bridges the gap between the self and the others but also elevates the other to a predominating status.

However, Jean-Paul Sartre disagrees with Heidegger on that the relation of the other and my self is like the mute existence in common of one member of the crew with his fellows, that existence which the rhythm of the oars or the regular movements of the coxswain will render sensible to the rowers and which will be made manifest to them by the common goal to be attained (Sartre, 1978:246–247).

Instead, he subscribes to Hegel's idea that my consciousness and I depend on the others and their consciousness for he believes that Hegel "has made significant progress over Husserl" (Sartre, 1978:235). He thinks that "I am as the Other sees me" (Sartre, 1978:222) and live under the gaze of the other. Caught in the tangle of mutual objectification, the other becomes a force to compete against myself for freedom.

Levinas makes his critical reflection on Husserl, Heidegger, and Sartre. He does not consider the other as another self which can be obtained via empathy. The other and I are neither present in a kind of "co-existence" which merely focusses on "Dasein" rather than their relationship nor caught in the conflicting entanglement of mutual objectification. Levinas claims that the other is characterized by alterity and strangeness. The other which is constructed by otherness is a mystery to me. I cannot comprehend it but should respect its otherness as if it were God. Furthermore, there is an asymmetric ethical relationship between the other and me. I undertake responsibilities and obligations to the other as if I am his "hostage". With the sense of responsibility which is the ethical essence of human beings, the subject gives up its solipsistic status.

Maintaining that "morality is not a branch of philosophy, but first philosophy" (Levinas, 1979:304), Levinas develops his discussion about the ethical relationship between the self and the other into an ontological ponderation over identity and the other. He claims that identity has an ethical relationship with the other. He questions the ontological tradition of Western philosophy in *Totality and Infinity*, pointing out that the Western ontological tradition seeks "Totality". All thoughts try to integrate existence into the one, such as Plato's "idea", Hegel's "absolute spirit" and Heidegger's "existence". The typical characteristic of this ontological philosophy is the suppression on the other and differences. However, Levinas believes that the other which maintains its otherness and strangeness actually does not result from identity because it reveals "Infinity".

Meanwhile, Levinas knows clearly that it is a paradox to reflect on the other or difference in the context of traditional Western philosophy. As a result, he turns to Jewish doctrines from the East. But his effort does not set him free from the language of Western philosophical ontology and his theory about the other eventually becomes a part of the philosophical tradition which he himself desires to subvert. In spite of his failure, his challenge to subjectivity and identity of traditional Western philosophy and his emphasis on the difference of the other have a great influence on the following philosophers of post-structuralism and feminism, especially Jacques Derrida and Luce Irigaray.

### *The other in post-structuralism*

After phenomenology and existentialism, post-structuralism launched another wave of reflection and criticism on Western culture. The theoretical exploration into the other made by Jacques Lacan, Paul-Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida ranges from philosophical speculation to social and cultural life, demonstrating a subversive power.

Lacan's thoughts about the other are the creative application and even subversive development of Alexandre Kojève's interpretation of Hegel's Master-slave dialectic, Freud's psychoanalysis, phenomenology-existentialism and Saussure's structural linguistics. He proposes the division of the other (*autre*) and the Other (*Autre*). The former shows itself in the mirror stage when an infant begins to distinguish itself from the external world and realizes that it itself is a whole. At this moment, the subject consciousness and the sense of alienation as well emerge. Entering the language system, the subject moves from the imagery realm into the symbolic realm where the Other resides. The Other is the system of linguistic symbols or the network composed of the symbol systems, embodied in the language structure and various social relations that are external to the primal self. The subject is constructed by the symbols represented by language and controlled by the Other. In Lacan's eyes, even the unconscious is "neither the primordial nor the instinctual, and what it knows of the elemental is no more than the elements of the signifier" (Lacan, 2006:434). Therefore, Lacan forms his formulation that "the unconscious is the discourse of the Other" (Lacan, 2006:434). Both uppercase and lowercase others play a conducting role in the process of self-identification while leading to the self's irreversible loss of its authenticity. The original state of primal harmony of the subject cannot be restored. Nor can the subject free itself from the control of the Other. In this sense, Lacan thoroughly deconstructs the dominance of the subject.

Similarly, Foucault takes a positive attitude towards de-subjectivization in his critical study on the relationship between knowledge of the humanities and power and in his criticism on the modern Western system of power/knowledge/discourse. Firmly opposing the universal subject of rationality like Lacan, Foucault points out that it is power/knowledge/discourse that

constructs the belief in the universal subject in the process of modernization. For Foucault, power, omnipresent and unescapable, is like the Other which Lacan posits above the subject. The disciplined subject which is generated by power/discourse can be considered as the subordinated and marginalized other in relation to the sameness and being. What Foucault is really interested in is not the powerful subject but the history of the disciplined subject's being constructed as the other. Foucault's revealing criticism on how the Western system of power/knowledge/discourse disciplines the other debunks the myth of its objectivity and authenticity and at the same time enlightens post-colonialist theorists and feminists.

Derrida is another influential thinker of the other whose criticism on the entire Western philosophical history makes a great impact on postcolonial theorists and feminists. He points out that logo centricism predominates the long tradition of Western thoughts and culture. Such a thinking mode sets multiple binary oppositions which embrace an inequality. The items of subordination and secondariness, such as the East and women, are often considered as the inferior others while the opposing items like the West and men occupy the central and dominant position. In Derrida's eyes, this thinking mode of binary oppositions is the theoretical foundation of all social hierarchy and tyranny and thus the task of deconstruction is to break the closed system and change the well-established hierarchical order. In order to prevent the other from being incorporated into identity or disciplined as a new subject, Derrida puts forward "différance" as a strategy. In respect of word formation and meaning, Derrida's "différance" can be considered as the philosophy of the other. For him, the other refers to the marginalized and differentiated of binary oppositions, and the liberation of the other lies in repudiating dualism. Derrida's ideas provide the marginalized and silent other with the possibilities for the equal voice and also equip postfeminists and post-colonists with the theoretical base and deconstructive strategy.

In conclusion, the historical review of philosophical context reveals that the concept of the other has been explored in its relationships with the One/Same and the self/subject rather than in the ontological sense. The other which serves as the opposition to the One/Same corresponds to non-being which is subordinate and secondary to being. The other which is related to the self/subject turns out to be more complicated and can be divided into three categories. The first group contains all the other people, communities and cultures which are external and related to Self, and reveals heterogeneity. The second category, including "God" of Judeo-Christian culture, Hegel's "absolute spirit" and Lacan's "the Other", dominates and moulds the subject. The last type of the other exists for the sake of the establishment and construction of the subject, such as the East and women, and is characterized by subordination and secondariness. When the pair of the self/subject and the other embodies another pair of the One/Same and the other, the others of the two pairs become a whole. But the others of the two pairs can contradict each other when the two relationships are separated.

For example, Hegel's "absolute spirit" can be the absolute One and as well as the other for the subject.

Generally speaking, the other has three attributes. The first stresses difference which is the primary meaning of "other" in the Indo-European languages as many dictionaries explain. The second underlines its constructivity. The other plays a constructive and controlling role in the process of subject construction. The third attribute is subordination and secondariness when the other refers to the inferior of binary oppositions in the hierarchical system. The three attributes of the other are so closely related to each other that we often highlight different attributes when we use it in various situations.

### **"The Other" in post-colonialism**

The theory of the Other is frequently applied and developed in Cultural Criticism of the second half of the 20th century, especially in post-colonialism and feminism. Post-colonists and feminists tend to apply and discuss the other in terms of two sets of relationships—women and men, the East and the West. Women and the East are regarded as secondary and subordinate to both men and the West, which embodies the power relation. At the same time, the connotations of the concept vary in different thinkers' thoughts and in different contexts. A careful examination of its multiple connotations and their fine distinctions enables us to properly understand and employ these theories and to shed more lights on the interaction and dialogue between different cultures and genders. Hence, I will introduce the discussions of the other made by the "holy trinity" of post-colonialism, namely Edward W. Said, Gayatri C. Spivak, and Homi F. Bhabha, in the following section. Their theoretical explorations into the other also reveal the historical development of Western post-colonialism to a certain degree.

#### ***Said: the Oriental other and moderate otherness***

After Said published *Orientalism* in 1978, the subordinate and secondary image of Oriental other was gradually and widely accepted. Said's concept of the other, in fact, is threefold. In the first place, the Oriental other means dissimilarity for the West. The Orient is viewed as an alien which is completely distinct from the West and excluded from human experience. It "has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience" (Said, 2003:1–2). Said believes that Orientalism "promoted the difference between the familiar (Europe, the West, 'us') and the strange (the Orient, the East, 'them')" (Said, 2003:43). Hence, the other stands for the absolute difference.

The second connotation of the other is closely related to the absolute difference. The Orient of the absolute difference has never been viewed as the underprivileged other for a long time in history. However, the Oriental other

of the second connotation was developed during Europe's colonial expansion. The idea that the East is inferior and backward was disseminated and thus an unequal relationship between the two cultures were established and enhanced. In such a process which "elided the Orient's difference with its weakness" (Said, 2003:204), the other began to represent inferiority, subordination, secondariness, and marginality.

Said shows his disapproval of the "absolute Other" of absolute difference and as well as the "servile Other" of subordination and secondariness. He contends that both of the connotations constitute the core of Orientalism, which exemplifies the European subject's discourse of power and demonstrates "a kind of Western projection onto and will to govern over the Orient" (Said, 2003:95). Such discourse about the other of the first two levels is an accomplice to European imperialism to achieve colonization and discipline the East.

Arguing against the other of absolute difference and the servile other of subordination, he proposes the other of moderate difference. One of the reasons lies in the necessity of otherness in different cultures. As Said says:

The development and maintenance of every culture require the existence of another different and competing *alter ego*. The construction of identity...involves establishing opposites and "others" whose actuality is always subject to the continuous interpretation and re-interpretation of their differences from "us".

(Said, 2003:332)

Another reason is that both the subject and the other, or the oriental and the occidental cultures, fall into the same category of human experience. Taking the humanist stand, Said advocates mutual respect for the otherness and fostering a two-way and even exchange between the subject and the other. On the one hand, the West should regard the East and its culture as an integral part of human experience. On the other hand, the East can resist against the domination and suppression of the West with the weapon of humanism rather than "Occidentalism" that might remake "the inhuman practices and injustices that disfigure human history" (Said, 2003:xxii). The other of moderate difference, an expression of humanism, is the solution for the East and the West to transcend geographical, ethnical and cultural boundaries for an equal and harmonious relationship.

It is no doubt that Said exposes how Orientalism has generated "one of the deepest and most recurring images of the Other" (Said, 2003:1) and questions Western discourse. Nonetheless, he overlooks the efforts and achievements made by some Western orientalists who cherish and respect the other. It should be admitted that many Western orientalists help to preserve, develop and spread the oriental culture. And secondly, his own humanistic proposal of the other of moderate otherness is a utopian fantasy. Though he endeavours to prove that humanism does not exclusively belong to the

West, it is still a difficult paradox to eliminate Eurocentrism by the internal force from the Western culture. In addition, many scholars even raise doubts about Said's academic identity. It is debatable whether Said himself is still fettered by the tradition of Western Orientalism or he has smashed its shackle. Lastly, the other's resistance and the factors of gender and class are rarely touched upon. In conclusion, Said reveals that Orientalism and imperialism are complicit in making the East the other of inferiority. His findings usher in more thinking about the relationship between different cultures. And at the same time, the unsettled questions, doubts and controversial issues leave room for further examination.

***Spivak: deconstructive strategy and female underclass***

Spivak takes up the job of developing and supplementing what Said has achieved and overlooked in his *Orientalism*. In *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present*, she does not confine her discussion to Orientalism and the works which are about the colonies and the colonizers. Instead, her criticism extends to the whole Western academic discourse. She believes that the whole Western academic discourse of philosophy, literature, history and culture is immersed in Eurocentrism. Under its hypocritical mask, the subject of the colonized has already been put into foreclosure and converted into the silent other in advance.

Spivak's deconstructive reading of Kant's philosophy is a typical example. She claims that she made a "misreading" of "the untutored individual" (Dem rohen Menschen) in Kant's *Critique of Judgement*. She thinks that the uncivilized men refer to slaves or the Aboriginal because Kant believes that these people do not obtain their subject identity and are natural being. This misreading is affirmed by another chapter in which Kant mentions the New Hollander or the man from Tierra del Fuego. Kant says:

The grass is required as a means of existence by cattle, and cattle, similarly, by man. But we do not see why after all it should be necessary that human beings should in fact exist (a question that might not be so easy to answer if we were to consider the New Hollanders or Fuegians).

(Kant, 2007:206)

Spivak points out such a remark obviously indicates that "the subject as such in Kant is geopolitically differentiated" (Spivak, 1999:26–27). Spivak contends that many Western philosophers like Kant seem to ponder over universal concerns but actually speak for European bourgeoisie. Europe is the only subject of judgment and thus the legislator of the whole world who shoulders the mission of disseminating and implementing Western culture, religion and law in non-Western countries. In this way, Western colonial expansion and rule is justified.

Spivak's critical view about the Western academic discourse is not scrupulously fair and just. As Spivak criticizes, Western academic discourse is

biased by ethnocentrism and promotes European colonial expansion. And her discussion about the collusive relationship between Western academic discourse and imperialism in the construction of the “servile other” is more revealing than Said’s. But it cannot be denied that a majority of Western thoughts are treasure of human civilization. And it is also unadvisable and unrealistic to overemphasize the difference and opposition between the East and the West, blindly exclude everything foreign or discard the entire Western discourse.

Spivak’s another outstanding contribution to the post-colonialist exploration into the other is her concern with gender, especially the miserable women in the Third World. For Spivak, the term of subaltern has an extended scope. She defines subaltern as any subordinate group which have no right of autonomy and have no access to upward mobility rather than one particular oppressed stratum. Women in the Third World and even those of the middle-upper class obviously fall into the category. But Spivak finds that the Independence of India brought no equality or freedom to Indian women. Their resistance against Western colonialization is not recorded in official historical documents. Their fate and resistance are not studied or reduced to the instrumental role in tremendous subaltern studies. “Male subaltern and historian are here united in the common assumption that the procreative sex is a species apart, scarcely if at all to be considered a part of civil society” (Spivak, 1996:228). Likewise, Western feminists who regard themselves as the spokesperson for all the women take no notice of the differences of women in the Third World and even deprive them of the right of speech. Excluded from social life, history and Western discursive systems, women in the Third World are treated as the silent others. To sum up, Spivak is very concerned about the existence of women in the ex-colonies or the Third World. Her research enriches the connotations of the Oriental other, expands the scope of subaltern studies, and leads to an increasing awareness about gender.

### ***Homi Bhabha: cultural hybridity and minority communities***

Homi Bhabha agrees with Said on that the Oriental other is on a subordinate and unequal footing with the Occident. Meanwhile, he argues that their relationship is complicated, contradictory and bidirectional on the basis of Hegel’s Master-servant dialectic and psychoanalytic thoughts of Lacan and Fanon. The relationship of power between the West and the East, the colonists and the colonized, is not mono-directional. Power is not exclusively possessed by the colonists while passivity and helplessness are not labels pinned down on the colonized other. In order to clarify such a complicated relationship, Homi Bhabha proposes a string of related concepts like mimicry and hybridity.

Homi Bhabha borrows Lacan’s thoughts of mimicry in his own post-colonialist discussion “Of mimicry and man: The ambivalence of colonial discourse”. Mimicry reveals the colonizer’s desire to identify and reform the

other. Carrying on the mission of cultural transformations, the colonizer requires the colonized to accept the introduced value and moral principles and imitate them. In order to accomplish the mission, the colonizer himself first has to adapt to the local culture and hence translate, interpret and modify authoritative texts from his own culture. During this process, a crack occurs to the dominance of colonial discourse, which results in more pronounced contradictions inside colonial discourse. Furthermore, the colonized is an “inappropriate subject” which manifests itself as the unequal other and as well as the subject of otherness. Mimicry makes the colonized “almost the same, but not quite” (Bhabha, 1994:86) as the colonizer. As shown by India’s misreading and misapplication of *The Bible*, the colonized will not interpret Western authoritative texts in a presupposed way and come to the expected understanding. Colonial discourse cannot keep its authority and uniformity any longer. To some degree, mimicry not only generates resemblance but also poses challenges, supervision and menace. On the one hand, mimicry serves as a mechanism for exerting the colonial power. On the other hand, mimicry is transformed into the colony’s resistance against colonial hegemony. The exposition of such a complicated relationship between the colonial subject and the colonized other is a development in Post-colonialism. But Homi Bhabha draws on psychoanalysis so much that he overlooks social and historical factors and simplifies the complex relationship as a two-way pattern which overshadows imbalance and inequality between the West and the Oriental other.

At the turn of this century, Homi Bhabha showed great interest in the works of W.E.B. Du Bois and was more concerned about the existence of “minorities within the minority communities”. This interest is related to the fact that he was born into a Parsi family in India and raised up in America. On the basis of the previous outcomes of Spivak and subaltern studies, Homi Bhabha steers postcolonial studies further in discussing the relationship within a certain community. He develops minority into a concept of a wider range. His minority encompasses more than the issue of how the East and the West are related to each other and the problems within ex-colonies and the Third World. It includes all the marginalized groups, people and underclass that are deprived of political and cultural voice and of any means to express their opinions and defend their interests. These minorities are usually improperly represented or entirely silenced. Ironically, the number of minorities is in fact large, which is contrary to the primal meaning of the term. For example, all the women who have been marginalized by the patriarchal system and excluded from historical narration belong to the minority. They are the silenced others in Spivak’s eyes. It should be noted that minorities are not necessarily the financially vulnerable. For example, some Parsi families enjoy a high economic status in India but still remain on the fringe of the political and cultural scenes. The substantive characteristic of minorities is that they are less powerful on the political stage and are marginalized by the mainstream culture.

Homi Bhabha believes that minorities emerge in an incessant process of otherizing that “the self” is divided from “the other” within a certain community. Such a division is repeated within the otherized minority community in accordance with their own internal ethnic discrimination and prejudice. Hence, the division of the marginalized occurs and the minority within the minority community encounters further marginalization. What’s more, the issue of minorities is also related to developed capitalist countries and cities. Homi Bhabha believes that minorities of “quasi-colony” exist in London, Paris and New York. Poor laborers in slums and black Americans, for example, are geographically segregated and suffer from mental discrimination in law and customs. Their life of the colonized in a Western metropolis constitutes an essential and core question of the issue of minority. In this way, Homi Bhabha’s post-colonialist ponderation on minorities is a shift from external colonization to internal colonization.

As mentioned above, Homi Bhabha does not view the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized as a one-way operation of power. Likewise, he does not regard minorities as the others of complete passivity. In an interview, he says that minority communities have a positive force (Sheng, 2002:59). Minorities can ally with each other to establish a “partial community” and a transcultural coalition that take advantage of their own “disadvantages”. Homi Bhabha believes that this alliance is a better representation of the will of humankind and a better chance to discover how to effectively overcome cultural barriers. He hopes that human culture of diversity can be established in such an alliance which respects differences and otherness of all the minorities. The discussion about minorities indeed provides a new perspective for the important issues of equality and freedom, nation and nationalities, and globalization. At the same time, it leaves many questions unanswered. How can we make sure that minorities represent the will of all the human beings? Is it sure that the alliance of minorities can remain steady? Can we guarantee that no new minorities will be produced within the alliance?

In conclusion, the concept of the other evolves with the development of postcolonial criticism. When investigating the cultural relationship between the West and the East in *Orientalism*, Said stresses the characteristics of subordination, secondariness and marginality of the Oriental other. He exposes that the Oriental other is constructed in the process which weakness is attached more importance to than difference. He advocates a humanistic attitude that both the West and the East should respect the moderate otherness of the other and both cultures should be incorporated into “human experience”. Later on, the concept of the other is enriched with Spivak’s deconstructive postcolonial criticism. Spivak firstly reveals how the whole Western academic discourse plays the role of accomplice in the construction of the other by imperialism. A feminist perspective is then added through her analysis of how women in the ex-colonies and the Third World are converted into the silenced other and what problems they are undergoing. The issues of

class, gender, and ethnic within a certain community are also expounded in her subaltern studies. Both Said and Spivak highlight the power of Western discourse while overlooking resistance made by the Oriental other. Different from the two previous scholars, Homi Bhabha contends that the complicated relationship between the subject/the West and the other/the East is bidirectional and contradictory. In this relationship, the other possesses its power. Homi Bhabha makes another development in the study of internal conflicts through his discussion about minority communities. Minorities are generated in a continuous process of division between the subject and the other. Being the other, minorities have the potential power. But the resisting power might be a helpless instinct. And Homi Bhabha overshadows inequality between the West and the East, and between minorities and majorities. To sum up, the changing concept of the other reflects that postcolonial criticism evolves from the one-fold discussion about “external” conflicts between the West and the East to the multifold exploration into “internal” problems of gender, class and race.

### **“The Other” in French feminism**

The other is also an important concept for feminism, especially French feminism. This section is to introduce its development in French feminism through summarizing the discussions and utilization of four French feminists.

#### ***Simone de Beauvoir and The Second Sex***

Beauvoir declares in her introduction of *The Second Sex* that woman is “incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute--she is the Other” (Beauvoir, 1956:16). What makes woman the Other of subordination? Beauvoir proposes a different answer to the question because none of the existing theories like biology and psychology can discover the mystery. Nor can the fact that woman and man have different labour capacities and possess different means of production fully explain why all the women suffer from oppression. Beauvoir contends that the fundamental reason lies in that human beings have consciousness of the other. “If the human consciousness had not included the original category of the Other and an original aspiration to dominate the Other, the invention of the bronze tool could not have caused the oppression of woman” (Beauvoir, 1956:83). In other words, “otherness is a fundamental category of human thought” (Beauvoir, 1956:16). Both the subject and the other are defined in reference to each other. But in such a reference system, man is “being-in-itself” who has the right of self-determination and is in charge of his own actions while woman is objectified as the other who has no power of autonomy by man-dominated social structures and norms. What’s worse, woman has internalized all the myths and assumptions created by the patriarchal culture.

Beauvoir outlines the history of woman becoming the subordinate other but doesn't believe that the two sexes are the same diametrically opposed to each other as the proletariat to the bourgeoisie. Gender issues are more complicated than class problems because a certain class can be eliminated while woman can never conceive of the extinction of man. From an existential perspective, she thinks that man and woman exist within *Mitsein*. The conflict of objectification between the subject and the other is never suspended and so the other is a term of mutuality. However, woman has never gained the status of subject. Beauvoir believes woman's liberation depends on the acknowledgement that both woman and man can be both the subject and the other. Since the female other is constructed in the history which patriarchy dominates, woman can be liberated after essential changes are made in the whole society, including economy, morality and culture.

However, French postfeminists like H el ene Cixous, Luce Irigaray and Julia Kristeva disapprove of Beauvoir and other traditional feminists' thoughts. In their eyes, traditional feminists inevitably fall into the trap of the sameness of Western metaphysics because they pursue the bourgeois egalitarianism which advocates equality in relation to man's rights within the patriarchal society. Concerning to their own interpretation and application, the duality embedded in this term is demonstrated. They endeavour to bring to light how woman is constructed as the other of subordination, intensively combating various gender discrimination and oppression. Meanwhile, French postfeminists put more emphasis on differences and otherness. They believe that otherness is "a way of being, thinking, and speaking allowing for openness, plurality, diversity, and differences" (Tong, 2014:192). Thus otherness which owns advantages is a more positive resistance against patriarchal society.

Greatly influenced by Lacan's psychoanalysis, Foucault's theory of power/discourse/knowledge, and Derrida's deconstructivism, French postfeminists like H el ene Cixous, Luce Irigaray and Julia Kristeva make their theoretical exploration into the importance of the pre-Oedipal stage in which no gender differences emerge and the power of discourse and writing, and simultaneously deconstruct all the disguised modes of the construction of the female other. How the concept of the other is developed by the three French postfeminists is to be introduced in the following sections.

### *H el ene Cixous:  criture f eminine*

Drawing on Derrida's deconstructivism, H el ene Cixous points out that gender opposition is a prototype of Western dualism which embodies the value system of patriarchal society. All the items on the side of women are powerless and negative. However, Cixous stresses the otherness and difference of all the others. Women of the otherness in fact unthink "the unifying, regulating history that homogenizes and channels forces, herding contradictions into a single battlefield" (Cixous, 1976:882). The most significant and effective approach to deconstructing the stereotyped dualism is * criture f eminine*.

Cixous's *écriture féminine* is proposed on the basis of her critical interpretation of Lacan's thoughts. For Lacan, the mother and the infant are harmoniously integrated into one and the mother owns the dual sexual traits in the pre-Oedipal stage. Entering into the latter period of the Imaginary Order when the father intervenes, the infant is exposed to the Law of the Father which is composed of language and cultural practices that are external and alien to its body. Females usually stay in the Imaginary Order, which leads to more dependence on illusions than on reality. Contrary to Lacan, Cixous thinks that life in the Imaginary Order embraces more possibilities. She presents the pre-Oedipal space as Canaan "filled with mother's milk and honey as the source of the song that resonates through all female writing" (Moi, 2002:113). In the Imaginary Order, differences are allowed and females are equipped with multiple strengths. Hence, women enjoy more freedom in their writing.

What is female writing? Cixous states, "it is impossible to *define* a feminine practice of writing, and this is an impossibility that will remain, for this practice can never be theorized, enclosed, coded" (Cixous, 1976:883). Though a clear definition is impossible, traits of female writing can be disclosed by contrast. Compared with male writing that prefers well-defined frameworks of thoughts and rigid and mandatory structures of representation, female writing is characterized by openness and diversity. Placing an emphasis on differences, female writing takes pains in weakening logo centrism and smashing the sealed structure of binary opposition. It is safe to say that female writing embodies Cixous's hope to establish new discursive system and writing modes that can properly express women's emotions and experience from their own perspective.

As for the strategy to fulfil female writing, Cixous proposes "writing through their bodies". Female bodies have been suppressed just as their voices have been silenced in history. Patriarchal suppression forces women to shy away from speaking about their own bodies and desires. If women want to liberate themselves from the patriarchal suppression, they should return to the body. In female writing, they should depict their emotions and inner life which are the forbidden zones set by patriarchal traditions and culture. In Cixous's eyes, female writing is the requisite approach to freedom and the subversive field to struggle against the Symbolic Order. It is by female writing which challenges speech governed by the phallus that women will confirm their subjectivity.

Female writing proposed by Cixous is still problematic. She doesn't believe that a writer's writing is causally related to his/her gender. But at the same time, she stresses the close connection between female bodies, sex traits and female writing. This contradiction suggests the stamp of biologism and essentialism. In addition, women liberation by writing is a utopian fantasy. Recognizing such problems, Cixous would like to label herself as a writer rather than a philosopher. She sets herself as an example who, in

passionate and poetic language, boldly depicts female bodies and feelings, celebrates female creativity and imagination, and summon women to question and criticize male-dominated mainstream culture.

*Luce Irigaray: speculum and the twofold sex*

Like Beauvoir and Cixous, Irigaray takes up criticism of enduring phallogocentrism in Western culture. She firstly refutes many concepts and assumptions of Western philosophy and psychoanalysis. One of the targets is the omnipresent logic of sameness shared by all the Western thinkers from Plato to Freud who establish a tradition of rationalism and patriarchal discourse. Man is approved as the only social norm while woman is accepted as man's "specularized Other" who is usually defined as "lack" and "non-being". Such a philosophy is in fact the outcome of male narcissism. Irigaray's concept of specularized Other and Beauvoir's thoughts about subordination of female other coincide. But Irigaray's discussion sounds so radical and daring that she is ostracized from Freudian School of Paris and relieved of her post at the University of Vincennes. Her being expelled precisely confirms hegemony of male discourse exposed in her *Speculum of the Other Woman*.<sup>1</sup>

In order to change women's destiny and subordination, Irigaray also upholds the otherness of women in *This Sex Which Is Not One*. Being a pun, the title implies that woman is not essentially a variation of men as Freudian one-sex model describes and as well as that woman enjoys multifold sexuality. Starting from this perspective, Irigaray argues that woman, being a sex of diversity and fluidity, cannot be fully understood and identified by the unitary thinking mode of phallogocentrism.

On the basis of this insight, Irigaray puts forward "strategic essentialism" to react against the confinement of dualism and the suppression of patriarchal society. She proposes that identification with the mother in the pre-Oedipal stage should be restored, the bond between the mother and the daughter should be strengthened and a new female genealogy should be written. If women desire to have their own subjectivity, they should adopt "woman speak" which is characterized by indefinability, irrationality and fluidity. Because woman speak usually cannot be understood by men, Irigaray develops a strategy of mimesis. Women deliberately manifest themselves in the feminine images created by patriarchal culture to deconstruct phallogocentrism. Though Irigaray admits that mimesis might lead to a new logic of sameness and in turn will be fettered by phallogocentrism, and all these strategies will be criticized for their essentialist implications, she still believes that they are rewarding resistance against patriarchy.

Irigaray takes a more conciliatory attitude in her latter works like *To be Two (Extre Deux)*. Drawing on Levinas's key terms or images such as "light", "invisibility" and "mystery" that embrace respect for the otherness, and oriental thoughts (especially Buddhist and yoga philosophies) of a return to

the self and the perception of differences, she suggests that gender relations should be established between two sexually differentiated subjects. Sexual differences are the conditions necessary for both sexes and even the whole human race. For an individual, gender is a special field of self-identification and self-realization. At a broader level, a boy or a girl should cooperate with the other sex to fulfil the mission for the whole race.

However, what traditional ideas in Western philosophy deal with is how a positive subject understands and possesses a passive object. Irigaray thinks that even Levinas who promotes respect for the other reflects on the relationship between the subject and the object from such male perspective instead of regarding them as two subjects. Irigaray contends that this ethics dominated by one sex, especially by men, should be smashed. Both man and woman are subjects. Being subjects of differences, neither sex can be replaced or viewed as subordination. It is the ethics of sexual differences that provides the base and means for women liberation. What is uncertain about Irigaray's proposal is whether an overemphasis on differences will give rise to new estrangement of the two sexes.

### *Julia Kristeva: periphery and resistance*

Kristeva is deemed to be the most important and influential French post-feminist together with Cixous and Irigaray. Besides several articles that straightforwardly address feminist issues, she demonstrates her feminist thoughts in discussions of semiotics and psychoanalysis.

In "Women's time", Kristeva divides the development of European feminism into three phases. Feminists of the first generation strive for the same and equal rights as men. Instead of transforming the patriarchal society, they long for being a part of it. However, their efforts cannot achieve true liberation. During the second phase, feminists promote differences and female particularity. But Kristeva doesn't think that they break away from the logic of identification dictated by the patriarchal society (Kristeva, 1981:19). Hence, feminists of the third generation like Kristeva place an emphasis on diversity. Here, diversity means universal differences among individuals rather than sexual differences of essentialism.

Like Irigaray, Kristeva refuses to define woman. But they have different reasons. Irigaray objects strongly to a definition so that she shuns the logic of sameness embedded in Western metaphysics, whereas Kristeva queries sexual identification and stresses individual diversity. Kristeva doesn't believe that sexual difference alone can account for individual identification. She also attributes diversity to differences in ethnicity, class, religion, and politics. At the same time, it is unreasonable to define true femininity because each woman has her own specificity. What she is more concerned with is the marginalization of the female other rather than the universal nature. For Kristeva, femininity refers to peculiarities constructed and marginalized by the Symbolic Order of patriarchy. If femininity is nurtured through

a series of choices, men can also live at the fringe of the Symbolic Order. This is true of avant-garde artists such as Stéphane Mallarmé and James Joyce. Kristeva argues that the marginalized femininity has the power of resistance and subversion which is demonstrated in her semiotics.

Kristeva's concept of semiotic derives from Lacan's psychoanalysis. In the pre-Oedipal stage, the infant is not separated from the surrounding world (especially the mother) and does not acquire language and the sense of self. The infant's instinctive flow of impulses is not naturalized by language and constrained by familial and social norms. Kristeva borrows Plato's term "chora" to name such a sweepingly inclusive state of fluidity. Once the infant enters into the Symbolic Order, chora is dis severed and semiotic is repressed by the symbolic which is composed of ordered and normative syntax and semantics. The open and irrational semiotic is absolutely alien to the sealed and rational symbolic. As Terry Eagleton states, "the semiotic is the 'other' of language which is none the less intimately entwined with it" (Eagleton, 2008:163). Though it is repressed as the infant enters into the symbolic, the semiotic other still emerges in contradiction, confusion and meaninglessness of language and poses a threat and even subversion to ordered syntax. Furthermore, the semiotic is driven by unconsciousness. All human subjects, being speaking being, are subject to the semiotic. Only when they incarnate the semiotic can they clearly express their thoughts and emotions.

Though the semiotic is not proprietary language for women, they are closely related as both of the others share marginality and subversive power. The semiotic is the peripheral with respect to language but the former can deconstruct the latter's centrality and subvert cultural hierarchy in the Symbolic Order. Likewise, woman is the other marginalized by the patriarchal symbolic and possesses the power to overthrow patriarchy. Such female resistance against patriarchy is one of her threefold revolt. In her etymological survey, Kristeva posits that "revolt" embodies more than political revolt and insubordinate behaviours in reality. She would like to interpret it in terms of intellect, culture, and psychology. People are often involved with revolt against gender identification, political identification, and identification of being and the other. The first revolt directly deals with female issues and the rest two types are related to female issues.

Similar to Cixous, Kristeva is fully confident of the significance of language and writing in revolt. Revolt is inseparable from language and unconsciousness and revolt in language and writing can be more radical and destructive than that in reality. The marginalized woman can write to revolt against the rigid confinement of gender identity established by the symbolic order and gain individual dignity and intellectual freedom. Kristeva's discussion about revolt and its significance is desirable but depreciates the value of protests and rebellions in real life.

To sum up, the four French feminists demonstrate subversive power in their academic thinking and theoretical exploration though it is difficult for them to obtain a wide support from ordinary women. Beauvoir reveals

the history of woman falling into the other of subordination and secondariness and encourages women to strive for equality and independence. Different from Beauvoir, Cixous and Irigaray stress differences, inclusiveness and diversity of the other. They maintain that female specificities can transcend the thinking mode of phallogentrism and smash patriarchy. However, Kristeva disagrees with them on sexual identification of essentialism. She is concerned with the marginalization of woman and the rebellious force of their marginality. She is insightful enough to connect females with the oppressed strata but at the same time tends to blur the distinction between female struggles and any other types of revolts.

In general, the four French feminists attach great importance to language, discourse or writing. Nevertheless, their overemphasis on the role of writing or discourse in women's liberation makes their pursuit a utopian dream because pure "female writing" or "woman speak" is impossible. It is more inclined to be transformed into the counterpart of male discourse and then reproduce the effects of identity. Or it is controlled by phallogentrism and once again reduced to the object played by male-dominated culture. In fact, it is impossible to treat man as the other. Nor is it helpful to solve female problems. What's worse, the overemphasis on female differences and marginality may foment more gender estrangement and alienation. It is proper for feminists to stay alert to those attempts to mould females into the "servile other" by the patriarchal hegemony. They should be more attentive to the value of the other.

### **Chinese reception and reflection of "the Other"**

"The other" is a key concept with a variety of connotations in different disciplines and intellectual schools of contemporary Western humanities, such as phenomenology, existentialism, psychoanalysis, feminism and post-colonial criticism. It is also a great attraction to China. Therefore, Chinese scholars introduced it into China as early as the period of the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945). During the first period of introduction, "the Other" was translated into different Chinese terms. In 1944, Chen Kang translated *ἄλλα* as "something else" when he translated and annotated Plato's *Parmenides*. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, He Lin translated the German word *ander* which corresponds to the Greek word *ἄλλα* into "other things" or "otherness" as he translated *The Logic of Hegel* in 1950. In 1976, Yang Yi adopted He Lin's term in his translation of *Science of Logic*. Though the survey is not complete, it is sure that the Chinese equivalent that is the most identical to the English term "the Other" can be found in the translated version of "Summary of Hegel's *Science of Logic*", which is included in *Philosophical Notes*, volume 38 of *The Complete Works of Lenin* published in 1959. The introduction of the first period is unsatisfactory because the translations mentioned above merely focus on the other in relation to identity or in terms of ontology or logic. It is in the

last decade of the 20th century when China was keen on Western postmodernist thoughts that Chinese scholars showed great attention to this concept in four fields. The philosophical exploration is still popular, but the focus is shifted to works by modern and postmodernist philosophers like Emmanuel Levinas and Jacques Lacan. At the same time, the rise of cultural studies drives many Chinese scholars to include “the Other” as an entry in their research works about key words of cultural studies. In addition, it predominates Chinese post-colonial criticism as Edward Said’s *Orientalism* is introduced. Finally, it is frequently used in Chinese feminist studies because Chinese scholars are greatly influenced by the thoughts of Simone de Beauvoir and post-feminism.

The popularity of “the Other” in China is indeed beneficial for the development of contemporary Chinese literary criticism. In the meantime, it should be noted that a shallow and rough understanding is detrimental. Only after distinguishing the different connotations of the key concept in various schools and disciplines can we achieve a better understanding, discover more valuable intellectual resources, and further make constructive reflections on cultural exchanges between the East and the West, and on communication and interactivity between different social classes, ethnic groups and gender. The following section is to discuss the acceptance of “the Other” in the four fields mentioned above and the problems.

### ***Chinese introduction to the philosophical concept of “the Other”***

The first popular approach of Chinese research on “the Other” is the historical survey in the philosophical field. There are two representative and influential works, Zhang Yibing’s *The Impossible Real of Being: The Image of Lacan’s Philosophy* (2006) and Yang Dachun’s *Language, Body and the Other: The Three Subjects of Contemporary French Philosophy* (2007). In the former book, Zhang Yibing divides “the Other” into “Divine Other”, “Demonic Other” and “Servile Other” and mainly traces the theoretical sources and historical development of the first two categories. He proposes that the third category originates from Hegel’s master-slave dialectic rather than Lacan’s idea and thus provides no discussion. These ideas are debatable. The first two actually fall into one category that presides over the subject. Furthermore, the origin of “Servile Other” can be traced back to the philosophical thoughts about being and non-being in ancient Greece. The second Chinese work is more extensive than the first as Yang Dachun covers the historical development of the theory from phenomenology-existentialism to poststructuralism and elaborates on the theories of Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida. It is a disappointment that Lacan’s thoughts are not included in Yang Dachun’s introduction. Another deficiency is that a contradiction remains unsolved in his analysis. On the one hand, “the Other” is gradually elevated in phenomenology-existentialism. On the other hand, “the Other” always

slides into subordination and marginalization in poststructuralism. The reason for the deficiency might be that the author fails to notice that the classification of “the Other” is made on the basis of different relationships. Phenomenology-existentialism tends to discuss “the Other” and its elevation in terms of its relation to subject while poststructuralism addresses the marginalized “Other” in the light of its relation to identity.

Besides the historical inquiry, Chinese scholars are inclined to examine the theories of Levinas and Lacan. As a result, many research outcomes about Levinas are published in China. *Levinas*, written by Du Xiaozhen in 1994, is considered as the first book that is written by a Chinese scholar to introduce Levinas. After a brief introduction to the thinker’s life, career and main philosophical ideas, Du Xiaozhen interprets the ethics of “the Other” and points out Levinas’s disapproval of Greek tradition and his inclination towards Hebrew religion. The lately published book as a research outcome about Levinas is Cun Xiangchen’s *Facing the Other: A Study on Levinas’ Philosophy* (2008). Unfortunately, the scholar aims at the introductory panorama of Levinas’s thoughts. Hence, the book contains only the brief description about the multiple sources for Levinas’s thinking of “the Other” and the clarification on two binary oppositions, Identity/ “the Other” and the Self/ “the Other”.

The two books described above demonstrate that the Chinese exploration into Levinas’s philosophical discussion of “the Other” needs to be propelled in spite of the achievements. For example, a great importance is attached to Levinas’s phenomenological-existentialist thoughts, leading to the Chinese enthusiasm for the research on the relationship between the self and “the Other” and as well as their ignorance of the study on the relationship between identity and “the Other”. In fact, the discussion of the ethic relationship between the self and the other from the perspective of phenomenology-existentialism serves as the basis for Levinas’s further exploration into the relationship between identity and “the Other” at the ontological level. However, the Chinese scholars display their limited perception of “ethics as first philosophy” and the significance of Levinas’s return to Jewish culture and quest for diversity. There are at least three reasons. In the first place, many important works by Levinas have not yet translated or published in China. Additionally, the unfamiliarity with Hebrew culture worsens the situation. And finally, the intellectual profundity and obscure language make the interpretation more difficult.

The Chinese study on Lacan’s theory of “the Other” is in the same predicament. The difference is that the domestic introduction demonstrates diversity in focus and interpretations. For instance, Wang Yuechuan believes that Lacan’s “the Other” transcends the traditional definition of other people. It also refers to the linguistic order that forms the binary opposition to the subject and thus has the referential function like language (Wang, 1998). Another Chinese scholar, Gao Xuanyang, clearly proposes that “the Other” can be interpreted in three ways. It manifests itself in symbolic signs,

bodies that have a particular identity, and physical forms that have a space-time structure. The three-dimensional “Other” serves as the orientator in the process of the construction of the subject and self-identification (Gao, 2005). While the former two Chinese scholars take the trouble to interpret the meaning of “the Other”, Wu Qiong engages in clarifying its theoretical sources, development and specific application. She believes that “the Other” does not necessarily refer to an actual being. Being the external factor that plays a decisive role in subject construction, it stresses alterity (Wu, 2011). All the three interpretations are reasonable, indicating that Lacan’s concept of “the Other” has abundant connotations.

### *Various interpretations of “the Other” in Chinese keyword study*

In the second half of the 20th century, Chinese scholars were greatly influenced by Raymond Williams. As a result, keyword study is booming. “The Other” is one of the keywords that are included in many publications of cultural studies.

One of the widely read books is *Two Hundred Keywords: A Compilation of Common Terms of Literature and Criticism* that was published by Liao Binghui, a scholar from Taiwan, in 2006. The interpretation of “the Other” covers both Lacan’s psychoanalysis and gender-related and geography-related theories. However, some confusion is caused when the author attempts to combine Lacan’s ideas with postcolonial theories. On the one hand, the author claims that Lacan believes that “the gaze of “the Other” functions as an omnipresent supervision and control while postcolonialism maintains that the colonizer’s knowledge, the discourse of power, also serves as grand autre” (Liao, 2006:178–179). On the other hand, “the underprivileged communities are often otherized. According to Orientalism, an alien race is usually materialized by means of otherization, stereotypes and marginalization” (Liao, 2006:179). The discussion mentioned above suggests that both of the polar opposites, the colonizer or his power and discourse and the underprivileged communities of class, gender and geography, are “the Other”. Such a confusing conclusion fails to distinguish the different counterparts of “the Other” in the two theoretical schools.

*Keywords of Cultural Studies*, another influential book which was compiled by Zhou Xian in 2007, does not provide detailed elucidations. Instead, there are merely some selected readings from representative works of Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha, and Gayatri C. Spivak. The compilation does provide Chinese scholars with an access to Western postcolonialist thoughts of “the Other”. However, it is inadequate because works of Lacan and Lenivas are not mentioned.

The concept of “the Other” is further interpreted by Deng Jianhua in *A Study of Key Concepts in Cultural Criticism* and by Ma Yuanlong in *Key Words in Cultural Studies*. Deng Jianhua’s explanation to this key entry is more thorough than other scholars’ interpretations. The problem lies in that

the author narrows his focus to the relationship between the subject and “the Other” and thus brings his understanding of the relationship between identity and “the Other” into the former one. Deng Jianhua proposes:

Western philosophers, including Lacan, Foucault, and Derrida, to whom the most powerful contemporary theories of “the Other” owes, concern themselves solely with the irrational, the female and the East that are silenced, marginalized, degraded, depressed, and disciplined by or absent from the mainstream discourse. The radical criticism of postmodern theories tends to classify “the Other” as the disadvantaged side of the binary opposition (Deng, 2007:322–323).

This comment is partially wrong. In fact, “the Other” in Lacan’s theoretical exploration predominates over and guides the subject. Similarly, Ma Yuanlong focusses on Lacan’s theory of “the Other”. He translates *Autre* into “the Other” and *autre* into other people. He claims that the former refers to the essential otherness that belongs to the Symbolic “Order” while the latter means an image or projection of the self rather than another person in real life (Ma, 2007). Though the distinction between *Autre* and *autre* is made clear, the author fails to further discuss the relationship between the subject and “the Other”.

In addition to the works mentioned above, many articles that introduce and comment on the key concept are published in various academic journals. One of the detailed introductions is Zhang Jian’s “The Other”, published in the column of “Keywords in Western Literary Criticism” in *Foreign Literature* that is an influential periodical in China. The paper not only presents its philosophical groundwork but also illustrates its application, especially in feminism, post-colonialism and ecocriticism. Though the paper provides a wide-ranging introduction, some interpretations are still open to further discussion. Take the definition of “the Other” as an example. Zhang Jian thinks that this concept refers to all the other persons and things that are the opposite and external existence of the self no matter what form, visible or invisible, perceivable or imperceptible, it takes (Zhang, 2011:118). This definition is so all-covering that the validity of the concept is questionable. Meanwhile, it reveals a partial understanding of the one and self. Zhang Jian proposes that the one discussed by Plato in *Dialogues* is equivalent to the self which we call (Zhang, 2011:118) at the very beginning of his paper. As a result, his interpretation of the Other overlooks the importance of the relationship between being and non-being, the one and “the Other”. Another problem is that Zhang’s explanation merely stresses the marginal and subordinate attributes embodied in the concept. Consequently, the various attributes of “the Other” are not identified and its multiple connotations are concealed from Chinese scholars.

To sum up, Chinese scholars have been attracted by the Western thoughts about “the Other” and taken pains to understand and elaborate on the key concept. However, the result is not encouraging. Few research outcomes

provide a systematic introduction to its different meanings and historical development. And how the concept is employed in Western literary criticism is hardly illustrated.

### *The dissemination of “the Other” and post-colonialism*

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Chinese scholars applied the theory of “the Other” into literary criticism, film criticism and cultural criticism as soon as “theory of the Third World culture” proposed by Fredric Jameson and postcolonial criticism represented by Said’s *Orientalism* were introduced to China. In the initial stage, China fails to understand the abundant meanings of the concept, leading to their simplified and different employment in domestic postcolonial criticism. For Said and other Western post-colonialists, the East which is the disadvantaged on an unequal footing with the West is constructed as the other by the latter. In this sense, “the other” mainly manifests itself in subordination, secondariness and marginality. But Chinese scholars simply interpret “the Other” as otherness and alterity. They view the West as the other and hence otherization as Westernization. Such a misreading brings about a Sinicized application that is different from and even contradictory to that in Western postcolonial criticism.

According to *Orientalism*, postcolonial criticism ought to reflect on and criticize Western orientalist discourse in the first place. Owing to limited access to the related literature and simplified understanding of the concept, China scarcely makes any in-depth criticism. On the contrary, overseas Chinese scholars feel a stronger sympathy in reading orientalist texts and produce some impressive works. For example, Liu He (a Chinese American Scholar) makes a critical analysis of *Chinese Characteristics* that is written by Arthur Smith who is a missionary from North America. Liu He states that the book embodies colonialism. It presents the superiority of Western religion, culture and Westerners to those in the East and depicts the master and servant relationship between the West and the East (Liu, 1999). Another Chinese American scholar Dan Smyer Yu also makes a postcolonial criticism on *Chinese Characteristics*. He claims that this book is a typical missionary ethnography which can be considered as a symbolic violence that divests the other of its morality, criticizes the representations of the collective self and dismantles its cultural reality (Yu, 2009).

Chinese scholars do not pay the same attention to examining and questioning how the East is disciplined and domesticated by Western cultural hegemony as Western scholars. Instead, they are more inclined to figure out whether Chinese art creation and cultural thoughts deliberately cater to the Western market and Westerners’ aesthetic taste, or whether they are snared in the cultural trap set by the West. Admittedly, their findings are quite discouraging. But it is also detrimental to overstate the influence of Western resources. Postcolonial criticism might go alarmingly astray, and extreme

conservatism and narrow nationalism would prevail if we think that Chinese literati and artists' efforts to reveal our unique national culture to the West are merely guided by the Western "other" on the one hand and that Chinese modern reform which greatly benefits from borrowing Western resources is a process of "self-othering" on the other hand. As Tao Dong-feng states, postmodern and postcolonial theories of anti-essentialism may evolve into another form of essentialism in China (Tao, 1999:42).

In addition, there is an increasing research into identity issues addressed in overseas Chinese literature because Chinese scholars stress the close tie between the other and identity. For example, Qian Chaoying makes an analysis of "the New Chinese Literature" which are created by Chinese migrants who immigrated to Australia in the 1980s and 1990s. He proposes that they construct their identity by otherizing at least three objects, namely the West, non-Chinese mainland migrants and China (Qian, 2000:9). Similarly, Liu Jun studies the duality of Chinese American Literature. He believes that Chinese American Literature turns out to be the other for both English literature which is the mainstream in America and Chinese literature in China (Liu, 2003:103). Applying the concept of the other and related postcolonial theory to the study on overseas Chinese literature, both of the authors find that the dual or even multiple identities of the other and the process of "othering" bring overseas Chinese and their literature to the crisis of cultural identity.

Compared with Chinese postcolonial studies, Western postcolonial criticism is far more extensive and complicated. Its scope is extended from external cultural relations between the East and the West, the suzerain and its colonies, and developed and developing countries to class, gender and ethnic issues that reside inside Eastern and Western societies. However, Chinese postcolonial criticism still focusses on the interpretation and application of Said's discourse in *Orientalism*. And many Chinese critics often probe into the unequal cultural communication between the East and the West on relatively reliable and favourable ground. In addition, China pays little attention to gender, class, ethnic issues, and regional and urban-rural disparity. In general, Chinese postcolonial studies lag farther behind the West.

### *The Other and Chinese feminism*

Chinese women have been regarded as subordinate to men throughout most of the history. Even after the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, Chinese women still had to comply with patriarchal norms to construct their gender. The objectification and commercialization of women prevailed after the reform and opening-up and recently became more prevalent with the widespread market economy and consumerism.

Domestic scholars have noticed the shift from subordination to otherness in feminist studies. Soon some Chinese female writers draw on Western

feminist theories and strive hard to represent the otherness of the female other. They break away from the tradition of men's writing and reveal female mental and physiological reality in personal writings, only to find that they are caught in the trap of subordination. Their works which represent women writers' intention of resistance and subversion unexpectedly turn out to be the lens of male gaze or be marginalized. Different from those women writers who are forced to be subordinate, some female writers proactively cater to the vulgar taste of the patriarchal society. Driven by the possible benefits brought by the market economy and the pursuit of material comforts, they explicitly describe their private life while disguising themselves as the bold advocate of female "otherness". No matter what purpose all the female writers have, they themselves and their works are reduced to the commodity consumed by the man-dominated world and the female subjectivity is decomposed again. How the female other can ease the plight and even eliminate gender inequality still remains unanswered in China.

Compared with the vigorous activities of elucidating "the Other" in post-colonial criticism and the craze for writing about the female otherness, domestic feminist studies yield few introductions and interpretations of the concept. One of the popular approaches is to do a historical survey of feminist thoughts about the other. Wang Hongwei's "On the Other and its Philosophy: A Concurrent Comment on Feminists' Criticism on Philosophy of Subject and Subjectivity" and Dai Xuehong's "The Other and Subject: A Feminist Perspective" are two examples. The first paper covers the discussions of the other in psychoanalysis, feminism, deconstructivism, post-feminism, and postcolonial feminism. Wang Hongwei concludes that the theoretical exploration of the other which is imbued with philosophical contemplation poses an objection and criticism to the philosophy of subjectivity and dualism (Wang, 2004). Wang's deliberately writing in tiny fragments can also be considered as his defiance against logocentrism. The second article introduces different opinions about the other and the subject and its evolution by interpreting representative feminist works, such as *The Second Sex* by Simone de Beauvoir, *To Be Two* by Luce Irigaray, *Can the Subaltern Speak?* by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and *In a Different Voice* by Carol Gilligan (Dai, 2007). Both writers illustrate that feminism has shifted the concern from marginality and subordination to diversity and otherness. But they fail to expound on the subtle differences in the concept of "the other" between various postmodern feminist thinkers and to properly understand the complicated relationship between postmodernism and postmodern feminism. For example, Dai Wenzhong does not further clarify the differences between Irigaray's theory of gender differences and Gilligan's. Meanwhile, it is unreasonable of Wang Hongwei to classify Lacan's "the other" and Derrida's into the same category.

Fang Jue's "The Other and the Absolute Other: Analysis of Simone de Beauvoir's thoughts" represents another approach of Chinese domestic studies on feminist exploration into the other. In his in-depth analysis of

*The Second Sex*, Fang Jue argues that Beauvior is inclined to use this other at the level of Absolute Other. On the one hand, she lays stress on the negative implications of the concept like passivity, alterity, and negativity. On the other hand, she believes that the concept of the other possesses mutuality which means that gender relations are characterized by relativity. Hence, she hopes that an intersubjective gender relation can be established under the guidance of existentialism (Fang, 2005). Fang Jue commends Beauvoir's break from the dualistic mindset of modern rationalism by emphasizing mutuality and relativity. But at the same time, he fails to point out her paradox that the existentialist reflection on the relationship between the subject and the other is still stuck with dualism. In fact, Beauvior's main dedication lies in her elaboration on subordination and secondariness of the female other. In brief, the second approach to the feminist exploration of the other is to investigate the thoughts of specific feminists. However, more insightful interpretations of more feminist thinkers should be made.

### *Implications of Chinese dissemination*

The Western concept of the Other encompasses multiple meanings and numerous heterogeneities. It places a primary emphasis on difference and diversity, pursuit of a harmonious and true state, and opposition to discrimination and inequalities. For China, the Western thinking of the other provides tremendous resources for a better dialogue and interaction between the East and the West, and between classes, ethnic groups and gender. The above analysis of its dissemination indicates that China has a great concern for this concept but there are also many problems in Chinese adoption. In order to make better use of Western thoughts and construct a Sinicized theory in line with the realities of contemporary China, the following points should be noted.

In the first place, constant vigilance is necessary in order to avoid being disciplined as the "servile other" by Western hegemonic discourse. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge and respect otherness of the other. Only when we transcend nationalism, adhere to inclusiveness and give priority to national diversity, can an equal and nice cultural exchange between the East and the West be achieved and retained (Hu, 2007).

More importantly, the value of the other should be demonstrated and fostered to carry forward the national culture with Chinese characteristics. As mentioned above, Levinas initially draws on oriental Judaism. But he is so confined within the ontological tradition of Western philosophy that he eventually returns to Plato's thoughts. His effort and failure are significant for Chinese scholars. As Ye Xiushan says:

Now that Levinas, like many other European philosophers, does not have much access to Chinese traditional philosophy, Chinese scholars should take over his job. They should follow his example of adopting the exotic and

the peripheral. In this way, resources will be shared and a greater achievement can be made by mutual support (Ye, 2002:34).

In other words, Chinese scholars can fulfil the task that is more constructive than Levinas's if they critically examine the Western tradition of ontology from the perspective of the other of traditional Chinese culture and thoughts.

In addition, the polarization of wealth has become more serious in China. And consequently, China is ripe for serious reckoning with its own issues of the marginalized and disadvantaged other. The academic scholarship should zoom in on women, minority groups, the disabled, and the underclass in order to provide them with various channels to express their demands and needs freely. Their appeals will be understood and their rights can be protected. Different forms of prejudice, discrimination and oppression can be identified and gradually eliminated by the joint endeavours.

Lastly, the market economy and consumerism prevail in today's China. In this context, Chinese scholars ought to take precautions against the external "aggressive other" which will bring about alienation and bondage, such as money, power and desires. It is high time for us to probe into the mechanism of these aggressive other and find approaches to pursue and maintain an authentic truth. To sum up, the occurrent drastic changes and rapid development and as well as the fledgling study on the other in China pose opportunities and challenges for more research.

## Note

- 1 Luce Irigaray thinks that the title of her book *Speculum de l' autre femme* should be translated into *Speculum, on the Other Woman* or *Speculum, on the Other: Woman* so as to prevent the reader from interpreting *speculum* as a metaphor for the relationship between a female and her own other. See Irigaray, Luce. (1996). *I love to you*. Alison Martin. (Trans.). New York and London: Routledge.

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## 3 Ideology

*Written by Wan Na, Translated by Cheng Xin*

The close relationship between ideology and literary study has long been acknowledged by people. While traditional criticisms put focusses on texts, authors and readers, ideology provides us another provoking approach to literature. Methodologically speaking, bringing ideology into literary study breaks the binary opposition and puts literature in the process of social development.

### **The origins of ideology**

Ideology has been related to “illusion”, which helps form one of its interpretations later in Marxism.

In *Republic*, Plato reveals the gap between truth and illusions with a comparison of “prisoner in the cave” to suggest the falsity of knowledge. Though Francis Bacon doesn’t mention the term “ideology” directly, he notices the displacement between the consciousness and the being in “four idols”, and regards them as “illusions” (Bacon, 2003: 40), which greatly influences later theories. In *Elements of Ideology*, a multi-volume work between 1801 and 1815, Destutt de Tracy suggests to build a conceptual philosophy on how the feelings of body construct the ideas. Soon after Napoleon criticizes the theorists of ideology who oppose his practice of imperial restoration, this concept is associated with negative political meanings.

In addition, Hegel often uses “forms of consciousness” to indicate the development of consciousness. According to him, the perceptual appearance of ideas which include symbolic art, classical art and romantic art represent three types of relationships between ideas and images. His study of “forms of consciousness” aims at figuring out how the phenomenon presented in consciousness accords with the essence, which is different from Tracy’s conceptual study based on the feelings of the body. Etymologically speaking, “forms of consciousness” is not “ideology”.

Before Marx and Engels’s critiques on ideology, German philosophers from Strauss to Stirner have enriched its connotations, providing great references for the understandings of it with a materialistic view. In *German Ideology*, ideology which mainly refers to the philosophy and the state of

mind of German at that time is criticized for reversing the being and the consciousness.<sup>1</sup> Based on the analysis of the conditions of the classes in the capitalist society, Marx and Engels study the class nature of ideology, and they reveal that “the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas” (Marx and Engels, 1998:67). The ruling class “controls the means of mental production” (Marx and Engels, 1998:67) in a dominant way while the ruled class is subject to them and the two classes share “the ruling ideas of the epoch” (Marx and Engels, 1998:67). In the meantime, they argue that, within the ruling class, ideology serves as “the thinkers of the class (its active, conceptive ideologists, who make the formation of the illusions of the class about itself their chief source of livelihood)” (Marx and Engels, 1998:68). Since labour is divided into the mental one and the material one, the ruling class is separated into two parts as well. “This cleavage can even develop into a certain opposition and hostility between the two parts” (Marx and Engels, 1998:68), which leads to the assumption that “the ruling ideas being not the ideas of the ruling class” (Marx and Engels, 1998:68), so they can be adopted by the other class in the society.

Considering its invisible class interests and seemingly neutral position, Marx and Engels regard ideology as “wrong ideas” (Marx and Engels, 1998:29). Under specific times, both the classes take the reversed ideas as absolute truth unconsciously. As Engels puts, “the actual motives by which he is impelled remain hidden from him, for otherwise it would not be an ideological process” (Engels, 2010:164). In the early works of Marx, the consciousness of the ruling class can be dissolved by the practical overthrow of the actual social relations by the proletariat (Marx and Engels, 1998:61). It means that the “falsity” of ideology may disappear with the collapse of the social relations.

Besides regarding ideology as general consciousness and illusions, Marx also seeks the possibility for the proletariat to share it, and he acknowledges that the proletariat can realize ideology consciously and use it to take part in the historical process effectively. Compared with the wrong ideas and the illusions of the ruling class, ideology of the proletariat is expected to be more practical. In this sense, though ideology has negative connotations, it can take a different standpoint when it belongs to a different class.

According to Marx, the ideology realized and used by the proletariat is not completely created by themselves. For a certain period, they may share it with the propertied class. But the two classes have different feelings towards it:

The propertied class and the class of the proletariat present the same human self-estrangement. But the former class feels at ease and strengthened in this self-estrangement, it recognizes estrangement as its own power and has in it the semblance of a human existence. The class of the proletariat feels annihilated in estrangement; it sees in it its own powerlessness and the reality of an inhuman existence.

(Marx, 1975)

Of course, the gap between “human” and “inhuman” is resulted from the ideology in which the ruling class claims its own interests as all human’s interests. The different feelings urge the proletariat to realize the limitations and the purposes of this movement. In this sense, ideology holds a neutral position. Based on the relationship between ideology and the economic base, with the participation of the proletariat in the history, the specific connotations of ideology may change. Here is what Marx says in *Capital*:

This is an essentially different conception from that of the bourgeois political economists, themselves imprisoned in capitalist preconceptions, who are admittedly able to see how production is carried on within the capital-relation, but not how this relation is itself produced, and how at the same time the material conditions for its dissolution are produced within it, thereby removing its historical justification as a necessary form of economic development, of the production of social wealth.

(Marx, 1994)

The relationship between capital and production which is discussed by bourgeois economists is the specific form of its ideology. It not only reveals how the capitalist society functions but also shows how it may lead to the overthrow of itself. Theoretically realized as the core of capitalist society, “capital” plays quite different roles in the ideologies of the two classes.

In their later works, both Marx and Engels elucidate the relative independence of ideology in a class society. In *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (1875), Marx deems that the first phase of communist society that emerges from capitalist society is “in every respect, economically, morally and intellectually, still stamped with the birthmarks of the old society from whose womb it emerges” (Marx, 1989:85), which do not dissolve with the overthrow of the capitalist relations of production but are the defects “inevitable” (Marx, 1989:87) in this period. In this sense, the relative independence of ideology is reflected in its delayed reaction to the change of the economic base. Therefore, the early revolutionary theorists may have to decide whether to use the former ideology as the means of mental production or to create the ideology of the proletarian class.

Engels gives his answer by demonstrating the relative independence of ideology. He defines philosophy and religion as “higher ideologies, that is, are still further removed from the material, economic base” (Engels, 1994). “Intermediate links”, such as politics and laws, are applied to explain the interconnection between ideology and the economic base, and they make it possible for philosophy and religion to “develop independently and subject only to their own laws” (Engels, 1994). In this sense, ideology is divided into two aspects based on their connection with the economic base. Engels also criticizes a “fatuous conception that, because we deny independent historical development to the various ideological spheres which play a role in history, we also deny them any *historical efficacy*” (Engels, 2010:165). He argues

that this conception misunderstands Marx's theory without the acknowledgement of the efficacy of ideology in the historical development. As one of the two aspects of ideology, philosophy and religion have impacts on the economic base through politics and laws, especially the former. Therefore, the intermediate links may probably be narrowed as politics in the society of proletarian dictatorship.<sup>2</sup> And all the forms of ideology must be explained through politics.

Since First International and Second International mistake Marx's theory as "economic determinism", Engels tries to correct this simplification of the relationship between the economic base and superstructure to show how the multiple elements exert their influences in the historical process.

It is in the interaction of all these factors and amidst an unending multitude of fortuities (i.e. of things and events whose intrinsic interconnections are so remote or so incapable of proof that we can regard them as non-existent and ignore them) that the economic trend ultimately asserts itself as something inevitable.

(Engels, 2010:35)

[A]nd thus the whole thing is the wrong way up. And it seems to me self-evident that this inversion which, in as much as it is not recognised, constitutes what we call an *ideological view*, reacts in its turn on the economic base and may, within certain limits, modify the same.

(Engels, 2010:61)

Engels emphasizes not only the interactions among the elements of the superstructure, but also the efficacy of ideology in the historical process. He refines and deepens this concept and does some preparation work on how to view ideology in the society of proletarian dictatorship.

Since the first phase of communist society of proletarian dictatorship through the revolution led by Lenin gradually gets completed, ideology and the theories about it experience a rather realistic turn.<sup>3</sup> "Ideology is no longer a necessary distortion which conceals contradictions but becomes a neutral concept referring to the political consciousness of classes, including the proletarian class" (Bottomore, 1991:250).<sup>4</sup> With a larger coverage, ideology becomes a neutral and descriptive concept.<sup>5</sup>

Lenin emphasizes the significance of revolutionary theories in guiding the revolutionary practice. In his opinion, "Without the revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement" (Lenin, 1978:25). He thinks that "There could not have been Social-Democratic consciousness among the workers. It would have to be brought to them from without" (Lenin, 1978:31). In Russia, the revolutionary theories constructed by the intellectuals with scientific thoughts lay an important foundation for the revolution. Though many Social Democrats highly appreciate the spontaneity of labour movement, Lenin holds a different opinion:

Since there can be no talk of an independent ideology formulated by the working masses themselves in the process of their movement, the only choice is—either bourgeois or socialist ideology. There is no middle course (for mankind has not created a “third” ideology, and, moreover, in a society torn by class antagonisms there can never be a non-class or an above-class ideology).

(Lenin, 1978:40–41)

Lenin puts forward proletarian ideology as an alternative to bourgeois ideology. Since then, ideology is no longer the “illusions” of the ruling class, but the mental production of the revolutionary intellectuals which represents the conflicts between the two classes. From a negative term to a descriptive term, ideology extends its connotations and meets the new requirements of the practices of class struggles.

To construct the proletarian ideology, Lenin proposes “scientific ideology” as the guiding principle and illustrates its party spirit.<sup>6</sup> He regards literature and art as a part of the career of the proletariat. Therefore, literature and art of the party should show party spirit, which represents proletarian ideology. He does not discuss ideology in a general sense, instead, he puts it in the realistic and specific class struggles. Under such a tense situation, as a kind of social ideology, literature and art of the party should make their contributions to the production of proletarian ideology.

### **Ideology in Western theories**

Lenin’s theories exert deep influences on the subsequent development of ideology. Up till now, “Lenin’s conception became most influential and has played a crucial role in shaping new contributions to the subject ever since” (Bottomore, 1991:250). The significance of his theories lies in that he provides a neutral perspective to view ideology. However, it may also lead to the generalization of this concept when it is adopted by other theories.

Among Lenin and other Western Marxist theorists of ideology, Lukács is the one that must be mentioned. He shifts the focus from the fields closely related to class struggles such as economy and politics to the ones of culture and philosophy. His emphasis on the independence of ideology frees it from the role as a political instrument.<sup>7</sup> In *History and Class Consciousness*, he proposes that the key to the struggles of the proletariat is to resist the materialization of the bourgeoisie. He puts forward “the point of view of totality” (Lukács, 1971:27) based on “the fate of the revolution (and with it, the fate of mankind)” (Lukács, 1971:70). For Lukács, only when the class of proletariat realize it, can they manage an overall grasp of capitalist social reality beyond the restriction of materialization. In the field of literature and art, he regards “aesthetic reflection”<sup>8</sup> as the intermediate between literature and reality, which is a full reflection of reality in the unity of subject and object.

Almost at the same time, Gramsci also shows great interests in the superstructure of Marxism. He puts forward “ideological leadership” and establishes a theory on the relationship between the ideological struggles and the function of state powers. Gramsci proposes to construct “national-popular” literature. According to him, “Literature does not generate literature, etc.; in other words, ideologies do not create ideologies” (Gramsci, 2007:48). The creation of new literature must involve the revolutionary activity that creates “new man” and “new relationships” (Gramsci, 2007:48).<sup>9</sup> In Western countries, this kind of activity is the battle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie for the ideological leadership. In this sense, the revolutionary activity of the proletariat in the West (which refers to Italy here) is closely associated with “national-popular” literature.

Both Lukács and Gramsci concern the opposition between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and associate ideology with practical class struggles. After them, however, the focus of Western Marxism almost gets fully transferred to the superstructure that is far away from the revolutionary practices of the proletariat. Ironically, ideology becomes a term like “illusion” illustrated by Bacon. It provides a perspective for the scholars to interpret how the powers function in ideology, senses, ideals and discourses secretly and help reveal the truth of modernity. Following Lukács and Gramsci, Western Marxists mainly conduct the studies of ideology in two dimensions. First, as a part of the social structure, ideology has practical functions in the process of social production. Second, by recording all kinds of efforts and illusions of “human liberation”, it contributes to the self-recognition of human beings.

In the critiques of Western Marxists, ideology plays an increasing important role and even becomes quasi-materialistic. Regarding the capitalist mode of production as a kind of ideology, the Frankfurt School conducts a type of social and cultural criticism. They deem that the exchangeability and measurability of free exchange contains the “principle of identity” and false needs which create a mythology that controls the mental production and material production of the capitalistic society. Adorno regards the “principle of identity” as the key to this mythology. Both the material elements related to the market and the mental elements of people in the market are abstracted by the exchange value. Even the most individual aspects such as the taste in art are not fully shaped by individuals, but by the exchange rules, which reflects modern capitalist society’s control over people. Therefore, Adorno and Horkheimer criticize the “formula” of culture industry in modern capitalism. “Although operating only with effects, it subdues their unruliness and subordinates them to the formula, which supplants the work” (Horkheimer and Adorno, 2002:99). What’s worse, people have no idea of their situation. They form the habit when being controlled, and then they obey and even protect the “formula”. The ideology that creates false ideas and conceals the truth exerts “pressure” to other consciousness and exposes the powerlessness of people which brings about a rather pessimistic

view towards modern capitalist mode of production. “Negative Dialectics” and negative theories of art are applied as the ways to resist the pressure of ideology. “Negativity” even defines art. Adorno proposes “negativity” as a rival to ideology and hopes it can remain independent.

Unlike other Western Marxists, Marcuse distrusts and feels disappointed towards all the critical theories about modern capitalist society. He opposes literature and art with ideology. To him, aesthetic feelings or “imagination” can get rid of the control of ideology, and it is the form that makes literature and art independent from the disorders and miseries of reality. Therefore, great political potential lies in the form itself. His understandings of ideology are negative and his critical theories are pessimistic, so his ideas on literature and art show a tendency of closed formalism.

Habermas, a representative figure in the second generation of the Frankfurt School, makes a detailed elaboration on “science and technology as ideology”. This phenomenon appears in the second stage of capitalism (“Post-Industrial Society” or “Advanced Industrial Society”) when science and technology serve for the invisible political rules. “Technocratic consciousness” is an extreme product of ideology (Habermas, 1989:111) based on science and technology, under which the principles of people’s “life-world” are assimilated by sensibility of technology and the “understanding” and “unity” among people are damaged. Habermas thinks it necessary to raise the position of “communicative action” with people’s aesthetic experiences in literature and art. Therefore, his goal is to achieve “communicative rationality” which dissolves the violence hidden in communicative spaces. That explains why he supports modern literary ideas that shows “negativity” and criticizes postmodernism for losing itself in consumerism. In general, by bringing science and technology which are primary productive forces into ideology, Habermas emphasizes their roles as material forces and remind people the invisible combination of ideology and the economic base. But the applicability of his “communicative rationality” aestheticism and its influences on literature and art still needs to be proved.

The quasi-material position of ideology can also be seen in a system that is prior to individuals and controls their thoughts and practices. In “Ideological State Apparatuses” illustrated by Althusser, religion, education, political system, labour union, mass media, culture and art and sports activities, though not controlled directly by the government, are all in the system of “State Apparatuses”, which makes sure ideology can exert its influence on these fields. In this sense, ideology is no longer the battle field of the classes. Instead, it helps “reproduce the production relations” in the economic base. Althusser proposes “imaginary relationship” and puts forward two ideas to illustrate how it works. First, ideology exists not only in a class society but also in a classless society (Althusser, 1969:236). Second, ideology has been “generalized”. “Imaginary relationship”, as the intermediate between reality and “a will”, “a hope” or “a nostalgia”, brings many things related to consciousness into ideology. On the other hand, the capitalist ideology

“consists of this play on the word *freedom*” (Althusser, 1969:235). Under the cover of “freedom” and “equality”, the bourgeoisie exploit the proletariat. Therefore, the practice of defining “ideology” by “imaginary relations” may finally make it a philosophical concept which allows for numerous explanations. The practice of searching for the meanings of it becomes a pure academic activity of looking for the semantic shifts and metaphors in the linguistic signs of “the signifier” and “the signified”. It is quite different from the ideological criticism of Marx and Engels which has great significance in class struggles.<sup>10</sup>

With Althusser’s efforts, ideology finally enters the field of productivity and is regarded as a material force by Western Marxists. During this process, ideology is often denied by aesthetics, which is doubted by the subsequent scholars. Can aesthetics get rid of the influences of ideology?

After sorting out the six definitions of ideology and exploring its original context, Eagleton insists on regarding it as neutral, and believes that the way for ideology to deal with the relationship between the being and consciousness can reveal the “material conflicts” (Eagleton, 2004:79) through decoding and deciphering. Influenced by Althusser who explains “ideology” with “imagery relations”, Eagleton regards it as a kind of illusion and discovers the irrationality in it. When studying the European thoughts, he discovers that “aesthetics is thus always a contradictory, self-undoing sort of project” (Eagleton, 2004:2). The construction of aesthetic ideas is closely related to the construction of various forms of dominant ideology. On the other hand, “the aesthetic, understood in a certain sense, provides an unusually powerful challenge and alternative to these dominant ideological forms” (Eagleton, 2004:3). He associates aesthetics with two dimensions of ideology. Therefore, “aesthetic” can neither deny ideology totally (as scholars like Adorno and Marcuse describe), nor be fully “assimilated” by the generalized ideology to the extent that only by the reconstruction of “rationalization of communicative action” can the unity of “the truth of statement”, “the intention of the good” and “the true life” be achieved.<sup>11</sup> When dealing with the relationship between literature and art and ideology, he opposes the reductionism which holds the view that “any historical or ideological contextualization of art whatsoever is *ipso facto* reductionist” (Eagleton, 2004:4). He also does not agree with the view of regarding literature and art totally independent of ideology without class attribute. The form of literature and art, one of the most concerned aspects of aesthetics and one of the fields in which ideology exerts a lot of its influences, becomes the focus of Eagleton.<sup>12</sup>

Based on the different understandings and the analysis of them from diverse perspectives, Jameson summarizes seven types of ideologies. He deems that those types represent the changes of the focusses of the scholars, and it is unnecessary to judge which one is the best. His position is a neutral one from the perspective of knowledge. Therefore, he regards Marxism as a series of ideologies as well. His research method is applying the ideologies of

Marxism to analyze the three types of capitalist cultures (realism, modernism and post-modernism). Different forms of culture are different structures of ideologies that reflect the corresponding capitalist modes of production (market capitalism, imperialist capitalism and late capitalism). With a historical view, Jameson discovers the coexistence of different ideologies in the phases of capitalist development. Therefore, he proposes a synchronic study with spatial juxtaposition to replace the diachronic one. In his study of specific cultural forms, Jameson puts forward “political unconsciousness” to show the invisibility of ideology. He argues that “political unconsciousness” can be analyzed by the “homology” between the different structural levels such as productivity, relations of production, economy, laws, politics, ideology and culture and modes of production. Because these levels are mediations of one another and the process of “transcoding” is involved among them (Jameson, 2002:25). In this sense, the invisibility of ideology can not only find its origin in the productivity and relations of production but also can be seen in the laws or politics. It reflects “over determination”<sup>13</sup> which is applied in literary and cultural study by Jameson. In this kind of analysis, he discovers that the work of art is “no longer unified or organic, but now a virtual grab bag or lumber room of disjoined subsystems and random raw materials and impulses of all kinds” (Jameson, 1992:31). His elucidation of ideology expands its scope of application but may also lead to the generation of it. To identify the ideology in them, literary works are dissembled into the allusions of the structural levels and their interactions. Sometimes, the cultural and ideological attributes in literature and art are so fascinating that people may ignore the other attributes of them.

### **Ideology in Chinese literary criticism**

In the early 20th century, the concept of “ideology” was translated and introduced from Japan to China by scholars such as Li Dazhao (Li, 2003:310–313). Later, when the left-wing theorists like Li Chuli and Cheng Fangwu vigorously advocated “Revolutionary Literature”, ideology was always applied in the definition of literature. Though several significant attempts have been made by Chinese scholars to generate the meanings of it in the context of contemporary Chinese literary criticism, compared with how Marx and Engels discuss it in their works, there are some displacements in these generations.

Most of the Chinese and Western scholars who study the meanings of ideology in the classic works of Marx share a view that this concept is applied in at least the following three occasions. In *German Ideology*, which refutes the idealist philosophy, ideology is criticized for “reversing” the relationship between the theories and real life. Second, it is understood as a neutral element in the social structure of “economic base/superstructure”. At last, as a kind of “critical philosophy”, it is regarded as the “culture of the alienated society” with alertness and reflection. To get a full picture of ideology in the

works of Marx, Engels, and Lenin, related contexts such as the ruling class and ideology, fetishism, the proletariat's class consciousness and leadership, modern industry and science and technology, religion, social thought and other aspects must be considered.

### *The displacement of ideology when it enters China*

In contemporary Chinese literary criticism, as an important approach to literature, ideology is understood mainly from the perspective of classical Marxism. It seems that to locate and analyze ideology in discourses in classic Marxist works is enough for us to understand its meanings. But as a dynamic term, ideology plays an important role in the construction of literary theories. So, it is necessary for us to explore the whole process of its development.

Ideology was translated and introduced into Chinese academic circles and gained some popularity under the influence of *New Youth*. But its meanings were not certain at that time. In domestic academic circles, due to the inadequate translation of the works of Marxism and Chinese nation's urgent need for a way out, the understanding of the essence of Marxism was inevitably biased without a clear and credible explanation of this new concept (Dong Xuewen and Ling Yujian, 2008). In the school of "Revolutionary Literature", the relationship between literature and art and ideology was even simplified as "literature is a kind of ideology" (Li Chuli, 1979:35).

The statement above suggests that literature and art are subordinate to and a reflection of ideology. The application of Marxist ideology theory in defining the essence of literature provides undoubtedly a new perspective when drawing on the Western ideological and theoretical resources, which echoes the position of literature in the social structure. But the theorists of "Revolutionary Literature" use ideology literally without a complete clarification of the logical structure of the Marxist theory of ideology. Therefore, a displacement between its application and its original essence occurs. Of course, if viewed from the perspective of "misreading", the displacement is inevitable. However, the effects of the displacement should be and deserve to be studied. First, ideology is regarded as a general term instead of a specific term. Second, theorists of "Revolutionary Literature" fail to locate the theory of ideology in Marx and Engels's theoretical system.

The rough translation at that time might explain part of the story. Based on the documents and the studies of some scholars, instead of "social ideology", ideology was literally understood as the "form" of "consciousness" in the articles of Qu Qiubai, Li Da, Li Chuli and others. For example, in "Marx's Historical Materialism" in the fifth issue of *New Youth* (Volume 6), "the form of consciousness" was defined as the overwhelming spiritual trend in the society, which referred to the state of consciousness of human beings (Yuan Quan, 1919:62-69). It is obvious that at that time, the academic circles did not reach a clear definition of ideology. The main reason

might lie in that as “a theory of social evolution” (1919:62–69), it could serve as the theoretical basis for Chinese revolution. Compared with the urgent need of revolution, the prudential analysis of the internal relations in the social structure was not so important. The confusion between “ideology” and “form of consciousness” was also influenced by the political claim of “Revolutionary Literature” in the 1920s and 1930s. Since *German Ideology* was not published until the mid-1920s, the lack of historical documents made it difficult for the first two generations of Marxists, including Lenin, to have a comprehensive understanding of Marx and Engels’s theory of ideology. Most of the theorists in China at that time, especially the advocates of “Revolutionary Literature”, accepted Lenin’s theory of ideology. They strongly supported his association of ideology with class interests and party organizations. On the other hand, in the school of “Revolutionary Literature”, there was already a voice that “our movement must let the proletariat have their voices in literature” (Guo, 1979:390), which reflected their burning passion to include literature as a part of social and historical revolution. Under such a tense situation, before they could figure out literature as an “ideology” or a “form of consciousness” carefully, the advocates of “Revolutionary Literature” used literature as a weapon for class propaganda, which echoed the revolutionary pragmatism at that time.

Due to the lack of documents and the influence of revolutionary pragmatism, the second kind of displacement happened in the understanding of the Marxist theory of ideology. The position of ideology in the structure of “economic base/superstructure” did not receive enough attention at that time. From the discussion of this structure in *Preface to the Critique of Political Economy* cited by Li Dazhao in his article “My Marxist View” in 1919, to the etymological study of the term in the first issue of *Cultural Criticism* in 1928 by Creation Society which obviously still used this structure, scholars at that time were quite familiar with the discourses of Marx and Engels about ideology in which they confirmed the dominant position of the economic base in the capitalist social structure and expressed the idea that “it is their social being that determines their consciousness”(Marx, 1987:263). The concept of “ideology”, however, was not their focus. Even the “forms of social consciousness” which was roughly translated as “social ideology” at that time was just mentioned as an element corresponding to a certain economic base (“the corresponding realistic basis”). In addition, Marx also mentioned that “the spiritual life”, the part most closely related to the discussion of literature, was “restricted” by “the mode of the production of material life”. The efficacy of ideology was not highlighted in this quotation. The main reason for Chinese theoretical circles to quote it frequently was to demonstrate the practicality of ideology, and then to prove that literature could directly participate in social changes. This intention was not so consistent with Marx and Engels’s works. The manuscripts of Marx and Engels which were gradually published later showed that the theory of ideology experienced three distinct stages.

From the very early critique of religion to the unmasking of mystified economic appearances and of seemingly libertarian and equalitarian principles, there is a remarkable consistency in Marx's understanding of ideology. The idea of a double inversion, in consciousness and reality, is retained throughout.

(Bottomore, 1991:249)

Marx mainly viewed ideology critically and negatively, while "Revolutionary Literature" in China emphasized the constructive functions of it as an attribute of literature, and highlighted its direct reaction to the revolution. This inconsistency cannot be simply regarded as a misunderstanding. But a certain degree of displacement does occur. It can be said that in the early attempts of defining literature with ideology in Chinese literary criticism, its meanings are still unstable.

***The constructive participation of ideological attributes of literature in Chinese social and historical practices***

Like "Revolutionary Literature" in the early 1920s and 1930s which applied ideology in the positioning of literature, Mao Zedong emphasized the practical functions of ideology in literature and art and their constructive roles in the revolutionary struggles.

Mao Zedong's views on ideology and literature and art are greatly influenced by Lenin's. Lenin's ideas about the "party spirit" of proletarian literature and art can easily find its trace in Mao Zedong's literary thoughts. For example, they both believe the necessity of creating culture belonging to the proletariat, and regard literature and art as "the cogs and wheels in the whole revolutionary machine" (Mao Zedong, 1967:86). Based on the existing literature, Mao Zedong's applications of ideology roughly went through two phases. In the first phase, it was used explicitly. In the second phase, it was used to substitute other similar terms such as culture, conceptual form, and ideological system. Therefore, when reading Mao Zedong's works, we should distinguish these different expressions in the two phases carefully.

In his discussion of the relationship between literature and ideology, Mao Zedong not only confirmed the decisive role of the economic base on ideology as other scholars who adopted historical materialism did, but also highlighted the core position of politics in the superstructure and regarded it as a bridge that connected the superstructure and the economic base. He argued that "Only through politics can the needs of the class and the masses find expression in concentrated form" (Mao Zedong, 1967:87). The "needs" can be regarded not only as the collective demand of "the class and the masses" but also as a quasi-ideology without theorization. Therefore, when reflecting and being reflected, politics and quasi-ideology handed over the powers to each other. The diverse and complex needs of "class and the masses" were inevitably integrated, generalized and simplified. At that time, politics in

China referred not only to the intense class struggles but also the ideological struggles. Politics was another name of ideology. Since they both belonged to the superstructure, politics provided a good reason for literature and art to take part in the struggles. During the revolutionary war, the relationship between literature and politics was expressed as “literature and art are subordinate to politics” (Mao Zedong, 1967:86) and this statement even influenced the definition of literature. In literary criticism, the understanding of politics was also narrowed, which violated Mao Zedong’s significant but ignored idea of “not the politics of a few so-called statesmen” (Mao Zedong, 1967:86).<sup>14</sup> The damage of the complexity of ideology and the narrowed understandings of politics might be one of the reasons for the later emergence of utilitarianism.

Based on these understandings of ideology in China, Mao Zedong emphasizes the practical functions of ideology by putting forward a requirement that literature and art should be “created” for and “used” by the masses (Mao Zedong, 1967:84). Lenin’s ideology theory contains the idea that the intellectuals produce the advanced culture to educate the proletariat. Mao Zedong’s literary thoughts inherit and develop it under the specific conditions in China. He distinguishes “the more advanced literature and art required by the cadres among the masses” and “the elementary literature and art required by the overwhelming majority of the masses” and emphasizes that “the advanced” one should guide the “elementary” one. To ensure that the proletariat leads the literature, literary criticism should let the “art of a lower level be gradually raised to a higher and art which does not meet the demands of the struggle of the broad masses be transformed into art that does” (Mao Zedong, 1967:89). This echoes with Mao Zedong’s emphasis on “people” in his literary thoughts, which attaches great importance to the leadership of the proletariat on culture. This idea is derived from the realistic need of the revolutionary struggles in China at that time. The urgency of class struggles requires that the productive forces with ideological attributes be transformed into the leadership in the ideological field directly and quickly, and become one of the powers in the revolutionary struggles. Therefore, the causal connection between literature and art with ideological attributes and ideology is established, and then they are regarded as interchangeable terms. Mao Zedong’s use of ideology and other alternative concepts (such as culture, ideological system, conception and so on) in the two phases is a theoretical practice of this understanding.

In Mao Zedong’s literary thoughts, the relationship between literature and art and ideology echoes the urgency of Chinese revolutionary struggles, and some of his arguments and expressions reflect the special historical era. It is the development of Marxism with respecting of its basic rules under specific historical conditions.

Since the late 1970s, how to define literature became a major focus in literary criticism once again. In contrast with the previous ways, the theorists began to seek possibilities in epistemology, symbolism, art production theory and aesthetic ideology. As one of the theoretical bases, the theory

of ideology became a hot topic at that time. Starting with the article "On the Relationship Between Superstructure and Ideology" (Zhu Guangqian, 1979:27–31) by Zhu Guangqian, the debate on whether ideology belonged to the superstructure lasts for many years, and finally came to an end with the topic changed to "the ideological and non-ideological attributes of literature" (Wang Yuanxiang, 1989:54–62). An extraordinary enthusiasm for logical speculation arose in the discussion of the relationship between ideology and the superstructure in the 1980s, which was related to the reflection on the relationship between literature and politics in the fields of philosophy, aesthetics and history of thought. Its root, however, lay in the clarification of Marxist literary theories<sup>15</sup> and the appealing for the relative independence of literature and literary theories, although some of them needed further discussion.<sup>16</sup> After this discussion, most of the scholars acknowledged the ideological attributes of literature and art.

In the last two decades of the 20th century, the discussions of ideology in the context of contemporary Chinese literary theory did not match its position in the theoretical system. In general, the scholars carry out various studies on ideology and manage noticeable achievements, including the analysis of classic documents and the discrimination of the Western Marxist theories of ideology. Most of these studies, however, do not develop into large-scale discussions on a common topic. As one of the keywords in literary theory, ideology has been mentioned repeatedly, but the uses and the studies of the concept are still not enough. When it is used to redefine literature, notions such as "literature is a kind of social ideology" and "literature reflects ideology" form and spread. For a time, the focus of academic circles is not on whether ideology is applicable in the positioning of literature, but on how to narrow the scope of it in literary theories more precisely, taking its legality for granted. Some scholars define literature as an aesthetic reflection of life. Regarding literature as a kind of aesthetic ideology can achieve a complementary effect by striking a balance between aesthetic quality (common in reflection theory) and ideological attributes (specific in reflection theory). But considering ideology as self-evident may lead to the lack of etymological study on it when it is regarded as a new perspective to view literature.

Although the understandings of ideology are vague in the Chinese context, aesthetic ideology still meets the requirements of that time and suggests a turn in its correction of "instrumentalism in politics" in literary criticism. It promotes the rapid transformation of contemporary Chinese literary theory, and encourages the scholars to start cautious analysis, bold questioning, and careful verification of ideology. One of their primary tasks is to restore its connotations in the classic works. Some scholars notice very early that "in the traditional textbooks of China, ideology is literally understood as 'forms of consciousness' and those forms such as philosophy and art are epistemologically understood and simply judged" (Zhuang Guoxiong, 1988:77–81). At least two facts can be identified here. The first is the confusion of "ideology" and "forms of consciousness". The other is the

simplification of the relationship between ideology and the economic base due to the inadequate understandings of ideology. Some scholars argue that ideology in Marx' theories is not a mirror of the economic base, but an inversion of the relationship between the two. The fact undoubtedly raises a question worthy of deep reflection: Can ideology get rid of the context and be neutralized? Many scholars also notice the similar problems, pointing out that the understandings of ideology in Chinese context sometimes do not accord with the full picture in the classic works.<sup>17</sup> In the meantime, some scholars make a retrospective study of the evolution of ideology in Chinese and Western Marxist theories.<sup>18</sup> They try to view ideology from different perspectives and have achieved a lot, which is of great significance for the application of aesthetic ideology in the definition of literature.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the discussion of ideology arose again. Its focus is the legality of defining literature with "aesthetic ideology", which reveals a tendency in the academic circles to return to the classic Marxist theory of ideology. As some scholars say:

I have a clear feeling that this discussion of the theory of literary ideology shows a distinctive feature of hermeneutics. The two sides no longer put emphasis on what literature is, but on how to interpret it and why it can be interpreted in that way. During the interpretation, the context, process and effects become the focuses.

(Ma Jianhui, 2007:22-26)

In other words, the discussion cares not much about what literature is, but highly concerns about the combination of the terms like "aesthetic", "ideology", "aesthetic consciousness", "ideology" and "forms of consciousness". Because at that time, it was urgent to find a way for the innovation and development of contemporary Chinese literary theory by clarifying the concepts and categories. During this process, the meanings of ideology in the discourse of Chinese literary theory need further discussion.

The complexity of classic Marxist documents on ideology makes it quite difficult for a clear location of the term. In addition, its great theoretical vitality also allows for multiple interpretations. From this point of view, if we define literature as an ideology without dissecting, we can never arrive at a clear definition and may turn literature into boundless cultural code translations. Therefore, when dealing with the basic question of literary theory, to use ideology to define literature or to use literature to verify the penetrating forces of ideology may answer the question whether there is a boundary for literary study.

### ***Ideology and contemporary Chinese literary criticism***

Since its entering the academic field, ideology is inevitably adopted in literary study. Although it faces some doubts from terminators at present, there

is still a large space for its interpretation and it shows vigorous vitality to evolve with the change of historical conditions. Sorting out and drawing on the existing theories of ideology can help promote literary study.

*Inspirations and warnings of Western Marxist theories of ideology*

Western Marxist theories of ideology under new historical conditions are the interpretations and developments of Marxism, especially the Marxist theory of ideology. Facing new situations and problems, Western Marxists place their focus on the ideological level. Their achievements provide both inspirations and warnings for the development of Chinese theory of ideology.

It is obvious that Western Marxism attaches great importance of ideology to the social structure. In classic Marxism, ideology is an element in the structure of economic base and superstructure. It can be said that to elucidate the ultimate decisive power of the economic base is the main intention of Marxism. For Western Marxism, however, since the great changes of both the economic base and the superstructure in the Western society may not happen in at least the near future, scholars turn their eyes to the ideological level that can influence both. With the efforts of many scholars, ideology finds itself in many fields such as productivity (Habermas) and aesthetics (Eagleton), which proves its important position in the social structure. In the meantime, the multilevel studies also strive for and succeed in a considerable extent in proving that when the social structure is relatively stable, to study ideology, to explain and to reveal the details of it may help shed light on the economic, political and cultural realities from a more profound perspective.

Western Marxist theories of ideology also reveal the ideological attributes of culture. Although Lenin has already made it clear that there are cultures belonging to different ideologies, he simply defines ideology and cultural production as the guiding principles and production practices. Later, with the development of cultural industry in Western countries, the connection between ideology and culture gets subtler. Western Marxists reveal that popular culture seems to be democratic and free, but people are spiritually paralyzed in a magic nightmare created by the production mode of capitalist industrialization. With Western modern culture born in Enlightenment facing more and more questionings, many scholars, including Western Marxists, find it necessary to review Enlightenment and the culture deriving from it critically. It should be admitted that the ideology which manipulates the operation of modern Western culture is the liberation of "people" put forward by the bourgeoisie which has been highly praised for the past three or four hundred years. The theories of ideology put the Western culture under examination, thus reveal the complex connection between culture and ideology. They remind people of being critical in the all-round encirclement of culture.

In addition to drawing on the various achievements of Western Marxist theories of ideology, Chinese theorists should also be vigilant about their practices of pushing ideology into a quasi-material level. Although Western Marxists' focus on ideology is resulted by specific conditions, certain deviation from Marxism do occur in their practices. They return to Bacon's "idols" of knowledge discovering. As some of them has predicted, they regress "from a theory joined with historical practice to abstract, speculative thought: From the critique of political economy to philosophy" (Marcuse, 2007:xlv). Under the situation in which the economic base cannot be changed through class struggles, which means the material revolutionary forces and achievements cannot be acquired, Western Marxists raise the status of ideology in the social structure. Although pushing ideology to a quasi-material level is partially due to the characteristics of modern Western ideology itself, we may still discover the illusion of Western Marxists to substitute quasi-material ideology for material production. In this sense, there will be no need for class struggles or revolutionary practices in the Western countries because the transformation of production relations can be fully completed at the ideological level. This prospect seems not more advanced than Hegel's inversion of philosophy and history criticized by Marx and Engels. The relative independence of ideology and its counteraction to the economic base have been magnified by Western Marxists and we must remain critical to it.

In addition, the hermeneutic tendency in contemporary Western Marxists' study of ideology, which is mainly reflected in the neutralized research methods, also influences the understandings of ideology in Chinese theoretical circles. In the chapter of "Ideology" in *Marxism and Literature*, Raymond Williams points out that the common use of ideology in the relatively neutral sense is one of the various tendencies in the 20th century (Williams, 1977:69). And it is widely used as "a general term to describe not only the products but the processes of all signification, including the signification of values" (Williams, 1977:70), so its natural link with "a world of sensations" deserves enough attention and study. Ideological criticism shows great potential in the processes of social signification from "a world of sensations" to the "conceptions, thoughts and ideas". Based on the thoughts of Western scholars and Chinese cultural traditions, some Chinese scholars predict the potential of ideological criticism in the sense of hermeneutics.

As a style of literature and art, neo-ideological criticism analyzes the aesthetic illusions in literature and art to reveal the relationship between art and social life based on the theory of ideology, thus achieve the aesthetic realm in which individuals and the environment, individuals and groups can interact with each other.

(Wang Yulan, 2001:12–16)

The "aesthetic realm" and "social life" are not only the "real world" emphasized by Western scholars but also the unique products of literature and art

in the process of “signifying process”. It reflects Chinese scholars’ prediction of Chinese form in ideological criticism after the concept of ideology is viewed in a broader way.

*The neutralization of ideology in contemporary Chinese literary criticism*

In contemporary Chinese literary theories, the neutral position of ideology in value orientation deserves a careful analysis. In Marxism, the neutralization of ideology refers to its position in the social structure in the theories of political economy, instead of the absence of moral standards in its specific uses.

First, the tendency of the neutralization of ideology appears in the classic writings of Marx. His different usages of ideology in different historical periods clearly show the neutral meanings of it as a part of social structure. Second, the context of contemporary Chinese literary criticism plays a crucial role in the neutralization of ideology. When social and political changes are promoted through literature, it is necessary to build a direct connection between literature and the economic base or social progress with the help of ideology. Therefore, the other meanings of it may not be given enough attention. In return, the neutralization of ideology also exerts profound influences on contemporary Chinese literary criticism.

Under such an academic background, there is a statement that “Literature is a kind of ideology”, which regards literature as neutral as well. Influenced by such opinion, the diversity of standards in literary criticism gradually leads to the absence of judgment. This tolerance may easily bring about an exhibition of critical techniques without moral restrictions. On the other hand, the understanding of “aesthetic ideology” also shows a simplified correspondence of “aesthetic” with “form” and “ideology” with “content”. In this sense, the Marxist theoretical base of “economic base/superstructure” may be lost. In summary, the neutralization of ideology in the context of contemporary Chinese literary criticism does not fully match its meanings.

The neutralization of ideology in its practical uses is greatly influenced by the generalized understandings of it in contemporary Chinese literary theory circles for quite a long time. They are even causal to each other. Ideology allows the neutralized understanding of it, therefore a relatively moderate environment is created for the construction of this new theory on the essence of literature. In the meantime, since ideology has been regarded as self-evident for a long time, the lack of communication between different theories brings about various misunderstandings and ideology is neutralized (or even vulgarized) inevitably.

The understandings of ideology in contemporary Chinese literary criticism is mainly based on “Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy” of Marx, in which he interprets this concept from the perspective of social structure. Therefore, literary ideas and theories should

be consistent with it. Only in this way can we ensure the self-consistency of the theory, and manage breakthroughs. Of course, things can be viewed from various perspectives. The social structure is only one of the approaches to literature. But if we adopt Marxist theory of ideology in the definition of literature, we should adhere to the structure of “economic base/superstructure” and the neutralization of ideology should follow this logic. In the meantime, the study of this core concept which has great theoretical potentials should be deepened consistently.

Since the argument over ideology in contemporary Chinese literary theory continues, in addition to being alert to the increasingly generalized understandings of ideology in Western Marxist literary theories, we can also adopt the achievements of other disciplines such as philosophy. Through distinguishing the falsity of ideology in epistemological sense from the functions it may perform in social practices, we can clarify the relationship between this complex concept and literature (Wang Xiaosheng, 2010:5–12). To acknowledge the ideological attributes of literature may be a constructive response to the neutralization and generalization of ideology.

Being negative and critical, ideology has become one of the marks of ideological criticism in the works of classic Marxism and Western Marxism. When cultural studies enjoy great popularity, criticisms that expose the relationship between cultural text and capitalist relations of production appear. With great theoretical depth and breadth, criticisms such as New Historicism Criticism, Feminist Criticism and Postcolonial Criticism all belong to this type. For contemporary Chinese literary criticism, to learn from their different approaches to ideological criticism may be more instructive than to use these theories directly in the interpretation of contemporary Chinese cultural and literary text. Because in the context of contemporary China, ideology is more constructive than negative.

Based on the relationship between ideology and the superstructure and the economic base in Marxism, “changes happening quickly or slowly” and the “unbalanced” relations have provided constructive possibilities in the relative independence of ideology. In China, where Marxism is the dominant ideology, ideological criticism is different from the one in Western political and cultural context whose purpose is to reveal the connection between the “social domination” and the “subjective position” (Zizek, 1994:8). In Western political culture, the social domination and its subjective position have an invisible opposite which is being controlled by them. In general, the dominant ideology of China seeks to express the understandings and expectations of various social strata towards the social being. So, the ideological criticism in China is constructive rather than critical. The constructive power of ideology, on the one hand, lies in that with its neutral connotations proposed by classic Marxism and interpreted by Leninism, it participates in and promotes the socialist revolutionary struggles. On the other hand, its theoretical system can improve itself consistently. The root of ideology’s constructiveness lies in the socialist revolutionary practices

carried out in China, and the rationality and internal structure of ideology are also related to it.

In the first half of the 20th century, the Chinese revolutionists regarded ideology as a constructive power in the socialist revolution and national liberation. And it gradually exerted deep influences on the self-positioning of modern and contemporary Chinese literature from the phases of “Revolutionary Literature” to “Socialist Literature”. How to deal with the relationship between literature and politics has always been one of the questions to be answered. Although they are not completely the same thing, the former is always the focus of the latter. Since the “New Period”, the direct influences of politics on literature has gradually weakened, but the scholars’ keen explorations on ideological attributes of literature still show their concerns about politics. In the context of Chinese revolution, the concept of “politics” shows the intellectuals’ view on how to participate in social and historical transformation. For example, as a revolutionist, the early Chinese Marxist Li Dazhao regards class struggles as the main content of politics. He divides Marxism into three parts: Theories of history, economy and policy, and considers “theories of policy, also called the theories of socialist movement” as “the theories about the future”, in which “reforming society” is the aim. It means that as the part of Marxism most closely related to the political level, their practical constructive functions have been noticed by the early Marxists in China. From a historical materialist perspective, ideology is an element in the social structure and its aim of participating in the socialist movement is also “reforming society” (Li Dazhao, 2006:18–19). His discovering of the homogeneity between ideology and politics is based on a systematic understanding of Marxism. “It is simply impossible to examine one’s socialism without considering his unique view of history” (Li Dazhao, 2006:19). Chinese Marxists inherit his idea and later they put more and more emphasis on it in the study of Soviet Marxist thoughts. In the field of literature, the constructive function of ideology is interpreted in Mao Zedong’s literary thoughts, especially in his creation method of “two combinations” (the combination of revolutionary realism and revolutionary romanticism). It can be viewed as a realization of ideological utopia in advance in the field of literature and provides transcendence and guidance to social reality, so as to help literature and art play their roles in the construction of social reality. From the literary thought combining the idea of “literature and art must serve the workers, peasants and soldiers” and political priority, the constructive quality of Chinese ideological criticism and the importance attached to people can be seen. Because of its political connotation of “people as the master of the country”, “people” that contemporary Chinese literature serves is different from other similar concepts such as the masses, the civilians or the citizens. Therefore, the importance of people embodied in ideological criticism is manifested in the construction of and reflection on the socialist core value system. In the practices of contemporary Chinese literary criticism, some scholars appeal to reshape the modern literary view

by “rewriting the history of literature”. Some scholars study the relationship between the new trends in new realistic novels and people’s life. Some hold a “discussion on humanity” which concerns about the mental state of the intellectuals in the period of social transformation. Some participate in the practice of mass culture directly from the perspective of cultural studies. Those efforts are all the explorations of the spiritual needs and value criterion of the contemporary Chinese people from the perspective of ideological criticism.

Ideological criticism was once doubted and neglected in the late 20th century. With the introduction of various Western ideological criticisms, however, it comes back to the eyes of Chinese theorists. What’s more, the new resources help deepens the ideological criticism of literary and cultural text. When contemporary Chinese literary criticism gradually stops the imitation of Soviet-Russian and the West and starts self-construction, ideological criticism is more and more popular for its theoretical value and vitality, its correspondence with Chinese traditional culture, and its relevance to Marxism. Having realized the scientificness of ideology criticism based on Marxist historical materialism, the scholars propose the return of ideological criticism in contemporary Chinese literary criticism,<sup>19</sup> the idea of “Neo-ideological Criticism”<sup>20</sup> and “multiple aesthetic ideology criticism”.<sup>21</sup> In these assumptions about the future of ideological criticism, how literature represents the individual’s imaginations of the society has become the focus, which distinguishes it from the previous ones. These ideological criticisms are rooted in the social reality and cultural context of contemporary China. In their practices, the constructiveness of contemporary Chinese social ideology has also been shown.

## Notes

- 1 “If in all ideology men and their relations appear upside-down as in a camera obscura, this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life process as the inversion of objects on the retina does from their physical life-process” (*German Ideology*, p. 42).
- 2 In the letter to Schmidt on 27 October 1890, Engels writes that “in philosophy, for instance, by the operation of economic influences (which again for the most part operate only in their political, etc., guise) on extant philosophical material handed down by predecessors” (*Marx & Engels Collected Works*, pp. 62–63). The metaphor of “political guise” shows how the philosophy and the economic base influence each other.
- 3 The representative figures of Second International hold different views, but they provide inspirations from another perspective for Lenin. Eduard Bernstein, the spiritual leader of Second International and the father of Revisionism, no longer regards Marxism as a critique of ideology, instead, he deems that the theory of ideology should be criticized and revised. Of course, Lenin’s proposal of the ideology of the proletariat is more critical than Bernstein’s confusion with Marxism and bourgeois ideology. The discrimination between them can be seen in Yu, Wujin’s book *yishi xingtai lun (On Ideology)*. Shanghai: shànghǎi chūbǎnshè (Shanghai Publishing House). 1993: 204–206.

- 4 “With Lenin, therefore, the process of change in the meaning of ideology reaches its culmination. Ideology is no longer a necessary distortion of which conceals contradictions but becomes a neutral concept which referring to the political consciousness of the classes, including the proletarian class” (*A Dictionary of Marxist Thought*, p. 250).
- 5 Before Lenin, Plekhanov also tries to understand ideology in a neutral way. He regards it as a general theoretical system and proposes “Social Psychology” as the intermediate between social being and ideology to explain how they interact with each other. He establishes “Five-factor Formula”: (a) the condition of productivity; (b) the economic relations restricted by productivity; (c) social and political system based on a certain economic base; (d) human psychology determined partly by economy and partly by both of social and political system; (e) various ideological system reflecting this kind of psychological characteristics. As the intermediate between “social system” and ideological system”, “Social Psychology” is different from “ideology”. Since the neutralization of “ideology” is completed in the theories of Lenin, the theories of Plekhanov are not discussed in detail here.
- 6 In both *The Socialist Party and Non-party Revolutionism* (1905) and *Marxism and Revisionism* (1908), Lenin proposes “party spirit” as the nature of Marxism. In *Party Organization and Party Literature*, he requires the literature serve the party.
- 7 “The progressive relinquishment of economic or political structures as the central concerns of theory was accompanied by a basic shift in the whole centre of gravity of European Marxism towards *philosophy*. The most striking single fact about the whole tradition from Lukács to Althusser, Korsch to Colletti, is the overwhelming predominance of professional philosophers within it” (*Considerations on Western Marxism*, p. 49).
- 8 The theories of Lukács on realism undergo several changes in his different works. “Aesthetic reflection” gets a relatively full illustration in his later book *Die Eigenart Des Aesthetischen*.
- 9 “They are not generated through ‘parthenogenesis’ but through the intervention of the ‘masculine’ element—history—which is the revolutionary activity that creates ‘new man’ (that is, new social relations)” (*Prison Notebooks*, p. 48). Here, “they” refers to literature and ideology.
- 10 The comment on Althusser by Thomas Bottomore is reasonable. “The Althusserian system, for all its emphasis on materialist science, displayed many of the features of an idealism. It attenuated relationship borne by Marxism, as a developing theory, to the contemporary history of class struggles. In the name of rejecting empiricism, it cloistered knowledge within a wholly circular, self-validating conceptual realm” (*A Dictionary of Marxist Thought*, p. 18).
- 11 Eagleton doubts the proposal of “communicative rationality” by Habermas. “Do not such proposals move at such a rarefied level of abstraction as to be effectively worthless? Can a political ideal really be projected from the supposedly invariable, universal ‘deep structures’ of human conversation?” (*The Ideology of the Aesthetics*, p. 404).
- 12 Eagleton conducts a detailed analysis of the hidden ideological conflicts in the works of Matthew Arnold, George Eliot and Charles Dickens.
- 13 “Overdetermination” is an Althusserian term.
- 14 Mao Zedong emphasizes that “when we say that literature and art are subordinate to politics, we mean class politics, the politics of the masses, not the politics of a few so-called statesmen”.
- 15 Instead of working on the relationship between ideology and superstructure, many essays directly refer to Marxist literary theory. These essays include: Lv, Dshen. (1980). *yǒuguān lishǐ wéiwù zhūyì de yīdiǎn lǐjiě—yǔ zhūguāngqián*

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## 4 Body

*Written by Liu Fang, Translated by Liu Fang*

The word “body” in modern English originates from the Old English word “bodig”. Its definitions, which are closely relevant to human bodies and experience, presented in *New Oxford English-Chinese Dictionary*, roughly fall into three categories. The first group is defined in biological terms. “Body” initially refers to “trunk other than head, neck and limbs” (Pearsall, 2007:227). Later the meaning is gradually expanded to the entire structure of the organism of human beings and animals and even inanimate “corpse”. Since the 12th century, the “body” has been considered as an opposition to the soul and spirit and characterized by human immortality, perceptibility and desires. The first two categories both indicate bodily materiality as it is defined as an organic, objective and natural entity of humans and animals. Different from the plainly biological explanations and its synonyms like trunk and corpse, the second group of definitions of “body” and its synonym “flesh” have individual and experiential implications. They are associated with desires, sensibility, emotions and sex. By the late 13th century, the meaning of body had been again expanded to refer to people. In this sense, the single word “body” does not separate physical body and soul. Instead, it is both an object and a subject.

However, all the definitions listed under the entry cannot fully explain the complexity in the concept of “body”. “Body” has been given “different connotations in different cultural and historical perspectives” (Hawthorn, 1994:24) because a concept is usually generated in a specific context and then endowed with different meanings along the flow of history and cultural evolution. It became a key concept in various modern academic fields in the 20th century when the traditional thinking mode that stressed binary opposition between flesh and spirit lost its vigour. Its rich connotations were first discussed and explored in modern and contemporary Western literary criticism and afterwards body studies were transmitted into China. This paper is to summarize representative ideas of Western body studies and research their transmission and evolution in China.

### **The philosophical background for Western body studies**

The body is not a pure, objective and neutral physical existence living in a vacuum. In its long history of being moulded, the spirit of different times

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has engraved different imprints on it. “The current fascination with the body—its formations, its transformations, and its history—is only the most recent phase and direct consequence of a long *cultivation* of the body in the West” (Porter, 1999:1). This section is to summarize some prevailing views about the body in Western philosophy and illustrate the historical background for the development of modern body studies.

### *Mind-body dualism*

Bodily thinking predominates in ancient Greece and Roman. They create gods and goddesses in myths and art in their own images. And their concern for the flesh is no less than that for the spirit. They endow gods and goddesses with human flaws, emotions and desires. The firm belief in the flesh-and-blood divinities indicates their simple imagination of materialism about the universe and as well as pride in their own bodies and affirmation of human desires. However, ancient Greek-Roman philosophers disapprove of such bodily thinking and the sublimity and beauty of the body. They regard the body as a concrete and sensible substance that is derived from the elements (arche) of water, gas, number or fire. The world of senses is merely the object of consciousness and perceptual knowledge obtained by physical senses can only be opinion rather than truth. Only the mind can grasp Being. Even Democritus, who is quite curious of and amazed at the structure of the human body, ascribes greater value to the soul and spiritual life. He believes that the atom of the soul dissipates just like the body but it is still the noblest and divinest element in man (Zeller, 1889:80).

Different from Democritus, the Pythagoreans degrade the body. They think dirt and beastliness make the body unholy in the process of human creation. Therefore, they practice abstinence and endeavour to get rid of all the bodily means by which the soul is defiled. The binary opposition of the holy mind and the impure body is consolidated by Socrates and Plato. Socrates encourages philosophers to face death calmly in *The Last Days of Socrates*. Only when freed from the body which is inhabited by desires, pleasure and feelings, can the soul pursue truth, goodness, beauty and justice. Inheriting the teacher’s thoughts, Plato suggests that the body is essentially a secular, mortal, short-lived residence of the soul in *Phaedrus*. The body seems to operate autonomously but is actually empowered by the soul. And he thinks that the combination between the body and the soul is a tragedy for the latter. The soul forgets the knowledge of the heaven when it falls down into the body and has to recall Idea with the external stimulation. Nevertheless, the body becomes an obstacle to clear thinking and truth acquisition at this moment as *Phaedo* depicts. The body is either plagued by diseases or constantly perturbed by desires, fears and fantasies so that it obstructs the reminiscence of Idea. Even if the events mentioned above do not occur, the soul is still led astray when it attempts to obtain pure knowledge with the body. For Plato, the body and its senses are so unreliable that the soul can only see the projection of real things and the imperfect facsimile of the realm of Idea.

What's worse, the swelling desires stimulate the irrational part of the soul to pursue pleasure, which gradually destroys the harmony of reason, spirit and desire. In this way, the soul is defiled and excluded by the pure divinity after death and has to wander around until another fall.

Plato depicts the body as a greedy, ignorant, low-grade substance, an obstacle to truth, beauty and goodness, and a grave or prison for the soul. His body-soul dualism is so influential that the body steps into its dark history of being ignored and suppressed in Western philosophy. To a certain degree, Aristotle is critical about Plato's thoughts. He emphasizes the importance of the body as matter for the existence of the soul. And he also affirms that bodily senses initiate human beings into the images of the outside world and then knowledge. However, his critical inheritance does not break through the dualistic thinking mode. The soul still occupies a dominate position in his cosmic hierarchy. Although bound by the body and sensory knowledge, the rational component has great potential.

Mind-body dualism is further developed in medieval Christian philosophy. Both the Plato-Augustinian school and the Aristotle-Aquinas school hold an identical view about the body in spite of all the disagreement over many doctrines and the scrambles for power and wealth. The body is a petty, passive and governed entity while the soul is the first cause of life as told in *Genesis*. In Saint Augustine's words, the body is matter while the soul is form which maintains the integrity of the body (Zhao, 1994:163). Medieval Christian philosophers are different from Plato in that they do not ignore or even belittle the value of the body. They regard the body as a necessary means of existence and life, and believe "the better the physical condition is, the better the soul is" (Fu, 1990:98). The body, as the essential means is defined and dominated by the soul and then the soul submits itself to God.

Another popular view of the body in medieval Christian philosophy is that it is closely connected with sin or evil. For example, Saint Augustine defines the body as a container of desires which is the root of human evils in his autobiographical discussion. He confesses that he is tempted by various desires, including desires for materials, power and sex, in different life phases. These infectious desires of the flesh tear his soul and erode his mind until the order of God, the soul and the body are inverted. When human beings indulge in bodily temptations, they sin. If man faces God, the earthly body must be overcome. Therefore, medieval Christian philosophers require people to live an austere life and purify the soul. It cannot be denied that asceticism is conducive to the restoration and promotion of morality and ethics of that age. But self-control, abstinence, meditation, prayer, celibacy, fasting, and austerity strangle all the vigour of life. As Bertrand Russell says, "[t]he life of the good here below was a pilgrimage to the heavenly city; nothing of value was possible in the sublunary world except the steadfast virtue that would lead, in the end, to eternal bliss" (Russell, 1967:305).

The suppression of the body in medieval Christian philosophy is largely replaced by the extolment of love and sex in Renaissance literature and art.

But the humanistic celebration of the flesh is so transient that the body is soon interrogated by knowledge and expelled by reason in scientific exploration. René Descartes believes that the soul and the body are two entities distinct from each other. The mortal body is a kind of machine composed of many accidents that are susceptible to changes. The soul, totally independent from the body, interacts with the latter in the pineal gland and animates bodily motion (Descartes, 2008). Descartes's distinction brings "to completion, or very nearly to completion, the dualism of mind and matter which began with Plato and was developed, largely for religious reasons, by Christian philosophy" (Russell, 1967:567). Though the body is no longer condemned in the pursuits of morality and divinity in Descartes's philosophy and merely abides by the laws of matter, the freedom or distinction also implies that it can be ignored. The essence of human beings lies in a purely spiritual subject which receives no devastation or subtraction if any bodily part is cut off (Descartes, 2008:61). Consequently, mental thinking, rational calculation and intelligent creation are the reliable access to truth and knowledge. The subjective feelings and passions are of little value to truth just as the amputated body parts to the mind. Descartes's dualism leads to the body's being ignored in the soul's exploration of knowledge (Wang, 2007:9).

To sum up, the body has been doubted, oppressed and ignored for a long history. "The body as animal, as appetite, as deceiver, as prison of the soul and the confounder of its projects: these are common images" (Bordo, 1995:3) within traditional Western philosophy. More weight to the spirit, consciousness, and reason is continually attached than to the body in modern philosophy.

### *The bodily turn*

The body in real life did not change its fate in the mid-19th century when tremendous development in natural science and engineering technology raised productivity and brought economic prosperity. Real bodies which Descartes compared to machines were reduced to money-making machines of capitalism. To the contrary, the body in philosophy encountered upward motion. Arthur Schopenhauer believes that a real subject requires both the soul and the body. The human body which is objectification of Will and Will is just external and internal representations of the same thing. Schopenhauer's departure from the traditional philosophy of Hegel and observation of this unification upgrade the body in the modern philosophical world. In fact, a positive concern about the body becomes one of the standards to distinguish the new philosophy from the old philosophy. As Ludwig Feuerbach says:

The old philosophy had its point of departure in the proposition: I am an abstract, a merely thinking being to which the body does not belong.

The new philosophy proceeds from the principle: I am a real and sensuous being. *Indeed, the whole of my body is my ego, my being itself.*

(Feuerbach, 1972)

Wilhelm Dilthey is a good example. He replaces traditional principles of abstraction with a philosophy of life that stresses the role of experience in grasping truth and joyfully recognizes the truth of the sensuous body. Karl Marx also falls into this category of new philosophers because he inverts Plato's rank of the body and the soul. He points out that "the first premise of all human history is, of course, the existence of living human individuals. Thus, the first fact to be established is the physical organization of these individuals and their consequent relation to the rest of nature" (Marx, 1998:37). Marx is observing here that the human body and its needs are the basic driving force. Different from the traditional philosophers who eulogizes the soul, Marx affirms the primacy of matter and views spiritual activities as derivatives.

The most critical philosopher that upholds the body is Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche. He first targets Plato as the chief culprit in the decline of Western civilization. He believes that Plato's invention of "the pure spirit" and "the good" is "the worst, the most durable, the most dangerous of all the errors" (Nietzsche, 1966:3). Most of his successors who pursue Idea and its substitutes continually repudiate the vigorous body. Moreover, Nietzsche finds that Christianity, being Platonism in the life of the masses, is the biggest lie in history. Christian creeds and morality are obsessed with tyrannizing the flesh in order to save the soul. However, Nietzsche thinks they merely bring about illusionary recovery in delirious sinners. The explanation that human misery is caused by sin leads to nothing but degeneration of humanity. And asceticism only domesticates a living body to be "a pale, sickly, idiotically fanatical creature" (Nietzsche, 1968:131). This moral philosophy of mind-body dualism initiated by Socrates and Plato and popularized by Christian lectures is carried forward into widespread prejudice and hostility against the phenomenal world of the flesh and senses in modern rationalism. But in Nietzsche's view, all these philosophers that regard body as enemy and purport to pursue truth merely exercise their own will to power. They advertise the pursuit of nihilism that denies passion and vitality via their painstakingly and discriminatorily conceived concepts, including reason, absolute spirit, and thing-in-itself.

After critically judging all the traditional values, Nietzsche proclaims that the body should be established as the criterion because "the body is a more astonishing idea than the old 'soul'" (Nietzsche, 1968:347-348). No matter what compelling ground these philosophers and religious prophets have in their logic and piety to hate the body, they have to acknowledge that their bodies cannot be vanished. Belief in the soul arises from unscientific reflections on the body (Nietzsche, 1968:271). If the more fundamental and richer phenomenon is defied and abandoned, the soul will be stuck with the hysteria of idealism.

Nietzsche conversely makes the body other than the soul or reason essence of human beings. What does “body” mean for him? Heidegger explains, “[t]he name *body* identifies the distinctive unity in the constructs of domination in all drives, urges, and passion that will life itself. Because animality lives only by bodying, it is as will to power” (Heidegger, 1991: 218). Nietzsche’s concept of body is not the equivalent of common desires and reproductive needs though animality is included and physical vitality is released. The body here is all the creative impulses, overwhelming, strong, positive, active, overflowing and expanding outward. It is a “political structure” built upon its will to power. On one hand, it is “agency in so far as it initiates reproduction” (Lash, 1990:70). The body, driven by the will to extend its boundary, struggles to dominate other bodies and adds to its own “quanta of power”. On the other hand, the body is “structure in so far as it is reproduced” (Lash, 1990:70). The waxing and waning of power as an effect of their struggles produces dynamic relations and knowledge. History, art, reason and morality are the dynamic products of the body’s will to power.

To sum up, the body of political structure replaces God, goodness and reason as the starting place and as well as end of all values in Nietzsche’s philosophy. This everlasting vitality of life becomes the fundamental attribute of existence. “The world will obtain a multiplicity of meanings from the bodily perspective” (Wang, 2007:14). The comment of Wang Min’an is indeed valid because many Western philosophers of the 20th century, such as Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Gilles Deleuze, engage in elucidating the mystery of the world via the body. And at the same time, the body became an important and indispensable dimension in Western literary criticism of the 20th century.

### **Thriving bodily thinking in modern Western literary criticism**

The first half of the 20th century witnessed the development and predominance of Russian Formalism, British and American New Criticism and French Structuralism which preferred the intrinsic approach to literature studies. To the contrary, body studies’ debut was quite humble. It emerged in Freud’s Psychoanalysis, taking the form of desires. When intrinsic study lost its novelty and encountered enormous challenges and literary criticism again related to extrinsic study, body studies gradually gained its popularity. “Body” became a key concept in many schools of literary criticism. This section addresses different Western literary theories of body in the latter half of the 20th century.

#### ***Libidinal body in psychoanalysis***

For thousands of years, the body has been condemned, reproached and repressed by the passionate pursuit of Idea, morality, reason and knowledge. Reason has been considered as the essence to distinguish human beings from other living beings and objects. Many philosophers claim that human

intrinsic quality lies in consciousness. However, Freud shifts the emphasis from rationality to irrationality and throws off the shackle of traditional equation between man and consciousness. Subconsciousness is given priority. Being an essential component of the human psyche, it functions as the primary source and deep motivation of man's mental activities, dominates personality development and controls human behaviours. Freud's description of the force of subconsciousness and id's desires is similar to Nietzsche's elaboration on will to power. Both id and will to power are so wild and intense that ego and the soul have to obey. The elevation of subconsciousness discovers a different answer to the Sphinx riddle and simultaneously paves the way for the upgrading of bodily thinking.

The most influential and direct legacy of Freud's psychoanalysis to contemporary body studies is his theory of instinct. He maintains that instinct is the primeval urge and inner motivation that resides in human bodies and manifest itself via spirit (Freud, 2007:12). All the innate desires, be they right or wrong, are prohibited by ethics and morality, national customs, religions and laws. Distinctly different from traditional philosophical thoughts and asceticism that reveal fierce hostility to body and its desires, Freud's psychoanalysis upgrades libido, or sexual desire, as a fundamental ingredient and the most important instinct. Libido is genetical, waiting to erupt. Though repressed deep down into the store of subconsciousness, its inescapable and ineradicable vigour propels the body into action for desire fulfilment. The prime motivity of life manifests itself in different states in various physical and psychological activities at different stages of individual growth. In his later works, Freud points out that bodily instinct, especially sexual instinct, is the driving force of the origin and development of civilization. In this way, instinct's function is extended from individual development to all the activities of human civilization. Although the theory of instinct does not explicitly proclaim the body as a key concept, the body shows itself in the disguise of innate, impulsive, immoral, irrational sex and desire. Freud practices bodily thinking by interpreting both an individual life and all the human social activities as products of libido.

Specifically, literature is a product of libido. Freud believes that literature is essentially the "sublimation" of bodily desires which conform to social norms. A writer's creative impulse and literary motifs of enduring charms originate from Oedipus complex or Electra complex which takes its shape during the genital stage of an individual growth. Literary works are a writer's daydreams that are configured to satisfy his bodily desires. Similarly, readers' own desires are pleased by appreciating the author's fantasy without feeling morally ashamed. Both literature creators and receivers properly release their inner bodily impulse, obtain alternative and compensatory satisfaction, and experience bodily pleasure. Freud applies bodily thinking into his literary criticism. Such bodily thinking "had a great impact on the whole Western literature and art, and for a time served as the theoretical basis for the Western modern literary and artistic trend of irrationalism" (Dong, 2005:245). It gives rise to new perspectives of literary criticism which

restore vitality of the old repressed, mechanized and stereotyped body, including interpretations of authors' psychology, concealed desires of characters, body images and symbols, and readers' psychology.

Freud's overemphasis on instinct, especially sex, may seem exaggerated and biased, ignoring essential differences between nature and society and reducing human civilization to the evolution of natural biology. But we have to admit that Freud's challenge against the stereotyped thinking mode and breakaway from consciousness domination is valuable and fruitful in the long river of human history, especially in the history of body studies. As Fromm comments, "Freud, by reducing a great deal of conscious thought to the role of a rationalization of drives, tended to destroy the foundations of the rationalism" (Fromm, 1980:23). The body becomes the concealed noumenon when Freud develops his study about psychological structure into revised theory of personality and then into extended exploration of civilization mechanism. At the same time, he names different stages of individual growth in terms of bodily organs like mouth, anus and genitals. In brief, the body is the source, reference and target of Freud's theoretical world. Vitality of the body and human nature is at least relieved from suffocating alienation caused by private ownership and profitable labour of capitalism and heeded in the development of literary criticism.

However, bodily thinking is by no means as predominating as the turn of linguistic philosophy. Georges Bataillé is the only voice who showed a fascination with the body and its natural impulses, especially eroticism, before the 1960s while all the other schools of literary criticism engaged with literary autonomy and internal laws of texts. Many researchers entirely ignored libidinal bodily thinking until Roland Barthes proposed "the death of the author" and stressed the active role of readers during the transition from structuralism to post-structuralism. Roland Barthes introduces the body into the dynamic process of text and meaning. "What is buried between the lines is not 'meaning' but 'pleasure'. Reading is no longer a 'spiritual' communication between individuals but a pornographic game between bodies" (Wang, 2007:15). In this way, a text is not a pile of objective words which are arranged in compliance with literary laws and literary reading is closely related to a reader's bodily desires and experience. Bodily "pleasure" and "bliss" are the two effects of texts which further distinguish "readerly" and "writerly" texts. Roland Barthes's metaphorical and poetic discourse which links text with body is rather obscure and ambiguous. But it is clear that the body and human senses are a major force in literary creation and evaluation. Since then, the body has challenged the status of consciousness and subject in literary theories and literary creation and is given prominence.

### ***The body in the web of discourse and power***

A great development of Western body studies is attributed to Michel Foucault's genealogical research into knowledge, power, discourse, subject and

sex. Though the body itself is merely a strategy to address the issues mentioned above and often vaguely refers to the subject, Foucault does clearly elaborate on political manipulation embodied in the body. And consequently, its rich connotations are revealed and the traditional impure and neglected body of materiality is turned into an important cultural concept in sociology and literary criticism.

Foucault firstly outlines the history of the body being written on by knowledge when he scrutinizes the genealogy of medical science. He defines this physical entity as “the object world that needs to be known” (Foucault, 2003:2) and embodies the infinite light of knowledge. The body is a passive corpse gazed and studied by doctors who endeavour to discover various attributes and governing laws about it. “The accomplished practice of the corpse produces and reproduces medicine under the sign of the preservation of life” (Baudrillard, 2017:134). To a certain degree, the body is productive as it helps to establish life science about individuals. But what Foucault stresses is not the original richness of the body but rather its process of degrading. Life science initially entitles the body to be the object of profundity, mysteries and knowledge. Shortly after the fulfilment of medicine, the body becomes a plain concept of taxonomic medicine, a visual structure in clinical lectures, or a dry mummy in anatomical medical discussions. It is no longer the essential existence for perceptual life and knowledge. An experienced and learned doctor merely views it as a temporary structure accidentally occupied by diseases and an agent of ailments. As a result, the body means the silent and shrivelled trunk in the biological sense, losing its vigour and life.

What’s worse, knowledge and discourse frequently depict and control the physical body to meet the needs of power. Foucault believes that an insane body “is closer to reason than reason itself” (Foucault, 1989:14) as revealed by the characters of the madman, the fool, and the simpleton in Renaissance literature and art. However, the irrational body is deprived of its relation to truth when *The Meditations* turns insanity into a research object and rational Europeans identifies madness via discourse of labour ethics to consolidate their superiority and power. Psychiatry which was established on mad bodies in the 19th century ironically makes reason the only criterion of truth and forces the insane body to regain a clear sense of self via doctors’ restraint and confinement in mental institutions. In this way, the insane body which used to refer to an unknown existence and truth inaccessible to the masses practically loses its own significance in the world which is dominated and dictated by the discourse of reason.

Under his scrutiny of knowledge history, Foucault regards the body as both the source of knowledge gazed by the intellectual community and the object deconstructed and then reconstructed by rationalism. Such bodily constructivism is further elaborated on in his critical survey of power mechanism and reveals more political implications. He maintains that the body is not only an object studied, decomposed and then reconstructed in various sciences but also the foundation for the operation of social and

political microphysics in any era. Foucault believes that there is no more physical, physiological, and material way than power implement (Foucault, 1997:171). Power always exerts its force on the “mechanic body” by means of either brutal and bloody punishment or modern “benevolent” control. The body serves as a specific field of materiality on which judicial institutions and the monarch directly implement their power. Later on, the new political anatomy merely replaces violent punishment with subtle arrangements, meticulous and orderly control and repeated exercise. The bodies are still manipulated by power as a broken machine of various decomposed tissues, motions, positions, attitudes and velocity until they become tamed and trained and docile bodies.

The body is passive but at the same time productive. The truth of the crime is obtained by the precise art of bodily torture just as knowledge is established by gazing at the ailing body. Once the culpability is determined, the criminal’s body “provides the synthesis of the reality of the deeds and the truth of the investigation, of the documents of the case and the statements of the criminal, of the crime and the punishment” (Foucault, 1995:47) and reveals to the public truth and judicial justice in the ritual of public punishment. Besides that the truth is produced and then replicated, physical scars, blood, wailing, exposed internal organs or mutilated torso demonstrate warningly the monarchal presence of supreme power. Under this old system, the individual body is the field to achieve justice, the effect of the monarchy’s power and restore the injured monarchy.

In the new political anatomy, the careful investment of the body does not cruelly torture prisoners and kill lives. Instead, it transforms prisoners from a social threat to productive labour of economic value. Foucault maintains that this micro-physics spares no human bodies of various institutions and systems of the whole society. Out of the body is created an

individuality that is endowed with four characteristics: it is cellular (by the play of spatial distribution), it is organic (by the coding of activities), it is genetic (by the accumulation of time), it is combinatory (by the composition of forces).

(Foucault, 1995:167)

Foucault’s discussion not only discovers the political implications in the body but also interprets its spatiality and temporality. Spatial allocation facilitates targeted supervision and renovation while schedule management, specific regulations of time in movements, and repetitive exercises with subtle and gradual changes guarantee efficiency, speed and continuity. The possibility to be moved spatially and temporally enables one body to cooperate with another body for maximum effect. Thus, the new political mode creates the subjects and productive forces that are subservient to power.

Many researchers may agree with Foucault on that the body is a political text to reveal the truth concealed in human history. At the same time, the body in Foucault’s early works always remains passive as Terry Eagleton

comments, “New body science... The transfer from Merleau-Ponty to Foucault is the transfer from the body as the subject to the body as the object” (Eagleton, 1996:83). Foucault seems to have realized the problem. In his later works, he turns to life experience of ancient Greeks, especially their sexual life and regimen to find a solution for modern people who lose their subjectivity due to the distorting force of power and discourse. In his proposal of “technologies of the self”, the body takes on a huge importance. He encourages an individual to establish an aesthetic relationship with one’s self which is to know his own body for self-recognition and achieve self-perfection in the fusion of free choice and self-temperance. In this non-soul-oriented relationship, the body is not a docile object and disciplined subject trapped in the web of power and discourse but an ethical subject who actively constructs his own self. This concept of body is rather idealistic and romantic but opens a door for Feminism and cultural studies.

### ***Bodily thinking in feminism***

The body has always been the interest of Western feminism. All the body theories which are constructed in mutual questioning, self-denial, and self-development by different schools of feminism can be roughly classified into three categories.

The first category is narrowly oriented towards specific rights of the physical body. Western feminists of the first wave firmly oppose the exploitation and control of female bodies by social institutions and patriarchal discourse. They protest against the restrictions on contraceptives, the physical afflictions and sexual repression. Their long struggle, assisted by the development of medicine, makes some achievements in physical emancipation. It puts an end to the physical torture caused by some social customs like female genital mutilation and corset wearing and legitimizes abortion.

However, the early female activists’ attitudes towards the body are still confined to the hierarchical tradition of mind-body dualism. On one hand, they strive for freedom of bodily control. But on the other hand, they fear, hate and even reject some characteristics, behaviours and functions of which female bodies are particularly possessed. They remain unaware that their differences in the physical bodies, the emotional world and psychology are of great importance. Liberal feminists maintain that the physiological phenomena unique to female bodies are unclean and dangerous. Such bodies which are meaningful merely in biology do not own the same subversive power as those basic rights of education, employment and suffrage in the public sphere. They are more concerned to prove that women are endowed with the same rational potential as men and thus advocate equal human rights for women. Reason is the fundamental criterion. The pursuit of rationality means a negative evaluation of the emotional experience of females. For example, Mary Wollstonecraft proposes in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* that women often demonstrate various undesirable sentimental

traits, such as emotional fragility, extreme narcissism, self-indulgence, carnal enjoyment and moral indolence, because of lack of education. Women should overcome sensibility with sense and achieve the same mental and intellectual capacity as men through education. Their de-feminization, however, does not include decorum, demureness, prudence and chastity which have been promoted by patriarchal culture. Many liberal feminists also believe that their distorted nature should be corrected by education in order to fulfil their doomed mission in domestic life. Similarly, opponents of Marxist and Socialist feminism view the body as an immutable and insignificant matter. They try to find the root of women's plight in terms of class, mode of capitalist production and patriarchal culture. To some extent, the early victory of winning women basic human rights is a by-product of male-dominated bourgeois revolution. The primacy of reason and traditional gender norms encounter no fundamental changes. Men are regarded as the rational mind while women are defined as the body that lacks autonomy and integrity. Getting stuck in the moor of body-mind dualism, they believe that they can construct their rational subjectivity only after they are liberated from the body.

Partially agreeing with the feminists of the first category, Simon Beauvoir, who is the pioneer of the second category, has doubts and animosity towards the natural body. She maintains that the anatomical reality, the innate differences between male and female bodies, makes it more difficult for women than men to have free subject. The biological differences act as a factor to restrict women from taking control of the world. But she doesn't believe that they are valid enough to justify the otherness of women. Neither can the other existing theories like inferiority theory of psychoanalysis or the economic monism of Marxism account for the origins of gender oppression. Affirming that the female body does have differences and limitations, Beauvoir constructively elaborates on how the male-dominated culture has overemphasized the biological differences and squeezed femininity into the natural body in *The Second Sex*. Her exploration adds a new meaning to the body. It is not only possessed of naturality but also endowed with sociality. It is the body of sociality that embodies the false nature imposed on women by the patriarchal culture and determines women's existence.

Following the footsteps of Beauvoir, Kate Millett proposes sexual politics and reveals that the body is the site on which implements its power. She doesn't believe that sexual behaviours are merely expressions of instincts. They are "set so deeply within the larger context of human affairs" that they serve as "a charged microcosm of the variety of attitudes and values to which culture subscribes" (Millett, 2000:23). They embody the political relationship or the model of sexual politics that the males govern, dominate and control the female, according to their birthright. In order to maintain authority, the dominant gender establishes the idea that men are inherently superior to women in temperament, gender roles, and social status. Women are educated, trained or forced to internalize these ideas through family

life, biology, mythology, religion and education when socialization starts in their childhood. Meanwhile, the society deprives women of opportunities for economic independence, makes economic exploitation and erodes gender division with class and racial issues, consolidating the effects of gender colonization. When the domestication fails, patriarchy directly exerts authoritative violence on the physical body. In Millett's groundbreaking discussions, the body transcends the boundary of biology, medicine, fashion and economics and becomes a political platform for power operation and display.

Beauvoir and Millett's theoretical exploration, cultural analysis, and close reading of how power and discourse in patriarchy discipline the female body are of great significance. Under their influence, feminists go further in their challenge against biological determinism. They engage in discovering the process of gender construction and the underlying cultural structure explicitly and implicitly depicted in various texts. The resistant reading of female images in male writers' works and the research into representations of gendered bodies in female writers' works flourish.

Transcending all the predecessors who stabilize the logic of the sex-gender distinction, Judith Butler points out that sex is also a social, historical and cultural construct. And

“sex” is an ideal construct which is forcibly materialized through time. It is not a simple fact or static condition of a body, but a process whereby regulatory norms materialize “sex” and achieve this materialization through a forcible reiteration of those norms.

(Butler, 1993:1–2)

For Butler, the body of materiality can never be understood beyond any cultural context. She denies that the body is a pre-existing material of naturality waiting for cultural engraving. Instead, the materiality of the sexed body itself is a practically passive object on which the history of the construction of the gendered subject is inscribed and as well as a product socially constructed. At the same time, Butler argues that the sexed body reacts to, reproduces and modifies structures in variable ways (Young, 2005:26). Though tangled in the complex web of power, the body still has the opportunity to set itself free from all the established cultural repression and restore itself to naturality.

Unlike the first two types of feminists who regard the body either as an annoying material or as a social constitute, some scholars, especially radical French feminists, emphasize the body's subversiveness. They believe that biological distinctions can become the main arena for women to compete for power. In their eyes, female bodies are beautiful, complete and passionate. For example, both Luce Irigaray and Hélène Cixious accuse Freud of his theory of female incompetence. They believe that the female body has been transformed into “the uncanny stranger on display--the ailing or dead

figure” (Cixous, 1976:880) and the sign of void by the rational discourse of patriarchy. But they explicitly claim that “the nasty companion” needs no penis to make it complete. This unexplored dark land is in fact saturated with libido, experience and imagination that are the motivation and resources for women to express themselves.

The body here becomes a semi-metaphorical concept, reflecting the close connection and the inherent logic between women’s fate and the physical body. It refers to both its physical structure and desires. It embodies female psychology, female spiritual experience originating from the body and cultural scripts. Since women have been subjugated and silenced for a long time, “the body is the only accessible medium for self-expression” (Gubar, 2014:254). As Cixous describes, the body provides texts which document women’s unique experience of love, work, violence and desires. These texts not only record specific experience of an individual but also tell the silenced history of all women. Therefore, the female body of libido is pluralistic, rich, dynamic and complex and supplies women with resources for self-articulation. Moreover, their writing style which is isomorphic to the sexed body is “never simple or linear or ‘objectified’, generalized” (Cixous, 1976:881). Their different modes of writing, in terms of both contents and forms, function as a natural resistance against traditional authoritative discourse and linear order of language. The resistance of the body is also found by the scholars who are interested in interpreting variability of Madonna’s bodily performance. For these theorists, the flexible and elusive body turns out to be a playground to resist the mainstream discourse. It successfully escapes the objectification, sexualization and stereotyping and deconstructs the essentialist claims about identity. This body even defies, rejects or provokes male peeping, challenging the traditional power relationship between the male gazer and the female gazed. Relying on the constant transformations of the body, women can redefine their identity and construct a pluralistic subjectivity.

In conclusion, the concept of body changes in the disputes between different schools of feminist criticism, flowing between the discourses of physiology and anti-essentialism, idealism and materialization, repression and resistance. These enthusiastic discussions that center on the body earn women some control of their physical bodies and provide theoretical resources for women’s creation. Women writers are encouraged to find their voices from their own feelings. In their writings, the unique psychological/cultural experience of lived bodies is articulated and highlighted. Various body images like illness, blood, death, senility and madness metaphorically represent and resist the repression of patriarchy and construct subjectivity. The complete textual body is no longer a passive sign but a “blank page” soaked with creativity, potential and resistance. This political body embodies Nietzsche’s “power” and Foucault’s “resistance” and opens up possibilities for changes and liberation. However, this metaphorical concept and its related discussions have many demerits. The concept itself becomes more

obscure in theoretical disputes. Instead of winning victories and liberation, the body that functions as the political battlefield is relegated into the convenient peephole of male gaze. Because the textual body and the physical body cannot be integrated, the body is bogged down in endless idealistic discussions.

***The vehicle of happiness and self-expression in the consumer society***

The body has been considered as an unreliable barrier to truth and a voracious container of evil in the long history when mind-body dualism prevailed. When the mode of production and the cultural context were changed, traditional morality and religious ethics gradually eroded and people embraced the life of hedonism. In the prosperous consumer society, the body which used to be imprisoned for the purification and salvation of the soul breaks away from the puritanical restrictions and becomes the “finest consumer object” (Baudrillard, 1998:129). Youthful and healthy bodies featured in advertisements and films are more than visual images. They promote flamboyance and beauty without any marks of sickness, suffering or death. They urge us to believe that these graceful bodies with smiling faces will lead us to unlock the door to happiness or they themselves are the key to happiness. In this way, the body is made into the myth of pleasure, enjoying everlasting vigour and happiness. As the vehicle of happiness, the body is not only the pleasant image but also the longing heart. The body, driven by its own desires and coaxed by advertisements, is perfectly capable of ceaselessly seeking pleasure and fulfilling its dreams. It frees itself from the social, economic and political constraints and treats itself as a platform for play, desire and leisure. Various advertising propels this new morality and stimulates more desires about the body. On one hand, the body provides the motivity of consumption. On the other hand, it is the site to express, produce and reproduce its own desire, dream, and pleasure by body maintenance.

Mike Featherstone proposes that body maintenance involves both the inner and the outer body (Featherstone, 1991). The first type of body maintenance attends to health and physiological functions. People take good care of the body when it is ill and fails in the aging process. The second type of maintenance deals with bodily appearance and behaviours within social space, covering a wide range from demographic situations and human ecology down to face-to-face interactions and the aesthetic dimension. “The prime purpose of the maintenance of the inner body becomes the enhancement of the appearance of the outer body” (Featherstone, 1991:171). In other words, the purpose of body maintenance is no longer to enhance the spirit or to save the soul as what traditional morality advocates, or to improve physical health as what traditional medicine endeavours to do. “The body is no longer ‘flesh’ as in the religious conception, or labour power as in industrial logic” (Baudrillard, 1998:132). The productive and reproductive functions of the body are ignored while its aesthetic value is heightened. Therefore,

the body is elevated from a means to a goal. The aesthetic body displayed and propagated in advertisements, mass publications, televisions and films make individuals more sensitive to their bodies. They take every effort to beautify the body as a consumer object and turn it into a sign of value.

Featherstone also argues that the body is the vehicle of self-expression in modern consumer society (Featherstone, 1991). In the 18th century, the body was separated from the true self. When clothing industry and department stores were developed in the 19th century, individualized clothing and behaviours gradually became a means of expression of selfhood. By the 20th century, the body have had an expressive function. In consumer culture, it publicly displays its attitudes towards life and identification via its inner body and outer body. At the same time, the performing body serves as the ground for others to make judgments. How well is the body maintained internally and externally determines to what degree an individual is identified by the society. The closer the body is to the contemporary standard of beauty, the more appreciation and self-confidence it will obtain. Consequently, the body feels that it is enjoying a happy life. In Featherstone's eyes, the body, happiness, self-identification and others' bodies are connected with each other in body maintenance. This also leads to an increasing self-awareness and self-examination of the body.

The carnal carnival in modern consumer society also leaves its marks in literature and art. The body becomes increasingly prevalent in contemporary literary creation. Sex and violence are explicitly and daringly depicted. Details of bodily consumption, including cosmetology, diet, dressing and body shaping, are described. Literary works are published with more visual images and advertised in a more visualized mode. However, we should be cautious about the tumultuous representations of the body and reflect on the following questions. Has the body become a floating signifier without any introspection? How can bodily narrative avoid a superficial writing mode of fragmentation and collage and resist the swelling of vulgar desires? How can bodily narrative reveal historical and cultural profundity and contemplation of human nature and consequently steer value orientation? How can the literary and artistic media protect classical literature against any damage caused by rapid and alluring propagation and promotion? Can gender discrimination be discovered when literary and artistic consumers peep into body representations? What narcissistic tendencies and self-construction do they present?

### *Intermediary of politics and aesthetics*

In the traditional aesthetic discourse, human is defined by abstract concepts of consciousness and spirit. Marx regards the body as the basic driving force of human history and endows consciousness with a concrete materialistic foundation, providing aesthetics with body-related dimensions. Body contemplation is developed into an important subject of aesthetics in the

20th century. Being the strongest advocate of the new somatics in Western Marxism, Terry Eagleton proposes that aesthetics is initially based on the discourse about the body. He criticizes post-Cartesian philosophy for the ignorance of the body and its perceptual experience which ultimately turns it into a lifeless corpse. Conversely, he highly appreciates Marx, Nietzsche and Freud because they set aesthetics from the shackles of idealism respectively by the body of labour, the body of power and the body of libido, and rediscover the true foundation for aesthetic judgement in various instincts and desires. He claims that a “recovery of the importance of the body has been one of the most precious achievements of recent radical thought” (Eagleton, 1990:7).

For Eagleton, the modern body is not only a material base but also a way of thinking which is more fundamental and inherent than rationalism. As a physical object, the body is different from a jam jar and a toothbrush. Eagleton believes that “it is a center from which they can be organized into significant projects” (Eagleton, 1996:72). That is to say, the body has the creative power to transform the surrounding materials and at the same time accomplish its own transformation. Unlike many theorists of the Cartesian tradition and even those of the new somatics, Eagleton elevates the body to a higher status and endows it with a revolutionary attribute. The natural body has the ability to transcend itself and the infinite creativity which has not been adequately captured by our language. Despite our failure in capturing this bodily creativity, the body exists and plays a role in the world in a complicated way.

How does the body relate to the world? Eagleton explicates the connection between the body and many political issues such as states, class conflicts and modes of production in *The Ideology of the Aesthetic*. He views the body as the subject of history and politics and as well as the material foundation and medium through which the ideology of the aesthetic functions. In the first place, aesthetic activities depend on the body. Human aesthetic activities originate from the basic physiological activities of the perceptual body and people have their unique emotional experience through the individual perceptual life. With the power of resistance possessed by sensibility, instinct and desire, the body transcends the constraints of reality and establishes a non-utilitarian and emotional relationship with the world. In this aesthetic process, the perceptual body is liberated. By clarifying the basic role the body plays, Eagleton enlightens us to pay more attention to our perceptual body. In addition, the body is in a delicate relationship because of the duality of the aesthetic. On one hand, bodily aesthetic activities make reconciliation and liberation possible. On the other hand, they are regulated by power and subject to political hegemony. Therefore, the connotations of aesthetic activities are constructed by a particular ideology. The uniqueness and freedom of the body obtained in the aesthetic process greatly depends on its effective subordination to the ideology. As Eagleton says, the aesthetic “signifies a creative turn to the sensuous body, as well as

an inscribing of that body with a subtly oppressive law” (Eagleton, 1990:9). The body bears the double shaping of the aesthetic and the ideology. The aesthetic, acting as a cooperator for the ideology, inserts political hegemony in the subjugated body in a deeper and more subtle way. In this sense, the body is the practice where the political order leaves its mark via the aesthetic. The harmonious cooperation between the aesthetic and the ideology accomplishes “internalized repression”. “The body’s affections are no mere subjective whims but the key to a well-ordered state” (Eagleton, 1990:34). When people enjoy the aesthetic pleasure, their bodies unconsciously fulfil the maintenance and reproduction of power.

Eagleton criticizes the division of spirit and body and suggests that modern materialistic aesthetics should be established on the basis of the body. He also holds a critical attitude towards body studies in the postmodern society because the body has been highly culturalized by overemphasizing desires and metaphorically implanting physiological factors into writing and self-expression. He believes that the body which is ushered back into aesthetics should be a complete entity which perfectly unites the internal body of libido and the external body of labour and serves as a hinge between nature and culture. The cultural body does not override over the natural body. Instead, the former exists by virtue of the latter. Eagleton’s criticism on bodily thinking in postmodern thoughts is a warning for the further development of body studies while his explication of the relationship between the body, the aesthetic and political and cultural reality triggers more reflections.

In conclusion, the body is a key concept that has been discussed and endowed with different meanings by various schools of literary criticism since the 20th century. In spite of all the differences, the body is elevated to an important position. Scholars believe that it is no longer a simple physical existence and physiological phenomenon but a political text. The political text is socially constructed and fragmented and as well as presents polysemy and fluidity. In addition, the body has the power of subversion as a rebuttal to the traditional metaphysics. The discovery and concern of the body may eventually lead to the complete liberation of human beings.

### **The “travelling” of body studies in China**

Since the turn of the 20th century, many thinkers, theorists and scholars in various disciplines across Western countries critically reflected on traditional Western thinking paradigms and consequently identified “the body” as a new, eminent and valuable subject of scholarship. As a result, several waves of body studies surged in multiple fields. The body was so frequently mentioned and explored that it inevitably became a key concept in modern Western literary criticism. Western body studies subsequently travelled to Chinese literary circle when China was eager to assimilate abundant foreign intellectual resources in its progress of modernization. This section is to

make a sketch of the travelling and transmission of body studies in China and as well elaborate on some factors which generate and facilitate its introduction and spread.

### ***The four phases of translating Western body theories in China***

China has introduced and translated modern Western body theories for almost one hundred years if we believe that it started in the 1920s. During nearly one hundred years, the West consistently made significant developments and promoted substantial innovations in body studies while China responded to its different needs which were called upon by different historical and cultural contexts and engaged in learning, borrowing and reflecting. Roughly speaking, China's opening to Western modern body studies in the past century could be divided into the following four phases. And China's attitude changed from being spontaneous, one-sided and shallow to being conscious, selective and reflective.

The travelling of Western body theory in China originated as an integral part of the May Fourth Movement of the mid 1910s and 1920s when Chinese intellectuals were enthusiastic about embracing new ideas to smash the shackles of feudalism. Two waves of translating Freudian theories implicitly declared the first stage of the travelling. Psychoanalysis was initially introduced to China as a new and important branch of modern psychology. Soon many young Chinese literary scholars and writers were inspired by Sigmund Freud's interpretations of literary works and views of literature. Consequently, many reputed newspapers and journals, which were designed to propagandize new culture and new literary projects, hurried to translate foreign intellectuals' commentaries and publish Chinese scholars' interpretations of related issues. Freud's works which were written and translated in other languages instead of in Chinese were sold in succession. Among all the zealous youths, Zhu Guangqian<sup>1</sup> stood out for his prompt introduction of this theory. His article "Freud's Subconsciousness and Psychoanalysis", which were published in *The Eastern Miscellany*<sup>2</sup> (Volume 18, Number 14) in 1921, was a relatively comprehensive and systematic introduction to Freud's theory. In addition, his appreciation of Freud's groundbreaking creativity in the field of psychology and interdisciplinary application encouraged more Chinese scholars to study and apply it.

Another early access to Western body studies in the first period was translating Japanese academic outcomes. A well-welcomed introduction was Zhong Yun's translation of *Psychoanalysis and Art and Literature*, an academic research written by a Japanese literature doctor named Takeo Matsuoka, which was serialized in *Literature Weekly*<sup>3</sup> from December, 1922. The serialized translations were considered to be the most systematic introduction to Freud's psychoanalytical scholarship on aesthetics of literature and art during the first period of the travelling of the body theory. These articles focussed on the relationship between sexual instinct and literature and art and elaborated on the implications of various sexual symbols. For

Chinese intellectuals of the 1920s who were discontented with the repression of human nature imposed by Chinese traditions and old customs, discussing about sex and bodily desires and the new approach to literature study were entirely bold, fresh and inspiring.

Unfortunately, the travelling of foreign theories was disrupted due to political upheavals and China's Cultural Revolution (1966–1976). After the forty-year delay, the travelling resumed with the second wave of the study of Freudian theories. The achievements made by those intellectuals of the May Fourth Movement paved the way for China's further learning and at the same time the new policy of reform and opening urged its continuity. In this period, almost all of Freud's works as well as enormous commentaries and academic books accomplished by Western scholars were translated into Chinese. And Chinese scholars made more comprehensive and in-depth discussions and interpretations.

With the increased exposure to Freudian theories, Chinese intellectuals discovered body theories by other Western philosophical, sociological and literary theorists. They were eager to busy themselves with studying theories of Michel Foucault, Merleau-Ponty and Western feminists. And at the same time, they occasionally referred to these theorists and their thoughts in their academic activities and made fragmented introductions. An important and influential effort was *Contemporary Feminist Literary Criticism* compiled by Zhang Jingyuan in 1992. This collection included Hélène Cixous's "The Laugh of the Medusa" and "From the Subconscious to Historical Scene". The two translated articles soon became Chinese feminists' favourite resources of citations as they were impressed by Cixous's insightful illustration about how women were repressed through their bodies throughout history. Chinese scholars' interest in Cixous was so intense that more articles about feminine writing were included in the French volume of *Blue Stocking*, a collection of foreign feminist works translated and published in 1995 by Hebei Education Press. This brought about more access to Western body studies. However, the Chinese academic circle was still innocent of the vigour, variety and complexity of Western body studies. That's why no books of philosophical, sociological and literary theories of body were translated in the last two decades of the 20th century. A few articles merely introduced Merleau-Ponty's philosophy and Cixous's feminine writing. The interpretations and comments were rather simple and did not identify the importance and theoretical value of the body as a concept. The exception was Zhang Nini's translation of American sociologist D. C. Hoy's "Critical Resistance: Foucault and Bourdieu". This article directly addressed to the body and helped Chinese scholars with their better understanding. To sum up, the second period was generally characterized by Chinese unintentional activities and spontaneous responses though scholars aspired to take in new thoughts and approaches to literary criticism. However, China lagged behind other countries as he made only fragmentary introductions and simple discussions of body theories and did not apply them to practical criticism at all.

The third phase witnessed the increasing popularity of body studies in China. Its interdisciplinary exploration finally woke up Chinese intellectuals and thus those Western theories boarded an express for their travel in China. For example, Chunfeng Literature and Art Publishing House<sup>4</sup> began to launch the book series “Reading Body” in 1999. This publishing project was followed by Hualing Press publishing “Psychological Humanities Series” in 2001. The two series of books included translations of Western outcomes of body studies in the field of sociology and cultural study, such as *The Body and Society*, *Five Bodies*, *Body Image*, *A History of the Breast*, *Kiss and the History*, *A Mind of its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis*, etc. “Collected Translations: A Lens of the Contemporary Academic” planned and issued by Nanjing University Press included Jean Baudrillard’s *The Consumer Society*. Meanwhile, a group of books about the body in philosophy and literary criticism, including Kate Millet’s *Sexual Politics*, Michel Foucault’s *Madness and Civilization*, *The Birth of the Clinic* and *Discipline and Punish*, Terry Eagleton’s *Ideology: An Introduction* and *The Illusions of Postmodernism* were translated by different publishing companies. Besides all the efforts of the publishing houses, Wang Min’an made his own contribution to the travelling of the theory by editing and translating four books<sup>5</sup> from 2000 to 2003. The compiled books which focussed on postmodern theories included Luce Irigaray’s and Judith Butler’s articles of theorizing the body, and as well as Western scholars’ interpretations and reflections on Nietzsche’s and Foucault’s thoughts of the body. It should be noted that the last collection mentioned above intentionally highlighted the body as a key concept. All the carefully chosen articles and chapters from Western cutting-edge research were deliberately grouped into four sections which are under the headings “Body and Philosophy”, “Body and Biopolitics”, “Sexual Politics of Body” and “Body and Consumer Culture”.

Because of all the introductions and translations, more Chinese scholars from different disciplines showed their interest in body studies in the fourth phase that began in 2006. The translating of Foucault’s and feminists’ thoughts about the body remained vigorous. Chinese scholars found novelty and originality in the translated *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* by Judith Butler and *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body* by Susan Bordo. Another distinct feature of the travelling of body studies during this period was that many young students at Chinese colleges and universities showed their concerns. Some young beginners made a historical outline of Western body studies, such as Deng Xianjin’s *A Sketch of Contemporary Western Cultural Theories of Body* (2008) and Duanchao’s *Body Politics in Postmodernism* (2009). Some focussed on feminism and the body.<sup>6</sup> Different from these young researchers who attempted at a relatively systematic and comprehensive picture of body studies, the others aimed at discovering, interpreting and evaluating one specific theorist and his/her bodily thinking, including Nietzsche, Merleau-Ponty, Foucault and Eagleton.<sup>7</sup> These postgraduate dissertations,

which might have inspired by their supervisors and other teachers' teaching to a certain degree, were different from the previous introductory and commentary articles both in the West and China because they explicitly made "the body" an independent and prominent subject instead of viewing it as a supporting point or unavoidable substance. Up to now, body studies has become a distinguished project in China.

### *The three routes of body theory travelling in China*

China's introduction and translation of modern Western body theories and subsequent application not only obeys a chronological order but also progresses in depth. The following section is to illustrate three main paths of its travelling and development in China.

#### *Rotating around a "carnal" axis*

As illustrated above, the body has been chronically and parochially understood to be a physical flesh of desires, emotions and perceptual experience. Throughout the long history that had not unearthed its historical, political, social and cultural values, civilized human beings have spared no efforts to oppress and repress flesh, only to find that body has always retained its vigour and uncontrollability. It was the fleshy body whose power and connotations were discovered and elevated by Freud that triggered the theory travelling at the beginning of the 20th century when China encountered its enlightenment movement. Chinese intellectuals instantly and passionately borrowed Freud's thoughts because they thought that his advocacy of irrationalism and elevation of "sex" were proper for a strong ideological pillar of the anti-feudal movement and a novel weapon of the new literature reformation.

Hence, the carnal body is one of the main routes for many Chinese scholars to undertake the task of introducing and discussing Western body studies. For example, Yang Chenbo who published "A Discussion of Psychoanalysis" in *Eastern Miscellany* (Vol. 20, No. 6) in 1923 pointed out that the subconsciousness alive with sexual desires motivates literary and artistic creation. He argued that art is by nature substitute satisfaction for the impetus. His discussion about the elevated status of sexual desires read stunning but also thought-provoking for intellectuals and the mass at that time. Owing to more exposure and a better understanding, Chinese scholars were more willing to study the body of libido. For instance, Zhu Guanqian did not ignore and purposefully rejected theories of sexual instincts in his *Abnormal Psychology* (1933) any longer as he used to do ten years ago. He expounded various manifestations of sexual desires and also explained how art and literature were related to libido in the chapter "Freud's Extensive View of Libido". Furthermore, he attempted to objectively elucidate Freud's major concepts and ideas and also "asked the reader to build their impartial

judgment on facts” (Zhu, 1987:182). His endeavours that were of neither blind affirmation nor casual depreciation helped the theory travelling speed up. Likewise, Zhong Yun positively provided China with three more translations of *Literary Theories*, *Abnormal Sexual Desires and the Arts*, *Literature and Libido*, following his initial task of translating a Japanese book as mentioned above.<sup>8</sup> In this way, flesh-centred literary aesthetics spread across China and more Chinese intellectuals began to accept that sex, instincts or desires were essential to literature and art.

On its entrance into China, Freud’s theory of the body of libido, along with other Western literary thoughts, made a great impact on Chinese writers of the May Fourth Movement. Almost all the writers, more or less, displayed their concerns and acceptance of libido. Different yearnings and pursuit ranging from spiritual freedom to bodily liberation predominated in literary and artistic creations of that time. Young writers, represented by Yu Dafu,<sup>9</sup> broke through the boundaries of forbidden subject matters for Chinese literature and art. In order to promote humanity emancipation, they narrated the secret and ineffable repressed deep down in subconsciousness, elaborately depicted sexuality and sexual acts which even included abnormal love and sexual fantasies, expressed the real self and exposed the true faces of Chinese society. As for women writing of that era, the yearning for love topped the list of their favourite themes. Women writers of the early period of the May Fourth Movement liked to deal with dramatic conflicts between repressive feudal autocracy and women’s yearnings for individuality and love. For example, Ding Ling daringly depicted women sexuality and honestly reflected their mind and emotions via a series of “Sha Fei” images.<sup>10</sup>

No matter what attitude Chinese scholars held towards the body of libido, approval and appreciation, half acceptance or critical reflection, China was engaged in translating, interpreting and commenting, and practical application of Freud’s thoughts in the 1920s. These activities facilitated the body thinking of the May Four Movement and paved the way for further development in Chinese reform and opening-up. It should be also noted that Chinese intellectuals’ precipitant ambition of liberating the poverty-stricken and convention-bounded public from feudalism and their aspiration of establishing a democratic country led not only to their narrow-minded zest merely for new literary terms and general introductions, but also to their ignorance of a holistic picture and in-depth understanding of Freud’s theories. It is safe to assume that the moment of enlightenment just began. The new relationship between body and literature and the multiple-levelled significance of body in the history of thought and human civilization has not yet been unearthed in China.

The travelling of the body theory which rotated around a carnal axis was not always blessed. After the enthusiasm for a theoretical exploration of libido in the May Fourth period faded and was finally substituted by a historical need to save the country from Nazism and win the following

proletarian revolution, China was forced to suspend the body theory travelling. Until the 1980s, China resumed the transmitting of Western body theories and the application as an answer to the reform and opening-up policy. As a result,

(p)sychoanalysis was once a flag of China's open-mindedness. A probe into "sex" became a prerequisite for justifying Chinese body and desire discourse and a popular theme of individuality in the 1980s. At that time, it was not only a frontier issue of scholarship but also a center of public attention.

(Zhang, 2002)

The opening-up policy allowed and rekindled Chinese intellectuals' passion for introducing Western thoughts. Naturally, the body of libido again redirected Chinese literary creation trends. One of the major impacts of libido theory during this decade manifested itself in the boom of erotic literature. Many prominent writers, including Zhang Xianliang, Su Tong, Jia Pingwa, Tie Ning, Mo Yan, etc., depicted sexual activities and psychology to varying degrees. Besides, it was popular for them to daringly experiment with new narrative techniques, such as stream-of-consciousness and dreams, in order to truly display the characters' subconscious desires.

In one sense, the intermittent travelling of libido body assisted China to break away with feudalism and changed the suppressed life via a revolutionary shift from the predominating superiority of morality and etiquette to an emphasis on corporality. Though China's ready for modern Western theories, the sharp contrast and differences in thinking modes and cultures, along with historical factors, hindered the intellectual community's keeping up with the West and understanding their thoughts. Therefore, China lagged significantly behind without recognizing the multiple faces and dynamics of body studies. The body, crawling in the shadow of flesh, was still waiting for an opportunity to make a full demonstration.

The Chinese travelling of Western body theory which rotated around flesh was not restricted to Freud's theories. In the 1990s, there was an obvious extension from Freud's libido to feminist sex-centred writing. Various introductions of Western feminism and the mechanism of cultural consumption worked together to enhance the attraction of corporality to China. Consequently, "bodily writing" became a vogue in China. Works written by famous women writers, ranging from Chen Ran's and Ling Bai's representations of female living experience and yearnings, and Wei Hui's and Mian Mian's narration of fleshly pleasure in material consumption to Mu Zimei's and Zhu Yingqing's descriptions of erotic games, were inundated with body images and sex scenes. More peculiar literary activities that advocated bodily writing were seen in Chinese poetry circle. A poetry community even designated itself as "Lower Body" and bluntly claimed that "the body is where poetry writing starts and ends as well" (Shen, 2002:77).

*Pondering on a multifaceted "body"*

The second mode of body theory travelling in China transcends that of corporal pleasure, desires and longings. When new methodologies and novel connotations of classical concepts in Foucault's works captured China's attention, Shang Zhiying wrote a paper to introduce Foucault's theory and argued that the body was not only a subject of political governing but also productivity (Shang, 1990). It is the first time that modern Western concept of the body which is closely related to power and discourse has surfaced. The definition, though brief, clearly identifies the political connotation and its dynamic nature. Such a short statement suggests that a new route of modern Western body studies travelling which is different from the axis of sex is developed in China.

The introduction to Foucault's concept of body that is tangled in the complicated web of power and discourse is beneficial for Chinese feminists. Another face of the body was found with an increasing number of translations and introductions of works by more Western feminist theorists. China feminists obtained a better understanding of those Western theories and frequently made critical reflections. In turn, all these arduous activities highlighted political and historical dimensions of the body. For instance, Xu Kun states that both feminine writing in the West and Chinese female writings in the 1990s are radical literary activities that elevated the body. But she also points out that there is a huge rupture in theoretical explorations between the West and China and in practical applications and theoretical discussions (Xu, 1996). Xu Kun's conclusions remind China to discern non-flesh connotations of the body. Likewise, Ai Yun, imitating the writing style of Hélène Cixous's "The Laugh of the Medusa", makes a critical comment on feminine writing in the journal *Mountain Flowers*. She not only introduces the birth of feminine writing and appraises its significance but also points out its drawbacks and limitations. Finally, she warns female writers that depicting fleshly and sexual bodies is never a way to rescue bodies because it cannot save them from their narrow-mindedness and flaws (Ai, 1996:75). Her reserved introduction and further question of whether the concept of body is corrupted when women are imagining that an unorthodox and novel language for their usage and living experience arouse heated discussions about more dimensions of the body. Worries and introspection about body theories, shown in the reflections made by the two critics mentioned above, indicate an obvious and insightful recognition that China's transmitting of these Western resources narrowly has centred on "sex" or fleshly dimension.

With this recognition and caution, some scholars continue to make a critical thinking about the previous stages of theory travelling and its impact while other scholars strive to dig out its richer implications and full interpretations. Take Cai Shilian's article "Feminism, Bodily Writing and Private Space: Absurdity in the Intentions of Women Writings" as an example. After

displaying his own interpretations about Cixous's theory and corrected misreading of body studies, he criticizes Chinese writers' misapplication of this key concept and appeals to them to adjust their attitudes towards artistic creation (Cai, 1998). It is also worth introducing "A Dialogue between Men and Women: Reread Our Body and Sex" published in *Shandong Literature* in 1998. Written in a conversational form, this paper inquires into several literary situations in particular historical contexts. The two writers discuss about Foucault's and feminists' body theories and subsequently apply different theories to analyzing specific texts. Despite that the paper does not make a systematic introduction, it explicitly states that body and sex and their discourse are a political issue. Similar to the other papers which reveal their displeasure about Chinese literary fixation on sex and personal emotions and desires, this paper calls upon Chinese intellectuals to reject frivolous elements of consumer culture and to theorize new aesthetics with a new and serious posture of the body (Huang, 1998). These opinions successfully encourage Chinese scholars to dig out more dimensions and connotations of the body and to achieve a full and better comprehension of Western body studies.

That a multifaceted "body" was widely researched and became a catchword in Chinese literary and artistic circle at the beginning of the 21st century is partially due to the far-sighted publishing project about the body planned and undertaken by Chunfeng Literature and Art Publishing House. In "Preface" of the book series "Reading Body", the publishing house purposely draws readers' attention to a distinction between the body and the flesh and expressly claims that body is a multidimensional phenomenon and a multi-layered concept. The two purposes of launching the Western academic outcomes are stated as follows:

One of the purposes is to introduce body studies into China via translating a collection of weighty academic treatises. Since the 1980s, there has been a great development in the transdisciplinary study of the body in the West. The body has grown into a major and popular subject in sociology, ethnology, culture studies, psychoanalysis, feminism and so on. The publishing house hopes that the selected theses and books that are honored for distinct opinions and novel methodologies may bring to us new perspectives and horizons and prompt Chinese body study.

Another reason is our impatience about current bodily phenomena. The body is extremely disparaged and practically reduced to a consumption machine of sex and diverse commodities in this consumer society which merely identifies fleshliness and ignores its significance of higher levels. On the threshold of the new century, we should reexamine our knowledge of body, eliminate outdated views of body, and build up a profound ideological mode of a healthy and beautiful body.

(Turner, 2000:5)

The intended address of the publishing purposes to its readers obviously reveals China's responses and thinking about bodily issues. What is more important is that the explanation fosters Chinese intellectuals' interest and commitment to discover the rich connotations and denotations of the body. In summary, this publishing project is considered as a huge effort to absorb foreign theoretical resources and at the same time to promote body studies and correct misunderstandings.

Chinese transmission of Western body studies via the second route starts with reading Foucault's theories and then develops with discussing feminist thoughts. Inspired by critical reflections, Chinese scholars move on into an active period with more introductions and translations, a wider scope and more profound expositions. For instance, Chinese scholars used to focus on power and discourse in Foucault's theories. But the interest in this theorist's thoughts about the political body is so strong that they would like to write one whole chapter or section to elaborate on his body views in their research outcomes of Foucault's thoughts.<sup>11</sup> These researchers generally agree that body is a site for historical occurrences and emphasize the construction of society and power on the body. They frequently extend their discussions from Foucault's works to other Western theorists' books. In *Contemporary French Thoughts of Fifty Years* published in 2005, Gao Xunyang not only illustrates Foucault's opinions about the relationship between power and body but also introduces Jean Baudrillard's depictions about bodies in a consumer society and even touches upon French feminists' body views. A more detailed introduction to feminist theories of body can be found in Huanghua's *Power, Body and Self-Foucault and Feminist Literary Criticism*. After elaborating on Foucault's thoughts of the body in his works one after another, Huanghua inquires into feminists' borrowing from Foucault's anti-essentialism and interprets the concept of the body in Cixous's "feminine writing" and Luce Irigaray's "female discourse" and its influences. Different from these books, other books focus on Terry Eagleton and his *Ideology of the Aesthetics*.<sup>12</sup> In addition, "Body Aesthetics in Consumer Culture", written by Tao Dongfeng, is a supplement to Gao Xuanyang's introduction to Baudrillard's ideas.

### *Philosophical thinking about the body*

To some degree, the second travelling route of a multifaceted body studies develops from the first route that rotates around a carnal axis. The third route is nevertheless slightly different from the first two. Since modern Western body studies are derived from a re-examination of traditions and conventions, Chinese scholars are keenly aware of the philosophical background and its implicit philosophical significance and build the third mode of philosophical thinking of body. Sun Zaiguo's paper about Merleau-Ponty's philosophy written in 1991, the first complete introduction to Western body theories since China shifted its focus from the sex-oriented body

to the multifaceted body, can be viewed as a try. Its historical sketch of Western body studies and introduction of a core concept of “body-subject” not only help China reinforce its understanding of the political nature of body theories but also lead to an acceptance and thinking of body ontology. He interprets this body as a link between the subject and the world and thinks that Merleau-Ponty’s body theory transcends traditional dualism which separates and ranks body and mind (Sun, 1991).

Besides Merleau-Ponty’s bodily philosophy, Chinese researchers show interest in other Western philosophers, such as Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Schmitz, Husserl, Marx<sup>13</sup> and etc. Consequently, there are many academic discussions about these classical Western philosophers’ thoughts and part of them are about views of the body and their historical significance. Nevertheless, more research is needed as only a few books center on the body concept of a singular philosopher, including Zhang Xiaojun’s *Metaphorical Body: A Study of Merleau-Ponty’s Bodily Phenomenology*, Jiang Yuhui’s *A Study of Deleuze’s Bodily Aesthetics* and Wang Minan’s *Nietzsche and Body*.

In addition to interpreting and evaluating a certain philosopher’s thoughts, Chinese scholars like to make a historical sketch of Western bodily philosophy. A widely read book is Yang Dachun’s *Language, Body, Other: Three Subjects of Contemporary French Philosophy*. The second part of the book is practically addressed to a historical research and detailed interpretation of body philosophy of French thinkers. In such a historical investigation, the writer also clarifies the inherited ideas and traits from French traditions and points out similarities and differences between the old and the new. Inspired by Foucault’s genealogical methodology, Chen Lisheng, Xie Youshun, Wang Minan and Chen Yongguo, Yang Dachun and Peng Fuchun successively sketches out the historical changes of the body concept in philosophy and aesthetics.<sup>14</sup> These scholars’ papers are useful resources for other Chinese intellectuals to clearly understand the evolution of body studies and the importance and subversiveness of setting a paradigm of bodily thinking. Similarly, Wang Min’an makes an observation of postmodernity mechanism from the perspective of body in “Genealogy of Postmodernity” which is purposely attached after the preface in his compilation *A Philosophical Dialogue of Postmodernity: From Foucault to Said*. In this paper, the body is upgraded to an important academic concept as Wang Min’an refers the body to the real center of postmodernity, either overt or covert, and points out that the mission of postmodernity is to return back to body and emancipate bodies (Wang, 2001).

The three routes of the body theory travelling described above are not completely separated from each other. Instead, tremendous activities of introducing, translating, interpreting and evaluating Western body studies along these three paths interact with and complement each other, cooperatively promoting China’s transmission and acceptance of modern Western thoughts about the body. In the entwined course of the body theory travelling, the focus on fleshliness is developed into a multidimensional construct

of body with an exploration into its philosophical significance. At the same time, many Chinese scholars are reflecting on body studies throughout the history of Chinese thoughts and making a comparative study between Western philosophy and Chinese philosophy<sup>15</sup>.

### *A cultural interpretation of Chinese acceptance*

The concept of body came on the scene in the name of instinct and desire at the very beginning of the 20th century and grew into a focus and subject of various schools of literary criticism by the 1980s in the West. When China was active about cultural exchanges, Western body studies travelled across the sea and entered into a different culture. It is no accident that there was a prompt and wide acceptance of Western intellectual resources. This section is to discuss about cultural factors and historical needs that lead to the current ascendance of body studies in China.

### *The inheritance of body-oriented Chinese culture*

One of the underlying reasons for China to promptly accept Western modern body studies can be found in Chinese traditional culture. The body has never been really and entirely absented from intellectual discourses throughout Chinese history, which is partially different to body experience in Western cultures. In ancient Chinese myths and legends, the body plays an important part. As Chinese story of genesis says, Pan Gu's body disintegrates to form natural components like the sun and moon and stars, mountains and forests, rivers and seas, grasses and trees after his heroic action of separating the sky from the earth exhausts him. In the myth which in fact figuratively embodies Chinese cosmology, the body matters as an accessible physical support for early humans. In other words, ancient Chinese observe and understand the whole universe from the perspective of their own body. Therefore, those mythological ancestors and legendary leaders, such as Nyu Wa, Fu Xi, Yan Emperor Shen Nong and Yellow Emperor Xuan Yuan, also share parts of human body and look like humans. In early Chinese history, the body indeed served as reference for ancient Chinese to imagine, observe, understand and explain the world.

Such a bodily thinking paradigm takes different forms in the following Chinese body discourses which are fairly varied with mixed attitudes. Different from the prevailing Western philosophical thoughts that either scorn or ignore the body, a vast body of Chinese classics of Confucianism and Taoism record varied discourses about the body. For example, Confucianism maintains that one's body which is inherited from parents should not be hurt or destructed at random. In terms of familial ethics, cherishing one's body is a representation of one's love for the family and filial piety. Furthermore, the body bears more meanings that transcends the level of individuals and families. Body presence, body self-discipline, and bodily commitment

not only mean an individual's observing clan ethics but also indicate a concern about a nation as they stand for taking political responsibilities. *Higher Education*, a Chinese ancient classic, describes the relationship between the body and familial ethics and national politics as such:

Men in old times when they wanted to further the cause of enlightenment and civilization in the world began first by securing good government in their country. When they wanted to secure good government in their country, they began first by putting their house in order. When they wanted to put their house in order, they began first by ordering their conversation aright. When they wanted to put their conversation aright, they began first by putting their minds in a proper and well-ordered condition. When they wanted to put their minds in a proper and well-ordered condition, they began first by getting true ideas. When they wanted to have true ideas, they began first by acquiring knowledge and understanding. The acquirement of knowledge and understanding came from a systematic study of things.

After a systematic study of things, and only then, knowledge and understanding will come. When knowledge and understanding have come, and only then, will men have true ideas. When men have true ideas, and only then, will their minds be in a proper and well-ordered condition. When men's minds are in a proper and well-ordered condition, and only then, will their conversation be ordered aright. When men's conversations are ordered aright, and only then, will their houses be kept in order. When men's houses are kept in order, and only then, will there be good government in the country. When there is good government in all countries, and only then, will there be peace and order in the world.

(Chu Hsi, 2017:22)

As illustrated above, the body is believed to be the brick in the chain which consists of the world, country, society, cultural community, family and individual. It serves as a bridge to link internal elements of mind, intention, wish and knowledge with external forces of family, country and the world. In order to achieve harmony running through the chain and put every element in the chain in order, one should cultivate his body and subsequently mind. As long as one cultivates one's mind via abstention and emotion control and then attends to the body complying fully with moral codes and ethics and conforming to Confucian rites and musical culture, a Confucius's gentleman of perfect characters is made. Only in this way can he realize his political aspirations of governing a peaceful country and a happy world. Though such a body view cannot avoid instrumentalism, the body is valued instead of being ignored, chained, or even deserted as Socrates wished.

Likewise, Taoism takes the body seriously. Laozi thinks that the body and life precedes other social factors such as fame and wealth. Hence, he proposes and theorizes a system of regimens and carries them out in his

own life. Unlike Confucius who emphasizes the political and functional features of the body, Laozi pursues the natural state and essence of the body as he holds that “man imitates earth, earth imitates heaven, heaven follows the divine law, and the divine law follows nature” (Lao, 2003:52). The body should comply with its innocent nature and frees itself from any constraint of feudal ethics and rites and also from the corruptions of earthly desires. Only when one lets things take their own course and is content with one’s lot, can the body and the soul be saved from harm and disharmony. And finally, Tao can be achieved. In brief, unlike Plato’s detesting and evaluation of the body as a barrier to obtain Knowledge, Taoism positively attaches great importance to the body in order to achieving Tao.

In conclusion, the body is viewed as the essential foundation of life in ancient China no matter what attitude one is taking towards self and the world. And the body is also strongly functional and valuable. It is closely connected with mind and a useful approach to “propriety” and “Tao”. In order to optimize its effectiveness, China, which is dominated by feudal ethics and rites, advocates shackles on bodily biological instincts and yearnings for individuality. Imposing such restraints on the body represents another view in traditional Chinese culture.

Traditional thoughts about the body still found their way in China’s process of modernization. China’s concern about the body retained when the country was engaged in a series of reform movements to oppose feudalism and traditional ethical codes and to pursue freedom and democracy. Yan Fu, one of the open-minded intellectuals, proposes that China urge its people to build a strong body, to have them enlightened, and to establish their new morality. In his eyes, a vigorous body and robust physique is a must for the survival of a country and its national prosperity. Such a view of the body is a consensus among all the young reformists and radicals. For instance, both Cai’e and Liang Qichao compare currently powerless China to a weak human body. The former summons China’s awareness that bodily reform is the very foundation for a surviving race and a thriving nation and thus supports the militarized moulding of bodies of all the people. Slightly different from Cai’e, Liang Qichao proposes that a new Chinese image is the key to cope with Chinese predicaments. Although the proposed new image is multidimensional, one of the specific strategies is an encouragement of military spirit. He asks all the Chinese to build a strong physique and as well discard the mentality that takes bodily vulnerability as the criteria of beauty.

A surge in discourses about body modification around the May Fourth Movement is another illustration of China’s body-oriented culture. The grand narrative of the body severely criticizes foot-binding<sup>16</sup> which has been popular for thousands of years. They connect foot-binding with national power. They argue that foot-binding is detrimental to female bodies. Hence, an unhealthy mother will give birth to sick men and subsequently has a bad impact on competitions against other countries. Such anti-foot-binding discourse inherits traditional views and endows the biological body with

the same political connotation and responsibility. As a Chinese sociologist Huang Jinlin states, “The New Culture Movement which started in 1915 can also be viewed as a reform of body” (Huang, 2006:20). The advanced youth, strongly repudiating Chinese traditional preference for a feeble body, hold a physically strong body in high esteem. They conceive of a new body image equipped with a vigorous physique and rich emotions and yearnings and hope that “the liberation of humans, individuality and body can eventually lead to the ultimate national independence and emancipation” (Huang, 2006:56).

The body’s presence, functions and metaphorical implications have been a dominant subject in traditional Chinese thoughts and developed into a pivotal point in a highlighted form at the beginning of the 20th century. Afterwards, various international and national wars and political regulations predominated while body discourse retreated. Despite that, bodily thinking has always been an important component of Chinese culture and history. To a certain degree, this cultural framework which keeps an eye on the body shares a similarity with modern Western body studies. Therefore, China provides a body-oriented cultural context of high compatibility for the ready acceptance of foreign thoughts.

#### *Necessity of particular social and historical contexts*

Chinese intellectuals were initially exposed to modern Western body studies in the New Culture Movement when Freudian theory was introduced into China. From the early 1950s to the end of the 1970s, the Western body theory travelling was suspended. The postponed travelling resumed from the middle 1980s. During the 1990s, Western body theories became a prevailing research subject in China. The two literary activities at the very beginning and then in the final decade of the 20th century took root in the zeitgeist and requirements of particular historical contexts.

In late Qin, neither enormous reform measures nor the 1911 Republican Revolution changed the severe reality of both domestic strife and foreign aggression. What’s worse, the subsequent activities to restore monarchy and rigidly worship Confucianism and conventions dragged China back into an unenlightened state. In such a historical context, China had to hasten its process of modernization and as well as westernization so as to survive international and national chaos. Western thoughts provided hopes at that time. Pioneers of the New Culture Movement turned to a great many Western thoughts and endeavoured to make a radical break with repressive feudalism and advance the enlightenment. For these young patriots who were keen on modern Western thoughts, both Confucianism and Taoism held a negative attitude towards individuality and inclined to control and restrain the body (Zhou, 2005:343) though they respectively valued social functions of the body and advocate the maintenance of natural state of the body. It seems that “the opinion of belittling body in the following generations has

its root in traditions” (Zhou, 2005:343). Chinese feudal ideology zoomed in on bodily management and etiquette or Tao advocated by Confucianism and Taoism to such an extreme degree that China had endured a long history of restraining sexual impulses and other desires and suppressing one’s individuality. Instrumentalized bodies were forced to be colonies of propriety and Tao. On the contrary, Freud’s theory of the body of libido justifies instinct release and desire fulfilment with scientific evidence. It aims at fostering a healthy and balanced personality and elevates the body to be the origin of human civilization. It was these features and ideas that met the revolutionary demands of a new time. China was eager to smash the shackles of outdated “human-eating” morals, liberate humanity and individuality, embrace scientific rationalism, and realize democracy. Under such circumstances, modern body studies, along with other Western thoughts, attracted Chinese intellectuals and obtained its first admission ticket into China.

The third and fourth stages of body theory travelling otherwise answered different calls from a different era. The end of the last century witnessed China’s rapid and sustained economic growth and a steady rise in gross domestic product since the reform and opening up. When more Western body studies were ready to travel across the sea, China stepped into the stage of globalization which was characterized by a fast-growing market economy and consumer culture. Material abundance and the increasing household income enabled Chinese to live a better life. Living standards were raised, with less money spent on basic daily necessities and instead a major part of living expenses on enjoying consumption like entertainment, travel and leisure activities.

Behind the analysis of daily life lies, in fact, the social transition and the changes of time. China has developed from the stage when the production and consumption of daily necessities predominated into another phase when the output and consumption of consumer durables soared (Sun, 2003:35).

The rising consumer culture not only changed Chinese living standards and their way of life but also converted their world outlook and concept of self. They were busy with maintaining and modifying their internal and external bodies and therefore the industries of beauty and skin care, weight-loss and fitness, diet therapy, sanitation supplies, and fashion and costume thrived. At the same time, the Chinese became bold about body performance and expression. Boisterous beauty contests and talent shows exhibited a variety of beautiful and individualized images via the media and networks. Furthermore, they discarded the belief that the body could not be modified as it was an inheritance from the parents. Instead, they felt happy if their bodies were improved or even transformed through cosmetic surgeries and transsexual operations for a better or true self. In this consumer society which preached individualism and hedonism, fleshliness that was once suppressed and deprived of at an individual level encountered a reversal of fate. The biological body obtained its intrinsic value and adequate appreciation. The body, which was traditionally associated with extrinsic

factors, currently owned its own integrity. Crawling out of the shadow of ethics, country and class, the body had a new position and the maximum concern in the course of upvaluing individual enjoyment, experience and individuality.

It was a huge joy that the body was liberated from the oppression and repression of traditions and conventions and as well as political causes. But at the same time, some far-sighted Chinese observed the underlying perils of treating the body as the center of aestheticized everyday life. People found that an indulgence in sensuality and craziness for desire fulfilment failed to save a vacuous soul in this consumer society of a weakened clinging to or even a declining of morality. The emancipation of all human beings has not yet been achieved because the multi-edged sword of science paired bodily salvation with violence, created individualized body images with standardized codes, and exhibited unrestrained female bodies to satisfy the voyeuristic community. The body seemed to have

fallen into a self-made conflict between the purposeful and the instrumental, between its biological essence and spirituality, between individuation and sociality, between an inclination to live and a propensity for death, between its contingencies and predestination, between self and non-ego. This series of paradoxes, foregrounded in this new social context, left modern people in a dilemma.

(Fu, 2004:5)

In conclusion, the body was confronted with both an elevated status and many controversial issues in this consumer culture. It was the present social reality that again won modern Western body studies another chance for further travelling in China and also a dialogue between the West and China.

### *Compliance with the paradigm shifts of literary criticism*

China's interest in and acceptance of Western body theories are largely attributed to the bodily orientation embedded in traditional Chinese culture, the historical needs for the social transformation of substituting feudalism with democracy and the currently thriving consumerism. And they are also the natural outcome of the development of Chinese literary criticism.

As a breakaway from traditional ideologies and ancient literature studies, modern Chinese literature, including literary theories, literary creation and applied critiques, are greatly influenced by or even shaped by Western thoughts. Before the May Fourth Movement, Liang Qichao, Wang Guowei, Chen Duxiu, Luxun, Hushi, etc., energetically translated and introduced advanced Western literary theories of that time. Their pioneering endeavours provided Chinese literature with a divorce from a self-locking state, an open window for blending with the West and a starting point of modernization. Even though Chinese scholars during this period indeed borrowed

these foreign resources with a filter and made transformations and assimilation accordingly, that a variety of novel thoughts swarmed into China resulted in a high dependence of Chinese literature on Western theories and practices.

The high dependence on modern literary theories of America, Britain, France, German, and Austria was shifted to those of Russia and Soviet in a given situation. The acceptance of realism and critical realism and social historical criticism prevailed and soon developed into an extremity. Until the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976, the country suddenly had the revelation that Chinese “literary theories became frozen, exclusive, isolated and rigid, and was eventually cornered because of the constant and intensive influence of the increasingly intense ‘left’ political atmosphere” (Dai, 1998:4). Chinese academic circles came to realize that there was a great need to equip themselves with a wider scope of foreign literary theories and their recent development. And only in this way could China keep up with the trend of world literature, find its proper position and play a role on the global agenda. Therefore, the 1980s again saw a great zeal coated with a touch of helplessness for Western literary thoughts and works. The newly developed body studies were accordingly transplanted into China with the rush for modern and contemporary literary theories.

If we make a careful investigation into the history of cultural exchange between the West and China, we can easily find that Chinese importation of Western body theories was not an entirely passive and forced move. Instead, Chinese scholars made their active choices which were in compliance with the logical evolution and shifts of academic paradigms and the new requirements of literary creation after critically examining a myriad of foreign terms, concepts and theories. Chinese endeavours of transmitting Western literary thoughts during nearly one hundred years roughly fell into two categories: one was political utilitarianism and the other was aestheticism. After the reform and opening-up, Chinese academy was desperately discontented with the ultra-left trend of thoughts and started to “set things right”. They actively dug out aesthetic discourses in Russian and Soviet theories. But this move was not adequate. Their unsolved dissatisfaction aroused the second wave of Western literary transmission for new ideas and a clear tendency of aestheticization. This time, the borrowing fostered an “inward turning” that stressed inherent laws and aesthetic nature of Chinese literary theories and criticism. “Of course, the biggest stars in the 1980s were Sarte, Freud and Nietzsche” (Xie, 2009:43). The revival of Freudian theories in China after many years’ interruption actually is a response to the requirement of the shift from exterior study to interior study of literature. The rediscovery of libido body can be seen as an active intervention and critical introspection made by the Chinese academy about leftism politicizing literature and literary studies.

By the last decade of the previous century, Chinese cultural structure had undergone a great deal of changes and a cultural pattern of multiple

symbiosis had been formed. Accordingly, the intrinsic study could never meet the demands for literature studies of the new age. Meanwhile, the examination from a single perspective, such as politics, aesthetics and semiotics, could no longer reasonably interpret contemporary literature nor offer a comprehensive picture of peculiar literary phenomena as literature itself simultaneously revealed many new traits under the influence of consumerism. As a result, there was an extension from intrinsic study to extrinsic study or even their combination. China was happy to absorb various Western literary theories and criticism of “the cultural turn”. Western Marxism, new historicism, post-modernism, post-colonialism, feminism and culture studies swarmed into China. Because the physical body was both the foundation of an individual life and everyday life and was closely connected with history, politics, class, gender, society and culture, the concept of body became the inevitable in all the schools of thoughts mentioned above. Finally, the evolution of literary studies and the disciplinary concern of body studies joined forces with the globalization of cultural consumption, giving rise to China’s recurrent dependence on and passion for Western literary theories. Compared with Chinese remedial action of importing Western resources in the 1980s, the following boom in literary theories since the 1990s carried a reflective examination from the perspective of postcolonialism. The bodily orientation embedded in traditional Chinese culture allowed Chinese intellectuals to seize a chance to follow the development of literary theories and at the same time to resist cultural hegemony and build a new national image. To sum up, all the factors analyzed above cooperated to drive China to widely accept Western body studies and discover bodily implications of its own literary criticism and culture.

### **The impact and traits of body studies in China**

Western literary theories are rooted in their peculiar historical, philosophical and cultural contexts. However, cultural heterogeneity cannot block their entrance and acceptance in China. The Chinese always have a way to find certain integrating hinges that can link Western resources with Chinese reality. And they soon apply the foreign borrowing to explain and solve their own issues until they transform the borrowed into their own stuff.

(Chen, 2002:18)

This comment on the fate of feminism in China is also true with Western body studies. Many ideas, concepts and methodologies of body studies are removed away from their original contexts and introduced into China. This utilitarian acceptance that responds to Chinese historical, political and literary demands make a wide influence on Chinese intellectual circles. And the impact grows greater as Chinese focus shifts from theories of “sex” to those of multi-layered body and its philosophical significance. Since the

1990s, the discussion of body theory has become a common practice and the body has been embracing its indigenization.

### ***The interface and its impact***

The acceptance of Western body studies makes an initial and obvious impact on Chinese practice of literature criticism. It enlivens Chinese literary critics with the continual infusion of innovative critical concepts and more diverse perspectives. To begin with, Chinese critics no longer scratches the surface. They used to simply narrate a writer's life story and then speculate the possible influences on the writings or their intentions. Turning to Freud's theory of "sexual sublimation" and "transference", they strive to dig out a writer's creating psyche. Many examinations of artists' underlying subconsciousness which are implied in their texts are made. In the second place, the subconsciousness mechanism and the personality theory inspire Chinese scholars to conduct in-depth research on characters' psychic structures, hidden sexual motivations, and personalities and as well their contributions to their fate. Thirdly, bodily images are included into the metaphorical system. Many critics are keen to uncovering the implications and artistic functions of bodily images and also the inner structure of a text. In addition, some critics like to inspect bodily manifestations in literature of a peculiar historical period and summarize their traits while some prefer a historical survey of changes in physical manifestations and body consciousness. Anyhow, both the synchronic studies and the diachronic investigations further interpret the cultural implications of the bodily phenomena. Finally, Chinese scholars imitate the Western transdisciplinary approach to various body issues. A typical example is *Cultural Politics of Body*, a collection of academic papers written by famous Chinese scholars and compiled by Wang Min'an in 2004. The fifteen papers address the relationship between the body and Chinese culture, Chinese literature and Chinese politics and cover various fields. In terms of physical body structure, the scholars deal with body modifications from hair colouring down to foot-binding. As for the time span, not only marital strategies and polices before China's Liberation but also today's picture-reading and image world are discussed. This academic fruit in an integrated form, undoubtedly benefiting from Western body studies, also investigates body issues that range from standardized body images of cover girls to diversified images of "Running Lola", from general hospital measures to specific SARS crisis, from critiques on Moyan's works to reflections on abstract body theories. In short, China widens its literary horizon as new research subjects are uncovered, scientificity is increased and profundity is achieved with new and modern methodologies.

Owing to the high dependence on Western thoughts and cultural disparities, China is still engaged in translation, introduction, interpretation and application of the foreign theories, and the development of Chinese body

theories lags behind. However, a few Chinese scholars clearly realize that it is of great importance to establish body theory of their own and thus take actions. Chinese concepts of body are puzzled out from traditional culture and attempts are made to achieve a harmonious conversation between China and the West via the bridge of body studies. Another theorizing effort is the proposal of somatics. For instance, Nan Fan brings up “body rhetoric”, Xie Youshun and Li Fengliang mediate on “literary somatology”, and Peng Fuchun makes his exploration into several core issues of “body aesthetics”. Different from the approach that stresses radical uniqueness, somatics blends traditional Chinese thoughts about the body with Western body theories. Among all the Chinese efforts, *Body Politics* written by Guo Hongbing and Song Geng in 2005 is worth introducing. The writers first make a distinction between the body in ancient Chinese culture and that in Western culture. And then they draw a systematic sketch of body images and situations in various literary works of the May Fourth New Cultural Movement, Chinese Revolution and postmodern period, employing the analysis framework of “body-power”. Besides, cultural politics implied in hunger, sex, illness and other states of life such as poverty, regret, intoxication and solitude are explained, followed by an attempt at abstractions and theoretical generalizations. The most impressive is their proposal of “body ethics”. They claim that this newly established ethics that opposes the mind-body dichotomy, in fact, is grounded in the three-layered body concept in ancient Chinese thoughts. The first layer is centred on the physical body and the second the drive-controlled flesh of emotions and subconsciousness. The third layer is identity which is governed by external forces like social morality and civilization consciousness. What really constitutes the immediate basis for body ethics is the body that serves as intermediary agent between the flesh and identity (Ge, 2005). Ge Hongbing’s research can be considered as an intact and systematic development of body theory in the mainland because of its abundant textual analyses, novel perspectives, diverse abstractions and an attempt of theorizing body. Although the body ontology proposed in his book is detached from reality and rather idealistic, the effort to establish an indigenous body theory based on traditional Chinese thoughts is still amazing and deserves commendation.

### *The characteristics of the Sinicized body concept*

That Western body theories are transmitted and widely accepted and the body is gradually developed into a cultural keyword in China is not a casual result of intellectuals’ emotional impulses and blindly following. Conversely, it is a ripe fruit nurtured by their rational and profound reflection on social reality. Yue Daiyun comments,

[o]n their entrance into China, these Western theories are screened by a cultural filter and adapted to Chinese cultural contexts. After a further

transformation in Chinese literary practices, they no longer remain intact. China has sinicized these overseas research achievements.

(Yue, 1997:142)

What happened to the borrowed body concept during its theory travelling? Which meanings were favoured by Chinese intellectuals? What were lost, changed or reconstructed? How can we understand all the transformations? Despite that Chinese theorists and critics often mix the three levels of body concept (the body, the flesh of libido and physical soma), or make general and vague explanations, or even overlook the importance of defining the term, we can still detect several traits of this Sinicized concept discussed in theoretical explorations and employed in literary practices.

First of all, Chinese academia tends to use the concept of body in terms of the “body-power” structure. Applying a genealogical approach, many scholars probe into the relationship between the body and class, national revolutions, and women liberation. Or they elucidate political connotations of the body through their analyses of historical Chinese body phenomena, including foot-binding and “foot liberation”, Chinese men wearing a braid in Qing Dynasty and braid cutting, illness and death, costume and fashion. It cannot be denied that China is greatly influenced by Foucault’s power theory and feminists’ discussions about patriarchal oppression and suppression. But if we look back at ancient Chinese culture and the historical development of Chinese literary criticism that are discussed in the previous parts, we can find the other reasons. It is safe to conclude that this preference arises from the ancient Chinese tendency to use the body as a metaphor for politics and bodily cultivation as an approach to propriety and morality, and from a modern continuation of Chinese habit of socio-historical literary criticism as well. Under this context, Chinese scholars tend to view the body as a structure for manifestations and operations of political power and thus endeavour to shed lights on complex power mechanism and ideologies that the body carries.

The study of politicized body in China focusses on bodies in national, racial and ethical narrative and at the same time begins to evaluate literary works that are positive about individual yearnings, emotional experience and self-manifestations. However, problems are generated from the simplified and impertinent application of body-power structure either in theoretical exploration and construct or in literary critiques. The concept of body wavers between the perspective of “political consciousness” and that of “cultural criticism” in many academic papers that lack substantial supports of careful and detailed textual analyses. At times, different levels of power and the complexity of its mechanism are explained vaguely and specific historical contexts are totally neglected. For this reason, how bodies are regulated by the power structure of national politics and patriarchy/feminism as revealed both in literary works and in social and cultural events is roughly examined and generalized. Besides, few scholars notice

the mutual permeation and interactions between the body and power. They regard the body as a passive matter without any resistance and enhance its instrumental value, erasing its revolutionary nature and subversive potentials. All these impatient and impetuous academic actions expose Chinese problematic borrowing of Western key terms and their lax habit of prioritizing conclusions. Without a close study on Western thoughts and a proper understanding of Western concepts, Chinese scholars rush to use the newly emerged terms for an eye-catching effect. Or some scholars like to first presume a definite value orientation of the body and then make biased argumentation for the given conclusion. Both result in a large number of papers about the identical research topics that misuse key concepts and draw groundless conclusions. Therefore, it is high time for China to make sound judgments and soberly conduct body studies. We need to maintain our vigilance against jumping on the bandwagon while jumping for joy because of the novel perspective of the body.

Another remarkable feature of the Sinicized body study is that the key concept is frequently used in a narrow sense. The body, as a three-layered concept, primarily refers to a biological physique that consists of head and hair, face, arms and hands, legs and feet. It also means the flesh that has emotions, life experience and individual psyche. Furthermore, it functions as a metaphysical signifier of social, historical and cultural thoughts and will. But most of the Chinese critiques merely deal with body parts or the whole biological body in literary discourse. They set sights on straightforward descriptions about physical bodies such as “greasy hair”, “expressionless eyes”, “fat chin”, “stout figure” and “pockmarked face”. There is no gainsaying that it is valuable to probe into the symbolic roles of all these body images. Such literary narrative inquiry, though valuable, surveys the physical body in an inappropriately narrow manner.

According to Li Fengliang, there are two types of body in body rhetoric: the delomorphic body and the concealed body. The first type, the body in a narrow sense, just includes bodily descriptions in a text and body rhetoric in a narrow sense. The second type refers to corporality projected out from a narrator’s narration, language and rhetorical strategies and also corporality permeating through a character’s speech, actions and activities (Li, 2006: 91–92). According to this division, the literary critiques mentioned above merely pertain to the body in a narrow sense. Owing to a simplified understanding, many scholars analyze the symbolic connotations of different body parts and thus make it a popular mode of body-based literary critiques. Only a few scholars realize there is another type of body. They try to figure out corporality of characters’ behaviours and discuss how literature is related with their perceptual experience like hunger, illness and pain, intoxication and solitude. Still, the focus on body images and bodily situations excludes bodily subjects of the aesthetic and their libido and perception. That is why Chinese scholars scarcely research narrators’ and writers’ corporality. They rarely investigate how a narrator’s or a writer’s

bodily consciousness, bodily experience and bodily imagination determine their way of knowing the world and influence their literary expressions. This indicates Chinese neglect of Freudian libido body, Merleau-Ponty's body-subject and Roland Barthes's bodily pleasure in theories of literary creation and appreciation.

Some scholars just pay attention to physical body images whereas some critics find an interest in bodily fleshliness through a magnifying glass. In the last decade of the last century, women writing and feminist criticism thrived in China. One of the major reasons for such a literary phenomenon is that Chinese intellectuals are inspired by Western feminism. The exotic factor achieves its maximum effectiveness with the motivation of Chinese consumerism and the aid of advanced media technology. What is unusual and weird is the naming of this cultural activity. Greatly influenced by the flourishing Western body study and Cixous's theory of feminine writing, Chinese academy coins a term "body writing" by a subtle blend. And soon other slogans like "personal writing", "lower body writing", "breast writing", "beauty writing", "baby writing", "prostitute writers" and etc. hover over Chinese literary circle. It is likely that these catchphrases are generated from the interaction between the commercial operation of publishing houses, the media hype, and the innovative pursuit of literary community. Literally, they substitute the flesh, sexual organs, privacy and desires for the body. Functionally, they tempt the reader to understand the concept of body in its narrow sense. Meanwhile, they become high-frequency phrases in literary critiques. Chinese critics are mainly concerned with bodily narrative that is specifically related to sex and carnal desires whether they have an approving opinion or a critical attitude. Discovering that both the public and the academic narrow the concept of body down to sex and desires, some Chinese intellectuals become alert. That's why Xie Youshun suggests, "only when the fleshly body holds on to the soul's skirt, can literary poetics be transformed" (Xie, 2001:40).

If the exaggerated emphasis on fleshliness can be considered as Chinese slanted attitude, gender fixation of body writing further restricts our understanding of the concept. Baudrillard suggests that the body in a consumer culture refers to both male bodies and female bodies, but female bodies always take precedence (Baudrillard, 1998:137). This is true with China in particular. Chinese scholars' research into Chinese body writing that thrives in this prosperous consumer society is limited to a group of women writers, such as Chen Ran, Lin Bai, Wei Wei, Mian Mian and etc. This group of women writers are also labelled as "beauty writers". Dissatisfied with the restricted conception, Ge Hongbin proposes that "body writing" should include male writers like Han Dong, He Dun, Zhu Wen, etc. (Ge, 1997). Afterwards, the label of "metrosexual writers" is advertised by publishing houses. Unfortunately, neither Ge Hongbin's proposal nor the newly coined label wins over the public and the academic. The tendency to relate the body merely to sex and to feminizing the neutral body still predominates.

The advertising of various media instead leads to the degeneration of the body as an object of consumer culture.

## **Conclusion**

“Body” is a dynamic concept whose multiple meanings have been discovered and developed in different historical stages and cultural contexts. It is primarily a material entity serving as an organic structure which life depends on. In the meantime, the body is a perceptual existence and the foundation for self, swelling with uncontrollable libido and subconsciousness. The natural body at the first level and the libido body at the second level are always regulated and disciplined by the tangled web of class, race, gender, power, discourse and ideology throughout human history. The unity of the natural body and the libido body, still advocating its own uniqueness and subjectivity, is then transformed into the body which bears groupment, sociality, cultural marks and historical traces. It is the integration of various levels that constitutes the holistic body in reality.

Modern Western literary studies make theoretical explorations into the body and reveals its multi-layered denotations and a wide range of connotations. When these thoughts are introduced and spread in China, the Chinese literary circle is greatly enlightened. A continual flow of innovations in literary creating modes and an increasing number of literary critical perspectives bring about several waves of literary activities and cultural events. Although there are irrational imitations and blind obedience, Chinese intellectuals actively examine all the foreign resources with a filter, make intentional misreadings and encourage transformations and developments according to their own cultural contexts and historical needs. Among all the endeavours, some focus on discovering “body orientation” and bodily thinking in ancient Chinese culture, and some are busy with applying Western theories into literary criticism and probing into cultural events while some strive to establish Chinese body theories. When most of the Chinese scholars celebrate the boom of body studies, some make insightful reflections on its impact and the implied problems and dilemma.

As Dai Xun points out,

there are enormous differences between Chinese literary theories and Western thoughts. There are also similarities, connections and compatibility. Western somatics developed in the realm of art and everyday life in China indicates the convergence of diverse thoughts and cultures in the context of globalization.

(Dai, 2008:179)

Currently, body studies in the West and China is confronted with some common problems. How is the all-covering concept of body related with and different from the concept of human? In what ways can the ontological

body sneak out of the regulation and discipline of discourse and manifest itself? Is there any chance for the body to retain its organic integrity in this postmodern era which is characterized by fragmentation? Can a materialized and standardized body achieve its individualization in this consumer society? How can the body in the newly established Chinese body ethics serve as the bridge or agency to link self and the other in reality? Is it possible that body studies which tends to be part of culture studies shift its focus to literariness? What concealed and particular manners does the body have to reveal its presence in literary creation? How can a female writer obtain discourse power on the basis of her body? How can we solve the problem that female bodies are often objectified and depicted as an object of desire?

These questions remain unanswered, though the oppressed and repressed body has its fate reversal and becomes the key concept in various fields. These unsolved questions might trigger new and potential literary research projects. As for China in particular, it is fairly beneficial if Chinese scholars base their meditation on their creative borrowing of new ideas from Western literary theories and also on their earnest consideration of unique cultural characters and contemporary Chinese literary reality. If so, we can expect body studies to be a starting point for a shift from “Westernization” towards “de-Westernization” and as well as an opportunity for China to overcome the postcolonialism complex and impatience and to ultimately realize a harmonious dialogue.

## Notes

- 1 Zhu Guanqian (1897–1986) is considered as one of the pioneers and founders of modern Chinese aesthetics. After studying aesthetics at the University of Edinburgh and the University of Strasbourg, he returned back to China and taught aesthetics and Western literature at several universities in turn. His works include *On Beauty*, *The Psychology of Art*, *On Poetry*, *A History of Western Aesthetics*, and *Letters on Beauty*.
- 2 *The Eastern Miscellany* was an influential comprehensive journal launched by the Commercial Press in 1904. Until it ceased publication in 1948, it chronicled China’s social transition and historical events such as the collapse of the Qing Dynasty (1644–1912), the failure of Imperial China, Japanese invasion, the Second World War, Communist revolution and the formation of New China (1949). It reported and commented on miscellaneous events at home and abroad, majorly supporting reformist policies and advocating universal education. The editorial staff included a number of prominent Chinese intellectuals like Liang Qichao, Cai Yuanpei, Yan Fu, Lu Xun, Chen Duxiu, etc.
- 3 *Literature Weekly* was launched on May 10, 1921, aiming to revive Chinese literature. On one hand, it took efforts to introduce classical world literature to China. On the other hand, it strove to produce modern Chinese works. The majority of its publications were literary critiques and theoretical discussions, especially those from foreign countries.
- 4 Chunfeng Literature and Art Publishing House, founded in 1959, specialized in publishing contemporary Chinese literature. Currently, it has an expanded scope.

- 5 The four books are *Philosophical Discourse: From Foucault to Said, Specters of Nietzsche in Western Postmodern Context*, *The Faces of Foucault*, *Postbodies: Culture, Power and Biopolitics*.
- 6 See Yang Mei's *French and American Feminism and Body* (2006), Long Liyu's *Feministic Power: Also a Review on Body Writing in Chinese Women Literature* (2007), Hou Ani's *Theoretical Interpreting of the Body in Western Feminism* (2007), Gao Minyue's *Theoretical Discussion about the Body Metaphor of "Tuccia's Sieve" and Its Significance in Gender Criticism* (2008). The four postgraduate dissertations, though detailed, are confined to feminine writing.
- 7 See Zhou Hailing's *Bodily Thinking in Foucault's Works* (2006), Mou Shijing's *On the Body: from Nietzsche to Foucault* (2006), Shang Jinjian's *Genealogy and Body Care* (2006), Shang Danlu's *Body:Aesthetics-Ideology—Eagleton's Theory of Aesthetic Ideology* (2006), Dingping's *Body's Paradise Regained—On Foucault's Aesthetics of Existence* (2006), Su Yongjia's *Sensibility in Life Carnival and its Sublimation: Nietzsche and his Body Aesthetics* (2007), Sheng Fangfang's *An Interpretation of Merleau-Ponty's Body Aesthetics* (2007).
- 8 It has been mentioned in "The four phases of translating Western body theories in China".
- 9 Yu Dafu (1896–1945) is a modern Chinese writer. Leading scholars think his works to be semi-autobiographical, individualistic, iconoclastic and controversial. His writings criticize Chinese political plight and employ ailing bodies as a metaphor for the weak nation. It is said that he was executed by the Japanese shortly after the surrender of Japan in the Japan Invasion.
- 10 Ding Ling (1904–1986) is considered to be the first modern Chinese woman writer that came to Yan'an anti-Japanese base. In 1927, she wrote *Sha Fei's Dairy* which depicted the life of several young people in Beijing after the May Fourth Movement. The leading heroine Sha Fei, enlightened by the movement, has a rebellious spirit and is critical about Chinese traditions, manners and customs. She perversely and boldly pursues true love and self. However, she is defeated by cruel reality and tangled in her relationship with and contempt for Ling Jishi, an oversea Chinese. *Sha Fei's Dairy* successfully and minutely delineates the female characters' inner world.
- 11 These books are Li Yinhe's *Foucault and Sex: An Interpretation of The History of Sexuality* (2001), Wang Minan's *The Limits of Michel Foucault* (2002), Wu Meng and He Xinfeng's *The End of Cultural Power: Dialogue with Michel Foucault* (2003), Gao Xunyang's *Aesthetics of Existence and Michel Foucault* (2005), Yang Dachun's *Diverse Issues of Contemporary French Philosophy: A Study of French Philosophy (1)* (2005).
- 12 Books which are introductions and interpretations of Eagleton's body views include Meng Dengying's *Aesthetics of a "Bodily Discourse": A Commentary of Eagleton's The Ideology of the Aesthetics* (1999), Zhang Lifeng's *An Re-interpretation of Marx: On Terry Eagleton's Ideology of the Aesthetics* (2003), Yuan Chunhong's *Construction of Ideology of Aesthetics in the Name of Body: On Eagleton's Aesthetic Criticism* (2004), Duan Fangji's *Ideology and Aesthetics: Radical Aesthetic Logic and Standpoint of Eagleton* (2005).
- 13 The papers include Jing Huimin's "Body as Both the Knower and the Known—An inquiry into Schopenhauer's Free Will" (2000), Pang Xuequan's "Bodily Theory: A New Attempt of Dealing with Body and Mind in New Phenomenology" (2001), Zhang Wenxi's "Body Views of Descartes and Husserl and Their Practical Significance" (2002), Yang Dachun's "Bodily Intersubjectivity of Philosophy of Consciousness: Merleau-Ponty's Creative Reading and Development of Husserl" (2003), Zang Peihong's "A Phenomenological Exploration into Body-oriented Existence: Merleau-Ponty's Ontology" (2003), Huangrong's

- “Merleau-Ponty’s ‘Body’ and Expressiveness of Painting” (2005), He Zhijun’s “Bodily Perspective: A Potential Viewpoint of Marxist Aesthetics” (2005).
- 14 Related papers include Chen Lisheng’s “Body as a Paradigm of Thinking” (2002), Xie Youshun’s “The Changes of Body Ethic” (2003), Wang Min’an and Chen Yongguo’s “The Bodily Turn” (2004), Yang Dachun’s “An Observation of Body’s Fate during the Process of Modernization in the Context of French Philosophy” (2004), Peng Fumei’s “Body and Body Aesthetics” (2004). In 2005, more papers about the development of body aesthetics were written. They were Peng-feng’s “The Theoretical Development of Body Aesthetics”, Xige’s “Body Aesthetics and Compiling Aesthetical History”, Wang Xiaohua’s “Body Aesthetics: A Return back to Body Subject—Taking the History of Western Aesthetics as an Example”, Dai Xun’s “Body: An Event of Modernity and Aesthetics”, Zhang Jing’s “The Highlighted ‘Body’: the Philosophical Origin of Aesthetical Turn”, and Fan Zhou’s “Inspirations of Body Writing—Also on Several Issues of Constructing Body Aesthetics”
- 15 Related books are *Qi and Body in Ancient Chinese Thoughts* (1993) compiled by Yang Rubin, *Body in Confucianism* (1996) by Yang Rubin, *Body Thinking: Cultural Hermeneutics* (1997) by Wu Guangming, *Body Thinking and Cultivation—A Transcultural Study of Chinese Classics* (2005) by Zhou Yuchen, *Metaphysical Thinking: Body Aesthetics in Han Dynasty* (2007) by Liu Chengji, *Confucian Body Views in Pre-Qin Culture and the Aesthetical Significance* (2007) by Zhang Yanyan, *Ancient Chinese Philosophy as a Body Philosophy* (2008) by Zhang Zailing.
- 16 Foot-binding was practiced widely in China from the Song Dynasty. Young girls bound their feet in order to prevent them from growing. In this way, the shape of their feet was modified to meet the standard of beauty.

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# Afterword

*Hu Yamin*

From planning to completion, the book on keywords took years of effort. In 2005, I conceived the idea of studying the keywords in Western literary criticism when I worked on “30 Years of Chinese Literary Criticism (1978–2009)” which was one of the sub-projects of “Sinicization of Western Literary Theory and Construction of Chinese Literary Theory” (The Ministry of Education’s major research project on philosophy and social sciences). In 2007, my project “Keywords in the Western Literary Theory and Contemporary Chinese Literary Criticism” was subsidized by the NSSF (National Social Science Fund of China) which launched the study of keywords.

Soon, I realized that it was never going to be an easy task. First, there was a sea of materials for us to read and select from. Sometimes we had to do translation work from several different languages. Second, each keyword, with its own history, was understood, explained and defined by different schools in varying ways, and most keywords went beyond their original boundary. Third, the dissemination and variation of the keywords in contemporary China had to be taken into our consideration. Therefore, studying and writing on several or even dozens of keywords was really a tremendous challenge to our brains. In the interim, “keywords” seemed to be a part of our life. We discussed it not only in class, in emails, but also on various occasions, including in conferences, during trips and even at table. One of us once mentioned in an academic conference that apart from work, he had dedicated himself to the keyword “metaphor” for eight years. As the chief editor, I have no doubt about it.

With careful reading and note-taking, the team members almost reached the extreme of our diligence and patience. When new materials or ideas which might rectify or subvert the existing entry were obtained, although greatly delighted, we would patiently scrutinize, reconsider and revise our manuscripts. Facing my rigorous and even hypercritical suggestions (which I regretted afterwards), all the team members would revise the manuscripts repeatedly, for we had a shared wish to advance contemporary Chinese literary criticism by restoring the historical features of these keywords. In this hard but fulfilling journey, we enjoyed the exploration of Chinese and Western civilizations and Chinese literature.

Two of the remarkable qualities of *Keywords* are critical thinking and the abundance of academic information. Unlike most dictionaries that only list and introduce terms, this book is more critical. Through the exploration of the past and the future of the key words and the interpretation of different critical theories, the book is quite theoretical and reflective. In addition, the study of keywords builds a dialogue between Chinese and Western critical theories, which reflects the team members' deep insights and theoretical creativity. The readers may obtain some pleasure from the historical and logical analysis of the keywords such as "discourse", "literariness" and "ideology". Another contribution of this book lies in the detailed and reliable theoretical documents, including the interpretations of important theoretical viewpoints, the discoveries and supplements of new materials, and data about the dissemination in China of the keywords from Western literary theory. All the materials in this book are carefully selected and refined. Most of them are classical ones or those that possess great theoretical value. In view of these two qualities, it may be said that "such a deep exploration of a word takes the initiative in China" (a comment from the National Social Science Fund of China).

In the study of the keywords, I was responsible for the overall planning, item selection, and the outline. I also guided, reviewed and unified the manuscripts. To make the structure of the chapters consistent with each other, I repeatedly negotiated with the team members making adjustments, and finalized an acknowledged structural design. Since then, I reviewed the manuscripts submitted by the team members and proposed amendments. In recent years, I revised the manuscripts three times before the completion of the project, applying for the "National Achievements Library" and publication. During this process, I was both excited and in pain, and sometimes even exhausted. Even now, there are still many regrets. The collection and selection of the materials and the interpretation and elucidation of the keywords still need to be scrutinized and polished. The elaboration on and evaluation of the views of some representative figures also ask for reconsideration. In particular, the integration of the keywords in Western literary theory and contemporary Chinese literary criticism needs to be deepened. Like some other Chinese scholars, we still lack calm discrimination and close observation of the increasingly frequent academic communications between China and other countries.

Finally, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all the friends who have cared for and contributed to our research of the keywords. Their support and kindness will be kept in our mind for a long time. I also would like to thank particularly my colleagues and students for their significant contributions. One of the team members said that he learned much in this team and so did I. Working together for the past few years, we shared the joys and pains, and gained not only the academic achievements, but also the trust and friendship. A team with a great enthusiasm for theories has gathered. What a happy thing!

During this academic journey, we have enjoyed wonderful scenery, and the publication of the book is not the end of it. We will be on the new road, and the study of keywords will always be on the road with us!

HU Yamin

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# Index

Note: Page numbers followed by “n” denote endnotes.

- Abrams, M. H. 16; *A Glossary of Literary Terms* 52; *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* 16  
“absolute Other” 63, 81, 82  
Adorno, Theodor 91; negativity 92  
aesthetics 13; aesthetic ideology 99, 100; bodily aesthetic activities 128, 129; consciousness 100, 127; human aesthetic activities 128; instincts and desires 128  
Ai, Yun 136  
Althusser, Luis 6; “Ideological State Apparatuses” 92; imaginary relationship 92–93  
Aristotle: art, generality and particularity 10; comparison theory of metaphor 9; language development and literary creation 9; *Poetics* 9, 10; prose, significance of metaphor in 9; *Rhetoric* 9, 10; shaping narrative style, significance of metaphor in 9; study of poetics and rhetoric 10  
*The Art of Poetry* (Horatius) 11  
Bacon, Francis: illusions 91  
Barthes, Roland 35, 119; bodily pleasure 152; metaphorical and poetic discourse 119  
Bataillé, Georges 119  
Baudrillard, Jean 152  
Beauvoir, Simone de 123; gender issues 69; *The Second Sex* 68–69, 81–82; woman’s liberation 69  
Bhabha, Homi F. 77; colonizer and the colonized 67; cultural hybridity and minority communities 65–68; dominance of colonial discourse 66; mimicry and hybridity 65–66; minorities of “quasi-colony” 67; Parsi families 66; postcolonial criticism 67; “the self” 67  
Black, Max 16; comparison theory 16; interaction theory, development of 16–17; metaphor creation and understanding 17; substitution theory 16; tenor and vehicle, relationships between 17  
Bloomfield, Leonard: *Language* 29  
bodily thinking: in feminism 122–126; in modern 117–129  
bodily turn 115–117  
body 2, 5, 7; biological terms 112; Chinese acceptance, cultural interpretation of 140–147; definitions 112; interface and its impact 148–149; modern Western literary criticism 117–129; origin of 112; semi-metaphorical concept 125; sex and violence 127; Sinicized body concept, characteristics of 149–153; soul and spirit 112; “travelling” in China (*see* travelling of body studies); vehicle of happiness and self-expression 126–127; Western body studies 112–117  
body ethics, proposal of 149, 154  
body orientation 153  
body-subject, concept of 139, 152  
body writing 152  
Booth, Wayne C.: cultural criticism, component of 18; fusion and mutual penetration, process of 17; general and special metaphors 17; literary rhetoric and research on metaphor 17–18;

- metaphor and simile, distinction between 18; metaphor classification, complexity of 17–18; puzzle-solving, process of 18; theoretical discourse 18
- Bordo, Susan: *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body* 132
- Bottomore, Thomas 107n10
- Bourdieu, Pierre 5
- British and American New Criticism 117
- Brook-Ross: *Grammar of Metaphor* 47
- Butler, Judith 132; body of materiality 124; body's subversiveness 124; *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* 132
- Cai'e 142
- Campbell 14
- Cartesianism 12
- Cassirer, Ernst 27, 28; human language, metaphor dominating 29; in *Language and Myth* 28–29; “pars pro toto” principle 28; “the power of metaphor,” perspective of 28; root metaphor 28, 29
- Chen, Daowang: *An Introduction to Rhetoric* 43–44
- Chen Duxiu 145
- Cheng Fangwu: “Revolutionary Literature” 94
- Chen Kang 74; *The Logic of Hegel* 74
- Chen, Kui 42; *The Book of Changes* 41; classification of metaphor 43; *The Guidelines for Essay Writing* 41; *Wenze* 43
- Chen, Qingxun: *T.S. Eliot: Towards a Metaphorical Poetics* 48
- Chen Ran 152
- Chinese culture: abstention and emotion control 141; bodily images 148; body-oriented 140–143; cultural exchange, history of 146; *Cultural Politics of Body* 148; “the cultural turn,” criticism of 147; familial ethics and national politics 141; fate of feminism 147; foot-binding 142–143; *Higher Education* 141; literary criticism, paradigm shifts of 145–147; modern literary theories 146; multiple symbiosis 147; rising consumer culture 144; self-made conflict 145; social and historical contexts 143–145; subconsciousness mechanism 148; Western thoughts and cultural disparities 148–149
- Chinese feminism, Other and 80–82
- Chinese literary criticism 1, 2, 5; aesthetic ideology 99, 100, 103; classic writings of Marx 103; combination of revolutionary realism and romanticism 105; consciousness, form of 95–96, 99; critical philosophy 94; cultural context 2; *Cultural Criticism* 96; displacement of ideology 95–97; economic base/superstructure 94, 96, 100; in *German Ideology* 94, 96; Historicism/Feminist/Postcolonial Criticism 104; on humanity 106; ideological criticism 100–101, 105, 106; literature, ideological attributes of 97–100; Marxist ideology theory 95; misreading, perspective of 95; “Neo-ideological Criticism” 106; neutralization of ideology 103–106; *New Youth* 95; philosophy 104; politics, concept of 105; “Revolutionary Literature” 95–97, 105; social domination and subjective position 104; social ideology 96, 99; “Socialist Literature” 105; social structure, perspective of 103–104; Western literary criticism 1; Western Marxist theories of ideology 101–103
- Chinese literary theory: analogy in literary creation 42; “the boom of metaphor” 49, 50, 51; Chinese metaphor theory, origin of 41–44; comparison and emotional imagery 51; concealment of metaphor 50; in Han Dynasty 42; metaphorical thinking, origin of 41; metaphorization of theory 51–52; Ming Dynasty 43; modern science and technology, development of 49; modern transformation 44; perspective of metaphorical language, text or thinking 41; Qing Dynasty 43; Song Dynasty 43; in Spring and Autumn period 42; study of poetic metaphor 51; theoretical expansion 51; theorization of metaphor 51–52; time difference of epistemological turn 50; variants of metaphorical study 49
- Chinese reception and reflection, the other: aggressive other 83; dissemination and post-colonialism

- 79–80; historical survey in philosophical field 75; identity or ontology or logic 74–75; implications of Chinese dissemination 82–83; Other and Chinese feminism 80–82; phenomenology-existentialism 75, 76; philosophical concept 75–77; subordination and marginalization in poststructuralism 75–76; various interpretations in Chinese keyword study 77–79
- Chinese Revolution 149
- Chomsky 36
- Cicero 13; *On the Sublime* 11
- Cixous, Hélène 69, 124, 125, 131; écriture féminine 69–71; feminine writing 70–71, 131, 138; “The Laugh of the Medusa” 136; the otherness 69; pre-Oedipal stage 70; theory of feminine writing 152
- classical metaphor theory: in ancient Roman period 10–11; in Middle Ages 11–12; Renaissance period 12; *The Rhetorica ad Herennium* 11–12; see also Western classical metaphor theory
- cognitive linguistics 26, 36, 45, 49, 53
- cognitive metaphor theory 36, 48; meaning and experience, relationship between 37–38; symbols, relationship between 37
- conceptual metaphor 37, 51
- Confucianism 140, 143–144
- Cooper, David: established metaphors 40
- Culler, Jonathan 21; analysis of Greimas’s *Sémantique structurale* 23; linguistic research model 22; *Literary Theory* 24
- Cun Xiangchen: *Facing the Other: A Study on Levinas’ Philosophy* 76
- Dai, Xuehong: “The Other and Subject: A Feminist Perspective” 81
- Dan Smyer Yu: criticism on *Chinese Characteristics* 79
- dead metaphors 38–40
- deconstructivism 31–32, 69, 81
- Deleuze, Gilles 7, 117
- de Man, Paul: blending of styles 35; deconstruction in literary criticism 34; philosophy and metaphor, relationship between 34; rhetorical criticism 32; rhetorical reading 34; romantic literary criticism 35
- Democritus 113
- Deng, Jianhua: *A Study of Key Concepts in Cultural Criticism* 77
- Deng Xianjin: *A Sketch of Contemporary Western Cultural Theories of Body* 132
- Derrida, Jacques 60, 75, 78; deconstructivism 32–34, 69; Derrida’s ideas 61; différance, creation of 33, 61; logic and rhetoric, oppositional concepts of 32–33; logo centrism 61; metaphor in philosophical texts 33; metaphysical tradition 26; mode of binary oppositions 61; philosophy 31, 34; rewriting of history of metaphysics 33; in *White Mythology* 24, 33
- Descartes, René 38; soul and body 115
- Destutt de Tracy 86
- de-Westernization 154
- Dilthey, Wilhelm 116
- Ding Ling 134
- discourse 2, 3, 6, 162; anti-foot-binding 142; of Chinese literary theory 100; colonial 66; contemporary 34; everyday language 30; female 138; and literary expressions 10; male 71, 74; patriarchal 71, 122, 125; philosophical 31, 33–34; poetic 119; of power 61, 63, 69, 77, 119–122, 124, 136, 138, 154; process of philosophical discourse 31; rhetoric 11, 13–17, 32, 44, 51, 53–54; Richards’s theory 20; Said’s 63–65, 67–68, 79, 80; Western 63–65, 67–68, 79, 82
- dissemination, Chinese: female otherness 81; implications of 82–83; and post-colonialism 79–80; “servile other” 82
- Duanchao: *Body Politics in Postmodernism* 132
- Du Bois, W.E.B. 66
- Du Xiaozhen: ethics of “the Other” 76; *Levinas* 76
- Eagleton, Terry 73, 121–122, 128; aesthetics 101; division of spirit and body 129; *Ideology: An Introduction and The Illusions of Postmodernism* 132; *Ideology of the Aesthetics* 128, 138; material conflicts 93; modern body 128
- The Eastern Miscellany* 154n2
- empathy 12, 58, 59
- Empedocles 13
- Empson 19, 44

- Engels, Frederick 7, 86, 94, 95; class nature of ideology 87; class struggles 93; ideology as wrong ideas 87; philosophy and religion, definition 88; proletarian ideology 89
- European Marxism 107n7
- existentialism, the other 58–60
- Fang, Jue: “The Other and the Absolute Other: Analysis of Simone de Beauvoir’s thoughts” 81–82
- Fanon 65
- Featherstone, Mike: body maintenance 126–127; vehicle of self-expression 127
- feminism 81; activists’ attitudes 122; biological determinism 124; bodily thinking in 122–126; de-feminization 123; Marxist and Socialist 123; sex-gender distinction 124; Western 122
- Feminist Criticism 104
- fetishism 95
- Feuerbach, Ludwig: old philosophy 115–116
- foot-binding 142, 148, 150, 156n16
- Foss, Martin: *Symbol and Metaphor in Human Experience* 19
- Foucault, Michel 6, 35, 75, 78, 131; bodily constructivism 120–121; body theories 136, 137; *Contemporary French Thoughts of Fifty Years* 138; crime, truth of 121; de-subjectivization 60; discourse and power 119–120; genealogical methodology 139; history of the body 120; insane body 120; *Madness and Civilization* 132; power/knowledge/discourse 60–61; resistance 125; spatiality and temporality 121; technologies of the self 122; theory of power/discourse/knowledge 69
- Foucault, Paul-Michel 60
- French feminism, the other in: écriture féminine, Cixous 69–71; periphery and resistance, Kristeva 72–74; *The Second Sex*, Beauvoir 68–69; speculum and the twofold sex, Irigaray 71–72
- French Structuralism 117
- Freud, Sigmund 128; aesthetics, psychoanalytical scholarship on 130; bodily desires, sublimation of 118; body of libido, theory of 134, 144; body theories 137; female incompetence, theory of 124; interpretations of literary works and views of literature 130; libido body 152; phenomenology-existentialism 60; psychoanalysis 60, 117–118; sexual sublimation and transference, theory of 148; subconsciousness 118; theoretical world 119
- Frye 27; *Anatomy of Criticism and Myth and Metaphor: Selected Essays* 30; archetype and metaphor 31; cultural anthropology and contemporary metaphor theory 31; *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature and Words with Power: Being a Second Study of the Bible and Literature*, 30; literary criticism 30–31; myth-archetypal criticism 28, 30–31
- Gao, Xuanyang: subject and self-identification, construction of 77; symbolic signs 76–77
- Genette 35
- Geng, Zhanchun: archetypes, metaphorical nature of 48; *Metaphor* 46, 47; metaphor and metaphorical thinking 47
- Gilligan, Carol: *In a Different Voice* 81
- Gramsci, Antonio 6; class struggles 91; ideological leadership 91; national-popular literature 91
- Greimas, A. J. 21; *Sémantique structurale* 23
- Guo Hongbing: *Body Politics* 149
- Haack, Susan 39
- Habermas, Jürgen: communicative rationality 92, 107n11; productivity 101; “science and technology as ideology” 92
- Han Dong 152
- Hawkes, Terence 11
- Hawks: *On Metaphor* 48
- He Dun 152
- Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich 57; absolute spirit 59, 61, 62; consciousness, dependent and independent 57–58, 59; forms of consciousness 86; identity and difference 57; master-slave dialectic 60, 75; the self and the other, relation between 57, 58; self-identity 59; something and other, relation between 57
- Heidegger, Martin 75; Dasein 58–59; existence 59; thinking and poetry 47
- Hesiod: mythology 56

- Historicism Criticism 104  
 Homer: polytheistic system of 56  
 Horatius: *The Art of Poetry* 11  
 Horkheimer, Max 91  
 Hoy, D. C. 131  
 Huanghua: *Power, Body and Self-Foucault and Feminist Literary Criticism* 138  
 Huan Tan: *New Theory* 42  
 Hushi 145  
 Husserl, Edmund 75, 139; *Cartesian Meditation: An Introduction to Phenomenology* 58; existence of the other 58; intersubjectivity 58; solipsism 58; subject and the other, relation between 56
- ideology 2, 162; in Chinese literary criticism 94–106; *Elements of Ideology* 86; falsity of ideology 87; general consciousness 87; *German Ideology* 86–87; illusions 86, 87, 90; in Marxist literary criticism 6; origins of 86–90; philosophy and religion 89; ruling class 87; in Western theories 90–94
- imperialist capitalism 94  
 integrated metaphor 43  
 interactional view of metaphor, Richards's 14–16  
 Irigaray, Luce 60, 69, 83n1, 124, 132; female discourse 138; male perspective 72; man's "specularized Other" 71; self-identification and self-realization 72; *This Sex Which Is Not One* 71; speculum and the twofold sex 71–72; *Speculum of the Other Woman* 71; strategic essentialism 71; theory of gender differences 81; *To be Two (Extre Deux)* 71, 81
- irony 2–5, 17, 35
- Jacobson 21; grammatical figures and potential functions 23; language system and literary language 21–22; metaphor and metonymy 22; poetic theory 22  
 Jakobson, Roman: poetic from ordinary language, distinguished between 47; principle of semantic equivalence 46  
 Jameson, Frederic 6; coexistence of ideologies 94; Marxism 93–94; political unconsciousness 94; "theory of the Third World culture" 79; transcoding, process of 94; types of ideologies 93
- Jiang Yuhui: *Deleuze's Bodily Aesthetics* 139  
 Ji Guangmao: *Poetic Tradition in the Perspective of Metaphor* 46  
 Johnson 16, 40; *Metaphors We Live By* 36
- Kant, Immanuel: *Critique of Judgement* 64; philosophy 64
- keywords: academic achievements 162–163; acceptance, application and transformation of word 3, 4; Chinese literary criticism 1, 2, 5; critical thinking and abundance of academic information 162; dissemination and variation 161; emergence of 6; in genealogy of literary criticism 2, 4; historical survey 3; "history field" 5, 6; literary and cultural 2; meanings and core elements 2–3; origins of term in West 2; plain language 3; reconstruction of Chinese literary criticism 3; relationship between 2, 3, 4; representative figures 3; theoretical viewpoints 3; in Western literary criticism 1, 2
- Kojeve, Alexandre: interpretation of Hegel's Master-slave dialectic 60  
 Kristeva, Julia 69; academic thinking and theoretical exploration 73–74; chora 73; femininity 72–73; language and writing 73; patriarchal hegemony 74; patriarchal symbolic 73; periphery and resistance 72–74; phallogocentrism 74; semiotic, concept of 73; sexual identification and individual diversity 72; in "Women's time" 72
- Lacan, Jacques 75, 78; division of the other 60; "the Other" 61, 76, 78; psychoanalysis 69; self/subject and One/Same 61; subject consciousness 60  
 Lai Yuxun: diversity of metaphors and problems 43; Qing Dynasty 43  
 Lakoff, George 40, 45; cognition-related disciplines, development of 38; conceptual metaphor 37; embodied philosophy 37; *Metaphors We Live By* 36–38; *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought* 36

- Laozi 141–142  
late capitalism 94  
Lenin, Vladimir 95; “party spirit” of proletarian literature and art 97; proletarian ideology 90; revolutionary theories 89–90; scientific ideology 90  
Levinas, Emmanuel 59, 75; alterity and strangeness, the other 59; disapproval of Greek tradition 76; light, invisibility and mystery 71; phenomenological-existentialist thoughts 76; self and the other, ethical relationship 59, 60; *Totality and Infinity* 59  
Levi-Strauss 6, 27, 28; language and myth, relationship between 29; mythology and primitive thinking 29–30  
Liang Qichao 142, 145  
Liao, Binghui: *Two Hundred Keywords: A Compilation of Common Terms of Literature and Criticism* 77  
Li, Chuli 94, 95  
Li Da 95  
Li, Dazhao 94; *Preface to the Critique of Political Economy* 96  
Li Fuyin: first index of metaphorical study in China 45  
Lin Bai 152  
literariness 2, 154, 162  
literary criticism 48; development and evolution of meanings 5–6; interdisciplinary perspective 6; language, metaphor in 48; “literary somatology” 149; *see also* Chinese literary criticism  
*Literature Weekly* 130, 154n3  
Liu, He: analysis of *Chinese Characteristics* 79  
Liu Xiang: *The Biographies of Noted Women* 42; *The Garden of Stories* 42  
Liu Xie: *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons* 42–43  
Lukács, Georg 6; aesthetic reflection 90; class struggles 91; *History and Class Consciousness* 90  
Luxun 145  
Mao, Zedong: on ideology and literature and art 97–98; people in literary thoughts 98; practical functions of ideology 98  
Marcuse, Herbert: aesthetic feelings or imagination 92  
market capitalism 94  
Marxism 86, 91, 93–95, 98, 101–106, 123, 128, 147  
Marxist literary criticism 3, 6  
Marxist literary theories 99, 104, 107n15  
Marx, Karl 86, 94, 95, 128, 139;  
*Capital* 88; class nature of ideology 87; class struggles 93; *Critique of the Gotha Programme* 88; economic base/superstructure 103; economic determinism 89; human and inhuman 88; ideology as wrong ideas 87; propertied class and class of the proletariat 87; spiritual activities 116  
masculine element-history 107n9  
Matsuoka, Takeo 130  
May Fourth Movement 130–131, 134, 142, 145  
Ma, Yuanlong 78; *Key Words in Cultural Studies* 77  
Mei Zulin: *The Charm of T’ang Poetry—Structural Criticism of Poetry* 46  
Melser, Derek: *The Act of Thinking* 38; characteristics of metaphor 39–40; metaphorical thinking 40  
Merleau-Ponty, Maurice 117, 131; bodily philosophy 138–139; body-subject 152; philosophy 131  
metaphor 2, 5, 7; Aristotle’s theory on 9; body 27; “the boom of metaphor” 49, 50, 51; conceptual 37; dead 39; established 40; general and special 17; history of 8; integrated 43; as literary theory in China (*see* Chinese literary theory); and metaphorical relation 46–47; and metonymy 22; mixed 47; noun 47; origin of 8, 54n1; paired 43; poetic 51; “the power of metaphor,” perspective of 28; root 28, 29; semantics, structure and interpretation 19–26; and simile, distinction between 18; space 27; structural 48; in 20th century (*see* 20th century, metaphor theory of); theorization of 51–52; verb 47; Western theory (*see* Western classical metaphor theory)  
metaphorical hermeneutics 24–26  
metaphorization of theory 51–52  
“metaphor mania” 36  
“metrosexual writers” 152  
Mian Mian 135, 152  
Millett, Kate: sexual politics 123; *Sexual Politics* 132

- mind-body dualism: bodily thinking 113; definition, Saint Augustine 114; holy mind and impure body 113; medieval Christian philosophy 114–115; sin or evil 114; soul and spiritual life 113–114
- Miner, Earl 53
- The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* (Abrams) 16
- mixed metaphor 47
- modernism 94
- modernization process 61, 129, 142, 143, 145
- narrative 2–3, 5–7, 9, 18, 24, 127, 135, 142, 150–151
- “National Achievements Library” 162
- neo-pragmatism 36
- new criticism, metaphor in: allegory and symbol 35; form and content 21; “image-metaphor-symbol” process theory 20–21; influence on modern Chinese scholars 44; text-based meaning-making 19; vehicle and tenor, interaction of 20; words to texts, transition from 19
- New Culture Movement 143
- Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm 12, 128, 139; body and soul 116–117; Christianity 116; non-logicity, existence of 33; “power” 125
- noun metaphor 47
- On the Sublime* (Cicero) 11
- Oriental other: of absolute difference 62–63; “absolute Other” 63; dissimilarity for West 62; Eurocentrism 64; and moderate otherness 62–64; Occidentalism 63; “servile Other” 63
- the other 2, 7; Chinese reception and reflection 74–83; constructivity 62; difference 62; in French feminism 68–74; Hegel’s definition 57; origin of 56; in phenomenology and existentialism 58–60; philosophical origins 56–58; Plato’s definition 57; in post-colonialism 62–68; in post-structuralism 60–62; subordination and secondariness 62
- paired metaphor 43
- Pan Gu 140
- Parmenides: being, the one and non-being 56–57
- Paul Rico 10
- Phaedrus* 113
- phenomenology, the other 58–60
- philosophical origins, the other 56–58
- Plato 13; in *Dialogues* 78; idea 59; invention of “the pure spirit” and “the good” 116; the other in *Parmenides* 56; *Parmenides* 74; *Republic* 86; soul and spiritual life 113–114
- Postcolonial Criticism 104
- postcolonial feminism 81
- post-colonialism, the other in: cultural hybridity and minority communities, Bhabha’s 65–68; deconstructive strategy and female underclass, Spivak’s 64–65; dissemination of “the Other” and post-colonialism 79–80; Oriental other and moderate otherness, Said’s 62–64
- postfeminism 81
- postmodernity mechanism 139
- post-structuralism, the other 60–62, 119
- psychoanalysis 7, 60, 66, 69, 71–74, 77, 81, 117–118, 123, 130, 133, 137
- Pu Nanjin: *A Companion to Rhetoric* 43
- Qian Zhongshu 45
- Quintilian 13; Substitution Theory 11
- Qu Qiubai 95
- Qu Yuan: *The Book of Songs* 42
- realism 94, 105; theories of Lukács 107n8
- Republican Revolution, 1911 143
- rhetoric and metaphor 8, 12; Aristotle’s theory 8–10; in contemporary theory 14; definition 13–14; in *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus* 13; interactional view, Richards’s 14–16; interaction theory, Black’s 16–17; and neoclassicism 20; and research, Booth’s 17–18
- Richards, I. A.: category of metaphor 15; discourse theory 20; interactional view of metaphor 14–16; Interaction Theory 15; language and human thinking 15; metaphorical genius theory 16; metaphorical research 15–16; *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* 14–15; tenor and vehicle, concepts of 16, 19
- Ricoeur, Paul: context, importance of 25; everyday language system

- 25; imitation and metaphor 25–26;  
*La Métaphore Vive* 24–25, 48;  
*Metaphor and the Central Problem of Hermeneutics* 26; metaphorical hermeneutics, conception of 24–26; structural semantics and semiotics 25
- Russia: revolutionary theories 89;  
 Russian Formalism 117
- Said, Edward W. 77; *Orientalism* 62, 75, 79; Oriental other and moderate otherness 62–64, 68
- Sartre, Jean-Paul 58, 59, 75, 117
- Saussure 47; division of language and speech 30; linguistic theory 47; structural linguistics 60
- Schmitz 139
- Schopenhauer, Arthur 139; soul and the body 115
- Shu Dingfang: *Studies in Metaphor* 48, 49
- Sinicized body concept, characteristics of: “body-power” structure 150; body rhetoric 150–151; foot-binding and “foot liberation” 150; political consciousness and cultural criticism, perspective of 150; social reality 149–150; theoretical explorations 150; three-layered concept 151; Western concepts 151
- Smith, Arthur: *Chinese Characteristics* 79
- Socrates: *The Last Days of Socrates* 113
- Song Geng: *Body Politics* 149
- Spivak, Gayatri C. 77; *Can the Subaltern Speak?* 81; concern with gender 65; deconstructive postcolonial criticism 67; deconstructive strategy and female underclass 64–65; Eurocentrism 64; Kant’s philosophy, deconstructive reading of 64; subaltern 65; Western academic discourse 64–65; Women in the Third World 65
- Stanford, W.B.: definition of metaphor 19; *Greek Metaphor: Studies in Theory and Practice* 19
- structural metaphor 22, 37, 38, 48
- Substitution Theory 11, 16
- Symbol and Metaphor in Human Experience* (Foss) 19
- Taoism 140, 141–142, 143–144
- text and metaphor 8, 12; language system and literary language 21–22; for new criticism 19–21; Ricoeur’s conception of metaphorical hermeneutics 24–26; semantics, structure, and interpretation 19; structuralists’ research 21–24
- 20th century, metaphor theory of: rhetoric 8, 12, 13–18; text 8, 12, 18–26; thinking 8, 12, 26–40; *see also individual entries*
- theorization of metaphor: change of disciplinary boundaries 53; cognitive linguistics 52, 53; concepts and theories 53; pragmatic metaphor 54; theoretical foundation 53; way of thinking 51, 53
- thinking, metaphorical 8, 12; from anthropology to archetypal criticism 27–31; philosophy, deconstruction in 31–35; rediscovery in cognitive philosophy 35–40
- Todorov 10
- travelling of body studies: carnal axis, rotating around 133–135; multifaceted body, pondering on 136–138; philosophical thinking 138–140; progress of modernization 129; routes of 133–140
- Turner: *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought* 36
- verb metaphor 47
- Vico 21, 47; basics of human thinking, reconstructing 27; body metaphor and space metaphor 27; contemporary cultural anthropology 26; *The First New Science* 27; method of classification 28; poetic faculty, research on 12, 27–28
- Wang Fu 42
- Wang Guowei 145
- Wang Hongwei: “On the Other and its Philosophy: A Concurrent Comment on Feminists’ Criticism on Philosophy of Subject and Subjectivity” 81
- Wang Min’an 117, 139, 148; *Nietzsche and Body* 139
- Wang Yi: *The Annotated Songs of the South: Preface to Li Sao* 42
- Wei Wei 152
- Wellek 19, 20–21; *Theory of Literature* 20
- Western body studies: academic outcomes 137; bodily turn 115–117; China’s Cultural Revolution 131; Chinese transmission 138;

- Contemporary Feminist Literary Criticism* 131; four phases of translating 130–133; May Fourth Movement 130; mind-body dualism 113–115; multifaceted body 137; philosophical background for 112–117; popularity of body studies 132; *see also* body
- Western classical metaphor theory: “the boom of metaphor” 49, 50; dissemination of 44–49; historical development 10–12; poetic metaphor, study of 51; *On Poetry* 44; study of metaphor 8–10, 45; in 20th century (*see* 20th century, metaphor theory of); time difference of epistemological turn 50; *see also* Chinese literary theory
- Western literary criticism: body in web of discourse and power 119–122; in China 1, 2; and contemporary Chinese counterpart 6; feminism, bodily thinking in 122–126; intermediary of politics and aesthetics 127–129; libidinal body in psychoanalysis 117–119; modern, bodily thinking in 117–129; vehicle of happiness and self-expression 126–127; “30 Years of Chinese Literary Criticism (1978–2009)” 161
- Western Marxist theories of ideology: aesthetic realm and social life 102–103; in classic Marxism 101; culture, ideological attributes of 101; formula of culture industry 91; human liberation 91; ideological criticism 102; ideological leadership 91; inspirations and warnings of 101–103; principle of identity 91; quasi-material level 91, 92, 102; social production 91
- Wheatley 14
- White, Hayden 24
- Williams, Raymond 1, 77; *Marxism and Literature* 102
- Wimsatt, W.K. 20; *Literary Criticism: A Short History* 20; “Symbol and Metaphor” 19
- Wollstonecraft, Mary: *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* 122–123
- Wu Zengqi: *A Discussion about Articles on the Han Fen Tower* 43
- Xenophanes: existence of “the one” 56
- Xie, Youshun 139, 149, 152
- Xu, Kun: Chinese female writings 136; feminine writing in the West 136
- Xu Yuantai: *Yulin* 43
- Yan Fu 142
- Yang Chenbo: “A Discussion of Psychoanalysis” 133
- Yang Dachun 139; *Language, Body and the Other: The Three Subjects of Contemporary French Philosophy* 75; *Language, Body, Other: Three Subjects of Contemporary French Philosophy* 139
- Yu Dafu 134
- Yue, Daiyun 149–150
- Yu-kung Kao: *The Charm of T’ang Poetry—Structural Criticism of Poetry* 46
- Zhang, Jian: “The Other” 78
- Zhang Pei: *The Life of Metaphor* 48, 49
- Zhang Xiaojun: *Metaphorical Body: A Study of Merleau-Ponty’s Bodily Phenomenology* 139
- Zhang Yibing: divides “the Other” into “Divine Other,” “Demonic Other” and “Servile Other” 75; *The Impossible Real of Being: The Image of Lacan’s Philosophy* 75
- Zhao Yanfang 45; *Introduction to Cognitive Linguistics* 45; *Metaphors We Live By* 45
- Zhong Yun 134; translation of *Psychoanalysis and Art and Literature* 130
- Zhou Xian: *Keywords of Cultural Studies* 77
- Zhuangzi: language and text 41
- Zhu, Guangqian 44–45, 130, 154n1; *Abnormal Psychology* 133; “On the Relationship Between Superstructure and Ideology” 99
- Zhu Quanguo: *A Study of Literary Metaphors* 48
- Zhu Quanzai: *Zhushi Wentong* 43
- Zhu Wen 152
- Zhu Ziqing: *An Analysis of the Statement* 45



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