A CHINESE WRITER'S VICISSITUDE IN THE POLITICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT OF EARLY MODERN CHINA

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September 2014

Table of Content

Abstract

This dissertation explores the social and linguistic contexts of Shen Congwen's literary works, with a particular focus on (1) the way his works enriched and stratified nationalist ideology/narratives and (2) the linguistic ideologies, the historical images and the literary images registered as semiotic processes which mediated the Hmong identity formation and differentiation in Xiangxi, China.

A range of scholars have demonstrated that the modern novel is one of the main tools for propagating the practices and ideologies of standardized language under nationalism. In this dissertation I examine the nature of the nationalist ideologies embodied in the still very young Modern Mandarin literature. Accordingly I have chosen texts in which collisions of different aesthetic and poetic traditions in Chinese history can be readily observed. Through a detailed analysis of literary devices including the juxtaposition of time-space configurations, the interactions of diversified linguistic elements and the micro-histories involved in the narratives, I demonstrate that Shen Congwen's literary creations and literary language can be considered as valuable early attestations of the potential for creativity in modern Chinese realistic literature.

In this research I also look into the dialogic relationships between standard and vernacular languages, and between classical and modern languages in current Xiangxi and in Shen Congwen's literary works respectively. This study is one of the first sophisticated attempts to bring a Chinese regional language complex to the field of linguistic anthropology. This research also constitutes a historical (from Imperial to Early Modern period) and an ethnographic approach to the social, cultural and linguistic contacts between Southern ethnic groups (mainly the Hmong) and Han majority, and the ways in which these contacts have been played out in the spheres of mythological, political economic, ethnographic and poetic text-building. By doing so, it reveals that Early Modern Chinese nationalism has heterogeneous sources deriving from earlier intellectual histories.

Acknowledgements

his as an encouragement. I would like to express my sincere appreciations for his contributions to linguistics and semiotics, and for his kindness to young students.

Professor Magnus Fiskesjö from Connell University, Professor Charles Patterson Giersch from Wellesley College and Professor John Herman from Virginia Commonwealth University had insightful discussions on the relevant themes in their conference presentations in the Fourth International Conference on Sinology in 2012. I had the pleasure to join them in the conference and the post-conference workshop and benefited a great deal from the discussions with them. Here I would like to deliver my gratitude to them and to the organizer of this workshop, Professor Wang Ming-ke, whose academic works have also been very important resources and guidelines to my research. I especially thank the other participant in this workshop, Professor Luo Xin, who firstly guided me into historical and ethnographic studies when I was an ecology undergraduate student in Peking University. His historical studies of ancient Southern ethnic groups in China greatly influenced my approach in archival surveys.

My special gratitude goes to Dr. John Carey from University College Cork, whose lectures on Medieval Welsh Prose and Early/Medieval Irish literature have deeply influenced my views of textual and mythology studies. I would like to thank him for sharing course materials and readings with me. For the same reason I thank Professor Wang Ming Ming from Peking University, who greatly changed my understanding of anthropology studies of China. And I thank Professor Cheng May-bo and Dr. Xie Shi from the Sun Yat-sen University who also gave me valuable suggestions on historical and anthropological studies of Chinese classical texts.

We have excellent staff and students in the Department of Anthropology, National University of Ireland, Maynooth. I am very grateful to the academic communications with them in the past four years. I especially wish to give my sincere appreciation to Dr. Patty A. Gray for sharing her opinions of fieldwork design, and to Dr. A. Jamie Saris for his seminars. I also learned much from the postgraduate gatherings by sharing research experiences with Tatiana Vagramenko, Katja Seidal, Rebekah McCabe, Alex P. O'Connell and Ivo Syndicus.

Through many years I remain very grateful to some friends who keep in touch

with me since undergraduate period. They are Xue Ming, PhD student of anthropology in UCLA; Li Kunrui, PhD student of history in Peking University, Tan Jingzhi, postdoctoral fellow of anthropology in Duke University; Li Xuan, PhD student of psychology in University of Cambridge; Liu Xueting, PhD student of anthropology in the University of Chicago; Zheng Shaoxiong, postdoctoral fellow of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences; Lik Hang Tsui, PhD student of History in University of Oxford; Yuan Qingyang, PhD student of anthropology in Harvard University; and Fan Ye, senior lecturer of Spanish literature in Peking University. In the process of this research and previous researches they not only kept with me very insightful academic communications but also shared with me their warmest friendship which helped me move on in the darkest moments.

This thesis is dedicated to my parents, my husband and my son. I have reserved my most heartfelt appreciations to them. My husband, Qiu Fangzhe, has been most supportive and helpful in my life in the past three years. He not only gives me very useful discussions about my research (which are based on his solid training in linguistics, law and literary studies), but more important, his understanding and love which I cherish most dearly. I will always be grateful to my son, Qiu Yizhou, who brings me happiness, hope and poetic inspirations. And here are some words I would like to directly speak to my parents. To my ecologist Daddy: you gave me a childhood in a flourishing botanic garden, you filled my world with wonder from your marvelous trips to the forests around the world; I've planted the seeds of hope you brought me, and I shall watch them grow. To my beautiful and fussy Mummy: the bedtime stories and Tang poetries you read to me since I was three, the *Dream of the Red Chamber* you let me start to read at the age of ten, etc. they have never left my life. These poetries and stories will console souls and protect dreams of people forever, like the consolations and love I receive from your gentle heart.

Notes on Transliteration and Translation

In this dissertation two types of foreign lexica are used: Classical/Mandarin Chinese and Hmong language. The indented quotations of classical and Mandarin texts are all my translations. I put the pinyin – which is the official phonetic system for transcribing the Mandarin pronunciations of Chinese characters into the Latin alphabet – to the places where titles of classical/modern Chinese materials are quoted. I also give the pinyin of important Chinese terms.

The Hmong texts quoted in this dissertation are recorded in Xiangxi Dialect, or Eastern Hmong, Dut Xongb, spoken by about a million, mainly 'Red Miao' living in west Hunan. They are written with the Latin alphabet system created by Chinese government in the 1950s, which is based on the Pollard scripts. I layout the Hmong scripts at places where titles of Hmong texts and important Hmong terms/names are quoted. But my translations of these texts base on the Mandarin translations of them.

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Research Themes

This thesis originates from the meeting of indescribable inquiries of the art of human mind and the master tropes pursued and annotated along the intellectual history of anthropology and literature. In particular, my research has been kindled by the following inquires:

(1) from Paul Friedrich: how the greatest literatures convey metaphors of a human condition that is beyond time, place, and cultures with fundamentally 'indeterminate' poetic languages and pervasively 'ironic' polytropes (Friedrich 2001; Friedrich 1996; Friedrich 1991; Friedrich 1986; DeBernardi 2006);

(2) from Michael Herzfeld: how literature relates to the situational construction of 'history' (people's conception of certain history); and the dialectic of literary realism which generates actual political influences in the metadiscourse communications (Herzfeld 1997; Herzfeld 1996; Silverstein and Urban 1996; Coleman 1999);

(3) from Michael Silverstein: the institutional and ideological processes by which discursive regimes come into being and become an innate aspect of national languages; and how modern realistic literature influences these processes (Silverstein 2000; Silverstein 2005; Silverstein 1996; Coleman 2004).

Hoping to follow these broad intellectual pursues and to make my own contributions to them, I have chosen the texts in which collisions of different aesthetic and poetic traditions in Chinese history can be observed. This thesis is researching the social and linguistic contexts of Shen Congwen's literary works, with a particular focus on (1) the way his works enriched and stratified nationalist ideology/narratives and (2) the linguistic ideologies, the historical images and the literary images registered as semiotic processes which mediated the local identity formation and differentiation.

Developing the above overall description, this thesis aims at exploring the following interrelated themes:

(1) The chronotopes (time-space configuration, cf. Bakhtin 1981; Silverstein 2005; Coleman 2010; Agha 2007) embedded in Shen Congwen's literary works, the way Shen Congwen aligned them and the way they correlate and contribute to enrich our understanding of Early Modern Chinese nationalist ideology.

(2) The speech forms of different linguistic registers and their interactions in Shen Congwen's works as well as in the actual Xiangxi society; the linguistic differentiation taking place both in Shen Congwen's authorial intention and Xiangxi's social reality. These two semiotic processes are to be analyzed in terms of linguistic ideology.

(3) The text-building strategies of historical narratives and Shen Congwen's literary creation as influenced by historical, social and linguistic contextualization; and different social genres (literary and material) related to the construction of a minority ethnic identity in Xiangxi ('Hmong-ness'). I propose that in these texts the location of identity comes not only from each ethnic group's structural position in the Hmong-Han relationship, but more importantly from their perception and recognition of the moral grounds generated in each ethnic group's own history.

Following a brief account of the intellectual and social backgrounds of the research questions (Chapter 1) and introductions of the relevant intellectual, historical and geographical contexts of the whole research (Chapter 2), the first theme is mainly explored in Chapter 3. Through analyzing chronotopes and chronotopic relationships in Shen Congwen's representative works, one comes to learn how the manifest literary representations index different connections between his or his people's personhood and the universe. The textual chronotopes juxtapose the world both the writer and the people he tried to represent dwelled, and become models for and of personhood. Shen Congwen created his own literary representations by employing different speech forms (differentiated by chronotopes) which connect to complicated and unprecedented meaning of time and landscape entangled with the newly imagined

personhood and history, while keeping open to a more or less fundamental restructuring and renewal of speech genres. In the Early Modern Chinese social and political environment any expression of social detachment and ambiguity can be a political act (Scoggin 2001, 148); and the 'people's voice' constructed in this period is especially related to nationalist ideology and having lasting influences on Chinese society up to present. In this section I also try to explore the possibility that nationalist ideology creatively incorporates Classical Chinese aesthetic categories, folk artistic categories, and the assimilated Western aesthetic category.

As regards the second theme, a concentrated discussion of the complex linguistic landscape of Shen Congwen's literature in Chapter 4 demonstrates his language ideologies and their relationships with the Xiangxi geographical and historical contexts. With the key concept 'minor literature', Chapter 4 explores how Shen Congwen's literary language deterritorializes modern national language and summons an imaginarily ideal 'Chinese people'. The complex linguistic landscape itself implies the abundance of mental layers and impressive creativity possessed by this people. The part in Chapter 4 which deals with linguistic differentiation in Xiangxi's social reality demonstrates the ethnographic research of the same theme and extends the discussion to language rights and language diversity in current China.

Since the themes of Shen Congwen's representative works are about Hmong people in Xiangxi and the Hmong plays a very important role in Xiangxi's history, the discussions of history and society of Xiangxi Hmong take part in each chapter. And gradually a relevant question is generated and explored in this chapter: what is 'Hmongness' in Xiangxi? The discussion of this question also relates to the general discussion of nationalism and the shifts of its form from Early Modern period to current China throughout the thesis. In Chapter 5 I discussed the imagination of 'Chinese-ness' and 'Hmong-ness' embedded in Shen Congwen's literary life. And I also present some ethnographic accounts about how some of these original metaphors have been read by different Xiangxi people and been considered as other and conventional metaphor models of national spirit and 'Hmong-ness'. After this discussion, in Chapter 6 I examined the text-buildings in origin tales and origin myths

in Early Modern and modern Xiangxi societies as regards Hmong identity, which are also mainly through presenting ethnographic data.

Before thoroughly exploring the research themes in the coming chapters, I shall firstly introduce the intellectual, historical and social backgrounds which help to form these inquiries of this thesis in the following sections of this chapter.

1.2 Nationalist Ideologies in Early Modern Chinese Intellectual Fields

When the 'nationalist ideology' and its implications in the reformation of Chinese literature in the Early Modern period are referred to, they embody a synthetic configuration of modern Chinese literature which derived from the development of Chinese literary tradition for two to three centuries. Some argue that from late Ming to Qing Dynasties (17th – 19th century) the burgeoning massive printing industry taking place in the South of Yangtze River constructed a 'field' (Bourdieu 1993) of vernacular literature production as an independent literary practice which very slowly departed from the imperial control and Confucian regulation (Ching 2006; Daruva 2011; D. Wang 2000; Yu 1998). Similar ideas have been expressed on the 'literary field' emerging in 17th century France (Viala 2006), medieval Ireland (McCone 1986; Carey 2002), and by implication a wider background where similar literary phenomena are found (Bynum 2001; Haskins 1976). This theory, supported by plenty of textual evidences, provides a useful toolkit for the consideration of the appearance of certain aesthetical and philosophical categories and values in vernacular Chinese literature and its mechanism. It is generally believed that in the later stage (19th century) the development of vernacular Chinese literature set up a strong base for the reformation to take place in New Cultural Movement (1917-1923) (Zhou and You 2006; Ching 1996; Ching 2007). During the New Cultural Movement, the dominant nationalist ideology has been gradually shaped by the medium of publishing houses, literary societies and university; and it was mainly marked by (1) the 'National

Language Movement'[1] (2) the Marxist approach in history studies, and (3) the abandoning of Confucian morality (Schwarcz 1986; Hung 1993; Kinkley 1994). Triggered by the May Fourth Movement (1915-1921, especially the 1919 student parade and protest) and the formation of Comintern, this nationalist ideology took a leftist stance in literature as the 'centre' and gradually 'differentiated' other literary ideologies (Irvine and Gal 2000; Silverstein 2000). Marshall Sahlins highlights that how people use signs in actions is critical in synthesizing history and structure:

> The dialectics of history, then, are structural throughout. Powered by disconformities between conventional values and intentional values, between intersubjective meanings and subjective interests, between symbolic sense and symbolic reference, the historical process unfolds as a continuous and reciprocal movement between the practice of the structure and the structure of the practice (Sahlins 1981, 72).

This historical context, as a 'structure' in Sahlins' sense, also extends to the 'marginal registers', which interact with certain 'intentional values' and form alternative responses to the dominant nationalist ideology

Susan Daruvala, in her research of Chinese nationalist literary movement, demonstrated an alternative Chinese response to modernity (dominant nationalist narratives) through a study of Zhou Zuoren's (, 1885-1967) literary creation and academic pursuits (Daruva 2011). She concluded that Zhou Zuoren (1) used traditional aesthetic categories; (2) emphasized the locality related to authors' self-recognition of identity and expression, which was most probably inspired by his training in ethnography and Classics in Japan; and (3) constructed an alternative historical study of Chinese literature which was completely in contrary to dominant nationalist ideologies (Ibid., 26). Daruvala's insightful approach highlights the individual agency (Kroskrity 2009; Friedrich 1989) which mediated between the conservative stance (to preserve the Classical Chinese Scholarship) and the new framework of humanitarian value. It also implied that there are other possible responses to nationalism in a historical context when different political, economical

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[1] A serial of literary activities to promote written vernacular Chinese (bai hua   ) and suppress classical Chinese aiming at struggling for the rights over literacy of people other than Confucian elites.

and ideological elements are taking effect and interacting.

Daruvala's approach is also suitable for looking into another Chinese historian, Tschen Yinko (　　　, 1890-1969), who took a different option to demonstrate the essence of Chinese culture by the most delicate linguistic skill and knowledge of classical Chinese poetics. Like Zhou Zuoren, Tschen Yinko was also interested in Classics and studied several languages including ancient Greek, Sanskrit and Pali. From 1910 to 1925, he spent most of his time studying oriental paleography and ancient Inner Asia languages in Germany, Switzerland, France and USA. From the training he received in this period Tschen Yinko developed his own perspective on history and poetry, in which he proposed to use sources in the classical Chinese poetic tradition (Friedrich 1996) to decipher the specific historical narratives and the mechanism of their construction (Yu 1998). In his last historical work *An Alternative Biography of Liu Ru-shi*[2] (*Liu Rushi Bie Zhuan　　　　　*, written between 1953 and 1964) , he demonstrated the zenith of traditional Chinese 'shi' culture[3] (Yu 1987), the most complicated paleography of Classical Chinese language and traditional poetics. In a sense this historical work can also be seen as a work of art which demonstrates the abundant levels and nuances in traditional Chinese elite narratives and the most delicate mental and sentimental impulsive of the past epoch. Like James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) or Franz Kafka's *A Hunger Artist* (*Ein Hungerkünstler*, 1922), the author's thought was perfectly projected into the form of narratives (Jakobson 1960; Friedrich 1986). Tschen Yinko, inspired by the scholarship of historical linguistics which gained its inspiration from 19th century European romanticism and the following folklore revival (Dorson 1968; Müller and Palmer 1909), devoted himself to demonstrating the quintessence of classical Chinese aesthetic and philosophical narratives.

From the above statements two different literary ideologies formed in Early Modern China can be identified: a dominant nationalism and an innovative

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[2] A famous prostitute in late Ming Dynasty and early Qing Dynasty (1618-1664).
[3] shi　　　 was scholar gentry appointed by emperor who performed governance in imperial China. They was selected through the imperial examination or in some cases elected from noble houses. The criteria of selection emphasized their mastery and representation of Confucian values.

conservatism. It is worth noting that these conservatives were different from today's 'Chineseness purists' anti-individualist social formalists: the former participated in the whole New Culture Movement and were part of the then new era's spirit; the latter, however, deeply question the 'May Fourth spirit'. In the Chinese national tradition, these two ideologies can both be seen as constructed in the same framework. The 'national tradition' here is proposed by Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975) in his research on the comparison of epic and novel. In this research, Bakhtin proposed that the source and power of ancient literature came from the memory of knowledge dated to the distant past which traces its validity and efficacy to the imaginary origin (the 'national tradition') (Bakhtin 1981, 14–15). Similar opinions can be found in various folklore and performance studies, like Richard Bauman's observation of 'traditionalization' in medieval Icelandic oral performances (Bauman 1986; Bauman 1992), Patrick Sims-Williams' analysis of medieval Welsh origin stories (Sims-Williams 1985) and Georges Dumézil's (1898-1986) discussion of the medieval Danish heroic saga which 'can be interpreted as a literary structure derived from the religious structure of the myth' (Dumézil 1973, 122). Simply speaking, the 'national tradition' of Chinese literature developed around the exegesis of ancient literary texts and Confucian cannons; the classical Chinese poetry tradition, on the other hand, was an entry to the culture as a system of values and symbols (Friedrich 1996; Granet 1989 (1919)) conveyed by poets' value-laden discourses. The latter also included the Confucian philosophical values4. The traditional Chinese literati either developed the scholarship of exegesis in political administration or composed in poetic registers which embodied the social and folk discourses; and in both ideologies

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[4] Best represented by the Confucian moral philosopher and cosmologist Zhang Zai's (　, 1020-1077) saying: 'Settling the heart for Heaven and Earth, settling the life for the people, keeping on the pinnacle study for the past sages, opening up the eternal peace for all future generations' (

　). 'Settling the heart for Heaven and Earth means forming one heart with the world. Zhang Zai insists on the Ren (humaneness) as the moral goal, and Ren requires empathy towards others and an encompassing heart full of empathy and selflessness is a heart for Heaven and Earth; 'Settling the life for the people', that derives from Mencius's (　, 372-289 B.C.) theory of 'settling life' (If a person, regardless of his lifespan, can keep his faith and morality, his life is settled and meaningful). Zhangzai further developed this idea to include his argument that one should regard the people as his siblings. The way to regard people as siblings, and to make everyone treat each other with brotherhood love, is through education; 'Keeping on the pinnacle study for the past sages', that is to inherit and develop Confucianism;'Opening up the eternal peace for all future generations', this is the ideal of Zhangzai, who wished everyone equate his innate heart with the Nature and other people's hearts, and thus return to humaneness. The Confucianism ideal always has both the moral and political aspects. He believes that by treating each other with humaneness, there will be no more chaos, and people will ever after live in peace.

they acted as a carrier of moral values (see footnote 4). The new intellectuals in Early Modern China, who were permeated with the reforming spirit which they gained from the social environment and armed with the new registers derived from the development of Chinese vernacular literature, nevertheless carried on their literary activities within the same semiotic framework. In the following chapters I will propose that Shen Congwen's literary creation brought about a different ideology which orchestrated the 'voices' from different social levels through aligning multi-layered historic and textual chronotopes (Silverstein 2005; Perrino 2007) , and therefore re-defined people's voice through 'heteroglossia' (Bakhtin 1981, 263). For elucidating this idea, a general introduction of (1) the interactions between the new intellectuals and the political evolvement in Early Modern China and (2) Shen Congwen's personal agency is necessary before looking into Shen Congwen's literary works.

Referring to aspect (1), Yeh Wen-hsin's research on the relationship of college/university education and the social political forces in Early Modern China is an important exploration (Yeh 2000). Ho Ping-ti (1917-2012) contributes an important study researching 'shi' class (see footnote 3) and the imperial examination[5], and concluded that the traditional intellectual gentry mediated the imperial force and the governance in the grass-root units of imperial Chinese societies through the institutions represented by imperial examination which was deeply rooted in a traditional philosophical background (Ho 1962). Joseph Levenson (1920-1969) demonstrated how traditional Chinese intellectuals who closely adhered to Confucian morals were alienated with the novel historical values promoted by Externalization (Westernalization) in both empirical and ideological senses (Levenson 1971). Inspired by these achievements, Yeh Wen-hsin goes deeper into the nature and characteristics of the new intellectuals in Early Modern China and their 'alienated' academic fates as a result of intense political upheavals (Yeh 1990). After the civil service examination system (with its core 'the imperial examination') was abolished in 1905, in very short

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[5] Ke ju kaoshi   , a civil service examination system in imperial China designed to select officials for the emperor.

time the new educational institutions were set up and showed great variation in different geographical areas. The first ones appeared in the big cities where Western ideologies were intensely imported through trading and diplomatic conflicts, and later they entered the hinterlands mainly through local literati class, representing an important reaction to the failure of Qing government in the First Opium War (1840-1842, between Qing Dynasty and United Kingdom). These educational institutions can generally be divided into four different types: (1) the national universities reserving imperial relics; (2) Western (especially American) Christian colleges; (3) endowed academies established by local elites; and (4) later established colleges supported by Republican political regimes[6] (Ibid., 1990). These institutions reorganized education of literature and history, which made room for the Western science and modern European languages. Besides certain similarities, different types of institutions embodied different opposing political forces: the imperial government used the reformation in education and controlled new educational resources to stabilize its political regime and to resist the expansion of Western Imperialism accompanying increasing military invasions (Chang 2002; Wu and Fei 1988). This pattern was later carried on by the Republican government to achieve its aim in centralizing power for Kuomintang party, which emphasized training in politics and specific scientific techniques (Yeh 1990). In different regions of China, local elites established new academies aiming at getting away from the central governments and dedicated to different degrees of autonomy and modernization of their hometowns (Duara 1996a; Schoppa 1977; Li 1986; Zhang 2002). These new academies gradually transformed into seedbeds of radical political stances. In traditional political and economic centers (big cities like Peking, Shanghai and Nanking) the rising middle class and commercial elites favored the Western Christian colleges which further connected them to the trading administration and diplomatic advantages. Many of the younger generation from the rich and honorable families residing in big cities soon embraced the globalization of European elite culture and alienated themselves from traditional values and academic concerns; some of them returned to China and

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[6] The political regime of the Republic of China (1912-1949).

devoted themselves to the founding of a new nation with what they learnt abroad (Hsia 1999; D. Wang 2000).

When the canonical Confucian promotion channel 'approaching the official career when one excels in academy and morality' (xue er you ze shi学而优则仕)[7] was blocked, this rupture released creativity in new professional techniques in arts and science, and provoked independent political opinions of new intellectuals outside the dominant national ideologies (including the 'national tradition' analyzed above and emerging dominant nationalistic ideologies). This process is most similar to Max Weber's (1864-1920) 'disenchantment' and 'demystification' (Weber 1992[1904-1905]; Barber 2012). The scale of this introduction does not permit to a review of Weber's complicated system of theories which grew over different stages. But one of Weber's explorations is very relevant here since it helps elucidate the departure of Chinese intellectuals from the dominant political regimes, which has consequences for the Chinese academy even till now. In an oversimplified conclusion, Weber proposed that the transformation of 'salvation religion'（die ideellen Macht ethischer Prophetien）from disciplined rituals to inner ethical rationality took place in the trend of Western rationalization and through the construction of believers' 'habitus' (Weber 1992 [1904-1905]; Bourdieu 1977).

> And in truth this peculiar idea, so familiar to us today, but in reality so little a matter of course, of one's duty in a calling, is what is most characteristic of the social ethic of capitalistic culture, and is in a sense the fundamental basis of it. It is an obligation which the individual is supposed to feel and does feel towards the content of his professional activity, no matter in what it consists, in particular no matter whether it appears on the surface as a utilization of his personal powers, or only of his material possessions (as capital) (Weber 1992 [1904-1905]).

This paragraph indicates the independent role of social ethics as the essence of a capitalistic system and the guarantee of its good function. Ethical rationalization helps people attain their 'freedom' spiritually in a capitalistic society. The relation between Ethical Rationality and Social Rationality is not cause and effect, but rather a relation

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[7] A quotation from Zi Xia (, 507-420 B.C.) a renown ancient Chinese educator who was a discipline of Confucius (, 551-479 B.C.).

of mutual selection and mutual promotion. Accordingly Ethical Rationality is not an outcome of the social force, but has its own origin and is influenced by Social Rationality. And Weber was exactly concerned with its origin and the elements of the Protestant Ethic contributing to it.

> In order that a manner of life so well adapted to the peculiarities of capitalism could be selected at all, i.e. should come to dominate others, it had to originate somewhere, and not in isolated individuals alone, but as a way of life common to whole groups of men. This origin is what really needs explanation.
> It might thus seem that the development of the spirit of capitalism is best understood as part of the development of rationalism as a whole, and could be deduced from the fundamental position of rationalism on the basic problems of life (Ibid., 1992[1904-1905]).

With the 'independent social ethic' in mind, we can summarise here that the new intellectuals in Early Modern China started cultivating innovative ideologies of academy, society and nation when the civil service examination system ceased to work (a process of disenchantment). But in the dominant political framework, the centralized bureaucratic power never really disavowed itself from the imperial mode. Magnus Fiskesjö and Wang Ming-ke even suggested that, that both the nationalistic recognition and the definition of the inner and margin of the Chinese 'nation' through ethnic identifications in Republican China and People's Republic of China indicated a continuous ideology of the 'imperial centre' (M. Wang 2006; Fiskesjö 2006). Therefore, some of the new educational institutions and intellectuals were gradually incorporated into the mainstream radical political reformation; others, though once efficiently opening a space for various trends of thought, were alienated and gradually declined. This is not an isolated phenomenon, similar impoverishments of literary creativity can be observed in the nationalistic movements around the world (Silverstein 2003).

Besides the departure and innovation in the intellectual history of Early Modern China, it is important to note that modern Chinese intellectuals' emotional connection to the Confucian morality, and their literary style composed within the traditional semiotic framework ('Settling the life for the people', see footnote 4) were not

transformed immediately (Levenson 1953). Bakhtin indicated that a literary style comes from the combination of different social styles including the ones entering the literary works and the ones from authors' thoughts which are in dialogic relationships (Bakhtin 1981, 262). And in both radical leftist literati's or in conservative historians' literary works, it could be observed that the voices embodying the ideology which renders intellectual gentry masters of formal speech who continuously repress the voices from grass-roots. Therefore they were mostly composed following the semiotic processes which represented Confucian morals found inside traditional intellectuals. This statement is not a simple differentiation of 'enlightened' and 'passive' literary ideologies. In a completely different manner, it tries to trace the cause of alienation of Chinese literati in Early Modern period and the lesson to be gained from it on inheriting and incorporating of a culture; and it also tries to indicate Shen Congwen's special personal agency with which he distanced himself from both repressive process.

Coming back to the proposal that Shen Congwen's literary creation differed from the ones connecting to mainstream nationalism and innovative conservatism, it is helpful to review Shen Congwen's literary activities within the historical context introduced above. Shen Congwen was once teaching in several national universities which were gradually inclining to radical leftist political stances; he also ran newspapers and submitted articles to publications which implicated that his personal stance was against economics-dominated ideologies and educational patterns set up by the city elite class. However, his publications and teaching delicately revealed his non-leftist stance. Wang Der-wei termed his literary style as 'critical lyricism' (D. Wang 1992), which embodied two dimensions: (1) the pastoral lyric writing style taking on a moral dimension as not adding any traditional or modern doctrine, which, in James Clifford's sense, is usually allegorical in reading(Clifford 1986); and (2) the implication of decline in whatever demonstrated as a goodly model of 'people's history' and humanity. Hsia Chih-tsing pointed out that Shen Congwen's main divergence from his leftist friends in the Peking literary circle was his opinion of the adapted Marxist historical and religious views in Early Modern China (Hsia

1999(1962)). In Karl Marx's (1818-1883) The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte (Der 18te Brumaire des Louis Napoleon 1852), a review of the restoration of a dethroned monarch indicated that historical narrative is a social fact rather than a historical truth. Through detailed examination of the historical materials, documents and discourses of involved political figures, Marx elucidated the pre-determined social elements reflected in ideologies which were later incorporated into actual social relations which were highly complex and mysterious at the time. This work also contained Marx's important view of the role of individuals in history: to enter the circumstances that are determined by the material elements and to perform the determined 'script'. In a specific Early Modern Chinese adaptation, the individuals' role in historical process was emphasized – in a sense that lower class individuals represented the suffering under the 'wrong Capitalism' and should get together to struggle for the communist future. Referring to the Early Modern Chinese religious ideologies, Marcel Granet (1884-1940) indicated the general utilitarianism and variationist ideologies (Kroskrity 2009) in his detailed research notes (Granet 1977[1922]). However, in the historical context that the imperial order had just been abolished, the meaning of 'religion' went through an ideological process of 'iconization' (Irvine and Gal 2000) which related it to imperial rituals and Confucian disciplines. Therefore, Marx's anti-religious stance was intensely strengthened in its adapted version in Chinese leftist thought. From 1899 to 1920, Marxist – Leninist theories were continually brought to Chinese society mainly by late Qing reformers and many Republican politicians; and they have been widely circulated since the establishment of Chinese Communist Party in 1921[8]. In the 1920s and 1930s, ethnographers commissioned by the Republican governments to conduct fieldworks in minority ethnic areas and folklorists both observed the great impacts of official anti-religion publicity on local religious practices (M. Wang 2012; Xu 2006; Duara 1996b). However, Granet and Xie Xiaohui reported the complicated positivist attitudes towards religions of people in the Early Modern period (Granet 1977; Xie

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[8] From Central Compilation and Translation Bureau website:
http://www.cctb.net/llyj/llgc/basictheory/201308/t20130822_291844.htm; last retrieved 2014/07/14.

2013), and pointed out the still widely performed, various everyday rituals succeeded by the practical spirit nourished by Confucian teaching in a long historical period (Granet 1977, 156).

In the coming chapters, I will use detailed textual materials drawn from Shen Congwen's literary works to illustrate that he endeavored to give his own account of historical and religious views which greatly enrich our understanding of cultural integration in the Early Modern period. In a very different aspect, Shen Congwen implied that the 'noble savages' (Lévi-Strauss 1992[1955]) staying at the lower level of Chinese societies usually entered history without the imaginary consciousness and agency, and their nobleness resided in their peaceful acceptance of what their 'fate' granted them and their finding out the meaning of life in these 'carrying on's. The word 'fate' in the places within this thesis – where people's perception of destiny and of justification of their rulers are mentioned – should be read in light of the specific term *Tian Ming*   , lit. Mandate of Heaven. In Confucianism the Mandate of Heaven postulates that heaven blesses the authority of a just ruler.

The agency of Shen Congwen's innovation of incorporating folk discourses and ideologies suggests the importance of individuals as loci for considering historical values. And a perspective informed by an individual's 'incorporated history' is 'necessarily an account of a person's confrontation with the imposed relevance of his or her social world' (Kroskrity 2009, 200). Therefore, it is helpful to give a brief outline of Shen Congwen's life and literary history.

1.3 A Brief Introduction of Shen Congwen's Life and Thoughts

I was very much inspired by Michael Herzfeld's *Portrait of a Greek Imagination: An Ethnographic Biography of Andreas Nenedakis*, when I considered seriously to engage with the discussions of early Chinese modernity and nationalism through looking at Shen Congwen's life and works. Herzfeld organized his 'ethnographic biography' from a lot of data and ideas of interest to area specialists to issues in translation studies and more classic anthropological concerns such as how one

understands the formation of dominant and more marginal state cultures. Especially in the chapters *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Woman* and *Painting an Ethnographic Portrait*, he presented – with great delicacy – how the writer and artist Andreas Nenedakis created a surprising parallelism between expressions of aggressive masculinity and the female voice in order to profoundly explain 'Greekness' or 'Greek authenticiy' (Herzfeld 1997, 276); and in so doing Herzfeld demonstrated the multiplicity of ways one should look into the process of democracy, tradition, modernity and national identity.

Herzfeld's work inspired me to think about how I could present Shen Congwen's thoughts over national identity and the seemingly strange coexistence of the 'militant heroism' in his writings and his anti-radicalness stance; and it also led me into thinking how Shen Congwen's persona – which also derived from very rich historical and cultural contexts – influenced his literary creation. In Herzfeld's overall analysis art has been an important them, because Andreas Nenedakis delivered complex response to various forms of domination through discussion and literary creation taking art as the main theme. In this sense, the idea of language being the site of a complex response to modernity and nationalism comes very appealing to me. For one reason, modern Chinese language has been one centre of argument in Early Modern Chinese cultural transformations; for the other reason, I encountered the multi-layer poetics in Shen Congwen's literary language through the way he treated with different local and national languages/dialects. This is also the starting point for me to contextualize him and his imaginary worlds. Following this great inspiration, I shall begin to draw my ethnographic portrait in this and other chapters.

Shen Congwen was a special literary phenomenon. Essentially influenced by the May Fourth Movement which was anti-imperial and self-consciously nationalist, Shen Congwen actively endeavored to enter the elite literary circle in Peking and advocated the original 'May Fourth spirit': to model the humanitarian values through literary creation (Schwarcz 1989). Shen Congwen's literary creation was framed by the modernist narrative realism which is generally believed to be related to standardized

nationalist ideology (Bakhtin 1981; Williams 1983; Silverstein 2000). His literary merit was acknowledged by the elite literati circle in Peking mainly due to his achievements in lyric style writing and his organization of stories based on folk materials. Though he continuously took part in the thought trends of reformation in Early Modern China, his approach greatly differed from other Chinese intellectuals of his time. Like others, Shen Congwen realized the crisis that Chinese literature faced when challenged by historical and social upheavals accompanied by various intruding discourses, and he also tried to demonstrate the value and strength of Chinese Literature. However, Shen Congwen mainly concerned the 'unaltered' quintessence of Chinese philosophy which, he believed, had been unconsciously preserved throughout history.

Figure 1.1 The Chinese Writer Shen Congwen (1902-1988)[9]

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[9] This portrait photo is printed in the first volume of the collected edition of Shen Congwen's complete works which I base my analysis on in this thesis (Shen 2002a).

Map 1.1 Location of Xiangxi Prefecture (yellow) within Hunan Province of China[10]

Shen Congwen was born into a renowned military house in Xiangxi, Hunan Province (see Map 1.1). Water channels run around the Fenghuang County (see Figure 1.2) where he was born, and they were then the main transportation life lines connecting Xiangxi to the downstream big cities (e.g. the provincial capital Changsha), as well as the vital military routes in the Early Modern period. Shen Congwen grew up by these rivers with his friends and enjoyed his merry childhood and youth. However, he also used to witness the massive beheading execution by the river of the Hmong men, bandits and landowners who were accused of 'not cooperating with the Republican government'. This exceptional combination of aesthetically ideal peaceful country life and horrid cruelty happened on a daily basis, and was deeply imprinted on Shen Congwen's early life experience which continuously influenced his literary creation in all stages (Kinkley 1987). Shen Congwen was sent to a traditional Confucian academy[11] at the age of four, but later entered a school funded by local elites where both traditional scholarship and newly imported subjects like mathematics and geography were taught. In 1917 Shen Congwen graduated from this school at the age of fifteenth and was recruited into the troop of a local warlord's army (nominally part of the Republican army) which was stationed in the Northern and Western Hunan (see Map 1.1).

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[10]   http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Location_of_Xiangxi_Prefecture_within_Hunan_%28China%29.png, last retrieved at 08/06/2013.

[11] Si Shu   , traditional Chinese education institution usually established by local elites, mostly in their own houses. The education provided mainly helped participants prepare for the imperial examination, including the Confucian cannons, rituals and discipline, as well as some training in poetry and prose writing.

Figure 1.2 Shen Congwen's Birthplace and Hometown Fenghuang Town, 2007

Later he entered the Xiangxi branch of United Army of National War[12], working as a secretary of the chief officer, warlord Chen Quzhen (1882-1952).　Chen Quzhen was fond of collecting antiques and ancient books, which he used to give Shen Congwen to catalogue. Shen Congwen also had to read through most of these old scripts and to be familiar with them so that he could find the right texts when requested by his chief officer. This was Shen Congwen's first education in traditional Chinese literature and aesthetics. Chen Quzhen also actively sponsored local industry and funded modern education (Zhang 2002; Lu 1989). From the imported educational resources Shen Congwen came to know for the first time the intellectual achievements in the New Cultural Movement; and more importantly, he began to gain access to the translations of modern Western novels (e.g. Charles Dickens' (1812-1870) and Leo Tolstoy's (1828-1910) works). With Chen Quzhen's support and subsidization, Shen Congwen left Xiangxi for Peking in 1922, at first sitting in classes in Peking University and practicing writing. Since 1924 he began publishing his literary works and got acquainted with some of the renowned modern Chinese romantic poets and prose writers (e.g. Xu Zhimo　　　　　(1897-1931) and Yu Dafu　　　　　(1896-1945)). In

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[12] Huguo lianjun　　　　　, the army united by military forces coming from different provinces in anti-restoration civil war in 1915-1916. Several of these armies were controlled by the local warlords.

1926, Shen Congwen attempted to run a newspaper for grass-roots literature with his leftist friends, and soon gave up for lack of funding. From 1928 to 1930, Shen Congwen was teaching in National Public School[13] and meanwhile taking up the job of editor in the literary supplements of some of the most influential newspapers (e.g. Ta Kung Pao 《   ) in Republican China. In the following years China continuously suffered from the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945) and the civil war (1945-1949). In such circumstances, Shen Congwen had to change from job to job as a teacher and an editor, mostly in the national colleges supported by mainstream political regimes. Shortly before the establishment of The People's Republic of China in 1949, Shen Congwen was criticized by radical leftist literati for his ambiguous attitude towards communism and stopped writing. Since then, he devoted himself to research on Chinese antiques and published an influential work from his research on ancient Chinese costumes and adornments (Shen 2002b).

In Shen Congwen's early life, he was very often exposed to the violent deaths in Xiangxi's special historical and geographical environment which bespoke the long-term conflict between minority ethnic groups and dominant imperial forces. When these conflicts became a routine and part and parcel of a relatively steady life governed by strong local customs and traditional values, it was difficult for him to associate the military violence that his hometown suffered from with the abstract Communist progressive discourses. His military experience enabled him to survey the goal of the war and social upheavals in Early Modern China from a different angle, because he took part in the military actions himself, and as a young soldier also struggled to seek meanings out of these wasted years. Therefore it was difficult for him to recognize the historical values advocated by city theorists as well. In a Foucauldian sense, the Kuomintang party and the Communist party achieved their power through differentiating 'self' and 'others' in their political discourses and their actual political movements in villages respectively (Foucault 2005[1960]; Chen 2002). In this aspect, Shen Congwen never actively constructed his own identity and integrated it into the

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[13] Zhongguo gongxue   one of China's first universities, set up by city elites in Shanghai and later greatly supported and funded by Republican government.

Republican/communist 'self' or other ideologies demonstrating the spirit of 'reform' or 'freedom', for he observed the unconscious undertaking of his people of the 'fate' that befell them and the different strata of ideologies inside this unified 'self'. Born in a Han military house with a shared lineage with the Hmong and other minority ethnic groups in Xiangxi, and trained in the local military forces which inherited their structure from the imperial organizational structure and struggled to maintain themselves through the implanted 'reformation', how could Shen Congwen think of the collective judgment of his father's generation as an 'imperial legacy'? How could he recognize the 'Republican' slogan which relegated his Hmong relatives to a marginal status? And how could he accept that the brutal and inhumane military life imposed upon most youths of his generation in Xiangxi was the normal procedure to get to 'Reformation' or communist enlightenment? And how could he agree that the consolation in country life (the religious ideologies and rituals or performances which represented the quintessence of folk aesthetic expressions) was 'the opium of spirit'?[14]

1.4 Understanding Shen Congwen from a Comparative Perspective

Here it is very helpful to draw a comparison of Shen Congwen's personal agency with another recognized Irish writer's motives of literary creation. Shen Congwen's alienation from the dominant ideologies finds an interesting counterpart in an Irish context, where there is also a complex social, cultural and literary history involving contact between native Irish and English society.

The Irish playwright John M. Synge (1871-1909), besides his great literary achievement, also created a literary genre that provoked an alternative form of linguistic ideology and its relation with the imagined nation state. Synge spent six summers in the Aran Islands, collecting folklore, recording the lives of the peasantry, and practicing his Irish. At first, he shared the ideal with many European folklorists in the 19th century, that is, to search for the vestige of archaic pagan beliefs under Catholicism, the native

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[14] The communist adaptation of Marxist religious thoughts in Early Modern China

way of village life, and its moral system. However, Synge thought further ahead of the guardians of local ideologies; he noticed, with a realistic pessimism, the inevitable fate of the Irish language and the so-called local culture. At that time, Gaelic schools were already widely set up in Ireland, Cú Chulainn's epic had become part of the curriculum, and the Finn Cycle had been transformed into a national legend during the Literary Revival. Nonetheless, Synge thought that Irish would inevitably fade away quickly with the Gaelic peasants' way of life, even if such a life style on the West Coast was re-established and promoted as a model of native culture. Days on the Aran Island left almost nothing but profound sadness in him. Both Imperialism and the weird, conservative religious ideology distorted under the British rule have depressed and dulled the local life, draining away all its hope and passion. What Synge saw was a depressed and violent personality, starkly distinguished from the valiant and noble peasantry depicted in the works of most Revivalists. In *Riders to the Sea* (1904), a play written roughly at the same time as *The Aran Islands* (1907), Synge presents an old woman, whose husband and all six sons were lost to the sea. When her fifth son was trawled out of the sea, the corpse was so deteriorated that it was only identifiable by the belonging in the pocket; except for that, neither the body nor the clothes was any different from the countless indistinctive persons that used to live on the islands. She was deprived of voice when her last son ignored her counsel and headed to the sea. She could not tell the anger, anguish and blame she felt for him; her last words to her only son yielded to those lifeless drab phrases, just as countless indistinctive Gaelic mothers would have said. She was like the poor Echo in Greek mythology (Synge 1992). In *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907), a wonderfully piercing play, a woman with wildness in her blood complained to the cleric 'nothing to confess for'. Synge has realized, no matter how noble was the life in the Gaeltacht, or how well it preserved its Irishness, the price was just too high (Kiberd 1996). He echoed the questions in Dostoyevsky's *The Grand Inquisitor*[15]in his works. Bakhtin hunted after the elusive

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[15] 'In place of the clear and rigid ancient law, You [oh Lord] made man decide about good and evil for himself, with no other guidance than Your example. But did it never occur to You that man would disregard Your example, even question it, as well as Your truth, when he was subjected to so fearful a burden as freedom of choice?' (Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Grand Inquisitor*)

    The Grand Inquisitor is an important parable in Fyodor Dostoyevsky's (1821-1881) novel *The Brothers*

voice of Dostoyevsky in two books, and he claimed that some discourses belong only to 'the Grand Inquisitor' and must live apart from the author (Bakhtin 1984). In a similar sense, Synge refused Lady Gregory's advice to condense and abstract his personages; he refused the Revivalists' request to portray the noble and valiant Gaelic peasantry; and he refused to write in Irish. He perceived something perpetual and unique about the Irish. He wished to demonstrate the 'Irishness' which is voiced through Hiberno-English. While his contemporary Dubliners thought in English and strived to speak 'pure' Irish, Synge enlivened his personages who spoke English, but thought in Irish (Kiberd 1996, 182–183).

With the help of the analysis of this more widely recognized literary genre, it is probably easier to understand Shen Congwen's deviation from the mainstream nationalist ideology. Similar to Synge, he decided that the reformation which neglected the various layers residing in folk ideologies was unacceptable; rather, he lauded the natural humanness and the imaginarily undisturbed country life as the ideal of the 'Chinese humanness' (like the 'Irishness' that Synge wanted to record). Therefore, it is worth noting that what Shen Congwen emphasized as 'humanness' or 'human nature' in his literary criticism on other's or his own works was not the same as the 'human nature' advocated by the literati in New Cultural Movement, which is based on Western rationality and requires a consciousness of self identity. What Shen Congwen looked into was an imaginary, undisturbed passion in natural lives, a much more stratified time-space configurations in people's thoughts and wishes. The linguistic landscape in Shen Congwen's literary works implies the complex relationship between standardized language and dialects, self-recognition vs. official construction of the meaning of minority ethnic groups, and the academic tradition of socially constructed 'positive locality' (Herzfeld 1996) which connected this Chinese case into the globally imagined historical values of folk revival (Dorson 1969; Appadurai 1996). In the coming chapters I shall extensively illustrate his works and explain his thoughts.

Karamazov (Братья Карамазовы, 1879–1880).

1.5 Shen Congwen and Xiangxi

As stated above, Shen Congwen's 'incorporated history' and his literary creation provides a framework for looking into Chinese nationalism from an internal perspective (Shen Congwen representing Xiangxi's locality). In order to find out the nature of the intellectual history of Hmong people of central China, and also to investigate the relationship between standardized and vernacular linguistic ideologies, I conducted fieldwork (including historical archival research and participant observation) in Xiangxi Tujia and Hmong Autonomous Prefecture (current administrative region and official name, see Map 1.1) from 2010 to 2012.

Sixty years after the establishment of the People's Republic of China (1949), and twenty years after the embargo on publication of Shen's literary works was lifted (1989), Hmong society gradually joined the overall process of forming a unitary 'nation-state'. In the meantime, all ethnic groups in China underwent two ethnic identifications[16] under the influence and guidance of European vernacular movements and nationalism, as well as the ethnical policies of Soviet Union (Fei 1980). The main arguments and thoughts which contribute to the current ethnic policies were formed and settled in these two censuses. As a result, the regional history was constructed both by their self-reflexive reaction to the larger-scale history process through preservation and building up their own identity and culture, and the passive acceptance of the national ethnic policies.

The specific linguistic and cultural images of Xiangxi also derive from its complicated local histories, which several scholars have referred to in their area studies. The notion of British anthropologist Sir Edmund Leach (1910-1989) is employed here to elucidate the scheme of the construction of these images. In his study of highland ethnic communities in South Asia, especially the highland Burma societies, he demonstrated a shifting morphology of political/social structures. Leach noted that no matter how a society is defined, from one aspect it is a self-reflexive unit of political organization; from another aspect, it is a link to a larger society (a larger-scale political

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[16] Minzu shibie 民族识别, lit. surveys for identifying ethnic groups. One was around 1935 conducted by the government of Republic of China; the other was a two-stage survey and documentation of ethnic identities conducted by the government of People's Republic of China from 1950-1978.

system), and its stability is determined by the shift of structure and distribution of power in this larger political system (Leach 1973; Evans-Pritchard 1969). This dynamic political process in Hmong communities in inland China was involved in the construction of imperial order in the epoch of dynasties, as well as in the construction of nation-state in Early Modern periods. As a result, Hmong society in central China has the feature of indeterminacy and cultural otherness. Even in the current multi-ethnic state structure, the process of identity construction still reveals an imagination and understanding of a different history. James Scott, who engages in 'process geography' studies (Giersch 2010; Giersch 2006; Michaud 2010; Lieberman 2003), proposed that the retreats of minority ethnic communities (including the Hmong) to highland areas to avoid imperial assimilation were self-determined by these ethnic groups. (Scott 2009). Chinese scholars, in describing this process within China, emphasized that the whole process was more likely a unilateral action of the Han imperial courts. Local history was a reflection of the vicissitude of the political power of imperial dynasties (Luo 2009; M. Wang 2006). Magnus Fiskesjö, employing Lévi-Strauss's concepts of *The Raw, The Cooked and the Rotten* (Lévi-Strauss 1986), argued that the relationship between people beyond and inside the Hmong frontier wall [17] were representations of Chinese sovereignty. This core of the sovereignty was the Confucian morality; and this sovereignty calls for the periphery to determine its own limit. Thus the subjects inside the wall were ideologically defined as under the sway of Confucian morality, while those beyond the wall were ideological 'barbarians' who could 'naturally rot' (Fiskesjö 1999; Lévi-Strauss 1986). This argument is very strong, given that the historical materials cited include a linguistic analysis of the terms of ancient Chinese barbarians and 'the Hmong' itself. Fiskesjö discovered that both the Chinese characters of 'barbarian' (Man   ) and 'the Hmong' (Miao   ) were ancient terms embodying the ideology of sovereignty, which were invented and used in a very different context in materials before medieval China; the fact that they were reused in the historical records about the Hmong frontier wall proves that these historical records were part of the

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[17] Miao Jiang Bian Qiang   , another academic term referring to the South Great Wall, mostly used by Chinese scholars; the description of which will be developed in next Chapter.

construction of imperial order (Fiskesjö 2012). Certain ethnographic studies and my own linguistic analysis of this area showed that the communities inside or beyond the wall were linguistically and ethnically distinct groups of people who can hardly be generalized as 'Hmong people', thus it seems Fiskesjö's argument has well summarized the older history of this area. However, in the light of the fact that none of the local ethnic groups had their own written records of their history and the early materials were only written in classical Chinese, the explanation of the political relations discussed above could only be partial.

Map 1.2 Location of the South Great Wall in Xiangxi Tujia and Hmong Autonomous Prefecture[18]

When it came to the Early Modern period, local people participated in the regional identity construction. Before the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, there were two ethnic censuses plus ethnographic researches ordered by the central government and accomplished by European-trained scholars (Fei 1980; F. Wang 1985; Ma 2003). The purposes of these investigations were to define the newly established,

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[18] http://english.zhangjiajie.gov.cn/?action/viewnews/itemid/286.html, last retrieved at 08/06/2013.

and highly unstable Republic of China, as well as to mobilize every possible force to defend against foreign invading powers. In this period, local elites actively responded to these investigations and presented themselves as a united community called 'the Hmong' and proposed that they should be included into the new regime as a distinct ethnic group other than part of the so-called Southern Ethnic Groups which included all non-Han communities south of Yangtze River (see Map 1.2).

Map 1.3 Yangtze River in China[19]

And they achieved this identity, which remains in use till now. This identity construction process in the Early Modern period seems to be a win-win strategy. The central government successfully incorporated these communities into the new regime and put them to military and economic use, while the local communities gained an ethnic identity ideologically equal to that of the Han. From the perspective of central government, this process is both influenced by an ideology of old imperial sovereignty and foreign precedents such as Soviet policies; while the perspective of local communities remains much vaguer. It is certain that the local elites and military administrators at that period accepted newly-imported Western education and the

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[19] http://www.thewaterpage.com/yangtze.htm, last retrieved at May 30, 2013.

concept of European nation-state, which could be an important contributing factor of their attitudes toward the ethnic investigations (Zhang 2002; Tan 2007; Lu 1989; Schoppa 1977; Li 1986).

The most representative historical and ethnographic area researches of Xiangxi are: (1) Jeffrey Kinkley's reconstruction of Xiangxi's Early Modern history based on reading local archives and extracting the historical evidences from Shen Congwen's literary texts (Kinkley 1994); (2) the ethnographic surveys carried by scholars funded by the Republican government in 1933 (Ling and Rui 2003[1947]); and (3) the ethnographic surveys carried by local intellectual elite funded by the Republican government from 1934 to 1936 (Shi 2009[1940]). Kinkley's study regards Xiangxi as an area 'culturally other' to both Western academia and China, given its geographical and historical features; it also focuses on the position of local values in modernization. Kinkley scrutinized the conflicts between local autonomy and the nation's central power by evaluating ethnic relationships and the process of nationalism. The comparison of the researches carried relatively by scholars representing the Republican government and by local intellectual elites reflects interesting deviations from a supposedly linear process leading to nationalism in modern China. The personal agency and linguistic ideologies played important roles in the process, which I shall further discuss in the coming chapters.

Besides the basic framework of this thesis mentioned earlier, I shall also examine local identity formation and recognition basing on the studies of current linguistic ideologies. This examination touches some of the themes in the frontline of current anthropology, including the notion of cultural diversity in modern China's form of state; the meaning of a culturally constructed identity, such as 'Hmongness', in current globalization trends; and the important meaning embodied in the emergence of new literary genres.

Chapter 2 Research Background

2.1 The Methodology of Historical Narratives

This thesis touches many aspects of the constitution of modern Chinese nation-state. To begin with, the cultural reforms immediately before and during the Early Modern Period (1898-1949) are marked by the shifts of political regimes and educational institutions. These reforms ensured not only the mobility of the knowledge mastered by Shen Congwen, but also the achievement of forming a dominant nationalist ideology. Secondly, it is necessary to analyze the role of traditional intellectual literati in connecting central bureaucratic power to country literacy and administration, for such an analysis is helpful for the locating of Shen Congwen's role in modern Chinese literature. Last but not least, the history of the Hmong land in central China is particularly relevant to the following questions: How was the modern state of China defined in the Early Modern period? The history of the Hmong land is also profoundly relevant to the time-spaces configurations in Shen Congwen's novels and their specific aesthetic and poetic effects.

I would like to review the long-term institutional and ideological changes related to the modern nationalistic ideologies and administration; as well as to look into the actual political needs which were satisfied besides what the conceptual changes represented. Besides a brief account of the historical and ethnographical background of this thesis, this chapter also emphasizes the development of literary devices which project the spatial and temporal features of a nation/kingdom in different Chinese historical periods, which is important in demonstrating in the coming chapters the literary genres Shen Congwen inherited. A brief review of different anthropological traditions in which knowledge of China were produced - among which the anthropological traditions of studying Chinese literature are especially relevant - is helpful to reveal the logic of this thesis' organization and its position in the theological development of Chinese studies.

2.1.1 Anthropology and Chinese Studies

The systematic production of knowledge about China started with missionary men and scholar's translation of ancient Chinese cannons and palaeography research ignited by 19th century Historical Linguistics tradition in Europe (Wong 2010). They also witnessed a social image of chaos and weakness when late imperial China for the first time was confronted by European and Japanese military forces. The accounts they produced portrayed the value of Chinese culture as limited to the past civilization represented by the classical cannons; the place of China's reality in 19th century was not different from those 'people without history' (Wolf 1982).

Since the 1920s, European-trained Chinese scholars started their exploration of village life with an aim of building up a new sociological methodology in China as an reaction to the Early Modern cultural reforms (Mingming Wang 2000). The representative work is Fei Hsiao-Tung's (费孝通,1910-2005) study of the mechanism of Chinese social changes through examining the village economic structures (Fei 1939; Fei 1992). The popularization of this work and the following funded researches of different ethnic groups in inner China reflected the Republican government's desire of making political propaganda to attract international aids for the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945), so that they could define the nature and feature of the new modern state and mobilize every possible local force to take part in the war (Arkush 1981; Ming-ke Wang 2012). Fei also contributed to the study of the Chinese gentry. He regards the gentry class as a structure of Chinese society mediating the circulation of power between bureaucratic centre and grass-root units (villages) (Wu and Fei 1988; Fei 2006).

In the first three decades after the People's Republic of China was established (1949-1979), mainland China was not open to any sociologists, foreign or local, to study because of the political ideologies and international situations then. In the meantime, Maurice Freedman (1920-1975) pointed out the problems of previous Chinese village studies, and proposed to integrate sinology and village studies (Freedman 1963). It is worth noting here that sinology went through a development

from Ming Dynasty (16th century) to Freedman's time (1960s). From 16th to 19th centuries, imperial literati endeavoured to recover the moral standards and rituals established in the Han Dynasty (206 B.C. to 220 A.D.) and the exegesis tradition of Song Dynasty (920-1279) of classical Confucian canons (Mingming Wang 2007). As indicated above, the academic tradition was brought to Europe by missionaries and transformed into the study of classical Chinese palaeography. Later under the influence of the historiography of the French *Annales* School, sinology developed into a holistic approach to Chinese civilization which emphasizes the comprehensive understanding of Chinese culture and philosophy (Granet 1989[1919]; Gernet 2005[1972]). After the Second World War, sinology was mainly preserved in USA and it covered all branches of Chinese studies in sociology. Freedman's emphasis on Chinese civilization in anthropological analyses has a considerable impact on subsequent researchers. George William Skinner (1925-2008) employed economic geography to study Chinese villages and claimed that: (1) Chinese villages are united in a network regulated by exchange in rural markets, and economic units modulated the scope of marriage and religion; and (2) Chinese economic entities were macroeconomic regions united by these markets, and they overlapped with the political, administrative and culture units (Skinner 1985; Skinner 1998; Mingming Wang 2000; Mingming Wang 2007).

In 1980s the Chinese Reform re-opened ethnographic fields, and triggered the massive production of Chinese ethnographic studies together with the (re-)publication of researches carried out in the 1960s and the 1970s. Steven Harrell summarised the progress of Chinese anthropology in the period from the 1980s to 2001, and the achievements in this research area which reflect what Freedman advocated – the integration of sinology and anthropology of Chinese studies – through discussing the will of the nation and nation-village relationship in ethnographic studies of villages (Harrell 2002).

The above review tries to trace the formation of my views of the conceptual evolvement of nation-village relationship. The researches before the 1980s especially provide original records of village life in Early Modern China which influenced my examination of the features of Xiangxi life in the Early Modern period.

2.1.2 Ideologies of 'nation' in Chinese literary tradition

Joseph Strayer (1904-1987) constructed an ideological framework for considering the formation of the modern state: a process of concentration of power through social configurations and religious reformations taking place since the European Middle Ages. Meanwhile, he provided a historical approach to see how and when the form of state organization came into existence, what needs it satisfied, and on what principles it was based (Strayer 2005[1970]). It is helpful to think with Joseph Strayer's notion of examining the constitutions of concepts of modern state by historical analysis of earlier political/economic institutions. It is also worth considering the insights brought about by French *Annales* School which pointed out the internal spatial-temporal paradigm of the research community besides the linear historical narratives in official archives and traditional historical narratives (Burke 1990). In the Chinese context, the conception of 'nation' shifted in literary works in different epochs. The most relevant research to the ancient period is Granet's study of folk rituals and songs.

Marcel Granet (1884 – 1940) was a French sociologist, ethnologist and sinologist who, among the first, brought sociological methods to the study of China around the1920s. Granet's research fixed on the temporal aspect of historical social research and started with the analysis of the earliest Chinese classic, *The Odes* (*Shi Jing* 《
lit. Classics of Poetry). *The Odes* is the earliest existing collection of Chinese poems and songs. It comprises 305 poems and songs, many of which can be dated to the 10th - 7th centuries BC. Over half of the poems are folk ballads concerning love, marriage, work, and war. Others include court poems, and legendary accounts praising the founders of the Zhou Dynasty (1046 – 256 B.C.). The hymns used in sacrificial rites, and songs used by the aristocracy in their sacrificial ceremonies or at banquets are also part of the collection. Granet thought that the moralized annotations of 'Classic of Poetry' by Confucian scholars veiled the original state of the poems. Granet wished to restore these love songs and ritual lays to their original social context and to picture the

beliefs, customs and structure of Chinese societies in ancient times. As one of Durkheim's successors, Granet considered 'society' as the basic stage for human activities. He observed that these societies were conceptually formed by two groups: Yin and Yang, which combined and shifted dynamically according to season and space. This basic structure can be observed in many crucial aspects in ancient Chinese societies, such as divisions of labour by gender, cosmic ideology, social activities, rituals and folk literary creation (Granet 1989[1919]).

These folk songs depicted how young men and young women conducted song contests, bathed, presented flowers to each other and proposed marriages in particular time/season at particular places. And these spatial and temporal aspects conformed to seasonal stages of agricultural production. According to the agricultural circle, People stayed at home in winters; and when it came to summer men and women scattered to do different works; different regional communities gathered and held grand ceremonies in springs and autumns to accomplish marriages between different clan societies. These customs are similar to many ancient practices around the world (de Coulanges 2006 [1864]; Danaher 1972), and these original, spontaneous gatherings eventually evolved to the regional rituals performed by land lords of ancient city state. These ritual sequences and songs further developed to odes and carols written by court poets in feudal dynasties (since 10th century B.C.) who searched for ancient mystic knowledge and imitated ancient rhymes. The odes and carols then lost the original function of memorizing and depicting seasonal revels and become eulogies of ancestors and clans. Why had these rural seasonal ritual poems been welcome by court poets and Confucian annotators? According to Granet, these folk poems established the basic structure of the whole Chinese culture: the conflict and conformation of Yin and Yang. This structure, or to say the popularity of this structure, led these successors constantly back to *The Odes* searching for decisive evidence and force of morality. Rituals and folk songs were respected as representations of ancient principles of seasons, and were considered to be rhetoric of morality. More importantly, according to Granet, the sacredness came from the reunion of different societies/clans which were separated in usual time by labor divisions (by gender) and geographical barriers, and from the feeling of the grand charm

and force in ancient seasonal rituals. This could be greatly influenced by Durkheim's theories (Durkheim 1915); and the sacredness could also be gained from the mental upsurges through exchanging food and marriage relationships (cf. Mauss 1954; Mauss 2001[1902]) and from the faith of synchronous dynamics of cosmic order and the order of human society. The participants in these rituals considered their activities correlated with the movements of universe, with mountains, seasons, constellations and rains, and their life principles were conformed to the principle of nature. So the time and space of natural orders regulated their life orders. When it came to the epoch of rise and fall of dynasties, nature was rendered the metaphor of social cycles. The natural disasters symbolize the failures and injustice of their ruling, and also foretell the collapses of political orders. Clans and political forces which were connected to certain mountains were consistent with the triple sacredness mentioned above, and the social order constructed by Yin-Yang structure and the related cosmic order were the foundation of Chinese politics, philosophy and folklore for more than 2,000 years.

Granet contributed to three major aspects: firstly, he discovered that the ancient Chinese worldview, constructed on the basis of Yin-Yang binary opposition before Han Dynasties (11th century B.C. to 1st century A.D.), has a self-contained spatial and temporal conception that differed from what was in later 'classical' periods. Secondly, he pointed out the stratification of what had been formerly considered 'unitary' Chinese philosophy and literary tradition, and brought sinology to the framework of the *Annales* sociology and historiography. This approach, reasonably speaking, has not yet been surpassed since Granet. Thirdly, he gave a precious account on the features of Chinese religion(s) which derived both from his incisive review of his contemporary scholars and from his personal observation of Early Modern Chinese society (Granet 1977).

From the 1st to the 2nd century, the ancient ritual texts represented by *Rites of Zhou*[20] constructed the framework of Confucian world view of 'under heaven' (*tianxia*

, denoting the metaphysical realm of mortals which later became associated with political sovereignty) which rendered the scope of nation to be a land governed by the

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[20] *Zhou Li*　　　(*Rites of Zhou*), firstly edited from 50B.C. – 23 A.D.

Confucian morality (Fiskesjö 2006; Eberhard 2006 [1947]). In the classical era from Han Dynasty to the end of imperial China, there were also variations in the seemingly unified Confucian worldview. Ancient literature such as *Collection of Mountains and Seas*[21], *Book of the Latter Han*[22] and *Five Imperial Biographies*[23] provided alternative cosmological understandings through the use of cultural images of the self-contained worlds beyond the spatial and temporal scope of 'under heaven'[24] within the framework of mainstream historical narratives (Eberhard 1999 [1937]; Mingming Wang 2007). In Tang Dynasty (618-907 A.D.), because the ruling class was originally of non-Han ethnic groups, the Confucian centered ideology was weakened; and Buddhism imported another worldview which regarded the realm of ultimate wisdom as the imaginary centre of the world: this soon prevailed in Chinese society and nurtured literature such as *The Great Tang Records on the Western Regions*[25], which also coincided with the development of Chinese vernacular theatre (Tanaka 2011). A distinct literary genre describing the visionary journeys to the 'otherworld' also arose, creating a moral ground for staying away from political power. Representative literary works of this genre include *Songs of the South*[26] and *The Peach Blossom Land*[27]. The ancient Chinese texts listed above have guided us to various cosmologies co-existing with the dominant Confucian morality. Accordingly the ideologies of 'nation' in Chinese intellectual tradition can be seen as a complex of different elements which all exert their distinct influences on modern Chinese nationalistic ideologies.

The variations and outward perspectives mentioned above imply a bifurcated history (various imaginations of history), which differs from mainstream nationalist linear historical views. Prasenjit Duara pointed out that 'When modern nationalism spread to East Asia towards the end of the nineteenth century, it carried with it certain characteristics' (Duara 2008, 324); and 'The view from East Asia shows that these

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[21] *Shan Hai Jing* (*Collection of Mountains and Seas*).
[22] *Hou Han shu* (*Book of the Latter Han*).
[23] *Shi Ji - Wu Di Benji* (*Records of the Grand Historian: Five Imperial Biographies*).
[24] *Tianxia*, the ancient Chinese cultural concept that denotes the geographical/conceptual realm divinely appointed to the Emperor by universal and well-defined principles of order. It is usually associated with political sovereignty and Confucian morality.
[25] *Da Tang Xiyu Ji*, compiled in 646 A.D.
[26] *Chu Ci*, compiled in 2nd century A.D.
[27] *Taohua Yuan Ji*, written in 421 A.D.

circulations are mediated by regional developments...'(Ibid., 323). Duara and a range of scholars' studies of Chinese rural areas suggest complicated historical changes of power relationships and marketing networks of Chinese society in the imperial and Early Modern Chinese societies (Duara 1996; Skinner 1998; Giersch 2006). As a simplified conclusion of the above review and as the starting point of the historical narratives in the next section, it is worth noting and bearing in mind that there has been a highly varied classical literary tradition, the diversified conceptions of 'nation' contained in which lead to a complicated composition of the nature of modern Chinese nationalist ideology. And corresponding to a long-term scholarship exemplified by Granet, Skinner and Duara's works, the authority of modernized nation caused very complicated changes of power relationships/intellectual organizations in rural areas in the spread of modern nationalism in China.

2.2 The Social Reform in Early Modern China

2.2.1 Early development of China's Nationalism

The construction of Early Modern Chinese nationalism entails important shifts in the relationship between Han people (the majority ethnic group) and the minority ethnic groups, which coincided with changes in political and social institutions that both resulted from and triggered transmission of culture and tradition. Up to the 1911 Revolution[28] which overthrew the Qing Dynasty, several peasant revolts and the famous Reform Movement of 1898 initiated by Kang Youwei (, 1858-1927) and Liang Qichao (, 1873-1929) occurred and remarkably threatened the reign of Qing Dynasty. But these movements did not step out of the ideology of autocratic monarchy, and only aimed at improving governing technology of Qing Dynasty and setting up a constitutional monarchy. The civil service examination system still ensured the Confucianist culture to be the moral ground of ruling. Even in the Revolution of 1911 which finally overthrew the Qing Dynasty, the 'Three Principles of the People' put

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[28] Xin Hai geming   , the Chinese bourgeois democratic revolution led by Dr. Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925).

forward by Dr. Sun Yat-sen were not against the Confucian culture. The 'Three Principles of the People' are:

(1) The Principle of Minzu (, lit. ethnic group), which is similar to 'Nationalism' (The People's Relation)

(2) The Principle of Minquan (, lit. people's right), which is similar to 'Democracy'

(3) The Principle of Minsheng (, lit. The People's Welfare)

Dr. Sun Yat-sen, the leader of this revolution, had been educated in America and Hong Kong. He was also baptized in Hong Kong in 1883. His early education and religious background well explained his belief of democracy and freedom. But he adored Chinese traditional philosophy all through his life and turned it into his own revolutionary philosophy. In the 'Nationalism' section, Sun Yat-sen vowed to expel the Manchu, the founding and ruling class of Qing Dynasty originally from Northeast China, which showed the influential legacy of the classical ideology of 'under heaven' (see footnote 1) which related Confucian moral ground to sovereignty and implicated the relationship between ethnic and Confucian morality. In the later period (1905-1912, before the Republican period (1912-1949)) he put forward another political principle which proposed a 'Five Races under One Union' (wu zu gonghe   )[29]. Also in this period the 'national language' policy was proposed, and Mandarin was selected as the national language (Huang 2006; Zhou and You 2006).

The Revolution of 1911 ended the monarchical system in China. In this period, conceptual discourses such as 'Democracy' and 'Republic' were wildly spread around China. The new generation of literati, who were structurally similar to the classical Confucian intellectual gentry, used these imported concepts to construct a knowledge system to define the modern Chinese nation. They were in a unique environment of 'free speech' in the early Republic China (1912-1927), and prepared for a throughout revolution in that period. In 1915 and 1916 the New Culture Movement[30] was started by

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[29] The 'five races' are the Han, the Manchu, the Mongolian, the Huichu (Muslim population of mixed origins), and the Tibetan.

[30] The New Culture Movement (1910s to 1920s) was a revolutionary cultural movement initially propelled by *New Youth* and other periodicals. Its early participants include many important figures of Early Modern Chinese

the radical leftist Literati as a protestation against the Restoration to Monarchy[31]. The Restoration to Monarchy took Confucianism as its cultural basis, which became the second important reason for the refusal of Confucianism in the New Culture Movement. In 1916 the Restored Monarchy was overthrown by the Republic army, therefore the political appeal of the New Culture Movement was fulfilled and the remaining cultural appeal was strengthened. New Culture Movement later became a general revolution in the realm of culture. Its aim was purely to replace the out-dated tradition with one which was formed from various imported Western thoughts: Social Darwinism, innate human rights, and Western Rationalism. An article titled *To the Youths* (*Jing Gao Qingnian*) by Chen Duxiu (, 1879-1942, one of the founders of Chinese Communist Party) which appeared on the initial issue of *New Youth* (*Xin Qingnian* , then called *Youth Magazine* (*Qingnian Za Zhi*) and renamed in 1916) was indicative of the argument of the periodical and even the whole movement:

> Moreover, in our country, people are not yet awake from their fanciful dream, and cocoon themselves in conventions; our fine things such as politics, education and literature, common things such as clothing, water and fire, all appear rustic and primitive, so how can they compete and survive in the modern world?... Our extant ethics, laws, academics and morality are all remains inherited from the feudal eras,…which can do no good other than exclude our people from world of the twentieth century and enslave them into the dark trench of servitude, why should we still repeat them! As for those conservatives, I candidly admit no knowledge of any of our institutions and cultural objects that fits to survive in the current world. I would rather sacrifice such 'quintessence of Chinese culture' than see our people decline and emaciate presently and in the future, because they are no longer fit for survival in the world.
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literature.

[31] In 1915-1916, the official president of the Republic of China, Yuan Shikai (, 1859-1916) attempted to restore monarchy in China and enthroned himself as Hongxian Emperor ( ).

Chen Duxiu adopted the idea of Darwinian evolution and selection from Yan Fu's (　　, 1854-1921) translation (and in many places free adaptation) of T. H. Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics* with the title *A Theory of Natural Evolution* (*Tian Yan Lun*

　　). He agreed that 'the weak should be the meat for the strong, and the foolish should be the slave of the intelligent' (　　　　　, 　　　　　). According to this standard, traditional Chinese culture is unenlightened and weak, and nothing could be gained from it. Therefore, to 'fit in the survival logic of the world' (　　　　), one should 'tolerate the eradication of the past quintessence of Chinese culture' (

　　). The subtitle of this article illustrates the characteristics of the New Culture in his mind: 'progressive and not conservative', 'global and not self-locked', 'pragmatic and not impractical', 'scientific and not imagined' (

　　), etc., in a word, 'Early Modern European' (X. Zhang 2009). In the political environment of Early Modern China these Western theories were adapted and expressed as the universal standard of measurement. Against this standard the traditional Confucianism was measured as an inferior culture which should die out in the 'chain of evolution' in the adapted social Darwinist terms (X. Zhang 2009).

In the mean time, it is worth noting that the literary 'fields' formed with a technical and customary basis mostly existed in big cities where the non-Han cultures were not prevalent (see 1.2). It is natural that when the New Culture Movement took place and Confucianism was considered as the representative of the inferior Chinese culture which should be eliminated, various non-Han cultures and history were out of the discussion. In the later stage, when the Republic of China was established and functioned as a nation-state, a knowledge system which endows it with the legitimacy of being representative of all its citizens was needed. At that time the most urgent need of accommodating citizenship came from the pressing military demand. In the old imperial knowledge system, several subsequent minority ethnic communities were seen as 'barbarians' (man　) which were beyond the 'realm of Confucian morals' (wanghua　　) (Fiskesjö 2012; Luo 2009). When the 'barbarians' were in revolt, the emperor's army would be sent to conquer them and then usually incorporated them into the 'realm of Confucian morals' (technically into the Civil Service Examination

System). When the empire confronted military invasion, theoretically only the emperor's army should be sent to defend the Empire, though sometimes 'barbarian' armies were summoned into the local landlord's army which took order from the central government. When the new nation-state was established, the ideologically contrastive 'emperor's people' (min) and the 'barbarians' were all turned into a uniform citizenship. Before the 1911 Revolution, the political principle put forward by Dr. Sun Yat-sen ('Five Races under One Union') indicated the inadequate conceptual construction of a newly born nation-state. The 'five races' are the Han, the Manchu, the Mongolian, the Huichu, and the Tibetan, all northern ethnic groups. This principle implicate a problematic understanding of the Southern ethnic groups, either suggesting them all to be in the way of becoming the Han, or still suggesting them all to be the 'barbarians' which were not worth considering in the construction of citizenship. When the Republic of China was established, this principle needed to be amended to meet the new requirement. In the cultural context of Early Modern China, this knowledge system was built up by positivist scholars who did thorough archaeological and ethnographical researches. Abundant academic works sprang up to participate in the conceptual construction of a unified new nation-state, including (1) analyses of the possible shared origin of all ethnic groups (Chi 1957); (2) researches of the Southern minority ethnic groups (which were in most of the time seen as 'barbarians') with European ethnographic methodology and official documentation (Rui 1972)[32]; and (3) a folk revival movement which incorporated rural oral tradition (including oral tradition of minority ethnic groups) to the unified 'Chinese cultural legacy' (Hung 1993).

Both the folk revival movement and the ethnographic surveys in Xiangxi in the Early Modern period left direct cultural impacts on Shen Congwen's literary creation. It is necessary to point out here that all through his literary life, Shen Congwen's compositional concern focused on the integration of different Chinese literary traditions, which he expressed as an abstract 'Chinese humanness'. And mainstream nationalist discourses inspired this unitary expression and his literary imagination of 'a moral life' (within a state). However, he evoked spiritual and emotional responses to the folk narratives and alluded to classical literary genres which contain diversified conceptions of 'nation'; and accordingly the understanding of modern nationalist

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[32] The first officially recognized ethnic group which generalized all undefined Southern ethnic groups in Early Modern China was the vaguely defined 'the Hmong'.

ideology can be broadly enriched and stratified. In order to sketch the basic meaning of Early Modern Chinese nationalist ideology, the rise of a new generation of Chinese intellectual literati in urban literary 'fields' (Bourdieu 1993) and their roles in vernacular Chinese movement as well as the folk revival movement will be introduced in the following section.

2.2.2 A new generation of intellectual literati

The classical education system guided by Confucian philosophy was not only a knowledge system but also a moral guideline for daily behaviour, which pointed to a direct route of connecting ordinary individuals from rural and urban areas to the central bureaucratic system. The contents of the teaching materials and the entrance examinations are also about understanding the core Confucian philosophy: to live a moral life and to run the state morally. Ever since the Sui and Tang Dynasty (6th to 10th century A.D.), the central governmental policies formulated by different rulers towards other (minority ethnic groups) all had the intention to bring them into the same education system and let the Confucian ideologies permeate the local imagination of central governing forces (Fiskesjö 2006; Luo 2009). Along the rise and fall of different imperial powers in various historical stages, certain degrees of local autonomy remained in several places where the 'barbarians' dwelt. The tension caused by the confrontation of indigenous ideologies to central governmental power always reflected the nationalistic ideologies embodied in the sovereignty. But the injection of Confucian education system did change the long-term relationship between the ruling class and 'barbarians' by gradually reducing warfare and resulting in more complicated political and economic relationships.

The political and cultural reforms in the Early Modern period totally subverted the education system and threw the heirs of traditional literati to a modern dilemma: to accommodate the traditional ideology of morality – which is tightly bound to the recognition of validity of central governmental ruling – to the modern education system imported from Western cultures in pursuit of 'democracy' and 'science'.

Superficially it looks like a vernacular movement, in which new political and social discourses and ideologies replaced the classical ones; however, it concealed a different imagination of 'nation' and the evolvement of its conceptual construction in Chinese history. And this evolvement was strongly related to and expressed through the roles of classical and modern intellectual literati. Benedict Anderson's historical notion 'a nation is an imagined community' can serve as a starting point for discussing vernacular movements in China's history. Anderson analyzed the historical process of vernacular in Europe, and in the recent history of Southern Asia. He also inquired why 'a nation' was imagined mostly regardless of what exact political process was going on in referred areas (Anderson 2006). Anderson's mode of vernacular process was challenged by Prasenjit Duara with samples from China's recent history. Duara considered that Chinese people had been imagining the 'nation' long before the Modern Western nationalism was known to them. For Chinese people, the exotic thing is the modern 'Nation-state', but not the concept of 'nation' (Duara 1996; Bedeski 1989). But in the more recent vernacular Chinese movement, exotic concepts were very important contributing factors to propagation and circulation. Furthermore, the vernacularism in China's recent history also caused great shifts in political and educational system. Sheldon Pollock thought about vernacularism as 'action rather than idea, something people do rather than something they declare, as practice rather than proposition' (Pollock 1998; Pollock 2000). From both perspectives – the Chinese nationalist imagination and the actual political movements – the vernacular Chinese movement was a semiotic process accommodating the traditional ideologies and transforming them into different cultural principles according to the changes of political ideologies in the Early Modern period. The transformation of the undertakers, namely a new generation of intellectual literati, will be looked into firstly.

Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937), inspired by Marx's *The eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte (Der 18te Brumaire des Louis Napoleon, 1952)*, in which all the metaphors and artistic descriptions served as the basic ground of discussing human in real history, developed his theories of Cultural Hegemony. Gramsci was interested in

the philosophy question of "to be human in the real world, other than the abstract 'human' in the tradition of Western philosophy" (Holub 1992). Marx provided a perfect answer to this inquiry: human is 1) natural individuals; 2) others; 3) social relationships. Marx also analyzed the essence of human in real history, who 'not only actively changes the world, but also changes the total social relationships of the involved individuals'. Gramsci used all these in his study of intellectuals (Gramsci 1971). From 1935 onwards, shortly before Gramsci passed away, he produced a large amount of analysis (Marx 2007[1952]) on intellectuals, in which he pointed out (Holub 1992):

(1) Throughout Italian history, intellectuals mostly originated from priests who had cultural privilege and shared rights of ruling with the aristocratic class of the state. The two groups had 'organic relationships' in a feudal society. And they all represented 'culture of élites' and morality which separated them from the ordinary people.

(2) Traditional views limited 'intellectuals' in a category of 'Philosopher kings', which have nowadays been overturned by modern education. So every educated person is an intellectual, but just not everyone is performing the structural social role as an intellectual.

(3) The ones who served this function are 'organic intellectuals', of which the standard should be 'the intimacy between them and the main social groups'. Hence proletariat should also have their 'specific intellectual' who might not be the professional revolutionists, but must immerge into people and promote cultural transformation.

Antonio Gramsci's research on intellectuals encouraged one to probe the historical reasoning, the structural functions of intellectuals, and why and how intellectuals shift and develop their social cognition. Cultural reforms and revolutions in Early Modern China were all related to the social intellects' activities; for the sake of clearly retelling the history and social origins of these movements, two matters should be further explained: (1) the concept of 'gentry' and the new generation of literati; (2) the selections of language as an important aspect of politics in Early

Modern China (from 1840 to 1949).

As pointed out by the scholarship on political institutions of ancient China, in a long historical period before 20th century, ancient Chinese dynasties were not powerful enough to maintain a penetrating bureaucracy that reaches out to the smallest units of the society. The ruling force of central government could only control down to the level of county, while the basic political structure of rural area was totally different (Yeh 2000; Gernet 2005). Georges Dumézil (1898-1986) proposed that Indo-European society had a tripartite structure (Dumézil 1988[1929]):

First function/domain – sovereignty- sacral kingship

Second function/domain – martial (force)

Third function/domain – fecundity / fertility, prosperity (agriculture)

In a similar tripartite division of Chinese social structure, the second domain is 'intellectual gentry', the function of which is to unite the upper class and the lower class with the civilizing and edifying purpose of Confucianism. In this manner the Chinese society can be considered as a culturally-unified entity. The 'civil service examination' serves the function of connecting the third domain (agriculture, rural families) to the bureaucratic structures of the upper class (the first domain, government administrations and the king). To qualify for the 'civil service examination', one should be able to: 1) prove one's knowledge of ancient wisdom by referring to the classical texts of pre-Qin Dynasty eras (before 221 BC). 2) use the analytical methods provided by Confucianism; and 3) state the application of these knowledge and methods to administrating the present state and to guiding people into a better life (Chang 2002, 184–221). This structure existed in ancient Chinese societies in more or less similar forms, and was well connected to central bureaucracy system through the roles of local elites, who were responsible for maintaining local education system and ensuring excellent scholars would enter the central bureaucracy through the imperial examination system. For achieving this aim, they had to have a shared understanding of Confucian morality which was related to the legitimacy of ruling class.

Duara reviewed the relationship between state and local forces at the end of Qing

Dynasty (around 1900), using villages in North China as sample sites. From his doctoral   research, he depicted two brokerage systems in rural China: 1) profit-making brokers including officials in county level or professional business men, who were not necessarily supervised by the central government, especially when the power of state could not reach the rural area, there were not sufficient government employees and the statistics of land resources were lacking; 2) protective brokers, who represented the interests of rural people, formed a unitary community under this circumstance and elected their own local elite to supervise civil services (Duara 1996). The power of both was basically balanced in ancient dynasties (reflected by the case of Qing Dynasty). For one aspect, authority was preserved for the top of social network through performance of sample sacrifice rituals and award of official rank by an imperial examination system; for another aspect, inside the village communities, the election of local elites were mostly based on renown and morality of certain clans. Competent and venerable individuals from these clans demonstrated their leadership through community activities and claimed the legibility of power. Their duties included undertaking official duties, funding public activities and rituals, witnessing and vouching for loans between peasant households, litigation representatives, etc. (Ibid., 1996).

One of the best modern Chinese philosophers, Liang Shuming (, 1893-1988), proposed that the fundamental difference between Eastern and Western culture of modern times could possibly be traced back to the differences of size and structure of society at the local level in medieval time. These societies consist respectively of extended family (Eastern) and feudal farms united by local churches (European) that were shaped by spiritual/religious factors (Confucianism vs. Christianity). He considered that the basic conflict in western society was the conflict of individuals and society or churches; while imperial China resolved such conflicts by placing emphasis on families which served as a buffer between individual and society. In Chinese culture, there was no meaningful individual. The family would do everything to ensure the success of individuals and the individuals would do everything to contribute to the family. And the patriarchs had total control over the

fate of the individuals. While in feudal Europe, individuals lived in a village which was not identified by familial ties but religious ties. In this sense the study of rights and functions of local elites in Chinese society turned out to be meaningful (Liang 2005[1949]).

Liang Shuming's proposal pointed out the ethic ground of the role taken by classical Chinese gentry. It also implicated that 'gentry' was a category which had a wider dimension and fluidity. It includes people who preserved and transmitted Confucianism, both the ones who excelled in civil service examinations and served the function through government administration, education and writing; and the ones who had their own lands and the ability to hire tenants. These people consciously had their progenies in family receive standard education, and served the function through education and performing ceremonies based on morality of Confucianism. To a certain degree, the classical gentry class decentralized the imperial power in regard to administration and protected the local benefits, and thereby maintained their own authority. In the prolonged imperial history of China, the imperial power and the authority of gentry class experienced various cooperating and conflicting relationships (H. Wu and Fei 1988; Fei 2006[1945]). But their common aim was an ideological expansion of Confucian morality. Max Weber, in a similar approach, pointed out that the intermediate stratum between the royal class and its people was not culturally unified (Weber 2002[1915]). Weber further stated that in considering the percentage of royal class in the population, the extent of their administration was very limited compared to their absolute sovereignty. Hence the power of the gentry in actual administration must have been relatively strong. But the social role of those who excelled in the civil service examination and gained positions in government was different from the role of the ones who owned their lands and gradually became local elites (Li 1995). Weber alternatively used the 'rational' and 'traditional' aspects for depicting their relative characteristics. The former ('Shi') relied on the morality with a nature of worshiping the ancestors and nature, which was later in accordance to Confucianism; while the latter served the structural function of economic and political administrations in local affairs as a tradition. Their relationship had a natural inner

tension (Weber 2002[1915]). Duara discussed the influence of New Culture Movement on the intellectual gentry, and indicated that rural administration and cultural construction were greatly worsened after the abolishment of Civil Service Examination system (Duara 1996). Joseph Levenson pointed out that Confucianism asserted the wholeness of China: 'not in the name of nationalism but of Confucian universality' (Levenson 1971), this form of centrism acknowledged local contributions, but 'the pride was for localities as centers of illumination for the whole intellectual world' (Liu and Faura 1996, 139).

Liu Tao Tao indicated that the new generation of intellectual literati was a structural derivation of the classical intellectual gentry, but became more diversified in nationalistic and moral ideologies; and the internal conflicts among new intellectual literati and the external conflicts between them and the government mainly focused on the new education system (Liu and Faura 1996; Yeh 2000). As indicated above, one of the main functions of the classical intellectual gentry was to maintain a morality which was related to people's understanding of the legitimacy of sovereignty (Granet 1989[1919]). At the time of social upheaval and cultural reforms it was possible to observe the connection between morality and a world of meaning, a set of beliefs, a style of discourse (Taylor 1995). In the past, the participation of clans and religious organizations (local elites) bound unbreakable ties between politics and social relationships (the way traditional education system was organized), which was what a modern nation-state tried to avoid. The latter endeavored to divide the relationship between clans/religions (rural politics) and construct a top-to-bottom bureaucracy which hampered the whole economic and educational systems from evolving to suitable new forms for constructing the modern Chinese state. This is the biggest dilemma in early modern China which has long-term cultural influences on contemporary Chinese societies (Li 1995; Yeh 2000).

Yeh Wen-hsin analyzed the social and historical context in which this new generation of intellectual literati kept playing their role in imparting knowledge and learning; in which she indicate that they were alienated by the mainstream political conflicts over the regime and the urgent need to construct a nationalist ideology (Yeh

1990). Shen Congwen, however, was exceptional in the sense that he developed his own understanding of Chinese morality (which he termed as 'Chinese humanness') through an integration of different literary and social traditions. He was also exceptional in the way that he consciously remained in a vague stance towards different radical political ideologies. Shen Congwen's 'incorporated history' (Kroskrity 2009) ensured him to continuously referred to his original identity as a 'country man' who came from a marginal region defined both by the imperial authority and the Early Modern Republic regimes; it also reminded him of his affection for the traditional aesthetic ideology prevalent in his hometown for a long time which kept him away from radical political pursuits. For this reason he was not ideologically bound by the traditional morality which imposed certain duties and guidelines on the intellectual literati in general; neither was he associated with the radical political ideologies which 'alienated' (Yeh 1990) the new generation literati's studies from central political power and moral ground in the new era. When Shen Congwen started his literary creation in Peking, the new discourse that influenced him most was expressed in the Folk Revival Movement, which was also triggered by the nationalist ideologies.

2.2.3 The Early Modern Folk Revival Movement

The Chinese Folk Revival happened during the period of the New Culture Movement. Scholars in Peking University and other institutions in Beijing started collecting folklores and surveying local festival and rituals from 1909 to 1935. They ran a journal named *Lays* (*Geyao Zhoukan*   ) in this period and published folktales and field records, usually in translations from local dialects into vernacular Chinese writing. These folklore collectors experienced the First World War and the whole academic group later moved to Southwest China where the National Southwest Associated University (Xinan lianhe daxue   , a united educational institute of the most important Chinese Universities during the war time) was during

the Second World War. In the late stage of the Second Sino-Japanese War they were forced to move to Sun Yat-sen University in Guangzhou (Xu 2006; Hung 1993). There were two types of scholars who engaged themselves in the Folk Revival. One was well-educated in a traditional way and had deep thoughts on traditional Chinese literature. They gained the insights in explaining Chinese folklores from classical Chinese texts which could be dated back to 11th century B.C.; the other was educated in a half-traditional way in childhood and resumed education in new-fashioned schools in big cities and finally sought further education abroad. They were deeply influenced by the studies of folklore in UK and Germany, or the studies of traditional folk literature in Japan. They appreciated the 'forms' and 'grace' of Chinese folklore, and devoted their efforts into ethnographic studies of folklore following the methodologies they learned abroad (Ibid., 1993). Also there were some foreign scholars in China who were especially interested in Chinese folklore and studied them since the middle of 19th century. The most important one is the German Scholar Wolfram Eberhard (1909-1989). He did an anthropological survey of Chinese folklores in areas around Peking and wrote his important work about Chinese folktales which connected the study of Chinese folklore to the European scholarship in the 19th century (Eberhard 1999). These scholars had immense influences on the Chinese folklore collectors, who were all urban intellectual elites.

One representative figure of this Folk Revival Movement is Zhou Zuoren (see 1.2), who was also an important figure in the New Culture Movement. Soon after his strong proposal advocating a new literary style in the New Cultural Movement, Zhou Zuoren departed from radical leftist literati for his own reconsideration of the value of classical Chinese literary tradition. Inspired by his studies in ancient Greek and Indian epics in years of further education in Japan, he adopted the idea of preserving the national tradition defined by traditional aesthetic category (Bakhtin 1981; Daruva 2011). Zhou Zuoren was one of the earliest advocates and organizers of research in modern Chinese folk literature. In 1906, he published an article *The Myth of Three Stars*（*San Chen Shenhua* ）on folk literature; In 1904, he called for research and collecting of folk ballads in the Journal of Shaoxing Education

Association (*Shaoxing Jiaoyu Huikan*   ), and in his own initiative he gathered around 200 nursery rhymes and children songs. When Zhou Zuoren got a teaching position at Peking University in September, 1917, he immediately participated in the ballad collection initiated by Liu Bannong (, 1891-1934, poet, prose writer and linguistic) and others. Half a year later he founded with Liu Bannong and Qian Xuantong (, 1887-1939) the Ballad Collection Office in Peking University; and in winter 1920, the Peking University Ballad Research Society was established, with Zhou Zuoren and Shen Jianshi (, 1887-1947) as chairmen. Between 1922 and 1923, he published a series of articles about ballads, and stirred wide interest in folk ballads among the Peking intellectuals, which is witnessed by the class of Chinese Ballads lectured by Zhu Ziqing (, 1898-1948) in Tsinghua University.

In imperial China, people living in the countryside had the same chance of receiving traditional education and doing well in the Civil Service Examination as people living in the city, since the wealthy property owners and renowned houses who could afford to hire teachers mostly lived in rural areas. However, after the abolishment of imperial examinations (1905), new schools firstly appeared and ran better in cities. The cultural severance between countryside and city were strengthened. Scholars who were engaged in collecting Chinese folklore considered their works to be a task of searching for the remnants of traditional morality and the real, original elegance of Chinese literature (Xu 2006). These explorations had a great impact on Shen Congwen. Given that he learnt to write in Mandarin, it is natural that his vocabulary in this second language was not enough to support his literary creation. In other words, he needed to accumulate primary speech genres in Mandarin in order to form a secondary genre which is inseparable from the formation of his literary style (Bakhtin 1986, 61–62). From Zhou Zuoren's translation of Japanese folk drama (kuangyan   ) he found expressing discourses similar to Xiangxi folk dramas for which he held a life-long affection. The appreciation and imitation of Zhou Zuoren's translated works led Shen Congwen to incorporate folk genres and his hometown's local dialects in his writings. As a result, his first literary works, mostly short drama

scripts, were imitations of these translated drama playbooks (Shen 1997[1934]). After his first success in publishing these scripts, he furthered in other literary genres which he studied hard in Peking and gradually shaped his literary style. Shen Congwen studied and worked extremely hard trying to absorb and integrate different literary styles which he appreciated. He proved to be very talented in writing, and reached his distinct personal style before long. However, what he firstly absorbed from the folk revival movement, especially the influence of Zhou Zuoren's translation of Japanese folk drama, set a keynote of his creation and became his life-long belief of the meaning of literature. This explains why he took the risk to appraise Zhou Zuoren's literary works and to claim it 'forever healthy in spirit and appropriate to humanness' (   ) at the time when Zhou Zuoren was accused to be traitor to China in 1940 (Shen 2002, vol. 10).

Closely related to the literary and social reforms reviewed above, the reform of language was also a very important aspect of Early Modern nationalist ideology.

2.2.4 The linguistic landscape of Early Modern China

Classical Chinese (wenyanwen   ) was the written form of the Chinese language which was generally used all through imperial China for formal purposes up to the 20th century. It stemmed from the language used by the sages, presumably more or less as spoken by them, in their monumental writings (e.g. Confucius's *Analects*) in pre-Qin eras (see Table 2.1), which set the literary standard for written Chinese to follow for many centuries to come. The way it was pronounced varied according to the phonology of local dialects. Though its vocabulary and syntax (and morphology, if there was any) may reflect a fossilized stage of the Chinese language, Classical Chinese is more of a writing style than a language. Traditional literati who wished to enter the bureaucratic system through Civil Service Examination had to master this language regardless of their personal linguistic background, which required their mastery of the Confucian canons written in Classical Chinese. Therefore, the literati

brought up in the classical education system were multilingual. In contrast, the written form of modern standard Mandarin reflects a (somewhat artificial) unitary pronunciation (X. Ma 2003).

The word 'Mandarin' (guanhua　　) has a different meaning before it became the name of the unified standard modern Chinese. There must have already been dialects in the early stage of the Chinese language, which however were not recoverable from the unitary written language known as Classical Chinese. The development of a supposedly *Ursprache* of the Sinitic languages or dialects could be ascribed to the early expansion of the Huaxia core population (the main body of the later the Han) who occupied a vast territory, and therefore their spoken language merged with local substrata and acquired distinct characteristics during the long development in their own courses due to their relatively isolations from one another (Chappell 2004, 10). Classical Chinese, as a result, was pronounced differently from one region to another. These dialects, however mutually unintelligible when spoken, have been halted from advancing into independent languages by the coalescing power of the single written language (Ibid.).

Among these dialects, the one originated from the Huaxia (　　) heartland – known as the Central Plain (zhongyuan　　) – has achieved its primary importance in two ways: on the one hand, emigrants from this area are the most widely distributed in China, ranging from the most south-western corner of Yunnan to the Northeast Manchuria. They carried the spoken language of the old Central Plain into the new settlements, most of which had not had a significant Huaxia/Han presence and as a result lacked competition from other Chinese dialects. A good example is the South-western Mandarin (Xinan guanhua　　　　), nowadays widely spoken by the Han population of Guizhou, Sichuan and Yunnan, and learned by non-native speakers such as the Tibetan and the Hmong. On the other hand, since the centres of Chinese dynasties almost always fell in the regions inhabited by speakers of this dialect, it naturally became the spoken language used by the dynasts and central bureaucrats and spread out with the officials into new territory as the correct/elegant way of speaking

(zhengyin/ yayin 　　　/　　　), the tongue of governance and culture, especially after the standard of Classical Chinese had been loosen and elites started to write in their spoken language, usually in this dialect. And if, for various reasons, the capital of a dynasty moved to a new area previously inhabited by speakers of another language or dialect, the power of imperial administration, commerce and culture usually creates an exclave of this dialect, an example of which is the dialect exclave of Hangzhou, which is surrounded, until today, by the Wu dialect.

Now this powerful dialect is known as Mandarin, but it is not a single dialect anymore. Millennia of development has made Mandarin in fact a group of largely mutually intelligible regional dialects which share many common linguistic features against other dialects. For instance, most Mandarin dialects have lost four of the six Middle Chinese consonant endings (*-p, *-t, *-k, *-m); Old Chinese *Anlaut* *nj- has lost the nasal element (e.g. Standard Mandarin *ren*　　　 'tolerate' vs. Wu dialect *njin*, S. Min *nung*); etc. There are, according to most scholars, eight major branches of Mandarin nowadays, and within each branch there are numerous local variants; and it was spoken by the majority of the population (see Map 2.1) (Zhou and You 2006). Modern Standard Mandarin was canonized on the basis of the Beijing branch of Mandarin.
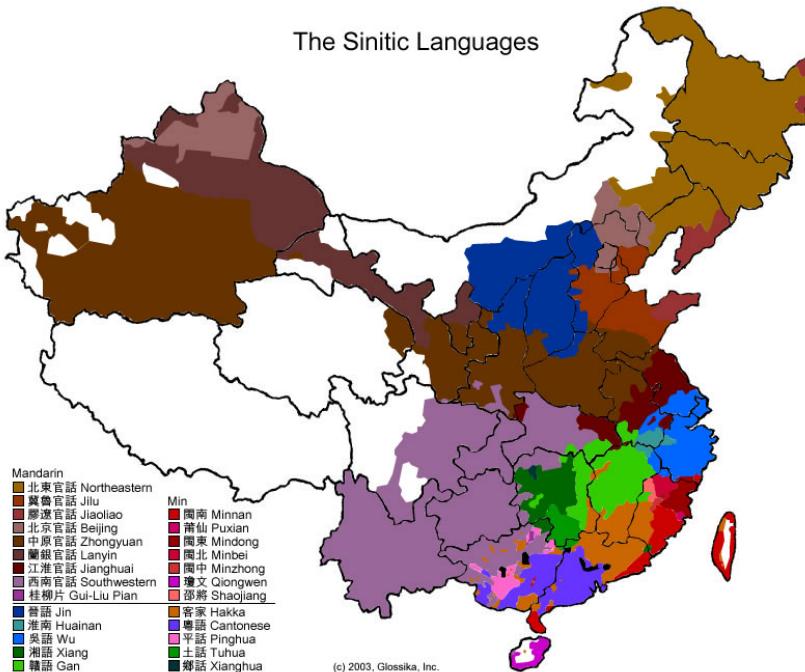
Map 2.1 Distribution of Mandarins and Southern Languages up to 20th Century[33]

In historical periods, people from southern ethnic groups who wanted to enter the central bureaucratic system, or simply wanted to stay as local elites would participate in the Confucian education and learned to use classical Chinese. In their careers as gentry or imperial bureaucrats, they committed to classical Chinese writing and spoke certain sub-dialects of the Mandarin group according to their geographical locations. These people were the very rare examples in their own ethnic community and part of local autonomy system which connected intellectually to the central imperial government; and they would not give up their own mother tongue and culture (Ling and Rui 2003[1947]).

The Early Modern nationalist reforms brought about the ideology of one unified national language, and finally institutionalized a standard language, both in speaking and in writing, based on the Beijing Mandarin dialect. A written vernacular, mostly based on the same Mandarin dialect, was already in use in the realistic novels of Ming and Qing dynasties, and was later refined by Early Modern intellectuals. Since the early 1920s, this written form has become the standard style of writing Modern Chinese. In the early stage of the development of this written form, the impact of classical Chinese on its vocabulary and syntax was still strongly felt. During the Republican period most official documents and scholarly articles were still to a large extent adhering to the Classical Chinese model. But the New Cultural Movement mass media and the New Leftist realistic novels greatly accelerated the transition in writing. As a result, by 1950s the traces of Classical Chinese in most influential publications had been largely eradicated. The best realistic novelists in Shen Congwen's time, however, were deeply influenced by both the classical Chinese literary style and the written style of the new national language.

Qian Xuantong, in his correspondences with Chen Duxiu and others on the matter of 'The Future Chinese Writing System' (*Zhongguo Jinhou de Wenzi Wenti*) on the issue. 4, vol. 4 of *New Youth*, claimed that:

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[33] http://www.zonu.com/fullsize-en/2011-08-08-14265/The-Sinitic-languages-2003.html, last retrieved 08/06/2013.

…in order to abolish Confucianism, Chinese characters have to be abolished; in order to eliminate the naïve, barbarian, stubborn minds of the common folk, Chinese characters have to be abandoned first.' Such is his reasoning: 'the Chinese characters, as to their shape, are the dead-end of logograms rather than the scientific phonograms; they are inconvenient to learn and write; their meanings are vague and highly imprecise. In their application to the modern science, they own nothing that can describe the new ideas and objects; in their past, 99.9% of their usage was merely recording the nonsense of Confucianism and Daoism. Such a writing system is not consonant with the new 20th century.

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The statement represents the linguistic ideology pervasive in Early Modern China, which led to the construction of the modern nationalistic language. The Republican period is crucial to China's modernity. The National Language Movement, which was part of the New Culture Movement, concentrated on the establishment and popularization of a national language. A modern society has newer request of the national language's legitimacy and feasibility than a traditional one. Meanwhile, the establishment and popularization of a national language (rather than a lingua franca) basically rely on policy-making. Therefore the dialectical aspect is the essential part of the Republican language policy, which includes two dimensions: one is to gradually get rid of the influence of dialectical and historical phonologies, and separate the new national language phonology from the traditional Mandarin one; the other is to conduct a large-scale dialect survey in order to provide a basis for the whole language policy (Huang 2006). There had also been abundant academic debates on language in the Early Modern period, but the official language and the vernacular written Chinese were stabilized and popularized before long.

At this point I have introduced the different thought trends which have influenced Shen Congwen's conception of nation. Besides the Confucian education in his early years which abstractly equals 'nation' to the realm of imperial sovereignty and Confucian morality, Shen Congwen was also nourished by various classical

literary works which embodied alternative cosmological understandings of the spatial and temporal aspect of Chinese nation. Since his early twenties Shen Congwen mainly received intellectual influences of the new generation of urban literati who were commonly shaped by the New Cultural Movement (the modern Nationalism). Among them, he favored the folklorists whose perspectives encouraged him to build up his own literary glossary from his familiar folk narratives, and also led him to a distinct understanding of the potentials of a national language. In the following section I shall introduce the history and intellectual histories of the Hmong land which is both Shen Congwen's homeland and the source of his imagination of 'nation' and 'people'.

2.3 The Hmong land

2.3.1 Xiangxi Hmong in ancient and imperial China (11th century B.C. to 19th century A.D.)

Recent scholarship recognizes a distinct culture module of ancient China (11th – 2nd century B.C., see Table 2.1) indigenous to large areas of the current Central and Southern China, namely the Chu culture (culture of the ancient Chu Guo   , lit. Chu State); And it is indicated that this cultural module includes apparently different geographical, religious, literary (literature and legal) and burial ritual traditions according to the recent archaeological findings and manuscript researches (Cook and Major 1999). In an earlier stage, Edwin Pulleyblank (1922-2013) studied the Chu culture and proposed that Chu civilization was formed by non-Han ethnic groups residing around midstream of Yangtze River under the influence of the Han civilization (see Map 2.2). As a result, the civilizing process can be seen as a process of adopting Han culture and discriminating against the 'barbarian' identity. The most important index of this process, according to Pulleyblank, is language. The establishment of Chu state and the advancing of Chu culture based on the use of

classical Chinese and then the acceptance of south-western Mandarin as the oral language (Pulleyblank 1983). The representative literature of ancient Chu culture is the *Songs of the South* (*Chu Ci*   ), an anthology of lyrics combining myths and shamanism which was usually attributed to Qu Yuan (, 343-278 B.C., poet and politician in the State of Chu). Chu religion was identified as a complex with the main body of Taoism and branches of shamanism and few Confucianism (Cook and Major 1999); it was very different from the classical Han culture which was mainly based on the imperial rituals and Confucian canons.

Map 2.2 The Location of Qin State and Chu State in Late Warring States Period[34]

Luo Xin insightfully indicates that the conversion of the Southern Polity to Han culture does not mean the conversion of the whole population, or even of the majority population; He further pointed out that this conversion was a very slow process in which Han culture gradually permeated socially from one place to another. In ancient Chu area the Han-influenced regions and populations were like small islands surrounded by the sea of Chu culture; yet it is observed that when the two cultures confronted each other the Chu residents who would not acknowledge Han political

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[34] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Warring_States_period, last retrieved 28/07/2014.

administration moved away to the remote mountainous areas (Luo 2009). After the 3rd century A.D., the success of expansion of Han culture ensured the Han speakers' authority in economic, political and cultural aspects in the South; and the pattern of expansion was formed: Non-Han speakers were assimilated into the Han culture mainly through acknowledgement of political administration of central imperial government, leaving the mountainous areas and settling in plains; while the resistors were forced to move to deeper mountains.[35]

	Pinyin	Anglicised Form	Dates
/	Xia or Yin		21st -17th cent. B.C.
	Shang		17th -11th cent. B.C.
	Zhou	Western, 11th cent.-771 B.C. Eastern, 770-256 B.C.	11th cent.-256 B.C.
	Chunqiu	Spring and Autumn Period	770-476 B.C.
	Zhanguo	Warring States	475-221 B.C.
	Qin		221-207 B.C.
	Han	Western Han (Former Han), 206 B.C.-24 A.D. Eastern Han (Later Han), 25-220 A.D.	206 B.C.-220 A.D.
	Sanguo	Three Kingdoms Wei 220-65 Shu Han 221-63 Wu 222-80	220-280
	Jin	Western Jin, 265-316 Eastern Jin, 317-420	265-420
	Nanbei Chao or Liu Chao	Northern and Southern Dynasties or Six Dynasties *Northern:* Northern Wei 386-534 Eastern Wei 534-50 Northern Qi 550-77 Western Wei 535-57 Northern Zhou 557-81 *Southern:* Song 420-79	420-589

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[35] *Songshu – Yiman Zhuan* (*The Book of Song: Biography of Barbarians*).

		Qi 479-502	
		Liang 502-57	
		Chen 557-89	
Sui			581-618
Tang			618-907
Wu Dai	Five Dynasties		907-60
	Later Liang 907-23		
	Later Tang 923-36		
	Later Jin 936-46		
	Later Han 947-50		
	Later Zhou 951-60		
Song	Northern Song 960-1127		960-1279
	Southern Song 1127-1279		
Liao			907-1125
Jin			1125-1234
Yuan			1279-1368
Ming			1368-1644
Qing			1644-1911

Table 2.1 A Chronology of Chinese Dynasties

As early as Han and Jin Dynasties (202 B.C.- 420 A.D., see Table 2.1), the peoples living along the vales and glens of Hubei, Hunan and South-eastern Sichuan Provinces were already designated by the Zhongyuan (, lit. Central Plain, mainstream Huaxia Chinese) people as *Ba* or *Man* (, , see Map 2.2 for the approximate location of these people in ancient China). It was thought by the Huaxia Chinese that among these alien tribes, those who inhabited the northern half were descendents of Lin Jun (, a heroic ancestor figure of Ba people), while those in the southern half descended from Pan Hu ( ). Pan Hu was a mythological figure with canine features, or being a divine hound himself. Ancient Chinese myths tell that he was given the hand of the daughter of Emperor Gao Xin ( ), another mythological figure, and from the couple derived all the barbarian tribes in the mountains. During the Nanbei Dynasties period (420-589 A.D., see Table 2.1), many Huaxia Chinese fled southward from their homeland in Northern China, and the 'descendents of Pan Hu' at this time referred more clearly to the mountain tribes in

Xiangxi[36]. The most well-known were the 'Five-Stream Barbarians' (Wu xi man

, 3rd to 6th century A.D., see Table 2.1) residing in current Hunan Province. And researchers generally considered them to be speakers of language(s) of the Miao-Yao (Hmong-Mien) language family (Luo 2009; Ming-ke Wang 2006).

The ancient myths describe that these 'barbarians' or progeny of Pan Hu favoured colourful and highly decorated clothes. They had split up into many regional communities distinguished mainly by different clothing pattern as early as their first large scale contact with the Huaxia Chinese during Han Dynasty. Xiangxi locals living amid Huaxia Chinese during Tang Dynasty (618-907 A.D., see Table 2.1) had already been assimilated to Huaxia in all aspects of life. Yet those inhabiting the vales and mountains kept their own languages, distinct customs and communities[37]. After Tang Dynasty, the range of 'Descendents of Pan Hu' in the mind of mainstream Huaxia gradually expanded to include more southern and south-eastern regions. Approximately around the time of South Song Dynasty, all the non-Han populations began to be designated either individually as the Hmong, etc., or collectively as Descendents of Pan Hu. The people known as the Hmong at that time probably also recognised themselves as progeny of Pan Hu (Luo 2009).

In many areas of China where minority people were considerable local forces, a certain degree of autonomy remained while the local governing forces stayed responsible to central government. It is called the Tusi Institution (Tusi zhidu

, lit. native chieftain institution). The local chieftainship was similar to the feudal lordship in Medieval Western Europe. The office of local chieftains was hereditary, and the chieftains have military duties when the sovereignty of central government was violated. Paying annual tributes and the military duties or land-farming in wars was mandatory. It was also mandatory that some of their male offspring were educated in Civil Service Examination System and passed the first or second round of civil servant recruiting exams (Chai 2013). In an extreme example, the last generations of one local chieftain family in Kham Tibet never spoke Tibetan in their

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[36] *Hou Han Shu - Nan Man Zhuan*   ·   (*Book of the Latter Han: Treatise on the Southern Barbarians*).
[37] *Sui Shu - Di Li Zhi Xia*   (*Book of Sui: Geography II*).

entire lives[38]. Because of the specialty of the Hmong, there was not a local chieftain coming from Hmong communities. And the local chieftain families in Xiangxi were from another ethnic group: the Tu-jia. It is also widely recognized, even by local people, that the Tusi families in central China were actually descendants of some Han migrants from Jiangxi Province before the 14th century[39] (before the Ming Dynasty, see Table 2.1). Literacy in the mountainous area in inner and Southern China was very low. Only members or relatives of chieftain's families or of very rich locals could go to Confucian schools, which were co-established by these families (Ibid.). Some offspring of the prominent Hmong elites went to these schools; some others were recruited by local chieftains into their armies. These Hmong youths could also enter the central bureaucratic system through military achievements (including excelling in military civil service exams).

Since the Tusi institution was established in Xiangxi, the people under Tusi administration were thus indirectly governed by the central government, but the majority of the Hmong remained 'raw barbarians' outside the dynasty's jurisdiction. Since the 14th century, Hmong people appeared as threatening local forces. In the periods when the Han or the other ruling ethnic groups had evident economic development and population boom, or had to migrate and expand their settlements as dictated by the development policies of the central government, their confrontation with Hmong people usually led to fierce warfare. The military blockade line which was intended for the whole Hmong territory gradually advanced into the Hmong heartland during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644, see Table 2.1), and finally formed a military defence line against the Hmong in the Wanli period (1573-1620). It was named the Twelve Fortresses of Wanxi（Wanxi shi er bao   ）by the government then. Later, the famous Hmong Frontier Wall（Miao jiang bianqiang

, currently known as The South Great Wall）was built along this defence line[40]. The construction of the South Great Wall took over four centuries, through the

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[38] Personal communication with Zheng Shaoxiong, postdoctoral fellow of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.
[39] According to interviews with keepers of Baojing Archive, Xiangxi.
[40] *Jing yi Jishi - Bian Lue Si*   (*Records of Barbarians in Jiaqing Period, 1552-1578: Frontier Strategies IV*).

process of which the central imperial government ideologically claimed that Raw Hmong beyond the wall to be an ungovernable population unworthy of including into the local autonomy governance connected to the central bureaucratic system. However, Tusi also had subtle but solid relationships with Raw Hmong, especially in economic and military communications. Some local chieftains developed military skills and improved their weapon manufactory through learning from Raw Hmong. It is worth pointing out here that the communications between Raw Hmong and Tusi were mostly in Hmong language. It is not until the middle of 19th century that Hmong people started constantly learning the South-western dialect of Mandarin. Xiangxi area had the longest surviving local chieftainship in Chinese history. In the mean time, the Nation in the mind of the Hmong was almost identical to the Tusi administration. Tusi were allowed by the central government to have their own army, which were not part of the imperial army and had no military obligation towards the government except on occasions of foreign invasion, when they should follow the central government's commandments. The Tusi army was half civilian, half military: civilian at time of peace but enlisted when wars broke out. Some Hmong people joined the Tusi army and fought against invasions under central commandership as well, such as in the battles against the Japanese pirates (wokou   ) who plundered the coastline of South-eastern China during the 14th to 16th century (Ji and Zhao 2009).

2.3.2 Xiangxi and the Hmong in late Qing Dynasty

Xiangxi lies in the eastern region of Mount Wuling. It sits on the joint of Central and Western China, where transition from the Han-dominated regions to the multi-ethnic Southwest begins (See Map 1.1). Fenghuang (see 1.3, Shen Congwen's birthplace) became the capital of Xiangxi in the 19th century, where the Tujia, the Hmong, the Yao and the Han have been living and intermixing together for a long time. Non-Han ethnic groups still constitute the majority of the residents here nowadays. According to the census, the population of the County was 358,000 by the

end of 1998, of which 66.32%, namely 237,400 were non-Han ethnic groups.

Fenghuang Ting (　, an administrative division of imperial China) does not have a very long history. Before Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368), this place was governed by the Office of Five Settlements (wu zhai zhangguan si 　　　　　) and the Office of Ganzi Ping(Ganziping zhangguan si 　　　　　), under the Promulgating and Consoling Office of Baojing (Baojing xuanwei si 　　　　). It entered the central government's consideration only during Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). The first formal government set up here was the Guardianship（shoubei 　）established in 1513. Afterwards, as the geographic and strategic importance of this place increased, accompanied by the more frequent riots and conflicts between different ethnic groups, the level of administrative institution became ever higher accordingly. The Tusi institution was abolished in 1707, and the government of Fenghuang Ting, which belonged to the hierarchy of centralised administration, was established two years later. At first, Fenghuang Ting was a *San Ting* (　　) at the same level of a county（xian 　）, but later in 1724 was promoted to the status of a *Zhidi Ting* (　　　) at the same level of a *Fu* (　), higher than county but below *Dao* (　). In 1735 finally, the Dao of Chenyuanyong Jingbingbei（Chen Yuan Yong Jing bingbei dao 　　　　　　, a military-political administrative division）was set up, the office of which was located in Fenghuang, which rendered Fenghuang the capital of all the seven *Ting*s and counties of the Hmong area of Xiangxi. Two early gazetteers of Fenghuang have been compiled. Besides, a gazetter of Fenghuang as *Ting* was firstly compiled in 1758, then revised and enlarged in 1824, and emended again in 1890, over the time span of 132 years.

Xie Xiaohui stated that in the early 18th century Qing rulers used two different policies and strategies to construct imperial rule in Xiangxi, applying to different communities recognized with separate identities. To the communities which were under the control of Tusi, of whom the majority were Han, Tu-jia and Hmong communities in Northern Xiangxi and within the South Great Wall, the state political and juridical institutions of Qing applied and replaced the native chieftainship (Herman 1997). To the communities lived outside the control of Tusi, of whom were

mainly Hmong communities in Southern Xiangxi and beyond the South Great Wall, certain specific census registers, conventional regulations, land policies and tax policies applied alongside the state institutions (Xie 2013; Dong 1909). These specific policies implied that the Qing Empire recognized the region as the frontier rather than part of the nation. At this stage, the Hmong representatives and lower officials played an important role in forming the perception of the culture of these communities as accepted by central government, and in mediating the relationship between Qing central government and local communities (Guo 2012). The Qing administration of Southern Xiangxi in this period, especially the land policies, led to the tragic confrontation between Hmong people and Qing State (Xie 2013).

A gazetteer of Fenghuang as *Ting* was firstly compiled in 1758, then revised and enlarged in 1824, and emended again in 1890, over the time span of 132 years. These gazetteers have documented more detailed information of Xiangxi Hmong people and reflected the attitudes of the government officials towards them.

A Gazetteer of Fenghuang Ting compiled in Qianlong period(1736-1795)[41] wrote:

> Before their submission, the Red Hmong[42] were aggressive and wild, raiding and assaulting the residents, so that peaceful living had not been possible for centuries. Now, however, sage emperors rule and succeed one another, so that the Hmong are touched by the teaching of the sages and come to submission, like the beasts and birds which dance when hearing the Confucian teaching; and we are exempt from marauders for decades…so that all the future generations know that the sage is in the supreme position, and his morality and authority command the farthest parts… customs should be observed, in order to establish the standard of abundance and scarcity; let them learn about loyalty, filial duty, integrity and righteousness, so that they will follow the rights and avoid the wrongs. The heavier the laws, the less effective it sustains people's hearts and customs; ruling this land in such a way, is it not as easy as looking into one's own palm!
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> ……   .
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>   .)

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[41] *Qianlong Fenghuang Ting Zhi - Xu*   *(Gazetteers of Fenghuang Ting compiled in Qianlong Period, 1736-1795: Preface).*

[42] The Hmong communities distributing in Xiangxi and Eastern Guizhou calling themselves *dut Xongb* (lit. red Hmong); The Eastern Dialect of Hmong language in China is also named *dut Xongb*.

From this account Hmong people are still considered as barbarians beyond the imperial administration; and the relationship between the Hmong and the emperor's government is analogized to the relationship between beasts and Confucian saints. The royal families and aristocratic houses of Qing Dynasty came from Manchu ethnic group and fully adopted Confucian morality as a basic ruling principle. Accordingly, the local officers, mostly the Han, would not strengthen the non-Han features of Southern ethnic groups but only point out their status as not being involved in the central governmental administration system using the metaphor of not being Confucianized.

At the beginning of the 19th century, after the Qianlong-Jiaqing Hmong Rebellion[43] (Qian Jia Miaomin qiyi   ,1795-1806) was put off, the local government opened regular markets in the Hmong-Han borderland (along the South Great Wall), and made the third day of each month a market day for the Hmong and the Han to trade. The market commerce brought great convenience to the daily life of this borderland, and the regulations and restrictions published by the government thereby helped preserve the local peace to some extent (R. Wu 1985). He Lin (, 1753-1796, a political and military minister) promulgated the *Six Aftermaths for Hunan Miaojiang*[44] (*Hunan Miaojiang shanhou liutiao   *, 1796) after the Rebellion, which states, among others, that 'for Han-Hmong trades, a site should be chosen by the people at the border, and a market is thus set up to trade on certain days regularly, but no bartering of goods for land is allowed' (

). The markets were located near the sentry posts on the border wall, so that Han-Hmong communication was directly put under the supervision of the central government. Since the 19th century, market commerce has greatly developed in Xiangxi, and the commercial

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[43] A large-scale anti-Qing rebellion; Its principle was 'Casting Out Guest People (Han and Manchu landlords and government officials) and Recovering Ancestral Lands' (zu kemin fu gudi   ,   ). The rebellion army punished landlords (including the Cooked Hmongs) and took over their lands. Qing government summoned armies from seven Southern provinces to extinguish the rebellion and ended it twelve years after it started

[44] *Daoguang Fenghuang Ting Zhi - Zhengfu Xia   * (*Gazetteers of Fenghuang Ting Compiled in Daoguang Period, 1821 – 1850: Conquest II*). He Lin's proposition in this decree includes returning lands to the Hmong, restricting rights of landlords and advocating Hmong-Han commerce; His aim was to strengthen the ruling of Qing government through effective political administration.

production in all parts of Xiangxi has increased significantly, especially after the Opium Wars, when the production and commerce of China wood oil (Tung Oil) contributed a large proportion to the local economy. During the Daoguang period (1821 – 1850), the number of markets doubled from 7 in the Qianglong period to 14. This century also witnessed, firstly, the enlargement of Fenghuang Town to twice its original size; secondly, more than thirty new temples and altars, and dozens of bureau houses were built; and thirdly, 180 Li (90 km) of the border wall and sentry posts were renovated, which was a costly project (Ji and Zhao 2009).

A Gazetteer of Fenghuang Ting compiled in Daoguang period (1821 – 1850)[45] wrote:

> Though the Hmong are alien people, they also have human temperaments; though their land is barbarian and remote, they also understand the teachings.
> (   )
> Today's Hmong people respect the superiors and elders as well, turning their faces towards inland (the central dynasty), there are some who would not abandon themselves… And the Hmong of today is not the same as the Hmong of yonder.
> (……
>   )

At the peak of the Xiangxi Hmong rebellion (1796), representatives of the Hmong had a negotiation with representatives from the central government in Fenghuang Ting, demanding 'Hmong land for the Hmong, and Han land for the Han' (   ) (R. Wu 1985). Ethnic identity was realised through fighting for the space for the Hmong. After the 1796 Rebellion, the rotating government officials[46] widely ordained Hmong officials and accepted subject Hmong people into their governance. They also founded many government-funded schools (Tan 2007). Since then, the Hmong gradually turned from the conventional authority of the Lilao and Zailao[47] to the Confucian mode of joining the government system through school education and examinations (Ji and Zhao 2009). And the subsequent official

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[45] *Daoguang Fenghuang Ting Zhi - Miao Fang*   *(Gazetteers of Fenghuang Ting, compiled in Daoguang Period, 1821-1850: Defense against the Hmong).*
[46] A replacing institution applied after the abolishment of Tusi institution in 1707 (see 2.3.1).
[47] Prestigious Hmong headmen who were traditionally in charge of arbitration.

documents of regulations on Hmong-Han trading put the business activities directly under supervision of central government, which also reflects that the Hmong, except those living in deep mountainous area, was viewed as citizens of the nation.

Soon after the Qianlong-Jiaqing Hmong Rebellion, the Qing government carried out a registration census in Xiangxi, but only the households inside the South Great Wall were registered and made to abide the local taxation laws. The registered households were also under the protection of the emperor's law. In the contrary, the ones who were not registered were neither under the protection of the local army against bandit gangs' raids, nor protected by the emperor's law in commercial activities. The Hmong households which were registered were termed the Cooked Hmong (Shu Miao   ) while the ones beyond the wall were called the Raw Hmong (Sheng Miao   ) (Tan 2007; Fiskesjö 2012; Fiskesjö 1999).

In the aspect of military administration, after the Qianlong-Jiaqing Hmong Rebellion, Qing government employed the Baojia system[48], which was in practice a hierarchy of military systems with around 10,000 stationary soldiers in Xiangxi. According to the system several Hmong officials were selected to participate in political administrations in Hmong areas, which made the Hmong achieve certain degree of autonomy[49]. These local officials were very important in regulating local commerce and the military land-farming system[50]. The most famous local army of Fenghuang named Gan Army (Gan jun竿军, see figure 2.1), which played an important role in Early Modern history in Xiangxi（Shen Congwen's grandfather and father gained their military achievements in it）, was the basic level of this military hierarchy system; And the local soldiers of the Gan Army (mostly the Hmong) were only in temporary military status.[51] They took military training from autumn to

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[48] Baojia   , a community-based system of law enforcement and civil control aiming at reducing the central government's reliance on mercenaries, which was in use in different forms in different areas of imperial China since 11th century. The leaders of the regional community were authorized to collect taxes and maintain military and civil projects (Ch'ü 2005[1937]; Ch'ü 2003[1947]).

[49] *Qianlong Fenghuang Ting Zhi - Baojia* (*Gazetteers of Fenghuang Ting Compiled in Qianlong Period, 1736 – 1795: Baojia*).

[50] Tun tian   , an agriculture system which was promoted in Han dynasty and continued till the end of imperial period. According to it, soldiers on distant expeditions were set to work converting and farming the conquered land, both to provide food for the army and to turn the region into an agricultural one (Tan 2007).

[51] The word of describing these basic level soldiers is '   ', who differed from '   ' with military status of central government army. The former were only exempt of taxes of their own land when they or their descendants were in

winter and ploughed from spring to autumn (G. Ma 2009). From 1840 to 1874, the Gan Army had trained an impressive number of military elites, among whom seven became important military ministers in charge of frontier guardianship. In the Republic period this system continued to function and contributed at least seven lieutenant generals and a lot more lower military officials to the Republic army.[52] Besides the military land-farming system, there were civil land-farming system[53] and Hmong land-farming system[54] (Tan 2007).

A Gazetteer of Fenghuang Ting compiled in Guangxu period (1824 – 1890) deleted the *Defence against the Hmong* (*Miao Fang* 《   》) volumes of the Daoguang compilation. It still has two volumes on the geography and military farming, but the emphasis has moved from discussing subsistence to describing the people's customs and morality. There are in total 16 volumes of this compilation, of which 12 are devoted to customs and morality, including ceremony, schooling, temples and altars, celebrities, election, countryside gentry, notable characters, newly settled persons, retired officials, virtuous women, and miscellany. May-bo Ching proposed that the native-place gazetteers compiled by local literati in late Qing Dynasty generally reflect the government's will of cultivating patriotic sentiments. And from school regulations as part of the reform program announced by late Qing government it is revealed that the intent of (native-place textbooks and gazetteers) compilation was to let people learn 'from near to distant' so that they would be able to see the connections between their own native-place and the nation (Ching 2007). The Daoguang compilation of the Fenghuang Ting gazetteer include many descriptions of the Hmong area, which further indicates that Hmong people was considered to be part of national citizens in Xiangxi.

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military services; The latter were registered in census and were exempt of taxes of their own land no matter whether they were in military service or not. And the taxation policy could be inherited by their descendants no matter whether the descendants were in military service or not (see *Hunan Miaofang Tunzheng Kao*
).

[52] According to interviews with keepers of Baojing Archive.

[53] Min tun   an agriculture system which allocated lands belonging to central government to normal people and extracted taxes from harvests. Sometimes local government recruited businessmen from other provinces to plough the lands and contributed to taxation, which termed 'commercial land-farming system' (shang tun   ).

[54] Miao tun   , an agriculture system which allocated lands belonging to central government to registered Hmong households and extracted taxes from the harvest. The whole administration was undertaken by local Hmong officials.

Figure 2.1 Xiangxi Local Army with Imperial Military Organizational Structure[55]

In the whole 19th century Qing government remarkably increased the education input in Xiangxi, which were substantially supported by the taxation from the land-farming systems. *Gazetteers of Baojing Xian Compiled in 1731* (*Yongzheng Baojing Xian Zhi* 　　　　　　　　) stated that numbers of free schools (yi xue 　) increased, which actively took in students from registered Hmong schools, while local officials advocated to raise the quota of Hmong students to participate in the Civil Service exams. Following the shift of national policy, a large number of private schools funded by local elites were set up to ensure even more students of various ethnic backgrounds to be involved into the Civil Service Examination System (P. Zhang 2002).

2.3.3 Xiangxi and the Hmong in Early Modern China

Henry Davies (1865-1950, British military officer) was the first to classify the South-western languages in China following his expeditions (1894-1900) into the Yunnan Province of Late Qing to discover possible routes for a railway connecting

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[55] http://www.xxfhw.com/ztqw/3824.html, last retrieved 08/06/2013.

British-occupied Burma with the upper Yangtze river and through to Sichuan. And he classified the non-Han languages in Yunnan into three families: (1) Mon-Khmer Family; (2) San Family; and (3) Tibeto-Burman Language[56] (Davis 1909). This system was inherited by Samuel Clarke who had stayed in South-western China for more than thirty years (since 1889, mostly with the Black Hmong community in Guizhou) as a missionary. Clarke also noted with particular interest that the Hmong language had no written form. Therefore, their origin myths and social discourses were all oral. Clarke quoted at length from their origin myths and drew a comparison between them and the biblical story of Noah's Ark (Clarke 1911). Clarke's publication of his missionary works (in 1911) was also reviewed by the Western scholars for exploring the Han and non-Han cultures in imperial China and indicating their 'immiscibility'. From this exploration a conclusion was drawn: the expansion of Han culture in imperial China did not effectively bring civilization to non-Han races, but rather turned them into 'practical slavery'(Churchill 1912). In 1924, French missionary le Père François Marie Savina (1876-1941, Missions Etrangéres de Paris) published his landmark documentation of Hmong people in Asia. This historical work includes a profound exploration of language, social institution, contemporary ethnography and mythical past of Hmong people living in Southwestern China (Savina 2009[1924]). Inspired by the Asian-European historical linguistics of the 19th century and the Annals School developed by French historians in the 20th century, as well as the burgeoning anthropological studies in his time, Savina's academic approach was set up with a clear framework: looking for the exotic, ancient nations with all forms of purity and goodness. He considered that Hmong language had remained a stable form which could be dated back to ancient times (2000 B.C.).

Following the earliest ethnographic surveys of the Hmong in China written by the European missionaries and army official, systematic researches were carried out and published by Chinese scholars once the political regime of the Republic of China was stabilized. The Academia Sinica (Zhongyang yanjiuyuan 中央研究院）was

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[56] later incorporated into the 'Sino-Tibetan Languages'. The Hmong-Mien languages were placed in the Sino-Tibetan family by early linguistics; they are currently considered as constituting a family of their own according to linguistic census after 1960s (X. Ma 2003; F. Wang 1985)

established by the government of the Republic of China in 1928; and the Institute of History and Philology (lishi yuyan yanjiusuo 历史语言研究所) belonging to its Humanity and Social Sciences Division was established in the same year. A lot of European and American-trained scholars were hired and worked for the Institute or other research institutions in order to study the South-western ethnic groups and establish the cultural ground of the unitary 'national ethnic group'. In October 1934, Mongolian-Tibetan Committee of Republic Government[57] promulgated the No. 112 Address:

> The South-western provinces of our nation are resided by various ethnic communities; the Hmong and other barbarians scattered distributed, and their customs vary. In order to unite all ethnic groups in our nation and to prevent the imperialists to take advantage of them, it is necessary to thoroughly survey the circumstances and state of affairs of these ethnic groups. The inquiry schedule is hereby formulated which is for the consultation of different governments in South-western provinces; and effective surveys were demanded.'
> ("
>
>
> ″).

Since then ethnographic surveys and identifications were carried out by different governments and academic institutions in the South-western provinces of the Republic of China. Ma Chang-shou (1907-1971) was a renowned Chinese scholar who started researching Southern ethnic groups at a very early stage. Though he took in the concerns of physical appearances and cultures, his classification of ethnic groups was mainly based on language and was greatly influenced by Davis's system (C. Ma 2003). Ma's research showed the continuous distribution of the Hmong-Mien languages and their kinship. Ethnographers from the Institute of History and Philology, Ling Chunsheng (, 1902-1981, trained in France and influenced by the Annales School) and Rui Yifu (, 1898-1991, educated in Yale University), did three-month anthropological research in Fenghuang in 1933 and

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[57]Meng zang weiyuanhui   , established in 1929 according to *Government Organization Act of the Republic of China* (*Zhonghua Minguo Zhengfu Zuzhi Fa*   , issued in 1924) and was in charge of the political and religious administrations in Mongolia (already declared independency) and Tibet, as well as the administrations of Mongolian and Tibetan residents in other provinces.

documented a large number of non-Han rituals and customs (see Figure 2.2). They also observed that because of the late Qing ethnic policies reviewed above, the Hmong land was deeply influenced by the imperial administration, most efficiently through implanting the ideology of regional identity and Confucian morality into the local gentry. In their research report there is a paragraph stating:

> In recent years the local government constantly announces their prohibition of the uncilvilized sacrifice rituals, therefore the drum dances are not usually seen; and the educated Hmong gentries consider it a big insult to talk about the drum dances which they think exposes the remaining barbarism of the Hmong.'

（

）(Ling and Rui 2003[1947]).

Figure 2.2. Ling Chunsheng, Rui yifu and Xiangxi local officers in 1933 [58]

After their field surveys, some local intellectuals from Fenghuang once wrote to the Mongolian-Tibetan Commission of the Republic Government and accused them 'focusing on the uncivilized and primitive customs of the Hmong, collecting them to make films, and using the films for making fun and profit' (

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[58] Archival Photo in possession of Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, Taipei.

). They also prosecuted the scholars for three major crimes: 'forcing the Hmong to kill their oxen as sacrifice to deity' (

), 'enjoining the good womenfolk to play the drums and excessive immoral music, if anyone refuses, they flogged her and imposed fines on her' (

), and 'extorting man labor to work in their service' (   ). The accusation letter was signed by firstly 'Peng Tianfang, the Hmong Representative from Xiangxi' (   ), and joined by the signatures of one representative from each ethnic group as 'the Liao from Zhejiang, the Li from Guangdong, the Hmong from Yunnan, the Yao from Guangxi, the Man from Sichuan, the Hmong from Guizhou' (

) (Ming-ke Wang 2012). This letter has shown that the non-Han intellectual elites in the Republic period appealed for their communities to be recognized as progressive and enlightened by nationalist ideology instead of being 'primitives' which must be watched and studied by Han scholars. Most of the Southern ethnic groups were mentioned in ancient Chinese historical materials with names indicating their barbarism. And the signatures of this letter continued to use these contemptuous designations. The Chinese characters *Liao*[59] and *Yao*[60] relate these communities to fierce animals, and *Man*[61] literally means 'barbarian'. This either means that the learned class of these communities accepted them as mostly referred designations of their own communities – but this is very unlikely given that they were already able to formulate such a letter and were so self-conscious of ethnic honor; or they became proud of being distinct from other ethnic groups and hoped to be recognized as independent ethnic components in the new Republican nation.

The ideology of a unitary Hmong identity within a 'nation-state' was actually vaguely formed much earlier than Ling and Rui's survey; and it was influenced by the education and economic policies of late Qing government whose activity brought

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[59]   , related to current Gelao ethnic group.
[60]   , related to current Yao ethnic group.
[61]   , related to current Qiang ethnic group.

Xiangxi into the early modernization (P. Zhang 2002). Among the minority ethnic groups of China, the Hmong is one of the most active forces participating in the construction of the Early Modern nation-state. Many local elites joined the 'Chinese United League' (Tungmenghui   ) initiated by Sun Yat-Sen at an early stage of the formation of the nation-state, and welcomed the 1911 Revolution and the claim to establish a new nation-state. Some of them led the revolutionary force to attack the Qing imperial army on December 7th, 1911, which was the first battle of the 1911 Revolution fought in Hunan Province.

In the whole research process they were funded and helped by the local warlord Chen Quzhen (, 1882-1952) who had set up new schools importing science and sociology subjects and founded all sorts of capitalist industries in Xiangxi. It is worth noting that Chen Quzhen was actively devoted to formulating new education policies in Xiangxi which banned the using of non-Han languages and the practice of local religious rituals in schools (Lu 1989). Ling and Rui also gained a lot of help from a representative of the local intellectual elite, Shi Qigui (,1896-1959). Shi also took three years' independent research of Hmong cultures after Ling and Rui left. He on the one hand kept sending complementary data for Ling and Rui who promised him a post in Institute of History and Philology, and on the other hand strived to prove the existence of a distinct 'Hmong culture' (Ming-ke Wang 2012). In the first decades of the Early Modern period, most areas in South-western China were governed by the warlords who were cooperating with the Republic Government and cultivating their own military and political forces at the same time. And the influences from the central government in local administrations were flimsy and complicated. Therefore, in the early nationalist ideologies, South-western China was seen as the 'inland' which did not share the sensitivity with the frontier. Later when the Second Sino-Japanese War was approaching and the South-western area gained its military strategic status, the meaning of the ethnographic surveys and the effort of constructing local identities suddenly became prominent.

The *Full Records of the Autonomy of Ten Counties in Xiangxi in Republic of*

China Issued in 1923[62] drafted by Chen Quzhen's cabinet details his policies and the supply of 'self-sufficient industries' (without mentioning that part of those were from opium planting and transporting weapons[63]). There are some new policies which are very relevant to the changes of status of non-Han ethnic groups. Qing governments formed the regulation to have the Hmong representatives selected by subject Hmong people for communicating between central government and the subject Hmong households. According to the new policies, however, representatives of certain number of households were selected with specific standards; and the most important of all were literacy and considerable personal properties, which made the number of Hmong representatives sharply dropped. And it became mandatory to send all school age children to new schools and learn from the new textbooks designed by a committee supervised by local government; the private schools having their own curriculum were all banned. Furthermore, students were strongly advocated to use standardized national language in school communications. Inspired by the nationalist thought, Chen's educational policy was a combination of Confucian education and new type of schooling imported from Europe. The education system was economically supported by Chen Quzhen's re-distributing the fortune made by local business men in newly constructed capitalist industry (Zhang 2002), and by the harvests of the confiscated Hmong lands following the old land-farming system (see footnote 23). Though Chen Quzhen's power was taken over by the central government of Republic of China in 1925, he remained the role as a local military official and his political and economic policies were put into practice until the beginning of Second World War.

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[62] *Minguo Xiangxi Shi Xian Lianhexiang Zizhi Quan An*   . The original copy is put in an archive box which lables the file name with 'false government' (wei zhengfu   ) because the file was drafted during the time of the warlord's government (see Figure 2.3).
[63] According to the interviews with two local high school teachers and two old people who have memories of their family firms in the Republic period.
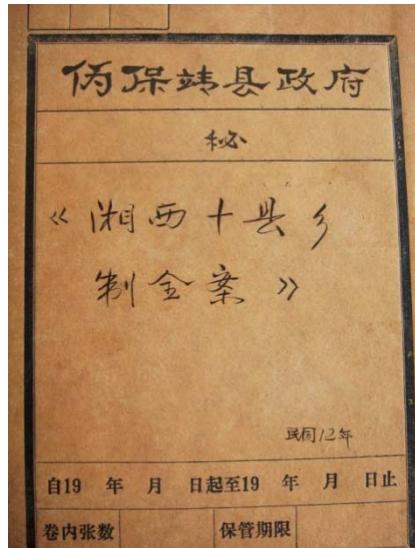
Figure 2.3 File *Full Records of the Autonomy of Ten Counties in Xiangxi* in an

Archive Box (photocopied in 2011)

Concluding this chapter, Early Modern Chinese nationalism had its rich and multi-layered sources originating from both the global culture imports and a stratified worldview constructed in ancient and imperial Chinese history. The Chinese state construction in the Republican period brought about concerns of relationships between the Han and Southern ethnic groups, and the concerns for recognizing minority ethnic identities. In order to examine these processes, the regional circumstances and the influences of the earlier Qing state administrations should both be taken into consideration. The new generation of urban elite literati took on the role of precipitating and recording the dramatic social and cultural reforms in Early Modern China. As one of them, Shen Congwen witnessed the changes and played his own role.

Chapter 3 Chronotopes in Shen Congwen's Novels

From the beginning it belonged to distance
as the blue color of the mountains does
…
many years after it had been found
its true name remained
on the other side of knowledge

yet it was still there
like a season that has changed
but appears in the light
in the unspoken morning   (*Heartland*, by M. S. Merwin)

3.1 Chronotopes and Literary Genres

Paul Friedrich states that poets are engaged in constructing a worldview, or to say, 'to get into a worldview'(Friedrich 1996, 38–39). Based on his research on the indeterminacy of poetic language, the 'master trope' in poetic language 'makes poetry consist in integrating or organically fusing the music of language with the nuance of myth' (Friedrich 1986, 3). Here myth is alleged to be not only folklore or epic, but the concealed history of mind transiting to a documented one (Lévi-Strauss 2001[1978]). Therefore, the poetic language projects the image of myth onto the combination of sound. In a very similar manner, Roman Jakobson (1896-1982) explored the poetic function of language which emphasized more on this projection process. According to Jakobson, when the phonetic/linguistic features of a message itself are observed and related to the way meaning is constructed, a verbal message becomes a work of art (Jakobson 1960). His notion has very important impact on modern semiotic anthropology, as it indicates that the poetic function of language gives prominence to signs as entities of value:

> Poetic function is not the sole function of verbal art but only its dominant, determining function, whereas in all other verbal activities it acts as a subsidiary, accessory constituent. This function, by promoting the palpability of signs, deepens the fundamental dichotomy of signs and objects (Jakobson 1960, 356).

In Merwin's poem *Heartland*, the true name that remained in the other side of knowledge is equivalent to a season which has changed and yet appears in light at an uncertain moment; this contiguity awakes the land of the heart within us which is dominated by the most cherished and lost, and helps us map the 'heartland' embodying the essence of a tradition. For the reason that poetic language contains verbal beauty deriving from the interplay between uncertainty (the unspeakable 'heartland', the essence of a tradition) and harmony (the textual practices that project 'heartland' into a palpable sign) of a language, Friedrich considered that 'the poet is part of a whole, a figure in the great centers of a tradition…'(Friedrich 1986, 2)

Mikhail M. Bakhtin (1895-1975) dealt with another literary language, which he also considers to be reflecting the core of different traditions along European history: the language of novel. Bakhtin draws comparisons between languages of poetry and novel to indicate the different approaches these two literary languages use in portraying social images. To understand this better, it is necessary to look into his analysis of speech genres. Bakhtin states that social images (life or myth) enter language through concrete utterances (Bakhtin 1986, 63). The thematic content, style, and compositional structure are three aspects which link to the development of certain types of utterances in specific sphere of social communication: speech genres (Ibid., 60); and 'in each epoch certain speech genres set the tone for the development of literary language' (Ibid., 65). Bakhtin also proposes that it is the inherent time-space connection in a literary language that defines genre and generic distinctions. He employs a term 'chronotope' (lit. time-space) to describe 'the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature' (Bakhtin 1981, 84). Some of his sample studies may help us better understand the meaning of 'chronotope': Bakhtin proposes that the concept of 'metamorphoses' shifted from Hesiod's time (750-650 B.C.) to Roman and Hellenistic era (323-31 B.C.): Hesiod's archaic mythology revealed the feature of framework of Seasonal Myths (figures representing seasons replace one anther); Ovid's (Publius Ovidius Naso, 43 B.C. –17/18 A.D.) *Metamorphoses*, representing the interpretation of this concept in Hellenistic Period, revealed the irreversible change of separate individuals.

This vividness of image, or the integration of personhood and destiny, is called *mimesis* *μίμησις* by classical writers, namely representation (Auerbach 2003[1946]). This example shows how the chronotopes of Greek and Roman epochs define the generic distinction. These two types of narrative myths also indicate different connections of personhood to universe. Thus, in the words of Asif Agha, 'representations of time cannot be isolated from representations of locale and personhood' (Agha 2007, 324). Since every literary representation requires concrete expression, Bakhtin claimed that all signs are chronotopic to some extent (Coleman 2010, 23):

> ...in order to enter our experience (which is social experience) they must take on the form of a sign that is audible and visible for us (a hieroglyph, a mathematical formula, a verbal or linguistic expression, a sketch, etc.). Without such temporal-spatial expression, even abstract thought is impossible. Consequently, every entry into the sphere of meaning is accomplished only through the gates of the chronotope (Bakhtin 1981: 258).

Thus, Bakhtin states how literary genres in general increase the palpability of signs through their chronotopic features, and accordingly builds up the connection of his research to modern semiotic studies. The difference between poetic genres and novelistic genres mentioned above, in Bakhtin's notions, comes from the premise that the style of poetry derives from chronotopes of individual imagination while the style of novel derives from dialogic relationships of various chronotopes existing in real social lives (Ibid., 284). Similar to what Jakobson propose as a projection process (image of myth – combination of sound) which makes a verbal message a work of art, the projection process makes novel a work of time/history. Chronotope indexes the time-space images of a specific epoch. Although only some forms of chronotopes enter literary traditions, the ones developed in given historical conditions are in the great center of culture (Ibid., 84-85). Novelists project the time-space images onto the literary genres, thus define the literary work's artistic unity in conjunction to historical reality (Ibid., 243). Lévi-Strauss once gave a very similar statement: 'Myth is language, functioning on an especially high level where meaning succeeds practically at "taking off" from the linguistic ground on which it keeps rolling.' (Lévi-Strauss

1963, 210)

Agha gives his explanation of chronotope in the framework of more recent semiotic studies on the entangled relationships among time, space and personhood. He suggests that a chronotope is 'a semiotic representation of time and place peopled by certain social types', and indicates that in all forms of ex-textualized representations chronotopes provide frames of ideologically saturated social lives (Agha 2007, 321, 323). Agha further points out the semiotic features of chronotope, that the experience of constructing a chronotope itself also has its representational agency, or to say an organization of time, place and personhood which may be transformed in construction and circulation. As they circulate in the discursive life of a society, chronotopes become models of and for personhood (Ibid., 324; Kockelman 2007, 376). The semiotic aspect of chronotope presented by Agha is especially helpful when one deals with extraliterary strata of national language and ideologies. The culturally constructed historical images themselves and the circulation of them together define the spirit of time, as Steve Coleman states:

> Literary representations are chronotopic because they always juxtapose the world they describe and the world which describes them - the narrated and the narrating worlds exist in particular relationships which are historically and generically specific. What is more, representations circulate through social space, over time, so that the relationships between representations are themselves chronotopic as well (Coleman 2010, 23).

This chapter aims at understanding the contexts of Shen Congwen's representative novels, with a particular focus on the dialogic relationship of different chronotopes in his works which project the spatial and temporal dimensions of social life and the way they are felt. The classical literary tradition was confronted by modernity and influx of Western thoughts in the Early Modern Period (1898-1949), which led to the re-shaping of the imagination of history and personhood. An analysis of literary chronotopes in this period will bring insight to the examination of the shift in Chinese literature tradition from classical to modern time. In circulation, chronotopes in Shen Congwen's novels involve complicated and unprecedented

meaning of time and landscape entangled with newly imagined personhood and history, opening to a more or less fundamental restructuring and renewal of speech genres.

3.2 'The Peach Blossom Land', Theatre World and Timeless Present

Shen Congwen's literary genre is a symphony of different genres embedded and multiplied in histories, localities and imaginations. The contextualization of aesthetic expressions and their semiotic effects was juxtaposed with identity appeals, demonstrating the 'time-spaces' in which different Chinese literary traditions are felt. In this chapter I try to analyze the three prominent chronotopes in Shen Congwen's representative novels and their semiotic effects, and to indicate the embodied political institution and poetic justice.

3.2.1 The Imagined Utopia

In his renowned novel *Border Town* (*Bian Cheng*   ) (Shen 2002, Vol. 8) Shen Congwen depicted the land by envisioning a journey into an 'otherworld' in which the human activities immersed in the seasonal cycles and natural landscapes. The journey unrolls on the waterway formed by conflux of Yuan River and Youshui River (see Map 3.1) through high mountains in the Southern Xiangxi. The houses of this imaginary land are built along this commercial waterway hidden in thick vegetative covers, 'one is sure to find a house wherever peach blossom flourishes; and one surely can buy some wine wherever a house is found' (

). The main characters of this novel are an old man and his granddaughter living by a stream flowing into the waterways, who own a small boat for ferrying people across the stream. This small boat belongs to local government, so the old man is considered as a grass-root civil servant who earns a low salary and

raises his only relative – his granddaughter with it. He calls the young girl 'Cui Cui' (　　, lit. bluish green) , which is the color of the vegetation on the steep cliffs they see every day. Cui Cui is raised in the nature, and Shen Congwen compares her to a tender but vigilant fawn. The town is a small dispatching center of navigation, the administration of which is regulated by the recognized headman following the traditional customs. Being one of the joints of marketing network extending through South-western China, this little town has trading markets for different commodities coming from upper or lower streams; yet all business activities merge with the everyday happenings repeating through the years. This feature is best demonstrated by the description of the headman's two sons: they have gone through very tough trainings during business travels on boats or on foot exactly as their father; yet there is no description of these trips, but only of the local ritualized annual activities when and where the most representative characteristics of local youths are on display: strong and modest. Both Cui Cui's family and these two brothers' have to work diligently through the whole year; therefore, only in the annual gatherings for welcoming the summer – the Dragon Boat Festival (Duanwu jie 　　)[64] – can they encounter in town. The triangle love story, which is the only plot of this Proustian style novel, was collectively launched in three annual festivals.

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[64] Also called May Festival (　　). Its origin has been traced to the memorial of poet Qu Yuan since 3rd century B.C. According to folk belief of China, after Qu Yuan drowned himself in Miluo River (see Map 3.1) on May 5th of the Lunar Calendar because Chu state was gradually devoured by the Qin regime (Qin guo 　　, one of the states in Warring States Period 475-221 B.C.), people in the South began to hold massive gatherings on the same day every year in his memory. This traditional festival also share some features with the ancient festivals welcoming summer in other parts of the Indo-European world, which include courting of young people and some shamanist rituals (Danaher 1972; West 2008).

Map 3.1 Major Rivers Flowing through Provinces in Inner China[65]

In the tradition of Chinese literature before the Early Modern period, the chronotopes embodied in classical Chinese poetic and philosophical writing were closely related to shifts of nature and seasons and to the relationships between life process and nature. A substantial moral system was corresponded these temporal shifts of nature. Spatial representations also bear moral values, as they are linked with social activities such as meeting, parting, worshiping…each has a set of customs or regulations to specify tradition. Paul Friedrich sketched an insightful summary of the relationship between nature and man in his study on a poet of Tang dynasty (618-907 A.D.) – a historical period when ancient China's cultural and economic influences reached its peak. He concluded that in the poet Du Fu's (, 712-770 A.D.) view 'nature is animated, analogous to society, only meaningful as part of a dialogue, and itself responsive or at least symbolically or indexically related to culture' (Friedrich 1996, 51). Such an idea applies to classical Chinese literature in general as well. However, these specific features responded to different social ideologies (religious and

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[65] A file from the Wikimedia Commons, last retrieved at June 8th 2013.

philosophical trends of thought) respectively in each historical period, including the archaic mythological chronology, the essential and native part of Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism etc. (Granet 1989[1919]; Friedrich 1996). Shen Congwen's 'otherworld' is especially connected to two branches of the poetic tradition. One belongs to the Chu culture best represented by *the Songs of the South* mostly attributed to Qu Yuan (see 2.3); the other is the fable of an utopia hidden from the knowledge of all central political institutions, best represented by poet Tao Qian's (, 365-427 A.D.) *Peach Blossom Spring Story* (*Taohuayuan Ji* 《   》, 421 A.D.).

Chu culture is a synthesis of the prevalent Han culture and the folk cultures in Chu state (2.3.1). The collective work *Songs of the South* includes Qu Yuan's compilation and edition of ritual songs and lyrics of the Chu state, as well as other verses combining political opinions and emotions towards lives of ordinary people written by Qu Yuan and his contemporaries. These rhythmical songs and verses are supposed to be sung in Southern Chinese dialects which were creolized with non-Han languages[66]; later they were intextualized with written classical Chinese. Most of the lyrics are dedicated to local water and mountain deities and sung with dances; therefore the written texts were specifically rhymed with structural modal words (Hong 1983[1154]). This literary style is distinct from other classical written text in or around the center of Han culture and became an independent literary genre which was used by lots of famous persons before the 4th century A.D. to express emotions similar to Qu Yuan towards corrupted political regimes and the woes of ordinary people. This literary genre shows a sentient relationship between human and nature. The goddesses in the songs are usually covered with plants with fragrant scents and feminine shapes, riding on strong and vigorous beasts; Water and mountain spirits are partly hidden and partly visible in the mist above water and stones, or disappearing in the winds. A great number of names and descriptions of plant and animal species appear in the songs decorating and making connections between the scenes of

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[66] Some scholars in current Xiangxi proposed that the non-Han elements of Chu dialects came from the Hmong languages (Long 2001).

confrontation and love affairs of the deities. These scenes are chanted and performed in the rituals spreading through South-western China until a very recent age, which were considered as demonstrations of natural and healthy relationships among lives.

Shen Congwen was writing following this long lost tradition with the influences of the Hmong songs and ritual performances he grew up with. One of his short novels, *the Mountain Ghost* (*Shan gui* 《　　》) (Shen 2002, vol. 3), has exactly the same title as one of the *Nine Songs* (*Jiu ge* 《　　》) collected and transcribed by Qu Yuan as the most prominent folk genre incorporated to the *Songs of the South*[67]. The story is about an insane young man and the days he was lost in the wild. This young man, however, does not have most features of what are normally considered to appear on mental patients except that he is very ignorant about what is going on around him. He is clean, polite, great at music performances with instruments made of strange plants by himself, especially fond of children; therefore he has a nickname Dai-gou Wang (daigou wang　　, lit. the king of the children; 'dai-gou' is the Hmong word of little child). Sometimes he disappears for two or three days and is back with peach blossom picked miles away from his village. Once he disappeared for a while and is found by his brother in a cave in the mountains; thereafter he changed, but no one knows what happened on him. His only parent, the mother, is very sad and worried about him. She does not know what will happen on him after she dies. And the story ends here. According to what is said about the female spirit ('mountain ghost') in the folk song collected by Qu Yuan, this young man is in love with some spiritual being. The whole story is like an aesthetic metaphor yearning towards the ideal of beauty and love represented by the mythical being. However, direct mentioning of the ideal is completely absent in the whole story, only very vague hints are given, such as the flowers in the cave and the trance of the young man. And both the indication of his being a lunatic in people's eyes and his own mother's sorrow draw the mythical scene

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[67] The *Mountain Ghost* in *Nine Songs* is about a female mountain deity who is in love with a spiritual being. The short lyric composition depicts her beauty and enthusiastic love in a flowering style, which deeply moved and inspired Shen Congwen.

back to the realistic context. And being in this place-time, the myth is out of people's memory and the scene turns to everyday undertaking and meaningless sorrow.

Shen Congwen's 'otherworld' is poetically inspired by another literary genre: the utopian literature represented by Tao Qian's *Peach Blossom Spring Story*. The story tells how a fisherman lost his way in the lower stream of the Yuan River (see Map 3.1) and entered a land covered with flowering peach trees. Being received with hospitality, the fisherman learns that the people living there descend from the refugees escaping wars that plagued the middle land during the time of Qin Dynasty (221-206 B.C.); they chose to stay in this place by the Peach Blossom Spring and lived a self-sufficient and peaceful life, and so do their descendants. When they inquire about the outside world, the fisherman finds that they know nothing that happened in the history after Qin. When the fisherman leave, these people tell him: 'it is not worth mentioning to outsiders' (   ). The fisherman, however, reports this to the local official and brings back people to find the peach blossom spring. No one ever finds it, including one honorable scholar who dies in sorrow of not finding it. This literary genre was employed by countless classical Chinese intellectuals to express their wishes for an ideal and self-sufficient society blocked from political upheavals and military chaos that recurred in every imperial dynasty (see Figure 3.1). The space-time configuration in *Peach Blossom Spring Story* is a 'nowhere in fossilized time', and this literary text has been consistently referred to when the need of distancing from political reality or grieving over the past arises. Shen Congwen's 'otherworld' inherits the literary ideology of this 'Peach Blossom Spring' which is said to be by the same river that flows past his hometown. When one enters the 'border town' from the waterway, the houses are found behind the peach blossoms. Though the description of the environments includes the kinds of army camps or business routes which index the realistic setting, the narratives and dialogues signify a self-sufficient society featured by an unchanging cycle of life around the year and a static space.

Figure 3.1 *Plum Blossom Study Covered by Emerald* by Li Tang (c.1049-1130)[68]

Both the *Songs of South* and the *Peach Blossom Spring Story*, in their respective historical contexts, are entextualized with an established written form, which, however, is enriched through the use of symbolism and embellished by artistic forms of the Chu culture. They were constructed by elite intellectuals from the established cultural centre who expressed their political appeals by creating a poetic justice. This political stance is carried by a group of imaginary people who volunteer to block themselves from all the ongoing political institutions. In a sense, this ideal of morality could only be kept in an imaginary state inhabited by people with spontaneous ideal morality. However, this literary genre is very important in classical Chinese literature as it expresses, poetically, a metaphor of justice and morality distinct from the Confucian morality which emphasizes the loyalty towards the emperor. Shen

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[68] The *Plum Blossom Study Covered by Emerald* (*Mei Zhai Yan Cui*   , now in the possession of Taipei Palace Museum) is the earliest painting in the Song Dynasty (960-1279) which depicts a scene from the *Peach Blossom Spring Story*. Because earlier paintings stemming from this story in the Tang Dynasty and Five Dynasties (618-960) were all lost, this Song painting is the earliest extant visual art on this theme. It portrays how the fisherman sailed across the cave and met people living by the spring. The very influential artist of classical 'shan shui hua' (, lit. mountain-water painting), Li Tang, put pines in the prominent positions of the picture to symbolize the integrity of residents.

Congwen endeavored to resurrect this literary ideology and to demonstrate this ideal morality which he considered as rooting inside Chinese people in the framework of a modern realistic novel. As a result, this literary genre is in dialogic relationship with others in Shen Congwen's novels, which combine and create an allegorical style. The *Border Town* has demonstrated such modern allegory. For elucidating its chronotopes and literary genres, I shall very briefly review its plot in a diachronic order:

Following Hmong customs, young people searched their partner in private pair-singing event in summer, which is held in open spaces. The marriages are arranged by older generation or respective elders, though young people's willingness is the most important factor. The plot of the novel includes two love tragedies taking place in parallel space and time. One is the story of Cui Cui's mother, who was touched by a young soldier's songs and had a bastard child (Cui Cui) with him. She finally died from drinking cold river water after childbirth. The soldier committed suicide in the night before the army decamped, long before the child was born. The other is Cui Cui's story. Both brothers from the headman's family have affection to her, but she is secretly in love with the younger brother. This story unfolds in three Dragon Boat Festivals. In the first year Cui Cui was thirteen, grandfather took her to watch the dragon boat races. Later grandfather left for a while to take care of a drunken friend and Cui Cui was anxiously waiting for grandfather after the race. The younger brother appeared on the pier and invited Cui Cui to his home. Mistaking the invitation as an indecent assault, Cui Cui scolded at him; the younger brother took it as a joke and got her some help. In the next year, Cui Cui accompanied grandfather to the headman's house which overlooked the river. The headman was impressed by Cui Cui's beauty and hinted alliance of the two families. In the third Dragon Boat Festival, the two brothers both came to grandfather and asked for marriage with Cui Cui. One night Cui Cui heard a song in sleep and dreamed of floating on the song to the highest cliff and picking up the wild geraniums. Cui Cui's grandfather made a mistake and came to the brothers telling about the dream, letting the elder brother to hold Cui Cui's hand. The elder brother sailed downstream instead, knowing that Cui Cui was moved by his brother's songs. He had an accident and was

drowned in this sailing. The younger brother is still in love with girl, but his family wishes him not to marry the one who led to his brother's death. He sails to the lower stream as well, not knowing when to return. The grandfather dies in a storm; Cui Cui takes over his task and waits for her lover. The story ends with: 'this man may never return, and he may return tomorrow.' (   ).

Cui Cui can be seen as an incarnation of the goddess in the *Songs of the South*, who grows up in nature and perfectly maintains her life in a 'peach blossom land'. Except for daily conversations, she says almost nothing. In the contrary, there are many lengthy descriptions of her behaviours like meditating on the stars, imitating animals or picking up the wild plants. The only direct citation of the indigenous folklore in the novel is a ritual song dedicated to local deities which is usually sung by the wizards. Cui Cui sings it at the Dragon Boat Festival:

You the great spirit, you the great god, open your eyes and watch our people!
They are honest, young and without ailments.
Their adults can drink, can work, can sleep,
Their children can grow, can endure hunger and coldness,
Their oxen will plough, their goats will breed, their chickens and ducks will lay eggs,
Their women can bear sons, can sing, can find the lover that pleases her!

You the great god, you the great spirit, arrange your chariot hither and array on both sides.
Lord Guan Yunchang rides his scarlet-hare horse
Lord Weichi holds his huge iron bar![69]
You the great spirit, you the great god, descend from the clouds and walk in grace!
Zhang Guolao shall sit fast on hit donkey,
Iron-Stick Li watch your steps![70]

Long lasting fortune and prosperity are the heavenly grace,
Mild weather is the kindness of gods,
Delicious wine and food are set forward,
Rotund pigs and goats on the fire!

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[69] Guan Yun-chang (, n.d. -220 A.D.) and Wei-chi Gong (, 585-658 A.D.) are real historical figures who excelled at military skills. Stories of them entered the legends and dramas and spread all over imperial China for a long history.
[70] Zhang Guolao and Iron-Stick Li (   ) are legendary Taoist figures who are known by people all over imperial China from the legends and dramas. This paragraph indicates the various cultural elements existing in the local ritual performances besides Hmong elements.

Hong Xiuquan, Li Hongzhang[71]
When alive you were despots of the time,
You slaughtered or burned, you kept your integrity or served your loyalty in your own ways,
Now why not join us in the feast!

Eat slowly, drink gently,
and cross the river when the moon is bright and breeze is clear,
joyfully drunk you return hand in hand,
I shall chant you another song!"
(

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[71] Hong Xiu-quan (, 1814-1864) was the leader of the most influential peasants' rebellion against Qing Dynasty. Li Hong-zhang (, 1823-1901), famous military general and advocator of the modernization of China's navy and military industry in late Qing, who successfully suppressed the rebellion. This paragraph indicates another function of the wizard's ritual song, which relates to the tuition on people through commenting on recent political affairs. Here it implicates that the discrimination of the good and the evil should not be easily decided because all political affairs are utilitarian. But the gods' festivals should be followed and honored through celebration.

This seemingly eternal peaceful life cycle is exceptionally fragile. Once her inner monologue is related to the love affair, the imagery of death enters the narratives. At the first Dragon Boat festival, when she is waiting for her grandfather on the pier, she suddenly ponders on the idea of her grandfather's death; meanwhile, the light-minded dialogues of the sailors about a prostitute and her father's violent death is heard nearby, which aggravates the ominous atmosphere. At the moment the younger brother appears and invites Cui Cui to his home waiting for her grandfather; Cui Cui mistakes him as one of the sailors who used to insult young women and scolds at him. Two years later she is physically mature and reaches the age of marriage according to the local custom. When the headman sends someone to officially ask for the marriage of Cui Cui and the elder brother, the discussion between grandfather and Cui Cui constantly shifts to the beautiful and sad stories about her parents' deaths. And grandfather is worried about his own age and eager to arrange Cui Cui's marriage properly. In the meantime, the imagery of grandfather's passing away repeatedly appears whenever the topic of Cui Cui's marriage is mentioned, mostly in the monologues of either Cui Cui or the grandfather. In reality the love affair confronts a series of misunderstandings caused by Cui Cui's silence and grandfather's ambiguous attitude, eventually leads to the elder brother's sailing off and death. As the plot develops the imagery of 'treacherous outside world' gradually emerges, firstly in Cui Cui's father's story which tells that the soldier committed suicide when the army was leaving the town to the outside world; and secondly, when the elder brother leaves the town and sails downstream, he is drown. The one Cui Cui loves sails to the outside world as well, leaving an open ending.

Shen Congwen went even deeper into the tradition of the *Songs of the South* and the *Peach Blossom Spring* in his *Under the Moon* (*Yuexia xiaojing* 《   》) (Shen 2002, Vol. 9), which tells the story taking place in several ancient Hmong *Zhai* (congregated households) separated from the outside world. In a half-imaginary, half-realistic scene, a couple of young lovers sing each other songs of love and commit suicide after they are sexually united. The song is filled with mythical imageries and similar to the style of the folk songs collected by Qu Yuan:

Nuoyou[72] sang gently to his sleeping girlfriend: 'A dragon hides in the cloud, you shall hide in my heart'. And the girl answered from dream: 'My soul is a flag, and your sweet song is like a tender wind.' 'It is said my voice is intoxicating, yet a song puts one in slumber only for a day as a litre of liquor; your words are soaked with honey, even a syllable sweetens my heart for a whole year.' And the girl, eyes closed, answered again from her dream: 'no wind of winter, no wind from the sea, my flag cannot weather fierce storms. Please blow lightly, blow gently, wind of spring, tender wind, open the blossoms, do not sweep them away.'
("   "
      "   " "

                                    "   "

                                    ")

    The chronotope embedded in this style points to a mythical time-space which is eternal as contrast to the realistic history. Therefore, it demonstrates that the modernized 'heteroglossia' novel can incorporate the voices from the past into a harmonic aesthetics. Unlike Qu Yuan and Tao Qian who used to connect this time-space to the imagery of 'disappearing and lost', Shen Congwen connected it with death. It seems that he realized the history in which one can refigure this literary imagery in literary ideology has already passed. This is an allegory of the uncertain fate when traditional aesthetical category and literary genres confront the realistic 'outside'. In the mean time, the radical leftist intellectuals were exposing the miserable lives and extreme ignorance of ordinary public through realistic depiction with critical attitudes; the folklorists were advocating preservation of folklores which they considered as a collection of cultural materials representing people's wisdom. Shen Congwen, however, chose a different way to accommodate modern literature.

    Besides bringing back the traditional aesthetics and literary genres and indicating its passing, Shen Congwen also employed another chronotope which relates to more vibrant and consistent social discourses – I shall develop this in next section 3.2.2. These discourses, prevalent in Chinese society, show how political institutions and 'poetic justice'(D. Wang 2000) are recognized by ordinary public of Xiangxi.

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[72]   , lit. blessed by the Nuo God. Nuo is the deity Xiangxi people held massive shamanistic rituals for.

3.2.2 The Theatre World

3.2.2.1 The Recreational Han Theatre

In his short novel *Living* (*Sheng* 《 　》) (Shen 2002, Vol. 7), Shen Congwen told about an old man who wanders around Peking playing puppet shows. He only has two puppets; one is called Wang Jiu, the other Zhao Si. His performance is always about how Zhao Si is bullied by Wang Jiu, yet managed to beat Wang jiu down in the final fight. People in the town know nothing about this old man's life, yet they enjoy the vivid performances which gradually become part of their everyday life. The performances last for a few years until the old man disappear one day. After the old man goes away, some people remember that sometimes he talked in a very tender manner to the puppet called Zhao Si, the winner of the two puppets. This very short story ends in one sentence: This old man does not want other people know that his son Zhao Si was killed by Wang Jiu in a fight several years ago; and Wang Jiu was also dead for some reason long ago.

Wang Der-wei employed the term 'poetic justice' to indicate the way justice was imagined and reflected in vernacular Chinese novels since late Qing Dynasty (19th century). The most representative example he used is the recurrent scenery in the afterlife reincarnation: the image of the Buddhist hell. Wang analysed the theme of violence in these novels intensively exemplified by the injustice of cruel extorting of confession, and concluded that this distinct literary style was a reaction to the social injustice caused by the corrupted political institutions in late Qing. As an ideological compensation, the poetic justice was visualized in symbolic or religious language. For example, it is demonstrated by the scenery of the Buddhist hell where the evil ones are tortured after death and the good ones are escorted by Buddha's guards to enter their next lives (D. Wang 2000). Shen Congwen's *Living* shows a more passive and vague expression of the poetic justice felt by the ordinary folks. The old puppet performer's voice is silenced and permeates into the marionette performance; however, the indifference in the bystanders' voice, the contempt in police officers' voice and the

extremely succinct and intended empty narrative voice are dialogized to create the literary ideology of the lost social justice and the dignity hidden in the humble life of the common people. In several novels, Shen Congwen also demonstrated the poetic justice and the moral institution rooted in a theatre tradition once prevalent in central and Southern China from imperial to Early Modern period.

Shen Congwen was fascinated by folk dramas and marionette performances in his childhood years, when he constantly play truant to follow the visiting puppet performers or theatrical troupe. People in Xiangxi use a classical Chinese word '

'(kuǐlěi) to describe puppets (marionette), the logogram of which indicates the sorrow or anxiety etched in hearts, but later the word came to mean real puppets or, metaphorically, one controlled by others. The performing puppets originated in the Han Dynasty (206 B.C. – 220 A.D.), and gained popularity in Song Dynasty (960 – 1279 A.D.); they were mainly used in funeral ritual performances or festival gatherings. There were also abundant tales about ancient generals who used puppets to fool their enemies (Van der Loon 1992). Puppet performances in Xiangxi began in the late 14th century. Local tales still talk about the legendary origin of Xiangxi puppet performance around 15th century. It is said that a Han Chinese army was sent by the emperor to invade the barbarians in Xiangxi area, and struggled in their encounter with the fierce and tough Yao people among the barbarians. The war lasted for a while; in the mean time, the Han general was informed that the Yao people were very pious to their gods. He then ordered his soldiers to carve wooden masks and knit men shapes with straw. When the straw men were erected and faced the arrows shot by Yao troupes, they did not fall but marched. Yao soldiers thought that gods descended on the world and were terrified, and then they surrendered to the attack. The Han army raised the straw men with wooden masks and danced to celebrate the victory, which became the origin of Xiangxi puppet performances.[73]

The story indicated the Han origin of the art performances, and indeed most puppet performances in Xiangxi are adapted from the long-spreading Han folk stories

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[73] The story bases on the interview records. One is the interview of the ex-curator of Baojing Archive Institution, Xiangxi; the other is the interview of 'Fa Shi' (, the person who calls back people's souls when they are lost in the time people get frightened. The role of 'Fa Shi' is similar to 'conjuration') in LuoChaojing Village, Xiangxi.

with a tint of Confucian morality and distinct Buddhist conscience of good and evil. In Shen Congwen's time, images and inspiration from dramas were thoroughly penetrating into people's lives. I was introduced to one member in the last generation of wandering drama troupes in Feng Huang town. He told me some stories in regard to the local belief of the drama deity Yue Wang（   , lit. king of the mountain）, one of which is vivid and interesting. It tells that the local drama troupes usually carved a small wooden puppet to represent Yue Wang and take it with the group wherever they go. One day a handsome young man went to the market place where the troupe stayed and bought half a kilo of pork; he then asked the butcher to get his money from the troupe the next day. The butcher went to the drama troupe but no one remembered buying any meat. The butcher insisted on opening all the closets and boxes, and finally found the meat in the puppet's hand with the special knot which can only be knitted by the butcher. They soon learnt that Yue Wang bought the meat in human figure, which might be a warning to the butcher who usually cheated on his customers in trading. The butcher confessed his sins and became a conscientious tradesman. Many similar stories are told in Xiangxi and people sometimes give their children names related to Yue Wang, i.e. 'Yue Wang Bao' (, lit. protected by Yue Wang). In Shen Congwen's literary works, these names frequently appear. There are also names coming from the Hmong ritual dramas, played on the sacrifice rituals of worshipping mountain or river deities. The most well-known figure in his literary works – the younger brother in the *Border Town* - is called Nuo Song (, lit. sent by Nuo Deity)[74]. Nuo Song also has a nickname called Yue Yun (, one of the leading roles in a popular Han drama *Yue Fei Zhuan*   》, lit. the biography of Yue Fei).[75] It is said that Nuo Song is so handsome that no one would think of proper

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[74] Nuo Deities are the ancestor gods whom Xiangxi Hmong people worshipped and held sacrifice for.

[75] Yue Fei (, 1103-1142 A.D.) was a Han general active in Song Dynasty. He was famous for his royalty and battle achievements in wars confronting the military force of Jurchen empire in the north (1115-1234). Yue Fei's life story was widely adapted to classical Chinese biographies and vernacular dramas. Yue Yun was his eldest Son. In the folk tales Yue Fei is the reincarnation of Garuda – the mythical half bird half man creature in Hindu and Buddhist mythology (see ancient Sanskrit epic *the Mahābhārata* (Jin 2005[800-900 B.C.]). Tales and images of it spread to China from India in late Han Dynasty (1st to 2nd century A.D.); and gradually it became the seat of Buddha in Chinese Buddhist tales. Most of Yue Fei's biographies also indicate that Yue Fei's leading rival, one from the Wanyan (   ) clan of Jurchen which founded the independent kingdom is the reincarnation of the red-beard dragon in Buddhist tales (Qian 1998[1744]).

words to tell; so people call him Yue Yun, referring to the figure in the drama *Yue Fei Zhuan* which is usually played by the most handsome and best make-up young boy.

Figure 3.2 Members of the Last Theatre Troupe which Performed *Yue Fei Zhuan* before the Establishments of National Theatres, 2011

Shen Congwen also described his favourite female figures in his novels as 'having the appearance of Guanyin[76] (　　，lit. observing the sounds of the world)' (Yü 2001). Nuo Song' brother once mentioned Cui Cui to her grandfather as:

'Old uncle, your Cui Cui is delicate and good looking; she has an appearance of Guanyin. Sometime later, when I can stay in Cha-dong taking care of things and need not travelling around like a crow, I must sing for her every night on the side of this river.'
 ("

　　")

In another novel *Long River* (*Chang He* 《　　》) (Shen 2002a, Vol. 10) based on his impression of Xiangxi life in several boat voyages back to hometown during years in Peking, Shen Congwen described another female protagonist who represents

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[76] It is the Chinese name for Avalokitasvara, a celestial Buddha which is especially related to compassion, and usually appearing as a female figure symbolizing 'mercy' in Eastern Asian Buddhism.

his vision of an ideal young girl. Yao Yao (　　) is her name, taken from one of the oldest Chinese folk poems *Tao Yao* (　　　　, lit. the peach tree is luxuriant and flowering. The poem is comprised in to her, and she would get over any sort of grief in half day. When people talk about her, they say:

> 'When Yao Yao grows up she would definitely be Guanyin. There's no doubt of it...'
>
> "　　　　　　　　　　　　　…")

The image of Guanyin also very probably derived from *Legends of Guanyin* (*Guanyin Chuanqi*　　　　　), which is one of the most popular traditional threatre plays and puppet plays in Xiangxi.

Figure 3.3 *Legend of Guanyin* on the Stage of Xiangxi Puppet Theatre[77]

Traditional academic studies on Chinese dramas mainly concentrated on how city recreational places facilitate the adaptation and reformation of drama performances (Tanaka 2011). Court songs and dances in Han and Tang periods, musical telling in Song period, and vernacular novels are believed to be the sources of drama performances which took shape around Song and Yuan Dynasties (10th – 14th

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[77] http://txhn.net/hnfw/fwzwhyc/201205/t20120524_17629.htm, last retrieved 30/08/2013

century A.D.) in places like teahouses, taverns and markets. The original stories include Buddhist stories, Confucian and Taoist moral tales, historical hero tales and romances, as well as vernacular love stories (K. Wang 1998[1910]). These dramas were played by local the *Book of Songs* dating from 10th to 7th centuries B.C.). Yao drama troupes, and were usually passed on from masters to disciples without a fashioned script. Only since 1950s the most popular plays were officially documented and the scripts were formed for preservation. Many famous masters slightly but gradually changed the lines or moves in their years of performances, and some finally documented versions of the play took on the names of the masters. In most parts of China, after a certain history of spreading and synthesis, the lines in dramas were changed into local dialects in different places. However, these dramas in Xiangxi were only played in Han Chinese language even after it was widely accepted in rural, Hmong-speaking areas.

One of the Buddhist stories adapted to both ritual dramas and puppet plays is still widely known in Xiangxi. It is extracted from the story *Mu Lian Jiu Mu* (, lit. how Mu-lian saves his mother) which is firstly recorded in a Buddhist sutra taken from India to China in late Han Dynasty (around 67 A.D.).[78] The story is briefly concluded here: Mu Lian was a gentle and humble youth; his mother, however, was an exceptionally greedy and merciless woman. When his mother died, she was sent to the Buddhist hell and sentenced the penalty of being forever hungry – the one who cannot be fed would never have the chance of reincarnation according to Buddhist belief. Mu Lian was very sad about his mother and went through great difficulty to consult the Buddha the way of saving her. Touched by Mu Lian's filial piety and wisdom (enlightenment), Buddha imparted the Sutra of 'U-lan-b'an' (*Fo Shuo Yulanpen Jing*   ) and advised him to make 'u-lan-b'an' (Yulanpen   , Yulan   lit. overhang, Yulanpen   contains best food and fruits) and distribute them to Buddha and a hundred thousand priests on the fifteenth day of the seventh month. Mu Lian's mother finally reincarnated from the hell (de Visser

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[78] *Hou Han Shu - Chuwang Ying Zhuan*   (*Book of the Latter Han - Life of Liu Ying, King of Chu*).

1928). The Buddhist 'u-lan-b'an' Festival (Yulanpen jie ___ , requiting the favour for the education and love received from parents) gradually mixed with folk beliefs in central China and became one of the ancient Chinese festivals intended for souls and ghosts. In Xiangxi, it is one of the most important traditional festivals called 'Ghost Festival' (Gui jie ___). Since late Ming Dynasty (after 14th century), it was very common that the Mu Lian drama was adapted to three days' or even seven days' Ghost Festival recreational performances, and thus was added lots of plots. For the same reason, there are some small drama plays inserted before or in the middle of the main performances (Tanaka 1992). The most popular inserted plays were *Yue Fei Zhuan* and *Legends of Guanyin* (*Guanyin Chuanqi* ___), for the reason that they are both typical Buddhist stories[79].

Figure 3.4 *Legend of Mu Lian* on the Stage of Xiangxi Provincial Theatre[80]

Although the wondering drama troupes and puppet players disappeared in the 1980s, the Mu Lian drama is still performed on the Ghost Festival, or in the healing rituals or funerals. It is one of the few drama stories that are still told by teenagers and kids, though they simplify the story to some degree and only tell me that Mu Lian went to the Buddhist Hell to save his mother. However, they do believe in the power

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[79] See footnotes 62 and 63.
[80] http://www.nlc.gov.cn/newgtkj/zhsy/201109/t20110921_51505.htm, last retrieved 30/08/2013.

of healing rituals. I was informed by lots of local people about how the 'Fa Shi' (　　，the local wizard) call back human souls when they are lost because of sudden frightening or illness. Many Xiangxi people have a second name from one of these healing rituals to block them from evil powers, or a third name given by a male person other than his/her father (gandie　　, lit. foster-father）who is believed to be beneficial to his/her destiny. These 'small names' were mainly used among relatives or extremely close friends.

The widely spread Han dramas are usually adaptations of historical or Buddhist/Taoist stories mixed with Confucian, Buddhist and Taoist thoughts. Han dramas in Xiangxi were enjoyable recreations in the relatively isolated and quiet Xiangxi life, which also granted people an imagination of the connection of them to the ancient Chinese empires. People took up moral lessons and historical education in these dramas. So far the historical and social background of Xiangxi Han theatres has been briefly described along with small pieces of Shen Congwen's writings which suggest the constant influence of this tradition on him. The theatrical scenes in Shen Congwen's most important novel projected the historical 'time-spaces' (when and where the past stories happen) onto literarily realistic circumstances. And it is worth noting that these past stories are related to the folk beliefs brought about with marks received from various civilizations once (and some still) influential in China. They changed along the history witnessing cultural amalgamations and folk aesthetics. The chronotopic organizations are best represented in Shen Congwen's *Long River*.

Long River and *Border Town* are the most important novels of Shen Congwen, the former, however, is unfinished. In the completed first volume one can observe that another imaginary town, though retaining some features of the 'peach blossom land', is permeated with realistic narratives hinting the ongoing political and social chaos. It depicts a renowned Hmong house and its members from two generations, who went through the social upheavals in Early Modern Xiangxi. The 'real-world' chronotope is dialogised with the utopian time-spaces, bringing together intentions of

traditionalization [81] (Bauman 1986) and revolutionary concerns. This dialogic relationship is strengthened by Shen Congwen's artistic skills in sketching his characters, especially through dialogues. Here are two dialogues from *Long River* embroidered with discourses of theatre imageries. These dialogues are between members of the renowned Teng family (Yao Yao is the youngest member of the younger generation) and local sailors (Shen 2002a, Vol. 10), demonstrating how discourses of the theatre imageries incorporate the historical chronotopes into the literarily realistic social circumstance (which are also chronotopes).

> Dialogue I: The young shipwright- like Zhang Gu-dong in the ritual dramas redeeming deities [82], he was best at pulling things out of the air- smiled and said, 'ah, big boss, is there anyone who doesn't know you are Sir Teng from the Radish Creek? Money is like the long river water, flowing day and night, rushing here and there, as is said, *East bank for thirty years, West bank for another thirty*[83], a prosperous omen is right over your village, I can tell even from a far look at the tree tops. Your Yao Yao grows fair and smart, surely a first-lady-to-be. Heizi has got salient feature in his "five peaks", he will have the luck of becoming a Dufu[84]. Now that in the Republic Dufu is changed to Dudu, then to the Chairman, he will be a Chairman. When he becomes a Chairman, he will welcome you to office in a big jet plane, twelve Mausers escorting, how grand!'
> The shipwright babbled and blabbered, lumping up whatever by the way; he made Changshun (head of the Teng House) bursting into an unstoppable laugh, and all his gloom was swept away. Changshun said, 'Old Bro, we are nowhere

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[81] Bauman uses the term *traditionalization* to indicate the speech acts which systematically link the present events to a meaningful past, while at the same time authenticating the speeches by 'tracing the provenance'; tradition becomes an aspect of situated practice, work that members of a society actively perform to constitute objects as traditional (Bauman 1992, 137, 140). Here I use 'traditionalization' to refer to both the mythical and imaginary time-space (which is the hallmark of an important literary genre in classical Chinese literature tradition) discussed in 3.2.1 and the chronotope embodied in the theatrical images and voices I am going to develop in the next paragraphs.

[82] The type of ritual dramas redeeming deities (Nuo yuan xi   ) in Xiangxi was a special combination of popular Han theatre tradition and local ritual drama tradition. It is usually held when people appealed to local deities and pleased them with songs, dancing and short theatre plays in Hmong new years. During the plays worships to deities structurally mingled with the performances. Zhang Gu-dong (   ) was a character of a popular theatre play who is famous for making impromptu comic gestures and remarks.
[83]   ,   , a Chinese saying, meaning that luck does not stay but changes its place, and that one should accept what destiny (luck) brings to him/her.
[84] San Heizi is the nickname of Yao Yao's older brother. Dufu (   ) is the highest local official in imperial order, which was replaced by Dudu (   ) as a similar character in the local government in Republic period. The 'chairman' mentioned later is the title belonging to head of Hunan province according to Provincial Autonomy movements.

near the New Year, and you are already playing your Zhang Gu-dong. The Republic has only First Lady's Pot, but no First Lady! If San Heizi became a Dudu, wouldn't it be just like *Niu Gao's Capture Yang Yao in the Water*? You are Yue Yun, he is Niu Gao, the Dudu of the Dongting Lake Navy Battalion, for both of you can row![85] '

The Shipwright said, '"A hundred-foot mansion is not built in a day"[86], why not? Tian Xingshu[87] from the Fenghuang Ting[88] was no more than a fodder vender, when his time came, he became a Viceroy. He Long[89] from Sangzhi used to be the groom of Wang Zhengya, now he is a Commander. Climbing up the thirty-mile high Bamian Mountain, one has to start from its foot. If the luck hasn't come, not a single rope in the world can catch it; if it comes, not a single door in the world can shun it away. ' The shipwright slapped his palms in front of Changshun, 'Sir Teng, if you don't believe, wait and see.'

Changshun laughed and said, 'Well then, may it be as you say, Old Bro. If my San Heizi becomes an officer, I will ask him to honor you as his counselor. It would be perfect for you to put on the Eight Trigram robe, take up the plume fan, and be Master Zhuge Wolong, sing a *Ding Jun Shan* down by Deshan at Changde Fu[90]. '

The old Shipwright cut in for a joke, 'Sing *The Empty Fortress* at Changde Fu, I can just be the sweeping guy.'[91] '

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[85] Yue Yun (   ) and Niu Gao (   ) are both characters in the legendary biography of General Yue Fei (see footnote 62).

[86]   , similar to *Rome is not built in one day*.

[87]   , 1836-1877, a Xiangxi military officer in late Qing Dynasty who was famous for his prosecution of Christian missionaries in Guizhou.

[88] See 2.3.2.

[89]   , 1896-1969, a communist marshal who was born in Xiangxi.

[90] Changde Fu (   ) is an administration division of imperial China including a large area of Hunan province around the lower stream of Yuan River (see Map 3.1), the note of division unit 'Fu' see 2.3.2. This administration unit was abolished in 1913 by the Republican government; however, Shen Congwen noted here that it was still in use by local people of Xiangxi before the Second Sino-Japanese War (before 1937).

[91] The plays *Ding Junshan* (   ), and *The Empty Fortress* (*Kong Cheng Ji*   ) are both extracted from *Sanguo Yanyi*   (*Romance of the Three Kingdoms*), a vernacular historical novel written in 14th century depicting wars and historical figures in the Three Kingdoms era at the end of the Han Dynasty (169 A.D. – 280 A.D.). Stories of the Three Kingdoms were widely spread and remained as an important oral tradition in Chinese society since 13th century. Several stories were very influential political metaphors and military exemplars which were adapted to various literary works and performances including folk theatre plays. Zhuge Liang (, 181-234, courtesy name Wolong   , lit. reclusive dragon) was a chancellor of the state of Shu Han of the Three Kingdoms, who was imagined as the most accomplished strategist and an ideal of loyalty in imperial China. These two plays tell the stories about his exceptional military strategies and excellent psychological reasoning.

Dialogue II: (Yao Yao) 'Brother, Brother, why don't you watch the drama? What are you busy at when everyone is watching?'

'What to see there? Anything but the Red-faced rushing in, the Black-faced rushing out[92], whoever unruly and bullying takes the lead!' San Heizi was standing by the rustling water, and thinking of the grievance of his family under the powerful man's pressure and extortion, his heart was burning.

Yao Yao saw right through his thoughts, and said, 'Heaven is just, and the bully won't last! In the dramas, you see, karmas always follow the deeds. There is no place to hide!'

'Karmas for the deeds, and nowhere to hide? Whatever the dramas say, the reality is different!'

The old sailor walked towards the siblings with a smile, 'San Heizi, you think it is Fu Ye coming to catch your chicken, don't you?[93]' He said to Yao Yao meanwhile, 'Yao Yao, Yao Yao, you are not watching Wang Sanjie throwing her embroidered ball to the suitors[94], but guarding the oranges by the river. Any point for a girl to be such a miser? Oi, gold and gems, who wants your oranges?'

Yao Yao knew he was only joking, so she rejoined with another, 'Manman[95], why are you here too? I see you cross your arms sitting on the bench under the stage, just like the God of Wealth, Zhao Xuantan[96]. No one called your name when they were "striking the promotion"[97] today, no wonder you are upset! If you are not, I should be upset for you. Doesn't Manman deserve such an honor?'

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[92] The red-faced usually plays as the righteous; the black-faced usually plays as the evil.

[93] A folk comedy drama; Fu Ye (   ) is a local appellation of normal gentlemen. Here the old sailor is joking at San Heizi through saying that Heizi is so eager guarding his personal properties (chicken as its metaphor) that he rather not go to watch the dramas. It is an effort of lightening the tense atmosphere caused by the unpleasant confrontation between Teng House and officers of Republic army coming from Changde Fu (see footnote 77).

[94]   , a traditional Han drama telling the love story of Wang Sanjie (lit. the third sister of House Wang), who is the third daughter of a prime minister in Tang Dynasty (618-907). Lady Wang threw the embroidered ball to a poor but brave young men Xue Ping-gui (   ) as the token of agreement of marriage. She insisted to live a hard life with him and kept her chastity while Xue was in his nineteen-year campaign towards Tang's foreign enemies. She died soon after re-uniting with her husband. Lady Wang was a well-known female figure in Han drama tradition for she set an exemplar of women's virtues in imperial Chinese society.

[95] Manman (   ), a Hmong appellation of 'foster father'.

[96]   , a Taoist god which was very popular in imperial Chinese society.

[97] Da jia guan   , the tradition of honoring special male guests in the way of wishing them promotion by appointed actors in the intervals of theatre plays.

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Dialogues like these in Shen Congwen's novels embody a chronotope involving voices which not only spoke but acted in a theatre world that stored sources of people's sentiments and happiness. Giorgio Agamben discussed the polarization of 'a rational life' in Western philosophy tradition and 'the happiness in life' which he signified with the metaphor of magic:

> That is the ultimate reason for the precept that there is only one way to achieve happiness on this earth: to believe in the divine and not to aspire to reach it (there is an ironic variation of this in a conversation between Franz Kafka and Gustav Janouch, when Kafka affirms that there is plenty of hope - but not for us). This apparently ascetic thesis becomes intelligible only if we understand the meaning of this 'not for us'. It means not that happiness is reserved only for others (happiness is, precisely, for us) but that it awaits us only at the point where it was not destined for us. That is: happiness can be ours only through magic (Agamben 2007, 21).

Agamben further developed this theme with Kafka's self-contained design of magic world, in which magic is summoned with the hidden original names of things. In this process, the relations between things and their names in the real world collapse (Ibid., 22-23); this symbolizes a different ethic from the rational morality.

Shen Congwen described a magic world in which people's names and acts are replaced with the theatrical imageries which are replete with wisdom and logic belonging to historical/legendary time-spaces. And these names showed real power in indicating people's sentiments and regulating their moral pursuits in everyday life. In

the theatrical play *The Biography of Yue Fei* people find a poetic justice in the Buddhist reincarnation after General Yue Fei and his son Yue Yun are murdered by treacherous court officers; they also find a symbolization of fairness and bravery ideally embodied by the character Yue Yun.

In the two dialogues above, name replacements and theatrical discourses are what Bakhtin termed *heteroglossia* ('other-languagedness') (Bakhtin 1981, 263). The ideologies inherent in the theatrical languages constitute the concepts of justice, integrity, mercy and mythical imagination in traditional Chinese society. These discourses were composed with aesthetic perception to gain their 'otherness' in a realistic literary style. The default expectation for 'people's language (voice)' in early modern Chinese literature is to be realistic and contrary to rhetorics in classical styles. In Shen Congwen's novels, when theatrical discourses are circulated and comprehended, a 'world of magic' appears in which meaning and paradigms are reached through 'other-languagedness'. Studies of the 'natural histories of discourse' have focused on entextualization and contextualization as processes involving the production, circulation, and movement of 'texts' across time and space (Silverstein and Urban 1996; Perrino 2007). By name replacements and theatrical contexts implanting Shen Congwen aligned the textual-chronotopes of drama-texts with the conversation event, and therefore implied an 'interactional history' (Perrino 2007, 242), or 'interdiscursivity' in Silverstein's sense (Silverstein 2005), which added diversified layers to common Xiangxi people's intellectual world. He tried to resurrect the social images which were encircled with coherent and independent rules deriving from multiple traditions in Chinese history; and through these images the meaning of life and morality are felt by people in Xiangxi. This seemingly fabled and fictive literary design, however, also incorporated the historical chronotopes to the modernized novel framework.

3.2.2.2 The Efficacious Ritual Dramas

As discussed in the last section, Han dramas in Xiangxi usually used classical

Chinese and were played in normal recreational environments, including festivals and funerals. The local Hmong ritual dramas, however, were relatively functional: that they were played in Hmong language and in specially set-up places, and when people gave their prayers and reverence to the local mountain and river deities. Hmong rituals most frequently appearing in both Shen Congwen's writings and my interviewee's recollections are healing rituals: wizards recreated gods with singing and dancing so the sick or the wretched be helped by the gods. In reality, when healing rituals succeeded, more redeeming rituals for thanking gods would be held, and among which the sacrifice ritual was mostly applied.

Jane E. Harrison (1850-1928) did a thorough analysis in the early 20th century about the evolution of art and theatrical play forms from folk religious rituals (Harrison 2008[1913]). Harrison derives her conclusions from ancient epics or folklores. The researches taken by Chinese classical scholars on traditional Chinese theatres seldom included countryside areas or discussed the relationships between the Han dramas and indigenous ritual dramas. As an innovative contribution, Harrison's theory is employed by Tanaka Issei in his research on the spontaneous ritual dramas in rural South China. Two research themes in Tanaka's studies are very relevant here: firstly, how certain narrative and performative forms in sacrifice rituals evolved into drama performances; and secondly, how this type of drama performances served the ideology of local clans (Tanaka 2011).

Richard Schechner pointed out that the nature of 'transformation process' (the state of a society/people changes after the ritual, e.g. war – alliance, youth-adult) in most tribal rituals known to ethnographers were identical to theatrical transformations; and if one considers the ecological cycles, history and geography of those societies, rituals both symbolized and participated in the process of pivotal transformation (or actualized the social changes) just as theatre did – both mirrored and set models for societies in all ages (Schechner 2003, 109–122). Schechner's point is very helpful in the consideration of what characteristics in Xiangxi Hmong rituals contribute to the development of aesthetic local dramas from Hmong rituals. Among the relevant characteristics I shall look into two aspects which influenced Shen Congwen most: the

verbal art and the symbolism of the wizard.

The appreciation and expectation of verbal art that a wizard or a ritual drama presumably possess derives from the song tradition in traditional Xiangxi Hmong society, including singing and the social encounters in the singing events. The song events were played when one or more families/clans needed to invite wizards to thank gods for healing or ridding calamities; they were also regularly played in the 'Summer Festival' (liuyue jie   ) as prayers to ancestors and a testimony to the continuance of the power of wizards.[98] The song tradition of Xiangxi Hmong was carried out in various forms. The improvised antiphonal singing exchanged between guests and hosts, potential lovers, specific song competitors, and even both sides of legal disputes are most popular. There are certain routines in each type of these confrontations, yet the actual effect of performance and audience's reaction mainly depend on singers' witty responses in improvised composing. Some pairs of young lovers achieved their marriage through finding equal wisdom and similar understanding in exchanging songs, which they did not only in the Summer Festival, but also in Spring Festival, markets set up according to Hmong calendar, and secret rendezvous; it was no less common to find judicial dialogs exchanged in carefully organized lyrics, in which situation citing lines of ancient lays that contain folk righteousness would always improve people's impression on the arguments; welcoming songs composed according to characteristics of the guests reflect the hosts' generosity and kindness; and there are endless song competitions between clans and villages which dealt with the delicate inter-village relationships.

Charles O. Frake discussed how the display of verbal art influenced or settled litigation and other social relationships in Subanun society in Philippines, and stated the mechanism of the function of verbal art in specific social encounters:

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[98] Xiangxi Hmong people call this festival *'Liu Yue Liu'* (, lit. June 6th) for it is celebrated in big assembly on June 6th in the Hmong calendar. Song competitions among Hmong clans, public antiphonal singing, drum dancing and tall swing playing etc. are usually seen on the festival. People also highly expect the ritual drama plays on the day, since it is the time for wizards to pray for a year's harvesting and for the new disciples of the wizards to firstly test their skill. People told me that they anxiously watched young disciples climbing up the ladder built up by blades and walked over charcoal fire every year. Lots of these disciples would fail the tests and hurt themselves, which would leave them few opportunities to get over and continue their training. I only met one of these performances, which were taken by highly experienced old wizards in a public celebration; and I did not have a chance to observe the young disciples' tests. If what I saw was true, these wizards' training would lead to the exceptional functions of human body. Most people believe that this is the spirit inherited by wizards.

Assumption of decision-making roles in legal, economic, and ecological domains depends not on acquisition of an office but on continuing demonstration of one's ability to make decisions within the context of social encounters. This ability in turn depends on the amount of deference one can evoke from other participants in the encounter.

Since there are no juro-political offices in Subanun society, a legal case is not only a contest between litigants, but also one between persons attempting to assume a role of legal authority by settling the case. Success in effecting legal decisions depends on achieving a commanding role in the encounter and on debating effectively from that position (Frake 1964, 129–131).

Frake's work is very inspiring in considering why the aesthetic aspect is referential in the song tradition – and therefore in wizards' performances – in Xiangxi Hmong communities. Below is a record of an actual lawsuit chanting of the Xiangxi Hmong. The songs were collected and transcribed into modern Mandarin by Professor Long Xing-wu (　　) of Jishou University in Xiangxi in the late 1970s (S. Long, Long, and Shi 2004, 70–72).

Pleading words for marital conflict among the Xiangxi Hmong (fragment)

The husband's family:
We invited the wise seniors, the adult arbitrators. We invited morning-Venus from the South, even-Venus from the North. We invited the elders in charge of the *Zhai*, gentry of the locality. We summoned the land on the hills, trees by the land. You are like bamboos growing higher than the mountains, trees higher than the hills. Take the tailor's scissors to curtail the edges, take the carpenter's axe to level the pointed wood. You shall straighten the bent, downsize the lump, shorten the high, full up the hollow.

Do not let the tongs and drums clamour, do not spread into others' ears.

(Singing)

The girl from his house,
does no housework in the day, does not behave in the night
she crosses the mountain to cut grass, she passes the hill to pluck bamboo shoots.
she climbs the hill to blow Muye, she goes down to whistle,
she sings in the deep wildness, she talks in the creek and jungle,
she offends the ancestors, she crosses the elders,
without consciousness, loses all proper forms
flimsy morality, thick facial skin
their girl bails water without filling the bucket, cuts firewood without stuffing her basket;
the young man wishes to be a quilt, but the girl wouldn't be the blanket,
the young man wishes to be the tile, but the girl wouldn't be the rafter,

indulging her temper at home, gossiping others outside,

staying here today, another house tomorrow,

when she goes to a market or dating fair, leaving at midnight, returning only by the cockcrow;

she offends the ancestors, she crosses the parents.

Their girl is like an ox traversing the right road, a nag derailing from trail…

And so, we will wait for your judgment.

(End of Song)

The Lilao[99]:

Your two houses spend money and rice to ask for our arbitration, we three Lilaos, by the heaven and by the audience, shall speak firstly a few righteous words:

(Singing)

you clamour, you fight, you have too much blood in the bodies.

Maggots in your salt cans, blisters on your bodies, we shall let out your pus, we shall let out your purulent blood.

one heals after ridding the purulent blood, one walks after letting the pus. You buy reason with silver, you purchase wise words with gold.

like turning over a gould, like overturning a plate. Speak out the reasons, laying out the causes.

one stands with reason, one falls lacking reason…

only on party of two wins, always one side of two loses,

Eat the goat's head if you have head, eat the goat's tail if you have tail.

high and low never in a line, win and lose never come in one…

Let this be settled by sunset, let this be concluded by moonset.

(End of Song)

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[99] The Lilao institution: the Lilao emerged during the Hmong's transition into a patriarch tribal society, and the Hmong call them Li Ga Lo or Li A Lo. The Lilao title was originally held by a prestigious senior of the house, but later became a hereditary office of the first son of the primary sect. Lilao enjoys a wide range of authority. His main duty is to mediate and arbitrate all sorts of disputes concerning inter-clan or intra-clan matrimony, family, possession and land. He is invited to resolute every conflict that arises within the clan or between clans, and to settle every important matter of his own clan. During Ming and Qing dynasties (14th to 19th centuries), Lilao and Zhailao (leader of a region resided by Hmong clans sharing blood relation and congregating as a Zhai) often cooperated to mediate and arbitrate various disputes if the conflicts were complicated. In the Republic times, Lilao's power and function dwindled, and was gradually replaced by Zhailao. His office was later limited to the settlement of intra-clan disputes. No payment is due to the Lilao for his arbitration, but only a dinner provided by the person that invited him to arbitrate (S. Long, Long, and Shi 2004).

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From this text one can observe how morality and justice were felt throughout the metaphoric re-narratives of everyday happenings in the poetic expression by the Xiangxi Hmong. Similarly, a wizard's mastery of verbal art is crucial in the effect/people's feelings of healing rituals. Concluding what I heard back from my interviewees, a Xiangxi Hmong wizard generally possesses capacities/powers belonging to a typical shaman in the definition given by Mircea Eliade (1907-1986):

> …the shaman is also a magician and medicine man; he is believed to cure, like all doctors, and to perform miracles of the fakir type, like all magicians, whether

primitive or modern. But beyond this, he is a psychopomp, and he may also be priest, mystic, and poet (Eliade 2004 [1951], 4).

Among all characteristics, the one of a 'psychopomp' is best known to common Xiangxi people; and in the healing rituals a Xiangxi Hmong wizard would act like a communicator between common people and gods. In Shen Congwen's writings, however, the referential aesthetic aspect in Xiangxi Hmong ritual dramas is strengthened and related to the symbolism of Hmong wizards. He described how people experience collective revels in ritual dances and flowery singings by wizards as a part of ritual dramas honoring and pleasing Nuo deities (see footnote 59). In his literary imageries the wizards are personalization of aesthetic ideal and incarnated divinity; and they are sources of 'happiness gained by magic destined for people' in Agamben's sense. Shen Congwen's short novel *The Love of Wizard* (*Shenwu Zhi Ai* 《   》) (Shen 2002a, Vol. 9) has lengthy description of the beauty of the wizard, and of the prettiest young Hmong girls who wish to dedicate their love and bodies to him. Shen did not describe the wizard's appearance, but used the words like 'he is as brave as a lion and as humble as a sheep…it is like the whole spirit of the mountains and all the delicacy of the rivers aggregate on him…and those fair words for telling splendour are all created for depicting him.' Shen then described how people reached the peak of their obsession when they watch the wizard singing and dancing for people's health and happiness. In most of his literary works, the ideal image of young man has a shadow of this wizard.

Looking back to Harrison and Schechner's discussion of ritual and theatre, Shen Congwen's writings have literally 'changed' Hmong healing rituals into theatrical entertainments which emphasize aesthetic aspect and verbal arts in the extreme[100]. And again, Shen Congwen brought the ritual chronotope embodying recurrent seasonal cycles/people's life cycles and the time-space of his characters' social

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[100] Hereby I should declare that I have no stance to surmise the parallel process happening in actual Xiangxi Hmong rituals and ritual dramas (though apparently there was one deduced from the interviews), given that Hmong ritual dramas are rarely performed nowadays (I did not have a chance to observe one during the time of my fieldwork) and the interview samples in regard to this topic are not abundant.

encounters into 'coevalness' (cf. Silverstein 2005). Therefore he strategically presented the foregone folk religions in the form of a unique artistic element in Early Modern Chinese literature and again proved the richness (in histories and traditions) and complexity of the chronotopic relationships in the framework of modernized Chinese novel.

3.2.3 The Timeless Present

The above two sections discuss the chronotopes in Shen Congwen's novels with reference to classical literary archetypes and mythical/poetic institutions which demonstrate the richness and complexity of chronotopes. In his most realistic literary creation, he employed a third mode of time-space which shows a different understanding of history by Xiangxi people.

Shen Congwen's story *A Small Scenery of Qian*[101] (*Qian Xiao Jing*) describes two merchantmen and a shopkeeper in two days on a march (Shen 2002a, Vol. 7). Lying in the deep mountains in South-western China, where it drizzles day after day, the government-built trading routes are covered with mud and moss, trees are half hidden in the mists, even the ravens look darker and gloomier because of hunger. The brave merchantmen, thoughtless of their fates, set out for trading after the New Year celebration. They seldom rest during the year and spend most of their lives solving emergent difficulties on the way. Generation after generation, the merchantmen's families carried on this mobile business. In *A Small Scenery of Qian* Shen Congwen deliberately omits the specific time, place and aims of his characters, thus the two days look like any day during a year and the story a scene picked out from the eternal cycle of time in any part of the South-western trading network.

Patterson Giersch employs 'process geography' methodologies (Michaud 2010) to reconstruct trading networks through the mountains and river valleys of nineteenth-

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[101] Qian , classical appellation of Guizhou, which is a province connecting middle China and borderlands such as Yunnan Provinces and Tibet, thus is an important joint area of South-western trading network in imperial and Early Modern China.

and early twentieth-century Inner Asia's Kham, East Asia's Sichuan and Yunnan Provinces, and Southeast Asia. In doing so, he reveals how South-western China was connected to increasingly thriving global transformations which led to complex networks imbricated with state and local power. The study focuses on the mobile merchant troupes which circuit between several marketing centers on Inner Asia highlands and the merchantmen from various geographical areas who managed to communicate and trade in spite of political and cultural differentiations (Giersch 2006; Giersch 2010). These merchantmen were groups of people who broke through the geographical divisions set by different state or political regimes and constantly confronted regional powers of diverse cultural backgrounds (Giersch 2012). In *A Small Scenery of Qian*, they appear as normal businessmen, headless bandits or ex-convicts in suspicious gangs and unrecognizable military uniforms. Since imperial period, Xiangxi's trading routes spread westwards through Guizhou and thereby connected to the South-western trading networks. In the Early Modern period, the most important merchandise were weapons and opium (Zhang 2002). The mobile merchants also traded in stable markets set up in the Hmong borders in Xiangxi (see 2.3.2), and their trading routes were channels linking Hmong communities in Xiangxi to those in Guizhou who are their kin. As calmly and unsentimentally described in *A Small Scenery of Qian*, it is very normal for a Hmong youth carrying back to Guizhou the heads of his kinsmen executed for taking part in the Xiangxi anti-imperial revolutions (as part of the 1911 Revolution in Hunan).

There are lots of historical causalities embedded in the scenes witnessed by Shen Congwen in Guizhou; however, he refused critical realism which was generally taken by his contemporaries. As the story flows on, various scenes of daily confrontations on the way are told with very precise details: pale skin of their feet steeping in the muddy water, stinky and coarse textile on beds of little inns, stories provoked by the wolf howling and prediction of the value of a tiger skin associated with the roaring in midnight, etc. The business men are content with a little meat and a glass of wine and seem to forget all the hardships in the world; otherwise, they can also spend one evening out of the thousands watching the sunset and having only sweet potatoes with

a lot of gossips. These are what the two businessmen – left behind by a large merchant troupe – have in a lonely inn in the deserted part of the trading route. The shopkeeper participates in their chats and fills his conversations with several lies. He says that his son is out for business and only comes back to see him in the New Year; and he usually goes to the nearby town buying meat and wine for his guests, which does not happen on that night because of rain. His life sounds very common and does not cause any suspicion. In fact his son died in the New Year and he has not talked with anyone since then. The reason of his lying is unclear, and it seems he is bearing the pain and solitude of losing his last relative and only son by keeping an absolutely normal pace of life. And he is found dead after the night by the two businessmen.

Shen Congwen probably witnessed a lot more violence and suffering in his early life than any other writer or intellectual of his time. But narratives of these never enter his writing as central events. He consciously depicted people's lives with a seemingly unchangeable daily lives of the ordinary folk; and in several cases he pointed out that the most precious virtues of people are found in their undertaking of whatever befell them (Shen 1997[1932]). When the merchant troupes see the Hmong youths carry heads of their kinsmen in a basket and tread the muddy route with empty eyes, they step aside and say nothing; and soon memories of the ones they love flow out and permeate the gentle words. The even fairer narratives are all about the trivial daily deeds of their children and wives.

Wang Der-wei analyzed the history of violence in modern Chinese literature since the 19th century, in which he used the theme of 'beheading' to mark the differentiation of literary styles of different writers. According to him, the most representative figure of the May Fourth Movement, also the most renowned modern Chinese writer Lu Xun (1881-1936) repeatedly emphasized how the 'beheading games' of Japanese soldiers and other savage acts they did on Chinese people provoked his desire of using vernacular Chinese literature as a powerful weapon to evict the moral creeds imbued by classical Chinese philosophical writing which caused the weakness inside people. And the imageries of death and execution served as the climax of his literary creation and the central events of his realistic criticism.

Shen Congwen, having seen a lot more beheading executions of Hmong men, consciously avoided their occupying of the narrative center and diluted the nervous and horrific atmosphere surrounding the scenes of beheading by shifting the narratives to the mental activities of the spectators (D. Wang 1992). It is worth noting here that Lu Xun's personal 'incorporated history' (Kroskrity 2009) draws a sharp contrast to Shen Congwen's. Lu Xun grew up in Eastern China where a literary 'field' was set up by local elite intellectuals since the 17th century (see 1.2); and he absorbed the newest ideologies through a mass of domestic and imported literary works. Later he had further study in Japan and witnessed the relentless foreign invasions in both physical and ideological dimensions. It is imaginable that he would easily take on a nationalist ideology and transform it into his literary creation and revolutionary activities in the political and cultural center of Early Modern China. His attacks towards the interior of Chinese literature tradition were with aims of constructing a lively outward nationalist ideology. Shen Congwen, on the contrary, was brought up in a complex geographical region and witnessed violence mostly within a stratified Chinese society. For several years he even joined the local military force and took part in the routine army activities including confiscating personal properties of local gentries and prosecuting bandits to protect public security. These experiences enable him to think of the meaning of a normal Chinese life in a completely different manner. Foreign invasion was one of the external stresses on the people in Xiangxi, yet probably not the most oppressive one. And the meaning and virtue of a 'normal Chinese life' was a synthesis which is exposed when all the external stresses were understood and undertaken with a powerful and consistent internal logic.

In Shen Congwen's novel *Three Men and a Woman* (*Sange Nanren He Yige Nüren*) (Shen 2002a, Vol. 8), watching beheading executions becomes a regular recreation of two lonely soldiers who temporarily station in a little town with their army. According to the historical record, beheading execution was abolished in 1908 by the late Qing government (D. Wang 1992). However, the remoteness, the frequent bandit assault, and half-modernized military institutions put Xiangxi in a consistent 'state of exception (Ausnahmezustand)'

(Agamben 1998) in which this ancient penalty remained as a symbol of absolute power (Foucault 1999). As usual, Shen Congwen shifted the focusing point of narrative from beheading to scenes like light mist in sunset, children's games and mental activities of the prisoner's relatives. And the events soon become part of the daily happenings in the two young soldiers' lives. The peaceful life in the little town aroused sadness in hearts of the young soldiers who are perplexed by spending their youth drifting from place to place without seeing any future. And they can never be really accepted by any of these stationary sites because of their army identity. And the utopian-like and timeless town life is filled with an unfortunate and gloomy atmosphere in Shen Congwen's narratives, implying a treacherous and unpredictable fate waiting for these powerless figures. The two soldiers make friend with a young shopkeeper and all three fall in love with a general's daughter. They are happy to have a glimpse of her day after day and are secretly cursing all of her possible suitors. The narrative 'I' has a literary 'doubling' (Welsh 1990) – his army companion – who is more obsessed by the mystic beauty hidden in the local life. According to Karl Miller's theory, 'doubling' has always been a fundamental technique of narrative, a way of displaying the inward world of a fictional character. It is closely linked to psychological themes, discussion of which is usually framed according to Freudian analyses of narcissism (Miller 1985). 'The double' has a much stronger tendency of escaping from his realistic identity and has all sorts of surreal ideas of an imaginary living in the wild. From the descriptions of 'the double' one can find the wildest dreams Shen Congwen once had in his younger and unstable years. This temporary peaceful and relaxing life was suddenly confronted by a shocking revulsion: the lady committed suicide by swallowing gold. The narrative 'I' put his companion, who believes in a superstitious way of rescuing gold-swallowers, under control with great effort. Meanwhile, the shopkeeper did what 'the double' would like to do: digging out the corpse and sleeping with 'her' in a cave hidden in deep mountains. The shop keeper is sentenced a death penalty which he accepted with a smile. Soon after this small disturbance the town returns to its normal state and the army set out again. This event was presented in Shen Congwen's writing in the way as if it represents various

strange but understandable happenings in the life of this little town without causing any changes or being endowed with any ethical meaning. The story is developed in a mild rhythm which washed away the disturbing aspects of an eerie plot and accommodated the fates of these ordinary people with a noticeable sympathy.

Shen Congwen's realistic writing contains a chronotope which embodies a perception of history of the common Xiangxi people. The 'history' draws upon memories of a regular and ordinary everyday life, rather than the judgments and retrospection of certain historical events. Silverstein pointed out that interdiscursivity plays on the logic of the chronotope:

> Token-sourced interdiscursivity implies a reconstruction of a specific, historically contingent communicative event as an entextualization/contextualization structure, complete in all its essentials as drawn upon (Silverstein 2005, 6).

By presenting this chronotope Shen Congwen restored Xiangxi people's possible dreams and desires in their original states without any overwhelming judgment or criticism. The level of token differentiates Shen Congwen from mainstream new intellectual elites; for the everyday time-space configuration is placed in the centre and becomes the source of meaning. I shall develop this point and relate it to Shen Congwen's overall literary pursuit in the coming section.

3.3 The 'Mimesis' of Shen Congwen's Literature

For understanding Shen Congwen's literary pursuit, it is very helpful to consider two concepts brought up by Erich Auerbach (1892-1957) to elucidate how literature represents reality: 'foreground' and 'background'. Auerbach's conception of foreground is 'a local and temporal present which is absolute', which he used to describe the variations of a story itself. Auerbach's 'background' was used to explain how the 'the depths of time and the depths of life' was represented in literature (Auerbach 2003[1946]).[102] Shen Congwen drew upon abundant images of classical

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[102] Auerbach built up his historical analysis on the comparison between how life is represented in Homeric poetry and in the Bible, which was later criticized as holding a strong anti-rhetorical stance. Egbert J. Bakker proposed

literary archetypes, theatrical entertainments and recurrent everyday life to build a timeline of Xiangxi people's life which was (in his literary imagination) relatively static and distanced from the Early Modern Chinese social environments. Shen Congwen also demonstrated an art of symbolic voicing as he animated social identities in 'people's histories' including a mythical past, theatrical tradition, shamanism, etc. The structure of his novel contains a good story ('foreground') and an uncertain historical environment exerting influence on how the story is going ('background'), both of which were created according to his experience, knowledge and practice (imagining an idealized future and showing it to readers). To understand this, one needs to look into 'people's voice' in Shen Congwen's writings which is rich in histories and traditions incorporating all sorts of value systems including realism, Confucian, Taoism, Buddhism and other folk beliefs.

Taking for example the texts cited in the section 3.2, by strategically aligning mythical, theatrical and historic chronotopes with the social encounters in his literary creation, Shen Congwen 'foregrounded' the timeless everyday life of common Xiangxi people and 'backgrounded' the different histories and traditions understood and felt by them. Silverstein stated that 'voices' are authorized in discursive usage through the process in which discursive regimes come into being and take hold of the subjectivities of populaces, which is clearly shown in the literary voices in modern realistic novels:

> In effect, the practical discursive activity 'literally' realizable in this nationalist stance (of footing or voice) is always already presupposed and resupposable as the shared orientational norm of agentive consciousness. Even 'fiction' is encompassed in this chronotope, since figurative discourse can be experienced as a development out of the other, 'expository' types by presupposing that the chronotopic parameters of the latter are the basis of tropically transformed denotational effect...(Silverstein 2000, 123).

As Bakhtin and Williams pointed out, one of the great achievements of what we may term 'nationalist' literary imagination as a kind of collective self-representation is

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that Aubach's reading of Homeric poetry partially ignored the nature of the text as a written record of an oral tradition which must have a performative emergency (Bakker 1999; Bakker 1997; Lord 1991). I personally agree with Bakker's criticism, but I think that the concepts of 'foreground' and 'background' are still very powerful tools of analyzing how life is represented in literature in other literary genres.

the so-called realist novel…In such a work, the presupposed perspectival jumble of interests in the society realistically portrayed finds its narrative linguistic trope in the figurated 'polyphony' of voicing that depends on using linguistic 'heteroglossia' to tropic advantage. The 'realistic' novel is…a swatch of plausible reality that it both represents and gives voice to (Ibid., 119, 126).

Inspired by Silverstein's discussion, one can observe this process in Shen Congwen's literary creation shown by the chronotopic relationship of the discourses. The 'heteroglossia' created by the various (mythical, theatrical, historical) speech forms composed the 'narrative linguistic trope' of the multi-layered 'people's voice' in his writings, which differs from the default people's voice shaped by the mainstream nationalist ideology in Early Modern China. What differentiates Shen Congwen from other early modern Chinese elite writers (who also focused on country life and people's power following the then popular communist ideology) could also be elucidated by his 'mimesis'. Here an example from the history of art can be borrowed for explanation.
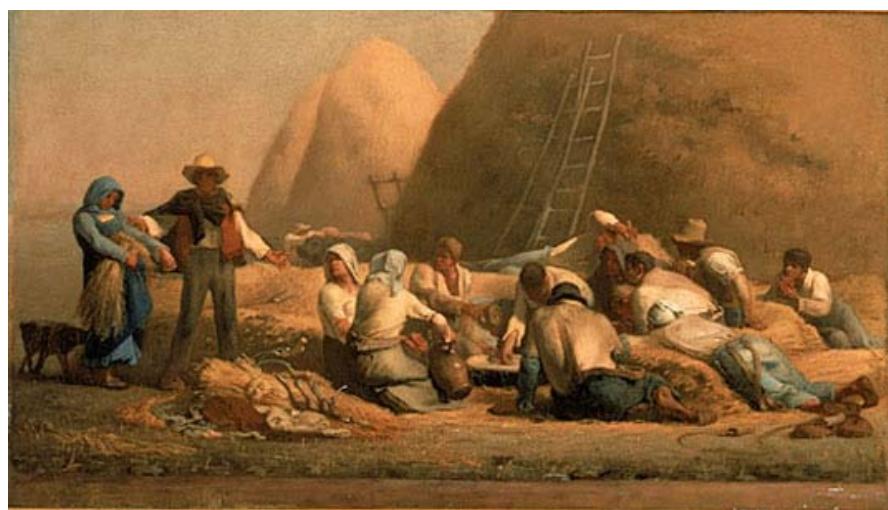
Figure 3.5 *Harvest Resting* (1850-1853) by Jean-François Millet (1814-1875)

This painting was once called *'Ruth and Boaz'* when it was conceived by the French realist and naturalist painter Jean-François Millet. The woman holding the hay is Ruth – a common woman in a daily scene in a French countryside and at the same time the alluded biblical image who dedicated her love and obligation without

reservation. It is well known that most of Millet's paintings seem to be overlaid with a dim halo, which later greatly influenced Van Gogh's artistic creation. In this painting, the halo that symbolizes the dignity of farmers is compared to a holy light in the painter's original intention. The French farmers in this scene take on the possibility to interconvert with biblical images. It also indicates the possibility of replicating the Bible in everyday life in a time that 'the highest' (Auerbach 2003[1946]) was settled in canon. The openness of this possibility, in its special historical background, gave ordinary French farmers and rural lives indelible dignity and meaning.

This is a great example of the relationship between 'foreground' (the scene of country life and the halo) and 'background' (the Biblical tradition). Shen Congwen also created the depth of time and the depth of life for his characters with a 'halo' of symbolic discourses. The relationship between his story and the ideal model of unique Chinese morality tokens his endeavor to grant these country people with spontaneous and eternal virtues. And he believed these virtues could be the source when one wishes to find true humanity in China (Shen 1997[1932]) which would give people faith and power to believe in goodness wherever the ongoing social chaos may lead to.

Shen Congwen made a great effort to practice and went through several years' experiments to finally reach his seemingly naturalist and realistic style. He was probably the only one in the elite literary circle who grew up in the most violent and military environment and personally experienced the constant killing in army and the beheading games performed by the local chieftains or warlords in Xiangxi. Yet he chose an idyll style to document the life of Xiangxi partly from reality but more from his imagination and memory. In the 1950s, he was reproached by the most famous and influential literati who had close relationship with the communist leaders in the newly founded nation. The accusation was mainly on his ambiguous attitudes towards religious rituals and local traditions which were believed to be 'feudalistic and superstitious' (feng jian mi xin   [103]). The most severe and typical reproach

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[103] 'Feudalistic and superstitious' (   ) is a set phase proposed by Mao Tse-tung (1893-1976) which implies the imperial and religious institutions that the 'New Democratic Revolution' goes against (Mao 1969, 667).

was in an article titled *Repelling Retroactive Literature and Art* (*Chi Fandong Wenyi*

) written by Kuo mo-jo.[104] This article, because of the author's influential status both in political and literary circles, caused a lot of public pressure on Shen Congwen who twice tried to commit suicide under the stress in March 1949. Since 1950, Shen Congwen stopped writing and devoted himself into the research of ancient Chinese costume (Shen 2002b[1981]). It is quite obvious that if he used what he personally experienced to accuse 'imperial legacy' as a delegate of the suffering lower class, life would be much easier for him both in Early Modern Period and in the harsher political environment in the first years of People's Republic of China. He did have a choice, and even his most beloved wife knew and complained about it. She could not understand why Shen Congwen did not embrace the new regime and new life which ended the wars and placed 'people' on the altar. Yet she finally realized that what her husband continuously referred to as 'lost' was truly lost forever in 1949, when she was about to complete the compilation of his posthumous works decades later (Shen 1996a).

What was lost in 1949? Hannah Arendt (1906-1975) said in her philosophical analysis on the historical development of the situation of human existence:

Man cannot be free if he does not know that he is subject to necessity, because his freedom is always won in his never wholly successful attempts to liberate himself from necessity (Arendt 1998[1958], 121).

Communism believes that it can ultimately fulfill all the necessities, which, according to Arendt, equals the elimination of personal freedom. But whether Shen Congwen was convinced by communist propaganda of this ultimate fulfillment or held a pessimistic stance that communism could not answer for human necessity is difficult to judge, given the fact that Shen Congwen never directly commented on the mainstream ideologies[105]. In either situation, his pursuit is thawed. Shen Congwen believed that he had been restoring the dreams and desires of people to their original

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[104] Published in 1948 on *Dazhong Wenyi Congkan* (   ), Hong Kong. Kuo mo-jo   , 1892-1978, poet, historian and a notorious government mouthpiece who steadily advocated Chairman Mao's doctrines.
[105] Though his personal attitudes could be implied from his criticism on contemporary literary works, his political stance remained conservative and ambiguous.

state (by demonstrating a multi-layered 'people's voice' with people's conception of history and people's memories of traditions), but then the fountain of his literary inspiration was dry, since communism had become the solely accepted voice in all literary genres.

What Shen Congwen deeply desired to grasp was probably the 'one perfect lyric poetry'(Heidegger 2004[1959]) that 'might have been' (Shen 1992[1931-1938]). In his retrospection of his ten years' of writing, from *Border Town* to the unfinished *Long River*, from writing on the 'luminous temple' to 'men in the shaking world', Shen Congwen wrote down his confession in an imaginary dialogue with an abstract figure named 'coincidence' (Shen 1984, 274–296):

> You are escaping from the destiny. All struggles are vain. Your pen brings you back to the Past, but it is merely writing stories in lyrics. What awaits you is in fact the Future. Do you dare to look inside yourself and ask, what is the cause of the tenderness under your pen? Do you dare to recognize and scrutinize yourself, whether you are satisfied with those trivial loss and gain, joy and sorrow?
> ("   ,   ,   ,   ,
>
>   ")

> Success and happiness are either the pursuit of the wise or the hope of the mundane, but they have nothing to do with me. I am only expected by death. Before my death, I may do something to preserve the conflict and harmonization of emotions when these coincidences immerse into the life of a countryman. I have to compose a hymn for the god when god is falling apart. I have to write meticulously the last lyric when the solemn and elegant poems of the classical eras lose their luster and significance.
> ("   ,
>   ,   ,   ,
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>   ")

Both Shen Congwen's personal account and his student's memoir show that he was greatly influenced by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832, *Faust* was repeatedly mentioned in Shen Congwen's prose and literary criticism), Lev Tolstoy

(1828-1910), Ivan S. Turgenev (1818-1883), and Homeric poetries[106]. Rooted in some of these borrowed literary imaginations, Shen Congwen's confession showed his determination to demonstrate 'divinity' (shen xing神性) through depicting ideal human behaviour and human life. Some of his dramatic writing directly mentioned this intention: for example, in *Lung Chu* (　　　　) women consider their physical desires towards Prince Lung Chu to be a love of divine grace (Prince Lung Chu's beauty is the representative of idealness in 'nature'); in *Love of the Wizard* (*Shen Wu Zhi Ai*　　　　　) people compared the dance of the physically ideal wizard to the theatre of god and aspired to be attached to him (Shen 2002a, Vol. 5, 9). Half a century earlier, Rossetti used to express a very similar idea, which was best represented by his painting and sonnet themed on the Semite goddess Astarte (Ἀστάρτη).

Figure 3.6 *Astarte Syriaca* (1877) by Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882)

And from her neck's inclining flower-stem lean
Love-Freighted lips and absolute eyes that wean
The pulse of hearts to the spheres' dominant tune.'　（*Astarte Syriaca*, 1877）

For Rossetti, the 'only poetry' (Heidegger 2004[1959]) was coherent with the ideal image. The sonnet accommodates the whole imagery: flower-stem (neck)

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[106] See for example Shen Congwen's *Abstract Lyricism* (*Chouxiang De Shuqing*　　　　　, 1931) (Shen 1996b) and *Water and Cloud* (*Shui Yun*　　　, 1931-1937) (Shen 1984), his student Wang Zengqi's (　　, 1920-1997) *Mr. Shen Congwen in National Southwestern Associated University* (*Shen Congwen Xiansheng Zai Xinan Lianda*　　　　　　　, 1986) (Z. Wang 2005).

transported the liquid of life to the flower (head, and the ideal image in nature), and the pulse of hearts connects to the ultimate order ('dominant tune') in the universe. He observed the great mystery of life from the image 'shining woman'. Shen Congwen, quoting Goethe's 'Verweile doch, du bist so schön' ('Stay a while, you are so beautiful',   Shen Congwen's original Chinese text: "   ") (von Goethe 1978[1828-1829]), gave out what he would sacrifice his life and his soul for: the 'coincidence'[107] that 'might have been'. In the last part of his confession, this intention was stabilized in his creative motif of *Long River*:

> With Me lost, God is known, and His solemnity. A patch of yellow sunshine on the wall, groves of flowers in the yard, a lone star in the sky; things that everyone has a chance to see, they shall be approached with calmness and common sense. To me, however, their sheen and hues seem to take on divinity, and become a miracle, because they are embedded into my memory and impression at the same second with the life of a coincidence. Not only these things that plunge into my life with the coincidences are divine, but when I chew on the delicate link between their own beings and the universe, alone and silent, I can also feel life's gravitas in all natural scenes. A religious feeling first revealed by the beauty and love of beings and reared in tranquility cannot be reduced. Part of my life, thereby, dissolves in the belief in the whole nature. Such a simple emotion may be innate to all creatures in the harmony of their lives, and must be inalienable in higher life forms. Yet when it occurs to man, great religions, or all delicate and sincere art works, are born. As for me, I write nothing, and I say nothing. My senses experienced all those exquisite feelings in a new education…I write stories with this emotion which sees from the innermost, and so is *Long River* written.'
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[107] Jeffrey Kinkley considers this 'coincidence' was an actual female who had a love affair with Shen Congwen when he was teaching in National Southwestern Associated University while his wife was in Peking (Kinkley 1987). Here I propose that whether or not Shen Congwen was indicating an actual figure, this writing shows his introspection both on the meaning of his writing and on the meaning of his life.

"   ) (Shen 2002a, Vol. 17)

This material implicitly indicated how Shen Congwen's 'mimesis' was created –
in other words – how the manifested literary representations index different
connections of his/his people's personhood to universe. The textual chronotopes
juxtapose the worlds both the writer and the people he tried to represent dwelled, and
became models for and of personhood. Shen Congwen created his own literary
representations by employing different speech forms (differentiated by different
chronotopes) to record the multi-layered 'people's voice' as, according to his
confession, a personal honor to the 'divinity' (the ideal of his literary pursuit). In the
discursive construction and circulation of these literary representations over time and
through social space, they became models for evaluations of personhood and social
types of common people in Early Modern China.

Chapter 4   Linguistic Landscape in Shen Congwen's Works and Linguistic Differentiation in Xiangxi

In youth I left, now old, I return carefree,
My tongue unchanged, my hair thinner be.
Unknown am I to the boys and girls I meet,
Smiling they ask, "Sir, from whence come thee?"
(·   :   ; *Returning Home*, by He Zhi-zhang,
744 A.D., Translated by Andrew W.F. Wong)[108]

4.1 Shen Congwen and His 'Minor Literature'

Shen Congwen frequently quoted the first two lines of this poem when he talked about his accent and affection for the languages in Xiangxi in his late years. It also showed his sorrow of losing the world of poetic inspiration, constructed with imageries of his hometown and expressed through his mother tongue ('unknown to the children there' as the He Zhi-zhang put it). As indicated in Chapter 3, Shen Congwen innovatively orchestrated chronotopic 'heteroglossia' to form a literary genre which realistically restored the presupposed interests of Chinese grassroots. This chapter looks into the speech forms of different linguistic registers and their interactions in Shen Congwen's works as well as in the actual Xiangxi society. The linguistic differentiation taking place both in Shen Congwen's authorial intention and Xiangxi's social reality have been discussed. The connection of these two semiotic processes can be analyzed with Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995) and Pierre-Félix Guattari's (1930-1992) concept of 'minor literature'.

According to Deleuze and Guattari, a minor literature is not a literature written in minor languages, but rather a minority constructed within a major language (Deleuze

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[108]   http://chinesepoemsinenglish.blogspot.ie/2011/04/he-zhizhang-coming-home.html, last retrieved in 30/08/2013.

and Guattari 1986[1976], 16). With Franz Kafka (1883-1924) as their central example, Deleuze and Guattari proposed that within a 'minor literature', the writing-machine operates when the writer assumes 'a sort of stranger within his own language' (Ibid., 26). They argued further that the concept of a 'people', when invoked by subordinate groups or those aligned with them, always refers to a minority, whatever its numerical power might be; and within the writing-machine, 'there is nothing that is major or revolutionary except the minor' (Ibid., 26). This process of 'becoming-minor' (*devenir-mineur*) within the writing-machine of a 'minor literature' involves making the plurilingualism within one's own language resound. The philosophical concept 'becoming minor', according to Deleuze and Guattari's further development, has become an element of modern democratic thought (Guattari and Deleuze 1987 [1980]). Therefore, its appeal in literature is naturally political:

> In major literatures, in contrast, the individual concern (familial, marital, and so on) joins with other no less individual concerns, the social milieu serving as a mere environment or a background… Minor literature is completely different; its cramped space forces each individual intrigue to connect immediately to politics. The individual concern thus becomes all the more necessary, indispensable, magnified, because a whole other story is vibrating within it (Deleuze and Guattari 1986 [1976], 17).

Because of the 'plurilingual' characteristic of the language of 'minor literature', Deleuze and Guattari pointed out 'the first characteristic of a minor literature in any case is that in it language is affected with a high coefficient of deterritorialization' (Ibid., 16). Judith Butler, commenting on the trial on the dispute over the ownership of Kafka's unpublished manuscripts in 2011, put forward the question:

> So is there a first language here? And can it be argued that even the formal German in which Kafka writes – what Arendt called 'purest' German – bears the signs of someone entering the language from its outside (Butler 2011, 4)?

It is argued that Kafka's perfection of written German (according to what Butler said 'a long and curious tradition of praise for Kafka's "pure" German') brought new intensity into his expression which signifies a fundamentally different ideology from Germanic epical or romanticist traditions. Butler claims that 'the writing conveys

precisely a set of events that are bound together neither through probable cause nor logical induction' (Ibid., 5). The ideology comes from something pervasive in Kafka's writing which is elusive yet omnipresent. This is in keeping with Agamben's comment on Kafka's *Before the Law* (*Vor dem Gesetz*) which points out that Law appears as Nothingness, it 'does not signify, yet still affirms itself by the fact that it is in force' (Agamben 1998, 51). And the intensity of Kafka's expression comes from the contrast between the aridness of language (grammatically perfect) and the density of symbolic usages in it. More importantly, Butler pointed out that the influence of Kafka's Jewish identity on his literary creation does not indicate any consistent opinion on Zionism. In many circumstances the horrific feeling in his works is conveyed through absolutely neutral narratives in succinct German depicting unimaginable violence. The 'violence' is about the tension caused both by the spread of German nationalist movement and Zionist ideals. Here it touches the third characteristic of 'minor literature' discussed by Deleuze and Guattari: its collective, enunciative value. Because the concept of 'becoming minor' is constructed by an expression of cultural otherness, the collectiveness of 'culture' ensured the collective value of 'minor literature'. Specifically in Kafka's writing, the ideology of something 'does not signify yet affirms itself' is usually referring to the Jewish messiah (Agamben 1998; Butler 2011):

The Messiah will come only when he is no longer necessary; he will come only on the day after his arrival; he will come, not on the last day, but at the very last (The Coming of the Messiah [Das Kommen des Messias], 1946).

According to Hannah Arendt, the 'assimilated' Prague Jews were too alienated from not only Zionism and German nationalist ideology, but from all sorts of established collective identities. And what Kafka was summoning was an imaginary 'people' living in the shadow of The Messiah. Arendt developed this opinion through making popular a quote from Kafka's letters: *'My people,'* wrote *Kafka*, *'provided that I have one'* (Arendt 1968). This collective or national consciousness is 'often inactive in external life and always in the process of break-down' (Deleuze and

Guattari 1986, 17), literature finds itself positively charged with the role and function of the collective, and even revolutionary, enunciation.

Deleuze and Guattari's conception of 'minor literature' emphasizes linguistic ideologies of author within one written language, given that each linguistic ideology is connected with a different aspect of author's 'personal agency' (Kroskrity 2009): mythic, symbolist, referential, phatic, and poetic aspects (Jakobson 1960). Corresponding to Kafka's linguistic ideologies, they show his attitudes towards these languages and the cultures behind them: Hebrew as a mythic language connected with Zionism; Yiddish as a symbolic language signifying 'a nomadic movement of deterritorialization that reworks German language' (Deleuze and Guattari 1986, 24); bureaucratic and commercial German as a referential language; Czech as a vernacular language of a rural milieu where Prague Jews came from; and literary German - especially in the Romanticist literature tradition - which not only conveys the aesthetic aspect of literary works but also projects the linguistic ideal of Romanticism in a fixed form of speech (Jakobson 1960, 359; Deleuze and Guattari 1986, 25). These linguistic ideologies were embedded in Kafka's 'pure' German writing and shape his style in their specific ways.

Back to the social environment of Shen Congwen's literary creation, in Early Modern period the breakdown of Qing Dynasty accentuated anti-imperial revolutions everywhere. An ideology of deterritorialization took root in both politics and culture. Specifically in Xiangxi, it is reflected politically in the repercussion of the 1911 Revolution, Provincial Autonomy Movements of Hunan Province and warlords' separatist regimes (see 2.2.1). All sorts of complex cultural refigurations took place following the abolition of imperial examination, the establishments of new educational institutions supported by both the local elites and the Republic government, and the construction of a unitary Hmong ethnic group within Xiangxi's main political regime with modernized moral and religious bases (see 2.3.3). Shen Congwen insisted on the designation 'rural person' (xiangxia ren   ) as his true colors at many occasions, like this one in his literary review:

133

I am actually a countryman. I'm not proud of this appellation; neither do I depreciate it. A countryman has an ineradicable characteristic, a unique pattern of love, hatred, sorrow and happiness which differs greatly from a city dweller! He is conservative, stubborn, fond of his land, not exactly lack of canniness but certainly not deceitful. He is usually very serious about everything, probably too serious and looks a bit silly (Shen 2002, Vol. 17).

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Though Shen Congwen drew upon modern Mandarin and wrote in typical modern prose, this hidden minority is embodied in his use of the lexical and stylistic resources of Xiangxi languages. His literary discourses and registers are in keeping with his self-signified identity: 'rural person' (of Xiangxi). Considering the fact that the New Cultural Movement and modern Chinese revolutions greatly polarized cities and countryside through unequal allocation of educational and industrial resources, it can be broadly concluded that mainstream nationalist ideology was developed in cities both literally and politically (Yeh 1990). Even the Communist movements and revolutions which advocated the rights of 'the proletariat' (the underclass) originally established their bases of operation in big cities and spread their influences from educational centers (Yeh 2000). In this context, Shen Congwen's self-signified identity and his literary discourses granted his literary works a natural characteristic of 'deterritorialization' (Deleuze and Guattari 1986, 16). Here by deterritorialization I mean decontextualizing a set of relationships embodying mainstream nationalist ideology, and rendered them more inclusive. The linguistic ideologies in Shen Congwen's works and his self definition of 'rural person' are most revealing of this process. Shen Congwen was fascinated by Chu culture and constantly traced the mythical aspects of his literary characters to Chu mythology and folklores (see 3.2.1). The 'deterritorialization' of standard national language he used for literary creation has a second aspect: to depart from Han-centered cultures in order to look for his own community.

In this historical context, the specific situation of Shen Congwen in relation to languages in Xiangxi can be concluded as these:

(1) The vernacular language of Fenghuang residents is South Western Mandarin, which is also the vehicular language in which daily commercial and bureaucratic activities are carried out. This is no doubt the mother tongue of Shen Congwen.

(2) Shen Congwen originally became literate through Classical Chinese; and from philosophical and poetic works in Classical Chinese he firstly learnt how to organize his poetic expressions. It is worth noting here that the influence of Vernacular Chinese Movement was not fulfilled immediately in contemporary compositions. Most official documents in Early Modern China (including most denunciations of Classical Chinese) were still written in Classical Chinese (in style and grammar, though employing simplified characters). Compared to the radical elite intellectuals growing up in big cities or in eminent families South of Yangtze River (see discussions of 'literary field' in 1.2), Shen Congwen's literary language preserved more traces of Classical Chinese.

(3) Shen Congwen's novels, however, are typical modern novels as they are related to various speech genres (oral and literary) and reconstructed in 'polyphony' (Bakhtin 1981; Coleman 1999, 320). In Silverstein's analysis, the modern novel is one of the main tools for propagating the ideologies behind standardized national languages (Silverstein 2000, 126). Shen Congwen left Xiangxi and learnt to write under the influence of New Cultural Movement when he was a little older than twenty. After that his social and literary life was conducted with standard Modern Mandarin, though he always felt out of place in this language. Yet he was part of the movement and his literary creations contributed to this movement.

(4) Hunan Province is the habitat of an ancient Han Chinese dialect – the Xiang dialect – which is still in use in its ancient and secondary forms in parts of Eastern and Southern Hunan. It is generally believed that Xiang is an heir to the Chu speech, in which the original sources of the mythical *Songs of the South* were loaded. Shen Congwen held a special affection towards the homeland of Xiang (see 3.2.1). Again, in Deleuze and Guattari's words, it is inferred that the collectivity in Shen Congwen's 'minor literature' comes from his imagination of the ancient Chu state and the collective identity of Chu people.

(5) Last but not the least, the folk registers which are directly dialogized within his Modern Mandarin narratives – which become his most prominent literary style – come from the Hmong language. Shen Congwen's maternal blood lineage connects him to the Hmong, and his family advocated Hmong participation in the anti-imperial revolution, for which several of his Hmong relatives were beheaded. Besides these social relations, Shen Congwen grew up with the beautiful Hmong folk songs and perplexing Hmong myths and folk tales. They left everlasting aesthetic impacts on his literary creation.

(6) The Gan dialect of Han Chinese might also have entered Shen Congwen's life in the way of Tu-jia memorial worships; and it is worth noting that Gan language is related to the Xiangxi Tusi family who claimed themselves from Gan-speaking areas and exerted an important influence on the indigenous culture.

For analyzing the speech forms of these different linguistic registers and their interactions in Shen Congwen's literary works, also for analyzing the linguistic differentiation in Xiangxi, it is necessary to briefly introduce the historical and geographical backgrounds of the languages mentioned above.

4.2 An Introduction to Languages in relation to Shen Congwen

4.2.1 Han (Chinese) Dialects in Hunan Province

The Han dialects in Hunan Province can be approximately divided into four: Old Xiang, New Xiang, South-western Mandarin and Gan. The first dialect is Mandarin. It covers the largest territory, including 29 counties throughout the Yuan and Li Basins (see Map 4.1); the second is New Xiang. It has the smallest territory, covering no more than Changsha, the capital city and its surrounding six or seven counties, and mostly spoken in the major cities and towns (see Map 4.1); the third is Old Xiang. It is spoken in the upstream River Xiang and River Zi, including areas spread from east of Xiangtan to South of Huaihua (see Map 4.1); the fourth is Quasi-Gan, used in the narrow stripe in eastern Hunan bordering Jiangxi Province (Zhou and You 1985).

Map 4.1 Major Cities and Areas in Hunan Province[109]

Gan pushes westward into Hunan along the whole Hunan-Jiangxi borderline (see Map 4.2), but the intensity of distribution is higher in the northern part than the southern part, and it follows two main paths into inland Hunan. Immigrants are the crucial determinant in dialectal geography, and immigrants from Jiangxi constitute the majority of immigrants in Hunan. According to the evidence provided by the local gazettes and family genealogies, Jiangxi immigrants take up 56.5% of the total immigrant population, and their number decreases from east to west. The quasi-Gan dialect area of Hunan naturally borders Jiangxi, and Gan characteristics are stronger in the north of the area. It results from the immigration farming policy promoted by the Ming and Qing Dynasties, which brought a great number of population from Jiangxi into Hunan (J. Qu 2010). Gan was also claimed to be the mother tongue of local chieftain family (Tusi, a local hereditary chieftainship from 9th to 18th century see 2.3.1). The local chieftainship had a long and lasting influence on Xiangxi indigenous cultures. Tu-jia ethnic group was sinicized much earlier and in a deeper

degree than other non-Han ethnic groups in Xiangxi[110]. Its shamanist rituals were originally sacrifice rituals worshiping their god ancestor 'King of the Eight Tribes' (Babu Dawang　　　　). However, according to my interviews, several towns distributed along the western borderline of Xiangxi adopted the Tusi ancestor as object of their worships; they called him 'The Grand Peng Ancestor' (Penggong shizu 　　　　　) because the surname of the chieftain family is Peng. And in these places Tu-jia people constructed the memorial temples for The Grand Peng Ancestor, stopped sacrifice rituals and began their daily worships in the temples, which is a typical Han custom[111].

There are two principal passages through which Mandarin gradually influenced Hunan. One starts from Hubei Province, and encroaches southwards into River Yuan and River Li downstream, as well as River Xiang and River Zi downstream (see Map 4.1). The influence of Mandarin becomes less in various degrees from north to south. River Yuan and River Li downstream is completely Mandarinized, whereas River Yuan midstream speaks Old Xiang which preserves the ancient initial voiced consonants. Old Xiang once spoken in River Xiang and River Zi downstream, however, evolved into New Xiang under Mandarin pressure (see Map 4.1). The second passage comes from Guangxi. It bifurcates into two branches: one goes north into County Jing, merging with the trend from Hubei and Mandarinized the dialects in County Jing and Xinhuang. The other infiltrates Hunan from the West, contacting and fusing with Old Xiang and Gan, and therefore forms the picture of mixed coexistence of dialects (Zhou and You 1985).

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[110] The Tu-jia language has almost disappeared today; and Shen Congwen never mentioned this language and Tu-jia culture even some of his lineage were people of this ethnic group.

[111] And whenever I said my name in Xiangxi, most people would immediately refer my surname to their Tusi even the chieftainship was abandoned two centuries ago. Interestingly, according to the pedigree of Peng clan in my hometown (in South-eastern China) recorded in lots of family books, the Peng ancestors of my hometown did come from Jiangxi. This unconsciously mentioned fact greatly improved my situation in my fieldwork.

Map 4.2 Distribution of the Seven Major Han Dialects in Modern Geographical Divisions[112]

The Mandarin area of Hunan coincides with the Basins of River Yuan and River Li. There is a profound historical background for this overlapping of dialectal distribution, natural geography and administrative region. After the Yongjia Upheaval (307-313 A.D.) of West Jing Dynasty, the dialect(s) brought by the northern refugees into Hunan formed the first Mandarin presence. The Liu-Song regime of the South Song Dynasties (420-479 A.D.) extensively resettled immigrants from Shanxi and Henan Provinces in nowadays Hubei and Hunan, and Mandarin began to permeate into River Yuan and River Li downstream. The An Lushan Rebellion (755-763 A.D.) forced more northerners into the area of Changde, Hunan, and they went further south than their predecessors, reaching the basins of River Xiang and River Zi in a much larger population, so that the registered households rose tenfold from Jingzhou (nowadays Jiangling) to Wuling (nowadays Changde). Such immense scale of immigration led to the replacement of the endemic dialects in River Yuan and River

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[112] http://www.chineseschoolnederland.nl/studeerkamer/chinese.php, last retrieved at August 30th 2013.

Li downstream by Mandarin, and Changde has been a Mandarin region ever since. The later shift of administrative divisions on the one hand brought Changde Mandarin and Hubei Mandarin closer, on the other enabled Mandarin spread further upstream along River Yuan. According to *Song Shi Dili Zhi* 《   ·   》 (the *Geography* volume of *The History of Song Dynasty*), 'The first year of Shaoxing (1131 A.D.), the office of Anfu Shi was set up for the Jing-Hubei Lu, whose seat is located at Ding Zhou, and he governs the Zhous of Ding, Li, Chen, Yuan and Jing' (,

). The whole River Yuan Basin was incorporated into the Jing-Hubei Lu centred at Jiangling in the Sone Dynasty, and this decisively enhanced the development of River Yuan mid- and upstream. After the two or three centuries of development in Song Dynasty, Mandarin has steadily advanced upstream and was firmly established in the whole River Yuan and River Li Basins.

As early as the Spring and Autumn Period and Warring State Period (770-221 B.C.), this place was already inhabited by peoples known as *Man*, *Pu* and *Ba* (

). In the 37th year of King Wu of the Chu State (704 B.C.), the Chu power crossed the Yangtze River and expanded southwards, 'invading the Pu land and possessing it' (   )[113], into the mid- and downstream of River Yuan. The Chu people not only brought with them advanced technique and culture, but also the Chu speech, predecessor of the Xiang dialect. Chu already diverged from the mainstream Hua-Xia Chinese in the Spring and Autumn Period and Warring State Period (Chappell 2004, 11). Mencius (c. 372-289 B.C., famous Confucian philosopher in ancient China) belittled Xu Xing as 'a bird-tongued Southern barbarian'(   ) as Xu Xing, a Chu, spoke an unintelligible dialect[114]. *Zuo Zhuan*[115]- *Xuan Gong Si Nian*   ·   (*Zuo Zhuan - Xuan Gong Year Fourth*) explains a Chu king's name and says 'in Chu "to milk" is *gu* and "tiger" is *wutu*' ("   ,   ", Old Chinese *qa-laa, perhaps standing for *qhlaa),

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[113] Quoted from *Shi Ji - Chu Shijia*   ·   (*Records of the Grand Historian: Ancient Houses of Chu State*).

[114] Quoted from Volume 5 of *Mencius* (*Mengzi Juan Wu*   ), a collection of anecdotes and conversations of Mencius compiled during Warring State Period (4th century B.C.).

[115] *Zuo Zhuan* (   ) is a narrative chronicle commentary of the history of Spring and Autumn Period (722-468 B.C.) which was compiled in late Spring and Autumn Period or Warring State Period (,   468-221 B.C.).

which is perhaps non-Sinitic; but other compelling evidence exists which suggests that Chu is a Chinese dialect which differs from the indigenous languages. A Chu prince in about 528 B.C. heard the song of an indigenous boatman but could not understand, and asked his interpreter to translate it into Chu, and recorded both the translation, which is apparently Chinese, and the transliteration of the song with Chinese script (Zhengzhang 1991). In 218 B.C., Emperor Qin the First (Qin shi huang

) waged a campaign against the South Yue People (Nanyue ren   )[116]; the Qin soldiers advanced into Xiangxi and some settled there. The Su Family (Su xing

) in Yuanling County (an area encircled by Xiangxi, Zhangjiajie and Changde, see Map 4.1), as told by the *Hunan Gazetteers* compiled in 1885[117], descend from the Qin immigrants. Ma Yuan, the Fubo General[118] of Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220 A.D.), gathered two hundred thousand soldiers to conquer the Wuling (area around Changde, see Map 4.1) Barbarians, but his army was quashed and scattered all around[119]. Members of the Hua-Xia Chinese from central China who entered Xiangxi in the Qin and Han Dynasties (3rd century B.C. to 3rd century A.D.) amalgamated with the local Chu and some of the *Man* and *Yue* indigenous peoples, and became the Han in Xiangxi who spoke an early form of Xiang dialect of Chinese. For more than a thousand years from Qin Dynasty to Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127 A.D.) Xiang had been the main dialect spoken by the Xiangxi Han people. The dialect used in Chenxi and Luxi (east of Xiangxi, included in what Shen Congwen called Chenzhou, an imperial geographical division) remains as Old Xiang even until today (Zhou and You 1985).

Wei Yuan's *Sheng Wu Ji*[120] records that, when the Ting (see 2.3.2) was first

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[116] Indigenous residents of the ancient kingdom in Southern Ancient China that consisted of parts of the modern Guangdong, Guangxi, Yunnan and northern Vietnam.

[117] *Guangxu Ben Hunan Tong Zhi - Miao Fang Wu*   (*Gazetteers of Hunan compiled in the Guangxu Period, 1875-1908: Defense against the Hmong V*).

[118] Fubo jiangjun Ma Yuan   , 14 B.C. – 49 A.D., commonly known by his official title General Fubo (, lit. general who calms the waves), famous for conquering several non-Han barbarians in North-western and Southern areas of imperial China.

[119] *Hou Han Shu - Nan Man Zhuan*   ·   (*Treatise on the Southern Barbarians* in *Book of the Latter Han*).

[120] Wei Yuan (, 1794-1857), famous enlightened scholar in late Qing Dynasty who advocated reformations of imperial educational and military institutions. His *Sheng Wu Ji* (, lit. records of the sacred campaigns) is a narrative chronicle documenting most 18th century campaigns of Qing government towards the non-Han ethnic groups in imperial China.

established, 'Yongsui Ting[121] was hanging in the den of the Hmong. Surrounding the fortress every land that belonged to the Hmong was taken by the (Han) subjects within a decade' (   ). The mass immigration of the 'guest people' (ke min   , what Xiangxi indigenous people call the Han) reinforced the communication between the indigenous people and the Han; and as Han culture soon took root in these multi-ethnic areas, the minority ethnic groups began to be sinicized to various extents. Most of Xiangxi and part of Yuanling County (east of Xiangxi) have been area of South-western Mandarin since 19th century (J. Qu 2010).

4.2.2 Introduction to the Hmong language

It is difficult to establish what exactly the term *Hmong* denotes, either as an ethnonym or as a language designation. Linguistically it is safer to say that there is a language continuum stretching through Southern China into Vietnam, Laos and Thailand, where neighboring groups are more or less mutually intelligible, but as the distance between them increases, intelligibility declines, sometimes so drastically as to form completely separate languages only to be reckoned as belonging to the same language family after comparing their cognates (see Map 4.3). And in this part of the world where mountains, gorges, rivers and forests predominate, distance in map could often be very tricky for travelers and for linguists who may find his language map is similarly full of discontinuous boundaries. Centuries of migration and isolation also help create numerous enclaves and exclaves, or 'language islands', sometimes as small as a village with a few hundred speakers.

Though 'Hmong' has often been used to designate a 'core' language group which has three 'dialects' and the speakers of which constitute the majority of the Hmong, certain languages, such as Bunu or Pa-Hng (Hmongic languages of Yao ethnic group), might not be more diverse from their neighboring Hmong dialect than one Hmong

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[121] Western Xiangxi, close to Xiangxi's borderline connecting to Guizhou (see Map 4.1).

dialect is from another. Usually the whole continuum is termed 'the Hmongic languages'. Together with the related Mien languages (another continuum distributed in roughly the same area), they form the so-called Hmong-Mien languages, with about eight to ten million users worldwide, including a substantial population living in the United States. But the relationship of the Hmong-Mien languages to the Sino-Tibetan language family is not altogether clear. Some, especially Chinese scholars, tend to confirm their genetic link, whereas other linguists categorize them as belonging to Austro-Asiatic, Tai-Kadai or forming a family of its own and insist that the similarities between Hmong-Mien and Sino-Tibetan are due to very early borrowing and long history of contact. The most powerful argument against a Sino-Tibetan membership is that the reconstructed Proto-Hmong-Mien does not show cognates with Sino-Tibetan languages in numerals under four and basic personal pronouns. There has not been a widely-accepted consensus yet (Benedict 1972; Ma 2003).

Ethnographically the *Minzu* (lit. ethnic group,   ) that the Chinese government recognizes as *Miao* cannot be equated with the Hmongic speakers, and not even all those who call themselves Hmong, Hmu, Amo etc. cognate names speak a Hmongic language. Miao is certainly a Sinicised form of their self-designation deriving from the stem *hmo(n)*, cognate to the Mien autonym *mjen* (Ma 2003). Some Miao people speak Chinese, Mien, Dai or mixed languages, and some Hmongic speakers, out of one reason or another, are labeled as the Yao (mostly Mien-speaking) or other ethnic groups in China, Vietnam and other countries. Even within those Hmongic speakers, traditional, tribal or territorial identity sometimes overrides the ethnic identity constructed on linguistic and cultural similarities, thus some of them may disagree on being regarded as the Miao or the Hmong.

The core Hmong language in China consists of three quite distinct dialects, so different from one another that four systems of Romanization have to be devised in order to spell them: (1) Chuanqiandian Dialect, or West Hmong, Hmoob, which contains further many divergent sub-dialects. It is spoken by about 2.6 million people, mainly from the White, Green and Flowery Miao as traditionally distinguished by their dress colors. These speakers live in Guizhou, Sichuan and Yunnan provinces of

China, and also form the majorities among American Hmong immigrants. (2) Xiangxi Dialect, or Eastern Hmong, Dut Xongb, spoken by about a million, mainly 'Red Miao' living in west Hunan. (3) Qiandong Dialect, or Central Hmong, Hveb Hmub, spoken by about 2 millions, who are mainly 'Black Miao' and live in eastern Guizhou. A fourth system is for the Diandongbei Dialect, now generally regarded as a sub-dialect of Chuanqiandian Dialect, but with its distinctive completes set of voiced stops (F. Wang 1985).

Map 4.3 Distribution of Hmong-Mien Language Family in China and Southeast Asia[122]

Despite the differences between dialects, the Hmong language does display common characteristics. In phonology, all dialects have affricates, uvular stops, unvoiced nasals and unvoiced laterals. Most dialects have prenasalized stops (mp, ndz etc.) and consonant clusters formed by a labial stop and [l] or [z̩] ([pl], [mpʻz̩] etc.). All dialects distinguish between aspirated and unaspirated stops ([p] and [pʻ], some

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dialects have voiced or even voiced aspirated stops), and allow only two allophones [n] and [ŋ] for consonantal Auslaut, similar to modern Mandarin. None of the dialect distinguishes vowel length and tight/loose vowels (the tight vowels are sometimes called 'creaky sound' in English, which is a feature in many Tibetan-Burmese languages). But all dialects employ tones to distinguish meanings, and their tonal systems are systematically corresponding to each other (F. Wang 1985).

The simple words in Hmong language are predominantly monosyllabic, and it could be called an isolating language in that it does not inflect or agglutinate words to express case, tense, mood, etc. It distinguishes singular, dual and plural, first, second and third persons in pronouns. The adjective and demonstrative usually follow the noun, and prepositions rather than postpositions are used to express temporal or spatial relationships. Verbs can complement other verbs and adjectives to make meanings more specific. Usage of measure words is pervasive. In fact, Hmong grammar is not dissimilar to those of most modern Sino-Tibetan languages and could be best described with their terminologies (Ma 2003).

In Hmong legends and songs there are accounts of an ancient writing system and literacy, but so far this is not confirmed. In Leigongshan, East Guizhou, fragments of a stele were found in the 1980s, on which there are some unidentified scripts, seemingly adapted from Chinese characters. Leigongshan has been Hmong homeland for centuries, and the inscription in folk memory has been said to be ancient Hmong scripts. Chengbu town (in South-western Hunan) has recently discovered a quantity of stone inscriptions which are quite probably the writing system once used in neighbouring area during the Yongzheng Hmong Rebellion (Yongzheng miaomin qiyi   , late 1730s) and banned by the Manchurian emperor after the riot had been suppressed. It is still hard to determine how old was the system and how widely it had been used, and knowledge of this writing system unfortunately has not survived at all.

We know no Hmong people who had committed their language to writing thereafter until the end of the 19th century, when several unsuccessful creations by native scholars and missionaries had been attempted. In 1905, British Methodist

missionary Sam Pollard, with the help of local Hmong and Han Christians, invented an abugida spelling system for the Diandongbei sub-dialect spoken in his mission area. It is based on earlier Methodist creation of the Cree language in North America. The script has been used to translate the New Testament and other religious texts, and has soon gained popularity among not only the Hmong, but also Lisu ethnic group and other peoples in the region. A revised version of Pollard script is still in use today (Foggin and Carrier 2009). Chinese government has also created four sets of Latin alphabet scripts for different dialects in the 1950s, but its promotion and utilization have been intermittent due to political, financial and other situations.

4.3 The Linguistic Landscape in Shen Congwen's Works

The above introductions of Hunan languages have shown the important correspondence of each language (dialect) and its symbolic geography (Irvine and Gal 2000). Shen Congwen's realistic style includes accurate details, among which are a large number of place names (mostly political units of Qing Dynasty) and descriptions of geographical features of each place. His attitude towards these languages is also bound with his historical/literary imaginations of their distributing areas. In areas where Old Xiang was preserved, Shen Congwen indulged his fascination with Chu Culture; and along his several voyages back to Xiangxi from eastern Hunan he had complex sentiments towards different places and the inhabitants. Broadly speaking, he depreciated the social registers related to modern urban life in New Xiang-speaking major towns and cities. As his boat trips went westwards, he found himself more and more in touch with the 'primitive and healthy humanities' preserved in the countryside in the form of vibrant rural languages/dialects (Shen 2002, Vol. 11). He used South-western Mandarin to decorate his neutral narratives in standard modern Mandarin which emphasizes a sense of locality (Daruva 2011; Appadurai 1996). The languages which he endowed with deepest sentiments must be classical Chinese and Hmong language. There is a very important differentiation in Shen Congwen's

literary genres: he expressed his ethical concerns and political ideologies in novels through an orchestration of chronotopic 'heteroglossia' (see 3.2); his novels store a great number of vivid or even bold conversations including some discourses of indigenous languages/dialects. In his prose writings, however, he writes in a Classical Chinese poetic style, composing odes to people or places of Xiangxi in his memory. Pieces of Hmong usually entered his novels in the form of folk songs, direct quotation of local idioms or words denoting specific social relations. And they are usually associated with scenes of Hmong wilderness. His novelistic narratives or conversations between his protagonists sometimes code-switch to classical Chinese when the aesthetic ideal embedded in the circumstance is so sublime that it is obliged to be expressed through classical poetry or words connoting a poetic meaning. On the contrary, his prose language is more textual and stylized comparing to his creative use of rich oral resources in novelistic language. This is also in keeping with the classical Chinese poetics which emphasizes the use of rhetorical patterns.

4.3.1 'New Life' and Daily Life

Shen Congwen sought 'deterritorialization' of modern standard Mandarin; and his major novel *Long River* (*Chang He*   ) (Shen 2002, Vol. 10) was an attempt to do this satirically. In it Shen Congwen drew upon a genre of satiric theatrical plays lines and brought it into the framework of modern Chinese novel. There is also a distinct feature in this novel, that all utterances of masters and city dwellers are quoted or vaguely and ironically referred to; on the contrary, the utterances of underclass are written in full. In a scene of *Long River* there is a discussion of rumors about a commissioner's visit to the countryside and 'New Life' in a series of conversations between an old sailor, two passengers and a middle-aged woman. The New Life Movement (Xin shenghuo yundong   ) was initiated by

Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek[123] in 1934, which aimed to build up a morality for the Republic of China which was ailed by corruption and opium addiction. It rejected individualism and Western democratic values as well as opposed to socialism and communism (Schoppa 1977). However, the complicated historical and political background of importing New Life Movement to Xiangxi includes an aim of expelling forces of the local warlords through reorganizing local armies and sending them separately to the frontline of the Second Sino-Japanese War. This is a strategy of consolidating nation-wide military forces for the use of the Republican government. The vacancy left by local stationary army was filled with the KMT constabulary (Guomindang baoan dui　　　　　) – a district military force akin to the police. What the characters say about the rising power of 'Bao Zhang' is only comprehensible in the specific context of Xiangxi in this movement. Though *Long River* was unfinished, it can be speculated that the main storyline is the conflict between the constabulary and the prominent local families in Xiangxi. These conversations show multifarious linguistic ideologies towards imported vocabulary and political slogans.

The scene begins in a serene autumn day, when two passengers take a rest before an ancestral temple under the charge of an old sailor and have a chat. The middle-aged woman participates in the conversations later on her way to the country market place.

> [Passenger 1]: '…there really was a commissioner coming down to the countryside. Our Bao Zhang[124] struke a gong to notify people, that whoever

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[123] Chiang Kai-shek (　　　, 1887-1975), leader of Kuomintang (KMT, 　　　, Chinese National Party), and thus the military and political leader in mainland China from 1925 to 1949. He chaired National Military Commission (Guomin zhengfu junshi weiyuanhui 　　　　　　　　　) with the title 'Generalissimo' since 1938 and the short form 'Gimo' became his popular title.

[124] Baozhang 　　, the official of a single unit in the Baojia system – baojia 　　, a community-based system of law enforcement and civil control aiming at reducing the central government's reliance on mercenaries, which was in use in different forms in different areas of imperial China since the 11th century. The leaders of the regional community were authorized to collect taxes and maintain military and civil projects (Ch'ü 2005[1937]; Ch'ü 2003[1947]). The Baojia system was abolished in early years of the Republic, but in some places local warlords or chieftains retained similar systems. In those places Bao Zhang was holding additional posts such as headman of local military forces belonging to the Republic Government (Minguo bingdui 　　　　) and headmaster of local

grows a big radish should bring it to the commissioner. If the commissioner sees it, he might just take the radish into the town and award the grower, real-gold award, lots of money! '

[Passenger 2]: 'Then what?'

[P1]: 'Then the Bao Zhang invited the commissioner to dinner, and the commissioner said he learned how to grow vegetables in the university. Those who were present the dinner were asked to contribute a bunch of eight hundred copper coins each, fourteen bunches in total to pay for the dinner, four dry dishes and four soup dishes, plus a premier stew.'

[P2]: 'After the dinner, the commissioner took some vegetable seeds with him, and seized seven or eight fat yellowish hens for further research and hanged them on the sedan pole, and left in the sedan chair. I don't know what happened afterwards.'

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   The whole conversation is mainly a transcription of the local Han dialect, namely South-western Mandarin. But the 'commissioner' (weiyuan   ), 'university' (daxuetang   ) and 'research' (yanjiu   ) belong to the imported vocabulary of modern standard Mandarin. Their lexical meanings are ironically used and distorted. Coleman points out that the word can be a niche of decontextualization, quoting Silverstein:

> Silverstein (1979) notes that the word, as the largest decontextualizable unit of language, is a natural focus for 'secondary rationalization', in which pragmatic meaning (the perceived residue or effect of language use in context) is projected onto lexical structure (Coleman 1999, 293).

   Here 'the commissioner' is implicated to be ignorant enough to consider something very normal in the countryside, such as a big radish, as an exotic thing. And the 'university' teaches its students how to grow vegetables – the most basic skill

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modernized schools. Like the town master or county governor, Bao Zhang had a triple role combining political, military and cultural aspects (Li 1986).

of a countryman, which dissolves all the possible significances of such an institution. And then what 'research' refers to is even worse: it refers to extorting the countrymen's properties in the name of study. In the following conversations, 'the commissioner' incarnates the greediness and tyranny of city bureaucracy. It does not specifically refer to any particular person, but rather to a symbolic figure who is the possible contact or boss of their Bao Zhang – the local despot.

The old sailor who sits nearby joins the conversation which further satirises city dwellers:

> [S]: 'I saw the commissioner pass my place in a sedan chair, and there was really someone shouldering a basket of radish and a dozen fat hens. There were two hams as well, which must be a gift from the County Governor. They were sitting here eating radish, and he said, "Your governor is a nice man, he works hard without complaint, like a parent caring for his people." And he was speaking Mandarin. He also said, "Your place has good sack (soil), so that the radish grows big without a hollow, and tastes wonderful!" The muddy guy carrying the hens then asked the commissioner, "What sack and rag did you say? Is it the shit? " No reply. The commissioner said 'sack', sack his dumbass who knows nothing!'
>
> [P1]: 'The commissioner has magic. He carries with him lots of glass bottles; wherever he goes, he grabs some earth, puts it into the bottles and shakes gently. When he is asked, "Commissioner, what is this for? Is this the 'sack'? For making kerosene? For preparing medicine? " And the commissioner will smile and answer, "Yes, yes, I am bring it back to pronounce (analyze) it." "Do you have a telescope?" "I use the danger-scope (microscope)." I guess it must be the electric mirror thing, you know, invented by the foreigners.'
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The muddy guy who was made to carry the trophies of the commissioner did not understand the word 'soil' (turang   ) in modern standard Mandarin, and

considered it to be 'sack' (tunang   ), which is in local dialect similar to the pronunciation of 'shit'. The old sailor does not understand this neologism either but makes fun on 'sack' in a homely cliché (his dumbass, ta ge niang   ). The first passenger also mistakes the word 'analyze' (huayan   ) in modern standard Mandarin for the word 'pronounce' (huanian   ) in local dialect, and goes on to mention 'telescope' (qianli jing   ). When the commissioner corrected the word by saying 'microscope' (xianwei jing   ) the one who the passenger quotes understood it as 'danger-scope' (xianwei jing   ) which has exactly the same pronunciation in local dialect. And the first passenger concludes that the commissioner was mentioning something he heard about with distortion: the electric mirror (dianguang jing   ). This conversation ends with a small paragraph of narrative:

> The folks simultaneously sighed at the unfathomable problem, but suddenly all turned into laughter. It was really so weird and funny. Although the Republic promoted 'Five Races under One Union', the town people and urban affairs were after all too remote from the country dwellers.
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Here 'Five Races under One Union' (Wu zu gonghe   ) is a political slogan put forward by Dr. Sun Yat-sen (leader of the 1911 Revolution) to formalize the conception of 'republic', of which, however, the 'five races' do not include any Southern ethnic group (possibly indicating them to be incorporated or in the process of assimilation to Han ethnic group already, see 2.2.1). And in the context of *Long River* it is certain that the main characters and the old sailor are from a Hmong family. So the quotation of this slogan here probably does not denote any political meaning, but vaguely implying a concept of 'republic' (gonghe   ). It is very important to note that most of these imported words 'university' 'research' 'analyze' 'microscope' 'republic' are translated directly from English or French or Japanese into modern standard Mandarin. It is also implicated that the country people associate modern

standard Mandarin to a remote and unknown geographical area, in contrast to their familiar homeland.

The woman joined in and a new conversation begins:

[W]: 'Brother, let me ask you, is it true that the "New Life" is coming? I heard Chieftain Song of Taiping Xi say that. He is a first cousin of my uncle's wife.'
[P1 or P2] (casually): 'How is it not true? It is witnessed! Just after the Central Army[125] retreated, the "New Life" is coming. Good harvest, but evil world, we are all doomed, no chance to escape. It is said that the Heavenly King Bodhisattva at the river mouth is very efficacious, but even if you sacrifice pigs and sheep to him, he can't save you!'
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A following paragraph of narrative explains the intention of the woman's inquiry:

The woman did not know what was 'New Life'. She could only remember, in the past five years, the Sichuan troops[126] came and left, the Communists came and left, and the Central Army came and left. Now she heard that the 'New Life' was coming up, but she did not know what it looked like, whether it enlisted or killed people. So she asked a lot of people, but no one seemed to understand. Now this man said someone had witnessed it down there with own eyes, it must be true. Since it was true, one must prepare for the situation that the village was a mess again, with soldiers and horses crowding around, and levies of provision and manpower upon every head. One troop went and another showed up, each imposing a levy of provision and service on every household.
Now she heard about the 'New Life' coming up, she became very distressed. The two piglets in her bamboo basket could have guided her into a sweet dream, but the 'New Life' hammered down and smashed her dream.
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[125] Zhongyang jun 　　　, local military forces which were directly under control of Republican Government.
[126] Chuan jun 　　　 local military force of Sichuan Province including some areas of Kham Tibet. Shen Congwen indicated in several places in his works that there were land communications for Sichuan Businessmen to trade in Xiangxi. In *Border Town* he mentioned that local prostitutes make a living from Sichuan Businessmen but mostly save their true love for the local sailors (Shen (　　) 2002, Vol. 8). This explains why people in Xiangxi experienced plunder of Sichuan troops.

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This paragraph indicates a division in the mental world of the ordinary – the coming of outer forces and the continuing of daily life. The military/political forces from the external world only mean compulsive enlisting and distribution of quotas of military supplies. The two piglets, however, symbolizes the stable real life. The 'New Life' (Xin shenghuo   , in modern standard Mandarin) originally aims at constructing a morality which is anti-liberalism (westernized concepts adopted by the Republican elite intellectuals), anti-communism and partially advocating Confucianism for the sake of teaching the 'citizens' of a newly established regime to obey their new leaders. Here its original meaning is totally dissolved and reasonably replaced with a stylized understanding of its possible consequence. The latter part of this conversation is an even more exaggerating description of 'New Life':

[W]: 'Brother, do you hear that they are coming this way? Are they many?'
[P1 or P2]: 'Is there a second way other than this? They come whenever they want to. I heard from a Gao Cun[127] person, that the moment his boat reached Chenzhou Fu[128], he saw the "New Life" disembarked, what a crowd! Machine guns, cannon guns, running fire, needle fire, thirteen trumps, you name it. The commissioner commander rode on a big white horse, rested his hands on the waist and made a speech to the people, (he made a humming sound as the officer's voice) "My fellow compatriots, my comrades, my brothers and sisters! This is the "New Life" and I am the commander! Let us fight!"'
[W]: 'Is the Central Army chasing them at the back?'
[P1 or P2]: 'Who knows! He is 'flying feet'[129] and he has chased the Central Army before! Yet, the Chairman[130] always has solutions. He must have sent out troops behind them. They are slower only because they have more soldiers and

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[127] A village name.
[128] Fu,   , an administrative division of imperial China, see 2.3.2. Chenzhou Fu include a small area east of Xiangxi and south of Zhangjiajie (see Map 4.1); Shen Congwen usually used place names of geographical division of Qing dynasty.
[129] Fei mao tui   , Chinese popular belief tells that in ancient China urgent military missives were sent by runners when the destinations were not reachable by horses. These missives were usually marked by sticking a feather. Therefore good runners were sometimes called   (lit. flying feather feet), meaning that they were fast enough to deliver the letters with feathers.
[130] Chiang Kai-shek, see footnote 110.

heavy guns.'

[W]: 'Are they going to Yunnan?'

[P1 or P2]: 'Why not! Sooner or later they are all going to Yunnan! As the old saying goes, "Go to Yunnan and fight against the melon spirits"[131], very true, they are all going to fight against the melon spirits, and they will never stop until all spirits are swept out!'

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This scene is an exquisite satirical comedy. The characters talk about the strangest recent happenings, and soon get to the rumors of 'New Life'. They know nothing about this political movement and interpret it without real understanding. From their mouths the 'New Life' is a mighty organism, the image of which shifts from army generals, ridiculous theorist, and council member to a super living creature that is armed with machine-gun, machine cannon, even weapons like 'running fire' 'needle fire' and 'thirteen thumbs' in knight-errant novels. The goal of its staying in Xiangxi is not clear, however, it is certain that peasants' pigs are to be robbed and gentries are to be forced to donate money, and our old sailor is going to lose his job guarding the ancestral temple. This dramatic conversation series has abundant hidden messages between the lines. Through raves and vulgar languages the solemn theme of the New Life Movement which aimed at reforming cultural and political ideologies of Chinese public is totally ridiculed (D. Wang 1992). And what is extravagantly

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[131] *Fight against the Melon Spirits* (*Da guajing*   ) was a traditional Xiangxi theatrical play about a love story of a lady living in Northeastern Jiangxi (homeland of Gan) and one of the emperors of Han dynasty (206 BC – 220 AD). There is a scene in the play telling about how the emperor - in his early life a poor soldier separated from a rebellion army after a lost war – picked up the leaflet of a revolt when he was guarding the watermelon field in the lady's hometown. He actually escaped from his job to rejoin the rebellion army, but one of the countrymen saw him disappear after a loud noise and thought he was devoured by the melon spirits. When this legend became popular the lady's countrymen started to call fugitives 'fighting against the melon spirit'. Here the passenger probably means the 'New Life' will escape to Yunnan to avoid the chasing of the Central Army.

expressed is how indigenous people channel unfamiliar things into their everyday life through the prism of the familiar. They picked up superstition, prejudice, cliché, proverbs and rumors to fabricate purely preposterous stories at their pleasure. However, their random conversations still deliver a desperate feeling, an anticipation of losing everything they can hold on to. And the woman begins to taste her current life and think of the possible small happiness she will get after selling the piglets. Her current life is indeed laborious, but nice and serene comparing to what the gigantic and whimsical 'New Life' may bring about.

Northrop Frye (1912-1991) indicated that lyricist and ironical writers have something in common, that they both rhetorically depart from their readers and creatively enrich the relationship between the signifying and the signified, and between things and their literary symbols (Frye 1957). This series of conversation naturally bring about a natural linguistic differentiation, with which the imported modern standard Mandarin vocabulary and its symbolic meaning is oppressed by the local cliché. However, all participants realize the overwhelming power of these 'comes' and 'runs' which will finally uproot them from their daily life. When the Hmong language appears after these conversations and is heard by the gloomy old sailor, this anxiety becomes more intense. Leaving the passengers and the woman, the old sailor goes down to the waterside. At the time a young man is singing a Hmong folksong frivolously, flirting with some women under the maple trees. He sings in rhyming:

> Three maple trees stand side by side; under them are fair women in mind; many virgins all I like; embroidered purses were worn out by my side.
> (   )

One of the women is just about to let out her grievances on other matters and catches this chance to scold at the young man from a distance:

> Embroidered purse, embroidered bodice; your mother makes for you in leisure-time!
> (   )

The old sailor watches these women walking down the basin and talks to himself:

Embroidered purse, embroidered bodice, wearing off, tearing apart, children have grown up. The days are long. When the 'New Life' comes, sending soldiers to look for young women for merrymaking, you will all suffer!
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The song is an imitation of Hmong songs written in South-western Mandarin. The dialectic registers used here are all Mandarin. But the theme and the imageries included here, the maple tree, the virgins, frequently appear in Hmong pair singing and contain specific symbolic meanings in Hmong culture. The maple tree is a sacred species to Xiangxi Hmong. All Hmong people I talked to in Xiangxi knew the story of maple tree and their ancestor goddess:

From the heart of the tree the maiden mother of the Hmong was born
From the heart of the tree a flower mother was born
(Hmongb det yis Mais[132] Liuf[133]
Diangl Mais Bangx[134] lol dluf) (Ma and Jin 1983)

The two mother goddesses (Mais Bangx Mais Liuf[135]) were hatched from a maple trees. They were in love with the bubbles in the pool and conceived twelve eggs. The first man and woman of the Hmong and other animals came from these eggs[136]. It can also be speculated from the story that the ancestor goddesses of the Hmong (at least to the knowledge of Xiangxi Hmong) were virgins when they conceived human and other species. Here Shen Congwen drew upon imageries of Hmong origin myths probably for implicating the unpredictable destination of the Hmong as a whole. The words 'embroidered purse' 'embroidered bodice' are directly translated from Hmong language. The former was a common love token given by women to their true love; the latter, however, was and still is common clothing that

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[132] Hmong word 'mother'.

[133] Hmong word 'girl, maiden'.

[134] Common Hmong female name, literally means 'flower'.

[135] Mais Bangx and Mais Liuf are two ancestor goddesses in Hmong origin myths and epics.

[136] Firstly documented in *Da Huang Nan Jing*   (*Classic of the Great Wilderness: South)*, from *Shan Hai Jing (Collection of the Mountains and the Seas Compiled in Early Han Dynasty, B.C 206 – 9 A.D.)*.

mothers make for babies for covering their breasts and bellies when they are asleep. Therefore, it was given more intimately by Hmong women to their boyfriends, usually in the situation that the two already shared a sexual relationship. In the scene the young man only mentions 'virgins' and 'purses'; the young woman and the old sailor further mention 'bodice'. The rejection of the woman, in this context, symbolizes a negation of natural and healthy Hmong love relationship (mostly advocated by Shen Congwen), given that Shen Congwen once depicted scenes of love and sex between Hmong men and women in poetic and lyrical languages in a large number of short novels. The old sailor's comment strengthens this implication, in which he predicts that the 'New Life' is bringing sexual violence to Hmong women (the modern bureaucracy will outrage Hmong people) and the 'embroidered purse' and 'embroidered bodice' will be worn off and torn apart.

In this section Shen Congwen demonstrated an ideological differentiation between modern bureaucracy arising in an early stage of nationalism which was represented by a vocabulary of modern standard Mandarin, and an ideally natural and harmonic human relationship in daily country life which was expressed through the language complex in Xiangxi. In the next section my discussion will shift to Shen Congwen's literary languages associated with other geographical areas in Hunan, and how they demonstrate his linguistic ideologies as concerns Hmong language and Classical Chinese.

4.3.2 Deep 'Hmong Mountain' and 'Chu State'

Shen Congwen's short novel *After the Rain* (*Yu Hou*   ) (Shen 2002, Vol. 3) does not point out where the story takes place. However, from the description of landscape it should be one of the many mountainous areas in Western Xiangxi adjacent to Guizhou Province (see Map 4.1). The story is about a romantic dating of two Hmong lovers on a hill, their conversations and their romance. Hmong utterances in Shen Congwen's novels are usually associated with scenes in wilderness, which is

liminal area where a normal world and a mythical world encounter (Turner 1977; Nagy 1981; Ó Crualaoich 1990). *The Mountain Ghost* depicts an insane man – who is a modern counterpart of a mountain spirit in myths of ancient Chu state – who disappears for a few days and is found in a cave in deep mountains (see 3.2.1); in another novel *Three Men and a Woman*, a shopkeeper following the Hmong legend (see 3.2.3) digs out the corpse of the woman he secretly loves and brings her to a cave in deep mountains and slept with 'her' in order to bring her back to life. To Shen Congwen, Hmong language is associated with his wildest literary imaginations inspired by both the beautiful and perplexing Hmong myths/folk stories and a specific landscape which fascinated him in the early stage of his life.

The scene in *After the Rain* begins with some casual conversations between a Hmong man and his lover. They both show their true affections and carefully probe each other's feelings. The woman is to some degree educated and conducts her words more delicately; the man's words are much more direct and bold. When their conversation is steering to the direction of sex, the woman gets shy and the man gets bolder. The woman's younger sister hears them from afar on another hill. Though she cannot see them, she sings improvised songs to tease them. Her sister's boyfriend replies with his own improvising, which forms an interesting pair singing (a Hmong song tradition). The woman reproaches her younger sister, but the man carries on his singing with a popular Hmong folk song:

> Sigou laughed at the situation again. He could tell, from his experience of theatrical plays, after the foreplay of 'Striking the Promotion', there is always… always some frivolous rhapsody of assorted plays.
> Big Sister paused and sided her face so that Sigou did not see her chuckle, but Sigou just knew it.
> Sigou said, 'Don't be mad at me please.'
> 'Why do you still say that? How dare a woman cross a man?... (To her younger sister) Hey Litter Sister, don't be absurd!'
> But Sigou carried on singing, 'Smiley smiley Big Sister walks, up and firm stand her boobs. Longing to rub them with my hands, pit-pat my heart throbs.'
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The first volume of *Long River* ends with seven days' theatrical performances when and where people all gather together to celebrate the good harvest and do their prayer to gods. This scene is also an illustration of an ideal social image, in which all types of people, underclass and officials, police and thieves, landowners and wandering peddlers all follow the same tradition and contribute to entertain the gods and people. It is also a circumstance similar to Durkheimian 'Collective Effervescence' (Durkheim 1915) or Geertz's 'theatre state' (Geertz 1980). In this conversation, Shen Congwen again used different stages of a theatrical performance to analogize the phases of love relationship. When the man means to go beyond the current relationship, he uses a jargon of theatrical performances which has already become cliché of Xiangxi South-western Mandarin. But he finally passes the threshold, using Hmong language. This small Hmong ballad is considered by Kinkley as an outstanding exemplar of Fenghuang (Shen Congwen's birthplace, see 2.3.2) folksong (Kinkley 1987). In Shen Congwen's novels when the characters' sentiments are too rich or too erotic to speak out, they often express them through singing. In these Hmong ballads Shen Congwen show the vividness and wittiness of Hmong language which denotes a different insight of life wisdom and amorous feelings. However, when he touches the abstract conception of 'beauty', a code-switching to Classical Chinese appears. In the scene of this conversation, this woman, though sharing the same feeling and affection with the man, wants a little more than acts. Shen Congwen vaguely attributed this attitude to her 'literacy'. The story carries on:

> Sigou was illiterate, so nothing poetic ever occurred to him. But listen to the chirp of the insects, to the buzz of dry-winged grasshoppers' flight, to the bouncing of raindrops fallen from the leaves, and to the heartbeats of the one so close, aren't they all poetic?
> 'Please read me a verse.' Sigou pleaded with her, because she went to school and could still read some novels.
> ……

He pleaded for a verse, and so she thought, he wouldn't understand the difficult ones, but the easy ones are no better than a ballad. So she recited, 'Blossoms drop and one stands in loneliness, in the drizzle a pair of swallows glide.'[137] Not quite the same scene, but the mood was there. There were always better poems than this, but she couldn't find them in memory.

Sigou said this was a good poem. Not that the poem was good, as he knew nothing about poetry; just the person and the ambience were right. He had no other way tell his happiness but through a poem.

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The quoted sentence from the poem depicts the melancholy of separation from a lover through tropes of the end of spring and pairs of swallows. In this context, it is a delicate way for the woman to express her loneliness in a poetic aspect. 'Not quite the same scene' because the two are not physically separating and a luxuriant summer surrounds them. They are separated by a boundary of poetic language. Classical Chinese (and a tradition of poetry flourished on it) represents a poetic harmony in which souls are naturally recognized and united but it is ideologically separate fromreal life. The woman wishes not only to unite with the man, but also to give her soul to him. This is to fail for sure, but according to Shen Congwen, the meaning of life is still fulfilled in this scene.

The above discussion centers on an interesting encounter between Hmong language and Classical Chinese in the context of a stylized love story of the Hmong people, which polarized Shen Congwen's linguistic ideologies of a sentimental ideal and a poetic ideal. In his literary works, these linguistic ideologies are also driven by

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[137] A quotation from the lyrical poetry written by Yan Jidao (　　　, c. 1040-1112). The poetry belongs to a special literary genre in the tradition of Classical Chinese poetry named Ci (　), which use a set of poetic meters derived from a basic set of certain patterns, in fixed-rhythm, fixed-tone, and variable line-length formal types. There are certain rhythmic and tonal patterns call Cipai (　　). The title of a specific lyrical poetry is a combination of the name of Cipai and the name of this poem. Sometimes poets did not add the poem's name but only kept the name of Cipai, which is the situation of this poem. Its name (the name of the pattern it belongs to) is *Lin Jiang Xian* (　　　　, lit. riverside daffodils)

specific landscapes. The following textual analyses will quest for the relationship between Classical Chinese and a symbolic geography of the Chu State. In order to do this, it is necessary to briefly introduce two relevant genres in Chinese literary tradition: Pian Wen and San Wen prose.

San Wen （　　） in Classical Chinese literature is more or less like prose in Western literature, denoting a natural flow of speech without discernible special arrangement of formal, grammatical or acoustic structures. When I say Shen Congwen's 'prose writing', it refers to this literary genre. Pian Wen （　　）, however, is a writing style unique to Classical Chinese literature. *Pian* etymologically means 'two horses under a yoke', which is an appropriate metaphor for the most distinguishing feature of this style, namely couplets. Pian Wen at its peak of development (Wei and Jin Dynasties, 220 – 420 A.D) was almost exclusively written in a series of strictly corresponding couplets, mostly four or six syllables per line. Though rhyming is not compulsory as in verse, the contour pattern of tones is usually consistent within a couplet. Pian Wen (especially its rhyming variant called Pian Fu （　　） can be regarded as something between undecorated prose and verse. Pian Wen possesses a beauty of neatness and order, tends to use opulent and flamboyant words, and is teemed with literary and historical allusions. Pian Wen is terse and elegant, but often becomes vain and extravagant as a result of pursuing sound effect and eruditeness. For this reason it lost its appeal after Song Dynasty, only to be revived shortly during Qing Dynasty (D. Qu 1994[1934]).

In his prose writing, Shen Congwen more often composes in a Classical Chinese poetic style than directly expresses his sentiments towards specific symbolic geographies and the inhabitants. In prose *Luxi, Pushi, Xiangziyan*[138] （《　　·　　·

　　》, 1938) (Shen 2002, Vol. 11), he depicts the landscape of an area where Old Xiang (see 4.2.1) – a Han dialect which descends from the language of ancient Chu State[139] – is well preserved:

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[138] All place names of Yuanling County (an area encircled by Xiangxi, Zhangjiajie and Changde, see Map 4.1).
[139] See 3.2.1 for Shen Congwen's literary imagination of Chu culture and of a collective identity of Xiangxi people inheriting from ancient Chu people.

When the weather is fine, and the sun sets in the west, fleeces of cloud turn from silvery crimson to greyish purple. In the tiny fishing boats parking under the cliff, wet firewood is burned for cooking; the smoke, moistened, spreads the water surface like a white screen unrolled. Three or five green-headed ducks fly away in array and vanish in the twilight mist arising from the water. Everything is serene and melancholically beautiful. Cut a piece and paint on paper, you have a perfect Song-styled Hua Ben[140].

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This 'serene and melancholically beautiful' 'Song-styled Hua Ben' is orchestrated in the symphony of verbs. 'The sun', 'fleeces of cloud', 'fishing boats', 'smoke', 'ducks' – all these natural phenomena and human activities perfectly match into a picture through the junction of verbs. This is a typical imitation of classical Chinese poetry and painting style. By doing so, he also attributed a different sense of time and beauty to the landscape of area that once belonged to ancient Chu state. He then depicted the people dwelling in this area and delicately wrote about their mythical features which he considered to have inherited from the ancient Chu culture. In another prose in the same collection named *People of Yuanling*[141] (*Yuanling De Ren* , 1938), he combined landscape description and the mythical legends:

Looking at the hillside town on the north bank from across the river, one sees the shouldering rafters of the houses, and the crenellations[142] protruding above surrounding the hill; trees and shrubs dot the scenery, brushing away all the vulgarity. Overlooking the south bank from the north, one finds bamboos, woods, temples, pagodas and resident houses on the riverside hillocks, each at its most appropriate position. Further away behind the hills, mountains tower and form a screen along the horizon, which are wrapped by ever-shifting azure and emerald mists. Whoever watching this scene from day to night must wonder if there are deities riding their dragons or giant fishes, dashing among these mountains. Every March and April at the height of the spring tide, the long river around the town is colored by the painted oil-boats from River Hong. They are large rectangular rafts, driven by tens of robust men who stand at the corner of the rafts, rowing their

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[140] Song-styled Hua Ben (   ) means exemplars for painting or albums of paintings in an artistic style formed in Song dynasty (960-1279 A.D.)

[141] See footnote 125 for 'Yuanling'.

[142] Zhi die   , a short shielding wall covering watchman of the city. http://www.zdic.net/c/9/fc/267049.htm, authoritative online classical Chinese glossary, last retrieved 31/08/2013.

oars, battling against the torrent, roaring their tunes and soaring downstream. The most touching spot arises at the midway of the boat trip, when one raises the head and see himself besieged by mountains and mountains beyond, as if in a picture. The water is deep and rapid, but the boatwoman, bold and calm she stands on her precarious perch, unperturbed as she gazes…

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This paragraph is written in a quite formal Pian Wen (   ) style, having lots of corresponding couplets with four syllables per line like '(Further away behind the hills,) mountains tower and form a screen along the horizon, which are wrapped by ever-shifting azure and emerald mists' (

). Within this apparent Pian Wen style writing, the word 'screen' (   ) and the verbs describing the azure and emerald colors wrapping the hills (   ) are very delicate poetic usages only found in classical poetry. Other fine poetic usages include verbs 'battling against the torrent' (   ) 'soaring downstream' (   ) 'calmly standing'(   ). Some discourses like 'crenellations'(   ), '(deities) riding their dragons or giant fishes, dashing among these mountains' (   ) appear in very old classical poetry or Pian Wen, and the imagination of the supernatural especially reminds of the depiction of water deities in *Songs of the South*[143].

If one wants to truly understand the poetics of this and other similar landscape descriptions in Shen Congwen's prose writings, one needs to comprehend the traditional art of 'Dui Ou' and 'Dui Zhang'(, lit. corresponding couplet). Dui ou means to use coupling words in two phases in order to strengthen the effect of imageries. For example, in this paragraph the two phases 'mountains tower and form

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[143] The representative literature combining an expression of political opinions and odes to mythical deities of Chu culture mostly attributing Qu Yuan (see 3.2.1).

163

a screen along the horizon' (   ), the imagery of '   ' (lit. a serial of mountain tops) is compared to '   ' '   '(lit. protective screen). The art of 'Dui Zhang' would further require the two phrases in a 'Dui'ou' relationship conform to the art of presenting true word meaning through visionary effects (Xu Shi   ). The two phrases '…wrapped by ever-shifting azure and emerald mists' (

) very well reflect the Xu Shi effect: using the azure and emerald colors ('   '

'   '), which is visionary words to depict the effect of ever-shifting mists ('

   ', the word meaning) surrounding the mountain tops and reflecting different times' sunshine. Pian Wen emphasizes word format and sound pattern, and even more importantly it is a high art of using flowery language to present most poetic imageries. To Chinese literati the art of Pian Wen represents a highly sophisticated classical poetics. However, this essay style has usually been used to depict exquisite imageries and matters which are distanced from everyday material world. So some classical poets and scholars consciously avoid writing Pian Wen. In this sense, Shen Congwen implies that the place Yuanling, and its people and landscape, belongs to a visionary imagery which should be depicted with a high art.

The stories of Yuanling people follow the landscape description in the same prose, in which, unlike novels, the narrative plays the main role and only very small pieces of conversations are inserted between lines of the narrative. It tells the story about the origin of a famous local bridge: a young and beautiful widow was secretly in love with a monk living in the temple high up the hill across the river, and went there to have prayers every day just for having a look at him. Twenty years went by and the lady's son grew up and realized the secret; and he did not speak a word but paid for a hundred workmen and a hundred handicrafts to build the bridge for the convention of his mother's visits to the temple. It looks like a simple legend, but is actually very peculiar for the Chinese. It differs from most of the old Chinese folk legends for it praises a lady who apparently violates a woman's virtue according to the Confucian standard, and the one she desires is a monk who cannot accept her love. In fact, in most vernacular literatures written in imperial China, affection to monks has usually a humorous and indecent implication. The most widely known example is *The*

Great Tang Records on the Western Regions (*Datang xiyu ji*   ,
compiled in 646 A.D.) , an imaginary account of a trip to the Buddhist centers in
Central Asia and India undertaken by an eminent and learned monk and his disciples
in Tang dynasty (618-907). A great number of mythical figures and landscapes are
found in this account, including the evil witches sent for luring the pilgrims; and their
appearance always brings about a sort of comical and indelicate punch. The
adaptations of this account into folk theatrical plays made popular the literary device
of 'loving a monk'. However, in Shen Congwen's prose the story of this Platonic love
sounds very sincere and natural. Shen Congwen's implication of the connection of
Yuanling with ancient Chu state – a place estranged from Han cultural centers, is
strengthened when Shen Congwen indicates that the landscape he viewed was a
suitable dwelling place for 'Lord in Clouds' (yunzhong jun   ) and 'Mountain
Ghost'(shan gui   ), all renowned deities in *Songs of the South*[144].

It may be interesting to add a little background to 'the bridge tale' here. Because
water channels are especially important for Xiangxi and other places along Yuan
River in Eastern Hunan where Old Xiang is preserved (see Map 4.2), people are very
interested in stories of bridges or any relevant stories. During my fieldwork in
Xiangxi, I heard much about a famous Xiangxi artist named Huang Yong-yu (   )
who shares a common lineage with Shen Congwen. His art works with local themes
have been sold at astounding prizes. And the way he reciprocates his hometown is to
raise funds to build a museum housing lots of his paintings in Xiangxi's only
university, and to build nine bridges in the capital city of Xiangxi with exaggerating
shapes and poetic subscriptions. It turns out that the branch of river flowing through
the city has so many bridges that the riverbank walk has become a novel recreation
for both the residents and tourists. When I was completely shocked by the huge
engraved heart shapes on one of the bridge arch, a university staff told me a
magnificent constructing project is on the way which is to build a highway bridge
across the steepest mountain tops in the midway from the capital city of Xiangxi to
Fenghuang County. After that I headed for Baojing County where a large number of

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[144] See 3.2.1.

Qing and Republic archives are stored. Surely enough I heard from everyone I met there about the construction project of the bridge; on the contrary, another national project which I consider much more relevant to their life – the three-hundred-million national investment on tea planting – was only mentioned by one high school teacher and a peasant.

Back to the prose *People of Yuanling*, a story of a realistic figure is told after the tale. It is about the youngest daughter in a peasant family. Her name is the same as Shen Congwen's main character in *Long River*: Yao Yao[145]. This Yao Yao is famous for her beauty and boldness, which attract attentions from both young men in town and villains of bandit gangs living in deep mountains:

> …Yao Yao's beauty was known to every boatman. Last year (1937) in a winter night, four hundred armed men suddenly attacked the town of Yuanling, shooting their guns outside the walls for a whole night. They found no way into the town and retreated by dawn. Their original intent might just be firing guns outside the town, but a so-called colonel brought his team and broke into Yao Yao's house, asking nothing but the girl herself. The girl was terrified but said calmly, 'Take my wardrobe with me; otherwise I have no clothes to change!' The colonel carried her into the mountain, and asked her, 'Yao Yao, do you want to live or die?' The girl thought for a while and whispered, 'You won't let me die if I want to.' The colonel smiled, 'So live then! Marry me if you want to live, and come with me. I will treat you as a lady; I will slaughter pigs and sheep to entertain the guest for your sake; you shall not be mistreated by me.'
> (……
>
>   "   "
> "   "   "   "
>   "
>
>   ")

Here the typical morality of imperial Chinese society is violated again: the romantic (dissolute) Yao Yao is depicted as having a composed mind when she confronts real danger (contrary to the traditional description of exoteric women as

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[145]   , taken from one of the oldest Chinese folk poems *Tao Yao* (, literarily meaning 'the peach tree is luxuriant and flowering' (see 3.2.2).

unintelligent and craven); and the bandit gang brings no robbery or killing but a special marriage proposal of their head. The date of the event is specifically indicated, which is the time when the Second Sino-Japanese War started. This small episode of Yuanling life has become a memorable event which engraved Shen Congwen's impression of Yuanling and its people.

> The girl looked at the colonel. Such a handsome man, much better than the tailor's apprentice[146], and she said, 'One has to eat wherever she goes. I will go with you.' So two pigs, twelve sheep, and a hundred pairs of chicken and ducks were cooked on the same day, and people feasted and reveled to celebrate the wedding of the colonel and Yao Yao. The girl asked for her wardrobe; and when it was opened, good heaven, a dowry was already prepared! Hero and beauty, a perfect match. After three days, the colonel sent a messenger to the old Zhou couples in their vegetable garden in Huang Caowei[147], calling them in-laws, and reporting that Yao Yao was alright, no need to worry. The letter was written on a red paper, the words flowery and elegant, masterpiece of his private adviser[148]. Also a load of gifts! The old couple had no other way but to accept the fact. The only miserable one in the whole affair was the apprentice, who sat in a shop in the East Gate Street, weeping as he cut the cloth for buttons.
> ("
>   "
>
>
>
>   )

Surprisingly, this marriage fulfills most aspects of a traditional Chinese marriage. The bride has her proper dowry, while the 'in-laws' have received a betrothal gift and a letter signifying the identity of the groom – a letter written by Shi Ye (see footnote 135) in classical style which usually comes from a renowned family. A violent breaking of a set engagement turns out to be 'hero and beauty, a perfect match'. At the end of the prose Shen Congwen talks about the special way Yuanling people understood human and the world, and he emphasizes 'divine' and 'demonic' qualities

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[146] Yao Yao's fiancé.
[147] A place in Yuanling town.
[148] Here the 'private advisor' is called *Shi Ye* (   ), which usually referred to juridical clerks or high-class intellectuals patronized by lords or renowned families in imperial China (Ch'ü 2005[1936]).

in their cultural origin:

> These things are human affairs. They are inseparable from human life, but mixed with divine and demonic qualities. Legends and myths from Xiangxi are archaic, beautiful, and touching, and there are many besides. The mystery of Xiangxi is tightly bound with the uniqueness of its people. The imagination of Chu people in history must have been born in this environment in order to grow into unforgettable poetry. The same environment is needed to preserve the poetry.
> (
>
> " "
>
>)

Old Xiang is a mythic language which connects to ancient Chu culture. Shen Congwen did not comprehend this dialect/language, so it does not enter his writings as conversational utterances or compositional narratives. It is imagined in Shen Congwen's poetic style, in which he drew upon his best classical Chinese writing. The stories of Yuanling people uncover different sorts of social customs which emphasizes natural human sentiments. This is what Shen Congwen cherished most in a land sealing up his memories of both the ancient and contemporary myths, which were unfortunately being ravished by war and modern state construction.

In section 4.3 a concentrated discussion of the complex linguistic landscape embodied in Shen Congwen's literature has demonstrated his language ideologies and their relationships with the Xiangxi geographical and historical contexts. The novels and prose chosen for detailed textual analyses here are all written at his mature stage of writing (1930-1940). It is worth noting that at an earlier stage Shen Congwen went through great difficulties both learning to write in a second language (written vernacular Chinese). These difficulties left traces in his earlier writings. I chose his later works because at that stage Shen Congwen had already stabilized his literary style in which he consciously inserted different 'voices' and specifically referred to certain (realistic or imaginary) historical and geographical contexts. As a result, at that stage his literary language is highly stratified but very fluent for reading. Some scholars from Xiangxi's only university – Jishou University (Jishou daxue   ) pointed out to me that his earlier writings have preserved a larger portion of real

colloquial Xiangxi dialects/languages. This is my consideration: Shen Congwen had a clear consciousness of demonstrating the essence of Chinese humanity through glorifying (Xiangxi) people's possible dreams and desires in their original states. He did this with a literary imagination which was influenced by his original training (classical Chinese and the classical poetry tradition) and the artistic forms gravened in his memories like theatrical plays and Hmong ritual dramas. Therefore, it is not about destructing his literature into different original language forms or historical facts, but about exploring how his literary language deterritorializes modern national language and summons an imaginarily ideal 'Chinese people'. The complex linguistic landscape itself has symbolized the abundance of mental layers and impressive creativity possessed by this people.

In the process of analyzing Shen Congwen's linguistic landscape, an interesting image of Xiangxi languages in the Early Modern period was generally depicted. In the next section the discussion will be on the language ideologies and linguistic differentiation in current Xiangxi.

4.4 Linguistic Differentiation in Current Xiangxi

I have sketched above an overview of Xiangxi languages in the Early Modern period. In the next section the discussion will focus on the language ideologies and linguistic differentiation in contemporary Xiangxi, and draw a comparison between this and the situation in Early Modern Xiangxi. This discussion will further our understanding of nationalism and modernization which were brought about by the political entities in modern China.

4.4.1 Language Ideology and Linguistic Differentiation

Friedrich discussed the role of 'inventive individual' in understanding particular cultural phenomena that embody political economy, the definition of which is given as such:

Political economy involves resource allocation in the sense…involves the generic economic processes of the production, distribution, and consumption of

goods, including 'non-material' ones, and the patterns and culture of power that control or influence these processes (Friedrich 1989, 298).

And the 'inventive individual' plays the role in which:

…they give critical margins of understanding, insight, and intuition into 'how the political economy works' and how it lived out in real life (e.g., Mintz 1974) - margins that elude the rigidly sociocentric or socioeconocentric modes of research (Ibid., 299).

Friedrich further referred the exchange of messages to exchange of commodities in an economic determinant relationship, and thus suggested that the way people speak naturally embodies a sort of 'ideology'. For 'ideology' he listed three types of explanation (Ibid., 300):

(1) notional ideology (ex. religion, myth)
(2) ideology for maintaining or changing a sociopolitical order (e.g. nationalism; anthropologist's culture)
(3) ideology for masking a structure of domination

The language complex in Xiangxi is very complicated due to its ethnic composition and regional history. Friedrich pointed out that language is related to ideology and political economy in many ways, often through practices of individuals. Shen Congwen's writing, as an exemplar of this notion, circulates an image of the Xiangxi language complex and, as a result, reflects the hidden relationships in Early Modern Xiangxi's political economy. Xiangxi is a very special area as one looks into nationalism in China: for a long time it had been the margin of ancient Chinese empires. In the process of China's modern nation-building, both the external influences and the social transformations taken place inside China had incurred many profound changes to Xiangxi's political economy and its people's language ideologies. The image of the Xiangxi language complex circulated by Shen Congwen's literature is especially interesting in the way that it embodies this symbolic geography.

More than half a century has passed since the establishment of the current modern nation, the People's Republic of China; it is probably very meaningful to look upon the current situation in Xiangxi as a sample of modernization and nationalism in a multi-ethnic region in central China. Collaborated with information gathered in my

recent fieldworks in Xiangxi, the differentiation of language ideologies in Xiangxi speech communities will be explored in this section. For this purpose, I will discuss language rights and the influences of language standardization on Xiangxi speech communities. And before the discussion, the concepts of language ideology and linguistic differentiation will be examined first.

Paul Kroskrity studied language ideological change in the Western Mono community of central California, and in his study he outlined the development of the concept of language ideology:

> When Michael Silverstein first defined linguistic ideologies as 'sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use' (Silverstein 1979, 193), he did so not merely to acknowledge the existence of such folk beliefs about language but to demonstrate both their potential and actual potency...The comparatively short history of language ideological theorizing thus originates with an emphasis on speakers' awareness of language and transformative potential of this consciousness as a form of agency(Kroskrity 2009, 190–191).

This discussion emphasizes that the study of language ideology considers not only the speakers' feelings towards language(s), but more importantly, their realizations and judgments of language(s) which would potentially transform into their agency of making social changes. Kroskrity has summarised some language ideologies which are applicable in current situation in Xiangxi. For example, he indicates:

> …in contrast to standardizing linguistic regimes that either seek to eliminate or supplant variation due to region, ethnicity, class, and so on, Western Mono communities have promoted a language ideology of variationism in which dialectal variation is not hierarchized but is instead naturalized as the expected outcome of family and individual differences (Ibid., 193).

Even within Xiangxi the distribution of languages varies between small geographical units. Some places are densely inhabited by the Hmong, but more are mixed dwelling places. Multilingualism is very common in most places, and it enters daily utterances and the code-switching in daily contacts or literature as a feature of locality. In some cases mobile merchants recognize each other by using Hmong

language though they are mostly Han people – they need this language to trade for special products which can only be found in Hmong open-air markets (see Figure 4.1).[149] In other cases Hmong students who only know Hmong language and a little bit standard modern Mandarin learned from primary schools have to speak only standard modern Mandarin at high school with other students who speak local dialect (South-western Mandarin) after class.

Figure 4.1 Hmong Open-air Markets, 2011-2012

Kroskrity also pointed out that the currently dominant ideology which relates a specific language to certain identity is not a universal truth (Ibid., 194). From my

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[149] Hmong open-air markets are held in certain days of every mouth according to Hmong calendar, which is a legacy of late 18th century markets located near the sentry posts on the border wall for ensuring governmental supervision of Hmong-Han trading (see 2.3.2). The markets are still very popular among Hmong people though modern shops are available for daily convenience. The markets days are occasions of gathering and other social activities. Some Hmong merchants' families also consider these markets events particularly suitable for youths to learn trading and meet mobile merchants.

observation most Hmong families in Xiangxi consider a language to be a tool of communication rather than a symbol of identity. When the local government officially promoted Hmong language classes in educational institutions, many parents opposed these new lessons and insisted that their children should be better educated in modern standard Mandarin and English – for those primary schools providing Hmong lessons usually delay their students' English education to middle school stage, which, according to their parents, would cause disadvantages in their performance in the university entrance exam. However, the oppositions never mean that these families despised Hmong identity. On the contrary they attach tremendous values to their children's sense of honor as a Hmong person. These children are naturally socialized to be caring the need and honor of their families and Hmong clans, but it does not seems to be a big deal that they grow up in an environment of modern standard Mandarin. Besides daily conversations in Hmong language, they watch TV and play computer games in web cafes in small towns which are all operated in modern standard Mandarin, not to mention their school education. Old and middle-age Hmong people told me that the younger generations are losing their ability to comprehend certain Hmong idioms and proverbs. And it is certain that they are unable to carry on the beautiful Hmong song tradition. But they never complained about this, simply saying 'each generation has their own style of living' (

).

Accordingly, the linguistic differentiation – discriminating different languages and associating each with certain identity or characteristics – in most circumstances is a reflection of hegemonic supervision. Judith Irvine and Susan Gal researched language ideology and linguistic differentiation in mid-nineteenth century Macedonia – a heterogeneous area as a frontier of European complex confronting Asian influences. In this study they identified three semiotic processes by which the social change highly related to political economy – linguistic differentiation – works. They are:

(1) Iconization, which 'involves a transformation of the sign relationship between linguistic features (or varieties) and the social images with which they are linked';

(2) Fractal recursivity, which 'involves the projection of an opposition, salient at some level of relationship, onto some other level';

(3) Erasure, 'the process in which ideology, in simplifying the sociolinguistic field, renders some persons or activities (or sociolinguistic phenomena) invisible' (Irvine and Gal 2000, 37-38).

Through examining the three processes of linguistic differentiation taking place in religious, folkloric, institutional and daily contact aspects in nineteenth century Macedonia, Irvine and Gal proposed that the relationship between linguistic practices and social categories in this region differed fundamentally from the expectations of Western Europeans. By implication, the understanding of relationship between speech forms and ideology (in Friedrich's sense) needs to be widened and examined carefully in its regional, historical and social contexts.

Following Irvine and Gal, I will examine two aspects of Xiangxi's linguistic differentiation: language rights and the influence of language standardization in Xiangxi speech communities. But firstly, I will briefly review the theoretical framework of these two aspects.

4.4.2 Language Right and Language Standardization

To begin with, it is helpful to go through some theories in regard to ideologies of language rights, which can be reviewed in two intertwined themes: first, on the right of speaking the language; and second, on the right of speakers' using the language in their own way. It is also useful to look into two terms anthropologists usually employ to define research schemes: speech community and language community.

> I would tentatively define the basic notion of speech community in terms of shared knowledge of rules for the interpretation of speech, including rules for the interpretation of at least one common code (Hymes 1984, 18).

> We can see that language communities are groups of people by degree evidencing allegiance to norms of denotational (as 'referential', 'propositional', 'semantic') language usage, however much or little such allegiance also encompasses an indigenous cultural consciousness of variation and/or change, or is couched in terms of fixity and stasis (Silverstein 1998, 402).

To put it in a much simplified way, a language community is a group of people who are expected to, or believe they should stick to one purified language; a speech community is a group of people who can understand each other through speaking or acting, while not necessarily speaking the same language. For example, people in Hong Kong consider their region as a Cantonese-speaking area, and differentiate themselves from people who cannot comprehend Cantonese (the situation is different when they confront foreigners). This is very much approaching the concept of 'language community'; while in one of my research areas, Regong, which is in the Amdo dialect region of Tibet, people recite Buddha sutras in Amdo Tibetan, while the educated monks in temples use a more conservative pronunciation, closer to classical Tibetan and Sanskrit. Daily communications are carried out inside communities in a mixture of Tibetan and Tu Language, a variant of Mongolian, whereas people communicate with outsiders in standard Mandarin. This could be identified as a speech community. In many multilingual nations and individuals around the world a 'speech community' is closer to actual situation; while 'language community' is a constructed ideal which populate in most government-oriented ideologies and made possible through institutional standardization processes.

How would a concept of speech community (as opposed to language community) affect the idea of language rights? Or can the very concept of language rights only apply to one type of community - for example, from the state's point of view, is it more possible to identify one type of community than another, and more possible to assign 'rights' to one rather than another; or, are the 'rights' pertaining to these two different types of community fundamentally different?

Back to the two types of language rights, one can look into the example of Regong area with these questions in mind. The Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures inside People's Republic of China are ideologically considered to be a unity with Tibetan as the regional language. And Regong area belongs to the Huangnan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. Suppose one considers people in this unity as a language community and the national policy is to protect local culture and language; then, according to the policy, only standard Tibetan and the national language (standard

Mandarin) should be advocated and maintained. This hypothetical situation would be in concord with the first theme: the right to speak "the language"(in this situation, it is Tibetan, not Tu). While the actual situation is that people in Regong area is a speech community, the second theme, that the right to allow people use the language in their own way implies that both Tu language and Amdo Tibetan should be maintained, and the three languages in use should all be advocated. The actual local language policies value all three languages while making differentiations: only Standard Tibetan based on Lhasa dialect and Standard Mandarin are used in governmental or educational institutions, but Tu Language is within the popular propaganda of preserving local culture. This is complicated enough, leaving out the situation of Creole languages (mix languages) which are in everyday use.

Following the basic conceptions are some social ideologies which may influence language rights. A very relevant ideology is language standardization

> For language was actually 'characteristic word of the race, bond of the family, tool of instruction, hero song of the fathers' deeds, and the voice of these fathers from their graves.' Language could not possibly, therefore, remain of one kind, and so the same familial feeling that had formed a single language, when it became national hatred, often created difference, complete difference in language (Herder 2002 [1772]).

It is generally believed that language standardization creates ideological hegemony which is contrary to the right of minority languages. The powerful language ideology of 'one nation, one language' is conventionally traced to eighteenth-century thinkers on language and history, and most famously to Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) who posited a unity among language, national essence and territory (Ahearn 2012, 126). The adoption and spreading of this ideology relate to the formation of modern European nation-states. In the increasing trend of globalization, several factors have possibly strengthened this currently worldwide ideology in various ways.

Then how does this ideology develop and draw its influences on nation state policies?

Standardization, then, is a phenomenon in a linguistic community in which institutional maintenance of certain valued linguistic practices – in theory, fixed – acquires an explicitly-recognized hegemony over the definition of the community's norm.

…the existence of Standards is very much a function of having hegemonic institutions, such as those that control writing/printing and reading as channels of exemplary communication with language, the operation of which in a society establishes and maintains the Standard (Silverstein 1996, 285–286).

Much scholarship has been done on the nature of the language standardization process and the reason why it especially correlates to institutional efforts and ideological hegemony. The arguments can roughly be divided into the following three types:

Firstly, standardization is considered to be the extreme of the natural development, and a concrete institutional form, of the denotational optimization. This is a process in which a wider and wider circle of people look for a common agreement of the meaning of words for the sake of, presumably, economical and political convenience (Silverstein 1996, 287–288). There are some contrary situations, however. For example, multilingualism is an integral part of India's national identity and a daily fact of life for many of its residents. (Ahearn 2012, 127) In these multilingual societies, a shift from one language to another usually implies moral judgments and social hierarchies which also index supremacy of dominant/standard official languages (Hill 1995).

Secondly, a standard language refers to a 'positive locality' of most communities. Increasingly, for populations of people, locality is and must be precipitated as a positive dimension of cultural being; for each person, it is an identity-relevant dimension of belonging to a particular group that otherwise can be defined only residually or negatively (Appadurai 1996).

Language communities, relatively speaking, are 'local' when they are perduringly bounded through cultural means in relation to sociopolitical processes on a global scale (Silverstein 1998, 403).

Language is a powerful index of belonging and locality, and through standardization it achieves this indexical function. Members of a language community

are expected to take the 'purism' of language not as a natural state, but as a means to maintain the created locality in the process of globalization.

Thirdly, within the state or region where it is officially dominant, a standard language claims another source of authority: the universality that comes from supposedly being the property of all citizens, unbiased because it is no one's in particular, and hence represents a socially neutral, supposedly anonymous voice (Gal 2006, 166). A great deal of contradictions appear when we look into the actual situations of asylum seekers and immigrants in Europe (Blommaert 2009). This argument can also lead to the discussion of public sphere:

> The ubiquity of standard ideology also hides from researchers and elites the emergence of a particular kind of public, a set of cross-linguistic channels for political debates (Gal 2006, 177).

There is another intriguing factor which vaguely promotes the language standardization process: the continuous and increasing concerns on public sphere. After World War II, the elite philosophers and public intellectuals around the world had deep retrospections on the approaches to real democracy. Jürgen Habermas' recuperation of the concept from English, French and German intellectual debates of the last three centuries provided the impetus to think about rational deliberation as a mode of democratic politics.

> The bourgeois public sphere may be conceived above all as the sphere of private people come together as a public; they soon claimed the public sphere regulated from above against the public authorities themselves, to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labor (Habermas 1989, 27).

Habermas considered that the existence and mechanism of public sphere have great influences on modern democratic institution. Inspired by Habermas' work, linguistic anthropologists endeavor to discuss why and how 'public' is constructed through flowing of discourses, which they consider to be the 'complex event of encountering and interacting with another's word'(Bakhtin 1986, 144). The mechanism of exchanging messages in public sphere also implies feasible

mutual-understanding of linguistic norms. A vivid example lies in debates on EU democracy process. The effect of standard language ideology is evident in the recurrent debates about Europe's 'democratic deficit'. Most scholars and political literati agree that a major impediment to democratic governance in the European Union is the lack of a public sphere, made impossible by the lack of a single common language in which issues could be generally discussed (Gal 2006, 175). From this aspect one could see the power of ideologically constructed public and its influence on standard ideology.

The discussion of language right also relates to an understanding of language diversity and endangerment. Linguistic anthropologists have investigated several discourses relating to this topic, such as enumerations of endangered languages, regarding endangered languages as a fading treasure universally owned by all mankind, and equaling endangered languages to incredibly beautiful structure of human mind which is under threat of disappearance(Moore 2006). However, they point out that these are largely illusions: firstly, the census of minority languages implies a process of documentation and refers to standardized criteria, which may not be legitimate according to the intellectual judgments of the actual speakers; secondly, if the beauty of the language derives from its embodiment of diverse structures of human mind, the diversity does not necessarily come from special grammar components which are often emphasized by documenters. The essence of a language always remains in its actual use and the social life where it is enlivened by speakers; and thirdly, speakers of the minority languages in most situations consider the languages their own properties specific to their identity and history, which are certainly not a common wealth of mankind (Hill 2002, 2002).

> The public literature summons its readers to an encounter with these languages as monuments in a sculpture garden of human cognitive achievements, objects of wonder and appreciation…these disappearing linguistic structures, once 'objectualized' – e.g., by being written – bear all the hallmarks of the Sublime in the European imagination (Moore 2006, 297).

Specifically referring to the European origin of objectifying languages and other documented social phenomena, Robert Moore cited historians' work on the medieval origin of the contrasts between 'Wonder' and 'Imitation'.

> 'Medieval theorists', writes Bynum, 'understood wonder (*admiratio*) as cognitive, non-appropriative, perspectival, and particular' (Bynum, 2001, p.39); imitation, which for many medieval authors formed a contrast with admiration, centrally involves a stance of appropriative mimesis (*imitatio*). Imitation seeks to unite the subject and the object on the basis, perhaps, of shared essences (a state of consubstantiality achieved, perhaps, through ritual practice) (Moore 2006, 299).

Robert Moore compares most people's understanding of endangered languages to the medieval 'wonder' which is both 'awe-inspiring' and cannot be substantially reached through actual practices. Thinking in this way also implies that speakers do not have the capacity, firstly, of stabilizing their language through ritual or everyday practices; and secondly, of constructing their own mode to maintain language through historical and current communications with outsiders and struggles with natural forces (Moore 2006, 302). Both implications are belied by reality.

4.4.3 Language Ideologies and Linguistic Differentiations in Xiangxi

Besides the Hmong, the Tu-jia is another major minority ethnic group in Xiangxi. However, the Tu-jia is sinicized much earlier and more thoroughly in history and Tu-jia language has almost died out in Xiangxi, spoken only by some elder people in several remote, small villages. And some Han people claim that they are Tu-jia people so as to register their identity as such and to earn their children extra credits in the entrance exam to universities, as regulated in the national policy. And real Tu-jia habitats overlap with Han areas. So generally it is very hard to tell the Tu-jia apart except by very few means such as customs of funeral ritual. This is the reason why my discussion of language ideology and linguistic differentiation in Xiangxi mainly concentrates on Hmong language, local Han dialects and modern standard Mandarin but not on Tu-jia language.

Similar to Moore's analysis, the discussion of Xiangxi's language diversity concentrates on the second aspect of language right: the right of speakers' using the

language in their own way. A comparative case study of Hmong young adults' language socialization may well reflect the current situation in Xiangxi. Socialization refers to the process where individuals may adopt a variety of skills which they use unconsciously to accommodate the social environment in which they were born and raised up. This process, as most cultural activities, is naturally expressed and mediated by language (Rymes 2008, 3), and the participation in literacy activities is governed by secondary language socialization (Duranti 2009, 293). And the process depends on how institutions and professional organizations socialize individuals, who are competent speakers of their native languages, through entextualization - the process of transforming experience into text - and recontextualization - the process of making texts relevant to the ongoing situation (Mertz 1994). Gellner explains the logic of nationalism and the role of education system in imposing the order of cultural homogeneity, and further employs 'exo-socialization' to state why state and culture must be linked (Gellner 1983, 1–2, 38). Here are several examples of language socialization in Xiangxi which draw a comparison between socialization within community and outcomes of institutional education.

Example 1

A Hmong *Zhai* (, Hmong traditional congregated households) consists of wooden structured, densely-arranged houses owned by people from the same family or related families. The interior of individual households contains a large semi-public space facilitating family or larger-scale gatherings (see Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2 Hmong *Zhai* in Xiangxi and an Inner View of a Household, 2011

On the first day I arrived at Luo Chaojing Village[150], I was shown to a Hmong household. The host's grandmother and sister-in-law were at home and gave me a warm welcome. He said to his sister-in-law quickly with a mysterious smile, and told me that something will come up. Then we waited for a while, when it was obvious that his sister-in-law was thinking about something with her eyes closed. Then she sang a beautiful song to me in local Hmong dialect, which was two-phased, and she stopped in the middle and thought for a while again. I was pretty surprised, since I knew the song tradition of Hmong people. They usually sing with rhyming and certain set phrases, so usually a Hmong person sings a song for conveying information or replying for a song very fast (pair singing, see 3.2.2.2 for Hmong song tradition). I was even more surprised when the host mentioned that his sister-in-law was one of the most famous singers in the village. Then I asked for her favor to tell me the lyrics in Mandarin, and found that it is a welcome song improvised by her with rhymed lyrics. Then women in the near household, who were all close relatives of this family, started to gather around to see me because they heard the song. And the host's grandmother started to talk to other middle-aged and elder women, which were about the comments of the song. They also talked to young girls about certain usage of words in the lyric. Finally they decided to pass a conclusion to the host. 'They said they think you are all right.' He said. 'What do you mean by all right?' 'They said you show respect to the grandmother and show respect to the paper of invocation hung on the gate on your arrival.' The young girls did not say a word. Similar circumstances happened again when I passed the well where women gathered to wash clothes. Elder women answered our questions for the young girls.

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[150] A village in Fenghuang County (see 2.3.2).

Figure 4.3 The Welcome Song, the Female Relatives and the Paper of Invocation, 2011

Soon I learnt that a Hmong *Zhai* is a place for people to gather, exchanging information in the village and telling stories of the past. Both the structure of Hmong vernacular settlements and the inner structure of individual households facilitate people to gather together. After the second ethnic identity survey in China[151], three dialectical areas of Hmong were recognized and a standard alphabetic Hmong was designed for each area. In similar examples of standardization and conservation of languages, usually the standardization process would have complicated consequences for local dialects, often causing further differentiation between different dialects (J. Blommaert and Verschueren 1998). However, in the eastern Hmong dialect area, Xiangxi being the main district, the continuous variation of different Hmong dialects can be observed according to the surveys of scholars based in Jishou University (Xiangxi's only university). The structure of vernacular settlements provokes lively, active social communications. Social communications, including the Hmong New Year, song festivals, market days and funerals, are carried out in massive gatherings. The ritual performances, including healing rituals, drama performance and singing, are also observed by most villagers.

Example 2

As I observe, local knowledge is for villagers a crucial criterion to differentiate themselves from others (other clans, other dwellers in the same areas, other ethnic

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[151] The first survey took place around 1935, conducted by the central government of Republic of China; the second was a two-stage survey and documentation of ethnic identities conducted by the central government of People's Republic of China from 1950-1978.

groups, or people from outside world) and to draw a connection between themselves. One day I walked a young Hmong female student home by sunset, and she pointed to several peaks and told me their stories: this one is representing the dragon spirit and the luck it used to bring is lost when the river cut through it during the war; there is a hidden cemetery where people gather in Qing Ming Jie (, All Souls' Festival in spring) and have fun, etc. Her girl friends all show up on the way and cheered me with chuckles and invitations of joining their dances. Along the way they kept climbing on hills or running down the slopes of riverbanks, picking flowers, leaves and roots, teaching me their names, functions and time for food or medicine. When we reached the village they ran directly to her uncle's house and took turns hugging the one-year old baby in the family. The girl explained to me that baby boy's mother had to cook for the whole family and the little boy needed someone to play with. To my surprise these little girls are all highly skilful of childcare and full of affection to this infant. Two girls, among others, are especially close to the boy. The reason was that the witch doctor in the village examined his fate and implied that it would be good for him to get close to people who have certain surname, and the two girls have that surname.

During the time I spent with these young girls, it occurred to me that specific local knowledge and the way local Hmong dialect is used are more relevant to their feeling as a Hmong community. It is these landscapes that differentiate her community from other Hmong communities. And other Hmong communities also have their stories of certain landscapes. I also consider the home education and socialization happening in their village will be with them for a lifelong period, for in this way they share with each other memory and knowledge of natural things and human relationships, the features of nature and human mind.

Figure 4.4 Hmong Zhai and Hmong Students, 2012

Example 3

Yu Junyi, 18 year-old Hmong student, graduated from Fenghuang Advanced High School in July 2011, and was about to go to a university in Shanghai[152]. He returned to his Hmong *Zhai* in Luo Chaojing Village and undertook some works in family business before going to university in September. One evening after supper, he took me for a walk around the village, and showed me the Hmong drum (see Figure 4.5)[153] playing in a neighbor's house. At that time middle-age and old women from his family began to gather in courtyards, while young girls either took part in the drum performance or joined the women's gathering. Men from his family started to discuss the family business in front of a shop next to the biggest household of this extended

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[152] Biggest city in economically developed area in eastern China
[153] Traditional folk art usually performed by women and transmitted from mothers to daughters or passed down between female relatives

family where they could get wine and cigarette from time to time, and I asked for Junyi's permission to go and watch. Suddenly a little boy showed up and Junyi seriously stopped him and took him with us to the men's circle. 'My younger cousin,' Junyi said, 'and he should attend that meeting too. He's thirteen.' On the way to the men's gathering, Junyi started talking about the constellation and the changes of the rivers in the village, and asked for the replies from the little boy. 'This river used to be much wider and cleaner; you can see reflection of the mountain and the field in it.' Junyi said. 'The river was from a good old time. It changed now.' The boy replied, and I was surprised to hear him speak in the most proper way in local culture which mentioned the 'good old time'. And soon I realized that was the way boys were taught by his relatives. And when they entered the meeting, the boy was listening seriously as a male member of the family, even though I was pretty sure that he would not know much about the investment and loans discussed there. Junyi revealed that he would study economics and help to find a way out from this difficult time for the family business. And he would take a part-time job to pay for his tuition fees. And his cousin said something like 'we are a family as a whole; every member should contribute to the prosperity of the family.' The boy was treated and self-recognized as a 'member' of his own community. He was actively involved in the discussion of communal affairs, and showed his competency by using certain norms and set phases which are valued in that speech community. The socialization process does not just show that he was already a native speaker, but to show the way he uses his language to achieve and play his social role.

Figure 4.5 Hmong Drum: Recreation in Hmong Women's Gatherings, 2011

Every Hmong village has its own primary school (usually only one), which is required to teach certain subjects based on a unified national curriculum. However, county governments have the right to decide whether or not to employ compilations of course books on indigenous language and culture, or to start English education at the primary school stage. The usual length of primary school education in China is six years (students age 7 to age 12). If one village primary school decides not to start English education within the period, while employing bilingual education (Mandarin and an indigenous language), they usually shorten primary school stage to five years and let students have their final year's education in county primary schools before entering middle-schools and high-schools. Every county town in Xiangxi has middle-schools (students age 13 to age 15) and high-schools (students age 16 to age 18), which are all boarding schools with dormitories for students coming from villages. Middle-schools and high-schools in county towns recruit students according to the grades of entrance exams, and students from village primary schools usually gain lower grades. So around two-third of village primary school students go to middle-schools and slightly less than half of these students enter high-schools. The schools arrange the classes also based on grades; as a result some classes have more students of minority ethnic background. Since my fieldwork was based at Luo Chaojing village, I conducted some research in the village primary school, a middle-school and two high-schools in Fenghuang town, which is 25km away from Luo Chaojing, the nearest county town and a famous tourist site. There are three primary schools, three middle-schools and two high-schools in Fenghuang. Every county in Xiangxi has its own dialect, which slightly differs from those of other counties, but they are all variants of Southwestern Mandarin[154]. I noticed that Hmong students in their final year in primary school or the first year in middle-school usually speak standard Mandarin, which is both the classroom language and language for communication, since students of minority ethnic groups coming from villages cannot

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[154] Southwestern Mandarin is a primary branch of Mandarin Chinese spoken by Han Chinese people throughout many regions of central and southwestern China. Varieties of Southwestern Mandarin are spoken by roughly 200 million people.

understand the local dialects (Southwestern Mandarin). As these village students come to their senior years and have got used to town life and the local dialects, they tend to speak the local dialects more often.

Quite different from the socialization process in Hmong villages described above, what normally happens in a classroom is that students sit in lines regardless of ethnic backgrounds, and make no comments when teachers are giving lectures (see Figure 4.6). If one of them is asked a question, the answer usually only relates to the contents in the textbooks. So when the topics of our conversation are related to that sort of knowledge, they speak frankly and consider I am one of them who went through the same education process.

Figure 4.6 The Interior View of a Classroom of 2nd Middle School in Fenghuang Town, 2011

Example 4

I sit in a fifth-year Hmong language class in the only primary school in Luo Chaojing village[155]; in that class the headmaster of the school, who is also famous for Hmong language education in the area, taught with the textbook titled *Nature and Culture of Our Homeland*. And they talked about 'Qing Ming Jie' (All Souls' Festival) as a traditional festival for 'Zhong Hua Minzu'[156] to memorize their ancestors. And during the class a brief introduction of the rituals was read to the students in Mandarin (in the textbook it was written in Standard Mandarin) and several sorts of plants were

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[155] A village in Fenghuang County (see 2.3.2).
[156] Zhong Hua Minzu (   ), literary 'Chinese nation' or 'Chinese race', an important political term symbolizing modern Chinese nation-building and nationalism (Mullaney 2010).

classified and taught to students which grow in the Qing Ming season and could be used for making the traditional food (the one recognized by all ethnic groups who celebrate this festival), which was also in Mandarin. Then the Hmong text about a family gathering in Qing Ming Jie was studied in detail with the explanation of several words in Hmong language. Encouraged by the headmaster, some students were voluntarily reading out the text in standard Eastern Hmong language (which differed from the local dialect a lot); the headmaster corrected the pronunciation and talked about the word orders of the sentences in Mandarin, for the part of grammar in the textbook was also written in standard Mandarin. Thus ends a typical Hmong language class.

I talked to the headmaster after class about his own attitude towards this class. He soberly claimed that 'it is very important to keep a record of our culture'; he was also very proud of the Hmong language education, saying 'ever since the Hmong language class was taught in our primary school in early 1980s, a great many educational officials and groups have visited our school; there are even some Sweden and French scholars came and sit in my father's class!' – his father was the late headmaster of the school who started this Hmong language education with local support. When I inquired about students' future use of the standard Hmong language, he became very pessimistic and said that it would not last long in most students' memories, for the entrance exams to secondary school and universities do not include Hmong language examination. According to the local educational policy, if students are taking the Hmong language education from 1st to 5th primary school years, then they do not need to take the English exams for entering the secondary schools. For this reason, a lot of parents oppose Hmong language education even they speak Hmong dialects themselves, for it would naturally hinder the students' English learning which is vital for passing the entrance exam to high schools and universities.

Coleman employed the term 'personation' to indicate the way Irish speakers use Irish language as a semiotic practice which 'motivates Irish-speakers' resistance to various attempts – centered in discourses of the nation and the state – to refigure the Irish language as the 'voice' of a generalized and purified national past or as a semiotically transparent medium for the state'(Coleman 2004, 381). In the village, Hmong kids study the language through utterances derived from older generations which were used to define themselves in certain spatial and clan schemes. As discussed above, Hmong children do not consciously resist the standardized Hmong language because of 'personation', but they generally oppose it for two reasons: (1) The standard Hmong language education was conducted in the logicality of the classified and descriptive knowledge which could only be properly explained in the national official language – standard Mandarin. But the Hmong dialects they speak,

and more importantly the way they speak it, clarify their belonging to certain local Hmong communities; (2) Their wish to succeed and to have a brighter future requires them to master modern Mandarin and English, but Standard Hmong language classes delay both educations. Students are naturally socialized with the ideologies referring to a culturally created ethnic identity through education in a standard national language, which will be strengthened in their future studies. Even the preservation of a standard Hmong language is included into the nationalistic ideology that it is a sort of 'cultural resource' of the 'Zhong Hua Minzu'[157]. However, Hmong people in Xiangxi have not connected their Hmong identity with standard Hmong language, because they are socialized to speak Hmong language in a different way in their village lives; neither have they iconized their own dialects to indicate the Hmong identity or spoken it for the reason of 'personation', because they wish to succeed not merely as Hmong but rather as general Chinese citizens.

The educational institutions and the mechanism of unified national curriculum plus entrance exam systems have masked background language differences between students, and incorporated all of them into a unified educational system that evaluates students by their competence in modern standard Mandarin. The local government, meanwhile, with aims of preserving local language or cultural (tourist) resources, has iconized (Irvine and Gal 2000, 37) Hmong language and associate it with the Hmong identity or Hmong culture. These efforts further project the iconized standard language to recognitions of identity while ignoring the variations of Hmong dialects in oral uses in different areas (fractal recursivity, Ibid., 38). There is no systematic survey to evaluate the education effects of standard Hmong classes or the outcomes of differentiated educations in Xiangxi (the differentiation of elementary educations in Hmong residential areas and county towns). From my own observation the connection between Hmong identity/culture and (standardized) Hmong language has not been ideologically constructed or felt by normal Hmong people in Xiangxi. As indicated in the above samples, it occurred to me that specific local knowledge and the way local Hmong dialect is used are more relevant to their feeling as a Hmong community. But

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[157] See last footnote.

in general they recognize and agree with the national education system. This attitude is in accordance with the attitude of the older Hmong generations who used to recognize and agree with the Confucian education system. But it also occurred to me that in the current national education system Hmong students have a natural disadvantage in understanding the structure of mandarin. This disadvantage is distinctly reflected in their essay-writing exercises in elementary schools. And the standardized Hmong classes do not help. Hmong is a language continuum in South-eastern Asia with dramatic variations between different areas. Alphabetic writing systems are only designed for a few major dialects by Europeans or Chinese government, regardless of other dialects and sub-dialects. What students learn in their Hmong textbook could be very different from the dialect they use in daily contacts. And because there is no requirement of this language skill in important exams, they do not gain much experience of structuring essays or building reading habits with this language. What is worse, Hmong classes may cause alienation in Mandarin education which they will actually use in the future. These minor language ideologies hidden in the framework of standard modern Mandarin (nation) vs. standard Hmong language (locality) could be easily 'erased' (Ibid., 38) by governmental and educational institutions.

The phenomena of linguistic differentiation in Xiangxi discussed above are formed in complicated historical and social contexts. The brief account of Xiangxi's Early Modern history in 2.3.3 showed that the governance of all sorts of military forces and the revolutionary activities brought modernized ideologies to the learned class of Hmong communities in Early Modern Xiangxi. Several national policies formulated by the Republic of China government including the official recognition of the Hmong, language policies and education policies were firstly provoked by members of Hmong communities and then accepted by the government. Most of these policies continue to be used till now. Considering that the Early Modern Hmong elites received both the Confucian education and the nationalist ideologies popular in Early Modern China, while ordinary Hmong people were still mostly blocked out by a boundary inheriting from the last two imperial dynasties (14 – 20th century), the

modernization process of Hmong community were certainly accompanied by ruptures between folk ideologies and modernized ideologies including Early Modern nationalism, democratic thoughts of members in the community and political needs of both the Republic of China government and the current political regime.

Concluding this chapter, it is time to bring together Shen Congwen's poetic reflection of Xiangxi language complex and the current image of language ideologies and linguistic differentiation in Xiangxi. No doubt what Shen Congwen demonstrated was a mixture of literary ideal and his personal imagination. However, as Friedrich and Silverstein indicated, individual literary imaginations usually convoy the potential of the associated languages, or, in other words, the vitality of the language(s) associated with his literary creation (Silverstein 1996; Friedrich 1986; Friedrich 1996). The linguistic landscape in Shen Congwen's works demonstrates several literary traditions and the possibility of keeping their vitality in their modernized forms. Contrary to this image, the present situation of Xiangxi is relatively bleak. The classical Chinese literary forms have disappeared and Hmong oral tradition is passing away speedily; and Old Xiang can no longer inspire people's imagination of ancient Chu culture. No recent local literature shows even half the degree of language hybridization in Shen Congwen's writings.

I mentioned in 4.4.2 the influence of a created public sphere (or an ideology of a constructed public) on standardization. If we consider a public sphere based on literature rather than politics or diplomacy, we can observe that Shen Congwen's literary creation brings about a public sphere where linguistic ideologies coming from the imagined speakers of several languages/dialects have met and shown capacities to exchange messages and thoughts. Naturally, the premise is that these linguistic ideologies were all chronotoped (the Early Modern time-space configuration) and expressed through modern Mandarin. However, their richness, the complexity of their interactions, and the vivid human condition depicted through these interactions are most revealing of the vitality of these languages/dialects.

To extend the above discussion, we might also consider language rights and language diversity itself. It appears that current Chinese language policies towards

recognized minority ethnic groups advocates their language rights with a hidden premise that the targeted communities are language communities and language right only implies the first type of language right: the right of speaking the language. Besides, standardization is a process which has a deep root in the intellectual history of modern democracy which could not be easily refigured. Furthermore, if we take into account the universal phenomena of speech community and Creole languages (mix languages), improvement of the concept of language right on the part of the policy makers seems badly needed. Now we could possibly ask: to what degree can we preserve language diversity? How are we to make our social institutions flexible enough to preserve our precious language diversity which is the key of literature vitality (Silverstein 1996, 289)?

Chapter 5 The Nationalist Ideology in the Literary and Memorial Worlds

As noted in Chapter 2, The construction of Early Modern and modern Chinese nationalism entailed important shifts in the relationship between Han people and minority ethnic groups, which coincided with changes in political and social institutions that both resulted from and triggered transmission of culture and tradition. The previous chapter has just embarked on the discussion about where 'Hmong-ness' lies in current Xiangxi society. In this chapter I hope to develop the discussion of the imagination of 'Chinese-ness' and 'Hmong-ness' embedded in Shen Congwen's literary life. James Fernandez stated that anthropologists find 'cultural worlds are brought into being by the enactment of mixed metaphors' (Fernandez 1991, 11–12). Thinking in this light it is interesting to see how the discourses in Shen Congwen's works have been read – some consistently and some differently – by Xiangxi people, and how the possible original metaphors have become other or conventional metaphors.

A number of scholars have demonstrated that the modern novel is one of the main tools for propagating the practices and ideologies of standardized language under nationalism (Williams 1983; Silverstein 2000; Bakhtin 1981; Foucault 2005). From the perspective of writers, literature is a realm combining individual consciousness, public opinions and institutional guidance. If we think of a public sphere (Habermas 1989) based on literature rather than on politics or diplomacy, we can observe that Shen Congwen's literary creations bring about complex interactions of discourses and social contexts which vividly reflect human conditions in different circumstances. I am very much inspired by Fernandez and Friedrich's argument that great literary art recognizes the immense complexity of human condition; and it is anthropologists' role to insist on a continuing dialogue or dialectic within the discipline as regards what it is to be human (Fernandez 1991, 13; Friedrich 1991). I hope to elucidate what human conditions, as represented in Shen Congwen's works,

have become the metaphor models of 'Chinese-ness' and 'Hmong-ness' for Shen Congwen and Xiangxi people.

5.1 The 'Chinese-ness' in Shen Congwen's Literary Worlds

5.1.1 Heteroglossia and Indexicality in Novel *The Long River*

In his analysis of novel, Bakhtin argued that investigators are confronted with a variety of coexisting styles, which represent different 'voices' (the author's, the characters). It is through these voices that language as a fundamentally stratified and differentiated code, what he called heteroglossia, can enter the novel – as well as everyday talk. Bakhtin also pointed out that the discourses of main character in novels are contextualized by certain social trends of thoughts which were expressed by various discourses. And these discourses in the novel are in a dialogized relation with author's own thoughts and ideologies (Bakhtin 1984, 187). Shen Congwen's literary creation, using his home town as archetype, was twofold. His personal life was a miniature of self-conscious literati who was on the one hand involved in the process of constructing a modern nation, on the other constantly perplexed by the personal feeling towards the people to whom he felt attached. Then how do the voices he put forward relate to the image of Xiangxi Hmong and the national identity? And how does his persona – the born-again 'peasantry' with a capital city background – be part of the literary creation and change the way these voices are recognized?

Bakhtin stated that modern novel appeared to be anti-centre in the very beginning as it took on various discourses and disillusioned the language centre:

> Heteroglossia, as organized in these low genres, was not merely heteroglossia vis-a-vis the accepted literary language (in all its various generic expressions), that is, vis-a-vis the linguistic centre of the verbal-ideological life of the nation and the epoch, but was a heteroglossia consciously opposed to this literary language. it was parodic, and aimed sharply and polemically against the official languages of its given time. It was heteroglossia that had been dialogized (Bakhtin 1981, 273).

Paul Friedrich had a discussion of individual imagination and its importance in

linguistic creativity and speech, which he called 'the central reality'(Friedrich 1986, 16). In the natural process of development of language and literature, the nation's power and its representative in discourses may incessantly trigger the emergence of social genres that overspread and disperse power; but some of these new genres would indicate the boundaries of nation's will and the rivaling force. This already embodies the shifting understanding of power and nation.

In novel *The Long River* (*Chang He*   ) (Shen 2002, Vol. 10), there is a monologue of a craftsman in the middle of his dialogue with the head of the most prominent local Hmong family:

> 'The ancients said officials must not compete with the public for profit, which makes sense. Now things are different, everyone fights for profit.
>
> A long story of this! Thirty years ago, officials wanted their "faces", but now besides faces, they also crave for some bucks with Yuan's or Sun's head[158]. In the past, people would raise fund to erect a stele commemorating a good official's virtuous rule; and he would be escorted by an 'umbrella of the people' when this "azure sky" departed from his term. Nowadays, even the most tyrannical official will force the people to put up an advertisement on the papers. "Once on the paper, never lose in court", the courts will just turn down the complaints. One hands in a complaint to the commissioner's office, and the commissioner will say, "you foolish rustic man, his name is already on the paper, his virtuous governing has been exalted, and now why are you suing the official who took care of you? Should you not be fooled or puppeted by someone?" Case closed.
>
> One can never overcome those colluding officials. Next time when they are selling government bonds by force, every name that appears as the complainer will be called out to buy an extra hundred or so. You say you can't afford, you have no money, and the commission says, "Last time you hired a law monger to write a complaint against your official to the commissioner's office, how could you afford that?"…
>
> If you don't buy the government bond, you are defying the central government's decree. They will have you detained, flogged and hanged up in chain, see how you can bargain with them.'
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[158] Meaning the currency in circulation, Yuan is short for of Yuan Shi-kai (, 1859-1916, the official president of the Republic of China from 1915 – 1916), Sun is short for Sun Yat-sen (see 2.2.1), two presidents in the Republic China

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Here one can observe the multiple non-referential indexes identifying the speaker's social identity. 'The ancients said officials must not compete with the public for profit', 'erecting a stele', 'azure sky', etc., are quotations of older legal proverbs referring to an older time when 'official' denotes different social roles. They reveal that the speaker is well aware of the imperial order and its practices in the local scale. The use of phases like 'once on the paper, never lose in court','commission', etc., on the other hand, suggests clearly the contemporary concerns of how the legal cases are being dealt with and how people are treated by their officials currently. These comments show that the speaker's identity and self-recognition as a normal 'civilian' are consistent and are situated in all historical periods; yet the sense of being one of the oppressed individuals in the new social order is added to this identification. From the dialectical relationship of the micro-sociological indexicalities (Silverstein 2003, 227), or in the Bakhtinian sense the interplays of different voices in 'Heteroglossia' (Bakhtin 1981, 273), we can observe the complex changes of macro-sociological cultural categories.

Following the monologue is a short description of the reaction of the listener:

But Chang Shun[159] is a veteran reader of Shen Bao[160] who has witnessed and experienced the changes over almost two decades. He didn't quite believe in the officials, but he kept a faith of the country. He stayed distant from the officials out of mistrust and fear, yet there was a bit of belief in the country. The faith and love was proportional to his career and temperance, and was contingent with the social experience he attained during twenty years. He had a simple and candid faith, that the country would be much better if it did not suffer wars and remained unified. The fate of a country is like the fortune of a house, you have to let it go slowly, and gradually it will be fine.

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[159] The head of the most prominent local Hmong family in the novel.

[160] Shen Bao   , the Shen Pao newspaper, published from 1872 to 1949 in Shanghai, China. It is the most influential national newsprint in China in the late 19th to early 20th century in the sense of public opinion formation, which experienced the 'advocating imperial' stage (before 20th century) and 'Reform' stage (early 20th century).

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Here is another 'voice' coming from the local elite showing the 'belief' in 'country', which is a concept that has not yet entered (but already sensed by) the craftsman's discourses. And it also reacts to last monograph, strengthening the coexistence of the identity of 'civilian' in the imperial order and the individual in the new social order.

The above paragraphs vaguely showed several different governing techniques between two different political regimes: the late Qing and the Republic governments. In order to comply with the governmental ideology of 'reform', the traditional taxation system was gradually shifted to 'Public Debts'; and the circulation of public discourses in new media was emphasized. A very important point here is that in Xiangxi the concept of 'country' was differentiated with the institutions that the officials represented. Chang Shun compares 'the fortune of a country' to 'a fortune of a house', which is traditionally believed to be connected to the higher decisive force (tianyi 天意, lit. wills of the sky; similar to 'destiny'). It is noticeable that twenty years after the Qing Dynasty, and because of public propaganda, the concept of 'country' reached the bottom of the countryside. Yet it is more or less like a replacement of imperial authority which was guided by the higher decisive force. The practice of power by the officials and different institutions did not completely change the 'faith', which is hard to define, of ordinary people. Shen Congwen would probably wish to express that the 'faith' itself is the core of the morality. This local discourse reveals that the practices of power did not connote the logic and justice of the new political regime to the common people; and the local people considered these happenings as random phenomena in the course of 'the fortune of a country' which is traditionally represented by the head of the house, then the local chieftain, and finally the emperor.

The detailed military and political administration in Xiangxi was also discussed from the viewpoint of local people. Another dialogue in *The Long River* between a boat passenger (in the same place as Shen Congwen in the year 1934 in a boat trip back to Xiangxi) and an old sailor:

> It turned out that the guest was a middle school teacher. After a few more cups, the guest poured out words on the local affairs in recent years. He said, 'It must be! Your place was under the charge of that local chief officer five years ago. He was one of you after all, so he wouldn't take too much. Grabbing enough money, he would naturally wish to do something for real. But he can't take all the credits. Those in the province feared that he had bought over the people, and if his power grew too strong, no one could ever control him, and the chairman was afraid of being overthrown. So two divisions were dispatched to force him to step out of the military power. If he wouldn't leave, war would be waged. You wouldn't know who was going to win if it were waged. The local young officers all said let's fight, solve it on the gunpoint. Your chief however wasn't afraid of the chairman[161], but of the Central Government; he wasn't afraid of man but laws, national and military laws. He thought it better not to upset the Gimo[162] and stepped down peacefully, driving away to the provincial capital to be a commissioner, and left the military sphere. Then the army was soon rearranged and repositioned. Before long came the guards[163]. The chairman wants the guards securely in his hand without becoming an independent force, so he thought up a brilliant idea. He moved around the heads of battalions and

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[161] The title 'chairman' belonging to the head of Hunan Province implied the federated autonomy movement spread in South China in the early modern period. In 1919, Liang Qi-chao (, 1873-1929) raised for the first time the political agenda of 'federated autonomy' (   ) in his *Foreword* to *Jiefang yu Gaizao* (1919) (

). Xiong Xiling (, 1870-1937) was the initiator of the federated autonomy movement, and Tan Yankai (, 1880-1930), then military governor of Hunan, was the first to answer his call. In January 1922, the *Constitution of Hunan Province* was published, which was warmly welcome by the local military governors of Sichuan, Yunan, Guangdong, Guangxi, Zhejiang and Fengtian. The *Constitution of Hunan Province* was promulgated in 1921, and came into effect on January, 1922. Hunan was the first autonomous province in China. The Northern Expedition was resumed by Chiang Kai-shek (see footnote 110) in 1926. Chiang marched into Hunan and gradually brought the whole China under his demand, and so the Federated Autonomy Movement was finally aborted. However, the remaining influence of this movement would not be completely exterminated until the establishment of People's Republic of China. Specifically in Hunan, it generated a different political force and was strengthened by its historical and geographical features (Schoppa 1977; Duara 1996).

[162] Chiang Kai-shek (, 1887-1975), leader of Kuomintang (KMT,   , Chinese National Party), and thus the military and political leader in mainland China from 1925 to 1949. He chaired National Military Commission (   ) with the title 'Generalissimo' since 1938 and the short form 'Gimo' became his popular title.

[163] The KMT constabulary (   ), which was a district military force connecting to the police system. Though 'The Long River' was unfinished, it can be speculated that the main line of plot was the conflict between the constabulary in Xiangxi and the local prominent family.

regiments from time to time, and the troupes too, so that no enduring bonds are forged between the chiefs and the soldiers, troupes and their locations. A good thing indeed: it annihilates all the local military powers, and curbs new ones from emerging; but what is good to the chairman is not necessarily beneficial to the people. The guards become so mobile, always ready to move rather than to defend against the brigands. When they station somewhere, it is only stationing, nothing more. Even if there is a good officer, he knows nothing, not even about his soldiers, how can he take charge? So they develop the kind of irresponsibility…one leaves his wife and children and march far, what for but money? Once he gets the coins he will run away!'

The old sailor didn't find it convincing, so he cut in, 'why haven't these been heard in Nanjing?'

The guy said, 'Old sport, the Gimo is too busy to care such trifle things. Now that we are fighting the Japanese, there are other things on his mind.'

The ship owner asked, 'Since the man has stepped down, and his soldier repositioned to Ningbo and Fenghua, why does the province move more troupes here? Killing the Hmongs again? Enough Hmongs killed, and they are not rebelling!'

'Old Rudder, you must know this better then we outsiders!'

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The 'local chief officer' refers to the warlord Chen Quzhen, whom Shen Congwen used to serve as a secretary for a few years before 1922. This imaginary conversation (which is very probably based on a real conversation) took place in Shen Congwen's second trip back to Xiangxi before the second Sino-Japanese war (1937-1945). It is also an account of the suffering of the grassroots in a game of power. Though Chen Quzhen exploited the old military land farming system to supply his army and increased sharply taxation to supply the new industry and education institutions and laid heavy burdens on the people, Xiangxi was steadily developing in his governing years and Xiangxi people were exempted from wars (Lu 1989; Zhang 2002). Because he was the local protector, bandit gangs were in a relationship similar to 'cooperation' with this military genius. Thus in Chen Quzhen's governing period Xiangxi was in a relatively peaceful time. This conversation records the chaotic phase after Chen Quzhen was forced to deliver his military power to the Chairman of Hunan Province[164] in 1935.

The Republic of China governed mainland China from 1912 to 1949, and the KMT party[165] represented the official regime. But all through this period power over regional administration was shared by different political forces including different branches in the KMT party, the Communist party, local warlords and other forces. The Communist party and the KMT party used different strategies in controlling and motivating local military forces. Generally speaking, Communist armies set up their district bases of operations rooted in local communities; and they controlled and converted local elites who had the economic and political resources. The KMT party, however, performed the ruling from top to bottom which was beyond the rulers' actual capacity and distanced them from local forces (Chen 2002; Esherick and Rankin 1993). Specifically in Hunan Province, the local military forces included the KMT army represented by the constabulary[166], the Communist army which was nominally in cooperation with KMT before and during Second Sino-Japanese war, the branch of

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[164] See footnote 165.
[165] See footnote 166.
[166] See footnote 167.

KMT party which advocated provincial autonomy[167] and the local warlords. In Xiangxi, besides these forces some large local bandit gangs were also active. This conversation displays a local observation of the military conflicts among different parties in Xiangxi, as Xiangxi became an increasingly important strategic position when the second Sino-Japanese war approached. It is implied that the frequent moving of KMT constabulary troops was a practice of power to ensure the dominance of KMT party instead of real administration. According to my interview with a former soldier in the constabulary, the troops usually moved to a new place when the local resources were properly extracted and the recruitment of new soldiers finished (my interviewee said it was rather a trickery of kidnapping young men to the army with promises of money and fame, yet it worked because it was a way of keeping alive instead of starving to death in the countryside). There was another important consideration, that the real danger of confronting the cruel and brave Hmong bandit gangs. 'When such urgent danger approached, we usually shot our gunfire to pretend a little bit fighting and soon escaped before we actually met the gangs', said my informant. From Shen Congwen's account, one learns that the local warlords' army was doing more or less the same thing: to maintained its existence through extracting local resources and compulsive recruitments. Thus the aimless soldiers would hold on to killing games and performed the beheading penalty regardless of its banning by the official political regime (Shen 2002, vol. 9).

At the end of this conversation, it is also remarked that people's memory of the massacre of Hmong people in the anti-imperial revolution (1911) was still fresh. It was a local revolt instigated by insurrectional members responding to the 1911 Revolution (see 2.2.1) which finally overthrew Qing Dynasty and established the Republic of China. The insurrectional members successfully persuaded some military officers and soldiers belonging to the Qing army which garrisoned the Hmong border land and some prestigious local families (including Shen Congwen's family) and organized three rebellion armies. Some of these local revolt people also recruited the fierce and tough raw Hmong youths in the Hmong villages (some were beyond the

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[167] See footnote 165.

border) whom they could trust[168]. After the massive military repression of Hmong rebellions in Qing Dynasty[169], the raw Hmong beyond the border in Xiangxi held hostility towards the Manchu rulers of Qing government even till the early modern period. It was also because of the long-term tension between the Qing government and the Hmong communities in Xiangxi, after this revolt completely failed, the suppression army launched a massacre targeting on raw Hmongs even they were not the major force in the uprising. A great number of Hmong young men were beheaded, among whom most did not actually participated in the revolt (Wu 1992; Ling 2004). Shen Congwen saw the heads and ears of his uncle and cousin in person. There was no official record or oral narratives recorded reflecting the influence of this massacre on local people. The last part of the conversation (The ship owner asked, 'Since the man has stepped down, and his soldier repositioned to Ningbo and Fenghua, why does the province move more troupes here? Killing the Hmongs again? Enough Hmongs killed, and they are not rebelling!') implies a very special mentality of local people. First, it indicates that they did not clearly differentiate the Qing army and the government military force of Republic of China, and they still thought the KMT constabulary was like the imperial army which would kill Hmong people for no reason. Second, it indicates that they never believed that any military force moving in would be protecting them in wars or social changes; they believed that they were here only to perform penalties.

Indeed one learns from the historical records in Xiangxi since the 14th century that the power plays of central institution never stopped going on in Xiangxi. The military settlement and land farming system ordered by central governments of the last two imperial dynasties, the mobilization of different forces in the Republican Period, can all be seen as power performance to ensure control over this sensitive area.

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[168] Most of the Han families and the Cooked Hmong families in towns had Raw Hmong relatives in the Hmong villages (Kinkley 1994).
[169] Especially the 1795 Hmong Rebellion protesting the taxation and land invasion related to Qing's territorial expansion (see 2.3.2 Qianlong-Jiaqing Hmong Rebellion).

5.1.2 The Meaning of 'Chinese Humanness' and Nationalist Ideology

In Shen Congwen's literary world there are very complicated identity recognitions, which well correspond to Early Modern China's entangled social and political configurations. In both his imaginary world and his real life, which are strongly intertwined, what is his imagination of 'Chinese-ness' and 'Chinese humanness'?[170] The above dialogues extracted from *The Long River* clearly protested the social status of the Hmong, and equals the deeds of killing the Hmong to the bureaucratic terrorism which is against 'Chinese Humanness'. Furthermore, the realization of the political order and bureaucrats of a new Chinese nation state is put to the thoughts of a prestige Hmong headman. This clearly shows that China as a nation state incorporating Hmong ethnic group as citizens has been imagined in Shen Congwen's literary world, though the real social process took a little longer. However, the difficult coexistence of the identity as an imperial civilian (sharply distinct from a Hmong in the imperial order) and as a individual in the new social order belongs only to an imagination nurtured by the traditional Han culture, not to one by the Hmong culture. Not only in *The Long River*, but in most of Shen Congwen's literary works, the mental processes and discourses of his characters show similar identity recognitions and imaginations.

It may be helpful, at this point, to draw attention to the debates on 'Modern Chinese Literature', since they show the relationships between the individual aesthetics and institutional realms in modern Chinese poetics. Modern Chinese Literature is a very vaguely defined concept. Usually it denotes literary works written in the media of modern standardized Mandarin. As modern Mandarin was invented for institutional use (against classical Chinese which was rendered to represent imperial culture in the early 20th century, see 2.2.1) , criticisms of Modern Chinese Literature choose criteria to define 'Modern Chinese Literature' in accordance with the ideology of Modern Chinese sovereignty. Ideologies of sovereignty is always

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[170] Ren Xing 人性, Shen Congwen's own understanding of Chinese morality which he quoted in many places in his biography and criticism works. See 1.3 and 2.2.2.

dialogized or conflicted with independent literary creations (Van Crevel 2006). A number of scholars have demonstrated that in the dominant political framework, the centralized bureaucratic power of modern China never really disavowed itself from the imperial mode (Wang 2006; Fiskesjö 2006). One can observe that national propaganda tends to advocate works written in mainland China which it assumes as showing grassroots ideologies; yet minority ethnic literatures and Mandarin literary works written outside of mainland China are seldom included. The propaganda is implemented in various institutional efforts including authoritative literature criticism compilations, textbook compilations and official media broadcasting. From the development of the concept of 'Modern Chinese Literature' we can observe how an implied 'civilization centre', or 'culture centre' is imagined.

Michael Herzfeld thoroughly explored a similar theme in his discussions of Greek nationalism. He presented for us how oral discourse represents creativity rather than conformity through their ambiguity and irony, especially in a writing style that presents itself as oral (Herzfeld 1997, 291). And he also examined how these discourses – so often in direct contravention of state authority – actually constitute the state as well as a huge range of national and other identities (Herzfeld 2005, 2). Shen Congwen's imagination of national identity and the virtues of Chinese people he tried to present draw upon the classical Chinese morality, which is a coherent imagination extending to present time.

5.2 The National Sprit in Reading Shen Congwen

After they had been banned by state censorship for more than two decades, in the 1970s and early 1980s Shen Congwen's works were unknown to most Chinese people. The publication of Hsia Chih-tsing's *A History of Chinese Fiction* in America greatly enhanced the popularity of Shen Congwen's works. Since the Chinese economic reforms in the 1980s, a number of literary styles and ideologies began to be accepted and widely circulated by Chinese society, while Shen Congwen's works were 'reintroduced' to China by overseas literary critics. Since the 1990s extractions from

Shen Congwen's literary works have appeared in high school and university textbooks of Chinese literature.

During my fieldwork in Xiangxi I came to know that although Shen Congwen is very famous – given that many literary images in his works have become local tourist attractions which has made Fenghuang Town a very popular tourist spot – few people have actually read any of his works. For one reason the poetics shown in Shen Congwen's literary ideology and literary language is very complex; for the other, middle age Chinese people had no access to Shen Congwen's work in their school years. Interestingly, I found that I always shared my enjoyment of reading Shen Congwen with scholars born between the 1920s and 1940s.

When I started an interview with a professor in Jishou University who is a prestigious local scholar researching Chinese literature, he asked me: when my high school teacher told me Shen Congwen is a representative Chinese writer and his works are excellent Chinese cultural heritage, did I really identify with this ideology? It took me very long to think, and the answer was no. I began to read Shen Congwen's novels at 10, but only started to understand some of his writings when I read the novel *Long River* in my high school 'Chinese' course. At that stage I was deeply obsessed with Gabriel García Márquez's and Franz Kafka's works, thinking that real literary inspirations and enlightenments only come from encounters with exotic and ironic human conditions. And Shen Congwen's literary worlds, or his special literary images (for a very long time being the source of my imagination of 'Hmong-ness') was appreciated by me in the same way that I admire Márquez's and Kafka's writings. I have been tutored by my mother to read classical Chinese poetry/prose and vernacular novels in late imperial China since I was two or three years old. At the stage of middle school (13 years old) I gradually developed an interest to know more about my grandparents' and my parents' generations. And the books I chose to read were biographies of Chinese military elites in the Second World War, the gazetteers of parents' Hometown, and realistic novels depicting Chinese society from the 1950s to 1980s (ex. Lu Yao's 路遥 novels). My imagination of 'Chinese-ness' is a strange combination of classical Chinese poetics and these realistic documentations of Early

Modern and modern Chinese societies (mainly the parts related to my family). For many years afterwards I have been reading Shen Congwen's works; yet to me Shen Congwen's literatures have always been a sort of literary ideals and sources of imaginations of exotic human conditions.

The old professor then said 'I think what your high school teacher told you is very true to me.' He did not state in detail about his experience of reading Shen Congwen, but briefly told me that he had suffered many years for wars, and then in the 1960s and 1970s he was deprived of his teaching jobs due to the Cultural Revolution. For many years he was reading the 'politically correct' modern Chinese literatures and for most time has been teaching them. He considered most of these writings are really good literatures, ex. Lu Xun and Ba Jin's literary works; but only Shen Congwen's works, which he could not share with others or teach his students for many years, gave him the strongest feeling of vitality and humanness. 'I don't mean that Shen Congwen had the highest achievement in writing among all Chinese writers I've studied in my life. But I always have the best enjoyment of reading his works; and I consider we Chinese would be lucky to go back to the time and place he depicted in his works. To me, what he tried to present is the best Chinese life and humanness', said he.

Figure 5.1 Professor Liu and His Student in Jishou University, 2012

In my interviews with two keepers of Baojing Archives – who are also well-known local scholars studying late Qing and Early Modern Xiangxi histories – I have come across very similar identifications of Shen Congwen's literary creations. That interview was not about Shen Congwen, so our discussion about literature was very brief. They both revealed that when they were going through many years of political turmoil, Shen Congwen's works was the symbol of a pure, innocent and beautiful past of Chinese people. And they still consider the best national spirit they have found is represented by Shen Congwen's literary ideologies.

Figure 5.2 Mr. Tan (Left) and Mr. Wu, Keepers of Baojing Archives, 2012

From these memories and longings I have sensed a separation between Shen Congwen's literary ideal and people's understanding of the literary representations in his works. The audience generally chose to subjectively identify 'peasantry' as national spirit. The rich historical chronotopes embedded in his 'countryman's writing' can hardly be part of the metaphor model of 'Chinese-ness' in our age. And Shen Congwen probably foresaw this at the time he gave up writing.

Chapter 6 Text-building and the Fluidity of Identity

This chapter deals with text-buildings in origin tales and origin myths in Early Modern and modern Xiangxi societies as regards Hmong identity. I propose that in the origin tales of 'the Heavenly Kings' (see 6.1) the location of identity comes not only from each ethnic group's structural position in the Hmong-Han relationship, but more importantly from their perception and recognition of the moral grounds generated in each ethnic group's own history. Case studies of material cultures and modern Xiangxi scholar's text-buildings aim at examining the 'traditionalization' embodied in the modernized reading of ancient myths, oral traditions and material exhibiting. The origin myths contained in both textual and material cultures reflect subtle ideologies of differentiating self/others and the understanding of locality, history and memory.

6.1 The 'Fluid' Identity in Text-building

6.1.1 Theoretical Framework

> The meaning of a text, then, is a set of relations…In a multi-cultural world, a world of multiple epistemologies, there is need for a new philologist – a specialist in contextual relations – in all areas of knowledge in which text-building (written or oral) is a central activity: literature, history, law, music, politics, psychology, trade, even war and peace. (Becker 1980, 138)

Alton Becker's examination of Javanese theatrical discourses proposed that literary texts could deliver the reflexive relationships of different linguistic ideologies, which further turn into a semiotic process with political motility in a performative context. Becker's examination concentrates on the 'constraints', or 'footing' in Erving Goffman's (1922-1982) sense (Goffman 1986), in Javanese drama texts. His premise is:

> In a text, or any unit of artistic expression, 'constraints' are different in different languages and in different cultures. That is, the area of significant variation is not the same in all languages, in all cultures, but it can be discovered by finding what the constraints on the text are (Becker 1980, 139).

Comparing with what Aristotle (Ἀριστοτέλης, 384-322 B.C.) proposed as the most powerful constraint on the selection and arrangement in classical Western drama, namely the linear (temporal-causal) sequence, a Javanese context 'completeness' does not refer to linear (i.e. temporal) causality, but to the completion of the part which was carried out by addressing to the essential audience (the ancients and the dead which connected to the unseen sources of power) in archaic language (Becker 1980, 144,157). Here Becker distinguished the roles of archaic language in different drama traditions, indicating that in a Javanese theatre, archaic language does not only performed the rhetoric function but rather indexes the widest context of the play. (Ibid., 140)

Clifford Geertz (1926-2006) pointed out another dimension of the context of text-building in his reading of Claude Lévi-Strauss' (1908-2009) *Tristes Tropiques* (1955): the relationships of symbolic imageries. Geertz considers that *Tristes Tropiques* not only presents Lévi-Strauss' paradigm of examining the social elements which encode the structure of history, but also opens to variant interpretations of the witnessed social phenomena by innovating the ways different genres interact.

Daniel's ethnographic account of a Tamil community in South India starts with a summary of a creation myth; and the entire writing can be considered as an all-embracing interpretation of this creation myth. When it comes to the aspect of reality in this interpretation, Daniel pointed out that only when the life process becomes the sign process towards the fulfillment of the ultimate idealism embedded in the tale can the tale be a real 'creation myth'(Daniel 1987, 19).

In short, what Becker, Geertz and Daniel suggest are the consideration of the way literary genres interact in the text ('the set of relationships of a text' proposed by Becker) and the way these genres are projected and perceived by the community members (best seen in the sign process proposed by Daniel). Accordingly, historical, ethnographic and literary texts do no simply index the real social relationships, but also influence and be influenced by people's perception of these relationships. To unravel how the texts in interest placed the image of Xiangxi Hmong in a network of social relations, one needs to consider Daniel's taking of the creative individual as a web of significances and Clifford's suggestion to opening to different histories.

Half a century ago, Sir Edward E. Evans-Pritchard (1902-1973) asked anthropologists at large an insightful question: when dealing with a developing social system, 'do we then speak of a society at different points in time or do we speak of different societies?' (Evans-Pritchard 1964, 181) In response to this, Michael Herzfeld described the uneasy coexistence of two historical images in Modern Greek nation-state: 'as the revered ancestor of Europe and as Europe's cultural borderland contaminated by the proximity of the Orient'(Herzfeld 1996, 277). The current nationalism is both deeply influenced and denying these two images. And it is built on a folklore tradition believed to be consistent and testified by local scholars, which represent people. Herzfeld made this observation through examining the currently circulated nationalistic discourses inside local scholars' cycle, which makes one curious about the reaction of larger communities. In his another ethnographic documentation of a Cretan writer, he compared nationalist ideology of the bureaucratic system to village and kin-based idioms within Cretan socio-political identity, which disclosed a history dependent on situational construction even under the same aim of nationalism (Herzfeld 1997, 72, 254). All these trends of nationalistic thoughts derived from a set of widely circulated ideas called 'folk positivism', which are inevitably generated and testified through the creation of locality(Herzfeld 1996, 278).

Following the abovementioned inquires, especially Herzfeld's theory of situational perception/construction of history, I will conduct below a historical survey of the worship of White Emperor Heavenly Kings (Bai di tianwang   , referred to as 'the Heavenly Kings' in subsequent discussions) shared by different ethnic groups in Xiangxi. I aim to reveal the fluidity of identity by reviewing the historical accounts in this study, in particular those of the mythic inventions in Xiangxi – a region which has been a multi-ethnic frontier of the Chinese Empire for a long history.

6.1.2 The 'Heavenly Kings' Texts Revisit

Hmong Rebellion at the beginning of the 19th century left a profound ravage on Qing state governance/institutions in the Hmong land (see 2.3.2). Afterwards, the social and political institutions needed to be re-established. At this point the Qing government incorporated the most important local triple deities, the Heavenly Kings, into the Qing pantheon in order to ideologically advance the integration of Hmong communities into the state's Xiangxi prefecture. In 1798, the Heavenly Kings were officially listed into the fete canon and worshipped in spring and autumn (Xie 2013, 70). These triple gods played a very important role in local juridical affairs up to the early 20th century. Most unsolved lawsuits in Xiangxi Hmong society were sent to them for ordeal. The results were highly respected by all Hmong people (Xie 2013; C. Ling and Rui 2003[1947]). Donald S. Sutton pointed out that the Hmong and the Han[171] were all engaged with the cult of the Heavenly Kings, but these gods had different mythic meanings for the believers of each ethnic group:

> Gods reached across social boundaries, articulating social relations as worshippers cooperated or competed to win their favors. Often, rival gods and cults divided communities or separated them one from the other, but in some places, a single cult framed and channeled subofficial politics within a locality; this was the case in West Hunan [Xiangxi]. In such instances, various groups of believers worshipping a specific god did not necessarily have identical images and notions of that god in mind when they made offerings or bore images in procession (Sutton 2000, 449).

Sutton went on to discuss the collective and competitive myth making by the Han and the Hmong and emphasized the historical and social contexts of these text-makings: the role of the relationship between central government and these ethnic groups who resided in remote places with polyethnic settlement (Ibid., 450).

According to Sutton, the Han immigrants in Xiangxi adopted the Hmong cult of the Heavenly Kings as a means of assimilation in the 17th century; then in the 18th century Han people in Xiangxi were more inclined to appropriate these gods as their

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[171] Sutton also examined the cult of Tujia believers, and their origin narrative of the Heavenly Kings. Due to the scope of this thesis I only review his studies in Han and Hmong cults.

special protectors. Accordingly, the subprefectural officials felt they had to come to terms with the power of these gods (Ibid., 454-458). The first origin tale of the Heavenly Kings told by the Han was recorded in the *Gazetteers of Yongsui Ting Compiled in the Period of Xuantong, 1901-1902*[172] (Ibid., 461).

> [As for] the White Emperor Heavenly King deities, the old men of the villages pass down the tradition that they are surnamed Yang and are men of Chenzhou or, some say, of Jingzhou. The three brothers were generals of the Song dynasty [960-1279], who were full of wisdom and courage. After the Miao came out in revolt they led forces to attack them. They knew the Miao always craved drink and food. Since the weather happened to be severely cold, they slaughtered many oxen and pigs, cooked them and suspended them in the trees. The Miao mob fought each other to drink and eat. They [the brothers] surprised them and inflicted a severe defeat. Thereupon the Nine Creeks and the Eighteen Caverns were opened up, and only five surnames of the scattered Miao survived: these are the Wu, Long, Shi, Liao, and Ma clans of today. Later some disobedient people were jealous of the [brothers'] exploits and presented them with poisoned wine, giving it as if by royal command. The brothers drank it and died simultaneously. It was just at the Small Summer Festival [recorded by Duan Rulin   , 1751].

The first Hmong version of the origin story of the Heavenly Kings is recorded in an ethnographic account (1947) written by the Republican researchers who carried out anthropological surveys in Southwest China (see 2.3.3) in 1930s. This record is an oral narration of Xiangxi Hmong people which has a strong Hmong flavor; but still it is very possible that the Hmong residents who recorded it drew on some circulated Han written texts.

> An old man is unhappy that he has no son. One day he is sitting weeping by the stream when he disturbs the Dragon King in the water, who, knowing the reason for his sadness, sends up a frog to the surface. The frog asks the old man why he weeps and offers to be his son. "How can a frog be my son, and how can you help me work?" Though skeptical he lets the frog persuade him to watch his oxen while he goes home to cook. The frog subsequently shows his skill at plowing and becomes the old man's adopted son. The old man gets a go-between to find a bride for him. The girl is understandably displeased when she sees the groom. On the bridal visit to the natal home, she brings along a bag of stones and tries to kill the frog, but each time he jumps nimbly out of the way. At her parents' house he

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[172] *Xuantong Yongsui Ting Zhi*   .

fails to observe proper behavior, preferring to sit on the stove not a chair, and at night sleeping in the toe of his wife's shoe. After three days, they return home and again the wife tries to stone him to death. The frog tells his adoptive father, who scolds the bride. She holds her peace but is inwardly unhappy. On the occasion of a song festival in the zhai, the wife asks her father-in-law if she can go. After she leaves, the frog takes off his frog costume and shoes, revealing himself to his father as a good-looking young man. He goes off to the festival. The wife is much struck by him and they exchange songs. On return home she tells her father-in-law about the young man. The frog chimes in "Was he like me, like me?" "How could he be like you, you dead frog: he was a handsome youth!" says the wife, trying to hit him with a stick. The father-in-laws colds her to stop hitting his son and she desists. On the second day he again gives her permission to go to the festival. The frog again takes off his frog garb and goes as the handsome youth, and again exchanges songs with his wife. As before, she arrives back after her husband and he interrupts her: "Was he like me, was he like me?" She curses and takes a swipe at him, and is restrained by her father-in-law not to hit "the only son he has."On the third day the father-in-law whispers to her before she goes to turn back when she is halfway to the zhai. She does so, and he shows her the clothes discarded by her husband in the coal shed and tells her to hide them. She goes to the festival and exchanges songs with the young man. Her husband returns first and, as before, looks for his frog clothes. "Without them I cannot transform myself into a frog, and she will know my true form." His father says no one has been back to the coal shed. The wife returns and is delighted. That night, for the first time in 103 days, they sleep together. They have three sons who grow up brave and strong. One day the emperor recruits labor to build houses. They work so vigorously that the emperor is afraid that they will revolt. He gets them drunk and sated with food, and presents them with a flagon of poisoned wine to take home with them. On the road the oldest first tastes the wine, and at once falls dead. The second brother cannot believe that a mouthful of wine could kill someone, and he takes a mouthful himself, falling dead in his turn. The third angrily says "How can a little wine kill someone? I shall drink the whole flagon." He too falls dead. Their parents grieve bitterly but can do nothing. One day the husband asks for his frog costume and shoes. His wife demurs. He says, "Have we not raised three sons together?" She then brings out the frog costume. He puts it on, hops to the stream, jumps in, and disappears. She runs down too late to stop him, and dies of grief beside the stream. According to the Miao, this account concludes, the old man's surname was Yang, and his three grandsons are the Tianwang pusa (Heavenly King Bodhisattvas) (Ibid., 477).

Here it is interesting to see that the Han version traces the origin of the Heavenly Kings to generals of Song Dynasty (960 – 1279 A.D.). In this dynasty both the Confucian scholarship and the classical poetry tradition greatly flourished and some very important Confucian thinkers and composers of lyric poetry had set up high

planes for classical Chinese academics and literature. It is generally believed that the moral and intellectual principles established in this dynasty laid the foundation for the following imperial courts in their state administrations, no matter the ruling class was the Han or other ethnic groups. However, the imperial court of Song faced fierce invaders from the Northern steppes and the whole state was constantly under threat of invasion or was suffered from wars. Accordingly in Song Dynasty the imperial power had relatively weak influence on the inner Hmong land. The Han origin story of the Heavenly Kings especially connects the three gods with Song generals, whose prestige in the inner Hmong land no other military leaders from subsequent dynasties can emulate. This connection in the story has a strong moral dimension. It indicates that the power of their patron gods comes more from the moral principles and high cultures of Song rather than from military achievements (which were few in the Song period). The Han story also conveys a strong impression of Han community in Xiangxi as a discrete moral entity with its own particular origin and principle.

The Hmong origin story of the Heavenly Kings traces the mythic power of the gods to the Dragon King. I have not particularly looked into the dragon belief of Xiangxi Hmong, but from time to time the natives would mention their views of dragon to me. From my perspective the Hmong 'dragon' is incarnation of the spirits which help shaping the attributes of all living things in the universe. This point of view comes both from the traces of the dragon belief in the origin myths of the Hmong and from Hmong people in current Xiangxi. The curator of Xiangxi's Hmong ethnic museum, who is also a scholar of Hmong-Han comparative linguistics, indicated to me that the mythically conceived ancestor goddess in Hmong origin myths is sometimes replaced by 'dragon' in several variants of these myths. And this change, according to my interviewees, is widely recognized by common people. Elder people told me they always grant their hospitality to guests because any of the guests may be a transformed body of dragon that comes to the households in order to see if the Hmong residents are nice and helpful. And if Hmong people visit their relatives or friends in neighboring villages they would avoid getting close to the wells and caves locating inside or near those villages: 'because their dragons are in the wells and

mountains, we should not disturb them or we may be threatened by them and become so scared that we may even lose our minds', as they explained. In the rarely preserved Hmong clan's registers recording the pedigrees of some renown Hmong clans in the period from 18th to 20th century[173], the Dragon King is honored as an ancestor god (see figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1 Images of the Dragon King in a Clan's Register (zu pu   )
Belonging to a Renowned Hmong Clan in Xiangxi (photocopied in 2012)[174]

Considering the variants of the origin myth of the Hmong, if the 'dragon' is related to the very spirit which gave birth to all living things, the power of the Heavenly Kings could be seen as being granted by the decisive power of the universe.

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[173] Keeping a clan's register to record pedigree of a clan is a sign of sinicization to a very high degree, which was a rare phenomenon among the Hmong existing only in the late imperial and the Early Modern periods. Most of the clan registers in Xiangxi were destroyed duing the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976); the remaining ones are rare and precious.
[174] This *Clan's Register of the Long Clan* (*Long Shi Zu Pu*   ) is in possession of Jishou University.

This also explains why the ordeals in front of the shrines of the Heavenly Kings have the right of intervening decisively the Hmong society affairs.

Using Lévi-Strauss's dyadic structure and Bakhtin's dialogic discourses theories, Sutton has already carefully examined the Hmong-Han relationships in each ethnic group's perception and ideologies reflected in these two accounts. I shall also deal with this theme in both the literature and ethnographic materials in this and the next chapters. At this point I focus on the actual political effects these origin stories enact by their specific mythic tracing. I also want to draw upon Patrick Sims-Williams' insightful opinion that the importance of origin stories can be understood in the light of a mentality in which history conferred meaning, and in which history was concerned with origins and derivations (Sims-Williams 1985, 119). The Han and Hmong origin stories of the Heavenly Kings demonstrate the fluidity of identities in Xiangxi, which combine the construction of linear history (military/political expansion and sinicization) and the construction of mythic history (conveying principles and moral grounds). At a literary level origin stories furnished names for patron gods and made possible an ironic mode of narrative, best seen in the tragic foreboding of the origin of the Han Small Summer Festival and the departure of the Hmong Dragon King's offspring from his people. Shen Congwen's inclination to a style of tragedy was also very likely nourished by these Xiangxi legends and tales.

6.2 Resonance and Wonder: A Survey of the Ethnographic Museum in Xiangxi

6.2.1 Traditionalization, Resonance and Wonder

Richard Bauman, by advocating a performance-centered analysis which examines the emergence of rituals and social actions, has provoked a fresh appreciation of the symbolic forms that serve as the bases of interpreting culture (Bauman 1986). He also indicated in his research on the 13th century Icelandic verbal art that he gained his inspiration from Clifford Geertz, who emphasized an integrative perspective in the refiguration of social genres (Bauman 1986, 131; Geertz 1985). In his research, Bauman employed the term 'traditionalization' to elucidate how ancient

knowledge cited in an oral performance in 13th century Iceland had actually generated power through the way in which it had been sung and recognized. He further suggested that 'honor and verbal art in 13th century Iceland constituted an integrated semiotic system organized around performance as the communicative mode by which moral values were enacted…' (Bauman 1986, 146). Again with Geertz's renowned study of the 'theatre state' in Bali, one may have a deeper impression of the social practices that serve as moral pattern and power of constructing shared feeling towards history and memory in an 'imagined community' (Geertz 1980; Anderson 2006).

The phenomena of 'traditionalization' exist in numerous literary traditions. We can start by reviewing the examples most relevant to the understanding of 'history'. An Indo-European comparative mythologist, Georges Dumézil (1898-1986), extensively studied functions of origin myths in medieval Nordic genealogy writing. One of these researches presents an early example of analysis on historical narratives which use ancient knowledge to gain justification in ongoing literary practices and political deeds. The fore-tale in the third volume of Saxo Grammaticus' (c.1150 – c. 1220) *Gesta Danorum* (*Deeds of the Danes*, a genealogy of early Danish kings) is a prose narrative of the life of Hadingus[175]. Dumézil concluded that the saga itself is a complete transcription of an ancient myth in which the common theme of the formation of a typical tri-function Indo-European society is presented. He also suggests that this traditionalization shows a way of connecting Hadingus' kingship to practices of ancient ancestor gods, which specifically honors and justifies his sovereignty. In the mean time, it serves another function: to maintain the pagan ideology of the formation of human society in coexistence with the Christian belief (Dumézil 1973). Some Celticists used similar methods to examine some medieval texts from Ireland and Wales which place a more intertwined relationship of the mainstream ideology (Christianity) and pagan thoughts tracing back to pre-historic times (Ó hÓgain 1979; Carey 1991). Patrick Sims-Williams' intensively studies origin stories in early medieval Wales, and points out that these tales serve the function of fostering a sense of national identity in the island of Britain against Roman and Saxon invasions (Sims-Williams 1985, 111). With numerous examples drawn from historical narratives of Gildas Sapiens (c. 500 – c.570), Geoffrey of

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[175] One of the earliest legendary Danish kings (Saxo Grammaticus 1905 [late 12th - early 13th century A.D.]).

Monmouth (c. 1100 – c. 1155) and the famous medieval Welsh prose collection *Mabinogion*, Sims-Williams also points out that these origin stories, in their specific way of traditionalization, explained and justified the political geography and enhanced the prestige of particular dynasties within Wales (Ibid., 115). Here Sims-Williams provided an insight of looking into how all of these happen in the framework of a larger myth. He suggests that this could be understood in the light of an indigenous mentality in which 'history' confers meaning (Welsh *ystyr* means at the same time 'story', 'meaning' and 'history'); thus there is the 'history'(meaning) of events, but this 'history' did not necessarily depicts what really happened (Ibid., 119). Lévi-Strauss, based on a structural analysis of Indian myths, once suggested a similar approach as he reminded his readers to cherish different branches of narratives within a single regional history and discovered the repetitive mythical elements (Lévi-Strauss 2001, 17–18). These elements are samples of traditionalization which convey the meaning of history in indigenous people's understanding; or, in Lévi-Strauss' words, '(to assure) the future will remain faithful to the present and to the past' (Ibid., 18).

Drawing from the above review, the term 'traditionalization' can be approximately defined as 'assigning knowledge from the past to gain power and justification for the present'. To form a framework of analyzing how 'traditionalization' works in the coming discussion of textual and material cultures in the Hmong community, I employ another two terms *resonance* and *wonder*.

> By resonance I mean the power of the displayed object to reach out beyond its formal boundaries to a larger world, to evoke in the viewer the complex, dynamic cultural forces from which it has emerged and for which it may be taken by a viewer to stand. By wonder I mean the power of the displayed object to stop the viewer in his or her tracks, to convey an arresting sense of uniqueness, to evoke an exalted attention (Greenblatt 1991, 42).

Greenblatt indicates that the power generated by two sorts of museum displays on visitors differs due to the different purposes of the exhibition. Using an example of exhibitions in Jewish synagogues in Prague displaying properties which aim at arousing memories of collective tragedy happened to the Jewish people in Eastern Europe in the 20th century, he suggests that these exhibitions aim at triggering a sense

of immorality which stops visitor to judge individual exhibited items by their aesthetic or intellectual value. In this way, the power generated (*resonance*) over visitors functions to incorporate all visitors into the implied ideology of mourning for the lost and criticizing violence (Greenblatt 1991, 46). On the contrary, another sort of power (*wonder*) was aroused by the uniqueness, authenticity, and visual power of the masterpiece. This power could be widely observed in exhibitions in the dominant aesthetic ideology of the West; and it mainly aims at fostering the prestige of the artists and the desire of possession of visitors (Ibid., 52).

Decisions about how cultures are presented, in both literary and material presentations, reflect deeper judgments of power and authority. As a range of recent researches on collections and display show, sometimes it is easier to understand the political and social implications of such decisions when one looks at the museums of other cultures (cf. Van der Grijp 2009; Perkins and Morphy 2006; Firth 1992; Karp 1992). Comparing to literary presentation, the museum effect is a more independent force, as Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine state that 'if it can aid or impede our understanding of what artists intend and how art means' (Karp and Lavine 1991, 14). Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett and Donna Haraway also pointed out that exhibitions are powerful meaning making processes which conveyed philosophical ideologies of their times (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998; Haraway 1984). Besides the ideas and logics embedded in the design of museum exhibitions, one may further consider how the curator and audience participate in the processes of constructing their own history and identity. James Clifford employed the concept of 'contact zone' to discuss how museum space connects the intentions of the object's producer, the exhibitor's arrangement and display of the objects, and the assumptions of audience (Clifford 1997).

The following section endeavors to discuss the two sorts of power, 'resonance' (extremely context-oriented) and 'wonder' (aroused by the (re)presentations of objects themselves) embedded in the Xiangxi Hmong ethnography museum exhibitions. In this museum 'traditionalization' takes place in the textuality of history, which also allows us to review how the museum effect ('resonance') in our time

differs from powers in the texts revealed in previous historical periods. The meaning presented and negotiated by the displayed material objects ('wonder'), however, refers to different aspects of self-recognition of nationalistic ideology. I shall also discuss the agency of different generations of Xiangxi local scholars in their creative explanations of their past and material cultures. Before the essential analysis, I shall give a brief overview of the history and political geography of the district in interest.

6.2.2 The Shan Jiang Region

Shan Jiang Miao (Hmong) Minority Museum was located in Shan Jiang town (Ba Gu Hmong Zhai,　　　　　), 20 kilometers Northwest to Fenghuang Town (see Map 1.2). The region has its own military and ethnic traditions. The highlands of Xiangxi are a natural continuation of the north-western Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau (see Map 6.1). These mountains lie far beyond the control of many ancient Chinese dynasties, and once provided a habitat for the mountain-dwelling Hmong people. Shan Jiang is located in the mountainous area as part of this geographical continuum. Since Song Dynasty (960-1279), Hmong has been the major ethnic group in Shan Jiang, geographically adjacent and culturally connected to the Hmong communities in Guizhou. Even in the twentieth century, this land was still referred to as 'Miao borderland' or 'Miao territory', together with the least sinicized Guizhou in the Southwest (Q. Shi 2009). Accordingly the region east of Fenghuang was called 'the Inland' [176]. There remains to be seen the ruin of a long earthen wall structure, stretching over 170 km, northwest of Fenghuang: it was the Han-Hmong division border established in 1615 referred as the 'South Great Wall' or 'Border Wall in Hmong Land' by scholars and considered a division of 'the raw' and 'the cooked' inside the Hmong (see Map 1.2). The Hmong territory strides over three provinces: Hunan, Guizhou and Sichuan, mostly in lands too remote for the central governments of imperial dynasties before 20th century to exert effective control, where borders

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[176] Fu di　　. This term was originally used in the military reports submitted to central government of Qing Dynasty, implying that the mountainous area west of Fenghuang were residential area of people not being under control; and the area located inside of the civilized region. See *Miao Fang Bei Lan*　　　　　 (*Preparatory Materials for the Defence Against the Hmong , 1795-1821*).

between counties are drawn according to natural mountain lines, therefore even without inter-ethnic conflict, the place is notorious of breeding riots and sheltering bandits. The wild terrain was ideal for outlaws and rebels to hide themselves, whereas the frequent upheavals in this borderland enabled them to show up on public stage from time to time.
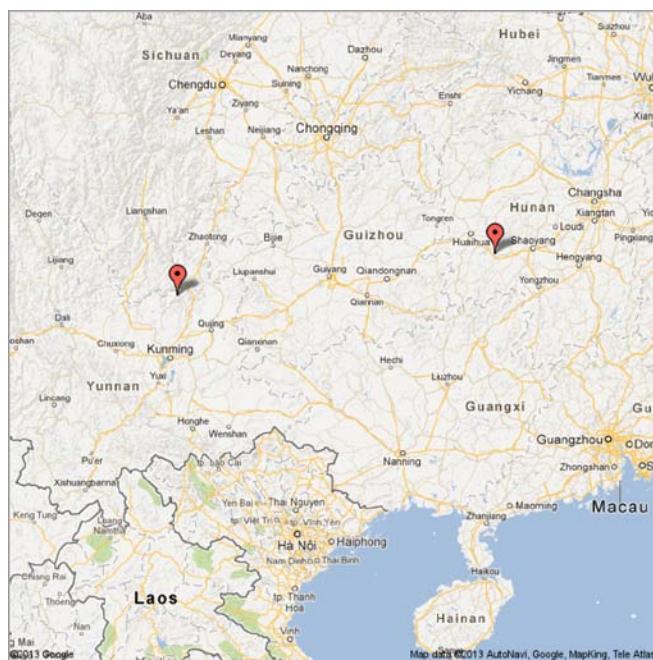
Map 6.1 Yungui Plateau and Xuefeng Mountain (Google Map)

Xiangxi was considered a unified entity in history. Since Hunan became a province in 1644, Xiangxi was under the designation Chenyuan Shuijing Bingbei Dao, although most of its western part was governed by local chieftains (Tusi) rather than the Manchurian-Han officials (see 2.3.1). However, Shan Jiang area has a special geography which facilitates the diversity of living environments and thus bred different sorts of gangs, guerillas and military forces since the 14th century. From then on Shan Jiang has had a dense Hmong population and became a buffer zone for blocking out the Hmong and other minority ethnic groups who had their own way of living and resisted the spreading of central government force of various dynasties till the early 20th century. Local Hmong chieftains organized different sort of military forces or armed bands, some of whom left traces in the popular oral tales. Several of them were called 'King of the Hmong', reckoning their special power of controlling

local forces and rituals (Luo and Wang n.d.; R. Wu 1985). In the Early Modern period, these local forces from time to time got involved in the conflicts between greater powers and helped determine the configuration of powers between national parties, warlords and invading foreign forces. In this way a few local Hmong chieftains played an important role in the history of early 20th century Central China. The same individuals, during their interaction with external powers, imported novel social ideologies into local systems, which led to the construction of new army, new industries, new education system and a fresh imagination of identity (Zhang 2002). However, Shan Jiang still keeps its characteristics of Hmong culture and preserves a special landscape decorated by relics of strongholds, defense fortifications, and traditional Hmong architectures.

The museum is founded in 2002 by the Vice-President of Xiangxi Autonomous Prefecture, Mr. Long Wen-yu, and funded by the donation of local celebrities. Mr. Long claimed that he acquired the idea of building this museum from Shen Congwen. It stands right beside the stronghold of the last generation of 'the King of the Hmong', which also becomes part of the museum exhibition. The exhibition includes three parts: (1) an introduction of Hmong history from pre-historical period to Early Modern period in several sections. The part of Early Modern history is mainly put in the stronghold which keeps its decorations intact, with elaborate explanatory texts. (2) An exhibition of Hmong folk life, including inner household decoration, wooden furniture, tools and a live embroidery show. (3) Organized half day tour to the traditional Hmong Zhai (congregated household). Besides the main exhibition, a wide stage is set in the courtyard of the museum performing Hmong rituals and dances for every organized tour. The exhibitions contain a text-building strategy in composing narratives regarding Hmong origin and history based on modern nationalist ideologies; they also contain a specific material culture demonstration.

6.2.3 The Ethnographic Exhibitions

6.2.3.1 Diverted Versions of Hmong Creation Myths

In the first two halls, wall boards show the Hmong origin myth. These stories are written down by local scholars led by Mr. Long Wen-Yu. Mr. Long once studied and worked in the Institute of Ethnical Linguistic Studies in Central Minzu (lit. ethnic) University of China. He is therefore familiar with the recognized methodology of studying the origin, evolvement, classification and distribution of the Hmong languages. He also specializes in comparative studies between Hmong and Han languages. He pointed out that some of the phases in *Songs of the South* which are unexplainable in classical and modern Chinese languages can be elucidated by comparing with the extant Hmong languages, and deducted that these phrases actually represent a predecessor of Hmong languages, identifiable with the recognized traces of Chu language in *Songs of the South*[177] (W. Long 2001; Yang 2004). His more in-depth research focuses on the comparisons between local oral tradition and *Songs of the South*; the result of his comparison implies that Hmong people in China originated independently and remained a distinctive and continuous culture.[178] Based on these and similar researches by local scholars, the museum introduction compiled a story of the origin of Hmong people in China.

According to the exhibition boards, the Yellow Emperor is the ancestor god of all Huaxia Chinese people, and the wilder legendary tribal leader Chi-you was Hmong people's. They fought side by side to defeat the 'dragon' (the symbolic collective name of plagues) which infested the mainland, as told in *Five Imperial Biographies* in *Records of the Grand Historian*, compiled in West Han Dynasty (202 B.C. - 9 A.D.) [179]. These two ancestor gods then started fighting with each other for land and other treasures. Their fight lasted for a very long time and ended when Chi-you was defeated and beheaded. This part of writing is based on *A Biography of Chi-you* from *Grand History* of Late Song Dynasty (1127-1279)[180]. The maple wood being used to chain Chi-you were thrown away and grew into woods. The 'Butterfly Mama' hatched from one of these maple trees. She was in love with the bubbles in the pool

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[177] See 2.3.1, 3.2.1 and 4.2.1 for the introductions of Chu culture and Chu language.
[178] http://www.cnki.com.cn/Article/CJFDTOTAL-JSDX198201012.htm, last retrieved: March 18, 2013.
[179] *Shi Ji - Wu Di Ben Ji* 《   》(*Records of the Grand Historian: Five Imperial Biographies*).
[180] *Lu Shi - Hou Ji Si Chi-you Zhuan*   (*Grand History: Postcript IV, Life og Chi-you*).

and conceived twelve eggs. The first men and women of the Hmong and other animals came from these eggs. These people were expelled and forced into six exiles and long migrations before they dispersed into the mountainous area. In one of these exiles the whole world was drown by a great flood and only a brother and a sister survived. They somehow conquered the mental shame and unified for the sake of the continuance of the Hmong. This part of writing, except the part of 'Butterfly Mama', is based on *Book of the Great Wilderness: South* from *Collection of the Mountains and the Seas*, compiled in early Han Dynasty (206 B.C. – 9 A.D.)[181]. A lot of pictures of Chi-you were shown on the exhibition boards to demonstrate his mythical and powerful aspects. And in the next exhibition hall of embroidery, live performance of knitting and decorating traditional Hmong clothes employs various butterfly images to strengthen the mythology theme (see Figure 6.2 and Figure 6.3). The exhibition also includes another wide-spread story of Pan Hu, the canine deity which the Hmong and other minority ethnic groups in the area revere as their ancestor. The myth of Pan Hu also traces back to the pre-historical time of the Yellow Emperor. The story is quoted from *Treatise on the Southern Barbarians* in *Book of the Latter Han*, compiled in Former Song Dynasty (420 - 479 A.D.) which records tales of the people in the South from 25 to 220 A.D.[182]. It tells about the 'divine dog with five colours': the Yellow Emperor's descendant, Emperor Gao Xin (   ), suffered from a plague imposed by a Southern chieftain which deeply threatened his realm. Thus Emperor Gao Xin announced that he who saves his realm from the crisis would be awarded with land and the hand of his daughter. At the time there was a dog in the palace which was transformed from a bug living in the prophetess' ear. It was called Pan Hu (   ) because of the metamorphosis and the five colours on his fur. Somehow the dog obtained the enemy chieftain's head one day and put it in front of Emperor Gao Xin, who was reluctant to marry his daughter to a dog. However, the princess pointed out that an emperor should not withdraw his words once they were said, and volunteered

[181] *Shan Hai Jing - Da Huang Nan Jing* (*Collection of Mountains and Seas: The Classic of Great Widerness South*).

[182] *Hou Han Shu - Nan Man Zhuan* (*The Book of Latter Han: Treatise on the Southern Barbarians*).

to leave with Pan Hu. This couple hid themselves in the mountains in the south and had twelve children who were shown to the emperor after Pan Hu's death. Emperor Gao Xin would like to give them land which he promised to the one who saved him from the crisis. However, these men and women preferred to live in the wild and marry each other. Emperor Gao Xin thus gave them the right to live in the mountainous area in the South and granted them the clan name *Man* (，lit. barbarian). They became the ancestors of ancient Southern ethnic groups.

Figure 6.2 The Legendary Battle between Yellow Emperor and Chi-you (with horns) on a picture brick from Han Dynasty (206 B.C. –220 A.D.), 2011, museum photocopy

Figure 6.3 The Embroidery Room in Shan Jiang Miao Minority Museum, 2011

The creation myths are constructed with clues drawn from historical scriptures written by ancient Han historians. These scriptures are also considered to be the

canonical accounts of prehistoric China. For this reason, the version of the creation myths here appeared to be very authoritative and aroused the 'resonance' (Greenblatt 1991) of the viewers. These narratives show that the Hmong in China has its distinct origin which could be traced to a celebrated ancestor. However, at least to my knowledge these ancient scriptures have never directly indicated that Chi-you was the ancestor god of the Hmong or any ancient Southern ethnic groups. There are only superficial similarities between the image of Chi-you and images of ancient barbarians (mostly in the South or the Southwest) outside the civilization of the ancient Chinese Empire. It seems very creative to anchor the origin of the Hmong to a mythological figure distinctly different from the Yellow Emperor, who has been successfully modelled as the common ancestor of Huaxia (, currently representing China or Chinese civilization). It also strongly conveys an understanding of the Hmong-Han relationship: the conquered and the conqueror. The version of the origin myth of ancient Southern ethnic groups usually recognized (among several versions recorded in the historical canons) is the Pan Hu story. Generally this story implies that the Southern ethnic groups were granted their rightful lands and resources as a reward to their ancestor god's divinity and bravery. However, it is only peripherally mentioned in the exhibition as 'some Hmong people in China also believe that they are the descendants of Pan Hu'.

The 'Butterfly Mama' myth is also very interesting. A recent study of the constructions of Hmong myths points out that the concept of 'mother butterfly' came from the systematic compilations of Hmong songs and myths from 1950s to 1980s – the period of ethnic identification and nationalism construction after the establishment of the People's Republic of China. The phonetic record of 'mother butterfly' in Xiangxi Hmong language is *Mais Bangx Mais Liuf*, in which *Mais* means 'mother', *Bangx* means '(the spring) flower' and also is a very common Hmong female name, *Liuf* is a common designation of female. Mais Bangx Mais Liuf should be scanned as 'a Hmong mother goddess who was called "flower" because she was born in spring' or unspecifically 'girl'. And the author Wu Xiao-dong – a Xiangxi Hmong scholar who currently works in Institute of Ethnic Literature, Chinese Academy of Social

Sciences – proposes that this misreading was caused by the similarity of the pronunciation of Mais Bangx Mais Liuf to the pronunciation of butterfly (Gangb Bax Liuf) (X. Wu 2010). And according to Wu Xiao-dong, though some Han literati related Chi-you to ancient Hmong or southern barbarians, the claim of Chi-you being the ancestor god of the Hmong was made popular only by this period's scholarship (Ibid, 2010). Both the narratives from my interview records and the recent publication of ancient Hmong ritual songs (S. Shi, Shi, and Long 2012) show no trace of the images of Chi-you and the 'Mother butterfly'. I have also discussed the dragon belief of Hmong people (see 6.1), and concluded that in some variants of Hmong creation myth the dragon spirit takes the role of the ancestor goddess. In regard to the same creation myth exhibited in San Jiang museum, it is also very interesting to see the direct allusion to classical Chinese archives stating dragon as the incarnation of plagues. It was equally fascinating to hear the younger generation in Shan Jiang and Fenghuang claim that they were descendants of mother butterfly and to see that the Hmong embroidered cloths with butterfly images are traded with indications that the cloths were made with images of Hmong ancestor totem. I consider these phenomena the result of the influence of the folklore publications from 1950s to 1980s, or even directly of the influence of this museum.

Different creation myths unlike the museum texts were shown in the oral materials collected by local scholars in the 1990s and the 21st century. In the collection of tales and songs from oral performances of a Hmong song champion and wizard named Shi Shou-shan, who contributed more than three hundred ritual songs of Bax Deib (Hmong or Han shaman in Xiangxi Area), one can get a glimpse of how the stories are probably known and sung by indigenous people. It is said that the world and all natural phenomena originated from some substances in the universe, of which the first men came at the last. And all ancient people were descendants of the only survivors of the fourth generation of the first men – *Ned Ghunb Mat Ghu-oud*, literally meaning the Dog Father and the Ghost Mother (in some finer versions Deity Mother). The survivors were brother and sister, who had sexual intercourse to breed human descendants. And because of their incest they were called with humiliating

designations, namely 'dog father' and 'ghost mother'. They lived in a cave in the Southern wilderness and bred twelve children, from whom the mother kept the secret of their father because of shame. These children were scorned by animals around them and realized the truth, which led them to kill their own parents. Then they dissected their parents' bodies and took out books and ancient written characters; and then they left the caves. The younger six children succeeded in cheating the elder six and occupied the things they took from their dead parents, which brought them literacy. When they left the caves the younger children also stole the wooden boats which belonged to the elder six and left their iron boat. Therefore, they occupied the central areas and started to live an enlightened life. The elder six children lagged because of the speed of iron boats and had to wander in the wilderness and engage themselves into labouring works. Thus the elder children became the ancestors of Hmong people and the younger ones ancestors of Han people. The ancient Hmong people were forced to take seven major migrations because of the warfare with other ancient ethnic groups. In the seventh migration some Hmong communities entered ancient Xiangxi and finally settled there (S. Shi, Shi, and Long 2012).

The images of ancient Hmong people in a picture of prehistoric China brokenly shown in these Hmong songs seem to be a mixture of the incest myth and the Pan Hu myth which appear in separate historical accounts. However, the theme of sibling disputes is not found in any of the historical scriptures. Wang Ming-ke divides the origin myths he collected from the oral narratives of several current South-western Chinese minority ethnic groups into two different types, one with the theme of 'sibling ancestors' and the other with the theme of 'heroic ancestor'. And he indicates that the former implies the originally equal identities and the latter differentiation of identities, which focuses on the tension between different existent communities; the latter presupposes that each community originated from a distinct heroic ancestor god and focuses on demonstrating the characteristics of different communities (Ming-ke Wang 2006; Ming-ke Wang 2012). The text-building strategy of the museum focuses on the 'heroic ancestor' theme and favours the mythological figure who was the major enemy of the Yellow Emperor but not the divined dog who gained the right of the

land through serving another mythological emperor of Huaxia. The local oral tradition, however, cares more about an understanding of the inequality in the relationships between the Han and the non-Han ethnic groups.

It is worth noting that all of these ideologies have something in common, which is a pre-supposition that the Hmong is a well-defined ethnic community with certain consistent and distinct civilization or tradition. The historical scriptures dating from ancient time to the 18th century usually described people in Xiangxi with a very general term, the 'Southern people' or 'Southern barbarians' (the Hmong was one of them) (Kinkley 1994). Only after the local rebellion against the central government force in the late 18th century and the building up of administration network in the early 19th century that the rebel army were described as Hmong army[183]. It was at the same period that the 'Hmong Border Wall' became the division of the 'Raw Hmong' and the 'Cooked Hmong' (Giersch 2010; J. Long 2009). Comparing these historical documentations and the museum texts, I propose that the point of divergence is important. The oral tales sung by ordinary people try to explain the origin of inequality between Hmong people and Han people, seemingly being influenced by the long term unstable relationship between residents and administrators from central governments since ancient time up to the 20th century. An older generation of local scholars maintain that Hmong people had a sense of shame on barbarism and were always managing to advance to the 'higher civilization'. The local intellectual elites were normally trained in the central bureaucratic system and influenced by the Confucius morality before the 20th century, and adopted all sorts of ideologies including communism in the 20th century. The latest local scholars, more in contact with the mainstream scholarship of modern ethnography, emphasize the uniqueness and wholeness of an independent Hmong civilization, though they conclude it as a phenomenon of the diversity of Zhonghua Civilization.[184] These origin stories, in each of their specific way of traditionalization, explain/justify the political geography and reflect the delicate feelings hidden in social memories which are the bricks for

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[183] *Ping Qian Ji Lue* (*A Brief History of the Suppression of Qianlong-Jiaqing Hmong Rebellion, compiled in 1850-1879*).
[184] A term used to state the unified nationalistic ideology in current China.

constructing a common history to convey the meaning and social relationships each of these communities wish to demonstrate.

6.2.3.2 The Exhibition of 'The King of the Hmong'

The other exhibition is in the stronghold of the last generation of 'The King of the Hmong', Long Yun-Fei (1896-1951). This legendary Hmong chieftain participated in the serial of local wars supporting the 1911 Revolution (see 2.2.1) in Hunan. He then thrived in 1920s to 1930s as leaders of local brigands living in the mountainous area around Shan Jiang, and also played a role as regional administrator. During First and Second World War, he attended military service in the army of Republic of China from time to time, and once wore the head of Major General. After the establishment of People's Republic of China, he stayed as the head of local military forces and confronted the communist army. In the new government's last actions of purging brigands in the border areas of Central and South-western provinces he committed suicide. Through all his career and life he remained a very controversial figure. The exhibition started with two exhibition boards outlining his life history similar to what is concluded above, adding the claim that his final resistance towards the communist army was because of the conspiracy of an American spy. The main body of the exhibition was his stronghold and the inner decorations of his own household which are considered to be an exemplar of Hmong style. In Greenblatt's sense the items on display would help arouse people's 'wonder', which is a sense of evaluating the specific inner qualities of the items and attributing them to the characteristics described in their introductions (Greenblatt 1991). For better analyzing the story of Long Yun-fei on exhibition, it is helpful to look into other images of Long Yun-fei in the social memories and compare them to the exhibiting image. Before this can be done, a little historical and social background is needed.

In Early Modern period Xiangxi still remained the military-political administration system and the military land-farming system (see 2.3.2).And the

warlord's enclosed governance was not in the same pace with the administration policies made by central government of the Republic of China. This political pattern stifled local minority ethnic groups' connection to central political system, save for the patterns set by local military elites (Ling and Rui 2003[1947]). Thus young Hmong males either entered a local army for military achievements which they did not acknowledge the objects[185], or they followed another tradition of becoming wandering brigands hidden in mountainous areas and made their living by rubbery and killing (Kinkley 2000). According to the specific historical and social contexts, all sorts of propagandas appeared and it was hard for common people to judge these propagandas. From my interviews with old people in Shan Jiang and Fenghuang it seems that local people in the Early Modern period could vaguely differentiate the deeds into 'the good' and 'the evil'; and it also seems that they mixed up all sorts of military/political forces. Thus the lore of local brigand chieftains gained exceptional popularity, because those who controlled the wandering outlaws and had a sense of organization would set up criteria of area administration and actually regulate the merchants and the rise and fall of different military forces. In Victor Turner's sense, this is a time of social turmoil and a liminal phase when traditional heritage system was easily disturbed and the novel social system has not yet been set up (Turner 1977). Thus a life in delinquency bands means a rite of passage for brave young Hmong males, and a place to know society and morality (Gennep 2000[1909]).

Below is the story of Long Yun-Fei I concluded from my interviews with old people in Shan Jiang and Fenghuang. Long Yun-fei was called 'the King of the Hmong' and was outstandingly gifted in military strategies in small-scale wars taken place in mountainous areas. Though he accumulated his wealth through regular robbery and the illegal demands of area administration fees from local households, he was known for his sense of justice. It is said that he never robbed the poor or the integrity. Every brigand chieftain has a certain feature of local morality. Long

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[185] Shen Congwen noted in his biography that those junior soldiers did not know to what political entity the local armies belong; and they wandered around 'clearing the country', taking money out from rich landlords and maintained a very special relationship with the lower class of society. Though they did frighten away organized outlaw groups, they did not have a doctrine or any particular object. The friendship of them seemed to be the only source of power unifying them together (Shen 2002, Vol. 13).

Yun-Fei was famous for his soundness. Local old people still complemented him for his adherence to every word said by himself for anyone. And trustworthy is one of the top morals Hmong people cherish for best. Besides all these, Long Yun-Fei had successfully organized several guerrilla attacks against Japanese transportation armies in the 1930s, which made him be recognized by the Republic of China as a war hero. For this reason, he also became a legendary figure in numerous local tales. After People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, the national army was in charge of sorting out local political and administrative figuration, which required a new relationship with local forces. The communist army included or defeated all sorts of local military forces before the end of 1950s. After nearly half century of wars and social changes, it would not be easy for local chieftains to see through the situation and choose their sides. Long Yun-Fei finally decided to join the military forces of the defeated political regime and got himself killed.

Oral narratives have always been an important genre of delivering and transmitting ideologies between generations in Xiangxi Hmong communities (see 4.4.3). Storytelling in family gathering remains the key process of socialization as long as this type of social life maintains (Clausen 1968, 5). I was entertained with tales of Long Yun-fei's dramatic life from both old people and younger generations. It appeared to me that the most important characteristic to local Hmong people is Long Yun-fei's soundness. In other words he remained faithful to his friends and to the people he was governing. And this characteristic was strongly connected to 'Hmongness'. My interview records contain the frequently appearing sentences like 'Long Yun-fei was very royal to his friends, just like a real Hmong person', or 'He never failed to keep any word he said to his men; and he never tolerated insults on Hmong people'. The other important characteristic is that Long Yun-fei had a sense of justice in his governance even he was actually in charge of a local brigand. This is in keeping with the Lilao institution prevalent in traditional Hmong society (see Footnote 86) which relies on the prestige of the chosen senior of the house to do legal arbitrations. Whether the legal statements and judgements are successful depends on the chosen masters' (Lilao's) arguments with the different sides of quarrels. The

masters would cite the old traditions and examples of settled lawsuits in lyric songs, and the persons involved or implicated would reply in equally well-composed improvised songs. The final settlement would be reached with people's approval, and most importantly with both sides' consents (S. Long, Long, and Shi 2004). In several cases, the conclusions were drawn and some families' benefit was considered to be vitiated; these families might get the masters into big trouble and it could not be redeemed. Up to the 20th century, the jurisprudent master have a name in Xiangxi Hmong language called the 'arrow-bearer', meaning that there could be a shoot to them for the bad judgements which harmed clans' benefit and dignity[186]. The masters were selected from courageous and venerated volunteers – which were few – without any election.

The Lilao institution has declined since the Republic period. But according the interviews of old people and middle age people in Shan Jiang and Fenghuang this institution was maintained till 1980s in Xiangxi. Before 1980s the local gang fights between different Hmong clans were mainly settled by Lilaos; and non-Hmong officers found it very difficult to carry out their works in Hmong areas without Lilao's help. These phenomena gradually disappeared when the life-style of Hmong people changed due to the increasing number of Hmong youths leaving the hometown and making money in big cities since 1990s. In Chinese rural areas, especially in the autonomy prefectures of minority ethnic groups, law system is still a mixture of the general national law and the conventional customary law up to now. The former can reach as far as 'county' or 'town'; in lower political units, villages, there are law mediators appointed by the county government who intercede local affairs. There are also head of the villages and secretaries which are politically subjected to central government and supposedly selected by villagers in elections. However, the local customs are so stable that the law mediators and village principles still have to cooperate with the jurisprudent masters to settle local lawsuits. Here I have another documentation of a venerated old man who had once taken on many roles: the witch doctor, the Lilao and the village principal. He is also renowned for his skilful verbal

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[186] Quoted from the interview with Professor Long Xing-wu of Jishou University, Xiangxi.

art, which can both call back the souls of sick people and settle arguments. As a village principal, he was forced to resign his job when one of his daughters violated the birth control policy in early 1980s. When he gave up the job in the village political agency, the law mediator and the jurisprudent master made a great effort stopping villagers from revenging the officials in the town government.

Back to the Long Yun-fei story, the image of this legendary figure remaining in local oral narratives shows a quality of soundness and an embodiment of the Hmong concept of justice which is in keeping with a very old legal institution of Hmong communities. This is different from the emphasis of the image appearing in the Museum exhibition. The museum texts mostly emphasize Long Yun-Fei's military strategies and brave deeds in the second Sino-Japanese War. And it is claimed that this Hmong leader was cheated by one of his chieftains on what the communist army intended to do with them if he was subdued. According to the poster information apparently the new government had the best intention and a policy with mercy. But this chieftain told Long Yun-Fei that there would be a massacre after subjection and he needed to protect his men. Thus Long Yun-fei made the final resistance and his whole troop was destroyed. The betrayal chieftain, however, was suborned by an American spy. This emphasis connects the characteristic of bravery to 'Hmongness' and indicates the contribution of the Hmong to the nation. And the inner decorations of Long Yun-fei's household on display as exemplars of Hmong arts strengthened the impression that his personal characteristic represents the general features of Hmong people.

The different depictions of the same figure reflect different understandings of Hmong identity. The museum exhibitions may be a good example to demonstrate how the 'history' of the Hmong was re-written in a modernized style, and is probably going to be stabilized as a standardized version of 'the history of the Hmong'. After somegenerations, the social memories of the different historical images recorded above may disappear and only the standardized version will stay. There may also be newer versions of 'the history' emerging and replacing the currently modernized image. Looking back to Sims-Williams' study, one may find a very good explanation

that here different versions of 'the history' convey meanings of specific social contexts and people's sentiments.

6.3 New Space and New Approaches

The above surveys mainly target the text-making taking place in current Xiangxi; the narratives analyzed above are still the most popular and representative registers about Hmong identity. However, the younger generation of Xiangxi Hmong scholars have taken advantages of internet space and have started their new approaches to seeking the nature of Hmong identity. Among them Mr. Wu Xiaodong has already won a reputation by writing influential academic essays online on the understandings of Hmong identity.

Wu Xiaodong currently works for the Institute of Ethnic Literature, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and he publishes most of his academic essays on the official website of the institute. I have already cited his analysis of the misreading of Hmong origin myth which includes an ancestor goddess Mais Bangx Mais Liuf (see the discussion of the theme of 'butterfly mama' in 6.2.3.1). He argues that the popularly received image of 'mother butterfly' as ancestor goddess of the Hmong comes from a misinterpretation of Mais Bangx Mais Liuf (lit. Hmong woman/girl who is called *flower*) which sounds similar to the pronunciation of 'butterfly' (Gangb Bax Liuf) in Hmong language. This article is published originally on a journal in 2010. However, it only became well-known after being widely read online since 2011[187].

This is not the first time that Wu Xiaodong's articles draw extensive attentions of scholars who have interests in minority ethnic literature and myths. The ones he wrote in 2005[188] and 2006[189] arose lots of debates surrounding his challenges to the mainstream opinion that Chi-you was the ancestor hero of the Hmong (see 6.2.3.1 for

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[187] http://iel.cass.cn/expert.asp?newsid=9439&expertid=24, article title: "Hudie Yu Chiyou Miaozu Shenhua Xin Jiangou Ji Fansi 蝴蝶与蚩尤：苗族神话的新建构及反思 (Butterfly and Chi-you: New Constructions and Introspections on Myths of Miao)", last retrieved 30/01/2014.

[188] http://iel.cass.cn/news_show.asp?newsid=2205&pagecount=0, article title: "Lun Xibu Miaozu Qianxi Shishi Fei Chiyou Shidai Miaozu Zhanzheng Qianxi Koubei 论西部苗族迁徙史诗非蚩尤时代苗族战争迁徙口碑史 (A Demonstration of Western Miao Migration Epics to Prove They are not the Oral Tradition of Miao Wars in the Time of Chi-you)", last retrieved 30/01/2014.

[189] http://iel.cass.cn/news_show.asp?newsid=2044, article title: "Miaozu Chiyou Shenhua Yu Zhulu Zhi Zhan 苗族《蚩尤神话》与涿鹿之战 (The Miao Chi-you Myth and the War of Zhulu)", last retrieved 30/01/2014.

the discussion of this theme). In the 2005 article he argued that the figure of ancestor god in the Western Hmong migration epics of the Hmong, Gid Chib yeul Laol (lit. a heroic grandpa), was misread as Chi-you because the similarity of pronunciations confused the Han scholars. And the current popular reading of Chi-you as the ancestor of Hmong among Hmong people was mainly caused by the influences of these Han scholars who did their researches in 1980s and 1990s. According to my interviews with the staff of Fenghuang County Library and keepers of Baojing Archives, this article was widely circulated and remained very controversial; and Wu Xiaodong sticks to an ambiguous statement saying that this heroic figure could be or could not be Chi-you. In his 2006 article, he proposed to consider both Chi-you and Pan Hu (see 6.2.3.1) to be tribal leaders who took on animal imagery because of totemism. He further proposed that the narratives in historical archives indicates the opposition between the tribe of Chi-you and the tribe of the Yellow Emperor, while they conferred the subordinate position of the tribe of Pan Hu to the tribe of Emperor Gaoxin, who is also a mythological figure in the Yellow Emperor's pedigree. In so doing Wu Xiaodong turned back to support the popular reading of Chi-you and the Yellow Emperor legends which signify the Hmong identity through demonstrating the Hmong-Han relationship. However, he draws upon the theories of totemism in his attempt to explain why the tribal leaders relating to the Hmong were seen as animal-like barbarians by the ancient Han scholars. This approach appears to be fundamentally different from the popularly received Hmong belief which reckoned the mythical power of Hmong ancestor gods and goddesses (see the discussion of the Heavenly Kings materials in 6.1.2 and the discussion of Hmong origin myths in 6.2.3.1). Therefore, though the dominant historical narratives are still being supported, the base of understandings of the younger generation of Hmong scholars suggests an alternative understanding of 'Hmong-ness'.

Wu Xiaodong's use of internet to publish articles appeals to a larger group of readers; his angle of retrospections of the dominant reading of Hmong origin/ancestor myths suggests a historical positivist attitude. Both of these approaches have demonstrated the new features in the construction of Hmong identity by the younger

generation of Hmong scholars. In his attempts one can observe the influences of systematic modern ethnographic training and a more open mind to the prevalent academic thoughts. One can also observe the deeply-rooted nationalist ideology which is best seen in his insistence on the unitary Hmong identity and its recognition while his materials – especially the parts he has extracted – very probably suggest otherwise. Like the museum materials, Wu Xiaodong's impressive historical studies and linguistic analyses generate an effect of 'Resonance' which generally arouses readers' respect to 'historical facts' and 'linguistic evidences' and makes them easily accept the very problematic premise. However, similar to the above analysis of linguistic landscape in Shen Cong's works, the discussions in this chapter do not aim at directing attention to the nature of Hmong identity; they rather emphasize a semiotic approach of understanding the process of constructing Hmong identity as continuous changes of perceiving social positions and social relations. Yet more importantly, they emphasize the fluidity of identity in the construction of 'Hmong-ness' in each historical epoch.

Chapter 7 Conclusion

Summing up my inquiries in this thesis, I would like to go back to my original inspirations which I lay out at the beginning of my introductory chapter. They are the essence of the classics of world literature studied by Paul Friedrich, the perception/construction of history by people to which Michael Herzfeld provided valuable insights, and the regimes of language uncovered by Michael Silverstein.

To begin with, Paul Friedrich stated that some literatures (e.g. Homer's epics; Tolstoy's novels) he cited most often are generally recognized as classics of world literature because they contain numerous metaphors of a human condition that are seemingly beyond time, place, and cultures (Friedrich 2001, 226). And the metaphors contain forms of human social and political experience: the ironic essence of temporal, political, and communicative relations (Ibid., 2001); and they can be looked into through analyzing the cultural images and historical archetypes (polytropes) (Friedrich 1991; DeBernardi 2006). Friedrich's approach is very inspiring to me, because what attracted me intellectually and emotionally at the beginning was the 'human condition' that Shen Congwen sketched and the feeling of irony pervaded through the process of reading and perception.

I have tried to focus on the temporal aspect of Shen Congwen's works. When he alluded to classical sources, the theatrical texts and the traditional folk songs, he not only read the past but also imaginatively construed the present. Like the vivid and full historical and cultural images in these texts that preserve metaphors of Chinese people's lives, Shen Congwen's 'minor literature' also contains countless literary representations of the ideal 'people' that he both deterritorialized and placed in parallel traditions. As Friedrich points out, time and process always imply irony and involve some discrepancies between the intended meaning and what was understood, between what was anticipated and what actually happened (Friedrich 2001, 228). In Early Modern China or at present, the reading and explanations of the historical archetypes are continuously changing and being distorted especially due to the social and cultural reforms taking place in the Early Modern period. The 'people's voice' in

Shen Congwen's composition can never effectively refer to the virtues he perceived and felt (only in very few occasions, according to his memoir) from Xiangxi people. And the exceptionally calm and self-contained characteristics of his protagonists when confronting unpredictable tragic fates are replete of irony since their virtues are so profoundly exposed to and undercut by the much grater powers – the political power and the powerful time which changes traditions. Therefore, the mimesis of 'human condition' in Shen Congwen's works fully undertakes the feelings and distances of his readers on the literary and realistic histories.

The linguistic aspect of Shen Congwen's literary creation connects broadly with the fluidity of identities of people in Early Modern Xiangxi that he came across and constructed. It is also connected to Shen Congwen's conscious allusion to classical languages and mythical sources. Drawing upon Friedrich's notions that all languages are fundamentally poetic and poetic languages are indeterminate (Friedrich 1986), I have tried to demonstrate the variations of each language in Shen Congwen's language matrix and the ways in which they can creatively interact. Here his literary language is a symbolic process that mediates between the feelings of belonging or the nuances of mythic meanings and the composition of discourses from different languages/dialects. I also relate the language elements to the tropes (classified by Friedrich, cf. Friedrich 1991) in Shen Congwen's literary creations (e.g. the classical *pianwen*-styled depiction functions as the 'formal trope' which embodies the Classical Chinese aesthetical ideal; the Hmong discourses serve as the 'image trope' which indicates realistic contexts; the modern standard Mandarin registers complete the function of the 'modal trope' which reveals discrepancies between uttered words and the understandings of them; etc.). These literary tropes are also saturated with irony because of the speedy shifts of these languages/dialects, inadequate understandings of such languages/dialects, and especially the nationalistic language ideologies pervasive now and then.

The second important inspiration comes from Michael Herzfeld's studies of nationalism and locality. In his ethnographic documentation of a Cretan writer, he compared nationalist ideology of the bureaucratic system to village and kin-based

idioms within Cretan socio-political identity, which disclosed a history dependent on situational construction even under the same aim of nationalism (Herzfeld 1997, 72, 254). Because Shen Congwen's representative novels are all about his imagination of Hmong lives, I compared his literary images of the Hmong to the historical images I found. During my archive studies, I came across highly differentiated historical images of the Hmong in central and Southwest China. And I classified them into these categories: (1) the mythological image of the Hmong in ancient archives conveying the barbarian features; (2) the mythological image of the Hmong preserved in oral traditions signifying its complicated relationships with the Han; (3) the historical image of the Hmong in ancient and imperial Chinese archives that reflect the distinction between people accepting Confucian morality and people beyond the imperial control; (4) the historical image of Xiangxi Hmong in archives of Ming and Qing dynasties implying the shifts of the fringe of imperial state and the perception of the cultures of state frontier; (5) the late 19th century to early 20th century ethnographic image of the Hmong in Southwest China embodying its primitiveness; and (6) the early 20th century ethnographic image of Xiangxi Hmong which clearly reflects the self recognition and active construction of Hmong identity. The complexity of these historical images surpasses my original intent of searching for the historical archetypes of Shen Congwen's literary creation. They combine a process along which the concept of 'nation' continuously changed according to the shifting views of ethnic relationships and the various perceptions/self-perceptions of non-Han cultures. These images also imply that Early Modern Chinese nationalism has heterogeneous sources deriving from earlier intellectual histories.

I propose in this thesis that the Hmong image in Shen Congwen's representative works is a combination of many possible imaginations, including: (1) his allusion to a very important literary genre in classical literature tradition using ancient Chu state as its poetic archetype, mainly convoying a longing for a self-contained and moral life far away from the political institutions of the imperial central government; (2) a retrospection of his military experience and memories of Xiangxi's military institution in his early life; (3) memories of his Hmong relatives and other Hmong people who

were violently killed during the early stage of anti-imperial revolutions; (4) an imagination of Hmong people and Hmong culture as the epitome of the great 'tragedy' he was experiencing in Early Modern China (the decline of Chinese 'humanness' and the threats of taking over the homeland). The literary image of Hmong people in Shen Congwen's literary creation, however, is often perceived by later readers with an attitude of what Herzfeld termed 'folk positivism'(Herzfeld 1996, 278). Which means it is often understood as convoying the absolute virtues of Xiangxi people. It is probably appropriate to ask "What is Hmongness in Xiangxi?" "What are the possible approaches to understand it?" "Why is it important to ask this question in current social and political context?" I tried to examine these questions through my ethnography study of social memories and linguistic differentiations.

As regards the social memories and linguistic differentiations in Shen Congwen's literary creation, I look into the symbolic geography of the languages /dialects in Xiangxi which have their impacts on Shen Congwen's life and writing. The linguistic differentiation in his novels and prose is also bound with his historical/literary imaginations of the distributing areas of these languages/dialects (e.g. lyrical style writings drawing upon Classical Chinese poetic language are used to depict the landscape of the area of ancient Chu state, which both embodied the 'aesthetic ideal' reckoned by Shen Congwen; Hmong folk registers are often used to sketch landscapes of wilderness, which implied the liminal space where normal world and mythical world encounter; Modern Standard Mandarin discourses are mostly used – usually only ironically quoted by the characters – in the scenes of confrontations between local people and people coming from/symbolize outside world, which usually indicate the danger and power of the ongoing social reforms on Xiangxi life). Shen Congwen's 'minor literature' (Deleuze and Guattari 1986), similar to Kafka's, is not the proper field for searching for any absolute identity construction. It is more important to see how his literary language deterritorialized the major language and placed the Hmong identity in a net of social relationships and memories; and it is equally important to see how he used language, how he wanted to project it in a complex and changing context. Here it is also very helpful to look into Michael

Silverstein's discussions of 'discursive regimes', which was by all means socialized into Shen Congwen's ideologies.

The third inspiration comes from Michael Silverstein's studies of language relativity. As regards the semiotic mechanism of language ideology, Silverstein cited his understanding of Benjamin Lee Whorf's (1897-1941) theoretical construction of language relativity:

> (Linguistic relativity) works through specific proposals about the complex, semiotic origin of 'space' and 'time' as 'intellectual tools', that is, verbal captions and discursively manifested cognitive concepts that were supposed, by Bloomfield and those who inspired him, to be precultural and prelinguistic intuitions from 'nature'. In effect, Whorf proposes a seven-part explanation for how such cultural concepts emerge in the language(d) state of humanity (Ibid., 98).

Silverstein drew from the Whorfian themes a general theoretical conclusion that any sort of calibration of languages – and through languages, of any form of cultural semiosis would be influenced by researchers' 'precultural and prelinguistic intuitions from "nature"' (Ibid., 108); in the sense of analyzing the role of linguistic ideologies in constituting nationalism, Silverstein emphasizes the importance of considering the differentiation of 'speech community' and 'standardized language community' as the research scheme (Hymes 1984; Silverstein 1998). The former embodies the plurilingualism and heteroglossia (Bakhtin 1981) contesting the 'regime of language' which 'has its norm informed by standardization' (Silverstein 2000, 121, 128–129).

Silverstein's approach firstly prompted me to review Shen Congwen's literary creation within the framework of a typical modern nationalist novel. And the urban intellectual elite circle that Shen Congwen belonged to can be considered as a standardized language community which would explain folk discourses with orientations of a determinate denotational code. Therefore, the Hmong images in Shen Congwen's literary creation have far more complicated relations with the Hmong identities constructed and perceived by both the new nation-state and local people.

The linguistic differentiation in current Xiangxi, however, connects the discursive regimes (of Hmong language) to the folk positivism attitude, which is

marked by the traditionalization and resonance appearing in Xiangxi's current material and literary cultures. In the level of metadiscursive communications, I looked into the impacts of language standardization and matters relating to language right in Xiangxi. In particular, I consider that the impacts of language standardization can be effectively analyzed with an examination of socialization process. For this reason I compared the socialization process in the environments of educational and political institutions and the native socialization process in Hmong residential areas. The standardized Hmong language education indicates an iconized relationship between Hmong language and a unified Hmong identity; the national Mandarin education strengthens the readily built-up iconized relationship between Mandarin and identity of Chinese citizen; the language socialization processes in Hmong Zhai which ensure their members to become competent native speakers, however, symbolize the world and history where and when the discourses were generated. Therefore, current Xiangxi Hmong people perceive and construct 'Hmongness' in a multiple value-laden framework. To extend the discussion to the matter of minority language right, and by implication the matter of minority ethnic identity construction, it is necessary to consider these premises:

(1) current Chinese language policies towards recognized minority ethnic groups advocates their language rights with a hidden premise that the targeted communities are language communities, and language right only implies the right of speaking the language;

(2) standardization is a process which has a deep root in the intellectual history of modern democracy which cannot be easily refigured.

I would like to end this thesis with a quotation from Shen Congwen's epitaph:

'Following my thoughts, one understands "Me"

Following my thoughts, one meets "People".'

("   "

" " ）[190]

Figure 7.1 Shen Congwen's Tombstone; the Epitaph was Chosen by His Wife

Zhang Zhaohe (1910-2003), 2007

Shen Congwen's vicissitude in the Early Modern Chinese political and cultural environment drew him into confrontations with incredibly diversified literary discourses from a very old literary tradition, from dramatic social reforms and from various folk cultures. Considering that modern Mandarin literature has only a very short history, it has a huge potential of absorbing various linguistic elements (including the ones of the declining and disappearing languages and dialects) and of creatively structuring them to form infinite metaphors of human life and destiny (the 'me' and 'people' in Shen Congwen's epitaph). I wish Shen Congwen's literary creation and literary language can be considered as valuable early attestations of the potential of creativity among modern Chinese realistic literature.

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[190] The starting words of Shen Congwen's unfinished prose *Chouxiang de Shuqing* (*Abstract Lyricism*) (Shen 2002a, Vol. 17).

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